



# Catholic Women's League Hong Kong Newsletter

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### Dates to Remember

**Jan 16:** Chinese New Year  
Potluck

**The Mother's Evening  
Prayer group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup>  
and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the  
month - 7 to 8 pm**

**Venue: 7th floor, Rm 708,  
Catholic Diocese Centre**

## From Fr Russell's Desk...

"And is it true? And is it true/ This most tremendous tale of  
all/ Seen in a stained-glass window's hue/ A baby in an ox's  
stall?/ The Maker of the stars and sea/ Become a Child on  
earth for me?"

Soon we'll be making our way to Midnight Mass, the Mass of  
the Infant Christ, our Christ-Mas(s), our thanksgiving for the  
great mystery of the Incarnation. We go in spirit to Bethlehem  
and peer into the cave where the Holy Family are sharing  
space with ox and ass: the dumb ox knows his owner and the ass his master's crib, but  
Israel knows nothing, my people do not understand (Isaiah 1,2). We watch as Mary  
comforts her new-born Child rocking him in her arms. Then the shepherds arrive. As  
any mother would do, she hands over her bundle of joy to each visitor: her mission is to  
give Christ to the world. Then come the Magi and each of them in turn holds the Infant  
Christ in his arms. Then Mary beckons me to enter the cave: she places her Child in my  
arms. I gaze on this red-faced, wispy-haired, gurgling little creature and make an act of  
faith: My Lord and my God. I welcome him into our world and thank him for the  
extraordinary exchange: God has come to share in our humanity in order that we might  
share in his divinity. Or, as some of the early Christian writers put it more bluntly, God  
became man so that man might become God.

Now at baptism we are called to share in Mary's mission of giving Christ to the world.  
The Magi would never have set out on that journey which led them to the feet of Christ  
if the star they had seen was no brighter than the other stars in the night sky. Nor will  
other searchers for the truth be motivated unless we stand out just a little by being  
kinder, more joyous, more compassionate.

*(Fr Russell has been spiritual director of the Catholic Women's League since 1991.)*



# New Year, New Vision



Our AGM this year was held on Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. As it marks the end of a term for the four executive officers along with our team of committee members, we took stock of the year gone by. Most of the activities reported have been established many years back and have been running quite successfully. The new hardship project set up two years ago is operating quite smoothly.

After the AGM, with the dawn of a new year, new resolutions need to be made, as is done when New Year rolls around every year. As a faith group, we should set our goals, map out a plan, and follow the steps as we start the year afresh.

The proposals below are just a few of the areas which we could look into: I would like to expand our assistance program for the less advantaged, so as to include the ethnic minority group. We have already begun researching and contacting non-profit groups who work solely with non-Chinese speaking students. These are students who were born in Hong Kong and are most likely to choose to stay and live here when they grow up. As a result of their lack of proficiency in the Chinese language, most of them will not be able to excel in life and may have to settle for low paying jobs. CWL has helped minority groups in the past, but not on a regular basis. We now have the resources, both in terms of manpower and financial capabilities, and so have decided to take up the program again.

The second area that I would like to examine is Internship for university students. This is for students studying to be social workers. Every year we interview 45 to 60 student applicants for our financial aid program. We could tap into the pool of future social workers and have them work with our interviewers and help in processing applications. This would help them to gain first-hand experience of actual cases, as well as relieve the workload of our interviewers.

A third area is to reach out to students affected by the current Hong Kong political unrest. In the last six months, many families and especially those with teenaged children are faced with a dilemma. Household incomes are threatened as there may be a wave of unemployment in the coming months due to the prolonged protests and its fallout. We would try to reach out to families that may be facing temporary financial crises, with the help of school social workers.

Some other inputs I have received from members include engaging good speakers at different intervals, pilgrimages to different churches in Hong Kong with prayer intentions, inviting people we help to join in our monthly potlucks, home visits to those unwell and perhaps actively inviting people to our video shows.

The Catholic Women's League belongs to every member. Without your participation, there is no League. I am open to listening to new ideas and recommendations. I look forward to working with all of you this coming year of service for the greater glory of God. **Irene Chen**



The New Committee



# Macau: No Bets, All Prayer & Worship

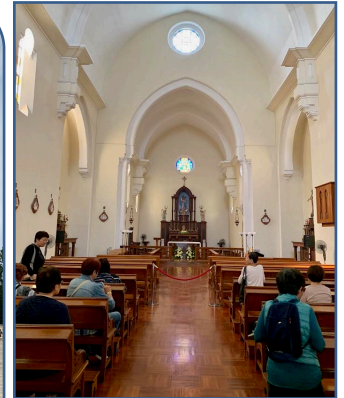
*On Nov 12, about 20 CWL members and friends went on a pilgrimage to Macau. The tour was organized by Maria Chu with Jason Un as the guide, to explore the old and beautiful churches and the Catholic presence in this one-time Portuguese colony. Here's a glimpse of this very enjoyable day.*



Our Lady of Mount Carmel



A special mass for CWL pilgrims at Our Lady of Mount Carmel



Our Lady of Penha church



Church of St Francis Xavier



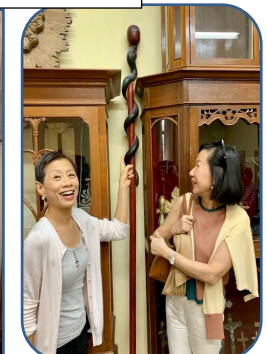
St Augustine Church



At St Joseph's seminary and museum



Walking up to St Joseph's Church





## Faith formation videos: Spiritual nourishment



Thanks to the initiative of CWL member **Maria Chu**, a series of faith formation videos has been planned for our members. It began with 'Catholicism', an award winning 10-episode series by Bishop Robert Barron. The first episode was screened on September 26<sup>th</sup> and over the weeks we have seen a very interested group of viewers.

Bishop Barron currently serves as the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. His website WordOnFire.org reaches millions of people each year and he is one of the most followed Catholics on social media.

**Maria** says, "I ordered 'Catholicism' a few years ago and attempted to watch it. But the Lord did not open my mind or my heart, and I hardly remembered anything of it. It was not until February this year that I was reintroduced to Bishop Barron's media organisation, Word On Fire, through a new series of videos that he created called 'The Pivotal Players'. I enjoyed the episode of St Francis of Assisi so much that I decided to subscribe to it and this allowed me to watch all that was available on the website.

"I re-watched 'Catholicism', and by God's grace I had a totally different experience this time. Not only was I attracted to the beautiful cinematography of each of the episodes, but my ears were intensively tuned into the words of Bishop Barron. When I did not understand what he said, I stopped and replayed. I watched each of the episodes, not twice, but at least three times. I still missed out a lot of information. I was so impressed by Bishop Barron's knowledge that I began watching him on YouTube where he commented on faith-related subjects or thorny contemporary issues. Word on Fire has become my daily spiritual nourishment.

Maria adds, "I so wanted to share all this information with CWL members. I felt like the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus whose hearts were on fire after they encountered the Risen Lord. I wanted to share 'Catholicism' with others whom I knew would be inspired by this. And I did. We began watching the first episode on September 26<sup>th</sup> supported by a few members and non-members, and we completed watching the series on December 5<sup>th</sup>."

CWL member **Daphne da Rosa** says, "It was most informative, the holy sites visited were so relevant and his narrative was easy to follow.... allowing us Catholics to refresh our catechism of our one true faith. For sure it gave me better 'formation'.

"We are living in trying times when others around seem to be diluting the beliefs passed down by scripture and tradition.....including by those from within the Catholic church. Hence it is even more important that we strengthen our knowledge of our faith, especially from someone of authority like Bishop Barron."

**Katherine Wong** says, "I have enjoyed viewing the series together with others. Bishop Barron's eloquent, enlightening presentations lead me to have a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith. This, along with the beautiful cinematography of some sacred places, gives viewers visual pilgrimages that depict God's love for His people and the response of some saints. The series inspires us to be more authentic Christians by surrendering ourselves to God and loving others."

**Anita Stevenson** says, "I had watched a few episodes at home and found the 'Catholicism' video series very inspiring and it helped to strengthen my faith. Then viewing this on a wider screen together with CWL friends made it even more special. I found the handout notes on each of the episodes very useful. The episodes that have made a high impression on me are: 'Both God and Human', 'The Mystery of God', 'Communion with the Lord'.

I feel that many of us will benefit from watching the 'Catholicism' video series and we should try to recruit more participants for the next video program.



# 'Tis the season to be jolly!



CWL members celebrated their annual Christmas potluck on December 19th. About 40 members gathered to partake of a specially created festive lunch and some lively carol-singing. But the biggest joy of the afternoon was to have Fr Russell back with us to share the yuletide cheer. A truly special afternoon!





## Birthday Cheer



Sept: Judy, Mary Wa, Angelina, Catherine, Margaret, Joyce, Cora



Oct: Margaret, Laura, Rosemary, Fernanda, Anita



Nov: Teresa and Lily



Dec: Elaine and Cecily

## CWL Diary



Happy 90<sup>th</sup> dear Flor!  
Long-time CWL member,  
Flor Cruz turned 90 on  
Sept 31. We wish her good  
health and happiness  
always!



Nov birthday girls:  
Maria and Lily

## Reaching out to the Elderly



On December 14, CWL members Catherine Wong, Judy, Angelina and Lily visited the Caritas Integrated Family Service Centre in Tsuen Wan. They attended a special outreach, luncheon and entertainment that was organized for the elderly. There were about 40 elderly who participated in the event.

CWL has been supporting this program since 2012 and has been giving them a grant of about \$20,000 every year.