



Canossian Colleges Alumnae Association Newsletter

6071 Christina Road Richmond, B.C. V7C 2P7
Website: www.canossianalumnae.org

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*"Take heart, let us hope incessantly, Let us continue to love the Lord, loving him with a willingness that he alone can see."
St. Magdalene of Canossa*

Spiritual Director's Address

Sister Cecilia Cham, FdCC

Dear Alumnae:

The **Book of Revelation** must be understood in a symbolic sense, it is not a preview of the end of the world or a call to arms. It was meant as encouragement to Christian believers. The drama of Revelation is meant to demythologize all earthly powers. None of them is invincible and eventually all must submit to God who is the only legitimate authority.

St. Paul wrote to his community in Corinth to assure them that the delay in the return of Jesus is for a reason, the work is not finished. St. Paul insisted that until the entire process is complete, it is even more important that we lead upright and godly lives and engage in the continuing work of creating a just and peaceful world that is conformed to God.

Mary was attuned to this divine work on our behalf and was one who yearned for a just world. She recognized that the movement of God into the world is always accompanied by upheaval and change and she celebrated that in her **Magnificat**. She praises the God who topples the high and might from their thrones and strips them of their power as well as empowering the weak and the marginalized. There is also praise for the One who ensures a just distribution of the necessities of life and fills the hungry with good things

Throughout this drama, Mary remains one whose heart and mind are in harmony with God, so much so that in a manner similar to Enoch and Elijah, she is taken up into heaven and her name honoured for all generations. **The divine drama of restoring the world to God continues in our own time. Rather than spectators, let us be those who take an active role in God's cause.** I urge all alumnae to pray to Our Lady so that she will bless us and guide us on our life's journey so that we can carry on the work that is dearest to her heart.

Magnificat

My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour;

*Because He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid; for behold, henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed;*

Because He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name;

And His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear Him.

He has shown might with His arm, He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and has exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

He has given help to Israel, His servant, mindful of His mercy –

Even as He spoke to His fathers – to Abraham and to his posterity forever.

May I wish you and your family a happy and safe Christmas and New Year!

Sr. Cecilia Cham

Sr. Cecilia Cham FdCC

Message from the President

Vicky Wong SMCC

Dear Fellow Alumnae,

The second half of year 2010 has been quite quiet for our alumnae association. After our Annual General Meeting held in May, the only other event was the pilgrim tour to Israel and Egypt.

On May 4, 2010, the 23rd AGM was held at the Red Star Seafood Restaurant in Richmond. Before dinner, the Board had a business meeting and a new board was elected. Basically, all existing board members will extend another term, with a slight change in positions. Originally, there were 3 new board members joining us - Carmen Tam, Joanna Wong and Carmen Man. Unfortunately, Joanna Wong and Carman Man resigned from the Board later on due to personal reasons. With God's blessings, we managed to have a new member joining the Board recently - Betty Tso, as Social Convenor. The Board wishes to express sincere thanks to Betty, in contributing her time to service the CCAA. This year's AGM dinner was on a Tuesday night, but surprisingly, we had ninety guests showing up. Additionally, we were very fortunate to have Sr. Elizabeth Chambers, General Counsellor of the Canossian Sisters from Rome, joining us for the AGM dinner.

Shortly after our AGM, a group of ninety people, namely CCAA members, families and friends, under the leadership of CCAA's past president, Janny Li, began a twenty-one day Pilgrim tour to Israel and Egypt. Fr. Paul Chu from the Canadian Martyrs Parish, CCAA's Spiritual Director, Sr. Cecilia Cham and two of our board members, Theresa Tsang and Helen Wong, were among the Group. Comments on the trip were, although the trip was not an easy and relaxing one, it was a very good experience and full of good memories.

As for membership, I believe by now all members should already be aware that our annual membership term commences on January 1 and expires on December 31 of each year. Our membership registration/renewal form can be found on our website at www.canossianalumnae.org. This year, we have so far received only 15 membership renewals and 2 lifetime membership registrations. We sincerely hope that our members will voluntarily send in their membership renewals and the fee of \$10.00/person before the end of each year. Members may not be aware that this minimal membership fee can immensely help to cover some of the administrative costs, such as printing and postage.

A couple of months ago, we received a Project Proposal for building a Canossian Middle School in Chihuahua, Mexico, from Sr. Sharon Aline Brannen. Since 1992, The Canossian Sisters has been running an elementary school in Chihuahua, the Instituto Educativo Morelos. The Sisters are now in urgent need to build a middle school, to accommodate the elementary school's graduates. We believe that this is a very worthy project, to help building a better future for the Chihuahua children. With the assistance of some of our alumnae, we are now at the tentative stage of planning a fund-raising dinner event, to be held next year.

Last but not least, please mark down on your calendar that the 2011 CCAA Retreat will take place on March 5, 2011, at the Canadian Martyrs Parish. The topic will be "*A Day of Lenten Preparation with Fr. Elton Fernandes*".

On behalf of the CCAA Board, may we wish you a very jolly Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Meet our Board of Directors

Special Announcements

2010-2011 Board of Directors

Spiritual Director	Sr. Cecilia Cham
President	Vicky Wong
Vice President	Theresa Tsang
Secretary	Janet Mak
Treasurer	Helen Wong
Membership	Carmen Tam
Social Convenor	Belinda Cheng
Social Convenor	Betty Tso

MARCH 2011 RETREAT WITH FATHER ELTON FERNANDES

MAY 2011 AGM

AUGUST 2011 SUMMER PICNIC

SEPTEMBER 2011 CHIHUAHUA FUND RAISING DINNER

DECEMBER 2011 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

2010 Pilgrim Tour—pleasure and pressure of tour escort

Janny Li SMCC



20 May, 2010, the departure date of our pilgrim tour to Israel & Egypt, was a special day for all the tour members. Being my third time as tour escort of pilgrim tour, I was as excited as all the tour members, and yet, could not help feeling the pressure. Unlike Europe, West or East, of which I had visited on many occasions. I had never been to neither Israel nor Egypt! And Jordan, Middle East! I started to pray to God, for a smooth journey and to let all tour members enjoy thoroughly throughout the itinerary, and, most of all, return home safe and happily contented, both spiritually and culturally. With the same confidence in mind, as I did with the previous pilgrim tours, I was convinced that leaving everything to God's hand, we would be blessed with another successful tour.

The long flight to Tel Aviv, transiting at Calgary and Frankfurt was not as unbearable as we thought. At least one credit I would give the German Airline, was their flights were always on time. Tel Aviv was just like other big cities, with multi-storey building everywhere, but elsewhere in Israel, unlike Europe, there was no beautiful landscape, nor chateau to view and recall the old days. Nevertheless, there was a familiar feeling in the air, as if we were returning to a place that would exist only in our dreams, probably that was because we read it all in the Bible; The Mount of Olives, Via Dolor Rosa, Last Supper Room, Sea of Galilee etc; and as such, being physically there did give us some brand new thoughts and inspirations. The most impressive of all, for me, was definitely the Mount Sinai – where Moses received the Ten Commandments from God. Apart from the stunning sun rise, there seemed to be a strange frequency in the air, as if you could really connect to God! In fact more than one tour members mentioned to me that they really received messages. Though I was not the lucky one, I could feel and share the joy.



Egypt was entirely different. The country was full of historic details since 6,000 years ago, but one could hardly believe that the place was once extravagant, and yet poverty was seen almost everywhere nowadays. We were all fascinated by the ancient glories, the Giza Pyramids & the Sphinx, sculptures, painting on the walls, ruins and statues at the Valley of the King, Jewelry & mummies at Egyptian Museum, and all these remains of the faded glories, made everyone forget about the heat! Yes the temperature was up to 46C! As if we were walking inside a heated fire place. We all treasured the air conditioning every time when returning from our shore excursion to our cruise boat 'Ms Egypt', where we stayed 3 nights, sailing on the River Nile from Aswan to Luxor.



Thanks to Sr. Cham and Fr. Chu, who gave us the spiritual guidance and support. We celebrated Mass at wherever we could manage to stop at a Catholic Church. It is actually not easy in a country where Moslem is their official religion. Thanks to God, who gave our tour the blessing we prayed for, we returned to Vancouver safe and contented. The 21 days journeys passed quickly but will remain as our long-lasting memory.

2010 Retreat

Carmen Tam SHCC Macao

Our annual retreat this year was held on March 13, 2010 at Canadian Martyrs Catholic Church in Richmond. This is the time of the year for us to be out from our busy life, to look back on what has happened, take a look at where we are, and make some necessary changes for a better life. God is always working with us - gently urging, communicating and seeking contact. What we have to do is to give time to listen to God's message. Prayer is simply being with God and let God be in our heart.

On that day, we started the retreat with a mass by Father Paul Chu. There were about 50 alumnae attended this retreat. Our spiritual speaker is Father Anthony Ho, who is the Assistant Pastor of St Patrick Parish in Vancouver, and Chaplain of St Patrick Regional Secondary School. He writes a weekly column in Chinese for the BC Catholic newspaper.

The topic of this retreat was about Prayer, Works of Mercy and Penance. During the retreat, Father Ho brought with him many relics of the Saints for exposition on several desks. Some participants prayed before the relics, took photos, touched relics with devotional objects, and wrote prayer petitions to the saints. Father Ho preached with enjoyment and humor. Through many of the life stories of the saints told by Father Ho, we are enlightened by the examples of the saints, and we can learn a lot from them.

In summary, the teaching from Father Ho could be summed up in the following points:

It is imperative that we have to pray regularly about 1-2 hours a day - just like eating every day to keep us healthy. Open our heart, and let the Holy Trinity to guide us. Do not be afraid of quiet time, we should take this opportunity to pray, especially rosary, which is very powerful.

We should have faith on God's mercy and care. Sometimes, we are the vehicle of God's grace in the world. Therefore, we have to do some sacrifice, and are ready to suffer. We should have charity heart on those who are less fortunate, be humble and respect each other. Everything we do, even our smallest daily acts, must be done for the love of God.

2010 AGM Dinner

Belinda Leong Cheng SHCC Macao

This year our AGM fell on May 4, 2010 and it was on a Tuesday, on a week day which was slightly different from our usual weekend schedule. This is done for a very special reason. Sr. Elizabeth Chambers, General Counselor of the Canossian Sisters from Rome was visiting Vancouver from May 3 to May 5. The main purpose of her trip to Vancouver is to meet with our members of CCAA. In order to invite her to be our honourable guest for the AGM dinner we had to have it happened on a weekday. At first we were a bit worried about the attendance due to the short notice of time and the weekday schedule. However, it turned out to be quite a satisfactory result. We had nine tables booked for the event which took place at Red Star Seafood Restaurant.

Before the dinner started, we had our new board committee members elected. A hearty welcome to the new board members for this year; they are Carmen Man, Carmen Tam and Joanna Wong. A big thanks to the old members who still stay on board; they are Belinda Cheng, Janet Mak, Theresa Tsang, Helen Wong and Vicky Wong. We had a wonderful evening which was kicked off by the opening prayer by Fr. Horgan and then a speech from Sr. Elizabeth Chambers. She was impressed to see the enthusiasm and effort our members had strived for all the activities we had done. She said she was overwhelmed and did not expect to have such a warm welcome party for her. There were almost a hundred people for the dinner. We had more than one thousand dollar raised from the sales of the raffle tickets. A donation of \$1,000 was presented to Sr. Chambers for the Canossian Convent. Our dinner ended cheerfully with the singing of the theme song for our foundress, St. Magdalena of Canossa. The song reminded us to be proud being the Canossian daughters and to carry on her spirit to comfort the needy, help the poor and care for the sick.

