

MA-SG

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Montfortian Associates - Singapore





Montfort Brothers of
St. Gabriel



**Love with your heart and hand
and not simply with your mouth**

St. Louis Marie de Montfort



vocation@montfortcentre.org



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about Montfort Brothers

contents

04

A Humble and Contrite Faith

05

Opening Address for MA

06

**Montfortian Associates Online
Monthly Formation**

07

**Evening of Prayer with
Montfort** – for the months of July
and August 2020

08

**By Way of the Heart
Healing Prayer &
Heart-2-Heart Recollection**

10

**Assumption of the Blessed
Virgin Mary**

11

**Total Consecration to Jesus
through Mary** – 4th Batch
Journey

12

News @Montfort Centre



A Humble and Contrite Faith

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

Our Lord exclaimed “Woman of Great Faith”.

For St Matthew to record this incident in his Gospel especially written for Jews is a great personal challenge as well as for all his Jewish audience.

Jesus’ exclamation or pronouncement must have shocked and surprised even his disciples who wanted Jesus to get rid of her. Even though Jesus seems to sound impolite by saying that He came for the lost sheep of Israel and it is not right to throw the children’s food to the dogs. Jesus seems to speak the plain truth of the purpose of His Mission and who the gentiles were considered in the eyes of the Jewish.

Nevertheless Jesus Heart was struck by the Canaanite Woman’s persistent and trusting faith. Her prayer and invocation of Jesus Son of David truly went into the core of the mystery and truth of Jesus’s Heart.

How can we draw water from the Well of Salvation – the Heart of the Incarnate God and Wisdom? Only when we are filled by the Holy Spirit and driven by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works in anyone, enlightening and empowering. St Paul has said, “No One Can Say Jesus Is Lord” without the Holy Spirit.

May we have the “Humble and Contrite Faith” like that of the Canaanite Woman. And may we truly seek the Holy Spirit – Giver of Life – to fill the HEART’S OF THE FAITHFUL.



The Woman of Canaan at the Feet of Christ by Jean Germain Drouais

OPENING ADDRESS

for MA



By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

Fellow Montfortian Associates and friends of Montfort,

The Covid-19 situation across the world has not seen much respite and countries are racing to develop a vaccine against the disease which has killed almost 775,000 people since December 2019. In our economic race to get back to our old normal, we have forgotten what it means to be a human race. To cite Pope Francis, the world must also cure a larger virus, that of social injustice, inequality of opportunity, marginalisation, and the lack of protection for the weakest.

While we may not be able to address all our big world issues, only one thing is necessary when it comes to our commitment as baptised Christians. St. Louis Marie de Montfort would echo this necessity in his Hymn 17:14:

What is a poor person? It is written
That he is the living image,
The representative of Jesus Christ,
And His most beautiful legacy.
But, to say it even more clearly,
He is Christ Himself.

When we are able to give our neighbour a loving gaze and likewise receive one from them, we will recognise that we are all made in the image and likeness of our Heavenly Father. It is said that the eyes are the window to one's soul. That is why I believe that the call to remove the plank in our own eye before being able to see the speck in another (Matthew 7:5) is the gateway to loving one's neighbour as oneself. If we can look straight into the eyes of another, we will see a clear reflection of ourselves imprinted on their eyes. It is as though we are now in the very heart and deepest being of the very person right in front of us. Even those without sight can listen to the faintest heartbeat of the person in dire need.

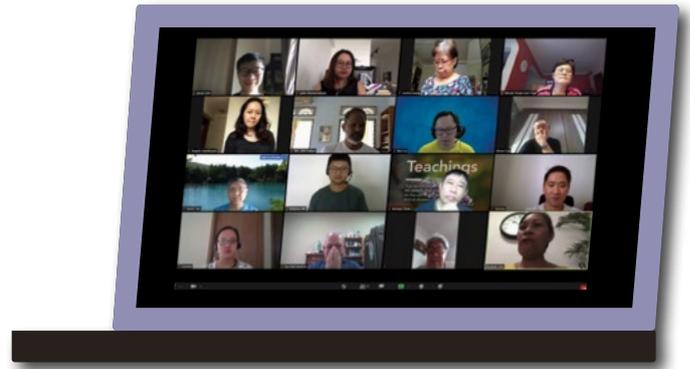
The month of September is dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows. One of the sorrows is where Mary stands at the foot of the Cross and it is here where she is given to be our Mother. If she is our Mother, then all of us are her children. And if all of us are her children, we have to care for our brothers and sisters even if it pains us dearly in such trying times.

Let us continue to walk this journey with Our Lady of Sorrows, as we continue this extraordinary mission with deep trust and steadfast faith in her Son, Jesus Christ.

MONTFORTIAN ASSOCIATES

ONLINE MONTHLY FORMATION

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement & Aloysius Adi, Vice President of the Montfortian Associates Movement



Faith is like gold which has to be tested in fire, and those who are worthy are found in the furnace of humiliation (Sirach 2:5). That is why our Montfortian Associates come together every first Saturday of the month to grow in faith through our formation sessions. Our earlier formation sessions in 2019 explored the key stories of the life of St. Louis Marie de Montfort and many were touched by how Montfort always had a tender loving devotion to Mary despite all the rejections faced in his own community, ministry and mission.

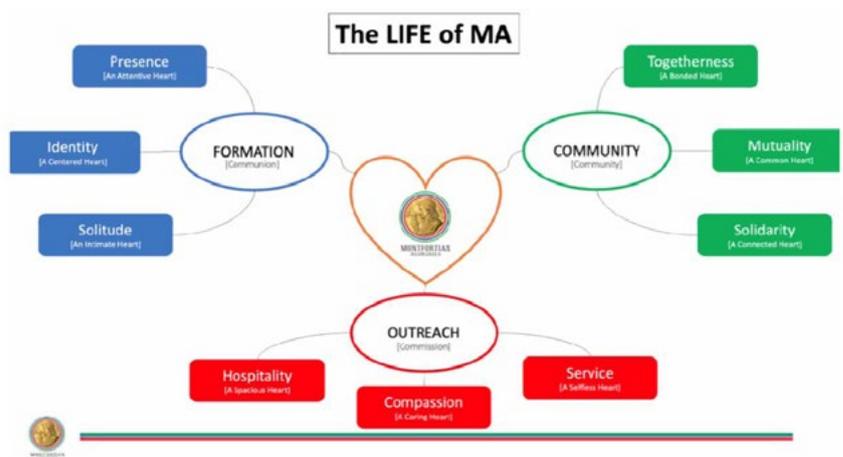
Since the start of the year 2020, our Montfortian Associates began reading and reflecting on Montfort's most well-known writing *True Devotion to Mary*, as part of their monthly formation via Zoom online. The sessions were prepared by the Spirituality subcommittee members and were presented by our very own members. One of the aspects which touched their hearts was the importance of Mary's role in the plan of salvation.

As a community, our Montfortian Associates have prayed, shared and learnt how to continue offering their hearts daily to Jesus through Mary. The pandemic has also impacted how we strategised the formation sessions and group sharing. Initially, some of our members found it difficult since they were Zooming in for the first time but eventually became so confident that they were showing their own beautiful virtual backgrounds.

Inspired by the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we began looking into our own hearts as well. The book *Mere Spirituality*,

written by Wil Hernandez based on the writings and inspirations of Henri Nouwen was used as part of the reflections. The Montfortian Associates contemplated various hearts such as an intimate heart, a bonded heart and a caring heart which represented the three subcommittees: formation (spirituality), community and commission (outreach).

We are most blessed to have our own monthly formation, where we can gather, physically and virtually, journey and share our faith together. We pray that God will bless us with more people to join in this journey.



EVENING OF PRAYER WITH MONTFORT

..... for the months of July and August 2020

By Wendy Chan, Spiritual Assistant Head of the Montfortian Associates Movement



With the resumption of public masses in Singapore in July, Montfort Centre was ready to welcome visitors again to pray in the chapel, albeit limited to 20 people and with safe management measures in place.

Since our last evening prayer on 26 February when we commemorated Ash Wednesday together in the chapel, our monthly Evening of Prayer with Montfort held on the last Wednesday of each

month had been held online for the last 4 months.

The voices of the prayers of the faithful filled Montfort Chapel once again on 29 July, when we came together to pray the Little Crown of Mary for the first time after a long absence. We were visibly excited to see each other although we had to sit far apart. Although we were not able to praise God in song as no singing was allowed, our thirst for the Lord was more than satisfied in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Those who were unable to join us at the chapel were still able to pray with us as the session was also livestreamed on our Montfortian Associates Facebook page. The online session did not quite end as expected as there was a technical issue which resulted in the abrupt termination in the last 10 minutes of the livestreaming. Nevertheless it was a wonderful prayer experience to be able to come together with my brothers and sisters in Christ after a long time.

The Evening of Prayer with Montfort held on 26 August at 8pm on the theme "O Blessed Are Those Who Fear The Lord" was led by Aloysius Adi Pratama, vice-president of Montfortian Associates. The prayer session ended with an invitation to join us on the Extraordinary Mission Online Webinar and Recollection at Montfort Centre in September.

Thank you for joining us in July and August. We look forward to seeing you either online or physically at Montfort Chapel next month on 30 September for the next Evening of Prayer with Montfort.



BY WAY OF THE HEART HEALING PRAYER & HEART-2-HEART RECOLLECTION

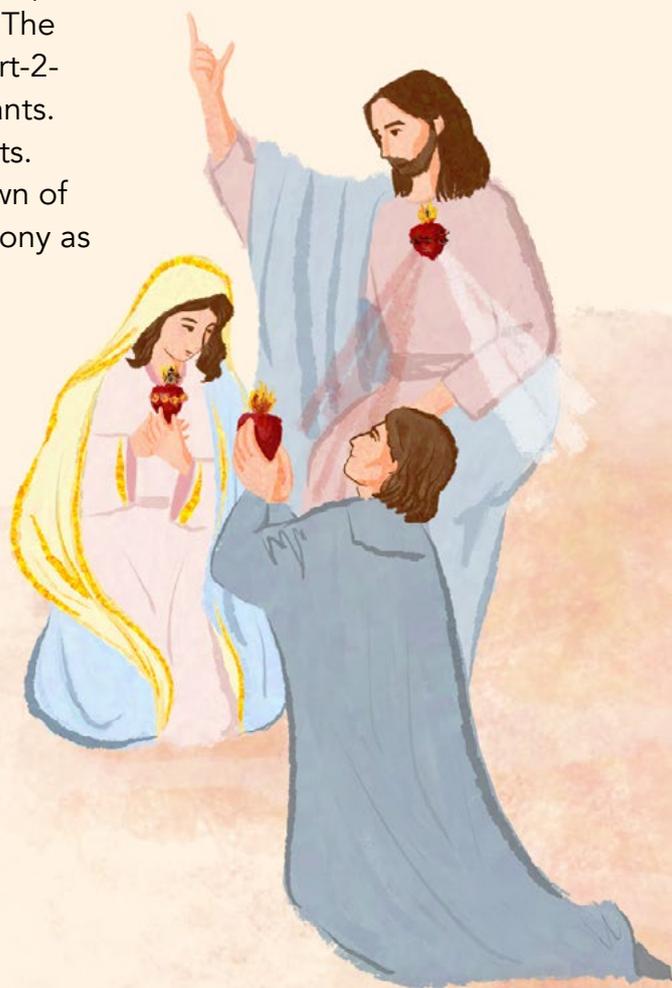
By Lydia Alexkartadjaja, Secretary of the Montfortian Associates Movement

“By Way of the Heart” was the theme of our online prayer series in June 2020. Montfort’s invitation to us in one of his hymns devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, is to have the courage to “enter this marvelous Heart, so that we may love as it does”. The heart has always been a symbol of the intimacy of the person, of love, of surrender. Through guided meditation formulated by Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh and led by some Montfortian Associates members, we entered and journeyed by way of the heart through healing with the beatitudes and the mysteries of the life of Jesus in Mary.

Approximately 30 to 40 people participated in the prayer through ‘Zoom’ for 8 days every Monday and Friday. The prayer experience was concluded with a day of “Heart-2-Heart” recollection, attended by a total of 8 participants. They were invited to submit expressions of their hearts. These hearts were then woven together with the crown of thorns of our Lord as we share in his suffering and agony as well as the hope and joy of his resurrection.

HEALING PRAYER HEARTS

- 01 June: The Immaculate Heart of Mary
- 05 June: The Sacred Heart of Jesus
- 08 June: The Merciful Heart
- 12 June: The Resilient Heart
- 15 June: The Peaceful Heart
- 19 June: The Humble Heart
- 22 June: The Thirsting Heart
- 26 June: The Weeping Heart





Participants' hearts expression



"Heart-2-Heart" recollection through 'Zoom'

ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

By Simon Lim, Community Building Sub-committee of the Montfortian Associates Movement

The celebration of the Feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother was held on Saturday, 15 August 2020 at the Chapel of Montfort Centre. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided by Franciscan Friar, Fr. Martin Low at 5.30pm and was followed by dinner.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, only 20 participants, made up of 15 members and the Brothers, were privileged to participate in the celebration and to receive Jesus sacramentally. In his homily, Fr Martin highlighted the significance of the Feast and the important roles played by Mother Mary in God's plan of Salvation and our personal sanctification.

After having participated in the spiritual banquet at the table of the Lord, the members enthusiastically welcomed the much-awaited bonding moment that came from the sharing a meal together. It had been quite some time since the members had the opportunity to come together for interaction and prayer due to the pandemic restrictions. Members also took the opportunity to celebrate Bro Dominic Yeo Koh's 62nd Birthday and to wish him many more years of faithful service in the Lord's vineyard and as spiritual director to the Montfortian Associates Movement.





TOTAL CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

4th Batch Journey

By Cynthia Chong, TCM Facilitator

In February 2020, the Montfortian Associates embarked on the 4th run of the Total Consecration to Mary (TCM) Journey.

Right from the start, it was a run like no other. With Singapore in the grip of Covid-19 and safe distancing measures gradually introduced, we held our first “hybrid” introductory session. One-third of the group met at Montfort Centre, while the remaining two-thirds joined online, from the safety of their homes. Despite the technical glitches and initial awkwardness of speaking to a screen, we all had a chance to meet each other and mark the start of the first ever online TCM journey.

Going through the TCM journey for the 2nd time (the first as a participant and the second as a facilitator), it remains a learning experience. Despite my team’s jokes that Montfort’s writings are all doom and gloom, we appreciate his

hard talking and the implicit encouragement that we can all be better Catholics. My team’s reflections and their own life journeys have also shown me that while we struggle in our different ways, we can all seek the same grace to overcome it from Mother Mary.

In the midst of the two-month long Circuit Breaker, when public mass was suspended and we were ordered to isolate ourselves at home, these fortnightly sessions with my team and fellow Montfortian Associates were truly an oasis in the desert.

Now that we are much closer to the end of the TCM journey than the start, I did a quick stock-take of our progress:

- We are officially digital natives! We went from grappling with downloading the Zoom app (don’t judge) to confidently producing our own videos for the TCM sharing. SkillsFuture

SG should hire us as Ambassadors.

- We reached out to and engaged many more people. Going online meant that distance was no longer an issue for participants. It obliterated that uphill trek to Montfort Centre and allowed us all an extra hour of sleep on Saturday morning, so we had no excuse not to be present.
- With the grace of Jesus and Mother Mary, we overcame what seemed an insurmountable setback and opened ourselves to more opportunities to bring the TCM journey to others.

As we count down to the day of the participants’ consecration to Jesus through Mary, we will continue to pray and grow as a Montfortian community, not just through this TCM journey, but all the friendships we have fostered and the obstacles we have overcome.

NEWS

@MONTFORT CENTRE

Montfort Centre is a mission of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel and has been serving the community as a spirituality and retreat centre since 2003.

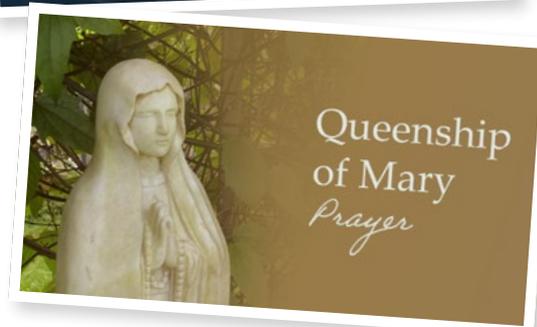
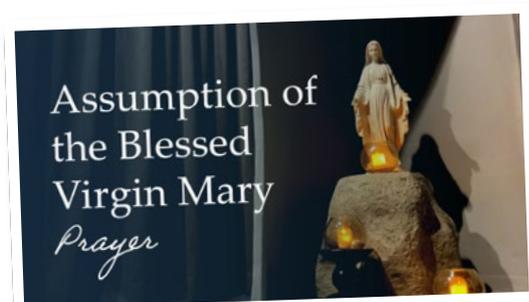
Since the re-opening in phase 2 of the circuit-breaker, Montfort Centre has begun reaching out to the community, especially those who are still unable to come, stay and pray with us. As part of the efforts to bring a prayerful and reflective experience from Montfort Centre to people, two prayer videos were co-created with our Montfortian Associates, Aloysius Adi Pratama and Lydia Alexkartadjaja:

1. Assumption of Mary - Prayer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7X7weuQ0gJw&t=2s>

2. Queenship of Mary - Prayer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDd6AsTrzqU>



We have also launched a blog content platform featuring various content related to spirituality. This includes reflections by our Brothers, bite-size gospel reflections for our educators and even poetry and comics for those who are interested to discover more about Montfortian spirituality: <https://www.montfortcentre.org/blog>

Over the next few months, the Brothers will be bringing you on a virtual tour in the footsteps of Montfort. They will share with you things you never knew about St. Louis Marie de Montfort, the Brothers as well as Montfort Centre!

STAY TUNED AND FOLLOW US ON:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/montfortcentre>

Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgPc9khvFaSkn5x94sQalgw>

DONATE

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>