



Words from the Provincial Superior

Bro. Dominic Yeo Koh

Dear Brothers,

Once again we celebrate the great feast of Easter in the Church. This liturgical season of Easter reminds us of the Paschal mystery in which Jesus passed over from death into life. This annual enactment of this mystery encourages us to be a resurrected people, an Easter people. We are called to live a life of Hope, a new life always. We are also called to give others a new life too.

At the end of 2012, at the International leadership seminar of the congregation held in Bangalore, it was proposed to us all to live a “leadership for change.” This leadership for change is a call to us as leaders in response to the orientation of the 31st General Chapter which invites us to be “Authentic leaders for a greater brotherhood.” This theme launches us onto being men of God bringing about the desired changes in our mission and way of life as Montfortian Religious Brothers.

Here the emphasis on leadership is opposed to being mere managers, but rather leadership for us is that of spiritual leadership. It is taken from a faith perspective, the Jesus’ leadership, wherein a leader is a man of God and a servant to all. This spiritual leadership is much needed in our fast-changing world of today. To be able to respond to the rapid changes of our society, we are called to a leadership that is “visionary, with integrity and the commitment to persevere.” Thus leadership is not so much about a position that one is appointed into but rather it is a decision that one takes to grow into it. Every Brother is called to live a spiritual leadership in whatever position they are in. No one is exempted from this, but all are called to take up this leadership. In doing so, we “need to be equipped with the needed skills like interpersonal relationship building, strong technical and conceptual skills to create vision, to be self-aware, self-motivated and self-confident.” The leader has to have a high degree of inner freedom (*liberos*) and a strong belief in God and in the person that God has created him to be.

A truly spiritual leadership must bring about change and transformation, first and foremost in himself and then in those around them. To be transformational we need a leadership that is innovative in order to bring about the desired changes in “all aspects of our life with special emphasis on our prayer-life, mission, lifestyle and formation.”

To be transformational in our leadership requires of us to be innovative. It is said that the first of the laws of innovation is that “everything changes.” Innovation is taking a problem situation and transforming it into a workable solution for life. Of course, there is a process to bring about innovation. Innovation helps to explore alternatives before choosing the most suitable solution.

Creating a space for innovation is needed for innovative ideas to grow and be incubated. Thus clearing a space in our life for contemplative experience is essential for one to be truly innovative.



Taking on a contemplative stance towards life opens one up to live life innovatively. One begins to open up to genuine changes in one’s life when one takes on a contemplative approach towards life. Contemplation is not about focusing within oneself but rather opening up of oneself to the Great Other, God himself. Contemplation can be defined as “immediate open presence in the world, directly perceiving and lovingly responding to things as they really are.”

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN! Let us open ourselves to the New life of Easter. Let us not hold on to the Jesus of Galilee but to experience the Risen Christ. It is He who gives us new life.

HAPPY EASTER!

Montfort Youth Training Centre, Sabah.

Kinarut; New Year is celebrated internationally in various ways. Partying with fireworks are the common celebration awaiting for the year to turn. The four young English volunteers with Montfort Youth Training Centre, had an experience that they will never forget. The local tradition of Sabah, especially in Penampang and Kota Kinabalu, water is the main element when midnight clock strike. They enjoyed maximally the midnight pool party in one of the neighbours' houses at Bro. Thomas Paul's village.



Midnight pool party



New Year Fellowship lunch

The Brothers of St. Gabriel's Fraternity, Sabah, organized a fellowship lunch with the staff on the 1st January. It was a pot-luck lunch. Varieties of dishes were brought by the staff. The celebration was simple but hearty with wonderful fellowship. Then the school reopened after the Christmas Holidays when the students returned. Some of them felt that the holiday was too short while some were eager to return and to complete their studies.

On the 10th January, Mr. Rocky Wong, (a long serving Board member of Montfort Boys Town, Shah Alam) and his wife, Adeline, visited Montfort Youth Training Centre. They spent some time touring around the Residential Campus.



Student reporting back to the institution.



Mr. and Mrs. Rocky Wong with the staff and students of Montfort Youth Training Centre.

For Holy Week and Easter, Father Benedict McKenna came to the centre to animate the liturgical celebrations. Fr. McKenna is an Irish Dominican who is currently stationed in Hong Kong.



Prefect Training 14th to 16th March 2013



A simple birthday celebration for Mr. Lee, a member of the Executive Committee.



Fr. Ben McKenna and Bro. Francis



Mr. Donald Lee, a Board member of Montfort Youth Centre, Melaka visited MYTC on 25 March.



A fellowship lunch with the staff and students in conjunction with the Patronal Feastday of the Brothers.



Palm Sunday



Washing of the Feet during Holy Thursday



Station of the Cross on Good Friday



Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday



Blessing of the Fire and Candle on Easter Vigil



Fellowship refreshment after the Easter Vigil Mass with the faithfuls

MYTC expressed her gratitude to Fr. Ben McKenna (OP) for his generosity to animate the liturgy of the institution during the Holy Week and Easter.

Mission 70 “Bridging the Divide”



Shah Alam; The Rotary Club of Bukit Bintang, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia launched the Mission 70 on 21st February, 2013 at Montfort Boys Town, Shah Alam. The objective of the program is to inculcate a positive and healthy lifestyle amongst youth in addition to transforming them into responsible and successful individuals with the physical and mental health to overcome the challenges of life.

The Rotary Club of Bukit Bintang in conjunction of its 21st Anniversary undertook the program to train 21 underprivileged and challenged youths aged 18 years and above to develop character-building and life skills, and in the process, help them transform into future leaders. The program will culminate in Mount Kinabalu (the highest peak of South East Asia) climb on June 15 to 19, 2013.

The Royal Patron for the program, His Most Noble Tunku Naquiyuddin Ibni Almarhum Tuanku Ja’afar, officiated at the launching ceremony. In his speech, he said that today, the Montfort Boys Town stands as a shining example of what commitment can do to change the lives of the less fortunate. Over the years, it has stood as a pillar of light in this arena. He also said that what people see of Montfort now has not just happened; it is the culmination of a lot of time, effort and commitment of many. He congratulated all those who have made Montfort what it is today and for continuing their efforts to give their students a chance to excel in life by coming in with the Rotary Club of Bukit Bintang in this really worthwhile project.

Bro. John Albert, the Director of Montfort Boys Town said that, the objectives of the Mission 70 is totally consistent with Montfort Boys Town toughening up a strong principled character in our youths today, which will stand them in good stead throughout their lives, wherever they go, and in whatever they may choose to follow, at any point in their lives.



The 21 youths were selected through the series of training programs prior to the climbing. The 21 youths consists of the students of Montfort Boys Town and the Business School of Kuala Lumpur University. Majority of the youths are from Montfort Boys Town.

Bro. John expressed his gratitude to the Rotary Club of Bukit Bintang for having included Montfort Boys Town in the said project. *Province Bulletin*

The Provincial Chapter

Singapore; The Brothers of the Province gathered for the Provincial Chapter from the 3rd to 5th March 2013 at the Montfort Centre in Singapore. The Provincial Chapter was preceded by a day of recollection on 2nd March. This recollection was animated by Bro. Paul Raj, the Assistant General from Rome. He helped the Brothers to reflect on Authentic Leadership and how to reclaim it in the chaotic context of the church and the world today. He also talked about how to enhance the group potency, the spiritual energy of the team.

On the morning of 3rd March the Provincial Chapter began with a moment of prayer and words of welcome by Bro. Dominic Yeo Koh, the Provincial Superior. Bro. Paul Raj then symbolically lighted three candles to signify the presence of the Trinity God and also our spiritual leaders, St. Louis Marie de Montfort, Blessed Marie Louise of Jesus and Father Gabriel Deshayes. This was followed by the inaugural address by Bro. Paul Raj wherein he reminded the Brothers that today we are at a significant moment wherein religious leaders are in a state of great evolution. He reckoned religious leader as the image of the stranger on the road to Emmaus. At a critical and confusing time for the disciples, the stranger exercised true leadership in the face of despondency and confusion to show that life is still meaningful and challenging, and so enter into the plan of God.



Bro. Paul Raj lighting the candles in the opening ceremony.



The Brothers in Chapter

For the next three days, the Brothers were divided into two discussion groups to study the various topics presented by the 31st General Chapter. These were alternated by plenary reporting and discussion to further deepen the subject at hand. The theme of the 31st General Chapter, "Authentic Leaders for a Greater Brotherhood," was studied and a number of practical proposals were put forth and subsequently adopted.

One of the key decisions taken was to return to a God experience in the life of each Brother and to have meaningful faith-sharing done in the communities and with others too. The Brothers also affirmed their vocation as religious brothers and to proactively promote this vocation, and with Christ as the model the Brothers profess to do so through a life of prayer, humility and availability.

It was decided that the Brothers shall be in solidarity with the poor and has identified to give priority to the youth-at-risk, migrant youths, minority groups and those in need of alternative schooling. The Brothers also affirm that as individual and in community they are to be more environmentally-friendly in their lifestyle, and as educators to inculcate this in the school community. Being responsible for the environment is not a mere lifestyle only but is a part of the spirituality of ecology.

The Brothers also looked at how in true solidarity, good governance is also needed in their life and mission. It was proposed to create common platforms for the institutions in Malaysia in the areas of human resource policies, accounting practices and common fund-raising. It was proposed to have a common child Protection policy for the institutions. It was also taken that there be a proper human resource development programme for the mission of the Brothers to ensure a standard of practice in the institutions.



Members of the Steering Committee



At a group discussion session

At this chapter the Province has also committed to organize the laity into associates of the Brothers of St. Gabriel. It recognized that many lay persons are closely associated with the Brothers in the mission and spirituality, though informally so for now. This gives the impetus to put structure to the experience and as such the Province will put aside personnel to make this happen. Though in the face of manpower shortage, the Province has also adopted to take the necessary risk for God to launch into a mission for Myanmar. To fulfill this they will seek collaboration with other Provinces where possible.

Time does not permit the chapter to take a look at the restructuring of the Province. This will be studied further at another occasion. With this the chapter drew to a close. The Brothers were generally happy with the outcome of this assembly and are committed to fulfill the decisions and orientations. Through the able guidance of the Steering committee, under the leadership of Bro. Rajamanikam as President of the committee, the chapter proceeded smoothly and productively. The chapter was appropriately concluded by Bro. Paul Raj who in his closing remarks noted that the decisions taken are applicable and workable. He wished that the decisions will take shape at the soonest. With this note the chapter came to a close with a prayer service to thank the Lord for His guidance throughout the three days and to implore his help in the implementation of the decisions taken.

Province Bulletin

Celebrations of Life
1 wedding and 3 Birthdays

Congratulations!



The Brothers congratulated Mr. Joannes Anchun, a former Brother who wedded Ms. Marciana on the 13th January 2013. Mr. Joannes Anchun, when he was a Gabrielite Brother had served Montfort Youth Centre, Melaka and Montfort Boys' Town, Shah Alam.

Happy Birthday



Bro. Philip Heng turned 75 on the 9th January 2013. The two communities in Singapore celebrated his birthday with sumptuous dinner at one of the restaurants in Changi. Happy birthday to Bro. Philip.

Happy Birthday



Happy birthday to Bro. Jean-Denis turned 83 on the 7th March. We are blessed to have him in the Province. His jovialness added the spice to have a happy environment.

Happy Birthday



Bro. Roger-Venne turned 84 on 22nd March, 2013, the oldest member of the Province. He is blessed with a healthy and happy life. Happy Birthday to Brother Roger. *Salute!*

The Province is blessed to have the senior members who had seen how the Province had strived.
Province Bulletin.

The Project Trust Volunteers

Kinarut: For the first time, Montfort Youth Training Centre and San Damiano Hostel received four volunteers from the United Kingdom under the Project Trust Program. The program lasted for a year. They came in July 2012 and would be returning to the United Kingdom by end of July 2013. They are in their late teens and in between high school and college. They would resume their student life once they have returned to their homeland. They participated in the Project Trust program by means of exposure and integral programs in the respective countries they were assigned. Jason Lattimer and Barney Necus were placed in Montfort Youth Training Centre. John Haswell and Hugo Drummond were at San Damiano Hostel. The four of them were merged into the various activities in both locations for their benefits and that of the students.

Jason Lattimer wrote.

When I first stepped through the gates to Montfort Youth Training Centre I was absolutely stunned by what I saw before me; A beautiful array of colors and well-kept buildings that make MYTC look like a paradise and I thought to myself “they don’t need my help here, they already have everything.”. Looking back I now realize that all of the work to keep MYTC looking that immaculate is done by the trainees and is part of their learning process and that there were plenty of areas in which I could be of help. To begin with I was slightly apprehensive with settling in at my first few English classes. However all this soon passed and I began to take enjoyment from everything I did, from lessons to playing sports. During the Prefect Training Camp, that was a 4 day camp based on the idea of arming next year’s prefects with the skills and knowledge of how to be a prefect. During those times, I ran a session on ‘what is leadership’ where I led a group discussion with the trainees on the qualities of a leader and how to portray these qualities as a leader. I also organized and ran a blind folded assault course where in groups of 10, 8 were blindfolded and 2 leaders had to guide them through various obstacles using only words. This was a success as each participant gained valuable trust and communication skills as well as enjoying the activity. I then ended the final night with a traditional scout style campfire with songs, sketches and games. This was a fantastic way to end the camp with lots of laughter to allow them to relax after an intensive 3 day course. In conclusion I feel this was an absolutely fantastic experience enhanced by spending each night sleeping in the tents with the boys sharing stories and experiences with each other, again building on the relationships that had already been built up over the previous 6 months. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at MYTC thus far and look forward to 3 more months of it. In my time here I feel like I have become part of the family of Montfort which fills me with a great sense of belonging. In conclusion I hope that I have been able to pass on my knowledge and skills to my trainees and even the staff and in return I have gained the most incredible life experience and forged the strongest of friendships which will stay in my heart forever. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has welcomed me into this Montfortian family and may God bless each one of you.



Jason Lattimer



The Mount Kinabalu Climb



(L-R) Hugo Drummond, Barney Necus, John Haswell and Jason Lattimer



Hugo, Janisius, Waydie (San Damiano Boys) and John



Barney Necus



Jason and Barney with MYTC Boys

Barney Necus Wrote

I was greeted very warmly by all of the staff and all of the trainees at MYTC, making me feel comfortable straight away, and within weeks I was talking to my friends and family, referring to Montfort as 'home'. My first day of lessons, I was thrown into a class on my own, having no prior experience at teaching English. Fortunately, this was no problem, as the trainees in my class were very disciplined and eager to learn already. I was amazed at how good their attitude towards learning was, even with a teacher of a similar age. After a few months, I had pinpointed where this discipline had come from; the heroes that I believe make Montfort so successful are the prefects. One of the biggest focuses here is on responsibility. Every trainee has the shared responsibility to keep Montfort clean and running smoothly. Those trainees with leadership qualities and discipline are appointed as prefects, who have the task of motivating and assigning duties to the other trainees. Since everyone has a job to do, everybody can feel valued and proud of their work. This pride encourages everyone to work hard in all aspects of life, from concentrating in lessons to finding a job. I have also been involved with some of the events at Montfort. In August along with my fellow Project trust volunteers; Jason Lattimer, Jenny Stewart, John Haswell and Hugo Drummond, I ran a stall at the Montfort Open House selling flapjacks and pancakes taking in around RM800 turning a profit of around RM600. We also organized a Halloween Party for the trainees with games and a scary story competition with a selection of the trainees reading from stories they had written in class, a way to try to encourage writing in English in a more fun, creative way. I have been enjoying my time at Montfort so far, and the amount of improvement not only in the levels of English but also levels of maturity has compelled me personally to keep going and try to help the best I can.
