



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Are you a Spiritual Christian?

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
29 Aug 2021

Deut 4:1-2, 6-8
Jm 1:17-18, 21-22, 27
Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Catholics in Singapore are fortunate to have a well-organised and committed Church to run the various services required to make the practice of our religion possible. But there is also the danger that because this part of our religious life is so well taken care of, we fall into the trap of assuming that all we need do is to fulfil the obligations of the Church in an external manner.

A 2019 survey by the think tank, the Institute of Policy Studies, found that although confidence in the religious establishment was very high, almost half of Christians here did not consider themselves spiritual. The survey did not go into the reasons why they felt this way, but it is worrying that so many did.

Today's readings address this very issue and what we must do to overcome it.

In the Gospel, Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees who attacked him for allowing his disciples to "eat their food with unclean hands."

Our Lord's first response was forthright and to the point: "It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture: This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me." (Mk 7:6)

It was a stinging rebuke.

But it was what he later said to his people which carries the deeper meaning.

"Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is

the things ... from within, from men's hearts, that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make man unclean." (Mk 7: 14)

The laws and rituals of the Church may make us outwardly Christians but religion is ultimately a matter of the heart.

The real issue that Jesus identified was not about the laws themselves but about our inner disposition, which determines our attitude to life and the actions we take. This reveals the person we really are.

Ultimately this depends on our relationship with God, which has to do with our holiness, or spirituality. As Christians we believe that we become holy when we allow the Holy Spirit to transform us to do God's will.

The second reading reinforces this point.

"It is all that is good, everything that is perfect, which is given us from above..." (Jm 1: 17).

But it also contains practical advice about what we must do to achieve this transformation.

"Pure, unspoiled religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world." (Jm 1: 27)

One question that might arise from these readings is how do the laws as laid down by Moses in the Ten Commandments relate to our Lord's scripture?

If we are told not to follow the law blindly, how do we regard them?

The Church summarises the relationship between the two in the following passage:

"The Law of the Gospel *fulfills the commandments* of the Law. The Lord's Sermon on the Mount, far from

abolishing or devaluing the moral prescriptions of the Old Law, releases their hidden potential and has new demands arise from them: it reveals their entire divine and human truth. It does not add new external precepts, but proceeds to reform the heart, the root of human acts, where man chooses between the pure and the impure, where faith, hope, and charity are formed and with them other virtues." (CCC 1968)

The readings today force us to examine our Christian life and ask important questions about our outward and inward self.

What "hypocritical" (cf Mk 7:6) attitudes prevent us from having a closer relationship with God?

What traditions are we still following which stop us from accepting God's love, and expressing that love to our friends and neighbours?

Our spiritual life will be richer and more fulfilling when we address these questions, and seek God's help in answering them.

Hopefully, when the next survey is done more Christians will proclaim joyfully that they are nothing if not spiritual.



"The Lord's Sermon on the Mount, far from abolishing or devaluing the moral prescriptions of the Old Law, releases their hidden potential and has new demands arise from them: it reveals their entire divine and human truth."
- (CCC 1968)

Announcements

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

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

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 3 Sep, 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: SFX3SEP



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

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).

SEPTEMBER MASS BOOKINGS

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

Tue 31 Aug, 12pm

2nd booking for 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. Only local vaccination certificates or Health Hub vaccination proof are accepted.

Children aged 12 years and below
Can participate in Vaccinated/PET Masses. The total number of children allowed is no more than **20 percent** of worshippers present for the Mass.

Other Vaccines
- Self-test Kit

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



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 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.



NEW WINE CONFERENCE 2021

Since the start of the pandemic, our daily lives are filled with extreme changes that have affected all our parish communities. As parish leaders, many of us have been straining to respond and reconcile the new realities using maps for a world that no longer exists. As the uncertainties prolong, what if the way ahead is to set aside confidence in our current parish playbooks and adapt ourselves to new ones in order to stay faithful to our mission and the communities we serve? Join us at New Wine Online Conference 2021 as we share inspiring perspectives to courageously lead our parishes through uncharted waters in these off-the-map times.

Theme: Leading Parishes through Uncharted Waters

Dates & Time:

- Sat 11 Sep, 9.30am - 1pm (Part I Plenary Sessions)
- Wed 15 Sep, 8pm - 10pm (Part II Breakout Sessions)

Registration: bit.ly/one-nwc2021

WELCOMING HOME RETURNING CATHOLICS

Landings Singapore presents a new 10 week programme which runs from **14 Sep to 16 Nov, every Tuesday from 8pm to 9.30pm**. A weekend of virtual retreat takes place near the end of this programme on the **6 and 7 Nov**. All sessions will be held over Zoom. We invite Catholics seeking a reconnection with the faith to register at <https://bit.ly/3gFDObF> or scan the QR code. For more information on Landings, please email singapore@landings.org.sg or visit www.landings.org.sg

What to expect

- Check-in time and opening prayer
- Faith story-telling
- Response to story
- Fellowship
- Reflection on Catholic themes (the themes centre around our relationship with God as well as the Sacraments)
- Closing Prayer



Featured on FORMED: Pick of the Week

September Recommendations



Mary: Handmaid of the Lord

St. Teresa of Kolkata is known throughout the world as a woman who was totally committed to the Gospel. In this inspiring talk, she shares her insights on the Blessed Virgin Mary as a model of womanhood and perfect discipleship. She shows us that we, too, can do the will of God by saying "yes" to the Lord in the big and little things in our lives; nothing is too insignificant.

Drawing Strength from Our Lady of Sorrows

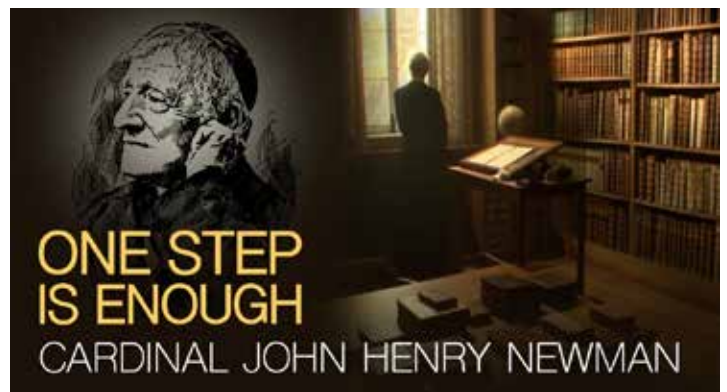
Speaker and author Kimberly Hahn, wife of Dr. Scott Hahn and mother of six, is a convert to the Catholic Faith. Although honoring Mary was difficult for her to understand initially, she began to encounter Mary's loving guidance in little ways on a daily basis. In this Lighthouse Talk audio, Kimberly reflects on the joys and sorrows that Mary prayerfully experienced during her time on earth, and shares how her example leads us closer to Christ.



Hildegard's Gift by Megan Hoyt

Hildegard's Gift was not wrapped in shimmering paper and tied with gold ribbons. It was not a special package left under a beautiful, fragrant Christmas tree by old St. Nicholas. Hildegard's Gift was much more special than that. It took a lifetime for Hildegard to understand her gift completely, but when she finally did, she changed her entire world.

This beautiful children's picture book not only celebrates the life and work of Hildegard von Bingen; it also shows children that they, too, have gifts and talents hidden within, just waiting to be released.



One Step is Enough: Cardinal John Henry Newman

One Step is Enough is a biography of John Henry Newman, a 19th century British theologian and historian. Newman was raised in the Anglican Church and became an Anglican priest and a professor at Oxford. Over time he became critical of both the evangelical emphasis on dramatic personal conversion as well as the merely academic or intellectual Christianity that was common at Oxford. Newman promoted the idea of "via media" or a middle way between Protestantism and Catholicism. But when he offered a new interpretation of the 39 articles of the Anglican Church, he faced intense opposition from within his denomination.

Sign up for free at formed.org/signup

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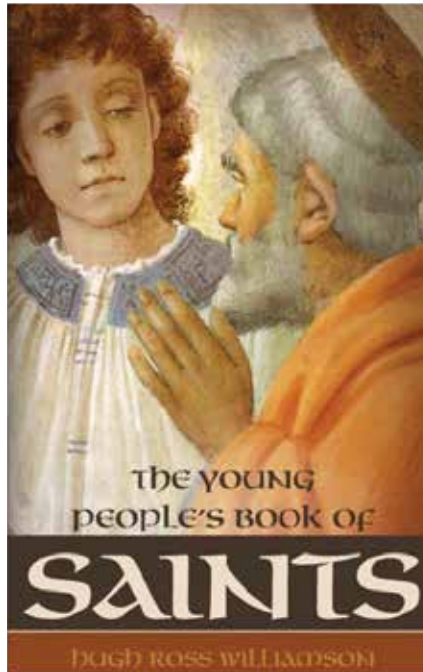


Looking for more Information?
visit www.sfxchurch.sg!

The Young People's Book of Saints

Saints are the men and women who best love Christ and His Church. They may be kings or queens, statesmen or soldiers, scholars, visionaries, workmen or beggars. They teach us the real meaning of human history, and they show us how to live in any walk of life or set of circumstances.

Included in this anthology are famous saints—Francis of Assisi, Dominic, Joan of Arc, Ignatius of Loyola, Teresa of Avila—but also more obscure ones, such as Raymond Lull and Hugh of Lincoln.



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

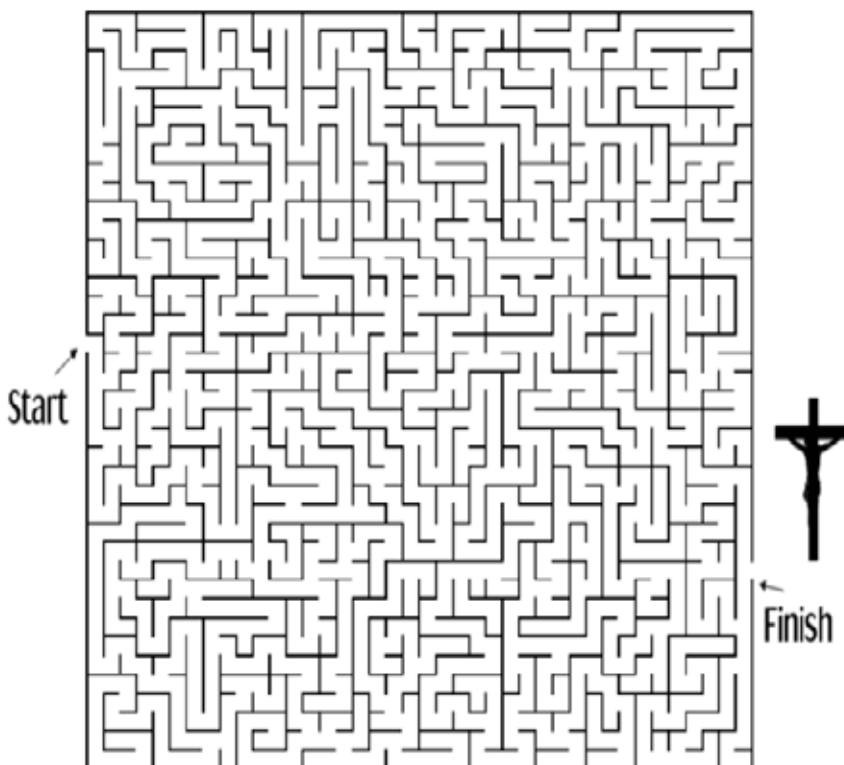
Closed until
further notice

COLUMBARIUM

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



Lead People to Jesus



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