



Disciples
Making Disciples

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Money not enough?

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time
31 July 2022

Ecc 1:2, 2:21-23
Col 3:1-5, 9-11
Lk 12:13-21

Today's readings address a problem that has become one of the defining issues of our time - the growing divide between the rich and the poor in Singapore and elsewhere. How should Christians live their lives in the face of this inequality? How much personal wealth should they acquire that is in keeping with their faith? There is admonishment in the readings, but also much wisdom and hope.

First, the bad news. In the passage from Ecclesiastes, the message is that everything we strive for will not only come to nought but that we cannot help ourselves because of who we are. Vanity is part of what makes us human.

"...for what does he gain for all the toil and strain that he has undergone under the sun? What of all his laborious days, his cares of office, his restless nights? This, too, is vanity."(Ecc 2:22-23)

In fact, much of Ecclesiastes is about the futility of human life. Even when we try to seek fulfilment in wisdom or knowledge, "all is vanity and a chasing after wind."

What is a person to do in the face of this extreme pessimism?

Our Lord had the perfect parable. In the Gospel reading, he is asked by a man who wanted Jesus to tell his brother to share their inheritance. Jesus responds with a story about a rich man who decided to build a bigger barn to store his bountiful harvest.



"I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."

- Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel, 198

In earthly terms, the man made a perfectly rational decision, building on his hard-earned gains to secure his future. That's what most of us strive to do all the time.

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul, and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?'

So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God." (Lk 12:20-21)

The admonishment from our Lord is not about making money, which isn't sinful by itself. The real question is about where our heart lies and what our purpose in life is.

Indeed, Christ did not tell the man directly how the family's fortune ought to be divided or how much is enough.

Those are not the pertinent issues, just as, for us too, it is not a question of how much money we make or possessions we should have.

What is important is what we treasure most. The second reading makes this clear.

"...you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God." (Col 3:2-3)

St Paul's teaching is not about shutting ourselves from the world, looking up at the sky and quietly contemplating heavenly thoughts.

Our Lord did not die for such a purpose.

His call is for us to renew ourselves - our old self has to die! - and see the world through God's eyes, enabled by his love for us.

It is only when we are so converted will we be able to rise above our self-centred limitations.

This is the reason human society finds it so difficult to resolve the inequality problem, despite the best efforts of governments and charitable organisations.

It is not possible to overcome man's inherent weaknesses through human effort alone. The author of Ecclesiastes knew this long ago.

When Christ died on the cross, he showed us the way out of this hopeless predicament.

Removing suffering caused by inequality also requires active participation on our part, to go beyond our comfort zone, and live out the words of our Holy Father.

"I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security." (Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel).

Announcements

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

**SCAN QR CODE
FOR MASS HYMNS**
www.sfxchurch.sg/mass



CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting is on **Mon 1 Aug**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by Praying Over. All are welcome!

Venue: Parish Hall (Parish Centre, Level 3)

Time: 8pm - 10pm

INTERCESSORY

Come storm heaven with us in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

Date & Time: Mon 1 Aug, 8pm

Venue: Micah (Parish Centre, Level 2)

SFX BAT: UNLOCKING THE MYSTERY OF THE BIBLE

SFX BAT is offering an eight-session course on Salvation History, Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible. It will be held on Zoom over eight Fridays, **8pm - 10 pm**, starting **12 Aug 2022**. You would need to first sign up for online access - Scan the QR Code for more details.



CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Pope St John Paul II said, "Art has a unique capacity to take one or other facet of the message and translate it into colors, shapes and sounds which nourish the intuition of those who look and listen".

We'd like to ignite and shine with faith through Art@SFX by calling for you to share your creative talents with us. Your pieces will be used to decorate our parish! Contact Craig (9451 8256) to register your interest or if you have any questions.

Details

Theme: "He makes all things new"

Requirements:

1. Medium: Oil/Acrylic/Mix Media/ Watercolour, mounted on a 60cm x 60cm canvas
2. A video synopsis of not more than five minutes to share the inspiration behind this art piece

Submission Deadline: Fri 30 Sep

AUGUST MASSES

Online Mass bookings are no longer required. Seating capacity for Weekend Masses has been increased to 700 for VDS* Masses and 500 for Non-VDS* Masses.

NATIONAL DAY:

- Tue 9 Aug: 9am only (Non-VDS)

Mass Entry: All doors

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (Day of Obligation)

MON 15 AUG:

- 6.30am, 6.30pm (Non-VDS)

Mass Entry: All doors

• 8.30pm (VDS ONLY)

Mass Entry: Choir Entrance and Foyer

THINGS TO NOTE

- Trace-Together App/token and ID **NOT REQUIRED** for Weekday & Sat AM Masses except specified Solemnity Masses
- Trace-Together App/token and ID **REQUIRED** for VDS Masses for Vaccination status verification and headcount
- ID **REQUIRED** for Sunday non-VDS Masses for headcount
- Mass Entry: Weekday & Sat AM Masses - all doors; Sun 7am Mass - Choir Entrance only; all other Weekend Masses - Choir Entrance and Foyer

NON-VDS MASSES (500 PAX):

- Weekday Masses (**EXCEPT SPECIFIED SOLEMNITY MASSES**)
- Sat 6.30am, Sun 7am, Sun 5.30pm

VDS MASSES (700 PAX):

- Sat 5.30pm, Sun 9am, Sun 11am

As per MCCY guidelines, we regret that we may have to refuse entry when the maximum capacity has been reached.

* Vaccination-Differentiated

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**.

RCIA/RCIY 2022/2023 - THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

Do you know of anyone who is interested in embarking on a journey of faith? Or perhaps someone who has felt a stirring in their heart and is seeking answers to questions, or even peace in their struggles? We encourage you to reach out to them and invite them to join us in RCIA and RCIY.

New RCIA Journey (24 years old and above)

Date: Every Tuesday

Time: 8pm - 10pm

Venue: JP II Hall (Parsonage, Level 1)

Register: tinyurl.com/sfxrciasignup

For enquires: 9827 6893 (Lloyd)/
8112 8041 (Grace)



New RCIY Journey (13 - 23 years old)

Date: Every Sunday

Time: 10.30am - 12.30pm

Venue: Jeremiah (Parish Centre, Level 2)

Register: tinyurl.com/SFX-RCIY-2022-23

For enquires: 9002 9977 (Angela)/
9675 5698 (Corinne)



For 2022 RCIA/Y Journey testimonials, visit <https://tinyurl.com/sfxrciay22testimonials>

THANKSGIVING SOLEMN MASS FOR HIS EMINENCE WILLIAM CARDINAL GOH

The announcement of Cardinal-elect William Goh's appointment to the College of Cardinals is a cause of joy to our Archdiocese. Let us unite as one Church to give glory to God at the Thanksgiving Solemn Mass.

Date: Thu 8 Sep

Time: 5.30pm - 8.30pm

Venue: St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah)



Log in to your mycatholic.sg account to indicate your interest* and receive an email reminder to book for this event!

*The indication of interest does not constitute a booking. Booking is still required from 24 Aug onwards to secure a spot for the Mass.

RESTORE, REKINDLE AND RENEW YOUR MARRIAGE

"Marriage is a project to be worked on together and a process of growth." - Pope Francis (*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 218, 221).

Good marriages can always be made better! To deepen your couple relationship, do sign up for a Marriage Encounter Weekend scheduled for **23 - 25 Sep 2022** by contacting Joe & Reenie @ 9670 5390 or email at mewkend@gmail.com

LANDINGS SINGAPORE: WELCOMING CATHOLICS SEEKING A RECONNECTION

There will be a new 10-week programme which runs from **5 Sep to 14 Nov**, every Monday from **8pm - 10pm**. A weekend retreat will take place at the end of this programme on **12 and 13 Nov**. All sessions will be held in person at the Church of the Holy Spirit. We invite Catholics seeking a reconnection with the faith to register. For more information on Landings, please email singapore@landings.org.sg or visit www.landings.org.sg

Returned!

This event, which includes testimonies, will give you an understanding of Landings, and an opportunity for any clarifications you may have.

Date: Fri 5 Aug 2022

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Church of the Holy Spirit

Register: bit.ly/3AbeUMB

Ten Ways to Improve Prayer Life

Prayer is the key to salvation. St Augustine says that he who prays well lives well; he who lives well dies well; and to he who dies well, then all is well. St. Alphonsus reiterates the same principle: "He who prays much will be saved; he who does not pray will be damned; he who prays little places in jeopardy his eternal salvation." The same saint asserted that there are neither strong people nor weak people in the world, but those who know how to pray and those who do not. Prayer is our strength in all times and places. Here are ten ways of encouragement to help us on the highway towards heaven through the effort to grow in our prayer life!



1 CONVICTION OR DETERMINATION

There is no successful person in this world in any enterprise who was not animated by a firm determination to achieve his goal. Super athletes, accomplished musicians, expert teachers, and writers never arrived at perfection by mere wishful thinking but by a firm determination to arrive at their goal — come hell or high water.

For this reason, St Teresa of Avila, the Doctor of prayer, stated: "We must have a determined determination to never give up prayer." If we really believed in the depths of our hearts the priceless treasures that flow from prayer, we would make it our aim in life to grow constantly in prayer.

2 HOLY SPIRIT AS TEACHER

St Paul says that we do not really know how to pray as we ought, but that it is the Holy Spirit who intercedes for us teaching us to say "Abba" Father. The Holy Spirit is the Interior Master or Teacher. With Mary, the Apostles spent nine days and nights praying and fasting and they were imbued with the power from on high — the Holy Spirit.

Before starting any formal prayer period, why not invoke the Person of the Holy Spirit to help you in your weakness. During the course of your prayer, beg the presence of the Holy Spirit to enlighten your mind and ignite your heart. He is closer to you than you are aware. If you are in the state of grace, He resides in your heart.

3 TIME, PLACE, GOOD WILL, AND SILENCE

As with every art, we learn by practicing. This applies to prayer. To learn how to pray, we must have a set time, a good place, goodwill on our part and silence. The saying rings true in sports as well as in prayer: "Practice makes perfect."

4 PENANCE

Maybe our prayer has become insipid, boring, anemic and stagnant for many reasons. One possible reason might be a life of sensuality, indulgence, gluttony, or simply living more according to the flesh than to the spirit.

As St Paul reminds us, the flesh and the spirit are in mutual opposition. Jesus spent forty days and nights praying and fasting. The Apostles spent nine days and nights praying and fasting. One cannot arrive at any serious mystical life led by the spirit if he has not passed through the ascetical life of self-denial, mortification and penance.

A bird needs two wings to fly; so does the follower of Christ. To soar high in the mystical life, the two wings are prayer and penance. If you have no training in the penitential life, consult a good spiritual director and start with small acts of penance to build up will-power so as to do the more heroic acts of penance! If you have never run before, start with a block and build up to the mile.



5 SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Athletes need coaches; students need teachers; teachers need mentors to learn the art. Equally important, prayer-warriors must have some form of guidance, and this is called spiritual direction.

St Ignatius of Loyola insisted on the spiritual life as being a journey of accompaniment. St Teresa of Avila had several saints directing her on her long and painful journey leading to perfection — St John of the Cross, St Peter of Alcantara, and St Francis Borgia.

There are many obstacles in the spiritual journey, especially when one pursues a deeper life of prayer; for that reason, having a trained spiritual director who knows the traps of the devil, the pitfalls always present, and the dangers that are always present can help us to grow steadily in holiness through a deeper and more authentic prayer life.

6 PRAYER AND ACTION

St Teresa of Avila points out that authentic growth in prayer is proven by growth in holiness and that means by the practice of virtue. Jesus said that we know the tree by the fruits. Likewise, an authentic life of prayer blossoms forth in the practice of virtues: faith, hope, charity, purity, kindness, service, humility and a constant love for neighbor and the salvation of his immortal soul.

Our Lady is model at all times but especially in the intimate connection between contemplation and action. In the Annunciation, we admire Mary absorbed in prayer; then in the following mystery (in the Visitation) she follows the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to serve her cousin in a mission of love. In truth, we can call Mary a true “Contemplative in action”. Like Mary, we are called to be contemplative in action.

7 STUDY AND READ ABOUT PRAYER

St. Teresa of Avila would not permit women who could not read to enter into her order. Why? The simple reason was that she knew how much one could learn on many topics, especially on prayer, through solid spiritual reading.

Find good spiritual books on prayer! Many helpful ideas come through good spiritual reading. e.g Part Four of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This is a spiritual masterpiece on prayer.

8 RETREATS

To go deeper in prayer, it’s a good idea to set aside some time for a prolonged period of prayer; this we call a spiritual retreat. One of the most efficacious styles of retreats are Ignatian retreats. It might last a whole month, or eight days, and even a weekend retreat can prove extremely valuable.

Seeing the Apostles overwhelmed with work, Jesus exhorted them: “Come apart for a while and rest...” This rest that Jesus mentioned has classically been interpreted as a call to the spiritual retreat! Look at your calendar for the year and set aside some time. More extended periods of time for prayer allow for greater depth in prayer!

9 CONFESSION AND PRAYER

Sometimes prayer proves exceedingly difficult due to a dirty conscience. Jesus said: “Blessed are the pure of heart, they will see God.”(Mt 5:8) After a good confession, the Precious Blood of Jesus washes our souls and consciences clean. Then the interior eye of the soul can see and contemplate the face of God with greater clarity.

10 OUR LADY AND PRAYER

Call upon Mother Mary to pray for us and to pray with us every time we dedicate time and effort to prayer. She will never fail us. As Jesus turned water into wine at Cana through Mother Mary’s intercession, so she can help to turn our insipid and flavorless prayer into the sweet wine of devotion.

Source: <https://catholicexchange.com/ten-ways-improve-prayer-life/>

MASS TIMES

WEEKDAY MASSES

Mon - Thu:
6.30pm

Tue - Sat:
6.30am

Fri:
8pm

WEEKEND MASSES

Sat:
5.30pm*

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

***For Vaccinated Only**

**MASS ON PUBLIC
HOLIDAYS**
9am

CONFESSION

Fri:
4pm - 6pm

Sat:
10am - 12pm

OPENING HOURS

MAIN GATE

Mon - Sun:
5am - 11pm

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

Mon - Sun:
7am - 11pm
Closed on Public Holidays

COLUMBARIUM

Mon to Sat:
10am - 6pm
*Closed on Sundays and
Public Holidays.*

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

Spiritual preparation is held on the last Friday of every odd month. Baptism is held on the first Sunday of the following month. For registration, please refer to our website.



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