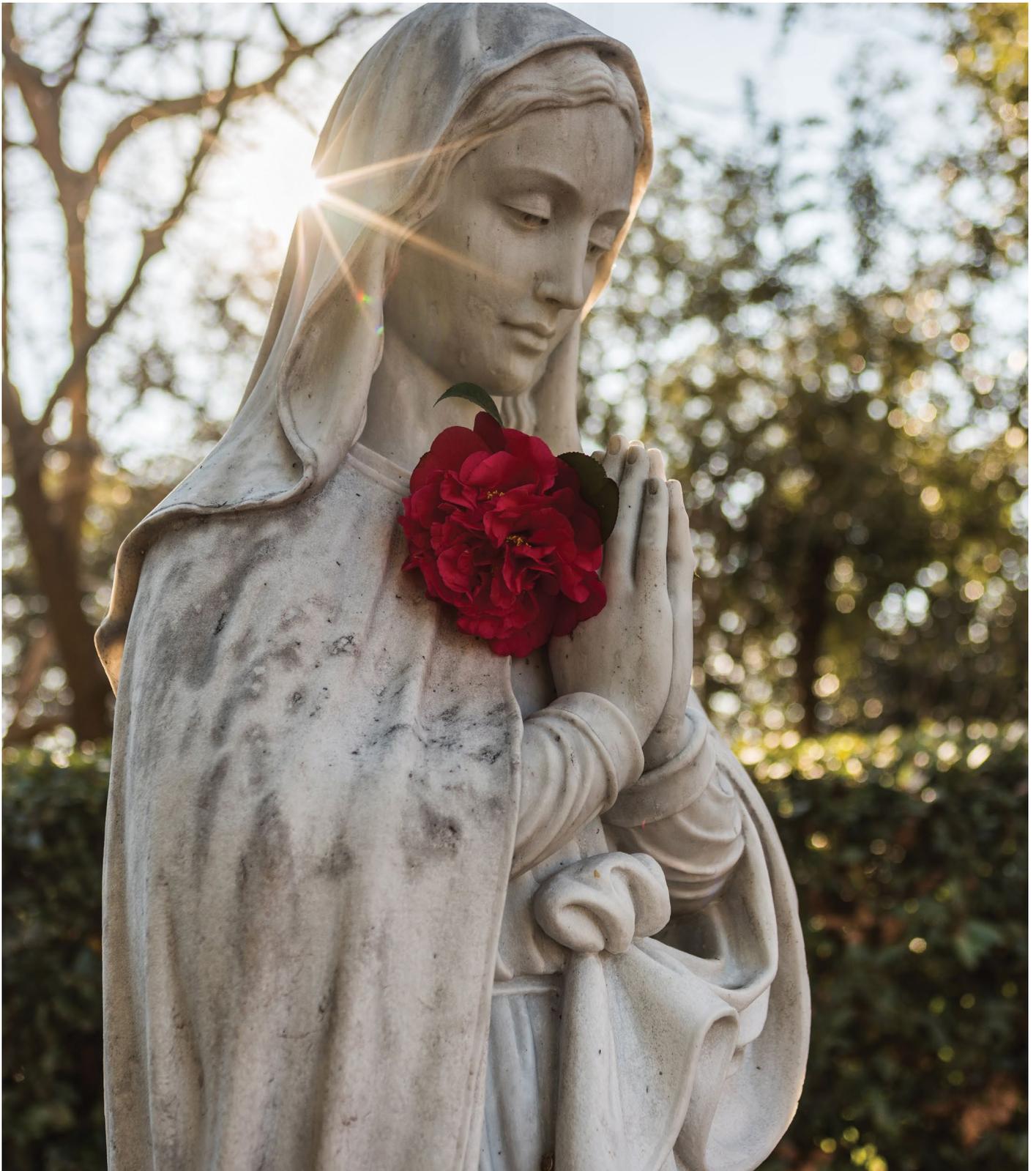


MA-SG

ISSUE 08
SEPTEMBER
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

Dear Montfortian Associates and Friends,

As we enter towards the end of the year 2021, the end of the Covid-19 pandemic still remains out of sight. Though vaccination rates in Singapore are up at over 80%, the community cases are also on the rise as we treat Covid-19 as endemic. Some of our Brothers jokingly shared with me that their blood pressure has also been going up! There is certainty that this is the new normal, but at the same time, there is uncertainty as to what the new normal actually entails. This tension between the two challenges us to ask ourselves: How do we still live, share, and promote the spirituality of a Total Consecration?

Come October 24th, we will celebrate World Mission Day, which is according to Pope Francis, an opportunity to “recall with gratitude all those men and women who by their testimony of life help us to renew our baptismal commitment to be generous and joyful apostles of the Gospel”. The temptation for many is to resent the current state of their life which subsequently renders them discouraged, disillusioned and burnt-out due to the many stressors brought about by the pandemic. While we may eventually be immune to the Covid-19 virus, we cannot possibly be immune to the repercussions which the pandemic has brought about. When St. Louis Marie de Montfort received orders to tear down the calvary at Pontchâteau which took over two years to build, one of the first things he did was to weep over this setback. It was only much later when he was able to invite the faithful who have helped to build the calvary to plant it in their hearts instead.

What this means for us is to acknowledge our feelings towards our current life situations and unite ourselves with our fellow brothers and sisters under the mantle of Our Lady. Pope Francis in his message for World Mission Day 2021, calls this the “mission of compassion” which can help make necessary social distancing an opportunity for encounter, care and promotion. I liken this to the beads of our rosary where even though each bead is separated by a spacing, they are all connected in the one same rosary.

As we also celebrate the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, consider how you can as children of Mary, bring to the poor, lowly and lonely everywhere, the sweet fragrance of Jesus (TD56). May we widen our circle of compassion and enlarge our tents of hospitality to reach out to others who are not a part of our circle of interests. Let us respond to the call of Christ, Pope Francis and St. Louis Marie de Montfort, to be messengers and agents of compassion, especially to the last, the lost and the least!

*the
Heart
of Living*

Thy Will Be Done

SPIRITUAL GUIDE FOR HEALTHY LIVING BASED ON
ST. LOUIS MARIE DE MONTFORT'S SPIRITUAL PATH
SPEAKER: BRO. DOMINIC YEO-KOH, SG

DATE Saturday, 2 October 2021
TIME 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm
ONLINE on Zoom



MONTFORTIAN
ASSOCIATES

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[https://www.montfortcentre.org
/events-1/heart-of-living-2021](https://www.montfortcentre.org/events-1/heart-of-living-2021)



Community Outreach and Evangelization

By Doreen Law, Montfortian Associate

At Mass, on the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, the priest quoted: "Go out to the whole world, proclaim the Good News to all creation" - Mark 16:15.

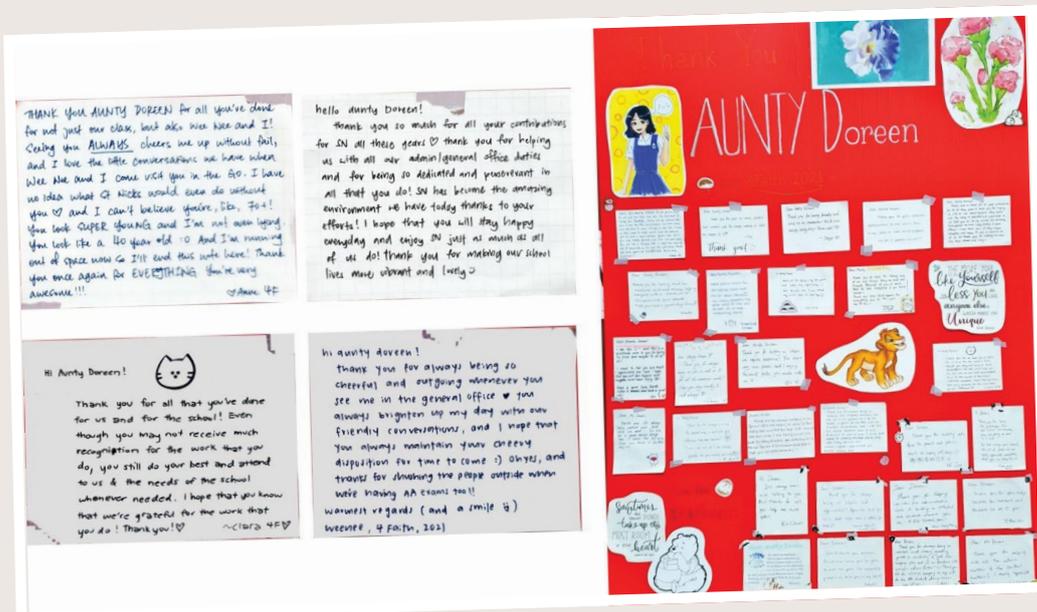
I was excited to write and share about the topic on community outreach and evangelization. Pope Paul VI defined evangelization as "bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new."

The importance of community outreach is about giving, contributing, and helping those who cannot help themselves. It helps them to grow in a meaningful way so that they would not be stressed out.

Naturally, I love to meet people and when I see them happy, I am happy. Friendship is a gift we can all give. I will reach out to the community through friendship evangelisation and interactions among Christians and non-Christians alike. Jesus said "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." [Mathew 28 :19]

Since my baptism in 2002, I have been reaching out to inspire my family members and friends to receive Christ. It makes a difference to me to see them be in touch with the living God and to seek and to save that, which was lost. Thus far, nine in my family and six of my friends were baptised in God's time. I have to be tactful and be respectful in order to be effective with people I meet. Being a good listener is also important to build trust and relationships in the community.

As a frontline administrator in school, my communal outreach to the student is to give them my support, understand their needs, and influence them to give back to the community. During the pandemic heightened alerts, the students had to stay home for home-based learning (HBL).



One of the Secondary 4 class students and her classmates took the initiative to send me notes of gratitude. It was so thoughtful of them to gather the classmates and teachers to pen down beautiful words to inspire me during their absence from school. It touched me emotionally and I was overjoyed!

Although I am not their teacher, I could only contribute with my best effort. They quoted Winnie the Pooh: *"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."* Written by student Clara: *"Even though you may not receive much recognition for the work that you do, you still do the best and attend to us and the needs of the school whenever needed. I hope you know that we are grateful for the work that you do!"* It is heartening to know that they are so understanding. Teachers do more than teach. They foster social responsibility, broaden imaginations, and offer encouragement and support.

To my fellow Montfortian Associates (MA) who have not been active for some time, I occasionally connected with them via WhatsApp to greet and invite them to join us in the formation and meeting. I am glad to be able to engage with them and many have responded. I will continue to contact and support them so as to improve our social wellbeing. I have set my goals to determine and establish the identity of our fellow MAs and communicate and catch up with them for a meal. We will discover opportunities and find creative ways to live, share, and promote the Montfortian spirituality. Outreach is more than just an effort to bring services or information to people where they live or spend time.



Pontificia Facolta Teologica MARIANUM in Rome in 1994 to 1996. From 1996 to 2013, he worked as Spiritual Director in San Carlos Seminary, Guadalupe, Makati City and was then appointed as Head Spiritual Director in the same seminary.

A key message in this retreat was an invitation for all of us to connect with Mary and emulate her way of life through her venerable virtues.

The virtues of Mary include (1) profound humility, (2) faith, (3) obedience, (4) prayerfulness, (5) universal mortification, (6) divine purity, (7) charity, (8) patience, (9) angelic sweetness and (10) divine wisdom.

I believe that through these virtues, God is extending an invitation to each one of us, albeit differently one from the other, as a way to follow Him more closely.

A sharing from Fr. Yulito that touched me was his total dependence on God on his complete healing. God carried him every step of the way through his healing process. The attending doctor were surprised at how God made him well. Miracle is not impossible with God. Nothing is impossible for Him. Although we often wait for God's plan to manifest in our lives, God is actually working and making wonders in our life. And so we need to encounter Him and personally experience the graces He had granted for us all.

So, personally, the virtue of Mary that resonated with me the most was the total obedience to God. Being totally dependent on and obedient to God is definitely difficult. But this virtue was the start of Mary's YES to God, which eventually led to embracing God's plan for her life. So, we could begin to give our yes to God like Mary did. And perhaps, we would finally arrive at a point in our life where we could not just accept, but graciously embrace God's plan for salvation for us even if it entails pains and sufferings like Christ did. Begin by giving your yes to Mary, she surely give us ways how to say our Totus Tuus to God.

Let us all say our yes to God, like the sweet, humble servant, handmaid of the Lord.

Yes, be it done according to your will, O God. Fiat voluntas tua.

Testimony

The retreat was a faith-filled experience for me. God affirmed to me again His faithfulness through the care of Mary. Despite the pandemic situations, we were able to conduct this in person and online showing Mary's way of caring for her children. The prayer sessions felt powerful to me. I was looking forward to praying with everybody in the retreat. The morning prayer gave me inspiration to be with God, Mary and retreat participants. The evening prayers refreshed my soul before going to bed. Indeed, there was power in prayers said together as community.

Sharing by the Montfortian Associates helped me to experience the wonders that Mary had brought to each one of us. And the guidance of our Spiritual Directors during the one-on-one sessions became a visible sign to me that God is always present.

On the last day of retreat was the renewal of our consecration. As I attended the retreat via zoom, I went to Chinese Mass early in the morning as a preparation for the renewal. The readings and union with Jesus in the Eucharist helped me to learn to be evangeliser like Mary and to radiate love, which even a baby the womb was able to feel it.

Finally, the retreat was closed with mass celebration by Fr. Martin Low, OFM and with the renewal of our vows on being consecrated to Jesus through Mary.

I hope next year we can all attend the consecration face to face.

Walk with Jesus and Mother Mary...

By Angela Tjandrasari, Montfortian Associate



When I heard about the MA annual retreat that will be held on 20 until 22 August, I knew that it was God's plan for me to join the retreat. I'm glad I said "Yes" to Jesus and Mother Mary.

It has been 2 years since I decided to consecrate myself to Jesus through Mary. It was not too long ago but the journey seemed to be full of ups and downs and it gradually made my faith weaker. It was sad, but that was my reality.

While listening to each session in the retreat, I recalled my life experiences in the recent past. And, these questions started flooding my mind. What is God's will for me? How is my response to God's will? Am I willing to say Yes to what God wants in my life? Have I embraced Christ in my pains and suffering? Has my presence brought life to others? (And I realized I wasn't able to give answer to those questions wholeheartedly.)

Working as an office worker for almost half of my life, I have become a person that was attached to worldly things. I realized that, unconsciously, my desire was to have financial stability so that I could live peacefully, do what I like and have control over my life. I busied myself with work although I didn't have passion for my corporate job. Eventually, my health and prayer life suffered. I have come to a point where I believed I have no time even for God.

But something life-changing happened to me on Easter day this year. At the end of mass celebration, suddenly I experienced an intense stomach ache and I almost passed out. That stomach pain lasted for almost 2 months. It affected my daily life and caused me to fall into depression. I could not embrace the suffering and I blamed Jesus. Why did I have to go through such suffering? I don't have family in Singapore and I truly felt that I struggled alone. But, it turned out to be a blessing in disguise for me. When I finally cried for God's help and surrendered myself to Him, it became a healing journey instead of mere suffering. Jesus, Mother Mary, and the saints had really showed me how to go back to the loving Father again.

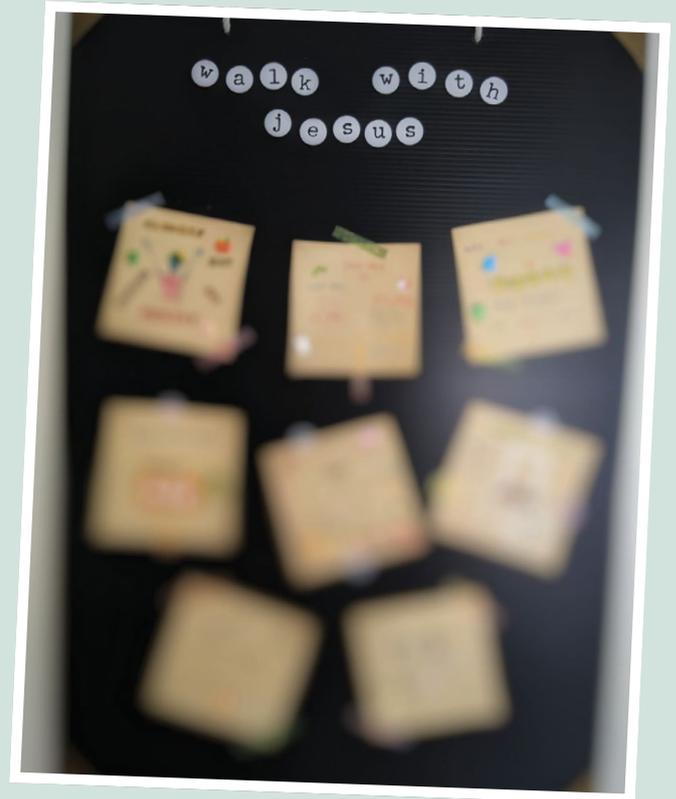
After that, one step at a time, with Jesus and Mother Mary's guidance, I decided to start from the beginning to pursue my dream job and leave corporate life, even though it was a very difficult decision for me. And I continued to listen to what Jesus asked me to do next. One thing that I realized throughout this journey was that His will for me is to have **freedom to follow Him wholeheartedly** and to love others, and most importantly He wills for my happiness.

During the retreat, I also had a wonderful sharing session, which strengthened my faith and reminded me to live in this present moment with a grateful heart for all the blessings that Father has given to me. Finally came the time to renew my consecration, which took place on the Feast of the Queenship of Mary. I felt warmth and joy in my heart as I consecrated myself again.

I am very blessed with this community and I will continue to walk with Jesus to renew my faith daily together under Mother Mary's mantle.

This quote helps me to trust and surrender to God as He guides me in every step that I should take in future.

"You don't have to be afraid of the unknown. It is unknown only to you. God is well aware of where you are and of every step He is asking you to take".



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Mary Full of Grace

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8 – 10 October 2021
7 PM (Fri) – 1 PM (Sun)

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