

MA-SG

ISSUE 07
JUNE 2021

Montfortian Associates - Singapore



Prayer to St Joseph

HAIL, GUARDIAN OF THE REDEEMER,
SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.
TO YOU GOD ENTRUSTED HIS ONLY SON;
IN YOU MARY PLACED HER TRUST;
WITH YOU CHRIST BECAME MAN.

BLESSED JOSEPH, TO US TOO,
SHOW YOURSELF A FATHER
AND GUIDE US IN THE PATH OF LIFE.
OBTAIN FOR US GRACE, MERCY, AND COURAGE,
AND DEFEND US FROM EVERY EVIL. AMEN.



contents

04

President's Message

06

**Establishment of Montfortian
Associates Movement in
Singapore**

08

**An Experiential Walk at Wallace
Trail & Rail Corridor**

10

**The Participation of
Montfortian Associates
Movement in the Montfortian
Mission**

12

Crafting Knotted Rosaries

13

News @Montfort Centre



 [@montfortianassociates](https://www.facebook.com/montfortianassociates)

 montfortian.associates.sg@gmail.com



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

My dear Montfortian Associates and friends

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all fathers, godfathers and fathers-to-be a Happy Father's Day! It is certainly a double blessing for the feasts of the twin hearts to be celebrated in the month of June: Sacred Heart of Jesus (11 Jun) and Immaculate Heart of Mary (12 Jun).

The Montfortian Associates community also celebrates our 5th anniversary since our establishment on 3 April 2016! What a journey it has been!

I recall vividly that exactly a year ago, we organised *By Way of the Heart*, which was a whole month of prayer dedicated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Tight Covid-19 restrictions were still fresh in our minds as the pandemic had hit the shores of Singapore and South-East Asia not too long ago. As a community, we prayed and asked for a marvelous heart that continues to love the way Christ would despite the new normal.

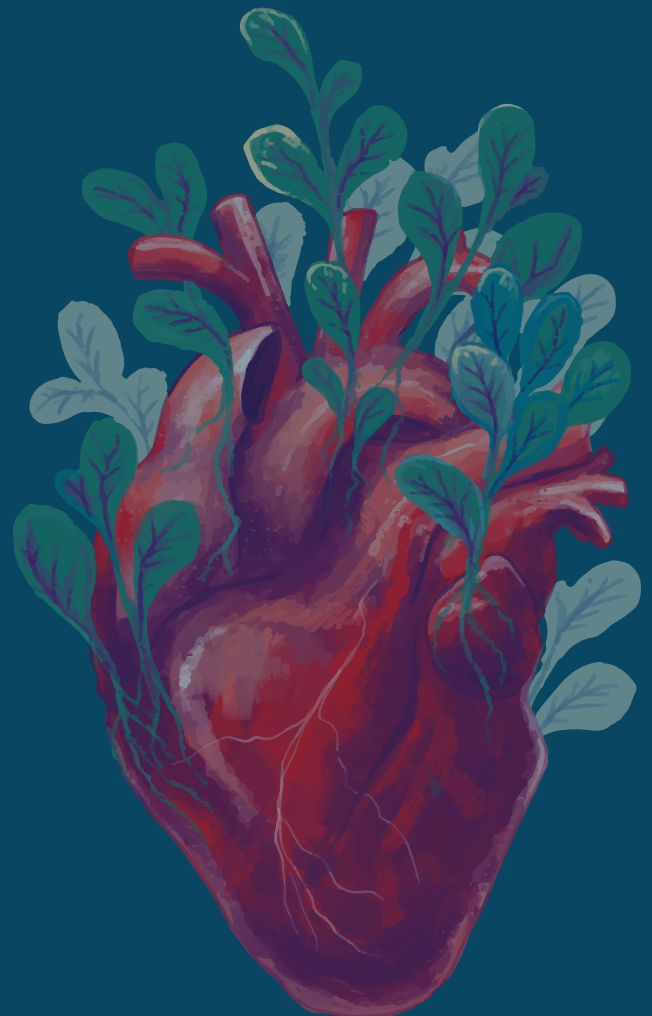
A year on now, still faced with many Covid-19 restrictions, I wonder how has our hearts been moved and transformed? Many of our priorities had to be readjusted and changes in decisions made. One of our members who is expecting her first child had already arranged for her parents to come to Singapore when new inbound travel restrictions into Singapore at the last minute made such an arrangement impossible. Instead of giving in to despair, she and her husband discerned and turned to our Montfortian Associates community for help. I am glad to know that there are a few veteran mothers in our community who have risen to the occasion and offered their support during the confinement period.

Coming to a decision – no matter how favorable – is never easy. It is especially during such trying times when discernment is needed. We need to ask our Lord for a discerning heart as well! Fr. Ernest Larkin, O.Carm writes and reminds us that, "Discernment does not tell us what to do... But it does indicate whether or not we are moving in the right direction on the deepest level of our being." Even our founder St. Louis Marie de Montfort after being ordained as a priest still had to discern the way in which he would express his ministry and was clearly torn by two contradictory feelings: a secret attraction to a hidden life versus a tremendous urge to an active life (Letter 5). One may think that Montfort would be more settled in his spiritual life and direction towards the end of his life. On the contrary, he expressed his inner turmoil in Letter 26 to Sr. Catherine of St. Bernard, 3 years before his death on 15 August 1713 that "I have forever to be

on alert, treading warily as though on thorns or sharp stones. I am like a ball in a game of tennis; no sooner am I hurled to one side than I am sent back to the other, and the players strike me hard." Despite struggling with the polarities in his spiritual life, Montfort loved God and the poor wholeheartedly, through and through.

My friends, we who are baptised and have made our consecration to Jesus through Mary know by now that the Cross is necessary in our ministry of love. But, in it we find the inner freedom to go to the very depths of our hearts and the collective courage and reach out beyond the very breadth of our hands. In times like these, I find great comfort and encouragement in this prayer on the liberating power of love written by Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, former superior general of the Jesuits and would like to bless each one of you with this divine love:

Nothing is more practical than
 Finding God, that is, than
 Falling in love
 In a quite, absolute, final way.
 What you are in love with,
 What seizes your imagination,
 Will affect everything.
 It will decide
 What will get you out of bed in the morning,
 What you do with your evenings,
 How you spend your weekends,
 What you read, who you know,
 What breaks your heart,
 And what amazes you with
 Joy and gratitude.
 Fall in love, stay in love,
 And it will decide everything.



Establishment of Montfortian Associates Movement in Singapore

By Doreen Law, Montfortian Associate

In November last year, we had our annual retreat for the enrolment of Montfortian Associates (MAs) and renewal of the existing. I was sparked with a question on how Montfortian Associates was established. As a veteran MA, I would like to share the memorable events leading to the establishment of the Montfortian Associates Movement (MAM).

It started with the invitation from The Brothers of St. Gabriel to join them for the Montfortian Partnership Forum cum Inauguration of the Partnership Sub-Secretariat. Bro Yvan Passebon, the Vicar General, and the Assistant General, Bro Paul Raj officially launched the Montfortian Associates Movement (MAM) for the Province of Malaysia-Singapore on 21st January 2015. The aim of the MAM is to live, share and promote the Montfortian Spirituality and to share in the service of the Brothers, especially in the educative mission.

Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh organized a Learning Journey in The Footsteps of Montfort, an exclusive pilgrimage to the places of St. Louis Marie de Montfort. The Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, the spiritual director, Montfort Father Raja Rao (SMM), who provided us with an in-depth understanding of the life and works of a saint and founder, accompanied us. Thirteen participants signed up for this rare opportunity to travel with fellow pilgrims to Western France, where we visited the birthplace of Montfort, and places where Montfort visited and worked in. The highlight of the trip was the visit to the Basilica where his tomb and that of his first follower, Blessed Marie Louise Trichet, are displayed.

We began our spiritual journey from Paris, visited Saint Sulpice Church then to Mont Saint Michel, and journeyed on to Rennes. In Montfort-sur-Meu, we were greeted at the Birthplace of Montfort. We moved on to another experiential place in Dinan, where we were told Montfort found a leper. He took him on his shoulders and went to the Missionaries' House, knocked at the door and cried out "Open to Jesus Christ". He took the poor man in and made him rest on his bed. **"Wisdom is the Cross and the Cross is Wisdom." (LEW 180).** We went to the Cesson Bridge, where Louis-Marie, departing for Paris, exchanged his new clothes for the rags of a beggar. We resumed the journey to head for Pontchâteau to visit the site while following the way of the cross, to the great calvary. We stayed at the Bethany Center of the Sisters of Wisdom in Saint Laurent.

The pilgrimage that I participated was a very fruitful, experiential and memorable one. After the trip, Fr Raja Rao shared that he would be ordained Bishop of Vijayawada, India in 2016. A friend and my grandniece were baptized in 2016. The following year 2017, my brother in law and his daughter were baptized and another niece in 2018.

I believe that my trip to France was significant and meaningful. It was awesome to experience all these miracles that happened, and these happenings inspired me to go back for the second

time for the Footsteps of Montfort in 2018. Unfortunately, in June 2020, we were prohibited from travelling to France due to the coronavirus pandemic.

I remember, during our sharing of the reflections on the first trip in 2015, Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh shared the challenges that he faced. One of the initiatives he desired was his commitment to establish the Montfortian Associates Movement. This initiative is to share the life and teachings of Montfort with more people. Invite them, have an ardent desire, and to make it work.

Indeed, the Pro-tem was formed on 31st August 2015. We had our first meeting with five members, Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh, our spiritual director and Bro Thomas Paul our facilitator and animator. The Pro-tem Committee members were as follows:

Coordinator:	Simon Lim
Asst. Coordinator:	Henry Tan
Treasurer:	Doreen Law
Secretary:	Neil Cabrera
Asst. Secretary:	Wilson Chew

On 26th September 2015, the committee outreach invited people to attend the Total Consecration to Mary (TCM) Introduction and formation. In the following month, October 2015, we began our first batch of Montfortian Associates Movement (MAM) and the 33 days preparation for the Consecration to Jesus through Mary.

On 3rd April 2016, the first batch of 13 enrolled as Montfortian Associates. The second batch of 7 enrolled in 2017, the third batch of 8 enrolled in 2019 and fourth batch of 11 enrolled in 2020. The current Exco Committee are as follows:

Spiritual Director:	Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh
President:	Zerah Goh
Vice President:	Aloysius Adi Pratama
Treasurer:	Henry Tan
Secretary:	Lydia Alexkartadjaja
Asst. Secretary:	Ben Liu

In our outreach, we have recruited new TCM members. To date, we have completed 4 batches of preparation for the Consecration to Jesus through Mary. Now, we have grown to 33 active enrolled Montfortian Associates.

The Consecration to Jesus through Mary is not a one-time event but it is an ever-deepening journey until we become fully united with Jesus who is the Divine Wisdom. To quote Bro Paul Raj: *Montfortian partnership and collaboration can never be seen as an individualistic enterprise. We always interact as members of the body. We always serve in the context of a relationship with God and with others. One of the great gifts we share with others is the fruit of these life-giving relationships. Montfortian collaboration is a sharing of life and love.*

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to share and together we could experience the Montfortian Spirituality through our love and care for one another.

"If we do not risk anything for God we will never do anything great for Him."

– St Louis Marie De Montfort.

Montfortian Partnersh



ip Launched (2015)



MA Batch-4(2020)



MA Batch-3(2019)



France-2018



An Experiential Walk at WALLACE TRAIL & RAIL CORRIDOR

By Doreen Law, Montfortian Associate



Some zealous Montfortian Associates and Friends of Montfort gathered on a Saturday morning to experience brisk walking at Wallace trail and Rail Corridor so as to keep a healthy lifestyle and at the same time, to get the chance to appreciate nature by going on a DIY trail. It is ideal for nature lovers, bird enthusiasts and families. COVID-19 pandemic creates new inspiration for walking and biking, especially with the safe distancing measures.

On Saturday morning, 17 April 2021, we gathered near Hillview MRT station to start our walk at Wallace trail. This takes us through the Dairy Farm Nature Park and Rail Corridor. The day was bright and the sky was clear with a burning sun. Initially, the weather was dull in the morning and I thought that it might rain. Besides, there was some breeze, which made the heat bearable to some extent. The clouds were floating in the sky and the sun started shining.

Tall trees, plants of odd shapes and sizes, beautiful flora and monkeys, maybe other animals, surround the path too. The beauty of the trees could be seen in between scattered light that filters through when the rays of the sun through the trees were parallel and beautiful.



We noticed more people have turned to walking and biking, moving speedily and safely along the path. It was our first experience to walk 1.4 km and we followed the signs to the Singapore quarry. The scene at the quarry is peaceful and tranquil. From afar, we could see small birds chirping and apparently looking for food. We had a panoramic view of the quarry and then detoured for breakfast. We took the exit via Jalan Asas, through the private housing estate accessible to Upper Bukit Timah Road and to the Rail Mall. There is a supermarket and some restaurants; we stopped for breakfast at the famous Spring Leaf Prata Café.



We embarked on to the Rail Corridor, a railway line formerly used for commuting and transporting goods between Singapore and the Malay Peninsula. The Malaysian rail service ceased operation in 2011.



The Rail Corridor trail is suitable for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts to view the greenery, flora, fauna and to experience a trip down memory lane to discover the rich culture heritage and to explore the historical landmarks along the Rail Corridor. It is a trial walking on the Bukit Timah Truss Bridge and a glance to take some photos. We walked the stretch of land from Hillview to King Albert Park MRT station, which is around 4km. It is so wonderful and astounding that we had clocked about 11,187 steps in the 4km walk.



The terrain in the Rail Corridor is flat and is good for people of all ages. God's blessing is upon every one of us as we end the walk at King Albert Park and was welcomed by a heavy downpour, thunderstorm and followed by flood. It is such a memorable moment to experience as we have our bonding and sharing in the shopping centre while waiting for the rain to stop.



The Participation of Montfortian Associates Movement in the Montfortian Mission

By Zerah Goh, President of the Montfortian Associates Movement

This article was first published in The Participation of Montfortian Associates Movement in the Montfortian Mission (Circular Letter, SG 53 2021)

What content of spiritual and missionary training can open the associate's vision to the spirit of communion and synodality among the Montfortian Family?

All our associates are to have done their preparation for total consecration before enrolling themselves into the movement. Our mission as Montfortian Associates is to live, share and promote the charism and spirituality of the total consecration according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort.

We provide a monthly formation which is an ongoing training to deepen the associate's understanding and appreciation on the life and writings of Montfort. Throughout the year, there are community building opportunities such as fellowship, Eucharist and workshops to help members build bonds and find a sense of connectedness as a community. Our associates are also engaged in some forms of outreach through events such as parish missions and the Heart of Living seminar where they get to promote the spirituality and importance of the total consecration to Jesus through Mary.

What is the formation of reliable leaders with good knowledge and appreciation in the field of Montfortian spirituality in order to be authentic missionaries in schools, parishes, dioceses, communities?

Montfortian resources, which include the life and writings of Montfort as well as the reflections and retreat materials are made available at Montfort Centre. Our associates also have a dedicated partnership room for their use and a resource space to call their own.

We run the Montfortian Experience programme which are retreat sessions based on the spirituality and writings of Montfort. The programme helps participants to renew their commitment to God and deepen their lived experience of a total consecration. We have even managed to run an online Montfortian Experience on the Secret of Mary in May 2020 as well as a blended approach on Prayer for Missionaries (Extraordinary Mission) in September 2020.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, we would organise a Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of Montfort every two to three years. We have installed sites of Montfort in each of our institution and will be running a local pilgrimage using a blended approach called the "Montfortian Pilgrimage In Our Schools" (MPIOs) for our school community, associates and eventually the wider church community.

The possible missionary fields for collaboration:

1. Montfortian Spirituality & Retreat Work

The Montfortian programmes at Montfort Centre are run by the Montfortian Associates. The pastoral programmes staff themselves are also Montfortian Associates.



2. Educative Mission of the Brothers

Some of our associates are teachers in the institutions of the Brothers while others are involved in the social mission such as Boys' Town. They help to live and share the spirituality of the total consecration in their engagement with their colleagues and beneficiaries.

3. School Chaplaincy Team

Our associates are also in the Montfortian School Chaplaincy Team. This team is the keeper of the Catholic character of the institutions, and integrates Montfortian values into the life of the school through retreats, programmes, dissemination of materials and group activities for the whole school community.

The history of the creation of the Montfortian Associates in connection with the Montfort Center in Singapore: are there any other groups animated by the Brothers of Saint Gabriel in Singapore-Malaysia, what kind of formation and missionary activities are offered in Singapore, what are the challenges experienced?

The 30th and 31st General Chapters of the Montfort Brothers of St Gabriel had called for empowering the laity as collaborators and partners. Establishing the Associates of the Brothers of St Gabriel under the name "Montfortian Associates Movement" (MAM). The Montfortian Associates Movement for the then Province of Malaysia-Singapore was officially launched by Bro Yan Passebon, Vicar General of the Montfort Brothers of St Gabriel on 21 Jan 2015 at Montfort Centre. The first 13 members began their preparation in October 2015 and made their total consecration on 3 April 2016. The other group animated by the Brothers includes the Montfortian Associates in Sabah, Malaysia.

The membership for the associates is very diverse with members even from the Philippines and Indonesia. We have a total of 42 members to date with the youngest being 23 years old and the oldest being 78 years old.

One of the challenges is finding time for the preparation process which should be 33 days as proposed by Montfort. Lay people who have family and work commitments are unable to spend a whole month away. Inspired by St. Ignatius' 19th annotation, we spaced out the preparation across a period of 9 months on every alternate Saturday morning of the month. We even did an online preparation for 15 participants through Zoom due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Another challenge would be language as some of our members' native language is not English. Some are more comfortable using Bahasa Indonesia and Chinese. Not all the writings of Montfort are available in the languages. For instance only the Secret of Mary and True Devotion are available in Chinese.

Crafting Knotted Rosaries

By Ambrose Chua, Montfortian Associate and Paulette Lirio, Outreach Sub-committee of the Montfortian Associates Movement

On Saturday 1st May, we held our 2nd MA Community Building Day for 2021. As the month of May is the month of Mary, a rosary making session was planned for our community building followed by mass to bless the rosary and to commission Montfortian Associates to spread devotion to our Lady and recitation of the Holy Rosary.

We had about 20 participants and everyone arrived at about 9 am to have breakfast. There was indeed no shortage of food as many people brought something to share. We even had some piping hot Chinese dim sum with home sourced chili sauce.



Brother Damian started the rosary making session by showing us certain videos on rosary making. Thankfully, he then declared that he had a simpler method and showed us how to make the knots that would resemble our rosary beads. He, however, cautioned that we must always maintain the distance between the knots. Bro Damian was deft with his hands and his knots came out beautifully consistent. Those of us following his guided instructions soon fell behind as we had to unpick our knots and re-knot again, not once but quite a few times.



Once all ten knots were complete, Bro Damian showed us how to make the crucifix using a similar knot technique. It was then that the scales fell from our eyes. We realized maintaining the same distance between the knots would leave us enough rope to make the knots for the crucifix!

We were tasked to make two rosaries but quite a few of us only managed to complete one. We however promised ourselves we would make a second rosary and took some extra rope home. The rosary making session ended with all handcrafted rosaries collected and placed in an organza bag with our names for the blessing and commissioning ceremony that would take place at mass.



Fr. Edward Seah presided at mass and as 1 May was also the Feast of St Joseph the Worker, he commemorated St Joseph as the exemplar of a man whose sanctification comes from working for the glory of God. After holy communion, Fr. Seah blessed all the handmade rosaries. Zerah, the President of Montfortian Associate then called out our names individually. We came forward to receive our blessed handmade rosary

which Zerah commissioned each of us with the words “let us crown ourselves”; to which we each responded, “with the roses of the rosary”.

It was an uplifting moment as we prayed after the commissioning for the graces of the Mysteries of the life and passion of our Lord to come down into our souls and into the souls of those we touch. With this we were each sent to spread devotion to our Lady and the Holy Rosary.

Immediately after mass, we adjourned for a spicy curry lunch and a carrot cake dessert donated by one of the participants at our Evening of Prayer with Montfort. For many of us, it is a first to be making our own rosary and more importantly commissioned to spread our love and devotion to Mother Mary.

As we build community and meditate through this rosary-making activity with the Blessed Mother, we pray for the Holy Spirit to grant us a deepening desire to love as Jesus loves. Each MA is on mission to make Jesus and the Blessed Mother known & loved by befriending the last, lost and the least around each one of us. What a good start to give our hand-made rosaries and accompany them as prayer intercessors too!



MONTFORT
CENTRE
ALL FOR GOD ALONE

NEWS

@MONTFORT CENTRE

STAY TUNED AND FOLLOW US ON:



DONATE

Support us in our mission to continue working towards facilitating for each person a greater sense of purpose in life and a greater commitment to the least among us.

<https://www.montfortcentre.org/donate>

Scan QR
Code to find
out more



Montfortian Experience Retreat

Authentic Discipleship

ONLINE WEBINAR SESSIONS

8:00PM – 9:30PM

Session 1: 19 July 2021

Session 2: 22 July 2021


Session 3: 26 July 2021

Session 4: 29 July 2021

RECOLLECTION @MONTFORT CENTRE

9.00AM – 7:00PM

Session 5: 31 July 2021

 624 Upper Bukit Timah Road
Singapore 678212

