

Mainland



Brief

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Mainland Service Desk

Caritas-Hong Kong

From the Editor

In August 2005, we assisted a Sichuan baby girl to have a free cardio surgery in Hong Kong Adventist Hospital. A month later, we established the "Children Heart Fund" which enabled us to help six children from Mainland China. All of them have suffered from congenital heart disease. One of them has undergone a successful surgery. The other patient in a less serious condition is now on the waiting list for another medical examination. Another child has gone through two tests. She will receive a surgery in July this year. Yet it is very sad to report that the parents of a very ill child refused any treatment after the first check up. Apart from those cases, two children are being arranged for their first medical examination in Hong Kong. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to those who have provided assistance on these children. We wish the children good health and good fortune at all times.

If you want to know more about our service, please visit our website: <http://mainland.caritas.org.hk>

A Child's Life is Saved by Hong Kong and Mainland Donors

5-year-old Dang Haoyang has been suffering from heart disease since he was born. At the age of one, the gap in his heart was 4.2 mm. Last year, it expanded to 5 mm and his health condition deteriorated. Dang has an active character, but he could hardly jump or run like other kids at his age do.

Dang's parents are farmers. His two elder sisters are both studying at Primary school. There isn't much money left to cure Dang's illness. Dang's father is already in great debt. To undergo surgery which costs \$35,000 is the only way to ensure Dang's survival.

In May 2005, Xi'an Catholic Social Service Office introduced Dang's family to Caritas-Hong Kong. At the same time, they also applied for a subsidy from a local funding agency. With the support from the Hong Kong donors and the local donors, Dang's family received enough money for the surgery.

Under the good and intensive care of doctors and nurses, Dang recovered rapidly. He has been admitted to a kindergarten and he is having a healthy new life now.



Dang has gone back to school after recovery



Dang and his mother

Equip the School for the Happy Life of Kids

Xiaobazi Primary School is located in a remote village in Yunnan Province. The school was built in the late 70's. There are 6 classes and 210 students in school, while 140 of them need boarding and lodging service because they live so far away from school.

The increasing number of students had put pressure on the use of the school facilities. Many desks and beds were in bad condition. Besides, the river that the whole school relies on for living had been polluted by poultry. Getting clean water from the villages nearby, as well as buying new desks and beds were therefore the most urgent task. As the school could not afford to pay for the related expense, they sent a funding request of \$10,600 to Caritas-Hong Kong.

Upon receiving the request, Mainland Service Desk contacted Fr. Julian's Group, a volunteer group aiming at raising education fund for the Mainland poor children. They promised to solve the school's financial problem. This school equipment project was completed in December 2004.

In March 2006, Father Julian's Group paid a visit to the school and were warmly welcomed by the students. They were very happy to find that the great improvement of the school environment provided students with a comfortable place to study.



Clean water supply for the school



New beds in student dormitory



New desks and chairs



Sweet taste of clean water



Fr. Julian's Group and students

“No Wall College” Helps Sichuan Farmers to be Self-sufficient



Training is an essential tool fostering local development



Acquiring sewing skill strengthens competitive power

In order to help the poor farmers in Sichuan Province to improve their life through vocational training, Caritas Adult and Higher Education Service is working in collaboration with the local authority to set up a rural community college in Leshan city. This project is supported by Misereor.

The college could be described as a “no wall college”. It is not made up of huge buildings. Instead, the learning locations are set up in different villages through cooperation with local schools or county administrative offices. With the help of Leshan Science and Technology Bureau, the main office of the college was set up with minimum manpower for daily planning and operation. Caritas-HK helps in various ways, for instance, forming an Ad Hoc Committee of the college, training a team of administrative staff, making a plan for development, setting up a continuing consultation system for operation, assisting the administrators in planning and designing vocational programs, and contacting business firms on job opportunities for students, etc.

The college serves mainly the unemployed villagers and farmers who are unable to earn a living by farming. An experienced principal from Caritas Education Service is responsible for the running of the whole project. Some vocational training has already been implemented, such as bamboo knitting, sewing, housework training, etc. Besides, the college also seeks job opportunities for the graduates, and subsidizes the local vocational schools to set up sewing training centers for the unemployed farmers. It is hoped that the poor farmers can be self-sufficient in the future.



A Voice from Afar...

The summer vacation is approaching; Hong Kong pupils is going to buy new textbooks and stationery for the coming academic year. However, poverty may prevent some students in Mainland China from continuing their education. Below is a letter written by a Sister from the mountainous area of Guangdong province. It tells how the poor students thirst for education.

Dear Sir,

... I know many people in the neighbouring area are suffering from poverty yet I have no money to offer assistance on my own. I seldom seek help from others, but this time it is for the poor children, so I send you a request.

You Meiting and You Yuqing are sisters. Their family is very poor. Their father earns little and their mother is always sick in bed. They even have an elder brother who is mentally retarded. You can imagine how hard the lives they are having.

Luo Xiaohua and Luo Xiaoying are sisters too. Due to the poor financial condition of their family, Luo Xiaoying, being the first born child of the family, is admitted to Primary one at the age of 11. Children living in towns normally can complete their primary studies by age 11. What about the children living in remote areas? People live in the countryside earn their living by farming. But Luo's father got no farmland. He can only do temporary jobs. His income is not guaranteed. How can he afford to send the children to school?

Zheng Kaiwen and Zheng Diwen face the same difficulties as the above-mentioned children. Their father abandoned the family and got married with another woman 12 years ago, leaving their mother alone helplessly. She was only 28 at that time. She spends all her energy taking care of the family but still does not have enough money for the children's education. She has already burnt herself out and her health is getting worse.

I write this in the hope of seeking your kind assistance on these children...

A Sister from Guangdong

17 June 2006

Apart from the children mentioned above, many other students are facing the same situation in Mainland China. Since the implementation of the "Nine-Year Free Education Policy", the financial burden of some families has been lessened. However, many people are still unable to cover the lodging fees and other school-related expenses. Mainland Service Desk needs to raise \$400,000 each year to subsidize about 1000 deprived students. They are now waiting for those who can offer help...

We need your generous support!

You can send us a crossed cheque made payable to "Caritas-Hong Kong" with "Education allowance for poor students" 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. Thank you.