

Journeying with TCM Participants

By Doreen Law



On 24 September 2022, the 5th batch participants for the Preparation for Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary (TCM) had their last session at Montfort Centre. Their nine-month journey culminated with a group sharing. The encouragement of the facilitators stirred the hearts of the participants and increased their desire to enroll in the Montfortian Gabrielite Associates (MGA).

As a facilitator for the TCM, my responsibilities were to ensure that all participants were engaged in the sharing and that they were able to confidently achieve the TCM outcomes. While doing group facilitation is not easy, it is possible if one is aware of the process and is alert, an open group sharing can be fruitful. This was achieved by first breaking the ice amongst the participants.

As it is important to acknowledge our feelings and to share our feelings with others, I created an environment where each participant feels encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions. To Jesus through Mary, we are all personally inspired on this journey and our relationships with one another have strengthened.

A participant shared:

“Ever since I decided to participate in the sessions that will lead to the Consecration to our Blessed Virgin Mary, I could feel and experience the closeness of our Blessed Mother Mary and her son, our Lord Jesus. The ‘zoom sessions’ were useful, and the sharing from our members helped us in our relationship with one another even though most of us have yet to meet each other personally. The sharing affirmed one another and made each of us realize that we are not alone. Personally, I find that through our personal sharing, our relationship with one another grew. The session on the ‘Knowledge of Mary’ was informative and insightful; and Bro Dominic’s sharing was inspiring and insightful. It was indeed beneficial”.

Metamorphosis

By Pauline Lim

“What are you looking for?” John 1:29-42

Jesus asked this of the two disciples who followed him and they answered that He was the one Whom they sought. The generosity of God to those who seek Him is seen in His warm welcome and an invitation to His home.

The fifth run of the Montfortian Gabrielite Associate program looked at the various stages that one journeys through in search of Wisdom Incarnate. We arrived at a deeper understanding of the Montfortian way to Jesus through Mary.

Our 9-month preparation has been likened to the gestation period. The first trimester saw us recognising and renouncing the spirit of the world. The second trimester saw us being introduced to the secret whose name is Mary. The third trimester saw us being brought as disciples to Jesus through Mary. On the day of our consecration, we renewed our baptismal promises, in essence, being born again in Christ.

From the very beginning of the run, I struggled with placing Christ at the centre of my life, being distracted by work, study and the concerns of the family. This saw me being absent from a number of sessions and if this were to be treated the way the world sees things, I would have failed the programme. This personal experience of mine is a simple illustration that the way of the world is not the only way, and for me, I choose the way of Christ.

Picture my first entry into the cosy chapel at Montfort Centre. It was the evening of the first day of the retreat and stepping into the chapel's inner sanctum, I saw a life-size likeness of St Montfort in alabaster-white kneeling down and offering his heart to the cross. At this point in time, I did not know much about the life of this saint and did not understand the true significance of this gesture. I learnt about the man who put together a small group of good, poor priests to minister to the needy in France and the saint who was one of the greatest apostles of the rosary in his day and through his books and the Montfortian missionaries, he is still inspiring many today.

If there is a parallel to be drawn between the stages in our preparation for the renewal of our baptismal vows and the four main stages in life - birth, growth, maturity, death - it is that of transition and change. Transitions are inflection points and become metamorphosis, where we see rebirth and promise.

I'd like to end my reflection with St Montfort's prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which also answers the question asked at the beginning, "What are you looking for?"

The only grace I ask of you, through pure mercy, is that every day and every moment of my life, I may say three times, "Amen".



Retreats in October

7-9 October 2022

Montfortian Kenosis as a call to Christian Way of Life

Facilitated by Br Paul Raj, 33 TCM participants had a 3-days-2-nights retreat for their final preparation to consecrate themselves to Jesus through Mary. Following the consecration, 16 of them enrolled to be Montfortian Gabrielite Associates.



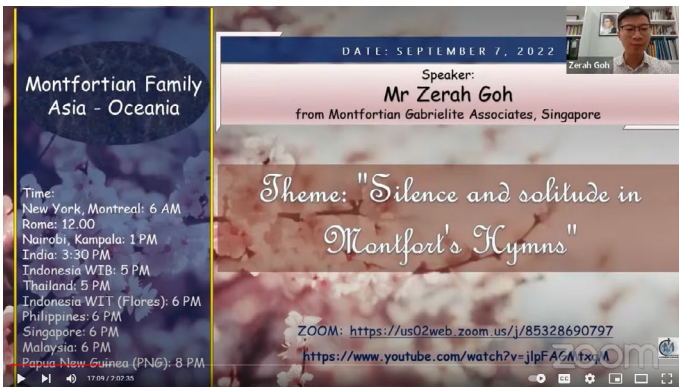
28-30 October 2022

Called to be Consecrated: Total Consecration as Jesus living in Mary



Attended by 20 MGAs, the retreat was animated by Br Paul Raj. The MGAs renewed their consecration to Jesus through Mary by the end of the retreat.

Watch on YouTube



<https://youtu.be/jlpFAGMtxqM>

<https://youtu.be/acUwIW5Z2SY>

Zerah explored the theme of Silence and Solitude in Montfort's Hymn for a Montfortian Synodality session organised by Montfortian Family in Southeast Asia.



Spot 4 MGAs: Zerah, Doreen, Linda, and Cecilia who joined the Novena Church Annual Procession on 4 September 2022.



Merry Christmas!



In the month of December, the MGAs celebrated Christmas by decorating Montfort Centre and having a gathering for prayer, lunch, and gift-exchange with family and friends.



My Sabah Retreat Experience

By Cecilia Leong

Brother Thomas from Sabah extended an invitation to Montfortian Gabrielites Associates Singapore to facilitate a retreat from 4-6 November 2022. The theme was 'True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin'. Brian Ooi and Cynthia Chong took up the invite which was challenging as it was their first time to animate a session overseas. As a Montfortian Gabrielite Associate (MGA), I also wanted to experience how an overseas retreat was conducted. So together with another associate, Sharon Lee, we journeyed to Sabah.

On arrival at Sabah, we were welcomed by Winnie, an Exco member who brought us for lunch, sampling their local delights. We stayed at the Montfort House where we met Brothers Gasper, John and Simon and joined in the Evening of Prayer. The next day, we headed to Pace Bene Retreat Center. The first evening was simple as we had the ice breaker session to mingle with the retreatants. The retreat was delivered very smoothly. Brian was able to capture their attention and they responded well to questions. The retreatants were paired and given a question to discuss and they were able to share spontaneously. Break up sessions was also a time when the group were able to share their thoughts openly. This reflected well during the feedback sessions.

Cynthia made the session more relaxing by introducing games and stretching exercises. Everyone enjoyed. The last evening on Sunday highlighted the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. It was an encounter that was very new to them. The chapel was only lighted with candles and in the silence of the night, the retreatants experienced a totally different way of the adoration.

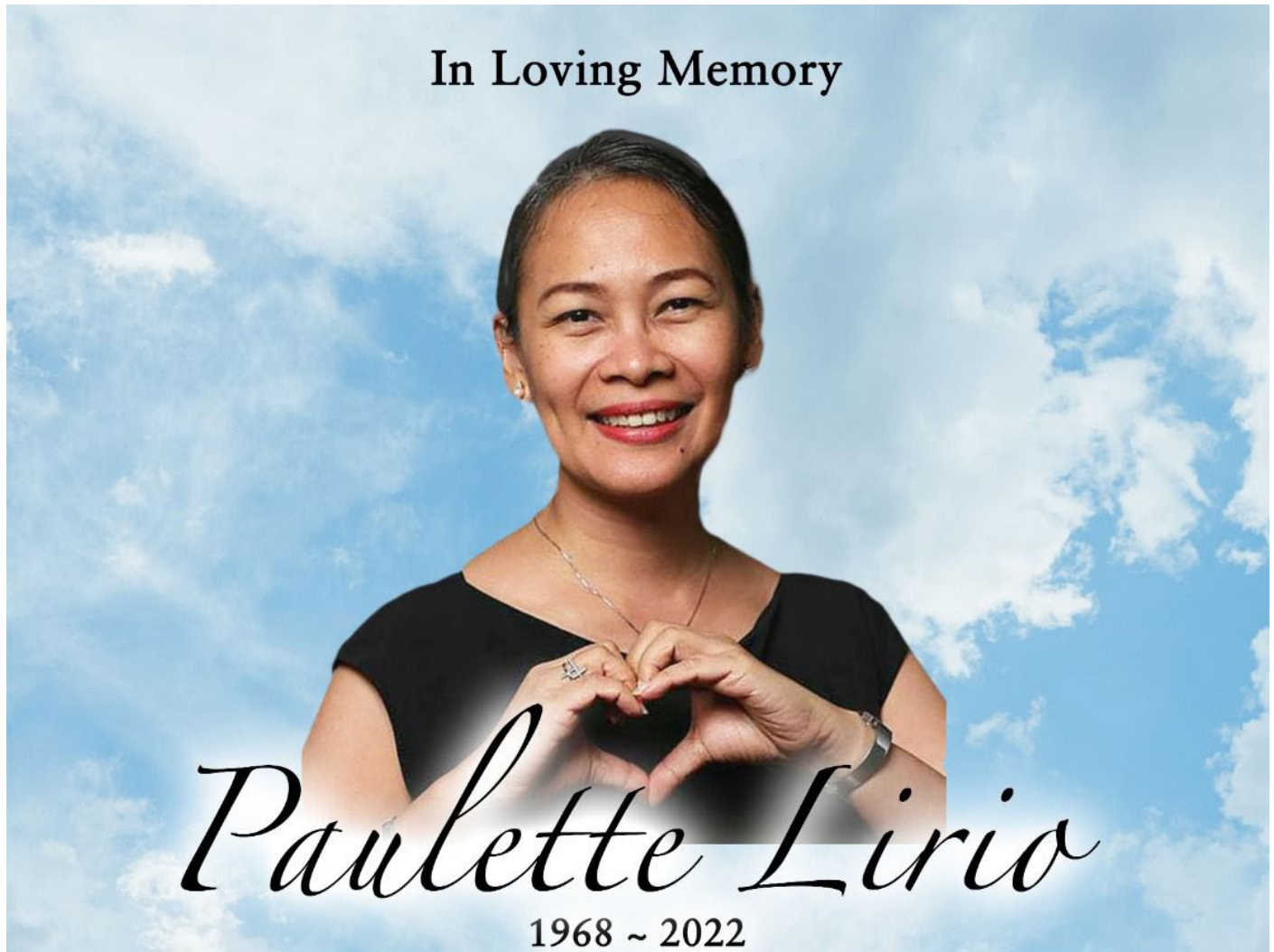
An evaluation of the retreat was that they expressed a joy and fulfilment from the talks. They were also looking forward to participating in any overseas retreat.

For me, it was an awesome experience. My rapport with my group sharing was one of spiritually filled and openness.



Remembering Paulette

By Simon Lim



Paulette joined the Montfortian Gabrielite Associates in 2016 after nine months of preparation for the Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary by St Louise Marie de Montfort. Paulette was a very committed and active member. She headed the outreach committee and spearheaded many activities and programs of the movement to make Jesus, Mary and Montfort better known and loved. She had given her entire life selflessly to proclaim and witness the gospel values. She passed on 14 October 2022 morning after fighting the good fight against cancer. She is survived by her loving parents, and two brothers and their families. Rest in Peace, Paulette. Below are some touching tributes from the Montfortian community

Sharon Snow-Lee

I know Paulette for a short few months. She loved God and Mother Mary so much that I want to emulate her. An easy-going personality, she put anyone at ease in her presence. She was also caring and selfless despite her illness. She puts others first before herself. I was fortunate to have a few opportunities to visit her and have meals with her before she was hospitalized for treatment. She shared freely about our faith and we prayed together.

Margarita

Paulette is my role model. Her unwavering faith and complete trust in God despite her illness are so touching and she is such a great example of a true Catholic.

Stella

Paulette is an inspiration for me, someone who avoids crosses. She bears them so well with gentleness and smiles. Because of her, I'm opening up to bearing my crosses and have enrolled in MGA. Indeed, St Louis Marie de Montfort has started blessing me with little crosses, ever since I said 'Yes'. I complained a little, but the memories of Paulette helped me bear them faithfully.

Sharon Too

I remember Paulette, my facilitator, for her sharing during TCM sessions. Her journey in her illness was a testimony of her strength, her trust and her hope in God. Her conversations with Jesus were a total surrender to the Divine Will. She saw her suffering as an opportunity for God to purify her love for Him. I felt that God was always with her. She will always be remembered.

Ben

I am surprised that Paulette still took the time to facilitate despite her condition. It also surprised me that it was only a few months later that she passed away because she said her condition seemed to be improving. It made me reflect on the frailty and shortness of our lives. She is a testimony of how we should give our lives to others in the community in faith and love.

Jacinta

I will always remember Paulette as a beacon of God's light and love. Her strong faith and trust in God even amid her struggles is my inspiration to try to be positive and to hope in the Lord no matter the challenges I face. She is a testament that with God, there is no fear.



MONTFORTIAN EXPERIENCE 2023

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



3-5 MAR
2023

Wisdom is the Cross

Montfortian Preached Retreat (stay-in)

MAR-APR
2023

Friends of the Cross

Customised retreats for school children in the season of Lent

20 MAY
2023

The Heart of Living

Montfortian Spirituality Symposium



26-28 MAY
2023

Via Maria

Montfortian Preached Retreat (stay-in)

JUN-JUL
2023

Montfortian Pilgrimage in Our Schools (MPIOs)

In the footsteps of Montfort (Singapore)

24-27 AUG
2023

Montfortian Formation Programme

Montfortian Spirituality Retreat (stay-in)

8-10 SEP
2023

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

Montfortian Preached Retreat (stay-in)

OCT-NOV
2023

Cesson Bridge Experience

Transitions programme for school children in the Montfortian Way

NOV-DEC
2023

Open Your Heart to God

Customised retreats for school children in the season of Advent

LAST WED
OF THE MONTH

Evening of Prayer with Montfort

8pm at Montfort Centre Chapel

1-4 JUN
29 MAY-2 JUL

Individual Guided Retreat (IGR)

An individually guided retreat in the Montfortian Way

JUN 2023-
MAR 2024

Preparation for Total Consecration to Jesus Through Mary

Preparation based on Montfort's 33 days preparation

