

Dear Members of the Foundation & beloved Maryknollers,

Thank you for attending the 11th AGM of the MCS Foundation. First, I would like to thank the Principals of both Sections for attending our AGM and giving support to the Foundation.

Second, I would like to thank the Communications Committee for issuing three newsletters this year to keep members informed of matters decided at Council promptly and efficiently, instead of hearing them from me at AGM.

This year is the 10th Anniversary of the Foundation. In year 2005, the sponsorship of both Secondary & Primary Sections of MCS was passed from the Maryknoll Sisters to the Foundation, which was entrusted with the perpetuation of the vision and mission of the Sisters, and setting policies accordingly. I have over time served Maryknoll in different capacities but this current role as the SSB Chairperson is by far the most challenging. When the Sisters started the school 90 years ago, there were only 12 students. Now the two sections had around 2,000 students in total, which meant our responsibility had increased multiple folds.

The Maryknoll Values

I had the luxury of being taught first hand by the Maryknoll Sisters and learning personally from them. To me, Maryknoll Sisters are forward thinking, open minded and ready to embrace new thoughts. They are also loving, kind, and always encouraging. They believe in education for all ~ 有教無類, and they believe in the innate goodness of people. While they held high expectations of their students, the expectations were never about coming in first or winning a race. Rather, the Sisters expected their students to bring out the best in themselves. I believe that these are the 'core values' that the Sisters had instilled in us. They are also the values that both sections have faithfully protected and passed on throughout the years.

The Maryknoll Connections

This summer earlier on, the Principals and Vice-Principals of both sections, together with a group of students from the Secondary Section, visited the Maryknoll Motherhouse in Ossining for over 10 days. They participated in various programs including talks, sharing sessions, performances for the Sisters, services, and even gardening etc. Much bonding and re-connection with the Sisters resulted from the exercise, as was evident in the video which captured the girls in action in New York. Both students and Sisters enjoyed the interaction very much. To maintain the Maryknoll spirit, I think the School could arrange such interaction with regularity, for the teachers as well as for the students. Dr Maria Lee, Supervisor of Secondary Section, had more to share on this trip shortly. I would like to quote a few lines from a letter from Sister Jeanne Houlihan on the visit and our girls:

'...The students were energetic, caring, concerned participants in the program.... The parents and all our MCS staff should be very proud. They learned, they

played, they gardened, they laughed, they ate, they slept, they prayed – all of this with Maryknoll Spirit...' ([read more..](#))

In this letter, Sr Jeanne shared with us how she saw the difference between the 20th and 21st centuries. She reminded us that the world was ever changing, with new challenges every day. We cannot be complacent and live only in the past or within a comfort zone. We need to be vigilant, constantly re-evaluating ourselves, looking to improve and moving on with the times.

This year marked the 10th Anniversary of the Foundation. It is the time to do some self-reflection. During the past decade, a lot of challenging changes took place in the education system. Introduction of the Hong Kong Diploma Of Secondary School Examination was made to replace the School Certificate & Matriculation system. Statutory establishment of the IMC two years ago (Incorporated Management Committee – a legal entity with representation from parents, teachers and alumni) was made to replace the School Management Committee. The values and culture of the Hong Kong people were also different from what they were 10 years ago. In fact, the younger generation is faced with challenges quite unheard of in our school days. The stress of the people, unfortunately, was not something we could easily decipher. In other words it is very important to move with the times, evolve with the times and improve with time.

With that in mind, the Foundation took the initiative to re-evaluate our overall structure. The first joint meeting of the Councillors and the SSB Managers (IMC managers appointed by the Foundation) was held on June 23. Several action points on teaching and learning, and general development of the schools emerged as a result which should be followed through. Hence a task force led by Doris Kwan was formed to identify and narrow down the issues on improvement. Members of this task force included Maggie Chau, Ophelia Ngan, the 2 Supervisors and the 2 Deputy Supervisors. In fact, their first meeting would be after this AGM.

The Maryknoll Resources

Quoting Helen's favourite line about our two sections 'one School with 2 Sections', I would like to add to it as 'one School with 3 Sections.' The 3rd section would be the Former Students. At the moment, we have 3 former student led organisations serving the School. The Foundation, which is the SSB; the FSA, a social organisation with a large database of former students across the decades; and the MCS Educational Trust, a charitable organisation which is responsible for raising funds for the needs of the School. The Foundation, FSA and the Trust worked closely with each other to provide resources and support for the School. The membership of FSA and also the Foundation could be our resource reservoir for manpower while the Trust would continue to serve as our additional financial resource.

Over the last 12 months, a lot of collaboration and cooperation work have been undertaken between the Foundation, the FSA, the Educational Trust and the School:

1. 'Getting to know each other' gathering on June 13
The first-ever joint gathering organised by the Foundation, FSA & Trust was held at the Maryknoll Fathers' House in June this year. The Principals & Vice Principals of the two sections, the FSA Exco, Educational Trust Trustees, IMC Managers and the Foundation Councillors came to gather under one roof. We began with a tour of the Stanley House, a beautiful red brick building which greatly resembled the New York Motherhouse, followed by a Mass, then a sharing/introduction session, and finally a sumptuous dinner in the Fathers' dining room.

2. Floral pattern project
MCS Foundation is the owner of over 10 trademarks of MCS including the floral pattern of our primary winter uniform. MCS Educational Trust provides yearly funding to the two sections and needs regular income. To show our support of the Trust, the Foundation granted an agreement to the Trust to produce products using the Floral Pattern exclusively. The project is spearheaded by alumna Irene Li. The inaugural product is the 90th Anniversary Floral Pattern Bear, which can be personalised by having a name of your choice embroidered on the paw of the bear. Income from sale of the bear as well as other Floral Pattern Products would go to the Trust.

3. Relay for love
Another cooperation project of the Trust and the Foundation in planning would be the Sports Funds, designed to cover costs and expenses of non-curriculum sport-related activities for the benefit of current students. To promote the awareness of sports and to increase the sense of belonging and unity among current and former students, teachers and parents, a fund raising event 'Relay for Love' would take place at the Kowloon Tsai Sports Ground. Fund-raising would be in the form of entrance fees, sponsorships and donations. The project would involve physical participation from students of sections, alumni as well as parents, running on the track in relay at the same time for 1 to 2 hours. An anticipated participation of over 1000 people was expected. Organisation of this event would demand a lot of manpower. So please members, do sign up as volunteers!

Collaboration and cooperation could be big or small. To show our support to FSA, nearly all Councillors attended the FSA AGM and annual dinner. Today, many FSA Exco and members of the Trust are present at our AGM. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for being here!

Here is a brief update on the movement of SSB managers in the 2 IMCs. Ms Dorothy Cheng Chan Mei Chu has resigned as SSB manager of both Primary & Secondary IMCs. Her position in the Primary IMC was to be replaced by Dr Doris Au and, in the Secondary, by Ms Ophelia Ngan. I would like to express sincere thanks to Dorothy for her invaluable contribution.

Furthermore, we also sponsored the 3D school magnet souvenirs of the latest FSA event, the Overseas Universities Fair, held at the two sections of the School just last Wednesday, Sept 23. Over 50 top US, Canadian & UK universities had set booths at our school. The Fair was an eye opening opportunity for our students and it also indirectly enhanced the image of our school. I would like to congratulate FSA, Maggie & June, for their vision and courage in their taking on such an immense task.

Last but not least, a vote of thanks to my Vice Chairs, Doris Kwan & Maggie, Sister Marilu, Secretary Miranda Poon, Treasurer Isabelle Young and Convenor of Membership Committee Ophelia, Co-Convenors of Communications Committee, Pinny & Bonnie, Convenor of IT Committee Maggie.