

## Spotlight on CHARIS Affiliate

# Clares Missionary

Established since 2010



MaryClaire (back middle) with the Mission Trip members, Paitan Trip 12-19 Nov 2011

St Clare of Assisi's words "Praise God by your very life." is MaryClaire Fan's daily motto. A member of the Secular Franciscan Order, she is inspired to follow Christ in the spirit of St Francis and St Clare of Assisi, devoting her energy and enthusiasm in the service of our Lord.

After many years of volunteer and missionary work, MaryClaire founded Clare's Missionary in 2010, a structured organisation to conduct the work she believes the Lord has laid down for her. She is totally driven by Christ's call to poverty of spirit, social justice and evangelisation. Within her petite frame simmers a maelstrom of ideas, enthusiasm and love for God and for others.

Clare's Missionary's approach is encapsulated in its logo of a sturdy tree with verdant green leaves, symbolising the group's desire to grow and spread the love of Christ over all communities, both overseas and locally, reaching out to the needy through the education of our youth.

Overseas, Clare's Missionary collaborates with the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception in Sabah, East Malaysia, to run English-language programmes for students in Kadazan-Dusun secondary San Damiano Hostel in Kiulu, Santa Maria Goretti Hostel in Binaong and an annual weeklong English camp for hostelites.

Clare's Missionary also contributes to the Sisters' Mission in Paitan, Sandakan. Much of Paitan is remote and accessible through cross crocodile-infested waters and trekking in deep jungle. The intrepid Sisters and volunteers' work is both humanitarian and evangelical - spreading the Lord's Word while helping to build basic infrastructure, provide clean water, supply meals and basic necessities to young children. In line with the educational vocation of the Order, the Sisters have built seven kindergartens and are in the process of building more schools for the children of the indigenous communities, all with the help of volunteers.

In addition, Clare's Missionary also supports Mission Sook in the Diocese of Keningau with mission exposure trips to Nabawan and Sepulot.

In Singapore, Clare's Missionary runs Clare's Enrichment Corner out of a shophouse in Yishun, in line with the concept of 'Christ in the Marketplace'. The location in the HDB heartland was chosen to raise awareness of our Lord in the neighbourhood. Non-Catholics who stop by are effectively taking the first step to know Christ.

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Academic tuition at below market rates are provided to needy children (5 – 16 years). Tutors offer their services for a nominal fee and are qualified teachers who are Catholics as well as non Catholics, sharing the same spirit of service to others. Service and evangelisation are realised through a Sunday Reading Programme and other gatherings including movies based on the Bible at Christmas and Easter.

MaryClaire hopes to attract more members for Clare’s Missionary and more volunteers to join her mission trips. Above all, she would like to offer more formation to all those who sign up for a mission with Clare’s Missionary.

### Did You Know...

Funding for overseas missions comes from sales at Clare Missionary’s Thrift Corner. All mission trips are funded by mission volunteers themselves.



The children of Paitan spend their leisure time running around in a muddy field, swimming in a brown water pond, and take their shower from the nearest river.



At the start of every school term, the good Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception have to physically fetch the children from their kampongs to go to their boarding school, loading them in their sampan and travelling more than an hour through the jungle. On their own, these children will not make the trip to school.



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## 2012 Key Activities...

- **Mission Trips –Sabah**

Currently, the group is supporting the Franciscan Sisters' missionary work in Paitan. Another group of volunteers take part in the weeklong English learning camps organised for the students in the hostels.

Aug 18-24 2012     English Camp in St Maria Goretti Hostel, Binaoung, Sabah

Nov 11 – 17 2012   English Camp in San Damiano Hostel, Kiulu, Sabah

Dec 10 – 16 2012   Mission Exposure in Paitan, Sabah

- **Preparation for Mission Trips**

Welcoming volunteers unable to travel to East Malaysia but are keen to help out through preparing educational materials for the English-language programme for the hostels in Sabah

- **Running of Tuition Programme at Clare's Enrichment Corner**

Welcoming all qualified tutors willing to offer time at a nominal fee to coach and teach primary and secondary level students