

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIOCESAN VOCATION COMMISSION

October 2002 - September 2003

Chairperson

Rev. Benedict Lam.

Committee members

Sr. Louise Lam, F.D.C.C. – Executive Secretary
Sr. Agnes Yam, S.P.C. – Treasurer
Rev. James Areechira, S.V.D.
Rev. Giles Chong, O.C.S.O.
Rev. Bro. John Chong, F.M.S.
Rev. Paul Kam (end of the term of office: 30th April, 2003)
Rev. Paul Leung, S.D.B. (end of the term of office: 31st August, 2003)
Rev. Antonio Leung, S.D.B. (commencing on 1st September, 2003)
Sr. Romana Chow, S.P.B.
Sr. Bernadett Lau, F.D.C.C.
Sr. Michelle Reynolds, M.M.
Sr. Josephine Suen, F.M.M.
Mr. Vincent Jim – Serra Club (end of the term of office: 30th June, 2003)
Mr. Howard H.P. So – Serra Club (commencing on 1st July, 2003)
Miss Clare Lai – Auxiliaries of the Apostolate

Staff: Ms. Teresa Ng

No. of Meetings held: Six meetings were held during this year.

Matters Arising:

1 Prayers for Vocations – On the First Thursday of each month at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel (Catholic Centre).

- 1.1 Adoration & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:
From 10:30 a.m. to 5: 15 p.m.
- 1.2 Benediction: At 5:15 p.m.
- 1.3 Eucharistic Celebration: At 5:30 p.m., celebrated by a Member of the Commission or by another Priest, by invitation.

Evaluation: Our members suggested to encourage more faithful to attend Mass for vocations at their own Parishes, so to increase their awareness on the importance of praying for vocations. Hence the mass for vocations organized by our Commission at Catholic Centre was discontinued since September, 2003.

2 Project on Vocation Promotion

2.1 Prayer Movement for Vocations

Activity: A Pilgrimage to St. Jerome Church with Eucharistic Celebration.

Date: 14th December 2002 – Saturday

Time: 1:30 p.m. – 5:30p.m.

Attendants: 150 members of the Prayer Movement for Vocations with Sr. L. Lam and Sr. Agnes Yam.

Evaluation: All participants enjoyed the visit to St. Jerome; they were interested in the history and the design of the stained glasses of this new church explained by Fr. Anselm Lam during the Eucharistic celebration. This activity was considered very meaningful.

2.2 E-card Edition on the DVC Website

Aim: To increase the publicity of our website by means of the E-cards

Date of Publishing: 1st April 2003.

Content: Easter greeting cards were the first edition.

Evaluation: Most of the visitors found that the E-cards lovely and animating. They suggested to add more varieties such as: birthday card, thank you card and spiritual uplifting cards etc. A young lady from Toronto found our website very creative, stimulating and informative. Lately she has contributed her sharing on our web page.

2.3 Catholic Hotline Service

Our commission has joined this service since 1998; there was the decline of numbers of clients. After having received feedback from the clients, the music was shortened and the content remained unchanged, because it was considered good and appropriate.

2.4 Auto-rotating Board outside the Sacred Heart Canossian College of Commerce

This advertisement was set up in July 2003 for a trail; its effect is not measurable.

2.5 Vocation story Book

Bishop Tong has recommended us to distribute the two vocation storybooks at the Book Exhibition in July 2003. 1,400 copies were then delivered at the exhibition.

Evaluation: A young lady from Toronto said, “The real stories are interesting and touching, it is of great help to those who are searching for vocations.” She has recommended these books to her Parish Priest there.

2.6 An Inter-Catholic Secondary School Competition organized by Serra Club

Theme: Love and Joy in the Lord

Date 19th July, 2003 – Saturday

Time: 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Venue: Caritas Community Hall, Caine Road.

Content: Awards Presentation and Gala Performance

Participant: 700

3 Vocations Gathering

3.1 The Discipleship Retreat

Theme: Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for they shall see God.

Date: 31st December 2002 – 1st January 2003

Venue: Lantau Island – Trappist Monastery.

Spiritual Directors: Fr. Benedict Lam and Sr. Louise Lam

Participants: 6 boys with a seminarian and five girls.

Evaluation: The content was appropriate. The quiet atmosphere was conducive to prayer. The participants were very much absorbed by the prayer and sharing. However, the time for personal reflection was insufficient, so an extension for one more day was suggested. The participants also requested to have another spiritual camp during the summer holiday.

3.2 Summer Spiritual Camp

Theme: Surrender to God's Will

Date: 15th – 17th August, 2003

Venue: Lantau Island - Trappist Monastery

Spiritual directors: Fr. Benedict Lam and Sr. Louise Lam

Participants: 4 boys with a seminarian and 5 girls.

Evaluation: The content was appropriate; the movie elicited a deep sharing on the power of love. Time for personal prayer and reflections was sufficient. Due to raining and hot weather, they were confined within the sitting room, thus lack of privacy was felt. Some commented that summer was not the suitable time for a retreat.

4 40th World Day of Prayer for Vocations on 11th May, 2003

4.1 The theme of this year is “The Suffering Servant”.

4.2 Posters were distributed to all Parishes and Secondary Schools

Proposed intercessory prayers and outline of the homily for this occasion were forwarded to all Parishes

4.3 Souvenir: Vocation Story Book “百力支 II” and Telephone strings.

4.4 Activity for this Occasion – Vocation Night

Theme: “In God My Life Shines With Beauty” (Introducing 18 Religious Orders' Charisma and Apostolic Work)

Date: 31st May, 2003 – Saturday.

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Venue: Holy Family Parish, Choi Hung Estate, Kowloon.

Content: Part I: on the stage – starting with a “Theme Song”; then “Awards Presentation to 18 Religious Orders and Gala Performance”; followed by “Speech from Bishop Zen”.

Part II: Touring to the Displays prepared by the Religious Orders and group sharing

Part III: Taize' Prayer organized by the Seminarians of the Holy Spirit Seminary concluded with blessing by the priests present.

Participants: About 500 people including Priests, Religious Sisters, Brothers and young people.

Evaluation: Feedbacks from the questionnaire were encouraging. This activity was judged to be very creative. What was most enjoyed were the Gala Performance, and the Taize' Prayer. After this activity, Sr. L. Lam has invited two boys and girls to join the monthly prayer meeting for vocation discernment.

4.5 Mission in Africa – Follow-up Activity of "In God My Life Shines With Beauty"

Date: 11th July, 2003 – Friday

Time: 7:11 p.m. – 9: 00 p.m.

Venue: St. Patrick's Church, Lok Fu Estate.

Speaker: Rev. Paul Kam

Participants: 100 people including Priests Religious Sisters and young people.

Content: Exposition of Blessed Sacrament and Adoration, Sharing by Fr. Kam on his call to Mission in Africa, concluded with Benediction.

Evaluation: The prayerful atmosphere was appreciated, but the silent prayer was considered too long for them, more musical element would be preferable.

5 Follow-up Vocation Prayer Meeting

A The Monthly Prayer Meeting for boys

During the past year, two boys have quitted the prayer group for further study, five of them persevered till the present. Two new ones have joined after Vocation Night.

B. The Monthly Prayer Meeting for girls

Two quitted this group; one of them has joined the prayer organized by a Religious Order.

The remaining five are constant; one of them has started the "Come and See Experience". Two new ones have joined after the Vocation Night.

Sr. L. Lam accompanied few girls to visit four Religious Orders in the past two months.

Evaluation: Both boys and girls are faithful to the monthly prayer meeting for vocation Discernment. Their sharing was sincere and in depth, however it takes time for them to learn to build a Love relationship with God.

6 Meeting of the Vocation Promoters - Two meetings were held:

First Meeting

Date: 17th January, 2003 – Friday

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Venue: 18/F., Grand Building, 15-18 Connaught Road

Facilitator: Rev. Joseph Ha and Sr. Louise Lam

Participants: 12 Priests and Religious Sisters.

Content: Sharing on the document and methods of vocation discernment and accompaniment by Fr. Ha and Sr. Lam on the Franciscan Order and Canossian Congregation respectively.

Second Meeting

Date: 6th September, 2003 – Saturday

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Venue: 18/F., Grand Building, 15-18 Connaught Road

Facilitator: Rev. Benedict Lam

Participant: 11 Priests and Religious Sisters

Content: A productive sharing was elicited by a question on “How would the promoter help young peoples to discern their vocations?”

Suitable candidates can be referred to the monthly prayer meeting for vocation discernment for boys and girls organized by the Commission. Sr. L. Lam introduced two good books that were appropriate for helping the youth in vocation discernment, namely: “Following God’s Call” and “I Chose you”

Evaluation: The promoters suggested that Saturday morning is the good time for the promoters’ meeting twice yearly. Sharing of experience on a specific topic is worth continuing.

Closing Remarks

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”(Jn.6:68) Peter’s great love for Jesus has stirred in many young peoples the desire, when they are at prayer, to dwell in the house of God all the days of their lives! However when they return to their daily living, they are confronted by such a variety of choices, that they find it difficult to pursue their desire to follow Jesus! That is why Jesus said many are called, but few are chosen! (Mtt. 22:14)

“Vocation Promotion” is a hard task in this present time. The vocation promoters should not get discouraged, should strive to be a role model for young peoples through deepening of our prayer life, so to be perfect as our heavenly father is perfect!

Rev. Benedict Lam
Chairperson
1st October, 2003

Sr. Louise Lam (F.D.C.C.)
Executive Secretary