

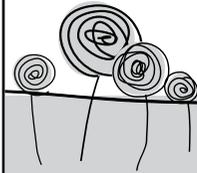
catholicfoundation.sg to donate online or find out more.

HOPE 2016 CONCERT - The Good Shepherd Sisters and friends presents a Christmas concert to raise funds for four social services under Marymount Centre. These services reach out to children, women and families who experience injustice. Enter into the Advent season more fully with us by recognising hope in our lives. Date/ Time: Sunday, 18 Dec '16, 7.00pm - 8.30pm. Venue: Church of Sts Peter & Paul. Tickets at \$30, \$60, \$100 available through <http://tinyurl.com/2016hope> or contact us at 6256 4440/ Hope2016@marymountctr.org.sg

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER (ME) WEEKEND - Present a ME Gift Voucher to your spouse or friends this Christmas. For December only, get the vouchers from Cana (55 Waterloo Street, Level 2) at half-price of \$25. Book a ME Weekend and pick up new communication skills for

a stronger marriage. Slots are still open for Jan 6-8 Weekends. E-mail mewkend@gmail.com or visit wwmesg.org.

In the first place it should be known that if a person is seeking God, His beloved is seeking him much more.



Quoteworthy
-St. John of the Cross

Sunset Mass	: 5.30pm
Rosary	: 4.30pm (Saturday)
Sunday Masses	: 8.30am (Mandarin), 11.00am (English), 2.00pm (Cantonese), 4.00pm (English)
Weekday Masses	: 7.20am and 5.30pm
Interspersory Prayer	: 7.15pm (English, Thursday)
Infant Jesus Devotion	: 5.30pm (Thursday, followed by Mass)
Divine Mercy Devotion	: 12.30pm (Sunday Mandarin)
Sion Adorers - Holy Hour	: 7.45pm - 8.45pm (Saturday)
Hour of Mercy	: 3.00pm daily
Counselling @ SPP	: 7.00pm - 9.00pm (Monday, call church secretariat 6337 2585 for appointment)
Adoration Chapel	: 8.00am - 9.00pm (Mon to Sat), 8.00am - 7.00pm (Sun)

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

Church Donations - Please make your cheque payable to:

(i) Church Of Sts Peter & Paul - for contributions /donations for on-going maintenance of our Church or parish projects and Mass offerings; (ii) Church Of SPP Building Fund - for contributions/donations to our Church building fund; (iii) Carmelite Fathers for contributions/donations to the Carmelite Friars (SPP), OCD Missions, Frairs Formation. (iv) 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

Tel: +65 6337 2585 Fax: +65 6334 5414 email: sts_peternpaul@singnet.com.sg www.sppchurch.org.sg



READINGS: Sunday Missal (Year a) Pg 197

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK: MON 5 December - SAT 10 December 2016

MON: IS 35:1-10, LK 5:17-26 **TUE:** IS 40:1-11, MT 18:12-14 **WED:** IS 40:25-31, MT 11:28-30 **THU:** Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary **FRI:** IS 48:17-19, MT 11:16-19 **SAT:** SIR 48:1-4, 9-11, MT 17:9A, 10-13

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, judgments, 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-centeredness, 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, 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. 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.”

PARISH NEWS

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICE
Schedule for the City District: 12 Dec (8.00pm) - St. Bernadette, 13 Dec (8.00pm) - St. Michael, 14 Dec (8.00pm) - Sacred Heart, 15 Dec (8.00pm) - St. Teresa, **16 Dec (8.00pm, Fri) - SPP, 17 Dec (1.00pm, Sat, Mandarin) - SPP, 19 Dec (8.00pm) - Our Lady of Lourdes**

ALTAR SERVERS MINISTRY - We are in a very urgent need for Altar Servers as the number is decreasing at a rapid pace. Altar Servers are urgently needed especially for 2.00pm Cantonese Mass and 4.00pm English Mass on Sundays. We will be very glad if Secondary School students are willing to help out at these 2 masses. Primary School students are also welcome. To sign up as a member of the Altar Servers Ministry, please go to sppaltarservers.tumblr.com/SignUp. We will greatly appreciate your service to our church.

INFANT BAPTISM - The next Infant Baptism service will be held on Saturday 17 Dec ‘16 at 9.00am in the main church. Parents and Godparents are required to attend a preparatory session to be conducted by the Priest at 8.45am before the baptism. Application Forms for Infant Baptism can be obtained from the Parish Office. The Forms must be submitted by Monday 12 Dec ‘16.

THE OFFICE FOR THE NEW EVANGELISATION has produced a booklet of reflections for the season of Advent in English, Mandarin and Tamil. The theme is “The Pilgrim Community”. Please take a copy of the booklet for your household. You can also find the online copy at <http://www.one.org.sg/resources-for-parishes/>.

NEW REGISTRATIONS FOR PRIMARY 1 CATECHISM 2017 - Please submit the completed registration form,

together with your child’s original Baptism Certificate to the parish office. Latest date to submit the form is 11 Dec ‘16.

CATECHISTS NEEDED - We are still short of 2 catechists for the Secondary level. Anyone who would like to come forward and help in the faith formation for these children can get in touch with the Main Coordinator, Moses via moseskow@gmail.com or 90092226.

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF BVM - Prayers and the rosary will begin at 11.30am in our church on Thu 8 Dec ‘16. Confessions from noon. Mass will be celebrated at 1.00pm. For sale during that day: New book of prayers (1) and (2).

2-DAYS MALACCA PILGRIMAGE - We are organising a two-days pilgrimage to Malacca from Sat/Sun 10 - 11 Dec ‘16 for the Feast Day Celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe. For enquiries, please contact Lawrence Seet at 97992488 or register at our Secretariat Office. Last day for registration: Sun 3 Dec ‘16.

NEWS AROUND THE PARISH

LAUNCH OF GIFT BY CATHOLIC FOUNDATION - The Catholic Foundation has launched the Giving in Faith and Thankfulness (GIFT) campaign to encourage and empower regular individual giving to the archdiocese. Resources are needed to fund the many organisations in the archdiocese involved in families, youths, evangelisation; several building projects; and other initiatives. Currently, there is a projected shortfall of \$238m for the next 7 years. Every Catholic in Singapore is called to pledge a regular monthly contribution to the archdiocese today, so that the Church may continue growing for generations to come. Appeal booklets, flyers and envelopes are available in the parish to make your pledge. Alternatively, visit gift.

Taken from Praying Advent, on Creighton University’s Online Ministries website: <http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html>. Used with permission.