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Making Disciples

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The Resurrected Life

Easter Sunday of the
Lord's Resurrection
12 Apr 2020

Ac 10:34a, 37-43
Col 3:1-4
Jn 20:1-9

The Covid-19 pandemic has cast a long, dark shadow on virtually every aspect of our lives. We can become overwhelmed and depressed by all this suffering and death but the Lenten spiritual journey which has culminated in today's Easter victory should renew our hope and strengthen our faith when we reflect on what Easter really means.

The answer is in John's account of what happened inside the tomb of Jesus Christ. The empty tomb was "an essential sign" of Christ's resurrection (CCC 640) and we profess this in the Creed at every Mass:

"...For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died and was buried. On the third day, he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures..."

What is important is not just accepting the fact of the resurrection and reciting it but understanding what it means for humanity. As Christians, we believe that through this one act, the Lord conquered death and made it possible for all of us to have salvation through him. Without the resurrection, there would have been no Christian faith. If Christ had died on the cross and it ended there, his defeat would have been total, all his followers would have disappeared with his demise and Christianity would have been stillborn with the crucifixion.

St Paul in 1 Cor 15:13-14 puts it starkly, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith."

Instead, the resurrection turned everything on its head. It made his victory total, and it removed the most feared and unavoidable part of human existence - the fact of death as the final and irrefutable end to life.

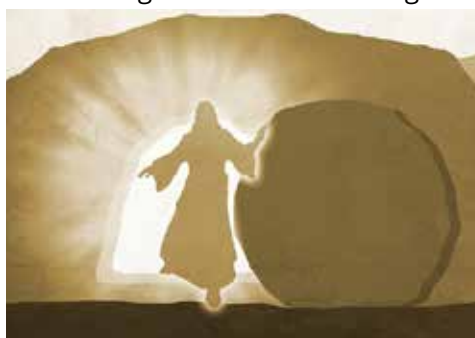
It is not just the resurrection itself that we celebrate Easter with joy. We now know that it was part of God's plan from the very beginning. There would have been no resurrection if the Lord had not entered his own creation by sending his only-begotten Son, to live among men and suffer their cruelty and folly in order to achieve his ultimate goal. Christianity is unique among all religions in this respect. It has been said that all faiths believe in a divine being. There is, however, no other faith in which the Son of God came down to be among men to die so brutally on the cross so that man can have eternal salvation.

Today's Gospel also reveals different responses to the resurrection. Mary Magdalene's first response was to think that someone had removed the body. This is a very human reaction because we are conditioned to thinking in a linear and logical

way. Peter saw the linen cloths on the ground and the cloth that had been over Christ's head. Peter "believed, but in his own way, with that faith that is a bit mixed with remorse for having denied the Lord." (Pope Francis, Easter Homily, 1 April 2018). It was John, the disciple who entered after Peter, who urged us to have faith and believe in Christ's resurrection as he himself "saw and he believed." (Jn 20:8)

After his resurrection, our Lord continued to be among the apostles, guiding and strengthening their faith (cf Ac 1:3). He knew that they would be threatened to renounce and abandon him. All the apostles except John were martyred for preaching Christ to others. How easy it would have been for them to renounce the resurrection and suffer no more. But they wanted the resurrected, not the unfulfilled, life, and their faith built the Church we have today.

What about all of us who did not witness the resurrection? Are we experiencing our new life in Christ from our Baptism and the Eucharist so that we approach the long, dark shadow of death with strong hope in Christ's resurrection? The pandemic will pass one day. But these questions on maturing our Easter faith will remain with us.



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Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to mmm@sfxchurch.sg by the MONDAY before the weekend, 2359hrs

CHURCH CLOSURE NOTICE

The Singapore government has announced further measures to reduce the transmission of Covid-19 on **Fri 3 Apr 2020**. In light of the current situation, all SFX parish premises, offices will be closed and all renovation works are suspended with effect from **Tue 7 Apr** through **Mon 4 May**. For pastoral care services, (e.g anointing, funerals) you may still call the Parish Office number; calls will be redirected and we will get back to you so do leave your name, contact number and a brief message.

SFX TELEGRAM - FOLLOW US!

Follow us through our official TELEGRAM channel: <https://t.me/sfxchurch>! You will receive the latest official announcements on Parish-wide events/initiatives, reminders, mass timings and the church bulletin on your phone. Telegram is a free app! Information will continue to be available on our SFX website, Facebook, Instagram and our bulletin "The Manna".

HOLY MASS WITH CHILDREN - ONLINE!

Parents with young children, take note! There is a pre-recorded Children's Mass every **Sun, 8am**. Watch it at online at www.youtube.com/catholicsg.

ONE: EASTER REFLECTION BOOKLET 2020

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a booklet of reflections for the season of Easter with the theme "**Singing Alleluia in Communion**". The booklet is available outside the Parish Office and online at tinyurl.com/20easterbooklet.



THE LORD IS TRULY RISEN, ALLELUIA!

Wishing all parishioners a blessed Easter and may you come to believe and experience the living hope and joy of Christ in these extraordinary times.



CATHOLIC SG

HOLY WEEK 2020

LIVESTREAM & WEBCAST SCHEDULE

WATCH
[YouTube.com/catholicsg](https://www.youtube.com/catholicsg)

LISTEN
radio.catholic.sg

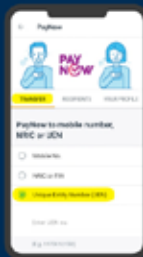
7 Apr - 7pm	Holy Tuesday (Mass) †
8 Apr - 6pm	Holy Wednesday (Mass) †
9 Apr - 8pm	Maundy Thursday (with adoration till 12am)
10 Apr - 10am	Stations of the Cross
10 Apr - 3pm	Good Friday
11 Apr - 8pm	Easter Vigil
12 Apr - 10am	Easter Sunday

† 24 Hours of Prayer, Fasting and Adoration
Starts Tue 7pm (Mass with Vespers, Exposition and Adoration)
Ends Wed 7pm (6pm Mass with Vespers and Benediction)

MASS COLLECTION

CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

With the indefinite suspension of Masses, income collection has greatly decreased. On top of utilities, staff salaries, etc. our church has the renovation to finance. As such, we would like to appeal to parishioners for your continued support. Mass collections can be made via the following options:



PAYNOW

1. Launch **PayNow** Service in your bank's app OR online banking website
2. Select "**Send via Unique Entity Number (UEN)**"
3. Key in Parish UEN - **T08CC4033J**
4. Check Name - **Church of St Francis Xavier**
5. Key in Amount
6. Key in Ref - **Mass Collection**



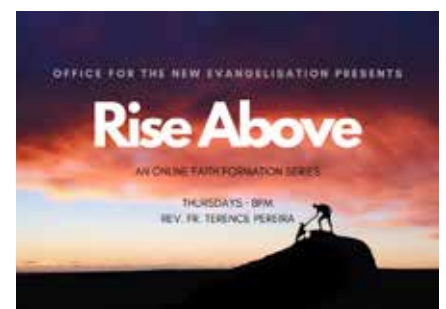
CHEQUE

1. Payable to **Church of St. Francis Xavier**
2. Mail the cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive Singapore 558758**

For more information, visit www.catholic.sg/offertory/
Step-by-step guide: www.catholic.sg/transfer-funds-via-paynow/

ONE: RISE ABOVE - AN ONLINE FAITH FORMATION SERIES

Join ONE's online Catholic Faith Formation series 'Rise Above'. A 4-part study is designed to provide you with insights and inspiration on how we can draw on our faith to see through the challenges brought by the COVID-19 outbreak. Study session will take place **every Thursday at 8pm** starting on **Thu 16 Apr** over four Thursdays. Sign up at <http://tinyurl.com/riseabovestudy>.



School of Witness 2020: Drink Deeply, Live Fully

The School of Witness (SOW) is an eight-week live-in discipleship school that aims to grow participants in the awareness of who God is, and who they are. Organised annually by the Office for Young People (OYP) for youths and young working adults, six of our parishioners had the opportunity to attend it this year, and they will be sharing with us their testimonies in the weeks to come, so stay tuned to it! Here is our third testimony..



I am 19 years old, a nurse and I come from a family of four. My life before SOW was not Christ-centred. I did not go for weekend masses or attend community sessions, and did not regularly pray to God. I felt that I would only call on him when I needed him like before exams. I would normally put on these masks of different personalities – as a cool guy, a people pleaser, and a bully, all of which would display unChrist-like behaviours. The feeling of loneliness, the thought of being a failure and the experience of being bullied when I was young culminated these personalities and has led me to hide my true self. These made it hard for me to listen to God's will and to understand his purpose for my being as I led a care-free life, ignoring even my family's concerns and advise.

On the first day of SOW, I was lonely. I felt that I was not good enough and out of place because I was the only one from ITE. But the people there were very welcoming and made me feel accepted.

On the second week of SOW, I took a verse from the truth box which really struck me. It said:

"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments"

- Psalm 119:176

That same week, I got injured and had a cast with my right leg. For reason that was about to be revealed, I remembered the verse and as I reflected on it, I realised that God was sending me a message, that even though I am lost and crippled spiritually or physically, he will not abandon me. He will search for me like a lost sheep and carry me home.

The SOW has led me to encounter Jesus and be healed of my inner wounds. I was emotionally in pain because of my relationship with my stepfather. My biological father left our family and I've never known him since birth. Later on, it grew on me that I never really needed a fatherly figure in my life though I still felt lonely and abandoned. This made me struggle with my relationship with my stepfather. I could not bring myself to accept him. I ignored him at home. There was this deep-rooted anger towards him. During the healing session, we were asked to speak out the areas that we wanted healing. I wanted to be healed of the pain and unforgiveness that I had towards my stepfather. As my brothers were praying for me, I felt something in my heart and I knew that God was there with me. I felt God was healing me, softening my heart of steel. The verse that I got on week two has happened. God did not forsake me. He searched for me and carried me home.

Since the day he created me, he was always beside me, walking this past 18 years with me through ups and downs in life. He was always there though I couldn't

see him. But I realise that God was always guiding me and when I got hurt, he was hurt as well.

God, Jesus and Brother; these were how he made himself known to me and that was the turning point with my relationship with him. My perception of God has changed because I felt this love that I was longing for so long. He was carrying me on his back like a lost sheep.

The experience of encountering the Lord has made me realise to seek him first before making a decision or action in my life. My deep relationship with the Lord has allowed me to see the positive things rather than the negative. He fills my life with great joy and freedom when I make him the centre of everything. I no longer need to wear a mask pretending to be somebody else. I don't even need to hide my past because he has helped me to embrace it. He made me new and now, I can be myself to everyone. I am committed to share this love that I have received to those around me, a love that is simply overflowing. I have seen and tasted the goodness of God and there is nothing I would want more.

In this world, we encounter so many challenges and fears, one of which, is the fear of not being accepted for who we are. If you are facing any fear, Jesus is inviting you to come to him because he loves you and he wants to carry you. Brothers and sisters, are you ready to open your hearts to Jesus and feel his love?



Looking for more Information?
visit www.sfxchurch.sg!

Palm Sunday Creative Decoration At Home

Here are some creative palm displays that our fellow parishioners have put up in their homes or on their doors on Palm Sunday!



It's a wonderful display of spiritual unity during this quarantine period caused by the coronavirus pandemic. A simple testament that nothing can dampen the spirit of those who truly have great faith in the Lord!



Prayer for Protection Against Coronavirus

Praise You, Heavenly Father, Almighty Creator of the Universe. You appointed us stewards of all fauna and flora and gave us mastery over them. In so many ways, we have failed you and we ask for your forgiveness.

In these worrisome times, with the global Coronavirus pandemic threatening our health and existence, we humbly and confidently ask for Your protection, healing and restoration, especially of those who are already afflicted with it.

Father, keep safe all medical staff, all who comfort the sick, all border patrol personnel, and all who courageously take up the task of keeping our country and the world safe from this virus.

If it is Your will, bind this plague and take this suffering away from us. Holy Spirit, transform our fears into strength, resilience, steadfastness and fortitude, and help us bear fruits of faith, hope, charity and prudence.

Precious Blood of Jesus, purify the world of this pestilence. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Mother of Perpetual Succour, watch over us and intercede for us. St. Benedict and St. Raphael, pray for us. All our guardian angels, light and guard our way.

In Jesus' Most Holy name we pray. Amen.

Mass Timings

WEEKEND MASSES

Suspended until further notice

WEEKDAY MASSES

Suspended until further notice

MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Suspended until further notice

HOLY HOUR

Suspended until further notice

Opening Hours

PARISH OFFICE

Closed until further notice

ADORATION ROOM

Closed until further notice

LIBRARY

Closed until further notice

COLUMBARIUM

Closed until further notice

CANTEEN

Closed until further notice

ANOINTING OF THE SICK



The sacrament can be administered to any Catholic awaiting serious surgery, suffering from serious illness or weakened by old age. Anointing may be given before admission for the anticipated medical procedure. Contact the Parish Office to request for a priest. In emergencies, priests of the church nearest to the hospital can be contacted.

INFANT BAPTISM



For more information, please contact the Parish Office for Baptism of Infants.

FUNERAL



Please check with the Parish Office for priest availability and Mass timing before confirming the timing at the crematorium. For prayers at the wake, please contact the Parish Office.

MARRIAGE



Contact the Parish Office 12 months before your intended date to book the church premises and ensure that your presiding priest is able to make that date. Church unavailable from 1 Nov 2018 due to renovations.

MASS OFFERING



Mass offering envelopes are available outside the Parish Office and Church. Submit your envelopes at least two weeks in advance of your intended date. Please write the names clearly, and in block letters.

VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact mmm@sfxchurch.sg