



Celebrating Catholic education in Singapore

“To Love, Dignify, Serve and Lead”

This is the vision of our Catholic educational institutions for their 50,000 or so students ranging from nursery children and preschoolers, to Primary School students and teenagers in secondary schools and Junior College.

The Catholic education family

An African proverb states: “It takes a village to raise a child”. On Sept 13, 2020, Catholic Education Sunday, we will celebrate the important role of the Catholic educators’ fraternity. Our dedicated and committed teachers and school leaders impart not just academic knowledge, but equip students with values for living faith-directed and purposeful lives. Together with the congregational religious brothers and sisters whose orders founded their schools, they make schools safe havens where students can grow to be the best persons they can be, formed in the faith to become people for others. The joint effort of the wider community, comprising parents, priests and the parishes in their different roles, reinforces the Catholic ethos of our schools through their support.

Even during the Covid-19 circuit breaker, we remained very much a “village”. Just like their founders, who faced many challenges but endured with resilience and tenacity, our schools persevered in facing the pandemic’s new challenges with much creativity, resourcefulness and hard work. While teachers



CHIJ Secondary teachers wishing students “Hello from the other side!” Photos: CHIJ Secondary

prepared and delivered daily lessons online for home-based learning, continuing steadfastly with online prayers and acts of charity in school, parents rallied behind them, while the religious communities prayed and gave guidance.

Being Christ to others

Our Catholic education family did not neglect to share the love of Christ with others during this difficult period either. Many students designed gratitude cards for family members, especially for their mothers who spent much time helping them with home-based learning. Others participated in community outreach projects, sending encouragement cards to the unsung heroes of the Covid-19 frontline and migrant workers, and raising funds to buy special treats for them. Then, when schools reopened, students also participated in working towards the common good by becoming safe-distancing ambassadors.

Through all these projects, students learnt the importance and value of affirming the dignity of the human persons around them, while appreciating their own human dignity; they experienced being Jesus to others, as well as for others.

Thanksgiving for Catholic education

Ever since Catholic Education Sunday was inaugurated in 2017, every year, during the Eucharistic celebration, students in school uniform have participated in the liturgical, music and hospitality ministries at Masses, serving in different parishes around Singapore. This year, however, due to Covid-19, the Catholic education family will only be able to celebrate online in a virtual Mass on Sept 13, 2020. Yet, we are confident that even more family members and friends will join us, united in prayer and in spiritual communion as one

People of God, to remember and pay tribute to the founders of all our Catholic schools; the religious, whose presence has helped uphold the Catholic ethos in school; the invaluable role of parents as school supporters and the primary teachers of their children; our priests and parishes for their spiritual guidance, and, of course, our school leaders and teachers who try their best to role-model Christ in schools.

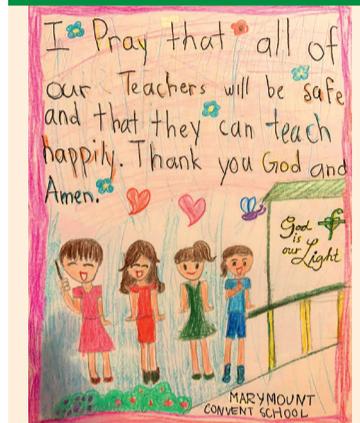
In short, Catholic Education Sunday will faithfully continue to be a celebration of the Body of Christ and its many parts, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our schools with his many gifts. In the words of St Teresa of Kolkata:

“I can do what you can't do, and you can do what I can't do. Together we can do great things!”

Contributed by the Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS)

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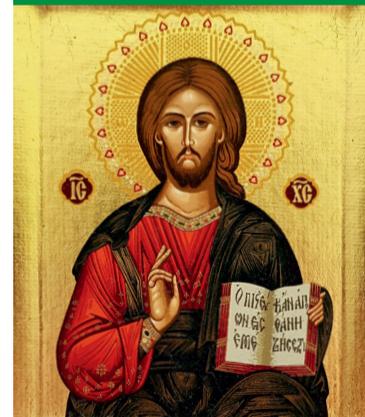
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