



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Mutual Honour in the Family

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary, and Joseph
26 Dec 2021

1 Sam 1:20-22, 24-28
1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24
Lk 2: 41-52

Just as reading too many romance novels can place unfair expectations on your significant other, watching too many feel-good Christmas movies can form an overly idealistic impression of what a perfect family should look like.

In the movie *Home Alone*, 8-year-old Kevin McCallister is bullied by his mean siblings and cousins, and punished by his mother after being unfairly treated. He was so angry that he wished his family away. Kevin was subsequently left behind in the chaos of the scramble to catch a flight. Left on his own, Kevin realises he does in fact miss his family and regrets his words, although we do not see any reminiscent moments of kindness or love. After cleverly defending his mansion against two burglars, his family comes home in joy to spend Christmas with him. No more fights, or taunts, or harsh words. All is forgotten and they lived happily ever after. Not much was shown of the family's remorse, with the exception of his mother's guilt, nor the amount of effort and grace it takes to live in harmony.

It was a climactic moment when Kevin is finally reunited with his family, and yet this peace is not shown to be built upon the foundations of a loving family. In *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope St John Paul II says "Family communion can only be preserved and perfected through a great spirit of sacrifice. It requires, in fact, a ready and generous openness of each and



all to understanding, to forbearance, to pardon, to reconciliation... [E]very family is called by the God of peace to have the joyous and renewing experience of 'reconciliation,' that is, communion reestablished, unity restored." (*Familiaris Consortio* 21, 1981)

Today's Gospel tells us that Jesus was similarly separated from his parents and remained behind in Jerusalem. When Mary and Joseph realised their son was missing, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him for three days. He was found in the Temple engaged with the teachers. He had decided to stay on since he was meant to be in his Father's house. The Catechism tells us that it was a choice he made "to remind his parents that he must be about his Father's business." (CCC 583)

Did Jesus dishonour his parents? Was he honouring his Father in heaven? Perhaps we are invited to consider in this episode how Mary and Joseph honoured their son Jesus. Pope St John Paul II questions in his Letter to Families: "Is the system of interpersonal relations indicated by the fourth commandment one-sided? Does it bind us only to honour our parents? Taken literally, it does. But indirectly we can speak of the "honour" owed to children by their parents."

'If the fourth commandment demands that honour should be shown to our father and mother, it also makes this

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- *Familiaris Consortio* 21, 1981

demand out of concern for the good of the family... it makes demands of the parents themselves. You parents... should act in such a way that your life will merit the honour (and the love) of your children... Ultimately then we are speaking of *mutual honour*." (*Gratissimam Sane* 15, 1994)

This mutual honour is echoed in St Paul's exhortation to the Colossians, to "bear with one another and to forgive one another." (Col 3:13) Certainly, a level of generosity, patience and understanding would be needed for the Holy Family to reconcile themselves to each other.

Despite her anxiety, disappointment, and not understanding her own son, Mary "pondered all these things in her heart." She did not abuse her authority over him and often reflected on their relationship. Jesus too could have wanted his parents' recognition and approval of his enterprise. Even without receiving it, he followed them back to Nazareth and continued to be obedient to them.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph may not have a saccharinely sweet happy ending. They are not the perfect family of feel-good movies; they are the Holy Family, modelling for us an example of love as they endure the stresses and challenges of a real family. May we walk in their footsteps to honour all in our family, both young and old.

Announcements

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

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE

Please note the opening hours of the Parish Office:

- **Fri 31 Dec:** 9.30am - 12noon
- **Sat 1 Jan:** Closed

INTERCESSORY NOTICE

There will be no intercessory prayer session on **Fri 31 Dec**. You may still submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory prayer.

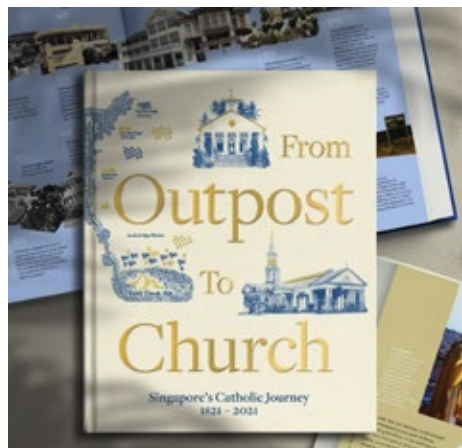
TEMPORARY ONLINE MASS OFFERINGS

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 reference number upon making payment via PayNow (**T08CC4033J**).

CATHOLIC 200SG COMMEMORATIVE BOOK

Learn about the first missionaries who planted seeds of faith as they set up schools, soup kitchens and churches. Be moved by how our early Catholics kept the torch of faith lit through the desperation of the war years, and passed it through the generations to build the Singapore Church we know today. Hear how our priests and religious were called to serve and listen to how our Catholics are being stirred to continue the mission ahead.

It is available for \$30 at the Parish Office during office hours, while stocks last! Please bring exact cash amount.



Blessed Christmas

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. - John 1:5

Our parish priests – Fr Benedict, Fr Cornelius, Fr Nathaniel – would like to thank everyone for your generous support, prayers and love. Together with all our staff in SFX, we wish one and all, a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

January Mass Bookings

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

Tue 28 Dec, 12pm

1st booking of all weekday and weekend Masses, usual policy of 1 weekend Mass, and 5 weekday Masses per booking session.

Fully Vaccinated/PET Masses (180pax):

- **Fridays:** 8pm • **Saturdays:** 5.30pm
- **Sundays:** 9am, 1pm

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 may be made **1 hour** before Mass.
- Vaccinated parishioners should refrain from booking unvaccinated Mass slots.

MASSES FOR FULLY VACCINATED/PET INDIVIDUALS:

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%** 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



ADDITIONAL MASS TIMINGS:

Mary, Mother of God (Sat 1 Jan):
• 180 pax: 9am

Chinese New Year Eve (Mon 31 Jan):
• 180 pax: 4pm

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**.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



Come join us on Christmas Eve on our SFX YouTube channel at **6pm**, to watch our Christmas Pageant!





7 Ways Your Domestic Church Can Imitate the Holy Family's Virtues

In imitating the virtues of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, holy families are created.

According to St John Paul II, the feast of the Holy Family reminds us to contemplate the Holy Family of Nazareth, a wonderful model of human and supernatural virtues for all Christian families. We can find in it values and teachings which today, are more indispensable than ever to give human society sound and stable foundations.

The best list of virtues that were lived by the Holy Family are the ones provided in the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, referencing humility, love of neighbour, poverty of spirit/obedience and piety. Each of these virtues are hailed in the Rosary precisely because they are pre-eminently modelled by Jesus, Mary and Joseph, not simply as individuals, but as a family.

HUMILITY

The greatest reflection of humility of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is that each did everything that God asked of them. Humility is finding our place, given by God or other people, and doing it well. The greatest humility is when we do what God asks of us in his kingdom. One way today's families can live with humility is by nurturing an environment of compassion and mercy. For instance, family members can readily admit faults and give forgiveness.

Author C.S. Lewis saw humility as not necessarily thinking less of yourself but thinking less about yourself. Lewis' account of humility takes the attention off us and turns us outward in love of God and neighbour. Humility, in this sense, also helps each of us to be more emotionally available to those around us, precisely because we are striving to be outward oriented, focusing on the 'other' instead of ourselves.

LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR

The one virtue is the great love of neighbour that Joseph showed toward Our Lady. He loved and cared for her. It was a love called to a high level of purification. This virtue can be shown by having meals as a family, spending evenings together and asking about each other's day.

POVERTY OF SPIRIT AND OBEDIENCE

Our Lady showed that poverty of spirit when she said, "Be it done unto me according to your word." There are no recorded words of Joseph. Words weren't needed. He just did what was asked, showing a real "emptiness." Poverty of spirit is allowing ourselves to be emptied before God. Joseph was alert to the angel's instructions.

When the angel told him God's will, he did it. It shows how close he was to God. Obedience is a virtue that is under attack. Families can grow in this virtue by showing proper deference and respect to each other and fulfilling the duties of each one's state in life. Piety also shines throughout the Holy Family's life. Giving the example of the flight to Egypt, poverty, obedience, and piety all work together.

PIETY

Piety, which is honouring God's will, was shown by the Holy Family when they packed up and went to a land they didn't know and had no support, no security, no employment. This is an example of piety, which is a reverent trust in God's will. One way families can live piety in daily life is in the esteem and honour that is shown to parents and to those in authority who are outside of the family, such as civil and religious leaders. If these virtues are lived well, the Christian family manifests the kingdom of God. This is a kingdom of truth, light, peace, grace, and reconciliation. It is a kingdom that turns the world on its head and shows it the more excellent way of love.

PROMPTNESS

Promptness or alacrity is defined as promptness with "cheerful readiness," generosity, and fortitude. When God's inspirations came, the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph answered with promptness or alacrity. Sometimes, we are tempted to ask God, "Are you sure you want to do it that way? I have another proposal."

GENEROSITY

- ***Are you generous with God with your time?***
- ***Are you able to commit to daily prayer time with God — not just a quick prayer on the fly?***
- ***Can you be generous once a week and make a Holy Hour?***
- ***Or book and go to Mass?***

Make that sacrifice.

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For this virtue, we can teach our children to give as a family. "We let our children put some change in the second collection and encourage them to set aside some of their own money for the collection," explained dad David. "They also see Mom or Dad put the envelope in the gift collection box, and that helps to teach that we are all called to give generously. We also try to give of our time and talent as we are able to, by being involved in ministries at church and volunteering for other organizations as well."

FORTITUDE

It is one of the four cardinal virtues. The Holy Family's efforts to do God's will require perseverance. The virtue of fortitude is to shoulder the burdens that come and to stay faithful.

Article adapt from www.ncregister.com



Christmas Day and Feast of the Holy Family

There wasn't any room for Mary and Joseph to stay in Bethlehem, so they had to go to a stable outside the town.
Can you help them find their way?



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

Mass Timings

WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue & Thu:
6.30pm

Fri:
8pm*

WEEKEND MASSES

Sat Sunset
5.30pm*

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

*Fully vaccinated/PET 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