



The Birth of *Jesus* The Audacious Dream of God

It doesn't take much for a baby to draw our attention to himself or herself. It can be a stranger, a friend or a family member in church, in a train or in a market – it doesn't matter who or where – a baby has an innate ability to attract us. We almost always respond so spontaneously with a “so cute” or want to carry the adorable baby!

Indeed, if I were to see Baby Jesus, perhaps that will be my immediate response – to be drawn inexplicably to him. I might even sense something different about this baby – something of his “aura,” his “presence,” his “power,” his “vulnerability,” or his salvific destiny to change the course of human history.

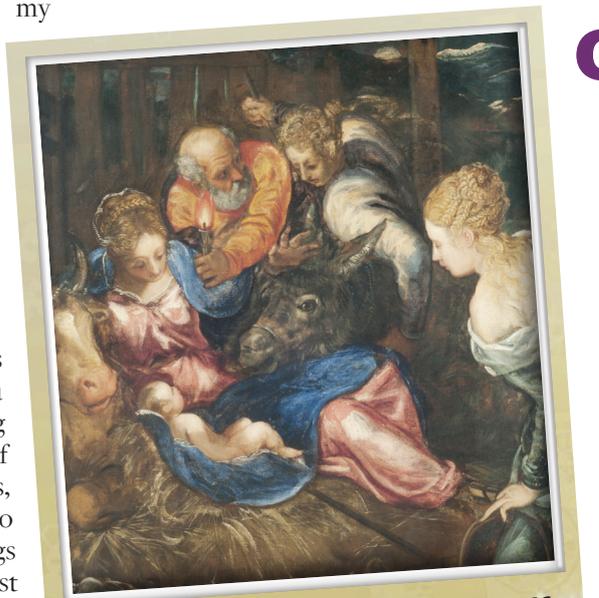
The birth of Jesus Christ is a birth unlike any other. It is the fulfilment of a dream, of a vision of God to come among us. It is the audacious dream of God to save us, to protect us, to share his life with us and to become one like us in all things but sin. Who in his wildest dreams would ever think of doing such a thing?

Yet, the fact that we have now with us, the Saviour born of the Virgin Mary, is an act of faith in humanity. It is a gift given to us by God who shows us his love and his nature as “being-for the other” (Ratzinger). God's nature is to share with the other (we who are his unworthy creatures) all that he possesses in his being, power and love.

How do we respond to this gift of God himself to us? I humbly suggest three movements or responses.

ADORATION. I think, like seeing the baby that is vulnerable and cute, the first response is to simply adore Christ.

Our acts of adoration are due to God alone. To dare to adore is to give what is due to God as our Creator and to give him the honour and love that is right and just. Spend some time to adore the



The PPC Exco, the Parish Staff
and the Jesuit Community at
Kingsmead Hall wish
all Parishioners

*A Joyous Christmas
and
Peaceful New Year!*

baby Jesus and consider his humanity and divine origin to be with us, to give us hope.

FAITH. The second response for us is an act of faith to accept and to acknowledge the humility of Jesus to come among us and to identify as one of us in order to show us the way to the Father. Each day we live and move and worship God in faith to know that he holds our lives in his hands. Take time out to examine your faith and see how it needs strengthening, if it needs repair and renewal and maintenance, like a ship or a car for it to be in good working condition.

FRIENDSHIP. Thirdly, we open our hearts to accept his friendship. To know Jesus is to become his friend as he introduces us to his Father. It is hence an act of friendship to know that he stands with and by us in good and bad times.

“If once you set about loving God, his Friendship will bring you immortality.” (St Irenaeus, Against the Heresies).

My dear friends let us open our hearts to love Jesus this Christmas. This will be the best gift we can give to ourselves and to HIM. Have a blessed Christmas and continue to live the audacious dream of God in your lives.

FR COLINTAN, SJ

PARISH NEWS

OFFICE CLOSURE

The Parish office will be closed on Christmas Day, Tuesday 25 December.

MEMORIAL MASS for deceased loved ones is on Friday, 28 December, 6.00pm at the main Church, followed by prayers in the Columbarium. All are welcome.

CHRISTMAS MASS AND PARTY FOR THE AGED, SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

by the PaCes Ministry. Friday 28 December, 2.30-5.00pm. Sign-up forms at Place of Gathering.

INFANT BAPTISMS on Sunday 13 January at 3.00pm. Parents and godparents are required to attend a briefing on Sunday, 6 January 3pm at La Storta Room. Registration forms available at church office or website. Please choose a saint's name for your child. Contact Lisa (9818 5281) & Brian Ling (9760 0978) or Michelle (9765 2936) & Mark Kwek (9221 0281).

WEEKEND CATECHETICAL PROGRAMME

New registrations for 2019 is NOW CLOSED. If you have missed the enrolment period, please email us directly at stignatius.wecat@gmail.com.

LANDINGS ARRIVAL

Landings Ministry is coming to St Ignatius. The outreach program helps welcome back those who have been estranged from the Church. Contact Fr Jerome if you are interested in becoming coordinators and facilitators.

BIBLE ConX

Master Bible quotes in a fun and easy way at Bible ConX on Saturday 12 January, 2019 at St Ignatius Hall, 8.30am to 5pm. Register at <https://form.jotform.me/BibleApostolate/bible-conx-registration-> or scan barcode. Enquiries: Magdalene at 9152 8227 or batstig@singapore@gmail.com



MIND YOUR STUFF

Parishioners are advised to keep watch on their personal

NCC NEWS

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings start at 8.00pm.

ZONE A DISTRICT 1 & 3

Wednesday, 16 January 2019, Rm SH-E.

Light Refreshment @ 7:30pm

Programme: "Insights on the difference between Catholic teaching & Atheist view/Catholic & Protestant." By Father Ravi



Advent and Christmas 2018 Put the Love of Jesus Back into Christmas

Christmas Eve Children's pageant

Monday 24 December, 5.30pm, followed by Mass

Reflection and Worship (DVC Choir)

11.00pm, followed by Christmas Midnight Mass

Christmas Day Masses

Tuesday 25 December, 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm and 6.00pm

Christmas Mass and Party for the aged, sick and homebound (PaCES Ministry)

Friday 28 December, 2.30pm

Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve Concelebrated Mass

Monday 31 December, 6.00pm

Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of God Mass

Tuesday 1 January 2019, 8.15am, 10.15am and 6.00pm

belongings, especially handbags and valuables, while receiving communion, and within the Church compounds. Check to ensure you have not left anything behind when leaving.

BE PART OF OUR PARISH FAMILY

The 12 NCC and SCC groups within our parish allow for parishioners to support each other in faith and fellowship. If you wish to be part of any of these communities of faith, contact the church office or Bernard at bernard@attitudeDS.com or 9450 7077. You can also leave your contact at the Help Desk at the Place of Gathering. All, whether young or old, are welcome. We also encourage new parishioners to register with the Church Office. Being registered as parishioners gives you the privilege of using the church for weddings, catechism classes and funerals, among other advantages.

Fr Colin Tan, SJ Parish Priest ★ Fr Matthew Tan, SJ Assistant Parish Priest ★ Fr Jerome Leon, SJ Assistant Parish Priest

Angela Kurnadi Parish Administrator ★ Suzie Wee Parish Accountant ★ Jeremy Aloysius Catechetical Director ★ Gerard Robert Youth Coordinator ★ Cheryl Lek Youth Coordinator

Robert Ong Sacristan ★ David Saw Operations Manager ★ Steven Leong Facilities Manager ★ Therese Gian Communications Manager



Happiness



To distinguish between pleasure, happiness and joy, we must understand the different “levels” that constitute our person: the physical, emotional and spiritual levels.

Pleasure is what you feel in the body at the physical level, happiness is what you feel in the heart at the emotional level, but joy is what is in our soul at the spiritual level.

Happiness is dictated by external circumstances – it is fleeting. You might feel happy on your birthday, at getting good exam results, a promotion at work or having your prayers answered. What all these have in common is self-centredness: your birthday, your exam, your promotion, your prayers.

Joy, on the other hand, doesn't depend on external circumstances – it is about being in the right spiritual relationship with God, being in a “state of grace”. Joy lives on the same spiritual plane as peace, grace and gratitude. As Pope Francis teaches, joy is a gift from the Lord; and so, its attributes are calm and constant.

The three states operate independently. This is why you can be afflicted at the (shallower) emotional level and yet still be joyful at the (deeper) spiritual level. In a state of spiritual emptiness, when you don't feel like praying, don't know how to pray or don't

feel God's presence, you can still be joyful in the certainty that God loves you. If you need reminding, just look at the Cross, and at Christmas, look at the Crib.

Consider Paul, who after suffering scourges, shipwrecks and the spectre of death, writes from prison his letter of joy to the Philippians, saying the “great joy” in him is “in the Lord” (Philippians 4:10).

Similarly, James says when we experience “trials of many kinds”, we can still consider them “pure joy” (James 1:2). The trials of this world can rattle the emotions but cannot temper the joy of the soul.

Even the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary contain episodes of sadness. After the Annunciation, Mary must have been in anguish until the angel told Joseph about the mystery of the Incarnation. At the Nativity in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph could find only a stable to stay in and our Lord arrived into a world oblivious to his existence and later on, unready to welcome Him. The joy of the Presentation was offset by Simeon's ominous prophecy that Mary's soul will be pierced by a sharp sword of sorrow. After the Presentation, the Holy Family had to flee to Egypt to protect Jesus.

This must have involved years of survival among foreign people, language and customs. Then there's Joseph and Mary's despair before the Finding of Jesus in the Temple. We see tinges of sadness on the surface but ultimately, joy prevailed.

What about us today? Well, shortly after we sing “Joy to the World” on Christmas Day, the very next day, the Church commemorates the martyrdom of St Stephen and on 28 December, the murder of the Holy Innocents. That these are remembered during the Christmas Octave is not down to some scheduling error by the Church but rather a conscious reminder that even in the midst of pain and affliction, there can still be an overriding sense of joy.

How can we find and increase joy?

First, stay close to God through the sacraments and prayer. Clear a space in your soul for joy by resolving to actually enjoy receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Second, if we surrender everything to God's will, all our problems can be seen as opportunities for us to show our faith in God. After all, having faith means trusting God, which allows us to rest in hope, and this produces joy.

Finally, if you already possess joy, you have been blessed. And as the Abrahamic saying goes: “You have been blessed to be a blessing to others.” So be a conduit of joy to others at Christmas: smile, speak kindly, forgive. When others see your joy despite your setbacks, they will know what Emmanuel truly means: Not God was with us (some 2,000 years ago) or God will be with us, but God IS with us.

JESUIT NEWS

'O GOD, IT'S A NEW YEAR!' | DAY OF RECOLLECTION

Rejuvenate spiritually and renew commitment to grow your relationship with God. Spend some time in silence contemplating God in Scripture and be engaged in guided activities based on Ignatian themes.

Date & Time: Saturday, 19 Jan 2019, 9.30am - 5pm

Facilitators: Diana Tan & Roselie Chia

Contribution: \$60

Register: <http://tinyurl.com/ogod2019>

Jesuit Regional Curia, Telephone: 6469 7356

Fr Christopher Soh, SJ, Fr James Tan, SJ

Kingsmead Hall, Jesuit Community, Tel: 6466 3225

Fr Gerald Tseng, SJ, Fr Charles Sim, SJ, Fr Leslie Raj, SJ, Fr Agustinus Tanudjaja, SJ,

Fr Gregory Tan, SJ, Msgr Philip Heng, SJ, Fr Adrian Danker, SJ,

Kingsmead Centre, Tel: 6467 6072 Jesuit Mission Office Tel: 6463 6022

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

LOVE IN THE CITY!

In a light-hearted talk show, come and discover the reasons for the ways we celebrate Christmas. Invite non-Catholic friends and family to help them understand and experience Christmas with a difference.

Date/Time: Saturday 29 December, 2pm - 4pm

Where: The Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo St, S187954

Organised by: Office for the New Evangelisation

Info and registration: www.one.org.sg/events

CROSSROADS

Date & Time: 5 January 2019, 9am-

6 January 2019, 1.00pm

Venue: Choice Retreat House, 47 Jurong West St 42

Contribution: \$180

A retreat for young people (20-35 y.o.) to consider where they have been and where they would like to go, and to prayerfully discern the choices in their lives.

By Cenacle sisters. Please register at www.cenaclemission.com

PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS COURSE 2019

By REV FR DAVID GARCIA, OP

This one-year systematic course in Moral Theology, consisting of 6 individual modules, is for all Catholics and people of goodwill interested in formation in the foundations of Ethics and Moral Theology. Organised under Caritas Singapore. Begins 11 January, every Friday, 7.30pm to 9.30pm, at Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street. Information and registration: www.caritas-singapore.org or email formation@caritas-singapore.org

Church Office

120, King's Road, Singapore 268172 or
8, Victoria Park Road, Singapore 266492

Entrance via 8 Victoria Park Road

Kingsmead Hall (Priests' Residence), St Ignatius Hall, Sacred Heart Hall, Kingsmead Centre (for Ignatian Spirituality & Counselling)

Sunday Masses

Saturday: 6.00pm

Sunday: 6.45am, 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm and 6.00pm

Weekday Masses

Monday - Friday: 7.00am & 6.00pm

Saturday: 7.00am

Confessions

Every Friday & Saturday: 5.40pm

Every Sunday Mass: 20mins before Mass begins

Infant Baptism (each month)

Briefing for parents & godparents (compulsory):
1st Sunday, 3.00pm

Baptism: 2nd Sunday, 3.00pm sharp

Registration forms are available at front of Church office

Weddings

Couples must make themselves known to the priest at least one year before the wedding.

Contact: Sacristan, Robert Ong (8511 4614)

Visiting Hours (Columbarium)

Open daily from 6.30 am to 8.00 pm (including weekends & Public Holidays)

Memorial Mass at the Main Church every 4th Friday, 6.00 pm for all deceased parishioners and families, followed by prayers in Columbarium.

Inigo Bookstore

Wednesday to Saturday: 4.30pm to 7.00pm and during Sunday Masses. Closed on Monday and Tuesday

Sick, Elderly and Homebound

Please contact the parish office if help is needed for parishioners hospitalised (regardless of hospital).

In emergencies, you may also contact priests' residence at 6466 3225

Bereavement

Please contact the parish Sacristan, Robert Ong (8511 4614) for help and advice before contacting the funeral director.

Church of St Ignatius has no official social media account.

WEEKLY

Rosary Devotion in Church

Monday to Saturday, after 7am Mass and Monday to Friday 5.15pm to 5.45pm, except first Friday of the month

Intercessory Prayers

Tuesday, 2.30pm in Sacred Heart Hall Adoration Room, Level 2

Catholic content online, login:

www.FORMED.org; parish code: 4904ed

Gentle Light

Tuesday, 10am - 12noon in St Francis Xavier Chapel (Kingsmead)

Thursday, 10am - 12noon in Sacred Heart Canteen (Room SH-A)

Divine Mercy Devotion

Every Wednesday after 6.00pm Mass in the Main Church.

Christian Meditation

Friday, 2.30pm in St Francis Xavier Prayer Room (Kingsmead)

MONTHLY - in Main Church

Sacred Heart of Jesus Mass

Every 1st Friday, 8.00pm (No 6.00pm Mass) Followed by **Eucharistic Adoration by Generation CHRIST!**

Children Eucharistic Adoration

Every 3rd Friday, 7.45pm. No session in June and December

Memorial Mass

Every 4th Friday, 6.00pm, followed by prayers in the Columbarium