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Canossa Convent Primary to go co-ed next year

Principal Eugenie Tan and Sr Theresa Seow speak to Catholic News about this move



Canossa Convent Primary School will go co-ed in 2019 and will be renamed Canossa Catholic Primary School.

By Jared Ng

Canossa Convent Primary School (CCPS) is set to go co-ed in 2019 for its Pri 1 intake.

An official announcement was made earlier in January by Canossian provincial Sr Theresa Seow and principal Eugenie Tan to the Canossian alumni exco and parents.

"We hope to raise daughters and sons of Canossa with a Canossian education focused on character and formation of the heart," Mrs Tan told Catholic News.

Sr Theresa expressed her excitement at being able to "formally start accepting Pri 1 boys into the school from next year onwards."

"The idea [to go co-ed] has been in the works ... for about two years and the Sisters felt it was important to move with the times and respond to the needs of the community," she told Catholic News.

Some of these needs include catering to parents and their sons, living in the MacPherson-Aljunied area, who are affected by the merging of MacPherson Primary School and Cedar Primary School. Going co-educational will also cater to newer estates around the area, such as the upcoming Bidadari estate.

Furthermore, "many of our Canossian schools abroad have already gone co-ed, like in Hong Kong, India, the Philippines, Timor Leste and Italy," said Sr Theresa.

In the early years of the school, there were boys in the boarding house looked after by the Sisters, said Sr Theresa. They attended school with the girls here. However, the emphasis then was to provide girls with an education because at that time, they did not have as many opportunities as the boys to attend school. Today, the Canossians feel it is timely to also provide boys the Canossian brand of education, she added.

According to Mrs Tan, parents with eligible children under the various registration phases can register from July this year for both girls and boys for next year's Pri 1 intake.

She added that the school name will be changed to Canossa Catholic Primary School next year.



Canossian provincial Sr Theresa Seow and principal Eugenie Tan emphasised the importance of responding to the needs of the community as one of the reasons for the change.

The reaction so far from parents, teachers and alumni has been very positive, said Mrs Tan.

“Some parents with sons in Canossville Pre-School, a full-day child-care and kindergarten within the same compound as the school, have also been approaching their kindergarten principal and teachers with regard to registration,” she said.

One parent, Mr Edwin Chan, said, “Now my son Jackie can join his elder sister Jade in the same school.”

Another parent, Mrs Michele Ho, expressed her happiness “that my daughter will enjoy an enriching experience growing up with both boys and girls.”

Ms Sylvia Chua, an alumna of CCPS, shared, “Having benefitted from a Canossian education, I’m really happy that now even the boys can get a chance to learn what I learnt, especially our Canossian foundation from St Magdalene of Canossa.”

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A picture taken during the 1940s showing both girls and boys in Canossa Convent Primary School. Later, the emphasis was to provide girls with an education.

History of Canossa Convent Primary School

According to the CCPS website:

- The official opening of CCPS was on Aug 15, 1941.
- CCPS was suppose to function in January 1942. However due to the Second World War, the school became a refuge for war victims.
- On May 15, 1942, CCPS began functioning using Japanese as the medium of instruction.
- After the war in 1946, a private Chinese school was established on the site for those who had reached school-going age.
- In 1951, the Chinese school was converted into a one-session government-aided English school.
- The Canossian Sisters began to teach the classes which were previously taken by the Chinese-speaking lay teachers.
- In 1962, CCPS became a two-session government-aided English school.

Catholic co-ed schools in Singapore

- Canossian School for the hearing-impaired
- De La Salle School
- Holy Innocents' Primary School
- St Anthony's Primary School
- Assumption English School

- Assumption Pathway School
- Hai Sing Catholic School
- Holy Innocents' High School
- St Joseph's Institution International School
- Catholic Junior College

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