

Diocesan Vocation Commission
Annual Report
October 2009 – September 2010

2008 – 2010 Diocesan Vocation Commission (DVC) Committee Members

Rev. Benedict Lam, Diocesan Priest (Chairperson)
Sr Louise Lam, F.D.C.C. (Executive Secretary)
Rev. Bro. John Chong, F.M.S. (Treasurer)
Rev. Giles Chong, O.C.S.O.
Rev. Antonio Leung, S.D.B.
Rev. Charlton Plateros, SVD
Rev. Joseph Liu, Diocesan Priest
Rev. Deacon Joseph Sung, Diocese of Hong Kong
Sr Miriam Lui, SPB
Sr Lucia Mak, FMM.
Sr Luigia Mindassi, PIME
Sr Cecilia Wong, LSP
Sr Catherine Fung, FDCC
Miss Clare Lai, Auxiliaries of the Apostolate
Mr. Patrick Chan, Serra Club

1. Project on Vocation Promotion

1.1 Annual Gathering for Members of Prayer Movement for Vocations

Date: 26 October 2009 (Monday)

Time: 1:30 p.m. – 5:30p.m

Venue: Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception

Participants: 50 Members of the Prayer Movement for Vocations with
Fr Benedict Lam, four Seminarians, Sr Louise Lam and
Ms Clare Lai.

Contents: Heritage Tour, Adoration and Refreshments.

Evaluation: This activity fell on the Chung Yeung Festival,
therefore the attendants were fewer than usual. The members
have benefited from this interesting heritage tour, they found
the heritage team well trained.

1.2 DVC Website

To mark the “Year of Priestly Vocations” , information and materials on
Vocation animation and promotion are frequently uploaded on the website
The DVC blog is usually updated twice weekly, and even more frequently
when special issues arise. The average number of visitors per day is around
80 till present.

Evaluation: The visitors found the contents of dvc website and blog enriching and enlightening.

1.3 Catholic Hotline Service

The number of audience remained unchanged as last year, our commission considered worthwhile to continue this service.

1.4 A Joint Venture with Kung Kao Po

To celebrate the Year of Priestly Vocations, from July 1009 to September 2010, monthly DVC published a series of cartoons on the Kung Kao Po to illustrate the meaning of Vocation. The fourteen published cartoons were also posted on the DVC Website and Blog.

Evaluation: The use of cartoons to illustrate the meaning of Vocation had been appealing to young people, and of easy understanding.

1.5 Vocation Bookmarks

The 12 images of Prophets/ Saints selected from the old and the new testaments were painted on the front of the bookmarks, and three relevant questions were printed on the back for personal reflections. In addition, appropriate games were also designed for the students to deepen their understand of the call of each saint.

Evaluation: These bookmarks are still now very much welcomed by teachers and students, the questions are of great help to students in deepening their understanding of the Saints' vocation as well as their own vocation.

1.6 Footprint Prayer Cards

The Footprint Card with the prayer for vocations in both English and Chinese, printed on each Side, is more popular than the other designs.

1.7 Vocation Promotion Leaflets

To advertise vocation activities on the leaflets is at present less effective than on the Internet.

1.8 Greeting Cards

A greeting card was designed for whoever would like to send a short message to their favorite priests who deserve our appreciations and gratitude.

The Teachers of the Primary School are still now more interested in this campaign than those of the Secondary schools.

1.9 Guidelines for setting up a Vocation Promotion Team

Following the advice of the Diocesan Synod, Guidelines for Setting up a Vocation Promotion Team in all Parishes had been posted to the DVC website as reference.

2. Activities for the Year of Priestly Vocations

2.1 Vocation Animation Seminar

Date: 1 October 2009 (Thursday)

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Venue: Holy Spirit Seminary

Speakers: Rev. Stephen Chow (SJ), Rev. Andrew Fung (SDB),
Rev. Joseph Ha (OFM), Rev. Benedict Lam,
Rev. Domingo Leong (SDB), Rev. Antonio Leung (SDB).

Participants: 100 attendants including: Teachers, Pastoral Workers,
Religious Brothers and Sisters, Deacons and Priests together with
Sr Louise Lam, Br John Cheung, Fr Joseph Liu,
Fr Charlton, Deacon sung, Sr Lucia Mak, Sr Miriam Lui,
Sr Catherine Fung, Sr Cecilia Wong and Ms Clare Lai.

Contents: Inputs and Group Discussion. (Lectures notes can be downloaded from dvc website)

Evaluation: The comprehensive content includes: the Relationship between Youth Ministry and Vocation Ministry; the essential elements for Vocation Accompaniment and Discernment. The participants were in favor with the excellent Presentations of all speakers, and the small group discussion in the afternoon. They suggested allocating more time for group sharing, and a follow-up session on the planning and implementation of vocation animation both in the Schools and Parishes.

2.2 Vocation Gathering

Theme: The Joy of Giving

Date: 29 November 2009 (Sunday)

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Venue: SS Peter and Paul Church (Yuen Long)

Organizers: the Joint effort of Diocesan Vocation Commission and the North-West New Territories Deanery.

Contents: Sunday Mass; Games; Lunch; Heart-to-heart dialogue;
Exhibition (five Exhibitors) and Taize Prayer

Participants: 80 young people with Fr Benedict Lam, Fr. Martin Ip,
Br John Cheung, Sr Louise Lam and Sr Catherine Fung

Evaluation: Through the games, sharing from the Religious and small group discussion, the participants experienced the Joy of giving through sacrifice, thus encouraging them to respond to God's call by leaving everything behind to follow Jesus. The feedback was positive.

2.3 Vocation Camp

Theme: Call to be human and Christian

Date: 31 December 2009 to 2 January 2010

Venue: Holy Spirit Seminary

Spiritual Directors: Rev. Benedict Lam, Sr Luigia Mindassi, PIME,
Fr Joseph Liu, Sr Lucia Mak and Sr Louise Lam.

Participants: Three Girls and Eight Boys

Contents: Inputs, Sharing, Eucharistic celebrations and personal encounters

Evaluation: The participants appreciated the pleasant surroundings and prayerful atmosphere. Few of them could enter into solitude and contemplation through the Labyrinth Walk.

2.4 Vocation Gathering

Theme: Love...Gives Life to Dreams

Date: 31 January 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Venue: St Jude's Parish (North Point)

Guests: Bro. Raymond Yim (OFM), Sr Imelda Li (RGB)

Organizers: the joint effort of the Diocesan Vocation Commission and the
Hong Kong East Deanery

Participants: 60 youth from various parishes with Fr Benedict lam,
Sr Louise Lam and Sr Catherine Fung.

Contents: Sunday Mass; Games; Lunch; Heart-to-heart Dialogue;
Exhibition (seven Exhibitors) and Taize Prayer.

Evaluation: The sharing by Bro Yeung and Sr Li awakened Vocations among the participants. Through games and group interactions, the youths were let to experience how "Love gives life to dreams". Fr Lam encouraged the youth to dream in Christ and with Christ so to overcome all difficulties in life, ultimately their dreams would come true.

2.5 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations on 25 March 2010

Theme: "Witness Awakens Vocations"

Promotion: Posters were distributed to all Parishes and Secondary Schools

Date: 25 March 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Venue: Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish (Tai Po)

Guests: Sr Mary Ho (FSP)

Organizers: the joint effort of the Diocesan Vocation Commission
and the North- East New Territories Deanery.

Participants: Approximately 60 young people with Fr Dominic Chan, VG,
Fr. Michael Tham, Fr Moses Ngai, Andrew Fung, Fr Benedict Lam,
Sr Louise Lam, and Sr Catherine Fung.

Contents: Sunday Mass (Celebrants Rev.D.Chan, VG, Rev. M.Tham,
Rev. M. Ngai); Lunch; Exhibition (Nine Exhibitors);
Witness by Sr Mary Ho and Taize Prayer.

Evaluation: Many Families and youths attended this mass. The sharing from the Religious Institutions was a bit long but interesting. The singing at the Taize Prayer was weak due to insufficient practice, however the participants enjoyed the Taize Songs and the prayerful atmosphere.

Evaluation: The presence of Bishop Tong, Priests, Religious Brothers and Sisters, Members of the Serra Club and the Auxiliaries of the Apostolate in the Exhibition Hall created a family-like and festive atmosphere. The Variety show was amusing. The adoration in a small room was prayerful and crowded with parishioners and few young people. The three speakers' sharing roused the awareness of vocation among the audience and elicited productive discussion within the small groups at the Vocation Night. The joy was completed with the Taize Prayer. The unsatisfactory attendance was attributed to the lack of support from the Schools, due to summer vacation.

2.6 Mass for the Parents/Relatives of All consecrated People

Date: 27 June 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Venue: Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception

Chief Celebrant: The Most Reverend John Tong Hon (Bishop of Hong Kong)

Participants: Approximately 500 people including parents, relatives of consecrated people and Catholics.

Souvenirs: A photo frame with Bishop Tong' s words imprinted (meaning A family of vocation gives glory to God and profit to men).

Evaluation: Though only Seven Priests and two Deacons were present at this celebration, the Church was filled with peace and love. The most beautiful gesture was the giving of the frame through the Bishop' s hand to the Priests who in turn handed it to their parents/relatives; this token of love was very touching and unforgettable.

2.7 Vocation Exhibition and Vocation Night

Theme: God, You and I... Set Hearts on Fire

Date: 10 July 2010 (Saturday)

Time: 2:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. - Opening Ceremony was officiated by the Most Rev. Bishop Tong and Sr Monica Liu, FMA.

2:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m - Vocation Exhibition, Entertainments and Adoration.

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. - Refreshments

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. - Vocation Night commenced with sharing by Rev. Vincenzo Carbone, PIME; Rev. Joseph Ha, OFM and Rev. Martin Ip, followed by Group Sharing and Taize Prayer.

Participants: 400 person-time at the Exhibition and 150 at the Vocation Night (the percentage of Young people was very low especially at the exhibition)

Souvenir: An Audio-visual CD contains one MV and six songs and music composed by the youth, A Canossian Sister and a Trappist Monk.

Contents: Exhibition by 22 Exhibitors; Entertainments performed by Salesian Youth, Franciscan Youth, Society of the Divine Word, Fr. Paul Kim Dong Ju & Korean Missionaries, Foreign Mission Society of Mexico and Filipino Community; Sharing of Vocation Stories by three Guests; Small Group Discussion and Taize Prayer.

2.8 Sharing of the Diocesan Priests' Pilgrimage

Theme: Love Lives Again

Date: 29 August 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Venue: St Thomas the Apostle Parish (Tsing Yi)

Organizers: the joint effort of the South-West New Territories Deanery and the Diocesan Vocation Commission

Participants: 70 young people with Fr Benedict Lam, Fr. Joseph Liu,

Fr Giles Chong, Br John Chong, Sr L. Mindassi, Sr L. Mak, Sr C. Fung and Sr L. Lam.

Contents: Ice-breaking Games; Role Play; Heart-to-heart Dialogue and Taize Prayer.

Evaluation: It was a creative approach in presenting the different types of consecrated lives. The youths were stimulated to think and interact through role-play.

3. Prayer Meeting for Vocation Discernment

3.1 Monthly Prayer Meeting for boys

During this year, two boys have joined in while two have quitted this group, at present; eight boys continue to attend the monthly prayer meeting guided by Fr Pierre Lam and Sr Louise Lam.

The boys would like to know more about the Monastic life, during Easter holiday, eight boys with Sr Louise Lam have met Abbot Li for two hours of sharing and spent a day of prayer in the Trappist Monastery in Lantau Island.

The group guided by Fr Benedict Lam was suspended for the time being.

3.2 Monthly Prayer Meeting for girls

Three girls were interested in the contemplative life, in August; Sr Lam accompanied them to meet two Carmelite Sisters in Stanley for an hour of sharing.

Two girls have just decided to quit this group; the remaining four together with two new comers will continue their discernment with Sr Louise Lam.

Evaluation: The quality of prayer life is essential and crucial for Vocation discernment. Life in Hong Kong is too vibrant and hectic, both boys and girls could hardly find time for prayer, if they could not set prayer as their first priority, they would never find their vocation!

4. DVC Youth Formation

Date: 31 January 2010 (Sunday)

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Venue: St Jude's Parish (North Point)

Participants: 15 youths with Sr Louise Lam

Content: Bible sharing

Evaluation: The faith sharing was of help in strengthening Young Peoples' spirit of prayer and team spirit.

5. Outreaching Activities

5.1 Monthly retreat for Clergy (September 2009 to December 2010)

The DVC members take turns to speak on vocation at the monthly spiritual exercise for the Clergy upon invitation.

5.2 Vocation Talk to the Working Youth (15 October 2009)

Sr Louise Lam was invited by the Catholic Marriage Association Council to deliver a talk to a group of working youth as one of the movements during the year of priestly vocations.

5.3 Interview from the Joyful Youth (May 2010)

A journalist of Kung Kao Po has approached Sr Louise Lam, to obtain the consent from two boys and one girl of the DVC youth group for an interview regarding their voluntary work in vocation promotion and their understanding of vocation. The report was posted to the "Joyful Youth" of Kung Kao Po.

5.4 A half-day Seminar for the Teachers and Pastoral workers (25 June 2010)

Sr Louise Lam was invited by the Diocesan Youth Commission to conduct a half-day seminar together with Rev. Dominc Chan.VG and Rev Andrew Fung (SDB) for all Teachers and Pastoral Workers in all Catholic Schools.

Closing Remarks

In the story of the rich young man: “Jesus looked at him with love.” (Mk10: 21) likewise, God looks at us with love. In fact, He has been thinking of us with love from eternity. Before we were born, He has already called us each by name (Is 43:1), and has entrusted to each of us a specific mission on earth (Jer 1:40), by implanting in our hearts “a Vocation Seed ” in terms of our “Desire for Him” . This “Desire” or “Seed” grows with the grace of God and takes root in His love through our cooperation to His grace. Unfortunately, in our vibrant life, we are slow to clear the path by which God wants to take possession of our beings. If our hearts were filled with sensational or material goods as with the rich young man, we certainly would not be able to discover “the look of love” from Jesus’ eyes, unless we empty our hearts making room for Jesus to stay with us in solitude and prayer.

In accompanying the young people for vocation discernment, may the Vocation Promoters encourage young people to appreciate silence and practise contemplative prayer, through which the spirit will lead them to go beyond the zone of sensations and emotions, into the innermost of their beings where the personal encounter with Christ takes place through faith and dependence. Ultimately they will discover their vocation.

Rev. Benedict Lam (Diocesan Priest)
Chairperson
1 October 2010

Sr Louise Lam (FDCC)
Executive Secretary

Appendix 1

Proposed Constitution for the Parish Vocation Team

Name of the Parish:

The Objectives:

1. To promote Priestly and Religious Vocations in the Diocese of Hong Kong.
2. To encourage young parishioners to attend the Vocation Activities.
3. To support all Vocation Promotion Activities at the Diocesan Level.
4. To introduce young parishioners to the Parish Priest for Vocation Discernment.

Membership Requirement: All Catholic Parishioners who are interested in “Vocation Promotion” are welcome

Responsibilities:

1. To recite the “Prayer for Vocations” daily.
2. To recite the “Rosary” weekly with an intention for vocations.
3. To attend a “Mass for Vocations” monthly.
4. To help/participate in the “Diocesan Vocation Promotion Projects” .
5. To do penance, abstinence, acts of charity and pray regularly for vocations

Membership: One Spiritual Director (A Priest or Deacon or Religious Brother or Sister), A Chairperson,
One Secretary and Treasurer

Five to Ten Members

Duties: all Members should attend:

- “ A Monthly Mass for Vocations”
- A regularly (bi-monthly) meeting in planning and implementing “Vocation Promotion Activities” in the Parish
- Parish Council Meeting (ideally the Chairperson should be one of the council members)

Approval: The Parish Priest should approve The Constitution.

Appendix 2

Proposed Guidelines for setting up A Vocation Promotion Team

Vocation promotion is everyone's concern in our Catholic Church. As Jesus says: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Lk 10:2) During this year of the priestly vocations, let us work together in one heart and mind to promote vocations starting from oneself and each family.

Every parish should strive to strengthen the prayer life of all catholic families, in so doing, the youngsters may be influenced under good religious education and practice. It is of great help to awaken in them their vocation, and motivate them to sacrifice their lives for the service of the Church. The Diocesan Vocation Commission thus would like to propose the following guidelines for setting up A "Vocation Promotion Team" .

Proposal I – The Family is the Cradle for Vocations

The Parish Priest may invite two or a few families to initiate family gatherings in an informal way so as to provide a joyful, prayerful, social gathering for their children. Each family may take turns to hold meetings regularly in their own home or elsewhere as desired.

Proposal II – Vocation is God's Gift

The Parish Priest and the Parish Council may recruit parishioners to set up a "Vocation Promotion Team" and install the Team Members for this specific mission in the parish.

Proposal III – Vocation Ministry is the ultimate goal of Youth Ministry

A joint effort between Youth Ministry and Vocation Ministry can be made to initiate formation activities to deepen the spirituality of all altar Boys, Junior Sunday School Teachers, and all Youth Group of the Parish.