

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 Third Week of Advent with Film 3 - Blaze. 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). If you have not started yet, you are still in time. Log on to FORMED.org immediately!

### 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.

### NEWS AROUND THE PARISH

**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** - This weekend, there will be a second collection for the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) campaign. GIRO forms, cheques or cash can be sealed into GIFT envelopes and dropped into the collection bags that will go around. Spare GIFT envelopes are available in the church pews, and at the parish office. Please give generously for the vision of the archdiocese. More info is available at [gift.catholicfoundation.sg](http://gift.catholicfoundation.sg).

<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>Interspersory 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.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION** - 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.

**Parish Priest:** Rev Fr EDWARD LIM, OCD, **Asst Parish Priest:** Rev Fr THOMAS LIM, OCD, **Priests in Residence:** Rev Fr TOM CURRAN, OCD, Rev Fr GREGORY HON, OCD and Rev Fr JOSEPH KOH, OCD, **General-Delegate:** Rev Fr JOHN CHUA, OCD, **Parish Secretary:** Ms Martha Loh, **Parish Clerk:** Ms Jannie Lui, **Liturgical Co-ordinator:** Alex Wong, [alexdominic@gmail.com](mailto:alexdominic@gmail.com)

#### Church Donations - Please make your cheque payable to:

- (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.

Church of Saints Peter & Paul: 225-A Queen Street, Singapore 188551  
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**READINGS:** Sunday Missal (Year B) Pg 624

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM: My Soul rejoices in my God.**

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:** MON 18 December - SAT 23 December 2017

**MON:** JER 23:5-8, MT 1:18-25 **TUE:** JGS 13:2-7, 24-25A, LK 1:5-25 **WED:** IS 7:10-14, LK 1:26-38 **THU:** SG 2:8-14, LK 1:39-45 **FRI:** 1 SM 1:24-28, LK 1:46-56 **SAT:** MAL 3:1-4, 23-24, LK 1:57-66

### Third Week of Advent

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."

We continue to focus on the first readings in this first part of Advent. From the Book of Numbers, we have the proclamation that "a star shall advance from Jacob..." Zephaniah is the prophet of impending doom, if the people don't abandon their idolatry. But this week we read about consoling healing, "on that day," when the Lord comes. Isaiah's message is full of promise: "Turn to me and be safe ... for I am God; there is no other!" God promises us, "with great tenderness I will take you back," and "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

On Saturday, we reach the December 17th and in these last eight days of Advent the focus returns to the gospels with stories from Jesus' family in the time before he was born. In Matthew's genealogy, we see the ancestors of Jesus.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we read Luke's Gospel of the Annunciation, the moment when a troubled Mary is told she has

found favour with God and she will conceive and bear a son. She questions: "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" Then declaring herself the handmaiden of the Lord, she accepts: "May it be done to me according to your word."

### Daily Prayer This Week

This third week of Advent, begins with *Gaudete* (rejoice!) Sunday. Our daily prayer continues to allow us to become much more concrete about naming our desires and preparing the way for the Lord. We begin this week with joy, knowing that our celebration of all the ways our Lord comes to us is getting nearer.

In these familiar readings is an invitation to us to ask again for help, perhaps especially in dealing with our fears. On Tuesday we hear God's message to us Isaiah: "Fear not. You shall not be put to shame." Fear can stop us from asking God for the very help we need in our lives.

In the midst of what our culture tells us should be a picture-perfect holiday season, we can step back and get in touch with our fears and ask God to help us deal with the relationships we are afraid of, the family tensions that make us apprehensive and the stress that can take us out of the spirit of Advent reflection. If we pause for just a minute, we can feel in our hearts that Jesus is saying gently to us each day: "Do not be afraid."

These very busy days can still be a time for us to

focus our desires, perhaps each morning at the side of our bed, while in the shower or while going about our daily errands. We can ask God to remind us again that what we are doing in our daily lives is touched by the sacred because God is present in even the most mundane tasks.

“Lord, let me place my trust in you. I get so independent and think I need to fix everything myself. Let me remember not to be afraid of so much and to ask you for the healing that my heart needs so badly. Give me the patience this week to deal with the relationships in my life that need mending and the forgiveness that I can give others and that I need so badly myself. Be with me through the darkness so that I can see the light that you bring to us and the joy with which you want to fill our hearts.”

We are moving toward the end of our Advent journey. Even if we don't feel like we have “started” on Advent yet, we can begin today. We are being invited: “Do not be afraid!”

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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.  
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### **Becoming John the Baptist - Accepting the Call to Prepare the Way for Jesus**

Advent can take us way beyond preparing for Christmas. It certainly does prepare us to be open to the gifts that come with this season. It is a season of hope and expectation. We encounter what happens when we taste our longing and can say, “Come, Lord, Jesus” at a deeper and more personal level. However, Advent can also draw us into the mystery of being not only “preparing” but to become one who is called to prepare the way for Jesus, in our world, for others.

#### *Looking at John the Baptist*

John the Baptist is given to Elizabeth and Zachariah, and to us, as a Hebrew testament prophet. He comes in order to be a precursor. He is the one who steps right out of the message of the Prophet Isaiah to prepare a way for our God to save us - in the midst of the wilderness, the wasteland - wherever there is hopelessness. His message is that the mountains aren't too high, the valleys aren't too severe for our God to come and save us - to be with us. He comes to make it clear that he himself is not the promised one. He is only to announce

and prepare his way. He calls for repentance and offers forgiveness. He comes with power to speak the truth to those who would be threatened by the good news. And, John pays a prophet's price for his discipleship.

#### *Becoming John the Baptist*

Advent is a time for us to hear the call - ultimately which comes from Jesus - to prepare his way. We are sent before him to the non-geographical places where the good news of Jesus hasn't been heard or where it is no longer accepted. Pope Francis tells us - in the Joy of the Gospel - that we share the good news best by our actions, more than by our words. Our inner joy, made manifest in our freedom to witness our joy, in our service for others, evangelises, that is, it credibly announces the good news of our salvation in Jesus. We tell people about it best when we look like we believe it, and we look like we believe it because we live it.

We become those who prepare the way for faith, through our core relationships and in our families, when we witness our faith in Jesus. Perfectionism, harshness, judgements, the pointing finger never brought anyone closer to Jesus. Yet, this is too often what “being religious” looks like to others. Our role in preparing the way for Jesus is to announce, to witness, to show how full of joy and how free we are by the personal relationship we have with Jesus. It is the exact opposite of being “self-righteous” or “impatient”. We “proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes” when we look and act like loved sinners. When we know we are forgiven and saved by God's mercy in Jesus, we are not only free from our own self-centredness, but we become courageous in loving as we have been loved. We become compassionate. We have the heart of Jesus for others. We are the people who keep the door open, even when it seems there is no hope that someone will return. We become more merciful. We hear the cries of those in need and we reach out and stand on the side of those in need.

When we are on fire with the reality of the Incarnation of our God - for us - we become not only more charitable, and kind and generous. We become on fire with being advocates for those in need. We desire, with Jesus, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to stand up and speak

the truth about the need for justice and prepare a highway for Jesus to let God's Kingdom come on earth - as it is in heaven.

#### *Becoming John the Baptist, we point to Jesus*

Like John, we don't call attention to ourselves. We point the way to Jesus. We say, “Look, there he is.” “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!” When we point the way to Jesus, who is mercy, we become ambassadors of his mercy. One of the most effective ways we can do this is to let ourselves not only be filled with the good news, personally, but to let ourselves fall in love with Jesus - to fall in love with his story, his example, his way of being, his trust in the Father, his parables, his healing presence. Everything about Jesus becomes more and more attractive to us. We come to him and learn from him. Our very being “proclaims the greatness of our God”.

#### *The Cost of this Discipleship*

As we live the life of Jesus in our world, we will experience immediately how counter-cultural it is. It is very difficult to be non-judgmental and compassionate in a very harsh world, in a sometimes very severe community. Living the life of Jesus, speaking truth to those who sustain injustice, will cost us. If we actively engage in dismantling unjust social structures, it will cost us dearly. Sometimes, even being kind and compassionate will cost us. Speaking about mercy and acting with forgiveness,

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Source: [http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/Becoming\\_John\\_the\\_Baptist.html](http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/Becoming_John_the_Baptist.html)  
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### **PARISH NEWS**

#### **CITY DISTRICT ADVENT**

#### **PENITENTIAL SERVICES (8.00 pm):**

18 Dec (Mon) Novena Church

19 Dec (Tue) Church of St Michael

#### **SOLEMNITY OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD**

- Mass in English will be celebrated on Mon 1 Jan '18 at 9am.

#### **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)

building bridges, rather than walls, will too often place us at odds with others. John the Baptist found himself in a Herod jail, unsure of his survival, for speaking out about Herod's life style. It must have shaken him because he sent some of his followers to go to Jesus and to ask if he had been a prophet in vain: “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” Jesus sent them back to John with this message: “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.” (Luke 7)

John gave his life, becoming a martyr who inspires us today. He died in the consolation of Jesus' assurance that he was blessed in his trust in Jesus and his way. John had prepared the way, and pointed others to Jesus, where they found healing and good news.

#### *Asking for the grace*

During Advent, we can ask for the grace to become a John the Baptist, in whatever way the Lord wants to use us to open a door for him today. The opportunities will come. We can simply ask to be opened to see them - to recognise them - and to be given the courage and the trust to be an instrument of grace for others. We can give that special content to the prayer, “Come, Lord Jesus, Come.”

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**CATECHISM CLASS 2018** - Commences on Sun 21 Jan '18 at 9.30am.

#### **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.

#### **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 what it means for