

CANORITA 2011



While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have
her baby... [Luke 2:6]

Raphael was 27 years of age when he painted this memorable icon. His knowledge of antiquity is evident in this icon. The sandals of the Virgin are exactly the kind worn in the first century of the Christian era. Raphael also turned to antiquity for the format of his painting. Coins and medals bearing imperial images were round and so this work suggests an official portrait. By positioning the holy family in a vast and empty field, he infuses the painting with an aura of spaciousness and timelessness, as though these handsome creatures will be preserved as he has depicted them for an eternity.

The Alba Madonna by Raphael, Italian, 1483—1520

Dearest Sisters, Lay Canossians & Lay Partners in mission,

With so many natural disasters happening around us, one may be tempted to run away to a monastery, away from the pain and anxiety of living, the demands of globalization, the hectic hustle, the demanding family responsibilities of Christmas-time. Then we would have a holy Christmas. But we would forget the **lesson of the Incarnation**, of the enfleshing of God—the lesson that we who are followers of Jesus do not run from the secular; rather we try to **transform** it. It is our mission to make holy the secular aspects of Christmas. And we do this by **being holy people**—kind, patient, generous, loving, laughing people—no matter how maddening is the Christmas rush.

We can **make Christmas a saving event by spending time to emulate Mary**, the Christmas Woman. Luke's Gospel account of the Christmas event is full of activity and yet, in the middle of the frenetic action, here is this woman wrapped in mystical silence...She demonstrates the necessity of a quiet place within ourselves at Christmas-time—that place where we are most ourselves in relation to God. It is a place of silence, not because it is untouched by all the activity of our lives, but because it is capable of wonder. Every prayer begins with silent wonder before it turns to words. Our first response to God is dumbstruck awe at who he is and what he has done for us.

Perhaps the hardest thing to remember about Christmas is this. It celebrates the incarnation, not just the Nativity. The incarnation is an on-going process of salvation, while the nativity is the once-for-all-historical event of Bethlehem. We do not really celebrate Christ's 'birthday,' remembering something that happened long ago. We celebrate the stupendous fact of the incarnation, God entering our world so thoroughly that nothing has been the same since. And **God continues to take flesh in our midst**, in the men and women and children who form his body today. And the birth we celebrate is not just the past historical event but Christ's continuing birth in his members, accomplished by the power of the Spirit through the waters of baptism.

What we celebrate is our redemption in Christ and the transformation of all creation by the presence of the divine in our midst. Let us take time to reflect on the Christmas version of 1Corinthians 13. The family can be my immediate family, my Religious family or my parish/work community.

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny balls, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and snowflakes, attend the Advent liturgies and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to listen to the older person. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way. Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.



May you find in Jesus
the promise of everlasting hope,
the gift of divine love,
the Light of wondrous peace

Christmas

Blessings to You and your family!

Affectionately, **Sr. Marilyn**

Canossian Alumni Dinner



Sr. Marilyn with Sylvia Goh (centre), president of the Canossian Alumni



Sr. Janet and Alumni members .



Sr. Magdalene Tan, the veteran who graced the occasion and was so happy to meet all her ex pupils.



Br. John D' Cruz animated the **Province Assembly** in April



Sr. Linda facilitated the **Discernment Process** for the new Provincial Council



Prof Yu & Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon hosting a dinner at Jln Merbok for the Sisters

Jubilee..... a great blessing

I would never have thought that I would ever celebrate my Silver Jubilee together with Srs Marcellina and Rose. To the many who knew me, this may come as a surprise because they would have heard of my story, hence, what a miracle! Why did I say this? It was because of what I had decided to do earlier. There was a plan to move to another form of serving God as I felt I would serve God better in a way that is more life-giving. However, after my six months in the Philippines to find if God's plan was in alignment with mine, God showed me otherwise. I had a beautiful experience of what it meant to be Life-giving - it was and has to be an experience of a deeper relationship with God now and always.

The Jubilee itself was indeed a confirmation of that relationship with the Lord. It was a great blessing to be convinced of God's will for me and his faithfulness and that he had been with me throughout my journey and my constant search to give meaning in all that I have chosen to be and live meaningfully.

Before and during that period of the Jubilee celebration, there were much recall and reflection. I could not help racing through the past journey, of events and the many people who have touched me and have contributed to who I am today.

Indeed I was soaked with gratitude to have been so much loved by God. He has called me by my name and has brought me up to this day. I am grateful to my biological family, they have taught me how to love by their trust, care and unfailing love for me and to the Sisters of my religious communities who have believed in me, loved and supported me all these years, their understanding and acceptance, affirmation as well as by their forgiveness. By all these I have caught the most important meaning of what it means to love even if it hurts.

Last but not least, to the many relatives and friends who have continually enthused me to live meaningful life, thus have helped me to serve joyfully wherever I would be. To you all I must say with heartfelt thanks and gratitude for having influenced me in my life journey to continuously follow Him wherever He leads me. Thank you, thank you and thank you again.

Sr. Jane Chong

The three Jubilarians.....



Sr. Jane and her mother



The occasion was graced by His Grace, Archbishop Nicholas Chia and Archbishop Emeritus Soter Fernandez.

Combined Local Leaders Meet in S'pore

The combined province event at Aloha proved once again to be a healthy way towards bonding Malaysia and Singapore in genuinely Canossian spirit of communion and unity, something that our Foundress said would make her feel 10 years younger when she learned of the "union of hearts between the Houses". Yes, there may be "hiccups" on the political scene, but we truly enjoyed and treasured the hours we spent together, sharing our faith stories, enjoying delicious home-cooked food or a walk by the beach.

I was struck by an article shared by Sr. Ros, about the way we can heal our world by simply focusing within and "evoking the spirit of love to heal within me what was creating the outer circumstance". This way, I take responsibility for whatever is happening out there, "simply because it is happening in your life". It took some time for me to deepen this... to embrace the pains and disasters around the globe and to be part of the healing process, silently saying "I'm sorry" and "I love you". I'm still learning to be more aware of the power of this "loving" process.

Sr. Marilyn

The two days were a good break away, of relaxation and recharge as a group.

Sr Rosalia's input on "CHANGE" was solid wisdom to put into practice first of all by myself if I want to be what God wants me to be.

The beginning liturgy "Look deep into the well within" (by Sr Gerry of SJH) and concluding liturgy of Faith and Water (by Sr Theresa) sums up my experience of these days as

WELL WATER –

Water

Enriches us to be

Living and

Life-giving.

We are all like water, being

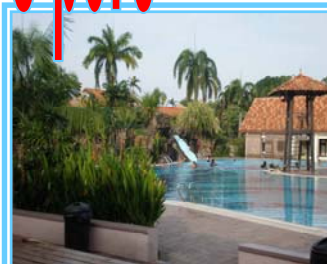
Affirmed these days,

To

Empower, and

Reach out and Refresh others in our communities and people we meet.

Sr. Louisa



.....a place that is truly 'Hawaiian' in its beach and water vicinity. Though I did not swim, I was able to enjoy the sea breeze and water sounds. It was a good break from the usual 'convent' life-style.

I was touched by the warm welcome given to us by the St Anthony's Canossian Primary School and to see that there is still much good that our Canossian schools can do even without teaching Sisters.

Truly the Lord is full of kindness and mercy! **Sr. Esther Thomazios (Malacca)**



We need to learn to relax and just enjoy the simple goodness and beauty around us and not be too preoccupied with work that we miss out appreciating truly what is essential for our well being.

Sr. Christie Ho (Malaysia)

... in Malacca

The Combined Local Leaders meet was held in Malacca, from 16th-18th September 2011.

Our facilitator was none other than Bro John D'Cruz FSC, who needs no introduction. As always. Brother inspired us, challenged us, informed us, providing space and time for reflection and sharing.



Here are some insights we gleaned from Bro John's presentation.

To be fully human is to be spiritually alive to what is happening around us.

"Ritual" is one way in which we pay attention, take time to be mindful, and so become more spiritual. It arises from our present stage and age of life.

Brother John gave us some soul-searching questions to reflect on:

- Do I feel I am not essential in what I do?
- Have I become routinized into a ministry?
- Looking at the present, I ask myself, "Who am I as a Sister?"
- Who is the person I want to become?
- In all my relationships am I a more loving person?

The purgative role of ritual is necessary for our prayer to be real; for us to see Christ in us; to see things as Christ sees; to believe, hope and love as Christ did.

Brother John also introduced to us the wisdom of the sages found in "The Tibetan Art of Living", by Christian Hansard.

"The purpose of any spiritual practice, ethical framework, or religious belief should be to help us enjoy the lives that we have. ...

Start by aiming to experience everyday life in as open and direct a manner as possible. From the moment you wake to the moment you sleep, allow every experience to come to you without judgment. The key is acceptance."

And we took this sound advice!

We not only gratefully received these moments of profound learning; we also fully welcomed the experiences of walking through the super modern shopping malls, eating out and enjoying the delicious food, shouldering our way through Jonkers Lane.

The bi-annual combined Meet for Provincial and Local Leaders has always been enriching and uplifting for body, mind and spirit.

Thank you dearest Sister Geraldine and Sisters of Malaysia for your warm, loving welcome and care.

Sr. Rosalia

My first steps in postulancy

My entry date into the **Canossian Postulancy** was on **8th September 2011** in **Yangon, Myanmar**.

I joined the small community in the presence of three Canossian Sisters, Marion, Angela and Jacqueline. Another searcher, Mandalena was also present on that God-filled morning at Lauds.



Left : Mandalena, Sr Jacqueline, Sr Marion, myself and Fr Peter Kim

Before I entered into postulancy, I did a three-day retreat. It was very helpful for me. I was not sure whether my call came from God or that it just came from myself.

Sr. Marion gave me some bible passages about God's calling and I meditated on the passages during the retreat. Now I am sure that God called me to be with him in the way of the Canossian style of living.

On the entry day, I felt I am one step closer to God as a member of our Canossian big family while one step further from my family, friends and my past life styles. My heart was very quiet with a little fear as I did not know what the future would be like, yet, I felt that I was ready to say "Yes" to God's Will because I know that He loves me and will be faithful in His love for me. In return, with grateful heart, I was ready to embrace His invitation to religious life.

I was given a medal "Our Lady of Sorrow." I accepted it as a model for my life, Mary Mother of Love at the foot of the Cross. This also reminds me that I am on the way to our Father through Jesus Crucified.

I also received gentle hugs from Sr. Marion, Sr. Angela, Sr. Jacq and my friend, Mandalena. I also received greetings of welcome to the Canossian family from Sr. Marilyn, Sr. Janet and Sr. Jessica. Some other Sisters from Singapore also sent me cards and gifts on that special morning including Fr. Peter Kim SJ who kindly celebrated the Eucharist for me that morning.

I would like to thank all of them and would like them to know that I appreciate their love and kindness. May the Lord Jesus Christ's Love and Peace be with them always.

As the days pass, I am beginning to realize that living in a formation house is not as easy as I thought and not as difficult as well. However, I can say that it is completely different from living a worldly life which I have led for the past 30 years.

Maria Jia Awn



Searchers posting with Mgr Eugene Vas, Sr Jacqueline and Sr. Marion .



Lay Canossians Echo session in Taunggyi led by Lay Canossian Antonia together with the Sisters



Lay Canossians Echo session in Taunggyi led by Lay Canossian Antonia (far right 2nd row) together with the Sisters.

PROJECT:
Construction of a Boarding House
for poor children and Training Centre for the educa-
tors in Myanmar.



Work in Progress on the building which is to be opened on Dec 6, 2011. Sr Angela (centre) supervises the project. The roof is finally put up.



70 years of loving service

20th August 2011 was a joyous day indeed with **Canossa Convent and Canossaville Children's Home** coming together to celebrate **70 years of loving service**.

Following a Eucharistic Celebration at St. Stephen's Church, the Home opened its doors to guests which included our Guest of Honour Madam Halimah Yacob, Minister of State, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), officials from MCYS, agencies, schools and corporations and many other benefactors, donors, volunteers, residents, students and staff (past and present). We were heartened by the words of our Guest of Honour Madam Halimah Yacob when she cited Canossaville Children's Home as a positive model of the many helping hands approach.

Guests were welcomed with an interactive Drum Circle performance with many being encouraged to participate. Immediately after, guests were treated to a short program which included singing, a circus performance and a hip-hop dance performance choreographed by a former resident and performed together with current residents.



It was a celebration of life, love, resilience and blessings.

A celebration of lives

Many lives have been touched since the Home was founded in August 1941. We continue to touch the lives of those who pass through our doors.

A celebration of love

The Canossian Sisters extended unconditional love to those who were in need and today supported by many others this outpouring of love continues.

A celebration of resilience

We strive to build resilience in our children to that they are able to overcome life's challenges and to contribute positively to society.

A celebration of blessings

We have been richly blessed by the generosity of benefactors, corporate and individual donors, volunteers and so many others. This has given us 70 good years and we have faith that this will continue.

In all we received more than 500 guests on that balmy Saturday afternoon. The weather held up despite some threatening clouds. Our staff, supported by many volunteer groups had worked tirelessly to present a warm and homely feel to the celebration and in this they exceeded all expectations. It was heartening indeed to see our visitors wander around the grounds and catch up with one another while enjoying the retro-style food and entertainment.



We had some very real concerns – the weather, the sound system, the performance, the food and many other items. As we all know, anything that can go wrong will go wrong. But God prevailed. God's presence was very real in the weeks leading up to the celebration and during the celebration. We trust that God will continue to be with us as we journey forward in our service to the children and their families.

Note: Archbishop Nicholas Chia who was to preside over the Eucharistic Celebration was unable to make it due to a fall. We thank Father Johnson Fernandez for stepping in at the last minute. Our best wishes to Archbishop Nicholas Chia for a speedy recovery.

Sr. Rose Low

Sessions with Fr McGuire (May 20 - 22)



Fr McGuire (extreme left) shared on Growth towards Truth in Self, firstly, to the 5 Singapore and 2 Malaysian Sisters who had been to the CCTAO Seniors' Renewal program in Tagaytay, then to the Singapore Sisters. His sessions opened with a story on:

Knowing Self.

A belligerent samurai, an old Japanese tale goes, once challenged a Zen master to explain the concept of heaven and hell. But the monk replied with scorn, "*You're nothing but a lout – I can't waste my time with the likes of you!*"

His very honor attacked, the samurai flew into a rage and, pulling his sword from its scabbard, yelled, "*I could kill you for your impertinence.*"

"*That,*" the monk calmly replied, "*is hell.*"

Startled at seeing the truth in what the master pointed out about the fury that had him in its grip, the samurai calmed down, sheathed his sword, and bowed, thanking the monk for the insight.

"*And that,*" said the monk, "*is heaven.*"

Archbishop Nicholas Chia visited on the last day .



Greetings from Archbishop.

Passion for our charism

This workshop is a significant milestone that we, Canossian Sisters in Singapore, made to ensure the charismatic character of our institutions. It arose out of the stark awareness that ALL our educational institutions are led by lay leaders. Our elderly care institutions, though still with Sisters at the helm, would in the future be managed by the lay.

The Sisters' passion for their charism would not allow them to sit restfully and retired - they possess a shared 'compulsion' to sustain and enhance the charism even when their physical presence in our institutions gets increasingly less.

Sr Cecily Pavri, the current supervisor of Canossian schools, is keenly aware of the need for the charismatic formation of all Canossian institutions. The support and ideas of Sr Marilyn Lim, the provincial Leader, prompted her to seek the expertise of Sr Elizabeth Tham, who from down under in Adelaide, began the preparations via Skype and email.

Twelve lay educators, nurses, administrators and seven Sisters came together on 20 - 21 Jun 2011. The work was most fruitful because Sr Janet Wang had, in the past seven years, formed the Canossian chaplains and laid the foundations of charismatic formation and pastoral care in our schools.



The prayer of all communities ensured that the Holy Spirit and our Canossian saints were not distracted but totally present at our meetings. Out of the two days came several documents and resources. These are:

- *The Canossian Identity*
- *The Canossian Way*
- *The Canossian Core Values*
- *The Canossian Motto*
- *A Systematic Canossian Formation Program for Teachers*
- *The Define-Personalize-Challenge structure to bring across the charism*
- *An Itinerary for a local Canossian Learning Journey*

The persons who were most appreciative of these documents are our schools leaders who need them for their strategic planning and annual reviews.

Out of this workshop, the **Canossian Charismatic Formation Team** was formed to meet the demand for charismatic formation from our schools and homes. They are Sisters Janet Wang, Cecily Pavri, Dorothy Lim and Margaret Goh who meet every Tuesday at Grezzano room at Canossa Convent Primary School.

Sr. Cecily Pavri

The fruits of the weekly Tuesday meetings



At year end, Grace, then Mee Eng met with the Srs to share their vision and how they want the Sisters to help in the animation of the staff



The four Sisters at the Jane Bowen's Café which was to be used for the Canossian School's animation.



Nursing officer, Gillian, at an Induction in August, shares the Vision and Mission of Care Givers, to the Nursing Staff from SJH and Villa Francis

At **Canossian School**, Sisters presented 4 skits to bring out the School's Core Values of Integrity, Sincerity, Determination and Humility. We roped in Sr. Geraldine Tan to act as the Marchioness discerning God's will for her. Sr. Priscilla as the young Magdalene and Terry the Principal as the handsome Don Pietro. Sr. Geraldine Lim was the loveable hedgehog who stole the limelight! Mary Lim a staff acted as the deaf boy.



Compassion, Commitment, Cheerfulness

Canossian Values



Canossa Convent Primary School



Translating 3Cs into everyday practices

St Anthony's Convent Primary School



Revisiting the Canossian Identity



St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School

The *Foundress* visited the staff affirming their Canossian values



Giving choices

St. Joseph's Home

Vision : A person-centered Home which values Human Dignity.

Mission : To provide Holistic Care through Love, Care and Compassion.

SJH cascades its vision and mission statement to all staff so that they translate them into daily action plans. Staff saw how **Giving Choices to residents** in specific daily activities such as bathing, clothing and eating is a concrete way of :



Nurses Day with Br. Emmanuel

- Better realising the Vision and Mission of the Home.
- Making a significant difference in the lives of residents and
- Enriching their own work and personal life.

The staff of St. Joseph's Home will continue to sustain the new effort and bringing their level of love, care and compassion to greater heights not only at the Home but also in their work and personal lives.

The approval of accreditation between Singapore Nursing Board and SJH for nursing students' clinical placement in the area of Gerontology was a significant event for SJH. Up to date, we have received a total of ten batches of diploma nursing students from Nanyang Polytechnic School of Health Sciences. Each batch comprises of about 12 to 15 students each time with an attachment of 4 weeks for each posting. Of the seven batches, eight batches were in their third and final year of their nursing training after which they take on their professional role as a qualified staff nurse in their respective hospitals; we also had one batch in their second year and the other in their first year of training. We also received two batches of qualified staff nurses from the various restructured hospitals undergoing their Advanced Diploma in Nursing (Gerontology) – an area of specialization in their nursing career.



Nanyang Polytechnic Nursing Students



Catholic Welfare Services (CWS) and the Lien Centre for Palliative Care (LCPC) jointly organised a pilot “Palliative Care Course” for 13 nursing aides from Villa Francis. A second run of the course commenced from 8th February 2011 to 31st March 2011 for 30 participants from eight nursing homes. They were Bethany Methodist Nursing Home, Bright Hill Evergreen Home, Bright Vision Hospital, Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens, Lions Home for the elders, St. Joseph’s Home, St. Theresa’s Home and Villa Francis. The course which comprises 48 hours of teaching was conducted at SJH from 2pm to 5pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The third run of the course commenced on 4th October 2011 and ended on 24th November 2011.



Palliative Care— demo session by the trainers, Gillian and Susan

The learning objectives of the course was to give participants an overview of palliative care perspectives which includes communication skills, management of pain, exploring psycho-social and spiritual issues, loss, grief and bereavement as well as issues in advance care planning.

Telegeriatrics is the practice of telemedicine in the area of Geriatric care through the use of video conferencing to conduct a doctor’s consultation with a patient.



This is done in collaboration between Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and St. Joseph’s Home. The potential advantages of telemedicine are far reaching. The first most important benefit is improving efficiency. By reducing the travelling time of doctors, time can be channelled to reach out to more residents in the nursing home. Geriatricians can also respond to cases in the nursing home which need urgent attention, thereby averting a potential hospital admission. The use of video conferencing is just a tool to aid in the provision of healthcare for residents and physical consultations with the residents must still be maintained.

Nursing Officer Gillian Beins





Joyful Moments in St Joseph's community. Time of .. Prayer.. Celebrating Birthdays.. Meals.. Recreation .. Outings ..Visitations

Giving joy to the residents



On 8 May, the Feast of St. Magdalene, our President, Dr. Sylvia Goh and some of the Alumni Ex-co members and their families visited the residents of St. Joseph's Home. Our friends from the Silver Hair Club provided very lively entertainment. In fact some of the wheel-chair bound residents even offered to sing their favourite songs over the mike. The lunch for the residents and staff was donated by Ban Heng Restaurant of Raffles Country Club. Donations were presented to the Home by the Silver Hair Club as well as by the staff of SACSS who raised a total of \$1591, of which \$251 was spent on buying vegetable oil for the Home. All the residents enjoyed themselves very much. Kudos to Nelly Soh who made all the arrangements for this very successful visit.

Sr. Janet Wang



Sr. Vittorina Lamperti shared that her 77th Anniversary was a day of Thanksgiving to her adorable God and Spouse. Her greatest prayer and wish now is that the Lord will come and take her to Heaven to be with Him forever and ever. Amen. Alleluia.

She thanks her Sisters in Community for their loving care, love and special attention for her present needs. She loves them all.



On 2nd September **Sr. Virginia Crimella** celebrated her 75th Anniversary of Religious Life.

When interviewed she said, "I wish to be like the Virgin Mary, in order to offer Jesus to the people of our time, reawakening in them the deep desire for salvation, which comes only from Him. I desire that the whole world be like an enormous church, engaged on a good journey with Christ towards our true Home in Heaven."



On the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, we had five newly enrolled Lay Canossians : Gerardine Steward and Ivy Tan from the Antonia Group, Rose Lee and Martina Ho from St Joseph's and Maggie Tan from Magdalene Apostles. Standing behind in support are Sr. Theresa Seow, Cecilia and Sr. Magdalene Ee



Prayer of the Oblates.

Jesus, I offer you my prayers, my loneliness and my sufferings for the Canossian Sisters all over the world. Mother of Love at the foot of the Cross, be with me and help me. Amen.

The Canossian Oblates at St. Joseph's Home was started in 13.09. 1987 with six Residents, by Sr Natalia Tasca, the Provincial Leader at that time.

Total Canossain Oblates
Those who had passed away
Living
Enrolled on 11 Sept 2011
Presently as at 20 Oct

- 140 Members
- 122 Members
- 17 Members
- 3 Members
- 20 Members



The Life Arts Dept from St Anthony's Canossian Secondary School staff cooked a special porridge for the soft diet residents. They also catered and served the other residents during the National Day break.



The English and Literature Department from SACSS came for an afternoon visit, first to the convent, where they spent time with the Sisters. Then, they mingled with and served the residents, the dinner they had catered for them.



After their exams, two Primary 6 classes of St Anthony's Convent Primary school came to St Joseph's. The bubbly and cheerful girls came to know the elderly better and even enjoyed having a Drum Circle session with them.

Our month staying and helping in St. Joseph's Home & Hospice was a gift from God. It was a unique experience for me, not being something I had done before and I came in with much, much, fear and anxiety. But the stay was so filled with the graces from God, I was in tears almost every day for the first week. I found so much joy just interacting with the residents, working with the staff, hearing from the management, and even observing the volunteers. **Even conversations with the cooks brought me much spiritual consolation, hearing how they sincerely saw themselves helping in God's work, helping people who might not be able to cook for themselves.** I was so touched, and touched by so many there, that I knew it came about through God, who desired that I should be there to gain from it the unique gifts which He had placed ready for any who would venture into such an experience in St. Joseph's. **Jesuit Novice Don Bas-**



Fr Shogo Sumita SJ and the Japanese novices at lunch with the Sisters.



Sr Geraldine with Anne Merrimen and Stanley (extreme right)

Of the many graces and insights received during the course of the stay in St Joseph's home, I'd like to focus on one thing that struck me during my first week there. There were, on many occasions, opportunities for me to reflect on the idea of dignity and what that means. The simple act of combing the hair of a resident who does not even realize that his hair is being combed was the catalyst to this – of how important this can be in the wider scheme of things. The work at the home was not just about survival – **it was about giving the residents hope, joy and life in the twilight of their days and bringing back a dignity that they may not have experienced prior to coming there.** This emphasis on giving dignity through seeing Christ in everyone helped to ground the experiment in my own sense of what my vocation is about.

Jesuit Novice Stanley Goh



Xavier Tan on the right

I've served at SJH for probably close to 2 years. I come every Sunday to serve with Jacob and on Feast days if I can. I find serving masses there be very pleasant and enjoyable. What I like about serving here is that I feel a sense of being at home there because of all the sisters and brothers, who are also attending mass together on Sundays. I like seeing the elderly attending and participating during mass as well. The choir which is made up of nurses sings the hymns, which makes the mass even livelier.

For me, being an **altar server** is to serve God whole heartedly. I am also able to be stand so close to God during mass which, really makes me feel peaceful and loved in my heart. It is also to participate well during mass, and be attentive to the Word of God, and also following the directions given by God. For the time being I don't have any hopes about my service at SJH, everything seems to be in order and peaceful. Maybe in time to come, we may improvise the masses at SJH and maybe even have incense during high masses.

Currently I am studying in Temasek Polytechnic. I want to serve because I have the calling from God to serve him. Being a server makes me a more responsible person, and helps me serve others selflessly without any rewards or appreciation in return. It also teaches me to control my feelings and be calm most of the time, and pray because communication with God is very important.

Xavier Tan



The Elderly Sisters Receive the Missionary Cross

"I felt encouraged and proud of having gratuitously received gift of Christian faith. I also felt a strong desire to show in my life through my actions, presence and words; the joy, love and peace I have in my heart. Above all else, *To make Jesus Known and Loved and Served* in this life and to be happy in eternal life." - St Magdalene

Musical talents fill the air



New Horizon - visited St Joseph's one afternoon. While the elderly and volunteers and staff, from the Centre entertained with dances, music and songs, their elderly and ours, including the staff, moved and swayed along with the music.

Even our Sisters showcased their talents. Sr. Anna Ong played the accordion with the elderly from the Centre. Sr. Elizabeth Law played the organ, while the Sisters sang in accompaniment, to the delight of all present.





Sr. Dot's **Sec 2 Catechism** students from St Francis of Assisi came to SJH. After Mass, they helped served food to the elderly, and even fed the patients. Some visited the elderly Sisters and posed with them.

After all the interaction we had a simple Lunch, before going our separate ways.



Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. Mt 25:24





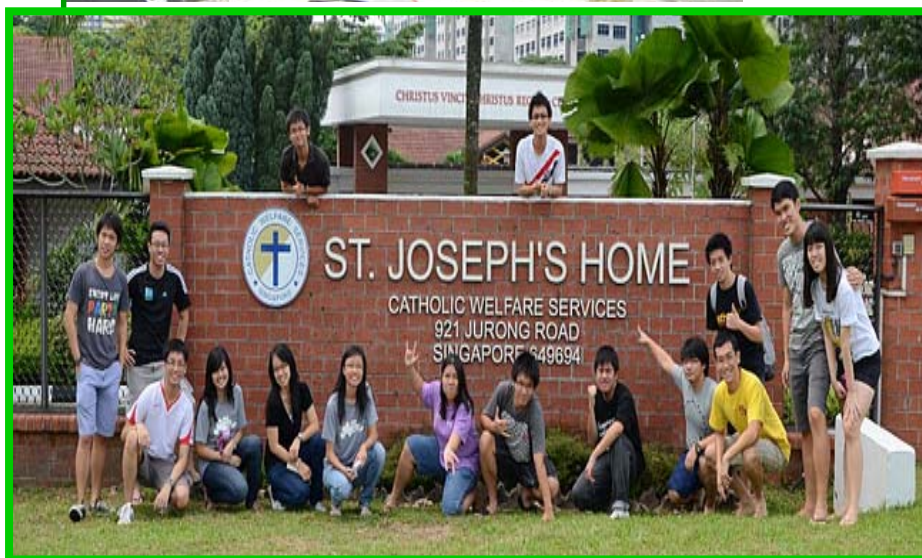
The **Charismatic Prayer Group** organized the yearly *Life in the Spirit Camp*, where Sr. Dot, the Spiritual Director facilitated the session on Inner Healing



At the Humanitarian Forum and Fair



The **CSA's 25th anniversary** was held at Catholic Junior College. Professors Steven and Haryanto, who are always present at weekly Masses, were also there.



The **NTU-NIE 20th—21st EX- Co Discernment Retreat** at SJH to prepare the new Leaders.

Leaving Melbourne after 20 Years

What an experience! On Saturday I was in Adelaide, helping at a church food fair. On Sunday I was in Melbourne attending the Farewell Mass and celebratory lunch with Sr Joy and on Monday morning I was back in Adelaide, showering mum in the morning and getting her ready for her regular club activities in the city. And in between I slept two nights on a coach going and returning from Melbourne! How I missed my regular bed!

So here I am on Monday night looking forward to an early bed-time to make up for the travel. But before that, let me tell you how incredibly moving was the farewell celebration for Sr. Joy in Melbourne. I had no idea how much she was loved and appreciated there. First the children of the Sunday School that she had nurtured for the last twenty years serenaded her with song, skit and gifts. The parish priest himself, Fr. Pat, played the guitar and joined the children in the song "*There is a joy, joy, joy, joy, deep in my heart*". In between, Sr Joy kept reminding the children repeatedly in her own inimitable way to bring another friend along to Sunday School so that they will come to know God better. The message seemed to have sunk in considering how many hands went up in response. The Sunday School will surely miss Sr Joy as she is so much part of it.

Then before the 10.30 am Farewell Mass began, parishioners, old and young, came to have a word with Joy, whispering fond words and pressing gifts in her hand. I was amazed at the multi-cultural group that came for Mass and the wonderful connectivity the parishioners have with one another and with the parish staff. Among them were Winnie and Lawrence Phoon, Sir. Marilyn's own sister and brother-in-law. The chairman of the Parish Council was Justin Tan, an ex-student of mine from Catholic Junior College, married to Mary Tan, an ex-Vice-Principal of SAC Primary in Singapore. Others who came to introduce themselves to me came from Indonesia, Malaysia, East Malaysia, Hong Kong, India and Sri Lanka. Mingling easily among all these colourful migrants were the native Australians, young and old. Surely this must be a model of the international Church we long for so badly. What a sense of community prevailed in this parish, thanks to the leadership of Fr. Pat and the spirit of the Pallotine Fathers.

In his homily, Fr. Pat applauded Joy for sharing so whole-heartedly in the Pallotine spirit and for her dedicated service to the parish and the people. In return, I took the chance at the end of Mass to thank Fr. Pat and the Pallotine Fathers for giving Joy a home for the last twenty years and congratulated Joy for her Canossian spirit to "make Jesus known and loved" everywhere. I also shared how our Foundress Magdalene of Canossa went out of her way to help other Institutes like the Rosminians spending time in Venice working with the team of Anthony Rosmini. Perhaps Magdalene would also have offered to help the Pallotines, if she knew about them!

After the Mass there was a shared lunch, lots of food, more songs, more gifts, more testimonies. The Superior of the Pallotines also came for the occasion, concelebrating the Mass and speaking with appreciation of the part Joy played in the parish. The garden outside the parish house that Joy cultivated has been

officially named as “Sr. Joy’s Garden” to remind future parishioners of her legacy to the parish. Many parishioners clearly were saddened by her transfer but, in faith, accepted that Joy is now being called to another mission in Singapore.

Thank you, Joy, for leaving such a strong Canossian presence behind in Melbourne and wishing you all the best in your new mission among the young and old of Singapore. My song for you is the evergreen

*“Joy, joy, the Mother comes, and in her arms she brings, the Light of all the world,
the Christ, the King of Kings!”*

**Sr. Liz Tham
Adelaide, 31 October 2011**



Fr. Pat accompanied Sr. Joy back to Singapore and stayed in Merbok for ten days. Father and Joy brought laughter to the community in St Joseph’s when they came for Lunch. Sr Vittorina asked Fr Pat if he was Sr Joy’s Spiritual Director and he replied promptly that she was his Supervisor. She also reminded him to ‘walk straight’. He immediately jumped straight up in obedience to her command!



Life as a Postulant

It has been 2 months since I entered Postulancy. My daily routine seemed to have been turned upside down. I used to start my day with lauds, followed by work (about 7am- 4pm), quiet time, evening mass, lessons (7pm- 10pm) and end with dinner (11pm). Now, my current routine would start with morning mass (also lauds), quiet time, lessons, work (2pm- 6pm attachment), dinner and end with recreation.



I had some difficulties trying to adapt initially because when it is time for me to go for my work (attachment), I would feel so sleepy. I was used to starting and ending my work early and not starting my work after mid day. But thanks be to God, with His grace, I'd managed to stay awake during my work and to be in bed only when its time to be in bed.

Such schedules have helped me to pace my day to day activities and have allowed me to have a better balanced lifestyle. Time is allocated for fixed activities/ events such as mass, prayers, meals, works, lessons and ministerial works and the remaining time is for us to dispense on.

One most important aspect which I had to adapt is the massive reduction in my travelling time. I used to spend at least 3 hours per day on public transport and now, it has been reduced to approximately 30 minutes daily. These 30 minutes are spent walking to and fro church for mass. Since I stayed in at CFH, the only times I travel were when I was going home or when I am going for courses elsewhere. This has allowed me to have more time for myself and thus, able to utilize my time in a better way in spending time for my lessons and reading.

I have always wanted to do ministerial works and was always hesitating whenever opportunities arise due to my availability to commit. Such long- yearned opportunities came during my Postulancy phase. I am currently attached to Morning Star Community Services Centre where I work with school children (age 7 -12) and am also attached to the catechetical office at Church of Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary where I work with the youngsters (age 13-16). I no longer need to hesitate that much whether or not to be part of any ministry because all these have been put in place for me to venture on.

I have always longed to have time to attend courses at Singapore Pastoral Institute (SPI) and these opportunities have been created for me as well.

All in all, the most important difference in my life before and after entry would be my commitment and my relationship with God. Life has since been surrounded more fully by His great love for me and humankind and this has been something which I had been praying for. Life has never been the same anymore but with each day's blessings and divine graces, God is leading me closer to Him.

Adeline Tan

In a simple Memorial Service for the departed, the Sisters gathered in Merbok to remember our deceased Sisters and Brothers, loved ones, friends and benefactors and those who died from wars and natural disasters.

Some Sisters shared on the Legacy of love by departed loved ones. Sr. Maria Casarotti shared about Sr. Maria Rizetti who gave without complaints about herself, her sickness, or others. She remembered her as saying: *The strong one keeps silence, The weak talks*. Sr. Rose Low shared that she believed her vocation was sustained by her mum's constant recitation of the rosary for her and that she continues to do so now for her and all the Sisters. Sr. Theresa Seow shared on how Sr. Carmen touched her when she spoke about God's love for us in Jesus and on poverty. Finally, Sr. Geraldine Lim read a letter she had received from Sr. Elizabeth Yeo on her first profession, which she had been keeping for 24 years.



*If you love me, do not weep!
I am already gripped and
infatuated by God, His
boundless beauty,
The things of the past are
so insignificant by
comparison!
My love for you remains,
An extensive tenderness
that you cannot even
imagine.*



**We remember you
We love you
Dear residents of St
Josephs**



CHINATOWN OUTREACH

When I accompanied my father some 15 – 20 years ago to “Goo Chia Jui” market to buy fish and to have breakfast we would sometimes see old people sitting around and my father would say “jin cham” (very pitiful). Once I saw him giving some money to an elderly man.

Often when I read articles in the newspaper about the elderly who has to struggle to continue living I remember my father living on his own. Once on duty on attachment at Assisi Hospice doing my CPE course in 2008, I met a man in his fifties who came to visit a dying woman from Chinatown. He shared that he would visit the elderly there and he promised the dying woman that he would see her through till the end which include funeral arrangements. I sensed the deep compassion in this man. He was not here doing a project but just reaching out to others who has no relatives to see to their needs at the end of their lives. I was deeply touched and I took down his hand phone but never get down to do contact him.

Just before my father died in July I read a write up in Yahoo about Theresa Hu. The part about her now still going to Chinatown bringing some packets of food jolted me again. A few days after my father died and I was at St Joseph, grieving over his passing on when once again I read an article in the Straits Times about the elderly not having nourishing food. A desire came to me. I would like to outreach to the elderly in Chinatown in memory of my father, Bernard Goh.



I have made some visits for about 3 months, once in a fortnight... and I realized that there are two needs of the elderly...one, their loneliness and the regret and pain of past misdeeds that could be soothed by a listening ear. Secondly, due to various circumstances, they are unable to get medical help though they are sick with the common age related illnesses such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cataracts.

I befriended a lady in her seventies whom I noticed was looking unwell. Over the past few weeks, I got her to see a doctor at Outram Road Polyclinic. She was diagnosed with high blood pressure, high sugar content and severe cataract in her right eye. Though she was born in Singapore, she has a blue I/C. She will be operated later this month for her cataract and I am working towards her financial assistance to pay her medical bills from the social worker. A friend has been helping me by providing transports and buying some food for the elderly. Other friends have also come forward to say that they will assist in the outreach, one of whom is Friar Vernon OFM. Do keep us in your prayers!

Sr. Margaret Goh

From Teaching to Learning...From Text books to Life experiences.....

On the 19th November 2011, Br John De Cruz facilitated a session for some staff and volunteers at Canossaville and I was one of the participants. As expected I was much empowered and energized by his session. He skillfully steered us towards what we feel about education when the session was in danger of being undermined by our own convictions being overpowered by what society or establishments want. I felt to share some of my joys of accompanying the young students that come to **Total Learning Centre at Canossaville**. Earlier, we had a volunteer who in my opinion had a accurate sense of how education at TLC should be a journeying with the student, a mutual exchange of love and respect in a safe environment where he/she learns, bringing out the innate wisdom that each individual including a child has.

Andy, a primary two student, is a good looking boy with a cheeky smile but who is very guarded in revealing who he is, probably due to some traumatic experiences. Once he was relating to me excitedly and confidently some scientific concepts which he learnt in school. I could sense his joy in learning new things and how he thinks that the world is organized in the way we know or name it. I gave in to the temptation of wanting him to experience that sometimes things are not what it is. There could be another side of things.

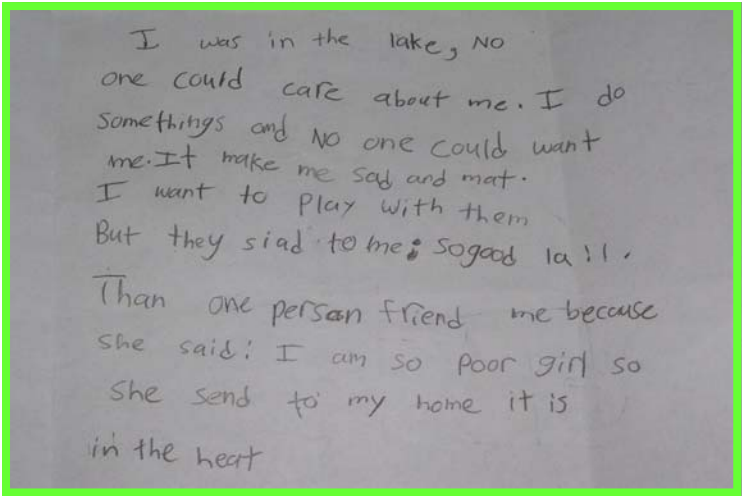
I asked Andy to call me a "Cat". Of course, he looked at me as if I had gone bonkers. I repeated what I had said. So he called me a cat. Then I asked him to touch my hand and I said. "Am I still Sr Margaret?". There was a look that says "Aha". I knew he understood. Then with his cheeky smile and an exasperated look, he put his hands over his head and exclaimed "Why didn't you tell me at the beginning... why make me think so hard?" I smiled.

Cecelia loves drawing. and she expresses herself in bold strokes and rather big outlines of her figure. I love to see them for it reveals her personality. One day she surprised me. She said: I wrote a poem for you and it's a poem about the heart. Yes she wrote mat instead of mad: I was encouraged by what Br John said: It does not matter what they write. ***It's their experience of being accepted of who they are that counts. I believe this will lead eventually to happiness which is their birthright, stemming from their confidence of who they are.***

Of course in the realm of kpi and marketing strategies, it's elusive but it can be felt.

Thank you
Brother John!

Sr. Margaret Goh



I was in the lake, No
one could care about me. I do
Some things and No one could want
me. It make me sad and mad.
I want to play with them
But they said to me: So good la!!
Than one person friend me because
she said: I am so poor girl so
she send to my home it is
in the heart