



St. Mary's Past Students' Association

NEWSLETTER October 2014

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Dear St. Marians,

Fully aware that nothing is new under the sun, I try to select a topic that would be of interest to you.

For children, the role of peer leaders is not only attractive but also a respectable one. It is always an honour to be a leader since teachers regard them to be role models to their schoolmates. For the past decade, we have created a lot

of titles and leadership roles for the students. The purpose is to get them more involved in school life. In the process, these posts will help the students develop into trust worthy, sociable and respectable adults in society.

Ever since the Whole Day School started in 2003, the concept of “service” was introduced, emphasized and evolved from

the idea of “One student, one service” . Now the number of titles for student leaders has increased tremendously. In the past, the leadership role was to develop the student’s personality. This has been transformed to a greater emphasis in serving the community. We now have Discipline Prefects, Library Prefects, Lunch Prefects, School Bus Prefects, Reading Buddies, I.T. Ambassadors, English Ambassadors, Health Ambassadors, Environment Friendly Ambassadors, Visual Art Ambassadors, Putonghua Ambassadors, First Aid Assistants, etc. Each one has specific duties, playing active roles in various aspects and functions on a regular basis in their school life. This active participation leads to building a better sense of belonging and sharing of responsibilities within the school environment. As a result of the adoption of “The Through Train Mode”, most students will probably stay together for twelve years in the same campus for their entire school life in St. Mary’s. I believe that this culture of service and participation is beneficial for their school life, helping to build a more generous and other-centered personality in the students.

A few days ago, I found a Primary 5 student in the sick room. She had injured her knees during P.E. lesson. Her two classmates, still sweating from the activities in the P.E. lesson, helped her, to the best of their ability, to settle comfortably in the sick room. They related to me how they had helped their friend to write the diary, pack her belongings, and bring them to the sick room. One consoled her friend who was in tears due to the pain while the other said that this was her most meaningful day. Then a discussion followed as how they would transport the heavy bags of their injured friend to the school bus after school.

I was really touched by that event, having witnessed with my own eyes that this outgoing personality has become a second nature to the St. Marians, a passion to serve others with joy and enthusiasm.

Maria Cheung, Headmistress of SMCS and SMPSA Patron
October, 2014



1. Delivery of badges to all student leaders after the School Opening Liturgy.
2. With the Brownies after their enrollment.



Annual School Drama 2014 "TIMELESS"

In April this year, drama fans of St. Mary's were brought to year 2034 by the musical "Timeless" directed by Mr. Geoff Oliver and Ms. Eudora Lee. This tragic love story was beautifully presented by the joint effort of over 100 St. Marians under the guidance of Mr. Oliver and faculties. The students also wrote the lyrics of the 11 original songs and have shown of talent through their touching and impressive creations.

All tickets were soon sold out and the performances were highly applauded by the audience. Mr. Oliver revealed that next year, there would be an interesting play specially written for parents, so fans should all stay tuned!

Ms. Catherine Wong, the School Principal, congratulated the team on stage and shared an inspiring poem "Legacy or Technology" with them. The poem was written by Ms. Wong and is a reflective piece based on the core theme of the play. We have asked for Ms. Wong's kind permission to allow us to reprint the meaningful poem here for sharing. We hope you'll like it as much as we do!



Legacy or Technology?

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Human custom and history
World heritage and heredity
Are our culture and our legacy
Old traditions, but set our identity | 5 | So here is a dilemma for you to elect
A slate or an i-pad to select
Age of stone or age of space?
Book of parchment or book of face? |
| 2 | Development in science and technology
Civil progress, but change climatology
Advancement unchecked, pollution doubled up
Environment destroyed, in the economic hub | 6 | What a difficult choice to make!
Which side would you take?
Reverence or convenience?
Conscience or expedience? |
| 3 | (Choose, choose, girls would you?)
Manual operation or fully automatic?
New construction or ancient relic?
Visit a museum or an exhibition room?
The good old days or monetary boom? | 7 | Do you have to lean aside?
Can there be a compromise?
Out of the box you may think
To save our city from the brink |
| 4 | (Would you choose:)
Convention and conservation?
Or creation and innovation?
Antiquity despite austerity?
Over property and prosperity? | 8 | To stop separation or fission?
To form coalition without division?
Bring forth union and fusion?
St. Marians, you are on a mission! |
- by Ms. Catherine Wong

Another HKDSE Scholar from St. Mary's – Sabrina Wong



You may still remember reading about the first female scholar, a St. Marian, of the new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) two years ago (newsletter issue October 2012). Sabrina Wong followed a similar path this year, scoring 5** (highest grade) in all seven subjects, alongside 11 other students throughout the territory. Sabrina just started her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree at the University of Hong Kong.

✿ Striving for excellence

Sabrina's deep interest in science subjects is fully reflected in her choice of HKDSE electives: Physics, Chemistry and Biology. While the HKDSE examination period was kind of stressful, as expected, Sabrina did not find it particularly difficult as the preparation phase started a few months back and there was not really a need for "last-minute rush" during the revision and examination period.

✿ Commitment to serve

Sabrina has a strong commitment to serve. She was a member of the Zonta Z Club and participated in various types of community services. At school, she took it to the highest level and served fellow St. Marians as the Head Girl before her HKDSE year. As the Head Girl, she started to see real life examples of how to balance various interests, how to ensure that the interests of various parties could be addressed, and how different views could be brought together for the benefit of the school community as a whole. She also had the opportunity to work with other schools, enabling further growth of her interpersonal skills.

After completing the HKDSE examinations, Sabrina took up a 2-month internship at a social enterprise. She met families which have genuine difficulties in meeting their daily needs. Sabrina contributed by serving as volunteer tutors to children who needed help in catching up their studies but could not afford to do so. There she saw that children from families with less means usually had a higher aspiration for good academic performance, in the hope of helping to improve the quality of life of their families, but the pressure arising therefrom might not always find the right outlet.

Apart from her academic inclination and ability, it is also her commitment to serve that made her decide to take up MBBS. A loved one in the family suffered a stroke a few years back. Sabrina therefore had experience of the local medical sector and appreciated the tremendous medical resources, including human resources

with various expertise, required to serve the community of Hong Kong. This has reinforced her wish to go for the medical profession.

✿ Proud to be a St. Marian

Sabrina studied in St. Mary's for 12 years, from Primary 1 to Secondary 6. She enjoyed the kind support and guidance from teachers, both on the academic front and in extra-curricular activities. The Current Affairs Forum, for example, has not only been a good tool to prepare for Liberal studies as a HKDSE subject, but, more importantly, enabled students to develop critical thinking, thereby gaining a better understanding of our society and its problems. This is probably a major reason why St. Marians have been scoring high in Liberal studies.

The unique tradition of drama production is something that Sabrina takes great pride in. She sees this annual school-wide endeavour an occasion to connect St. Marians of all ages – from school age to those who have left school. It is also something not easily seen in other schools and makes itself a pride of St. Marians.

Sabrina is pleased to see fellow St. Marians staying active with school activities which would not only instil a sense of belonging, but would also help establish a good foundation for participation in activities outside school.

Sabrina found university life interesting and enjoyable. She has already signed up a few clubs, mainly related to community services to continue her service for those in need.

We see here a pragmatic and confident young lady with a firm commitment to serve the community, taking care of those in need. These are no doubt some of the core values shared by St. Marians, passing on from generation to generation. It is exactly such fine tradition that makes us take great pride as a St. Marian. Live St. Mary's evermore!

In Loving Memory of Sister Ida Sala



Sister Ida Sala, principal of St. Mary's from 1979 to 1990, returned to our Heavenly Father peacefully on 6 March 2014 around 12:25pm. To many St. Marians, Sr. Ida is more than just a principal. She is a caring mother, an inspiring mentor, a dear friend and a guardian angel. St. Mary's would not have been what she is today without Sr. Ida.

Her Vocation

Sr. Ida was born on 20 August 1922 in Arcore, a city about 20 km northeast of Milan. She was baptized two days later. In 1940, at the age of 18, she finished high school at the Liceo Classico Bartolomeo Zucchi. While studying in university, she joined the Canossian Missions and became a postulant in Vimercate, Milan in 1942. She became a novice in 1943, made her first profession in 1945 and on 15 September 1951, she made her final profession in Rome.

Her Teaching Mission

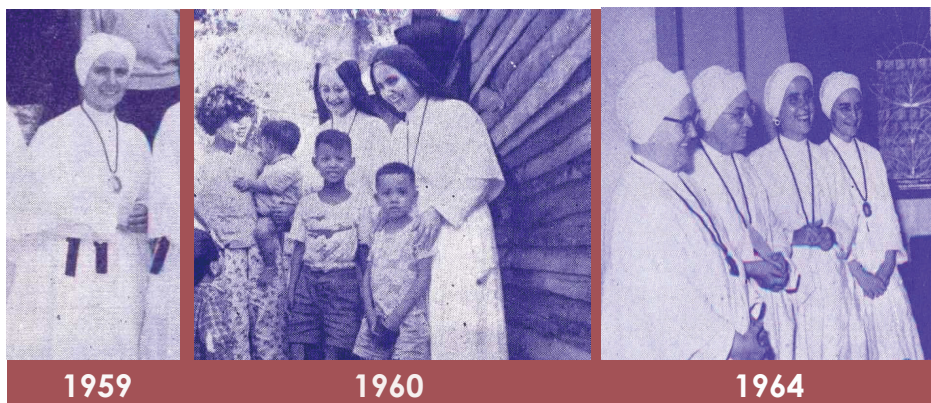
As a young student, Sr. Ida had always wanted to become a doctor. In fact, she originally planned to study medicine at the Milan University. But as Sr. Ida always said, "God has different plans for each of us." When she was 18, she felt God's call for her, which was to join the Canossian Missions and became an educator. She followed God's call, dropped her plan to study medicine, and studied Classics at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan to prepare herself for a teaching mission. After obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Humanities in 1947, she went to study in England so as to be professionally qualified for teaching in Hong Kong. She obtained a Degree in History at the University of London in 1949, and then returned to Milan to do a Master's Degree in Arts.

After her final profession in 1951, she started her teaching mission in England where she taught Latin and History at the Canossian Convent Mater Dei School for Girls in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. She stayed there for seven years until she was sent to Hong Kong in 1958.

Her Legacy for St. Mary's

Sr. Ida started her lifelong association with St. Mary's in 1958, teaching Biblical Knowledge and History, the two subjects that she liked most. In 1959, she became the Discipline Mistress and in 1960, the Vice Principal. She was transferred to Sacred Heart Canossian College in 1966 and was the principal there until 1973. Owing to her health problems then, she went to Rome and served as translator in the General House of the Canossian Missions. She returned to Hong Kong in 1978, and became principal of St. Mary's in 1979.

Between 1960 and 1965, Sr. Ida established the House System in St. Mary's, organized the first post-war Sports Day, started the publication of the school newspaper and school magazine, organized the Old Girls' Association (predecessor of St. Mary's Past Students' Association), and set up the Students'



Council. Sounds familiar? Indeed. All these are but part and parcel of the life of St. Marians, past and present. Sr. Ida was always keen to get students to initiate and organize extra-curricular activities. She gave them the freedom to develop their ideas and to execute them. She wanted them to learn to cooperate, to accept one another and to learn from mistakes. She had always been a firm teacher and

principal, but she “always knew the right dose of encouragement to give, and a bright cheery smile would always be ready for a well-deserving pupil” .

Her Passion for Drama

Sr. Ida was passionate about Drama. In 1959, just a year after her arrival at St. Mary’s, she started the Dramatic Society. She also wrote and directed “Murder in the Cathedral”, the first drama formally staged in the school hall. In 1960, she wrote and directed the second drama “A Pageant of Love” for the Centenary Celebration of the Canossian Missions in the Far East. Rev Bianchi, the then Bishop of Hong Kong, was among the audience at the Premiere show. The play was staged 18 times (eight in English and 10 in Chinese) in the following weeks, where students of other Canossian schools took turn to come to St. Mary’s to see the performance.

When Sr. Ida returned to St. Mary’s to become principal in 1979, she saw that while the love for drama continued, it was more an inter-class event. With Mr. Geoff Oliver joining St. Mary’s, they partnered in developing drama in the school. Over the years, St. Marians have nourished a deep love for drama production, from script-writing to directing, casting, performing, music, choreography, wardrobe, sound and lighting, design and set construction, stage management etc etc. The annual drama performance has since become an integral part of our school life, and an icon for St. Mary’s for the next 3 decades and beyond.

Teachings of Sr. Ida

“Every challenge is a gift from God. Every Challenge is part of His Plan for you.”

“Do your best. And God will do the rest.”

“What a good School should do is to help its students to become men and women of integrity, of justice and of peace, men and women for others, committed agents of positive changes...”

“Live our School motto COR UNUM (one heart) and VIA UNA (one way), by aiming the same goal of improving one another, helping one another, and caring for one another. You will change the world.”

“Each one of us must try to aim higher, to do better, to improve at all levels.”

“I am proud of you all. You should keep on doing good deeds.”

“Our School is dedicated to the Holy Mother of Christ. We should follow Holy Mary – her humility, her purity, her obedience, her kindness, and most of all, her abundant love for God and for her neighbours.”

“We should seek the glory and honour of God, not the glory and honour of this world.”

Donations in Memory of Sr. Ida Sala

Sr. Cynthia Chan, Provincial Superior of the Canossian Missions, reported that HK\$399,350 was raised during Sr. Ida’s Funeral Mass at the Canossian Chapel on 10 March 2014, and the two requiem masses arranged by past students of St. Mary’s Canossian College and Sacred Heart Canossian College.

Of the donations received, HK\$254,000 would be used for scholarships and education purposes, HK\$45,900 for dedication to prayers and Holy Masses, and HK\$99,450 for other work of the Missions.

Sr. Cynthia Chan thanked all St. Marians again for their love for Sr. Ida, and for their support for the work of the Missions, which had always been so close to Sr. Ida’s heart.

School News

External School Review for SMCC

St. Mary's Canossian College underwent an External School Review (ESR) in April 2014. The Review Report was very positive. The performance of the school management, teachers and students as well as the support from parents and past students were highly commended. The following are excerpts from the Review Report:

"The management of the school is effective. Areas of responsibilities are clearly delineated in the organisation structure. Policies and workflow are well set out. Administration guidelines and procedures are comprehensive and handy."

"Members of the well-represented IMC, notably the former Principal and Heads of the two feeder primary schools, take great interest in, and are cognisant of, the school's development. They accord the school personnel with trust and respect."

"The Principal has been devotedly steering the development of the school since she took office in 2007. She suitably delegates responsibilities and leads the teaching staff to set their focus on, and channel their effort into, serving the common good of the school. Being personable and open-minded, she is nonetheless steadfast in upholding the school's values and driving its pursuit of excellence, regularly communicating her expectations to the teachers and inspiring them to maintain high standards of performance.



Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the
Mentorship Programme in 2014

The Vice Principals and the Assistant Principal render staunch assistance to the Principal. They provide clear direction and active support for the departments under their charge. Along with the Principal, they play a pivotal role in creating a favourable environment for students to thrive in, serve as excellent role models and have gained the confidence and respect of the stakeholders."

"A strong language atmosphere has been created in the school. A clear Language on Campus Policy emphasising the use of English and Putonghua is in place and well observed... In general, students demonstrate high language proficiency. They are able to express their ideas clearly in

English and Chinese. They make good use of the generic skills to process information, analyse or argue about issues, and solve problems."

"Lessons are well-planned and structured. In a majority of the lessons, the teachers have appropriate learning expectations and good rapport with the students, and a stimulating and supportive learning environment is created. Students are highly motivated. They demonstrate a conscientious learning attitude and positive learning engagement, keenly interacting with the teacher and each other and participating in activities"

"Past students have been playing a very significant role in upholding the school's vision, spirit and heritage. The Past Students' Association (PSA) has been serving the school in various ways, and the mentorship scheme, its signature programme, is a prime example of how the very dedicated past students support the present ones."

We congratulate St. Mary's again and we thank the school management, teachers, students and all stakeholders for collaborating to keep St. Mary's a name that we will always be proud of.



PSA News



Next year, 2015, marks the 115th anniversary of our Alma Mater, and the PSA is delighted to organize the St. Mary's 115th Anniversary Dinner on 3 October 2015 (Sat). A Chinese banquet will be held in the evening. Preparations are currently underway, so please mark your diaries, especially for those who are residing overseas. We look forward to seeing you at the dinner. Do come and share another memorable time with us with joy and laughter. Further information will be available in the March 2015 issue of our newsletter, so please stay tuned!



Class Reunion News



The **Class of 1979** celebrated their 35th anniversary in July 2014 in Hong Kong. Over 70 people, including 63 girls and 9 teachers, joined the reunion dinner held at Kimberley Hotel. Amongst them, 8 classmates flew back from overseas to share this happy occasion. Sr. Joanna Wong also came all the way from Macau to join the dinner. A group of 20 visited their alma mater during a campus tour prior to the dinner. To reconnect with the group, please contact Rosa Yeung at alexrosa@netvigator.com or Maria Assumpta Au at marialiu@netvigator.com.

The **Class of 1984** celebrated their 30th anniversary on 5 July 2014. 21 classmates visited the school during the day and had a chance to meet Sr. Virginia Wong, their F.1 sister-in-charge. In the evening, 55 classmates and 5 teachers including Mrs Winnie Hung, Mrs. Clare Pedron Cheung, Mr. Philip Lee, Ms. Hung Ka Po, and Ms. Ellen Tsang attended the reunion dinner to share memories and fun. To reconnect, please contact Rosanna Chu at rosanna_wc_chu@yahoo.com.hk.



*St. Mary's Canossian College
1984 Graduation Reunion(5th July 2014)*

The **Class of 1975** will be celebrating their 40th Anniversary. A reunion dinner will be held on either 27 or 28 February 2015. Please contact Chow Tuen Yi Alice at 90888422 or Monica Wong at drmonicawong@gmail.com if you wish to attend.

Organizing a reunion for your class? Let our Membership Secretary know and we can include your news on the newsletter and the website. Email to membershipsec@stmaryspsa.org.



Alumnae Day Activity 2014 Campus “Poon Choi” Dinner

Ever thought of having a Poon Choi dinner in front of our favorite big steps? Thanks to the kind support of the school, now there is a chance! The PSA will be organizing a Poon Choi dinner on 29 November 2014 (Sat) in the school. St. Marians and their friends will have the opportunity to savor this delicious traditional Cantonese dish in a familiar setting so close to their heart!

Poon Choi, or Big Bowl Feast, was said to be invented during the late Song Dynasty when Mongol troops invaded Song China. The young Emperor fled to Guangdong and Hong Kong. To serve the Emperor as well as his army, the locals prepared all their best food available. Yet there were not enough containers, so they put everything in wooden washbasins. This was the first Poon Choi.

There is no fleeing now but there will certainly be great enjoyment of good food with wonderful company in a very special place! Tables are limited so do make your bookings soon by completing and returning the Reply Form below.

REPLY FORM

Date: 29 November 2014 (Sat)

Time: 6pm – 9pm

Place: SMCC playground

Ticket Price: HK\$150 (same price for adults or kids who occupy one seat)

(You can also download this form from the PSA website at www.stmaryspsa.org)

Name:.	
Mobile Phone:	
Email Address:	
PSA No. (if available):	
Year of Form 5:	
<p>Yes! I would like to join the Alumnae Day Poon Choi Dinner on 29 November 2014 (Sat).</p> <p>Please reserve _____ seats for me.</p> <p>Total ticket price = HK\$150 x _____ = HK\$ _____</p> <p>ENROLMENT DEADLINE: 13 NOVEMBER 2014 (Thu)</p>	

Please note:

1. Group booking is encouraged. Each table seats 12 people.
2. As tables are limited, all bookings are on first-come-first-served basis.
3. Please make cheque crossed and payable to “St. Mary’s Past Students’ Association” and send it together with the completed Reply Form to St. Mary’s Past Students’ Association, 162 Austin Road, Kowloon. (Attn: Ms Becky Lui)
4. Reservation confirmation will be sent via email or telephone.
5. The dinner is provided and managed by 8 Mei Heung Poon Choi.
6. If it rains the dinner will be moved to the covered playground under the Magdalen Building.
7. In all circumstances the paid ticket fee will not be refunded.
8. Please send email to activities@stmaryspsa.org for further information.

