



C O R R I connections

Inspiring a spirit of excellence, Nurturing a culture of compassion

2014 GCE 'O' LEVEL EXAMINATION Results Release @ SACSS

On 12 January 2015, the GCE 'O' Level results for the 2014 cohort were released. The high anxiety of the students gathered at the hall quickly fizzled as the result slips were handed out. The hall was soon filled with Canossians' sharing their joy with each other and, in the spirit of Other-Centredness, a shoulder to cry on for those whose results did not measure up to expectations.



The cohort performed commendably well in several subjects, including English Language and Literature (EL and Lit). The cohort improved on the results for EL from 96.9% passes in 2013 to 98.7% passes in 2014, while for Pure Literature, the number of distinctions rose from 16% in 2013 to 29.4% in 2014 for the students in the Secondary 4 Express stream.

At the beginning of 2014, the EL and Lit department implemented an action plan to ensure that the students performed well. For EL, Oral Consultation sessions were held on several mornings each week beginning in Term 1, to allow the students to consult with their teachers and develop their strategies to help improve their Oral Communication skills. Remedial sessions were held in the afternoons to provide help to the weaker students – this allowed the teachers to monitor the progress of this group of students so that they could make improvements leading up to the GCE 'O' Level examinations. In some classes, the

students were also banded according to their ability so that the teachers could customise their lessons to address different weaknesses.

For students taking Pure Literature, the teachers analysed the performance of the previous cohort to develop a strategy to help the 2014 cohort do better. The department adopted a multi-modal approach for the teaching of the Shakespearean *Romeo and Juliet* text. Students were provided with alternatives to explore the text, including watching the film adaptation by Franco Zeffirelli. The students were also given the opportunity to watch the play performed by local theatre company Toy Factory Productions. This allowed them to visualise what they have read. In addition, the teachers incorporated Reader's Theatre tasks as part of the students' assignment. Arrangements were also made for the students to take part in a debate at the National Schools Literature Festival. The Set Text Debate challenges the students to

study the text very closely and then debate for the position they are assigned against another school offering the same text – which in turn deepens students' understanding and appreciation of the text.

The top student in the 2014 cohort was Aarini Bhatia who scored eight A1s. Previously from an international school, Aarini joined SACSS only in 2013. Despite having to adapt to a new environment and taking on new subjects in her two years at SACSS, Aarini's passion and spirit for excellence had a part in contributing to her excellent results.



If we have to identify the most determined student in this cohort, it would have to be Aashwini Cassandra Gunasilan, who was diagnosed with Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada syndrome (VKH) in 2012. Aashwini struggled to cope with school work and could barely see as the inflammatory condition caused her eyesight to deteriorate. Aashwini only managed to take her GCE 'O' Level examinations in 2014, after the school supported her in locating a suitable assistive device that would help her see what she was reading. Despite the odds, Aashwini's Can-do Spirit and Resilience helped her to score seven distinctions and secure a place in Raffles Institution. Aashwini was also an active student leader – she was President of the Angklung Band and Catholic Activities Council.

The 2014 examination results have proven that with hard work, a positive mindset, a good attitude towards learning, and the determination to succeed, anything is possible despite the seemingly unsurmountable obstacles one may encounter.

By Mrs Jannine Kuah and Ms Kamala Kausikan



FOUNDRESS DAY CELEBRATIONS CHEERFULNESS... A CALL TO JOY

The school celebrated Foundress Day on 27 February. The programme began with the solemn March-In Ceremony featuring members of our Girl Guides and St. John Ambulance Brigade carrying the National Flag and the School Flag. The flag bearers marched in accompanied by the music played by the school's Concert Band. The dignified proceedings reinforced the significance of Foundress Day Celebrations which was attended by the entire Canossian Family comprising the Canossian Sisters, staff, students and Canossian Co-Educators.



The next segment was the Foundress Day Mass with Fr Simon Pereira as the Celebrant. Celebrating the Mass allowed us to reflect on the values espoused by St. Magdalene of Canossa, and how we can better emulate her and walk in her footsteps. The theme for this year's Foundress Day Eucharistic Celebration was *Cheerfulness... A Call to Joy*. Fr Simon related how our call to joy is also one related to service. It is in serving others, in seeing Christ in others, that we experience a deep sense of joy and peace.

2015 being SG50, we were also privileged to have some of our Canossian Pioneer Educators with us – including retired Principal at SACSS, Ms Choy Poh Chun and two former teachers, Mrs Manu and Ms Mabel Kang. Their presence served as a testimony of their dedicated service and commitment in upholding the ethos of our Canossian education.

As part of the Foundress Day Celebrations, students from the primary school, SACPS, were invited to watch the musical, *The Canossian Spirit* on 25 February. This was a timely reminder of the vision of St. Magdalene of Canossa and those who contributed to the growth and development of SACSS.

By Ms Sharon Yu



St. Magdalene of Canossa was one who is ever generous in her love and service to the people around her. Let us remember the graciousness of our Foundress who remains cheerful and is always a beacon of hope and joy to those whom she encountered. As Canossians, let us be like St. Magdalene, so that in radiating cheerfulness and joy to others, our lives will be a testimony of God's love.

I N V E S T I T U R E 2 0 1 5

From Leaders-In-Training to Leaders-In-Action

The Leaders' Investiture marked the handing over of student leadership. For the newly minted batch of leaders, their leadership journey, the transformation from Leaders-in-Training to Leaders-in-Action, began with the ceremonial receiving of the badge and reciting of the leader's pledge.



The event is also a formal platform for the new batch of leaders to thank the outgoing seniors for the guidance and for being an inspiring role model for them. Indeed, the ceremony acknowledges the achievements of past student leaders and gives the new cohort the responsibility of carrying on the mission of improving the welfare of the students and also the environment around them. There were poignant moments felt by the entire congregation when the incoming leaders hugged the seniors as a mark of respect and an expression of gratitude. A piece of the past will always stay to serve as a reminder for the new batch of leaders to serve with pride, and to the best of their abilities as well as to strive for greater heights. To some, it was a nerve-wrecking experience and to the others, it was one of the proudest days of their lives. However, one common emotion felt by the new leaders was a sense of accomplishment.

The event, attended by the entire student population, was an opportunity to introduce the leaders to all, and to signal their readiness to be approached for assistance on issues by the student population to work together for a better school environment and to perpetuate the school's motto... *Via, Veritas, Vita*.

By Ms Nicole Quek, Student Councillors and Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) Councillors (2015 ~ 2016)



Camp CORRI 2015

As in previous years, the annual Camp CORRI programmes for the different levels were held to cater to the students' respective needs.

Secondary 1

The 2-day camp focused on the importance of goal-setting and hard work fostered a spirit of camaraderie amongst students in the class as well as promoted the CORRI quality of *Responsible Individuality* through the camp activities. This year's theme, *Better Me, Better Class* underscored that being a responsible individual leads to a better class performance.

The first day's programme commenced with the *T.E.A.M. Model Challenge* which was made up of a series of team bonding games. One of which was the *Caterpillar Traverse* – which saw students moving together from one point to another with their legs tied together using each other's shoelaces. To navigate through the course successfully, a team leader had to give clear instructions to manoeuvre the course.

The second day began with the *Start Right Workshop* which focused on the importance of maintaining a positive mindset in the pursuit of success. There was also the novel *Para Para Egg Challenge* which involved building a structure to protect an egg. Every member of each team was assigned a role, such as in sales, finance or building, and each one was to perform her assigned role efficiently to contribute to the team's objective.

The enthusiasm displayed by the Secondary 1 students during the inter-class cheering competition was simply amazing. Secondary 1/2 eventually emerged as the winner of this competition. Certificates were also awarded to the best camper from each class for their performance over the two days.

By Ms Shona Chow



“When the shoelaces of a team member came loose, everyone waited patiently for her to re-tie them without complaints about falling behind the other teams.”

– Lareefah Tasneem (Secondary 1/3) on the team spirit displayed during the Caterpillar Traverse

Secondary 2

Some of the main camp events this year included *T.E.A.M. Challenges* which featured activities on overcoming challenges as a class, *Dragon-boating* at Kallang Water Sports Centre and *Outdoor Cooking* where the girls prepared a pasta meal. The students also learnt to pitch tents which they spent a night in.

The activities emphasise Relationship Management – such as allowing the



“We learnt to be more other-conscious before myself. We also learnt teamwork in group activities and weaknesses that we never thought of.”

– Dorado Marcielo and Ynez Ang (Secondary 2/2)

Secondary 3

This year, Camp CORRI for the Secondary 3 students was held at Savannah Hill Resort, Johor Bahru. The school was abuzz with excitement when the girls turned up at the reporting point in school.

One of the highlights on the first day was the visit to the Desaru Fruit Farm where the students were engaged in making *Love Letters*, or egg rolls, gaining insights about the traditional blowpipe, playing cultural kampung games and learning to weave *ketupat*. The farm tour that followed gave them the chance to sample a variety of fruits, make mud balls and have a hand at rubber tapping. They also had an enjoyable time feeding and interacting with the animals at the farm.

The programmes lined up on the second and third day included challenging outdoor activities such as mud-trekking,

participants to acquire interpersonal skills that are needed for them to work as a team. Along the way, camaraderie is fostered among the students in each class which in turn, allowed them to better understand each other's strength and to leverage on these strengths to achieve the best possible outcome for the class. The activities also created opportunities for the girls to demonstrate the CORRI quality of Other-Centredness.

By Mr Dineshkumar Subramaniam



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to value the importance of
as well as discovered our
ought we had.”

2)



Secondary 4 and 5

Camp CORRI for Secondary 4 and 5 was held at various locations within the school campus. Anchored on Education and Career Guidance, the programme this year included a series of workshops on personal image management such as deportment and the dos and don'ts in an interview. The sessions were conducted with an experiential and practical approach to better engage the graduating cohort of students so that they can internalise the learning. A *Guest*



Hour segment featured a Forum by ex-Canossian students who shared about their work life and how the school values continue to be relevant.

“This year's camp was definitely out of the ordinary. We learnt useful skills such as how to deal with interviews and gained insights into deportment nuances that would exude one's gracefulness and confidence through proper dressing, and how to walk and sit in a dignified manner. We also learnt about make-up and skin care.”

– Beatrice Poh and Nur Afiqah (Secondary 4/6)

By Mr Hamzah Mohamed

river-crossing, negotiating the low obstacle course and flying fox. A team-building *Superchef* challenge was also held. The students who were a little apprehensive at the beginning, went on to face up to the challenge and even cheered each other on. The camp culminated in a campfire which featured a host of dance and cheering performances that were presented by the students and some staff!

“I learnt that working closely together as a class – helped us to overcome the tough challenges as a team.”

– Participant of Camp CORRI for Secondary 3

By Ms Tiffany Cheok





Ex-Canossians Demonstrate Other-Centredness

– Motivational sharing sessions by ex-students

When Mrs Koh Seok Hwee, a first time Form Teacher of a Secondary 4 Normal Technical (NT) class, was asked about Institute of Technical Education (ITE) by her students, she immediately thought of inviting her former students from the NT stream to share their experiences with her current students. Mrs Koh was not very hopeful that they would agree, after all, they graduated from SACSS a long time ago and may not be keen to share their experiences with juniors whom they did not even know. Mrs Koh was pleasantly surprised when Khoo Hui Ling (Secondary 4/1, 2004), Rachel Lim (Secondary 4/1, 2006) and Rebekah Siow (Secondary 4/1, 2006) agreed immediately despite their busy work and study schedules. And what was anticipated to be a simple sharing of their ITE experiences turned out to be an inspiring session on how they dealt with difficult challenges, bounced back from setbacks and emerged stronger.



Hui Ling stood out for her tenacity when she shared how she fought for her chance to take the Higher Nitec course when her application was rejected due to her poor results in the Nitec course. She also did not give up although she found her course later on at Singapore Polytechnic very demanding. Her journey from SACSS to the polytechnic is certainly not an easy one but she took any opportunity that came her way to improve herself. She went on an overseas internship, took part in Youth Leadership Forum and played an active role as a student leader and CCA leader. By the time she related the long list of awards she received at her graduation in ITE, including the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship To Encourage Upgrading (LKY-STEP) Award, the entire class knew it was made possible through her sheer hard work. Hui Ling did not share her success story, instead she emphasised the importance of resilience and can-do spirit when the going got tough. Although

she took five more years to enter the polytechnic compared to her peers, she achieved her dream of receiving a polytechnic diploma and went on to fulfill her ambition of becoming a police woman.

Rachel shared her educational journey from primary school to university. The importance of following one's heart and not being afraid to live one's dreams was what we also learnt from Rachel's sharing. She recounted how she turned her interest in digital media into a fulfilling career in the media industry. We were all very proud of her accomplishment when she shared that her documentary *Naked in the City* was selected to be screened at the 24th European Union Film Festival in 2014. Her eyes lit up as she spoke about her passion in film making. She also emphasised that it was important to live life with passion, to go all out to fulfill one's dreams and not let others determine how far we can go.

Rebekah, a gentle and soft-spoken student when she was in SACSS, surprised Mrs Koh when she shared that she attained a Diploma in Sports and Exercise Sciences at Republic Polytechnic after getting her Nitec certification in Applied Food Science. It was hard to believe that someone so soft-spoken could be a trainer for local soccer clubs. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sports Science at Edith Cowan University and looks forward to applying her learning as a Physical Education (PE) teacher in an early intervention school.

As each one of them shared their experience, Mrs Koh was convinced that SACSS had prepared them well for their post-secondary school journey because they continued to display the can-do spirit and resilience of Canossians. And as Rebekah and Rachel handed out little handmade bookmarks that they had created for every student, and encouraged them to do their best, both of them also demonstrated that they had internalised the value of compassion and other-centeredness.

Besides the three ex-students who shared on their learning journey after completing their NT education at SACSS, two other ex-students, Vanessa Toh Yan Ling, who graduated from SACSS in 2009, and Caroline Chin also made time to hold the sharing sessions for juniors.

Vanessa was in the SACSS Drama Elective Programme. She is currently a final year student pursuing her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Acting at LASALLE College of the Arts. In her sharing session, she spoke about her education at LASALLE and fielded questions during a Question and Answer (Q&A) session on Performance of *Monologue on History and Memory*.

Caroline completed her GCE 'A' Level education at Tampines Junior College last year. She has just completed a performance of the play, *Silly Girl and the Funny Old Tree*, written by celebrated playwright Kuo Pao Kun. She conducted a Q&A session providing insights on her pursuit in Theatre Studies as part of her A-Level education and she also held a Physical Theatre workshop. We are proud of our students and grateful that the Canossian spirit lives on in them.

By Mrs Koh Seok Hwee and Ms Kang Chee Hui

STRIKING A BALANCE BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND CCA COMMITMENTS

- Insights from our Performing Arts Groups Leaders

With the biennial Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) Arts Presentation (AP) approaching in April, the Canossian Performing Arts groups have been gearing up for the intensity and excitement of performing at the SYF AP which is one of the highlights of their CCA endeavours. The students involved have been chalking up hours in rehearsals to ensure that they are well prepared to represent the school with pride and honour. In addition to all the intense practices, the students will also need to keep up with their academic commitments.

Ms Amanda Choo spoke with several CCA leaders to find out more about their CCA commitments and how they strike that fine balance. The girls, Hazyra Surani (Indian Dance), Nurauni Bte Affendi and Filza Chew (Modern Dance), Alicia Wong and Serafina Loke (Angklung Band), Trisha Tee (Choir) and Sarah Tay (Guitar Ensemble) shared with her on how they are managing.

Q: Describe what a normal CCA day is like for you.

Hazyra: A full day of lessons with CCA activities adding balance and colour to my life and allowing me to relieve stress and a channel to fulfil my passion.

Serafina and Alicia: It is definitely a very long day but we always look forward to CCA as it makes us feel very happy.

Trisha: I usually start my day with leaders' assembly in the morning followed by morning duties, and after that comes a full day of lessons till after 2pm. During the 45-minute break between lessons and CCA, I try to complete as much homework as I can.

Sarah: To be honest, it is very tiring to juggle both CCA and school work. However, with proper time management and the help of teachers, we managed to meet the deadlines.

Q: How do you balance striving for excellence in SYF and still keep up with school work?

Hazyra: Although I am tired after CCA SYF practices, having the right perspective and the ability to prioritise is important. As a student, my purpose is to study, hence that is my priority. However, I will dedicate all my free time to ensure I do my job as a CCA leader well.

Serafina and Alicia: Time management is key.

Sarah: We make the most out of our time and try to keep to our schedule. Although we prioritise academics before CCA, we ensure that we perform our CCA duties by making the most out of our breaks. We also feel that having understanding teachers helps.

Nurauni and Filza: One of the strategies to keep up with our school work is to complete all our homework a day before CCA days. Then we can be fully focused during CCA. We also ensure that on a normal school day, we keep strictly to the timetable which in turn gives us enough rest to strike a balance.

Q: What is your motivation as you prepare for SYF? Share with us what inspires you.

Trisha: Right now, it is to attain a distinction and celebrate the immense joy knowing that all the work put in has not gone to waste. My hopes for the choir this year is to sustain our winning streak by garnering another Certificate of Distinction. What inspires me to train hard is the desire to keep up with the solid work by the preceding batch of seniors.

Nurauni and Filza: As we prepare for SYF, the hard work and determination of the team to achieve our goal of presenting an impactful performance will continue to spur us and strengthen our resolve to work even harder.

All the best girls, as we gear up for the upcoming SYF!

By Ms Amanda Choo





ST. MAGDALENE'S CLUB

St. Magdalene's Club was officially initiated in January 2015. The main objective of the club is to provide a platform for students who possess an interest in craft and would like to put their hands to good use. With initial feedback from students, some of the activities that will be introduced include baking, craftwork and needlework. As the club takes on the name of our Foundress, St. Magdalene of Canossa the club's activities would provide opportunities for students to embrace the CORRI qualities. Community service projects such as visits to Homes for disadvantaged children will also be included. Through the club activities, we believe that our students will grow more confident, creative and compassionate in reaching out to the less fortunate, and they would hone their skills in craft and needlework.

By Mrs Mary Ann Joseph and Mr Quek Joo Siah



THE CHAPEL OF ST. ANTHONY

The Chapel is located in the heart of the shared campus of St. Anthony's Canossian Primary School and St. Anthony's Canossian Secondary School and is open from 7.00am to 5.00pm. Having a chapel on the campus is a privilege. We experience the powerful presence of God in our midst – waiting and welcoming us to spend time with Him, to be enlightened, to be healed and to be at peace.

On the first Wednesday of each month, a combined Eucharistic Celebration with St. Anthony's Canossian Primary School is held at 6.45am. The combined celebration signifies the unity of our two schools as we come together to give thanks to God for a new beginning each month. It is well-attended by Principals, staff and students from both schools. Often, some of our Canossian Sisters join us in the Eucharistic Celebration.

The Catholic Activities Council's Music Ministry also leads in Praise and Worship Sessions on the first Fridays of selected months from 7.00am to 7.15am. On a semester basis, Lectio Divina is also conducted for the lower secondary and upper secondary students after their examinations. Both activities serve as a platform to deepen the faith of our students.

By Ms Sharon Yu

MAKE-A-NILA



In support of the 28th Southeast Asian (SEA) Games and as part of the SG50 celebrations, SACSS collaborated with Sports Singapore to participate in the Make-a-NILA project in January 2015.

As part of the project, the Secondary 3 cohort of students was tasked to make NILA, the mascot for the 28th SEA Games. Each hand-sewn mascot will eventually be presented as a memento together with the medal to a prize winner at the games.

Besides providing our students with the opportunity for students to learn some sewing skills, the Make-a-NILA project allowed students to be personally involved in contributing their creative skills and well-wishes to athletes at the SEA Games. The session also created a channel for students and their form teachers to foster closer bonds. Many of the girls appreciated the chance to learn a new skill and gained a sense of accomplishment from sewing their first toy.

The school leaders also joined in to support the project by contributing their guidance and sewing skills. Although some of the students found out how difficult it was to actually sew a toy, they enjoyed the experience and were heartened that the handsewn mascot will be a part of Singapore's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

By Mr He Junhao

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Student Councillors
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