

Mainland



Brief

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Mainland Service Desk
Caritas-Hong Kong

From the Editor

Since the release of last issue, we have received generous support from the readers on medical allowance for Yang Fengxian. On behalf of Yang, we would like to express our hearty gratitude. We are now waiting for further comments from different doctors to ensure a better medical treatment for her. We will report her latest updates in the coming issues.

In this issue, apart from reporting different Mainland services of Caritas-Hong Kong, we would like to raise your concerns over an urgent need of a village clinic in Shaanxi province.

Encouraging mutual assistance among parents of the disabled children

" My 21-year-old son suffers from cerebral palsy. I heard that an exchange programme would be held here for the handicapped children. I joined it out of curiosity. To my surprise, this programme is designed for the parents like us. For the very first time, I could express my painful experience which had been buried in my heart for 21 years... Today is the turning point of my life. I am much relieved now..."

It is the experience shared by a Hebei mother after the Exchange Programme for the Parents of Disabled Children organized by the Rehabilitation Centre of Liming Home in December 2006. 28 participants are parents of mentally or physically handicapped children, coming from 6 counties of Gaoyi, Ningjin, Longyao, Shijiazhuang, Zhaoxian and Baixiang. All of them have confronted discrimination and pressure from the community and their families since their children were born. Though they have suffered great pain, they have no one to turn to for assistance.

In order to help these parents, Liming Home, an organization provided rehabilitation service to the disabled orphans for many years, set up a rehabilitation centre in Gaoyi county in 2006. It aims at providing short-term training courses on rehabilitation service for the parents of handicapped children. It is hoped that they will know how to help their children after the training. With the funding assistance from Catholic Relief Services, the rehabilitation centre was able to organize this exchange programme for the first time. It is hoped that, with the expert's guidance and the sharing among parents, the participants would treasure the value of their children and realize the meaning of life.

After the exchange programme, the participants had set up a Parent Committee to continue to provide mutual assistance to one another. Liming Rehabilitation Centre will continue to organize similar activities in future for the parents of disabled children to lessen their burdens.



Parents shared their experience

Situated in Ganbazi village of Baijixun township, Yunnan province, the school house of Bailangtong Primary School was formerly a warehouse, which was renovated in 1973 as a 2-storey primary school. There were 25 students in 2006.



In the past, many young children in the local area were deprived of receiving education because they were too young to walk for more than 2 hours in the mountain path to schools. The warehouse was then renovated and transformed into a primary school. The warehouse design in fact was not suitable for the use of teaching children. The lighting was not enough even during the daytime of a sunny day. As the school house was out of repair for a long time, the roof trussed and the upper floor was badly damaged. Students and teachers could only have classes on the lower floor which was damp and dark.

In order to provide a safe and suitable learning environment for the students, the village committee in Baijixun township decided to construct a new school house for the students. However, all the villagers earned a living by farming. They could hardly afford the construction cost of HK\$45,000. A funding request was therefore submitted to Caritas-Hong Kong in April 2006. With the generous financial support of the L & T Charitable Foundation Ltd., the construction project was finally completed early this year. Students can now have classes in the bright and clean classrooms. All teachers and parents of the students are very grateful to the generous donors for their kind assistance.

Say Goodbye to the Days of Studying in Dangerous House



In order to promote the exchange and communion between families of Hong Kong and Mainland, Caritas Social Work Services and Family Movement organized an Exchange Forum with the theme "Mission of Catholic families in the Church and in the Society" from 19 to 22 August 2006. 7 families and 1 priest from the Mainland and 98 participants from Hong Kong had a genuine and touching sharing.

The sub-themes for the first two days' Exchange Forum were "The Challenge of Societal Value on Marriage and Family" and "The Important Role of Catholic Families in Liturgy and Evangelization". The participants from the Mainland visited different organizations to understand how the Hong Kong Diocese employed diversified approaches to carry out the marriage and family pastoral work. They met with representatives from Family Movement, Family Diocesan Pastoral Commission on Marriage and Family, Couple Co-creation Society, Caritas-Hong Kong, Diocesan Pastoral Centre for the Disabled, etc. Here are some highlights of the sharing of Mainland participants:

Families as the foundation of a harmonious society



"During the four-day forum, I was touched in different ways each day. Realizing the challenges of social values on marriage and families, listening to the sharing about family life in group activities, appreciating the care and concern of Hong Kong families towards the families in the Mainland, enjoying the very warm reception of the host families, I experienced God's love..." ~Chen Chao

"I was touched deeply in these few days. I got to know the history of Family Movement, its nature and purpose. I learned a lot of valuable information in the activities, especially from other participants' sharing. I really feel that this is a big family of love..." ~Zhang Liqing

"After returning from Hong Kong, life is still simple and trivial, but there is something more: joy and gratitude. The spirit of Family Movement is like a breeze in the spring that swept away the winter chills and hazes that squatted in our home. We have learned to care for each other with new perspectives, to understand and accept each other with completely new mindset, and to appreciate each other with newly gained experience. The experience with the Family Movement in Hong Kong, even the dribs and drabs during our trip, became a power supporting us. We have learned to recollect and reflect, to listen and accept, and to wait and fulfill God's will in our ordinary yet meaningful lives." ~Fu Lin Sheng & Fang Li

A Voice from Afar...



Inadequate medical service is one of the common problems in the mountainous areas of Mainland China. Villagers usually take herbal medicine if they have minor illness. In case of serious illness, the patients have to receive treatment in the township hospital. Due to the expensive medical charges, many villagers are too poor to receive the necessary treatment.

Aiming at providing quality medical service with reasonable price, the sisters of Zhouzhi diocese in Shaanxi province set up a clinic in Longfeng village some ten years ago. The sisters who are serving in the clinic are graduates from the medical college and got a license to run the clinic. Free medical service is provided to the poor elderly people. Longfeng Clinic has received favorable comment from the general public. However, the clinic only consists of two rooms. Apart from the consultation room, all the drugs have to store in the bedroom of the medical staff. Besides, owing to the construction defect, there was water leakage since last year. It imposed a negative impact on the sanitary condition of the clinic. Even though the sisters have good reputation and provide good medical service to the villagers, the local Health Bureau had warned them many times for a renovation.

The sisters are planning to construct a 3-room single-storey clinic next to the church to solve the urgent problem. The reconstruction project, amounting to HK\$30,000, includes a consultation room, a dispensary and a bedroom for the medical staff. Due to financial difficulties, they sent a funding request to Caritas-Hong Kong early this year. As there is water leakage problem, Longfeng clinic is now temporarily closed and waiting for assistance...



Drugs are stored in the bedroom of the medical staff



Longfeng clinic



Sisters serving in clinic as doctor and nurse

We need your generous support !

You can send us a crossed cheque made payable to "Caritas-Hong Kong" with "Support to Shaanxi clinic" marked on the back, together with the contact information. Please mail to: **Mainland Service Desk, Room 505, Caritas House, 2 Caine Road, Hong Kong.**

Official receipt will be issued by Caritas-Hong Kong for tax-exemption purpose. For enquiry, please call 35892259 / 35892500. You can also email to mainland@caritas.org.hk for more information. Thank you.