



Disciples
Making Disciples



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God's Might is Mercy

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time
23 Jul 2023

Wis 12: 13; 16-19
Rom 8: 26-27
Mt 13: 24-43

Today's Gospel on the parable of the wheat and the darnel begs the 64-million dollar question: why does God allow evil to exist in the world?

The short answer to that is that God is omniscient and omnipotent. He knows everything and he can do anything. So really, that question is moot.

What we should be asking ourselves is that as Christians, how should we be living in a world that threatens to weed out our steadfastness in faith?

In the Gospel, Jesus shocked his agrarian audience with the parable of the man with seemingly negligent crop-raising logic – one who would allow his wheat to be assailed by weeds, when he could have easily asked his servants to remove the pesky plants whenever they sprouted. However, by patiently waiting till harvest time to separate the wheat from the darnel, not only did he prevent the wheat from being accidentally and prematurely uprooted – thus maximising his harvest – his patience earned him a bonus: at harvest time, the bundled darnel provided fuel for fire! Greater good was certainly achieved.

There is also so much for us to learn from Scripture's examples of flawed individuals – the weeds of society – who, after an encounter with the Lord's limitless mercy, are transformed into some of his best evangelists: the Samaritan woman

at the well (cf Jn 4: 4-42), Zacchaeus the chief tax collector (cf Lk 19:1-10), the woman who washed Christ's feet with her tears and dried them with her hair (cf Lk 7:36-50), St Matthew who was called Levi (cf Mt 9:9-13), St Peter (cf Jn 21:17). It is only through tasting God's infinite mercy, and under his miraculous hand, that even darnel can become wheat.

In his Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et misera* of 20 Nov 2016, Pope Francis sums up God's purpose in sending his Son Jesus: "... everything is resolved in the merciful love of the Father... *Forgiveness* is the most visible sign of the Father's love, which Jesus sought to reveal by his entire life. Every page of the Gospel is marked by this imperative of a love that loves to the point of forgiveness. Even at the last moment of his earthly life, as he was being nailed to the cross, Jesus spoke words of forgiveness: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Lk 23:34)".

The first reading (Wis 12: 13; 16-19) reminds us that while God's mercy is rich and copious, he is also a righteous judge, and judge us he will on the last day, for he will "throw them into the blazing fire, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth (Mt 13:42)".

Thankfully, God's unconditional mercy comes to us in the Holy Spirit, our intercessor, who is the master of our interior lives (cf Rom 8: 26-27). We need the healing and strengthening graces obtained through the Sacraments of Reconciliation, the Eucharist, and to let the Word and prayer nourish us and deepen our relationship with the Lord. The lone wheat stalk remains vulnerable amid encroaching weeds. So, we journey with God-centred communities, and together form our faith through



*Forgiveness is the
most visible sign of the
Father's love*

Pope Francis, 20 Nov 2016

study, spiritual direction, and by supporting one another. In this way, we can experience a continuous metanoia before it's too late.

If mercy is God's way of healing our weed-like woundedness, then repentance should be our response to his mercy. Having been lavished by his unmerited compassion, we must freely love and forgive others too.

We need to unwearingly trust in God's omniscience and omnipotence, that the wrongs and sufferings he allows in the world and in our lives are for a greater good, and always used for shepherding us towards salvation.

As an insignificant mustard seed becomes a tree which shelters the birds (cf Mt 13:31-32), God makes remarkable things happen when we least expect it. Similarly, under his divine baker's hands, yeast, which signifies impurity, becomes a productive agent to raise nourishing loaves to feed the hungry (cf Mt 13:33).

At harvest time, will we be the wheat that "will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Mt 13:43), for allowing God's patient, persistent longing for us to change, to fertilise us? Or will we have wilted because we refused to endure God's faithful tending?

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/SFXFacilityReport



SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (DAY OF OBLIGATION)

Mon 14 Aug (Vigil Mass):
• 6.30pm

Tue 15 Aug:
• 6.30am, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

It is available via appointment only. You may contact the Parish Office to make an appointment for the following time slots:

Fridays: 4pm - 6pm
Saturdays: 10am - 12pm

CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer Meeting is on **Mon 24 Jul, 8pm at SFX Auditorium (Parish Centre, Level 3)**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by a talk on 'Jesus Is The Lord Of Your Life' by Martin Fernandez. All are welcome!

INTERCESSORY

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

Date: Mon 24 Jul
Time: 8pm - 9.30pm
Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Room

WHY WE BELIEVE: ANSWERING COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Do Catholics Worship Mary? What does the Bible teach about her? Join the SFX Bible Apostolate Team (SFXBAT) in this talk to find out more.

TOPIC 6: Do Catholics Worship Mary?
Date & Time: Sun 23 Jul, 9am - 10.30am
Venue: Jeremiah Room (Parish Centre, L2)
Register: <https://bit.ly/VWB2023Register>

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP AT JP II HALL - FOR DINE-IN ONLY

Please be informed that with effect from August, the food available on Sunday mornings is for dine-in only. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we look forward to serving you!



ST JEROME LIBRARY: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Our parish library is looking for volunteers who can help with updating book borrowings & returns from parishioners as well as adding and tagging of new books into the Librarything system. Training will be provided. In addition, volunteers can also help with researching and putting up displays related to the Sunday scripture readings and the Feast days celebrated each month. If you are able to commit **at least 1 hour each month on a Sunday** anytime between 8am - 1pm, please come by the library on a Sunday or email stjeromelibrarysfx@gmail.com with your Name and Mobile Number and we will get in touch with you.

SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL (SSVP): A TALK ON CARING FOR DEMENTIA

Interested to know more about Dementia? The Society of St Vincent de Paul has organised a talk with Dementia Singapore to help us understand what is Dementia, how to manage it and build a dementia-friendly community. If you are interested to know more, please register with the Parish Office or scan the QR code **before 8 Aug 2023**.

Date: Sat 12 Aug 2023
Time: 10am - 12pm
Venue: JP II Hall
Register:
tinyurl.com/C4D2023



LIVING THE FAITH EVERYDAY (LiFE): SACRAMENTS OF THE EUCHARIST AND RECONCILIATION

Come join LiFE on this six-part video series as we explore the beauty of Holy Communion and encounter God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Experience the transformative power of grace that God offers us in these Sacraments!

Dates: 11 Aug - 15 Sep (Every Friday)
Time: 8pm - 9.30pm
Venue: JP II Hall
Enquiries: Desmond (9011 5076)

PREGNANCY CRISIS & SUPPORT - A SERVICE OF CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE: LIFEMARK MOVIE SCREENING

"This film will touch your heart, marriage, family and faith!"

Based on a true story, Lifemark tells the story of a young man who was adopted at birth and embarks on a journey of self-discovery when he decides to reconnect with his biological parents. Come together with your family and friends to watch this heart-warming movie that depicts the beauty when a person makes the choice for life and loving God. Register for your tickets now at bit.ly/lifemark-movie

Lifemark Movie Screening
Date: Tue 8 Aug 2023
Time: 7.30pm - 9.30pm
Venue: Church of the Holy Spirit (Auditorium, Level 4)

Followed by
Reflection & Untold Stories of Hope
Time: 9.30pm - 10.00pm
Venue: Church of the Holy Spirit (Auditorium, Level 4)

LANDINGS: WELCOMING HOME CATHOLICS SEEKING A RECONNECTION

Landings Singapore presents a new 10-week programme for Catholics seeking a reconnection to the faith. It runs from **4 Sep 2023 through 14 Nov 2023**, every Monday or Tuesday from **8pm to 10pm**. All sessions will be held in person at Church of the Holy Spirit or Church of Queen of Peace. We invite you to register your interest at returning@landings.org.sg or visit www.landings.org.sg

What's happening in the Mass?

Starting from this week, we will be publishing regular articles explaining the meaning and significance of why we do what we do during Mass.

THE BEGINNING

Gathering Rite

The gathering rite gives a formal beginning to our Mass and sets the mood. It is helpful to have this start, so that we all know that this is the time to open ourselves more fully to the presence of God and to leave our preoccupation with schedules, plans and other daily concerns behind.

Get Up, Stand Up

Standing is both a sign of respect and an expression of joy in our celebration.

Gathering Song

Singing is an act of prayer. St. Augustine says, "One who sings prays twice." Singing in one voice with our community during Mass fosters unity and brings us closer to God.

Greeting

The priest greets the congregation in God's name and we make the sign of the cross as he speaks the words, "In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". This ritual greeting acknowledges the presence of the Lord. After all, we believe that wherever two or three of us are gathered, Christ is there too. After the greeting, the priest or a reader may take a moment to introduce the theme of the Mass that day.



INTRODUCTORY OPTIONS



Option One: Confiteor, or the Penitential Rite

The first option for the presider to use is the Confiteor. We make it known to God and to those around us that we all have human imperfections. God expects a lot of us and sometimes we don't live up to His expectations. This isn't intended to make us feel guilty. Catholicism is not about guilt! It's about being aware of our limitations, acknowledging them and asking God's help to make ourselves better.



Option Two: Sprinkling

The rite of sprinkling can replace the penitential rite especially during Easter time. It is a form of blessing and a reminder of our baptism. When you are "sprinkled", acknowledge the blessing by making the sign of the cross.



Option Three: Litany of Praise (Lord Have Mercy)

The Litany of Praise, often called the Kyrie, is often said in Greek, but can be spoken in the language of the people. Through this prayer, we ask for God's mercy. Asking for mercy allows us to come more fully into God's presence and opens us to hearing God's message in the Liturgy of the Word.



Gloria

Now that we have acknowledged our wrongdoings and asked for mercy, it is time to praise God in the Gloria, which is a song that reaches far back into church history and worship.



Opening Prayer/Collect

It is impossible to clear all worries from your mind, and the opening prayer is an opportunity to place yourself in the presence of God and present Him with your personal petitions. While you pray with the celebrant, you also are asked to silently make your own prayer to God.



Source: www.bustedhalo.com

World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly *His Mercy is from Age to Age*



The theme chosen by the Holy Father is "His mercy is from age to age" (Lk 1:50), which expresses the link with World Youth Day which will take place a few days later in Lisbon (1 - 6 August 2023). The WYD theme "Mary arose and went with haste" (Lk 1:39) shows us, in fact, the young Mary who sets out to go and find her elderly cousin Elizabeth and who loudly proclaims, in the Magnificat, the strength of the alliance between young and old. Pope Francis reminded us that the elderly should be cared for like a treasure of humanity: they are our wisdom, our memory. It is crucial that grandchildren remain close to their grandparents, who are like roots from which they draw the sap of human and spiritual values.

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

BACK GATE

Mon - Sun:
5am - 1am

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

ANOIDTING 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.



VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

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