



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

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DEC
2023

THE HOMESTEAD



ADVENT - The season of hope and expectations

Advent is a four-week period before Christmas that celebrates the anticipation and coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The origin of "advent" is from the Latin word "adventus", which simply translates as "coming" or "arrival". Not only is the Christian meaning for preparing and celebrating the coming of Jesus Christ, his birth at Christmas, but also to celebrate a new life when some accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and lastly, the anticipation of the second coming of Jesus Christ. The birth of Jesus is worth celebrating because it reveals His human side and is therefore an example of how we Christians should live our own lives as His followers here on earth.

Church Renovation Project

The project has been completed, on time and within budget. Hallelujah!

In Fr. Law's own words, "We thank the Lord for all the people who have helped us in this church renovation project, especially the Project Team, the Contractor and all the workers, the benefactors and donors, OLMC staff, church cleaners and all those who have contributed their resources in one way or another. Now that we have finished the renovation of our Church, we ask the Lord that he may also renew our hearts and lives as we begin a new page of evangelization!"

To celebrate the re-opening of OLMC, Cardinal Stephen Chow, Cardinal John Tong Hon and Bishop Joseph Ha celebrated Mass on the 1st Sunday of Advent, and at the end of each Mass, a token of gratitude was distributed to parishioners in a thanksgiving celebration. Yes, we have everything to be thankful for.



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Pastoral

Let Us Lend Our Brethren A Listening Ear

Deacon Alex Kwok

It is easier to visually identify people with physical disabilities. When you speak with Deacon Alex, you will easily see the hearing aids he wears. No wonder he is able to make announcements loudly in mass without using the microphone! As for people with emotional and even mental disabilities, it is harder to identify even though these days, more and more people are suffering from emotional and/or mental distresses in the aftermath of COVID and social unrests in the past few years. Chances are that we will encounter one in ten people we meet every day. As of November 2023, student suicide cases tallied 37 deaths and 269 failed attempts. This is alarming because such figures are obviously the tip of an iceberg!



We have hundreds of parishioners attending Church on Sundays. Chances are that we will be chit-chatting with some vulnerable brothers. Superficially, the Church environment is different from the schooling environment. Parishioners need not to follow a demanding schedule to finish a severe syllabus to sit for public examinations. Moreover, sharing the same faith ensures that they treat each other courteously like siblings, don't they? In reality, wherever there are human interactions, conflicts shall inevitably arise. Everyone believes that he/she possesses the truth. I am right and therefore you are wrong! Coupled with other interpersonal factors such as wounded egos, perceived position in power networks and personal relation with Christ etc., emotions would soon flare up and people begin to bark louder than Deacon Alex! In short, the environment may be different, but the problem remains the same.

In fact, many people who are suffering from emotional stresses would flock to the Church to seek a peace of mind. It is what a Church is supposed to provide, is it not? The Deacon does not exaggerate in saying from experience that the Church has a higher concentration of mental patients than all other social institutions except for psychiatric wards! Luckily, these needy brethren are less aggressive/violent. They appear extremely normal and courteous, though you can easily sense that they are hiding some wounds and yet they feel the urge to reach out to seek help. Don not feel guilty even if you fail to detect it for the first time because they can be very persistent. They will be back next week or week after next.

Though very few of us are professionally trained counsellors, we are still able to spare a couple of minutes or perhaps a few hours to listen through their stories. **It is always prudent to invite one more brother to listen together.** Being listeners, it is absolutely not necessary for us to solve their problems. No, we are not able to. Only the merciful Lord can! Just listen, suspend judgement and refrain from making any suggestions. Meanwhile, pray to the Holy Spirit for the wellbeing of this suffering soul to whom you are listening. If a rapport is established, pray together. *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"* (**Matthew 18:20**). When the good Lord, the Good Shepherd is present, there is nothing we shall want (**Psalms 23:1**). He pledges, *"The lost I will search out, the strays I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, and the sick I will heal"* (**Ezekiel 34:16a**, Solemnity of Christ the King, Year A, first reading).

Beloved Brethren! Do not underestimate the power of prayers. Let us join the Pope to pray for people with disabilities in December.
God bless!

<https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hong-Kong,-student-suicide-alert:-37-deaths-and-over-300-attempts-in-2023-59585.html>

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Pastoral

An Ending and A New Beginning

Sr. Victoria Victorino, PDDM

The month of November is a month of 'ending and new beginning'. This has been made doubly true in OLMC Parish as we ended the major renovation of our church and re-opened our 'freshly cleaned and refurbished church' in time with the celebration of the Solemnity of Christ the King on November 26, the end of the liturgical year. With the First Sunday of Advent we begin a new spiritual journey within the Church's liturgical year, this time with the evangelist St. Mark as our guide for the Sunday readings.

Walking with the Lord in this new liturgical year, I would like to propose my reflection on the FRUITS of the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary as our 'life nourishment' in the course of our spiritual journey. These are Faith, Hope, Love, Grace of a Happy

Death and Trust in Mary's Intercession. This is a brief reflection which I shared with the Living Rosary Group in our pilgrimage to St. Francis of Assisi Church in the month of November. I believe this can also help us in our struggle and endeavor to grow day-by-day in the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Fruit of Resurrection Mystery - **Faith**: when FAITH accompanies our actions, what seems to be impossible becomes possible. Jesus said that if we had faith the size of a mustard seed, we could move mountains. Faith awakens the sleeping potential of our Godliness or God-likeness, and makes us rise up to the occasion at hand, surprising us of capacities and powers we never thought we possess.

The Fruit of the Ascension Mystery - **Hope**: To recognize the Risen Jesus' authority and power is to connect with his Godliness. And this gives us the HOPE to allow God's power to be operative in our lives. Many times Jesus says to us, "your sins are forgiven." This means we are now freed from our load; we can now enjoy freedom from the burdens we have accumulated in our life. In this way our hope is renewed and we are ready to begin a new journey once more.

The Fruit of the Pentecost Mystery - **Love**: The foundation of all faith and hope is LOVE - God's love, by which he created us in his own image. And even when we have broken faith, this love persisted in recreating us into the image of his Son and in giving us the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Love. We simply need to be open to the same Spirit and to cooperate with Him to complete the process of healing and re-generation that God wants to happen in our lives.

The Fruit of the Assumption Mystery - **Grace of a happy Death**: Someone said, when we were born, we were already getting ready to die. So our earthly life is meant to be a process of finishing our PHD – preparation for a happy death. Mary is our model in going through this process. And she did this by saying always and everywhere, in good times and in bad: "I am the servant of the Lord, may it be done to me according to your word." May we allow Mary to help us gain the courage and wisdom of putting ourselves into the hands of God, knowing that no matter how far and hard we may fall, God's hands are there to catch us and deliver us from whatever danger may befall us.

The Fruit of the Mystery of Mary's Coronation - **Trust In Mary's Intercession**: If there was any human being closest to our Lord Jesus Christ, it would be no less than Mary, from whom Jesus got his 'human DNA.' That is why, by intuition and by tradition, Mary has primacy of place in our Catholic faith. We trust that Mary's intercession is so powerful because she is the Queen-Mother who is on the same 'wavelength' as her Son. True, it is God who has absolute power in our lives, but in Mary, we have a Mother with whom we can dialogue and ask for help to sort things out and discern what is best for us and for those we love. Then, together with her, we find the courage to bring our petition to the Lord and entrust ourselves to his loving care.

Journeying in this life which is simply a preparation for the final union with the Lord, we invoke Mary's intercession for an increase of faith, hope, love. With trustful and grateful hearts we welcome the Lord's coming in our midst in the celebration of the Christmas Season and may the New Year ahead be a full season of grace for everyone!



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25/11 Rite of Acceptance (Diaconate)

Call to Serve

Augustine Ma

“He does not call those who are worthy, but those whom He wills,” according to St. Therese of Lisieux. And further, “God will guide you to where you need to be, to serve him as best you can.”

The Bible helps us to understand that we all have a place in God’s Kingdom on earth. Many of us struggle to find that place, and most of us don’t see ourselves as having the capability we think it might take to make a leap of faith.

I came to my faith since year 2003. Then about few years ago, some friends in the church said, “You should consider to apply to be a deacon.” I was thinking how could that ever be possible? They saw in me what I could not see in myself.

That is what God asks of all of us, as a sister or brother to be changed into a person who could build up his Kingdom,

You may think you do not have the talents to do such a thing, but God will give you those tools if you wish. He will guide you to where you need to be to serve Him as best you can. Be patient and, more important, look for God’s hand in all that you do in your everyday life. He is deep in your inner heart, waiting for you to find Him, to talk to Him. It needs courage and He will give that to you. It needs wisdom and He will give that to you. It needs a loving heart far bigger than you have now and He will give that to you also. Trust God and you will find your vocation and you will be given what it takes to serve Him.

“It is not enough to love; we must prove it,” says St. Therese of Lisieux.



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25/11 Rite of Acceptance (Diaconate)

God Called Me and I Responded

Andrew Lau

God has sowed his seeds into my heart (cf. Matthew 13:3) even before I was born (cf. Galatians 1:5).

I was born in a non-Catholic family. Through my parents I received education in a Catholic primary school and at Sheng Kung Hui Secondary School. Through God's will, I explored my destiny and the true meaning of life. In the process, I felt God's call and I responded; I got baptized in Our Lady of Rosary Church.

God is the greatest and He worked through me for evangelization.

Through me, my wife Lilian was converted, then my parents-in-law and my own parents, who have been living within the traditional god-ghost type of ritual, and again my elder sister. When I look back, I realize it should be that God had sowed his seeds into my parents' hearts so that they gave me the Catholic education, and then through my witness and evangelization, the grace flowed forth to Lilian and her parents. Evangelization started from within our families.

God calls me to be His servant

God called me again when I became the assistant in the Catechism classes in Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC). I felt a need to receive a more vigorous Catholic education and so enrolled in the Holy Spirit Seminary College. I have met classmates who were deacon aspirants and candidates, and a deacon serving in OLMC. I came to learn that deacons are called to the Church for the ministries of the Word, Sacraments and Charity. Theirs is a life of service and charity, of witness and proclaiming the Good News, and of leadership in prayer and liturgy.

When Lilian and I were carrying Jesus' cross along Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem in 2019, I felt His unconditional love to us humans and His humility. Jesus did not regard Himself equal to God but emptied Himself; he became human and died on the cross (Philippians 2:5-8) as ransom for us so that we may gain freedom from sin (1 Timothy 6). I truly heard God's call again through His grace for serving our neighbours who are in need: "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). And I responded again. The road as a Deacon as servant of the Church is never easy (1 Timothy 8-13). Please pray for the vocation, for me and for all Deacons to be acceptable servants of our Lord!

Here is some useful information about the permanent diaconate, for those who might be interested.

The Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965) authorized the restoration of the diaconate as a permanent order of ministry.

"Deacons are 1 of the 3 ordained ministers in the Church – Bishop, Priest and Deacon: Deacons are ordained as a sacramental sign to the Church and to the world of Christ, who came "to serve and not to be served." The entire Church is called by Christ to serve, and the deacon, in virtue of his sacramental ordination and through his various ministries, is to be a servant in a servant-Church." (extracted from United Conference of Catholic Bishops).

See also: <https://www.facebook.com/pdhkc/> and <https://deacon.catholic.org.hk/>



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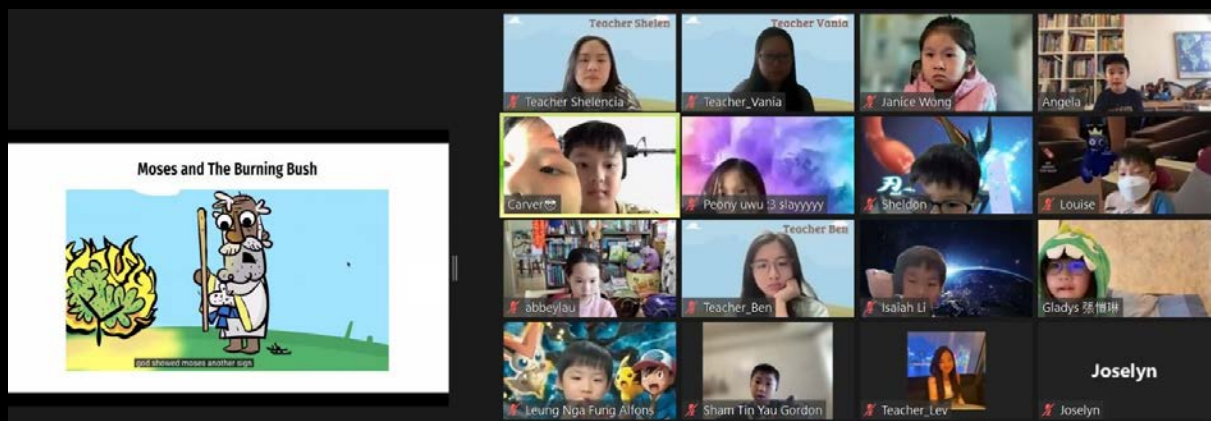
English Sunday School

OLMC English Sunday School Classes Go Online During The Parish Renovations

While the parish renovations have temporarily shifted our mode of teaching, they have also inspired us to embrace new opportunities. We have switched to online classes via Zoom, and we are delighted to see how well our students and teachers have adapted to this mode of learning. Our classes are still full of joy, fun, and faith, thanks to the hard work and creativity of our teachers, the cooperation and encouragement of our parents, and the enthusiasm and participation of our kids. Our online classes have been running smoothly every week since the start of the term on 8th Oct 2023.

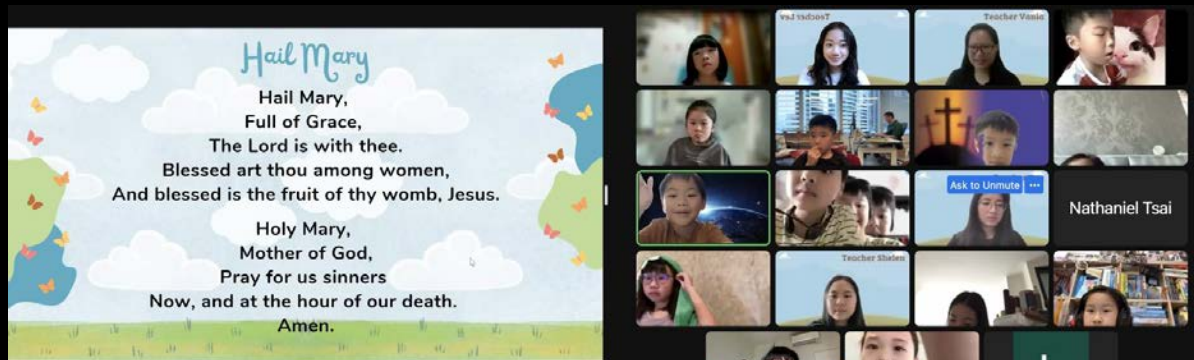
How Our Teachers Make Online Classes Engaging and Interactive

Our teachers have been amazing at adjusting their curriculum and methods to suit the online platform. They have been using different styles of lessons, games, quizzes, and activities to keep the students interested and involved. They have also been exploring various resources and tools to enhance the online classes and make them more lively and enjoyable. All teachers are very pleased with the attendance and engagement of the students in the online classes so far.



How Our Teachers Create A Warm And Friendly Atmosphere Online

One of the challenges of online teaching is the lack of physical interaction with the students. However, our teachers have not let that stop them from building a strong rapport with the kids. They have been trying their best to connect and communicate with the students, and to play and pray with them. They have also been inviting the students to share their feedback and suggestions. We can see that the kids are having a great time!



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English Sunday School

(Cont'd from P6)

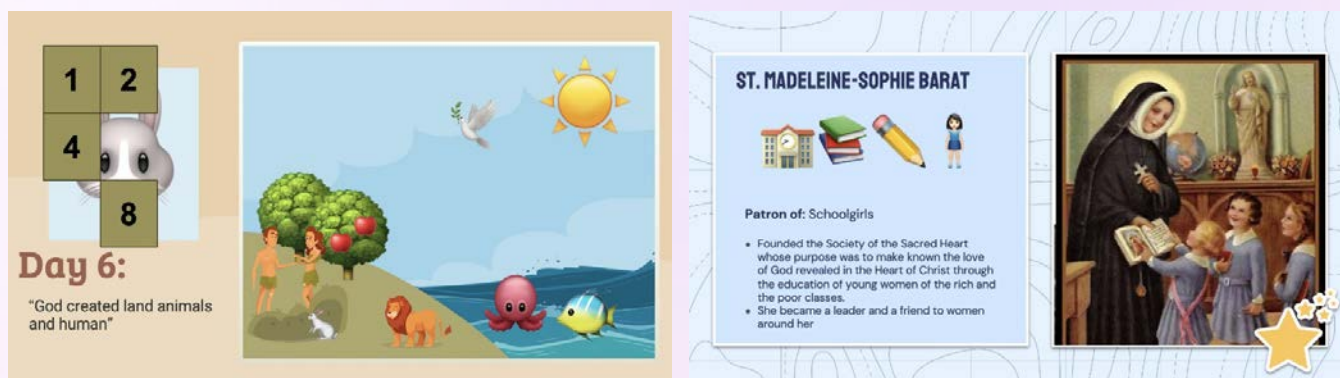
How Our Parents Support The Teachers And The Students



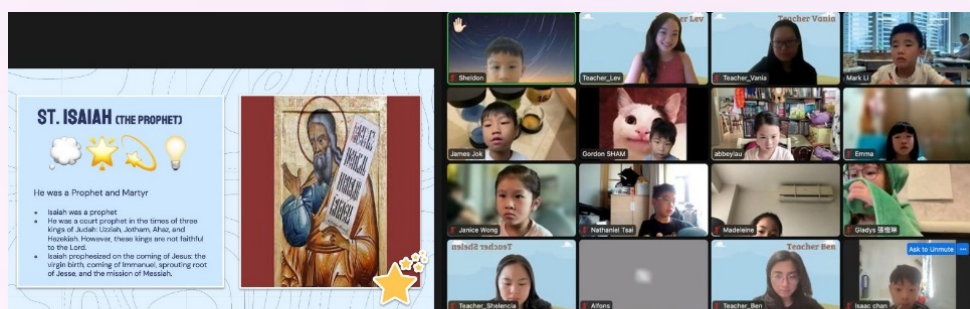
The parents have been very supportive and cooperative in helping the teachers and the students. They have printed out the offline activities and let the children have some fun at home. They have also motivated the children to attend the classes regularly and to participate actively. Some of the parents have even joined the classes themselves and shared their insights and experiences.

Some Examples Of The Innovative Ways Of Online Teaching:

Here are some examples of how our teachers have made the online classes fun, educational and spiritual:



For the creation story, the teachers created another guessing game based on the Book of Genesis. They asked the students to guess what God created on each day of the week, based on the images shared. The students had to choose from a list of options and see if they matched the correct day. The game was a fun way to learn about the order and purpose of God's creation.

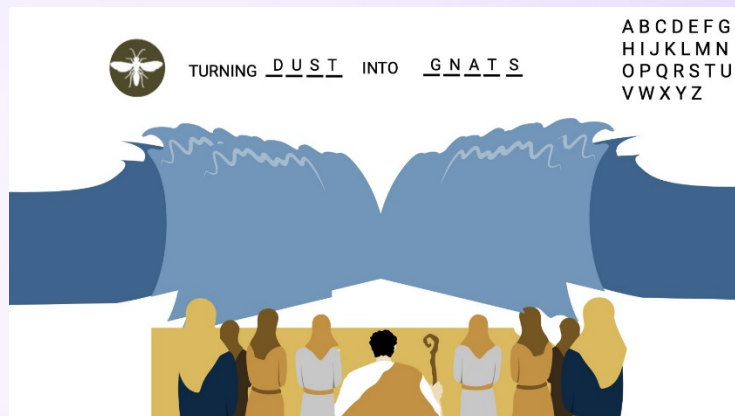


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English Sunday School

(Cont'd from P7)

For All Saints' Day, some of the teachers asked the students to research the lives of their baptism saints and to share their findings in the class. The teachers also created an emoji game to test the students' knowledge of the saints' patronages. The students had to guess the emoji that represented the saint's area of influence or protection. The kids were very eager and attentive, as they waited for their turn.



Some of the children enjoyed playing a special version of a hangman game to help the Israelites cross the Red Sea. Hangman is a word game where you guess letters of a hidden word or phrase. You have to guess it before a stickman is hanged.

For the David and Goliath lesson, the teachers asked the kids to share their fears and how they overcome them. Each time a kid shared their fear, the class earned a slingshot and a rock to help David defeat Goliath. The kids learned how to face their fears with courage and faith.

Meet Our Teachers

Our ESS teachers are dedicated and passionate about teaching the children about their faith and making the classes fun and engaging. Here are some highlights of what they have been doing with their students.

Level 1: Teacher Chinny

Teacher Chinny always picks catchy and upbeat worship songs that get the children singing and dancing along. The children love to learn new songs and moves from their energetic and cheerful teacher. They also join in the prayers with enthusiasm.



To P9 =>

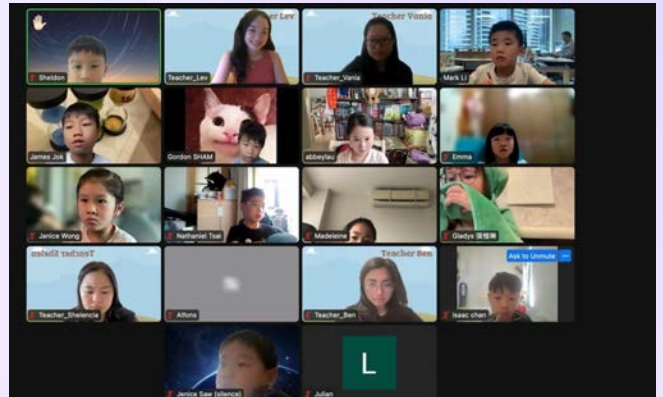
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English Sunday School

(Cont'd from P8)

Level 2: Teachers Levinna, Benedicta, Shalencia and Vania

The Level 2 students have been having a blast with their innovative group of teachers. They have been actively participating in all the spiritual learning activities that their teachers have painstakingly prepared for them. This group of teachers have used various resources and innovative methods to make the lessons more interesting and enjoyable.



Level 3: Teachers Gwen and Remy

The Level 3 students have been preparing for the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation with the help of their teachers. They have been learning more about their faith and the significance of these sacraments under the guidance of their wonderful teachers. They have also had a lot of fun and excitement with the stories, games and quizzes that their teachers have created for them. The students are always smiling and eager to learn new things.



Level 4: Teachers Anne and Fely

The post confirmands Level 4 students have been having a great time with their Sunday school classes, thanks to the creative and innovative efforts of their teachers. Teachers Anne and Fely decided to use a co-working space, called the Glue, in Wanchai, to conduct face-to-face sessions with their students. This was a great opportunity for them to meet the students in person and to have a more intimate and personal interaction.



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English Sunday School

(Cont'd from P9)

Looking Forward To Going Offline And Meeting Face To Face

The virtual classes were a huge success and all the ESS teachers ensured that the learning did not stop while our beautiful church was being renovated. However, we are happy that our virtual sessions have come to an end and we will resume face-to-face classes from 10 December 2023. All teachers are now busy preparing an exciting start to welcome the children back. For example, teacher Chinny from the Level 1 class is working with the parents to put up the annual Nativity play to help the children truly understand that Jesus is the real reason for the season. We are looking forward to reporting back to you on the grand success of our physical classes and hope that the parents will continue participating and supporting the teachers in this part of the ESS journey.

~ Thank you, Teacher Jovita

BS Corner

Works of Mercy

[Reference liturgical readings for The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (Year A): Gospel **Matthew 25:31-46**; 1st reading **Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17**; 2nd reading **1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28**]

The last Sunday in Ordinary Time or conclusion of the Liturgical Calendar, the Catholic Church observes the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe — also known as the feast of Christ the King — Pope Pius XI instituted it in his encyclical Quas Primas of 1925.

As we reached the observance of the feast of Christ the King, it is the intention and expectation of our beloved church and by our faith that after everything that we have learned and experienced during the entire liturgical cycle, we will choose with our own free will, knowledge and wisdom that Jesus Christ is the king of our life. That He is our Lord and the only one God we will obey and serve with all our mind, our heart and strength.

In the gospel, we are all encouraged by the Lord to practice the Corporal Works of Mercy. This is the aim of what the church is teaching daily because our liturgical calendar is preparing us for what is really to come and at the end of time when we faced the Lord, we will be assembled before Him as we proclaim Him as our King, may we be among the sheep on his right, where *the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'* (**Mt 25:34-36**).

The Corporal Works of Mercy are oriented toward the body, where six of the seven are mentioned in the gospel reading: (i) to feed the hungry, (ii) to give drink to the thirsty, (iii) to clothe the naked, (iv) to give shelter to travellers, (v) to visit the sick, (vi) to visit the imprisoned, and (vii) to bury the dead. These are the ways that we will be measured by the Lord on how we loved and cared for other people. Because whatever we do unto others, we do it unto our Lord. The Lord is reminding us that we cannot love him and serve him if we could not love and serve our brothers and sisters because this is the expression of our love of Him. This is what our Lord did for us. He gave His all for our welfare and to save us from our sins.

In the 1st reading, God is presenting to us that He is the shepherd. He is in control and is the one shepherding and doing everything for the sheep's own good. Let us not hesitate then to practice the corporal works of mercy as our expression of devotion to our Lord and King.

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Living Rosary Group



Pilgrimage to St Francis Church

Thanks to our Spiritual Director, Sr. Victoria, for organizing our annual local pilgrimage on 9 November. This time we decided to visit St. Francis Church which is located at Ma On Shan. Mega gratitude to our special guest Fr. Jomon, PIME, who is the Parish Priest and he granted us blessings and sharing after our Rosary Praying inside the church.

Learning from the History of St Francis Church, we deepened our understanding of Franciscan Spirituality and the well-known legacy of St. Francis of Assisi, especially his poor and simple lifestyle. His enlightenment reached a new level when the Saint lauded God's presence in the while creation calling on Brother Sun and Sister Moon, preaching to the birds and turning the wild wolf into a 'household dog.'

We all enjoyed our wonderful and spiritual pilgrimage. The happy ending was always wrapped up by our delicious lunch celebration which is a precious gift from God to enjoy our special sisterhood. Alleluia!



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Legion of Mary

Joint Retreat 2023

A Sharing by Precy Santos
(Shield of the Church Praesidium)

After a few years of having restrictions due to the covid-19 pandemic, we were finally able to organize a joyful and meaningful overnight retreat at the Salesian Retreat House in Cheung Chau on the 25 to 26th of November 2023.

It was a joint retreat participated by members of Mother of Mercy and Shield of the Church Presidiums of OLMC Parish.

I have apprehensions at first because of my concerns about being the only non-local speaking member of the group. My worry is that I will slow down the proceedings and give a difficult time especially to our retreat master, Sister Lucia. But of course, because of the solidarity among the members, we were able to set aside the language barrier and differences. Although the sharing was mainly in Cantonese, most of the sisters took the effort to either translate to me, or share in English so I was able to participate and share more meaningfully. It was very heart-warming to feel the love, care and concern among the participants. After all, the greatest Mother was with us. And we have a common denominator-love for each other.

We did our opening prayers and took every opportunity we can get to stay outdoors. The weather was lovely, and so are the members of this group. I went home renewed and re-energized by this short escape from the hustle and bustle of the busy city life. What a way to say goodbye to the old and start a new liturgical year.

Glory to God!!!

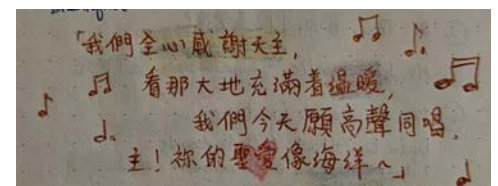


A Sharing by Margaret Lo
(Mother of Mercy Praesidium)

The time staying at the retreat house was short but it was so fruitful that I gained a lot from the guidance of Sr. Lucia, sharing of brother and sisters as well as the message God had brought to me in this beautiful environment!



「我們全心感謝天主，
看那大地充滿着溫暖，
我們今天願高聲同唱，
主！祢的聖愛像海洋～」



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Legion of Mary

(cont'd from P11)

God had just prepared the best for 12 of us! We were his chosen ones to be HIS son and daughters. It was such a wonderful journey that God had prepared for 12 of us staying together with HIM!

In this journey, we were invited to first empty our hearts for receiving God by sharing and offering all of ourselves to HIM, recognizing our feelings and thoughts, and listening to HIS words.



We learnt that if we would like to love, we need to come close to care and love. But we know that we will suffer when coming close to others as we will understand their needs.

To our surprise, we often find that we, the givers, in return will actually be the one who can receive the graces and love from God.

Another interesting thing that I experienced in the journey was to look at Jesus from the angle of the woman of Samaria in front of Jacob's well and to look at the woman from the angle of Jesus. It was beautiful!

and said to her, "If you had known the gift of God and who it is who says to you, 'Give me water to drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." (John 4:10)



Legion of Mary is an organization that bears God's Charism. 「聖母軍是一個神恩的團體」(區團培育日2023)

Last but not least, our spiritual directress, Sr. Lucia Cheung, had reminded us the followings at the end of this year's retreat:

1. We should always have **HOPE** as when we stayed in the retreat house.
2. We should **EMPTY** our hearts and **LISTEN** to God.
3. **D + d = P** (Desire of God + my desire = Prayer)
4. **W + w = S** (**W**ill of Go+ my **w**ill = **S**anctity)



Sanctification is possible when we listen to God and co-operate with HIM! That is the object of the Legion of Mary : "Self sanctification & Sanctifying Others!" Let's work together to make sanctification coming true!

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Music Ministry

Rabboni Choir - Christmas In Our Hearts and Families

Janric Rosales

Christmas. The most celebrated and anticipated day for Filipinos. Wherever you are across the Globe, Filipinos have a genuine story about family and their love towards Christmas. From celebrating with your family to foods that you can only taste once during its season. Christmas or 'Pasko' is a magical time for ages. We'd like to share with you stories and tradition from some members of the Rabboni choir:

Cavite Christmas

My early years was spent growing up in Silang, Cavite (southern part of Manila). It was a simple town and many people that I know are devoted Catholics. Every major event in the Catholic calendar was celebrated. But for every kid in that town, the main highlight of the year was simply Christmas. The shoes will be sparkling, dress and shirts neatly tucked and we smile like there is no tomorrow. For this is the only time of the year that you can get 'pamasko' (e.g. lai see) from your relatives. And it always pay off when you are early (you get to be the first in line).

When celebrating Christmas it is also a tradition to welcome anyone, even a stranger, who comes into your home. I remember our Lolo and Lola (Grandpa and Grandma) saying, "we share what we have, no matter how little it may be". This tradition lives on and will continue in our family as a reminder from our Lolo and Lola.



Cooking fiesta at home

Ame has a tradition that she and her family have done and will still be doing in the coming Christmas. Every year, her Mom never fails to make a feast during Christmas. The amount of food available on Christmas day may be enough for one barangay (small neighbourhood or village). But underneath all that cooking and food is a dedicated mother that only wants to have her family to have the best time together. We have a saying in the Philippines that the mother is the "ilaw nang tahanan" (light of the house). Ame's family is lighting the way to keep the tradition going.

It is more fun in Pampanga

Jeff's home town is Pampanga. Pampanga is known as the centre of culinary excellence in the Philippines. It is where Sisig (Filipino pork dish) was born! I can say almost all Kapampangans can cook. And it is no surprise that Jeff's family tradition revolves around it. A family gathering with a large variety of food will be brought and shared by all the family. During the gathering, his family will have its annual exchange gift giving. But not just any ordinary gift giving, there is an annual theme that has to be followed. It can range from something meaningful to hilariously funny. As entertainment for the whole neighbourhood, a yearly Christmas carol from the family will be conducted.



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Music Ministry

(cont'd from P14)

Sharing is a key tradition to Jeff's family. Every year they will arrange to give grocery bags to less fortunate brothers and sister in their area to share their happiness to other families.

And to cap the Christmas tradition, Simbang Gabi (devotional Christmas novena) will be observed with a healthy dose of bibingka (baked rice cakes) and puto bumbong (purple rice cakes) to be enjoyed each and every day.

These stories are may be unique to us, but every Filipino can relate to these and might have a similar tradition that we all share. These stories are all formed around family with Jesus Christ at the center of our celebration. Merry Christmas to all !



Lighting the Advent Candles

Each week until Christmas, we light a new candle on the Advent wreath, a circle of evergreens, along with each of the preceding candles. Each candle represents Hope, Joy, Peace and Love. The flame of each new candle reminds us that something is happening now, but something more is still to come. The light of Advent grows brighter and brighter guiding us toward personal peace, shared joy, and more love.



1145: The Li family



1330: The Mok Sisters



1800: The Rosales family



1145: The Lim family



1330: The Yue family



1800: The Kristanto family



1145: The Lo family



1330: The Limsiaco family



1800: The Yabut family



THE HOMESTEAD – DEC 2023

Christmas



聖誕彌撒
CHRISTMAS MASS

子夜彌撒
Midnight Mass
24/12 (日 Sun)
6:00pm (Eng)
8:00pm (中/Eng)
10:00pm (中/Eng)

聖誕節
Christmas Day
25/12 (一 Mon)
8:30am (中)
10:00am (中)
11:45am (Eng)
1:30pm (Eng)
6:00pm (Eng)

聖母聖衣堂
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

Christmas is almost here!

Let us take this opportunity to pray. Christmas prayers help us to give thanks for the greatest Christmas gift of all time i.e. the birth of Jesus Christ! The act of praying enables us to express gratitude, seek guidance, and strengthen our relationship with God.

St. Francis of Assisi's Christmas prayer is a beautiful prayer to share:

O most holy Virgin Mary, Your appearance at Greccio brought joy to the hearts of the faithful, as you showed them your Divine Son lying in a manger. By your intercession, may we seek humility, and be filled with a deep love for the poverty of Christ, who lives and reigns forever and forever and ever. Amen.

This prayer encapsulates St. Francis' deep reverence for humility and poverty in the birth of Christ, inviting us to reflect on the true essence and significance of Christmas.

Merry Christmas to All !



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