



## Trust in the Good Shepherd



**T**he image of the Good Shepherd has always appealed to me, but as I learned more about what a shepherd was and did in New Testament times, my understanding of the image which Christ uses in today's Gospel reading shifted rather noticeably. I realized that shepherds were at the bottom of the scale when it came to respect and income, and I was especially struck by the fact that these men raised the sheep in their charge only to sell them for food or for sacrifice. This did not enhance my vision of the Good Shepherd.

Christ clearly indicates that some owners of sheep hired others to care for their flocks, men who became shepherds only because of what they could get out of it, men who were liable to abandon their charges when there was a threat.

What Christ proclaims here is that He is actually the opposite of all such shepherds: He is the shepherd who goes lovingly after the one who is lost, leaving the ninety-nine to care for themselves for a moment (*Matthew 18:24; Luke 15:3-7*). He has chosen His sheep,

and He leads to life, not death, those who are willing to truly choose Him as their shepherd. His sheep do not die, for it is rather He who gives Himself to death in order that His flock might live.

Sheep in general are not very intelligent at all and need a caretaker, a leader, a protector – in short, a shepherd. That applies to us as well: when it comes to what is really for our good, we act only too often like children who want immediate gratification, who follow nothing more than their own hungers and desires. And like children, we need to be rescued and returned to a right relationship with our families and our communities. We are then very much like those sheep.

Those of us who want to follow Jesus, who wish to be with Him wherever He takes us, trust Him to lead us to real life and its fullness through all the dangers we think we face and all the doubts we suffer. We pray that we may truly hear and recognize His voice. Psalm 23 truly means something to us, and we follow not only out of need, but out of a love, a yearning, to

be always with a Shepherd whom we have come to understand and value even a little.

Jesus lives His life as the Good Shepherd at His Father's invitation, but freely: this is obedience, not forced, regretful, restrained, or blind, but free and loving. Jesus loves the Father, and He loves us, the sheep of His flock. His obedience is strictly a matter of passionate love for both the Father and us.

We can put our independence in the hands of Jesus, giving up our absolute self-direction, our self-sufficiency, and confidently let ourselves be led, fed, guided, protected, and above all, loved by a Good Shepherd like Him. Or we can childishly decide that we are all grown up and don't need God's concern and care for us, that we can do very well without His love and protection.

If we choose the former path, God might then work to make us shepherds in His own image, as the Father is, as Jesus is, and as the Spirit is, each in his or her own way.

**CHAS KESTERMEIER, SJ**

Jesuit Community, Creighton University

Fr Colin Tan, SJ Parish Priest ★ Fr Jerome Leon, SJ Assistant Parish Priest ★ Fr Ravi Michael Louis, SJ Assistant Parish Priest

Pauline Khoo Parish Administrator ★ Suzie Wee Parish Accountant ★ Gerard Robert Youth Coordinator ★ Natalie Ang Youth Coordinator ★ Susan Thian Catechetical Coordinator

David Saw Operations Manager ★ Steven Leong Facilities Manager ★ Therese Gian Sacristan ★ Chrestella Setiyadi Communications Manager

# New Beginnings

Our next RCIA journey will begin on **3 August 2021**. Registration commences on **1 June 2021**. Do keep a lookout for registration details or visit our Parish website for the latest updates.

We give thanks and congratulate our brothers and sisters from the RCIA/RCIY who were baptised, confirmed and received into full communion with the Catholic Church on the 10 - 11 April 2021.

There were a total of 39 elects, 9 candidates and 7 confirmands. Here are some of their testimonies!

My RCIA journey began in September 2020 when I was alone in Singapore. My husband and 3 children are already baptised except for myself. I didn't tell my husband who was in Jakarta at the time about my joining RCIA. I could only depend on Father Colin, my facilitators Anthony and Pao Yi to guide me during our ZOOM sessions. I would go to church with my family, hear all the Bible readings and homily, but never really listened. My husband called us "submarine Catholics" who only attend church on Christmas and Good Friday. I asked many silly questions at the beginning because there were so many Bible readings which I didn't understand at all. But I did memorize all the prayers which Father Colin told us to. When I was presented with a Catholic Bible on my Rite of Acceptance, I was at a loss to how to start with such a thick volume of more than 1,400 pages. But our RCIA sessions twice a week have taught me more and more, and I began to understand more of the Bible passages and different



readings from the prophets, Jesus' disciples and definitely all of Father Colin's homilies. I'm so blessed that God gives me this opportunity to be guided by Father Colin, Anthony and Pao Yi, and my group for walking this journey.

- **Sumiati Sakri**

I was raised in a Buddhist family and became a free-thinker after my marriage. God has planned my life by giving me two wonderful children, many wonderful friends and opportunities to travel and

visit beautiful churches, and so my desire to become a Catholic began.

I would visit Perth often with my dear friend Teresa and she would bring me along for Masses after shopping. In March 2018, our mutual friend, Angelica, got baptised in Perth and I was honoured to witness her beautiful baptism by Father Aloysius from Singapore. In fact, Father Aloysius asked me whether I would like to be baptized, but I declined as I was not ready. However, the seed of faith was planted in me.

Last year, my good friend Doris was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Prior to her passing, I witnessed her baptism by Father Colin. Being present and watching her go peacefully back into the light filled me with the courage I lacked all this time. When Father Colin told



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me that he is conducting RCIA for those who wanted to get baptised in the coming Easter, without any hesitation, I happily enrolled myself in RCIA, with support from my godmother Teresa.

Today, I stand humbly in front of God, in front of you brothers and sisters. I'm ready to join God's big family. Thank you so much everyone, especially Father Colin and Teresa for helping me in this journey. To Jesus be all the glory and honour, Amen.

- **Justina Tan Siew Hong**



As a Protestant, I had always been skeptical about the Catholic faith. After leaving my former church, I was constantly church-hopping, trying to find God again. I had many doubts about the Catholic faith, and I never thought I would convert. It was two full years of RCIY sessions before I decided to commit to baptism when I finally felt a sense of certainty. Eventually, I started seeing the beauty of the Mass and the sacraments.

During the two years, I have always thought it was me searching for Christ. But amidst the feelings of loneliness and doubts, I realised that He has always been pursuing me. When I finally partook in the Eucharist, I felt an overwhelming sense of peace and teared up immediately because that's when I knew He has never abandoned me.

A big thank you to Fr Colin, all the sponsors and planners of RCIY for making this such an amazing

experience for us. I'm looking forward to what's ahead of me in this journey I have with Christ!

- **Zeen Tng (RCIY)**

I was formerly from Church of the Holy Spirit I was introduced to St Ignatius Church by my former classmate Ashley Chia whom I met in CJC. I was baptised in 2009, but didn't attend Catechism classes. I always wondered what God was really like and felt the church was a lodestone of that emptiness I had in my spiritual faith. When I first joined RCIY, I already felt so welcomed by everyone. Everyone was so pure and genuine, which I really appreciated! From the meals or welcome tea to DVC's trivia night, I really felt at home almost immediately. As I journeyed towards confirmation, I learnt more about God's ways, and could understand him better through my reflections and prayers every night. Meeting and journeying with these new friends has been amazing, as I feel a more complete Catholic after this whole journey. My Catholic journey has just started, and I can't wait to explore more about the Faith through DVC and other communities!

- **Cassidy Thng (RCIY)**

For more information on the RCIA/RCIY Programme please visit [stignatius.org.sg/home/ministries/faith-formation/rcia-ministry](http://stignatius.org.sg/home/ministries/faith-formation/rcia-ministry) or [www.rciy.sg](http://www.rciy.sg)

## PARISH NEWS

### MAY MASS BOOKINGS

Stage 1 Mass bookings for May opens on **27 April at 3pm** via [myCatholic.sg](http://myCatholic.sg). Parishioners will be able to book **ONE weekend Mass** and up to **FIVE weekday Masses** at each stage, subject to availability.

**Weekday Morning Mass:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7.30am

**Weekday Evening Mass:** Mondays - Fridays, 7.00pm

**Weekend Mass:** Saturday 4.30pm and 6.00pm

Sunday 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm, 4.30pm and 6.00pm

### ASCENSION OF THE LORD MASS TIMINGS

Wednesday 12 May, 7.00pm (Vigil Mass)

Thursday 13 May, 8.15am, 10.15am and 6.00pm

**LIVESTREAM MASSES** are available on the following days: Mondays - Fridays, 7.00pm.

Saturday 6.00pm, Sunday 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm and 6.00pm. Please go to [bit.ly/stigslivestream](http://bit.ly/stigslivestream)

**AV VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to help operate the live streaming of the weekday evening Masses. Kindly contact David at [davidrobertsaw39@gmail.com](mailto:davidrobertsaw39@gmail.com) if you are interested in learning and are able to help.

### SAFEENTRY GATEWAY

With effect from **19 April 2021**, our Parish has deployed the **SafeEntry Gateway devices** as an additional check-in mode for all Masses. SafeEntry Gateway is a contactless means of checking in, and will be carried out at the registration desks.

Parishioners who wish to check-in via the SafeEntry Gateway are to have their TraceTogether tokens ready or have the TraceTogether App open on their mobile phones when they approach the registration desks.

*Existing modes of SafeEntry check-in are still available for the time being. Please continue to bring your NRIC/ Work Permit to verify your Mass booking.*

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are available every Wednesday, 6.00pm-6.30pm and Friday, 5.00pm-6.30pm. Kindly call the parish office (Pauline/ Suzie) to make an appointment before coming down.

### CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

Join us this **Wednesday, 28 April at 8pm** for an evening of Testimonies and a short video clip. By sharing God's goodness and what He's done in our lives, we proclaim His greatness. Email us at [cpg.cosi@gmail.com](mailto:cpg.cosi@gmail.com) for details.

### LENTEN FAST FOR THE POOR

A total of **S\$14,935.00** was collected for the poor from the start of the Lenten Fast to 31 March 2021. Our parish's Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) uses your donation for programmes to help the poor. SSVP is very grateful to parishioners for the gift of the Lenten Fast.

### VISITING THE COLUMBARIUM

Our Columbarium is open for visits on Saturdays, 5.00pm-5.45pm; and Sundays, 9.00am-9.45am, 11.00am-11.45am, 1.00pm-1.45pm, and 5.00pm-5.45pm.

For May bookings, please book at [bit.ly/stigscolumbariumMay2021](http://bit.ly/stigscolumbariumMay2021)

If you need help in booking, please call the church office at 6466 0625 (Pauline/Suzie). After office hours, WhatsApp/Telegram/SMS 9675 6621.

### GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY COLLECTION

Mass Collections received through PayNow, cash or cheques during the **week of 24th - 30th April 2021** will constitute receipts for Good Shepherd Sunday. Your contributions will support the ongoing formation of our seminarians and expenses of the St. Francis Xavier Major Seminary.

## ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

### CHARITIES WEEK 2021

Charities Week will close in about 2 weeks time on **9 May 2021**. To date, Caritas have raised about \$3.7 million of the \$7.5 million target and thanks you for your contributions, big or small, but there's still have a long way to go. Please continue to send in your donations, pick up an appeal envelope and give generously. Your donations will help Caritas' 27 charities and organisations to serve and empower those in need.

### MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS 2021

*Do Christians follow a different morality? Is there a difference between Christian and secular morality?* Join us for the third module of My Personal Moral Compass as we contemplate what God has to do with ethics in general, and how the Christian understanding of God has an impact on human ethics. All sessions will be led by Rev Fr David Garcia, O.P.

Module 3 will start on **29 April 2021** and will be held weekly on Thursdays over Zoom at 7:30 pm for seven weeks. To register, please go to <https://bit.ly/3a0542c> For enquiries, please email Caritas Singapore at [mPMC@caritas-singapore.org](mailto:mPMC@caritas-singapore.org)