



Disciples
Making Disciples



Parish Office:
6280 6076, secretariat@sfxchurch.sg



Parish Priest:
Rev Fr Benedict Chng
6288 0484
benedict.chng@catholic.org.sg



Little Shepherds' SchoolHouse@St Francis Xavier:
6011 1076, angeline.wong@catholicpreschool.edu.sg

Assistant Priest:
Rev Fr Nathaniel Xavier
6280 8331
xavier.nathaniel@catholic.org.sg

Highway to Heaven

5th Sunday of Easter
7 May 2023

Ac 6:1-7
1 Pt 2:4-9
Jn 14:1-12

We are in Eastertide, but the gospel flashes back to the last supper, reminding us: "Do not let your hearts be troubled" (Jn 14:1).

This is no empty platitude. Neither is it a mundane "cheer up".

Jesus follows up: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (Jn 14:6). As a commentator once said, "You don't go to heaven to find Christ. You go to Christ to find heaven".

The disciples get a dose of stress management. If they keep their sights on heaven and keep their faith in Jesus, they will overcome the trials of life. They will have inner peace.

The key - know Jesus and they will know God (Jn 14:7-11).

But the disciples fail to understand or keep their faith. Their struggles with fear in the events following the last supper is a portrait of us too. They are subtle denials of Christ compared to those who scream "crucify him". Their effects are nonetheless piercing.

What are some problems faced by the disciples and others that parallel our lives and rob us of peace, unwittingly?

Drowsiness: Peter, James and John doze off in the garden of Gethsemane - unwilling or unable to deal with the stress of the moment. Three times, Jesus warns them to stay awake and pray, lest they fall into temptation. But they sleep anyway.



"Not only is Jesus the road to heaven, the road will take the shape of the Sacraments of the Church"
(Dr. Brant Pitre)

A common human technique for dealing with stress and the hardships of life is to become numb and drowsy. Sloth in life leads to moral slumber because vigilance against sin can be equally stressful. We anaesthetise ourselves with mindless entertainment, meaningless distractions, alcohol and drugs. Prayers and spirituality pose too much hassle and too many uncomfortable questions.

Destruction: When Peter finally awakens, he cuts off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest.

For many of us, our sword is our mouth. Against those whom we dislike or oppose, we lash out in slander, gossip, insinuation and innuendos - bent on destroying reputation, dignity and harmony.

It is worst in cyberspace - anonymity numbs our senses. They go by many names - cyberbullying, doxxing, trolling, ghosting, cancel culture, woke culture... We need to confront evil, resist injustice, and speak clearly to a confused world - lovingly. There is no need to win every encounter. Plant seeds instead, confident that in Christ, truth will prevail.

Denial: Confronted with the fearful prospect of being condemned along with Jesus, Peter denies being one of his followers three times.

We, when confronted with far milder provocations, often deny a connection with the Lord or the Church. Let's take prohibition against fornication for example. Why suffer ridicule, endure questioning, or be drawn into an unpleasant debate? If it's the norm, why not conform? So, we dissociate, compromise, or qualify our faith to avoid stress.

Deflection: Pontius Pilate succumbs to fear of the crowd and condemns Jesus to death. He deflects responsibility by washing his hands in front of the crowd. His career was more important than justice.

Doing the right thing could cost us our job, our reputation, our friends, or simply make our life more difficult. Instead of assuming responsibility, do we blame, accuse, or excuse?

Staying faithful to Jesus leads to true peace, but it is indeed difficult. "Thou shall not kill" makes sense to almost everyone. But "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you", is a new moral law that makes sense only through grace.

It is through grace that Jesus promises: "whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father" (Jn 14:12).

Grace comes through the Sacraments - the "greater works" that priests, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will perform *in persona Christi*. Not only is Jesus the road to heaven, the road will take the shape of the Sacraments of the Church (Dr. Brant Pitre).

So, take courage - we don't need to drowse, destroy, deny, or deflect. The Sacraments give us grace to live a beatific life. Be like Mary, faithful to the end. She stands poised and resolute at the foot of the cross, not sprawled and distraught.

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 CHURCH PEWS?

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



ASCENSION OF THE LORD (DAY OF OBLIGATION)

Wed 17 May (Vigil): 6.30pm
Thu 18 May: 6.30am, 6.30pm & 8.30pm

2ND COLLECTION FOR THE GENERAL MAINTENANCE & 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 church. If you would like to donate digitally, please PayNow to UEN "T08CC4033J" and indicate in the reference "Maintenance". Please give generously.

CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting is on **Mon 8 May**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by Praying Over. All are welcome!

Time: 8pm - 10pm
Venue: SFX Auditorium
(Parish Centre, Level 3)

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

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

Date: Mon 8 May
Time: 8pm - 9.30pm
Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Room



MAY - MONTH OF *Mary*

Come join us to pray the rosary as a parish community to honour our Blessed Mother at the following timings:

Mon - Thu: 8pm (Grotto) | **Fri:** 7.30pm (Church) | **Sat - Sun:** 6.45pm (Grotto)
except 14th May at 8pm

Alternatively, you may join our online Zoom Rosary Sessions:

WEEKDAY DIVINE MERCY & ROSARY

tinyurl.com/SFXWeekdayRosary
Date & Time: Mon - Fri, 3pm
Meeting ID: 845 8298 0708

ROSARY BY SaLT

tinyurl.com/SFXTueRosary
Date & Time: Tues, 8.30pm
Meeting ID: 867 1052 4234
Password: 465481

ROSARY BY LECTORS

bit.ly/SundayRosary
Date & Time: Sun, 8.30pm
Meeting ID: 840 7232 7379
Password: 3059464132



Come join us on **Sat 13 May, 6.45pm** at **JPII Hall** for the candlelight rosary procession within the church grounds. You may bring your own waxless candle.

PENTECOST: NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT (DAY 1)

Come join our Charismatic Prayer Group, Intercessory Prayer Ministry and Praise & Worship Group for a time of Praise and Worship followed by Day 1 of Novena to the Holy Spirit. Find out more at www.sfxchurch.sg/sfxpentecostnovena2023/

Date: Wed 17 May 2023
Time: 8pm - 8.45pm
Venue: JPII Hall

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR 2023 (LISS) - JUMPSTART

Do you desire a new life in the Holy Spirit? Join us in the Life in the Spirit Seminar (LISS) - a series of 10 weekly in-person sessions including live praise and worship, talks and small group discussions. Seats are limited. Scan the QR Code to find out more.

Dates: 3 Jul - 11 Sep 2023
(Mondays)
Time: 8pm - 10pm
Venue: SFX Auditorium
(Parish Centre, Level 3)
Register: tinyurl.com/SFXLISS2023



MOTHER'S DAY SPIRITUAL BOUQUET

Celebrate Mother's Day differently this year! Bless your mother with the gift of prayer - come as a family, and offer a decade of the rosary specially for the special woman in your lives at the Grotto. In so doing, we will also be honouring Mary - the mother of all mothers, who exhorts us in her apparitions to never stop praying. Complete your spiritual bouquet by picking a flower stick, personalising it for your mother, and placing it at the feet of Mother Mary. Nothing can be more meaningful, special or heartfelt than a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the wonderful gift of mothers!



EASTER THANKSGIVING TREE

"Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples" - Psalm 93:3

Let us proclaim and glorify God for all the wonderful things He has done for us. We can write our thanksgiving for the New Life we have received - for the graces received to overcome challenges, prayers answered and miracles encountered! Please write on the paper provided and hang your 'Thanksgiving' on the Easter Tree: **Thank you Jesus for** _____



HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

FOR CHURCH MOVEMENTS AND GROUPS

We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelisation each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.

CARITAS: MODULE 3 OF MY PERSONAL COMPASS 2023 - CHRISTIAN MORALITY BY REV FR DAVID GARCIA, OP

In today's marketplace of ideas, there are many different moralities, and we are often asked to keep what we believe to ourselves. But is Christian morality meant to be kept private within Christian communities? What is Christian morality anyway? Join us as we explore why Christian morality may be the answer to the wounded human nature and the role of God's grace. We will also consider why the Church has always put so much emphasis on faith, hope and love. For enquiries, please email Caritas Singapore at mpmc@caritas-singapore.org

Dates: 25 May - 13 July 2023 (excluding 29 Jun)

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: CANA The Catholic Centre (55, Waterloo Street, Level 3)

Register: <https://forms.office.com/r/kckZrtLdqt>



IN THE MONTH OF APR 2023

WEDDINGS

We congratulate the following couples:

1. Wong Tsun Hei & Tan Maryann Michelle
2. Matthew Bryan Leo & Fiorina Rayen
3. Roy Paulinus Tan Bing Hong & Regine Tan Shu Min

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Edward Lim Tiang Hong
2. Paul Ho Keng Chong

BAPTISMS

We welcome the following:

1. Charlton Tan
2. Kaiser Thomas Ng Kai Ze
3. Kaiden Theodore Ng Kai De
4. Charlotte Tan Yu En
5. Andie Ashley Foo Kai Xuan
6. Eli Edward Dominic
7. Raine Xin Lei De Boer
8. Riley Xin Ling De Boer
9. Caleb Timothy Lim Yang Yi
10. Lily Enya Lim
11. Jonah Mao Han Shen
12. Tristan Thaddeus Head
13. Aw Ying Ding Augustine
14. Natalie Bernadette Kareen Lee Ai Zhen
15. Sofia Kateri Irwan
16. Vienna Nerissa Lim Li Ping
17. Dana Alvina Edea Tan
18. Annie Lee
19. Deanne Mariel Conceicao
20. Bede Dion Yong Khang Wei
21. Davian Ng Dong An
22. Iris Lee
23. Janice Emma Ng Mui Seut
24. Jude Moy Hounng Jun
25. Ronnie Luke Tan Swee Kim
26. John Tan Yuh Cherng

BOOKS BY FR. HENRY SIEW

Have you ever wondered what it's like to get behind a book, to know its story and its author?

The librarians at St. Jerome Library were excited about having Father Henry Siew over last week to share some of his beloved books, "**Smart Way of Loving**", "**Follow Christ and Be A Catholic**", as well as "**Pitfalls in Christianity**".

Father Henry began the session with a personal sharing on serving as a Marriage Encounter (ME) Presenting Priest. With a university background in social work and sociology, and returning fresh from theology studies in Rome, he initially took offence to expectations placed on him to become an ME Presenting Priest.

His second experience assisting at one Chinese language ME weekend, however, began to move him deeply as the personal sharing sessions focusing on sharing their emotions and hurts began to help him to understand himself and the great needs of those who are married.

By nature, an introvert but because of the pastoral needs he saw, Father Henry worked on gradually developing extroverted skills in order to help others. Subsequently, he found himself serving as Presenting Priest for 2 ME weekends each year.

> continued on page 4

Father Henry's books are available for sale this weekend outside JPPI Hall. He will also autograph books after every Mass except after Sun 5.30pm Mass.

"Smart Way of Loving" is going at **\$15** per copy with "Follow Christ and Be A Catholic" and "Pitfalls in Christianity" at **\$10** per copy. You can also purchase a bundle at **\$30** for all three books.



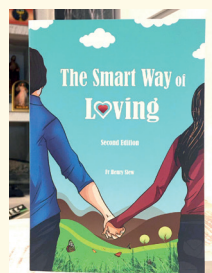
BOOKS BY FR. HENRY SIEW

The Smart Way of Loving, first published in Jul 2009, is a collection of 40 talks from these ME Weekends. These talks are grouped under 4 sections:

- I. Knowing You, Knowing Me - Mutual Understanding and Acceptance
- II. Knowing "We" - The Dynamics of Marital Relationships
- III. Connecting "You" and "Me" - Intimate Communication is the Meeting of Hearts
- IV. Growing "We" - Keep Your Priority and Build Your Support Systems.

Father Henry wanted to have a style of writing that is pastoral, meaning that the book is set in a relatable marital context with real-life examples.

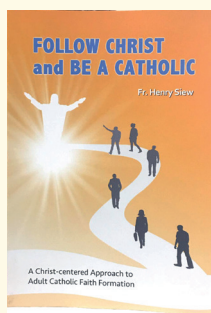
As he highlighted a few talks, the one that many of us found especially engaging was this question, "You can have many wives, but you only have one mother; true or false? Does filial piety mean disregarding your wife?" He then posed this question, "Who should a man rescue if both his wife and mother were in danger." We won't spoil the answer for you but these thought-provoking reflections and more can be found in his book, 'The Smart Way of Loving'.



Follow Christ and Be A Catholic is a collection of presentations from the RCIA program. Typically, we see Salvation History presented in a linear pattern starting with Adam and Eve, followed by the Fall, etc. Since such an approach may be slightly removed for some people to resonate with today, 'Follow Christ and Be A Catholic' focuses on Jesus with a Christ-centred approach.

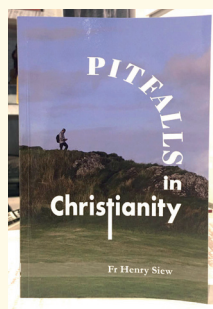
A topic like the Sacraments, for example, focuses on how Christ's whole life was a ministry of healing — and the fundamental source of all Sacraments.

If morality is an interesting topic you'd like to dive deeper into, the book sheds light on how we can live out the gospel values as shown by Christ's own life, as opposed to the 10 Commandments, which are part of Old Testament laws but not the main standard for Christian living.



Pitfalls of Christianity is Father Henry's latest book covering misunderstandings of the Bible (especially the Old Testament), prayer, and Christianity in the world today.

Every Christian has probably had some doubts about God, His goodness, or Christianity at some point in their journey. Some of us brush those doubts aside but struggle with them throughout our whole lives. Some of us think that doubts are wrong, and a stronger faith is needed.



But God is the source of both faith and reason, and there is no contradiction in God. In fact, both faith and reason lead us to the one Truth who is God.

'Pitfalls of Christianity' is that one important book we can refer to, to make sense of the doubts and questions we have about God and our faith. Even better, Father Henry has written the book in such a simple, straightforward manner that it helps with understanding.

The librarians were blessed to have met Father Henry and hear him passionately share about his books and why he wrote them. May the Holy Spirit bless all efforts to bring Christ's teaching and healing contained in these books to anyone who reads it.



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 - Fri:
10am - 6pm

Sat - 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