

St. Mary's Past Students' Association

NEWSLETTER JULY 2022

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Mentorship Programme 2021 - 22

The limitations caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic inevitably made an impact on the Mentorship Programme this year, which continued to be conducted in a hybrid mode, enabling mentors and mentees to connect online as well as in person when the opportunity arose.

Nineteen F.5 students enrolled in the programme this year, with 12 alumnae volunteered as mentors, sharing their academic and life experiences in the business, legal, design, science and medical fields. With the abrupt change in school schedule in first half of the year due to the 5th wave of COVID-19, it was fortunate that most of the mentees were still able to benefit from the exchange their mentors, either online or in person. Thank you to all mentors and mentees for working hard to keep the spirit going. Our sincerest gratitude also extends to Careers Mistresses Mrs. Queenie Mui and Ms. Eliza Wong for their patient coordination, and to Advisor Ms. Amelia Tsang for her unwavering support.

With the conclusion of the Mentorship Programme this year, the school is now reviewing the format of the programme and planning for some major adjustments to ensure that the experience can be enhanced for both mentors and students in the coming year, given the changing learning environment in the new normal. Do stay tuned and we shall keep you posted on new developments.



Hybrid mode adopted - mentors and mentee met online and offline.

Termination of Hard Copies of Newsletter



The Exco would like to inform members that we shall be terminating the postal delivery of hard copies of our newsletter for environmental and labour-efficiency reasons. Starting from the next issue, we shall distribute the newsletter solely through email. To ensure that you can receive our newsletters in the future, please update your email address with our Membership Secretary at membershipsec@stmaryspsa.org. Please also un-spam "membershipsec@stmaryspsa.org" at your spam folder, and check at regular intervals. Members can also access newsletters through the SMPSA website.

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to all the students, teachers and janitors who had helped us in lettershop and postal work during the past years. A big thanks to all of you!

A Life Filled with Gratitude

A Conversation with Sr. Cynthia Chan, retired School Supervisor of SMCC

For those of you who graduated after 1991, it is very likely that you have met Sr. Cynthia Chan, the gentle sister who has served as the School Supervisor of St. Mary's Canossian College until her retirement in 2020. You might not have the chance to talk to her then, but you certainly would have seen her at the Graduation Ceremony, wishing the best for our girls as they prepare for the next chapter of their life.

Sr. Cynthia has guided and witnessed the developments of our school during the past three decades, including the construction of the Magdalene Building, the launch of the through-train mode, the establishment of the Incorporated Management Committee, and most recently the introduction of online teaching and learning arrangements. Although she is not a past student, St. Mary's has always occupied a special place in her heart.



*Sr. Cynthia sends St. Marians
her best regards.*



*A snapshot taken during work
in 1992.*

"I started my religious life when I entered the novitiate at St. Mary's in the late 1960s," Sr. Cynthia explained. "During the three novitiate years, I mainly taught evening school at St. Mary's. I also had the chance to serve as substitute teacher in the primary section. I thoroughly enjoyed my teaching experience, especially the time spent with the young primary kids who were so lovely," she said with a gentle smile.

Those were also the first years that Sr. Cynthia spent in Hong Kong. "I grew up in Macau, and studied at the local Sacred Heart Canossian College from Primary 1 till Form 6," said Sr. Cynthia. During class, she was diligent in her studies, showing particular interest in mathematics. After class, she was also keen to help those in need, so she joined the Blessed Magdalene Club, and went with the sisters to serve the needy. That was the time when she found her interest in the religious life of service.

One time, she visited an elderly man together with Sr. Margaret Pante, an Italian nun. "The gentleman lived on his own in a small room, and didn't have much mobility. We entered the room and saw that one of his feet was swollen and bandaged up. He needed help in changing the dressing. Without hesitation, Sr. Margaret knelt in front of him, and attended to the foot. When the bandage was removed, a terrible foul smell filled the room," Sr. Cynthia remembered, still with a frown after all the years. "Apparently there had been some kind of infection with the foot. It was not a pretty sight either. I stood there and watched as Sr. Margaret patiently treated the foot despite the odour, while gently comforting the man at the same time."

The young student was still in awe when they finally walked out of the room. "I asked Sr. Margaret, 'Why would you be doing this?' She gave a reply that I would never forget – 'I joined the convent and left my home in Italy in order to serve the neediest in the name of God. That was my mission, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve this gentleman,'" recalled Sr. Cynthia. "Her words made an impact on me. What a meaningful life dedicated to serving those in need! I looked up to her example, and decided that I would also want to do the same. God led the way then and I was



*Sr. Cynthia was inspired by
the work of the Canossian Sisters
in her school days.*

finally baptised when I was in Form 4. After graduation I decided to move to Hong Kong to join the novitiate. That's how I ended up spending time at St. Mary's!" said Sr. Cynthia with a laugh.

Throughout all these years, Sr. Cynthia dedicated her life to education. She was secondary school teacher at a number of Canossian secondary schools. In 1989, she became Principal of Holy Family Canossian College and served for 18 years there. "I like being a teacher. There is great satisfaction in helping someone to learn. I also enjoy getting to know people and building relationships with them. I still remember my early days as a teacher: I made home visits to the families, and had weekend camps with my students at Wu Kai Sha and Honeyville. Those were all very rewarding experiences, and I was really grateful for the opportunity to do what I enjoyed," she said.

Sr. Cynthia was School Supervisor for St. Mary's from 1991 to 2008, and 2010 to 2020, accompanying the school through her 100th, 110th and 120th anniversary. "There has certainly been challenges and changes over these years. I'm very thankful that with the collaboration of a great school management team, and cohorts of wonderful students and alumnae, St. Mary's saw positive developments in all aspects," said Sr. Cynthia with a content smile.

When asked if she noticed any difference between the older and younger generations of St. Marians, she shared, "St. Marians are courteous and smart as always. While in the past they tended to be more bashful, they are now more outspoken and creative, thanks to the guidance and encouragement from the principals and the teachers. That's a delightful change, as it will enable our girls to excel even more in the future," explained Sr. Cynthia.



Sr. Cynthia enjoys her prayer time.

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"The great Greek writer Aesop once wrote: 'Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.' One should always be thankful, and not take anything for granted," Sr. Cynthia reminded us.

Thank you, Sr. Cynthia, for your abundant love and care to the St. Mary's family for so many years. We promise that no matter where we are and what we are doing, we shall always remember our Alma Mater, and be grateful for all the memories and learning experiences there.



Addressing students, teachers and guests at the Opening Ceremony of the SMCC 115th Anniversary Celebrations in 2015.

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Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.

Aesop

...SCHOOL NEWS...

SCMP Student of the Year Awards

- We are happy to report that St. Marians have been shortlisted as the Top 12 candidates in six categories of the Student of the Year Awards in the school year 2021/22, including Grand Prize, Best Improvement, Community Contributor, Linguist (Cantonese), Linguist (English) and Linguist (Putonghua).
- This annual event recognises outstanding achievements of secondary school students in academic subjects, visual and performing arts, music, sports, community service, and leadership. They are judged based on clearly defined criteria, which include all-round academic performance, personal reflections on a given topic, other awards and recognition, and involvement in community service.
- At press time, the selection of finalists and winners is still in progress.
- We congratulate our girls for their great achievements, and thank the teachers who have helped them become their best. Look forward to hearing more good news soon!



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School Drama Performance

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our school drama tradition has been inevitably put to a halt during the past three years. But the stage is always awaiting the return of action. As the current school year is coming to a close, Loban Mr. Oliver is already planning for the comeback performance for next year!



Drama fans please note that the performance time next year will be around end of February 2023, instead of April, as the College Hall will be used as venues for the DSE exams at the request of the EDB during April. Please stay tuned and we shall keep you posted on new developments.

Want to make a donation to your Alma Mater?

Thank you in advance for your generosity in supporting our Alma Mater. Donations will be pooled to support campus maintenance and development needs of SMCC and SMCS.

As the Education Bureau requires that all donations must be approved by the Incorporated Management Committees and properly documented for record-keeping, cheques are the preferred way of payment.

Please make the cheque payable to “The IMC of St. Mary’s Canossian College” or “The IMC of St. Mary’s Canossian School”, marking “General Donations” at the back. If a receipt for tax deduction purpose is required, please also indicate the name to be put on the receipt and the address for mailing.

Thank you again for supporting our Alma Mater. For further enquiries or other donation intents, please contact the school offices for assistance:

SMCC - Ms. Dolphin Li at 2724 2771 (dolphinli@smcc.hk)

SMCS - Ms. Macy Ho at 2368 4204 (macyho@smcs.edu.hk)



...SCHOOL NEWS...

Golden Medal at the INTOC Global 2022 International Science Project Competition

Our sincere congratulations to Ice Chow, Chloe Tam and Jaycee Zhao from Form 2A for their excellent achievement in winning a Golden Medal at the INTOC Global 2022 International Science Project Competition, Physics and Engineering (Secondary School) category.

The INTOC Global 2022 International Science Project Competition is organized by INTOC Global, an international organization aiming to encourage and bring together productive young minds to produce solutions for real problems of the world, categorized into five areas: Physics and Engineering, Applied Life Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Mathematics, and Social Sciences. The competition is supported by scientists from



*The winning team from Form 2A:
Jaycee Zhao (left), Chloe Tam (middle)
and Ice Chow (right).*



The virtual award presentation.

prestigious institutions such as National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and European Council for Nuclear Research (CERN). This year, more than 1,000 students from 30 countries participated.

The winning project addresses the growing issue of fake academic qualifications due to difficulty in verifying the authenticity of online certificates. The team built a web-based application called “Acredemic-chain”, a blockchain certificate-verification platform designed for holders, issuers and verifiers of certificates. Issuers, usually schools or institutions, can issue certificates or qualifications to holders; holders can proofread the qualifications issued before they are added to their profiles; and verifiers, or employers, can view the profiles of holders and verify the integrity of their qualifications, once viewing access is being granted. As blockchains are difficult to tamper with, the platform is more secure and reliable.



The team developed a web-based blockchain platform for verification of qualifications.

We are truly proud of this exceptional achievement, and are thankful to Information, Communication and Technology teacher Mr. Benedict Kwok who had guided the team. Using technology to solve real world issues is definitely one way St. Marians can contribute to building a better world. Keep the momentum going!

...ALUMNAE NEWS...

Prof. Nancy Ip will become next president of HKUST

We would like to congratulate alumna Prof. Nancy Ip on becoming the next president of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, making history being the first female president of the university since its establishment in 1991.

Prof. Ip is a world-renowned neuroscientist and a leader in the research on treating neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer’s disease which affects more than 50 million people globally. We wish her all the best, and may the St. Marian spirit continue to shine through her.



Prof. Nancy Ip

BOOK TO READ

承教·城傳：九龍學校的故事



Since 1900, our Alma Mater has been a significant landmark on Austin Road, bringing Canossian education to the population residing on the Kowloon Peninsula, especially those around the Tsimshatsui area. For more than 120 years, St. Mary's has nurtured generations and generations of young girls (and boys in her early years), and is an integral part of the local education history in Hong Kong.

Past students will be happy to know that the story of our Alma Mater is being featured in the book “承教·城傳：九龍學校的故事” (“A City’s Educational Heritage: Stories of Kowloon Schools”, in Chinese only) published by Chung Hwa Book Co. Ltd. in 2021. The book covers the early urban development of Kowloon, the history of local education, art and literature education, and includes interviews with various school communities. Readers are guided along their familiar landscape to revisit landmarks, discover the footprints of transformation and trace how art education in Kowloon schools has formed the cultural and artistic ambience of the community.

The main author, Prof. John Lee (李子建教授), Vice President (Academic) and Provost of the Education University of Hong Kong and Chairman of the Education Heritage Advisory Committee of Hong Kong Museum of Education, paid a visit to St. Mary's on 29 December 2020 to have an interview with School Supervisor at the time Sr. Cynthia Chan, School Principal Ms. Janet Wong, together with distinguished alumnae Prof. Nancy Ip and Ms. Annie Choi. Prof. Ip and Ms. Choi were delighted to share stories of their school life in the 1960s to 1970s. Ms. Choi, who has been researching on the history of her Alma Mater since school days, also gave an account on the early history of St. Mary's, which captivated the attention of all. Sr. Cynthia and Principal Wong were also keen to introduce the Canossian spirit, and the core values that are shared by generations of St. Marians.

“承教·城傳：九龍學校的故事” can be purchased at leading Chinese bookstores in Hong Kong. Introduction of the book and video recordings of the interviews have also been uploaded to the website of the Museum can also be accessed online by scanning the QR codes, or via the links below. Happy reading!

<https://kln-schools.lib.eduhk.hk/> (about the book)



About the Book

<https://kln-schools.lib.eduhk.hk/interviews/smcc> (SMCC interviews)



SMCC Interviews

In Loving Memory

Mrs. Betsy Yu (余陳白雪老師), teacher at St. Mary's Canossian School from 1961 to 2001, had returned peacefully to God on 25 May 2022 in Hong Kong, at the age of 82.

For almost six decades, Mrs. Yu spent time on the campus of St. Mary's. She started as a P.1 pupil after WWII, and continued her studies till her F.5 graduation in 1960. After training, she returned to her beloved Alma Mater to teach Mathematics, Science and Religious Knowledge to P.5 and P.6 pupils. Being a devout Catholic, Mrs. Yu also actively provided support to the school's religious activities, helping in various preparations and giving guidance to pupils.



Mrs. Yu retired in 2001, and enjoyed a peaceful and relaxed life with her family. She paid regular visits to sisters at the convent, and kept in close contact with old friends and colleagues. Loved and respected by all, Mrs. Yu will be dearly missed.



Mr. Wan Kwok Nam (溫國南先生), janitor of St. Mary's Canossian School since 2016, passed away on 21 March 2022 at the age of 60.

Mr. Wan, often referred to as 南叔, looked after the campus playground and handled minor repairs for the SMCS premises, and was dedicated to maintaining a safe and orderly environment for all St. Marians. Before the pandemic, Mr. Wan also often lent a hand to the PSA in preparing the playground for PSA activities. We will miss his kindness and support.

~ Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen. ~

Marians in Faith

While public masses were suspended again during Lent in 2022, Marians in Faith was pleased to see over 40 participants joining Fr. Cyril Cheung on 2 April for an online spiritual programme about peace during troubled times, 「困擾中的平安」.

Fr. Cheung enlightened us that, during troubled times, through prayers and committing to God, we would be able to have a clearer view as to what God has planned for us. Committing to God is not about "laissez-faire", but about ourselves becoming a channel through which His will be done.

"God will provide" is a recurring message in the Bible. It is there to remind us to remain faithful: God is taking care of us; we are safe in His hands. We are not short of the capacity to take on the sufferings of life. "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." (Luke 22:42)



Join us on <<https://www.facebook.com/MariansInFaith>> and stay tuned for upcoming events.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting 2022 of St. Mary's Past Students' Association

Date : 30 July 2022 (Saturday)
Time : 3:00 pm
Venue: Geography Room, 2/F Marian Building, SMCC



Agenda

1. Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20 March 2021
2. Chairman's Report
3. Adoption of the Financial Report for the last financial year ending 31 August 2021
4. Any Other Business

All members are welcome.

Please take note of the following requirements and pandemic safety measures, and refer to the SMPSA website for any updates due to pandemic development.

Registration

In accordance with the hygiene and security measures of SMCC and SMCS, members who plan to attend the AGM must register in advance by completing the Registration Form, and returning it to us on or before 27 July 2022 (Wed). Access will only be granted to those who have successfully pre-registered.

LeaveHomeSafe

All members must use the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application and present the QR code of their vaccination record or exemption certificate before entering the school premises.

Vaccine Pass

They must observe the Vaccine Pass regulations laid down by the Government, that is, having taken 3 vaccine doses. For further details, please refer to the Government website https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/vp_t1_ENG.pdf (ENG) or https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/vp_t1_CHI.pdf (中文).

Campus Closed

Due to pandemic concerns, access to other parts of the school premises, other than the meeting venue, is strictly limited. We aim to minimize the trouble for post-meeting sanitization by the school janitors. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

The Registration Form and Proxy Form can be downloaded from www.stmaryspsa.org.

