

**CATECHISM CLASS REGISTRATION -** 2018 Level 1 (Pri 1) Catechism Class is open for registration. Please obtain a registration form from Parish Office for more details.

**NEWS AROUND THE PARISH**

**ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH ART-** 5th Watercolour Exhibition by Adelene Tan and her students will be held at Parish Building Level 1 Praise & Worship Room on 16 Dec'17 (11.00am - 6.00pm) & 17 Dec'17 (9.00am - 6.00pm). Rev Fr Thomas Lim will officiate the opening of the exhibition on 16 Dec at 3.00 pm. All are welcome.

**FAMILY LIFE SOCIETY -** Come pray for the end of abortion and the protection of unborn babies, and their mothers on the Feast of our Lady of Guadalupe - the protectress of the unborn on Tue, 12 Dec '17. Pro-life rosary will be recited at 7.30pm followed by Mass at 8.00pm. Special blessings for pregnant mothers, their spouses and families. Organised by Pregnancy Crisis Service, a service of Family Life Society. All are welcome.

**PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS COURSE 2018 -** By Rev Fr David Garcia, OP. The Personal Moral Compass Course is for all Catholics and all people of goodwill interested in formation in the foundations of Ethics and Moral Theology. It is a one-year-long systematic course in Moral Theology consisting of 6 individual modules. This course is organized under Caritas Singapore. This workshop will be held weekly on Thursdays, starting on 4 Jan '18; 7:30pm to 9:30pm, in Agape Village, 7A Lorong 8 Toa Payoh. For more information and registration, please refer to the Caritas Singapore website: [www.caritas-singapore.org](http://www.caritas-singapore.org) or email to [formation@caritas-singapore.org](mailto:formation@caritas-singapore.org)

**GIFT ADVENT 2017 -** Next weekend, 16/17 December, being the 3rd weekend of the month, there will be a second collection to receive your monthly pledges and contributions for the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) campaign. Contributions to GIFT will help others encounter the love of Christ through numerous archdiocesan organisations and building projects of the archdiocese. More info is available at [gift.catholicfoundation.sg](http://gift.catholicfoundation.sg).



**READINGS:** Sunday Missal (Year A) Pg 620

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:** MON 11 December - SAT 16 December 2017

**MON:** IS 35:1-10, LK 5:17-26 **TUE:** ZEC 2:14-17, LK 1:26-38 **WED:** IS 40:25-31, MT 11:28-30 **THU:** IS 41:13-20, MT 11:11-15 **FRI:** IS 48:17-19, MT 11:16-19 **SAT:** SIR 48:1-4, 9-11, MT 17:9A, 10-13

**Second Week of Advent**

In the **Second Sunday of Advent** we hear Isaiah write of a voice that cries out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!" These lines from the prophet are repeated in the **Mark's Gospel** as we are introduced to John the Baptist who prepares the way for Jesus. John says, "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptised you with water; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

12 December is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

We focus on the first readings from the Prophet Isaiah this week. With the Babylonian Captivity, the temple was destroyed, the leaders of the people were taken away to Babylon and a remnant was left behind. A life-threatening desert separated the people. In this context, Isaiah proclaims God's vindication of the people in exile. The desert will be reborn. A highway will bring their liberation. And the signs will be that there is healing and peace. "Comfort, give comfort to my people," says the Lord. The valleys will be filled in the mountains levelled - every obstacle will be overcome - to build a highway for our God to come and save us. The people can hardly believe the good news. They are weak and weary of their captivity. Isaiah proclaims, "They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings." The people have been at a distance from the Lord for some time and were not obeying the commandments. The Lord says,

"I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand; It is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'" God promises them that if they follow his teachings, "Your descendants would be like the sand... their name never cut off or blotted out from my presence." The final first reading this week is a piece from the book of Sirach in which the prophet Elijah is praised. Elijah, who was destined to come again to restore order before the day of the Lord, is seen in the reading from Matthew's Gospel to be John the Baptist.

The Third Sunday of Advent offers us more of the promise. The words used by the prophet Isaiah to describe God's vindication are the ones Jesus points to as describing his own mission: "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 brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favour from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God."

Taken from the "Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on the Creighton University's Online Ministries web site: <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>. Used with permission.

**Reconciliation and Healing**

Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces our Lord offers us. Like all religious experience, it takes preparation.

**Preparing**

Reconciliation is what God does. We prepare for it by opening ourselves up, by reflecting upon the areas of darkness in our lives into which God so

<b>Sunset Mass</b>	: 5.30pm
<b>Rosary</b>	: 4.30pm (Saturday)
<b>Sunday Masses</b>	: 8.30am (Mandarin), 11.00am (English), 2.00pm (Cantonese), 4.00pm (English)
<b>Weekday Masses</b>	: 7.20am and 5.30pm
<b>Intercessory Prayer</b>	: 7.15pm (English, Thursday)
<b>Infant Jesus Devotion</b>	: 5.30pm (Thursday, followed by Mass)
<b>Divine Mercy Devotion</b>	: 12.30pm (Sunday Mandarin)
<b>Sion Adorers - Holy Hour</b>	: 7.45pm - 8.45pm (Saturday)
<b>Hour of Mercy</b>	: 3.00pm daily
<b>Adoration Chapel</b>	: 8.00am - 9.00pm (Mon to Sat), 8.00am - 7.00pm(Sun)
<b>Secretariat's Operating Hours</b>	: Mon - Fri: 9.30am - 9.30pm, Sat: 9.30am - 5.30pm, Sun: 9.30am - 5.00pm; Lunch hours: 1.00pm - 2.00pm. Closed on Public Holidays.
<b>Columbarium Opening Hours</b>	: Mon - Sun: 7.00am - 7.00pm. Closed on Public Holidays.
<b>SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION</b> - The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be administered from 5.00pm - 5.20pm on weekdays and Saturday at the makeshift confessional at the baptistery (back of the church). On Sunday, it will be available 30 minutes before each mass.	
<b>Parish Priest:</b> Rev Fr EDWARD LIM, OCD, <b>Asst Parish Priest:</b> Rev Fr THOMAS LIM OCD, <b>Priests in Residence:</b> Rev Fr TOM CURRAN, OCD, Rev Fr GREGORY HON, OCD and Rev Fr JOSEPH KOH, OCD, <b>General-Delegate:</b> Rev Fr JOHN CHUA OCD, <b>Parish Secretary:</b> Ms Martha Loh, <b>Parish Clerk:</b> Ms Jannie Lui, <b>Liturgical Co-ordinator:</b> Alex Wong, <a href="mailto:alexdominic@gmail.com">alexdominic@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Church Donations - Please make your cheque payable to:</b>	
(i) Church of Sts Peter & Paul - for contributions/donations for General Operations & Maintenance of the Church; (ii) Carmelite Fathers - for contributions/donations to the SPP Friars Community, Friars Formation; (iii) Soc of St Vincent de Paul (Conf St Peter) - for donations to the Society of St Vincent de Paul for the poor and needy.	

Information is correct at time of publication.

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Tel: +65 6337 2585 Fax: +65 6334 5414 email: [sts\\_peterpaul@singnet.com.sg](mailto:sts_peterpaul@singnet.com.sg) [www.spchurch.org.sg](http://www.spchurch.org.sg)

deeply desires to shine a light. It might begin with the simple question: Where might God be offering me forgiveness and healing?

If my answer is, "I don't know," then I have some reflection to do. I can examine my life - what I have done and what I have failed to do - and see what graces are offered me there. If I've come through that "era" of saying that any guilt, anything that makes me feel bad about myself, is a bad thing, to be avoided at all costs, then I might have a difficult time coming to genuine sorrow for my sins. If this is the case, I need to "go to work" on my reflection, asking God to rouse a sense of embarrassment, leading to deep sorrow, for any way I may not have been faithful, honest, loving, self-less or generous - in my relationship with God, with my family, with others. I can look at each of my responsibilities - as a citizen of a city and a country and the world, a neighbour, an employee, a member of a parish or congregation, as a parent or a spouse or as a son or daughter. God will always shine light into these important parts of our lives, to help us experience remorse and a genuine desire for forgiveness and healing. The point here is not ultimately to focus on ourselves. God always reveals us to ourselves, so that God might reveal to us our need for a Saviour. The focus is on God's reconciling, healing love. As John says, "God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but God's love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven." 1 John 4:9-10

It may be that I have experienced troubling guilt - coming out of deep childhood trauma or a long-standing sense of shame. This may plague my ability to feel good about myself at all, and therefore to be able to reflect upon my sins - the ways I fail at loving. I can still prepare for genuine reconciliation by preparing to better trust God's love for me, based upon two convictions: First, God's love is unconditional. It is not conditioned on my being better, or my overcoming anything, or even my being good at all. God just loves me. I am always precious in the eyes of the One who made me and desires to embrace me with the gift of complete freedom, in everlasting life. Secondly, God knows everything, including what I'm struggling with or suffering under. And, the God of all compassion, understands me and loves me. It may be that my greatest sin - the place where I need the greatest sorrow and desire for forgiveness and healing is my lack of trust in God's complete and

unconditional love for me. We can be certain that that is a gift God deeply desires to offer me.

It may be that when I ask myself the question about where God might be offering me forgiveness and healing, I might first come up with a single thing that seems "big" to me. I might say, "I feel sorry for how I treat my spouse or my children." I might focus on a long established habit of self-indulgent sexual fantasy, pornography on the internet or masturbation. I may feel most sorrow for what I fail to do - all the "good intentions" that never make their way into action. It is so important not to stop there. None of the "big" things about which we might immediately feel sorry for sums up all of who we are before God and others. They may be very important in giving some clues or some leads in identifying some larger patterns. For example, if a "big" thing that worries me is that I tend to be "loose" with the truth, at times, I can ask what that means, what it reveals about me. I may discover that the real pattern of sin has to do with a deeper dishonesty or lack of integrity: hiding from God; leading a double life; not being who I really am called to be; trying to manage my life on my own terms; manipulating others for my own needs and desires. When the Light of God's love shines into this level of self-awareness, then I am touched by a powerful experience of reconciliation. Even here, in a place I might be most embarrassed and feel most naked, God is loving me and offering me wholeness and joy.

### ***Celebrating Reconciliation***

Reconciliation is what God does. Receiving it and celebrating it is what we do. For those of us who are Catholics, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a most natural way to celebrate God's reconciliation. We used to think of this sacrament as only about "confession" - that it was like a dumping ground for my sins, where I got forgiven, and I had to "pay a toll". One of the great recoveries in our Christian history is to re-discover the meaning of this sacrament.

It is God who forgives sins. And God forgives us the very moment that we come to the experience that we need forgiveness (which itself comes through God's grace). At that moment, I feel sorrow and a desire for forgiveness and healing. In that moment, I am reconciled with God. The reunion, the bond, the connection, the joy are all there. Three more things remain: to receive

it deep within my heart, to celebrate it, and to participate in the healing process.

When I experience God's forgiveness and love, I am invited to savour it and let it touch me deeply. Experiencing compassion, patience, understanding, and forgiveness is itself transforming. If I fail to appreciate what I have just received - freely and undeserved - then I will take it for granted and risk moving on without a real healing happening.

Then, I need to celebrate the reconciliation I have received. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation - individually or in common - I have the wonderful opportunity to ritualise that celebration. In the Sacrament, my personal journey is joined with the mystery of God's saving love, as seen in the scriptures, and in God's desire to save us all. There, in ritual form (even if it is just me and the priest) I "step forward" and admit that I am a sinner, express my sorrow, and I name the places in my life where God is shining a Light into what I have done and what I have failed to do. Then, God's forgiveness is proclaimed "out loud" - for me to hear and rejoice in: "May God grant you pardon and fill you with God's peace."

Source: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/reconciliation-advent.html>

## **PARISH NEWS**

### **CITY DISTRICT ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICES (8.00 pm):**

- 11 Dec (Mon) Church of Our Lady of Lourdes
- 12 Dec (Tue) Church of St Teresa
- 13 Dec (Wed) Church of St Bernadette
- 14 Dec (Thu) Church of Sts Peter & Paul
- 15 Dec (Fri) Church of the Sacred Heart
- 18 Dec (Mon) Novena Church
- 19 Dec (Tue) Church of St Michael

**CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE** - Sunday, 24 December, Christmas Eve: 9.00pm (Mandarin, Carolling at 8.30pm), 12.00am midnight (Carolling at 11.00pm). Monday, 25 December Christmas Day: 8.30am (Mandarin), 11.00am (English), 2.00pm (Cantonese)

**SPP Advent Parish Wide Experience - ANIMA on FORMED.org** - We have a wonderful opportunity to grow as a parish family in our relationship with Jesus this Advent, and you are invited to participate in a video based study called ANIMA with study guide provided. This film study focuses on the Gospel message and

Many parishes offer an "Advent Communal Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation". It is a wonderful opportunity to join our sisters and brother in asking for forgiveness and healing during this important time of the year.

An integral part of the reconciliation involves the healing process. If I sprain my ankle, the doctor will offer me a number of therapies for healing - ice for the first 24 hours to reduce the swelling, wrapping it, elevating it, and then gradually and carefully using it, until it is healed and strong again. Part of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to seek and practice a "remedy" or "medicine" for the healing I desire. Often that will simply be prayer. Often, expressing my gratitude to God is one of the most important steps on the road to recovery from my independence from God. Sometimes, I will need to practice a therapy that is more carefully planned - making choices about what I can practice doing and what I can practice avoiding.

May our Lord grant us all the gift of reconciliation, and may we all receive it and celebrate it well in the holy days ahead.

what it means for us as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. ANIMA will move your heart and give you plenty to discuss as a family or as a group of friends, or even if you meditate individually. Let's continue this Second Week of Advent with Film 2 - Kenosis. To get the Parish Access Code for registration on Formed.org, please contact us at [www.sppchurch.org.sg](http://www.sppchurch.org.sg) or email [spphappenings@gmail.com](mailto:spphappenings@gmail.com)

**CAMP FEARLESS** Looking for God in a refreshing way? Or just want to know a few more familiar faces in church? Come join the SPP youth in a 3D2N stay-in camp centred around God with fun and games. Date: 12-14 Dec '17 (Tue-Thu). Venue: Church of SPP. Cost: \$15. Sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/sppcampfearless2017> or contact Tricia 98233922 for more details.

**SPP YEAR-END THANKSGIVING CELEBRATIONS** - Date: 31 Dec '17, (Sun) **Special Thanksgiving Mass** at 5.30pm with renewal of marriage vows and blessings for all married couples. Please note that there is NO 4.00pm Mass on this day.