

THE BEACON



It may be the year of the pandemic,
a season of difficult changes.
But here at St Francis Methodist,
we choose to be thankful
for the many blessings we have received
that were by God's grace alone.

PRINCIPAL MR WONG LOK OON



*"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
Proverbs 22:6*

Mr Wong Lok Oon assumed the office of St Francis Methodist School's Principal/CEO on 2 October 2020. We got up close and personal with Mr Wong to learn more about him.

Which 3 adjectives best describe you?

Motivated, conscientious and relational.

What are your hobbies?

I love catching up with old friends and acquaintances, reading, and watching movies, especially musicals. I've watched *The Sound of Music* 10 times!

Tell us a little about your family.

My wife of 38 years is a homemaker. I have 3 grown-up children: Mark, Charmaine and Caleb.

You have been an educator for 40 years! What started you on this journey in education?

I became a teacher by chance. After graduating from university, my friend asked me if I wanted to take over his relief teaching job. I said okay since I was available. When I started the job, I fell in love with teaching, I enjoyed the interactions, the collaborations with the children, and all that. There was no turning back.

What is your greatest achievement as an educator?

I have encountered thousands of students. There were those who failed, which I was sad about, but thankfully, the numbers were far lesser than those whose results were better than expected. In any case, I was thankful that I was able to help them – and helped the teachers help these students – to be successful and progress to the next level. To me, it didn't matter how long the students take, so long as they are moving forward and not backwards.

What kept you going in the face of challenges?

I'm a teacher. Deep down inside of me, I'm always a teacher. Children development and growth are priority for me. And the verse that keeps me going is Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Why did you take on the role as principal of St Francis Methodist School?

One of the board members asked me if I'd like to take on this role. I had just retired and was all set to enjoy my retirement. I prayed about this offer and was led by peace to step into this role. Although it has been a steep learning curve for me at SFMS, I enjoyed every minute of my time here. I also see this role as an opportunity to further God's kingdom by sharing the Word of God with the children and their parents.

Share one personal goal for 2021.

My personal goal is to fulfill God's plan for me. And I believe my coming here (SFMS) is part of God's plan. My personal mantra is: may God's will be done, not mine.

TERM HIGHLIGHTS



TEACHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Delicious bento sets, sweet delights and gifts galore marked this day and the end of Term 3.

This special treat was arranged to recognise and express gratitude to the academic and corporate staff who have risen to meet the challenges brought about by the pandemic, and have gone beyond the call of duty to extend unconditional care and support to those around them.



Students also heaped appreciation notes and gifts on their beloved teachers. Tribute to the teachers also came in the forms of a Chinese song performance by a talented multicultural team of Primary Programme students (bit.ly/primarysong-teachersday2020), as well as an entertaining video, produced by the students, showcasing the endearing qualities of their favourite teachers (bit.ly/appreciation-teachersday2020).

CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION

The Primary Programme students were treated to an exciting line-up of activities on this day. Based on the theme "Being Yourself", they came to school wearing an attire of their choice that ranged from fun casual outfit to princess costume.

The students kicked off the day with a light workout at their own seat. Energised, the students went on to enjoy the rest of the fun-filled activities, such as an entertaining magic show and an animal-themed short skit, "The Strange Shoes", performed by their teachers. Our new Vice Principal (Primary), Mr Melvin Sim, also took the opportunity to address the students.



TERM HIGHLIGHTS



SFMS 60TH ANNIVERSARY FINALE

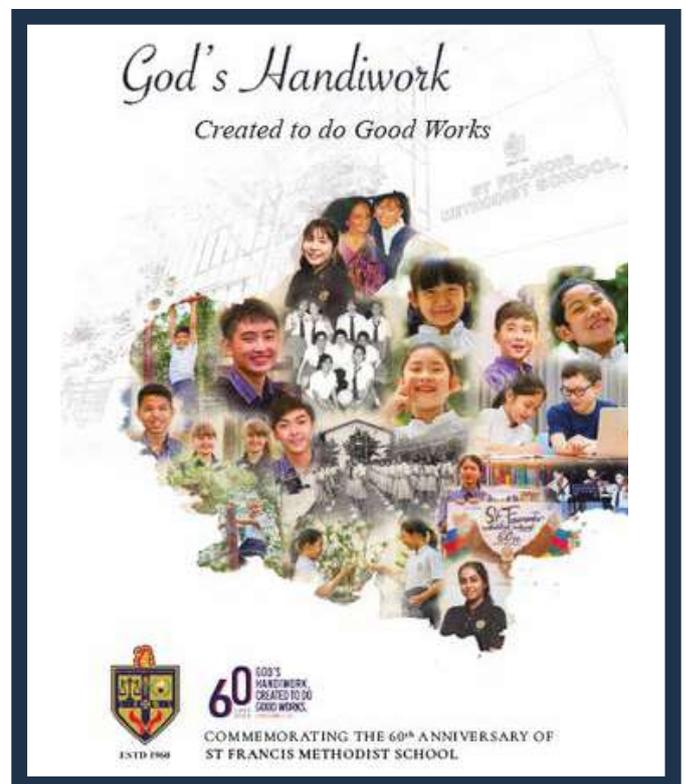
We held a 60th Anniversary Fiesta, comprising of a series of games and workshops, over four weeks. Students and staff can choose to participate in exciting sports matches or get creative with DIY workshops, such as balloon sculpting and cookie decoration classes.

We also organised a Bukit Timah Hill Summit challenge on four different days. 60 students from Years 5 to 12, each wearing a shirt bearing a unique number from 1 to 60, scaled the hill to reach the summit – symbolic of SFMS' progress towards our dreams and aspirations in the last 60 years and beyond with unbreakable grit and courage.



Our year-long celebration culminated in a grand finale on 20 November. This concluding schoolwide event included a video showcase of SFMS' significant milestones from 1960 to 2020 and a "Heart of Gratitude" activity initiated and organised by twelve students who attended this year's Global Youth Leaders' Summit. This meaningful activity aimed to inculcate an attitude of gratitude in our students as well as to appreciate their parents/guardians. During the activity, students wrote and coloured appreciation cards for their parents/guardians.

Each student and staff also received a 60th Anniversary commemorative book. This book showcases stories of the many lives who have been impacted by and have made an impact at SFMS. Other anniversary mementoes included a customised umbrella and keychain. Happy 60th Anniversary, SFMS!



TERM HIGHLIGHTS



GRADUATION SERVICES FOR YEARS 6, 10 & 12

Our heartiest congratulations to our Class of 2020 graduates from Years 6, 10 and 12!

It was also the first graduation service for our pioneer batch of Year 6 students. To adhere to the safe management measures, this year's ceremony was held over a series of sessions at the WOW Hall.

Throughout these sessions, the buzz of anticipation can be felt and pride can be seen on the faces of the graduates and audience alike as beaming graduates strode up to receive their graduation scroll from our Principal, Mr Wong Lok On.

ONLINE CLASSES FOR YEARS 7 & 8

The strict border restrictions implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to unforeseen delays and changes to the approval for entry into Singapore and our enrolment processes. This had affected a group of our newly enrolled students, who were waiting to enter Singapore to begin their learning journey at SFMS.

To ensure these students continue learning in spite of the uncertainties, we ran special online classes for the Years 7 and 8 students in September with a timetable-based Singapore Cambridge Lower Secondary curriculum. These classes, conducted by our teachers, extended to the holiday period and ended on 18 December.

Students who successfully entered Singapore continued with their lessons on campus during this period.



Have a **QUESTION, FEEDBACK** or **THUMBS-UP** for the school or anyone at school? Tell us at:

[bit.ly/HelloSFMS](https://bit.ly>HelloSFMS)

STUDENTS SPOTLIGHT

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the teachers who have taught and guided us throughout our years at St Francis. Especially thanks to Mr Tat Ming, Ms Charmaine, Mr Eric and our Chemistry teacher, Ms Shu Yuen, for helping us in our A Levels. Time flies and it's time to say goodbye to SFMS after spending a long time here. All the good memories have been engraved on my heart. I would like to wish my juniors all the best in the future and strive for the best.

~**Tung Shun Yiu, Neo (Hong Kong)**



Hear from our Year 12 Graduates

I would like to thank all the teachers on the behalf of 12A1, as well as my parents for giving me an opportunity to study in Singapore for the past 12 years. The past 2 years with my classmates have been memorable, such as last year's camp where we did dragon-boating. And a lot of friendships were developed. I hope that we stay in touch after graduation.

~**Elizaveta Moskvina (Russia)**



I would like to thank all my subject teachers, especially our Care Teacher Mr Sng, who knows us the best. Also, I want to say thanks to my school, St Francis. I spent 3 years here and I believe I will keep all these wonderful memories with me forever. And I will remember all the values that I learnt at St Francis: Integrity, Humility, Courage, Respect and Purpose-driven. And they will guide me wherever I go.

~**Li Haoqi (China)**



I have been in SFMS for around 4 years, so there will be a lot of things I will miss when I leave school. Especially the teachers. I really love the teachers here. They are really helpful, friendly, and responsible. I plan to enter a good university and study International Relations. I would like to be a diplomat.

~**Bui Quynh Nhu (Vietnam)**



SFMS is my first school in Singapore. I will miss my friends and teachers. I am planning to enter a university in Singapore or the UK. I am interested in Finance and Computer Science.

~**Zhang Kaibo (China)**



CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Zhao Yu, 8S2

"During the Bible study sessions, I have not only gained friendships, but also grew closer to God. I learnt many things and can see the world from a bigger perspective. I learnt to humble myself, and to be more tolerant, sensitive, and respectful towards others. I thank God for His great love and forgiveness for us, and His protection over us this year."

Sophie Kot, 7S2

"During chapel, devotion and small group sessions, I learnt how to love myself and how to relieve stress, and this helped me to get through the year. Despite being a Catholic, I did not believe in God until this year. I want to thank God for keeping my family and me healthy this year, and for His protection over my life. My prayer for 2021 is that it will be a year of blessings."

Ma Zirun, 7S1

"I learnt a lot of things about God in chapel class. I also learnt about Jesus, like how He rose from the dead three days after he was crucified. I didn't believe in God previously, but now I know there is a God and I pray to Him that my family and I will always be healthy."

Li Yuquan, 7S1

"From this year's chapel class, I truly realized that God loves us very much. He even gave His only Son Jesus to the world to forgive our sins. This year, God blessed my health, and protected me from the COVID-19 virus. I also successfully completed my year of study under His guidance."

Huang Siting, 7S1

"This semester, I learnt how much Jesus did for us. He chose to die on the cross for our sins, and I am grateful to Jesus for taking care of me and for keeping me safe."

Lionel Tristan Yapardhana, 7S2

"I am thankful for the weekly chapels and devotions as I have learnt more about God and grew closer in my relationship with Him. Through the stories of others, we learnt about kindness, forgiveness, and generosity. I also joined the Youth Fellowship IG where we met to share and pray for one another. The fellowship sessions allowed me to practice kindness, such as appreciating the school staff with snacks. 2020 has been an especially difficult year for me because this was my first year living away from my family and I was not able to visit them due to the pandemic. Yet, I am thankful to God for protecting my family and me from the coronavirus, and for the many little things I often take for granted."

Our Students'
Thanksgiving



ACADEMIC CALENDAR



27 November 2020 - 3 January 2021

Year-end School Holidays



4 January 2021

School Re-opens for Year 1 and Years 7-12



5 January 2021

School Re-opens for
Years 2-6

*SFMS wishes
everyone
a Blessed 2021!*



+65 6760 0889



marketing@sfms.edu.sg



www.sfms.edu.sg



St Francis Methodist School

492 Upper Bukit Timah Road
Singapore 678095

Connect with us!



ID: st_francis1960



Purpose-Driven · Courage · Integrity · Humility · Respect

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