

# Catholic educators must be imbued with the Word of God: Cardinal Goh

GERAINT WONG

“Can a Catholic school say: we are excellent when it comes to the spiritual formation of our students?” asked Cardinal William Goh in his homily at the Commencement of School Year Mass at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd on Jan 25.

Noting how schools often strive for excellence in various fields, Cardinal Goh said Catholic schools must also serve the mission of the Church and contribute to the building of the Kingdom of God.

He was addressing some 500 school leaders, staff, students, and members of governing entities of Catholic schools at the annual event.

In line with the celebration of Sunday of the Word of God, he emphasised that Catholic educators must be imbued with the Word of God to inspire their colleagues and students to see the goodness and beauty of the Gospel.

“Gospel values must permeate everything that we do, explicitly and implicitly,” he said.

### New principals commissioned

At the Mass, four newly-appointed principals of Catholic schools were commissioned, each receiving from Cardinal Goh a lighted candle representing the light of Christ.



Catholic school newly-appointed principals and vice-principals with (from left) Archbishop's representative in ACCS Msgr Stephen Yim, Cardinal Goh, and ACCS Spiritual Director Fr Edward Seah after the Jan 25 Mass. Photos: VITA Images.

Montfort Secondary principal Mrs Rachel Lee, one of the four, reflected on the homily: “Catholic education, as the Cardinal affirmed, is ultimately about formation – guiding young people not only to

learn well, but to develop compassion and live with faith and purpose. This is a calling I hold deeply, and one I am grateful to live out with our students, staff, and families.”

After communion, 21 newly-

appointed vice-principals were introduced, after which all principals and vice-principals present prayed a prayer of commitment, led by Catholic Junior College principal Mrs Woo Soo Min, chair of the Council of Catholic Schools' Principals.

Cardinal Goh also offered a word of thanks to Dr Koh Thiam Seng, who chaired the Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) till the end of 2025, and introduced the new ACCS chair, Ms Vivienne Lim, to resounding applause.

After Mass, school leaders and board chairs had the

opportunity to mingle with Cardinal Goh and with one another over refreshments.

Three schools – Canossa Catholic Primary School, Holy Innocents' High School, and Catholic Junior College – also shared their best practices in Catholic education.

### One Gospel, one mission

Cardinal Goh's words struck a chord with many who attended the Mass.

Mr John Jegathesan, who teaches at CHIJ Katong Convent, said: “The call by the Cardinal to bring the Word of God to our Catholic students and not to apologise for our Catholic faith inspires me to share the Gospel more with my students.”

Mikayla Lucia Thomas, a Secondary 4 student at St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School, felt Catholic education was very important.

“With proper nurturing, we students are able to go into life imbued with the values of the Gospel,” she said.

Echoing the message of Saint Paul in the second reading, Cardinal Goh concluded his homily with a call for unity among Catholic schools, a theme also highlighted at the Catholic Education Summit last November: “Although we are from different congregations with different charisms, we have only one Catholic mission, we have only one Gospel. All of us must work for the same Gospel according to the charisms that the Lord has given us.” □

**“ Gospel values must permeate everything that we do, explicitly and implicitly. ”**

– Cardinal William Goh



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The four newly-appointed principals (from left) Ms Teo Yen Li (Marymount Preschool), Mrs Rachel Lee (Montfort Secondary School), Mr Aloysius Ting (St Patrick's School), and Ms Genevieve Chye (Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus Secondary).

# Newly-appointed principals share their hopes for the year ahead



**Ms Teo Yen Li**  
*Marymount Preschool*

This is my 38th year as an early childhood professional and I am deeply passionate about my role in this field. When I am not at work, I enjoy travelling and trying new food. I also believe in broadening my knowledge and picking up new skills. At Marymount Preschool, we have named some classrooms after the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. During the daily school assembly throughout the year, the teacher-in-charge will share about the values of these fruits. From this, the children learn about and apply the values for each fruit through the year. We also began 2026 with the theme “thanksgiving”. A Bible verse is shared weekly, and our children learn, understand, and memorise the verse. In this way, the children learn how they can be thankful in school and at home. Thanksgiving is also the theme for this year’s K2 graduation concert.

**Mr Aloysius Ting**  
*St Patrick’s School*

One of my recent hobbies was mobile photography. I made a one-year journey posting daily pictures on Instagram, which gave me an appreciation of seeing things through different angles, and telling stories.



While I’ve moved on, the skills I learned allow me to capture beautiful memories with my wife and daughters. I’ve shared this story with colleagues and students – how small, daily steps can help us go far.

To me, this connects with our Catholic Social Teachings, particularly Human Dignity, Dignity of Work, and Solidarity. Everyone in the school community is a unique individual, with backstories that shape who we are now.

I would like to strengthen the student voice in St Patrick’s, hearing not just from leaders but from all students. Their voices matter in shaping their school experience, and this moulds who they will become in the future.

Serving in a school is a sacred calling. As educators, we strive for our students but also have personal lives which are equally important. I see my role as equipping staff to do their best while providing them time and space to rest, reflect, and bond with loved ones.

Joining St Patrick’s, I’m learning to catch the little moments that matter, from seeing students during recess and CCA, or having little chats with colleagues and parents. All these tell me how someone’s day is going, and God-willing, what I can do to support them.

**Mrs Rachel Lee**  
*Montfort Secondary School*

Moving from CHIJ Secondary, where I served for the past seven years, to Montfort Secondary is a transition both exciting and meaningful for me. I carry with me the cherished relationships and formative experiences from CHIJ as I step into this new chapter within the Montfortian Gabrielite family.



At the heart of our mission is the formation of the whole person. Beyond academic excellence, we seek to nurture values, character, and faith, forming young men who act with integrity, compassion, and a deep sense of responsibility towards others.

As Principal, I see my role as one of stewardship – faithful to the school’s Catholic identity, attentive to the dignity of every person, and committed to fostering a learning community where every student is known, valued, and able to flourish.

This mission is a shared one, realised through strong partnerships among staff, parents, alumni and the wider community, united by trust and a common purpose. I look forward to journeying with the Montfort community, building on 110 years of God’s faithfulness as we continue to nurture the young men entrusted to our care.

Outside of school, I am a mother to two children and two “fur babies” – a role that has given me much patience, perspective, and a sense of humour.

**Ms Genevieve Chye**  
*Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus Secondary*

“Our school is the best school” said my grandmother, the first in my family to benefit from the education provided by the Infant Jesus Sisters. With generations of IJ girls in my family having passed through the gates of the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus at both Victoria Street and Toa Payoh, CHIJ Secondary holds a special place in my family and my heart.



The 10 years I spent in IJ shaped me profoundly. Through the care and dedication of teachers and the lifelong friendships formed, I grew in faith, character, and conviction. These experiences helped mould the person and leader I am today.

As I begin this mission as Principal of my alma mater, I am humbled and in awe of how God has led me to this role. I hope to continue the IJ legacy, ensuring every girl experiences a Christ-centred environment where she is known and loved as a child of God; excels in learning and is nurtured holistically; and is inspired to deepen her personal spirituality and live a life of service.

We can only achieve this together – as one IJ community of educators, administrators, alumni, board members and parents – united in purpose and mission. Together, we will continue to be “Simple in Virtue, Steadfast in Duty”.

Sharing knowledge is not enough for teaching; love is needed. Only then will knowledge be beneficial to those who receive it, in itself and above all, for the charity it conveys.

*Address of Pope Leo XIV to educators  
Jubilee of the World of Education, Oct 31, 2025*

## CHANCERY NOTICE

21 January 2026

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You are hereby notified of the Acts of the Archbishop

### APPOINTMENTS

The Chrism Mass this year will be held on 2 April 2026 (Thursday), 10.30am at Church of Christ the King (2221 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 8, Singapore 569809).

**Rev Fr Terence Pereira, Chancellor**  
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