



**Disciples**  
*Making Disciples*



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## Jesus, Defender & Judge Extraordinaire

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent  
3 Apr 2022

Is 43:16-21  
Phil 3:8-14  
Jn 8:1-11

Pascal said: *"There are only two kinds of men: the righteous who think they are sinners and the sinners who think they are righteous".* The latter describes the scribes and Pharisees. They collude to entrap Jesus, a common foe. The genius of Jesus foils their plan and they become ensnared in their own trap.

In the temple in Jerusalem, the Word of God is interrupted by the religious leaders who parade a woman caught in the act of adultery. According to the Mosaic Law, a grave violation of any one of the Ten Commandments is punishable by death; for adultery, it is death by stoning. (Deut 22:22-24)

*"What have you to say?"* (Jn 8:5). It is not legal advice they are seeking, but a booby-trap armed to incriminate or discredit. Authorise the stoning and Jesus gets into trouble with the Roman authorities - Jews cannot administer capital punishment under Roman rule (Jn 18:31). Forbid, and Jesus gets into trouble with the Jewish authorities for breaking the Mosaic Law. Checkmate! The adulteress is merely a gambit.

Jesus turns defender and cuts to the heart of the matter: *"If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."* (Jn 8:7) The spotlight is now on the accusers. Knowing that executing

the adulteress will bring Rome's reprisal on themselves, not Jesus, the religious leaders are forced to walk away, humiliated, in full public view - for *"whoever exalts himself will be humbled, ..."* (Mt 23:12).

Interspersed in this shenanigan, Jesus strangely writes with his fingers on the ground, twice: first, after the treacherous question (Jn 8:6), and second, after his brilliant rebuttal (Jn 8:8). The first is perhaps divine mercy - time given for the religious leaders to examine their conscience and abort the entrapment. The second, divine judgment and conviction. What is inscribed in the dirt is probably symbolic. St Ambrose, St Augustine, and recent biblical scholars postulate that Jesus is performing a sign that fulfils a prophecy by the prophet Jeremiah - a warning that those who forsake the Lord *"shall be written in the earth"* because they have rejected the *"fountain of living water"* (Jer 17:13). The religious leaders fall into this category for rejecting Jesus, who has just been identified as the source of *"living water"* (Jn 7:38). Morally, St Bede in his homily observes: *"Christ, who twice bends down to write on the ground, teaches us to bend low in humility to examine ourselves both before and after addressing the faults of our neighbour."*



***"You see then that the Lord does indeed pass sentence, but it is sin he condemns, not people."* - St Augustine**

In the internet and social media, lives continue to be harmed by cyber-bullying and cyber-terrorism. Gossip, slander, doxing, fake news, ... are outcomes of a judgmental mindset and unbridled emotions, fuelled by the anonymity of the internet which shields one from the repercussions of uncharitable words. In his book, *"Introduction to the Devout Life"*, St Francis de Sales gives three simple principles which can be applied to the use of social media:

- Don't jump to conclusions: we all make mistakes. *"What assurance have we that he who yesterday was a sinner is the same today?"*
- Be discreet: not all truths need to be told, but always tell the truth. *"Let your words be kindly, frank, sincere, straightforward, simple and true."*
- When necessary to assert one's opinion: *"It should be done gently and considerately, without irritation or vehemence. Indeed, we gain nothing by sharpness or petulance."*

For the repentant, there is no limits to Jesus' love and mercy: *"Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."* (Jn 8:11) St Augustine, in his homilies on the Gospel of John, explains: *"You see then that the Lord does indeed pass sentence, but it is sin he condemns, not people."* The adulteress' mortal sins are forgiven. She is challenged to live a life of purity henceforth. We too have access to the same forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Be spiritually healed. Go for Confession regularly.

For Elect coming into the Church this Easter, you will receive much more: *"By Baptism all sins are forgiven, original sin and all personal sins, as well as all punishment for sin"* (CCC 1263). Rejoice! Savour the moment of being reborn spotlessly clean and pure in the Garden of Eden on Easter Sunday.

## Announcements

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

### SSVP SECOND COLLECTION

This weekend, there will be a second collection by the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) to help the poor and needy in monthly rations and other aid programmes. SSVP members will be at the atrium area. Please give generously.

Society of St Vincent de Paul

- **OCBC Bank Account No:** 686 596 768 001
- **PayNow UEN:** S61SS0149B

### ART MINISTRY RECRUITMENT

Looking for committed individuals (20 - 30 years old) who are competent in conceptualising, designing, or producing the sanctuary backdrop (Main Church) for Easter and Christmas. They will need to be able to work as a team and commit a few hours on weekday evenings and weekend afternoons — one month prior to both events. Training will be provided.

Please email [mmm@sfxchurch.sg](mailto: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 requests to [www.sfxchurch.sg/intercessory-prayer](http://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 4 Apr, 8pm  
Meeting ID: 861 5125 7252  
Password: SFXIP4APR



### CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting via Zoom is on **Mon 4 Apr, 8pm**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by Lenten Reflection & Renewal. All are welcome.

#### ZOOM MEETING DETAILS

Meeting ID: 884 2477 8685  
Password: HOLYSPIRIT



## April Mass Bookings

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

**Tue 5 Apr, 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

- **Tue & 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](http://mycatholic.sg)



### RECONCILIATION

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

**Venue:** JPII Hall

**Contact Parish Office for appointment**

### THINGS TO NOTE:

- **Mass booking/cancellation** closes **1 hour** before Mass. Please be gracious and cancel your booking if you are unable to attend.
- **Mass registration** starts at least 25 minutes before Mass.
- **Mass Entry:** Friday 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 the Zone Standee 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/](http://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'. Please write 'Mass Collection' behind the cheque. Mail cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive, Singapore 558758**.

## 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

**Cost:** \$60

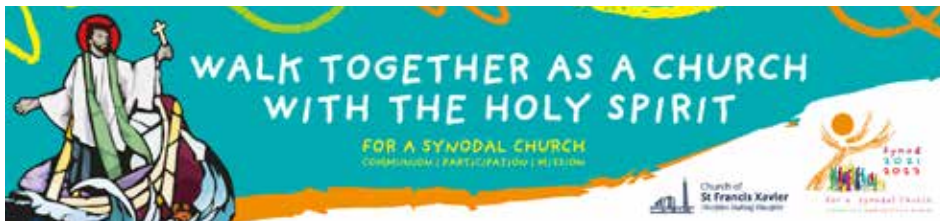
**Venue:** Parish Hall  
(Parish Centre, Level 3)

**Register:** [tinyurl.com/SFXPR22](https://tinyurl.com/SFXPR22)

*\*Registration closes on 23 April*



## SYNODAL CONVERSATION @ 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 and sign up now!

**Dates:** Sat 9 Apr

**Time:** 10am - 12pm

**Venue:** Parish Hall  
(Parish Centre, Level 3)

**Register:**

<https://tinyurl.com/SFXSynod>



## COLUMBARIUM VISIT

**With effect from 1 Apr 2022, online booking for Columbarium visits is no longer required.** The Columbarium will be open from **10am - 12pm** and **2pm - 4pm** daily except on Sundays and Public Holidays. A maximum of five people are permitted per visit.

## PRAY FOR OUR RCIA AND RCIY PARTICIPANTS

Our RCIA and RCIY Elect and Candidates are inching closer to the sacraments of initiation this Easter. Let us continue to support them and pray for their conversion and for their hearts to be open to the Lord!



## HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL

### FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

We pray for healthcare workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries; may they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

## IN THE MONTH OF MAR 2022

### WEDDINGS

We congratulate the following couple:

1. Dumont Emile Francois & Lam Oi Keat

### CONDOLENCES

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

1. Richard Ng Teong Swee @ Ng Tiong Swee
2. Rodrigues Rudolph Aloysious
3. Chan Meng Khiang Michael

## Nine tips for returning to Church!

*If going back to Church for Mass has been in the back of your mind for some time... if you can feel a little tug at your heart that wants to go back but you're worried or anxious or just a little unsure about it, we have nine tips to help you along:*

### 01 Come as you are!

God wants you back how you are now, preparing for Mass doesn't mean becoming perfect first before you can return, so come as you are.

### 02 Prepare in advance

As with any special occasion, preparation is important. Dressing your best makes an impact on how you feel and behave when you are in Church! Do look up the readings for Mass a day ahead; read it and let it sink in a bit. If you plan to go with your family, try reading it together.

### 03 Find someone you can go with

It is tough to go anywhere new alone and it is no different if you are returning to Church after some time. So find someone that you could come with, this might be a friend who already goes regularly or even just an acquaintance. Perhaps it can be a family member who has asked you previously if you would like to come to Mass with them. Contact them and ask if you can go along together.

### 04 Go for confession

Going back to Mass is much more than just a ritual. It is having an authentic encounter with Christ and we want our hearts cleaned up so that we can give him the welcome he deserves. Do make an appointment with our Parish Office if you would like to go for confession.

### 05 Arrive early

Try to arrive with some time to spare so that you will not have to rush. While sitting in the pews, use the time to recollect yourself, pray, and ask for the Holy Spirit to help you participate in the Mass as best as you possibly can.



## 06 Participate!

Be an active participant in the Mass – sing your heart out (it does not matter if you think you cannot sing – it is not a competition!), recite the responses, and be intentionally present.

## 07 Receiving Communion

Before receiving Communion, invite Jesus into your heart and try to be present in the moment. Spend time in the pew afterward talking to Jesus and thanking him for all he has given you.

*Adapted from "9 Tip Survival Guide For Returning To Mass When You Haven't Been In Awhile" by Ruth Kennedy (<https://catholic-link.org/survival-guide-for-returning-to-mass-when-you-havent-been-in-awhile/>)*

## 08 Reflect on the Mass

After Mass, do take some time to do a self-reflection. How did it feel coming back to Church? Was there anything that struck you? How should this change your life? Is there anything you need to do to change?

## 09 And finally... don't expect perfection

Sometimes when we go to Mass, things don't go as well as we would wish. Regardless of your experience of Mass, remember this - Christ is truly and objectively present in the Mass.

So, focus on giving your all to the Mass, making connections if you can with those around you, and remember, Mass is an act of faith. Don't worry if you don't feel anything but please be reassured that Christ is delighted to see you back!



## True or False?

*In today's Gospel reading the scribes and Pharisees brought a sinful woman in front of Jesus. Do you know the rest of the story? See if you know which of these statements are true and which are false:*

1. The law said that a sinful woman like this one should be killed. True or False?
2. The men were going to stone the woman anyway- they didn't care what Jesus thought. True or False?
3. Jesus didn't say anything right away; He just started writing on the ground with His finger. True or False?
4. Jesus said that whichever of the men had never sinned should be the first to throw a stone at the woman. True or False?
5. One of the men threw a stone at her. True or False?
6. All of the men walked away without throwing a stone. True or False?
7. Jesus forgave the woman and told her not to sin anymore. True or False?



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

### Mass Timings

#### \*WEEKDAY MASSES

**Tue & Thu:**  
6.30pm

**Wed & Sat:**  
6.30am

**Fri:**  
8pm

#### \*WEEKEND MASSES

**Sat:**  
5.30pm

**Sun:** 7am, 9am,  
11am, 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 JPPI 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 two weeks 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)