



Bukit Mertajam, Penang: The need to focus on young people as the next generation to continue the work of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) was the clarion call at the Charis South East Asian Conference at the Church of St. Anne, August 9 to 11 with the theme **“That they may all be one”** - Jn 17:21.

Further to this, there will be a Charis South East Asian training and formation session for youth leaders on presenting the LSS in Kuala Lumpur Nov 15-17, 2019 and Charis Youth Conference in Jakarta in 2020.

More than 500 delegates from the different Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) groups across Asia participated in the first ever Charis conference.

A keynote address was delivered in the form of a “missionary mandate” by the Bishop of

Penang cum Episcopal Advisor of PMST, Rt.Rev Dato Sebastian Francis.

Bishop Sebastian called upon the delegates to take up mission as an imperative, to make it an obligation for every baptized Catholic as the mission was entrusted by the Holy Spirit.

“Our baptism, the laying of hands and the Spirit’s empowerment leads to purification, sanctification, mission and communion; therefore the Holy Spirit through Pope Francis calls us to be missionary disciples of joy, mercy and hope”, Bishop Sebastian said.

Various sessions kept the participants in stitches as they covered topics on leadership, the direction of charismatic renewal and the objectives of Charis.

Charis International moderator Dr.Jean-Luc Moens spoke on why Charis was formed and it’s objectives. He shared that it was the initiative of Pope Francis who recognized the CCR as a “current of grace” to renew the Church and that the testimony of the CCR is more effective when it is a testimony of UNITY and SERVICE. He stressed that Charis International is only a service body of communion and that local renewal groups are under the authority of the respective local bishops.

He challenged all those present to become living saints by working together, and to refer to Charis’ key points given by Pope Francis: promoting baptism in the Holy Spirit, unity of all Christians, service of the poor and those most in need.

In helping the delegates to become more effective missionaries, session on *Love in Action and Servant Leadership* were presented respectively by Charis International Service Communion members, Bro James Shin from South Korea and Andres Arango from the United States.

“True service to the poor is unconditional love, and one cannot follow the Holy Spirit without love and compassion for the poor,” said Bro Shin.

Andres noted that in servant leadership, leaders are servants leading people not to themselves but to Jesus. There is a need for a good leadership succession development plan, just as how Jesus handed over the mission to his apostles after three years of ministry.

Charis NSC member Cyril John from India shared on the topics of *Visionary Leadership and Intercessor's Journey*, in which he hoped all will "live life as an intercessor which can eventually change the destiny of many things."

The conference also learnt on the importance of Life in the Spirit Seminar in addressing vital family and personal challenges through Penang Diocese CCR head Andre Ong.

Besides the sessions, delegates were also given opportunity to participate in open forums discussing Charis' relationship with the CCR and various charismatic communities.

All member countries of ASEAN and delegates were commissioned on the final day with Mass celebrated by Bishop Sebastian Francis.