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**Disciples
Making Disciples**

God is Unjust... to Himself

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Oct 2023

Ez 18:25-28
Phil 2:1-11
Mt 21:28-32

"Jesus loves me - that I know for the Bible tells me so..." As children, we all delighted in God. God's goodness and love is palpable - in the beauty and wonder of the cosmos, in the trees and flowers, the little birds and animals and most of all, in the love from our parents! In all these, we are so happy that God loves and cares for us.

In contrast to this childlike awe, today's first reading presents us with a bitter accusation that God is "unjust" (Ez 18:25) The accuser blamed God for the darkness he was experiencing from sin. Instead of acknowledging his own wrongdoing, he excused his sinfulness as an inherited condition that he could not be held accountable for (cf Ez 18:2). God was therefore "unjust" in allowing the burden of guilt that haunted him.

Perhaps we ourselves have used an excuse like this. We blame others for the wrong we do and the good we fail to do. Such an attitude causes a grave disquiet in our souls and God invites us today to renounce sin, "become law-abiding and honest" (Ez 18:27) and begin to live in his love and mercy again.

Jesus' parable of the two sons in today's gospel reinforces this invitation to repent and be united with God. In the parable, one son

agreed to go out and work in his father's vineyard but did not go. The other son declined to go when asked but "thought better of it" (Mt 21:29) and proceeded into the vineyard. Jesus posed the question to the Pharisees, "which of these did the will of the father?" (Mt 21:31) The son who actually repented of his initial refusal and then went into the vineyard is held as the role model.

Jesus used the imagery of a vineyard for the Church or God's kingdom here on earth deliberately. Working in the vineyard is also a metaphor for discipleship. Disciples are to persevere in learning from Christ and becoming more firmly grafted onto the true vine who is Christ himself (cf Jn 15:1-17). To be willing to toil in the vineyard is to discipline our self-will and conform ourselves

to Christ. Christ's life thus flows into ours and just as Christ was obedient to the Father even to the cross, we, too, as Christ's disciples can be obedient to God, reject sin and grow in the holiness God has given to us. No one who desires this new life in Christ is ever turned away. Jesus stressed this explicitly when he said that even tax-collectors and prostitutes (regarded as the most unworthy in Jesus' time) are able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. What is most needed is repentance and sincere efforts to strive to be as obedient as Christ to God's will.

This is also St Paul's exhortation in today's second reading. St Paul tells us that Christ was so "self-effacing" (Phil 2:3) that he did not cling to his equality with God but became incarnate so as to be the "slave" to die for our sins (Phil 2:7). We must therefore "...have no competition among [ourselves], no conceit... nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your mind be the same as Jesus Christ" (Phil 2:5).

Christ's earthly life was marked by suffering, yet he never accused God of being "unjust" but willingly followed God's plan of redemptive love for all of humanity. As we receive Christ's gifts of his Body and Blood today in the Eucharist, may we be more aware of the suffering love of the Trinity for us. May we also gratefully acknowledge that if God is "unjust", he can be said to be unjust and unfair only to himself. Though we continue to sin against him, God still waits with patient love every day for our repentance and return to him.



"...if God is 'unjust', he can be said to be unjust and unfair only to himself. Though we continue to sin against him, God still waits with patient love every day for our repentance and return to him."

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



SSVP COLLECTION

There will be a second collection by Society of St Vincent De Paul this weekend to help the poor and needy in monthly rations and other aid programmes. SSVP members will be at the atrium area. Please give generously. For cheque payments or PayNow, pay to:

Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP)

- OCBC Bank Account No: 686 596 768 001
- PayNow UEN: S61SS0149B

CHARISMATIC - GROWTH SERIES

The next Charismatic Prayer session is on **Mon 2 Oct, 2023**. There will be Praise & Worship followed by a talk on 'Gifts of the Holy Spirit - 3: Faith, Healing, Miracle' by Jessica Francisco/Gerard Francisco. All are welcome!

Time: 8pm - 10pm

Venue: SFX Auditorium
(Parish Centre Level 3)

INTERCESSORY

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

Date: Mon 2 Oct

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Rm

CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION @ SFX

Come celebrate Children's Day @ SFX on Sun 1 Oct 2023. There will be games, face painting, balloons and our very first Book Swap Extravaganza! Bring a book, take a book! Trade your well-loved titles for a fresh read.

Date: Sun 1 Oct 2023

Time: 8am - 1pm

Venue: Plaza (Outside JPPII Hall)

Thank You, Fr Nathaniel!

As a parish community, we give thanks to God for his sacrifice and love for the parish. Let us continue to pray for him.



We Welcome, Fr Edward Lim!



A warm welcome to Fr Edward Lim, who joins us as an Assistant Priest at SFX. Do say hello if you see him around!

October: Candlelight Rosary Procession

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. There will be nightly processions within the church grounds in honour of Our Blessed Mother. You may bring your own waxless candles and meet at the Grotto. **Please note that there is no procession on 31 Oct.**



Mon - Thurs, Sat - Sun: 8pm
Fri: 6.30pm

VERBUM DEI SINGAPORE: PICNIC WITH JESUS

Come away as a couple for a scripture-based mini retreat with a Picnic with Jesus at Labrador Park. Organized by the Verbum Dei Missionary Disciples.

Date: Sat 4 Nov 2023

Time: 9am - 12pm

Venue: Labrador Nature Reserve (Berlayer Shade)

Cost: \$60/couple

(inclusive of picnic basket, journals, refreshment)

\$5/child (inclusive of refreshment and children programme, age 5 years and above)



LIFE MINISTRY: REBORN - YOU, YOUR CHILD AND THE HEART OF BAPTISM

Explore the profound effects and mission of the Sacrament of Baptism through a three-part video series with LiFE. Examine the essential role of Baptism in God's salvation plan and discover your baptismal calling to share in the mission of Christ to which all the baptised are called.

Dates: 27 Oct, 3 Nov, 10 Nov (Fridays)

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: JPPII Hall

Enquiries: Contact Desmond (9011 5076)

Marian Apparitions Around the World

Marian appearances are known as apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, coming down from heaven to earth, usually with a message for us. They are another beautiful way in which Mary connects us to her Son, Jesus Christ. For an apparition to be worthy of belief and devotion within the Catholic Church, it must be approved by the bishop of the area where the apparition took place, following Vatican-issued guidelines. Over the course of Church history, there have been many reports of Marian apparitions. Most of us would be familiar with the apparitions in Lourdes and Fatima. Here are a few lesser-known ones.

Our Lady of Laus (Laus, France)

Our Lady first appeared to Benoite in 1664 when she was seventeen and continued to visit her throughout her life. Over the course of these appearances, Mary asked for a house to be built for priests, with the aim of drawing people into greater conversion, especially through the sacrament of penance. A small chapel was built near where Mary appeared. Mary revealed herself as “the Reconciler and Refuge of Sinners”, and therefore she offered signs to convince them of the need to repent. She told Benoite that the oil from the sanctuary lamp would work miracles with the infirm if they received the anointing with faith in her intercession. Later in life, Benoite received the Holy Stigmata every week for fifteen years.



Our Lady of Knock (Knock, Ireland)

This apparition is particularly interesting for many reasons. Not only was Mary present, but two other saints as well. In 1879, fifteen people saw an altar with a cross hanging above it. Upon the altar was a Paschal Lamb, and next to the altar was St John the Evangelist, St Joseph, and Mary. The apparitions occurred for two hours and the saints did not speak a word. The witnesses stayed to pray the rosary as the apparitions remained. Although a storm occurred during the apparition, the area that held Mary, Joseph, John and the altar stayed dry. In the apparition of Our Lady at Knock, “the Virgin says nothing”, Pope Francis notes, but her silence is “the most expressive language we have.” The message from Knock, therefore, is that of the “great value of silence for our faith”. This silence in the face of mystery does not mean giving up on understanding, but rather “understanding while aided and supported by the love of Jesus,” the Pope has explained.



Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (Paris, France)

Mary appeared to St Catherine twice in the year 1830. The first time, Catherine was woken up by a “shining child” at her bed and told that Our Lady was waiting for her in the chapel. Catherine went to the chapel and observed at first that it was empty. However, after hearing what she thought to be the rustling of silk, Mary appeared and Catherine rushed to her side.



HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

FOR THE SYNOD

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

IN THE MONTH OF SEP 2023

WEDDINGS

We congratulate the following couple:

1. Joshua Tan Song En & Ng Jie Ying
2. Tan Kai Huang, Kendrick & Millicent Lui Qiao Xin

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Adrian Anthony de Silva
2. Adalene Cheah Hong Bee
3. Francis Lee Mia How
4. Low Charm Tong



Marian Apparitions Around the World

The two talked for hours, Mary revealing to her that troubling times were ahead for France and that the Lord wanted to bestow a great task unto her. Mary appeared several months later and commissioned her to have a medal made, now known as the Miraculous Medal. Catherine was told that those who wore it when it had been blessed would receive great graces.



As her faithful children, we must look to all Church-approved apparitions and revelations as direct calls from Our Lady to go deeper into the faith, and use her advice to strengthen our relationship with not only her son, but with our brothers and sisters.

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



26th Sunday in Ordinary Time October 1st, 2023

In today's Gospel parable, a father asked his two sons to work in the vineyard.

Which one did what his father asked?

Use every second letter to fill in the blanks and find out the answer!



T A H B E C O D N E E F W G H H O I S J A K I
L D M H N E O W P O Q U R L S D T N U O V T

I _ _ _ _ _
H _ _ _ _ _

Source: <https://thekidsbulletin.com/>

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 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