



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Do We Stay Awake in Fear?

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
12 Nov 2023

Wis 6:12-16
1 Th 4:13-18
Mt 25:1-13

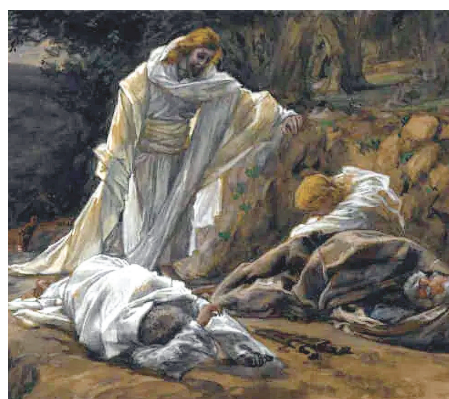
Today's gospel may cause some of us to become fearful, especially with the Gospel Acclamation that we are to "[s]tay awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming" (Mt 24:42,44). Some of us may be quite unmoved, thinking we are "safe" because we already have a regular religious routine and today's gospel does not apply to us. How are we to make sense of the urgency of this gospel without being excessively fearful or dreadfully numb? Is there an "appropriate" response?

What differentiates the foolish bridesmaids from the sensible bridesmaids in the gospel is that the latter brought flasks of oil together with their lamps. What does this "oil" stand for? Bishop Barron says "it stands for that divine life that was given to us in baptism... It stands for prayer, sacraments, study, the eucharist, good works, a life of love, corporal and spiritual works of mercy, all those ways that the life of Jesus remains vibrant in us" (Homily, 12 Nov 2017).

Sometimes the practices that are urged on us to grow this gift of divine life may bring about fear: perhaps we struggle to pray, we find it a challenge to study the faith, a life of love seems impossible given the people at home or work. A consolation can be found in our first

reading, where this flame of faith can be read as wisdom who is "[q]uick to anticipate those who desire her, she makes herself known to them" (Wis 6:13). The writer of *Wisdom* makes it clear that Wisdom is revealed and given to us and no one who is looking for or desiring to mature in wisdom will be disappointed (cf Wis 6:12,15).

In fact, these struggles that we face with work, school, or at home can actually contribute to our spiritual life. The Decree from Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity), teaches that "while correctly fulfilling [our] secular duties... [we] do not separate union with Christ from [our lives] but rather performing [our] work according to God's will [we] grow in that union" (AA #2). In this manner, our study of faith and our faithfulness to the sacraments would overflow into every aspect of our lives, thus fuelling growth in discipleship.



"Here, therefore, is the meaning of being wise and prudent: it means not waiting for the last moment of our life to collaborate with the grace of God, but to do so already from now on" – Pope Francis

In our striving, and perhaps "failing", we must hold on to St Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians to have hope because Jesus himself has risen and he will take us with him (1 Th 4:17). From the Office of Readings, a sermon of the second century tells us that "Christ willed to save people who were in danger of losing their souls, and he has been the salvation of many. When we were rushing headlong on the way to perishing, he came and called us."

While we are urged to remain hopeful in Christ's death and resurrection, this reading from Thessalonians has at times been misinterpreted as an excuse to be lackadaisical in our duty to nourish our faith since we can just leave it to the Lord. Our Lord's zeal for our souls does not preclude us from always "staying awake" and unceasingly welcoming God's grace as Pope Francis tells us, "Here, therefore, is the meaning of being wise and prudent: it means not waiting for the last moment of our life to collaborate with the grace of God, but to do so already from now on" (Angelus, 2017).

So what is an "appropriate" response to today's gospel? The gospel does not seek to frighten us but invites us to examine how much we truly love our Lord and anticipate his return. St John tells us, "There is no fear in love... perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love." (1 Jn 4:18) When we love the Lord and desire Him, we will find ourselves meeting him in the sacraments, studying his words and life, imitating him in corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It is his "oil" which we will find illuminating, guiding and buoying up our hope for his return.

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



PUBLIC HOLIDAY ON MON 13 NOV - DEEPAVALI

There will only be **one Mass at 9am** and no evening mass. Please note that the Parish Office, Adoration Room and Columbarium will be closed.

CANDLELIGHT ROSARY PROCESSION

Come meet us on **Mon 13 Nov, 8pm** at JPIL Hall for the rosary procession within the church grounds. You may bring your own waxless candle.

FEAST OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER (DEC 3): CRUCIFIX CRAB PLUSHIE GIVEAWAY



As part of our Feast Day celebrations on 3 December, 30 Crucifix Crab plushies will be given away in a colouring, drawing and quiz activity open to children 12 years and below.

Come by St Jerome Library to pick up the official entry form starting from this weekend. Please submit your entries by **26 Nov** to St Jerome Library. St Jerome Library is open **Sundays 8am - 1pm**.

ARCHDIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL - INTERCESSORY PRAYERS 2023

Let us come together as a diocese and pray for God's guidance as we discern a 10-year pastoral plan for the Archdiocese. The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council will be organising an evening of intercessory prayers at **Church of St Mary of the Angels** on **Wed 15 Nov, 8pm** to pray and reflect on the intention of Igniting the Church's Support & Structure.

2023 PARISH CENSUS UPDATE

It has been many years since our last Parish Outreach when 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 involving visits to as many SFX households as possible. To facilitate this, we are conducting a Census of all Parishioners.

The information gathered from this Census will serve to update our contact database and facilitate a visit to 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.



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 give support to them as a loving and prayerful community.

Mass with Anointing will be on **Sun 26 Nov from 2pm - 3.30pm**, Confessions from 1pm. Sign up at tinyurl.com/SFXMFTS2023 by Mon 20 Nov 2023.



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.



2024 CATECHISM REGISTRATION

Scan the QR Code to complete the registration form on **myCatholicSG**, and upload your child's **Baptism Certificate**. Parents are expected to be present as catechists to journey along with their children. You can now register your child born between 2017 to 2019 for the K1, K2 and L1 Catechism sessions. **Registration is now open and closes on Thu 30 Nov 2023**. 2024 Catechism sessions are held on Sundays, 3pm - 4.30pm. Scan the QR code to find out more information on how to register.



HEALING SERVICE WITH SR. BRIEGE MCKENNA

Sr. Briege McKenna is an Irish-American Catholic Nun, who is internationally renowned for her powerful healing ministry. She is the author of the bestselling book "Miracles do Happen". She, along with Fr. Pablo Escriva, have a ministry of intercession for priests for whom they regularly run retreats. Sr. Briege was the global rapporteur for an international retreat for priests at the Vatican.

Sr. Briege and Fr. Pablo will be conducting a healing rally at our parish. Love offerings will be collected. **As parking is limited, do come by public transport.** All are welcome and no registration is required.

Date & Time: Sat 18 Nov, 1pm - 4pm (Doors will open at 12pm)
Venue: Main Church (Overflow to Auditorium)
Love Offering: Paynow to UEN TO8CC4033J
Livestream: youtube.com/ChurchofStFrancisXavier



MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE 2024

The Marriage Preparation Course is a diocesan-approved programme that lays the ground work and grooms you comprehensively for this vocation of a lifetime. Held in a lecture room and home setting, the 6 sessions offer an authentic and dynamic overall learning experience to set you up for a joy-filled and lasting marriage.

Dates:

Q1: 18 Feb - 24 Mar, **Q2:** 21 Apr - 2 Jun,
Q3: 21 Jul - 25 Aug, **Q4:** 29 Sep - 10 Nov
Find out more at
<https://mpcsingapore.com/registration>

ACMI: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSES FOR MIGRANTS

Registration for Jan - Jun 2024 courses are open! Pick up skills such as English, Caregiving, Basic Computer and Word, Microsoft Excel and Powerpoint, Crocheting and more! Courses are held at the Church of St Bernadette and Agape Village.

For more information, visit bit.ly/3MiA94K or scan the QR code below for more details! Registration closes on 19 Nov. For any enquiries, please email sd.acmi@catholic.org.sg or call 6801 7444 (Mon - Fri).



OYP OUTREACH FOR SECONDARY 4 & 5 STUDENTS

The Office for Young People is excited to bring an outreach programme for graduating secondary students! On this day, we gather to experience the grace of God in the midst of their hectic school life. Know someone who is graduating from secondary school this year? Invite them to come and see. For enquiries, please email poly.oyp@catholic.org.sg

Date: Sat, 18 Nov 2023
Time: 10.30am - 1pm
Venue: Office for Young People (2 Lorong Low Koon, Singapore 536449)
Register: tinyurl.com/oypsecoutreach2023

TREASURE #15: A CATHOLIC ENCOUNTER RETREAT FOR YOUNG WORKING ADULTS

Have the demands and worries of life left you feeling lost, empty or broken-hearted? The Lord invites us to Begin Again with Him. Treasure #15 is a stay-in Catholic Encounter Retreat organised for young working adults (age 21 to 35 years old) in Singapore.

Dates: Thu 23 Nov, 7.45pm - Sun 26 Nov, 6pm (Requires 1 day of leave on Fri 24 Nov)
Venue: OYP (2 Lorong Low Koon S536449)
Cost: \$162 (incl. 8% of GST)
Register: tinyurl.com/OYPTreasure15
Enquiries: treasure.oyp@catholic.org.sg

L7 Retreat

*“Love the Lord your God
with all your heart and
with all your soul and
with all your mind.”*

Forty six teens from L7 (Sec 1) participated in their first ever retreat held on the 4th and 5th of Nov. The theme of the retreat was based on Matthew 22:37 – 40, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” One of the key objectives of the retreat is to create an opportunity for the Level 7 retreatants to bond with each other through ice breakers, wet and dry games. We also hope that through this retreat they would have a glimpse that their identity is rooted in Christ (not even with an authoritative figure e.g., parents, studies etc.), and to encounter the unconditional Father’s love, and that the teens will in turn love their neighbour. The retreatants



were blessed to have three external speakers, Nicholas Lye, Leroy Rafael Goh, and the Chua Family (Nicholas Chua, Jane Lee and their two beautiful daughters, Eva and Eurielle Chua). Given almost 3 years of COVID-19 where classes were conducted mostly online, this was an excellent opportunity to bring the teens together to interact with each other and to hopefully lay the foundation for building lasting bonds. The fruitfulness of this retreat would not have been possible if not for the support and help of the many youthful hearts, and parents as intercessors, serving food during mealtimes and as photographers!



L7 Retreat - Testimonies



"I found the retreat fun and peaceful. There were so many aspects that I liked."
- **Fabian Ho**

"I had fun at the retreat as it was a good opportunity to make new friends and the activities allowed us to know one another better."
- **Ashley Lim**

"It was very fun because we were able to make new friends and bond with Jesus."
- **Gabriel Teoh**

"The retreat helped me forge new friendships and brought me closer to God through all the talks and praise and worship sessions."
- **Bryce Yeo**

"It was eye-opening and I felt closer to God by the end of it! I was also able to make new friends through the fun activities!"
- **Luke Yeo**

"I learnt that I have been filling the void in my heart with materialistic things. But I realised I should stop finding comfort in materialistic things like my handphone. Only God can fill that void."
- **Elizabeth Mahimay**

"This retreat helped me to get closer to God and talk to him as a friend. It also allowed me to bond together with my friends and at the end of the retreat I felt blessed by God knowing that he is with me wherever I go and in whatever situation I may be in."
- **Adele Ng**

"I'm very thankful to have been able to attend the retreat. It allowed me to make new friends and also gave me the opportunity to get to know my catechism classmates a lot better. In addition, it also brought me closer to Jesus through the talks. I really enjoyed sessions by the various speakers especially the one on the first day that was at night. I also enjoyed the bonding games organised by the facils. Overall I had a very fruitful camp and am excited for the next one."
- **Clarice Glass**

"I am very thankful for the opportunity of this retreat. The experience has left me with a stronger trust, faith and newfound hope in our saviour and has helped me to bond with my catechism mates well. I am very grateful to the singers, speakers and the older students who have brought me along this

unforgettable journey, one that has given me memories that I will hold dear. In short, this camp has given me a new found resolve in my faith and I am looking forward to continuing this journey with my classmates next year."
- **Isabella Galang**

"After going to the L7 retreat, I have learnt to step out of my comfort zone. The retreat also helped me to make new friends and it also helped me to be closer to God"
- **Renee Thiew**

"The retreat was a fun and engaging experience where the L7s had the opportunity to bond with each other in the process of learning more about our faith in God"
- **Elisha Faith**

"After going to the L7 retreat, I made new friends and learnt more about God and felt closer to him through this retreat. Not only that, I also had fun with the facils and my friends."
- **Reyna Ng**

"I really like the camp as I got to know God more and bond with my catechism friends"
- **Amelia Teo**

"At the L7 retreat, I prayed really hard for forgiveness, love and comfort. I felt at peace. During mass, I felt that Jesus had taken away all my sins and sadness."
- **Matthew Lam**

"This retreat has given me a stronger connection to God and helped me understand him better."
- **Ezekiel Tan**

"Initially I was reluctant to attend the L7 retreat and at the same time uncertain on what is in store for me in this retreat. However, this retreat had taught me how to connect to God as a growing youth through praise and worship. Along with prayer, thanks to the speakers that had shared their experiences of encountering God, helping me understand how God is in our daily lives. In this retreat, it also helped me bond with the other L7s that I rarely interact with and create new friendships along the way. This retreat to me has been memorable and one I'll remember."
- **James Lee**

"I felt a warm feeling during the camp."
- **Rikito Ignatius Christian**

"Very fun and fulfilling"
- **Gwenda Foo**



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
Closed on Public Holidays
after 9am Mass

BACK GATE

Mon - Sun:
5am - 1am
Closed on Public Holidays
after 9am Mass

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