



**Disciples
Making Disciples**



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The Good Shepherd, the Fallen Shepherds, and the Stubborn Sheep

4th Sunday of Easter
Good Shepherd Sunday
25 Apr 2021

Ac 4:8-12
1 Jn 3:1-2
Jn 10:11-18

Sheep are silly, stubborn creatures.

Do not think of them as cuddly, passive, and obedient, content merely to graze passively at the green pastures that they are led to. No, they wander off in wrong directions to rocky cliffs and loose boulders, find themselves threatened by wild animals and marauders, and get themselves into all kinds of thickets and brambles.

A shepherd's job, then, is not simply a matter of sitting idly on a rock playing his pipe. His task is arduous for he must constantly be on guard to save his sheep – be it from their own foolishness or from external predators.

In this Sunday's gospel, when Jesus proclaims himself as the Good Shepherd, he is thus declaring his constant vigilance and care for us, even as his disciples failed to stay

awake with him at Gethsemane.

We can reflect on two further points. First, Adam was a gardener and a shepherd. In Genesis, the plants were not made insofar as "there was no man to till the ground" (Gen 2:5) and all creatures were brought to him to be named. As Ephrem the Syrian says, "the animals came to Adam as a loving shepherd."

That is only the beginning. Throughout the Old Testament, major biblical figures such as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David were also shepherds. But just as Adam fell, so were these shepherds flawed and fallen. In fact, in biblical times, it was common for shepherds to be hired hands. Many villagers owned only a few sheep, and thus entrusted their animals to one shepherd to pasture the whole village flock.

However, Jesus distinguishes himself from a mere "hired man" who "abandons the sheep and runs away as soon as he sees a wolf coming" because the "sheep do not belong to him" (Jn 10:12). Instead, Jesus claims us as his "own" whom he will "lay down [his] life for" (Jn 10:11). Just as Jesus is the New Adam who redeems the fall of man, he is also the Good Shepherd who epitomises the pastor. CCC 896 thus states, "The Good Shepherd ought to be the model and 'form' of the bishop's pastoral office."

This leads us to the second point: the Church continues Christ's work of shepherding his flock. At the end of John's gospel (Jn 21:15-17), Jesus instructs Peter – the rock on whom Jesus has built his church – to feed his lambs and tend his sheep.

In this regard, CCC 1564 holds, "in virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, after the image of Christ, the supreme and eternal priest, [priests] are consecrated in order to preach the Gospel and shepherd the faithful as well as to celebrate divine worship *as true priests* of the New Testament." Similarly, CCC 1465 states that in celebrating the sacrament of Penance, "the priest is fulfilling the ministry of the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost sheep".

Good Shepherd Sunday is thus also known as Vocation Sunday. This Sunday, we celebrate our pastors who have laid down their lives for us, their flock.

And they have their work cut out for them. As St John Chrysostom reminded the Church, "The Lord said clearly that concern for his flock was proof of love for him." In his first Chrism Mass in 2013, Pope Francis also appealed to his fellow pastors, "This I ask you: be shepherds, with the 'odour of the sheep', make it real, as shepherds among your flock, fishers of men."

This Sunday, let us thus pray especially for our shepherds – that they may take on the "odour of [their] sheep", no matter how stubborn and foolish we are, and that they, in turn, will be led by the Good Shepherd. Let us pray also for more vocations – for the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few (cf Mt 9:37). And let us pray for ourselves too – that the staff of the Good Shepherd will always comfort us through our valleys of darkness.



"This I ask you: be shepherds, with the 'odour of the sheep', make it real, as shepherds among your flock, fishers of men."

– Pope Francis, Chrism Mass Homily, 28 March 2013

Announcements

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

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE ON PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Please note that the Parish Office will be closed on **Sat 1 May** and **Mon 3 May**.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

It is available via appointment only. You can contact the Parish Office to make an appointment for the following time slots:

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

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 (**T08CC4033**)).

THE ALTAR SERVERS SOCIETY RECRUITMENT

Come! Boys 8 to 13 years – you are invited to be an altar server. Training will be held weekly beginning on **Sat 5 Jun, 7pm - 9pm**. Register via <https://tinyurl.com/SFXAltarServersRecruit2021>. A hard copy of the registration form can be obtained from the Parish Office. Please submit the completed form by **Mon 31 May**.

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

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. All are welcome!

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252
Password: SFX30APR



GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY COLLECTIONS

All Mass collections from this weekend will be for the ongoing formation of our Seminarians and expenses relating to the St Francis Xavier Major Seminary.

CHURCH MAIN ENTRANCE UPGRADE NOTICE

Please note that the Church main gate is undergoing upgrading. Drivers, please exercise caution and navigate carefully when entering the Church premises. **Kindly exit via the Church back gate (Cooling Close).**

MAY MASS BOOKINGS

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

All weekday Masses will begin with the Rosary.

TUE 27 APR, 12PM

Booking for a 1st weekend Mass*

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

ADDITIONAL MASSES

Memorial of St Joseph the Worker
Sat 1 May*: 9am

*Public Holiday: Labour Day

Ascension Vigil Mass
Wed 12 May: 8pm

Ascension Day Mass
Thu 13 May*: 9am, 11am, 6.30pm
*Public Holiday: Hari Raya Puasa

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 JPPI Hall).
- Please come at least 30 minutes before Rosary/Mass begins. Registration ends 10 minutes after Rosary/Mass begins.
- Bring along your photo identification card for MARS booking verification.
- Do remember to cancel your booking 24 hours in advance if you are unable to attend. A no-show for Masses that have been booked is being tracked in the system.

MAY ROSARY SCHEDULE

Come join us as a parish community to pray together at the following timings. All are welcome!

WEEKDAY DIVINE MERCY & ROSARY

<https://tinyurl.com/SFXWeekdayRosary>

Date & Time: Mon to Fri, 3pm

EVENING ROSARY DEVOTION

<https://tinyurl.com/SFXRosaryGrp>

Date & Time: Mon, Wed & Sat - 8.30pm

Meeting ID: 984 7131 7782

Password: 172017

ROSARY BY SALT (SERVANTS AT THE LORD'S TABLE)

<https://tinyurl.com/SFXTueRosary>

Date & Time: Tuesdays, 8.30pm

Meeting ID: 867 1052 4234

Password: 465481

SUNDAY ROSARY DEVOTION BY LECTORS

<https://bit.ly/SundayRosary>

Date & Time: Sundays, 8.30pm

Meeting ID: 840 7232 7379

Password: 305946

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 "**T08CC4033**". 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' and write 'Mass Collection' behind the cheque. Mail cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.

CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting is on **Mon 26 Apr, 8pm**. There will be praise and worship followed by a talk on 'Spiritual Fatherhood of St Joseph in our Families, Church & Communities' by Adrian Lim. All are welcome.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID:
836 3543 9497

Password:
HOLYSPIRIT



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER: MAKE YOUR MARRIAGE A PRIORITY!

Marriage is a project to be worked on together and a process of growth. Pope Francis (Amoris Laetitia, no. 218, 221). Good marriages can always be made better. To deepen your relationship, sign up for a **Marriage Encounter Weekend on 7 - 9 May 2021**. This in-person and non stay-in programme will be held at Agape Village, 7A Lor 8 Toa Payoh. Please contact David & Clara @ 96705390 or email them at mewkend@gmail.com.

CARITAS: MODULE 3 OF MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS 2021

Do Christians follow a different morality? Is there a difference between Christian and secular morality?

Join us virtually and live for the third module of My Personal Moral Compass by Fr David Garcia as we contemplate what God has to do with ethics in general, and how the Christian understanding of God has an impact on human ethics. Our conversation will cover issues like the existence of God, what we understand about God, the moral standard that Jesus called for, what is grace and how that grace helps us in our daily lives, and more.

Date:

Thu 29 April
(7 Thursdays)

Time:

7.30pm via Zoom

Register: <https://bit.ly/3a0542c> or email to mpmc@caritas-singapore.org to find out more.



CPS LUNCHTIME TALK: 'AM I READY TO LIVE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD'

Each time we pray "Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven", do we really know if we are living God's Kingdom on earth? Is it even possible to live His Kingdom values in today's world? Or is God's Kingdom reserved for life after death?

CPS invites you to join us as we hear Fr David Garcia share his insights. Registration is required.

Dates:

3, 10, 17 & 24 May
(Mondays)

Time:

12.30pm - 1.30pm

Register:

<https://tinyurl.com/p7zzf35c>



FORMED

✦ April Recommendations ✦



Into The Breach

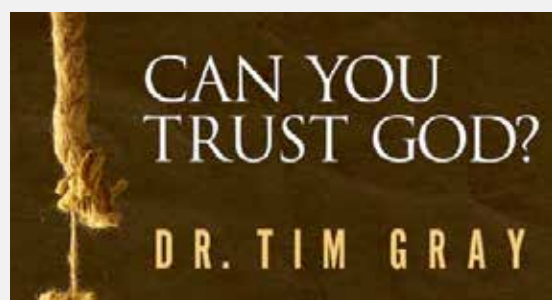
As we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker this week, we encourage all men to watch Into the Breach, a groundbreaking series that seeks to answer what it means to be a Catholic today. Inspired by Bishop Olmsted's apostolic exhortation, Into the Breach challenges men to embrace the greatness we all are.



Formed Now!

Who is St. Catherine of Siena?

In light of St. Catherine of Siena's feast day, join Dr. Tim Gray and Dr. Elizabeth Klein as they celebrate this holy woman: a nurse and mystic with papal influence who became a doctor of the Church.



Can You Trust God? By Dr. Tim Gray

To be a saint we must trust God wholeheartedly. Since the fall of our first parents, however, humanity has been tempted to mistrust the Father's love for us. Scripture scholar Dr. Tim Gray takes us on a journey that addresses the pervasive misconceptions about God, showing us that there is no reason not to follow him.





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

Good Shepherd Sunday / World Day of Prayer for Vocations

This Sunday is Good Shepherd Sunday. As we honour Christ the Good Shepherd, the Church also celebrates the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, to publicly fulfil our Lord's instruction to "pray to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).

By Baptism, we are all called to bear witness to Christ's love in our lives. And among the Lord's disciples, some are called to serve the Church as priests. They are called to be living, sacramental images of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and devote the whole of their lives to the service of God's people. Pope Francis famously said that priests are supposed to "smell like the sheep," that is, to be closely connected with their people and accompany them on each step of their faith journey.

We all recognize the importance of having good priests and religious, and more of them!



Please therefore pray

- for religious vocations, that many more young men and women will answer God's call.
- for those who are already in seminaries and religious houses of formation at this time, that they will persevere in accepting God's call.
- for our Pope, bishops, priests, deacons and those in consecrated life, that God will strengthen them in their vocations in order to lead them in the ways of truth and love.

Mass Timings

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue & Thu:
6.30pm

Fri:
8pm

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