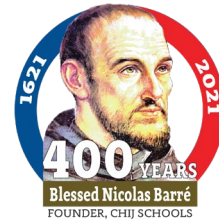




CHIJ KATONG CONVENT

346 Marine Terrace, Singapore 449150

PARENT LINK : APRIL 2021



6 April 2021

Dear Parents & Guardians

Term 1 ended on a very uplifting note for all of us at Katong Convent. Our Meet-the-Parents Session held on the last Friday and Saturday of Term 1 was a significant home-school touchpoint as we continue to work closely to support our students' holistic development and for the graduating cohort, their preparations for the national examination in the months ahead. We would like to thank all parents and guardians for your collaboration as our partners-in-education.

Leveraging the more leisurely pace of the March holidays, our students continued their preparations for the Singapore Youth Festival Arts Presentation and sports competitions, and participated in various activities in their quest for excellence. Our teachers enriched the learning of our girls with workshops for our Secondary 1 Catholic girls, Enhanced Art Programme students and the student leaders who have successfully completed their series of leadership training. In addition, the environment representatives deepened their awareness of environmental issues while learning some upcycling tips.

Our girls will continue to be busy this term. While we continue to do our best to look after their well-being, do encourage, support and guide your daughters/ wards to manage their time wisely so that they are not unduly stressed as their workload intensifies. We will end Term 2 with our Founder's Day Celebrations with the family of CHIJ schools in celebration of the Jubilee year of the 4th centenary of the birth of Blessed Nicolas Barré on 24 May and Honours Day on 28 May. More details will be provided nearer the date.

Library Outreach

As part of the English, Literature and Drama department's commitment to provide opportunities to students in honing their craft in the domains of critical thinking and communication, three concurrent inaugural workshops were carried out on 8 March 2021, as part of a year-long library outreach programme. Here's a glimpse into the details of each session.

Reading

Dare to Read was the theme for Reading Workshop 1, conceptualised and conducted by our KC Library Reading team of EL teachers, who are avid readers themselves. Students engaged in a variety of activities aimed at expanding their reading and helping them to better understand the feelings and motivations of characters in a story.

One activity that was widely enjoyed was Let's Judge a Book by its Cover. This activity required students to pick a book solely on its title and cover that represented them or how they were feeling

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TEACHING & LEARNING



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DEVELOPMENT



PARTNERSHIP



at that moment. Students then used the blurb of the book to make predictions about what that book could be about. They shared these with the members in the group, a process that created a lively discussion and allowed everyone to get to know each other better. Another activity that was really popular was creating a unicorn bookmark to motivate the students and journey with them as they read the book.

Students have since been tasked to read the book they had earlier chosen in time for the next session. Together, readers will Dare to Read different text types and share that joy with their peers!

Speaking

Budding student-orators with the potential and passion for the spoken word from Secondary 2 and 3 attended a session conducted by WordForward, a local literary arts company.

The session introduced participants to presentation skills and techniques with interactive activities like speaking for a minute, engaging in vocal exercises and constructing impromptu speeches in pairs. Techniques in managing anxiety while presenting were also shared to equip students with the necessary skills to better prepare them for public speaking. Students were also taught the importance of body language and posture while presenting. Subsequent sessions will see the students honing their skills for the hosting of formal and informal events.

Writing

Identified student-writers from Secondary 2 and 3 attended a riveting workshop on Rewriting Myths with Jon Gresham, an author and editor whose debut collection of short stories, *We Rose Up Slowly*, was published by Math Paper Press in 2015. His story, *The Visit*, was shortlisted for the 2020 Short Fiction/University of Essex Prize. He currently helps run the Asia Creative Writing Programme at Nanyang Technological University.

In the three-hour workshop, students were given some essential tips on creative writing as well as a teaser into myths, and the process of writing an original piece was shared with the highly enthusiastic writers. Students had the chance to create their very own short story and invested time in conceptualising their first drafts, along with sharing this and snippets of their actual writing with each other. Many left the workshop with beaming faces, as well as the commitment to finish their pieces, in line with producing artefacts for BMW 2021, which is aptly themed, *A New Creation*.

Term 1 Assembly Programme

With the frame Every School Experience a CCE Lesson in mind, and safe management measures still in place, assembly programmes had to be planned in such a way that students continued to experience a rich programme every Tuesday morning without assembling in the school hall. The assembly themes in Term 1 were centred around arts and culture, character development, student well-being, national education and celebrations, done through interactive and live zoom platforms and occasional face-to-face sessions carried out by Form Teachers.

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In early January, our students watched an educational and artistic dance performance by National Arts Council. The performance aimed at helping our girls appreciate the importance of recognising and accepting the differences and uniqueness in every individual through the various dance moves. Students were in awe of the dance moves and reflected on their own perspectives from what they gleaned after the performance. Aligned with the objectives, Assembly programmes were more than just skits and performances. It was also a time where students bonded and worked as a class in their values-in-action projects when they planned and prepared for Chinese New Year. Our girls were enthusiastic in putting their hands together to pack goodie bags and decorated them as gifts for the elderly in the community, with many who also participated in decorating their own classrooms and the school compound.

In February, our students were entertained by DJs from 98.7FM who came on live through zoom in an engaging one-hour session. The DJs first shared about the importance of self-love and acceptance and their personal experiences in learning to become more confident of themselves. Time was then given to allow our students to interact with the DJs virtually. Our girls were very spontaneous in coming forward to ask the DJs about their job, their challenges and some behind the scene happenings at the radio station.

Students were also given a glimpse of the Chingay experience 2021, using an interactive story-telling concept. An opportunity was provided for a digital learning journey and students were 'transported' to a virtual platform where they could appreciate the multi-cultural scene behind the meaning and origins of Chingay in Singapore. The programme ended with students participating in a tik tok challenge to display their appreciation of Singapore's unique hawker culture.

During Total Defence Week, our girls reflected on the 6 pillars of total defence through a skit on 6 things I like about Singapore. The digital online show highlighted the importance of each pillar in total defence and allowed students to reflect on their own role they can play as a teenager living in Singapore. A week after, the students watched an educational drama entitled: My friend, a Japanese soldier, which was based on anecdotes of true-life accounts. The play, using puppets and story-telling concept, brought the students back to their imagination of the Japanese Occupation in Singapore. This thought-provoking play enabled our students to better understand and appreciate Singapore's history.

In the later part of term 1, our girls experienced their first spirituality programme where non-Catholic students reflected on the importance of listening as a form of communication and the art of listening well. The Catholic students had a similar programme in separate venues and reflected deep into listening to God in their quiet times and how God can speak to them in their daily life.

The term's assembly programme ended with an interactive online skit from the Health Promotion Board, focussed on helping our students in 3 areas: conflict management and relationships, managing stress and smoking. The presenter paused at appropriate junctures to quiz the students and as usual, our girls came forward spontaneously to answer the questions asked.

All in all, our students had an enriching assembly programme in term 1 and experienced a range of different modes of presentations and themes which centred around an appreciation for the arts, opportunity to reflect on values, work with one another in class and develop their character.

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Arts Bites 2021: A New Creation

The KC Arts & Culture Programme aims to enrich the KC experience through exposure and immersion in the arts. One of these ways is via the A&C weekly Arts Bites, pithy 5-10 minute presentations which explore different art forms and pieces. This year, the A&C team launched Arts Bites 2021: A New Creation. In this series, students are introduced to a myth, story, or piece of folklore and the various pieces of art that subsequently arose from engaging with said myth. From traditional to contemporary art, visual to performing art, Arts Bites 2021 had explored such diverse myths as the Greek Medusa, India's Sea of Milk, Singapore's Hang Nadim and China's Lady White Snake in Term 1. Through these myths students have seen both Chinese and Western Opera, classical statuary, poems, sculptures, and even a rap parody. Arts Bites 2021: A New Creation shows how myths have deep archetypal resonances that we keep going back to them to find relevance and new ways of engaging with the world, through art.

Infant Jesus Youth Movement (IJYM) Donation Drives

With safe management measures still in place and physical engagement with beneficiaries restricted, IJYM nevertheless continued our efforts to serve our community meaningfully in different ways. This year, we expanded our donations-in-kind drives knowing that contributions to charitable organisations have been affected as the economy slowed down. Hence, IJYM renewed our energies to do our little part to help respond to such shortfalls.

Aligned with the IJYM theme of Dignity Challenged, our students explored ways in which they could restore the dignity of beneficiaries they serve.

One such way was to ensure a supply of household necessities for families who need help. Infant Jesus Homes and Children's Centres (IJHCC) was our first recipient of our 2021 donation drives. Relying on personal in-class appeals and digital broadcast platform, members sought in-kind donations of cooking oil, Milo, biscuits, instant noodles and canned sardines over a three-week period from the upper secondary students. We are happy to share that we garnered a generous total of just under 30 Joy Packs plus other assorted groceries. These were delivered to IJHCC during the March holidays. We are very grateful to the KC family for the generosity in donating these simple household items that so many of us take for granted.

We have planned for two more donation drives in Terms 2 and 3. The first will focus on the lower secondary girls, so that they too can step forward for the benefit of the community. We hope that our KC family will continue to support IJYM drives generously in our cause to support the less-privileged in our community.

The IMDA Lab on Wheels Experience

CHIJ Katong Convent was blessed with the opportunity to welcome the IMDA (Infocomm Media Development Authority) Lab on Wheels to be on our campus from 9 March to 10 March. The main objectives of this government initiative of having the Lab on Wheels are to excite our students in technology through various interesting and innovative showcases and spark their interest in technology to prepare them to be future- ready digital citizens.

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Over the two days, classes rostered during their character and citizenship education periods as well as our upper secondary cyber wellness ambassadors were invited to experience the Lab on Wheels. They learned the importance of enhancing personal digital defences and cyber threats, understood how to stay safe online by setting strong passwords, encrypting confidential files, identifying phishing emails, and recognizing the dangers of revealing excessive personal data online. They were able to put their learning into practice through activities conducted on the Cyber Security themed bus.

Our students also challenged themselves in the Artificial Intelligence (AI) themed bus by taking on an “escape-room” challenge where they made use of different AI technologies to help them escape! This AI themed bus helped to demystify and showcase different AI technologies through the interactive hands-on session. Participants also learned about the different subsets under AI such as image recognition, machine learning, neural network, deep learning and natural language processing and understood how AI works in our everyday lives.

The in-depth experience with various immersive technologies such as augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality proved to be very enjoyable. This was where our students took a short trip to France viewing famous artworks, took on the role of Ironman in Hollywood, went through a hair-raising experience in Dubai, as well as solved Mongolian wooden puzzles right here in the comfort of our campus.

Here are some reflections from the students:

“I learnt how easy it was to be hacked and how useful and beneficial the internet can be!”
Eunice Tan from Sec 3/3

“I got to learn how cyber security plays a big part in our daily lives - from what we post on social media to ways of identifying phishing activities.”
Safeera from Sec 4/1

“I liked that we had a hands-on experience on what AIs can do nowadays, and how they are being programmed to do certain things.”
Allegra from 500

Over the two days, the experiential and highly interactive showcases enabled our students to imagine and discover the possibilities of what emerging and future technologies could bring to our lives. At the same time, it also enhanced student awareness on pertinent issues related to cyber security.

Shakespeare Workshop

The Secondary 2E/NA students were introduced to Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew through a school-based workshop conducted by their Literature teachers. Sec 2/5 and 2/6 had their session on 9 March, 2/3 and 2/4 on 11 March and finally 2/1 and 2/2 had theirs on 23 March. The workshop’s main aim was to introduce Shakespearean language, characters and thematic concerns of the play. The activities crafted were both engaging and interactive as students had to take on the roles of the characters in the play while introducing themselves to their groupmates

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as well as using dramatic voices in reading the lines from the play. By watching video snippets of the play, students understood the dominant traits of the two main characters. At the end of the workshop, students went away with knowledge of the play and an eagerness to discover the play in detail which they will be studying for the rest of the year.

Meet-The-Parents Session (MTPS)

In light of the ongoing pandemic, this year's MTPS was conducted online via zoom on Friday, 12 March and Saturday, 13 March. The MTPS allowed form teachers to discuss the students' progress and development in both cognitive and non-cognitive domains with parents and guardians. Parents and guardians of the graduating cohort also had the opportunity to meet one to two subject teachers to discuss subject-specific concerns on Friday morning. On the whole, the MTPS was well received by parents and guardians. The school had gleaned useful learning points and feedback from all who attended the sessions. A big thank you to all parents and guardians for your support and making the MTPS a meaningful and enriching experience!

Upcycling Workshop

In the March school holidays, the school partnered Terra SG, an environmental social enterprise to organise an Upcycling cum recyclables donation exercise for all the environmental representatives and champions. The students had the opportunity to make upcycled mini pouches to contain coins, hair clips and other small items. They made their pouches using used (and sanitised) milk cartons, scissors, tape and a pen! They also donated clean, used plastic bottles, waste paper, glass jars as well as clothing to Terra SG to be sanitised and re-used later for future upcycling workshops. It was such a fun and meaningful morning for the students that they are keen to attend another upcycling workshop using different materials.

Art Workshop

During the March holidays, the Secondary 3 and DSA Art students attended a phone photography workshop in school. In its first iteration, Shoot, Select, Sharpen: Creative Phone Photography aimed to hone students' photographic approaches, namely in visual research skills, compositional considerations, editing techniques, and visual-analytical language.

To warm up their visual acuity, the students discussed photographic considerations and composition through exemplars. Thereafter, they engaged in a photographic exploration of an object or space within the school, and used these photographs to learn and apply newfound expedient editing techniques on an app on their smartphones. Finally, learning was consolidated through a peer critique of each other's photographs, and through sharing their reflections on their key learning points and further questions.

CCA Leaders Training

Our new CCA Leaders were confirmed and ushered into their appointment with a training session conducted by the Student Leadership Committee during the March holidays. Enthusiastic and keen to learn, the CCA Leaders actively contributed to a brainstorming challenge to identify

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qualities of effective leaders and discussed their roles and responsibilities as leaders where they were challenged to lead from a place of influence. Clear expectations were set and upcoming opportunities to serve were communicated, providing the CCA Leaders with a better idea of how they are supported in their development as values-driven leaders who leave a positive impact on their communities. The training culminated in an exercise where the CCA Leaders crafted goals and commitments for their CCAs. These will serve as timely reminders and give them a sense of direction as they embark on their personal leadership journeys.

We wish our student leaders a meaningful adventure of learning and growth as student leaders in KC!

Class Leaders Training

The newly appointed Class Leaders of 2021 had a chance to gather, albeit in smaller groups due to safe management measures, to learn more about problem solving in their leadership journey. They had fun discovering how they should look at all given details and going beyond the surface in a game of 'Crime Scene Investigation'. They also challenged one another to think out of the box in coming up with solutions to puzzles. At the end of the day, the Class Leaders put the learning into very practical use by thinking of possible resolutions to the unique issues they face in their classes. It was a fruitful way to spend the March holidays gleaning strategies from the coach as well as from their peers.

Art and Drama Artist-led Master Class

As part of the NAC Artist in School Scheme and KC's 2021 Communicative Performing and Visual Arts theme of A New Creation, theatre-practitioner Mr Chong Tze Chien conducted an interdisciplinary masterclass for our Secondary 4 Express Drama Elective and Enhanced Art Programme students: Exploring and Pushing Boundaries with Art.

It was a two-day intensive masterclass wherein Mr Chong led the students in trusting their emotional impulses as a primary source of creation, exploring different media and articulations of the self. It was a novel experience for the students, being both challenging and revealing of their creativity. While the students were initially bemused that students from two different art disciplines could participate in the same masterclass, they quickly realised that both the visual and dramatic arts are about reflecting upon their inner world and trusting emotional impulses and pathways to create truthful work. The students were urged to trust and respect their instincts, replacing judgement with curiosity such that students from both disciplines not only found themselves creating art differently, but also creating different art from what they had been in the habit of creating.

Mr Chong led participants through the fundamentals of an artist's role to enact transformation of the world around them, seeing everything as a canvas or medium that may be changed. From turning paper into fabric and scrawls into complex, honest representations of themselves, both the art and drama students left the masterclass greatly liberated and enriched with new ways of seeing and engaging with the world.

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Catholic Education Conference (CEC) 2021

The biannual CEC went online this year on 15 March, reaching out to all 35 Catholic schools. The theme of the conference was 'Celebrating, Encountering, Creating our God'. We began the conference with an online Mass, celebrated by Father Adrian Danker who was also the Co-Chairperson of the conference.

Teachers and students then participated in workshops to help them encounter and experience God through scripture, art and film. In the workshop on encountering God through Art and Scripture led by Ms Joanna Tan, a pioneer in the field of art therapy, we were asked to draw our image of God with the scripture passage of Jeremiah, 1:5 to help us reflect on who God is to each of us. Workshop participants treasured the opportunity to contemplate on our environment and surroundings with their drawings of a dove, a family, a baby a shady tree and aspects of nature.

In the other concurrent workshop on encountering God through film, the participants watched a short film titled "The butterfly circus". The film was about a Mr. Mendez, a charismatic master of a Butterfly Circus, who meets Will, a man with no limbs and a star attraction at a freak show. Will escapes with the circus troupe and overcomes his immobility and discovers his true strengths and talents. There was a profound message that like the protagonist in the story, we all go through a metamorphosis when we emerge from our "cocoon" that inhibits our development and come out triumphantly like a "butterfly" to discover our God given talents.

Just before lunch, His Grace Archbishop William Goh then addressed the school communities by touching on the pioneering work of all founding Missionaries and called on all Catholic schools to continue the strong legacy of our predecessors by carrying the torch in building a holistic education.

The second part of the conference entails schools going into their breakout rooms, to share their best practices and challenges in upholding their respective missions. Finally, Katong Convent's students collectively discussed ways to harness the good programmes that we have and planned for future meaningful God encounters for all our Katong Convent family. One of our participants Keira Lim of Sec 3/5 shared, "I think that one of the key takeaways from the CEC was that God is in everything and everywhere. I had failed to realise that God is always there for me whenever I need him. He is always ready to help and that I don't have to suffer alone. God is there when someone comes to offer help, or when someone just comes up to say hi."

Catholic CONNECT Day Camp

Every year during the March holidays, the school organises a Catholic CONNECT day camp for our Secondary 1 Catholic students. The objective of the day camp was to build on the weekly Thursday CONNECT sessions, and to establish a Catholic student community rooted in faith through fellowship. The day camp was specially planned for all Catholic students and was a collaborative effort between the school and the Redemptorist Mission Team (RMT) of Novena Church.

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This year's day camp was especially meaningful, and we are indeed blessed to be able to resume it after a one-year hiatus in 2020. With all that the world has gone through the past one year, we wanted to remind ourselves, and our students, of their blessings, and of how we should continue to pray for our loved ones.

During the morning session, the girls mediated on the Emmaus journey, exploring their own life journey and learnt to see themselves as God sees them. There were opportunities for deep conversations and journaling. They also contemplated on what it meant to be connected with friends and community, and how this enabled them to experience and encounter God, and to show gratitude for all that they have been blessed with.

In the afternoon segment of the session, the girls were taught how to pray for others, and in doing so, show empathy and support for one another. They were taught to understand that there can be different ways of prayer, through our actions and through song, and that in order to build our relationship with God, we would have to encounter Him in our own personal way.

This was followed by a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Fr Robin Lomangkok from Novena Church. Through this day camp, we hope to have further strengthened our students' Catholic identity and spirituality.

Parents and Guardians, we truly believe in the power of your support and encouragement. Do challenge your daughter / ward and support her at the same time. Your daughter / ward will truly "bloom where she is planted".

Thank you and may God bless you and your family.

Yours sincerely



Patricia Chan (Ms)
Principal

ACHIEVEMENT

History Talent Development Programme Symposium

13 March was the school's designated Meet-The-Parents Session but for one student, Kirthiga D/O Narayanan (Sec 4/3), this day marked another milestone in her education journey as she presented a research paper at the History Talent Development Programme Symposium.

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Having been invited by MOE and participated in the History Talent Development Programme (HDTP) since the middle of last year, Kirthiga had the opportunity to work alongside students from other schools who were also part of this programme, in areas that would deepen her knowledge of historical concepts and skills. One of the capstone projects required these students to present their findings from their self-directed research that they have worked on since November last year. Students could choose from the theme of Pandemics in Singapore, Oral History and Public Archaeology. Kirthiga and her two other co-presenters in this programme worked tirelessly to put together a paper titled 'How Far was Operation Coldstore for Internal Security?'

KC shares her success and hopes that this experience would open more windows of opportunity for her to develop her deep passion in History. Well done, Kirthiga!

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