



基督教  
靈實  
協會  
HAVEN  
OF HOPE  
CHRISTIAN SERVICE

以愛心服事關懷 | With Love, We Serve and Care

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March 2020 ISSUE 41

# Holistic Care Centre Quarterly Newsletter



*A Ray of Hope  
in the Dark*

## Walking through the Pandemic Together

When confronted with the sudden onset of COVID-19, I cannot help but think of “SARS” 17 years ago. I believe that the experience of SARS still haunts many Hong Kong People. When a virus outbreak happens again, people inevitably will worry, afraid and panic, yet the God I believe in always reminds me:

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

This scripture has given me profound encouragement and comfort in my past 30 years as a doctor, especially when I joined the “dirty team” 17 years ago. I still remember the time when I worked at the Department of Nephrology of the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital. When the SARS epidemic continued to spread, colleagues from different departments under the Division of General Medicine had to draw lots to decide who were to join the “dirty team.” At the time, a colleague suggested that I be exempted as I had to take care of my wife and son. Yet as I saw the need, and wished to offer myself. That night, my wife and I prayed a prayer of entrustment. My son, who was only 5 years old, prayed, “Lord, please let my father’s name be quickly drawn.” The child’s innocent thought was to hope that his dad could be quickly picked, the work could be quickly completed, and his dad could then quickly return home. The Lord really heard his innocent prayer. My team was the first to be drawn, and I was the first person from the team to get selected to join the “dirty team.”

I needed to leave my wife and children temporarily to join my colleagues in the battle against SARS. It was not easy, yet the presence of our Heavenly Father and his encouraging words gave me peace that surpassed all understanding, Day by day, He renewed my strength so I could cope with the work of the day and to take good care of every patient. In addition to God’s grace, I must thank my colleagues for their collective efforts to honour their posts faithfully. They cared for other peoples’ needs and were always ready to share the work. Amidst the hardship, I saw the professionalism of Hong Kong medical workers and the beauty of humanity, which still continues to touch me till this day. It is my firm belief that the current pandemic will pass, so let us keep up the spirit of helping and caring for one another, and to walk through the adversity together. Also, I pray that the pandemic will soon be under control, for everyone to experience godly peace that surpasses all understanding, and for remembrance of the hard work of frontline medical workers, may God give them strength!

In view of the severity of the pandemic, the Holistic Care Centre has to purchase more protective equipment, and the admission of new patients and reception of visitors have been greatly affected. Various fund-raising events for the Centre have also been postponed. In addition to the funding deficit for the past six months, this year's worst case scenario would be a shortfall of approximately 5 million Hong Kong Dollars. However, we firmly believe that the Lord will take care of us and provide for our needs. We sincerely ask that you remember us in your prayers and continue to support our work at the Holistic Care Centre.

Although faced with adversity, I can see the Lord's abundant grace just like I did 17 years ago. Recently, we received many appreciation cards from family members of our residents thanking our staff for their dedicated service. They truly experienced "Embrace the Last Journey with Love" as not only a slogan, but stands for our perseverance to put it into action, and this touches me deeply. Additionally, there has been specific donation to our Staff Welfare Fund which enables us to do more for our colleagues during this challenging time, such as gifting them with pandemic prevention supplies like moisturizing hand sanitisers and raincoats. This helps to put their minds at ease as they continue to work hard together to care for our residents and their families.



We can see the smile under the mask, as your accompany gives us great encouragement.



The current pandemic seemingly distances people from one other, but it cannot separate us from God's love, nor can it break the friendship among people! Thank you God for your abundant grace and thank you all for always walking alongside us!

*"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble!" (Psalm 46:1-2)*

Haven of Hope Sister Annie Skau Holistic Care Centre  
Deputy Medical Superintendent

Dr. Paul Wong

## Tested in the Wilderness

Chaplain Wan Yim Wah

Living in Hong Kong, people are used to peace and prosperity, having ample food and clothes, and travelling every season. The society went through sudden changes last year, differences in opinion among families and friends have caused many fractured relationships. This is followed by the Covid-19 pandemic, and people in Hong Kong fought for masks, toilet papers and rice. People find themselves living in fear and life has seemingly lost its peace and balance. We all want to preserve basic necessities for our daily lives, keep the wealth we own, yet we discover that life itself is fleeting and beyond our control.

The social environment, as well as individual lives, change in a split second. When people fall sick, they instantly lose their health, work, identity, mobility..., just like being alone in the wilderness, all sorts of thoughts would inevitably occur: My illness is causing me so much suffering, will God take away my physical pains? Will I be miraculously healed? How can I keep everything I own? No matter how one prepares and plans, in the course of illness and pain, death still gets closer and closer.

During the process of losing stability, facing danger, and experiencing threats to one's health, it is worth reflecting on Jesus's experience in the wilderness. In the wilderness, there was no water, food nor shelter. Instead, wind blew, rain fell, daytime was scorching hot, and night time was freezing cold. No one was there to help and beasts roamed the surroundings. These many dangers put surviving to the test. Satan came with "good things" to tempt Jesus to leave God, using basic and justified human needs (food) to test the Lord, yet Jesus refused to turn rocks into food. This is because the meaning of life is more than things we need in order to survive, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Satan then induced Jesus to perform miracles to overtake God's right (jump from a high ground and not get hurt), yet Jesus resisted the temptation and refused to replace God's sovereignty. Lastly, Satan tempted Jesus with splendours of the world, and again, Jesus refused the pride of life by firmly saying "No" to power, wealth and self-desires.

The course of our patients' illnesses is similar to Jesus's test of faith in the wilderness: they lose "good things," yet continue to place their faith in God. A patient who became a new believer had not received much education and had been a hawker for his entire life. During the baptism, the patient kept nodding when asked to declare his faith. Even the chaplain was worried if he could properly proclaim his faith. The pastor preached the gospel by answering a set of questions raised by himself. Afterwards, he asked the patient an open-ended but deep question, "Who is Jesus?" The patient thought for a while and answered, "our Lord Jesus Christ." When asked about his faith, a totally illiterate patient who struggled to form words amidst his sickness was able to place his hand on his heart and loudly proclaim, "Jesus Christ is in my heart." Another patient lost her vision due to a tumour on her face and was severely restricted in activity, she could no longer make the cake she loved and was unable to eat because of severe pain. Although not being able to do anything, the patient was still able to bear witness for God with her faith and she waited with hope for her future resurrected body in heaven.

The unstable society, economic recession, spread of the pandemic, illness, many people's lives have hit a rock bottom. Losing a job, falling out of love, getting a divorce, and experiencing failures – all these difficulties have seemingly placed one into the dangerous wilderness with brutal conditions and threats to one's life. The pain from broken social connections are similar to attacks by beasts, which cannot be faced with one's own strength. Life is not a pursuit of daily needs, not an adherence to all of one's wishes and plans, and not a chase after a lifetime of luxury and fame. Through Jesus's experience in the wilderness, let us understand that the pursuit of life is not only to seek "good things," but to seek "better blessings": to know and believe in the Lord.

***Jesus answered, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.', 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.', 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'* (Excerpt: Matthew 4:4,7,10 )**

Life Story of patient

## I will not be shaken

Interviewed and written by CY

“We are born with nothing; we leave with nothing. As long as we are safe and sound, the rest are small matters.” Said Auntie Pik Lan with her over 95 years of wisdom of living. Auntie Pik Lan is attaining 100 years old, yet she has no difficulty in recalling the past. This makes the interview exceptionally interesting.



Auntie Pik Lan has 6 sons and daughters, 10 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. Although she couldn't instantly recall all their names, she was enthusiastic and full of energy when I mentioned about her children. Auntie Pik Lan said her children had been very mature and disciplined since young, she never had to worry about their study, and they had contributed to the

society in their respective professions. But above all, the harmonious and affectionate relationship among her children and the utmost care they give to Auntie Pik Lan are the most impressive and enviable. According to Myrna, the Filipino domestic helper who looks after Auntie Pik Lan, ever since her admission to the Holistic Care Centre, her daughters and sons have been taking turns to visit her every single day. Auntie Pik Lan humbly shared that she had never been to school, nor she had any strategies on parenting, all she did was to influence and teach them by being their role model.

Auntie Pik Lan murmured some scattered memories of the early days when they lived in the Sau Mau Ping squatter area. With rich emotions and cute expressions, she imitated the kids crying and yearning for food. In that era, every family had to work very hard to survive. On one hand she had to take care of her children, and on the other hand she had to do some sewing works to increase the family income. Life was busy and the household was never rich, yet she held on to the

motto, “Love my children, and love the children of others.” Whenever she heard neighbouring kids wailing because of hunger, she would bring them home and feed them. “It doesn’t matter how much I have. I can just eat what I get, whether it is plenty or little.” Although most of the time, what could offer was just a simple meal, her great love was remembered by those who benefited from it until now. Auntie Pik Lan told us about a child who emigrated to the United Kingdom when he grew up. But he still keeps in touch with her. At one time she learned that he came back to Hong Kong to visit his family, she even invited him to stay with her so he could save some money. This is her personality: kind and charitable.

Auntie Pik Lan’s daughter, Margaret, had inherited her mother’s optimistic personality. She had gone through various challenges in life, and many times she was so close to death, yet she confronted them positively and battled on. She uses her life to influence other people’s lives. In one of the interviews, Margaret testified how her mother’s “never bend down” character had given her strength

to persevere, empowering her to overcome every difficulty in life and never give up. Auntie Pik Lan is old, and she has to live with many illnesses, but she lives everyday full of joy just like a child. Whenever she hears the melody of familiar songs like “Kang Ding Love Song” and “O Come O Come Emmanuel”, she sings along loudly. When she talks about memories of the past, she laughs. She gladly embraces the blessings and sufferings in her life and closely follows God’s will by watching every step she makes while alive. This is because she firmly believes that everything that happens to her has been endorsed by God.

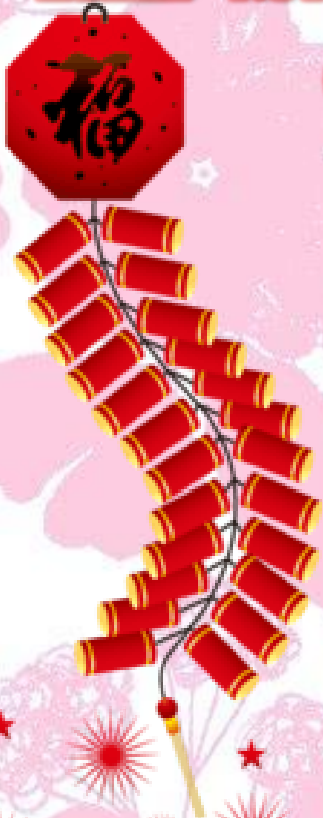


*“I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure.”*

*(Psalm 16:8-9)*

# HAPPY MOMENTS

## Lunar New Year Celebration



Lunch Gathering

## Mass Greetings





# CONGRATS

## Long Service Awardees 20 years



**Wong Pui Siu  
(Nursing Assistant)**



**Wong Shui Hong  
(Nursing Assistant)**

## 10 years



**Wong Ting Yan  
(Register Nurse)**



**Tsui Oi So  
(General Services Assistant)**



**Cheung Lai Ming  
(Clerk)**



**Thank you all for your good work!**

## **DEATH** -- The Hardest Topic for Family Members to Raise With Terminal Patients

When a family member is suffering from acute illness or even gets to the final stage, should we talk to him/her about death? It often puzzles family members. After all, death is still taboo in Chinese society. If the patient is a close relative, such as a parent, spouse or even a son or daughter, emotions as a result of raising the topic can be a huge challenge for both family members and the patient. In health care services, there are usually two kinds of "talking about death": (1) when we inform the patient of the bad news for the first time (BBN - Breaking Bad News), for instance, the patient is told to have terminal illness, incurable disease etc. (2) death is predicted in the foreseeable future either because of the patient's old age or continual deterioration despite treatment. In such cases a need to talk about death arises. Our Centre's experiences are mainly of the latter.

### **Why Talk about Death?**

#### 1. Self-determination (尊重自決)

If a patient knows well in advance that his illness is no longer curable, relevant parties should provide care according to the patient's wishes. Generally, because doctors are obliged to safeguard patients' right to know about their medical status, doctors will communicate with patients so that they understand how their conditions may develop, the diagnosis and treatment plans. However, due to health constraints of terminal patients, for example due to exhaustion, their voices can easily be buried under divergent opinions. Therefore, talking about death with terminal patients is an empowerment process that helps those who wish to presume a care plan for themselves to obtain the information they need and take part in the planning and implementation of their own end-of-life plan.

#### 2. Spiritual Care (關懷靈性)

Talking about death is not merely about entrusting one's affairs, rather, it is an appropriate occasion to understand how the patient apprehends death. When impending death, some patients may experience shock psychologically and spiritually. When patients look back on their lives, search for the meaning of life and figure out the goals of living on, they are more able to face death. Therefore, during

consultation, family members can also explore the philosophy and religion in life with patients, which can help them integrate a positive attitude towards life.

### 3. Enrichment (完滿人生)

In the case of "talking about death", it is often surprising to find that people in late stages of life may still carry many unsettled burdens and sorrows from the past: they can be regretful relationships, or even resentments that have been buried for many years. After all, these are water under the bridge. Before time has run out, if one can actualise the wisdom of life, finding the opportunities to say sorry and thank you, they will no longer be burdened. Some patients are elders with high prestige and have many children and grandchildren, and after discussing the topic of death, they displayed their open-mindedness through comforting their loved ones by conveying their blessings and farewells. Knowing they have lived a full life thus grants their family great relief.

All these expressions reflect that family members are not yet ready to face the death of their loved ones:

*"Take more rest, you will get well soon!"*

*"I will take you to yam cha once you've recovered!"*

*"Pray for miracles, you will be healed!"*

## Myths of Death

### 1. Why do family members want to conceal the illness?

To talk about death with our beloved ones will inevitably trigger sorrow and negative emotions. Family members often worry that patients cannot bear the devastating news. With the incentive to protect, they rather not let patients know their medical conditions. In fact, it is indeed a "cruel task" for a family to start the conversation about having to face the death of a family member. With their own sadness and pain to tackle and out of self-protection, family members tend to suppress their sorrows and avoid talking about the patient's illness, so talking about death will be even harder! Actually, this reflects that the family has not fully accepted the impending death of the patient. At this juncture, it is recommended to seek professional assistance by partnering with medical and spiritual care team to explain the latest condition and prognosis to the patient. Simultaneously, it is necessary to follow up closely on the patient's needs in all aspects<sup>1</sup> (physical, mental, social and spiritual) and also the feelings of his family members.


## 2. Will it weaken his/her determination to live if it is disclosed to him/her that death is imminent?

Family members often hope that "determination" will bring a turning point, a longer life, positive energy.... to the patient. Behind such a hope are one's values and beliefs about death. If "death" stands for eternal parting, despair, regret, and defeat, then it is indeed the greatest enemy of human destiny, and no doubt it will bring anxiety. However, from another perspective, since death is something that happens to us all, as the Bible says, "Just as people are destined to die once..." (Hebrews 9:27) How should we face it? Since life and death are the major events of our life, we really need to know and see the truth about death. It turns out when a person realizes that he/she is about to die, death can lead people to a more abundant life sentiment <sup>2</sup>(Heidegger, 1978). When people ponder upon death at a close distance, they can see clearly that "death" is the truth of life and it challenges us to cherish the present more. A serious illness disrupts many plans, but as death has set a limit to our days on earth, we get to examine and review how we can live well during this limited time.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, family members should know what are the goals of caring for the patient? Is it an endless extension of life, to stay alive till the last second, or a concerted plan to maintain the quality of life for the patient, with the goal to minimize suffering? When the chance to reverse a patient's condition is extremely slim, that may empower the patient to live the present moment well. Family members can organize family reunions and meeting with good friends, help the patient to bid farewell and express love, pass on his yet-to-fulfil dreams, arrange his finances, searching for faith and so on. As for the feeble elderly, it is not unwise to let them live freely in peace while alive, and finish well when their time on earth comes to an end. After all, terminal symptoms bring about discomfort and pain, and no one wants the elderly to endure such suffering for a long time.

## Conclusion

The deep emotions caused by death can make us so anxious that we choose to avoid the topic. However, to terminal patients who are bed-ridden day and night, who have endured all kinds of treatments for years or even witnessed the death of neighbouring patients, the thought of "When is my turn?" would have come across their minds. When patients' conditions are unstable, they can better cope with the



situation if they can stop doubting, candidly share how they feel about dying and let go of the vain hope of being healed. The illness is hard to bear, yet if talking about death is no longer taboo, and family members can adopt a gentle and gradual approach to unreservedly walk alongside the terminal patient and feeling what he feels, family members will draw closer to each other and experience an intimacy like never before. The terminal patient also gets informed of his condition and is able to depart peacefully. This will become an important source of strength to help the family to walk through bereavement.

Chaplains witness many families with members sharing the same faith and hope get to overcome the fear of death, and together they accompany the dying patient to embrace his final moment with peace. It is our firm belief that a person who is able to face death is like a fully equipped traveller who has his “Luggage of Life” nicely packed, and can then sit comfortably in the lounge for the souls, awaiting for his call from the heavenly realm. Our team wishes to be the greeting angels, so the dying could depart with no regret and the living could move on in peace.

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<sup>1</sup> WHO definition of health: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." (World Health Organization 1997,2)

<sup>2</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978). pp. 274-278.

<sup>3</sup> 溫偉耀, 《今生·來世》, 明風出版 2016, 28-31 頁

## Thank you card from family members



# Thank You

To all staff members on 3/F, Wing Wah Block, Haven of Hope

From our initial contact until I had my mother admitted to your Centre on 27 Novemebr 2019, and upon experiencing first hand and understanding more about your centre on the date of her admission, I knew for sure I could confidently entrust my mother to a professional and responsible team.

I'm thankful that during this difficult time, my mother was so well taken care of. This was so until she completed her final journey on earth. It is such a blessing that she could rest in peace and be surrounded with love.

Our family members also felt deeply of your support and encouragement, everything you had done for us was done with heart.

Our words of appreciation are endless! There are way too many people we need to thank for, including Chaplain Chiu (Judy), Nurse Lam (Laetitia), Nurse Lee (Priscilla) and many more, please forgive us for not being able to list out all the names!

We truly witnessed how you "Embrace the Last Journey with Love".

A place with love & peace

## 捐款表格 Donation Form

盼望得到您的支持，讓我們能為院友及家屬提供全人生命晚期照顧、長者復康治療及優質療養/ 長期護理照顧服務，一起攜手「用愛擁抱晚晴」。

We need your support in order to provide holistic end-of-life care, specialist geriatric rehabilitation service and quality infirmary/ long-term care. Let's join hands to “**Embrace the Last Journey with Love**”.

- 按月捐款 Monthly donation       一次性捐款 One-off donation      ( 請在適當方格內加 “✓”)
- \$500       \$1,000       \$2,000       \$5,000       其他 Others : \_\_\_\_\_
- 上述捐款有指定用途 Designated purpose of Donation (請註明 Please specify : \_\_\_\_\_)

### 捐款方法 Donation Method

1. 劃線支票 Crossed Cheque : 祈付 Payable to “Haven of Hope Christian Service – HCC”
2. 直接存入戶口 Direct Debit : 匯豐銀行 HSBC 808-8-000610
3. 信用卡 Credit Card :  
 VISA       MasterCard       American Express

持卡人姓名 : \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name :

信用卡號碼 : \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number :

有效日期 : \_\_\_\_\_

Card Valid Until :

持卡人簽署 : \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature :

請將支票或銀行入數收據連同填妥之表格寄回：新界將軍澳靈實路 19-21 號或傳真至 2703 5575。  
**Please send cheque or deposit slip together with completed donation form to: 19-21, Haven of Hope Road, Tseung Kwan O, N.T. or by Fax: 2703 5575.**

### 捐款人資料 Donor's Details

姓名 Name : \_\_\_\_\_ 聯絡電話 Telephone No. : \_\_\_\_\_

電郵 Email Address : \_\_\_\_\_

如要索取收據 (HK\$100 或以上)，請填寫地址：

Please provide address if receipt required (for HK\$100 or above) :

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I AGREE to the use of my personal data by HOHCS (SASHCC inclusively) for service promotion and fund raising purposes.

簽署 Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

日期 Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## Haven of Hope Sister Annie Skau Holistic Care Centre

Haven of Hope Sister Annie Skau Holistic Care Centre (SASHCC) is a non-profit, self-financed nursing home with a total of 100 beds. Upholding Sister Annie Skau's spirit of "Respecting Life · Impacting Life", the Centre provides integrated services and holistic care to the frail elders, chronically sick and late-stage cancer patients. With our professional care team, comprehensive facilities and tranquil environment, the Centre aims at bringing comfort, dignity and peace to the residents in the face of physical illness and even death.

### Prayer items:

1. Please pray continually for the pandemic to come under control as soon as possible and for the physical and spiritual health for our colleagues, residents and their families. We are grateful that our colleagues in the Psychosocial Spiritual Care Service Department are willing walk an extra mile to set up the video call service, allowing patients to see and talk to family members they miss so much through virtual meetings and phone calls on days they cannot visit.
2. The Centre is having a budget deficit over the past 6 months, with the impact of the pandemic, the worst case scenario would be a deficit of around 5 million HKD. May God take care of us and provide our needs.
3. "Heart To Heart Foundation limited" will hold a charity movie gala on 28th April, in order to raise funds for the "Psychosocial Spiritual Care Service Department" of the Centre. May God bless our preparatory work to go smoothly.

STAMP

靈實司務道寧養院

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Sister Annie Skau Holistic Care Centre**

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New Territories, Hong Kong**

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