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Justice Peace & Solidarity in Mission

The Congregation of the Sisters of Good Shepherd
Province of Singapore–Malaysia

Strictly for the Congregation of the Good Shepherd Sisters & their Lay Collaborators



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Dear Mission Partners,

— Greetings of Peace n Love!

In this issue we remember our dearest Susan, her love for us and our love for her. She always made each of us feel special. To the Good Shepherd mission she has left a rich legacy behind. We miss you dearly, Susan!

— **NEW**

The first cross-border programme that brought mission partners from Asia together!

The pilot project in Sabah.

— **CAMPAIGN**

No to Violence Against Women & Children by Good Shepherd Services.

— **SPECIAL**

Theresa Symons meets President Obama.

All these and more... enjoy!

In this Holy Year of Mercy, may our Shepherd God guide us to experience his merciful love for all especially those at the margins.

Wishing you Happy Hols, Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year! †

GLORIA



Susan Chia

1955 – 2015

Born in Singapore in June 1955, Susan entered the Congregation of the Good Shepherd in February 1979 and made her final vows in February 1984. She earned a Masters of Arts in Pastoral Leadership from All Hallows College in 2003. Susan was awarded with the All Hallows College Fr. Thomas Fagam, CM Memorial Medal for Academic Excellence.

— In 2003, Susan took up her role as Province Leader of Singapore/Malaysia, a position she held till she was elected to the Congregational Leadership Team in 2009. “She gave the maximum to the Congregation for the last six years (2009-2015). She finished her role of six years well.” Sr Sabina Pathrose, Province Leader Central East India/Nepal.

Her rich legacy to the Mission of the Good Shepherd includes holistic training programmes for Formators, Leadership Teams, Young Sisters and her vision of Partnership. In recognition of her Leadership, Susan was awarded the Satir Institute of the Pacific, Satir Model “STST” Leadership Award in 2011.

Susan was someone with “strong passion, vision and energy, who was not afraid to challenge structures and “status quo” mentalities to make the world a better place for the most marginalised and vulnerable among our brothers and sisters.” Cristina Duranti, Director of Mission Development Office, Rome.



Susan Chia, sister and friend

A sharing by Sr Joan Marie Lopez

— We have heard so much of who Susan Chia has been to us and to so many around the world. All those who

have known her, visited her during her illness, been present at her wake, at her funeral and all the many who have written messages since the time of Susan’s illness testify to this.

Susan was a very special person. She would always ‘think well’ of people, drawing the best out of each of them. Persons that she met went away with a feeling of warmth, having encountered somebody who cared for them and their concerns in a very personal way. In building relationship with her sisters, lay mission partners and those she journeyed with, she would often say, “we have not arrived, we are still on the journey.’ With Susan, things didn’t just happen, she made things happen and small events would be celebrated in a big way, with abundance of food and everybody who could be included would be invited; making them experience how important and precious they are.

Susan was a visionary, both as a Province Leader from 2003 to 2009 and as a member of the Congregational Leadership Team from 2009 to 2015. She was a risk-taker and one who saw situations of chaos and challenge as opportunities calling forth new life and change from within oneself. She was a reflective and discerning person who often asked sisters and lay mission partners the question, “Can you see the face of Jesus in the poor?” and challenged us to respond to the “people at the margins who are calling out to us.”



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End death penalty: Singapore nun

By Steve Butcher, Singapore
December 4, 2005

A SENIOR Singapore nun has taken the dramatic step of calling on her Government to drop the death penalty, following the execution of Melbourne man Nguyen Tuong Van.

In a move that may anger Singapore’s leaders, Sister Susan Chia, province leader of the Good Shepherd Sisters, described the death penalty as cruel and inhumane. It violated the right to life, she said.

CATHOLICNEWS

Seek alternatives to death penalty (CN25/05, Dec 25)

Chia is a priest assigned based in Singapore. She is the province leader of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Singapore and is a member of the Congregational Leadership Team. She is a risk-taker and one who saw situations of chaos and challenge as opportunities calling forth new life and change from within oneself. She was a reflective and discerning person who often asked sisters and lay mission partners the question, “Can you see the face of Jesus in the poor?” and challenged us to respond to the “people at the margins who are calling out to us.”

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One of her favourite quotes was, “the poor are my teachers”. On one occasion at a children’s programme that we organised in a village in Kota Belud, Sabah, Malaysia, Susan and I noticed a child of about seven years just eating white rice. Her packet of Kentucky fried chicken treat was left untouched. Susan asked the child why she was not eating her chicken and the child replied that she was saving the packet for her mother and brother when she goes home. We went on to have a chat with the child and assured her that we would give her another packet to bring home. Susan said to me later, “This child has taught me about love and self-sacrifice – the gospel of the day for me”.

One of her challenging questions to leaders in the congregation during our meetings and the leadership training sessions have been, “Is it enough?” Is it enough, that we have sufficient human and financial resources in our provinces and for our ministries? She would ask, what and who else do we need to include in this picture? Are we forgetting something, someone? Do we need to look beyond our borders and see who are our brothers and sisters in neighbouring countries who need a helping hand? Those who have little opportunities in the rural areas, the migrants and the human trafficked persons. We on our part would always feel challenged to acknowledge...“No, it is not enough...and ask ourselves, What’s the more that we are called to?”



These were not just questions to us to change our own mindsets, attitude and lives but it was what she challenged herself with. Over the past two years of her illness, she committed herself passionately in the training and formation programmes that she designed and facilitated for formators and leaders across the different continents. Susan, I recall you saying, “I feel like John the Baptist calling out in the desert through all these formation programmes – calling for change, for relevancy and going beyond what blocks us – otherwise, we continue our tortoise journey and there will be no future for the mission.”

Susan, you often used this phrase, ‘push the privilege’, making every effort to look for resources and opportunities from all sources so that the poor can benefit. You once said, “I am standing on tip toe to find the resources... I guess, this has always been my passion! Maybe it is because I am so short” But, Susan, I recall one of our friends saying, “You were the ‘tallest’ among us”. Soon after Susan was diagnosed with cancer, she had to change her plans of visiting the Democratic Republic of Congo where she was part of a team to find the resources to start the services and projects there. Feeling so distressed hearing about children in the mines in Kolwezi, Congo resorting to eat sand because they had not enough food, Susan called on a few friends and sisters and from her bed, she planned a fund

raising project. Through her personal sharings and the group’s efforts to organise a Province level fund raiser, over SGD450,000/- was raised. Today over 900 families and children are empowered through self-help programmes and are experiencing a better life and have hope for a brighter future.

Sisters and mission partners across the world had been praying for a miracle for Susan’s healing. For some of us, we may think that the miracle did not happen, yet, has not the miracle been given to Susan and to us? In that, Susan was indeed given an extra lease of life; was able to respond positively to the chemo and continued her term of leadership for almost two years after; effectively carrying out all the leadership training and formation programmes that she had planned. Is her life itself not a miracle that has been experienced by so many hundreds of people who had been blessed to encounter a compassionate God through her?

Susan, once shared this with me, that during her years in training as a young sister, she was given an assignment on the words she would like inscribed on her Epitaph. She chose three simple words – “I was loved.”

Let’s take a moment...to hear Susan say to us, “I am loved...by each one of you!” And we, we are blessed... because you loved us too, Susan.





Memorial Service – Kuala Lumpur

— The memorial service and tribute to Susan held on 25 October evening was well attended by Lay Associates, mission partners and Sisters. It was a very touching service which brought tears to many as they listened to Susan's favorite songs and the many tributes dedicated to her. It ended with light refreshments and fellowship. "SUSAN, we love you and your legacy lives on...."

Tribute to Susan – Ipoh

— *Remember, Cherish the memories n Celebrate* was the theme of our tribute to Susan. Sixteen of us were present for the prayer service which lasted for 45 minutes. Each one stopped to remember who Susan was to her as she lit a candle. As the mood grew sombre we reminded ourselves that Susan would want us to celebrate all that the Lord had done through her.....and so we did, with high tea.



Susan – “We celebrate the Gift of You” – Sabah

*“Every once in a while, someone comes along
And after that we're never quite the same....”*

— For the community of Kg Pukak and the children and families of Asrama Desa Pukak that someone was Sr Susan Chia.

The tribute service led by Sr Sandra was held on 25 October at St John Vianney Chapel in Kg Pukak. Members of these communities came together to remember their dear “sahabat baik dari Gembala Baik” who came to experience their

hardships and left them with a mission that has benefitted the lives of many young primary children as well as deepened the spiritual and community bonds of the villagers.

The tribute which was attended by seventy people recalled the many fond memories and experiences the community members had with Sr Susan. Many remembered her as the petite chinese sister who, although could not speak the Malay language well, communicated with a heart full of love and joy through her actions. Many were also inspired by the various projects initiated by her. A mother shared, “Sr Susan's passion, love and generosity for the poor challenges us to do the same”. †





PKGS – Responding to the Needs of Refugees

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE

Life as a Refugee in Malaysia

— In Malaysia, a country which has yet to sign the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, one of the most oppressed and marginalised population is the refugees. They are subject to many hardships among which are discriminatory practices in access to basic services in health, livelihood, and education. They live in poor conditions which are unsafe, and are subject to the constant harassment by authorities.

Officially, refugees are not allowed to work. However, for them to survive, many become vulnerable to forced labour and trafficking in persons as they look for a means to earn a living. The most vulnerable are the women and children who are subject to abuses within families and from outsiders. Article 22 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) states that refugee children are to “receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights”, which includes the right to education. Although Malaysia has ratified the CRC, the government does not appear to undertake its responsibilities under this ratification.

As it stands, refugee children are not given access to government education

system. Some NGOs have stepped up to provide some form of basic learning and living skills to some refugee children within their reach.

Stories from the Refugee Women and Children

— One of the women in the shelter spoke of how a police woman officer had disappeared with her child whilst they were in detention in a police station. The UNHCR officers are still trying to trace the child. Another woman was bought by a man who “married” her and then prostituted her out of their rented room. Yet another was found beaten up so badly that she came to our shelter with hand in a cast and stitches on her head.

“S” is another Myanmar girl who was trafficked to Malaysia when she was nine years old. S was forced to beg and the trafficker would beat her if she did not get enough money. Anything less than RM 100 per day would warrant a beating while bringing home RM 300 meant that she would be allowed to do anything she liked. According to S, she would use any means she knew to get money home. She said she would steal, cheat and sometimes she would provide sexual services for a man if he was willing to pay more. S revealed that she was raped by a man when she was 10 years old. She said the man kidnapped her and her friend for some ransom money from the trafficker.

Testimonies of PKGS Staff

— I am touched when I witness the ‘transformation’ of each of the children in RVGSC. I am touched when I see a ‘frightened cat’ become a ‘free bird’; she could not read ABC but now she can tell stories; she would hide

her voice, but now she is confident enough to share her thoughts in a group. She came with arms wrapped tightly around herself but now she has begun to open her arms to others. — *Ju Er*

When trust is established there is no limit to what a child reveals. Knowing the ins and outs of child trafficking and being challenged to develop a programme that responds adequately to the needs of a child victim of trafficking is something I owe to the children. It takes a dreamer to accept a child from the streets, a child who has learnt to survive through lies, cheating, stealing, violence and even outwitting the police – and believe that given the right influence and opportunity she/he can become one who will make a positive difference in the world of child trafficking. Yes, the children have made me a dreamer! — *Sr. Helena*

HOPE is defined as “A feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen”. Each time a woman or child or baby leave our door this feeling of expectation and desire for good things to happen is the strongest of feelings that come to fore. My hope first and foremost would be for the person to be going to a SAFE place. My next hope is that the person will leave for a better life.

There have been many times when it has been a wrench for me to let go knowing that the woman or child or baby may not be leaving for a safer place. It becomes harder when we know that the woman is returning to communities that do not value women and girls. So the only thing I have got left is Hope. Hope that maybe it will get better. And Faith that God did not sent her to us without a good reason.

When we get the first call after she leaves, it is with a breath of relief that she is fine and that she has found a job. I try not to think further than that. I focus on the person now in front of me. I continue because I know that the women who are with us now also hope. Hope that the person who tends to them treats them well and with respect.

I know that all that have gone before was possible only because God gave us and the women the grace to hope. He will continue to lead us in this Mission of Hope and Love — *Willa †*

Learning English in an International Community

Good Shepherd Convent Restful Waters, Singapore, 20 June - 27 July



BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Province Leaders of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Singapore-Malaysia mooted the idea of conducting a programme that would bring together Good Shepherd Sisters and lay mission partners from various countries in Asia to learn English and communication skills in an international community. Restful Waters was commissioned by the Leaders to facilitate the programme. By early 2015, the programme was conceptualised and invitations were sent to 6 Asian countries. A total of 16 participants signed up for the 5-week programme from 20 June to 25 July 2015.

By 19th June 2015 all participants arrived at Restful Waters, Singapore, their home for the next 5 weeks, where they would experience living in an international community of sisters and lay partners, from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Myanmar, Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore. At Restful Waters, they prayed together, had meals together, shared experiences and built friendship with one another.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

A team of dedicated volunteers led by Ms Jane Marie Ng, designed a programme that drew on scripture, Good Shepherd

publications and resources, and current affairs for contexts in which to learn English grammar and vocabulary, have conversations and practise communication skills in English. An experiential and interactive approach ensured that learning continued well beyond the classroom.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The objectives were for the participants to:

- Achieve a higher proficiency in the English language
- Grow in capacity for the life and sustainability of the Good Shepherd Mission
- Network and grow in confidence to participate in discussions and dialogues with a wider community
- Experience Good Shepherd Mission partnership

LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES

Visits were made to Marymount Centre, Good Shepherd Centre, Ahuva Good Shepherd, Good Shepherd Student Care, Good Shepherd Convent Kindergarten, Marymount Kindergarten and Marymount Convent School. The participants also visited DAWN (a diocesan ministry that teaches useful skills to migrant workers), joined in the Peace Prayer walk (an outreach to women in the

red-light district of Geylang) and went on outings to places of interest.

The participants had opportunities to:

- Participate and lead in daily prayer
- Participate in dialogue sessions on Congregational matters
- Share the culture and ministries of their own Provinces
- Give input on social issues e.g. migration, human trafficking, poverty
- Participate in Singapore's mission activities
- Learn and interact with Good Shepherd partners
- Learn and practise leadership skills
- Widen their world view
- Network beyond borders

COURSE PERFORMANCE TASK

At the end of the programme, each participant gave an oral presentation on a project with a view to persuading the audience to donate to her cause or volunteer support for her cause.

16 presentations delivered confidently in clear English informed the audience of Good Shepherd ministries and crisis shelters in 6 Asian countries. The audience heard first-hand accounts of the hardship, strife and risks that are the lot of the poor in those countries, and how the participants share with them the love of the Good Shepherd.

CONCLUSION

All agreed that the programme objectives were met. More importantly, it was also clear that the success of the programme was due not just to the enthusiasm and hard work of the participants and also to the collective effort of all benefactors, caregivers, coordinators, teachers and volunteers. It was truly a community of love that was united in the mission of making each participant feel loved and accepted, and helping each participant according to her needs.

This programme is the first cross-border endeavour to network, carry out formation and foster partnership through the learning of English.

It is our pleasure and privilege as the Province of Singapore-Malaysia to share our resources in cross-border efforts to empower and develop Good Shepherd people for the future of the mission. †



16 Days of Activism – Say No to Violence Against Women and Children

ORANGE ♀ THE WORLD

Say No to Violence against
Women and Children

— On an annual basis, Good Shepherd Services Malaysia organises a campaign during the 16 days of activism from 25 November to 10 December to create awareness on “Say NO to Violence Against Women and Children.” This year is no exception with the focus was on domestic violence.

The following initiatives were organised to spread the message in the three different states in Malaysia where Good Shepherd Services has a presence:

Training of the Trainers workshop

— The Training-of-the-Trainers workshop primarily for leaders of churches from various denominations. The workshop was to promote the



16 Days of Activism campaign and to encourage the participants to answer the call to action to ORANGE THE WORLD and say NO to violence against women and children. Over 40 participants took part in the one and a half day workshop which was held on 6 and 7 of November. At the conclusion of the workshop, the participants were committed to raise awareness of violence against women and children and to support those in need of help. Good Shepherd Services is grateful and encouraged by the sharing which took place and the passion shown by the participants to make a difference within their circle of influence.



Video Entitled “Behind Closed Doors, it is a Different Story.”

— To maximise its impact, the video had to portray scenes of violence that take place behind closed doors, in the private sphere. Professionally produced, the video has been well received as a strong call to action. It encourages those who suffer, commit or witness violence to seek help and break the silence. For more insight into “Behind Closed Doors” see <http://www.thestar.com.my/videos/2015/11/28/awareness-video-on-violence-against-women-and-children/> To be effective in its reach to the multi racial society of Malaysia, “Behind Closed Doors” is available in four languages – English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil. Behind Closed Doors is available at <http://goodshepherd.my/behind-closed-doors> See Good Shepherd Services Facebook for more information. †



Towards strengthening the commitment and collaboration for Pastoral Care for Migrants

– Flores, Tanjung
Selor Indonesia @
Sabah Malaysia



1
Delegates from Indonesia

2
Delegates from Malaysia

Sandakan – The 4th tripartite pastoral meeting hosted by the Diocese Sandakan was held from 19-22 October.

— The theme for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees is: *Church without frontiers, Mother to all.* 82 delegates from the six dioceses representing the region of origin (Archdiocese of Ende and Larantuka diocese of Flores, NTT, Indonesia), transit (Tanjung Selor, Kalimantan), and destination (Archdiocese of Kota Kinabalu, Sandakan diocese and Keningau, Sabah) were present.

The goals of this meeting were

- Envisioning the church pastoral care for migrants and refugees in regions of origin, transit and destination.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and the challenges faced in the implementation of the follow-up action taken as a result of the 3rd pastoral meeting held in Flores in 2013.
- Recognize and understand the reality and the problems encountered by migrant workers-immigrants.
- Strengthen collaboration in the planning and implementation of pastoral responses to migrant workers – immigrants from all three regions.

The Good Shepherd is “making the road by walking” with migrants in the Sandakan Diocese and Ruteng Indonesia

— “A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step” – Yes! Five years ago the Good Shepherd had began the first step working primarily for the

migrants in Sandakan Diocese. As we reflect on the global and local reality of migration that has become even more complex and poses challenges and opportunities for us Good Shepherd as we walk with the migrants in Sabah. It is worth taking the road less travelled. The challenges and opportunities will help us continue to grow, evolve, learn, change, emerge, and mature. Within the 5 years Good Shepherd responded to the need of migrants in these areas:

- 1 Basic children education and self development programs
- 2 Right to identity
– i.e. Birth registration project
- 3 Family and community building programs
- 4 BEC / Home visit and counselling
- 5 Leadership and team building
- 6 Women empowerment program

The Good Shepherd participation in the tripartite pastoral meetings is significantly encouraging and

empowering. There were 10 Good Shepherd representatives including the Province Leaders of Singapore-Malaysia and Indonesia.

SR THEREISA RGS FROM RUTENG, FLORES

She presented 'The Impact of migration on families' stating that the main reason of migration is poverty. Families left behind face many problems. Children are abandoned and their education neglected. The parent left behind has a double role to play in the family.

'Weta Gerak Good Shepherd' has taken steps to empower women who have been left behind. Scholarships were granted to school children.

In the work of reaching out to the families Good Shepherd staff and volunteers face several challenges such as the lack of fighting spirit in the community and the lack of support staff and funding.

MRS. ROBERTA STANISLIA MUTIS A TEACHER IN RUTENG, FLORES

She said, "Such meetings are very helpful because it covers all three regions; origin, transit and destination. It gave me the opportunity to meet with my own people and understand their challenges. I am very happy that most migrants are aware of the importance of education for their children".

MR PISIUS DANNY TIMOTHY is a Good Shepherd staff serving in Sandakan. His direct involvement with the migrant communities focuses on the rights of children. He shared, "This meeting has given me a broad overview on the issue of migration. Now I better understand the reality of the lives of the migrants. The dialogue session provided an opportunity for migrant workers to express the areas where they need attention and assistance from the Church. I encourage more young people to be exposed to the issue of migration so as to enable them to better understand the reality of migrants. This will change their perception towards migrants".

SR LIDWINA ALYANDU is from East Jakarta. Since 2011-2015 she has been working zealously for the Indonesian migrants in the Diocese of Sandakan. She has journeyed with the migrant communities and visited their homes. She is instrumental in creating and giving awareness on the importance of their children's education and birth registration. Up to date 464 children have received their birth registration from the Indonesian Consulate in Tawau.

During the thanksgiving mass Sr Chatarina, Province Leader Indonesia thanked all parties for their support and prayers for Sr Lidwina during her 4 year service in Sandakan.

A farewell by Sr Lidwina

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens (Ecclesiastes 3: 1) I feel that it's time for me to return to Indonesia even though I still want to work here. In fact I hope to stay for one more year but the Lord wanted me to go back to Indonesia. So I say with Mother Mary that "I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word". "GRATITUDE IS MEMORY OF THE HEART" †



1



2



3



4

1 From left: Ms. Rostan and Sr Thereisa, RGS

2 Mrs. Roberta Stanislia Mutis (right)

3 Mr Pisius Danny Timothy

4 Sr Lidwina Alyandu

Good Shepherd Partnership Gathering 2015

The weekend of 9-11 October 2015 saw some 80 mission partners from the various Good Shepherd ministries in Singapore and Malaysia come together for the 9th Good Shepherd Partnership Gathering in historical Malacca.



The gathering took its theme from that of the 30th Congregational Chapter – *Energised by the Spirit, We Risk Together for Mission*. This serves as a call to action, urging us out of our comfort zones to do our part for those who are marginalised and in need. For indeed, what resonated with many of us was the often-heard refrain throughout the weekend - If I do not do something, who will?

One of the main objectives of the gathering was to share the Directional Statement issued by the Congregational Leadership Team. Participants were urged to reflect on the statement, discuss their responses to it and personalise it to the work they do on a daily basis as part of their mission.

The gathering also remembered and celebrated the life of our former Province

Leader, Sr Susan Chia, who recently passed on. It was a poignant moment as we paid tribute to her numerous achievements and contributions by giving her a minute's standing ovation. It was a gesture that symbolised how she embodied the theme throughout her entire life. Energized by the spirit, she indeed did risk much for the mission. As one participant in my group put it "We are here today because of the work of Sr Susan" and I learnt it was she who played an instrumental role in initiating the yearly Good Shepherd Partnership Gathering more than a decade ago.

Towards the close of the weekend, Province Leader, Sr Joan Lopez, convoked the Province's next Chapter which will be held in 2016.

For first-time participants at the gathering and newbies to the Good

Shepherd organisation, the weekend proved to be an eye-opener, in terms of an increased awareness of the work and outreach done by the various ministries within the Good Shepherd Congregation. For those, like myself, who have been serving for a couple of years now, I came away with a clearer understanding of how the many parts fit into the bigger organisation and a deeper conviction in the work that I do in the mission. And of course, as always, the gathering served as a wonderful platform for networking and meeting our counterparts on both sides of the causeway, as well as connecting more deeply with the Good Shepherd charism and spirituality. †

Contributed by : Lynette Fernandez, Vice-Principal, Marymount Convent School, Singapore

Visit by US Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB)



Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre, a programme under Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (PKGS), had a visit by the US Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) on 14 August 2015.

The delegation from USCCB comprised Bishops Eusebio Elizondo and Oscar Cantu, Kevin Appleby, Matthew Wilch, Kristyn Peck and Virginia Farris. A representative from the UNHCR, Thulasi Munisamy, accompanied the delegation.

PKGS has been an implementing partner with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) for the past 5 years. The ICMC is funded by the USCCB. The purpose of the visit was to gain a deeper understanding of the protection needs of unaccompanied refugee minors in Malaysia. The visit included a fruitful meeting with the staff of the Centre and a short presentation by the unaccompanied refugee children who recited poems and read in a language that they just acquired to prepare them for. †



The Group of Eleven with their produce together with GSS volunteer Irene Liew (standing third from left)



Seed of New Hope –Sabah

Opportunity, it has been said often presents itself in times of misfortune. This is indeed the story for the women from Kg Kiau Nuluh, a village fringing the foothills of Mt Kinabalu which was badly affected by the June 5th Sabah earthquake and it's after quake tremors.

— Women form a substantial segment of the pineapple cultivation economy at Kg Kiau Nuluh. The earthquake and its aftermath had a devastating economic impact on women as the harvesting and cultivation of crops were

left unattended due to their fear and anxiety. Further more, the low wholesale market price of the fruit also did not encourage them to take risk. Their economic woes were compounded by the closure of the mountain summit which affected 70% of household income as it was heavily reliant on mountain guiding and pottering services.

In an effort towards building social and economic community resilience, GSS (Good Shepherd Services) piloted a community-based project to downstream pineapple production. One of the hopes for this initiative was to encourage the community to re-commence their farming activities. Eleven women whose main source of income depended on pineapple produce were chosen by the community to participate in this three-month pilot project. The only investment that was required of the participants, dubbed the Group of Eleven, for this project was their own pineapple produce plus their commitment of time to the production process.

The recipe for the two products, Pineapple Chutney and Pineapple Jam, were shared by GSS volunteers who made fortnightly two hour journey down to Kg Kiau Nuluh to supervise the production. GSS assisted with the marketing which was not difficult task as within the day

all the products would be snapped up at St Simon Church Kota Kinabalu.

The pilot phase started on 1 August and ended on 31 October. In all, they produce 600 bottles of pineapple product which generated a net profit of RM4,500 for the group or about RM400 each. Their total investment per person was 60 kg of pineapple equivalent to an income of RM90 had they sold the produce to a wholesaler. The quality and potential of the products were recognized by Rotary Club when they won a RM5,000 Biz Grant for their project.

The viability of Pineapple Chutney and Pineapple Jam project as an economic enterprise to supplement income for families have been an empowering experience for Kg Kiau Nuluh, particularly the women. Many dreams and hopes have been expressed as they aspire towards establishing an inclusive community-based enterprise that will directly benefit the well-being of women and their families. Importantly, the excitement of this continuing project has renewed personal energies, lifted the human spirit and given new hope to this earthquake-affected community.

“In the midst of sorrows, there are always great graces”
-St Mary Euphrasia †

DAWN

– Singapore

— DAWN, a Ministry to migrants is a joint project of the Redemptorist Fathers and the Good Shepherd Sisters. It offers 14-sessions' courses for foreign domestic workers to assist them in enhancing their advancement and development towards a better future while working in Singapore. The courses are mainly conducted on two Sundays of each month.

On 20 September, we had our Graduation Ceremony for 135 students who successfully completed their respective courses. It began with the Eucharistic Celebration by Rev. Simon Tan, CSsR, Spiritual Director of DAWN, to praise and thank God for all the blessings bestowed on us all – students, volunteer trainers and management committee.

The new intake of 129 students had their orientation on 1 November. Due to the demand for the Care-giving course, Man Fut Tong Nursing Home has increased its staffing to run two groups



of 30 students concurrently. There is now an advanced level for the Cake Decoration Course. Six students have enrolled for this. †

World Day Against Trafficking In Persons

30 July – Ipoh

— Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre (RVGSC) joined the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons campaign by:

- Giving a talk on human trafficking to the congregation at a Sunday Service in the Wesley Methodist Church on 5th July
- Reaching out to the public in Ipoh Old Town on 18th and 19th July.

OBJECTIVES

- To create the public's awareness on human trafficking in Malaysia.
- To distribute the blue heart – as a means of inviting those who receive the heart to have a compassionate heart for victims of human trafficking.

As it was the Hari Raya weekend there were many local and out of town tourists who stopped at our booth. We also distributed 160 hearts and spoke personally to these individuals who were interested enough to take time to listen and interact with us. For most of our visitors it was an eye opener to discover that human trafficking was too real and so close to home. One of our posters carried the caption, "Human Trafficking – It's Happening in Malaysia, It is Happening Now." †



World Refugee Day

20 June – Ipoh



— Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre celebrated World Refugee Day with its residents.

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the challenges that refugees and migrants faced in their home countries and when escaping to other countries.
- To educate the residents on the definition and difference between 'migrant' and 'refugee'.
- To honor the courage and strength of refugees who were forced to flee under the threat of persecution, conflict and violence.
- To instill a sense of gratitude in the residents

The residents then listed down on heart-shaped paper, five things that they were grateful for. They then pasted them on the mahjong paper to honor the courage and strength of refugees across the world. †

Voice Out 2015 : Connect To Change

*Pusat Belia Youth-PREP
Alamesra – Sabah*

— “Connect To Change” was the theme for this year’s annual arts festival. It talks about the active involvement of youths today with the social media. A public forum moderated by our local social media personality, Jasmine Rajah talked about the realities of connectivity to social media and how youths can apply it in making positive changes.

Speaking as a parent and senior in active



civil society movements, Puan Norhanida Annol urged everyone to be aware that being connected also means being exposed, so it is crucial to be prudent, careful and critical while being connected.

Adam Tambakau, a web developer said “People need to experience social media by understanding how it works including the pros, cons and particularly the harm it might bring to us. Do speak



out to someone when the situation gets dangerous to you. Overcoming the negativity that you receive somehow will give you courage; just remember to trust your own ability and the good intention in whatever you are doing”.

Bavhithira Chelvakumar, a psychology and counselling masters student from Universiti Malaysia Sabah, felt that youths nowadays are more confident in expressing themselves especially since the existence of social media which is helpful for people who are introverts. She further commented that it is also a boost to a person’s self esteem when they use this platform to inspire others. The event was held at the Oceanus Waterfront Mall, Kota Kinabalu on Saturday, 24th October. †

‘Citizens Against Rape’ walk

7 June – Kuala Lumpur

— The Teenage Centre residents and staff participated in this. Prior to it they were busy designing the banners which they will be carrying during the walk. They travelled by public transport and when they arrived at their destination, there were a lot of people there already.

Two women in a small truck were strongly demanding a stop to rape. Another related her experience when she was raped. I felt that she was very brave as she spoke to all the people about her past. I felt lucky because I have people to protect me.

The two ladies in the truck continued shouting slogans...‘Stop the rape’. We relentlessly repeated that after them. We also observed a minute of silence for the victims of rape. †

*Contributed by : Y Z
Resident at Teenage Centre*



White Ribbon Run 2015

*22 November
– Kuala Lumpur*



Theme: “Break the Silence, End the Violence”.

— Staff from Villamaria Good Shepherd Kindergarten joined 1,000 others in the 3km run organised by AWAM. The run began after some warm up exercises led by the organisers. All the participants were treated to some healthy food and drink after the run. †

Meeting with President Barack Obama

PREAMBLE

Malaysia is a destination country and to a lesser extent a source and transit country of victims of human trafficking. The US Department of State's Trafficking In Persons Report ranked Malaysia on the Tier 2 Watchlist from 2010 to 2013.

During the four years, as the situation of human trafficking did not improve in Malaysia, it was automatically downgraded to Tier 3 in 2014. Malaysia was however upgraded to Tier 2 Watchlist in 2015 despite strong views from NGOs and civil society organisations that the upgrading was unwarranted as the situation of human trafficking has not improved in the country.

Good Shepherd's involvement in anti-human trafficking initiatives Good Shepherd Malaysia, in line with the thrust of the Congregation Direction Statements, capacity built itself to reach out to victims of human trafficking and refugees who were vulnerable to being trafficked.

In 2009, from the initial shelter provision for 14 victims of human trafficking from

Myanmar, Good Shepherd Malaysia now has its own shelters for female victims of human trafficking and unaccompanied refugee minors. It also conducts program activities (which includes counseling & faith sharing for Christians) and case management support in the three government shelters for female trafficked victims in Malaysia. We are the only NGO that has access to all three shelters simultaneously. The organization also conducts prevention programs with communities on the issue of human trafficking.

Good Shepherd Malaysia's networking partners include UNHCR, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), Embassies, government agencies, other NGOs, faith based organisations and civil society organisations.

THE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA

Good Shepherd Malaysia, represented by Theresa Symons, its Executive Director, together with seven other civil society members, were invited to a roundtable discussion with Mr. Barack Obama, the

President of United States, on Saturday, 21 November 2015 in conjunction with his official visit to Malaysia for the Asean Summit in Kuala Lumpur.

The discussion started with the President expressing his appreciation and support for the work done by civil society in Malaysia. Obama stated that the "US firmly believed that having a strong civil society was necessary to achieve more accountable governance, and that it was his country's policy to meet leaders of such groups during his trips abroad."

Theresa shared on the topic of human trafficking in Malaysia whilst other members expressed views on their various areas of specialization in the closed door discussion. Human trafficking is a systemic problem which requires strong political will and determination to address. Although the Anti Trafficking In Persons and Smuggling of Persons Act was enacted in Malaysia in 2007, its implementation has been dismal. In the proposed implementation of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement of which Malaysia is a party to, Theresa called on the US to balance economic gains alongside fundamental human rights of just recruitment and employment practices and fair working conditions for migrant workers including providing legal recourse for those who were exploited.

This rare opportunity to meet the President of the United States lasted an hour and 10 minutes. †

