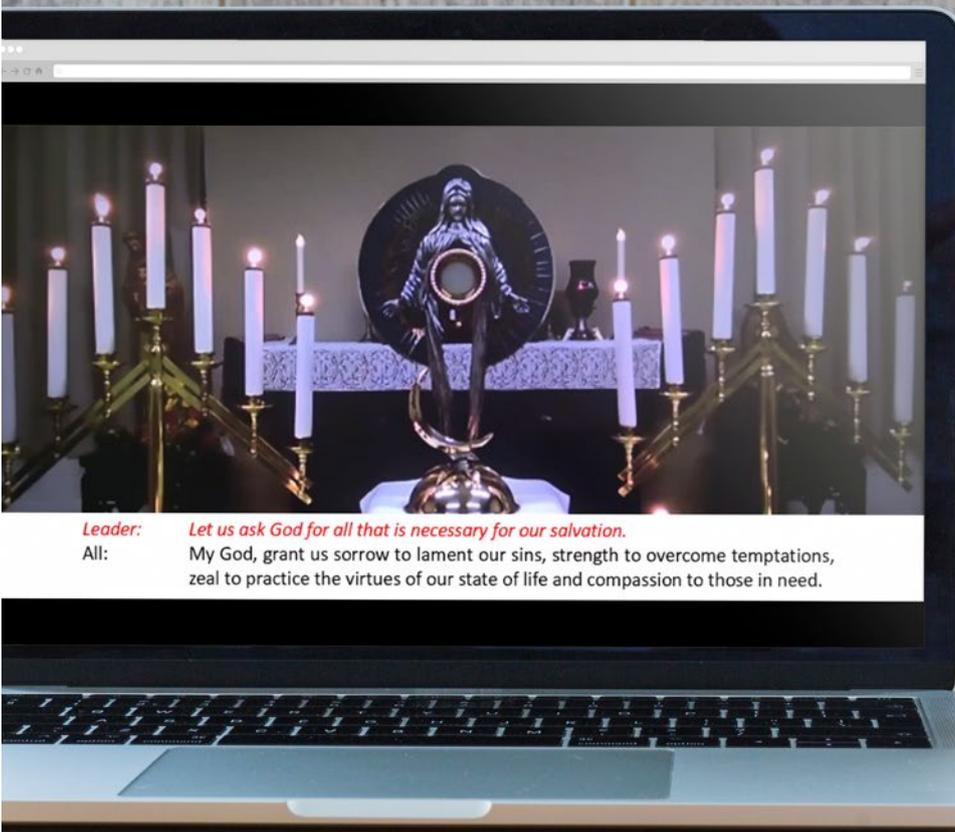


MA-SG

ISSUE 03
JUNE 2020

Montfortian Associates - Singapore

IN THE CLOUD WITH MONTFORT



Leader: *Let us ask God for all that is necessary for our salvation.*
All: My God, grant us sorrow to lament our sins, strength to overcome temptations, zeal to practice the virtues of our state of life and compassion to those in need.



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



Scan to learn more
about Montfort Brothers

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Calming the Sea of Galilee

A Reflection on Mark 4:35-41



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

Why did Mark decide to write about the above event? What was the immediate cause? And what was the evangelist's objective in writing?

I invite you to put on the 3D glass. It is like entering the Cinema to watch a 3-dimension movie. Be ready for dramatic motions, shocks, surprises and suspense.

The audience of that time were some Jews and Gentile

converts to Christian Faith in Rome. It was a time of great persecution, suffering and distress under the Roman Emperor Nero. Peter the Apostle was himself in prison and Christians were thrown into prison, burnt and thrown to the wild beasts.

Mark brings to the little flock in Rome a life-threatening moment, the experience of Peter and the other disciples of Jesus in the boat journey getting across the Sea of Galilee to the other side.

Mark was animating the grief-stricken community to look beyond the present sufferings. That evil in whatever does not have the final word. The community is asked to persevere in their faith of following the Christ Way.

This particular gospel event of Jesus Calming the Sea of Galilee is placed

before us as a source of encouragement as the whole world is facing the COVID-19 Pandemic.

"Rejoice that you have escaped the manifold perils and shipwrecks of this storm-tossed world." – St. Bruno

Christ the Lord

To grasp the awesome power Christ displays in this scene, we need to activate our imagination. Few situations leave men so helpless as storms at sea. The Lake of Galilee, where the disciples were sailing in this case, is still known for the violence of its squalls, which arise and subside rapidly and unpredictably due to its peculiar geographical situation. In the midst of these gales, the forces of nature unleash their full, terrifying force, and human fragility is nakedly exposed.

St. Mark makes it quite clear that the disciples

feared for their lives, so we can safely infer that this storm was no minor agitation. That a mere word from the Lord reins in nature's primeval brawn shocks the helpless fishermen even more than the stormy lake had frightened them just moments before. They had seen his miracles, they had heard his wisdom, they had witnessed his power over the human heart, but to see the unruliest powers that flow through the bowels of the universe submit like a well-trained golden retriever – this was a Lordship they had not yet even conceived of; this is Christ our Lord.

Christ the Teacher

“Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?” What is the lesson here? Was it unreasonable for the disciples to be afraid? Was it cowardly for them to wake up their leader when it seemed like they were going to perish? It wasn't unreasonable, nor was it cowardly, but it showed a lack of faith. They did not trust in him completely. They still thought it would be possible to sink, even though Christ himself was in their boat; they still thought that something (in this case, the forces of nature) was more powerful than the love of God.

Christ the Friend

He was in our boat. He was with us when we encountered a storm. He came to our rescue when we had nowhere else to turn...

How often I remembered this experience in the years that followed. It always spoke to me so powerfully – and it always made such an impression on people who were hearing about the Lord for the first time! It was an image for me of the life of every Christian. Christ is always with each one of us, and he has the power to protect us from every evil, to bring us safely through the most trying of times. Although sometimes he seems to be asleep in our boat while our lives are swirling in a hurricane of struggles and confusion, he is truly there.

Christ in My Life

Your power and majesty come across so vividly in the Gospels, Lord. Why don't I think more often about your greatness? You are the Creator and Lord of the entire universe; you gave the proton its weight and the electron its charge; you inspire every artist and strengthen every saint. Blest be your name throughout the earth! Thank you for calling me to follow you. Even the wind and sea obey you, Lord. How foolish I

am to resist you! I want to want what you want, because you want it, in the way you want it, for however long you want it. With the will of your heart, govern my heart.

You are in my boat; you are in my heart. As I stumble through life, trying to live out my responsibilities as you would have me, trying to discover your will in every storm, you are with me. I believe it, Lord, but help my weak faith! I won't say “Don't you care?” because I know you do care. But I will say: Convince my heart that you care, so I can be free to love as you love...

- Have the waters of the sea of life threatened you sometimes?
- Who saved you?
- What is the agitated sea of the community in our time?
- What is the agitated sea for us today in the context of COVID-19?

OPENING ADDRESS

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

for MA

My dear Montfortian Associates and friends of Montfort,

Peace be with you.

These are indeed uncertain times even as countries across the world are cautiously reopening their economies. For many of us, we might feel that we have locked ourselves in. Our hearts surely would feel disturbed and uneasy. But like our Blessed Mother, I would like to point us back to our Lord Jesus who told his disciples in John 14:7:

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled,
and do not let them be afraid.*

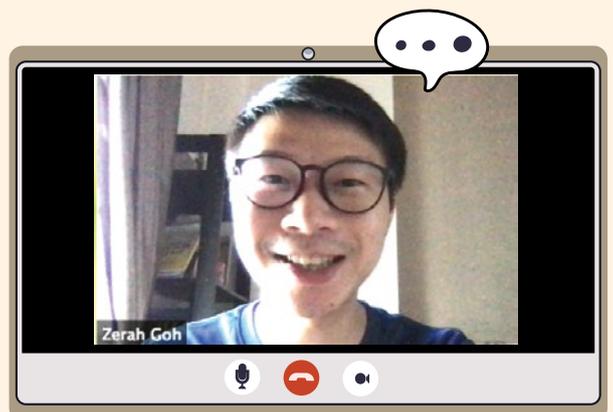
Our founder St. Louis Marie de Montfort reminds us in the Secret of Mary (22) that while meting out crosses to us, Mary gives the grace to bear us with patience and even joy! Indeed from every crisis, saints emerge. These are not the saints who have gone before us but as Pope Francis would call as the saints "next door" in his apostolic exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate. These are the people whom we witness holiness present in them especially towards their "next door" neighbour.

Though we are unable to be physically present with our brothers and sisters in Christ during this Covid-19 pandemic, many of our saints "next door" have risen to the occasion and have created opportunities for us to continue our spiritual journey through online platforms. With their help, we were able to animate so many prayers and programmes to support our community during this time of crisis. These are just some of the many initiatives made since April:

- Online Evening of Prayer with Montfort (weekly)
- Online Novena to Mary Queen of All Hearts (28 April to 7 May)
- Online Holy Rosary Offering to Our Lady of Fatima (11 to 14 May)
- The Secret of Mary Online Webinar Retreat (1 to 16 May)
- Preparation for Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary (ongoing)
- Monthly Formations (ongoing)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone of you who have contributed in one way or another, especially the sub-committees of the Montfortian Associates, the programmes team at Montfort Centre and our beloved Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel!

Let us continue to pray the Rosary faithfully and with utmost love for Our Lady who will lead us in contemplating the mysteries of the life, death and resurrection of her Son, Jesus Christ.



ONLINE EVENING OF PRAYER with Montfort

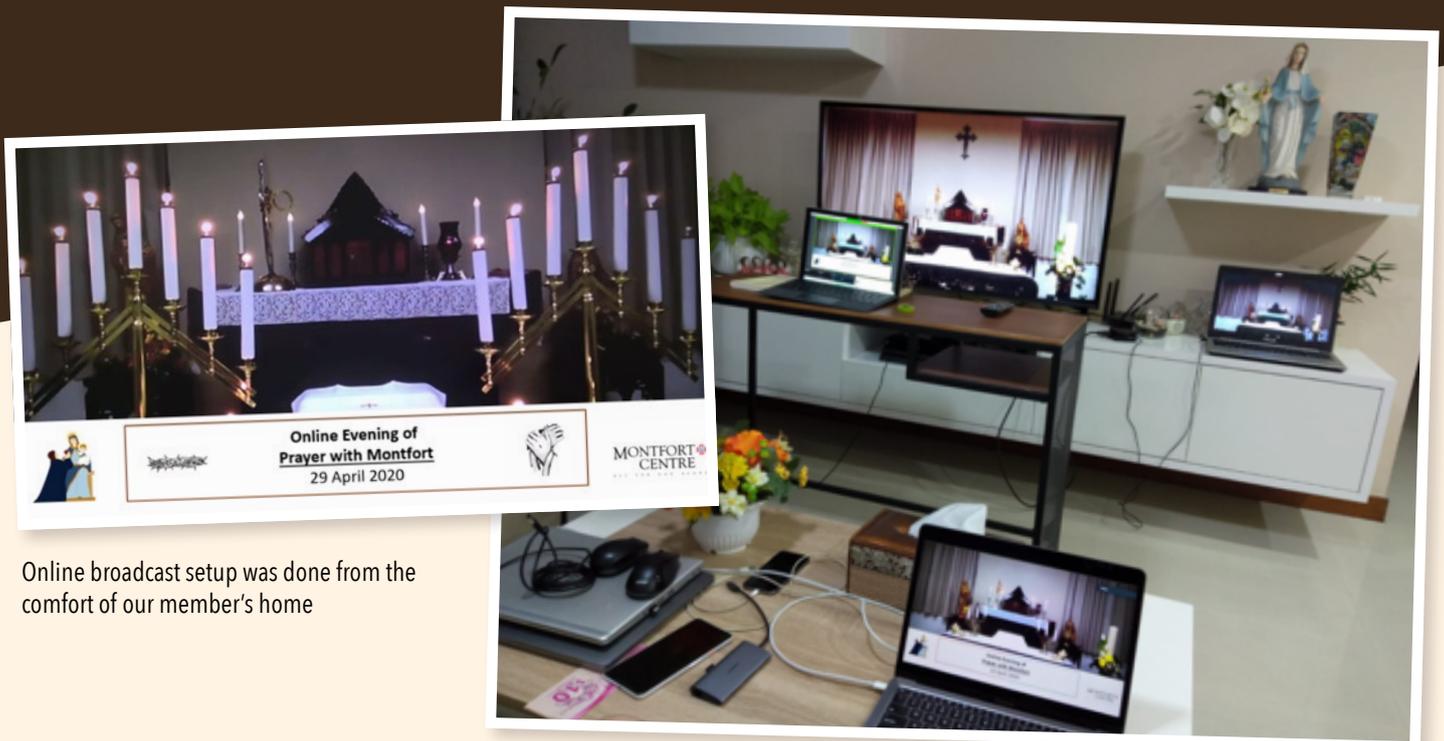
By Lydia Alexkartadjaja, Secretary of the Montfortian Associates Movement

April was the month when we kick-started our Online Evening of Prayer with Montfort. With social distancing measure imposed in Singapore to curb the spread of Covid-19 virus, we were not able to gather physically in Montfort Centre for our monthly evening prayer. This situation did not deter us from coming together to pray and adore the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we were able to stream the altar from Montfort Centre and pray together online using ZOOM.

With the online platform, many people overseas were able to unite in prayer. Indeed, we saw an increase in attendance compared to the offline evening prayer. You are also welcome to attend our online evening prayer every last Wednesday of the month at 8 PM Singapore Time. You may reach us at montfortian.associates.sg@gmail.com, and we will share the ZOOM invite link into your email.

“

**Join us
every last
Wednesday
of the month,
8 PM SGT**



Online broadcast setup was done from the comfort of our member's home

ONLINE NOVENA TO MARY QUEEN OF ALL HEARTS

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

The Circuit Breaker in Singapore has not prevented the Montfortian Associates from achieving its mission of making Montfort and His Blessed Mother better known and loved. Rather, it has provided new impetus to reach out to more people through the online platform.

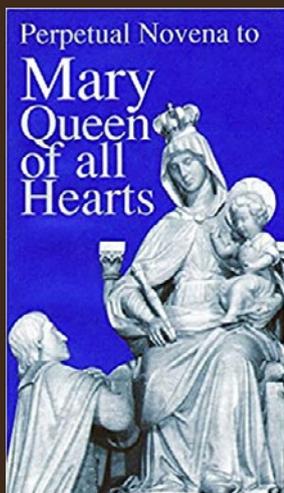
An initiative from the Outreach Committee led by Ms Paulette Lirio, the 10-day novena was held from 28 April to 7 May 2020. It started with the celebration of the feast of St Louis Marie

de Montfort and culminated on the feast of Blessed Marie Louise of God. The 30-minutes novena was adapted from the "Perpetual Novena to Mary Queen of all Hearts" by St Louis Marie. The theme for each day was accompanied by a scripture reading, and a reflection based on the life and writings of Montfort with intercessory prayer posted by the participants.

The novena, led by the Montfortian Associates, was very well received with average daily attendance of

more than 40 participants; made up of school leaders from the Schools of the Montfort Brothers of St Gabriel, teachers, Young Montfortian Associates and friends from Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines.

Feedback from the participants was positive and encouraging. Many expressed that the Novena has helped them to know Montfort and his spirituality better and they looked forward to attending more of the online prayer and devotion.



NOVENA TO MARY QUEEN OF ALL HEARTS

- 28 April: Missionary Daringness
- 29 April: On The Path to Inclusion
- 30 April: The Path of Continuous Conversion
- 01 May: Lead Us to Action
- 02 May: Wisdom Comes to Surprise Us
- 03 May: Grant Us Freedom
- 04 May: Open Us to Others
- 05 May: Sends Us in Mission
- 06 May: Heart without Borders
- 07 May: With a Heart Wide Open to Creation and to God

HOLY ROSARY OFFERING TO OUR LADY OF FATIMA

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

The month of May is also popularly known as “Mary’s Month” where special devotions are performed in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1945, Pope Pius XII solidified May as a Marian month after establishing the feast of the Queenship of Mary on May 31st. After the Second Vatican Council, this feast was moved to August 22, while May 31st became the feast of the Visitation of Mary.

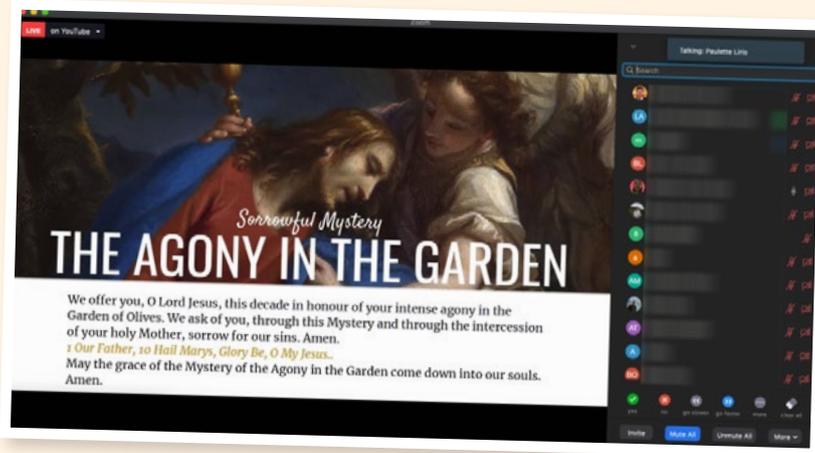
We also commemorated the first apparition of our Lady to the three young seers at Fatima on May 13, 1917. In honour of our Lady of Fatima, the outreach subcommittee led by Ms Paulette Lirio, organized a [Holy Rosary Offering to Our Lady of Fatima](#) from 11 to 14 May 2020. Montfortian Associates from Singapore and Malaysia as well as fellow friends and associates from across South-East Asia were invited to join in the recitation of the rosary according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort and the offering up of spiritual roses through online video conferencing platform ‘Zoom’. The prayer event was also streamed live on ‘YouTube’.

It was also the first time that the Montfortian Associates from both Singapore and Sabah have led a rosary prayer event together. We had 70 participants join us live on ‘Zoom’ on average throughout the four days and were blessed to be able to have so many beloved children of Mary pray for the conversion of sinners and an end to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“

The Rosary is “the mystical rose tree of Jesus and Mary in life, death, and eternity...the roses will never wilt or die, and they will be just as exquisite thousands of years from now as they are today.”

St Louis Marie de Montfort



Online rosary prayer through ‘Zoom’



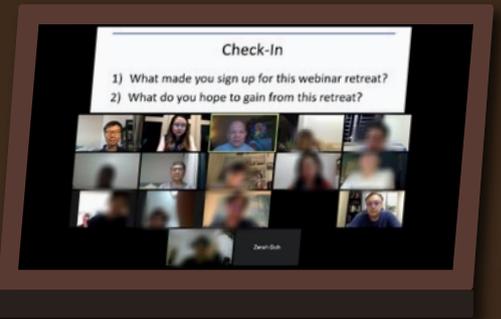
THE SECRET OF MARY ONLINE WEBINAR RETREAT

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

Like a thief in the night, the world as we know it has changed in the blink of an eye. Has God abandoned us amidst this great storm of war, natural disaster, economic crisis, and especially Covid-19? Why is Jesus asleep on the boat when so many people are living in

fear, anxiety and panic? We might start to wonder, how do we find God in all these?

In response to these questions, Montfort Centre organized its very first online webinar retreat for 13 participants from 1 to 16 May via 'Zoom'. The theme for the webinar retreat is "The Secret of Mary: The Interior way to Jesus Christ in the Storm" and was animated by Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh and Mr Zerah Goh. This was inspired by St. Louis Marie de Montfort's proposed way to Jesus through Mary in his writing of "The Secret of Mary", as well as Pope Francis' Urbi et Orbi address on the coronavirus and Jesus calming the storm.



As part of the Montfortian Experience Retreat series, "The Secret of Mary" was slated for the second week of May at Montfort Centre but had to be brought online due to the Circuit Breaker measures in Singapore. Participants met on 'Zoom' at 8pm on 1, 5, 8, and 12 May for short inputs on the topic of the session followed by questions and answers. The topics covered focused on the interior practice of the devotion to our Lady as the way to Jesus especially in times of crisis. Participants also had a meaningful small group sharing facilitated by Bro Damian Tay, Mr Henry Tan and Ms Lydia Alexkartadjaja.

The webinar retreat concluded with a two-hour online recollection on "Cultivating the Tree of Life" held on 16 May. Participants reflected on how best to make Mary – the tree of life – live and reign in their souls even in such a pandemic, so that they can reap its fruit; Jesus Christ.





TOTAL CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

4th Batch Journey

By Michael Chow, Community Building Sub-committee of the Montfortian Associates Movement

We are blessed with fourteen participants who started their spiritual learning journey on 22 February 2020 in the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary (TCM) in Singapore. The purpose of TCM is to prepare them to renew their baptismal promises when they complete the program on 22 November 2020 (just it will be there beginning too!) The initial sessions started with the use of modern technologies due to the lockdown in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

Participants completed 12 out of the 33 days of preparation for Total Consecration to Mary which began with emptying themselves of the spirit of the world. They are now halfway into their journey thanks to the help of technology and communications applications such as Moodle, Zoom, WhatsApp, and Text messaging.

We pray with them and for them as they continue the second movement of filling themselves with the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

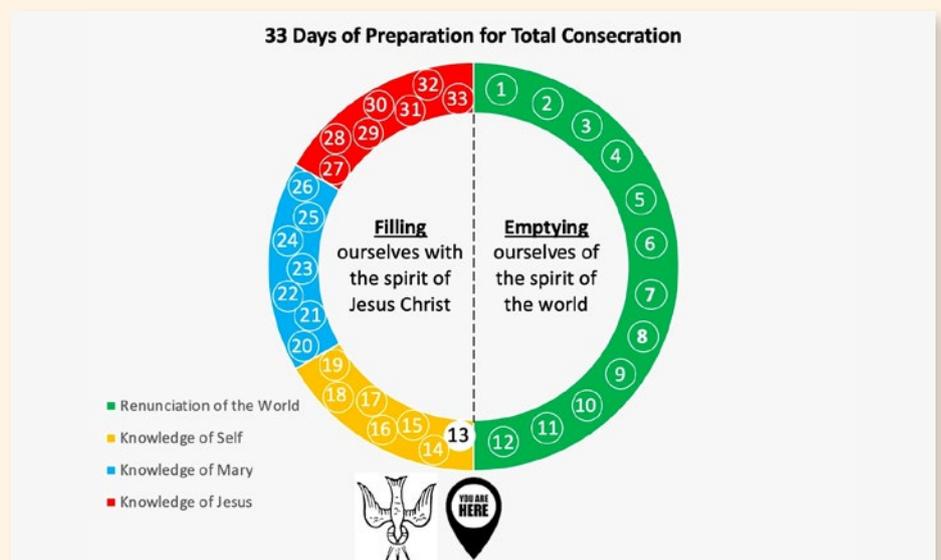
May their journey be fruitful and joyful as stated in 'Treatise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, 119':

"As this devotion essentially consists of a state of the soul, it will not be understood in the same way by everyone. Some –the great majority– will stop short at the threshold and go no further. Others –not many– will take but one step into its interior. Who will take a second step? Who will take a third? Finally, who will remain in it permanently? Only the one to whom the Spirit of

Jesus reveals the secret. The Holy Spirit himself will lead this faithful soul from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from light to light, until at length he attains transformation into Jesus in the fullness of His age on earth and his glory in heaven."

May we continue to give ourselves completely to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Wisdom, to carry our cross after him for the rest of our lives, and to be more faithful to him than we have been till now.

St Louis Marie de Montfort pray with us!



TCM journey road map



YOUNG MONTFORTIAN ASSOCIATES

By Wendy Chan, Religious Education Coordinator for Assumption English School

The idea of a community of Young Montfortian Associates (YMA) was mooted early last year with the aim of forming our young Catholic students in the Montfortian Spirituality. This new co-curricular activity (CCA) in Assumption English School started off with just the president, 15 year old Gretchel Flores Orbeta and her assistant 14 year old vice-president Denise Antonette Manipula Andres appointed in April 2019.

It is officially established this year with 16 secondary 2 to 5 student leaders in charge

of the 6 different ministries; Art & Drama, Music, Altar Servers, Media, Prayer Leaders and Lectors & Community Building. They were commissioned as executive committee members at the beginning of the school year Eucharistic celebration to serve and lead the Catholic students in the school. Among these are 2 student advisors, 17 year olds Ms Nathenia Savita Nicholas and Ms Ceana Joy Chalissery, who were moved by the Holy Spirit and have already been faithfully serving the community for the last 4 years. The CCA grew

into its current strength of about 60 members with the incoming secondary 1 Catholic students.

The leadership has just been handed over in April to the incoming president Ms Resterio Pauline Caryl Marbella and vice-president Ms Nicole Ann Ong for 2020/2021.

“Having been given this opportunity, we pray that we will be able to learn more about God with our peers. Through this CCA, we can all strive to understand one another better and help each other, especially the last,



Recitation of the commitment pledge by the YMA executive committee

the lost and the least, just like what St Louis Marie de Montfort said, "Those whom the world rejects, ought to touch you the most". Though we may face difficulties, we wish to learn from them with the help of God."

We ask for your prayers for these children so that they will all grow to become living witnesses of Christ, who live out their baptismal promises and who share the spirituality of a total commitment to Jesus through Mary as proposed by Montfort.



Collar pin of the YMA executive committee



Commissioning of the YMA executive committee

HOME

My love, you've walked an honest journey.
Your eyes behoves my desire for the Almighty.
Crimson passion awaits His glory.
The miles I'll walk with you are endless,
For the road I hope would bring him gladness.
Come home with me amidst this madness,
For together, we can bring Your Highness.

*By Audrey C.,
Participant of the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary*

