





Disciples
Making Disciples

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Eucharist & Lay Apostolate

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
Lay Apostolate Sunday

22 Aug 2021

Jos 24:1-2, 15-18
Eph 5:21-32
Jn 6:60-69

According to the 2019 Pew Research Centre Survey, only 31% of U.S. Catholics believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. 69% believe that the Eucharist is symbolic. Though there is no equivalent statistics for Singapore, low Mass attendance due to COVID-19 gives cause for concern. How do we know that Jesus meant literally to eat his flesh and drink his blood? (Jn 6:51-58)

1. The severe reaction of his followers: There was no reason to abandon Jesus for mere symbolic talk. Drinking the blood of animals is taboo (Gen 9:4; Lev 17:10-14; Deut 12:16). Eating human flesh and blood is abominable.

2. Jesus ups the ante: Given every opportunity to clarify his meaning along symbolic lines, Jesus does the opposite; "eat" shifts from "*phago*" (Greek for eating) in Jn 6:49-53, to "*trogo*" (meaning "chew" or "gnaw") in Jn 6:54-58. The graphic and crude connotation adds gravity to Jesus' demands to express faith by eating, in a real and physical way, his life-giving resurrected flesh of the Eucharist, the "living bread" (Jn 6:51).

3. Interpreting in context: "*It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life*" (Jn 6:63). Jesus contrasts between the ability of the spirit to enlighten our minds (Jn 14:26) and the inability of human reasoning to



"Reason in fact is not asked to pass judgement on the contents of faith, something of which it would be incapable, since this is not its function. Its function is rather to find meaning, to discover explanations which might allow everyone to come to a certain understanding of the contents of faith." - Fides et Ratio 42

comprehend revealed truths apart from faith (Jn 8:15). But "*the flesh has nothing to offer*" is often taken out of context and to interpret the bread of life discourse symbolically. Jesus is not referring "*the flesh*" to his flesh because "*my flesh*" appears 4 times immediately prior, in Jn 6:51-56. Jesus is the Word (Logos). His words are not symbolic but transformative (Gen 1:3-26, Isa 55:10-11, Jn 1:1-3). **Judging by appearance, they will only see his humanity but miss his divinity. Likewise, we will only see the bread and wine but miss his real presence in the Eucharist.**

The belief in the Eucharist is attested by the writings and praxis of St Ignatius of Antioch, St Justin Martyr, Origen of Alexandria - early Church Fathers of the first two centuries.

In the first Reading, Joshua challenges the Israelites. In the Gospel, Jesus challenges his disciples. When it comes to the Lord, there is no sitting on the fence. Jesus alludes to Judas' disbelief as the fatal crack in his windscreen of faith (Jn 6:64). In today's worldview of science and rationality, it is tempting to dismiss the Eucharist as symbolic. Deja-vu? The devil merely distorts and casts doubts on God's words for Adam and Eve to fall (Gen 3:1). "Symbolism" here, is a euphemism for distortion of the real presence, a rationalisation of unbelief, the elevation of reason above faith. But faith is above reason; reason cannot pass judgment on the

contents of faith (cf *Fides et Ratio* 42).

Lay Apostolate Sunday reminds us of the urgency to proclaim the Good News against the scourge of secularism, relativism, individualism and materialism. How do we fight against atheism, religious indifference, culture of death and the violation of human dignity? The Eucharist is the Good news.

In Baptism & Confirmation, we receive the charisms and mandate to participate in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King. The Eucharist actively sustains living faith (cf *Christifideles Laici* 14).

"*The true vine*" (Jn 15:1-17) indicates intimate union and sharing in the Trinitarian life. Discipleship in Christ is beyond disciple-master relationship. In the Eucharist, Christ the vine possesses, sustains, and lives in us. We imitate Jesus by not judging but drawing people to a holy life, re-Christianising the world:

- As **Priest**, Christ healed, bringing peace and comfort. Were people healed by our presence, or were they wounded?
- As **Prophet**, Christ preached, proclaiming the kingdom of God. Did people know more about Jesus and his Kingdom because of us? Did we speak out against social injustices?
- As **King**, Christ suffered and died, redeeming mankind. Did we interpret our suffering as redemptive?

Announcements

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

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

Please submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessoryprayer. All prayer requests are kept confidential. Join us online on **Fri 27 Aug, 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: SFX27AUG



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

'To know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.' - Ephesians 3:19

Do you desire a new life in the Holy Spirit? Join us in the Life in the Spirit Seminar (LISS) - a series of 10 weekly sessions of hybrid online Zoom and in-person sessions held from **24 Sep to 26 Nov**. Includes live praise and worship, talk and small group discussions. Seats are limited.

Sign up now at tinyurl.com/saccreliss21sg

IGNITE TALK: HOW THE YOUTH CAN HELP TO LAUNCH A NEW ERA OF FAITH



Unless our youths encounter the real person of Jesus Christ and build a relationship with Him, the task of evangelisation will remain stagnant. They need to experience a renewed life of discipleship before setting out to be an effective apostle. How can we partner with our youths to propel our Church into the new era of faith?

Join us for the final IGNITE TALK where Fr Jude David will be talking about Launching a New Era of Faith Together with Our Youth. Happening on **Thu 26 Aug, 8pm** on <http://youtube.com/catholicsg>.

SEPTEMBER MASS BOOKINGS

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

Tue 24 Aug, 12pm

1st booking for all weekday Masses and one weekend Mass*.

**Weekday Mass bookings for whole of Sep are open throughout the month and subject to availability with a cap of five weekday Masses per booking.*

Things to note:

- All Masses will be held in the Main Church. Entry for 50 persons Masses will only be via the Plaza.
- Mass bookings/cancellation will be **1 hour** before Mass. Please be gracious to cancel your bookings if you are unable to attend.

SATURDAY 5.30PM MASS

Admission Criteria:

✓ **Fully Vaccinated**
14 days after 2nd dose of Pfizer/Moderna/WHO EUL vaccines.

✓ **TraceTogether**
Check in via TraceTogether token/app.

✓ **Pre-Event Testing**
Taken from MOH-approved test provider, No earlier than 23 hours before Mass.

✓ **Children aged 12 years and below**
can participate in Pre-Event Testing (PET) or Vaccinated-only Masses. The total number of children allowed is no more than **20 percent** of worshippers present for the Mass.

✓ **Vaccination Proof**
ONLY local vaccination certificates or Health Hub vaccination proof are accepted.

✗ **Other Vaccines**
- Self-test Kit

For more information on the MOH guidelines, visit www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/pet



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**).

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

SFX CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting via Zoom is on **Mon 23 Aug, 8pm**. Praise and Worship followed by a talk on 'As They Gathered Together' by Gerard Francisco. All are welcome.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Meeting ID: 836 3543 9497
Password: HOLYSPIRIT



MONFORTIAN EXPERIENCE RETREAT: FRIENDS OF THE CROSS

A perfect Friend of the Cross is a true Christ-bearer, so that he or she can truly say, "I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me." (Gal 2:20). As a perfect Friend of the Cross, the finding of our True Cross has to be more than just a mere discovery. It must lead us to embrace and follow Jesus Christ wholeheartedly, in whom salvation is found. Come and discover "Friends of the Cross" at Montfort Centre, a 3D2N retreat from **10-12 Sept 2021, 7pm (Fri) - 1pm (Sat)**. Find out more or register at www.montfortcentre.org/events-1/friends-of-the-cross-2021.

CARITAS SINGAPORE & CHARIS: IGNITUS! SOCIAL MISSION WITH LOVE

An online event jointly organised by Caritas Singapore and CHARIS as part of Catholic200SG. Join us on **Sat 4 Sep, 9am - 6pm** to learn more about the social mission of our Catholic Church these past 200 years. Discover how our Church helps those in need, the vulnerable and marginalised. Find out more at www.bit.ly/IGNITUS.





Catechetical Awareness Weekend

There is a saying that goes, ***"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together"***. And this year's Catechetical Awareness Weekend reminds us of what we are called to do.

We are all called to walk with Him to echo His name and hand down the faith. We are gifted with the chance to share Jesus with someone else. It is part of what being a disciple of Christ is. It is from this same depth of love that the call to echo His name stems from.

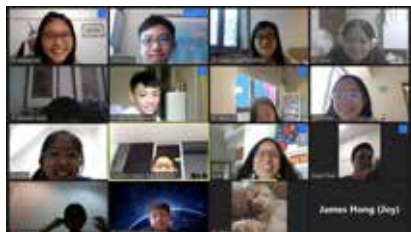
The theme ***"Walk with me"*** highlights the role of catechists as *"accompanier...and a travelling companion with patience and a sense of gradualness"* (DFC 113). It hopes to inspire a generation of catechists to journey with their candidates and help them to *"mature in the Christian life and journey toward God"* (DFC 113 cont'd).

The role of the catechist is as a *"steward of the mystery"* (1 Cor 4:1) and his/her goal is always to set hearts aflame for Christ.

Why and Where do we echo His Name?

"Hello, I'm Mabel and 19 this year. My first experience with catechism was during my Sec 3 Ministry attachment. I was curious to find out what goes on behind the scenes and how the catechists prepare for sessions. Once my attachment was over, I decided that this was not for me and I stopped serving. However, towards the end of 2019, as I journaled, I felt a stirring within me. It was as if God was saying, "Hey Mabel, it's time for you to rejoin catechism".

God's words were ever so gentle and this brought me peacefulness and a power that cannot be replicated. But I had plenty of excuses....Who am I to teach? Do I have enough knowledge? Am I not doing enough for you already? But I think God knew me really well. He knew that with some persistence on His part, I will eventually take that leap of faith with Him. He knows best and who am I to doubt His decisions for me especially if I know they are always made with utmost love. So here I am today serving in L8. I'm still not sure why exactly God called me, but then it's all in God's plans right?"



VISION FOR CATECHESIS

Catechesis is not just about sacramental preparation for Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation; it seeks to put the person not only in touch but in intimate communion with Jesus Christ (Pope John Paul II on Catechesis in Our Time (CT), #5) so that as a disciple of Christ, one becomes more like Him (CT 20).

I want to be a Catechist!



**Scan the
QR Code
to Answer
His Call!**

Would you WALK with Him to Echo His Name to the future generations of young Catholics in our Parish today?



The 1Cor12 retreat was held over the National Day weekend with the theme centred around John 20:19-29, where the frightened and hiding apostles had a joyous encounter with the resurrected Lord Jesus.

Similarly, it was a blessed weekend for the community to re-encounter the Lord Jesus, where they reflected on one's relationship with our Lord, community living, and living in Joy. Gendered cell groups also created a space for all to share their lives while the evangelisation session reminded all of God's mission for them.

During the session conducted by Fr Cornelius, there was a time for online prayer, where brothers and sisters from the OYP and ICPE communities took time off to pray for the retreatants. The community was also blessed with the tireless hours of prayer organised by the intercessory team, comprising the Intercessory Prayer Ministry, SaLT and Charismatic Prayer Group.

..... Testimonies

"I came into the retreat feeling discontented with where I was, because of the busyness of NS. I was experiencing a lot of isolation, physically and emotionally, from my family and friends, and my community. Life was becoming more of a solo journey and I found I was choosing to numb myself by rushing head-on into work and distractions, hoping to create a new identity for myself to be proud of. I seemed to have less time for prayer and for community, yet it was still something that called to me and, with my weekend free, I came anyway with a closed heart but a willingness to sit and wonder at what God had to tell me this time.

In the midst of the reflections during the retreat, I began to recall many of the hurts from conflicts I'd had in this season and how desensitised I had become to my own wounds and those of the ones I spent my time with. I found myself gingerly approaching these areas and often couldn't find the right words to express what I was feeling. Yet, through the sharing and presence of my brothers in my sharing group, the Lord began slowly revealing to me that it was okay to not have an answer and to not have everything all worked out. I resolved to sit in the stillness to listen and receive, even with all my questions and my burning desire to rationalise my hardened heart.

In that small surrender, I felt the Lord softening my heart and allowing me to truly receive, unburdened by the 'hows' and the 'whys'. Instead, I was reminded of the what, how and why of community in God's eyes and came slowly to take up his invitation to renew my relationships with my community and with him. I still may not have the answers I want and my heart is still a work in progress, but I am very grateful to embark on a new beginning with him again." - **Russell Goh, 19**

"Very much like the theme of the recent 1Cor12 Retreat (John 20:19-29) on doubting Thomas, I found myself feeling extremely skeptical about the ability and presence of the Lord in my life. I joined this retreat grudgingly, refusing to believe that the Lord could move and work through the computer screen. But the Lord used this opportunity to reveal Himself to me in different and surprising ways — like the God of surprise I now know Him to be! In the sessions throughout the retreat, I was reminded of the greatness of our Lord, and how there is an invitation and calling to return to Him. In addition, I was also reminded of the importance of community living and the need to rock the boat in order for my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to thrive and not merely cruise.

During the retreat, I was very blessed to undergo prayer ministry with my fellow sisters in Christ who intentionally prayed for me and spoke words of truth. In one of the many takeaways that I received, I remember a sister reminding me "not to restrict the Lord and not to put Him in a box"; to see and seek Him in everything. I started putting this truth I took away into "action" by allowing Him to be present in whatever I see and to seek Joy that comes from the Lord.

Today, I claim the truth that I am called to share Heaven with the Lord and that I am called to be an evidence of God's Grace here on earth through our mission to evangelise and spread His word. Thank you Shepherds for planning this retreat!" - **Rachel Tan, 21**

Are you willing to encounter the Lord in your life again? Our Lord awaits you to return to the banquet of the Eucharist together with our Christian community with joy and hope, as you take the opportunity to renew your intention and glorify the Lord by your life.



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

Mass Timings

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue & Thu:
6.30pm

Fri:
8pm

WEEKEND MASSES

**Sat Sunset
(VACCINATED/
PET ONLY):**
5.30pm

Sun: 9am, 11am,
1pm, 5.30pm
(There is currently
no Confession
before Mass)

**MASS ON PUBLIC
HOLIDAYS**
9am

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

Mon to Sat:
10am - 12pm, 2pm - 4pm
Booking via
<https://tinyurl.com/SFXColumbarium>

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. Submit your envelopes at least one week 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