



THE MANNA

Church of St Francis Xavier

63A Chartwell Drive,
Singapore 558758



Disciples *Making Disciples*



Parish Office:
6280 6076, secretariat@sfxchurch.sg



Parish Priest:
Rev Fr Benedict Chng
6288 0484
benedict.chng@catholic.org.sg



St Francis Xavier Kindergarten:
6280 8929, sfx_kindergarten@sfxchurch.sg

Assistant Priest
Rev Fr Cornelius Ching
6282 3151
cornelius.ching@catholic.org.sg

Priest in Residence:
Rev Fr Antony Maria Joseph

Let God Console You

Second Sunday of Advent
6 Dec 2020

Is 40:1-5, 9-11
2 Pt 3:8-14
Mk 13:1-8

Every year in Advent, we are encouraged to make a good Confession at the Advent Penitential Services but with the current pandemic we are asked instead to make an appointment with a priest. A sincere Confession makes for a joyful heart open to the Infant Jesus!

The Catechism lists six "spiritual effects" of the Sacrament of Penance: reconciliation with God to recover sanctifying grace; reconciliation with the Church; remission of eternal punishment; partial remission of temporal punishments; a peaceful conscience or spiritual consolation and finally, increased strength for the Christian life (cf CCC 1496).

We know God wants us to confess our disobedience. After Adam's sin, God prompted Adam to confess by asking him, "Where are you?/Why are you hiding?" (Gn 3:9) The Risen Christ subsequently gave the authority to forgive to the Church, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (Jn 20:22-23)

We could say Confession is like an Exodus journey which Isaiah recalled in today's first reading. Isaiah told the Jews in Babylonian captivity to make "a straight highway...across the desert" for the Lord. God himself, through King Cyrus, was "coming with power" (Is 40:3,10) to end the exile; through Zerubbabel and Joshua, he would lead them back to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem where they can joyfully

worship him again (cf Hag 1:12). This foretold "Exodus" started in 539 BC. Today, God leads us not by a pillar of cloud or fire as in the first Exodus, not just through eminent religious leaders like Zerubbabel and Joshua, but by his own Spirit which St John the Baptist reminds us today we all received when we were baptised by Christ himself (cf Mk 1:8).

Christ gives us his Holy Spirit to illumine us – to help us repent and persevere in Christian living. He is "the interior Master of life according to Christ, a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects, and strengthens this life." (CCC 1697) We, on our part, must will to obey the Spirit's promptings and remain reconciled with God. If we sin, we must confess, says our Holy Father, Pope Francis, "God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy." (*Evangelii Gaudium* 3); "The Lord always consoles us as long as we let ourselves be consoled." (Homily, Dec 10, 2019)

To help us enter more deeply into the reconciliation that has been accomplished in Christ, Pope Francis introduced into the Liturgical Calendar last year the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto to be celebrated on December 10. On this date in 1291, the Holy House of Nazareth where the Annunciation happened was miraculously translated from Nazareth to Croatia. It was subsequently

translated to Loreto where a Basilica was built over it in 1469.

Above the altar in this Holy House are the words: "*HIC VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST*" – "*HERE THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH*" – a reminder that God so loved humanity that he became one of us in all things but sin (cf Heb 4:15). Mary's "*fiat*" – "Let it be done" (Lk 1:38) made this happen.

Two days from now on December 8, we will also be celebrating a fitting privilege granted Mary for her willing Divine Maternity - the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - "the belief that [Mary's] soul, in the first instant of its creation... was, by a special grace and privilege of God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ... preserved free from all stain of original sin." (*Ineffabilis Deus*) Blessed Pope Pius IX says God willed this reconciliation or union between God and man, "From the very beginning, and before time began, the eternal Father chose and prepared for his only-begotten Son a Mother in whom the Son of God would become incarnate and from whom, in the blessed fullness of time, he would be born into this world."

We live now in this blessed fullness of time. May we resist Adam's temptation to hide but in filial trust, seek God's consolation and forgiveness and remain reconciled with our Father in Christ through the Holy Spirit.



**"The Lord always
consoles us as
long as we let
ourselves be
consoled."**

- Pope Francis

Announcements

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

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

A wellspring of mercy awaits us in this Sacrament. Confession is a gift, a means of grace, a way to God, and a way back to God. Contact the Parish Office to book an appointment for the following timeslots:

Tuesdays & Fridays: 4pm - 6pm
Saturdays: 10am - 12pm

Additional timings during Advent:

Sat 19 Dec:
10am - 12pm, 2pm - 4.30pm

Mon 21 Dec:
6pm - 9pm

Tue 22 Dec:
10am - 12pm, 4pm - 6pm

Wed 23 Dec:
6pm - 9pm

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**).

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

Our SFX Intercessory Prayer Ministry will intercede and offer your prayer petitions at its weekly prayer sessions. Please submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer. Rest assured that all prayer requests are kept confidential.

You could also join us online **every Friday, 8pm** to pray and intercede in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. If you are joining us for the first time, please email intercessory@sfxchurch.sg for more information. All are welcome!

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252
Password: SFXIP11DEC



BOOKING OF SECOND WEEKEND MASS IN DECEMBER

Booking for a second weekend Mass begins on **Tue 8 Dec, 9am** via myCatholic.sg. It is subject to availability. To ensure that all who want to attend are able to get slots, we ask that you be gracious and book only if you are sure you can attend.

Do remember to cancel your booking if you are unable to make it for Mass. Please come 20 minutes earlier, bring along your mobile phone and a photo identification card for check-in and verification.

Mass Timings

Tuesday, Thursday: 6.30pm

Saturday: 5.30pm

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

CHARISMATIC: THE WORD MADE FLESH

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting via Zoom is on **Mon 7 Dec, 8pm**. There will be praise and worship followed by a talk on 'The Word Made Flesh' by Roderick Lim. All are welcome.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 836 3543 9497


Password: HOLYSPIRIT



MASS COLLECTION

Your continuous generosity and donations will help contribute to our Parish's daily operations. You can make your offerings via the following options:

- 1. PayNow** - Launch the 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 the reference - **Mass Collection**.
- 2. Cheque** - Payable to **Church of St Francis Xavier**. Mail cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.




SFX CHRISTMAS PROJECT



Christmas gives us the perfect opportunity to restore broken lives and spirits. Let us 'Rise Up & Reach Out', and live out our Parish mission of **Disciples making Disciples**. Together as a Parish community, let us herald the Good News, and bring Christ - Light of the World - to all!


You will soon receive a package which contains a Christmas Portrait template, an Outreach Card and Prayer Tags.

CHRISTMAS PORTRAIT



Consecrate your family to God this new liturgical year! Take a family portrait in front of your family altar and paste it onto the template provided and fill out a message of thanksgiving. Drop these templates in the designated box located outside the Parish Office by **Sun 20 Dec**. All portraits received will be displayed around the Church and consecrated on the Feast Day of Holy Family. Alternatively, you may submit them digitally via tinyurl.com/SFXmasPortrait

ADVENT PRAYER TREES



What better gift for Christmas than the gift of prayer? Write your personal petition/thanksgiving and also let the Holy Spirit guide you in praying intentionally for someone this Advent - either to return to the Sacraments, or to be open to knowing our Lord and receiving the Greatest Gift of JESUS this season! Write their name(s) on the prayer tag you will receive and drop them in the designated box located outside the Parish Office before Christmas. As a faith community, we will pray for all these intentions throughout Advent.

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH CARD



Send this greeting card to a non-Christian or to welcome a fellow brother/ sister in Christ back to Church by sharing the hope of Christ and meaning of Christmas.





HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

FOR A LIFE OF PRAYER

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

IN THE MONTH OF NOV 2020

CONDOLENCES

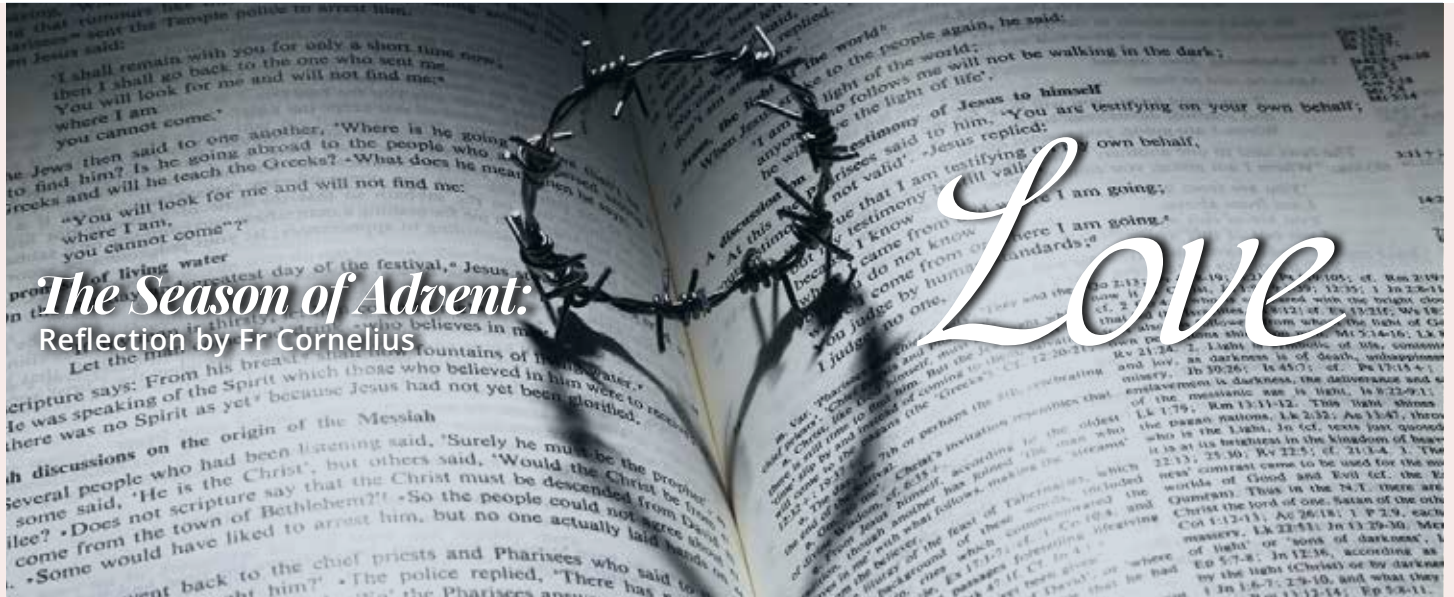
We offer our prayers to the families of the following who have returned to the Lord:

1. Wang Angel Nee Lee Oi Chun
2. Clarence Peeris
3. Lee Song Chua Bernard Robert

INFANT/ ADULT BAPTISMS

We welcome the following:

1. Mikayla Kyra Thomas
2. Wang Ying Rui Christopher Isaiah
3. Pierce Christian DeCruz
4. Brianna Christiene DeCruz



The Season of Advent: Reflection by Fr Cornelius

If you like a flower, you pluck it. If you love a flower, you water it.

Love is a four-letter word, often used, and often misused. It is an expression, often used between parent and child, relatives, siblings, friends, and lovers. From this example, we can see that there are many different degrees of love.

The love between parent and child is definitely different from the love between boyfriend and girlfriend. If this is such a commonly used expression, then what exactly do we mean when we say, "I love you!"?

In the famous passage from Jn 21:15-19, when Jesus asks Simon Peter three times "Do you love me?", we may not realise that there are two different Greek words translated to "love" in what we read in the English language.

Jesus' love (ἀγάπη - agape) for us is an all encompassing love, love without conditions. He asks Peter the first and second time, "Do you love (ἀγάπη) me?" He is inviting Peter to love him with an all encompassing love, the same way he loves him and all of us. Peter, knowing his own limitations and inadequacies, can only answer, "Yes, Lord: You know I love (φιλία - philia) you." Peter is saying that he loves the Lord, but his love is a love with limits, a brotherly kind of love, but incomplete, as compared to how Jesus loves.

When Jesus asks Peter a third time, "Do you love (φιλία) me?", it can be interpreted that Jesus is asking him to love him in the way he can, and to work at it. This could be the reason why he felt sad, not because Jesus asked him three

times, but that Jesus has "downgraded" his request to Peter, recognising his limitations at that moment.

There is no doubt that God the Father loves us. He is aware of the consequences of creating us and loving us, the consequence of even having to send his only begotten Son to be born of a human, and ultimately, as a show of his limitless love, to die for our sins, to die for us. This is what we celebrate at Christmas, what we are preparing for in this season of Advent: the limitless, all encompassing, unconditional love of God.

Jesus continues to invite us to "Remain in my love." (Jn 15:9) Loving God totally and completely may be too great a task and too high an ideal for us to even think about. But he is not asking us to make leaps and bounds in reaching this ideal. He is inviting us to love him the way we can, in the way we know how, and to continually build on it, to improve it.

One of the ways we can practice loving God is by loving those around us. Christmas is often called "the season of giving." Very often when we think of giving, it is of giving presents, of material things. The giving of our time and attention is also crucial. Many well-off people can be lonely. They may have the material possessions but they may not have the time and attention of the people they love.

With Christmas coming soon, let us continue to be convinced of the love that God has for us, and also to spread this love to those around us.



This year, our Parish community gathered online to celebrate our Parish Feast Day with our three beloved shepherds and a special guest preacher, Fr Varghese from Perth. Fr Varghese blessed us with his charism of healing and empowerment over YouTube as we celebrated our Triduum and Feast Day Masses virtually. Here we share some highlights:



Fr Varghese online preaching and leading us into healing and empowerment.



Relic of our Patron Saint.



Triduum Day 2 Mass celebration by Fr Cornelius.



Triduum Day 3 Mass celebration by Fr Antony.



Feast Day Mass celebration by Fr Benedict.



"Let Us Rejoice" music video captures the joy of returning to worship as the Body of Christ.



Virtual choir for our Feast Day.



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

Mass Timings

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue & Thur:
6.30pm

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)*

MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Suspended until
further notice

HOLY HOUR

Suspended until
further notice

Opening Hours

PARISH OFFICE

For pastoral care
services (e.g.
anointing, funerals
etc), you may
contact before
coming at the
following hours.

Mon - Sat:

9.30am - 6.30pm
Sun: 8.30am - 1pm

ADORATION ROOM

Closed until
further notice

LIBRARY

Closed until
further notice

COLUMBARIUM

<https://tinyurl.com/SFXColumbarium>
(by appointment only)

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