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Disciples *Making Disciples*

Peter's Confession

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
23 Aug 2020

Is 22:19-23
Rom 11:33-36
Mt 16:13-20

In all three Synoptic Gospels, Jesus asks his disciples who the people think he is and who they themselves consider him to be. In all three Gospels, Peter gives an answer that is markedly different from the opinion of the “people”.

This confession is a key milestone in Jesus’ journey and a key revelation of who Jesus is.

There are three key elements in Matthew’s text. First, the “people” view Jesus as a prophet. In particular, as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI writes in *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, Elijah personifies hope for the restoration of Israel while Jeremiah is the bearer of the promise of a New Covenant. The “prophet” category is thus an interpretative key drawn from Israel’s tradition that sharpens Jesus’ role in salvation history.

However, while these opinions can set us on the path to the mystery of Jesus, “they do not arrive at Jesus’ identity, at his newness. They interpret him in terms of the past, in terms of the predictable and the possible, not in terms of himself, his uniqueness, which cannot be assigned to any other category,” as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI writes.

This brings us to the second element of this Sunday’s gospel: Peter’s confession that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This is a culmination of the disciples’ experience with Jesus — for example, after Jesus walks across the lake, enters the disciples’ boat, and calms the storm, the disciples confess: “Truly you are the Son of God.” (Mt 14:33) Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI thus points out, “At certain key moments,

the disciples came to the astonishing realization: This is God himself.”

We see how scandalous this confession truly is at Jesus’ trial before the Sanhedrin, where the high priest reprises Peter’s confession as an accusation. When Jesus’ response acknowledges the title and puts himself on an equal footing with the living God himself, the high priest rends his robes and cries blasphemy. Jesus was convicted and crucified, not for what he did, but for who he was — an identity that was revealed to Peter.

The third element then is Peter’s commission as the “rock [on which Jesus] will build [his] Church.” Although only Matthew’s text situates this commission immediately following Peter’s confession, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI pointed out that the commission figures in different forms (though always with the same

substance) in Luke and John, and even in Paul — “[Peter’s] primacy is in fact attested by the whole spectrum of the tradition in all of its diverse strands.”

The First Reading from Isaiah prefigures this commissioning. Just as Eliakim was given the key of the House of David, so was Peter given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. As Eliakim was entrusted with the authority to open and to close, Peter was entrusted with the power to bind and to loose.

Despite Peter’s flaws, he was the first among the disciples to recognize and articulate who Jesus truly is — when Jesus first called him to put his net out into the deep, when he reached out to Jesus as he was sinking on the stormy lake, and finally, when he confessed the identity of Jesus in this Sunday’s gospel text.

In the end, the test of the disciple is whether he or she truly knows the Lord.



*“At certain key moments, the disciples came to the astonishing realization:
This is God himself.”*

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI,
Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration.

Announcements

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

BOOKING OF MASSES IN SEPTEMBER

Good news! Daily masses will resume in Sep on **Tues and Thurs** at **6.30pm**. Those who want to attend, please go to MyCatholic.sg to book your slots. There are no limits to how many times you can attend these daily masses.

For Sunday masses, booking will start on **Tues 25 Aug** at **12noon**. Masses are held on:

Saturday: 5.30pm
Sunday: 9am, 11am, 1pm, 5.30pm

LAST CHANCE!

Have you attended mass in church for Aug? If not, this will be your last chance. Do please register yourself and go to MyCatholic.sg to book your mass for the last weekend in Aug. There are spaces still available for the weekend masses.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

It is available via appointment only. You can contact the Parish Office to make an appointment.

NEED SOME PRAYERS?

Our SFX Intercessory Prayer Ministry will intercede and offer your prayer petitions at their weekly prayer sessions. Please submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer.

Rest assured that all prayer requests are kept confidential.

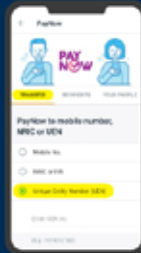
TEMPORARY ONLINE MASS OFFERINGS

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

MASS COLLECTION

CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

With the 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/

SFX ONLINE ROSARY (TUE NIGHT)

For the month of August, let's continue to come together as a parish community to pray the Rosary and bring our intercessions to our Blessed Virgin Mary. These sessions are led by Servants at the Lord's Table (SaLT).

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Meeting ID: 867 1052 4234
Password: 465481



Every Tuesday from **4 - 25 Aug, 8.30pm**. Meeting room opens from 8.15pm onwards via <https://tinyurl.com/SFXTueRosary>. Please note that recording of the session is not allowed.

LITTLE SHEPHERD'S SCHOOLHOUSE @ST FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH OPEN REGISTRATION FOR 2021

We believe every child is unique and special and a gift from God. We give priority to spirituality so that there is a sense of God in all that we do.

The following documents are required for registration:

1. Child's Birth Certificate and Immunization Records (photocopies)
2. Child's Baptism Certificate (photocopy) (if applicable)
3. Parents' I/C (photocopies)
4. Child's recent passport-sized photograph

Level	Child's year of birth
Pre-Nursery	2018
Nursery	2017
K1	2016
K2	2015

Chinese Immersion Classes for Nursery to K2 levels are available.

For further enquiries, kindly call the Kindergarten at **6280 8929** or email sfx_kindergarten@sfxchurch.sg.

Baptism Testimonies

Our SFX community is glad to welcome our youths who celebrated the Sacrament of Initiation on 15th August. May their testimonies touch our hearts and may these be a reminder that God is always calling us to return to him with his open arms and merciful heart.



"Joining RCIY was one of the most difficult yet best decisions I've made, and the many sessions and sharing have really helped me find my identity in Christ. Leading up to baptism, I was excited but nervous, unsure if I was worthy enough to be accepted. Yet the Lord never gave up and continued to use the people around me to reassure me that I am His daughter, imperfect but always being molded into an image of Himself. As I received my first Holy Communion, I heard God say 'welcome home', and that was when I knew there was no turning back in following Jesus. Praise God for His unyielding love!"

- Christine Judith Wong



"Since young, I struggled with finding my way to God. But I am proud to say I am finally home! This past year has been an incredible and unique (a big thanks to Covid-19) journey for me — the retreats, the community and most importantly, Christ Himself. Where I was once lost, I am now found. Before, I was doubtful. Now, after surrounding myself with God's children, I am whole again. I believe in His Grand Plan to prosper us! I hope to continue serving at SFX to share with others the same love God has shared with me!"

- Josh Jordon Genesis Gan



"My road to baptism was a challenging yet amazing one. During the journey, I learnt more about the importance of Christ, Community and Charity. On the day itself, my heart was only filled with joy and calmness. I was excited to take the first step in committing my life to Jesus. Baptism marked the start of a life-long journey which I am thrilled to embark on. Most importantly, now when people ask me what the definition of love is, my only answer is — Jesus."

- Celine Joy Elizabeth Gan

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"Growing up, I often struggled with my identity in Christ. I found myself in church with my paternal family on Saturday evenings and in a temple with my mother the very next morning. Although I longed to find out more about Christ, I let many opportunities slip through my fingers in order to not hurt my mother's feelings. I strayed and soon began to feel really empty. I started searching for superficial joy to fill the void within me. However, it seemed like nothing could fill the emptiness I felt.

One day, I stumbled upon SFX RCIY and I felt this longingness for Jesus once again. I took a step out of my comfort zone and signed up for it. Truly, Jesus is our Good Shepherd who never abandons us. Despite the amount of time I rejected His calls, new opportunities never failed to arise.

RCIY has shifted my perspective and transformed me spiritually. Now that I have received the Sacraments of Initiation, my real journey has only just begun. Praise the Lord for the brothers and sisters who journeyed alongside us and Praise His Holy Name for our second chance at life!"

- Nicole Brigid Neo



"My baptism experience was really fruitful and memorable. It was very unique as I was supposed to be baptised on Easter Sunday. However, it didn't happen due to the circuit breaker and was re-scheduled to 15th August. I felt very excited and could not wait for that date to come. When the day finally arrived, I was kind of nervous as I was afraid that I would mess up something but thankfully I didn't. The baptism went smoothly thanks to all uncles, aunties and facilitators who have also guided me throughout my journey. Overall, I feel very happy for how much I have learnt and I hope to continue learning and becoming closer to God. Lastly, I would like to thank all the facils, aunties, and uncles who have guided me and patiently answered all my questions and always cared and looked out for me. Thank you!"

- Caleb Gerard Won

Mass Timings

WEEKEND MASSES

Sat Sunset:
5.30pm
(There is currently no Novena at 4.45pm)
Sun: 9am, 11am, 1pm, 5.30pm
(There is currently no Confession before Mass)

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