

Helping to bring the light of Christ to students

Catholic schools beckon Catholic teachers

Leonard Leow

The thought of teaching in a Catholic school had never crossed the mind of Mrs Amanda Tan in the early days of her career as a teacher.

It was not until a former supervisor asked her if she would consider a move to a Catholic school that the idea was planted in her. This was followed by a process of prayer and discernment before she finally applied to a few Catholic schools.

A Mathematics teacher by training, Mrs Tan is now into her second-year of teaching at CHIJ St Theresa's Convent. It was not a straightforward decision for her; the school was some distance from her home, and this would mean she has less time to spend with her kids at home.

However, the call was very strong and she asked God repeatedly for wisdom and grace to make the right decision. Finally, she decided to take the leap of faith and joined CHIJ St Theresa's Convent. "I prayed and prayed and it seemed clear to me that God had invited me to take up the challenge to teach in a Catholic school," shared Mrs Tan.

Teaching has given her the mission to serve God and to offer help to students who need it. Mrs Tan strongly believes that an important aspect of teaching is to have a mission.

Coming to work every day, she would encounter a sign located outside the school's general office that reads, "Students who are loved at home, come to school to learn. Students who aren't, come to school to be loved." And she holds these words close to her heart and stresses that helping students regardless of their background or faith is the mark of a good Catholic educator.

However, she added that fulfilling this mission is not an easy task. When faced with struggles and challenges, she would constantly remind herself to emulate Christ the teacher who is a merciful and compassionate educator. "Whenever we need to 'correct' or 'discipline' any student, we always do it out of love and dignity for the students," said Mrs Tan.

For her, the role of a Catholic educator is one rooted in Christ-like humility and love. "Our



Mrs Amanda Tan (second from right) together with Archbishop William Goh, Mrs Jenny Leong (Principal of CHIJ St. Theresa's Convent, third from right) as well as teachers and students of St. Theresa's Convent at the Commencement of School Year Mass 2020. Photo: CHIJ St. Theresa's Convent

role as a Catholic educator is to bring the light of Christ to the students."

Being in a Catholic environment provides students with a holistic formation that does not only focus on academic achievements but also shapes them into exemplary individuals with resilient characters and strong morals. "A Catholic school respects the individual because we think that every student is unique and everyone of them is made in the image of Christ," she said.

Every student is valued, and no one is left behind. "We help the students understand their own identity in Christ and that is very empowering because it provides the students with an unshakeable foundation for the future."

To prepare the students to face a society that is filled with distraction, "noises" and vices, is of paramount importance, she explained. While society is volatile and

precarious, a Catholic school environment helps "to anchor the students and provide them with the necessary tools and development to enter the world as adults."

This mission can be fulfilled by Catholic teachers who teach with love and compassion. Just like Christ the teacher, Catholic teachers should not only teach by words but by example and actions as well.

When asked what advice she would give to a teacher considering teaching in a Catholic school, "Just go for it," she replied firmly believing that every Catholic teacher should do a stint in a Catholic school at some point in their career.

"Teaching in a Catholic school helps your vocation grow stronger," she said. Choosing to teach in a Catholic school is a decision she has not regretted, and she invites anyone who is considering teaching in a Catholic school to follow her example by taking that plunge. □

A Call to Teach in a CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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MOE Open Posting Exercise:
The Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) has compiled a list of vacancies in our Catholic schools in 2021.

ACCS will email you the instructions to access this list.



29 June - 24 July 2020