



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Life Worth Dying

2nd Sunday of Lent
25 February 2024

Gen 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18
Rom 8:31-34
Mk 9:2-10

Human sacrifice! It is incredible how Abraham obeys God's "irrational" command to sacrifice his son Isaac. What makes his faith so strong? Can we be like him?

God never tests us beyond our ability. His trials for us are designed to build spiritual muscles that strengthen faith and trust in him.

Abraham's faith journey begins when he obeys God to leave the comfort of his home for the unknown land of Canaan (Gen 12:1, 5). At the age of ninety-nine, he sacrifices part of himself in a covenant of circumcision (Gen 17:10-11, 24). Through God's consent and assurance, he obeys Sarah his wife to abandon Ishmael and Hagar - Ishmael being his first son conceived through his maid, Hagar (Gen 21:12-14). By the time God commands the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham has developed total trust in God.

At each stage in the process, more is asked of Abraham than before. He learns to surrender to God unconditionally. His faith deepens and matures to the point where God deems it fit to test him severely.

Likewise, as we progress in faith, our trials and tribulations too come in increasing difficulty but never beyond our ability. No matter how faithful we are, a bigger and more challenging trial awaits. Will we be able to forgive if we suffer a gross unfair treatment or a deep and painful humiliation? Will we be generous enough to donate a kidney to a loved one suffering total

kidney failure? Whether we become like Abraham depends on how we respond.

Trials have the power to expose shortfalls in our spiritual life, much like exams have the power to expose gaps in knowledge and understanding. In developing spiritual character, what matters most is not intellectual ability but "fear of the Lord".

Abraham exemplifies this virtue (Gen 22:12). He neither complains nor questions, but simply obeys. He prioritises God's will, not his own desires and feelings. He holds nothing back from God. How about us?

"Fear of the Lord" is not based on a dread of punishment but rather on a deep love and desire to please God. It is the wisdom that is tied to "right living" according to the standards of God (Ps 111:10, Prov 1:7, 9:10). It is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit that enables receptiveness to God's promptings and obedience to his will (CCC 1831). A virtue that helps us recognise the greatness, majesty, and holiness of God. It leads us to approach him with humility, respect, and obedience.

When we fear the Lord, we discern God's love and plan for our salvation in all things and situations. This perspective opens up an energising vocabulary and purpose-driven mindset tuned to our salvation. Trials become purifications, not punishments. Short term pains are endured for long term gains. Suffering becomes sacrifice in anticipation of future joy. We become holy, not secular; selfless, not selfish.

In his selflessness, Abraham lacks nothing, because God provides (Gen 22:8, 13). God's will has a providential dimension, serendipitous in timing and sufficiency, never outdone in generosity. Abraham's obedience



"God's will has a providential dimension, serendipitous in timing and sufficiency, never outdone in generosity. Abraham's obedience is rewarded with blessings for his descendants and the world."

is rewarded with blessings for his descendants and the world (Gen 22:17-18). He is blessed in all things (Gen 24:1). We too can be blessed.

But some of us tend to over associate holiness to suffering, forgetting the joys, blessings and rewards that God showers on his faithful. Such a disposition can make us ungrateful, sour-faced, joyless. We can become poor ambassadors of Christ and ineffective evangelisers of faith.

In the 2nd week of Lent, the dazzling display of the transfiguration in the Gospel encourages us to be hopeful and joyful in trials.

As Jesus' passion approaches and his disciples' apprehension grows, he sustains them by this vivid and extraordinary experience. We too draw strength and comfort by the manifestation of Jesus' divine glory and the continued existence of Moses and Elijah.

In the book, "Resurrection is Now", Dom Aelred Watkin says that death is merely the rending of the veil to immortality. Let us place our fear on God, not on death and suffering.

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



WELCOME, BROTHER OSWIN

Our Seminarian, Oswin Yeo, will be attached to our parish until the end of year. Do say "hi" when you see him around our church!



INTERCESSORY

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

Date: Mon 26 Feb

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Mount Tabor Adoration Rm

CHARISMATIC

The next Charismatic Prayer session is on **Mon 26 Feb**. There will be praise & worship followed by Holy Mass. All are welcome!

Venue: SFX Auditorium

(Parish Centre, Level 3)

Time: 8pm - 9.30pm

LENTEN VIGIL

The SFX Intercessory Prayer Ministry is organising a 9-hour Lenten Vigil with a closing Mass at 6.30am. Come and prepare our hearts as we enter Holy Week, all are welcome! Sign up at tinyurl.com/SFXLentenVigil2024

Dates & Time: Fri 22 Mar,
9pm to Sat 23 Mar, 6am

Venue: JPil Hall



ST GABRIEL'S FOUNDATION (SGF) FLAG DAY 2024

The students of St Gabriel's will be present at our parish on **Sun 25 Feb for the Morning Masses** to appeal to your generosity to help raise \$150,000. Your donations will help support SGF's programmes and operations. Please donate generously.

PARISH LENT RECOLLECTION

Come join us on **15 - 17 March** as Deacon Sherman Kuek leads us through a reflection of the Sorrowful Mysteries and what this mystery says to us about our Catholic life. Come visit our booth outside JPil Hall after Mass to find out more.

Venue: Auditorium

Cost: \$50

Register:

<http://tinyurl.com/SFXPR2024>



IN THE DESERT? JOURNEY WITH JESUS AND COMMUNITY THIS LENT

Join the 1Cor12 communities LOG (Leaven of God), IOS (In One Spirit) and FOCUS (Followers of Christ, United Spiritually) as we move from desert to Mount Calvary. Pick up a paper and hang your responses to the prompts on the desert mural at the Plaza. Little ones are invited to colour and put up their own responses too! Let us journey together and pray for each other especially during this season of Lent.



CHARITIES WEEK 2024

Please support and donate generously towards Charities Week 2024, an Archdiocesan annual fundraising project. The funds raised will enable the Caritas Singapore Family to provide vital programmes and services to serve the poor and elderly, persons with disabilities or special needs, migrants, youth-at-risk, lower-income families, and more. Let us walk together with our Brothers and Sisters in need. Pick up a Charities Week 2024 envelope to donate and mail it to Caritas Singapore (for cheques only), or drop it at our parish office. For walk-in donations to the Caritas Singapore office (Caritas Agape Village, 7A Lorong 8 Toa Payoh, #04-01, Singapore 319264).

Your Charities Week donations (\$10 and above) are eligible for 250% tax deduction. You may also wish to donate online by scanning the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/cw24bul>



Your contribution will make a difference to the lives of those in need. For more information, please contact us at 6801 7400 or visit www.caritas-singapore.org.

MONTFORTIAN EXPERIENCE LENTEN RETREAT: CELEBRATING OUR BROKENNESS

If God has plans to prosper and not to harm me, why does He allow me to suffer and experience the pain of brokenness? And if the Lord is close to the broken-hearted, why do I feel so far from Him in times of despair and darkness? This Lent, come and discover for yourselves, how our brokenness is not a cause of shame but a cause for revelation and celebration in Christ Jesus as He tenderly draws us closer to God.

Dates: 15-17 March 2024 (Stay-in Retreat)

Venue: Montfort Centre (624 Upper Bukit Timah Rd, Singapore 678212)

Register: www.montfortcentre.org/events-1/celebrating-our-brokenness



PIETA SINGAPORE

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. For more information, visit www.PietaSingapore.org or email pieta.singapore@gmail.com

Date: Tue 27 Feb 2024

Time: 7.30pm - 9.15pm

Venue: Catholic Archdiocesan Education Centre
(2 Highland Road, unit LG-01, Singapore 549102)

CRUCIS SINGAPURA 2024: A BAREFOOT WAY OF THE CROSS

Young people are encouraged to reflect on the Passion of Christ in a more contemplative manner by partaking in the Lord's suffering by walking barefoot across the island in paths marking the sign of the Cross. Participants will gather at a parish chosen during registration and walk in predetermined routes towards the destination - Church of the Holy Spirit. The event will conclude with a final prayer and blessing by 3pm. Organised by Jesus Youth Singapore and Crucis Singapura Team.

Date: Sat 23 Mar
Register:
singapore.jesusyouth.org



AN IGNATIAN RETREAT

An individually guided silent retreat with daily spiritual direction, Mass and Eucharistic Adoration. Set on a small island, away from the busyness of city life. Come as you are to encounter the Lord. For enquiries, email Jacinta Teo or Sister Cecily at anchoredinchristsg@gmail.com

Dates: 29 Aug – 6 Sep 2024 (7-day Retreat) / 31 Aug – 6 Sep 2024 (5-day Retreat) *(include travelling time)*
Venue: Xavier House (Cheung Chau island, Hong Kong)
Register: tinyurl.com/XH2024



RCIA – Rite of Election 2024

On 18 Feb, 23 elects and 4 candidates from RCIA and 7 elects and 8 candidates from RCIIY participated in the Rite of Election (usually takes place during Lent). Held at Church of Divine Mercy and witnessed by Cardinal William Goh, this rite is a big milestone for our catechumens who now turn elects, as it signifies their call by Jesus Christ to enter into the final period of preparation for initiation.



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Our RCIA and RCY Elect and Candidates are inching closer to the waters of Baptism this Easter.
Let us continue to support them.
Please pick up a prayer card and pray for them.



ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE PUZZLE

Do the math! Answer the math problems to find the right words to fit in the spaces to answer the questions!

God wanted to test Abraham's faith.
 He told him to sacrifice his only son, Isaac.

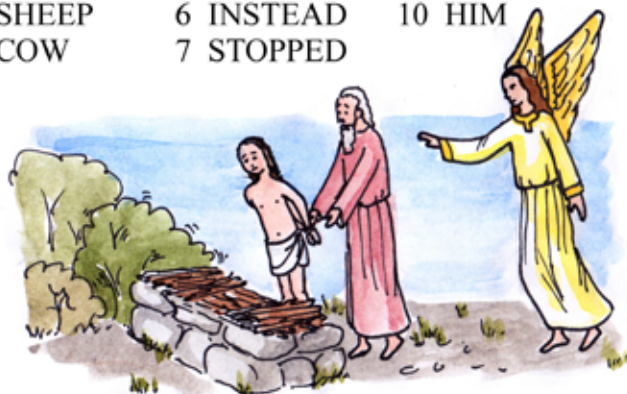
Did Abraham trust in God? $\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$
 $3-3=\underline{\quad}$

Did God let Abraham sacrifice his son,
 or did he stop him?

He $\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$ $\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$ and $\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$ a
 $3+4=\underline{\quad}$ $6+4=\underline{\quad}$ $5-1=\underline{\quad}$

$\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$ $\underline{\quad\quad\quad}$
 $5-3=\underline{\quad}$ $1+5=\underline{\quad}$

- | | | |
|---------|-----------|----------|
| 0 YES | 4 SENT | 8 BURNED |
| 1 NO | 5 KILLED | 9 SWORD |
| 2 SHEEP | 6 INSTEAD | 10 HIM |
| 3 COW | 7 STOPPED | |



Source: The Kids' Bulletin

Answer: Yes; He stopped him and sent a sheep instead.



Looking for more Information?
 visit www.sfxchurch.sg

Mass Times

WEEKDAY MASSES

Mon - Thu:
 6.30pm

Tue - Sat:
 6.30am

Fri:
 8.30pm

Stations of the Cross at 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