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Montfortian Education Charter (MEC) in the Modern Age: Responding to Global Challenges

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Abstract

This article deals with the commitment of the Religious Educators, Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, in Thailand and worldwide to cope with changes in the 21st Century. Though their three-hundred-year education system and pedagogy are founded upon the founder's charism and firm belief in the eternal 'Absolute Truth,' GOD ALONE, the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel acknowledged and responded to constant changes in the world. In response to demands of changes in the 21st Century, 16 years (1992-2008) of revising and updating their educational heritage under the 'Montfortian Education Charter' (MEC) was successful. Due to their sincere commitment to education mission inherited from their founder and God's inspiration, the contents of MEC coincide very well with the latest discoveries of educational guidelines for the 21st Century-Partnership for 21st Century Skill and Wagner's Seven Survival Skills for 21st century students.

Keywords: Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, Montfortian Education Charter (MEC), Education in the 21st century

Introduction

We live in a constantly evolving world of challenges; humans must enhance their capabilities to cope with the changes and problems. Education serves as the most effective means to achieve this goal by enabling individuals to understand the dynamic nature of the world, take action to address issues, and adapt to changing circumstances for personal growth and the betterment of the world. The availability of multiple educational approaches further enhances opportunities for personal development. This article deals with the Montfortian Education Charter (MEC), which is the directive of educational practice and pedagogy of the schools under the Congregation of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel in Thailand and Worldwide.

What is MEC?

Montfortian Education Charter (MEC) is the blueprint of educational practice and pedagogy of Montfortian Education in schools under the Congregation of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel worldwide, including the schools under Saint Gabriel's Foundation, Thailand.

Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel worldwide have spent 16 years (1992-2008) revising the educative mission and vision of the founder, St. Louis Marie de Montfort (1673-1716), to meet the demands of the 21st Century. The Montfortian Education Charter (MEC) consists of eight fundamental principles that offer the guidelines for administrators' practices (comprising Brothers of St. Gabriel), lay collaborators, teachers, and staff in their educational institutions. These guidelines are designed to help individuals operate their schools with creativity and faithfulness to the Montfortian Inspiration in the 21st Century (Montfortian Education Charter, n.d.).

Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel

Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel is one of the Catholic Religious Congregations with a typical mission to carry out Education and formation for the youth according to the founder's Charism. Thus, the Brothers of St. Gabriel (members of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel) are called religious educators by their profession/vocation. St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716), the founder, was a holy priest who lived during a turbulent period of the late 17th Century to early 18th Century. During his early priesthood period, he discovered opposition in society due to the advancement of industrialization, continental commerce, science, and technology. Industrialization and modern commerce facilitated a massive wealth accumulation of the rich, leading to a vast social and economic gap. While the rich had much more than enough to live on, the poor were left hungry. Massive migration from rural areas for job seeking in cities and industrial territories led to broad slum areas. The emergence of modern scientific inquiry/rationality led to a mundane mindset that undermined moral standards/spirituality and challenged dogmatic belief (Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, n.d.).

After Louis Marie de Montfort encountered the Divine Wisdom in early 1700s, he became a person of transformation and gave himself up entirely to GOD ALONE. He then took a stand contrary to the world's ways with great vitality, indomitable courage, and spiritual strength. He chose absolute poverty in the face of radical materialism; powerlessness in the face of a world seeking high position and prestige; deep experience of God in the face of spiritual indifference; a spirit of community in the face of individualism; and intellectual, moral and spiritual depth in the face of moral degradation. Montfort sought to lead the world around him in the ways of such Wisdom by beginning to provide free Education to the mass of people experiencing poverty, the lost, and the least advantaged in 'charity schools' by using his great oratorical skills, collective social action, and writing scholarly volumes, popular tracts, poems, and letters. In the process, he developed a pedagogy of acquiring true Wisdom that guided his spiritual journey and the lives of all those he got in touch with. According to St. Montfort, the purpose of Education is threefold: 1) to learn, understand and love God as Wisdom, 2) to understand and transform oneself in the ways of Wisdom, and 3) to be committed to transforming society in obedience to Wisdom Brothers of Saint Gabriel (n.d.).

To continue the mission he had launched, St. Louis Marie de Montfort founded two religious' congregations, one of the religious women, the 'Daughter of Wisdom' and the other one of priests and brothers named the 'Company of Mary' or the Community of Holy Spirit. Before he died in 1767, Montfort assigned the Brothers in the 'Company of Mary' (the Community of the Holy Spirit) to care for youth education in a charitable school at La Rochelle.

After the French Revolution, during the administration of the seventh Superior General of the Montfort Family, Rev. Fr. Gabriel Deshayes (1767-1841), the Brothers who engaged in Education took the new name, the 'Brothers of St. Gabriel' in 1842. The decree of Emperor Napoleon III authorized their existence and educative mission on March 3, 1853, officially delegated the Brothers to teach all over France Brothers of Saint Gabriel (n.d.).

The Role of Montfortian Education in the World

Montfortian Education started during the lifetime of St. Louis Marie de Montfort. During the 1710s -1880s, their educative mission was confined to France. At the end of the 19th Century, after the beatification of Father de Montfort in Rome by Pope Leo XIII in 1888, their mission expanded to other countries outside France to cover Canada in 1888, Egypt in 1890, Belgium, Gabon, and Djibouti in 1900, and Thailand in 1901. The Brothers of St. Gabriel have provided quality education to almost 500,000 students worldwide in 32 countries and four continents: Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. Their educative mission covers all levels of the schooling system: Kindergarten, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Universities and Colleges, Technical Training Centers, Schools for the physically and mentally challenged, non-formal educational centers, and Social Action Centers. Through their educative mission, the Brothers have created a more just society (Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, n.d.).

Montfortian Education in Thailand

The Montfortian Education in Thailand started during the Rattanakosin era after the first Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel arrived in Thailand (then Siam) on October 20, 1901. This first group consisted of five Brothers. They were Brother Martin de Tours (French), Brother F. Hilaire (French), Brother Abel (French), Brother Gabriel Ferretti (French), and Brother Auguste (Canadian), three months later, the second group of the four Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel arrived. At the beginning of their mission in Thailand, the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel were assigned to teach at Assumption College and later took full charge of the school administration in 1902. In 1920, the Brothers established St. Gabriel College in the Samsen district in Bangkok to accommodate children not admitted to Assumption College. During the 1930s-1950s, the Brothers started five other quality schools in Thailand. They are Montfort College (MC) at Chiangmai, the first school in the northern part of Thailand in 1932; Assumption Commercial College (ACC), inside the compound of Assumption College in 1939 (moved to Sathorn Road in 1943); Assumption College Sriracha (ACS), the first school in the East of Thailand in 1944, St. Louis College Chachoengsao (SLC) in 1948; Assumption College Lampang (ACL), the second school in the northern part of Thailand in 1958. The decade of 1960s was the golden period of the expansion of Montfortian Education in Thailand. The number of schools increased from seven at the end of the 1950s to 14 by the 1960s. They later increased to 18 institutions in 2012. At present, there are 18 institutes of different kinds under the Saint Gabriel's Foundation Thailand. They are 15 schools for basic Education (seven schools in the Central Part of Thailand, three schools in the North, three schools in the East, and two schools in the North-East), one technical school (charity school) in the North-East, one commercial college and one university. (Brothers of Saint Gabriel, n.d.)

The Brothers of St. Gabriel to the Development of Thailand

In 122 years of their existence in Thailand, the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel have provided quality education and produced thousands of graduates for country development. One of the first and most significant contributions of Montfortian Education to Thailand was the opportunity for standard Education for all. The second contribution was the mastery of the foreign language of Thai youth. The students who studied at the Brothers' school learned subject contents and foreign languages, English and French, when these students graduated, they could get good jobs in foreign companies that started operations in Thailand and conducted trade with foreigners. This, in turn, contributed to the economic development of the individuals and the whole of Thai society. Brother F. Hilaire composed the first textbook of the Thai language 'Darun Suksa' in 1902. When the Brothers started Assumption Commercial College in 1939, they brought the art and science of modern trade, finance, shorthand, typing, and typewriter to Thailand. These initiatives prepared the Thai people to come up with global commerce (Brothers of Saint Gabriel, n.d.)

In conclusion, the Brothers' intention is to care of holistic growth and development (care not only for the subject contents but also the physical appearance, dress code, behaviors, morality, and spirituality) led to their students' successes in life. These successes eventually contributed to the lifelong bond between former students, the schools, and the caring Brothers. The economic success of these students, in turn, led to the country's development, economic and social.

Contents of Montfortian Education Charter (MEC)

Montfortian Education is unique in that it operates from the framework of Charism inherited from the founder. It is the Education of the whole person, comprehensive Education for life and the afterlife, and Education for heart and mind. The Montfortian Education Charter comprises eight core principles (technically called Dimensions). These eight core dimensions are derived from the spiritual experience and genius of Montfort's vision, the audacity in the mission of Gabriel Deshayes, the faith, resilience, and enthusiasm of the pioneers, and the courageous new responses to today's world of the members. The eight dimensions are as follows (Brothers of Saint Gabriel, n.d.).

Figure 1*Eight Dimensions of Montfortian Education Charter*

Note. <https://www.stgabrielsfoundation.org/resources/montfort-education-charter/>

A Spiritual Vision

Committing to the belief in "God Alone" and pursuing the Absolute Truth is life's goal and academic mission.

Inclusive Education

Education aims to reach all children and youth, emphasizing those neglected or mistreated in an uncaring society. This includes individuals who are poor, outcasts, disadvantaged, disabled, and marginalized.

Incarnational/ Participatory Methodology

The approach used to cause transformation of the students personally and socially through total self-giving, sharing, involvement, empathy, warm relationship, and participation.

Innovation and Creativity

The consistent pursuit of new methods, new perceptions, and practice provides Education for forming children and the youth to become a person of holistic and integral development and a person who possesses the well-rounded intellectual ability, moral character, and social responsibility.

The Best Interest of the Child

For holistic development, the students' security and happiness are prioritized in all dimensions of the operation of the Montfortian schools.

Partnership and Networking

Utilizing local and international collaboration, Partnership, networking, teamwork, empowering, and resource sharing as evangelical and strategic tools to build solidarity and communitarian spirit and to carry out Montfortian Education to the community.

Respect for Community of Life

The acknowledgment and recognition that all forms of life, including the natural environment, have value and are interdependent. Since all life and natural environment are God's gifts to everyone, they deserve treatment with respect, love, care, and responsibility.

Quest for Excellence

The Montfortian schools strive to promote each student's excellence based on their unique aptitude and talents. The strife for and the possession of true Wisdom measures this excellence.

MEC in the Changing World of the 21st Century

Montfortian Education goes beyond cognitive learning to include the learners' social, emotional, and spiritual development. It involves the learning and teaching process and an environment in the institution that practices and lives the principles of Montfortian Education.

Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation

Montfortian Education requires adopting a holistic approach to teaching and learning that integrates programs, objectives, content, resources, methodology, assessment, and evaluation into one whole system for the holistic development of each particular student. The process goes beyond the classroom to build Partnerships between different members of the education community and to care for the individual difference of each student.

The 21st Century Education

It is a fact that the 21st Century is a period of rapid and tremendous changes in society. The causes of these changes have been attributed to many factors, such as the development of computers, science and technologies, information, communication and transportation technology, globalization, and internationalization. These changes drive industrial society into an information or knowledge society and lead to changes in how people work, learn, live, and interact (Voogt, 2008). Eventually, these changes require individuals to be flexible and adaptable to a changing society and demand a person to acquire new skills needed by the new world. In addition, the need for new talents to meet the demands of the 21st Century also based on their existing environment in public, private, and non-profit organizations. In the education sector, Partnership for 21st Century Skills is the key movement to promote the 21st Century learning to public awareness and implementation. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills was the organization established in 2002 by the initiative of the U.S. government and the collaborative efforts of many public, private, and non-profit organizations, its organization aims to bring the power of technology to all aspects of teaching and learning, to infuse 21st Century skills throughout primary and secondary schools by building collaborative partnerships among education, business, community, and government leaders, [and] to prepare young people to succeed as individuals, citizens and workers in the 21st century" (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills maintains that today's schools cannot avoid the need to respond to the influences of industry and information of the 21st Century. They should blend learning/ teaching contents with real-world relevance by focusing on cognitive skills and affective and aesthetic domains. To help schools achieve such challenging goals, the Partnership has created a framework for 21st Century learning. This framework was developed based on a national poll in 2007. The P21 poll focused on teaching 21st Century skills needed for the country's future economic success. Among the long list of responses in the P21 reports, nearly all responders voted for the skills of critical thinking and problem-solving, computer and technology skills, and communication and self-direction skills. This finding has influenced educational agendas and policies in the U.S. and the world (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

The Partnership for the 21st Century Skills Framework consists of core subjects (English, Reading, Language Arts, World Languages, Arts, Mathematics, Economics, Science, Geography, History, and Government and Civics) as well as interdisciplinary themes (global awareness, financial, economic, business, entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, health literacy, and environmental literacy). These subjects and themes center on three core skills: life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, and information, media, and technical skills. Additionally, they focus on developing 7C skills, which encompass critical thinking and problem-solving; communications, information, and media literacy; collaboration, teamwork, and leadership; creativity and innovation; Computing and ICT literacy; career and learning self-reliance; and cross-cultural understanding (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

Tony Wagner (2008) revisited the 21st Century Skills concepts proposed by the Partnership for the 21st Century Skills by conducting interviews with 100 US leaders of top organizations. His discussion focused on the questions: what skills will our students need to get—and keep—a good job in the new global economy? And what skills are required for citizenship today? Are these education goals in conflict? After systematically reviewing the responses and other research on the workplace skills most needed, Wagner (2008) found that there are seven essential skills that people of the 21st Century need for quality survival. (Wagner, 2008) The seven survival skills are (1) critical thinking and problem solving, (2) collaboration across networks and leading by influence, (3) agility and adaptability, (4) initiative and entrepreneurialism, (5) effective oral and written communication, (6) accessing and analyzing information, and (7) curiosity and imagination (Wagner, 2008).

The Integration of MEC and 21st Century Education

Though Montfortian Education is based on the firm belief in God (the Absolute Truth of Christianity), the Brothers keep responding to changes. They and their lay collaborators have consistently evoked initiatives to define and revise the Montfortian Education inherited from St. Louis Marie de Montfort, the founder, and Father Gabriel Deshayes (co-founder) to meet the demands of time. Realizing the rapid change of the 21st Century, Bro. Rene Delorme, the then Superior General of the Montfort Brothers in Rome, called the representatives of the members of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel and lay collaborators worldwide for successive Montfortian Educational meetings and workshops to revise their educative spirit to meet the demands of the 21st Century. Consecutive meetings and workshops were conducted periodically years of 1992, 1996, 2003, 2004, 2008 in many countries as Vijavada, India;

Bangkok, Thailand; Special Commission Meeting in Rome; Bangalore, India; and Delhi, India respectively. These were sixteen-year of global collaborative and effort that eventually developed into the 'Montfort Education Charter (MEC), afterward regarded as a standard guideline for operating their educational institutions creatively faithful to the Montfortian Inspiration. It is a guiding light that directs their schools to respond to the demands and situation of the 21st Century.

MEC and Modern Learning Theory

According to the writer, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) is MEC's most adequate educational theory because it involved all learning factors, learning process, learners' mental state, and social context into consideration. Albert Bandura, a Canadian psychologist and a professor at Stanford University, developed this theory in the early 1960s in response to Behaviorism. This theory is more suitable than the classical learning theory of Behaviorism in that it considers the influences of others' behaviors on learners' learning. Bandura (1977) wrote that "of the many cues that influence behavior, at any point in time, none is more common than the actions of others." (Bandura, 1977) Bandura developed his Social Learning Theory on the assumption that learners learn from their interactions with other people in a social context. When people observe others' behaviors, they assimilate and imitate the observed behaviors. Assimilation refers to the state of being influenced to change the meaning of the observed activities, which could sometimes (not always) lead to behavioral change. Imitation is a reproduction of observed activities. (Bandura, 1977) The level of assimilation and imitation was associated with the nature of observed behaviors—positive or negative ones, rewards, and punishment included in the observed behaviors. SLT posits that people learn from one another via Observation, Imitation, and Modeling. Key concepts of Social Learning theory are: Firstly, people learn through observation, known as observational learning; Secondly, learning is internal. The mental state, also called reinforcement, is a crucial factor for learning. Finally, learning is followed by a modeling process, and learning does not necessarily lead to a change in behavior. Bandura proved his social learning theory by carrying out a famous experiment known as the Bobo Doll experiment in 1961 (Bandura, 1977).

Process of Bandura's Learning Theory

Bandura identified four necessary conditions for a successful modeling process. They are—attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation.

Attention. A person will first learn when they pay attention to the model and its behavior. The more striking, prestigious, and attractive the model or the behavior, the more attention the model will likely gain.

Retention. A person will learn when they remember/retain the observed behavior the model has performed.

Reproduction. Stage of reproduction happens after the attention and retention. A person is replicating the action/ behavior that the model has demonstrated. The greater attention and retention, the better the observer can reproduce/ replicate the act.

Motivation. This is the stage that a person wishes to demonstrate/ replicate his/her own learned behavior. A person's motivation is closely related to reinforcement

and punishment. Therefore, different person will respond to his/her own observed behavior respectively.

The Implication of Bandura's SLT to Learning and Teaching According to MEC

Montfortian educator should remember that many daily life behaviors are learned through modeling. Montfortian educator can create a learning environment to motivate the students to retain what they have been taught through demonstration, using effective media, and allowing them to experiment with what they have learned. Moreover, Montfortian educator should act as a good role model for the students to emulate regarding social manners and morality, to assume teaching roles, role models, and being inspirers. It is said that the “mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates, and the great teacher inspires”.

MEC and School Leadership

Leadership plays a vital role in driving Education to success. There are many leadership theories (styles) available in academic literature. According to the writer, as per MEC, three leadership theories are essential for Montfortian Education. They are Transformational Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, and Servant Leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership is one of the most appropriate leadership theories for Montfortian Education because the most fundamental purpose is the holistic development of the learners through learning and teaching, students' formation, and transformation. Therefore, one of the essential duties of Montfortian educators is to transform students into more complete people. Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders. The theory was further developed and modified by Bass and Avolio (1994). (Jung & Sosik, 2002) for use in organizational management. Transformational leadership is the leadership style that goes beyond incentives for performance. This kind of leadership mobilizes people to work to achieve one's own and organizational mission and goals by developing and encouraging them intellectually and creatively and transforming them to be part of the organization. (Conger, 2002) Transformational leaders set a clear vision for their organizations (Trofino, 2000), motivate people by inspiration, and persuasion, generate excitement to move forward to a high level, and create clear common organizational goals (Kirkman & Taras, 2011). Transformational leader drives their people to overcome obstacles by assisting them to look at old problems from a new perspective, arousing excitement and inspiring them to put out extra effort to achieve goals and extraordinary achievement (Conger, 2002).

Components of Transformational Leadership

Bass and Avolio (1994) identified four components of the transformational leadership style. They are:

1) Idealized Influence. The degree to which the leader displays admirable role models, most probably ethical behaviors that motivate the followers to align their value set with that of the leader and emulate the leader's good examples. These role models instill pride, respect, trust, loyalty, and faith in the followers.

(2) Inspirational Motivation. The degree to which the leaders articulate a vision that motivates and inspires their followers to pursue higher standards and to achieve optimal goals.

This type of leaders uses firm and engaging communication to convince their followers to believe in their ability to succeed and to drive their followers to invest more and more effort in their tasks for success.

(3) Intellectual Stimulation. The degree to which the leaders challenge followers' assumptions and values set to drive them to think in a new way. Transformational leader encourages their followers to take risks to express their creativity and foster an environment that nurtures constructive and creative thinking. This leader stimulates their followers to view unexpected situations and problems as opportunities to learn new things, overcome them, and strengthen them.

(4) Individualized Consideration. The degree of attention the leader gives to each follower and the whole group. This type of leader cares for their followers' needs and development, at the same time he/she acts as a mentor or coach that advises on the further growth of their followers concerning their differences.

The Implication of Transformation Leadership on Montfortian Educators According to MEC

The idea of Transformation Leadership reminds Montfortian educators that they must work to transform their students into better people. There are four strategies that they can use to achieve the transformation goals of their students. First, they have to live the life of a good role model. This is a magnet that draws attention and retention from their students. Student will feel pride, respect, trust, loyalty, and faith in their teacher. It is a compelling motivation for student to emulate. Second, Montfortian educator should reinforce and inspire student to set clear goals of one own life and the belief to succeed. Third, Montfortian educator should use their effective communication skills to challenge the students to think out of the box, courage to think and act in a new way, and be creative and innovative. This educator has to help the students see problems and obstacles positively by turning the problems or obstacles to the opportunities rather the threats. In addition, to lead the student in learning new things and using one own capability to overcome the difficulties. Fourth, Montfortian educator should give loving care to each student and the whole group/ class. In conclusion, educator who provide students with advice to discover themselves, overcome their problems, and pursue their dreams with respect to their differences, these are the concept idea of Montfortian educator.

Spiritual Leadership:

Spiritual Leadership is another adequate leadership theory (style) for Montfortian Education because one the most fundamental purposes of Montfortian Education is to encourage each learner to pursue The Absolute Truth according to their religious belief. Fry (2003), the founder of spiritual leadership, writes that the gist of spiritual leadership is the "principles or the animating forces that a person believes in" (Fry, 2003). These principles are the animating forces comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that intrinsically motivate each person and others (Fry, 2003). Blackaby and Blackaby (2001) comment that this leadership style also includes other values such as active participation, love, tolerance, satisfaction, responsibility, honesty, and harmonious feelings toward oneself. These values enable the followers to behave ethically, be less likely to worry, and be more productive, flexible, and creative.

The dominant characteristics of spiritual leadership can be summarized as follows: (1) It is a value-oriented leadership style (Chen & Li, 2013). (2) It focuses on intrinsic motivation that incorporates vision, hope/faith, genuine care, concern, appreciation for oneself and others, and altruistic love. (3) It focuses on transformation for achieving continual and sustainable successes. (Fry, 2003; Torkamani et al., 2015) (4) It taps into the highest level of human needs, spiritual needs. (5) It responds to all dimensions of human life—the physical, intellectual, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements of human interactions. (Fry, 2003). (6) It opens to utilizing approaches higher than concrete rewards and punishment to influence others for positive and humane results. (7) It focuses on creating a common higher purpose in life that enables people to discover meaning and make a difference.

The Implication of Spiritual Leadership on Montfortian Educators According to MEC

The idea of Spiritual Leadership reminds Montfortian educators that they should encourage their students to have a firm commitment to the Absolute Truth in each one's religion and respect the Truth of different religions. Montfortian educator also recognize the non-religion claim that “Nature is their unquestionable Absolute Truth with respect”. The firm commitment to each one's faith develops a shared vision on the most fundamental issues of life—the fundamental origin of one's life, the purpose of life, the meaning of living a life, the meaning of suffering, pain, and disappointment, and the end of life. A firm commitment to one's religion supports acts of altruistic love. Altruistic love enables the development of a sense of wholeness and harmony (solidarity) among human beings. When a person experiences a sense of solidarity, they can show care and concern and behave in ways that promote the well-being of others without expecting anything in return. This feeling creates an appreciation of self and others as brothers and sisters.

Moreover, altruistic love embraces multiple moral values such as sharing, charity, patience, kindness, lack of envy, forgiveness, humility, selflessness, self-control, trust, loyalty, truthfulness, unconditional love, unselfishness, and benevolent care. A firm commitment to the Absolute Truth fosters a higher stage of moral development. To conclude, having a strong conviction in the existence of Absolute Truth, even without physical evidence, can cultivate hope and faith. This conviction provides a clear vision of where one is heading, how to overcome feelings of hopelessness, and the determination to confront obstacles. Thus, sincere commitment to one's own religious belief enables a person to endure hardships and persevere through uncertainty. This steadfast belief also motivates purposeful efforts toward achieving goals (MacArthur, 1998).

Servant Leadership:

Servant Leadership is another adequate leadership theory (style) for Montfortian educators because the factors of servant leadership align with the most fundamental commandment of Christianity—the command of love. (Matthew 22:36-40) The best expression of love is to love one's fellow people as brothers and sisters. Moreover, the factors of servant leadership are clearly mentioned in the New Testament in Mark 10: 43-4. In John 13: 4-5, Jesus gave the best example of a leader as a servant to his disciples. In John 13:13-15 Jesus Christ reminds his disciples that He has given them an example so that they emulate what He has done to them. Greenleaf (1977) first introduced the concept of servant leadership in his essay 'The Servant as Leader,' published in 1970. The central idea of servant leadership is that a "great leader should first serve others and that this simple fact is central to his or her greatness: true leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a desire to help

others" (Spears, 1995). The leaders are those who "serve first" (Greenleaf, 1977, 1978). Leaders need to "define and strive to meet the needs of others." Servant leadership regards leaders as servants of their followers. This type of leadership places the interests and needs of followers before those of the leaders and focuses on followers' personal development and empowerment. The leaders facilitate followers to achieve their mission, growth, success, and accomplishment.

The Implication of Servant Leadership on Montfortian Educators According to MEC

Jennings and Stahl-Wert (2003) and Bowman (2005) propose five pragmatic principles of servant leadership that Montfortian educators can apply to their dealings with students. First, to serve and second to lead, this means serving students' needs and interests and unravel students' strengths, talents, and passions. Montfortian educator need to help students overcome their problems and find solutions to move forward. Third, Montfortian educator should establish a zone of approximation for students' performance. Students must be challenged to meet a higher standard to attain growth and development through their Education. Fourth, Montfortian educator should help students discover their weaknesses and build their strengths. Fifth, Montfortian educator should put teachers at the bottom of the pyramid to unleash students' energy, excitement, and talents (Bowman, 2005). Montfortian schools should bring about significant positive social change and social justice through collaboration among school administrators, teachers, and students. The school should try to build community within and outside the school and commit to the growth of students through integrating educational programs and activities.

Characteristics of Servant Leaders in Montfortian Schools

Crippen (2004) and Spears (2005) identified ten characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and community-building. Referring to Montfortian educator, these characteristics mentioned can be applied and dealing with the students. First, listening to students intently with deep commitment. This means listening to both what is said and what is not said (Frick & Spears, 1996.) This listening is more than the attempt to hear; it is a touch with someone's inner voice to understand his/her body, spirit, and mind. Second, having empathy for students. Empathy means understanding and recognizing students' special and unique needs. (Spears, 1995) Third, being awake (awareness) to students' problems/suffering/wounds (Spears, 1995) through observation and empathetic listening. Fourth healing. Montfortian educator should find an opportunity to help students out of problems and heal their wounds and sufferings. This is a powerful force for students' transformation. (Spears, 1995) The fifth and sixth characteristics are persuasion and conceptualization. Greenleaf (1977) remarks that leadership by persuasion leads to change more conveniently than coercion because it is a change caused by a consensus. Spears (2004, p. 9) writes that conceptualization (sixth characteristic) is the ability to "think beyond day-to-day realities." Teachers have to enable students to foresee the results of their behavior. Seventh, the ability to predict the future or foresight. Teachers have to help students understand the lessons from the past and the present realities and predict the future. (Spears, 1995) Eighth is stewardship. Block (1993), cited in Spears, 2004 describes stewardship as

"holding something in trust for another." Spears (2004) gives further remarks that teachers, as servant leaders with stewardship spirit, have "a commitment [the ninth characteristic] to serve the needs of others" and to help them grow. Tenth the last one is community building. Montfortian educator should facilitate community building by providing service, investing financially, and caring about one's community. By building a community, teachers can have more influence toward students, and their leadership can be more pervasive (Crippen, 2004).

Conclusion

Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe that we live in a 'VUCA WORLD,' the world in constant situations of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. VUCA World demands humans to be ready to change and adapt before they are required to change for survival. Jamais Cascio (2023), an American anthropologist and futurist, describes that the COVID-19 pandemic drives people into the BANI WORLD, which is brittle, anxious, non-linear, and incomprehensible. Cascio adds that in the BANI world, people who want to live quality life must leave their comfort zone and be proactive, sensitive, and adaptive. They should be ready to unlearn and relearn; in other words, they should be able to develop their capability unceasingly. Education as the best way to create human capabilities will enable them to adjust themselves to cope with changes in the world and resolve world problems. Though Montfortian Education is based on a firm belief in God, the Absolute Truth in Christianity, the Montfort Brothers are open dynamism of the world. The Brothers of St. Gabriel worldwide keep revising and improving, their long history educative spirit inherited from the founder. The current Montfortian Education Charter (MEC) is the outcome of their sixteen-year of efforts to meet the demands of the 21st Century. Though MEC was developed separately a few years before the development of the 21st Century Skills Framework and Wagner's field survey, the conclusions of these documents are closely related among them. This proves their sincere reflection on real-world situations. In addition to the openness to make changes to meet the world's demands in the 21st Century, Montfortian Education welcomes updated educational theories and leadership styles that have been proven more effective in the business and private sectors. This is why Montfortian Education has been one of the most effective education administrations and pedagogy for the holistic development of human beings.

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