



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

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MAY
2022

THE HOMESTEAD

Our Lady Is *The* Perfect Disciple

By: Deacon Alex Kwok

All of the four canonical gospels agree that after resurrection, Jesus appeared first to a group of women. Among them was Mary Magdalene. The gospel according to Mark even states explicitly in its appendix that, "When he (Jesus) had risen, early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons." (**Mark 16:9**) Jesus sent Mary Magdalene to tell the apostles that He's risen. Therefore, the Church honours Mary Magdalene with a title of the "Apostle of the apostles"!

Naturally, our mind would turn to another Mary, the mother of Jesus. People feel uncomfortable because none of the gospels say anything about Jesus appearing to Our Lady after his resurrection. It is illogical because Jesus could not breach the Ten Commandments, could He? Do not worry. The absence of evidence is not an evidence of absence. If something is not written in the gospels, it does not imply that it never happened. John the beloved disciple of Jesus says it well; "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book" (**John 20:30**). Therefore, it is not superstition or folk piety to believe that Jesus had also appeared to the Blessed Virgin Mary ("BVM") to bring joy and peace to her. The absence of evidence only highlights the humility of Our Lady! Her silence did not contradict John's words "in the presence of his disciples" because Our Lady knew her position and she always followed her Son from a distance, even up to Mount Calvary where she ended up standing under the cross to suffer together with her Son. Her faith is unshakable and her love is total and unreserved. Her virtues are simply innumerable. Perhaps it is a good idea to recite the Litany of Loreto 【聖母德敘禱文】 in this month of May to familiarize ourselves with the virtues and privileges we find in her.

After resurrection, Jesus did not appear to all people but only to a chosen few to send them out to bear witness for him (**Acts 10:41-42**). On the first Easter day, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene to send her to bring the good news of his resurrection to the apostles. While Saul (aka Paul) was on his way to Damascus to wipe out the Christian community there, Jesus appeared to him and sent him to evangelize the Gentiles. Jesus appeared to St. Francis of Assisi and sent him to rebuild His Church and appeared to St. Faustina to popularize the Divine Mercy devotion, etc. We may safely conclude that whenever Jesus appears to anyone, He would send that person to bear witness for Him. Now, when the risen Jesus appeared to Our Lady, what did He send her to do?

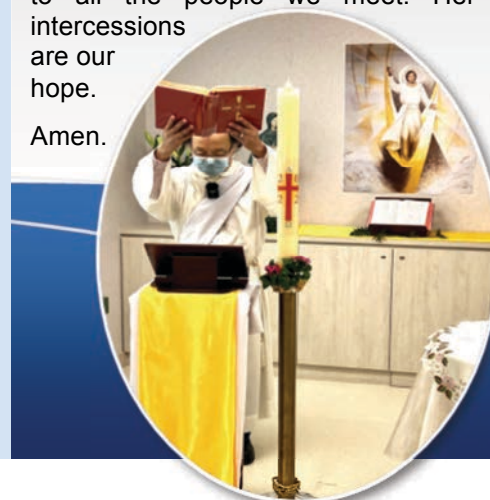
While he was hanging on the cross, Jesus commissioned the BVM to be the Mother of the Church with these words, "Woman, behold, your son" (**John 19:26**). What was the point of beholding a dying man? It must be referring to something else. Therefore, when the risen Lord appeared to His mother, He must have explained to her how she would act as the Mother of the Church in the future. For example, for forty days the BVM stayed among the believers praying together with them and elected Matthias to replace Judas (**Acts 1:14**).



Though not mentioned by name, the BVM must have been present at the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost. Previously, in order for the Word to become flesh (**John 1:14**), the Holy Spirit overshadowed the BVM (**Luke 1:35**). What better way for the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, to come into existence than for the BVM to give birth once more? What better way to nurture and to chastise her children than appearing to them in subsequent ages? The rest is history.

Brethren! Has the risen Lord appeared to you? I am sure He has, to all of us. Let us follow the exemplar of our heavenly Mother to bring the good news of reconciliation to all the people we meet. Her intercessions are our hope.

Amen.



The Mother of Jesus was there...



By: Sr. Victoria Victorino, PDDM

The narration of the Wedding at Cana starts on a very interesting note: “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.” Did you notice that Mary was mentioned first, and then, seemingly as an ‘afterthought’ the narrator says, “Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding?” One wonders if this is suggesting that Mary was the primary invitee; Jesus and friends came to be invited only because of family connections! Be that as it may, the story swiftly develops because of Mary’s perceptive eye as she noticed the wine running out. She hastily attempted to resolve this embarrassing situation by bringing it to Jesus’ attention. And we know the rest of the story: Jesus, upon the intervention of Mary, accomplished the first sign (miracle) in his public ministry – turning the water into wine, “and so revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him” (Jn 2:1-12)

This is the bible story, depicted on the mural of our sanctuary here in OLMC. And so when we come to pray and participate in the liturgy, we have before our very eyes the assurance of Mary’s intercession for us and Jesus’ response to our prayer, whatever and however that turns out to be.

Even today many persons, families, societies and nations have ‘no wine’ – symbol of joy, feasting and a fuller life.



With the further stabilizing of the pandemic situation, the Government has relaxed its social-distancing measures. From 19 May, all churches are allowed to operate at 85% capacity. Hallelujah!

Following the example of Mary, the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of the Church, let us first of all, grow in the awareness of and attention to the needy persons in our midst. This is one of the things that I have learned in my ministry here in OLMC: noticing the vulnerable persons and paying attention to their needs. All this, thanks to our Parish Priest, Fr. Thomas Law, who has a very strong sense of compassion to the poor and the marginalized persons in the society!

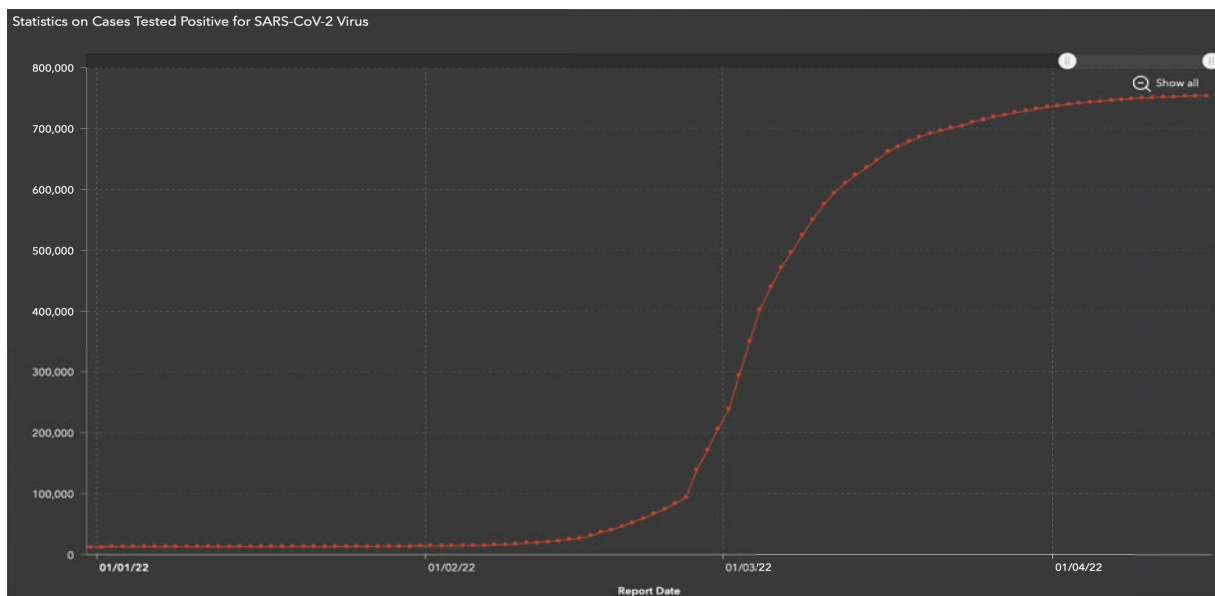
With this, we can move on and ask, what can I offer, what resources do I have to ease the pain and suffering of my neighbor? Sometimes, it takes something as simple as a smile, a few moments of attentive listening to lift someone’s spirit up and restore hope. Or more importantly, we can offer a fervent prayer, bringing to the Lord the petition and plea of our needy neighbor.

Let us be like Mary, always courageous and trusting in bringing to Jesus the needs of our brothers and sisters who have no wine.

We Can All Be Part Of The Solution

By: An Anonymous Volunteer at the Peduli Kasih Hong Kong and KKIHK Emergency Response Team

The fifth wave of COVID-19 in Hong Kong formally started at the end of December 2021 but as can be seen from the graph below from CHP dashboard, the number of cases started to increase significantly at the end of February 2022. Two segments of the population had it worst: the elderlies and migrant domestic workers. The mortality rate among the elderlies is high due to low rate of vaccination and other underlying illnesses. As of 15 April, the CHP recorded 8,856 deaths from COVID-19, 88% of them aged 70 and above, and 73% of them are unvaccinated. As quoted from The Lancet: Domestic migrant workers have had a particularly rough time. There are an estimated 330,000 such individuals in Hong Kong, mostly women from Indonesia and the Philippines. Under local law, they are required to live with the family that employs them. There have been reports of domestic workers being fired or instructed to leave after testing positive for SARS-CoV-2. Some have had no other option but to sleep rough. On 5 March, the Hong Kong Government issued a press release reminding employers of their legal obligations to domestic workers. “For those foreign domestic helpers under employment who test positive to the COVID-19 or are regarded as close contacts, they will receive support like any other citizens of Hong Kong”, stated the government. “Foreign domestic helpers working in Hong Kong are a core part of our community.” ⁽¹⁾



At the end of February we started to hear about domestic workers looking for a place to isolate after being forced out of the employers' homes. They were rejected by hospitals, as their condition did not require hospitalisation. The Hong Kong Diocese acted promptly and opened one retreat house as isolation facility, and we immediately put this information on the Indonesian Catholic Community (KKIHK)'s Facebook page along with a phone number of one of our community members. Soon, his phone could not stop ringing. Calls after calls came, asking for help, in the form of shelter, food, medicine, and information on health and labour rights. We soon realised that one person's mobile phone is not sufficient. On 4 March, we set up the Omicron Emergency Response Team with a hotline service and quickly organised a few members of the Indonesian community to be in charge of receiving calls, inputting data, coordinating logistics, delivering care packages, looking for shelters, and providing mental health support. Within a few days we raised funds and received close to HK\$100,000 in cash. We also received various supplies in the form of medicines, Rapid Antigen Test ("RAT") kits and supplements from generous sponsors. Unable to outsource the deliveries, our members delivered care packages containing food, medicines, RAT kits and other daily necessities direct to migrant workers who are isolated at home or other locations.

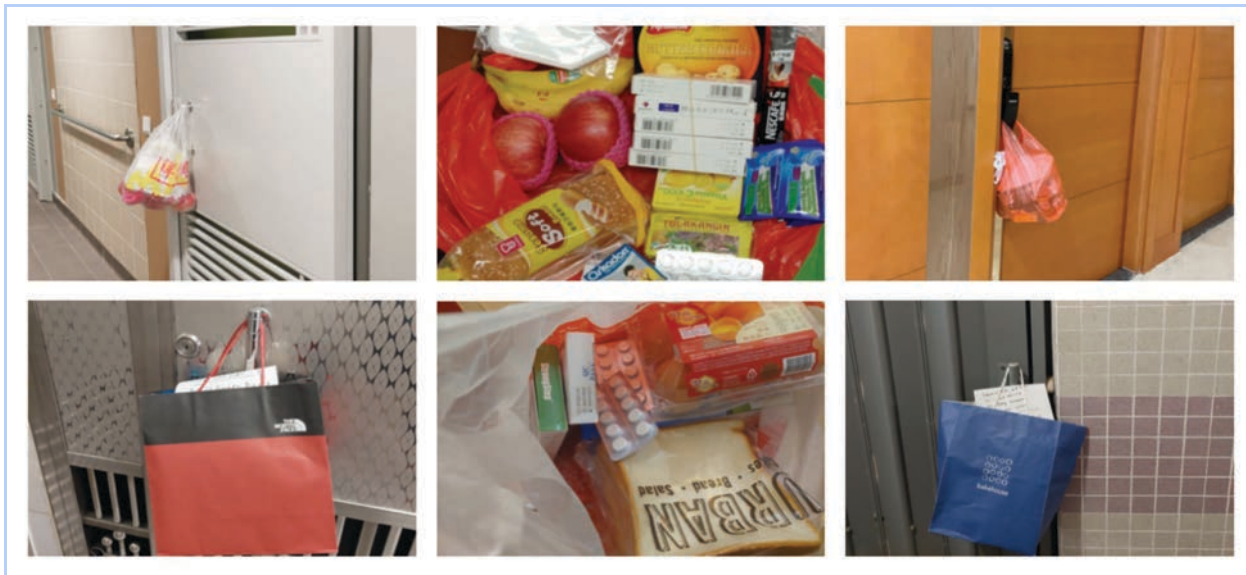
During the 6 weeks of our operations, we heard heartbreaking stories of helpers who are isolated in empty flats without food and medicine, or of helpers who despite being sick, still needed to take care of the elderly as both of them are isolated at home without much food and medicine. There were also inhumane stories of workers isolated at balconies or in a room

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without access to toilet. This further motivated the volunteers in the team to work day and night, often forgetting to have breakfast, lunch or dinner. Within 2 weeks, 457 people have called the hotline (2) and by 9 April, the team has facilitated deliveries of 700 care packages.

As part of the volunteering team, I too, experienced personal transformation. Having experienced the aftermath of May 1998 riot in Indonesia and having helped the volunteer team at the time (I was a lot younger then!), I felt a sense of déjà vu as I joined the Omicron Emergency Response Team. Initially helping on writing fund raising proposal and picking up donations, I soon saw urgent need in delivering care packages myself. My fear of getting infected was defeated by the need of being helpful in this critical period. The exhaustion and anxiety are somewhat neutralised when we receive a message back from the beneficiaries, thanking us for the food and medicine. It is ironic, our help is so little and so simple but the recipients are so grateful.



Our Omicron Emergency Response Team is just a small team contributing very little when compared to many other Non-Profit Organizations (“NGOs”) and community groups supporting elderlies and migrant workers. We can read their stories on social media. Whilst it is great to see different organisations responding promptly to the crisis, the NGOs are also burning out (3). It is appalling to see elderlies and helpers lacking food and medicine, isolated in one flat in a residential estate, where downstairs buzzing wet markets, supermarkets and restaurants are offering abundant food and supplies. Furthermore, many news articles were voicing out dissatisfaction on the slow and inadequate government support. Have we asked ourselves why should those people rely on NGOs and why we blame the government? Have we asked ourselves what have we done to help others in need? Do we know if any of our neighbours in the housing estate was suffering from COVID-19 and was in need of supplies? If every one of us helped our neighbour, we can overcome the crisis faster and with more positivity.

As Catholics, we are all familiar with the Parable of The Good Samaritan. Some may think it is a lot to be asked to act as a Samaritan, helping a stranger and taking extra effort to ensure the stranger receive care to recovery. But what if we are not asked to be the Samaritans? What if we are merely asked to be the innkeeper? We all have received two denarii and we are asked to help one person.

I am not writing this to seek praise or to boast of the work we did. I am writing to call for empathy and action. All of us can be part of the solution in times of crisis. May the 5th wave of COVID-19 in HK serve as a learning tool for us, that collectively we can do better as a community when the next crisis hits.

References:

(1) [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(22\)00167-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(22)00167-0/fulltext)

(2) <https://www.examiner.org.hk/2022/03/25/over-400-indonesians-helped-in-a-month/news/hongkong/>

(3) <https://www.scmp.com/comment/letters/article/3173004/how-hong-kong-can-help-save-its-ngo-sector-burnout>



My Journey to Baptism

By: Jian Xian Ko, RCIA Student

I was exposed to the Protestant tradition in my youth in Singapore. When I began the RCIA process, I had some prior knowledge of Christian tradition but was relatively new to the Catholic Church. I found the process to be comforting, with Sister Victoria doing a fantastic job making all of us catechumens feel welcome and engaged throughout.

Participating in the RCIA helped us to learn about the core beliefs that form the Catholic faith. One thing which really stood out to me, was how we were each given the opportunity each session to reflect, question, and engage in discussions on the topic at hand. No question was deemed unworthy of discussion and I found this open dialogue to be key to gaining a better grasp of the traditions. It was a most enjoyable process.

It is my view that human faith is an article that is intensely personal; it is an individually perceived truth that is constantly evolving and growing as each person goes through his or her individual life experiences. While no two journeys are identical, the path of each traveler is inevitably changed by his or her encounters along the way. I remain grateful to have had the chance to share a part of my journey with my fellow catechumens and hope to continue to keep in touch in the years to come.

Jian Xian Ko will receive the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion) on 29 May 2022 at the 1.30 pm Mass



RCIA's pilgrimage to St. James' Church in Yau Tong

Financial Education Seminar By: Amelia Hermosa

(Translated from Tagalog original by Sr. Victoria Victorino, PDDM)

I started my life in Hong Kong on a happy note. I came to work here on 10 January 2010 and I was happy to be here since I was highly motivated to help my family and relatives. But it happened that after some time, I had an attack of high blood pressure and was rushed to the hospital. Talking to some specialist doctors, I was even told that I might have only some months to live. It was the start of a radical change in my life. I turned to the Lord in prayer even as I continued my work. I joined the group Light of Jesus ("LOJ") here in Hong Kong and my spiritual mentors helped me to deepen my faith and be more devoted in my service to the Lord.



One time, our LOJ group attended the 6:00 pm Mass at OLMC. That started my desire to come back to this Church even on my own. The coordinator of the Mass, Ms. Precy Santos, started assigning me in the Offertory part of the Mass. And perhaps it was there that Sr. Regina Lito, PDDM, the then pastoral sister of OLMC, noticed me. She called me and asked me if I wanted to be trained as a coordinator of the usherettes and collectors for the 6:00 pm Mass. I prayed fervently over the invitation and after a week of discernment, I accepted it. Since then I have learned many things, also with the help of Ate Lea who assists the Mass in the Service of the Sacristy.

In 2021, out of Fr. Thomas Law's concern for us Filipinos, the modules on Financial Education were offered to us through the help of Enrich Association. I participated in all the lectures and workshops beginning with Money and Family up to the last one on Setting Up My Business on 1 May 2022 and 2 May 2022. In this last module, I realized that even as a simple businesswoman, I can put up my small business with a limited capital. I just need to choose wisely what is the business that answers the needs of the people. I have to be sure of the quality of my product, even with a lower price range that is adapted to the buying capacity of my customers. I learned that if I follow these criteria well, the potential customers would come back and patronize my products despite the competition around. If I decide to put up a food business, it has to be in a clean surrounding, with delightful and delicious products that will be attractive to my customers.

I am very grateful for all these learning. Thank you to Fr. Law and to Sr. Victoria for organizing this program for us Filipino Workers here in Hong Kong. Thank you also for allowing me to share this experience. May God bless us all and may He continue to guide us!



Amelia with the 6:00 pm Mass Liturgy team



“Setting Up My Business” Workshop



Do you want to start a business?

Join

Setting Up My Business Workshop

An introduction to entrepreneurship for domestic workers who are planning to start a business

1st session: May 1 (3:30- 5:30 pm)

2nd session: May 2 (9am -1pm)

Venue: 1/F Lobby,
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church



We Are Family!

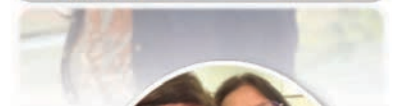
By: Bernice Leung

We have been seeing an exodus of Hong Kongers since 2020. OLMC has also seen her share of parishioners pack their lifetime belongings into suitcases, and leave Hong Kong, a place where they have been calling home their entire life. Each person has his / her own compelling reasons as to why they wish to leave Hong Kong. Most have left together with their family members and / or their loved ones as they wish to settle in another country where they believe they can find better opportunities and prosperity. Some have left OLMC because of retirement. Some have chosen to stay put in Hong Kong after retirement. Regardless, distance is of no importance, for God will keep all of His children under His shelter.

Ronny Yuk who has worked as a sacristan in OLMC for 4 years and 9 months has retired. Though we are unsure of Ronny's plans after retirement, we can be sure of one thing. She will still be under the guidance and protection of our Lord. We are after all God's children. WE ARE ONE FAMILY.

Remembering your lovely smiles, Ronny.

Ronny with Ushers from
Saturday Mass =>



Ronny
with liturgy
& choir
members



OLMC parishioners organized a farewell dinner for Ronny.
We are one family!

Ronny with some of the Lectors &
Psalmist from the English Mass =>



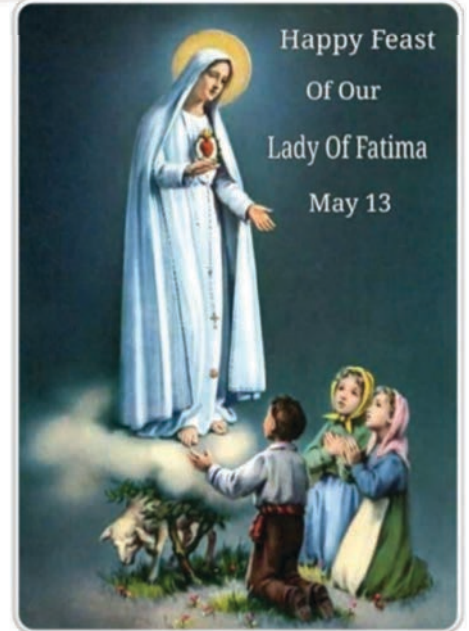
Feast of Our Lady of Fatima – 13 May

Prayer to Our Lady of Fatima (Act of Entrustment)

When Pope John Paul II made the third part of the secret public, he wrote the following prayer, which refers to the Act of Entrustment:

Mother of all individuals and peoples, you know all their sufferings and hopes. In your motherly heart you feel all the struggles between good and evil, between light and darkness, that convulse the world: accept the plea which we make in the Holy Spirit directly to your heart, and embrace with the love of the Mother and Handmaid of the Lord those who most await this embrace, and also those whose act of entrustment you too await in a particular way. Take under your motherly protection the whole human family, which with affectionate love we entrust to you, O Mother. May there dawn for everyone the time of peace and freedom, the time of truth, justice, and hope.

May Our Lady of Fatima offer you peace, hope, and protection through times of suffering and uncertainty. Amen.



Serving God through the Legion of Mary OLMC Praesidium

By: Judith Gomez



May the Lord God bless us all!

As a Legionary, I received a lot of blessings from our Father in heaven. During my term as president of the OLMC Praesidium, I had some difficulties because in our group we have different personalities. I came across difficult and awkward situations that really tested my composure. But with God's grace and love, through the guidance of Mama Mary, I learned how to be kind, patient, and humble, to practice more self-control and learn the true meaning of love. With these traits, I was able to overcome the struggles and troubles I have encountered.

As I finish my term this month of May 2022, we are happy to have a new set of officers. They are as follows: Jeany Arong as President, Leony Mallare as Vice-president, Fely Kinkito as Secretary and Melanie Taasan as Treasurer.

I would like to invite everyone who wishes to join us: We have the Legion meeting every Sunday from 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm, with Sr. Victoria as our Spiritual directress.

To God be the highest glory!



"The Legion is Our Lady's spirit come to life in people"
Quote from Legion of Mary Founder Mr. Frank Duff (1889-1980)

Peace of Mind

Reference liturgical readings for the 6th Sunday of Easter Year 2022:

Gospel (John 14:23-29); 1st reading (Acts 15:1-2, 22-29); 2nd reading (Rev 21:10-14, 22-23)

The Gospel reading tells us that Jesus said to his disciples: *"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me"* (Jn 14:23-24). Prior to this response, one of the disciples has asked Jesus what it means that He will "reveal" Himself to them, and not to the world. Also, Jesus had mentioned how the world would no longer see Him. In this statement, Jesus combined His message of love and obedience. If we truly recognize the presence of Christ in us and obey His will by simply following the basic law or His commandments no matter the difficulties we encounter in this world, God's presence through the Holy Spirit will remain and aid us to overcome those challenges.

In our day-to-day living we experienced anxieties or restlessness whenever we realized we cannot keep our word or tend to forget our promise to our loved ones, whenever we realized that we committed a sinful act and offended our neighbor, resulting to a bothered heart or conscience, and whenever we fear of losing our loved ones, material possessions, memory due to sickness or old age, and sanity because of problems and insecurities. Jesus answers these unwanted experiences of ours by His offer of 'peace of mind.' As He said *"I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you"* (Jn 14:25-27). This offering and assurance of peace from God is what we are looking for to receive and experience whenever we attend the Holy Mass. When we hear the liturgical readings and receive our dear Lord in the Eucharist, somehow we experience inner peace. Our hearts and minds commune with the Holy Spirit whenever the very phrase in the gospel reading *"...peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you"* is mentioned by the priest in each mass.

In this LBS, we are reminded that it is our dear Lord, through the Holy Mass and the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, who could provide each one of us the best peace of mind scenario and not the ways and the confusions that this world may bring to us.

Please note that we are still having our weekly LBS online through Zoom Video Conferencing every Thursdays at 9:30 pm. We welcome you to join us (ID: 320027131; PW: 7NQKV6)

Spiritual Reflection

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this land, here in Palestine. That no matter how much we have rejected him, he continues to offer forgiveness, peace. God wants to embrace his people, the Jews, by sending Jesus Christ".

"Aha! You are a believer, then!" I shouted as I started to move towards the beach, throwing him a flying kiss, and added: *"J will pray for you ... that you stop waiting for the Messiah."* And he shouted back: *"He has come, and will come again!"*

As I reached the beach, two ladies approached me and said, *"We could overhear your conversation. Jacob could not help himself. It's just too strong-his need to talk about the Messiah"*. And I asked, *"but who is he?"* And they replied, *"He is our founder, Jacob Damkani. We are from all parts of the world, carrying out this special mission to introduce Jesus Christ as Messiah to the Jews first and also to the gentiles!"* Before long, Jacob was behind me saying, *"if you want to know more about us, see our Trumpet ministry activities in our website"* (see <https://laop.kehila.org/trumpet-of-salvation-to-israel>). How could I ever imagine that I would meet not only a 'full-blooded Jew but one who believes in my Lord Jesus as Messiah, the Christ! Whoever said God does not answer our prayers nor heed the secret desires of our hearts? Whoever thought that God has given up on his seemingly stiff-necked people?

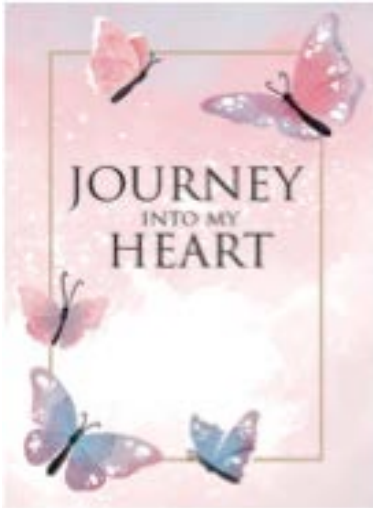
Indeed my journey is from faith to faith. I'd like to end this episode by sharing how this pilgrimage in Israel also paved the way for the beginning of our PDDM community in the land of our Lord. During that brief stay in the country, my companion Sr. M. Agar Coreno, a Mexican PDDM, and I were given the chance to meet significant persons who indicated to us possible ways to begin our ministry in the land where our Lord was born, where he lived, died and rose again. And in March 2009, less than a year, after that pilgrimage, the PDDM community of three sisters started the ministry in the Armenian Catholic Church, along the Via Dolorosa street, coordinating the apostolate of Eucharistic adoration. Presently our ministries have already evolved, even as we gradually discern the Lord's call and follow his lead, moving from our 'little faith in him' to his 'big faith in us.'

To Be Continued...

Journey into my Heart is a mini autobiography book written by Sr. Victoria Victorino, PDDM.

Sr. Victoria shares her story as compass to pilgrim searchers of God. There are a total of 11 chapters (1 introduction and 10 chapters) in the book, and one chapter will be featured in Homestead every month.

JOURNEY INTO MY HEART (CHAPTER 7) – *Granting My Heart's Desire*



The Lord challenges my faith throughout my journey of following him. But sometimes, I also find the audacity to challenge him.

Sometime in September 2008, I went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land as part of the celebration of my Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession. In that pilgrimage, I secretly uttered a prayer in my heart: *"Lord, please allow me to meet and talk to a full-blooded Jew!"* I wanted to know a bit more of this people, from whom my Lord and 'husband' Jesus came.

But it seemed to be an impossible feat. I asked our guide, Fr. Pio, an Italian Franciscan friar if there were any modern-day Jewish believers of Jesus Christ. He said, a few hundred, but in secret. Walking along the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem, he tried to make his point how difficult it was to get the modern-day Jews to believe in Jesus as Messiah; he even made us note how the conservative Jews avoided looking at us, Christian pilgrims. So I thought, *'that's it... end of my secret desire.'*

On the fourth day of the pilgrimage, we went to visit the Qumran caves made famous by the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls. Around 20 kilometers away from the Qumran caves was the Dead Sea. And due to the insistent request of our group, Fr. Pio had to

give in and allow us an hour or so to take a dip in the Dead Sea. I wasn't really prepared for that but there was a nagging feeling that pushed me to improvise and go. Guess what followed!

For those who know these salty waters, there was really no way you'd drown there. It was very tricky to swim or float since it was actually all mud under. Time and again, I found myself "sinking" until I decided to stay put in one place and just immerse myself in the salty waters. And lo and behold – a middle-aged man struck a conversation with me! It started with – *"where are you from?"* I immediately sensed I was talking to a full-blooded Jew, yes, right there at the Dead Sea, while we were both floating!

We went quite far in the presentation until he asked me, *"What do you know about the Jews? What do you think was our greatest contribution to humanity?"* And I dared – *"Oh, you're almost always the best in everything but the best contribution? Your co-national Jesus Christ! I'm just sorry you don't believe in him!"* And from that statement he brought me to some painful parts of Christian-Jewish history- persecution-holocaust, etc. At any rate, I pointed out to him how many Christians helped save the Jews too.

Then came his challenge: *"Okay, let me test you. If you were to introduce Jesus to me, a Jew, how would you do it? Where would you start? How can you make me jealous of what you have?"* At that point, I sensed he already knew something about our Christian scriptures – he was practically quoting St. Paul to me (see **Rom 9-11**).

I started with the synthesis of Jesus' teaching – Love. He was sent for that. He spent all his life for that. The Jewish stranger protested, *"That's too general"*. I need to tell him more. I hesitated, asking if he knew the Scriptures enough. And he assured me, he knew, as much as needed to be able to follow me. And I told him about forgiveness, the best proof of love. Has he experienced real forgiveness in his life? Will he be able to forgive all those things we mentioned earlier about the Christian persecution of the Jews, etc....?

I was getting too immersed, not only in the salty waters but also in this discussion that I was afraid my pilgrim friends would leave me behind. I started excusing myself. But he wouldn't let me go. Instead he took up the topic again and said—*"let me show you how you can present Jesus to me. First, yes- you have to say that he came because of love. God loves the Jews so much, that's why he came, not in another land, but in*

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