



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Do We Really Desire Heaven?

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
29 Oct 2023

Ex 22:20-26
1 Th 1:5-10
Mt 22:34-40

Talk is cheap.

Jesus warns that the false piety of the hypocritical scribes and pharisees are unworthy of imitation: "for they preach, but do not practice" (cf Mt 23:1-3).

While the scribes and the pharisees advocate complicated laws to flatter themselves, Jesus simplifies 613 commands of the Mosaic Law into love of God (Deut 6:5) and love of neighbour (Lv 19:18). Christ-centred love replaces Christ-less law keeping, grace replaces legalism.

Most cultures have a golden rule to be a good person: "Do not do to others what you would not do to yourself".

This is diluted Christian love. Avoidance lulls us to inaction and complacency. It is actually selfish.

In contrast, Jesus' answer turns away from self to God and neighbour - it is selfless and life-giving. We see it in the caregiving of a mother to her helpless infant, of adult children to their aging parents.

Christian love is beyond familial love and reciprocation of kindness, both of which are rooted in human nature. The challenge: How can we love strangers? How can we love God whom we cannot see?

In *Deus Caritas Est* (God is love) #18, Pope Benedict XVI explains that through Christ, love is no longer a command but a response; it is the encounter with God's love that enables us to love our neighbour

"If the thought of heaven is mundane, if worshipping God in the beatific vision is perceived to be boring, then, heaven and God are mere extensions of entertainment."



in return. Then, we can "love even the person whom [we] do not like or know" because love has been transformed beyond "feelings" and "exterior appearances".

We see this in the 1st Reading. God tells Moses - the Jews are to help everyone in need, especially foreigners, widows and orphans. The Jews first encountered God's love when they were slaves in Egypt (Ex 22:21-22). This enables them to respond in love to those in need. To love God is to obey his commands (cf 1 Jn 5:3). So loving our neighbour is loving God.

Charity is love in action. Love as a social principle favours the vulnerable, as love presumes justice. Acts of charity redistribute wealth and restore justice. A person in need is entitled to dignity and self-esteem. God created us in his image. He also created the world with the capacity to satisfy human needs. It means everyone has the right to resources necessary for full development. Anyone in need must not be despised, exploited, humiliated, ignored.

In giving, we must not act or feel superior to the needy since we are only stewards of God's creation. It is also not our business to judge people's predicament. Saint Teresa of Calcutta says that when we judge, we stop loving.

Pope Benedict XVI teaches that love of God and neighbour are intertwined and inseparable. He cautions that if we do not see the image of God in others, acts of charity born out of devotion and duties are "proper" but loveless; our relationship with God will

likewise grow arid and stale (cf *Deus Caritas Est*, #18).

To grow in love is to grow in holiness. The holier we are, the more sociable we become since love is relational by nature. How should we practice love in communities?

- Love without truth is sentimentality (cf *DCE* #3). Suppressing unpleasant truths in relationships is not authentic love. Trading and thriving only on niceties and pleasantries lead to "inbreeding" - relationships tend to be shallow, fragile, sterile, disordered. Much like networking in a business context, such friendship becomes utilitarian and lack enduring solidarity and brotherhood.

- Fraternal correction must never be censorial but steeped in mercy, peace and purity of intention. Emotion and affectation sow discord and division. Justice without love is harsh. (cf *Angelus*, 4 Sep 2011)

Is our love strong or stale? Since love leads to heaven, the degree of our desire for heaven indicates the quality of our love. If the thought of heaven is mundane, if worshipping God in the beatific vision is perceived to be boring, then, heaven and God are mere extensions of entertainment. Such thoughts betray our addiction to earthly pleasures, attachment to the world and to life itself. Our love for God and neighbour becomes questionable, but God's love for us remains steadfast.

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

TRAFFIC NOTICE

Please reduce your speed when approaching the ramps and gratings at the entrance to the car park. It is also crucial that we show consideration to the nearby residents by not parking our vehicles indiscriminately. **Avoid parking in handicap lots, unless you possess a "Drivers with Mobility Impairment (Class 1 Label)".** We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

CATHOLIC NEWS DESKTOP CALENDAR 2024

The Catholic News Calendar 2024 is now available! The theme for 2024's calendar is *"We Are Not Alone"*, inspired by Pope Francis' Synod on Synodality as we journey forward as one Church. Drop by the Parish Office to get a copy at \$10, while stocks last! Please bring the exact cash amount.

INTERCESSORY

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

Date: Mon 30 Oct

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Rm

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

2023 PARISH CENSUS UPDATE

It has been many years since our last Parish Outreach where every SFX household was visited by a priest. As part of our 2023 SFX Feast Day celebrations, we will embark on a 12-month programme visits to as many SFX households as possible. To facilitate this, we are conducting a Census of all Parishioners during Mass this weekend.

The information gathered from this Census will serve to update our contact database and facilitate the visitation of each household. Please fill up the Census form at tinyurl.com/SFXCensus2023 or scan the QR code. Alternatively, physical forms are also available and we kindly request that every parishioner aged 12 years and older take a few moments to fill out the form.



ALL SAINTS' DAY AND ALL SOULS' DAY MASS SCHEDULE

All Saints' Day (Day of Obligation):

- Tue 31 Oct (Vigil Mass): 6.30pm
- Wed 1 Nov: 6.30am, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

All Souls' Day Masses:

Thu 2 Nov: 6.30am, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

There will be blessing of niches at the Columbarium after all Masses.

ALL SOULS' DAY MASS OFFERINGS

Please be informed that the deadline for online Mass Offering is Sat 28 Oct and for all physical Mass offerings is by Mon 30 Oct. To ensure that your intentions are properly included and reflected on the notice board, we kindly urge you to submit your offerings early. Do note there is a **minimum stipend of S\$10 per name per Mass intention.**

MASS FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND - WITH ANOINTING

In conjunction with our Parish Feast Day celebrations, we invite all who are unwell to this special Mass with the Sacrament of Anointing. Come experience the "special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties inherent in the condition of grave illness or old age" (CCC 1527). Family and friends are also welcome to join in this special Eucharistic Celebration as we support them as a loving and prayerful community.

Mass with Anointing will be on **Sun 26 Nov from 2pm - 3.30pm.**



Confessions begin from 1pm. Sign up at tinyurl.com/SFXMFTS2023 by Mon 20 Nov.

Volunteers are needed to provide transportation to and from church, and serve refreshments after Mass. Please register at tinyurl.com/MFTS2023Volunteers by Mon 13 Nov.



CPS LUNCHTIME TALK: EMPOWERED AND GIFTED

Join us over 4 Mondays as Fr David Garcia talks to us about how our gifts, charisms and virtues empower us to bear witness to Christ in the marketplace. Registration is required.

Dates: 30 Oct, 6 Nov, 20 Nov & 27 Nov (Mondays)

Time: 12.30pm - 1.30pm

Venue: TPI Building (62 Cecil Street, 5th Floor)

Register: tinyurl.com/CPSTalksSpiritualGifts



CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF SINGAPORE (CTIS): CERTIFICATE IN THEOLOGY

Registration is now open for first semester 1, 2024 (15 Jan 2024 to 31 May 2024). For more information, visit www.ctis.sg to find out about the Certificate in Theology programme.

INFORMATION NIGHT

Date & Time: Thu 9 Nov, 8- 9pm

Venue: St Ignatius Room (Basement), SFX Seminary (618 Upper Bukit Timah Road, S678214)

Parish Recollection 2023



Over the last weekend, in celebration of Mission Sunday, we were honoured to have Deacon Prof. Dr Sherman Kuek lead the parish recollection that brought together 72 participants. The event also welcomed individuals from other parishes, fostering a sense of community and unity.

The recollection was centered around the Joyful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary, providing participants with an opportunity to reflect and contemplate on these sacred moments in the life of Christ. Deacon Prof. Dr Sherman Kuek skillfully tied his reflections with our active participation in the mission of the Church, allowing us to deepen our understanding of our roles as members of the faith community.

We are also tremendously grateful to all the volunteers who generously offered their time and support for this special event. Their dedication and service played a crucial role in making the recollection fruitful. It is through their selflessness that we were able to come together and create a meaningful experience for everyone involved.

As we reflect on this event, we thank God for the opportunity to grow in our faith and for the supportive communities that surrounds us. The recollection has left us inspired and empowered to actively participate in the mission of the Church, taking the teachings and reflections shared by Deacon Prof. Dr Sherman Kuek into our daily lives and continue to be disciples making disciples.





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

L2 Sacrament of Reconciliation



Our L2 children received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on 7 October 2023. This is a beautiful Sacrament, instituted by Christ to offer us His Mercy and Grace. To prepare for the session, the L2s and their parents had 2 Days of Recollection in September to examine their conscience and understand the concept of sin and God's forgiveness.

On 7 October, 51 L2 children received the Sacrament from Fr Nathaniel, Fr Jude, Fr Edward and Fr Joe Lopez. Here are some testimonies from the L2 children:

I felt very good after the confession. I asked my daddy whether I can go for confession every week. - **Jordan Chow**

While preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I was very nervous. I was worried the priest would ask me difficult questions. But the actual Sacrament felt very friendly. I left the confession feeling blessed. - **Caitlyn Tan**

Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation was a very happy experience. I feel fulfilled because Jesus has washed away my sins. - **Angus Jude Kan Siu Hay**

I enjoyed all the preparation sessions and reading the booklets the Catechists prepared for us. I was feeling nervous during the confession but I feel more confident now to go for confession with my parents and sister next time. - **Giselle Sarah Ng**

I learnt a lot about what sin is and how God forgives us. I liked speaking with the priest during confession. He gave me advice on how not to sin and I will try it. I am happy to be a Child of God. - **Dhilan Ranjan**

I was happy after receiving the Sacrament. I was nervous at the start. The first session was very meaningful as my mother and I went through the examination of conscience. It was a wonderful and memorable day. - **Riley Lim**

I thought the preparation sessions were interesting. My mother went through the activities to help me prepare. At first, I was nervous but after receiving the Sacrament I felt happy. I look forward to going for confession in school at Lent next year. - **Elva Tung**

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

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 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