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Disciples
Making Disciples

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Trusting in God's Goodness and Promises

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time
28 Jun 2020

2 Kgs 4:8-11, 14-16
Rm 6:3- 4, 8-11
Mt 10:37-42

In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges us to love him more than we love our parents or children, to take up our cross and follow him – failing which we would not be worthy of him. He warns that if we seek to preserve our lives instead of giving it up for his sake, we will in fact not have life (cf Mt 10:37-39).

These words portray Jesus as demanding, and even sadistic. Following Jesus seems to bring about suffering. St Teresa of Avila, in complaining about her constant trials to our Lord, heard him reply, "Do not complain, daughter, for it is ever thus that I treat my friends." To this, St Teresa had wittily responded, "If this is how you treat your friends, no wonder you have so few of them!"

Do we really have a sadistic God who wants his children to suffer? The Psalmist today seems to oppose this view in proclaiming, "Forever, I will sing the goodness of the Lord." (Ps 89)

Having a distorted image of God the Father will lead us to distrust God's great goodness towards us all. Faith in God's goodness enables our discipleship to flow and grow from the source of Good. Discipleship is then not a slavish obligation or undertaken with a legalistic mind and heart.

Often in our faith journey, we expect God's answer within our expected time frame. St Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun famous for her diary records of her encounters of Jesus as Divine Mercy, wrote that our Lord once said, "Oh, how much I am hurt by a soul's distrust! Such

a soul professes that I am Holy and Just, but does not believe that I am Mercy and does not trust in My Goodness. Even the devils glorify My Justice but do not believe in My Goodness... My Heart rejoices in this title of Mercy." (Diary, 300)

God is not only good, but he is also a God that can be trusted to keep his promises. Today's first reading reveals this. It was in the small village of Shunem in Israel, where Elisha, a prophet and a wonder-worker, was hospitably treated by an influential wealthy Shunaamite woman. She had no son, and her husband was getting on in years. Elisha then prophesied that in a year's time, the Shunaamite woman would bear a son. Impossible as it seemed in the couple's situation, Elisha's prophecy was fulfilled, "Yet the woman conceived..." (2 Kgs 4:16-17) Hebrews 11 is often titled "The Faith of our Fathers" and it, too, recalls a similarly impossible birth following God's promise to Abram that he would "bless him and make his descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore..." (Gen 22:17) Hebrews 11:11 attributes Abram's faith in a trustworthy God as essential for this miracle, "By faith he received

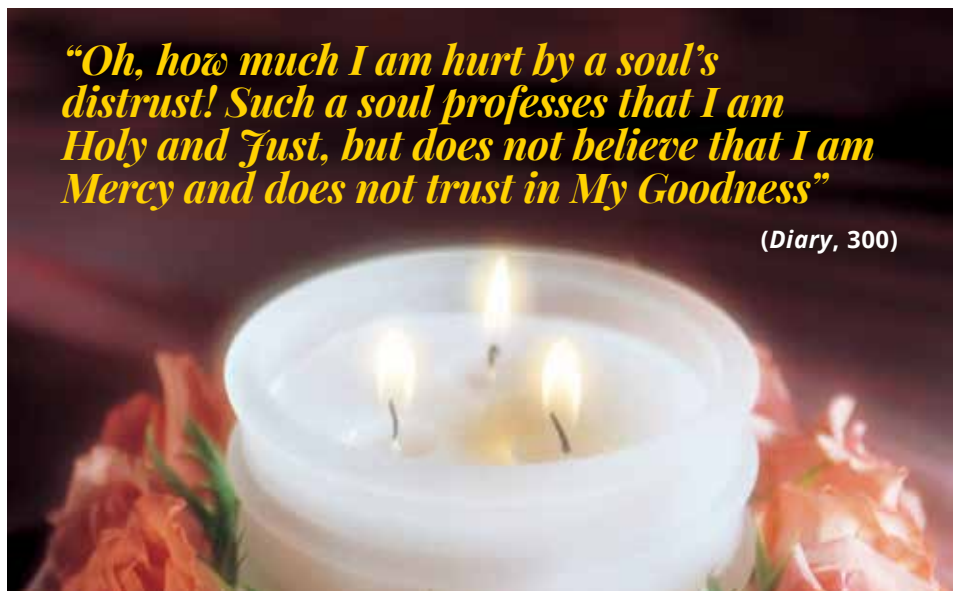
power to generate, even though he was past the normal age—and Sarah herself was sterile—for he thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy."

Certainly these miracles are beyond human reasoning and understanding. Pope St John Paul II wrote in one of his encyclicals, *Fides et Ratio* (Faith and Reason), that although faith and reason complement each other, reason has its limitation and "... our vision of the face of God is always fragmentary and impaired by the limits of our understanding. Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently." (*Fides et Ratio* 13)

How then are we to understand Jesus' challenges of discipleship in today's gospel and the suffering that being Jesus' disciple seems to bring? The Catechism calls us to turn to our "witnesses of faith" and especially to our Blessed Mother, "who, in 'her pilgrimage of faith'... shar[ed] the darkness of her son's suffering and death." Most of all, we are to turn to Jesus himself who suffered and died for us. Jesus is "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith [in a loving Father]." (CCC 165)

"Oh, how much I am hurt by a soul's distrust! Such a soul professes that I am Holy and Just, but does not believe that I am Mercy and does not trust in My Goodness"

(Diary, 300)



Announcements

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

NEED SOME PRAYERS?

Our SFX Intercessory Prayer Ministry will be standing in the gap to intercede and offer up your prayer petitions at their weekly prayer sessions. You may submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer. Rest assured that all prayer requests will be treated with the strictest confidence.

TEMPORARY ONLINE MASS OFFERINGS

Please submit your intention **1 WEEK** in advance. Please kindly wait for the Finance Department to contact you and provide you with a "Reference No", MO xxx (eg MO 001) before indicating the given referral number upon making payment via PayNow (**T08CC4033J**). These will be offered up during our priests' private masses.

SFX ONLINE DIVINE MERCY AND ROSARY PRAYER

In this month of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, let us come together as a parish community to pray the rosary together online via Zoom with our priest, Fr Ben. This online rosary prayer will be held on weekdays from **Mon 1 Jun - Tue 30 Jun** at **3pm** - we encourage you to log in by 2.45pm via <https://tinyurl.com/SFXWeekdayRosary>. Please note that recording of the prayer session is not allowed.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 845-8298-0708
Password: 621310

SSVP: DONATIONS FOR FRIENDS IN NEED (FINS)

The poor and needy are still in need of financial assistance during this period of Covid-19. Please do give your generous support so that the SSVP can continue to aid their Friends in Need (FINS) with your donations. We thank you for your generosity. To find out more, visit ssvpsingapore.org.

THANK YOU Fr Jude, Fr Brian & Fr Vinu!

Fr Jude and Fr Brian, words cannot express our appreciation of your many years of service and friendship. Your tireless efforts in seeking us out, sharing our joys and comforting us in our sorrows, will always be remembered. We continue to pray for both of you, to deepen your love for Christ everyday and for your hearts to be one after Jesus' heart always.

As many of you may know, Fr Vinu headed back to India last month for some personal matters and he will not be returning back to Singapore. We will miss his cheerful disposition and pleasant nature. We thank him for his service at SFX as we continue to keep him in our prayers.



MASS COLLECTION

Mass collections can be made via:

- PayNow** - Launch Paynow service on your bank's app or online website. Select "Send via Unique Entity Number (UEN)" and enter "**T08CC4033J**". Proceed to check entity Name = **Church of St Francis Xavier**, then key in Amount. Lastly, key in Ref - **Mass Collection**.
- Cheque** - Payable to **Church of St Francis Xavier**. Mail cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.
- Giro** - Download **Mass Collection Giro Form** via sfxchurch.sg/donate. Mail completed form to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.

Step-by-step guide: www.catholic.sg/transfer-funds-via-paynow/

RCIA AND RCIY 2020/2021: A JOURNEY OF FAITH

Do you know of anyone who is interested in embarking on a journey of faith? Or perhaps someone who has felt a stirring in their heart and is seeking answers to questions, or even peace in their struggles? We encourage you to reach out to them and invite them to join us in RCIA and RCIY. Here are some details:

RCIA journey

(24 years and above)

Date: begins every **Fri 26 Jun***

Time: 7.30pm - 10pm

Register: tinyurl.com/sfxrciasignup

Enquiries: Angela at ast_goh@hotmail.com or call 9626 5960.

**RCIA sessions will be conducted every Friday via Zoom for now. Sessions will be moved to Tuesdays, 8pm - 10pm once Circuit Breaker restrictions are formally lifted.*

RCIY journey (13 - 23 years old)

Date: begins **Sat 4 Jul[^]**

Time: 4pm - 6pm

Register: tinyurl.com/sfxrciysignup

Enquiries: rciy@sfxchurch.sg

"Come and See" session

Date & Time: **Sat 27 Jun, 4.30pm - 6pm**

Contact: Angela (9002 9977)/Mark (9751 3448) with your contact number and email for a Zoom invite to be sent.

**RCIY sessions will be conducted every Saturday via Zoom for now. Sessions will be moved to Sundays, 10.30am - 12.30pm once Circuit Breaker restrictions are formally lifted.*

CALL FOR RCIA SPONSORS

Sponsors are needed to help, guide, support and encourage our inquirers for their entire RCIA journey.

If you are a practising Catholic for at least three years and feel a prompting in wanting to journey alongside someone who is seeking God, please register your interest by emailing secretariat@sfxchurch.sg or contact Angela at 9626 5960 or ast_goh@hotmail.com.

10 tips to strengthen your Catholic home

St Pope John Paul II expressed this truth so clearly: The family is the basic building block of society... and... As the family goes, so goes the society. Together, let us launch a concerted effort to help construct a better world by striving for better, more holy families. Here are 10 tips to strengthen your Catholic home:

1. FAMILY PRAYER



One of the primary reasons for fights, quarrels, bitterness, coldness, and eventually separations is the lack of prayer in the family. What oxygen is to the lungs, so prayer is to the soul. Prayer should be at the very centre and heart of family life. Remember the words of the famous Rosary-priest, Fr Patrick Peyton: The family that prays together, stays together.

2. THE FATHER AS HEAD OF THE FAMILY



When possible, the father must be the head of the family; the mother should be the very heart of the family. A family without a head is a Frankenstein; a family without a heart is dead. May the father assume the role of the spiritual leader of the family and this means the leader in the prayer life of his family! If you like, the father should be the priest of the family. This means, the father should say yes to life. The father should love his wife and children. The most splendid example for the father should be the best of fathers, good St Joseph!

3. FORGIVENESS AND MERCY



Family members must be merciful and forgive, and not just seven times, but seventy times seven times—meaning always! If we want to be forgiven, then we must forgive from our hearts. The “Our Father” prayer commands this: Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

4. WINNING AND VICTORIOUS WORDS



The British poet, Alexander Pope penned these words: “To err is human, to forgive is divine.” Family members, cultivating true humility of heart, must learn to say these words: “I am sorry...” and equally

important: “I forgive you!” These words said often and with humility of heart can save families!

5. SERVANT ATTITUDE



Jesus, Son of the living God, washed the feet of the Apostles at the Last Supper. He himself stated: “The Son of man has not come to be served, but to serve and give his life in ransom for many.” (Mt 20:28) Each and every individual family member must not look to be served, but to be always ready to serve the other members in the family. Love and service are really synonymous.

6. EXPRESS GRATITUDE



Even though it is small, and at times, seems to be almost insignificant, these two words “Thank you” can really make a difference. St Ignatius of Loyola asserted: “The essence of sin is ingratitude.” Cultivate in your families an attitude of gratitude. God loves a humble and grateful heart!

7. TAKE A BREAK FROM GADGETS

A key time in family life is meal time. Normally that is when the family connects, comes together to share experiences, spends time with each other, bonds with each other, and grows in love with each other.



There is a comic strip of a family sitting together on the same couch. The father is watching TV, the mother is on her tablet, the son is playing a computer game on his laptop, the teenage daughter is sending a text from her phone, and the family dog has earphones on. We laugh at this, but we also weep, because we can see our own family in this comic strip. Therefore, at meal times, even though it might be a mere 20-25 minutes, set a rule to take a break from all gadgets – no mobile phone, tablet, computer, radio nor TV!



10 tips to strengthen your Catholic home



8. LEARN TO LISTEN

The art of listening is really hard, especially with family members. Many times, we fail to listen attentively when a family member wants to talk to us. Take time, be patient and learn to listen to one another, for it is through listening that we can share and partake in each other's lives.



9. CELEBRATION

The famous Catholic author Jean Vanier, who founded a group working most especially with the handicapped, and with forming families with handicapped members, made this discovery: families are called to celebrate!



Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays such as Christmas and Easter, and many more – all are festive and exuberant moments of celebration in the context of the family. We should celebrate each other in the family – especially special days and milestones. Inject a good dose of joy in your family, and get in the habit of celebrating! St Paul exhorts us in these words: "Rejoice in the Lord always; I say it again: Rejoice in the Lord." (Phil. 4:4)

10. MARIAN CONSECRATION

You can consider leading your family in a Marian consecration, to consecrate yourselves to Jesus through Mary. If families truly allow Mary to take root in the centre of their lives, our Lady will produce abundant fruits in their family: peace, joy, love, happiness, sharing, understanding, patience, kindness. In a word, by consecration to Jesus through Mary, families will become sanctuaries of true holiness as Jesus commanded: Be holy, as your heavenly Father is holy. (Mt 5:48)



Adapted from Father Ed Broom's "A Little Church: 10 Tips to Strengthen Your Catholic Home". Also seen on <https://www.catholic.sg/a-little-church/>

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