



# St. Anthony's Province Singapore-Myanmar



# Canorita 2016



CONTENT	PAGE
Content	
Provincial Leader's Message	3
Jubilee Year of Mercy Pilgrimage	5
A Missionary Comes Home - Interview with Sr Margaret Syn	6
Reflections on the Canossian Learning Journey	9
Youth, best ambassadors ...	11
VII International Convention of the Lay Canossian Family	13
Our Umbrella is too Small - the Canossa Story	15
A Cup of Milk Everyday	17
Expressions through Art	18
Flashes from Canossa	20
Let the Little Ones come to me	22
The Canossian Heritage Gallery	23
My Faith Journey	27
Onward to a new journey	29
Walk for Rice	30
Immersion Experience Caterina and friends	33
SMC - Staff Outing to the Land of the Million Pagodas	35
Musica Gioiosa – a combined Thanksgiving & Christmas Choral Festival	37
God answers ...in His time	38
2016: New life, New hope, New shoots for Canossian Mission in Myanmar	39
Christmas Message	44



# Provincial Leader's Message

Dear Sisters, Friends and Benefactors,

It seemed like yesterday when Pope Francis launched the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. Like everything else even that has passed. The Jubilee celebration is over. I pray that each of us has found it a year of grace and blessings when we responded to the invitation of Jesus to return to God the merciful Father.

For those of us who felt that we have missed on the Kairos moments and have not responded to His mercy, the Holy Father reminded us that while the year has come to a close “the true door of mercy, which is the heart of Christ, always remains open wide for us”. Indeed for each of us the Year of Mercy was a call to “rediscover the youthful, beautiful face of the Church, the face that is radiant when it is welcoming, free, faithful, poor in means but rich in love, on mission.”



Each day we see ongoing conflicts that inflict suffering on children, women and men alike. Domestic violence, disregard for human life and natural disaster tear families apart and destroy homes. Parents mourned the loss of their children. Children became orphans overnight.

What about Singapore? While we may be seen as a first world country many Singaporeans are trying to make ends meet. Many households have fallen into hard times and we are trying to reach out to families in need so that they too can experience God’s mercy and compassion.



With our limited resources but with generous friends and donors, I hope we managed to improve the lives of some of these families. With your support and response to my appeal, we hope the children are happier, the young persons we put into schools are more hopeful and the families we helped feel that their struggles have been lightened.

In particular, some of our Canossian educators in Singapore have funded programmes in Myanmar in cash and in kind. Yearly donations from ex-pupils and friends go to ensure that children get enough nourishment. These monies are over and above the funds collected for the Canossian Formation House and the setting up of two Kindergartens in Yangon and Thanlyin.

In Singapore we have children from poor families who may not even have decent meals. Next year I intend to work with one of our Primary schools to provide proper tea to children who are under the financial assisted scheme in NOVA. Even if they do not get a proper dinner at home, we hope to provide a proper tea before they go home for the night. We are also funding a club within the school manned by parents to help students find a place where they can be safe. These children would otherwise be hanging out in the void decks or in the shopping malls.

Our Canossian schools collaborate and support students regardless of race, culture and religion. Our lay leaders work together and do everything possible to keep the spirit of Foundress alive. They continue to keep alive the ONE Canossian family spirit and work together regardless of where we are located. In 2017 we will officially accept our Canossian Educators that began in 1895. From alumni to the schools and finally to the Sisters, we realise that this is true ...once a Canossian, always a Canossian.

We are well aware that the pool of donors is shrinking while welfare services are growing. It is difficult to get donations now. Every dollar we receive is given to our beneficiary. We have a small team that supports the administration of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. My appreciation goes to our admin staff who does not expect any extra payment for her services. Hence, none of the donations received go to pay for admin or operations.

Thank you for your trust, your belief in our mission of service and love done in humility and charity. We continue to count on you for your support so that the poor can learn to help themselves.

On behalf of my Council Sr. Christina Yeo and Sr. Dorothy Lim, we wish you God's blessings in this season of God's love and peace. May those you love enjoy peace and happiness during this Christmas and throughout the New Year 2017.



Blessings and warmest regards,

Sr. Theresa Seow, FdCC

# Jubilee Year of Mercy Pilgrimage



*Everyone listening intently to Fr Johnson's explanation of the Holy Year at the Lobby of the Church.*

The Community of St Magdalene made their pilgrimage to the Church of the Divine Mercy on 29 March 2016. It was a lovely afternoon for the whole *community to make this* short pilgrimage with the Parish Priest, Rev Fr Johnson Fernandez as our Spiritual Guide. We chose this Church as it was the Church where the Jubilee Year of Mercy was launched by the Archbishop.

As we walked through the Holy Door we listened to Fr Johnson as he explained the meaning of this Holy Year and the different parts of Church and in particular the relic of St Faustina. We joined in the Novena Prayers and later were treated to dinner by Fr Johnson and some of the parishioners. We ended the afternoon, spiritually and physically fed!



*- the beautiful interior of the Church and the Baptismal Font- Look at the wonderment in Sr Joy's eyes!*



*By Sr Priscilla Ahin*

# A Missionary Comes Home

*Sr Cecily interviews Sr Margaret Syn, Canossian missionary who served in the missions in Italy, Myanmar and China for 18 years. Prior to mission work, she was teacher, social worker, director of Canossaville Children's Home in Singapore.*



*She pioneered the Canossian Co-Workers (the present Lay Canossians); Family service and healing programmes for single-parent families: H.E.L.P. Family Service, the Rainbows for All God's Children, the Beginning Experience and Single Parents Encounter projects. Presently she ministers at Church of the Nativity to parishioners, the poor and the Chinese foreign workers.*



*Sr Margaret Syn with staff of HELP 1989*

## **The Interview**

Sr Cecily        *Sr Margaret, tell us about your calling to mission.*

Sr Margaret Syn    I never had a calling to become a missionary; neither did I offer myself to serve in the missions. When I first answered the call to religious life, I learnt to be willing to be sent anywhere to do God's work. There was no conscious deliberation, no need for dialogue. The spirit in me was free to go anywhere, with some apprehension but no fear.

Sr Cecily        *What was your first missionary assignment?*

Sr Margaret Syn    It was to Prato, an industrial town, twenty minutes train ride from Florence, Italy. The clothing industries brought in numerous Chinese immigrants, mostly illegal, to work in the sweat shops. They came with their families, with no finances, language or housing. The bishop recognized the pastoral opportunities for social work and evangelization among these people. As it was, the local bishop asked the Canossians to fill this gap. The request came from Mother General to Singapore and that is how I was asked to go there to serve.

Prato was unknown to me. There was no Canossian community there, and I had long forgotten my Italian; some knowledge of the Chinese language but grossly insufficient for ministry. I went to Italy with three dictionaries and my English Bible. I was entirely on my own, pioneering a new ministry with no resources and no mentor.

*Sr Cecily* *Did you ever feel isolated, unsupported and lonely? How did you manage then?*

Sr Margaret  
Syn I would return to an empty house with no TV or computer and occupy myself just reading the Bible. I read it cover to cover a few times. Similarly when I was asked to go to the mission in Beijing China, I just had the Bible. I read it through again. This “pastime” has equipped me well for evangelization.

*Sr Cecily* *Where did you get this attraction to the Word of God?*

Sr Margaret  
Syn It was during the Ignatian month that I did before my final vows. The retreat focused strongly on the Word of God. The next year I did a 8-day retreat during which I experienced strongly the healing power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and strengthened my calling to serve. I was totally surprised by joy and all fears disappeared. And the fascination with the Bible grew in me. When I was asked to minister in Prato, it meant leaving the flourishing ministry that I had built up at Canossaville. This up-rooting was such a real experience of total detachment and going to a place where I was not known, helped me to understand better Jesus’s self-annihilation and incarnational experience.

*Sr Cecily* *What exactly was your ministry in Prato?*

Sr Margaret  
Syn I was working with the Caritas of Prato, responsible for the welfare of the Chinese who were illegal immigrants, I gathered and organised activities for the children and youth; conducted Italian classes for the workers during the summer holidays. A small group of 3 Catholic women came and I started Bible class with them and their non-Catholic spouses, brought them to Sunday Mass. After a year of preparation the spouses were baptized at Easter vigil and the day, Sunday, solemnized their wedding at Mass conducted by a Chinese priest from Rome. Since then we invited Chinese priests studying in Rome to celebrate mass once a month for them and some non-Catholics also joined in. Other activities included an all-night vigil for Christmas, excursion and camping for youth, pilgrimage to Lourdes and Rome. About 30 young people together with the 6 Catholics were given special places for the Wednesday audience with Pope John Paul II.

*Sr Cecily* *We know you as the first Singapore Canossian Sister who was missionary to China. But before that you had a stint in Myanmar. Tell us about that.*

Sr Margaret  
Syn It is along story with several episodes that span over 10 years. You may like to do my China story in the next episode of Canorita`. After 5 years, the Prato mission was well-established and I handed it over to another Canossian Sister. I returned to Singapore all ready to re-enter into pastoral ministry with the Single Parents and the Rainbow programme in schools when I was once again asked to serve as missionary to Myanmar.

There was a group of about 10 Canossian aspirants in Taunggyi. The bishop provided us with a house and support. It was largely a house-mother role with faith-formation and nurturing their attraction to the charism of St Magdalene. I stayed there until I was once again asked by my provincial to minister in China.

Sr Cecily *How did your several love-affairs with China begin?*

Sr Margaret Syn It is along story with several episodes that span over 10 years. There were 4 China affairs and another Rome-China episode. Each one of them was pioneering projects that ended in fulfilling completion and handing over. Every one of them was requests that came through the superiors in Rome or Singapore. It all began in Guangzhou. A musician priest who headed the department of English and music school for children with music talent. I was invited to teach English. The next was a Spastic Rehabilitation Centre outside Beijing, on one of the hill tops where I translated for the doctors and specialists as well as minister pastorally for the parents of the children. The third brought me back to Italy, specifically to Rome as Mother Superior, rather it was 'house mother' to several Sisters from China studying theology there. The fourth was very different. The Catholic Social Welfare (Jinde Charities) in Shijiazhuang Hebei needed someone to be their consultant and PR with their foreign benefactors for relief projects all over China. It was there that my Chinese and computer skill greatly improved. The fifth was mission to minister to the poor of Yunnan province and Zhao Tong in particular.



*Facilitator in a youth camp in Zhaotong*



*Visiting the lepers with gifts of food*

Sr Cecily *How did you know when to leave a project and await the next?*

Sr Margaret Syn I served until I felt that enough local people are trained to handle what I was doing. I knew it was time to pass on and leave. Each departure marked a milestone of fulfilling service in my missionary journey.

Sr Cecily *Thank You Sr Margaret for your fascinating story. You can be certain that I'm coming back again to get the full China Story.*

# Reflections on the Canossian Learning Journey

30 May – 13 June 2016

This was my second Canossian Learning Journey to Italy but it is this trip that has given me a much more profound experience about the Canossian mission. The churches, with their Italian art and architecture, made me wonder at how God could inspire such creativity and craftsmanship in the people of those times. I could have sat for hours looking at the various icons, paintings and frescos. It was not very difficult to get into a contemplative mood, and wonder about the motivations of the many saints who dedicated their lives to the poor and the disadvantaged.

We visited Convent in Schio where St Bakhita had lived and died, and heard of the many cruelties she had suffered in her early years. Her story is not one that everyone can stomach, even in these modern times where graphic reports of horrors and injustices are common. I wondered how someone could be so free of the internal scars of a tragic, enslaved past, and go on to live a peaceful, quiet life but yet cause the many miracles that transformed the lives of others. I wondered about the power of simplicity and forgiveness.



We also visited the Canossa Palace in Verona and the Palace at Grezzano, their summer house, places that would have undoubtedly been so much more majestic and opulent two hundred years ago, during Magdalene's time. These were where our Foundress had grown up and laboured through the many questions and dilemmas that gave birth to her God-given mission. It's a wonder how someone, born into such immense wealth and grandeur, can give them all up just for the pure desire to serve God and model oneself after Christ crucified. In our current age, where financial security is considered one of the pillars of a stable and fulfilling life, it is hard to imagine how St Magdalene could have suffered poverty and simplicity with joy, and without attachment to the security of her privileged background. This life of simplicity and poverty, though, has resulted in a legacy that has continued, and is continuing, to enrich thousands of lives all over the world.

These are the wonders of my Learning Journey. The trip may be over, but it has prompted me to go on, in search of a deeper understanding of the Canossian heritage. I may not gain all the answers, but I have faith that the journey of questioning and seeking will in itself enrich my life as a Canossian. ***Cecilia Nathen (alumna)***

**Verona(alumna), Cecilia's daughter wrote:** The CLJ has been very insightful and eye-opening for me. I have learnt more about our Canossian saints, St Magdalene of Canossa and St Bakhita and how they were dedicated to Christ as the centre of their lives. Hearing their stories from the families and friends of these saints is totally different from reading them in books. When you hear them from people who have actually interacted with the saints, they tell them with such emotion that you can really empathise with the immense sufferings and hardships the saints had gone through.

The people I have met in our group have also made this trip memorable. Having different job scopes, we were able to learn from each other the roles we play in building and growing the Canossian family. The Sisters have also organised and planned this trip to the very last detail and have taken care of our every need. I will definitely say that this CLJ to Italy is one I will never forget as it has left me with a much deeper understanding and appreciation of my Catholic faith.

**Lanxi, Canossian Convent KG teacher shared:** Tracing the steps of two great Canossian saints – St Magdalene and St Bakhita provided me with an insight to the Canossian spirituality which is to make Jesus known and loved. St Magdalene loved God through her special care and love for the poor while St. Bakhita remained faithful and obedient to God even through times of great suffering. In knowing their stories, my work as a teacher in the kindergarten became more meaningful because of the realisation that I am in solidarity with the Canossian sisters and laity to provide for the poor in inculcating values of love, care and compassion through education.



My travel companions for this learning journey were people of my parents' age. This is the first time I had to travel with people of a different generation other than my parents. Initially, I was apprehensive because I did not know if we would be able to enjoy one another's company due to the generation gap and that I am an independent traveller. Throughout the trip, they took really good care of me and showed concern when I got separated from them at one point in Rome. This experience helped me to become more receptive of care from others as I saw God's love reflected in the concern that they have for me. I have also learnt to be more accountable to people because there is not just me in my life but there are others as well.

**Rachel, SACPS teacher:** There are many things that I'm grateful for. The opportunity to join the CLJ with my fellow colleagues from SACPS was already a big blessing. I'm also very grateful that through the journey, I get to know my colleagues a lot better. The companionship of the sisters and the rest of the participants were precious too. Through the many conversations, we had the opportunities to find out more from each other on the various ways we live out the mission started by our Foundress, be it at work or in our personal lives. I am exceptionally grateful that God called out to me during the trip and I decided to start on my RCIA journey after I came back.

*Collated by Sr Dorothy Lim*

# *Youth, best ambassadors ...*



World Youth Day (WYD) was held this July in Poland. My desire to see the highly-charged meeting of Pope Francis and the faith-filled youth from all over the world was fulfilled when Sr Theresa got for me the go-ahead from Mother General.

My youthful companions for the journey were eleven adults from W4 from the Church of Christ the King. W4 stands for Word, Worship, Works of Mercy and Witness formed in 2011 for WYD 2016. Four of them had been to WYD 2011 in Spain and they took charge of planning for the trip and the spiritual preparation. Members of the parish wrote their petitions for the group to pray at the different shrines in Poland.



*At the Shrine of the Divine Mercy where I prayed specially for our Sisters in the Province and in the Institute.*

As 2016 was designated the Year of Mercy, “Mercy” was the WYD’s theme. We were glad we could visit the shrines of the Polish saints of Mercy – the beloved Apostle of Divine Mercy St John Paul II who had instituted the WYD, St Faustina of the Divine Mercy, and the inspiring St Maximilian Kolbe who gave up his life for a fellow prisoner in Auschwitz. Of course we could not leave out a pilgrimage to Auschwitz and Birkenau, sober reminders of the horrors of war. Indeed the need for youth to come together to pray as a church to the God of Mercy this WYD is never more urgent as we are faced with world-wide refugee problems, meaningless killings by ISIS and religious persecution.

In Gdansk, the hospitality of the Poles who welcomed us to their homes during the ‘Days in the Dioceses’ programme restored our faith in love and human kindness. We spent 5 days in the parish of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians ran by the Salesian Brothers bathed in the warmth of their love and hospitality. With fellow pilgrims from South Africa, California and Egypt, we experienced the love of the Christian Community at its best! During this pilgrimage I was impressed to see how Catholic Poland is with its many beautiful churches and ornately adorned Cathedrals (it was christened in 966). The faith has certainly seen the Poles through the darkest times of their history.

We were also attended a concelebrated Mass at the Cathedral of St Mary by Archbishop Sławoj Leszek Głódź of Gdańsk. A Sister of the St Bridget’s Order made her final Religious Vows. It was a wonderful testimony of faith and courage in before so many youths! Countless expressions of solidarity, camaraderie by the young participants filled me with hope, gratitude and hope. As they exchanged well-wishes, and mementoes, and posed for photos, I am pleased to know that our youth are the best ambassadors for the Catholic Church of Singapore – young, vibrant, joyful and outreaching!

As the youth prayed as one during the Final Mass at Campus Misericordiae, I am sure the WYD will leave an indelible imprint, fuelling them with fervour as they return home. I remember a youth telling me that the WYD made her decide to answer God’s call to serve in an overseas religious congregation. I am sure many more would have been touched and challenged to live life differently. Glory be to **God!**



*The W4 and I at Wadowice, the place of St. John Paul II*



*Doing the Way of the Cross at Blonia Park.*

*By Sr Doreen Soh*

# VI International Convention of the Lay Canossian Family

San Fidenzio 24<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> July

I had the unexpected privilege of attending the VI Convention with the Singapore Lay Canossian (LC) Ana Bao, together with Sr. Jacqueline Chin [Sr. Jac] and LC Teresa Hlaing, representing Myanmar. This experience gave me a broader vision and sense of what being a LC means in the Canossian family. I felt too the sense of being caught in Magdalene's dream while seeing the presentations from the different countries. Brazil has so many young ones, even Hong Kong and I wondered whether Singapore could be next.

## Gratitude

We felt blessed for the grace to be part of this intense experience of praying, reflecting and sharing of our lives together as one Canossian Family. Teresa Hlaing experienced the closeness of God and was grateful to the LCs in Singapore who made it possible for her to be present "it was a wonderful dream for me to be there but it really happened by the power of God and the big heart of St. Magdalene. Besides, I was very excited and happy meeting with the Lay Canossians from all over the world".



## Spirit

Sr. Jac "The spirit of warmth, simplicity and charity among our International Lay Canossian communities was evident and heartening as seen and enjoyed throughout our stay and in our countless sharing together. It was also very beneficial, uplifting and renewing to meet the different Sister Animators from different continents as we exchanged ideas and learn how to collaborate in our styles of animating our different groups in the different parts of the world that we serve in". Ana Bao shared that "we not only shared a common identity and got to know one another better, but we shared in the charism of St Magdalene – Charity is a fire which spreads and seeks to embrace everything". Like the others, I too felt the joy of meeting not only our Sisters and the bigger LC family but also our 3 Canossian Fathers and Brother, the two secular missionaries of St Magdalene and the five Brothers and Sister LCs who share and live our ONE love, one mission and one Canossian . There were more than 80 of us, from 18 countries, yet the sense of being one in spirit and sharing as one family was very tangible.

## Witnesses

Sr. Jac felt "very edified to see our missionary Sisters' zeal in spreading and in living out our charism and spirit among our lay collaborators". Ana wrote that after the convention, she is more driven to witness to the love of Christ as Magdalene and Bakhita, summing up our sentiments. She saw the role modelling of Mary exemplified in Rosanna the New International Lay Canossian president when she generously said yes. I felt very touched by the previous President Adele Cremonesi who personally sewed a gift for each participant. All her prayers and love must have gone into the creation!

**What do the Lay Canossians together with the Canossian Fathers, Brothers and Sisters need to do now?**

**We are to live the *Inspice et fac* in the heart of the world with the joy of the Gospel.**

We are challenged to follow Jesus, the Way, in freedom of heart in his yes to the Father, in creatively realizing God's dream through us, in nurturing and building compassion and communion, with each person, with a joyful spirit.

We are never alone for we walk with one another and with others who have paved the way. St Magdalene tells us that one who loves is never tired. Sr. Fernanda Riva shares the way to be joyful

- To firmly believe that God loves us
- To be always able to see the good side of things.
- To cultivate within ourselves a holy optimism.

*Mother of Love at the foot of the Cross, pray for us and with us.*



*By Sr Dorothy Lim*

# OUR UMBRELLA IS TOO SMALL



Canossaville Children's Home started out as an orphanage in 1941, just before the war. As a Home for boys and girls, it provided shelter and a safe haven for vulnerable children. Besides residential care, there was also student care for those from the lower income and at-risk families. Its emphasis was on "formation of the heart" with the aim of bringing up happy, confident and resilient children.

Today, after 75 years, the rapidly changing social landscape and the breakdown of many families caused by moral decline and spiritual vacuum, call for a more integrated approach to learning and the formation of the heart. There is urgent need for the school and families to work more closely together.

## **We need a bigger umbrella**

To widen our circle of care and professional network, we will be closing the residential service sector and expanding our Student Care services. Magdalene's Kindergarten, a private pre-school, will transit to an inclusive childcare, to be named St. Magdalene's Inclusive Childcare. To do this, we have been blessed with the offer of partnership with the Lien Foundation. Together, we will work towards providing Circle of Care @ Canossian Eduplex.

It is situated at the Circuit Rd-Aljunied-Macpherson neighbourhood, where we have a high proportion of at-risk families. The present Canossian Eduplex is one-of-its-kind education complex in Singapore comprising five sectors in a single location under the Canossian Sisters, they are:

1. A primary School (Canossa Convent Primary School)
2. A special education school (Canossian School)
3. A kindergarten (Magdalene Kindergarten)
4. A student care Centre (SCC) part of Canossaville Children's Home
5. A residential Home (part of Canossaville Children's Home)

## The Circle of Care @ Canossian Eduplex

The core team, comprising the ED, Lai Chun, Architect Belinda Huang, Curriculum developer Regina Davamoni and Supervisor Sr. Marilyn, have been very busy in the last months making their own Learning journeys to different pre-schools and educational Centres / programmes and engaging in stimulating conversations with experts to evolve a new approach to childcare and student care which aims :

1. To *nurture a culture of mindfulness* where staff and children develop a habit of kind awareness
2. To *make connections* with Mother Nature - getting in touch with nature and seeing the connections (seasons, elements, ecology, food chain, etc.) – in the larger environment
3. To *acquire essential life skills* such as developing focus and self-control, perspective taking, communication, taking on challenges and self-directed learning
4. To *set-up pastoral care and family support* as in forming the Child Development Unit (CDU) with social workers and other therapists that will serve our children at the Eduplex

Our goal is to build an inclusive and life-giving environment, no matter what the needs of the children and families are. The main focus of the programmes at both the Student Care Centre and Childcare Centre, will be nurturing character and values to ensure children grow up to contribute back to society through opportunities given to them in Canossaville. Most importantly, the approach will be for children to discover and appreciate their own unique strengths, talents and maximising their God-given potentials.

The new St Magdalene's Childcare will be Singapore's second inclusive preschool. Best practices developed at Kindle Garden (the first inclusive preschool) relating to policies, practice, space design and staff configuration will be shared, with adaptations if required, thus putting the new St Magdalene's Childcare on a firm foundation and fast track.



**CANOSSAVILLE**

**Children & Community Services**

*By Sr Marilyn Lim*

# A Cup of Milk Everyday

Every year, the pupils come together to bring joy to others by raising money themselves or by helping organisations raise money for others.



In 2016, Canossian School celebrated our 60th Anniversary. To mark this milestone, Canossian School adopted the Canossian missions in Indonesia. There were 2 projects:

1. "A Cup of Milk Every Day". The pupils wanted to raise money to buy powdered milk powder for the Sisters and children served by the Canossian Mission in Indonesia.

2. "Colour My World". The Primary 1 and 2 pupils created a colouring book for children. The pupils donated coloured pencils and other stationery. Every Friday, pupils dropped coins into the collection tin and raised \$2,000 to buy loads of milk powder, pay for the overseas delivery service, print colouring books and others.



The pupils packed the cartons and went to great lengths to ensure that every carton was filled to the brim. They also placed special messages in the boxes to say hello to their friends in Indonesia.

Service learning is an integral part of a Canossian School pupil's life. Through this project, we believe that every child learns to help, serve and to make a difference and bring joy to others. The pupils are blessed with gifts and talents and should be given opportunities to make a difference to the lives of others.



*By Ms Terry Theseira*

# Expressions Through Art

About four years ago, I was asked whether I was keen to run an art class for the student care at Canossaville Children's Home's (CCH). Having conducted several art camps and art lessons with children from another social services organization, I had a rough idea of what I wanted to do in such art classes.

It would be a class where children use art to express themselves freely. The class will not have a teaching plan; there will be no targets, and the children's art will not be judged. These are my conditions – and to my delight, the CCH management agreed to the proposal. So in July 2013 my journey as a volunteer with CCH began.

I still remember the first class quite clearly. I was given a room with two tables -enough for a maximum of 12 children. The children were told that there was an art class which they could choose to attend. Only six children turned up for the first class.

I gave each one a piece of art block, palette with paints, brushes and a cup of water. And the only instructions they received were to paint anything they wanted, and to remember



that there is no right and wrong in what they drew. There was no time limit set but when they had finished, they could come and talk to me about their painting.

I was pleased with the first session as class management was reasonably easy with six children painting quietly. But that would not last! The children must have had enjoyed the experience and told their friends about it. When the third class came, the number of children had grown to 13. And I have not looked back since.

Over the years, I have made some minor tweaks in my approach. Paints have been replaced with crayons and color pencils as the dry medium is simpler to handle. Also, the number of children is limited to ten at any one time so that they have enough elbow space. But the instructions - of drawing anything they wanted, that the drawing would not be judged or graded, and that they could come and tell me their story when they finish - remained. I have never really counted, but over a two-hour session, I am quite certain I have sometimes collected more than 30 drawings.

It is not only the numbers that tell the story of the popularity of this class. The children's enthusiasm and the fact that the same children come back again and again are some of the reasons why I believe this class works.

And if I may be so bold, I can say that I have an inkling why it works. I really believe that each and every one of us yearn to be known, understood and loved unconditionally, by others and ultimately, by our Great Creator. Having the chance to tell their own unscripted stories without judgment, these children experience what it means to have another person know, understand and love them as they are.

It is truly my wish that they get to know the God who loves them without conditions, who wants to know each and every one of them and truly understands them. To be part of the programme at CCH is my privilege and I would like to thank everyone at CCH who has given me their support through the years. Without your foresight and understanding of what a child really needs, this class would not have come to fruition. God bless!

*By Ms Ruth Wong*

# Flashes from Canossa



Sisters Enrica Perego, Louisa Lim, Margaret Goh and Sabina joined the Canossian Family Night of SACPS



*"The future of Us" exhibition – Sisters joined Canossian School for an outing to Marina Boulevard*



*Morning Mass at Sacred Heart Church as pilgrimage to the Year of Mercy Holy Door – 17 March*



*100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Sr Vittorina at St. Joseph's Home on 27 May*



*Celebrating Lyn's birthday*



*Sr Etti with the migrant workers*

*31 May: tea with Andrew Cheong (Hatch Design Team) and the workers who worked on the Canossa Heritage Gallery project – our way of appreciation for their hard work. Terry, Grace and community Sisters were present*



*RCIA group from Divine Mercy Church visited the Canossian Eduplex to understand better the Canossian mission*

*Canossa Convent Community*

## *Let the Little Ones come to me...*

When I told a friend in Jan 2015 that I have accepted the mandate to be the supervisor of Magdalene's Kindergarten, I think he must have rolled his eyes for he said something to the effect: "God help you." He knows my skill is not to put systems in order, perhaps, just the reverse! However, trusting in the Holy Spirit I ventured into this ministry to be with little ones at aged 67 with excitement and full of hopes though uncertain of what to expect.



Memories of the young ones who taught me to be who we are before layers of expected behaviour clouded our consciousness came flooding back. What struck me most was their innocence!

I remember Karyna during MK Open House in 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2016. At slightly over aged two months old she was so eager to come to Magdalene's Kindergarten to follow her sister, Kayna. She was milking a cow with mum watching by. During the Combined Choral Festival on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Karyna morphed into a demure angel! These young ones really grow fast in mind, body and spirit!



I was happy too that one of the objectives of MK in 2015/6 was met - the Faith Formation programme of Mk to attract Catholic students.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sr Enrica for her support and prayer in my ministry at MK.

I would like to thank Sr Theresa Seow, Sr Christina Yeo and Sr Dorothy Lim for their love and for being there when it matters. It means that much to me, truly! God bless all of you!



1  
by Sr Margaret Goh

# The Canossian Heritage Gallery

The Canossa Heritage Gallery was launched jointly by Archbishop William Goh, our Provincial Leader Sr Theresa Seow, and CCPS Alumnus Miss Low Yen Leng, a Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Education – on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2016.

## The Project

From the onset of this project, we knew what to showcase as Sr Marilyn had already gathered many of the exhibits and paraphernalia to be displayed in the gallery. The earlier gallery by our Sisters had on the walls - posters of our Mother Foundress' life story, handwritten manuscripts and countless numbers of photographs, mounted in chronological order, and other artefacts such as an old nun's habit and bonnet hung and piles of photo albums, and record books in this Heritage "corner".

We were challenged very much more by what to keep and what to discard; and how to organise them in an interactive, informative and engaging manner to tell a 75-year old story of love and service. We divided it into five different areas with the Educational Complex forming the bulk of it.



The working project team, headed by Sr Marilyn – comprises Miss Grace Tan, Principal of Canossa Convent, Miss Terry Theseira, Principal of Canossian School, Ms Jackie Lim Poh Suan and me, and Mr Andrew Cheong and Sivam – the two talented designers from Hatch Design Consultancy who were commissioned to create

the visual displays and co-ordinate the installation. They say 7 is a significant number. Indeed – we the MAGnificent 7 created MAGic! It was daunting but enriching!

## The Concept and Layout of the Gallery

The main wall facing the door showed how the Canossian Daughters of Charity dedicated their lives to **forming a life built on love, empowering women and children.** They created an environment to **embrace the hearing impaired**, include the disabled and individuals with special needs. They committed themselves to **transforming lives of the poorest of the poor.** They **partnered with lay leaders** to continue a mission to make God known and loved.



Done in five different pastel panels the thrust of the Canossian mission became the 5 key messages occupying the main wall of the Gallery.

Related exhibits and items lovingly kept such as an old Singer sewing machine were testament to the vocational lessons the girls had in the convent. In the glass showcases, were various paraphernalia from report books to badges, aprons and exercise books to early day hearing aids and relics from the chapels. The habit, complete with a cape and bonnet which a Canossian nun



would have worn in the 1940s is also displayed on a mannequin.



## The Eduplex

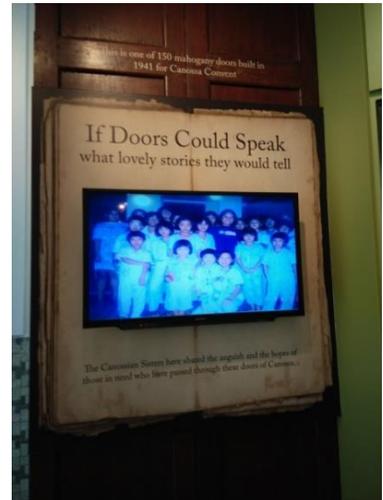
The borderless integration of the 5 sectors creating the Eduplex, a unique Canossian brand – Canossa Convent, Canossian School, Canossaville Children’s Home, Canossa Convent Primary School and

Magdalene’s Kindergarten is clearly illustrated by a geometric design of 5 hearts to show the seamless movement within the 5 sectors of the **EDUPLEX.**

This Eduplex is an Educational complex consisting of five different sectors - Canossa Convent Primary School, Canossaville Children's Home, the Canossian School for the hearing impaired, Magdalene's Kindergarten and Canossa Convent. The "hub" for transformation and empowerment, served with the spirit of our Foundress St Magdalene – to make Jesus known and loved. This was what the celebration of 75 years was all about. Via Veritas Vita

### **"If Doors Could Speak"**

On a ten-foot high mahogany door that used to be a classroom door, is a television from which individuals who have lived and passed through these doors narrate their love-stories with the place. These included the late Sr Virginia Crimella, a few teachers and some former residents of the Children's Home. A book with the same title will also be published to chronical the lives of people whose lives have been transformed.



On the opposite end, "Our Journey" describes the journey of the Sisters who came from Macau. On three interactive touch screens are timelines from 1939 to present time. The touch screen and its programme provide for flexibility in updating information on soft copy as time goes by, thereby keeping it relevant and current.



In the centre, encased in an exquisite looking golden frame mounted on a tall wooden prism tower is a grand digitized portrait of our Mother Foundress, St Magdalene.

Its central position is significant as she is the founder of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. The story of her life is narrated through a video thus allowing even our little ones to more about Foundress.

The Canossa Heritage Gallery costs about S\$50,000 to refurbish and nine months to complete. The National Heritage Board subsidised approximately half its cost, and other monies were raised through various initiatives including an outdoor race event organised by the Canossian Alumni Association, and some goodwill sponsorship from donors and well-wishers.



## The Celebration

The celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Convent 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2016 was also the re-opening of the Canossian Heritage Gallery. Everyone was involved in this important event. Teachers and students of the Canossian School and CCPS welcomed guests from the Ministry of Education, members of the School Management Committee, past Alumni Presidents, Principals of all the Canossian institutions, parent



volunteers, sponsors and benefactors to the various sectors of the Eduplex.

The celebration started with a Eucharistic Mass celebrated by His Grace Archbishop William Goh; the Grand Opening Concert and Luncheon, jointly put up by the students of the kindergarten, primary school and the Canossian School and the Canossian Sisters. Guest of Honour was CCPS Alumnus Ms Low Yen Ling, Parliamentary Secretary – Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Education and Mayor of South-West CDC. He reminded educators

and parents that the Catholic education has to be value-based, for what would be its purpose when a child grows up with many grade As but does not love and respect others, and remains selfish and self-centred.

Together with Sr Theresa Seow and Ms Low Yen Ling, he declared the opening of the Canossa Heritage Gallery with the ribbon cutting ceremony. A plaque signed by the 3 VIPs was mounted on a wall in the Gallery. This was followed by a short tour of the Gallery before they proceeded to the CCPS Educational Trail where the primary school girls made a positive impression as tour guides to the VIPs.



During the lunch Ms Low Yen Ling shared about her younger days in CCPS, confessing that one of her favourite places was the Chapel – where she found serenity, particularly before exams. The lunch was accompanied by beautiful of choral melodies, dancers in colourful costumes and the Sisters entertained with their ukulele. But the real show stopper was certainly the item by Magdalene’s Kindergarten Nursery children “Let’s Twist Again”.

My earliest memories of 1 Sallim Road, was walking hand in hand, with my grandmother to cross a sandy path leading up to a long wooden shed for masses on Sundays to the old St Stephen’s Church – a dark wooden building on stilts that I vaguely remember. What I initially figured was an administrative task for me to write to National Heritage Board for money for the project, became an endeavor of love and nostalgia. Strolling through the 75 years of history to the birth of a time capsule that will serve to tickle the memory of the generations of visitors to come is really my labour of commitment and love.

*By Veronica Tan*

# My Faith Journey

My dear Sisters, colleagues and friends, I would like to share with you, my faith journey.

I come from Patheingyi - Myanmar. I was the only son and until age 21, I was Buddhist, because my family is Buddhist. Even though my mother is a Catholic, she had to obey my father, who wanted his children, two girls and a boy, to be brought up in the Buddhist religion. My mother practised the Catholic faith but she never taught us the Catholic religion. My only recollection of any contact with Catholicism was when I was about 12 years old, when my mother brought me to Church on 2nd November - All Souls' Day and Christmas day.

I came to work in Singapore when I was 21. On reflection, God must be guiding, and directing me to St. Joseph's Nursing Home, where I started working as a Health Care Assistant for almost six years. At SJH, my desire to become a Catholic was awakened through my contacts with the Sisters, and the Catholic staff. I was attracted to the chapel where I prayed and asked God to show me the way. After one and a half years of searching, I asked Marian Jaswant what I must do to become a Catholic. She introduced me to Sr. Marie de Roza, who was conducting "Faith-Sharing" once a week with the residential Filipino and a few Catholic Myanmar nurses. I learnt that through the Bible, that is, God's Word, God really speaks to me. Sister gave me a Bible, which I cherished very much. In that group, I learnt how to pray and talk to God; I got to know Mother Mary and learnt how to say the rosary. I like to pray and talk to God, I know in my heart that God exists, that He loves and cares for me. I have many experiences of how God helped me whenever, I pray to Him in my difficulties, I feel God very close to me, in my life and in my work.

I will give you an example how God helped me. When I first started to work, I was hot-tempered, impatient and rough with the male residents. I prayed and God helped me to be more kind, gentle, forgiving and compassionate towards my colleagues and the residents. I grew to like working with SJH male residents. I treat them with love, respect and gentleness as I try to see Jesus in the people I serve. I remember that Jesus says, "When I was sick, you came to nurse me, when I was naked, you clothe me." In St. Joseph's Home, we are encouraged to be committed, to serve and treat our residents with respect, love, gentleness and patience.

To become Catholic, I had to be patient and wait for God's time, which is the right time. When I told Sr. Marie that I wish to be baptised, she told me to join the RCIA programme in St. Francis of Assisi Church in Boon Lay. Unfortunately for me, SJH had to move to 9 Mandai Estate in September 2014 for more than two years. I couldn't go to St. Francis for the RCIA programme, because going there was difficult and also sometimes, I have to do night shifts. I prayed to God, my Father to show me the way. One night, I was lying on my bed and still thinking of my wish to be baptised. Suddenly, God came to console and comfort me, "Aung Thu, you go to Myanmar and be baptised there." Wow! This is a good idea, I never thought about that! In my heart, I know it is God's idea and not mine. Later I

phoned to my mother and uncle, who are Catholics and told them that I will be going to Myanmar and I wished to be baptised.

The parish priest of my hometown in Pathein told my uncle that I needed a letter from Sr. Marie saying that I was prepared for Baptism. However my participation in the "Faith - Sharing Group" is not Baptism preparation. I was very sad and discouraged, but I continue to pray to God, to show me the way Sr. Marie also prayed and two days later, she told me that she will write to the parish priest telling him that she had just started preparing me for Baptism. After I had come back from Myanmar, I will be attending catechism and on-going faith formation for a year. Also, she made me sign a contract to ensure that I would be committed and persevere in my lessons.

My friends, I have been learning the Catechism of the Catholic Church, weekly and in the last 3 months, bi-weekly. I have discovered who Jesus Christ is, and found my treasure in the Catholic faith.

I was baptised in St. Peter's Cathedral, in my village of Pathein, on 26 March 2016. It was Easter Sunday, a special day. I felt so happy because finally, I could follow God's plan for me. I chose the name Andrew, which sounds quite similar to my Myanmar name "Aung Thu". I always wanted to be a follower of Christ, and be His apostle. I wish to tell others about God's Love, to make Jesus known, and how we should pray, and believe in Him, and thank Him for everything.

I am grateful to Sr. Geraldine Tan and Sr. Marie de Roza for their kindness, help and encouragement in accompanying me in my faith journey, and finally to be able to be baptised in the Catholic Church. In 2017, I will receive the two Sacraments of Confirmation and Matrimony in Myanmar, and I wish to thank God, My Father for all the blessings and graces He has bestowed upon me, whilst I am staying in SJH and in the peaceful and safe little island of Singapore.



*By Andrew Aung Thu*

# Onward to a new journey ...



*May the blessings of the Lord be with you always, dearest Ros!*

Finally, after months of waiting and medical tests, Sr Rosalia Yeo received the green light to go to Australia for her new mandate as Delegate Leader for the Australia Province. With a heavy heart and at the same time rejoicing with her, the Community held a Para-liturgy to thank God for all that she is to us and do pray for abundant blessings for her new Mandate. Sr Rosalia left Singapore on 19 August 2016.

*"Shall we dance? Till we meet again!"*



*"I will follow you, follow you wherever you may go ....."*

*By Sr Priscilla Ahin*

# Walk for Rice 2016



Hours before kick-off at 4pm, ominous dark clouds threatened to derail our plans to *Walk for Rice* – an initiative by South East Community Development Council and NTUC FairPrice to donate rice to needy residents. Could the event go ahead as planned? Some of us wondered. What if the rain persisted? Then it started to pour heavily and with no end in sight. Dominic Chia, organiser for this second edition of the walkathon was understandably worried “Participants would have had to take extra precaution as part of the route involved walking along the roads. That said, all participants were encouraged to take their wet weather gear with them so we could continue in the rain unless there was a thunderstorm.”

But as suddenly as it came, the rain quickly subsided to a light drizzle to make way for sunshine and high spirits once more. Flagging off the walkathon Sr Geraldine said “St Joseph’s Home has always been on the receiving end of kind sponsors and donors. *Walk for Rice* allows us to give back to the community where for every 200 metres walked, NTUC FairPrice will donate a bowl of white rice as well as brown rice to a needy family.”



*(Left) Workers from the new St Joseph’s Home construction site were a ray of sunshine in their striking yellow tops (Right) Sr Mary Wong at the ready to sound the horn.*

Second-time participant and staff of St Joseph’s Home Ilovea agreed, “I like that while I get to chat with my friends during the walk, I can also do my bit for charity.” She was joined by some of her fellow Josephians, Lay Canossians, volunteers and contractors, workers and architects working on the new home. At the blast of the horn by Sr Mary Wong, the group was officially off!



*(Left) Veronica from the Canossian Alumni Association and Dominic, event organiser  
 (Middle) Lay Canossians and staff of St Joseph’s Home raring to go  
 (Right) We’ll be lost without our lovely road marshals Susu (left) and Joylin (right)*

Participants wound their way through a 16-km path through Woodlands Road, Choa Chu Kang Avenue and along the lush forest of Bukit Batok Road before hitting Jurong East and finally, our new home in Jurong West. Said Ms Ilovea: “It was much further compared to last year’s route, but it was definitely easier on the feet as the ground was flat. We had to trek up Bukit Gombak last year to reach the Canossian Sisters’ headquarters in Jalan Merbok.” For driver Mr Woo who was taking part for the first time, it took him a leisurely 2 hours and 45 minutes to reach the new home. “It’s ok, not too tiring” said the 65-year-old, “and I made a new friend along the way, Sam!”



*(Left) A new milestone! (Right) Telephone contractor Sam and his wife*

As dusk fell and the new St Joseph’s beckoned in the distance, participants slowly trickled onto the construction site to jubilant smiles, high fives and sighs of relief. In all, about 140 participants walked 2,060 kilometres to raise 1,648 kg of rice –triple last year’s amount.



*(Left) Ms Ilovea (in blue) with (fr left) Shera, Sr Geraldine and Sharri  
(Right) Sr Geraldine with architects Darryl (left) and Andrew (right)*

“This year was just as much fun as last year. Walking with friends is always good no matter the distance,” said Tengah Airbase staff John de Souza and a long-time volunteer with St Joseph’s Home, “I’d definitely do it again because it’s for a good cause and a way to stay healthy.”



*(Left) John (far left) with his team from Tengah Airbase  
(Right and below) Staff, volunteers and project partners of St Joseph’s Home*



*By Sr Geraldine Tan*

# Immersion in Singapore

From the 17<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> August we had the opportunity to learn about a scholastic system and a culture which are completely different from ours. Our intention was to spend a month working with children and teachers so that we could learn a new educational method for our future career. Also besides helping us to improve our English we want to use what we learnt for our thesis for the next year in our school.



During our stay we were attached to different teachers who welcomed us to their class lessons, explaining their teaching methodologies and providing hands-on experience as well. We also had the opportunity to work with children with special needs. At Canossa Convent the hearing impaired are prepared for inclusive schooling wherever possible. We found the way in which children are integrated with the other pupils and how they are followed by teachers amazing.

Singapore is a country with different cultures, religions and ethnicities and it was interesting to see how they live in harmony together not only at school, but also in everyday life. Although the National Anthem is in Malay, the language of communication is English, so in school they study English, but they also have to study a mother tongue. Children can choose between Mandarin, Tamil or Malay.



*Caterina with the little ones*

After having sung the National Anthem, they renew their pledge and pray; after which they start their lessons.

In the primary school lessons last half an hour so that children don't lose their attention. Also the lessons aren't so 'frontal', they are dynamic and captivating: children sometimes sit down at their desks or on the floor or they walk around the class according to the teacher's pedagogical approach.

We noticed that they give a lot of importance to extracurricular activities (ECA), e.g. secondary school girls choose among 22 activities. They attend their ECA in the afternoon from 3 to 6pm, and once the girls choose an activity they must follow it for four years, this is to make them develop a sense of commitment. Some of these ECA include Indian dance, drama, art, karate, netball, tennis and cookery. We think this is a good way to learn different things and to spend time with your schoolmates. Another practice which is unique is that every morning, pupils and teachers meet at assembly and





We noticed that the children from the primary school have greater responsibility unlike those in Italy. In Singapore, a child has more duties and could become the leader of her group, class or even chosen as a prefect; these are pupils who have some control and they are respected by the others. This is surely a new thing for us because we are used to seeing the teachers as the only reference point in the class. Another thing that we liked a lot is that from early

age children are expected to reflect when and why they do something wrong and, this too, makes them more responsible. We were really impressed by the fact that lessons are not theoretical, but they also talk about topics that concern everyday life such as the importance of using internet in the right way, living peacefully together, technology and current events.

What surprised us the most from the beginning is the respect that the children show to the teachers: they always listen carefully to them and they take their advice really seriously. School imparts lots of values, like love for others, for themselves and for their Nation, compassion, humility, admiration and teaches them how to be proud of their success without boasting. Lessons are based on the idea of sharing with other pupils, caring, co-operating, empathy and tolerance.



Jo reading stories

We also had the opportunity to meet the Imam of a mosque, go to a Taoist temple and a Buddhist temple. These were amazing experiences because we learnt lots of new things by talking to them. Furthermore, we were warmly welcomed by all of them even though we belong to a different religion.

This has been such an enriching experience for us, not just because we are actually able to understand what a teacher's life is like now, but also because we had the chance to discover a new culture, live wonderful experiences and visit places. We also understand what being independent means. We're so thankful we have had the honour of meeting the kind of people who make our stay and our learning journey so fruitful and enjoyable. We would also like to thank the sisters who made us feel at home and took us to so many beautiful places.



Happy birthday Sisters



Caterina Pierini  
Natasha Piccolo  
Chiara Piccolo  
Jocelyn [group mentor]

# Staff Outing to the Land of the Million Pagodas

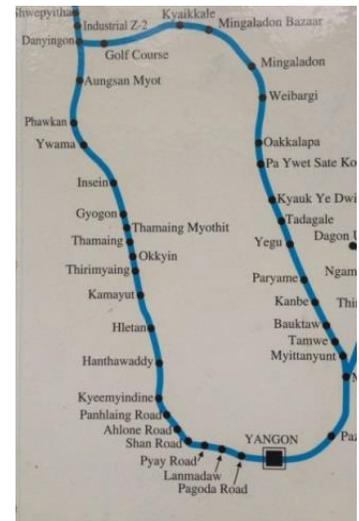
9 -13 Nov 2016



Staff of St Magdalene's Community Singapore (Jln Merbok) went on a 5-day trip to Myanmar, subsidized by the community's "Special Employer's Credits". Sr Christina Yeo, Sr Anne Lim, Sr Iris Jaswant and our regular volunteers, Frances, Louise and Mary Mercy were invited. For many, including Sr Anne and Sr Iris, it was their first visit to the "Land of the Million Pagodas".

Their first itinerary was a 3-hour "Circular Train" ride around Yangon, a trip all of them were very impressed for various reasons. They shared the cabin with vendors and their goods which would be distributed at the various train stations. Vendors did their sorting during the trip, but on this particular day, they had some "willing hands" to help them. As the train stopped at the various stations, they felt sorry to see the homeless.

Lucy, our staff, shared: *"The Circular Train ride touched me - I feel sorry for those who have nowhere to go but have to live along the tracks."*



Perhaps, on this circular train trip, the sentiments of the group can be summed up by Stella: *"A great way to experience and see the various villages around Yangon is a ride not to be missed. At a cost of only 200 kyats (S\$0.22 cents), it is the most economical train ride I ever had and it can't beat the experience I gained along the journey. Types of wares, vegetables, fruits, groceries are being transported to villages for their daily needs. The sight of the young and old vendors carrying their wares on top of their heads was unforgettable and an eye opener, especially for us who cannot do without our*

*luxuries and comforts back home."*

The group saw the vast contrast when they next visited the Shwedagon Pagoda, awed at the hundreds of gold plates that covered the Temple and the diamonds that encrusted the top stupa.

Ah Gek observed: *“The temple roof has gold and diamonds but the poor do not even have a roof over their heads.”*



“Visiting Thanlyn and seeing our children was yet another experience for the group: *“The children under Sr Angela are so well behaved, spontaneous and caring for one another...so different from our children back home.”*

The children and the young educators then performed some songs and dances to welcome their Singapore guests. The group then celebrated Sr Christina’s birthday with a cake and had lunch with the children over at the Home.



*A big “Thank you Sr Theresa, Sr Elizabeth and Sisters for this unforgettable and educational trip. Special Thanks to Sisters and Postulants of Myanmar for your great hospitality, especially Srs Marion and Jacq for accompanying us on our sight-seeing & being our translators occasionally.*



By Sr Mag Ee

# Musica Gioiosa -

## a Combined Canossian Thanksgiving & Christmas Choral Festival

*Musica Gioiosa* (Joyous Music), a Thanksgiving & Christmas Choral Festival, brought together all 6 education institutions of the Canossian Daughters of Charity – Magdalene’s Kindergarten, Canossian Convent Kindergarten, Canossian School, Canossa Convent Primary School and the St Anthony’s Canossian Primary and Secondary Schools.



Held at the Church of the Holy Family on 18 November 2016, the repertoire included traditional Christmas classics by the senior choirs, filling the hall with their angelic voices and setting the mood for the coming of Christ. The lively medley from the cute little ones, aged from 2 ½, obviously the crowd pleasers – got everyone singing and swinging along as they “jingled all the way”! The finale was a beautiful rendition of The Prayer of St Francis, sung by the combined choirs of the St Anthony’s Canossian Primary and Secondary Schools with Sr Theresa Seow, Provincial Leader, taking a solo lead in the first verse. A surprising bonus to the audience! This is the first time ever that the schools presented a combined concert to make joyous music in celebration of youthful verve to mark the end of the school academic year and the birth of Christ. It was indeed a beautiful celebration as ONE CANOSSIAN family.

by Mrs Eugenie Tan

# God answers...in His time

I have always dreamt of having a handicraft workshop, working with women. I picked up knitting at 13 and dressmaking at 17. I used to make a rosary at every recreation time in community. While I was in Italy, I learnt bobbin lace making from the elderly Sisters. This passion became less marked as I focused on my commitment to my responsibility.

Last December a haberdashery stall closed business and I inherited everything that was in it. Again my interest was ignited but I still did not know where I was heading...



Two months ago, I received a request to make tactile projects for dementia patients. I could say 'Yes' because I was on medical leave and thought that I could still contribute...

So voila! I gathered some friends and they brought their friends to do this project together.

Workshop time is happy time for us as we sing and work together. Our ladies are mostly retirees, some have not opened their sewing boxes for more than 20 years (I am one of them!).



After a day of working together, the feedbacks I received were, "energising", "therapeutic", "enjoyed the good spirit" and one lady asked "why only once a week?"

In this project, God not only realised my dream but also brought friendship and fellowship to this group of retirees. May God continue to bless them for the sacrifice of their time for others.

*By Sr Rose Low*

# 2016: New life, New hope, New shoots for Canossian Mission in Myanmar

The Canossian Community in Myanmar now has seven Sisters in two houses:

Sr. Angela Ng, Sr. Joana Da Silva and Sr. Antonia Mya Mya Lone in Canossa Home.

Sr. Marion Liong, Sr. Jacqueline Chin, Sr. Calista PonnuDorai and Sr. Heza Zar Zar in the Formation House



Sr. Heza Zar Zar made her First Profession as a Canossian Sister on 17 September in Singapore in the presence of her mother and sister, our Sisters and Lay Canossian Family and friends. Sr. Angela Ng was there to represent the Myanmar community. After her vows, Sr. Heza returned to Myanmar for her home visit and was posted to the Myanmar Formation House.



**Anita Valence joined the Postulancy on 29 Sept**

The Sisters in Myanmar also welcome Anita Valence who started her formation as a Canossian Postulant in our Formation House in Yangon, seen here in the photo together with her fellow Postulant Magdalena and the Sisters.



**Canonical visit**

The Provincial Leader, Sr. Theresa Seow visited the Sisters in Myanmar together with her Councillor, Sr. Dorothy Lim & Provincial Bursar, Sr. Magdalene Ee from 26 February to 1 March



Sr. Theresa visited the Sisters again from 26 to 30 November together with Mrs Eugenie Tan, Principal of SACPS and Ms Grace Tan, Principal of CCPS and a friend Anna Oliverio.



She received the 1<sup>st</sup> renewal of vows of Sr. Antonia Mya Mya Lone on 28 Nov 2016 in the prayer Room of Canossa Home, Thanlyin Myanmar in the presence of the Community of Sisters



### Canossian Formation House in Yangon

Sr. Marion and Sr. Jacqueline are involved in youth ministry, conducting Bible sharing, organizing leadership training camps for youth (as many as 700 youth each time) as well as camps for children. They are helping youth who are searching to find direction in life.



We are able to carry on this mission with the help of Volunteers, donors and supporters from Singapore. They are our mission partners, collaborating with us in giving training sessions to the educators & youth and conducting camps as well as giving Christmas Cheer to children & families in remote villages. We are grateful to so many of our friends who have gone on mission trips we organize periodically and have been supporting us with fund-raising.

### Training of Educators

Graduation of the 8th Batch of 24  
Educators on 29 April



### Intermediate Course:

18 educators returned after one year's service in the boarding Houses, for their Intermediate Course held in the month of May and had their graduation on 28 May 2016.

## Advanced Course

12 educators of the 6<sup>th</sup> batch returned after their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of service in the Boarding Houses to attend an English Course as well as the Advanced Course. After a month of updating their knowledge & skills, their graduation was on 30 June.



The 9<sup>th</sup> batch of 23 Educators started the Basic Course on 18 July.



22 children in Canossa Home started school on 1 June.

## Project 1: Our very own Formation House

Thanks to the contribution from Mother General, our Provincial of Singapore- Myanmar and the donations of friends and supporters, our Myanmar Formation House is near completion. The Sisters, Postulants and searchers hope to move in at the end of the year.





**Project 2: Canossian Vocational Centre (CVC)**, located in Nyaung Shwe, Shan State, near Inle Lake, has been completed in August 2016, thanks to our Provincial of Singapore - Myanmar, CHARIS Singapore for the grant & donations from friends in Singapore. This will give youth basic training in hospitality to equip them with skills to find work in the fast growing hotel industry in Myanmar.



Two of our FED Leaders have completed their 6 months courses at the SMVTI in Yangon. Rose for Restaurant Management & Lucia for Housekeeping. They are having their practical work in Chatrium Hotel in Yangon. Presently Matilda is attending a course on Front line in SMVTI.

### **LAY CANOSSIAN CONGRESS/CONVENTION in ITALY: 24 - 31 July**

81 Lay Canossians, Sister Animators & Canossian Father Fabio attended in the Congress. There were talks and sharing on the theme: *"Inspice et Fac: in the Heart of the World with the Joy of the Gospel"*.

Myanmar was represented by Teresa Hlaing (National Coordinator) & Sr. Jacqueline Chin (Sister Animator).



*By Sr Janet Wang*

# *Jesus Our King is Born*



*Merry Christmas  
and a very Happy New Year*

*We would like to wish all our friends,  
benefactors and partners in mission  
for their collaboration and support  
throughout the year.*

*We also invoke God's blessings  
on you and your loved ones as we welcome the  
New Year 2017.*

*Canossian Communities*