

Spotlight on CHARIS Affiliate ICPE

Established in Singapore since 2003



The ICPE Mission was founded in 1985 in Malta, in response to the Church's call for a new evangelization, by a couple, Mario and Anna Cappello. Its mission is to know Christ and to make him known, through the training of Catholics to become effective evangelisers, who will transform the different strata of society with the Good News.

From Malta, the ICPE Mission grew, and 12 years later in 1997, the first ICPE missionaries arrived in Manila at the invitation of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin. In 2003, with the blessing of Archbishop Nicholas Chia, ICPE Mission Singapore began. Besides Singapore and the Philippines, the ICPE Mission is also present in the USA, Italy, Ghana, New Zealand, India and South Korea.

The charisms of the ICPE Mission are worship and evangelisation – offering their own lives in service and worship of the Lord and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

ICPE missionaries live out their call in different ways. In Singapore, the ICPE missionaries, known as Companions, live their vocation in their own homes together with their families, and hold secular jobs. They meet regularly for prayer, fellowship and ministry. The ICPE missionaries in the Philippines live together as an international residential community, praying, serving, sharing life and mission together.

As the needs differ in each country, the response of mission also differs.

Since the Church in the Philippines is 'the church of the poor', the ICPE Mission there reaches out to underprivileged families, adults, youths and children and its vision is to empower them through God's compassionate love. Empowerment happens at many levels. First, and foremost, is to share God's love with each person, to remind them that though they may be forgotten and disregarded by many, including the local authorities, the Lord has not forgotten or abandoned them. In fact, each person is precious in His sight. As they see themselves in the light of how God sees and loves us, they are empowered to make choices in their lives, to reach responsible decisions. The mission reaches out to families who have been relocated from squatter areas in Manila to Montalban, Rizal Province, and to the 'hidden' poor in Tagaytay.

ICPE missionaries reach out to them in spiritual and practical ways, offering faith formation as well as training in skills that will help them find a job, handing out small loans to start a little business and supporting them in livelihood projects. For the children, educational sponsorship is available and medical assistance also, for both young and old. But, overriding all the practical considerations, the missionaries' main objective is to help adults and children find their true identity and dignity in God. By placing their hope in Him, they transcend the challenges of life, drawing strength to move forward with courage and faith. As Amilia succinctly puts it, "We share Jesus, His love, hope and peace rather than simply material things."

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Sharing God's loving presence also means assisting in disaster relief operations as the areas where the missionaries serve are very flood prone. Esther Fong, from Singapore, is the present coordinator in the Philippines. Although it is challenging to live and serve in the Philippines, she says that the Lord has a sense of humour and displayed His great wisdom by sending her there. As always, the Lord brings us to the place where He wants to bless us more than we can bless others.

The ICPE Mission communities in Asia support each other in their different ministries. Due to their proximity, ICPE Mission Singapore and Philippines collaborate closely to share God's word and His love in Singapore and in the Philippines. ICPE Mission Singapore assists in making known the needs of the less privileged and in raising funds to support the ministries there, in particular sponsorships for children in their educational needs and for the annual 'reverse carolling' project in December when groceries and other items of basic necessity are handed out to around 300 poor families. Missionaries from ICPE Mission Singapore and the Philippines regularly go to each other's countries to serve together in projects or retreats. ICPE Mission Singapore also helps to prepare volunteers who are interested to serve in the Philippines.

ICPE Mission's ministries in Singapore reach out to youths, young adults and women. Together with the Archdiocesan Youth Office and ICPE communities from India and the Philippines, they organise the annual intensive School of Witness (SOW) for youths. The SOW is modelled after the ICPE School of Mission, and focuses on discovering one's true identity in Christ, living the community life, and fostering a call to mission to serve others and be a witness.

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Did You Know...

ICPE Mission is a lay missionary community comprising singles, married couples and their children who live out their missionary vocation to know Christ and make Him known, and has received recognition by the Pontifical Council for the Laity as an International Private Association of the Faithful since 2002.



ICPE missionaries evangelise not only through formation, discipleship, training, community building and mercy work, but also through music, mime and dance.



In “reverse carolling”, Singaporeans can join volunteers from other countries and ICPE missionaries in the Philippines in December to visit poor families to share the joy of Christmas. They sing Christmas carols, pray with these families and share food hampers for Christmas.



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2012 Key Activities...



Singapore

- Formation for catechists, young adults and youths,
- Organising Archdiocesan youth events
- Working with youths for the World Youth Day and the Asian Youth Day
- Ministries to women, such as regular bible sharing group and faith formation group
- Periodic retreats and events focussing on true identity, self-acceptance, inner healing, "The Feminine Genius" and "Finding the Inner Child".
- Outreach to poor families and socially disadvantaged children
- Intercession prayer walks and meetings
- Working closely with parish leaders to provide formation and support for the youth ministry and young adult ministry

Philippines

1. Montalban, Rizal Province

Outreach to families to empower them to overcome their poverty and its consequences through ministries to adults, youths, children, medical assistance and education sponsorship.

- The Balikatan Ministry (meaning "shoulder to shoulder" in Filipino) - weekly sessions of faith formation, personal development seminars, micro financing and livelihood projects
- The Seeds of Faith Youth Ministry - weekly sessions include prayer, fun, faith formation and faith-based activities, retreats, birthday celebrations, educational trips and Back to School Mass
- The Medical Assistance Ministry to raise funds to provide families in need of emergency medical assistance and first aid care to children and adults.
- The Children Education Sponsorship Ministry providing funds from sponsors to enable children and youths to attend school and college and support their educational needs.
- Reverse carolling - sharing the joy of Christmas by visiting the homes of less privileged families, singing Christmas carols, and sharing a Christmas food hamper with them.

2. Tagaytay

- Home Visit Ministry to befriend and pray with the families in their barangay ('village'). Every fortnight, they visit the 40 or more families to encourage them in their faith and to evangelise through their friendship.
- Fortnightly Eucharistic Celebration
- Monthly outreach to children between 5 and 8 years of age, through sharing gospel stories and providing basic catechesis through songs, prayer and fun activities.
- Outreach to befriend child street vendors working to supplement their family income and school needs.

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3. Others

- Come and See Program for people who would like to visit and find out more about the ICPE Mission and to discover more of God's call in their life.
- Retreat and Time out for those who wish to spend time with the Lord, to seek his direction or simply to rest and be refreshed.
- Outreach to youths in universities, high schools and parishes, empower them to be leaders and mentor them to be young men and women of integrity.