

Our parish celebrates

By MATTHEW TAY



THE theme for this year's IHM feast day was Peranakan. Parishioners were asked to dress in Peranakan outfits and they were treated to great Peranakan entertainment and food. Among those who performed were well-known local groups The Cuzzies, Bootscooters and Singapore's

leading Peranakan singing group, Peranakan Sayang.

It was a night of fun which everyone, including the priests of the parish, enjoyed. Fr. Luke Fong was outstanding as he danced to 'Rasa Sayang' and eventually got the parishioners to join in the dance. There was also a 'movie under the stars' in the piazza where people could watch the movie even as they enjoyed the sumptuous buffet.

Said parish priest Fr. Adrian Yeo: "The Feast Day means celebrating the patronal feast of our Church. It is also the day that we re-dedicated the church after the renovations about three or four years ago. Therefore, during feast day, we are basically celebrating the foundation and essence of our Church."

Prior to the feast day mass celebrated by Archbishop William Goh, the parish had a Triduum, during which three priests from the Prelature of Opus Dei took turns to celebrate mass and deliver homilies to our parishioners over three days. (See Page 2)

The festivities on June 24

evening were the efforts of various church ministries with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) playing the leading role.

Julie Boon from SSVP, who co-ordinated the various feast day activities, shared with IHM Heartbeat on how the Peranakan theme came about. "My friend Joseph Wong is a member of Peranakan Sayang. He is also part of the vocal group Cuzzies and knows the line dance group Bootscooters. So when they all kindly agreed to perform for us, the committee was inspired to opt for the Peranakan theme!"

With all the fun, however, also comes an important message that Archbishop William Goh sent out during the Feast Day mass prior to the celebrations. "The Immaculate Heart is Mary's devotion to God and doing God's will," said the Archbishop during his sermon. "It is the imitation of Mary that is required and to give our heart to Mary so that our lives, in union with her, that we too, can truly be with the glory and praise of God." ♥



A spiritual feast spread over three days

By JOYCE TAN

OVER three days leading up to the feast day on June 24, three priests from the Prelature of Opus Dei took turns to celebrate mass and deliver homilies to our parishioners.

On the first day, based on the theme “Our Hearts are in the Right Place”, Fr. Frank Aniban explained that the heart is at the centre of human life, encompassing the will, emotions, and orientation towards God. God has only intended our hearts for love, to love God and other people. There are two signs that tell us our hearts are in the right place. The first is when God is at the centre of our lives, being our master and treasure. As a result, our relationship with God and prayer should be the priority. The second is the peace experienced in surrendering our lives to God. With our hearts being in the right place, there is peace and joy. In contrast, placing our hearts in worldly matters only causes us to be controlled by these wrong treasures. Reflecting on the homily, a couple Sherman and Vera felt that although we can be distracted by worldly things, if we let our hearts be like that of Jesus and Mary, we can trust that God will lead us in the right way.

The second day of the Triduum focused on Mary’s Immaculate Heart of Peace. Fr. Joseph Lopez pointed out Mary’s ability to readily say yes to God, without rationalizing and over-thinking about what the

yes would entail. This could be seen in Mary saying yes to St. Gabriel without hesitation and going to help Elizabeth without delay. Mary had this ability because she was full of the Holy Spirit. Having the Holy Spirit gives joy, and as Christians, like Mary, we are called to spread this peace and joy to others. Agreeing with Fr. Lopez, a parishioner Tannie said that the invitation to live simply and not to over-think, allowing God to lead, resonated with her.

In accordance with the theme “His Sacred Heart on a Mission” on the third day, Fr. Michael Chan spoke about St. Margaret Mary Alacoque who had a vision of Jesus, where He revealed His Sacred Heart as a symbol of love for man. The flames in the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus represent Jesus’ burning love for man, while the thorns piercing the heart represent man’s sins. Fr. Chan explained that Jesus’ heart is overflowing with love, a love that overcomes man’s infidelity. It is only with being schooled in the Sacred Heart, allowing this understanding of Jesus’ love to penetrate our

hearts, that we can truly love and be converted and purified. This explanation helped Francis Teo, a parishioner, to understand the love of Jesus in the image of the Sacred Heart. Said Francis: “Being connected with the Sacred Heart of Jesus is important, we must be centred on Him, if not there’s no union”. Reflecting on the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, another parishioner Catherine said she was deeply moved by the unconditional, pure love between Mother and Son. ❤️

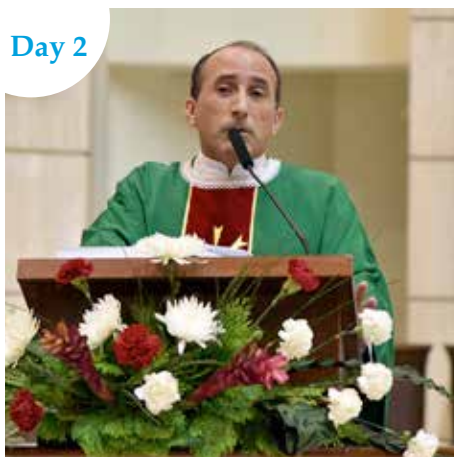


Day 1



Fr. Frank Aniban

Day 2



Fr. Joseph Lopez

Day 3



Fr. Michael Chan

Feast Day celebrations



Archbishop William Goh celebrating mass with Fr. Adrian Yeo and Fr. Luke Fong.



Placing the crown on the statue of Mother Mary.



Makan and movies under the stars on the piazza!



The group Peranakan Sayang crooning familiar songs...



Everybody had a good time!



The Bootscooters (left) and folks from the parish showing off their dance moves!



IHM gets three new coordinators

By DENISE JULIA TAN

FR. Adrian's search for a pastoral and youth coordinator to help out with parish operations began almost two years ago. Although it was not advertised, he joked that he "didn't want crazy people coming to (him)." Instead, he spread the word through priests. And that led him to be introduced to three professionals who worked as pastoral, youth, and catechetical coordinators respectively.

"I needed people to help me to run the parish. With the three

of us (Fr. Luke and Fr. Cary), it was difficult to see to everything. I have my other duties outside of the parish in the diocese so I cannot fully look into everything... It's different when you get someone to focus their energies on specific areas."

After interviewing Mike Arents, Benjamin Mao, and Yvonne Tambou individually, Fr. Adrian decided to hire them as pastoral, youth, and catechetical coordinators respectively.

"For me, they have some

experience coming from another parish and they have the right acumen and their heart is in the right place... They have a wealth of knowledge behind them."

One of the things in the pipeline is a programme for both lapsed Catholics and Sunday Catholics to renew and deepen their faith.

"If we can deepen discipleship, then the other things will flow from there and fit in. We can then also try to become a better community where we are truly a community of believers."



Mike Arents

(Pastoral Coordinator)

Working hours: Mon-Fri (afternoon to evening)

Prior to starting his job as parish pastoral executive here in April this year, Mike Arents, 36, was fulfilling the same role full time at Holy Spirit for six and a half years. Before that, he worked as a missionary in the Philippines. And before that, he was a seminarian.

Born in Holland, Mike first thought that God was calling him to become a priest, so he joined a seminary in a city called Den Bosch in the Netherlands. When he finished his theological formation, he was posted to a parish in Uden where he worked and was supposed to be ordained as a deacon and then a priest.

"I thought that I was headed in the right direction but I wasn't ready to be ordained yet, so I postponed it... I decided, with advice from my director, that it would be better to step out of the seminary first to deal with some personal issues... If God still calls me to be a priest, I can always come back."

Mike then joined a missionary group called ICPE (Institute for World Evangelisation) in June 2008 and became a missionary in Manila. He lived there for two years serving the poor. Upon encountering the healing love of Christ, Mike decided to re-discern his calling and proceeded to journey with a Jesuit priest intensely for five months.

"It became very clear to me that God was not calling me to be a priest but to explore the vocation of marriage."

He then met Singaporean Celine Lee, who was also a missionary in the same ICPE community. On advice from their community in preparation for their marriage, they left the mission and Mike permanently moved to Singapore in 2010 where he was offered his job at Holy Spirit by his friend Jarvis Tan. Mike and Celine have three children, their youngest just five months old.

His job-scope is parish wide, meaning that he oversees everything that happens in IHM in some sense. Although ministries will still be run by ministry leaders, he will work alongside them.

Mike hopes to "get people to become excited disciples of Christ". He also hopes to have more parish events that take place outside the boundaries of the church, so that lapsed Catholics in the neighbourhood can reconnect with Christ and non-Catholics can come to know Jesus.

"Over the past six years, I've come to love Holy Spirit quite a lot. I'm quite sure it will be the same here. Where I put my work, my heart will also be there." ♥

Benjamin Mao*(Youth Coordinator)***Working hours:** Wed-Fri (1pm-9pm), Weekends (9.30am-6.30pm)

Like Mike, Benjamin Mao, 28, was working as a youth coordinator at Holy Spirit for two years before starting his job here on the first of May. Back at Holy Spirit, his mission was to empower new leaders and enrich church culture.

“When I heard of the opening at IHM at the end of last year, I wasn’t fully prepared to leave. But I prayed about it and it fell in line with my mission, which was to go forth and empower... I didn’t have many friends here, but something in my heart brought me here.”

Overseeing about 100 youths from ministries RCIY, Anchored, Community of Youths (COY), Youth Catechists (YC), Fellowship and Community (FC), Young Adult Community (YAC), and affiliates Via Christ’s Choir (VCC), and Altar Boys Society (ABS), Benjamin works closely with both Mike and Yvonne Tambou (the catechetical coordinator) to create a smooth transition between these three important components of the spiritual journey.

“I don’t want to wait for children to get confirmed for them to come under me... So for me, I’ll get involved from Sec One onwards so that after Confirmation there is already a form of culture going on, instead of them finding out post-Confirmation about the different ministries.” ♥

**Yvonne Tambou***(Catechetical Coordinator)***Working hours:** Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays (8am-1.30pm), Weekends (8am-5pm)

Yvonne Tambou, 47, started work at IHM along with Benjamin on May 1. Previously, she worked at Holy Spirit fulfilling the same role for the last five years.

Married with five children, aged eight to 18, Yvonne has plenty of experience with children. Before her work at Holy Spirit, she helped out in MCYS, now known as MSF (Ministry of Social and Family Development) and was a school coordinator in primary schools, bringing programmes to both parents and children.

As catechetical coordinator, Yvonne’s job is to “oversee the whole catechetical programme and bring Jesus to the children.”

“We are also thinking of having programmes for parents, maybe retreats, and encourage parents to attend Bible sharing sessions that are already going on while their children are attending catechism.”

“For the secondary level, we are trying to get them to be more involved with the activities of the church, and we aim to build community and encourage them to serve the church after confirmation”

Yvonne is working closely with Benjamin to come up with such activities.

“So far my time at IHM has been good, it is just the transition and the learning process, and seeing what changes can be made for the future... I’d like to thank Fr. Adrian for giving me the opportunity to work with him and the team, and I hope to get the kids and parents to encounter Christ.” ♥

IHM Snapshots

By AGNES CHUA



Lectors: On July 8, 29 lectors pledged their commitment to the ministry during the Saturday evening mass celebrated by their Spiritual Director Fr. Luke Fong. ♥



Epiphany: TeachNLearn volunteers from the group are seen conducting English oral tests outside St. Ignatius school in Taroka, Batam. They also assess students in Rempang. Each school needs the services of 18 volunteers. ♥



Singapore Catholic Deaf Community: Group members honoured Mother Mary in a special way during the month of May with an interactive rosary. ♥



RCIA: Sponsors and assistants numbering 40 were commissioned by Fr. Adrian during mass on June 11. ♥



Epiphany: Archbishop William Goh visited the Epiphany team manning a booth at the Charis Humanitarian Forum & Fair. ♥



IIHM Jollies: On June 6, 32 members of the IHM Jollies visited the Church of St. Francis Xavier. They were welcomed by Fr. Benedict. The Jollies later visited the Seletar Mall for lunch and shopping. ♥

Reflect, recharge and be rewarded

By MATTHEW TAY

EVERY year, youths from the Youth Catechist (YC) ministry gather for a time of community building, prayer and reflection. The Day of Recollection (DOR) as it is called is a two-days, one-night retreat targeted at the YC's year 2s (17 year olds and above). It was held this year on June 25 and 26.

"As much as serving the community is important, it is also essential for us to spend time to grow our spirituality. We cannot give to our confirmands what we ourselves don't have," said Amanda Choo, a YC co-coordinator. "The retreat aims to give our members space for their personal reflection as a means of looking back on their own journey throughout the year as well as allow our members to grow closer together through sharing our experiences."

Most of the YC members are heavily involved in many church



activities such as catechism, the Sec 2 Camp and feast day celebrations. Coupled with their personal responsibilities, the DOR gives members space to recharge, reflect,

pray and journey as a community.

In addition to that, the DOR also helps prepare YC seniors. "This year's DOR was organised by Zachary Tan (year 3) and Tia Lim (year 4), and supervised by the super seniors," Amanda added. "This is also part of our capability building and training to become catechists so that we can bring the light to those around us."

The DOR participants go through various sessions, each focusing on different aspects of our lives, such as family and community. "The DOR was not only a good way to take stock of what's been happening in my life in the past few months, but also a time to reconnect with members in the community." Said Gary Huang. "It has reminded me that no matter how busy work may get, making time for the community whether to just simply chit-chat or eat together is really important." ♥

A walk in the footsteps of Jesus

By BENEDICT CHAN

On June 10 morning, St. Gregory's Hall started filling up with youngsters for the IHM Secondary 2 camp. The initial bustle gave way to silence as all members listened to Fr. Adrian as he spoke about the theme of the camp: Discipleship. Three days and two nights followed and we went on to learn more about ourselves, learning about what it means to be

a Child of God, and learning how to live like they are loved. As we ended the camp, our young people were asked to think about how we can all live as disciples in the community, and we learned that God calls each of us to different missions.

Our camp may have started quietly, but as it progressed, our service team observed the joy and the laughter that grew to fill each

day. There were many happy faces at our Parents Night as our young people caught up with their mums and dads. They got an opportunity to read all the posters plastered around the hall.

Said one parent: "Our heartfelt appreciation to all on a job well done on the recent Sec 2 camp ... Our son actually detests camps. But this camp had a 'thumbs up' from him!" ♥



Letting the children come to Jesus

by JOLYN TAN & JOYCE TAN



ON July 9, 71 Primary 3 children received their First Holy Communion. To prepare the children to receive the sacrament, the Primary 3 catechists held a camp for the children the previous day.

Based on the theme of “Let the little children come to me”, the camp included activities such as prayer time and games. For Matthias Chen from 3 Faith, being able to receive the Eucharist was a reminder that “God will be with us”. He also felt more familiar with the prayers said during Mass, which made him more confident to pray.

During the camp, the children also received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Rachel Teo from 3 Hope, aptly described confession as a process of purification, saying: “When you’re young, you are baptised and have a white napkin. But when you sin you get black spots, and then you want to remove the spots from your white napkin.”

Starting last year, a separate session for parents of the Primary



Receiving First Holy Communion.



Group discussion at the camp...

3 children was held parallel to the camp. It was intended to encourage parents to reflect deeper on their roles and responsibilities as their children’s first educators of the faith. A talk was given by Sister Elizabeth from the Canossian Daughters of Charity, where she explored the poem “On Children” by Khalil Gibran. In particular, she focused on the line “Your Children are not your children... they are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself”. As gifts for their children, the parents also wove heart shaped bookmarks and wrote Bible verses on them, in addition to penning letters to their children.

Looking back on the preparations for First Holy Communion, the catechists felt that “the children were a blessing to us”, and wished that they had more time to spend with them, to give them greater attention and introduce more activities. Nonetheless, the catechists unanimously expressed their joy in being able to journey with the children, describing it as a “privilege”. ❤️



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Published by: Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 24 Highland Road, Singapore 549115

Printed by: E-Press Printing Services, Blk 3015A Ubi Road 1, #02-01, Singapore 408705