



Disciples
Making Disciples



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The Parable of the Two Brothers and the Good Father

4th Sunday of Lent
27 Mar 2022

Jos 5:9-12
2 Cor 5:17-21
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

The story that Jesus tells in this Sunday's gospel is often called 'The Parable of the Prodigal Son'. Several Christian thinkers have also expounded on how the elder son reacts and is portrayed in the text. But there is a third protagonist: the good father. Let us examine each of these characters in turn.

The parable begins with the younger son asking his father for his share of the estate. In Jewish law, a father's property passes to his sons only after his death. In other words, the younger son's request was akin to asking his father to die.

He then travels to a distant country and squanders his property. In *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI points out that the Greek word used for 'property' also means 'essence' in Greek philosophy. In losing what he has received from his father, the younger son has dissipated the 'essence' of himself.

He ends up working for a local inhabitant who tasks him to feed the pigs, which were considered unclean by Jews. In other words, the younger son was working for a Gentile. The loss of identity is thus complete: not only has the younger son severed his



"Whether I am the younger son or the elder son, God's only desire is to bring me home."

– Father Henri Nouwen,
Return of the Prodigal Son

relationship with his father, he has also lost his link to his community.

But he "came to his senses". Deep within himself, he finds an inner compass pointing towards the father, towards "the freedom of a 'son'", as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI puts it. He therefore went back to his father, and they celebrated, for "he was lost and is (now) found".

The elder son, however, knows nothing of wanderings and inner transformations. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI puts it starkly: "He sees only injustice." And this resentment reveals that the elder son too has lost his way and his identity – he has been unaware of the grace of being at home, of the freedom that he enjoyed as a son of the father.

Consider also the context of this parable: Jesus was speaking to both the tax collectors and sinners, as well as the Pharisees and scribes. For the Jews, their relationship with God is a juridical one, above all else. The Law was paramount, and it was in their fidelity to the commandments that their 'righteousness' was expressed. In the character of the elder son, Jesus was therefore also addressing those who had never left home, for they, too, were in need of conversion.

The parable leaves uncertain whether

the elder son heeded his father's "plea". But what is certain is the heart of the father. In *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, Father Henri Nouwen writes that "the father's unreserved, unlimited love is offered wholly and equally to both his sons".

First, even when the younger son was still a long way off, the father "ran" to him. In those times, men would need to pull up the hem of their robes to run, revealing their bare legs, which was considered shameful. The father's love outweighed such petty concerns. Second, the father clothes the prodigal son with his "best robe". Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI interprets this as a restoration of "the lost robe of grace with which man had been originally clothed, but which he forfeited by sin". Third, in response to the elder son's bitterness, his father reaffirms his sonship and fidelity: "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours."

As we head deeper into this season of Lent, let us reflect on who we are as children of God – whether the prodigal or elder child – all in need of conversion. But more importantly, let us remember the goodness of our Father. As Nouwen puts it, "Whether I am the younger son or the elder son, God's only desire is to bring me home."

Announcements

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

COLUMBARIUM VISIT

With effect from 1 April, online booking and calls to the Parish Office for visits to the Columbarium are no longer required. However, Tracetoegether token/App for SafeEntry check-in is still required. Maximum of 5 persons per visit.

ART MINISTRY RECRUITMENT

Looking for committed individuals (20 - 30 years old). Competent in conceptualising, designing, or producing the sanctuary backdrop (main church) for Easter and Christmas. Able to work as a team and commit few hours on weekday evenings & weekend afternoons — 1 month prior to both events. Training will be provided.

Please email mmm@sfxchurch.sg or leave your name & contact with the parish office and we will be in touch with you.

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

You may submit your prayer request to www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer. All prayer requests are kept confidential. Join us online every Monday to pray and intercede in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Date & Time: Mon 28 Mar, 8pm
Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252
Password: SFXIP28MAR



CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting via Zoom is on **Mon 28 Mar, 8pm**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by a talk on 'Rising Up From Ashes In Our Faith Journey'. All are welcome.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 884 2477 8685
Password: HOLYSPIRIT



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Good marriages can always be made better! To deepen your couple relationship, do sign up for a Marriage Encounter Weekend on **6 - 8 May**. To find out more, please contact Joe & Reenie at 9670 5390 or visit www.mesg.org/me-weekend-selector.

April Mass Bookings

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

Tue 29 Mar, 12pm

From 1 April 2022, bookings will **NOT** be required for Weekday Masses except for days of obligation etc that fall on a Weekday. Seating capacity for **all weekend Masses will be increased to 450**.

Holy Week Schedule



Maundy Thu 14 Apr
7.30pm

Livestream Mass also available via SFX YouTube Channel



Good Fri 15 Apr
9am, 12pm, 3pm



Easter Vigil 16 Apr
7.30pm

Livestream Mass also available via SFX YouTube Channel



Easter Sunday 17 Apr
7am, 9am, 11am, 5.30pm

LATEST MASS SCHEDULE

- Tues & Thu - 6.30pm
- Wed & Sat - 6.30am
- Fri - 8pm
- Sat - 5.30pm
- Sun - 7am, 9am, 11am, 5.30pm

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

Wed 6 Apr (8pm - 10.30pm)

Venue: Main Church
Booking via mycatholic.sg



RECONCILIATION

Mon 11 Apr (4pm - 6pm, 8pm - 10pm)

Venue: JPPI Hall
Contact Parish Office for appointment

THINGS TO NOTE:

- Mass booking/cancellation closes **1 hour** before Mass. Please be gracious to cancel your booking earlier if you are unable to attend.
- Mass registration 45 minutes before Mass.
- Mass Entry: Fri and Weekend Masses via Church Foyer and Choir Entrance; all other Masses via Choir Entrance only



MAUNDY THURSDAY ADORATION

Come spend some time in the presence of our Lord from **9pm - 10.30pm** at the Main Church. For vaccinated only.

THINGS TO NOTE:

- No booking is required.
- Bring your identification card and TraceTogether App/Token with you.
- Check in entry via **Choir Entrance**



HOLY HOUR

Wed 13 Apr, 8pm - 9pm
Venue: Main Church

THINGS TO NOTE:

- No booking is required. For vaccinated only.
- Bring your identification card and TraceTogether App/Token with you.
- Check in entry via **Choir Entrance**

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

All weekday evening Masses during Lent will begin with the Stations of the Cross. You may scan the QR Code on your entry ticket to access the readings for the Stations of the Cross. Kindly note that you are required to attend both Stations and Mass together.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.SFXCHURCH.SG/BOOKING-OF-MASS-APRIL-2022/

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**.

BAT PRESENTS JESUS AND THE JEWISH ROOTS OF HOLY WEEK

We will journey with Jesus to his passion, to his cross and through the tomb to the Resurrection by looking at what he did on each day of Holy Week. What was Jesus doing on the last 7 days of his life? Join Helen Chong and obtain a better understanding of what Jesus did by looking at his actions through ancient Jewish eyes, how he fulfilled the Old Testament and inaugurated the New Covenant.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS
Date & Time: Sat 2 Apr, 8.45am
Meeting ID: 817 6776 3314
Password: SFXBATHW



PARISH RETREAT: JOURNEY HOME TO THE HEART OF GOD

Has Covid left you wandering in the wilderness - adrift, alone, dry and disconnected? Say 'yes' to the Lord's invitation for a weekend with Him - for your spirit to be refreshed, restored and renewed. The Parish retreat is run in collaboration with Catholic Spirituality Centre. Sign up now!

Dates: 30 Apr - 2 May
Time: 9am - 6pm
Venue: SFX Parish Hall



Register: tinyurl.com/SFXPR22
**Registration closes on 23 April*

SFX LENTEN WALK

LENT is a time for each of us to reflect and look into ourselves - what we each need to change, to be better, to love and be life-giving to others more through our words and actions. For this Lent, let us take this opportunity to spend time with God in prayer by taking a mini-Camino to communicate with God and offer this time to strengthen our relationship with Him and dig deep into our hearts to change some aspect or characteristic in our life so that we can continue our journey to living life to the full as Jesus wants us to. All are welcome!

Date: Sat 2 April
Time: 7am - 12pm
Venue: SFX JP11 Hall



Register: tinyurl.com/SFXLentenWalk22

SYNODAL CONVERSATION AT SFX

Come and join us as a Parish to pray, reflect, share and listen to what God's will might be for the Church moving forward. Let us, as one Church, journey together to listen to each other's faith experiences, joys and challenges. Gather your family and friends to sign up now!



Dates: Sat 9 Apr
Time: 10am - 12pm
Venue: Parish Hall



(Parish Centre, Level 3)
Register: <https://tinyurl.com/SFXSynod>

FORMED[®]

— Pick of the Week

WATCH

TRIDUUM: A SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE

In Triduum: A Spiritual Pilgrimage, the viewer is brought deeper into the story, landscape, and reality of Holy Week. It draws those with open hearts and minds toward a deeper understanding of Christ's victory while offering rich meditations for the pilgrimage of daily life.



<https://watch.formed.org/triduum-a-spiritual-pilgrimage/videos/triduum>



FORMED NOW! HOLY SATURDAY - JESUS' DESCENT INTO HELL

What do we mean when we profess that Jesus descended into Hell? Join Drs. Tim Gray and Michael Barber as they discuss this mysterious event of Holy Saturday.

LEARN

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/formed-live-jesus-descent-into-hell>

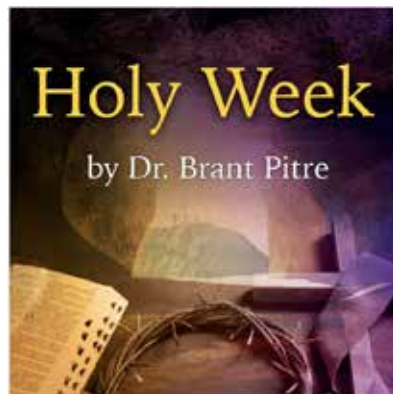


Looking for more Information?
visit www.sfxchurch.sg!

To set up your free account visit formed.org/
signup and select our parish

HOLY WEEK BY DR. BRANT PITRE

Join Dr. Brant Pitre, author and Scripture scholar, as he walks us through the events of Holy Week. Pitre's insights and clarity allow the listener to enter into a deeper appreciation of the most important events of Christ's earthly ministry.



LISTEN

▶ <https://watch.formed.org/holy-week-by-dr-brandt-pitre/videos/holy-week>



What did the son in today's
Gospel reading say to show his
father he was sorry?

Luke 15.1-3, 11-32



As you go through the maze, use only
the letters in the right path to fill in the blanks:

_____, _____
_____, _____

Mass Timings

*WEEKDAY MASSES

Tue:
6.30am, 6.30pm

Thu:
6.30pm

Fri:
8pm

*WEEKEND MASSES

Sat:
5.30pm

Sun: 7am, 9am, 11am,
1pm, 5.30pm
(There is currently no
Confession before Mass)

***MASS ON PUBLIC
HOLIDAYS**
9am

* All are vaccinated Masses

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

AT JPII HALL

Wed & Sun:
7pm - 10.30pm

LIBRARY

Closed until
further notice

COLUMBARIUM

Mon to Sat:

10am - 12pm, 2pm - 4pm
**From 1 Apr -
no booking required.**

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