



2020 | Issue 2

C O R R I connections

Inspiring a spirit of excellence, Nurturing a culture of compassion

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Page 2

Embracing Changes

**DSA and CCA
Go Online**

Page 2-3

**Student Leaders
Investiture**

Page 4-6

*Embracing Changes
and Seizing
Opportunities*

**Covid-19 Experiences
and How We Have
Grown As a Teaching
and Learning
Community**

Page 6

*Seizing
Opportunities*

**St. Anthony's
Feast Day Mass**

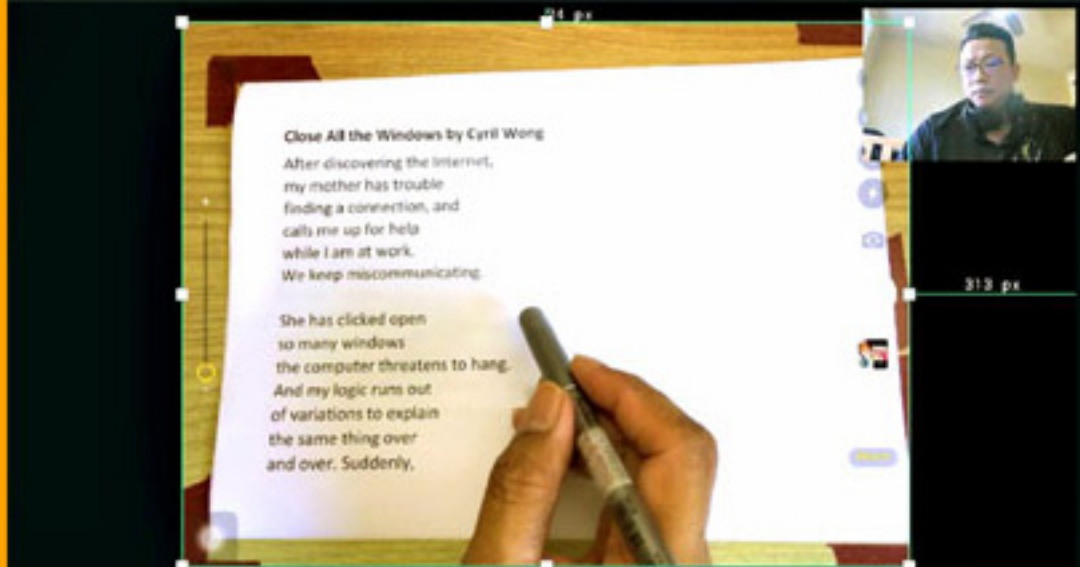
Page 7

Racial Harmony Day

Page 8

**National Day
Celebrations**

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Embracing Changes, Seizing Opportunities

The proactive adaptability of Canossians in overcoming challenges



Embracing Changes

DSA AND CCA GO ONLINE

SACSS welcomed a record number of 68 applicants from various primary schools for the Direct School Admission (DSA) 2020. It was the first time a DSA audition was conducted via a Zoom video communications platform. Everyone involved was anxious and excited as applicants were no longer required to perform in front of a panel of interviewers. This was indeed a significant change of format from previous DSA auditions and interview processes since they were first conducted back in 2014. While there were some anxious moments when the auditions were disrupted midway due to technical issues, the process was largely smooth and seamless. Fortunately, some applicants were able to draw upon recorded videos or provide video links for reference.

SACSS not only conducted auditions for the new intake from primary schools but also worked with Junior Colleges, Polytechnics and Institutes of Technical Education to ensure that our SACSS girls were well-supported during their applications for Direct School Admission into Junior Colleges (DSA-JCs), or the Polytechnic and ITE Early Admission Exercise (Poly EAE and ITE EAE).

What was most commendable from the experience was how a special group of people worked tirelessly together to facilitate a coordinated schedule and ensured that the equipment was set up and ready for the students in order to ease their anxiety prior to the audition. This group included the teachers as well as administrative and technical staff of various schools who worked together for the benefit of all DSA and EAE students, showing a truly united fraternity.



On a related note, as Face-to-Face CCA training had to take a different form post circuit breaker, SACSS adopted an e-CCA framework to promote safe management measures for all personnel. Despite initial challenges such as space and time constraints, and a few other technical and administrative matters, the students, instructors and teachers have now grown accustomed to the processes and are very much back on track with their online lessons.

To lighten the mood during this period, the Percussion Band CCA took the initiative to film a motivational music video of the students and their CCA teachers performing *Fly Me to the Moon* to encourage everyone. The video is accessible via the SACSS Facebook for your viewing.

By Mr Jimmy Choo and Ms Kang Chee Hui

STUDENT LEADERS INVESTITURE

This year, the entire Student Leaders Investiture was done online with students viewing the ceremony in class. We wanted to know how students and teachers felt about the change and if it was equally significant to them. We spoke to Head of Student Leadership, Ms Nicole Quek and some Student Leaders who shared their views.



The leadership roles during the pandemic

The pandemic has totally changed the way we communicate as a leadership team and the types of events we can organise for the school. Without our regular morning meet-ups and having to observe safety measures, we have had to adopt a paradigm shift in thinking of creative ways to overcome these obstacles. These unique challenges have brought us closer as a leadership team as we spend more time exploring new ideas over zoom meetings and have more purposeful communication so that we can continue to serve the school and grow our leaders. We have taken the changes in our stride as these changes provide us with the opportunities to challenge the process, harness our creativity and foster teamwork. After all, that is essentially what leadership is about – to take on a challenging situation, rise above it and emerge stronger as leaders.

Ms Nicole Quek (Subject Head of Student Leadership)

When things cannot be carried out in the same way that they used to be, we had to think out of the box to look for creative ways so we can still serve the school as leaders while adhering to safety measures. We are pleased that we are able to help keep the morale of the school high and ensure that every student feels included and safe and also finds joy during the events we organise, especially at such unprecedented times.

Cindy Chen 3.6 (Vice-Head of Welfare Council)

I learnt the value of maintaining strong links and effective communication among the council members via both face-to-face interactions and online platforms. The executive committee members also learnt to become more independent through this change. We overcame problems together to ensure that the outcome of our proposals are effective when presented to the school.

Samantha Sitanajah 3.6 (Headgirl)



One way I can make a difference is by stepping up to be a role model, for example, by ensuring that I always have a mask on whenever I speak and by encouraging others to do likewise.

Balasubramanian Dhejassri 3.7 (Student Councillor)

Keeping the morale and motivation high within the school

The council can help the respective class committees come up with ideas to strengthen bonds during this time.

Samuelle Ong 3.9 (Student Councillor)

Provide each class with the necessary support to enforce safe management measures by ensuring that the class cleanliness regime is up to mark.

Ariana Ser 3.1 (Head of Class Comm Council)

We need to let the students know that we empathise with their situation and are there to help them. We can also promote school-wide activities to encourage bonding.

Nicole Cheok 3.7 (Student Councillor)

Caring and looking out for each other is definitely essential. The council has to project enthusiasm when we interact with our schoolmates virtually or face to face. We also need

to stay united and remind each other to observe the safety measures, walk through this difficult time together and reassure each other that we are not alone. It is important that we celebrate our schoolmates' small achievements to boost the spirits and morale of the school community.

Cindy Chen 3.6 (Vice-Head of Welfare Council)

Takeaways from the live streaming of the investiture

I learnt that we should not let the pandemic prevent us from doing what we usually do such as helping to give back to society or hosting events.

Neha Elias 3.7 (Student Councillor)

Even though COVID-19 restricted us in many ways, there will always be ways to resolve issues if we view the problem from a different angle.

Jacintha Nugraha 3.1 (Student Councillor)

I learnt that variation in resolving a problem is integral to problem solving. In times of difficulty, always explore different ways to adapt and apply.

Lin Sheng Xi 3.7 (Student Councillor)

Nothing is impossible. We just need to work together.

Natalie Chong Jia Ying 3.7 (Vice-head Class Comm)

By Ms Nicole Quek and Student Leaders

Embracing Changes and Seizing Opportunities

COVID-19 EXPERIENCES AND HOW WE HAVE GROWN AS A TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMUNITY



Mere months ago, the term “social” that most concerned us was the Humanities subject taught in school – Social Studies. Also, to many of us, a circuit breaker was just a switch that cut off electrical supply to a device when the current is too strong.

How things have changed since. It is an understatement to say that life is no longer the same. Many over the world have been profoundly affected by the pandemic. Here at SACSS, we have not been spared from the challenges of the pandemic. From teachers to students and members of our non-teaching staff, everyone experienced the unfolding new normal.

One of our school attendants, Miss Malisah Muhammad, shared with us how quickly things changed. “Because of safe distancing measures, it was especially challenging to set up the exam venues. However, we soon got used to the changes and everything became easier,” she said. Miss Prasanna Ramdas, a science teacher who joined our school this year shared similar sentiments. She said, “Being a new teacher in the school when Covid-19 hit, it was definitely a challenge. I was unfamiliar with the processes in the school and was learning to adapt on the job. I was glad, however, that I got a glimpse into my students’ lives at home, and they were also able to see me in my home environment.”

Inevitably, teaching and learning processes had to evolve with the dynamic pandemic situation. When interviewed, Miss Justina Foo recalled some challenges she faced while conducting home-based lessons. She shared, “During the home-based learning (HBL) period, there was a lack of opportunity for me to give more personalised feedback. Also, I didn’t have multiple monitors so I could not see all my students to ensure that they were following their lessons.” However, true to the adage that necessity is the mother of invention, Miss Foo, like many of our teachers, started experimenting with ways to better reach out to her students. “I used Google forms to check how well my students had performed on a comprehension assignment and then I picked out the questions that most had difficulty with and explained it to them during our online lesson slots” she said. “It isn’t the most ideal way to learn,” Miss Foo added, “but with the constraints we were facing, it was an alternative.” Mr. Kevan Lee, too, employed innovative ways to ensure that his students got the most out of their lessons. He shared, “We adopted the flipped classroom approach where the students were given the resources to a topic beforehand, and they had to come to class prepared to ask or discuss questions. That way, the students get quality learning even if it is in smaller doses.”



Embracing Changes and Seizing Opportunities *continued*

The HBL period, inevitably meant that our students spent more time with their families and engaged in activities that they would not have much time for otherwise. Makayan Gwen Ashley Gravador from class 4.7 shared that she used the time at home to revise topics she had difficulty with so that she could bridge the gaps in her understanding of her lessons. Isabella Lily Binte Heron from 2.5, on the other hand, picked up American Sign Language (ASL) and can now sign her name and count in ASL.

When asked about the fears they had about returning to school, both students indicated that their concerns were more academic-related. They also expressed their confidence in the safe measures such as the daily visual checks conducted by form teachers and temperature-taking exercises that the school had implemented and felt safe turning up at school.

Evidently, despite the challenges we faced due to the pandemic, we have beaten the odds as a community. If anything, this period has taught us to be more adaptable and to be grateful for what we have – our colleagues, our students, our family and our friends. We pray the rest of the year progresses smoothly and that we will be able to tackle future challenges with wisdom and a grateful heart.



*By Ms Zaidah Rahmat
and Talent Development students*

Seizing Opportunities

ST. ANTHONY'S FEAST DAY MASS



Covid-19 has introduced new ways of doing things that we would never have thought would be the "norm". Never had we imagined that St. Anthony's Feast Day Mass would be a virtual celebration. In spite of the limitations, the pandemic presented us with new learning opportunities.

We learnt to leverage existing technology to plan and "stitch" the Mass segments together for the school to participate in on 1 July 2020. The Catholic Activities Council (CAC) Leaders and Canossian Spirituality Team (CST) held an online meeting ahead of time to discuss how our inaugural Mass would be carried out. Our hymns were selected from YouTube and student lectors recorded their Readings and Prayers using their mobile phones.

We were blessed to have Fr Adrian Danker, Principal of St. Joseph's Institution (SJI), as our Celebrant. Upon emailing him our Mass Slides, Fr Adrian generously supported us in arranging for his pre-recorded segment at the Chapel in SJI. After the clips had been uploaded on Google Drive, the Team then met Mr Haidar Amir, our ICT Associate, to begin the process of stitching the Mass together. During the process, we brainstormed the most effective ways to present the audio and visual materials.

There was heartening feedback from the staff and students, affirming us of the effort and quality of the virtual Mass. They appreciated the time of prayer and reflection. We were humbled and grateful for the support received. We will continue to journey as a Canossian community, seizing opportunities to create a better tomorrow.



By Ms Sharon Yu

RACIAL HARMONY DAY

COVID-19 has impacted the world in many ways, with rising anxiety and frustration placing additional stress on our societal fault lines. News of Singaporean Chinese students being picked on in the UK and Australia, as well as reports of foreigners flaunting Circuit Breaker rules at Robertson Quay, have raised the ire of Singaporeans and further promoted the "me versus them" syndrome among our people.

Here in school, our students and teachers were already feeling the tensions caused by enforced safe management measures in the canteen and restrictions in the way we socialise and interact in class and during CCA.

During this year's Racial Harmony Day commemoration, SACSS tackled these issues head-on with class discussions using the Straits Times IN Magazine. Teachers facilitated discussions on

racial issues in Singapore and around the world, ending off with a positive note encouraging everyone to support those in the frontline; regardless of their race, language or religion.

SACSS also collaborated with Singapore Discovery Centre on their interactive show *Stand Together, Stay Apart*. The show presented 3 characters who encountered problems and disagreements because of their racial stereotypes. Students put themselves in the character's shoes before voting on an ending of their choice.

The event concluded with everyone learning to fold traditional paper craft which included, Ketupat Fish, paper Diwa and the Crane. It was heartening to witness students and teachers helping each other manage the more complex folds, and finally presenting their creations as a combined class effort! While we stayed apart physically, SACSS stood together in spirit to overcome this crisis!



Seizing Opportunities

NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

Following up from Racial Harmony Day, and our school made a special effort to celebrate our nation's birthday through reflecting on our journey through the Circuit Breaker period and celebrating our common identity.



We've come so far, together

With a daily mix of NDP songs from past to present, each morning leading up to National Day was celebrated with music and a glimpse of behind-the-scenes videos of past National Day Parades as well as highlighting this year's SYF and NDP collaborative production *Be the Light*. The video *Recollections* highlighted how Singapore has grown and developed into the bustling city we are today.

A common destiny

SACSS collaborated with The National Museum of Singapore to participate in the 55,000 Wishes for Singapore project, where we contributed postcards penned with students' reflections of the Circuit Breaker experience and hopes for our future. We celebrated Singapore being Stronger Together by compiling artwork created by our students during the first CCE lesson after returning from an extended period of Home-Based Learning. The montages were featured in our first interactive SACSS Virtual Art Gallery.

Singapore forever, A Nation strong and free

Braving the rain as they marched down the parade square, students from our Girl Guides and National Civil Defence Cadet Corps carried our National Flag on their shoulders as they were filmed for the National Day Observance Ceremony. The whole school stood to attention as they recited the pledge alongside the Formal Ceremony that was broadcast in the classrooms. Although the school was not able to witness a "live" parade, our ICT staff brought the parade into the classrooms through the clever use of technology.

After the ceremony, the classes sprang into action as students played traditional games and participated in interactive quizzes on Singapore trivia. The classes then settled down to view the online Concert Segment of our National Day celebrations. The Performing Arts groups presented a light-hearted and meaningful video performance. Concert hosts Mr Joel Han and Ms Shirlyn Loh brought the audience through the staffroom, approaching teachers to play *Don't Forget the Lyrics*, and interviewing students on their thoughts about Singapore's past. The concert also featured pre-recorded performances by individual students and various CCA groups. The celebrations ended with a live broadcast of Mr Said and Mr He performing a medley of National Day songs from the Multi-Purpose Room. As classes clapped along to the music, the teachers ended the celebrations driving home the message that Singapore must remain united, and emerge Stronger Together!



By Mr He Junhao, Ms Nicole Quek and Ms Kang Chee Hui

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