

## Be on Guard Against Avarice!

Programmes promoting minimalism and essentialism are all the rage on Netflix and YouTube these days. They advise you on how to keep your house neat and encourage you to get rid of things that you do not use. This is more than just housekeeping advice, it is a philosophy of life. Do we spend our lives working hard to earn money to buy things that we don't need? Are we pawns in the game of consumerism and materialism? Is our 'buy and throw away attitude' destroying the environment?

None of these programmes, as far as I know, are inspired by the words of Jesus in the Gospel today: *'Watch and be on your guard against avarice of any kind.'* So what draws people to practice minimalism? Perhaps they feel a sense of freedom from the need to accumulate things and can focus on what is most important, their happiness.

Centuries ago, saints like St. Benedict and St. Francis of Assisi, were the minimalists and essentialists of their day. Promoting a simple lifestyle that they believed would bring happiness. I have been drawn to these programmes on minimalism and to be honest, I've tried to follow some of their advice in my own life. But what is my motivation? Is it simply to have a tidy house, or am I trying to live out the vow of poverty that I made as a religious?

When the Scriptures tell us, *'All is vanity,'* or *'look for the things that are in heaven,'* or *'a man's life is not made secure by what he owns,'* what does that mean? Does it mean that all possessions are bad, that we can never even buy anything we like? That we should not be concerned about the needs and financial security of our families?

The Scriptures make a differentiation between what we need, and what is vanity and avarice. Between what makes us truly happy and free, and what enslaves us. If we spend all our time and energy toiling and labouring for things that make us look good in front of others, if all our desires and ambitions are centred on what we achieve in this world - then Jesus warns us that we might be terribly disappointed.

The modern gurus of minimalism and essentialism may be on to something. What makes you truly happy? Do you need all the things that you desire? Today, Jesus, Paul and the writer of Ecclesiastes ask us the same question. But as people of faith, our motivations are different. Our focus, our goal is the eternal life and the eternal happiness of the Kingdom of Heaven. What you really need, is what helps you get there.

**Reflection by Gerard Louis, CSSR**

# Novena notes

18<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Year C  
4 August 2019

## Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 4 August	Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23; Col 3:1-5, 9-11; Lk 12:13-21 O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next.
Mon, 5 August Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major	Num 11:4-15; Mt 14:13-21 Ring out your joy to God our strength.
Tue, 6 August Transfiguration of the Lord	Dan 7:9-10, 13-14; Lk 9:28-36 The Lord is king, most high above all the earth.
Wed, 7 August SS. Xystus II and Companions	Num 13:1-2, 25-14; 1, 26-29, 34-35; Mt 15:21-28 O Lord, remember me out of the love you have for your people.
Thu, 8 August St. Dominic	Num 20:1-13; Mt 16:13-23 O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.
Fri, 9 August National Day St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross	Is 63:7-9; Col 3:12-17; Lk 12:22-31 May the Lord build us a house and watch over the city.
Sat, 10 August St. Lawrence	2 Cor 9:6-10; Jn 12:24-26 Happy the man who takes pity and lends.

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)  
Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm  
Confession: Half an hour before Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)  
Time: 6.30pm

SUNDAY MASS  
Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon, 5.30pm

PUBLIC HOLIDAY  
Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS  
Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION  
English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm  
Mandarin: 2.30pm  
Confession: After every Novena Service except after the 11am service.

DAYS OF OBLIGATION  
Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)  
6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

# Novena notes

## Novena in preparation for Annual Procession 2019

The Novena in preparation for our Annual Procession has begun. The theme for this special Novena is: "Completely Yours". All are welcome and bring along your family and friends.

6 July - Completely Yours

13 July - Completely Yours: In Devotion

20 July - Completely Yours: In Worship

27 July - Completely Yours: In Mind

### 3 Aug - Completely Yours: In Heart

10 Aug - Completely Yours: In Service

17 Aug - Completely Yours: In Communication Through Technology

24 Aug - Completely Yours: In Beyond Borders

31 Aug - Completely Yours: In Youthful Passion

## Triduum Mass in preparation for Annual Procession 2019

28 August -  
Completely Yours: From Me To God

29 August -  
Completely Yours: From Me To Self

30 August -  
Completely Yours: From Me To You

Time : 7pm

Preacher : Fr. Gino Henriques

## Novena Annual Procession

Date : 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019

Preacher : Fr. Gino Henriques

Celebrant : Apostolic Nuncio His Excellency Archbishop Marek Zalewski

Please take note there will be **NO** Sunset Mass on 31<sup>st</sup> August and **NO** Morning Masses on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. The Church and the carpark will be "locked down" after the last Novena Devotion at 5.30pm on Saturday. The carpark will be closed to prepare for the Annual Procession after the last Novena till 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019.

**Consecration of Families forms** are available around the Church. Please drop them in the boxes around the Church after you have written the families for consecration.

Specially printed **Annual Procession Envelopes** are available around the Church. All the collection will be used to defray the cost of the Annual Procession. We thank you for your generous support.

## Novena Youth Rally

Date : 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019

Time : 7pm

Theme : A Journey

*Finding stillness amidst rising tides. Dive into the safe space of community.*

Calling all youths. Dive deep. Join us at the Novena Youth Rally. Bring your friends to come experience the stillness of God's presence.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019, the Masses will be as usual for 6.30am and 12.15pm. There will be **NO** Evening Mass in preparation for the Youth Rally.

## 9<sup>th</sup> August, National Day

Please take note that there will be **NO** lunch-time Mass on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> August being National Day. Masses will be at 8.00am and 6.30pm.



*"May God bless our nation and all Singaporeans with peace and unity."*

## 11<sup>th</sup> August, Hari Raya Haji

Masses will be as usual at 8am, 10am, 12pm and 5.30pm

## 12<sup>th</sup> August, Public Holiday

Please take note that there will be **NO** lunch time Mass on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> August being public holiday. Masses at 8am and 6.30pm.

## St. Gerard's Choir, 5.30pm Sunday

St. Gerard's Choir (Sunday, 5.30pm) is recruiting instrumentalists and singers. If you are interested, please leave your details with the church receptionist or contact us via FB (<https://www.facebook.com/novenachurchsgc/>) or Instagram (@novenachurchsgc).

## Tagalog Mass

Please take note there will be a Tagalog Mass on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at 12 noon.

## Church of Queen of Peace

Come prepare for the Feast of the Assumption.

Theme : A Christ-Centred Community Through Mary

Mandarin Mass : 5 August 2019  
English Masses : 6 -14 August 2019

Weekdays : 8.00pm  
Rosary : 7.30pm

Weekends : 5.30pm  
Rosary : 5.00pm

The Redemptorists will hear Confessions before Mass.

Address : 4 Sandy Lane, Singapore 437321 (off Tanjong Katong Road)  
Nearest MRT Station : Paya Lebar

## Crossings Cafe

Crossings Café is offering all Novena Church goers a 15% discount off the food bill (excluding drinks) when dining with them. This offer is valid during the entire month of August 2019 in view of the Feast of St. Alphonsus Liguori. To enjoy this offer, all Novena Church goers have to do is to inform the staff the name of the Church when they come by Crossings Café during this period.

They are located at Catholic Centre 55 Waterloo Street Singapore 187954. They are a social enterprise café started by a group of Catholics and they provide employment to the disadvantaged and are committed to donating all profits to charity.