






Disciples
Making Disciples

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Worship - Pagans show the way

The Epiphany of the Lord
8 Jan 2023

Is 60:1-6
Eph 3:2-3, 5-6
Mt 2:1-12

Pagans normally play supporting roles in the bible - but this week, they are the main characters in all the three Readings. Even the Star of Bethlehem is prophesied by a pagan prophet, Balaam (Num 24:17).

This underscores the revelation that salvation is universal, not exclusive to the Jews. The Church celebrates this as Epiphany, *"the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God and Savior of the world."* (cf CCC 528)

In the Gospel, the Magi represent *"the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation."* (cf CCC 528) They fulfil Isaiah's prophecy of pagan nations converting and converging in the "New Jerusalem" (1st Reading).

In the book Jesus of Nazareth, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI says that the Magi are wise because *"[t]hey represent the inner dynamic of religion toward self-transcendence, which involves a search for truth, a search for the true God."* They overcome their old beliefs and pagan ways, take risks and struggle through deserts and mountains to find the Lord. Paul calls this the mystery of conversion (2nd Reading).

In contrast, the self-absorbed King Herod can only see Jesus as a rival. Paranoid with self-preservation, he takes the broad and easy path, marked by sloth and treachery - he cannot find Jesus.

There is no easy way to become like Christ. Suffering and self-denial are central to the Christian life (CCC 618). Submitting to God's will and responding to his call mean choosing the narrow gate that leads to salvation (Mt 7:13-14).

We must learn to see God's plan of salvation in all things. In a sense, God is like a matchmaker of disordered natures. People pitted against people, create opportunities in conflicts for our disordered nature to surface, like scum in soup. The resulting pain and suffering remind us of Jesus' call to take up our cross and follow him (Mt 16:24). The greater the disorder, the heavier the cross.

So, when mistakes are made and relationships sour, examine our conscience. Prosecute ourselves, not others, whether victim or perpetrator. Uncover the disorders causing the mess. Work towards converting vices into virtues - for instance, if it is pride, find ways to be humble. Be first to apologise and first to forgive, regardless of who is right or wrong. In forgiving and praying for others, we are the first to be healed. When we are at peace, fighting stops, healing starts. Salvation is about restoring our relationship with God and man.

More than responding to God's call, the Magi give us an example of how to seek the Lord and how to behave in His presence. They start their journey with worship in mind: *"We have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him"* (Mt 2:2). Upon arrival in Bethlehem, *"they fell down and worshiped him [with gold, frankincense and myrrh]."* (Mt 2:11)

King Herod too, uses the word worship (Mt 2:8), but his intention is murder. He manipulates, intimidates and dominates. All male children in Bethlehem, 2 years old or under, are killed (Mt 2:16).

When we do not worship God, like King Herod, we end up worshiping ourselves. Without the sense of worship, we lose direction in the Christian life. There is a grave risk of using God instead of serving him, of honouring ourselves instead of glorifying God.

Christian life is a love affair with God. It is more than just doing his will. Worship makes God the centre of our lives, as lovers do with those whom they love. Worship means making God's plan more important than Netflix, Tik-Tok, Youtube, Instagram. It can be as simple as kneeling and proclaiming: "My Lord and my God!" - to be embraced, loved, healed, strengthened, transformed. In doing so, we learn to reject what should not be worshipped - money, consumerism, pleasure, success, ourselves - all created things.

The Magi's journey evokes every man's journey to Christ. Epiphany should be an event that is repeated every day. Each morning, pray for the grace to live the day, the way the Lord has planned for us. Choices have eternal consequences. Discern his call, surrender our will, worship the Lord. When we magnify Jesus in every encounter, we become epiphanies for others and lead them to conversion.

"Worship means making God's plan more important than Netflix, Tik-Tok, Youtube, Instagram."



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



**FAULTY/DAMAGED
CHURCH PEWS?**

Spot any faulty or damaged pews in church? Scan the QR Code to share with us at tinyurl.com/SFXFacilitiesReport



2ND COLLECTION FOR THE GENERAL MAINTAINANCE & OPERATIONS OF THE CHURCH

There will be a second collection this week and all funds raised will go towards the general maintainance and operations of our Parish. If you would like to donate digitally, please PayNow to our UEN "T08CC4033J" and indicate in the reference 'Maintenance'. Please give generously.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

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

Date: Mon 9 Jan 2023

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Room

CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting is on **Mon 9 Jan**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by Praying Over by SFX CPG Team. All are welcome!

Time: 8pm - 10pm

Venue: SFX Jeremiah Room
(Parish Centre, Level 2)

CANDLELIGHT ROSARY PROCESSION IN HONOUR OF OUR BLESSED MOTHER

Come join us on **Fri 13 Jan, 6.30pm** at JP11 Hall for the rosary procession within the church grounds. You may bring your own waxless candle.

SALE OF CHINESE NEW YEAR COOKIES

The Altar Servers will be selling Chinese New Year cookies on **7 - 8 Jan** and **14 - 15 Jan**. Please come and support them outside JP11 Hall and the front porch of church!

TRIBUTE TO POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI

Please take a copy of our tribute to the late Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI - his life, thoughts and works - in the special insert of the Manna. As a parish community, we pray for the eternal rest of his soul and entrust him to the tender loving mercy of our Father.



CHINESE NEW YEAR MASS SCHEDULE

Sat 21 Jan (CNY Eve): 6.30am, 4pm

Sun 22 Jan (CNY Day 1): 7am, 9am, 11am, 5.30pm

Mon 23 Jan & Tue 24 Jan (Public Holidays): 9am only

There will be distribution of pre-packed oranges and blessings of oranges.



COMMENCEMENT OF 2023 CATECHISM CLASSES

Catechism for 2023 will start on **Sun 29 Jan 2023**. The exact venue and timing will be communicated by the Level Coordinators to the respective parents, children and teens. To all parents, we thank you for entrusting your children to our ministry for faith formation and we will try our best to supplement what you will be inculcating in your daily lives as their primary catechists. May the Lord continue to bless and protect all families and help us to form our faith in this community. For any questions, comments and feedback, please reach out to Dan Lai at 9749 1635.

PREGNANCY CRISIS & SUPPORT: OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PRO-LIFE ROSARY

The Our Lady of Guadalupe Pro-Life Rosary is a beautiful way to pray for the unborn children and all who are affected by abortion. Let our Rosaries be our weapon against the culture of death and let us pray for the dawning of a new culture, the culture of LIFE! Our Lady of Guadalupe, Pray for us! For more information on Pregnancy Crisis & Support, visit www.pregnancycrisis.sg/

Date & Time: Thu 12 Jan, 8.30pm

Venue: Zoom

Zoom Meeting Details

Meeting ID: 856 6676 8174

Passcode: 437647



LANDINGS: WELCOMING RETURNING CATHOLICS

If you or someone you know is seeking for a way to come home, we welcome you to come listen to testimonies of how others have returned through Landings! For more information, please email singapore@landings.org.sg or visit www.landings.org.sg.

Date & Time: Fri 13 Jan 2023, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Church of St Ignatius - Ignatius Hall, Level 1
(120 King's Road, S268172)

Register: <https://landings.typeform.com/returned>
(Registration closes by 9 Jan 2023)



CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE: LOVE OF THE FAMILY

Catholic Family Life has prepared a Family Card for parishioners to write an encouragement note to encourage and affirm another family if they have been an inspiration to you in the way they live out their vocation of family life.

Raising a family can be challenging and lonely at times, yet families are the very places we often witness the beauty of love, joy, and sacrifice. Let's be one community in supporting each other to build love-filled and faith-filled families, affirm a family this weekend! Please do take a card outside JP11 Hall and share your message of love and hope to a family.



With a gentle breeze in the air and no sign of rain, our CHRISTmas Fiesta got off to a great start. There was food and fun aplenty. Young and old took the opportunity to play, sing, paint and eat. Our parish priests with some of the seminarians also got into the act and joined in with song and dance. A birthday cake was rolled out and our catchy theme song rounded off the night, calling all to GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES! A huge thank you to one and all for being a part of this Fiesta.



Christmas FIESTA

30 DECEMBER 2022



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

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)

MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

9am

CONFESSION

Contact Parish Office to
make an appointment.

Fri:
4pm - 6pm

Sat:
10am - 12pm

OPENING HOURS

MAIN GATE

Mon - Sun:
5am - 11pm

PARISH OFFICE

Mon - Sat:
9.30am - 6.30pm
Sun: 8.30am - 1pm
Closed on Public Holidays

ADORATION ROOM

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

LIBRARY

Sun:
8am - 1pm

COLUMBARIUM

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

ANOIDING 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/second 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 and outside JP11 Hall. Submit your envelopes at least two weeks in advance of your intended date. Please write the names clearly, and in block letters.



Do check out SFX Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/sfxchurch.sg for more photos.

VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact mmm@sfxchurch.sg

Tribute to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger): His Thoughts & His Works



BIRTH TO PRIESTLY ORDINATION (16 April 1927 – 29 June 1951)

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was born Joseph Ratzinger on Holy Saturday, 16 April 1927 and baptised on the same day. The baptismal register (below) as updated to the time of his elevation to Cardinal (Kardinal) on 27 June 1977. (Source: Pope Benedict XVI A Personal Portrait, p22)

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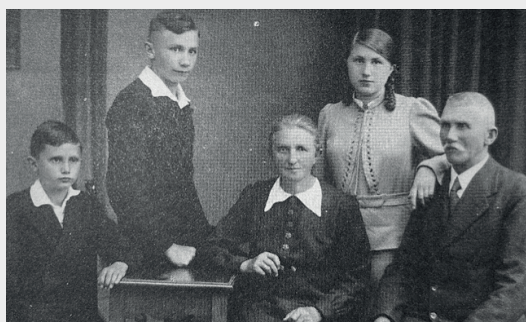


Ordination on 29 June 1951 (Feast of Sts Peter and Paul) in Freising Cathedral. Cardinal Faulhaber imposes hands on Joseph Ratzinger.

On the 60th anniversary of his priestly ordination in 2011, then Pope Benedict XVI returned to Freising Cathedral. He said, "... Then came the laying on of hands, and finally Cardinal Faulhaber proclaimed to us: "I do not call you servants, but friends"; at that moment, I experienced my priestly ordination as an initiation into the community of Jesus' friends, called to be with him and to proclaim his message." (www.vatican.va/special/60ratzinger/index_en.html)



Studio picture of Joseph Ratzinger (holding orb/ball) with his sister Maria and brother Georg. (Source: My Brother, The Pope, p66)



10-year-old Joseph Ratzinger (left) with his family – two years before he enrolled in the minor seminary in Traunstein in 1939. The seminary was closed during the war. After the war, the Ratzinger brothers entered Saint Michael Seminary in Traunstein in November 1945.

"In those days, it was the custom with First Masses for people who wanted to receive the new priest's blessing to sign up at the rectory office...each of us received a list of all the places we were to visit, and so we spent the next few days calling on all these members of the parish and blessing them...it made us happy to see what a grace it was to receive holy orders and to have the privilege of handing this blessing on to the people. Again and again, we experienced how ardently the people waited for the priest, a man who was called by God to serve them".

(Source: My Brother, The Pope, p164, 168 & 169)

After his Ordination, Ratzinger was appointed chaplain at the parish of St. Martin in Munich. In 1953, he presented his dissertation on Augustine of Hippo titled "The People and the House of God in Augustine's Doctrine of the Church." His habilitation (qualification for professorship) was on Bonaventure which he completed in 1957, "...my reading

of Bonaventure, were later on, very important for me at the time of the [Vatican Council II] discussion on revelation, Scripture, and tradition. Because if Bonaventure is right, then revelation precedes Scripture and becomes deposited in Scripture but is not simply identical with it. This in turn means that revelation is always something greater than what is merely written down. And this again means that there can be no such thing as pure *sola scriptura* ('by Scripture alone'), because an essential element of Scripture is the Church as understanding subject and with this the fundamental sense of tradition is already given." (Milestones, Memoirs 1927-1977, p109)



24-year-old Father Joseph Ratzinger and his 27-year-old brother, Father Georg Ratzinger confer their first blessings after their ordinations.

PRIEST, PROFESSOR, POPE (29 June 1951 - 28 February 2013)

DIES NATALIS TO ETERNAL LIFE: 31 DECEMBER 2022



As peritus to Cardinal Frings at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).



As Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1981-2005) with Pope St John Paul II.



Giving the papal blessing as Pope Benedict XVI after his election on 19 April 2005.



Goes into retirement at Mater Ecclesiae Monastery at the Vatican 28 February 2013.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote 66 books, three encyclicals, four apostolic exhortations and delivered numerous homilies, speeches and talks rich in theological insights into God as Trinity and His unceasing call to every person to respond to His love. Below is a list of the published English translations of his works and speeches in chronological order of the publication date. (*Some of these books are available in our parish's St Jerome Library*)

1960s - 1970s

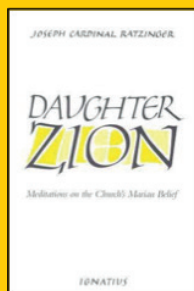
Theological Highlights of Vatican II, 1966. | Introduction to Christianity, 1968. Faith and Future, 1971 | The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God, 1978.

1980s - 1990s

Daughter Zion: Meditations on the Church's Marian Belief, 1983. | Dogma and Preaching, 1985. | Principles of Christian Morality, 1986. | Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy, 1986. | The Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church, 1986. | Seek That Which Is Above: Meditations through the Year, 1986. | Behold the Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology, 1986. | The Blessing of Christmas: Meditations for the Season, 1986. | Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology, 1987. | Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life, 1988. | Church, Ecumenism and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology, 1988. | Ministers of Your Joy: Scriptural Meditations on Priestly Spirituality, 1989. | The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure, 1989. | To Look on Christ: Exercises in Faith, Hope, and Love, 1991. | A Turning Point for Europe? 1994. | Co-Workers of the Truth: Meditations for Every Day of the Year, 1992 | The Nature and Mission of Theology: Essays to Orient Theology in Today's Debates, 1995. | In the Beginning...: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall, 1995. | Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today, 1996. | A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ in Liturgy Today, 1997. | Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium, 1997. | Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977, 1998. | Many Religions, One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World, 1999.

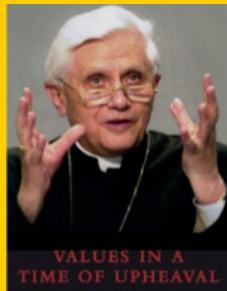
2000s

The Spirit of the Liturgy, 2000. | God and the World, 2002. | God Is Near Us: The Eucharist, the Heart of Life, 2003. | Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions, 2004. | Introduction to Christianity (revised edition), 2004. | Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion, 2005. | Mary: The Church at the Source, 2005. | Way of the Cross, 2005. | On the Way to Jesus Christ, 2005. | Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures, 2006. | Handing on the Faith in an Age of Disbelief, 2006. | Images of Hope: Meditations on Major Feasts, 2006. | God's Revolution: Pope Benedict XVI's Cologne Talks, 2006. | **Values in a Time of Upheaval, 2006.** | God Is Love: Deus Caritas Est, 2006. | What It Means to Be a Christian, 2006. | Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam, 2006. | On Conscience, 2007. | Europe: Today and Tomorrow, 2007. | New Outpourings of the Spirit, 2007. | Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration, 2007. | Jesus, the Apostles, and the Early Church, 2007. | God's Word: Scripture, Tradition, Office, 2008. | Saved in Hope: Spe Salvi, 2008. | The Fathers, 2008. | Church Fathers: From Clement of Rome to Augustine, 2008. | Charity in Truth: Caritas in Veritate, 2009. | Saint Paul, 2009. | The Joy of Knowing Christ: Meditations on the Gospels, 2009. | Light of the World: The Pope, The Church, and the Signs of the Times, 2010. | The Fathers, Volume II, 2010. | The Apostles, 2010. | Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Vol. 1, The Unity of the Church, 2010. | The Virtues, 2010. | Great Teachers, 2011. | Holiness Is Always in Season, 2011. | Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week, 2011. | Holy Women, 2011. | Doctors of the Church, 2011. | Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives, 2012. | Joseph Ratzinger: Fundamental Speeches from Five Decades, 2012. | The Faith, 2013. | Prayer, 2013. | Joseph Ratzinger in Communio, Vol. 2: Anthropology and Culture, 2013. | A Reason Open to God: Benedict XVI On Universities, Education, and Culture, 2013. | The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology, 2014. | Joseph Ratzinger - Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy, 2014. | Liberating Logos: Pope Benedict XVI's September Speeches, 2014. | **Last Testament: In His Own Words, 2016.** | Teaching and Learning the Love of God: Being a Priest Today, 2017. | Called to Holiness: On Love, Vocation, and Formation, 2017.



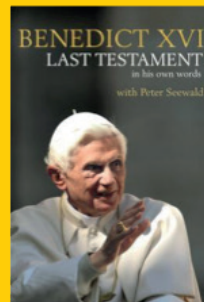
"...Marian piety and theology is fundamentally based upon the Old Testament's deeply anchored theology of woman ... Israel's belief in God with respect to the relation of man and woman expresses

*itself as marriage. Here, marriage is the immediate 'translation' of theology... what Ephesians 5 then further explains theologically is entirely the consequence of Old Testament theology." **Daughter Zion: Meditations on the Church's Marian Belief**, p13-16*



"Anyone who looks even at only the last hundred years cannot deny that immense progress has been made in medicine, technology ... and one may hope for further progress. At the same time, however, the ambivalence of this

*progress is obvious. Progress is beginning to put Creation - the basis of our existence - at risk; it creates inequality among human beings, and it generates ever new threats to the world and humanity. This makes moral controls of progress indispensable. But what are the criteria here?" **Values in a Time of Upheaval**, p25*



"...in old age you are more deeply practised... Life has taken its shape. The fundamental decisions have been made. On the other hand, one feels the difficulty of life's

*questions more deeply, one feels the weight of today's godlessness, the weight of the absence of faith which goes deep into the Church, but then one also feels the greatness of Jesus Christ's words..." **Last Testament: In His Own Words**, p9*