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Disciples
Making Disciples

What is Eternal Life?

4th Sunday of Lent
Laetare Sunday
14 Mar 2021

2 Chr 36: 14-16. 19-23
Eph 2:4-10
Jn 3:14-21

In response to God's gift of the Decalogue last Sunday, we affirmed the saving truth of God's precepts with Peter's profession, "You, Lord, have the message of eternal life." (Jn 6:68 – responsorial psalm)

This profession was Peter's response to Jesus' "Bread of Life" discourse. Many of Jesus' disciples found his Eucharistic teachings "offensive", but Peter understood that "eternal life" was Jesus himself. Jesus had repeatedly linked this hitherto elusive gift to faith in his divine person: "... [work] for food that endures to eternal life, **which the Son of Man will give you**" (v27); "**... everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life...**" (v40); "**... the one who believes [I am from God] has eternal life**" (v47); "**Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life...**" (v55)

In John, Jesus first spoke of himself as both giver and source of eternal life in his conversation with Nicodemus (our gospel text today). Jesus said it was necessary to be "born again... of water and the Spirit" to see the Kingdom of God (vv 3,5,7 & 8). He foretold his Passion as the event that would inaugurate this regeneration. Just as the Israelites in the desert were saved from deadly snake bites simply by obeying God and looking at the bronze serpent lifted up by Moses (cf Num 21:6-9), those who now look upon Christ "lifted up" on the cross and believe that he is God's Son would gain "eternal life." (Jn 3:14-17) The lifting up of the bronze



"Eternal life...is not an 'unending succession of days in the calendar' ..."
– Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI,

serpent thus "pointed symbolically toward salvation by [Jesus,] the incarnate Word." (CCC 2130)

In his encyclical on the theological virtue of Hope, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI posed the question, "Eternal Life – what is it? Do we really want this – to live eternally?" (*Spe Salvi*, Christian Hope n.10) He highlights a struggle we all face, "To continue living for ever -endlessly - appears more like a curse than a gift. Death, admittedly, one would wish to postpone for as long as possible. But to live always, without end - this, all things considered, can only be monotonous and ultimately unbearable."

He says Jesus' gift of "eternal life", therefore, is not an "unending succession of days in the calendar." Rather it is "...like plunging into the ocean of infinite love, a moment in which time - the before and after - no longer exists. This is how Jesus expresses it in Saint John's Gospel: 'I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you' (Jn16:22). We must think along these lines if we want to understand the object of [eternal life]... to understand what it is that our faith, our being with Christ, leads us to expect." (SS n.12)

"Eternal life" then, is to believe and be in God's "ocean of infinite love" for the

world revealed in the crucified and resurrected Christ. Jesus himself had affirmed this, says Pope Emeritus, "Jesus...who had come so that we might have life and have it in its fullness, in abundance (cf. Jn 10:10), has also explained to us what 'life' means: 'this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent' (Jn 17:3). Life in its true sense is not something we have exclusively in or from ourselves: it is a relationship... If we are in relation with him who does not die, who is Life itself and Love itself, then we are in life. Then we 'live.'" (SS n 27)

This 4th Sunday of Lent is also called *Laetare Sunday* or "Rejoice! Sunday." There is indeed much to rejoice today as St Paul reminds us, "God loved us with so much love that...when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ...and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven..." (Eph 2:4-7) As we adore Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, lifted up today by his priest at the altar for our salvation, let us rejoice in God's infinite love – that even while still here on earth, by Baptism and the Eucharist, man can already possess the great gift of "eternal life" in Christ.

Announcements

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

TEMPORARY ONLINE MASS OFFERINGS

Please submit your intentions **ONE 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. All prayer requests are kept confidential.

Join us online **every Fri, 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 for more information. All are welcome!

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252
Password: SFX19MAR



LENTEN JOURNEY 2021 WITH CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Calling all parents with young children! Scan the QR Code to join us as we share the Word of God with you for this Fourth Sunday of Lent. Don't want to miss the series? Stay updated with us by subscribing to our SFX Youtube channel.



LANDINGS: WELCOME HOME

Know of someone who is seeking a reconnection with the faith or are you thinking about starting your journey back to the Church? Come sign up for this eight-week programme. **Registration closes on Wed 7 Apr**. For more information, visit www.landings.org.sg.

Date: 15 Apr - 3 Jun 2021 (8 weeks)
Time: Every Thursday, 8PM - 10PM
Venue: Zoom or Church of St Ignatius
Register: <http://bit.ly/Landings-Apr2021> or email singapore@landings.org.sg (by 7 Apr)

CATHOLIC 200SG
SINCE 1821

Scan the QR Code to access the
Catholic200SG Prayer



Church of St Francis Xavier celebrates the 200th Anniversary of the Catholic Church in Singapore

SFX Parish Lent Activity 2021

Do you know of anyone who may not be tech-savvy enough to register and book for Mass, or attend Mass online? This Lent, let us Rise Up and Reach Out to our fellow parishioners and friends, by inviting them back for Mass! Assure them of the safety protocols that are already in place and go the extra mile by helping them register/book for a Mass slot. Alternatively, you may want to invite them to your home, inviting no more than 8 persons, to attend Mass online, together.

Let us be a Church to one another in this time of need. Let us Ignite and Shine with Faith, remembering the words of our Saviour, "Where two or three are gathered in my Name, there I will be." Matthew 18:20.

March Mass Bookings

[HTTPS://MYCATHOLIC.SG](https://mycatholic.sg)



Stations of the Cross

All weekday Masses during Lent will begin with the Stations of the Cross. You may access the readings for the Stations of the Cross at the bottom of your entry ticket or download via tinyurl.com/SFXStations.



MARS Booking Schedule

TUE 16 MAR, 12PM
Booking for a 4th weekend Mass*.

* Weekday Mass bookings for the whole of March are open throughout the month and subject to availability.

Please note that you are required to attend both Stations of the Cross and Mass together. No late arrivals will be entertained once Stations has started.

Things to note:

- To enter our Church premises, check in must be done via the TraceTogether token or the mobile app.
- Entry is via the Main Church foyer or Plaza (outside JPPII Hall).
- Please come at least 30 minutes before Mass begins. Registration ends 10 minutes after Stations/Mass begins.**
- Bring along your photo identification card for MARS booking verification.
- Do remember to cancel your booking one day in advance if you are unable to attend. A no-show for Masses that have been booked is being tracked in the system.

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:

- 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.
- Cheque** - Payable to Church of St Francis Xavier and write 'Mass Collection' behind the cheque. Mail cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.

CARITAS: MODULE 2 OF MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS 2021 BY REV FR DAVID GARCIA, OP

How do we become persons? Come join Caritas Singapore for Module 2 - Becoming Persons, of the My Personal Moral Compass (MPMC) programme. Module 2 started on **11 March 2021** and will be held weekly on Thursdays. Sessions will be conducted physically (30 slots available) or online. To register, please go to <http://bit.ly/2MJLpeE>. For enquiries, please email Caritas at formation@caritas-singapore.org.



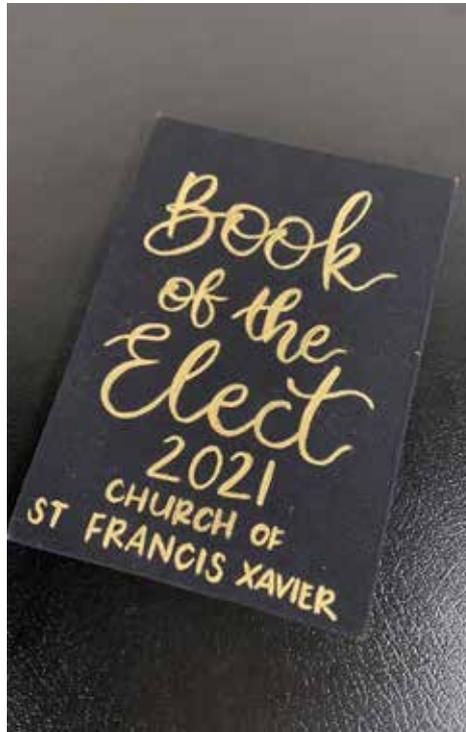
RCIA – Rite of Election 2021

From inquirers to Catechumens and now to Elects. On 23 February, 17 Catechumens and 5 Candidates together with their respective godparents and sponsors gathered at John Paul II Hall for the ceremony of the Rite of Election (ROE).

WHAT IS RITE OF ELECTION?

The ROE, usually a diocesan-wide celebration of Catechumens celebrated by the Archbishop during the first weekend of Lent, is more than just showing the Catechumens that they are joining a much larger Catholic Church made up of many parishes and a final bid to get them “enrolled” for baptism. It is another step towards making that choice (while being chosen by God), to become initiated into a life in Christ.

Due to the pandemic, each parish under the Archdiocese of Singapore celebrated the ROE in their own respective home Church. Upon the



testimony of their godparents, the baptised community then affirms the readiness of our Catechumens to celebrate the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil (Holy Saturday). Catechumens then enrol their names in the Book of Elect as a pledge of fidelity. The priest, who acts as the Bishop’s delegate, then declares the Catechumens to be members of the Elect. Intercessions are also prayed for the Elects and Candidates to conclude the rite.



Over the next five weeks of Lent, three scrutinies - rites for self-searching and repentance meant to deliver the Elects from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, along with the presentations of the Creed and Lord’s Prayer will take place. This period concludes with the celebration of the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist).



“Sitting throughout the ROE was like hearing God re-establishing his covenant with me, that I am going to be the ‘bride’ who is committed to the groom. This is going to be once, now and forever.”

Erni Saraswati



“I have found strength through my new-found faith in Christianity. I am thankful for the patience shown to me when I was doubtful. I am now more at peace with a faith that I can relate to. When I signed the book of Elect, it was a feeling of gratitude and thanksgiving that I am now one step closer to being one with God through baptism and the Eucharist.”

Janetita Phukempreyoon



“The ROE signifies the completion of an important milestone in my RCIA journey and is a reminder that baptism is just around the corner! I felt truly blessed by the presence of my uncle and auntie-in-law as godparents, as well as to have my wife on this RCIA journey with me. I look forward to growing closer to God and living out his ways.”

EDMUND TAY

Mass Timings

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue & Thu:
6.30pm

Fri:
8pm
(During Lent only, includes Stations)

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.

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