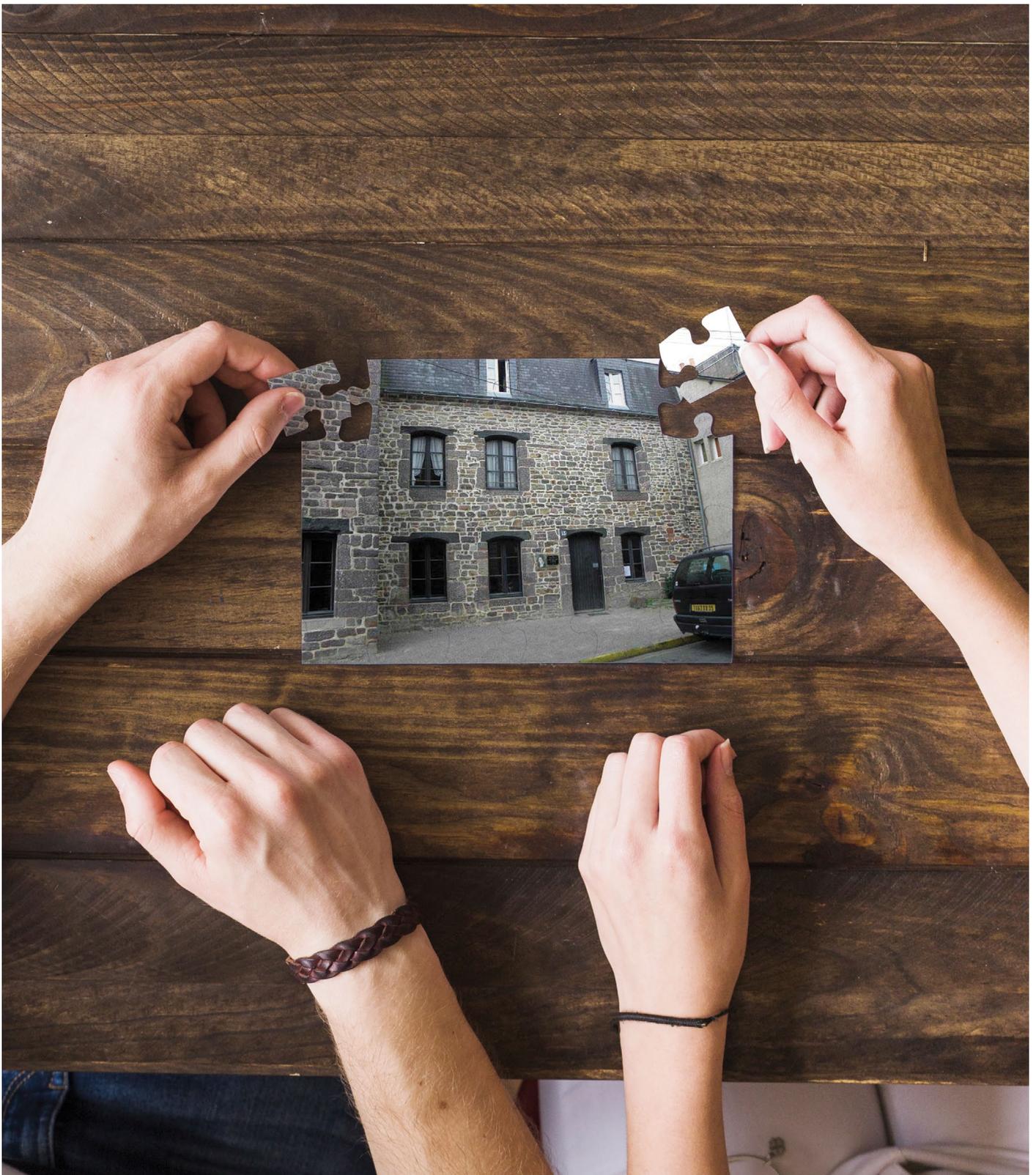


MA-SG

ISSUE 06
MARCH 2021

Montfortian Associates - Singapore



Prayer to St Joseph

HAIL, GUARDIAN OF THE REDEEMER,
SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.
TO YOU GOD ENTRUSTED HIS ONLY SON;
IN YOU MARY PLACED HER TRUST;
WITH YOU CHRIST BECAME MAN.

BLESSED JOSEPH, TO US TOO,
SHOW YOURSELF A FATHER
AND GUIDE US IN THE PATH OF LIFE.
OBTAIN FOR US GRACE, MERCY, AND COURAGE,
AND DEFEND US FROM EVERY EVIL. AMEN.



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News @Montfort Centre



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

My fellow Montfortian Associates and friends

I thank God for giving us the grace to complete the first quarter journey of the year 2021! I believe that most of us would have also wondered a year on into the Covid-19 pandemic: When will this journey finally take a turn for the better?

This is one of the many questions on my mind as we began the year 2021 and it was also the reason why I decided to reflect on the importance of taking this journey together as Companions of Jesus. I am sure that while God is inviting us on a journey into something new and exciting, leaving the old and familiar can bring about a great sense of loss, distress and anxiety.

St. Louis Marie de Montfort experienced this great sense of loss, distress and anxiety too when he was a 21-year-old seminarian. His beloved superior and director Fr. de la Barmondière - who also founded the seminary for the poorer seminarians - had just passed away, and Montfort having no family or money with him in Paris, did not know how things would go for him. Despite all these roadblocks in his journey towards priesthood, he wrote in Letter 2 to his uncle Fr. Alain Robert that:

*Whatever happens I shall not be worried.
I have a Father in heaven who will never fail me.
He brought me here, he has kept me here until now
And he will continue to treat me with his usual kindness.*

This trust in the kindness of divine providence is the guide which leads us into our deserts and crosses so that we may enter into new life with Christ on the day of the resurrection!

And so, I encourage each and everyone of you Montfortian Associates and friends to find the courage to discover what God has in store for you in your own journey with Him to new frontiers. May you, like our Blessed Mother, be open and committed in taking this intimate and sacred journey to the heart of Jesus Christ!

My Journey in Love of Eternal Wisdom Retreat

By Yvonne Boon, Montfortian Associate

I attended "Love of Eternal Wisdom" retreat that consisted of online webinars spanning four nights (during the period of January 19 to 28) from 8–9.30PM via Zoom and one full day of recollection on January 30, 2021 at Montfort Centre.

I always love being back in Montfort Centre — it is so quiet and peaceful. We ate a nice lunch of nasi briyani and dinner of fried ngoh hiang and spicy prawns during the day of recollection. While one participant was unable to join us physically as he was in Sabah, Zerah had it recorded for him. I personally hope that more people will be able to watch and listen to the recording as it is so full of wisdom. The participants took part in a meaningful small group sharing facilitated by Bro Dominic and Zerah. Jenny and I were the assistant facilitators to Bro Dominic and Zerah.

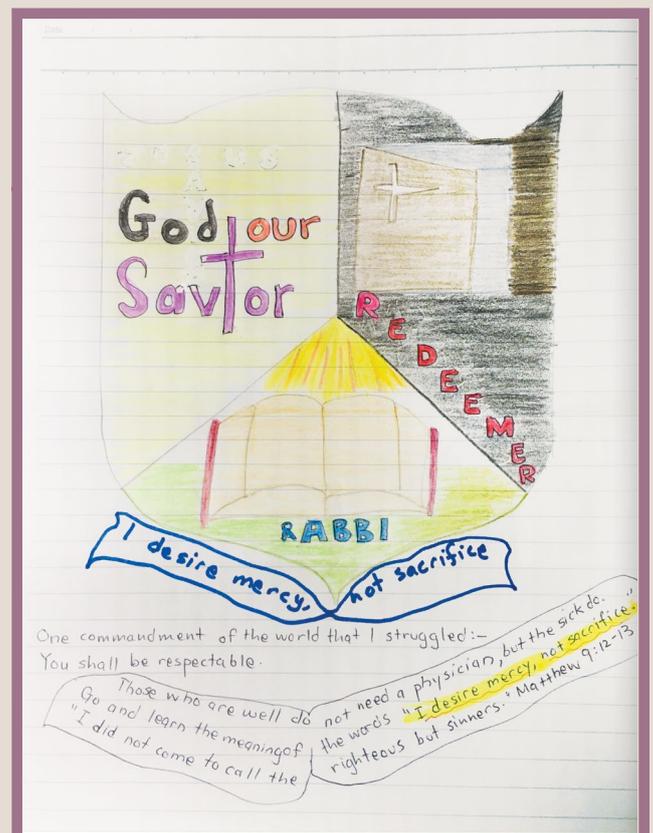
"Love of Eternal Wisdom" was the first part of the Montfortian Experience. Is it possible to love what one does not know? How can it be that people have so little love for the incomparable Jesus unless it is because they do not know wisdom herself, or know Her so very little? With this question, I started my journey in "Love of Eternal Wisdom".

One of the activities the participants took part in was the drawing of their "coat of arms" to illustrate the 3 titles of Jesus. For mine, it was "God our Saviour, Redeemer and Rabbi." My motto under my "coat of arm" was "I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

I also learnt of the 10 commandments of the world. What kind of wisdom is guiding and sustaining me daily? Is it false wisdom or true wisdom? What is wisdom then? "Wisdom is not born of quick searches on the internet." - Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti #50.

There was so much for me to understand and to reflect on. Eternal wisdom is the source of purest joy and consolation for man who possesses it. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

I continued to reflect even after the day of recollection. Lord, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more closely day by day. May I know the real meaning of Love of eternal wisdom and "move against the grain" by doing things that I would not normally do on my own. May You lead me to take risks in doing Your work.



Jauh di Mata, Dekat di Doa Kerabat Montfort, Selalu di Dada

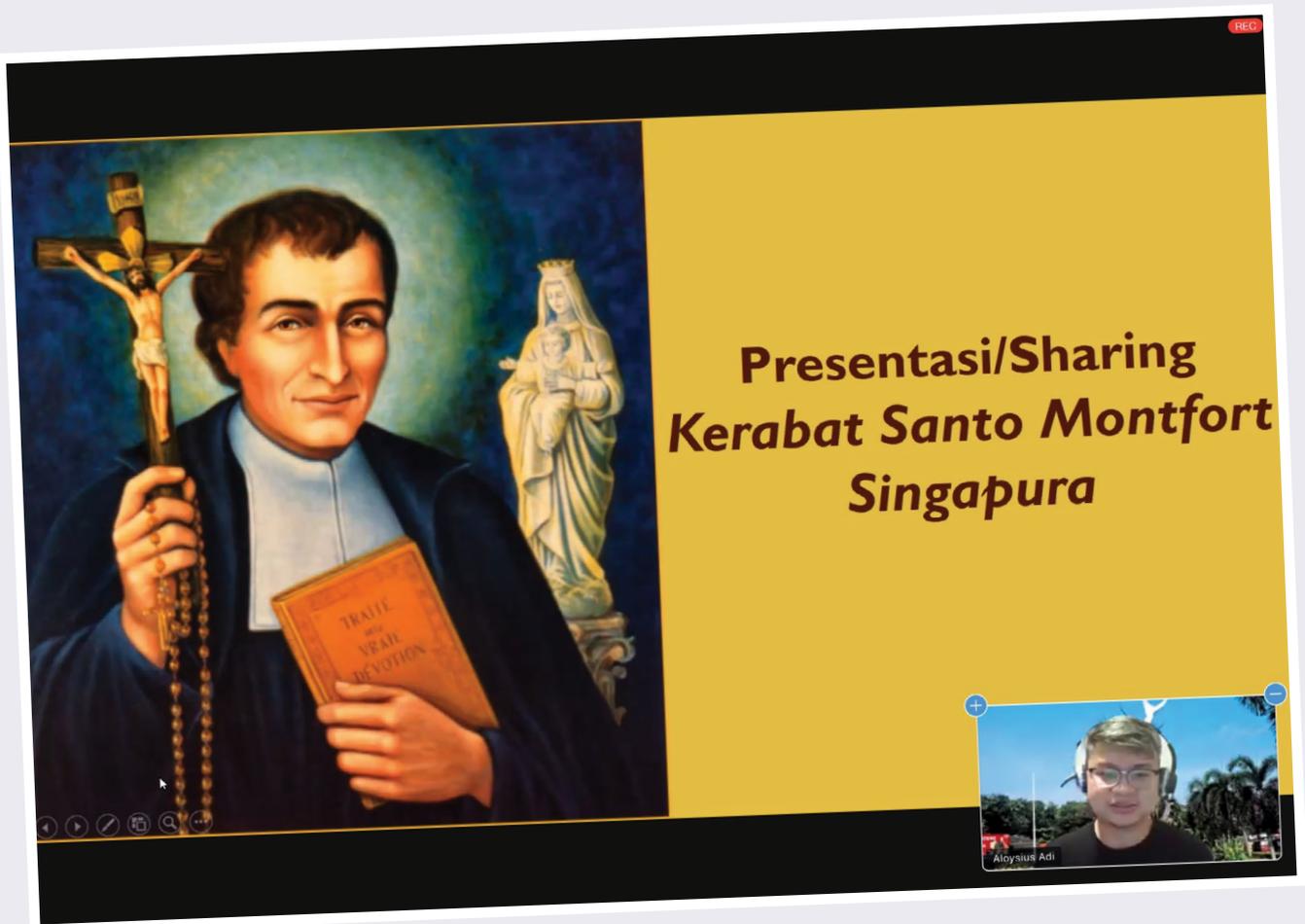
Far From Sight, but Close in Prayer
Friends of Montfort, Always in Our Heart

By Aloysius Adi Pratama, Vice President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

Though separated by time, distance and even language, friends of Montfort always know how to share laughter and love together. What brought the Montfortian Associates in Singapore (MA) contact with the *Kerabat Santo Montfort* (KSM, Friends of Montfort), was an invitation from Fr. Jeje, an Indonesian priest from the Montfortian Missionaries to share our journey as a community.

To experience how our spiritual formation and meeting was conducted for our MA members, 6 KSM members along with Fr. Jeje, sat in for our monthly meeting on 2nd January 2021, which was held virtually on Zoom. They were involved in our meeting and joined us for sharing sessions.





They shared that they learnt a lot from our monthly session, especially on the importance of a group faith sharing. It was a very enriching session where both communities shared on how Montfort has inspired their lives.

In return, some of our MA members were invited to sit in for their monthly meeting. On 23rd January, Zerah, Lydia, Adi, Livia and Marianna joined the KSM members virtually. There were 62 other KSM members from all over Indonesia, and two of them even stayed in the United States and Germany. They called their community Mary, Queen of All Heart (*Perserikatan Maria Ratu Segala Hati*) which has been around since around 2003.

The main topic of this second session was to share about MA activities, especially our Total Consecration journey. We also shared our latest soap making workshop which touched many of them. There was also a question and answer session which was moderated by one of the committee members. They were very curious about how, we as MA, live out our vision and mission, which is to live, share and promote Montfortian spirituality. One of the questions was on how Marianna, as a wife and a mother, was able to live out the Montfortian spirituality. Livia also encouraged the KSM members to read more about Montfort and his life journey in order to appreciate his writings better.

The overall 2 hours session was concluded with a blessing from Fr. Jeje. We pray that there will be a chance for us to meet once this pandemic is over and pray together as one Montfortian family.

MA COMMUNITY BUILDING DAY

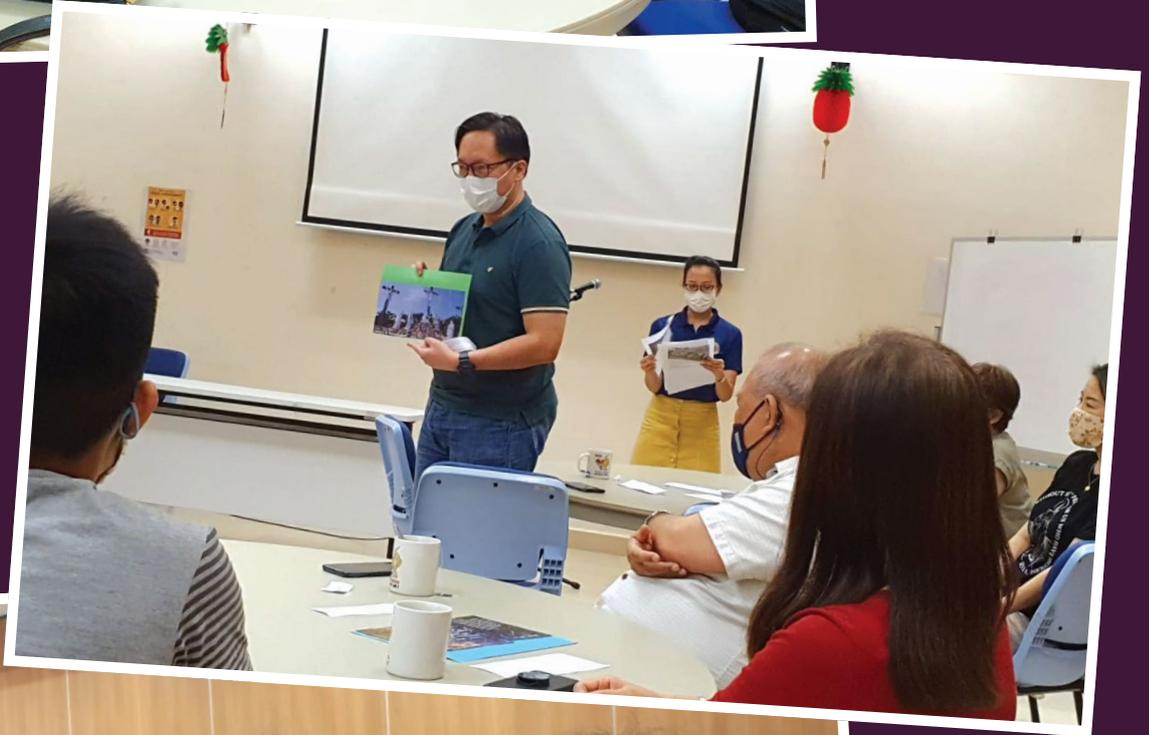
By Outreach Sub-committee of the Montfortian Associates Movement

On 6 February 2021, twenty Montfortian Associates, together with its spiritual director Bro Dominic, gathered for a morning of community building at Boys' Town.

The event started with a breakfast, where the associates took the opportunity to catch up with one another to interact and share latest news, for it has been more than a month the group last came together to celebrate Christmas. This was followed by a Kahoot game, made up of 21 questions to test how much they know about one another and their founder, St Louis Marie de Montfort. The associates had fun learning more about the life of St Louis Marie and knowing one another a little more. The next activity took on a more serious note. Associates in group of 4-5 were given 2 jig-saw puzzles related to events in the life of Montfort with a short background description and a question for reflection sharing. The group first needed to piece together the jig-saw puzzle to form a picture, then read the short description, reflected on the question given and then shared with one another, first within the small group, then to the big group.

The event culminated with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Boys' Town Chapel. In his homily, the celebrant, Fr Edward Seah, drew on a parallel between the life of St Paul Miki and his Companions (Feast of the Day), with that of St Louis Marie de Montfort in witnessing to the Gospel despite persecution and challenges especially from those in authority. Fr Edward praised the associates for their commitment to the mission of witnessing, in the footsteps of St Louis Marie de Montfort. He encouraged them to forge ahead courageous, trusting in Divine Providence to live and spread the spirituality of St Louis Marie de Montfort, and to make Jesus and Mary better known and loved. The day ended with a lunch at about 12.15pm. It was a day well spent in the company of fellow associates.







Be the Unique Blessing Bearers You Were Created to Be

By Rev. Br. John Albert, S.G., Local Superior

God has a special blessing for you as an individual which we are told in **Genesis 49:28**. All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their Father said to them when he blessed them, and giving each the blessings appropriate to him.

Don't try and receive other people's blessings. We may see charismatic leaders and speakers and want to be like them but God has designed us as individuals and has given us unique, individual giftings and characteristics. It is good to have positive role models but we shouldn't seek to be the same as others.

We are each made in God's image and show varying facts of His character and personality.

God designed us to accomplish His unique purpose for our lives. Instead of looking to other people's talents and wanting them for ourselves, we should ask God to reveal His unique plan and purpose for us. We will become frustrated and discouraged if we seek after other people's talents and blessings.

God has a unique and special blessing for each of His children. When we live under the Father's Blessings, we will be affirmed, encouraged and protected. We will be fruitful and have a sense of purpose. We can't earn the Father's Blessings; He gives it to us simply because we are His children and He loves us.

However, we can pursue the Father's blessing as many stories in the Bible shows us. Jacob wrestled with an Angel all night to receive a blessing from God (**Genesis 32:22-28**). Likewise, Elisha would not leave Elijah alone but followed him everywhere until he received his blessing from his spiritual father.

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane wrestled in prayer seeking the Father's Will and Blessing before he stepped forward for his journey to the Cross. So too we need to ask God for the faith to receive His blessing and the tenacity to keep on asking. Never grow weary of asking for the blessing of God, for God take great delight in showering blessings upon blessings. His love never comes to an end, his treasury of blessings cannot be exhausted in time or in eternity.

One blessing that is often used in tradition of blessings in the Household of God is **Numbers 6:22-26**. **The LORD said to Moses, "Tel Aaron and his sons, "This how you are to bless the Israelites, Say to them: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give your peace."**

This is the blessing that God wants spoken over His people and it applies to us. Another scriptural passage telling us of the Lord's blessing to Israel is **Deuteronomy 28:1-14**.

Blessings for Obedience

If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands, I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country.

The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock—the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.

You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out. The Lord will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.

The Lord will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to. The Lord your God will bless you in the land he is giving you. The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the Lord your God and walk in obedience to him.

Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will fear you. The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you.

The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail.

If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.

Sometimes to receive God's blessings there are conditions we need to fulfil, such as in **Malachi 3: 8-10**.

"Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?'

In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

I would now like to pray a blessing from God on each of you. I bless you to know your Heavenly Father in every way he wants you to know him. I bless you to know and experience your Heavenly Father's love for you every day of your life. I bless you to know the way your Heavenly Father wants you to go and have sense of purpose and direction. I bless you to fulfil the destiny your Heavenly Father has planned for you from your creation.

A Blessing from your Heavenly Father

Your Heavenly Father blesses you with a sense of belonging and know you are loved as His beloved child. He blesses every area of your life with his protection and His presence. He gives you every blessing. Everything He has is yours as you are co-heir with Christ Jesus. He blesses you with eternal life His favor rests on you simply because are His Child – His Beloved Son – His Beloved Daughter.

MARCH 2021

Master Peace

By Audrey C.,
Montfortian Associate

I am a puzzle piece,
Missing the big picture as you can see.
Help me find my missing piece,
Out in the world or in the seas.
Wait no this isn't it!
The puzzle is amiss.
'Give up', my prejudice,
But longing is my agony.
My Master make appeace,
For I want to be your masterpiece.
He puts me where I should be,
There and then I am complete.
I thought I was a mistake to begin,
Not realising this is my destiny.

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Support us in our mission to continue working towards
facilitating for each person a greater sense of purpose
in life and a greater commitment to the least among us.

<https://www.montfortcentre.org/donate>