



## Disciples Making Disciples



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## What makes Advent joyful

**Gaudete Sunday**  
Third Sunday of Advent  
13 Dec 2020

**Is 61: 1-2a, 10-11**  
**1 Th 5:16-24**  
**Jn 1:6-8, 19-28**

We are midway in our Advent journey to commemorate the coming of our Messiah, Jesus Christ, into this world. On this Third Sunday of Advent, how should we prepare ourselves for the rest of the period leading to Christmas?

One hint is that today is also known as *Gaudete* Sunday which is Latin for "rejoice". The readings today explain why this is such an apt description of what we need to do.

In the first reading, Isaiah reveals how he is filled with joy proclaiming God's words and doing his work. The tasks before him were not easy, let alone to be done joyfully.

"He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison." (Is 61:1)

How is it possible to exult with joy when trying to relieve the suffering of the poor, the broken-hearted and those in captivity? Isaiah tells us it is possible only if we believe we are anointed by God to undertake these tasks and that God's favour will be with us when we do so.

Looking at it in this way, how can we not feel immense joy knowing God is behind us and that his love for us is complete and unconditional? How can we doubt that they can be accomplished when our Creator who has dominion over the entire

universe has chosen us specially to do his work? How can we not have faith when Christ died for us on the cross so that we may have eternal salvation?

In fact, Isaiah's words were fulfilled by Jesus, as recounted in the Gospel of Luke. When our Lord was in Nazareth at a synagogue, he was handed a scroll containing this particular passage from Isaiah. He read it, and proclaimed: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Lk: 4:21)

The second reading tells us the practical steps to take in this joyful approach.

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Th 5:16-18)

Pray and give thanks for all the blessings you have received, even for the smallest things and what we take for granted.

Praying and giving thanks at the beginning of a new day and the end of the day will enable us to feel the joy that comes from being close to God.

In the Gospel reading we are told the story of John the Baptist who preceded Christ and saw his mission as being a true witness to the Lord, to prepare the way for his coming.

Like John, we too are called to bear witness to Christ's coming. Like John, we too will experience ups and downs in our faith journey. But our load will be lightened if we truly believe that God has anointed us for the task, in the sense described in the first and second reading.

When we do so, we will feel the joy that comes from knowing we are fulfilling God's will.

So, as our Advent journey proceeds towards Christmas, we should continue to reflect on what it is that we are waiting for.



*If we are truly waiting  
for the Lord's return  
and asking ourselves  
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If we are truly waiting for the Lord's return and asking ourselves how we should prepare for it, today's readings give us the perfect answer.

Rejoice in the Lord and bear witness to his coming with joy and exultation.

This joy does not come from material goods or the satisfaction of our desires. It is a joy from God's love that is so overwhelming it can only be described with the sort of powerful imagery that Isaiah used in the first reading:

"...for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels." (Is 61:10-11)

What better way to wait for the Lord's return than to be full of this joy.

## Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to [mmm@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg) by the MONDAY before the weekend, 2359hrs

### GIFT PROGRAMME

Next weekend, **19/20 Dec**, being the third weekend of the month, there will be the usual call for contributions for the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) programme to build a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church. Support the organisations and projects of the Archdiocese by making a monthly pledge. You can give via PayNow (**UEN: 201231391K**) or drop your contributions into the GIFT donation box at the two entrances of the Main Church. More info can be found at [catholicfoundation.sg](http://catholicfoundation.sg)

### TEMPORARY ONLINE MASS OFFERINGS

Please submit your intentions **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](http://www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer). All prayer requests are kept confidential.

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

#### ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252

Password: SFXIP18DEC



## BOOKING OF CHRISTMAS EVE/DAY MASS IN DECEMBER

Booking of Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Mass begins on **Tue 15 Dec, 12pm** via [myCatholic.sg](http://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. Please come 20 minutes earlier, bring along your mobile phone and a photo identification card for check-in and verification.

**Download the new TraceTogether app and let's do our part to help stop the spread of Covid-19 through community-driven contact tracing and keep our parish community safe!**

#### MASS TIMINGS:

**Thu 24 Dec:** 6pm, 9pm, 12midnight

**Fri 25 Dec:** 9am, 11am, 1pm

## SFX Christmas Project 2020

*Christmas gives us the perfect opportunity to restore broken lives and spirits, and bring hope and love to all. 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 - the Light of the World - to all!*

You will 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, paste it onto the template provided and fill out a message of thanksgiving. Drop the template 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](http://tinyurl.com/SFXmasPortrait)



### CHRISTMAS OUTREACH CARD

Send this greeting card to a non-Christian or welcome a fellow brother/sister-in-Christ back to Church with this Christmas greeting.

### ADVENT PRAYER TREES

What better gift for Christmas than the gift of prayer for a loved one or friend in need?

Write your personal petition/thanksgiving and also let the Holy Spirit guide you in praying intentionally for someone this Advent! Write their name(s) on the prayer tag and drop them in the designated box located outside the Parish Office before Christmas. As a community of faith, we will pray for all these intentions throughout Advent.



## CHARISMATIC: THE GRACE OF ADVENT

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting via Zoom is on **Mon 14 Dec, 8pm**. There will be Praise and Worship followed by a talk on "The Grace of Advent" by Andrew Toh. All are welcome.

#### ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 836 3543 9497

Password: HOLYSPIRIT





# FORMED

## | *What To Watch*



### **VIDEO:** The Story of the Nativity: The Truth of Christmas

The story of the birth of Jesus is often misunderstood. But this fast-paced, thought-provoking look at the true story of the Nativity clears away widespread misunderstandings of Jesus' origin. Join top scholars, inspirational speakers, and popular authors as they explain the story behind the story of the birth of Jesus. "The Story of the Nativity" also includes stunning works of art depicting the biblical story, from Fra

Angelico to Rembrandt, and footage from the Holy Land showing the places where the Christmas story actually took place. Explore the true story of Mary and Joseph, Jesus's miraculous conception, the birth of John the Baptist, the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the Star of Bethlehem, and the birth of Jesus. This is an invaluable tool for believer and unbeliever alike to learn more about Jesus of Nazareth and about the truth of Christmas.



### **VIDEO:** Mary of Nazareth

Mary of Nazareth is an epic motion picture on the life of Mary, Mother of Christ, from her childhood through the Resurrection of Jesus. The film vividly captures the essence of Mary's profound faith and trust in God amidst the great mysteries that she lived with as the Mother of the Messiah, as well as her compassionate humanity and concern for others, and the deep love that she and Jesus shared for one another.

The movie underscores her special role in God's plan for our redemption, her unique relationship with Christ, and the tremendous suffering that she endured in union with his Passion and Death, as well as her serene joy at his Resurrection.



### **ANIMATION – For Kids:** Brother Francis: The Days of Advent



Brother Francis leads us on a daily journey in this special seasonal celebration of the coming of the Lord! Featuring meditations, prayers, and suggested activities to keep our focus on Christ this Christmas.

### **PODCAST:** Prepare the Way of the King by Dr Scott Hahn



Dr Scott Hahn, one of the most eminent Catholic theologians today, reveals what scholars now know about the shepherds, the mysterious Magi, and King Herod. Your Advent journey will take on new meaning as you prepare your heart for the birth of our Lord. This illuminating presentation is sure to help you grow in appreciation of the greatest gift ever given to mankind — Jesus Christ.



Looking for more Information?  
visit [www.sfxchurch.sg](http://www.sfxchurch.sg)!

## The Season of Advent:

Reflection by Fr Cornelius

# Joy

*"Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." (Neh 8:10)*

Very often, we tend to feel that being joyful and being happy are the same. In fact there are some similarities but they can be vastly different.

I remember that I was very happy when I laid my hands on a brand new iPhone X some years ago. I was intrigued by the construction and the many more capabilities it had as compared to my previous phone. Needless to say, I spent much time toying with this new device but this happiness was barely there after a few weeks. It was just another phone that served the same purpose as my previous ones.

On a different note, I still remember the significant event in my life four years ago. Some people wondered why I did not seem at all excited at all about my upcoming sacerdotal ordination, but was strangely stoic. What I was feeling inside of me was the awareness of the vocation choice that I was going to make, how unworthy I was to be chosen by the Lord to live and minister as his priest, and the challenges and difficulties of the pastoral ministry.

In spite of all these feelings, there was an inexplicable peace and joy to know that Jesus would always be with me. These words of our Lord came to me, *"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete."* (Jn 15:9;11)

I realised that as long I remain in the love of God, peace and joy will surely be there. Sts Peter and Paul were suffering while spreading the good news of the love of Jesus but I am very sure that they were at peace, and were even joyful during their difficult moments.

It is not difficult to find joy in good times. To find joy, deeply seated in our hearts in times of trial and tribulations, will take some faith in our Lord Jesus, who came to us in the form of a helpless baby.

He wants to share in our happiness, and even more so, he wants to be with us in our most difficult times. Is 53:4-5 reminds us, *"Ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried.... On him lies a punishment that brings us peace, and through his wounds we are healed."*

This is the God who loves us. This is Jesus who loves us. He continues to reassure us, *"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."* (Jn 16:24)

This Sunday is the Third Sunday of Advent, commonly called Gaudete Sunday or the Sunday of Joy. The vestments of the priests change from a sombre violet/purple to a lighter colour of rose/pink. We are mid-way through Advent.

In all things, let us continue to find faith in Jesus. Know that in him, we can find the joy and peace that only he can bring. Keep smiling because the joy of the Lord is our strength.



### 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 us 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](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg)