



**Disciples**  
*Making Disciples*



**Parish Office:**  
6280 6076, [secretariat@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:secretariat@sfxchurch.sg)



**Parish Priest:**  
Rev Fr Benedict Chng  
6288 0484  
[benedict.chng@catholic.org.sg](mailto:benedict.chng@catholic.org.sg)



**Little Shepherds' SchoolHouse@St Francis Xavier:**  
6011 1076, [lss-cosfx.admin@catholicpreschool.edu.sg](mailto:lss-cosfx.admin@catholicpreschool.edu.sg)

**Assistant Priest:**  
Rev Fr Nathaniel Xavier  
6280 8331  
[xavier.nathaniel@catholic.org.sg](mailto:xavier.nathaniel@catholic.org.sg)

## Jesus, Personification of the Good News

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Sunday of the Word of God  
22 Jan 2023

Is 8:23-9:3  
1 Cor 1:10-13,17  
Mt 4:12-23

On 30 September 2019, the Feast of St Jerome, Pope Francis in his apostolic letter *Aperuit illis* instituted the annual observance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time, for the celebration, study and dissemination of Scripture, and named it Sunday of the Word of God.

This special feast is a needful reminder for us that, through Jesus the person and the Word, our Father reveals himself and his will to us. Jesus the Good News, who is "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6) also tells us that "all that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you." (Jn 16:15).

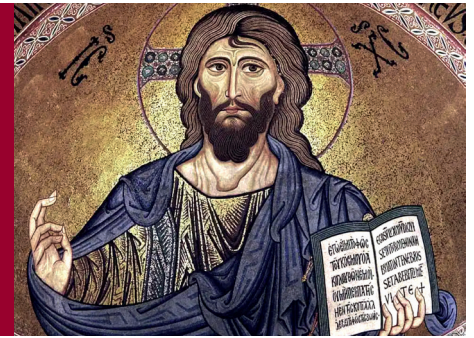
The readings focus on the Word incarnate bringing hope and joy, and a salvific freedom from spiritual death, through a unified, counter-cultural way of living in truth and love.

Isaiah's oracle talks about the degradation of the northern tribes of Israel under the Assyrian empire, but that in the gloom and doom, an unstoppable light will inevitably shine forth and overcome the darkness, bringing hope, comfort and joy. That "great light" (Is 9:2) is Christ himself, liberating the world from the slavery of sin.

Jesus as the light and salvation of the world in the Psalm emphasises our need to ask for the grace of enduring fortitude, to ceaselessly seek the Lord in his house in the sacraments, gaze on his brilliance at Holy Hour

*"Christ, the Son of  
God made man, is the  
Father's one, perfect and  
unsurpassable Word."*

CCC 65



and live faithfully for the salvation of our souls.

The theme of hope in Jesus continues through the Second Reading, where St Paul underscores that we are only as strong as our unity in heart and spirit. His sentiments echo our Lord's petition, "I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you..." (Jn 17:20-21)

The Gospel brings us full circle, to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah in the First Reading, where Jesus, the One Great Light, preaches the Gospel of repentance, a return to God, for the "kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 4:17). Jesus' mission as the divine king is also to re-unify and re-establish the 12 tribes of Israel under His new law of love and mercy, where, through His 12 Apostles, his fishers of men, he will heal by being the remedy for sin.

Today, what does it mean for us Christians to experience the joy and love of the Lord through Jesus the Word? It is, first of all, to know the Word as a person by right relationship.

To have fullness of life and experience supernatural joy, and to love as the Word calls us to, we need to go beyond mere biblical knowledge. Our daily encounters with the Word must grow deeper and stronger through the practice of praying with Scripture, like the *Lectio Divina* and Ignatian Contemplation.

From knowing him, internalising his

teachings, and continuously falling in love with the very personification of Scripture – spending copious time just being with, talking and listening to, and emulating him (that's what being in love with someone makes us want to do!) – we will eventually arrive at the hardest part that God's grace alone can achieve: making the Word and Jesus come alive for others, evangelising, soul-fishing – like the Apostles – through loving actions in our lives.

Said Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI, "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." (cf *Deus Caritas Est*, 1)

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb 4:12)

Jesus the Word separates sinfulness from holiness, sadness from joy, darkness from light, despondency from hope. Jesus the Word clarifies our position and charts the way we are to live, launching us on our heavenly exodus in him.

"Christ, the Son of God made man, is the Father's one, perfect and unsurpassable Word. In him he has said everything; there will be no other word than this one." (CCC 65)

## Announcements

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

**SCAN QR CODE  
FOR MASS HYMNS**  
[www.sfxchurch.sg/mass](http://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](http://tinyurl.com/SFXFacilitiesReport)



### CHINESE NEW YEAR OPERATING HOURS

Please note the operating hours for the following:

#### Main Gate

- 21 - 22 Jan: 5am - 11pm
- 23 - 24 Jan: 8.30am - 12pm

#### Parish Office

- 21 Jan: 9.30am - 1.30pm
- 22 Jan - 24 Jan: Closed

#### Columbarium

- 21 - 22 Jan: 8.30am - 6pm
- 23 - 24 Jan: 8.30am - 12pm

#### Adoration Room

- 21 - 22 Jan: 7am - 11pm
- 23 - 24 Jan: Closed

### CATHOLIC DIVORCE SUPPORT GROUP: SURVIVING DIVORCE

A 12-week DVD-based programme to support those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage, divorce or separation. The video presentations by priests, theologians and teachers will help you cope during this difficult time, and lead you and your family to God's divine mercy and love. For more information, email [catholicdivorce.sg@gmail.com](mailto:catholicdivorce.sg@gmail.com)

**Dates & Time:** (Thursdays)  
26 Jan - 27 Apr 2023, 8pm-10pm  
**Venue:** Zoom  
**Contribution:** S\$60  
**Register:** <http://bit.ly/SD-register>

*"The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious  
to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."*

*Numbers 6:24-26*

*Fr Benedict, Fr Nathaniel and all staff would like to wish all our  
parishioners a joyous & blessed Lunar New Year!*



### Blessed Birthday, Fr Nathaniel!

We thank God for the gift of Fr Nathaniel in our Parish. As we celebrate his birthday on **Wed 25 Jan**, may God bless him abundantly with good health and fill him with God's good gifts in a special way for the love and concern with which he ministers to all those entrusted to his care.

### FOR PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN - FOLLOW THE SUNDAY GOSPELS TOGETHER!

The Gospels over these few Sundays until end January are about Jesus as the Lamb of God, Jesus' call to repentance, his first disciples and also Jesus' teaching about the Beatitudes. You can read these stories with your children before coming for Mass! Our parish librarians have selected some books and marked out these gospels for you to read and pray over with your children. Come and check out the selection of books today!

St Jerome Library is open **every Sunday 8am - 1pm**. Please note that we will be **closed on Sun 22 Jan (Chinese New Year)**.

### MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND: RESTORE, REKINDLE AND RENEW YOUR MARRIAGE

Good marriages can always be made better. To deepen your relationship, sign up for a Marriage Encounter Weekend on **3 - 5 Feb** or **14 - 16 Apr**. Please contact Joe & Reenie @ 9670 5390 or email them at [mewkend@gmail.com](mailto:mewkend@gmail.com).

### CENACLE AT HOME RETREAT: JOURNEY FROM ASHES TO EASTER

A 10-week programme based on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, which enables one to know Jesus Christ more intimately in the midst of life's daily routine. It includes a weekly meeting of faith sharing, daily prayer using Scripture, and spiritual direction. It falls within the Lent season and it would be a timely opportunity for us to deepen our Lenten pilgrimage. To register, visit [www.cenaclemission.com](http://www.cenaclemission.com) or call 9298 5808

#### MORNINGS: 10 Thursdays

**Dates:** 16 Feb - 20 April  
**Time:** 9.30am - 11.30am  
**Venue:** LaSalle Centre - St Patrick School (490 East Coast Road)

OR

#### EVENINGS: 10 Thursdays

**Dates:** 16 Feb - 20 April  
**Time:** 7.30pm - 9.30pm  
**Venue:** Cana - the Catholic Centre (55 Waterloo St)

### CARITAS SINGAPORE: MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS (MODULE 1) BY REV FR DAVID GARCIA, O.P.

*How do we know what is right and what is wrong? Why does this matter?*  
Join us in person as we explore what moral truths are and why they matter for our happiness. For enquiries, please email Caritas at [mpmc@caritas-singapore.org](mailto:mpmc@caritas-singapore.org).

**Dates & Time:** (Thursdays) 26 Jan - 9 Mar 2023, 7.30pm - 9.30pm  
**Venue:** CANA at Catholic Centre (55 Waterloo St, Level 3)  
**Fee:** \$70  
**Register:** <http://bit.ly/MPMC-1>



# Lectio Divina: Praying with Scripture



The phrase *lectio divina* means “divine reading” in Latin and is a fitting name for this prayer practice of listening to Scripture with the ear of the heart. *Lectio divina* (often called “*lectio*” for short) is a dialogue with God through Scripture that includes the whole self: thoughts, images, memories, desires, etc. The movements within *lectio divina* involve reading, listening to, responding to and resting in the Word of God. It can be practiced alone or with a community.

## THE ORIGINS OF LECTIO DIVINA

With encouragement from the Church Fathers, *lectio divina* entered the daily prayer of the early monastic communities in the 6th century as a way of communicating with God through Scripture. It has developed over time into the practice we know today of reading God’s Word and attending to his presence therein. The four movements within *lectio divina* are reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation.

*“Above all it’s the Gospels that occupy my mind when I’m at prayer; my poor soul has so many needs, and yet this is the one thing needful. I’m always finding fresh lights there, hidden and enthralling meanings.” - St. Thérèse of Lisieux*

## WHY YOU MIGHT PRAY WITH LECTIO DIVINA

*Lectio divina* encourages us to become receptive to the divine Word in order to form us into the image of Christ. Pope Francis speaks of *lectio divina* in *Evangelii Gaudium* as a “way of listening to what the Lord wishes to tell us in his Word and of letting ourselves be transformed by the Spirit” (152). If you desire to incorporate more Scripture into your prayer life and pay closer attention to the movements of God, *lectio divina* might be a place to start.

## HOW TO PRACTICE LECTIO DIVINA



### 1. Select a Scripture passage

Before starting your prayer, select a passage from Scripture to use for your *lectio divina*. It can be from the Old or New Testament, but it shouldn’t be too long. The length of a reading from Mass works well. Often, people choose to pray with a reading from the day’s Lectionary or the Mass for the upcoming Sunday.



### 2. Prepare for prayer

Before entering into the prayer, prepare yourself physically and mentally. Begin by sitting comfortably, placing both feet on the ground, with posture upright and hands open on your lap as if waiting to receive a gift from God. Then, abandon any agenda, worries or thoughts you bring to this prayer and entrust these things to the providence of God. Ask for the grace to be receptive to what God will speak to you through this Scripture reading.



### 3. Read (*lectio*)

Begin by slowly and meditatively reading your Scripture passage out loud. Listen for a particular word or phrase that speaks to you at this moment and sit with it for a time.



### 4. Meditate (*meditatio*)

Read the same passage a second time. As you re-engage the text, let the word or phrase that stood out become your invitation to dialogue with God. Allow the word or phrase to wash over you and permeate your thoughts and feelings.



### 5. Pray (*oratio*)

Read the text a third time. What is God saying to you in these words? What do you want to say to God? What feelings do these words raise up in you? Share your answers with God.



### 6. Contemplate (*contemplatio*)

Read the text a final time. As you do, release the word or phrase you have been praying with. Be still and rest in God’s embrace. What gift has God given you to take away from this prayer? To what action might God be inviting you? Thank God for this gift and invitation as you conclude your prayer.





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

# Fortify Retreat: Taken, Blessed, Broken, Given



Forty-four participants in total signed up for the Fortify retreat from 6 to 8 January. The weekend provided a space for post confirmants to reconnect with God and with other members of the 1Cor12 youth communities. The sessions were based on the book 'Life of the Beloved' by Henry Nouwen. With facilitators as their mentors, each one was led into the lived-in weekend of praise and worship, sharing and prayer ministry before the Blessed Sacrament.



"The Fortify retreat really helped me. My relationship with God was growing stagnant. As my commitments with God became more chore-like and I felt like I was going through the motion during my personal prayer time. This camp really helped me relive the truth that God truly loves me. As long as I put my faith and trust in him, God will pave a path for me. Not only that, the Fortify retreat also got me closer to the people in the church youth community, giving me a group of new friends to grow with Christ in :) I'm so glad that I said my "yes" to God in this retreat <3" - *Alex Lim*

"The Fortify retreat was something that truly renewed me, it allowed me to start again with God. Despite my familiarity with him and his ways of reaching out to me, I am amazed by how he is still able to surprise me in new and different ways. Praise the Lord for allowing me to regain my child-like faith and be excited again to serve him, to be refilled with zeal to come back to him again because he has chosen me over and over again." - *Ignatius Chew*

"First and foremost, I must say I am truly grateful for my facilitators - for being so approachable, so enthusiastic and such friendly faces to confide in. Through this retreat, I have been able to grow closer to God and place my trust in His plan. More so, I am thankful for the amazing group mates that I had during this retreat, who have inspired me to build a stronger relationship with God. Attending Fortify retreat has undoubtedly been an insightful and unforgettable one!! Thank you to everyone who put in their hard work to make this retreat a successful one" - *Kyra Lim, Participant from St Bernadette's Church*

## 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

Public Holiday:  
8.30am - 12pm

### 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  
Sun: 8.30am - 6pm  
Closed on 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/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 JPPII Hall. 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)