A pair of hands, one larger and one smaller, are shown holding a red heart. The heart is decorated with intricate, swirling patterns in shades of red and grey. The background is a solid, vibrant red. The text is overlaid on the heart and hands.

Gratitude
is the
Memory
of the
Heart

50th Anniversary Celebrations
PUSAT KEBAJIKAN GOOD SHEPHERD, MALAYSIA

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd

VISION

One person is of more value than the whole world.

MISSION

We are committed to reaching out with compassion and respect, empowering each person to wholeness and full potential.

CORE VALUES

Compassion, gratitude, respect, integrity, zeal.

THE AIM OF THIS BOOK

“Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart” was a saying by St. Mary Euphrasia, the Foundress of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd.

As Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd celebrates 50 years of its presence in Malaysia, we remember the founding history of the organisation, the welfare services made possible by generous benefactors, the many lives we have touched and those that we will touch in future.

For all this, we are grateful.

**“You have a heart created
to love and be grateful.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd

(Teenage Centre),
8.8km, Jalan Hulu Kelang,
68000 Ampang,
Selangor,
Malaysia.

Tel: +6 03 4256 3941
Fax: +6 03 4256 5205
Email: teenage@pkgs.org.my

Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre

P O Box 60, Taman Ipoh,
81407 Ipoh,
Perak Darul Ridzuan,
Malaysia.

Tel: +6 05 546 7031
Fax: +6 05 548 8749
Email: rvgsc@pkgs.org.my

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (HQ)

c/o Villamaria Good Shepherd,
Lorong Setiabistari 2,
Medan Damansara,
50490 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.

Tel/Fax: +6 03 2095 7406
Email: admin@pkgs.org.my

The following is the address of the regional office for PKGS services in Sabah:

- Asrama Desa Pukak, Kiulu
- Asrama Gereja St James, Tenghilan
- Family Building and Reconciliation
- Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre, Pukak
- Learning/Mobile Resource Centre, Pukak
- Seri Murni Crisis Centre, Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan
- YouthPREPLink

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Sabah)

c/o Pusat Belia YouthPREP Alamesra,
Groundfloor Lot 25, Block E, Phase 2,
Lorong Plaza Utama 1 Alamesra,
Jalan Sulaiman,
88400 Kota Kinabalu,
Sabah.

Tel: +6 088 485 371 / 372
Fax: +6 088 485 373
Email: sabah@pkgs.org.my

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Malaysia.

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Fax: +603 4270 1933
E-mail: writers@po.jaring.my
Website: www.writers.com.my

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Tel: +603 6258 2993
Fax: +603 6252 3793

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Message from Sister Joan Lopez



**Province Leader of
Singapore – Malaysia**

With deep gratitude in our hearts, we, the Good Shepherd Sisters and lay partners are happy to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (PKGS) in Madonna Heights, Hulu Kelang, Ampang, Malaysia.

Our pioneer Sisters founded PKGS in response to an invitation by the late Most Reverend Tan Sri Dominic Vendargon, then Bishop of Kuala Lumpur, in the late 1950s. The Good Shepherd Sisters' presence in Malaya was established when PKGS first reached out to young women throughout Malaya who needed care and protection. Within a few years, its services expanded to include programs for a disadvantaged group from the surrounding villages of Hulu Kelang. Our Good Shepherd zeal then spread its physical presence to Ipoh, Johor and Sabah in response to the needs of the people.

We celebrate with gratitude the vision and foresight of our founding Sisters, and their courage in forging through unknown territory. This was their response to the call of the Good Shepherd Mission to be life-bearers to the poor and marginalised, especially girls, women, children and families.

Over the past 50 years, many Sisters and lay partners have walked in our pioneer Sisters' footsteps. Together, we have spent a large part of our lives trying our best to make a positive difference in the lives of all who have entered the doors of PKGS. Through struggles and challenges, through joys and successes, and sometimes through trial and error, we have touched lives in different ways.

Today, the Good Shepherd Mission is embraced by many more lay people who are involved as staff, volunteers and benefactors of PKGS. They bring with them skills, talents, resources and especially their enthusiasm, to expand the mission. The synergy arising from the partnership of lay people and Sisters has resulted in the rapid growth of the ministries and programs of PKGS, particularly in the last five years.

My Sisters and I are privileged to have witnessed, and be a part of, the development and growth of Good Shepherd partnership in PKGS. We have had many heart-warming experiences of working with lay partners in our shared mission, and we are grateful and proud to have them as partners in mission.

As we celebrate 50 years of the Good Shepherd presence in Malaysia, we experience a deep sense of gratitude for all who have been connected with PKGS in one way or another, and who have contributed to its history and development.

I wish to take this opportunity to appreciate and thank all my Good Shepherd Sisters for committing their lives to the mission of PKGS. Their faithfulness, dedication and hard work have contributed significantly to the stability and growth of PKGS.

It is my pleasure to express my special appreciation to all those who have resided at, and attended PKGS Residential and Educational Centre at Madonna Heights, and the many parents who have been a unique part of our Good Shepherd journey. Today, we remember each one of you and pray for God's continued blessings upon you and your families.

On this auspicious occasion, I congratulate and thank the current and past Boards of PKGS, Executive Management personnel, staff and volunteers, for your important contribution to PKGS.

Last but not least, I congratulate the Organising Committee of this 50th Anniversary Celebration for etching in the history of the Good Shepherd Congregation through this significant event. I thank you for generously giving your time, talents and efforts to make this a joyful celebration.

I am confident that with God's grace, we will continue to weave compassion and reconciliation in our families, in our society, in our country and beyond our borders.

"Let us rouse ourselves and go forward!

As we are all shepherds, no one small corner of the earth should hold us back."

- St. Mary Euphrasia - Foundress of the Good Shepherd Congregation 1796-1868



Message from Phoon Soon Keong

**Chairperson,
Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd
Board of Governors**

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Governor of PKGS, I would like to extend our thanks to the Good Shepherd Sisters, our lay partners, past residents and sponsors for all their support and encouragement for making this 50th Anniversary Celebration possible.

As we celebrate this event, let us keep in mind the mission of the Foundress of the Good Shepherd Sisters, St. Mary Euphrasia, that guided the Sisters in first setting up the Teenage Centre of PKGS that began their mission work in Malaysia. For the celebration, we have produced this book which centres on giving thanks for 50 years of mission work in Malaysia expressed through our theme "**Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart**".

Fifty years is not a long period but neither is it short. We have a lot to celebrate and be grateful about! PKGS has over the past 50 years supported numerous persons in need. What is truly amazing is that we see those who benefitted returning manifold to PKGS and society, a true expression of their gratitude from their heart!

This book provides insights into the history of PKGS and its welfare services and shares with you stories from those who have passed through PKGS – past residents, volunteers, sisters and staff. I hope that their stories will bring back many good and rich memories and touch more hearts so that we can together reach out more to those on the margins.

Many of us, including myself, are doubtful of our capacity to help others. We are afraid to venture for fear of the unknown, afraid to be hurt and sometimes, we think we should only do big things. I also hope that this book, in addition to sharing with you the works of PKGS, will bring about more change, stir more hearts and inspire more to reach out.

This celebration would not be possible without the efforts and dedication of the Organizing Committee, all our helpers, partners and sponsors. On behalf of the Board, I thank all of them. Special thanks to Theresa Symons for leading the organizing team and Faridah Stephens who has done a wonderful job in putting this book together.

Finally, I thank God for his presence with us, for looking after PKGS and our centres and for his love and graces.



Message from Theresa Symons

**Executive Director,
Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd**

This is indeed a historic moment for Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd. It marks 50 years of presence of the Good Shepherd Sisters and Mission in Malaysia, serving especially women, youths and children living on the margins of society.

On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartiest congratulations, underscored with deep gratitude, to each and every person of PKGS, past and present – Good Shepherd sisters, lay staff, volunteers, and benefactors. You have brought the organisation to where it is today; a dynamic welfare organisation that continues to grow and stay relevant wherever it is located.

For all that PKGS stands for, has done, is doing and will be doing, I want to emphasise that our greatest asset is our human capital. PKGS would not have been formed if not for the vision, zeal and courage of St. Mary Euphrasia, the Foundress of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd Sisters. During her lifetime, St. Mary Euphrasia was known for her courage and audacity as she constantly searched for new and creative ways to live out her prophetic vision of reaching out to women and children in need. To the many Sisters, staff, volunteers and benefactors, past and present, who have contributed your precious time, talents, energy and money, I am deeply grateful. Without you, PKGS could not have lasted 50 years, let alone look forward to the next 50 years. Thank you!

It is my privilege to pay tribute to the Good Shepherd Sisters for your audacity and vision in your quest to ensure that the Good Shepherd Mission lives on in Malaysia. Since 2005, the Good Shepherd Sisters have opened their doors to lay staff at all levels of management in PKGS. This development called for new ways of corporate governance, management of roles and responsibilities, refining of policies and operating procedures. It entailed taking the huge risk of letting go of “the old”, and embracing and trusting in “the new”. Thank you, Sisters, for taking this very bold step.

As the first lay Executive Director of PKGS, I have not only witnessed, but am party to, the challenging transition experienced by both sisters and lay partners as we work side by side to live out the Good Shepherd Mission.

It is my belief that we are now reaping the fruits of this prophetic change and new vision on religious-lay partnership. During the last five years, PKGS was able to rapidly introduce new services and programs to meet needs. This is a testimony of the success and synergy of mutual and collaborative partnership. The number of lay persons who are either working or supporting the Good Shepherd mission in one way or another, has increased significantly, and more importantly, these partners have brought with them a lot of resources – talents, skills, experiences and connections.

There is no turning back... Good Shepherd Partnership for mission in Malaysia is here to stay... for the next 50 years and beyond!

So, as we celebrate with joy and gratitude in our hearts on PKGS's 50th Anniversary, may we continue to appreciate the tremendous value of partnership, and seek to nurture it with openness, fresh boldness and commitment, working closely and authentically in co-responsibility for Good Shepherd Mission in Malaysia.

As we celebrate our 50th anniversary in Malaysia, we reflect upon the

Story Of St. Mary Euphrasia



THE FOUNDRESS OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Founded by St. Mary Euphrasia Pelletier (1796 - 1868) and known as the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, The Good Shepherd Mission has its origins in Angers, France. On 16 January 1835 Pope Gregory XVI approved the Congregation which has its roots in the Order of Our Lady of Charity known as the Refuge, which was founded by St. John Eudes (1601 - 1680).

John Eudes was an outstanding priest and leader in the Christian renewal of 17th century France. Fired by the love of the hearts of Jesus and Mary, he established a refuge in 1641 to help women and girls who were exploited and in moral distress. From a few committed women in this service, the Order of Our Lady of Charity evolved.

In 1814, Rose Virginie Pelletier entered Our Lady of Charity at Tours. She was given the name Mary of St. Euphrasia. Sister Mary Euphrasia combined a great apostolic spirit with a deep interior life. The community and mission took on new vigour when she was elected superior at the age of 29. A house in Angers was founded in 1829 at the invitation of the local bishop. There, in 1831, Sister Mary Euphrasia formed a contemplative community for some of the girls and women under her care who desired to dedicate their lives to God. These contemplative sisters offer their lives of prayer and penance for the people served by the Congregation.

Sister Mary Euphrasia longed for the world to benefit from the saving work initiated by St. John Eudes. She envisioned a central administration that could send the sisters to all parts of the world. Surmounting many obstacles, the Generalate (Central Administration) was approved in 1835. Thus The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd of Angers was born.

Sister Mary Euphrasia Pelletier gave herself unreservedly to the Mission as she responded with great zeal and love to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The Congregation grew enormously. Without telephone, fax, e-mail or air travel, Sister Mary Euphrasia founded in her lifetime 110 houses on every continent. She died in Angers on April 24, 1868. Her beatification took place in 1933 and her canonization in 1940. Today, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and the Contemplative Sisters of the Good Shepherd serve in 72 countries, embracing the world with their zeal for the salvation of all people.

A year after the death of St. Mary Euphrasia, the Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Mission was founded. From Ceylon The Good Shepherd Sisters came to Singapore in 1939 and reached out into Malaysia in 1956.

With prayer, witness and service, the Mission expanded and evolved. Collaborative ministries with the laity now take on a more formal role. Today, Good Shepherd partners comprising lay associates, staff, volunteers and friends mutually share, support and develop

the Mission, taking greater responsibilities to continue the Good Shepherd Mission.

The Good Shepherd Mission of Compassion and Reconciliation embraces people who have experienced injustice, oppression and alienation, especially women and children; awakening in each a sense of uniqueness, worth and inestimable value.

In Singapore and Malaysia, the Good Shepherd Mission includes ministries (services) to women and girls who are survivors of domestic violence and exploitation; single mothers; and children in disadvantaged households, in both residential and non-residential settings. Other services are those for youth and families, migrant workers, indigenous people, persons infected with HIV/AIDS, children with special needs. It provides pastoral and diocesan ministries such as retreats, family life and basic ecclesial communities; early childhood, kindergarten and primary education; and rural community development.

The Good Shepherd Ministries collaborate and network with government and non-governmental organisations to promote justice, peace and unity in a world disturbed by sin and conflict by changing systems and structures which condemn some to live marginal lives.

The Good Shepherd Congregation is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), United Nations.



50th Anniversary Celebrations

MILESTONES FROM THE 50 YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED

1956

Set up of Good Shepherd Convent at Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur.

1957

Good Shepherd Convent School in Jalan Ampang was initiated to reach out to the community through their children and to generate income for the sisters' living expenses. The Good Shepherd Convent School consisted of the Junior International School and Good Shepherd Kindergarten and Nursery.

The sisters started providing residential services to girls from poor families and taught them sewing, art and craft and cooking.

1960

Due to overwhelming response to Good Shepherd Convent School, the sisters moved their convent to Madonna Heights, Jalan Hulu Kelang, Ampang, Selangor so that every available space could be used for education.

With that, the welfare services for girls from poor families also moved to Madonna Heights. Thus began the Madonna Heights Welfare Centre for Teenage Girls.

1965

Nazarethville – Home for Unwed Mothers was set up in Batu Arang, Selangor.

1975

Nazarethville – Home for Unwed Mothers shifted to a rented house in Ipoh as the original site in Batu Arang, due to its development into an industrial area, was no longer conducive as a site for the Home.

1976

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Sekolah Khas), Hulu Kelang, Ampang, was officially opened by the Minister of Social Welfare. It offered commercial and vocational subjects to help the students obtain jobs and to prepare for their Lower Cambridge Examinations as private candidates. A sewing workshop was started as part of the vocational school.

1979

The Bishop of Penang gave the Good Shepherd Sisters permission to build Mariaville Kindergarten, the Sisters' Convent and Home for Unwed Mothers on a piece of land located in Ipoh. Upon completion of the building, the Home for Unwed Mothers relocated to these new premises.

1988

A house was purchased in Ipoh and named Rose Virginie Welcome House. This was a transition house for unwed mothers after the delivery of their babies and women experiencing spousal violence.

1989

Seri Murni Hostel, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, was set up on the grounds of the former Seminary at Jalan Sang Kancil and catered for girls from rural villages who came to the city seeking employment or to continue their studies.

In response to the needs of teenage girls experiencing pregnancy crisis and women with children experiencing domestic violence, the Good Shepherd Sisters set up Seri Murni Crisis Centre (SMCC) in the same premises.

1992

In their direction to be more involved in rural community development, the Good Shepherd Sisters took over the management of the rural parish hostel, Asrama Gereja St. James in Tenghilan. This is a hostel for secondary school girls from remote villages surrounding Tenghilan.

1998

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Sekolah Khas) in Hulu Kelang, Ampang, ceased operations following a change in the educational policy allowing for automatic progression in the secondary school system until Form 5. There was no longer a need to assist school drop-outs who could not progress to Form 4.

The Teenage Centre continued to retain its name i.e. Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Teenage Centre).

**“As long as we have 10 cents,
we will share it.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia

2000

The Home for Unwed Mothers and Rose Virginie Welcome House in Ipoh merged into one and become known as Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre and began operating from its current premises in Ipoh.

Seri Murni Hostel in Kota Kinabalu was officially closed as similar services were being provided in the city. The residents were phased out gradually with some being relocated to the Good Shepherd Sisters Convent in Likas.

Seri Murni Crisis Centre in Kota Kinabalu was relocated to a double storey house purchased specifically for this purpose.

2003

Rural Community Development (RCD) in Sabah was established to develop programs with the focus of empowering rural communities with leadership and communication skills. It also offered human development and social awareness programs. RCD's main target groups were women, youths and children.

2005

YouthPrepLink Level 1, an outreach program for youths from rural villages commenced in November at the Outreach Centre, Good Shepherd Convent in Likas, Kota Kinabalu.

2006

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (HQ) was set up in Kuala Lumpur to oversee the entire welfare services of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Malaysia.

2007

The Family Building and Reconciliation Program commenced with the focus on promoting healthy relationships within families through educational group activities. Programs were conducted in the diocese of Kota Kinabalu, namely villages around Tuaran, Tenghilan, Tamparuli, Pukak in Kiulu and Kota Belud.

2008

Asrama Desa Pukak, a residential hostel for primary school children from interior villages surrounding Kampung Pukak, Kiulu, in Sabah commenced operations in January.

At the same time, The Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre in Pukak also commenced operations.

In February, the Family Building and Reconciliation Program expanded its programs to the diocese of Keningau (which covers Beaufort, Sipitang, Tenom, Kemabong, Membakut, Kuala Penyu, Tambunan, and Apin-Apin) and the diocese of Sandakan (Sandakan Town and Beluran).

In July, the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) in Pukak, Kiulu, Sabah commenced operations with sessions held every Monday and Wednesday for primary school children from Kg Pukak.

2009

The Mobile Resource Centre commenced operations and brought the programs conducted in the LRC to remote villages surrounding Kg Pukak.

Seri Murni Crisis Centre in Kota Kinabalu was renovated to increase its capacity to accommodate residents from 12 to 20.

Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre in Ipoh commenced renovation and extension works to increase its capacity from 12 residents to 30 residents and upgrade its facilities to include counselling rooms, a semi-commercial kitchen and staff quarters.

2010

Alamesra Youth-Prep Centre (YPC), in Kota Kinabalu officially commenced operations in February. The YPC also houses the administrative office of PKGS (Sabah).





Good Shepherd Sisters

Board of Governors

Executive Director

Administrator

Ipoh

Kuala Lumpur

Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre

PKGS Teenage Centre

Micro Enterprise

Heart Gift Shop

Residential

Outreach

Counseling

Residential

Hostels

Outreach Programs

Asrama Desa Pukak

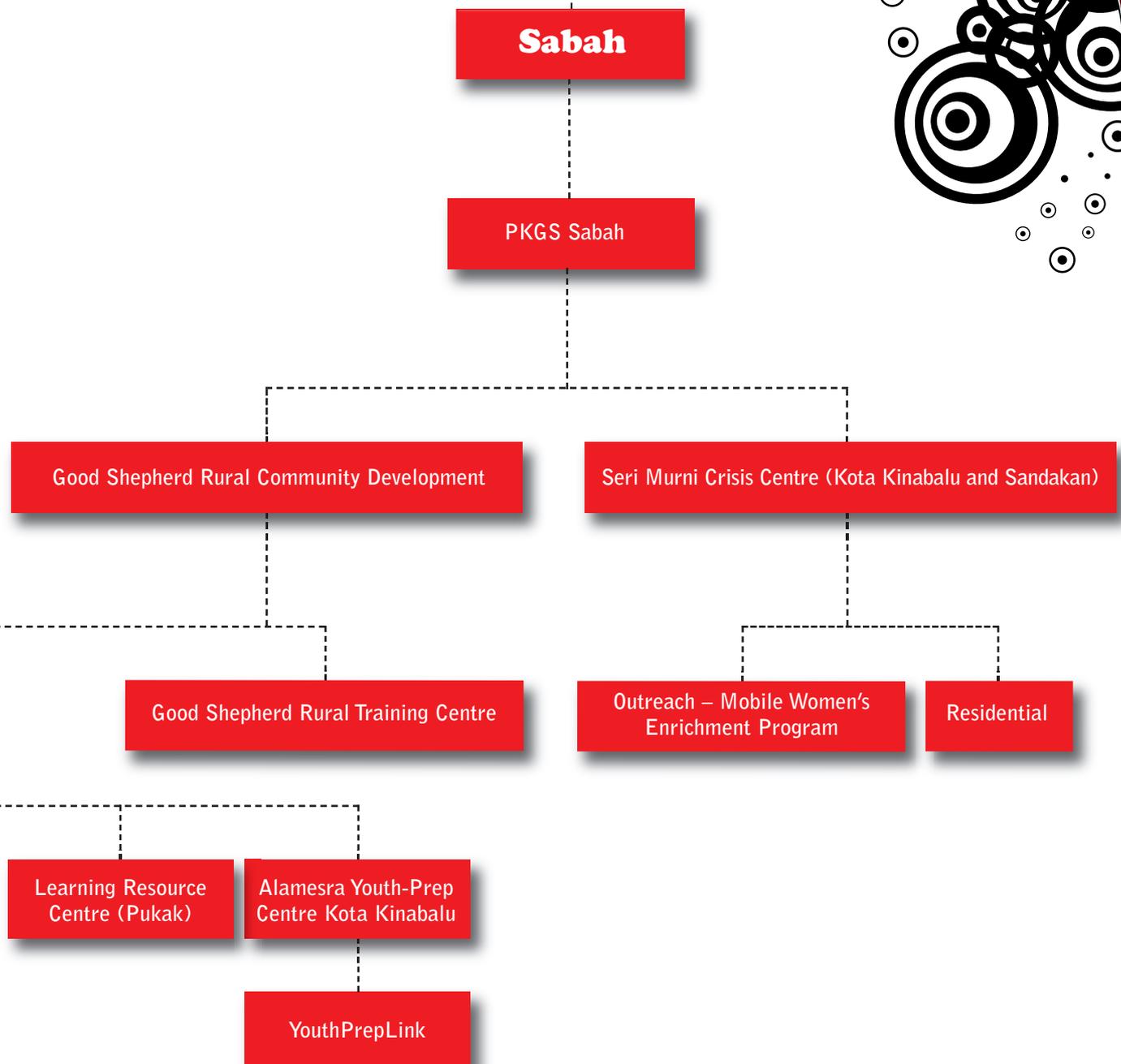
Asrama Gereja St. James Tenghilan

Family Building & Reconciliation (Kota Kinabalu, Keningau, Sandakan, Kota Belud, Tuaran, Tawau)

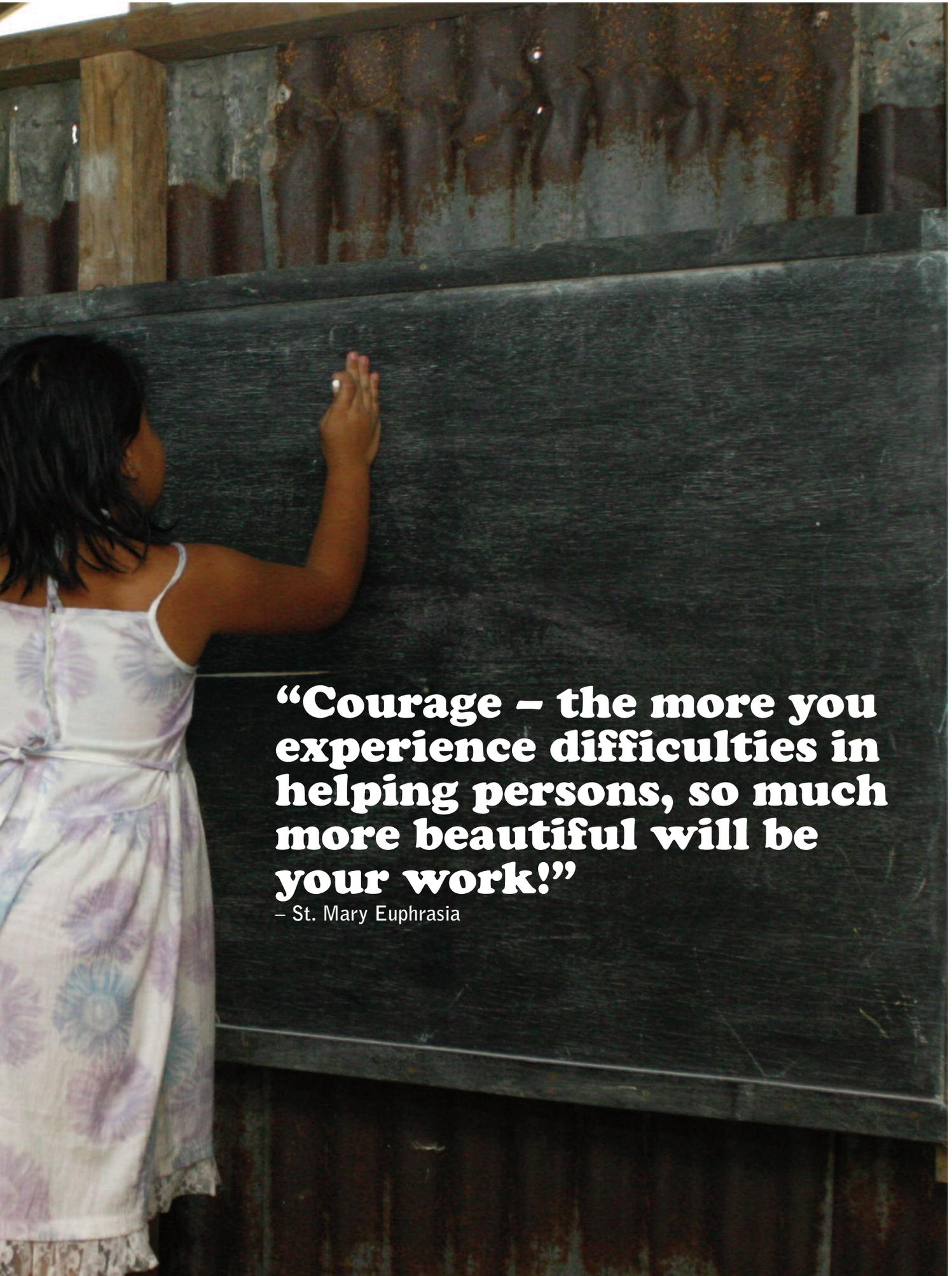
Mobile Resource Centre

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd

ORGANISATIONAL CHART







“Courage – the more you experience difficulties in helping persons, so much more beautiful will be your work!”

– St. Mary Euphrasia

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Teenage Centre)

THIS CENTRE, WHERE IT ALL STARTED 50 YEARS AGO, CONTINUES TO TOUCH THE LIVES OF TEENAGE GIRLS

The Good Shepherd Sisters established a convent in Kuala Lumpur in Jalan Ampang soon after their arrival in 1956. The following year, they initiated the Good Shepherd Convent School to reach out to the community through their children and to generate income for the sisters' living expenses. The Good Shepherd Convent School comprised the Junior International School and Good Shepherd Kindergarten and Nursery. That same year, the sisters started providing residential services to girls from poor families and taught them sewing, art and craft and cooking.

In 1960, following overwhelming response to the Good Shepherd Convent School, the sisters moved their convent and the residential services to Madonna Heights so that every available space could be used for education. Thus began the Good Shepherd Welfare Centre for Teenage Girls in Madonna Heights. Within the premises there were vocational and literacy pro-

grams for the residents and some students from the neighbouring squatters. In January 1975, a proper school building was initiated to meet the increasing demands from the neighbouring squatters and school drop-outs.

In 1976, Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Sekolah Khas) was officially opened by the then Minister of Social Welfare. The school offered literacy programs, commercial and vocational subjects to help the students who had dropped out of the formal school system to obtain jobs and to prepare for their Lower Cambridge Examinations as private candidates. A sewing workshop was also started as part of the vocational school for the students and also to help women living in poverty to supplement their low income.

In 1998, following a change in the education policy allowing for automatic progression in the secondary school system up till Form 5 and relocation of the squatters to pave the way for development around the Hulu Kelang area, the PKGS (Sekolah Khas) was

no longer needed and ceased operations.

However, the Teenage Centre continued to retain the name Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Teenage Centre).

FAMILY CENTRED PROGRAM FOR TEENAGE GIRLS AND FAMILIES

This program for teenage girls continues today to create an atmosphere and opportunity where teenage girls and their families can be empowered to realize their potential and take responsibility for their own lives.

Activities are carried out through three main streams:

1. Full Residential Program

Managed by qualified staff comprising Good Shepherd Sisters and lay persons, this program targets teenage girls who are experiencing conflict in relationships, abuse and/or neglect. A further target group is families with low functional capacity in dealing with situations of conflict.



Program activities are as follows:

- Counseling and support for teens and their families to manage the crisis
- Group living, building relationships and social values formation
- Home visits, family counseling and reconciliation programs
- Monthly support group and counseling session for parents of the residents
- Motivation and supervision of studies
- Holiday programs
- Group work and life skills program (for example, computer literacy, grooming, housework and other skills).

The residential program has a capacity of 20 residents.

2. Weekend Residential Outreach Program

Under this program, teenage girls with behavioural problems but who can be assisted within the family context are provided weekend stays and take part in activities such as:

- Family counseling
- Family bonding and reconciliation

activities

- Holiday programs and
- Group work and value formation programs.

3. Preventive Programs

Outreach programs to youths, young adults and parents offering human development programs, communication skills, awareness of social concerns etc.

Teenage Centre appreciates its volunteers

Many of the programs in the Teenage Centre are run with the assistance of volunteers who contribute time and effort to journey with the girls in their various capacities. These include tuition in academic subjects such as Maths, Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mandarin and Accounting, expression through music and drama, classical dance classes, computer classes, values formation, home and school visits etc.

The volunteers, when asked about their untiring commitment to the Teenage Centre (ranging from 18 years to new recruits),

have expressed that they find fulfillment and joy in being able to assist the girls and their families with opportunities for a better future.



Good Shepherd Convent School in Jalan Ampang in the 60s.

THE CARE, LOVE AND CONCERN OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Sister Therese Thong, the first local Superior of Madonna Heights Convent and the first local Province Leader of Indonesia (of which Singapore and Malaysia were part) from 1976 to 1985, shares.

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd, PKGS, has had 50 golden years. The thought fills me with deep gratitude – gratitude to God for the graces and blessings where many found love, a home, education, a future and meaning in life. We also remember with gratitude the Good Shepherd Sisters who have worked and toiled since 1956 to make PKGS a reality.

I was very touched in 2006 when I returned to Kuala Lumpur for the Golden Jubilee of Good Shepherd Sisters in Malaysia. I met many old girls and others who after over 30 years can still remember with love and gratitude small events that happened at PKGS. Villagers at the surrounding villages including the gardener and family had felt the warmth and care of the Good Shepherd Sisters. Destitute children from Setapak and Hulu Klang were not present but the memory of the four little Pakistani children aged five to 11 years eating rubbish and sand in the Hulu Klang Village was still present in

the minds of some of the old girls. They came to the Home during the day and the girls helped to bathe the younger ones. One morning the little five year old had a fever and he refused to move until the girls packed a big lunch for him. He then went off gladly to see the doctor and after that went home. This was the spirit in PKGS where the sisters looked after the girls and the girls did everything to help the Home and others' needs. The former girls from as early as 1960 remembered Sister Aloysius Scott who is now in Los Angeles.

I was in direct service in PKGS from mid 1972 to early 1974 – the time was very short. I loved direct service, sharing the life of the

girls and visiting the villagers who were in need. This was the place I was hoping to come back to after I completed my terms as Provincial at the beginning of 1985. However, God had other plans.

When the Federal Highway was built in front, PKGS was cut off from the surrounding villages. What is the future? Wherever Good Shepherd people are – still up on top of the hill or in the midst of society, we hope people will feel the care, love and concern of the Good Shepherd. What is essential is that the spirit of the Good Shepherd will live on in this Hulu Klang area and in every area throughout the world where there are Good Shepherd people.



Sister Therese Thong (second from right) with the founding sisters of the Madonna Heights Convent.



Sister Therese is now the CEO of Good Shepherd Welfare Services, Taiwan.

MEMORIES OF PUSAT KEBAJIKAN GOOD SHEPHERD (SEKOLAH KHAS)

Mrs P. Gunaseelan, the last Acting Principal of Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Sekolah Khas) before it closed in 1998, remembers.

I joined the school in December 1991 soon after my retirement as the Headmistress of the Sentul Primary Convent I in Kuala Lumpur. I was surprised to note that although the school followed the government school syllabus and system, it was run with a difference.

The pupils were mainly from poor backgrounds with social and schooling problems and school drop-outs. They were of various age groups. The pupils were streamed into classes called the Literacy Class 1, 2, and 3, the Secondary Class Forms 1, 2, and 3, the Cookery Class, the Tailoring Class, the Office Management Class and the Special English Class. The pupils mastered the subjects at their own pace. The Literacy Classes placed importance in mastering the 3Rs. The vast majority of pupils paid no fees whilst others paid according to their means. The poor pupils were given meals, transport and books. After completing their PMR studies, the pupils of government school age joined the government schools; others went into private institutions or took up careers.

The teachers taught according to the field of knowledge but with utmost DEDICATION, CARE and LOVE. The Good Shepherd Sisters were always there to counsel and guide both pupils and the staff. The teachers often organised very meaningful motivation camps for the pupils, while they themselves attended teacher formation sessions. The activities were most meaningful and beneficial to both pupils and staff of the school. It was a

very sad moment for the pupils and staff when this wonderful school was closed in 1998.

My seven years in this school made a great impact on my personal life. I could see and feel how much these special children asked of the teachers, and when given the right guidance, care and most of all LOVE, these children improved tremendously both academically and morally. Today, a good number of them are out there in the world with GRATITUDE in their hearts for what they call a "second chance in our lives." These pupils keep in touch with most of the teachers and it is a wonderful feeling. My seven short years in this school, first as a class teacher, then as Senior Assistant and finally as Acting Principal were wonderful years which I will always remember and treasure compared to my 35 years of service in the government schools. May God bless the Good Shepherd Sisters and all those who have gone through their hands.



Top and above: Mrs. Gunaseelan and some past students from PKGS (Sekolah Khas) at a Christmas gathering in December 2009.





REMEMBERING AND THANKING GOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Sister Teresa Chye, staff of Madonna Heights Residential/Vocational House in 1968, shares her personal story.

Every journey has to begin at a certain time in history. So it is with my entry into the PKGS journey. Forty-two years ago in 1968, I was privileged to enter into this journey – God’s journey at Madonna Heights.

The Celtic cross on the chapel roof top and Our Lady’s statue in the garden greeted me to one of the most memorable places I have

ever stayed. Many visitors would remark – “this is such a beautiful place, I am sure whoever lives here would experience peace and serenity.” Across the double tracked Hulu Klang Road were abandoned tin mines where our girls used to roam beside herds of cows on many Sunday evenings when they were not trekking through the forest behind our hill, beyond our river – our main source of drinking water for a long time. On some adventurous days, our girls would gather fire wood from the nearby forest and set up their outdoor kitchen to fry ‘kueh-kueh’ for tea. Such were the simple recreational activities of the early rustic life as the girls tried to make Madonna Heights their home.

On weekdays, classes were held in the girls’ parlour, study room, dining room and in the front part of the chapel. The teachers were the sisters who worked in the home and a few lay partners as part-time tutors. It was only in 1977 that we had a proper school – PKGS Sekolah Khas. Besides our girls, we welcomed all youth who needed a second chance to complete their schooling. Even in those early days, ‘orang asli’ youth and migrant children from Myanmar and Pakistan availed themselves of our educational opportunities. The daily food program in our school canteen was an exciting gathering event for the cooks and the children! What seemed to be new ministries had quietly begun 30 years ago at Madonna Heights. Reaching out to the poor and unemployed has always been a great concern and so PKGS’s Sheltered Sewing Workshop situated in the basement of the school offered training and work to women who needed extra income for their families.

Ever since Madonna Heights celebrated its first Mass in 1960, our girls and sisters and Sunday parishioners have journeyed

together on the road to becoming Good Shepherd Partners. Varied events on many occasions have linked them in our common Good Shepherd Mission, events like fundraising, Christmas parties, celebrations of all sorts and not forgetting our weekly Sunday Mass.

As I remember, I wish to thank our pioneer missionary Sisters who zealously took up the challenge to begin the PKGS journey in a mission land. I am privileged to learn from them the basic knowledge of building up a mission. They knew how to plant the seed of generosity, bonding and zeal not only in our lay partners but also in our girls so that together, we built a firm faith in God’s providence and in His unceasing care and bountiful love. I believe that because our PKGS journey is God’s journey, there were many times when I experienced what St. Mary Euphrasia one day said to her Sisters, “Another thing: yesterday we needed 500 francs more for the Sisters’ fare. We did not know where to find them, when quite unexpectedly someone gave them to us. My dear Sisters, do you wish to obtain more and more of such graces?” (Conferences and Instructions of St. Mary Euphrasia, page 234).

So as we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our PKGS journey at Madonna Heights, I celebrate my companionship and my learning with our pioneer Sisters, I celebrate my ministry with the girls of Madonna Heights who have enriched my life and I celebrate my link with all our lay partners who generously chose the journey of becoming Good Shepherds.

May God who called all of us on this PKGS journey continue to renew us and make us true to His Good Shepherd Mission!



Sister Teresa Chye, second from left, with other Good Shepherd Sisters.



Sister Teresa Chye with Sister Elaine Basinger, former Congregational Leadership Team member.



CHERISHING HER EXPERIENCES AT THE TEENAGE CENTRE

By Teresa James, a past resident from the 60s.

On the 18th December 2009 I traveled from Kuantan to Kuala Lumpur in the morning and returned the same day after attending the gathering of past residents in Madonna Heights.

When I told my son that I was going to the gathering he found it difficult to understand. "All that way?" he said.

I replied, "Son, you do not know what this gathering means to me. I still cherish all the memories of my stay in the Centre and I will go wherever the meeting is held."

I joined PKGS in 1963 at the age of 14. My mum was a single mother. I had failed in the Standard Six examinations but when I left PKGS I had an MCE certificate!

I did not appreciate what was done for me while in the Centre. The girls and I called ourselves 'jailbirds' as we were not allowed to go out on our own. I realised later that the Convent is the safest place in the whole world.

While in the Centre, the sisters gave me intensive tuition, spiritual guidance and taught me to be a good citizen – like how a mother brings up her daughters.

I was married in the Madonna Heights Good Shepherd Chapel, which is situated on the same grounds as the Centre. Sister Joan Gromley gave me away. I am now a proud mother of four successful sons.

I experienced peace and love during my stay in the Centre and am certainly proud to say that I am a product of PKGS.



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“Cultivate thoughtfulness.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia



MY STORY

Sharing by Sister Salomi Cruz, the Residential Manager of Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd.

God has created each person in His image and likeness... we are good people. Yes, this value and belief in the goodness of each person gives me the passion to reach out and give each person a second chance in life just as God has given me ample second chances. No matter what the circumstances a person has experienced, their worth and dignity as people remains. St. Mary Euphrasia recognized the uniqueness of each individual, her compassionate approach touched the lives of many girls/women and inspired many people to be channels of God's mercy and compassion. And I am one of them.

As I reflect on the many years of journeying with the teenage girls who have come to PKGS, I am grateful to God for being a part of so many teenage girls' lives and their families; for using me as His instrument in this sacred journey of their lives. Each girl comes with her own brokenness, pain and struggles and faces challenges to make a difference in her life. They 'fall and rise' many times and with them I, too, 'fall and rise' – meaning that I am with them in their struggles, encouraging and at times challenging them. These are the times when I have felt the presence of God, bringing them to God, and know that I am not alone. The girls also tap their own spiritual energy in the struggle. Through individual and group sessions, the girls are helped to discover their potential and goodness. The girls impact the lives of other girls. I am proud of each of them for

their courage to face the inner truth, yearning for God's healing and reconciliation within self and others.

I am also thankful for the many volunteers, benefactors and staff who collaborate in this mission of journeying with the teenage girls and their families. Through all these experiences, I have gained much more and my heart is filled with gratitude. The lives of these girls have moulded me to be humble; reflected my own areas of change and growth – to be committed and to persevere, to believe that each person has the potential to change for the better.



ACCEPTING GOD'S WISH

By Rosa, a volunteer.

My first encounter with the Good Shepherd Sisters was when I was asked to be an interpreter for some migrant workers. When this role ended six months later, I continued with Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Teenage Centre) as a volunteer matron. Having no prior experience helping out in such an environment, I initially struggled with my new role. Although I had a lot of questions and doubts on whether I could be effective, I decided to give it a try and started my volunteer work on 27 July 2009.

Since then, I have felt a sense of belonging

and safety under the love of God and the guidance and care of the Good Shepherd Sisters and all Good Shepherd people such as the staff members, other volunteers and friends. I have learned a lot of things such as: the Good Shepherd Sisters' zeal and meticulous working system make whatever they do seem so simple but really meaningful; the respect they have for each person is based on love and compassion without condemnation. In trying to live out each day what I witness, I too have grown as a person.

As I participate in some sessions and activities organized by PKGS, I have learnt how to interact with others in a more meaningful way, to share my own experiences as

well as listen to others. I have many reasons to be thankful to our Lord, God: for his love and protection, for providing for my needs, for being able to stay and share with Good Shepherd people.

Looking back at my past, I realize that I am in a good place and environment where I am accepted for who I am. This is because of God's grace, not by my own actions. I will be a Good Shepherd person wherever I am as I believe I have something to contribute and, at the same time, learn from opportunities that present themselves.

What My Time At The PKGS Teenage Centre Means To Me

Past Residents tell their stories.

ONG BEE KIM

Time flies and with a blink of an eye, it's been almost 17 years and 8 months since I first stepped into The Home (Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd). It is with mixed emotions that I'm sharing my story...

I came to the Home in April 1992 and left in December 1995. My three years and eight months stay there were memorable ones, especially with the scolding, laughter, quarrelling, frustration... Each day was full of excitement and these memorable moments will remain with me forever.

For the volunteers and benefactors who willingly spent their valuable time with us, I remember the quality time when we did handwork together... till today, I still keep a little beaded angel at home to remind me of those days and all of you whom I have not met for a long time.

For the Good Shepherd Sisters whom I have known for years, I am really thankful to all of you. It was your guidance that made me strong and encouraged me when I was down. And you were the ones who made me aware of my strengths and interests in life and supported me in all my decisions. This I will cherish in my heart forever.

After I left PKGS, I furthered my studies and graduated with a BA (Hons) in Environmental Design (Interior Architectural Studies) in 1999. After that I worked in Singapore as a designer till 2003, and returned to Malaysia to work for a multi-chain retail shopping centre as a Construction Manager for five years. Today, I'm a Facilities Manager for a property developer and I have approximately 40 staff working under my supervision.

All I can say is that I am blessed and God has taken good care of me throughout my journey. Thank you to all my friends and the Good Shepherd Sisters who have gone the extra mile for me... I am grateful.

JOVE CHIA

I cried for nine days when I first entered PKGS as I went in unwillingly. I was reluctant to do my own washing and other work. I was just lazy! I kept to myself and did not speak much. Time passed but the sisters and staff did not give up on me. They changed me - changed me to be a more helpful person and to think of others. I also improved in my studies. My English and Bahasa were not my strong subjects as I came from a Chinese medium school. As I had to obtain a pass in Bahasa in order to get an SPM certificate the sisters arranged intensive Bahasa tuition for me. I passed with a credit and for this I am grateful to the sisters.

Although I had to work hard during my stay in PKGS I learnt a lot of things that have helped me to be what I am today.

JACKIE MARION

Year 1987. I was sent to Madonna Heights Convent. Feeling very depressed, I felt that it was unreasonable for me to be there, staying away from my family. My first feeling was that I was sent to a place with so many rules and regulations. I hated it, not realising that the same rules and regulations would mould me into who I am today.



My chore was to clean up St. Joseph's dormitory toilets with G.A. Mary. We were awarded the best Duty Chargers by Sister Theresa Heng for the best job done. Since all the girls had to take turns to do the kitchen duties (which I disliked the most) I had no choice but to do it. The stench on me after cooking was intolerable. Being the most mischievous person in the Convent I got the most punishment from the sisters.

But the most difficult lesson to learn is "which bridges in life to use and which ones to break". This is the most valued message I got from the sisters. I believe in giving back whatever I learnt in the convent - which has moulded me to think this way. A snail leaves an empty shell behind when it dies but roses leave sweet fragrances behind them for us to put into the jar of memory. That's what St. Mary Euphrasia did, leaving the Good Shepherd Convent and the sisters here for us.

I only had a PMR certificate when I was in Singapore, and took up some classes to upgrade myself. As a person who once hated to do kitchen duties, I am now proud to have gained 17 years working experience in the kitchen. I am a Junior Chef Partie in Singapore.

When time permits I do voluntary service in the Pure Life Society.

WONG WEI LING

I entered PKGS in 2006 when I was in Form 2. I learnt a lot there and have fond memories of my stay. Although I have a home of my own now I still miss the Sisters, teachers and staff whom I got on well with during my stay in PKGS. With gratitude, Wei Ling.



MAY CHONG

My name is May Chong but within the Convent circle, I am known by my real name - Me Yong.



I joined the Teenage Centre in 1981 at the age of 10. It was an amazing experience for me because I came from a very poor background and was left alone at home always... I suddenly moved into this amazing resort-like home with almost 50 to 60 girls as my friends and companions. I felt truly blessed until I asked another resident how to get drinking water and she pointed to the piped water. Then the reality and differentiation hit me!

I left when I was 19 years old. During my nine years stay there, I had the opportunity to make a lot of friends and heard the stories of other families. I got close to the Good Shepherd Sisters. I was punished by them as well - to wash the cascading drains! Is anyone doing this now?

And of all the stories I have to share, I would like to share this one which is most significant to me.

I was studying for my Form Six the year I left the Centre. However, I faced financial difficulties going to school as I did not have money to pay for my bus fare. One day, I decided that I was going to drop out from school and start to look for a job. Early next morning an ex-Centre girl came to my house to inform me that Sister Theresa was looking for me. So I went to school with her (for the last time I thought) and promised to call Sister Theresa that day. I said goodbyes to all my school mates that day.

After school, I called Sister Theresa and guess what? She had a very strong feeling that I was facing some difficulties and asked me to move back to the Convent. She wanted me to continue my studies and said that she would take care of my financial needs.

Her exact words were, "Me Yong, I have a very bad feeling, I want you to come back! When can you come back?"

I was stunned! What a coincidence! I moved back the same day and five years later, I was the first Convent girl to graduate from university. Thank you, Good Shepherd Sisters. You have touched and changed so many lives. You have made a difference!



“Each day there are new blessings. Let us give thanks to God.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia



Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre

**THE IPOH-BASED HOME HAS MADE ITS MARK
SHELTERING WOMEN IN CRISIS.**

The seeds of what is now the Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre (RVGSC) situated in Ipoh were first sown in 1965, when the Good Shepherd Sisters established Nazarethville - Home for Unwed Mothers, in Batu Arang, Selangor. The home was situated in Selangor for 10 years until 1975 when it was relocated to a rented house in Ipoh.

In 1979, the Bishop of Penang gave the Good Shepherd Sisters permission to build Mariaville Kindergarten, the Sisters' Convent and a home for unwed mothers on a piece of land located at Jalan Francois, Ipoh.

In 1988, a house in another location was purchased and named the Rose Virginie Welcome House. This would serve women and children who were experiencing spousal violence as well as women needing support in times of crisis and transition.

In 2000, it was decided that the two separate programs at Jalan Francois and Jalan Canning should merge into one to become the Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre as we know it today.

The Centre is, as many already know, named after the Foundress of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Rose Virginie Pelletier. Rose Virginie entered our Lady of Charity at Tours, France, in 1814 and was given the name Sister Mary Euphrasia.

Since 2000, the Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre has been providing assistance to:

- Women, mothers and their children who are experiencing abuse in their relationships or through domestic / family violence
- Teenage girls / women in pregnancy who are unwed or in crises
- Women experiencing conflict in their marriage
- Women in personal or family difficulties, or other forms of crises
- Survivors of rape or assault.

The Centre currently offers the following programs:

- Residential services which are currently able to accommodate 12 persons including women and their children, though renovations are ongoing to increase this capacity to 30 persons
- Counselling (individual, group and family) and
- the Micro Enterprise Project.



Sister Cecilia Cheang in Batu Arang.





**“Gather up the fragments
so that none may be lost.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia



In July 2003, a concerted effort was made to make the Centre's new location and services known to other non-governmental organisations, churches, government departments, hospitals, welfare homes and so on. Soon, counselling and programs for women were initiated in phases. These programs include line dancing, personal grooming and make up lessons, English classes, handwork, computer classes and so on, all with the aim of giving these women useful skills and confidence.

MICRO ENTERPRISE SUCCESS

In February 2004, what we see developing today as the Micro Enterprise Project (MEP) was launched. The initial aim was for the women in crisis - residential and non-residential - to bake and sell Chinese New Year cookies to raise funds. Sales were later extended to include other occasions such as Mother's Day and Christmas as well. This project has expanded and grown quite significantly since its humble beginnings in 2004.

Today, the MEP repertoire has expanded to include small-scale catering for corporate events and school concerts/sports events, the supply of cut fruits, sandwiches and pastries to the Heart Gift Shop in Hospital Fatimah, and the operations of a food stall in two factories located in Ipoh i.e. Unisem and Carssem.

The MEP has proven to be rather beneficial to the Centre's women in crisis. It provides a daily routine for the women to be occupied in skilled work. It is an employment opportunity for single mothers and present/past clients who are in need of financial assistance. It inculcates discipline, work ethics and a sense of shared responsibility. It promotes a self-help attitude, dignity and self worth as well as financial aid for the women to start life again when they leave the Centre.

There are also mutual benefits to clients (past and present) and single mothers (including the non-residential target group). Journeying out of the Centre and keeping in touch with other women in similar situations also assists these women in their transition back to society.

Given the success of programmes that have been executed at the Centre, renovations are currently ongoing to expand capacity at RVGSC.

ADDING CAPACITY

• Residential capacity

The renovated premises should accommodate 30 people, an increase from its original capacity of 12. This will mean an increase from five bedrooms to seven bedrooms (five large rooms and two family rooms).

• Counselling rooms

Given the importance of counselling, two rooms have been proposed for this specific purpose where none exist at this time. Audiovisual equipment, to be used in recording cases for the specific purpose of staff training, will also be installed in these rooms.

• Facilities for Micro Enterprise

Food preparation related to the Micro Enterprise activities will be carried out separately in a new semi-commercial kitchen designed specially for this purpose.

• Further needs

Other needs are for separate staff quarters complete with a shared living room and kitchenette; a utility and store room dedicated to the Heart Gift Shop; a meeting room for staff and volunteers; a larger administration office which also includes a guest receiving area; and finally, a separate entrance for the Centre with parking facilities and walkways.

Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre is an established crisis shelter, with more than 40 years presence in West Malaysia. It is the only 24-hour crisis shelter in West Malaysia with a full range of services and live-in staff.

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A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Sharing by Rosaline Phang, a volunteer.

Sister Helena invited me to become a volunteer at Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre in 2003, the year after my retirement. Whilst in service I was teacher counsellor and had insights into the problems and confusion that young ladies faced and the problems that many of them get themselves into.

With this little knowledge and experience, I hoped that I would be of help. Right from the beginning, I was overwhelmed by the magnitude and severity of the crisis the ladies faced. Sometimes, I felt very angry at the unfairness of it all. The young girl who is left to fend for herself, very often without parental support; the battered wife

who is trying so hard to protect her children when she cannot even protect herself; the girl who faced the dilemma of reporting the relative who abused her; and lots more. Why Why Why? I then realised that that was exactly what the ladies too were asking themselves daily. I realised that what I can do to help lighten their sadness was to help keep them occupied through handicraft work.

With the support and encouragement of the Centre, we started sewing small articles, and also did cross-stitch. A couple of the residents even learnt to use the sewing machine. They were happy to know that they were able to produce beautiful articles. These activities also provided opportunities for communication. I was privileged that the ladies were able to share

their thoughts and worries with me. They were glad for a listening ear. Sometimes it was just empty talk and teasing. I am glad that they were able to laugh and joke.

In many cases, I found the gradual change for the better in the ladies to be rewarding. The ladies learned to handle their problems and plan for better days to come. I learnt that the world is not all bad. There are still lots of people who work relentlessly for those in need.



Rosaline decorating cookie jars for the Centre's Christmas sale.



Volunteers helping out with the Micro Enterprise Project.

SEEKING SHELTER IN ROSE VIRGINIE GOOD SHEPHERD CENTRE

Augustini, a past resident, shares her experience (translated from Bahasa Malaysia).

My two children and I were residents of RVGSC for about three months. I sought shelter at RVGSC due to domestic problems that I was facing. At that time, my children and I had nowhere to go and we stayed at the shelter until I could overcome my problems.

I am thankful and praise God that my children and I had a place to stay and food to eat. I am also thankful to Sister, the staff and other residents at the Centre. During my stay, I learnt a lot, such as living skills. There were counseling sessions to guide

me to make my own decisions to deal with my problems.

From there, I grew in maturity and patience and was able to face the issues that troubled me.

I also learnt how to cook and make cakes. Many opportunities were given to learn different skills during my free time. It was up to the resident to use these opportunities to change and learn new things.

At the Centre too, my children were given the opportunity to attend Kindergarten. I also learnt a lot from the experiences of the other residents. When I returned to my own home, I realised that every household has its own problems. I pray that we can overcome all the problems we face for our

own future and the future of our children.

Thank you Good Shepherd because you have helped my children and me. Even now, the Centre still assists us through emotional and counseling support as well as through food assistance.

I cannot repay this kindness.

I can only pray, and it is my wish, that the Centre will be blessed as it continues to help women in crisis. May it always receive the support of well-wishers.

I am grateful for my experiences at Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre.





THE JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF BEING IN THIS GOOD SHEPHERD MISSION

Beatrice Lim, Administrative Executive-cum-Program Co-ordinator at Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre, shares.

It is almost two years since I started work in Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre (RVGSC). I joined RVGSC armed only with my desire to be in direct service at a welfare centre. I did not have any past working experience in a residential setting.

The initial learning curve was very steep – there were moments when I experienced anxiety and fear, borne out of a lack of knowledge. I am now dealing with persons

instead of solely administrative duties which I was doing previously. In this job, I am called to be person oriented rather than task oriented. There was an incident when I stayed awake the whole night when a resident was not well.

In my last 21 months at the Centre, on a daily basis I ask myself these questions before going to bed: How have I been throughout the day? Have I been compassionate, patient, kind, giving a listening ear, caring to the ladies? Or have I been busy with other things?

Although I ask myself these questions, in reality the ladies are ministering to me and teaching me to be patient, caring, a good listener, compassionate and non-judgemental.

There have been many moments of joy for me. I find joy in seeing how the ladies are being cared for, given opportunities to increase their skills through learning handwork, baking and cooking. It also gives me joy to see the ladies rise above their crisis situations and make their own choices for the future.

Indeed, I am grateful and thankful to our Shepherd God for giving me the zeal and strength to be in this ministry. He has also given me the opportunity to grow as a person.





Launch of Micro Enterprise Project at Unisem (M) Bhd, Ipoh.



“Gratitude is your inheritance. Engrave it on your heart.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia

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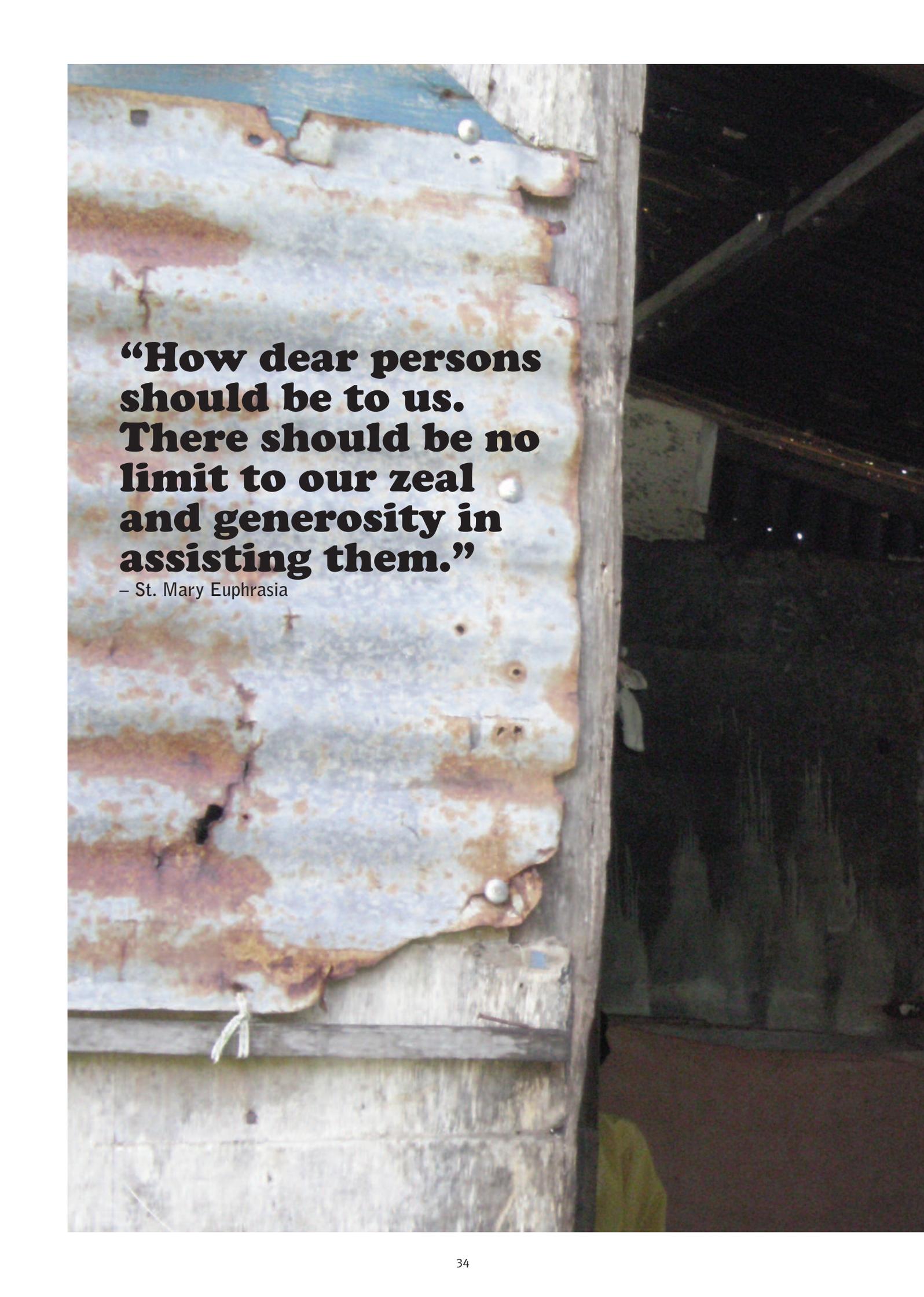
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**“How dear persons
should be to us.
There should be no
limit to our zeal
and generosity in
assisting them.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia



PKGS Sabah

“You can’t really talk about the different elements of the work that we do in Sabah separately,”

says Chin Poh Choo, Director of PKGS’s Sabah operations.

“Everything is linked.”

Indeed, when funds were needed to build Asrama Desa Pukak, it was the girls from the Asrama St. James choir in Tenghilan who traveled to Kuala Lumpur and Singapore to sing. A lot of PKGS’s work in the rural communities depends on volunteers - which are often sourced through the YouthPREPLink programs that PKGS runs. These are just two examples. Nevertheless, in the following pages we will attempt to explain the variety in work that PKGS does in Sabah.



Seri Murni Crisis Centre

A SAFE HAVEN FOR WOMEN FACING CRISIS SITUATIONS



The Seri Murni Crisis Centre in Sabah is an oasis for women and girls in trouble. As the brochure says, it reaches out to “teenage girls and women, awakening in each one a sense of their unique worth and dignity”. The Centre’s current scope of work includes providing assistance to pregnant, unwed teenage girls and women, women and children who are at risk from domestic violence, trafficked women and other women in crisis who need protection and support.

The only privately-owned women’s crisis centre in Sabah, Seri Murni started out as Asrama Seri Murni in 1987 when the late Datuk Simon Fung, then Catholic Bishop of the Kota Kinabalu Diocese, saw the need for a hostel for girls in Sabah and invited the Good Shepherd Sisters to establish one.

Coincidentally, in the mid to late 1980s, the sisters at the Good Shepherd Centre in Ipoh noticed that the number of unwed mothers from East Malaysia seeking refuge, counseling and help with childbirth had been growing. The girls who made it to their doorstep were fortunate enough to have the funds for the airfare. Many others did not. Asrama Seri Murni initially watched over

girls from rural areas who studied or worked in the state capital. Housed in the Catholic Seminary building on Jalan Sang Kanchil 3, the hostel was managed by three pioneering sisters: Sister Dorothy, Sister Barbara and Sister Salomi.

Soon, these sisters were receiving phone calls from or on behalf of unwed mothers, rape survivors and women experiencing domestic violence who needed help. There were calls from these troubled women themselves, or from their family members enquiring about whether there was temporary shelter for them. There were also referrals from the police, welfare authorities, hospitals and private clinics. As such, the scope of work and cases were gradually widened to meet these needs and the name of the centre eventually changed.

The Centre has proven to be successful in addressing the problems of women in crisis, such that there are plans to open another one in Sandakan in 2010. So, what goes on in this Centre?

Programs for Healing and Empowering

• Residential

There are four full-time staff at the Seri Murni Crisis Centre – which can accommo-

date 20 women at a time. An annex, sponsored by Sabah Credit Corporation, was recently added which has four separate rooms and an office on the ground level.

The residential program is designed to empower these women to take responsibility for their lives with the aim of eventually reintegrating them with their families and community. Curative in approach, the residential program encourages residents to live responsibly and respectfully with



The Award and Certificate of Appreciation received by Seri Murni in 2005 and 2006 respectively.

“I only loved... but I loved with all the strength of my soul... nothing is impossible to one who loves.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia

one another. This is done through group living where residents learn to manage their differences in a positive and healthy way. They learn life skills such as cooking, sewing, beadwork, housework and grooming. They take turns to cook and clean up. There are volunteers who come to give them cooking, tuition and yoga lessons. Nurses also visit the girls who need medical attention.

"The baking and cooking we do here is to teach the girls skills that they can take away with them rather than as a micro-enterprise business for the Centre," explained Sister Angelina, who is the Residential Manager at the Centre, "though they do sell cookies at St. Simon Church once a month."

Sister Angelina also wanted to emphasise the importance of the help of volunteers. "We rely a lot on volunteers. Apart from the help we get with the skills programs, our neighbours are always kind enough to provide transport if needed - to go to the clinic, for example. Some also send us food."

The residents are also inculcated with values towards mutual respect and a culture of peace. They are provided counseling on a personal, family or group basis and there is spiritual and prayer support daily.

• Non-Residential

The non-residential programs take a preventive approach. Here the sisters provide counseling, support and guidance for walk-ins and there is also an outreach program, which addresses personal growth, self-awareness, promotes healthy relationships and develops leadership qualities.

Additionally, there is the Mobile Women's Enrichment Program, which brings the mission of Seri Murni to rural areas through outreach programs for women and their families.

Good Work Recognised

As a mark of the good work done at this Centre, Seri Murni received an award in conjunction with the inaugural 2005 Mayang Sri Endon Award for Excellent Caregivers in Malaysia. In 2006, it went on to receive a Certificate of Appreciation in conjunction with the Prime Minister's Quality Award. An initiative of the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, these awards recognise the noble work of caregivers.

THANKING GOD FOR COUNTLESS BLESSINGS

By Sister Angelina Peter, Residential Manager, Seri Murni Crisis Centre.

Over the years, reflecting back on all the experiences in my journey with women and children who are affected by the injustice of society, God has been truly present in each step of the way. The experiences I went through are learning processes of growth. Openness and willingness are tools in being able to go through those experiences.



The saying of St. Mary Euphrasia - "You have a heart to love and to be grateful! Therefore, raise your joyful thanks to your Benefactors..." The word "Benefactors" speaks very much to me. Who are my benefactors in the mission aside from persons who have donated in cash and/or kind? As I ponder on the words of St. Mary Euphrasia, I can imagine and see a small light in the dark tunnel, which represents the presence of the Shepherd God in every face along my journey.

The following is from a couple who came in contact with Seri Murni Crisis Centre

STANDING ON MY OWN TWO FEET

A former resident shares her story.

I came to know the Good Shepherd sisters when I was 17 years old, at the height of my crisis. My family approached a local sister where I lived who gave us the telephone number. After several attempts, my uncle managed to speak to a Good Shepherd sister and told her about my problem. The sister was so helpful and arranged for my stay in the centre.

The first day when I arrived at the centre I was feeling frightened, and did not know what to do because the place was totally different from my house. I saw that the surrounding was so clean. The other residents were not very friendly. I could not do what I used to at home. After a few days I felt homesick and wanted to go home. Although I knew that that was an option, I was afraid that the people in my village would know about my pregnancy. Each time I prayed, I asked God to give me the patience. Whilst in the centre I made many mistakes and there were many things I didn't know how to do. Despite all this, the staff were always teaching and reminding us to be full of patience. Everyday we did house cleaning and took turns to prepare the meals. Everyone was like family. This was a new experience for me.

which I feel is appropriate to share on Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd's 50th Anniversary:

"Truly your love and compassion has touched our hearts. There are no words for us to describe our gratitude for taking Vicky (not her real name) in and taking such good care of her. You've inspired us in our service to God to love unconditionally and to give generously. We honour you for all the works you've done and for the lives you've touch. God must be so pleased with you."

This occasion is a time for us to raise our joyful thanks for all these years of touching lives and hearts. God has truly given us abundant blessings of joy... joy that no words can express, joy that is continually reaching out to where God is leading us to persons who need our help most at this point of time.

Praise and thanks to our Shepherd God for His countless blessings given to us each day.

*The Lord is good,
His steadfast love endures forever,
And his faithfulness to all generations.
(Psalm 136: 26)*

During the period of my stay in the centre I did learn a lot of things, such as cooking and baking; Bible sharing which strengthened my faith; counseling that helped me to discover and understand myself - and my family - better.

Whilst I was at the Centre, I requested to go for a home visit to my family. During my stay for a few days at home, I saw there were a lot of problems in my family. I realised that my parents always quarreled in front of my school-going sibling. I also realised that I would like to continue with my studies.

My experience staying in the centre helped me to become more mature and to learn to stand on my own two feet. The sisters helped me to obtain some financial aid, and now I am doing a diploma course in Administration and Computers. I hope to get a job in the future and help ease my family's financial burden. I thought I could never continue my studies after having gone through the pregnancy crisis in my life. I made the decision to give my baby up for adoption with the support of my parents and uncle. It was not easy for me, but deep in my heart I know that my baby will be taken care of and loved by her adopted parents.



Outreach Programs for women and their families in the rural villages are done through the Mobile Women's Enrichment Program by Seri Murni Crisis Centre.



Good Shepherd Rural Community Development

A RANGE OF WORK IN RURAL SABAH IS SEEING GOOD RESULTS



Children from Asrama Desa Pukak practising the Sumazau, a Kadazan dance.

Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd in Sabah is involved in rural community development, with particular emphasis on providing educational opportunities and human development programs for those living in poverty and on the margins of society, so that they may rise up and progress.



Study time at Asrama Gereja St. James Tenghlan.

Pukak

EDUCATING CHILDREN IN A RURAL SABAH VILLAGE

Asrama Desa Pukak (ADP) is a hostel for primary school children located in the village of Pukak, Kiulu, in the district of Tuaran in Sabah. The main objective of this hostel is to enable these children, who come from remote rural villages, to attend school on a regular basis so as to raise their academic standards and complete their primary education successfully.

If not for the hostel, these children would have to walk two-and-a-half hours over hilly terrain to get to SK Pukak everyday. School attendance would be dictated by the weather and the strength of each child. Access to these villages is only possible by four-wheel drive vehicles traveling on gravel or mud tracks and few in the village have such vehicles.

Funds for the construction of ADP were raised by the residents of Asrama Gereja St. James in Tenghilan, a hostel for secondary school girls, which is also managed by Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd. The residents there formed the St. James Hostel Choir, as a Pay-It-Forward Project to reach out to other children in need of educational opportunities. The St. James Hostel Choir performed in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur in December 2006 and proceeds from this fund-raising initiative were utilised to construct ADP.

ADP commenced operations on 1st January 2008 in preparation for the commencement of the new academic year on 3rd January 2008. The children spend Sunday through to Thursday nights at ADP and leave for home on Friday afternoon to spend the weekend with their families.

ADP started with 16 children from Kg Kelobaan and Kg Liposu. However, two of the younger girls had some difficulty adjusting to being away from home and decided to leave the hostel after the first term holidays in June. The remaining 14 children completed their first year at ADP. The enrolment at ADP increased to 23 children in 2009.

Seeing how the children have benefited from their stay in ADP, some of the families from the interior villages of Kg Bolotikon and Kg Moingob also asked if their children could reside at ADP in 2010. The facilities were expanded to accommodate them and now ADP has 26 children.

Besides supervision in their schoolwork, the children also learn living skills such as how to wash their own clothes and shoes, how to make their own beds and tidy their own living space.

ADP adopts a holistic approach towards the development of the children and this is reflected through the various programs that have been conducted for them which encompasses personal, social, value-based, spiritual, academic and intellectual aspects of formation.

The "Keeping Me Safe" program for kids is also run at ADP, and will soon be run for teenagers as well. Written by P.S. The Children, the modules - which are about creating awareness on prevention of child sexual abuse - are being modified in language and examples to fit the local context.

The active involvement of the children in the variety concert "The Gift of Hope, Pass It On..." not too long ago has given the children the realisation that they, too, are able to contribute towards the betterment of other children who are in a similar plight as themselves.

The hostel is jointly managed by Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd and the Hostel Management Team comprising villagers from Pukak, Kelobaan and Liposu.



It's dinner time!



Gloria Bon, contact person for Justice, Peace, Solidarity in Mission for the Good Shepherd Province of Singapore-Malaysia, volunteering her time in Pukak.



Preparing to go to school.



**“Let gratitude
be the main-
spring of all
your actions.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia

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“Let us be kind, very kind to the poor.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia



Stella Bulugu and her mother Kotinah Gilu. Stella recently graduated from Universiti Malaysia Sabah with a degree in TESOL.

BENEFITING THE COMMUNITY

Sharing by Kotinah Gilu, mother of two boys who are residents at ADP.

My personal experience with Good Shepherd has been an enriching one, which has benefited not only my children but also the local community where we come from. To me, the establishment of Asrama Desa Pukak (ADP) has opened doors to the children from remote villages like ours to attend school and enjoy it without being tired out. I am very grateful to ADP because I personally have experienced and seen how my two boys, who stay at the hostel, have become more independent, confident, caring and responsible. I believe

that they would not have been able to achieve these improvements if they did not stay at ADP.

Being a member of the Hostel Management Team (HMT) for ADP has given me a deeper understanding of the values and mission of the Good Shepherd. This has enabled me to share with others about who they are and the work they do. My involvement with the HMT has helped me to be more confident in myself. I am happy that I have been given this opportunity to participate and contribute towards the well being of the children.

Other than my two sons and myself, my eldest daughter, Stella, has also benefited

through her involvement in the different ministries. Recently, while waiting for her teaching posting she was helping out with the Learning Resource Centre at the Rural Training Centre. She really enjoyed her stay there and I believe that she also learnt a lot. I was also happy, as she was willing to spend her time helping others.

My hope is that the Good Shepherd ministries, especially ADP, will continue to grow from strength to strength and benefit many who are in need. Personally, I hope to continue serving in the HMT as long as I am able and that one day, my youngest son, Endrayson (8 years old), will also be able to serve in ADP.

Tenghilan

NURTURING YOUNG GIRLS TO BE CONFIDENT AND INDEPENDENT



Asrama Gereja St. James Tenghilan (AGSJT) is a secondary school hostel located next to St. James Church in Tenghilan, a village located some 45 minutes from Sabah's capital, Kota Kinabalu. It has the capacity to accommodate 28 secondary school girls from interior and rural villages surrounding Tenghilan.

AGSJT has been managed by Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd since 1992. These secondary school girls, ranging from Form One to Upper Six, study at SMK Tenghilan, a 15-minute walk from AGSJT. The girls walk to school in groups.

They come from remote villages. If they were to live with their families they would not be able to go to school on a daily basis due to transportation and financial constraints.

In selecting which girls to accept as residents, priority is given to families who are in dire need of financial assistance and who can't find a place for their daughters to stay that is near to the school. Indeed, some of the girls are only able to afford a uniform and shoes when they arrive at the hostel. Most of the girls come from farming families and, on average, have at least five other siblings in need of support.

At AGSJT, the girls learn about how to live and contribute to their own community. They make friends and study together, they learn about keeping their space clean and tidy, how to clean up after themselves, how to do housework and their own laundry. Sessions are conducted to teach them how to be good citizens - how to be responsible,

how to interact and basic manners such as saying Thank You and Good Morning, behaviours that they might not learn at home.

The girls are also inculcated with a spirit of service to society in that they are called upon to do their part in helping others through the Aftercare Outreach Program. This is where the girls visit a target village - Kg Soromboton - and teach the younger primary children.

This environment is conducive to studying and learning a set of skills that will one day lead them to become independent and confident girls.





**“Let us rouse
ourselves and go
forward... Let us
not become
weary of doing
good.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia

CHIN POH CHOO IS GIVEN THE GUANG MING HERO AWARD 2009

The Director of PKGS Sabah wins an award.

This biennial award of the *Guang Ming Daily*, a local Chinese newspaper in Malaysia, is given to individuals who make positive changes to communities of people in need of assistance through the sharing of their expertise in self-giving service and sacrifice.

The team from *Guang Ming*, during their visit to the villages of Kelobaan and Liposu, were enriched and impressed by their experience there. They spoke of the values displayed by the children, their caring attitude and the hospitality of their families. The team was able to witness and experience the positive effects Asrama Desa Pukak had on the children and the larger village community. They also had the opportunity to listen to the stories of

how the children now have a chance at an education through Asrama Desa Pukak and, hopefully, would be the catalyst for a better future for their families.

In recognition of her contribution to the communities of Kelobaan and Liposu, PKGS Sabah Director Chin Poh Choo won the silver award and prize money of RM5,000.

At the organisational level, Poh Choo's award is a testimony that we can live out our corporate mission of empowering persons in the rural setting to wholeness and full potential if we invest time and resources in community development.

Said Poh Choo: "The award is basically a recognition of the services of PKGS in Sabah. I don't take it as personal recognition - I have never seen this award in that way. I received it on behalf of PKGS, for the work that has been done by the organisation."



Chin Poh Choo, right, receiving the cheque from Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai. The RM5,000 was prize money for the silver Guang Ming Hero Award 2009.



INSTALLING THE CORE VALUES

A story from Jeslyininda Empat, former resident of Asrama Gereja St. James from 2005 to 2009.

I was a resident in Asrama Gereja St. James from Form 1 to Form 5. In the five years that I was there, I had the opportunity to learn a lot, especially in the area of self discovery and development.

When I left the Asrama in 2009, I realised that my stay had made me a stronger person with the ability to make decisions and be independent. I was also nurtured in self discipline and given the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

At the Asrama, I learnt to live according to the five core values based on the teachings

of St. Mary Euphrasia, the foundress of the Good Shepherd Sisters, i.e. respect, gratitude, compassion, zeal and integrity. These values are now very much a part of my life.

Living in a hostel environment with so many other girls, I improved my communication skills and became more confident. I learned to appreciate and be grateful for all I have, to acknowledge my strengths as well as my weaknesses.

I am thankful for the opportunity to have lived at Asrama Gereja St. James and am especially grateful to the Good Shepherd sisters, staff and benefactors who have helped in my secondary school education and a chance for a better future.

Thank you.



Jeslyininda (front) doing her chores in AGSJT.

“Look for the good and positive in each person.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia





Sister Susan Chia (wearing spectacles), the previous Province Leader of the Good Shepherd Sisters Singapore-Malaysia with women and children from a rural village in Sabah. She is now with the Congregational Leadership Team and holds office in Rome.

Outreach Programs



Family Building And Reconciliation (FBR)

REINFORCING FAMILY VALUES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Family Building and Reconciliation program is a module that is run to “Reinforce family values and relationships,” says Chin Poh Choo, Director of PKGS in Sabah. “There are modules on topics such as alcoholism and the importance of education. It enables families to come together to discuss these issues. They can talk in families or as a community with several families. Programs are run over three days and two nights. The groups can come in on a Friday, and it goes until Sunday after lunch. Sometimes they can stay in or, for large community groups, they go home and come back the next day. We run these programs as and when there is a need.”

Part of PKGS’s Rural Community Development program, the FBR program is being continuously developed to respond to the needs of families and the community. There is indeed a need to discover new and creative ways to address family problems in rural areas. The thrust of the FBR program is to promote healthy relationships in families through educational group activities. It is being facilitated using a person-centered, participative approach. FBR upholds the belief that everyone in the family has potential for growth and change. Thus building and strengthening of the family requires the participation of all.

The Goals and Objectives of FBR:

- To build and empower families to be strong, resilient and mature in all aspects so that they are spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and economically well-off.
- To focus on building family relationships through a holistic and integrative approach that involves seven areas:

1. Faith & Spirituality – To enable families to grow in their faith and spiritual life, to deepen the understanding of one’s faith, life and the human growth development stages. To nurture human growth in the light of spiritual insights and beliefs.

2. Education & On-Going Formation – To emphasise the importance of basic / formal education and ongoing development for all members of the family. It addresses the development of the individual, family education (for example, a family value system for relationships, family leadership, parenting skills), social-political issues affecting family life, economy / financial management and environmental issues and awareness.

3. Effective Communication – To enhance communication within the family unit (i.e. husband-wife, parents-children, relatives and friends – intrapersonal and interpersonal communication). It focuses on family experiential learning through workshops, activities on group dynamics and practical guides for effective communication.

4. Culture – To understand and appreciate the role of culture in shaping family values and value formation. To uphold one’s own unique culture and respect the differences of other cultures (e.g. Dusunkadazan, Chinese, Indian, Malay and so on).

5. Crisis Management – To help families to understand and manage family crises and their implications for every member of the family (e.g. death, illness, divorce, domestic violence, accidents, natural disasters, financial crises and so on). It focuses on imparting the basic crisis management skills within the family setting (to identify a family crisis, to respond to or deal with the crisis, and resolve it).





6. Reconciliation - To encourage families to give time and space to reconciliation with God, Self and Others; to bring about healing, peace and harmony in families. Sessions are being facilitated to enable family / community members to address relationship problems, to forgive one another and find creative ways to express love, forgiveness, and gratitude, so that the family grows in appreciation and unity.

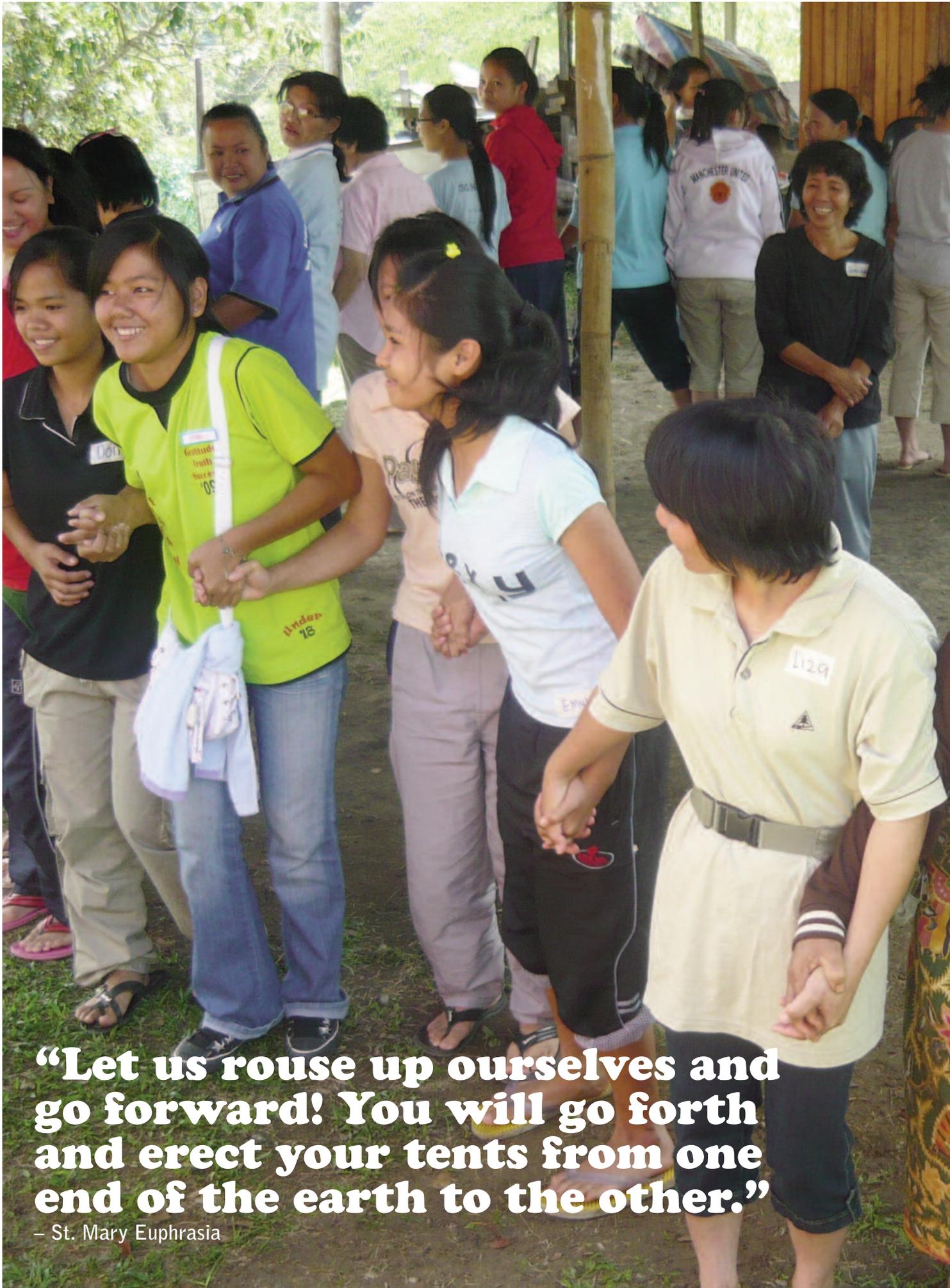
7. Family Support System - To help families to engage in a planning process whereby all the family members come together to look into the strengths / resources within the family and community, and develop and strengthen their family support system

for spiritual, emotional, social, economic, psychological, and mental health needs. It stresses on the importance of a network of family support to anchor family growth and change.

- To establish and develop a pool of individuals and families as self-empowered FBR trainers.

In 2007, the FBR program was conducted in rural communities within the diocese of Kota Kinabalu, namely villages around Tuaran, Tenghilan, Tamparuli, Pukak in Kiulu and Kota Belud. In 2008 and 2009, the FBR program was extended to the diocese of Keningau (which covers Beaufort,

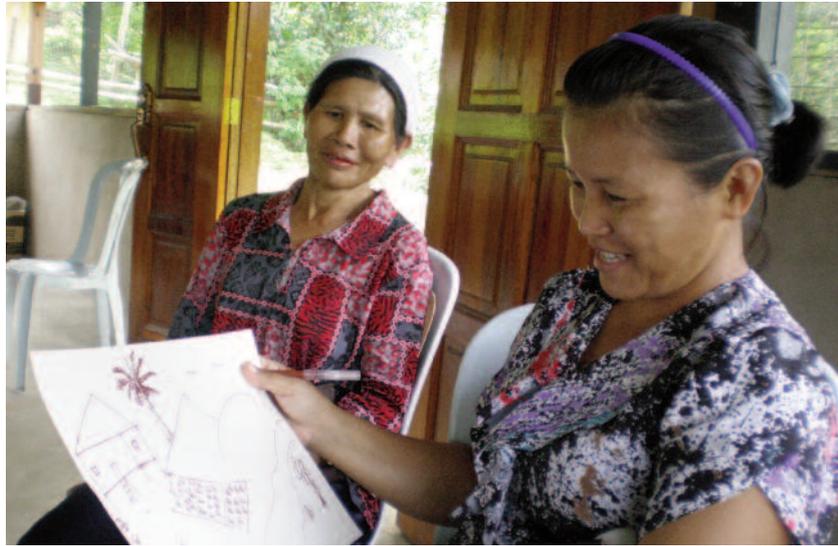
Sipitang, Tenom, Kemabong, Membakut, Kuala Penyu, Tambunan, and Apin-Apin) and the diocese of Sandakan (Sandakan Town and Beluran). In 2008, the FBR was conducted 10 times and in 2009, six times. In 2010 - the FBR training /orientation program is being developed for those who are involved in family care and support programs.



“Let us rouse up ourselves and go forward! You will go forth and erect your tents from one end of the earth to the other.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia





Participants of the FBR program share about themselves through artwork.



THE FAMILY BUILDING AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

By Sister Maria Dipal, co-ordinator of the FBR program.

The Family Building and Reconciliation Program began with a vision of bringing healing, transformation and reconciliation to families faced with issues of brokenness, woundedness, crisis, anger, hatred, the hurt of poverty, shame and guilt of family violence.

When the FBR program was first introduced to the parishes of the rural communities in Sabah in 2007, I had challenging questions like, "Has this program been proven effective? Will it be successful?" Honestly, I didn't have the answers then. I was simply hopeful, and grateful, for some

of the uplifting, encouraging and empowering stories that were told, and which I heard and experienced as I conducted the program.

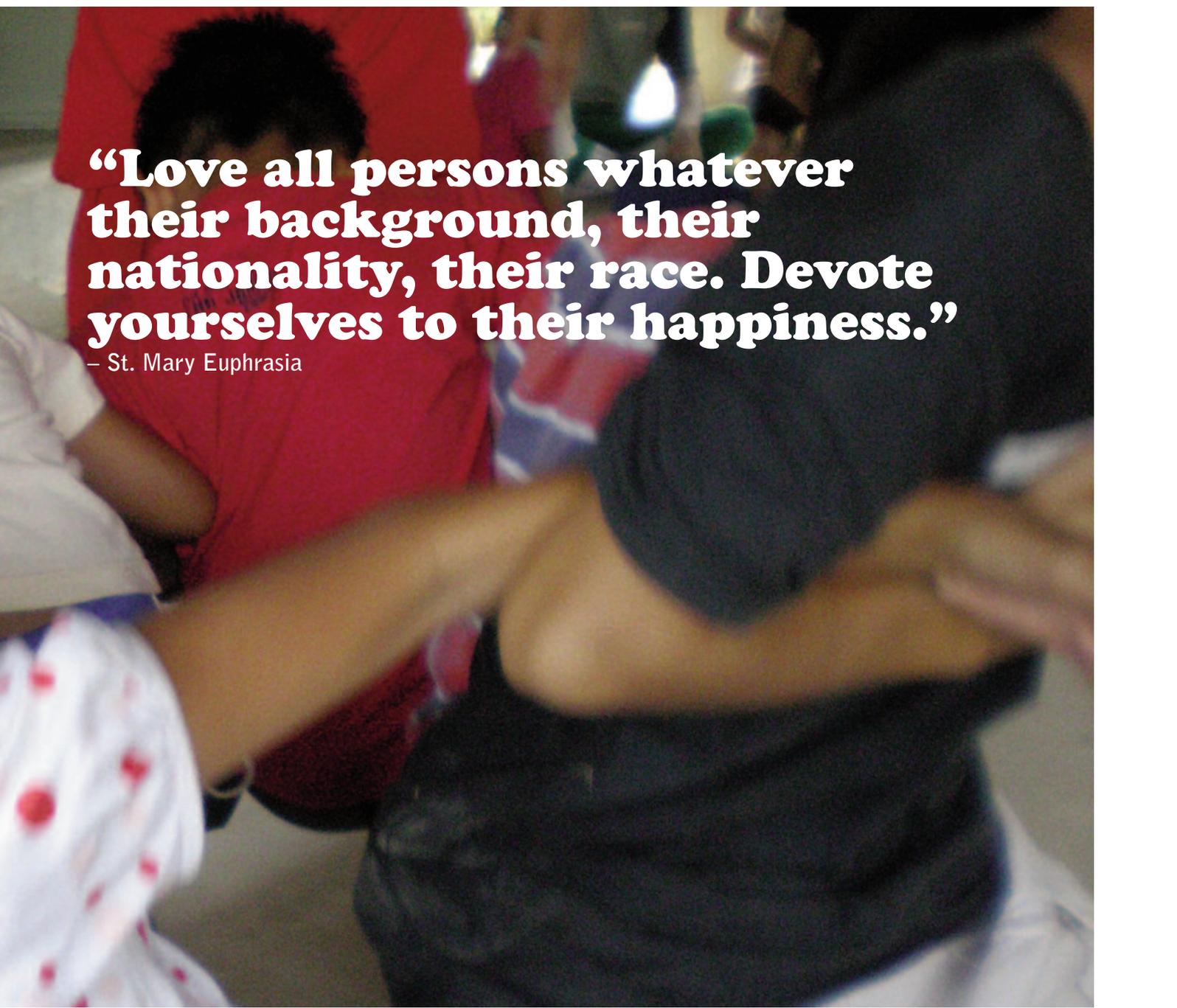
I recall vividly one of the FBR sessions, where a woman plucked up courage to stand in front of more than 180 people to share her story. For the first time, as a mother and a wife, she openly shared the pains of an abusive and violent spousal relationship. The woman ended her painful sharing with "All I want is for my husband to love me and my children. Everyday, I pray for him to love me again and care for our children. I have forgiven him from my heart." This woman showed me what true strength is – of a woman, a devoted mother and a faithful wife. When I looked at the audience, there were many teary-eyed faces, including those of men. I was just

pleased that this woman found a space and time in this program to stand tall, and courageously share her story.



So is the FBR program successful? To me, the answer is a resounding YES! It is more than a success story; it is a story of the faithfulness of God's love and compassion. The words of St. Mary Euphrasia are real to me, "If we cannot accomplish great things, let us be content with doing a little... find fresh courage in God." I did.

Parts of this story were used with permission from the Good Shepherd Sisters and Sister Maria Dipal from the book Living Stories: in Her Footsteps.

A large, slightly blurred photograph showing a group of people, likely participants in the FBR program, sitting in a circle. The focus is on the text overlaid on the image. The people are wearing various colored clothing, including a prominent red shirt on the left and a dark blue shirt on the right.

“Love all persons whatever their background, their nationality, their race. Devote yourselves to their happiness.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia

Learning Resource Centre (Pukak)

A PROGRAM THAT TEACHES ABOUT VALUES IN A FUN WAY



Part of the children's ministry, the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) has a home in the Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre complex in Pukak. The programs here enable children to learn in a fun way. It is not a program based on the school curriculum but rather to teach children values. The program complements the work they do at school, in this case, SK Pukak. Some 70 students, aged between five and 12 years of age, from SK Pukak attend the program on Mondays and Wednesdays.

The programs are prepared in advance and go according to themes. The kids also do

art and craft projects that are related to the theme of the month. They have done a program on the environment where they made sign boards saying "Please Keep My Village Clean" out of recycled wood. The Centre is close to the point where the white water-rafting route for tourists begins on the Kiulu River so these signs serve as an important reminder for everyone who comes to the area. The kids also made rubbish bins that were kerbau-, dog- and rain-proof.

In January, they did a program on what a new year means. They were encouraged to

write down the one thing they wanted to achieve in the year ahead. They buried these resolutions and will dig them up at the end of the year to see if they have achieved what they wanted to achieve. For Chinese New Year they learned about Chinese culture. During the Harvest Festival they have folk-tale telling competitions.

The kids also have an ongoing baseball league - which, apart from giving them physical exercise, teaches them English, motor skills, the game itself and language through sports.



There is also a “Keeping Me Safe” program for the kids – a compulsory program for all learning centres – which is about prevention of child sexual abuse.

While there is this established LRC in Pukak, there are also LRCs that are established in places (such as local schools) at the same time every week for children to attend.

These other LRCs are located in three villages in Tenghilan at Kg Lapai, Kg Soromboton and Kg Tenghilan. PKGS works with the local communities to run these centres. Says PKGS Sabah Director

Chin Poh Choo: “We do the planning of the activities together. We then run it on alternate weeks and in between the volunteers from the community will run it. We try to work with schools for this program. In Tenghilan, the students and staff from St. James run it on the alternate weeks.”

A new program, the Mobile Resource Centre, was initiated in September 2009 for children in SK Lokud. This is done by the staff of the Pukak centre who drive by four-wheel drive vehicles then walk in about 300 metres to get to the kampung. “We get about 30 kids there,” explains Chin

Poh Choo. This Mobile Resource Centre is set to expand in 2010 to cover other outlying villages in the district of Tuaran, and to Kota Belud.

Overall, the feedback on this program has been very positive. “The teachers say that the kids that attend our Learning Centres do better at school than the ones that don’t.”

SK Pukak acknowledged the role that PKGS is playing in its community in 2009 when they invited PKGS to the school’s Speech Day and presented them with a large painting.



THE JOY OF CHILDREN

Evelyn Sikul, the Learning Resource Centre Program Co-ordinator, tells her story.

When I was told by Poh Choo about being transferred to the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) in Sabah, I had mixed feelings. I was happy and at the same time, felt nervous. Happy because I would go back to Sabah, but nervous because I would oversee the whole LRC program. The question that I asked myself at that time was: "Do I have the ability to do it?". Poh Choo's assurance and affirmation that I could do the job made me willing to take up the challenge to learn. I would never know my own capability if I didn't try to see how far I could go.

4th January 2009 – my first day of work at the LRC. It was chaotic for the first two weeks. Though we had prepared the activities for the children, it was not sufficient. We realised that we first had to improve either our teaching skills or build relation-

ships with the children or both.

In structuring the program I encountered some challenges on where and how to begin as I was trained in early childhood education whilst the children were in primary school. Additionally, most of the volunteers did not have teaching backgrounds. With my limited experience, I had to guide them on lesson plans and delivery for the week.

It was a tough beginning for everyone but I felt encouraged and supported by everyone's eagerness to learn and try.

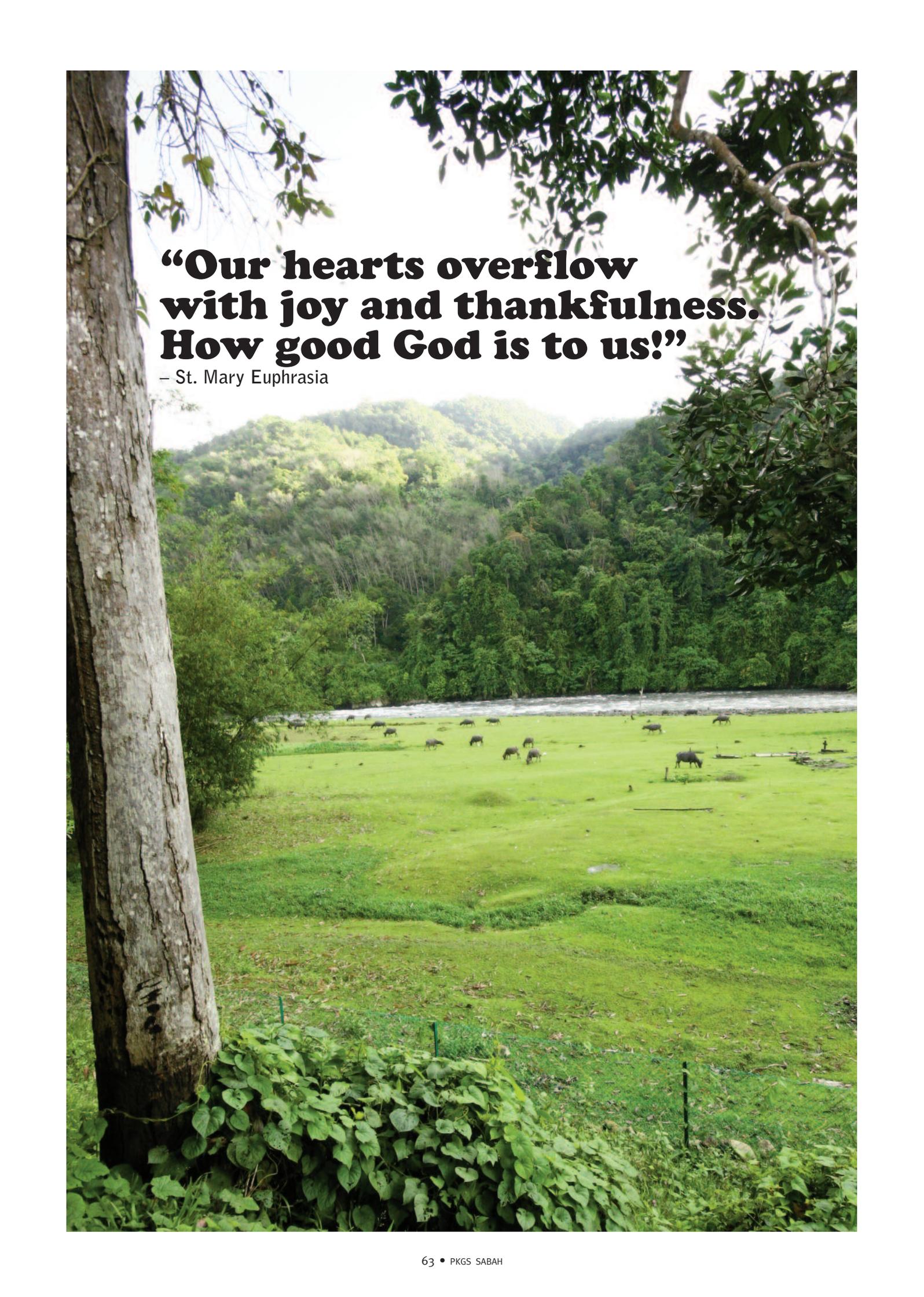
Knowing that we needed some basic skills, Gloria Bon, the former Principal of Maryvale Kindergarten, was invited to come to Sabah to give us sessions on Multiple Intelligences (MI). We were taught how to do lesson plans. From then on we gradually built our syllabus. Stella Bulugu, a university student with UMS, was the main person to help us to put the entire syllabus together. And I thank her

for this great effort.

The LRC is doing well and we have reached out to many children from Kampung Pukak. Following this, in September 2009, the Mobile Resource Centre was initiated to reach out to more children in Kampung Lokub. What really touched me was the joy in the faces of the children and their eagerness to learn. Their enthusiasm re-energises me. They are appreciative even of simple activities and bring back my own childhood memories. I am happy when I am surrounded by children. Their parents and villagers are also grateful for our presence in their villages.

Through the LRC, we have learned a lot – faced challenges as well as found joy in touching the lives of the children.



A scenic landscape featuring a wide river with white water rapids, surrounded by lush green forested hills. In the foreground, a large tree trunk is visible on the left, and a field of water buffalo is grazing near the riverbank. The sky is bright and overcast.

**“Our hearts overflow
with joy and thankfulness.
How good God is to us!”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia

YouthPREPlink

OUR PROGRAM FOR YOUTHS FINDS A BRAND NEW HOME

Fusat Belia YOUTH-PREP *Alamesra*

The YouthPREPLink program, which caters to teens from Form Three upwards, has recently found a permanent home in Alamesra, Kota Kinabalu – an area that is in KK’s ‘education belt’, which includes University Malaysia Sabah and other educational institutions such as UiTM, Polytechnic Sabah, Masterskills and Unitar.

Sponsored by Sabah Credit Corporation (at a monthly nominal rent of RM1), the

Youth Prep Centre is 1,500 square feet and staffed by four full-timers. Provided with high-ceilinged raw space, PKGS added a mezzanine level to create more usable space for activities. There is a conference room to fit 12 people, a counseling room for students and drop-in youths, there is also free internet service available at stand-up stations and a music corner. Then there is the multipurpose area for workshops for up to 20 people, which can also be converted to fit seating for 50 peo-

ple for theatre-style events.

“Our partners can give talks here about employment opportunities,” explained Chin Poh Choo. “The government agencies run programs for short-term certificate and skills-based programs. Our partners also run recruitment interviews here. We also have volunteer lawyers who come to vet contracts for youths who are going to be employed and who provide advice on a variety of issues.”





“May your zeal be universal, not affected either by countries or individuals.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia

The YouthPREPLink Services program is also carried out here. Level 1 of the program deals with English proficiency, self-development, social issues and managing boy-girl relationships. Level 2 is an exposure program, which provides the opportunity for youths to serve rural communities by running programs for children, organising talks for women and families on topics such as drug abuse and so on.

Through programs such as this, PKGS has

nurtured volunteers for service to the community. “We are looking at adopting a local community - Kg Pulau Penampang - which is a settlement next to the 1Borneo Shopping Centre [located opposite the Youth PREP Centre in Alamesra]. These are people from all over Sabah who came and settled here to work in the KK area. Some have relocated their whole families here. We would like to run a women’s, youth and children’s program with them,” said Chin Poh Choo. “It will be the main village

of activity. We will have commitments such as Learning Resource Centres for the kids every week. But of course, what we provide will depend on the volunteers we get in this area.”









A JOURNEY WITH SABAH'S YOUTH

Story by Sister Jossie Sili, Youth Manager and pioneer of the YouthPrepLink Program.

If St. Mary Euphrasia were alive today, I am sure she would begin her speech on the 50th Anniversary of PKGS Teenage Centre with "Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart". That is the same statement I would like to say to God, to each person I have encountered in my life's journey, my religious sisters, the youth, staff and volunteers and my family members and friends, for their support throughout the apostolate assigned to me till this present moment – the Youth Ministry.

"Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart" ... As I reflect on my journey through the various ministries I have been involved in since I was a postulant till today, I can only express my deep gratitude to God for the journey. I would not say that it was all wonderful but it was interesting. It was interesting because I went through the different stages of learning, the ups and downs, the joys and frustrations too.

After my year of Theology in 2001, I was assigned to the Madonna Heights Community in Kuala Lumpur where I worked full time at Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (Teenage Centre). During the weekends, I would be with the Sabahan, Sarawakian and Indonesian youths and families in St. Anthony's Church in Jalan Pudu, Kuala Lumpur.

I encountered many youths who were victims of broken families. They were confused, lost, and insecure with no one to turn to. I realized that this was the reality that a growing number of East Malaysian youths were facing in the city.

When I eventually returned to Sabah, there was this realization of a need to help Sabahan youths, especially those from the rural villages, before they migrated to West Malaysia seeking a better future. Hence in 2005, the YouthPrepLink Program was conceptualized and launched in November. From its humble beginnings as YouthPrepLink Phase 1, in 2007 it extended to YouthPrepLink Phase 2 where graduates of Phase 1 conducted part of the program

in rural villages. Finally, in January 2010, its very own drop-in centre – The Alamesra Youth-Prep Centre – was established in Kota Kinabalu.



The growth of this ministry was made possible through the networking and collaboration of many concerned individuals and groups who volunteered their time and talents in conducting programs for the youths. We each came with different talents and gifts, complementing each other so that we could be more effective in our outreach efforts.

My hopes and dreams for the Youth Ministry are still growing each day. I feel there is a lot more we can do for the youths. I continue to pray for humility to journey with young people. May I allow myself to be inspired by the Good Shepherd so that I may grow in understanding, compassion and love each day for youth at risk.





“I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL”

Jacklay John, graduate of YouthPrepLink.

I was privileged to be one of the five youths selected to undergo a three-month Intensive Preparatory Course (IPC) for internship training at UTI, an international company that offers supply chain solutions. The IPC is the first of its kind conducted by Good Shepherd Rural Community Development Sabah.

Throughout the preparatory program there have been many learning experiences for me. Not only have I improved tremendously in my English proficiency, I have also gained a better perspective of the various people, cultures and countries in the world through the Geography lessons. My Mathematical skills have also gotten better. We also had lessons about Social Etiquette & Personal Grooming, which emphasized the basics of courtesy, respect, work ethics, personal care and self image.

An important aspect of our program was the Community Project where we were

involved in providing learning support to undocumented children and adults twice a week in a nearby location. Initially, we assisted other volunteers who were teaching Basic English and Bahasa Melayu but later on some of us were given specific classes to teach. The age group of the students ranged from six to 20 years old. At the beginning, I was a bit afraid as it was my first experience working with undocumented children. However, when I saw how poor and how hard they had to work to earn a meager living, I was very moved by their plight and decided that I would do my utmost best to help them. Over the three months, we became friends with all the students. The fact that many of them were really keen to improve themselves greatly inspired me to also improve myself.

Working with the undocumented children brought a strong sense of balance to the program as it made me realize that there should be no boundaries in helping those who are in poverty. Also, in helping others, I believe that I have become a better person and friend.



Jacklay, second from right, with other graduates of the IPC and Morna Humphrey, their English teacher.

The IPC program has been made possible because of the involvement and support of many Good Shepherd volunteers, staff and sisters. I am eternally grateful to all of them. I also want to praise and thank God as I believe that we were chosen by Him to be a part of this wonderful experience. As we embark on a new phase of our lives, I ask that you keep my friends and I in your prayers. I will never forget the support and kindness shown and hope that I will be able to contribute to the growth of the PKGS ministries in a significant way. God bless!



“The Good Shepherd’s approach and care differs for each person, according to each one’s need and situation.”

– St. Mary Euphrasia





Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre

A MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY IN WHICH TO CARRY OUT OUR PROGRAMS



The Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre, located in Kg Pukak, Kiulu, District of Tuaran, is a complex of buildings with facilities which can accommodate up to 50 people for live-in programs. The focus of this Centre is to provide a venue in the rural setting for community development programs and activities. Its facilities include:

- i. one multi-purpose hall with a seating capacity of 80 persons. This hall can be converted into sleeping quarters for groups
- ii. six twin-sharing rooms with attached bathrooms
- iii. one family room
- iv. one meeting room
- v. six bathroom-cum-showers

vi. one fully-equipped kitchen

Construction of the Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre (GSRTC) was completed in November 2007 and handed over to PKGS on 4th December 2007. It began operating as a Centre offering training facilities with effect from January 2008.

The land upon which GSRTC is located was gifted by Mr. Madias Masilang to the Good Shepherd Sisters for their works in rural community development. The construction of the Centre was funded by donations of cash and kind from individual and corporate donors.

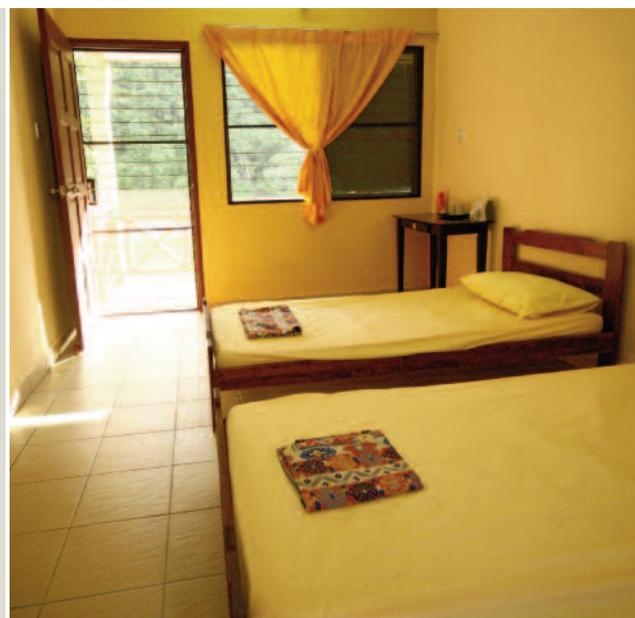
The Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre has become the hub of community devel-

opment activities for the village of Pukak. It is the venue for the Learning Resource Centre, women's enrichment programmes, youth / children activities and holiday camps.

The Centre faces the first starting point of the Kiulu White Water Rafting route and is ideal for retreats, team-building activities and group sessions away from the hustle and bustle of city life. It is also open for use at reasonable rates when the Centre is not used for programs by PKGS.







**“Our mission is to receive
with open arms those who
are the most forsaken.”**

– St. Mary Euphrasia





BENEFACTORS

With gratitude in our hearts we express our appreciation to all who have made it possible for Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd to develop into what it is today.

We thank...

those **who have gone before us**, the pioneers of the Good Shepherd Mission, for their prophetic vision, courage, commitment and zeal...

the **Catholic Church** – the Archbishops, the Bishops, clergy and all Religious Congregations – for welcoming the Good Shepherd Sisters and their ministries into their dioceses and parishes...

our **benefactors**, corporates and individuals, who have generously supported our works over the years through donations of cash and kind...

Government agencies – Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia, the police, the hospitals, the education department, the schools etc – for supporting our efforts to provide protection, rehabilitation and reintegration programs for the residents in our shelters and the communities we work with...

NGOs and other faith-based organisations (FBOs) who share the Good Shepherd mission and collaborated with us in our works, sharing their expertise and resources...

our **volunteers** who have generously committed their time, resources and talents to help the residents and communities we work with reach wholeness and full potential...

family and friends who have supported the works through their encouragement, care and concern...

our **staff**, all of whom assume different roles within the organisation and are the backbone of all PKGS's services, sharing the joys and challenges of affecting positive change in people who live on the margins...

the **women, children, youths and families** who are beneficiaries of all our works... it is for each one of you that PKGS continues to exist, grow and find new expressions of reaching out to make that positive difference...

With deep gratitude,
The Good Shepherd Sisters

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart was conceptualised and made possible by:

Faridah Stephens, Publisher, whose understanding and appreciation of the depth of PKGS's works came across especially in all the articles that were written by her and the stories that she helped to edit. Her passion for PKGS coupled with her professional expertise made the production of this book an enriching experience.

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Other team members from The Writers' Publishing House Sdn Bhd who contributed in one way or another to the production of *Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart*.

With deep gratitude,
Theresa Symons
Executive Director

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 - Family Building and Reconciliation
 - Good Shepherd Rural Training Centre
 - Learning / Mobile Resource Centre
 - Pusat Belia YouthPrep Alamesra
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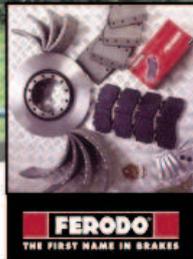
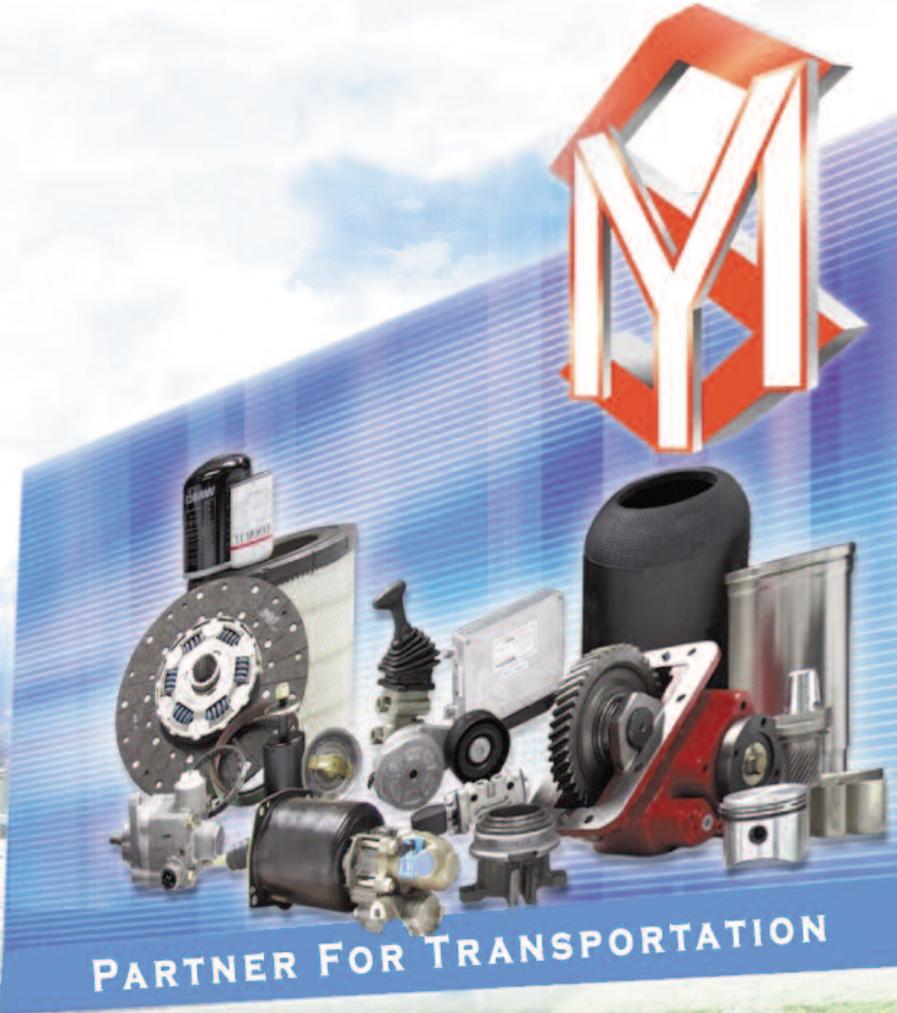
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