



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Parish Priest : Fr. Thomas Law
Address : 1 Star Street, Wanchai, H.K.
Tel : (852) 2527 7240
Email : mail@olmcchurch.org.hk
Website : <http://www.olmcchurch.org.hk>
Editor Email : olmchomestead@gmail.com

Autumn Edition

**OCT-NOV
2022**

THE HOMESTEAD

OCTOBER – MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. Since the prayers of the Rosary come from such excellent sources — from Our Lord Himself, from inspired Scripture, and from the Church — it is not surprising that the Rosary is so dear to our Blessed Mother and so powerful with heaven.

If we consider the power of the Rosary as seen in its effects, we find a great abundance of proofs of its wonderful value. Many are the favors granted to private individuals through its devout recitation: there are few devoted users of the Rosary who cannot testify to experiencing its power in their own lives.

The Rosary is Christocentric setting forth the entire life of Jesus Christ, the passion, death, resurrection and glory. Of course, the Rosary honors and contemplates Mary too, and rightly so, for the same reason that the Liturgical Year does likewise: "Because of the mission she received from God, her life is most closely linked with the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and there is no one who has followed in the footsteps of the Incarnate Word more closely and with more merit than she. No form of extra-liturgical devotion to Mary is more widely practiced among the faithful or found by them to be more satisfyingly complete than the Rosary, which has come to be regarded as the very badge of Catholic piety.

Until about the 15th century, hundreds of mysteries were part of the Rosary devotion then the 15 mysteries that we know today were definitively fixed as "the Mysteries of the Rosary." Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, in 2002 added the five Luminous Mysteries.

Through the meditations of the complete Rosary one recalls and has impressed on his mind, the Popes tell us, "the chief mysteries of the Christian religion," "the mysteries of our Redemption," "the great mysteries of Jesus and His Mother united in joys, sorrows, and triumphs." The twenty mysteries are divided into four equal groups, known as "The Joyful," "The Sorrowful," "The Glorious," and "The Luminous Mysteries."



OLMC Main Page
on Facebook



OLMC Page for English Speaking
Parishioners on Facebook



OLMC Website
<http://www.olmcchurch.org.hk>





A Church Open To Everyone

Deacon Alex Kwok

Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist

The Papal Prayer intention in October 2022 is to “*pray that the Church, ever faithful to the Gospel and courageous in preaching it, may live in an increasing atmosphere of synodality and be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome.*”

Synodality has been a buzz word since Cardinal Bergoglio was elected Pope Francis in 2013 to succeed Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. As a verb, “synod” means “*to walk together on the same road*”. Some sixty years ago, St. Pope John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council to kick off the modernization of the Catholic Church. He succeeded in opening a window for the Holy Spirit to breathe a new life into the Church. The Church listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit spoken through more than 2000 bishops and theologians. She renewed her identity as the People of God in pilgrimage on earth, sharing the joy and anxiety of men of this age. As a noun, “synod” is the gathering of bishop representatives to deliberate on social issues such as environment, young people, family, etc.

After Vatican II, it is impossible to assemble all the bishops all over the world to discuss problems. Synods are more manageable. In 2021, Pope Francis took one step further. He wants the whole Church, not just the elites of the Church, to walk together and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking in each and every member of Mystical Body of Jesus Christ! He makes the XVI General Assembly of Synod of Bishops last from 2021 to 2023 and the theme is “*For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission*”. It lasts for three years because the Church tries to listen to the voices from the grass root. We have just finished the diocesan phase of listening to different groups of people across all levels. The Diocese of Hong Kong firmly believes that those findings are voices of the Holy Spirit and they have been submitted to the Vatican.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is a carrier of the Holy Spirit. She visited Elizabeth and “*When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit.*” (Luke 1:41) After the Ascension of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary took care of the 120 disciples and “devoted themselves with one accord to prayer” (Acts 1:14-15). With her presence, the Holy Spirit descended on Pentecost. The Blessed Virgin Mary gave birth again to a new Mystical Body of Christ. In subsequent ages, the BVM appeared to different types of people: monks, bishops, farmers, shepherds and even children! Therefore, it is true that the Holy Spirit is happy to reside in people of all walks of life. We have to thank St. Luke for preserving for us what the Holy Spirit has spoken and done in the first century. Biographies of saints in subsequent centuries bear witness of the untiring effort of the Holy Spirit throughout the ages. When the Catholic Church started her modernization some six decades ago until now, we are able to discern the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit more clearly day by day.

Brethren! Let us follow the Pope to invoke the Holy Spirit to renew the Church as well as the earth. May the Holy Spirit rekindle the fraternity of all peoples. May the Church open her arms to embrace all, saintly and sinful men and women alike, the powerful as well as the poor, so that she can truly be called the Catholic Church. Amen.

St. Luke the Evangelist, Pray for us.





Mary In My Faith Journey

Sr. Victoria Victorino, PDDM

Sometimes, when we pause and reflect, we are given the chance to connect the dots in our faith-life continuum. For instance, lately I uttered a prayer of thanksgiving to God as I considered how blessed I am to be serving the Lord here in Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Wanchai (“OLMC”). And with that, I tried to think further where and when in my life I first came to know of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Philippines. Lo and behold, my memory data bank blinked and beeped: and I recalled that the Church where I used to go to as a child when my family was still residing in J. Ruiz, San Juan was Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in New Manila! Beautiful connection indeed! It was as if our Lady were telling me, “I have known you as a child and now we are together again.”

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
Manila, Philippines**



I feel the same way when it comes to my devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary. This time, the main influence was the parish community of St. Thomas de Villanueva in Santolan, Pasig. My family transferred to this place when I was about ten years old. Here I found a truly devout community who communicated the faith, through the Eucharistic celebrations and simple devotions. At that time, there was the “Block Rosary” movement made up of mostly pious ladies who taught us, the teens, how to pray the Rosary, while moving the statue of Our Lady of Fatima from one family to another every week or every two weeks, as the family desired. Hence, the Rosary prayer has been deeply ingrained in my faith life as it has been associated with my growing up years. Back to the now: one of the very first groups I met when I started working here in OLMC was the Living Rosary Group! Moreover, here in OLMC, we have now three active Praesidia (“PX”) of the Legion of Mary for the English group, not to mention the various PX for the Chinese community.

The presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary in our faith life is sure and secure. And I believe that she is just too happy to continue guiding us and helping us to be connected with Jesus and with each other. She never tires of showing us ways and means to grow in our commitment to her Son in the service of our sisters and brothers, especially to those most in need.

Let us thank our Lady for her help and guidance and let us continue to entrust to her loving intercession our troubled world which needs the word of peace and the faithful witness of all Christians. Our Lady of Mount Carmel, pray for us! Our Lady Queen of Peace, pray for us!

THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

English Sunday School

October, the Month of the Holy Rosary

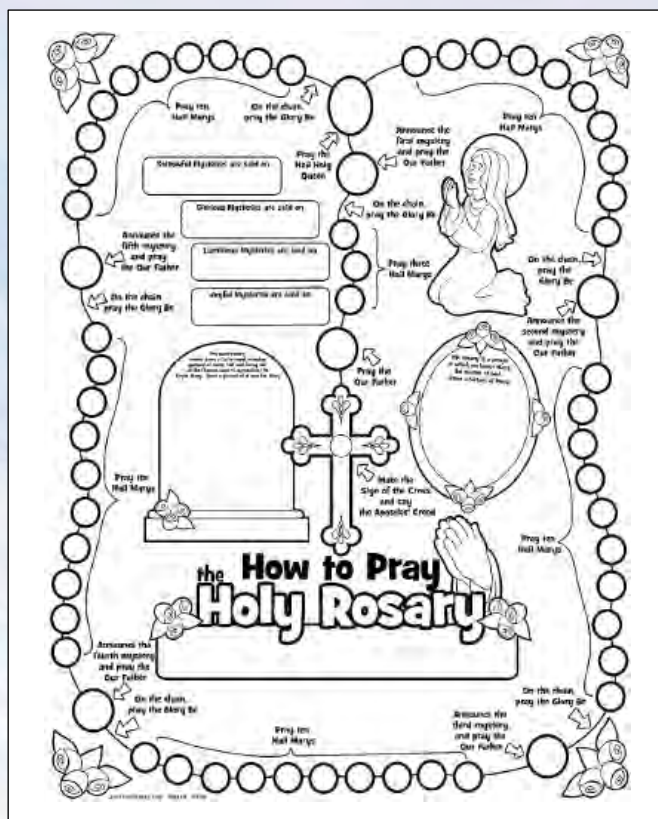
The rosary is a devotion in honor of the Virgin Mary. It is one of the most deeply rooted of Christian devotions. When we recite the rosary, we meditate on the mysteries regarding the life of Jesus or his mother. It is the meditation on the mysteries that gives the rosary its staying power.

It originally consisted of fifteen "mysteries" that recall the joyful, sorrowful and glorious moments in the life of Jesus and Mary. In 2002, St. John Paul II added another set, the mysteries of light (also called the luminous mysteries), in which we contemplate Jesus' public life.

Children from our Sunday school learned about the rosary and how to pray it. You can learn it too. Let us pray and colour together!

If you practice no other devotion in the spiritual life, pray the rosary. Through it, you will obtain all that you need and will vanquish the enemies of your soul. Through it, you will find peace and joy in the trials of life. Conquer the devil—pray the rosary!

The Rosary is the 'weapon' for these times." - Saint Padre Pio



Learning to make rosaries



These children are from OLMC's English Sunday School morning session. They are learning to pray the Rosary as culmination of the Month of the Holy Rosary.

Let us pray with the children for the intention of world peace!



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Legion of Mary

Legion of Mary's Joint Function 2022

Helen Chua

Firstly, we would like to thank Fr. Law for allowing us to use the church facilities for the joint function of the 3 praesidia of the Legion of Mary present in OLMC Parish on 4 October. The members present that day were from Shield of the Church Praesidium, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Praesidium, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Praesidium. We also had a guest from Queen of Martyrs Praesidium.

Secondly, we are grateful as well to Sr. Victoria for her unending support and guidance. Sr. Victoria helped us enter into the spirit of the day by reading the Gospel of the day from Lk 10:38-42 which narrates the visit of Jesus to the house of Martha and Mary in Bethany. As I reflected on this Gospel, I thought that it coincided well with what we did that day. On one hand, we were like Mary listening to Jesus when Sr. Victoria read the Gospel and also when we listened to bible passages shared by our guest, Derma Obiso from POLO Hong Kong. And then, we were also similar to Martha when we carried out our service for the glory of God. We prayed the rosary together and then proceeded to the main work of the day which was to learn how to make rosaries. This was to highlight the month of October as the month of the Holy Rosary. Since it was the first time for most of us to make rosaries, minor mistakes were unavoidable. Still the smile on our faces never faded.

Towards the closing of the event, Nancy Au from Shield of the Church Praesidium gave an inspiring talk to us. Even though she had a hectic schedule that day she found a way to attend our joint function. We really appreciated her presence.

All in all, this function gave us the opportunity to know each other and to become closer to each other. It was such a joyful and meaningful day that even now, we are looking forward to our next get together to learn other new things with the guidance of our Blessed Mother.

Thank you and God bless us all.



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THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Living Rosary Group

October, Month of the Holy Rosary and Growth of the Living Rosary Group



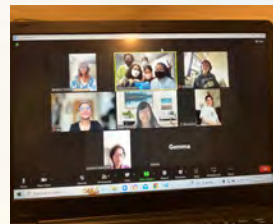
The month of October is so significant because in our Catholic Calendar this month emphasizes the importance of praying the Holy Rosary daily. This is exactly the Mission and Sole Purpose of The Living Rosary Group ("LRG").

Thanks to all the blessings through the intercession of Mother Mary, the inspiring guidance of our beloved Sr. Victoria, the persistence of our founder Mary Nip and the positive energy of our team leader Celia Filamor, we continue to grow in membership. From the handful of devoted core members we have grown in membership as we continue to welcome friendly new comers. The LRG of OLMC has also overseas members now from Singapore, Philippines, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia.



The COVID-19 pandemic which 'threatened' to stop us from meeting each other to pray together did not win. We learned to pray via zoom platform during the time of the lockdown. Now that restrictions are less, we already do the 'hybrid' style, or the combined use of prayer meeting through zoom for those who cannot be present 'in person' at the OLMC Church premises where we hold the meeting every Thursday from 10.40 to 11.20 am.

This is a proof that prayer has no distance; it can be done everywhere and by different means and modes. [\(to be continued on P7\)](#)



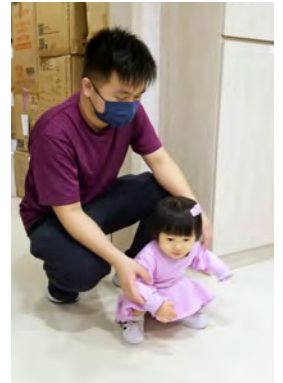
THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Living Rosary Group

... continued from P6

Here is one interesting sharing from Christine who is now a regular member of LRG and who usually 'attends' our prayer meeting with her 18-month old Baby Anna.

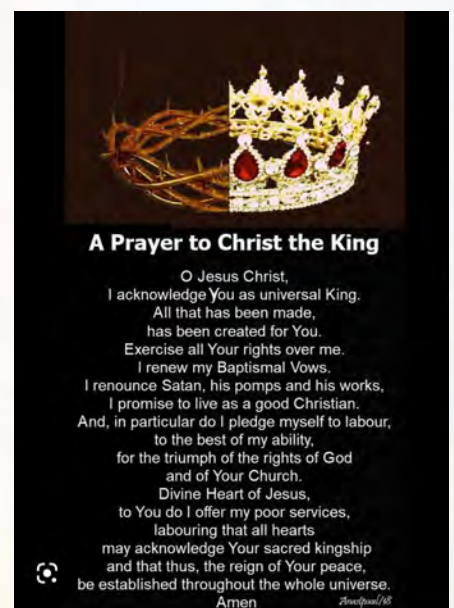
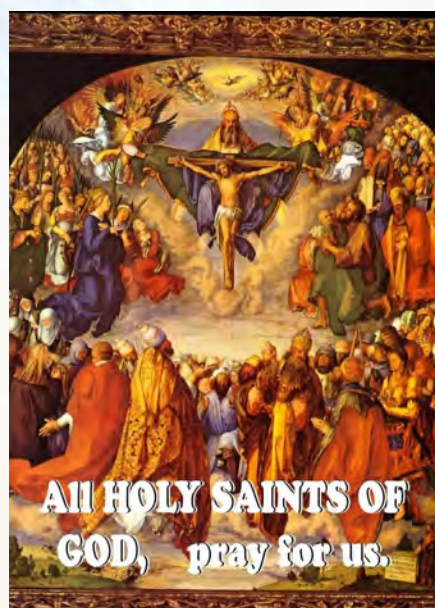
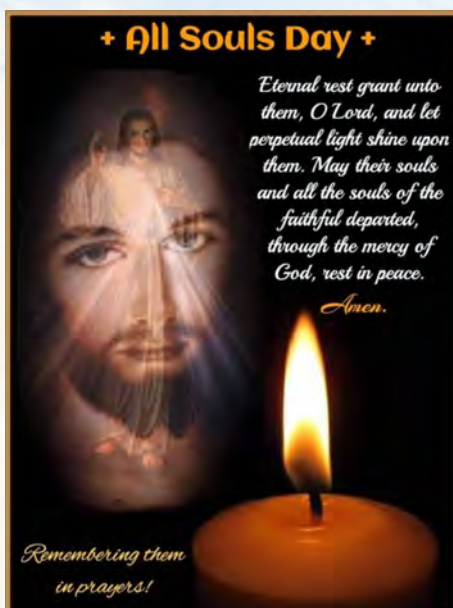
"Since my daughter Anna was born, my baby has kept my mind occupied. I believe the parish is the only sanctuary for me to relax and let my guard down. I hardly remember when was the last time I presented myself to the Rosary praying meeting 'in person' at OLMC. But yesterday, 27 October, I made it, together with Anna and my husband. I had never felt that type of intense and powerful strength through the Rosary prayer until today. All the daily irritation and tension striking me was suddenly gone!"



Teresa, one of our LRG members once comforted me saying that Jesus is human and God. Mother Mary went through everything a mum would in bringing up Jesus. She would be able to answer any questions I might have. Teresa drew us a picture of Mother Mary. That image of Mary reminds us that she is always with us, our greatest Mother. She will heal our pain and sorrow eternally. Please pray the Rosary regularly and you will find the peace in it. Amen."

We pray that our Living Rosary Group may continue to grow in all sense: bigger, stronger, happier and prettier! With the help and guidance of Mother Mary, may we be able to see 'Possibilities and to stay Positive' in our world view and attitudes empowered by our faith, especially in the difficult situation in our lives. May we never lose heart and may we learn to trust in the plans of our Almighty God; He truly makes all things beautiful in His time! Amen! Alleluia!

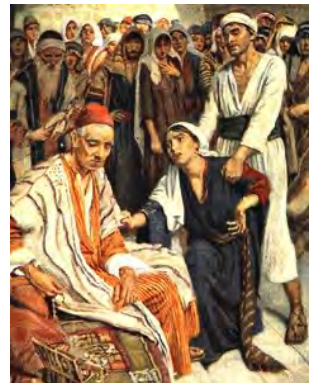
November, A Month of Prayers



Connect and Communicate

Reference liturgical readings for the 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year 2022):
Gospel (**Luke 18:1-8**); 1st reading (**Exodus 17:8-13**); 2nd reading (**2 Timothy 3:14-4:2**)

In the gospel reading, we listened to the parable of the widow and the judge as Jesus told His disciples the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary or discouraged (**Lk 18:1**). The story illustrates a woman's persistence in seeking for justice. He said, "There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary'. 'For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me'." (**Lk 18:2-5**). Because of the woman's persistence she was effectively able to connect and communicate the justice she's pursuing and was able to receive what she desired. We might learn from the example of this woman on the way we communicate and remain connected with God through our continuous prayer, where in the end we will be able to gain what we desire because we truly believe in the purpose or the reason why we pray...that God listens and answers our heart's desires in His own ways and in His own time.



The importance of constantly communicating and remaining connected with God was demonstrated in the 1st reading when Amalek waged war against Israel. Moses, therefore, said to Joshua, "Pick out certain men, and tomorrow go out and engage Amalek in battle. I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

So Joshua did as Moses told him: he engaged Amalek in battle after Moses had climbed to the top of the hill with Aaron and Hur. As long as Moses kept his hands raised up, Israel had the better of the fight, but when he let his hands rest, Amalek had the better of the fight. Moses' hands, however, grew tired; so they put a rock in place for him to sit on. Meanwhile Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other, so that his hands remained steady till sunset. And Joshua mowed down Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword (**Ex 17:8-13**). God helps his people to win the spiritual battle as they trust and believe. It is only when believe that we can win our own spiritual battle in life. For Moses to remain physically connected with God in prayer – keeping his hands raised, he was assisted by his trusting community represented by Aaron and Hur. Being in or having community of like-minded people in faith helps us in overcoming our weariness when we get tired of our life's burdens. We accept with humility, the help of community in prayer. And when there is prayer in the family, there is peace love and harmony.

Our 2nd reading in St. Paul's letter to Timothy reminds us to remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (**2 Tm 3:14-15**). The Lord is asking us to remain faithful and persistent in living out our Christian vocation and what our faith requires and living and keeping the faith alive in our hearts because we believe that this is what our Lord wants us to do and to stay connected with Him as He guides us, journeying with us, protecting us, and showering us with all the graces and blessings we need.

We pray for God's grace of courage not to give up in prayer and to remain connected with Him.

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THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Extraordinary Ministry of Holy Communion

On 16 October, Fr. Thomas Law commissioned 17 parishioners as Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion ("EM") for the 3 English Sunday Masses for a 2 years term.

The Parishioners should have noticed that EMs distribute Holy Communion, both during Masses and to those sick and old and immobilized parishioners at home or in hospitals.

Deacon Alex and Sr. Victoria arranged 3 formation sessions which were held on 2, 9 and 16 October 2022. As taught by Deacon Alex, EMs are formally instituted acolytes (e.g. candidates to the diaconate) or lay members of the faithful who have been commissioned. Commissioned members of the faithful should have received sufficient spiritual, theological and practical preparation to fulfil their role with knowledge and reverence. Deacon Alex's sessions concentrated on these three areas to refresh the EMs of their faith and knowledge. To name a few, the following topics were touched on:

Spiritual:

Loving Jesus Christ is the utmost first priority and central theme of our Catholic belief. EMs must have already developed a good spiritual life such as attending Masses and bible study regularly in order to serve the Lord our God. These will ensure that EMs have prepared themselves well in advance before attending Masses.

Theological

Some topics covered are the meaning of transubstantiation; the effects of the Holy Eucharist, the mystical body of the Christ, the incarnation, etc. All of these point to the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. These help to clarify and strengthen the EMs' "FAITH seeking UNDERSTANDING".

Practical

The sessions covered what EMs should do during the liturgy of the Holy Communion, e.g. What should EMs do at the altar; Should the parishioners be receiving Holy Communion using their hands or mouth; What should an EM do if the Holy Blood or Hosts accidentally drop on the floor....

We would like to thank Fr. Law for conducting the commissioning of the EMs before the English Masses of 16 October. We thank Deacon Alex for the training sessions and Sr. Victoria for the care and support provided to the EM community.

Andrew Lau

EM, 11:45 am Sunday Mass



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Music Ministry

LOVE & RENEWAL – A Musical Journey



On Friday, 21 October, The Holy Family Choir set off to Christ the King Chapel inside the grounds of St Paul's Hospital to take part in the LOVE Concert presented by the Diocese (Eastern District). With an objective of celebration of the Mission Sunday (23 October) the concert presented a total of 9 performing groups coming from the following parishes:

- Cathedral of Immaculate Conception
- Holy Cross Church
- St. Anne's Church
- St. Joseph's Church
- St. Jude's Church
- St. Margaret's Church
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
(Cornerstone and Holy Family Choir)



It is a great honour for the Holy Family Choir ("HFC") to participate in this concert, well attended by hundreds of parishioners and our fathers and sisters in the diocese. Bishop Joseph Ha made a beautiful opening prayer saying that many episodes in our lives are driven by "Love", it is really "Love" is really the force to ask us to renew and re-energise our lives each day, and love first comes from God... so that is why the concert is named **LOVE RENEWAL**.

The evening was filled with love, choirs after choirs presented their songs on the theme of love; though they are performing and singing with their masks on, we can definitely feel their enthusiasm, excitement and joy in every group, with big accolades from the floor. The Church was packed with happy parishioners!

The concert started by another group of performers coming from our Parish, Cornerstone. Stephen and Winnie made a perfect duo in bringing two uplifting original songs from their group.

After five rehearsal sessions in the last six weeks, the Holy Family Choir presented two original works. Indeed it is a musical journey of faith for us during these six weeks, with six rehearsals, meditations and reflections on the two works.

Glory to God (World Premiere) extracted from Mass of The Holy Family (2022) composed by Fr. Ricky Manalo, CSP. This is a special commission for our community in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish made possible by our family on the occasion of our anniversary. The joyous melody in our familiar prayer we cited in mass "Glory to God... on earth peace to people of great will" ignited the entire audience. A chorister from St Anne's Church commented the song lifted her up.

THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Music Ministry

(continued from P10)

The second song in Cantonese, 《耶穌基督》 or “Jesus Christ” (1999), a commission work by Dr. Benny Chow, the organist, from the Holy Family Choir. Benny composed this choral work in commemorating the deaconship for Vicar General Fr. Joseph Chan back then. A colourful choral work based upon the poignant scriptures of Philippians 2 and John 3 both closely connected with the Christology in catholic church in the early centuries. The audience responded ardently and joined us singing the last chorus of the song. This song allowed audience a reflection on the true identity of Christ, both in human and divine natures, as the Saviour of the world. I would say it is a hymn most suitable to be sung in the Christ the King Chapel.

Sharing with you the scriptures Benny used in the song:-

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness;
and found human in appearance,
he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.
Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name
that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that
Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

(Philippians 2:6-11)



<https://youtu.be/752kY4mq-6Q> Visit this link and you will enjoy the two songs.

Vivien Lee
Conductor, Holy Family Choir



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Community

Migrant Mass

Pritya Pravina

There was a special celebration held at Christ the King Chapel, Causeway Bay, on Sunday, 30 October. It was the Migrants' Day Celebration, attended by over 500 migrants in Hong Kong from 10 different nationalities. Rev. Bishop Stephen Chow, SJ, and 10 co-celebrants presided over the Mass.

The migrants' day is always celebrated around Mission Sunday, which fell on 23 October this year. No one can remember when the celebration started, but according to Fr. Jay Flandez, SVD, it may have started around the year 2007. This year's celebration took place exclusively inside the church, given the current restrictions on social gathering due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. However, it did not reduce the joy and festivities.

The Mass was opened with an entrance procession, where a group of Indonesian parishioners performed a contemporary dance to the tune of an Indonesian gospel song "Mari Sambut Tuhan" or in English "Let Us Greet the Lord". The dancers wore traditional Indonesian costumes "kebaya" and "kain batik". Another demonstration of migrants' diverse culture is felt during the Prayer of the Faithful, which was recited in multiple languages, including Tagalog, Vietnamese, Sinhalese, Indonesian, Cantonese and French. The Vietnamese group ushered in the offerings elegantly in traditional áo dài dresses. The Sri Lankan group sang the communion song in a simple but heartfelt way. The Filipino choir, El Shaddai, sang various hymns powerfully. The Mass was mainly delivered in English, but hymns were sung in multiple languages. The Mass participants can follow the liturgy in English according to the booklet, which was printed in English. In the homily, Bishop Chow emphasised the importance of migrants in forming Hong Kong's rich and cosmopolitan culture.

After the Mass, there was a brief cultural presentation from the Filipino, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Sri Lankan groups. Throughout the whole event, anyone can feel the dedication and hard work poured into the preparation and the celebration itself. It is admirable how the migrants, mostly working in a domestic setting, were able to rehearse the songs, dances, and performances during their days off. Heartfelt appreciation to all migrants who are involved in this celebration! If this report does not do justice to the spirit felt on that day, hope the photos on this page tell the story better!

Entrance Procession with Indonesian dance



Offering brought in by the Vietnamese group



Indonesian Choir



Sri Lankan Choir



'El Shaddai' Filipino Choir



Dance by the Vietnamese Group



Dance by the Sri Lankan Group



Dance by the Filipino Group



Photo with Bishop Chow and Co-Celebrants after Mass



Collectors - Indonesian Group



Love Offering to Bishop Chow ❤️



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Community

Attending the Migrant Mass

I participated in the Migrants Day celebration held at Christ the King Chapel in Causeway Bay, Hong Kong on 30 October. The theme of the celebration was **Migrants: Called to Communion, Participation, Mission** which is also the theme of the Synod of Bishops in 2023.

It started with the recitation of the Holy Rosary in 5 different languages, one for each Mystery: Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese and English and everyone responding in one language, English.

Then it was followed by the Eucharistic Celebration officiated by Rev. Bishop Stephen Chow, SJ and co-celebrated by more or less ten other priests, also of different nationalities.

The entrance procession was very lively with the Indonesians dancing to their native song and the representatives from each nationality wearing their national costumes. It was a very unique way to start the Mass. The readings and prayers were all said in different languages, as well as the songs for the different parts of the mass.

The Eucharistic celebration was followed by a presentation of some nationalities displaying both culture and tradition. The performers are from different countries -- migrant workers, forced to look overseas for work due to poverty, isolated away from home. Some of them are exposed to vulnerable situations where they suffer abuse, physical and otherwise. But at the moment everyone was just enjoying, temporarily forgetting and leaving their concerns behind. We all felt that we are all faithful disciples, responding to Christ in this moment of grace. We expressed our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Christ as we set aside racial and cultural differences, acknowledging and sharing one faith, one baptism.



I am happy to note that the essence of the theme is fulfilled and manifested in this joyful celebration, both in the Eucharistic celebration and the presentation of the program. Many cultures, the participation as one community, one faith.

Precy Santos
Legion of Mary
Shield of the Church Praesidium



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Community

Pious Disciples of the Divine Master (“PDDM”)
Philippines-Taiwan-Hong Kong Province celebrates
The Launching of the Jubilee Year for the Centennial of the PDDM Foundation
21 November 2022

This is a joyful celebration that took place in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Mass was celebrated by Fr. Jay Flandez, SVD and co-celebrated by Fr. Emil, SVD and Fr. Augustinus, RCJ. Deacon Alex Kwok of OLMC served at Mass. The event was graced with the presence of Sr. Maria Luz Cabahug, PDDM Provincial Councillor, members of the Pauline Family here in Hong Kong namely the FSP Sisters and the Association of Pauline Cooperators (“APC”) as well as friends and collaborators of the PDDM sisters in the various parishes where they serve as pastoral assistants.

Note: PDDM was founded by the late Fr. James Alberione on 10 February 1924



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Community

Rite of Confirmation Sunday, 27 November 2022



THE HOMESTEAD – Autumn 2022

Thoughts for November

Suffer Little Children To Come To Me

Deacon Alex Kwok

It is difficult for us who were born after World War Two (“WW2”) to imagine what child-abuse can mean. Though there are local regulations punishing parents for not providing schooling for their children and statutes prohibiting child labour, pornography, abuse and negligence etc., it is a cruel reality that many children are still suffering nowadays.

Children are physically and mentally vulnerable. Historically, in extreme situations such as famines, starving parents exchanged their children to feed on! In less severe situations such as poverty, children were readily dispensable. Debt-ridden parents sold their children to the debtors to repay the debts so that the remaining family members might survive. They could only pray in vain that the future masters were merciful and would not abuse or torture those child-brides and child-servants. More than seven decades after WW2, we still witness heart-breaking photos on social media of corpses of refugee children washing ashore! Reality is always brutal and we are staring child abuses in the face all the time!

On the surface, we are blessed to be living in a relatively stable and prosperous home called Hong Kong. Most of the tragedies mentioned above do not happen to us here. But have we seen reality clearly enough? Many a parent believes in the myth of “Winning at the starting line”. He will fill the schedule of his child up with all sorts of classes after school: ballet, cycling, fencing, golf, piano, swimming, taekwondo and violin etc., you name it! The child is exhausted beyond recovery, not to mention bringing the little child to Sunday School or Eucharistic celebration! If you are reading carefully enough, you will discover that those classes are mostly individual and hardly promote team spirit and cooperation! It is a pity to see children becoming exhibit prize stallions to satisfy the vainglory of parents or avatars for the unfulfilled ambitions of parents whose parents had failed to make them lawyers, physicians or certified accountants. Not only are the natural potentials of the child neglected, but the child is also forced to do something hindering their natural growth. Is this not kind of exhausting schedule another form of child-abuse which is particularly prevalent in affluent and competitive societies?

When citizens of a city do not see a hopeful future, the fertility rate of that city falls. It is a truism that a Church without young people has no future. In fact, the same applies to all groups and organizations. Therefore, children are truly gifts and signs of mercy from God. One of the many ways God gives a city hope is to give husbands and wives children. If you have any doubt about the role of God in human fertility, bear in mind that there are many infertile couples in the world today. God is still the author of life! But who can prevent the prevalent phenomenon of child abuse in a modern society? The task falls squarely on the laps of parents. As Catholic parents, their mission is obvious. Jesus says, “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (**Matthew 19:14**). With this, Jesus exhorts parents not to forbid children from coming to Him. Since, they have not reached the age to receive sacraments, a daily time slot should be reserved for their children to pray together with parents and to read Bible with parents. On Sundays, bring them to pray in Church during masses. When they reach the proper age, parents should send them to Sunday School in order to know Jesus more deeply and establish an intimate relation with Him. Furthermore, the children may develop their social skills and learn the spirit of solidarity. This time slot is of primary importance and no other activities can take it away! All learning classes should fall in place accordingly.

In the month of November, let us pray with the Pope for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war. May they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection. May people see and embrace in every child, the gorgeous hope and peace radiating from the Holy Infant in the crib. Amen.

God bless!