

Spotlight on CHARIS Affiliate Canossian Daughters of Charity

Established since 1894



One could say that the relationship between the Canossian Daughters of Charity and Singapore has undergone an about turn in the 100-plus years since the Order first arrived on our shores. From missionaries **to** Singapore in 1894, the Sisters are now missionaries **from** Singapore. While continuing their ministries of evangelization, education of children and care for the sick in Singapore, the Singapore Canossian Sisters have adopted Myanmar as a recipient of their overseas missionary efforts.

The Canossian presence in Myanmar goes back to 1996, starting with a mission outreach in Taunggyi and different parts of Myanmar. In January 2008, this presence became more permanent when they rented a house in Yangon and started teaching English to the neighbourhood children and the students in a Jesuit Language Institute.

In May 2008 they piloted a programme to train village teachers for boarding houses. There are over 500 boarding houses and orphanages in Myanmar run by the Catholic Church and many young girls who cannot get through the 10-standard exams, often land up in boarding houses as caregivers and cooks.

The Sisters have designed a 10-month Formation of Educators' Course with six weeks of practicum in a boarding house. The curriculum covers topics like learning styles of children, discipline, health and cleanliness, Faith Education, communication and problem-solving, to name a few.

In 2011, the Canossian Sisters completed the building of a formation centre for educators with the help of a grant from CHARIS as well as friends and supporters. The centre now offers a 10-month residential programme for young ladies who have the passion to work especially with the poor children in remote villages. The training is free and the graduates receive a small monthly allowance when they start working in the boarding houses.

The centre also has a boarding house on site for children, especially those who have suffered from trauma, like orphans from the Nargis cyclone disaster. This service, initiated in June 2012, will give the trainees on-the-spot training and learning. Currently, the mission is looking into livelihood projects to help partially sustain the work.

The Canossian mission in Singapore is still going strong, with more than 50 Sisters living in four different communities in various parts of the island. Educational activities include 4 schools and 2 kindergartens.

Of special interest is the Canossian School for the hearing-impaired and Canossaville Children's Home. The Sisters also care for the sick and terminally-ill in 2 Homes: St Joseph's Home and Villa Francis. The convent's headquarters in the serene surroundings near Bukit Timah Hill is home to a spirituality centre for both individual as well as group retreats.

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Did You Know...

The Canossian Sisters are present throughout the world, most strongly in Italy where the Order originated, and in Asia. Apart from Singapore, there are Canossian convents in India, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong and Timor Leste.



The Association of Lay Canossians comprises more than 50 members who find in the Canossian spirituality the impetus to live their Christian vocation in the world and become witnesses of the Charism of the Greatest Love in their secular life.



VOICA, the Canossian International Voluntary Service Programme, forms and trains volunteers for long-term mission services to the developing countries in Asia, Africa and South America.



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2012 Key Activities...

Upcoming in Myanmar & China

August and September 2012:

Short health-care course for trainee educators from villages- Myanmar
(2 nurses for 5 days)

27 October - 3 November 2012

Project in Canossa Home - Myanmar
(maximum of 12 Volunteers)

Early December 2012

Christmas Cheer for children in orphanages & homes - Myanmar

Dates To Be Confirmed

Assisting children in Home for handicapped children in Fujian, China

In Singapore

Give tuition or organize games and sporting activities for children in Canossville Children's Home

Organize activities like packing things to send to the Philippines with the Lay Canossian Missionary Group