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# A Family Pilgrimage

A family pilgrimage to Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Singapore.

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From earliest times, Christians started the custom of erecting shrines to the Mother of God in various places all over the world. We also dedicated in her honour the patronage of some of our Churches. Down the centuries these churches and shrines have stimulated the piety and evangelization of peoples, families, entire countries. Mary is

always ready to obtain from God the graces that their children need. She continues being faithful to her vocation given by Jesus Christ from the Cross: “Behold your son.”

In Opus Dei, we also learned some practices of Marian piety and place in the Blessed Virgin’s hands numerous intentions. St Josemaría loved all the traditional expressions of Marian Devotion. He was fond of calling Mary “our Lady”. One particular practice that grew as a personal devotion in Opus Dei is the May pilgrimage to a shrine of our Lady. This usually entails going to a Church dedicated to Mary, or simply to a place where there is an image or a shrine of Mary, without having to go far away from one’s country or place. It involves praying one part or mystery of the Rosary while going to a Church or to a shrine of Mary. Another part or mystery (usually the main part or mystery of the Rosary

for the day) is prayed inside the Church or in a shrine of Mary. And the last part or mystery of the Rosary is prayed while leaving the Church or a shrine of Mary.

On May 19, 2018, we decided to gather a group of young fellows and their families to go for a pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Mount Carmel in Bukit Teresa in Kampung Bahru in Singapore. Our meeting point was at St Teresa's Church, and from there we walked towards a chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The chapel is situated on top of a hill and we had to climb a short flight of steps. When we arrived and rang the doorbell, a cheerful Carmelite Sister greeted and welcomed us. We went directly into the chapel, distributed some prayer books for everyone and prayed the Rosary. Earlier on the way to the chapel, we asked some of the boys in our group to take turns in leading the Rosary. We offered each

decade for a special intention. The intention could be for the Holy Father, for the Archbishop of Singapore, for the Prelate of Opus Dei, for families of those in the pilgrimage, etc.

John Paul, a student of Primary 5 in St Joseph Institution and who attends regularly some formative activities in our centre, led one of the mysteries of the Rosary. He and his family are very familiar with this chapel of Mount Carmel since they attend Mass here occasionally. The Sisters in the Convent know the family. In fact, when the Carmelite Sister opened the gate for us, she recognised Remi, Caroline and the 2 children and said right away: “Welcome to pray to Our Lady!”

Maximilian, usually a quiet boy, also led a mystery of the Rosary. His mother held for him the book of prayers while he led the Rosary with

confidence. We were all surprised when he held the microphone and led the Rosary with a clear and loud voice.

We took a group photo before leaving the chapel. We then proceeded by cars towards the residence of the families for a barbeque lunch. Thomas and Deborah offered to host the barbeque in their condominium. It was not the best time to have a barbeque since it was raining. But our spirits were not dampened.

The little children in the group went for a swim and played among themselves, while the parents and adults sat down to eat and to mingle. Adeline, mother of Maximilian who led the Rosary earlier, shared about her work at Montfort school. She helps in the pastoral catholic education in the school. Edmond, her husband, also shared his joy for

having known about the activities we organise for the boys and their families. He told us about his journey to the Catholic faith, many thanks to the formation he received in a Catholic school.

One parent told us how good it was to pray the Rosary as a family, and how beneficial it would be to spread this Marian devotion.

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