



**Disciples**  
*Making Disciples*



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## Be Opened

23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
5 September 2021

Is 35:4-7a  
Jm 2:1-5  
Mk7:31-37

Our senses are the medium through which we connect to the world around us. Helen Keller was a famed American author and disability rights advocate who became blind and deaf after an illness struck her at nineteen months old. Imagine losing not one but two primary senses. In her autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, Keller described her initial frustrations of not comprehending what her teacher Anne Sullivan was trying to convey through the feeling of her hand gestures. She learnt how to copy the gestures but could not grasp that every object had a unique word to identify it.

Keller recalled the moment she finally understood: "I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten — a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. The living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, set it free!"

This must have been the same amazement that filled the man whom Jesus healed in today's Gospel. Jesus chose to minister in a very tangible way — through spittle and physically touching the man's ears and tongue. It was a form of communication that the man could understand and therefore accept the healing offered to him. Jesus also spoke the word "Ephphatha", which means "be opened". While previously the man

had been closed and isolated, now he is able to open up to the world and people around him.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI says that this opening of hearing and speech also "involved his whole self and his life...There is an inner closure that affects the person's inmost self, which the Bible calls the heart. It is this that Jesus came to open, to liberate, so as to enable us to live to the full our relationship with God and with others." (Angelus, 9 Sep 2012) This is the reason that the Word was made flesh, that we who are "rendered inwardly deaf and mute by sin" might hear the voice of Love through Jesus who speaks to our heart, and in turn learn this language of love to speak it back to God and to others.

This opening of senses and establishment of relationship with God is celebrated in the Ephphatha Rite which is part of the Rite of Baptism. The words of the rite reads: "The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May He soon touch your ear to receive His word and your mouth to proclaim His Faith." The priest also touches the ears and lips of the elect, blessing their natural capacities that it may lead them to a supernatural growth in faith.

Our senses are gifts, but as the Second Reading warns, they could also be misused. St James instructs us to "show no partiality" when it comes to status and outward appearances. If our treatment of others depends on how luxuriously they dress or how eloquently they speak, we become "judges with evil designs." A genuinely open heart is able to look beyond appearances to welcome all - rich or poor, great or small.

Pope Francis emphasised that Jesus heals us from the "fear that impels

us to marginalise the sick, the suffering, the disabled...Too often the sick and the suffering become a problem, while they should be an occasion to show a society's concern and solidarity with regard to the weakest." (Angelus, 9 Sep 2018) Indeed, a genuinely open heart will also give preference to those who suffer.

Through our healed senses, may we learn to recognise God especially in the poor, the sick and the marginalised; and may we advocate for them whenever they are ignored or silenced. We give our gifts of sight, listening, and speech to the Body of Christ when we hold ourselves in solidarity with the weakest. As Helen Keller says: "I believe that God is in me as the sun is in the colour and fragrance of the flower, the Light in my darkness, the Voice in my silence."



*"The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May He soon touch your ear to receive His word and your mouth to proclaim His Faith."*

- Words from the Ephphatha rite

## Announcements

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

### 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).

### 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](http://www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessoryprayer). All prayer requests are kept confidential. Join us online on **Fri 10 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: SFX10SEP



### 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](http://tinyurl.com/saccreliss21sg)

## SEPTEMBER - 3RD MASS BOOKING

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

### Tue 7 Sep, 12pm

All Mass slots are fully booked. Please be gracious to cancel your bookings if you are unable to attend and look out for released slots if any.

#### 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.

### 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](http://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/pet)



### SSVP 2ND COLLECTION

There will be a second collection by the Society of St Vincent De Paul this weekend to help the poor and needy in monthly rations and other aid programmes. SSVP members will be at the Plaza. Please give generously. If you wish to make a cheque payment or PayNow, it should be payable to:

**Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP)**  
OCBC Bank Account No: 686 596 768 001



### 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**.

### 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](http://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](mailto:singapore@landings.org.sg) or visit [www.landings.org.sg](http://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





### HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

#### UNIVERSAL: AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE

We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.

### IN THE MONTH OF AUG 2021

#### CONDOLENCES

We offer our prayers to the families of the following who have returned to the Lord:

1. Lim Choon Seng Timothy
2. Lim Daisy
3. Tang Choy Mei Teresa

#### INFANT/ADULT BAPTISMS

We welcome the following:

1. Sarah Elizabeth Tang En Xuan

## *10 Ways Our Lady of Sorrows can help ease our troubles this September*



Take inspiration from the Virgin Mary, who endured unfathomable sorrows with grace.

September is the month dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows. This September is an especially fitting time for us to find strength in this devotion, as we adjust to challenges with work and school, societal upheaval, and an unusually tempestuous weather cycle. Our masked world can feel surreal, as we stay at least six feet apart from our neighbor. Our Lady offers us the best possible consolation.

Immediately following August's devotion to the Immaculate Heart, and preceding October's devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary, September is an ideal time to strengthen our connection to Mary. So what better moment is there to immerse ourselves in her sorrows? The love and compassion we feel as we meditate upon her sorrows allows us to forget or transcend our own for a time. Further, we are reminded that our Mother truly understands us.

In the words of Pope St. John Paul II, "Turn your eyes incessantly to the Blessed Virgin; she, who is the Mother of Sorrows and also the Mother of Consolation, can understand you completely and help you. Looking to her, praying to her, your tedium will become serenity, your anguish change into hope, and your grief into love." This month, let's unite our sorrows to Mary's. Before we know it, we'll actually be more joyful! Here are some ways to do just that:

### TRANSFORM PAIN INTO PURPOSE

Take the sufferings you endure and offer them up for the reparation of Mary's Immaculate Heart.

Drawing upon your own sorrows will prevent a lukewarm heart, and let you instead be on fire with devotion and love as you contemplate the sorrows of our Mother and offer up sacrifices and acts of reparation, such as the First Saturday Devotion. Taking pain and transforming it into purpose through these acts is healing for the mind and heart.

### CULTIVATE JOY

In this month of Mary's Sorrows, dwell less on your own sorrows, and cultivate joy just by thinking of the wonderful Blessed Mother we have! Feeling low? Say a Hail Mary on the spot. Another idea is to journal your sorrows and then write a prayer asking Mary to help you to heal them.

### EASE SOMEONE'S SUFFERING

Offer to carry someone's cross for a bit, like Simon of Cyrene. You can do this by sending a card, closely listening when someone wants to talk about a worry; a grief; a pain; or a loneliness and offering time and empathy instead of being "too busy" to be there for them. You could send a bouquet to someone who is having a hard time: maybe roses or lilies in honor of Our Lady! Cook someone a meal that tastes so good they forget their troubles! Try "comfort food" like pasta, chicken soup with biscuits, or a brunch of pancakes and eggs.





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



## PRAY THE SEVEN SORROWS ROSARY OR SEVEN SORROWS DEVOTION

The Seven Sorrows devotion involves praying seven Hail Marys a day, each one while meditating on one of Our Lady's seven sorrows.

## PARTNER WITH SOMEONE IN PRAYER

Pray daily for someone you know who is suffering, and let them know you will partner with them in prayer so that the person feels less alone. This is a great month to pray this Prayer for the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows: *"O God, in Whose Passion a sword of sorrow pierced the most dear soul of the glorious Virgin-Mother, Mary, as foretold by Simeon, mercifully grant that we who reverently commemorate Her sorrows, may obtain the blessed effect of Thy Passion. Who livest and reignest, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen."*

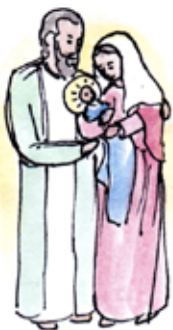
Source: <https://aleteia.org/>



### Our Lady's Birthday (8 SEPTEMBER)

On 8 September, we celebrate Mary's BIRTHDAY. She was CHOSEN by God to be the MOTHER of JESUS before she was even born. To PREPARE Mary to receive his SON, God made her PURE and WITHOUT SIN right from the first moment of her life.

JOACHIM and ANN were HOLY JEWS who were waiting for the MESSIAH to come. God chose them to be the FATHER and mother of MARY, who would become the mother of CHRIST.



See if you can find all the words in CAPITALS in the puzzle. Use the left over letters to fill in the blanks at the end.

C H J E W S I N M P  
H A P P M O T H E R  
O W Y J A N N O S E  
S A B O R N B L S P  
E I I A Y R F Y I A  
N T T C H D A A R  
W I T H O U T Y H E  
M N B I R T H D A Y  
A G R M Y J E S U S  
P U R E C H R I S T



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Source: [thekidsbulletin](http://thekidsbulletin)

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