



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Will you allow God to be the joy of your life?

3rd Sunday of Advent
17 Dec 2023

Isa 61:1-2, 10-11
1 The 5:16-24
Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Advent in our liturgical calendar is a penitential season that requires us to prepare our hearts with some personal sacrifices and penance in anticipation of the coming of our Lord. Today however, the Church celebrates the 3rd Sunday of Advent or Gaudete Sunday as the halfway mark leading up to Christmas.

Gaudete, in Latin, means “rejoice” and the Church today reflects this with the rose-coloured vestments and invites us to take a break from our self-denials and revel in a little pop of joy. Today is meant to uplift our spirits with joyful expectation of our Lord’s Coming.

Today might be a good time to also pause and meditate on what joy means to us and what it is that we should be rejoicing over? A line from today’s First Reading from the Prophet Isaiah perhaps best encapsulates the message of the Scriptures this Sunday: “God is the joy of my soul” (Isa 61:10). Yet how easy is it for us to replace “God” and complete the line with something else like success, money, honour, fame, sex or even our all-consuming hobby? Perhaps today we want to also rejoice with those who want to replace the “what” with the “who” that is God.

In supporting the common thread of rejoicing, our first reading from the prophet Isaiah announces the

coming of the One who will bring healing and liberation to the poor, the broken-hearted and those in bondage. Coming too is the “year of the Lord’s favour” that promises spiritual liberation for anyone who is imprisoned and shackled by sin or living a disordered life.

Yet as we wait for his Second Coming to fulfil the promise of salvation, Jesus already came and redeemed us! The healing and liberation we hope for is not going to come from the outside. Instead, the healing and release comes from God who works from within us. The Holy Spirit has already been implanted in our hearts and can transform us from the inside in the same way “the earth brings forth its plants, and a garden makes its growth spring up”. God is never far from our innermost self, and if we allow him to, he can come and speak life, love and healing into our most hidden depths that only later do we notice that he has been at work in us all this while.



***“Rejoice in the Lord
always; again I say rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near”
(Phil 4:4-5)***

Perhaps this is reason enough to be joyful!

Thus, we grow into the attitude required of us from the second reading from Paul to the Thessalonians. Paul said that because we belong to Christ, joy should outweigh everything else in us and because we cannot heal and construct ourselves, we are called to “pray without ceasing” and “in all circumstances give thanks” and to make room for the Spirit to work.

Finally, in our Gospel from John, Jesus is presented to us as the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the culmination of the Word, the light that is coming into the world’s darkness. John the Baptist whom many thought to be the Savior himself, in his humility distanced himself and announced that the one they seek is already among them but remains unrecognized. He was a simple instrument of God, a “voice crying in the wilderness” to “make straight the way of the Lord.” His role was simply to point to the One that is to come (again).

John the Baptist was so happy just to be a voice saying, “There he is.” This is what we are all called to be, and from our ordinary lives and circumstances in the world, to be a voice to all men — not just to this or that certain group — but to all the world. And so, may we develop a steadfast voice that gets truer and reach all through the world. With each day, may we speak out little voices of peace instead of conflict, of gentleness instead of spitefulness, of sweetness instead of bitterness and of acceptance instead of rejection.

As we celebrate Gaudete Sunday, perhaps this is the explanation of joy and what it means to rejoice - when we recognise the ways the Lord is present to us; let that inspire us to be for others just what he is to us.

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



GIFT COLLECTION

This weekend, being the 3rd weekend of the month, there will be a 2nd collection for Catholic Foundation's GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) programme. GIFT is a regular giving programme to rally support for and fund the Archdiocese's organisations and initiatives for youth, evangelisation, catechesis, formation, and others. Please drop your contributions or GIFT envelopes into the collection bags. Do consider signing up for a regular pledge, as it is the most reliable way of supporting the Church. Visit catholicfoundation.sg to contribute online or find out more.



INTERCESSORY

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

Date: Mon 18 Dec
Time: 8pm - 9.30pm
Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Rm

ST JEROME LIBRARY

Please note that St Jerome Library will be closed on **Sun 24 Dec 2023**. Books due for return on the 24th can be returned on 31 Dec when the library re-opens.

NEW YEAR'S EVE: THANKSGIVING MASS

Sun 31 Dec, 11pm



Join us for a time of rosary and reflection at 10.30pm. This will be followed by the Countdown Mass where we can give thanks to God for the past year, and where we can offer to God the new year ahead.

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS: THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
Mon 1 Jan, 9am

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICES IN SERANGOON DISTRICT

- Mon 18 Dec, 8pm - Church of the Transfiguration
- Tue 19 Dec, 8pm - Church of The Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Wed 20 Dec, 8.30pm - St Anne's Church
- **Thu 21 Dec, 8pm - Church of St Francis Xavier**
- Fri 22 Dec, 8pm - Church of St. Vincent de Paul



ADVENT PRAYER TREE

What better idea than to give someone the gift of intentional prayer this Christmas? Just as we did last year, think of someone to pray for - either to return to Church or be open to knowing the Lord. The prayer tags will be available for you to write your prayers and hang onto our Advent trees. **As a community of faith, we will pray for all these intentions throughout Advent.**

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve (Sun 24 Dec) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's Pageant: 8.30pm (livestreamed) <i>Calling all children to come dressed as shepherds, angels, or animals and be a part of our special Christmas celebration. Let's bring the Nativity scene to life together!</i>• Vigil Mass: 9pm • Midnight Mass: 12am	Christmas Day (Mon 25 Dec) 9am, 11am, 4pm
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THANKSGIVING MASS WITH FRIAR BARTOLO MARIA, OCD

Congratulations to Friar Bartolo Maria on his ordination! May God's blessings be upon him as he begins his new ministry. May his service as a priest be a beacon of hope, drawing others closer to God and bringing them peace and joy in their hearts.

Come join us for the thanksgiving mass on **Sat 23 Dec, 5.30pm** celebrated by Friar Bartolo Maria, OCD. There will be light refreshments and fellowship after mass at JP II Hall.



MY PERSONAL COMPASS: SHORTENED EDITION BY FR DAVID GARCIA, OP

My Personal Compass returns in a shortened edition this year. Come and get introduced to the basics of morality in an increasingly complex world. Build an ethical foundation to journey towards fulfilling your potential as a human person made in the image of God. To register, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/y38faeyr>. For enquiries, please email Caritas Singapore at mpmc@caritas-singapore.org

Dates: 18 Jan - 21 Mar 2024 (Thursdays)
Time: 7.30pm - 9.30pm
Venue: CANA at Catholic Centre (55 Waterloo St, Level 3)
Fee: \$100



APPEAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AID FOR GAZA CRISIS

Caritas Humanitarian Aid & Relief Initiatives, Singapore (CHARIS) is making an appeal for those affected by the conflict in Gaza and the surrounding region. You can donate in the following manner:

- Via credit card or PayNow through the CHARIS website.
- Send a crossed cheque payable to "Humanitarian Aid Fund", indicate "Humanitarian Aid to Gaza" at the back of the cheque to: CHARIS, 55 Waterloo Street, #07-02, Catholic Centre, Singapore 187954.



Please contact CHARIS at 6337 4119 or scan the QR code to visit their website for more information.

PIETA: DECEMBER MONTHLY SESSION

PIETA is a support group for bereaved parents who have united in faith to seek God's comfort, wisdom and hope. The monthly session, run by bereaved parents, is for prayer, reflection and the breaking open of the WORD OF GOD. We invite any parent who has lost a child (regardless of age and no matter how recent or long ago) to journey together in faith. Please email us for directions.

Date: Tue 26 Dec 2023
Time: 5pm - 6.45pm
Venue: Catholic Archdiocesan Education Centre
 (2 Highland Road, unit LG-01, Singapore 549102)

Building Our Families with SFX Family Apostolate

The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason, the family home is rightly called “the domestic church,” a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity. (CCC 1666)



In our modern life of busyness, the heavy influence of the secular world, pursuit of career, and for some - academic goals, oftentimes derail our vision to be faithful Catholic individuals and families.

As a family this Advent, we can reflect on how we can play a more integral and active role in building our families and perhaps even journeying with other families and individuals. It is not about getting our own house in order first before helping others. It is even with our imperfections and challenges, we can take the step to be a gift for others, to bring and be Christ for others. It is often in our own imperfections and the imperfections in our families that we can better empathise with others and be better companions and perhaps understand God's will in our own family life.

In line with our parish mission of 'Disciples Making Disciples', the SFX Family Apostolate will be launched on the Feast of the Holy Family on **Sun 31st Dec 2023**. It is formed to journey with individuals and families in discipleship. The members of the apostolate will engage parishioners through their various stages of life from being single, those dating as well as families to walk on a journey to grow in holiness and become fully alive in Christ.



How is this done?

Through various events, talks and activities throughout the year that will support, illuminate to assist marriages and families using the catechumenate approach proposed by the Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life.

All of us have a stake to build families to be the light of Christ for other families and we can do this through the activities where we shall be praying, sharing, learning, socialising & evangelising together as Children of God.

To find out more, come for the Information Session on **Sun 14 Jan 2024, 3pm to 4.30pm** in the JP II Hall. Scan the QR Code or register at tinyurl.com/SFXFA2023 by **Sun 7 Jan 2024**, as we would like to find out your thoughts and concerns about families today.



“The members of the apostolate will engage parishioners through their various stages of life from being single, those dating as well as families to walk on a journey to grow in holiness and become fully alive in Christ.”





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

*"Advent is the time
we are given to welcome
the Lord who comes to
encounter us, and also
to verify our longing for
God, to look forward and
prepare ourselves for
Christ's return."*

Pope Francis



The Messenger of Peace Word-find

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

See if you can
find the words in
CAPITALS from
today's first
reading in the
puzzle. Use the
left-over letters to
fill in the blanks in
the reading.

The SPIRIT of the Lord God is upon me,
because the LORD has ANOINTED me;
he has SENT me to bring GLAD TIDINGS to
the POOR, to heal
the _____,
to PROCLAIM LIBERTY to CAPTIVES



and RELEASE to the
PRISONERS,
to ANNOUNCE a YEAR
of FAVOUR from the Lord
and a day of
VINDICATION
by our GOD.

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

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 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