



Bishops, Religious, Priests & Lay Participants in the BILA II East Asian Meeting on Women.

family system, where young women do not want to marry and start a family.

iv. In the neglect of human dignity seen in the commodification of the human person in mistreatment of migrant workers, exploitation of women's sexuality in the entertainment and advertising industry, abortion, and human trafficking.

v. In the sexual harassment of women in the Church.

vi. In their desperation due to desertion, infidelity, divorce, and family disintegration.

vii. In the split between gospel and culture that has allowed the widespread violence to women to continue unaddressed.

**2. We felt the wounds of women:**

- i. In the migrant and multi-cultural families (with imported foreign brides);
- ii. In working as care givers, domestic workers .
- iii. In grappling with inequality of men and women in the Church;
- iv. In domestic violence;
- v. In the impact of globalization seen in the negative attitudes towards the aged and their care;
- vi. In the phenomena that have affected the family and marriage such as poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, gambling, internet game addiction, and suicide.

**“God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty”**

We are extremely concerned about the influence of unbridled consumerism and greed in our society today. All these in one way or another affect the lives of many, particularly the lives of women in a very profound way. We need to approach these problems from the perspective of women, in order to understand their reality and to respond accordingly. During Mary's time she too encountered the wounds of women battered, raped, and marginalized in her society. Mary's Magnificat today would denounce greed, materialistic values, selfishness, unfaithfulness, violence done to women and to all the weak and wounded of society. She calls us to examine the structures in which we live and the cultures that have formed us as women.

**C. Challenges & Recommendations: “God has shown mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever”**

- i. To model equality and mutual respect in relationships between women and men within the Church which would affect the way they relate to each other in life.
- ii. To examine the underlying reasons why women in East Asia are choosing not to marry and start a family.



Participants thanking the local parish that hosted a Eucharistic Celebration & Dinner

- iii. To empower aboriginal women who marry, have children, live in poverty and suffer domestic violence.
- iv. To support victims of sexual harassment as well as create awareness on sexuality in the Church for both men and women.
- v. To denounce modern trends such as the mushrooming of casinos, violence to women, mistreatment of foreign workers and the insatiable desire for pleasure.
- vi. To restore the sacredness of women's bodies and sexuality from its devaluation in popular culture.
- vii. To pastor and support immigrant women and foreign spouses in their integration into local society and the parish.
- viii. To raise awareness and

consciousness of women's issues through the Small Christian Communities.

**D. Conclusion:**

**“God has kept the promise he has made to our ancestors and has come to the help of His servant Israel”**

We are grateful to FABC Office of Laity & Family, Women's Desk, The Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference, Bishop John Lee and the Hsinchu diocese, and the local organizing committee, for their generous hospitality in hosting the meeting. With the song of Mary's Magnificat stirring us to action; with the Spirit of God burning in our hearts, we return with expectation and hope and invite the Church in East Asia to consider

seriously the challenges and assist in implementing the recommendations, knowing that **God is doing great things for us.**



Sr. Theresa Yih-Lan introduces our 2nd resource person Sr. Choi Hae-Young

## Youth Desk

**EAST ASIAN CONSULTATION ON YOUTH** March 11-13 2010,



Jessica Joy Candelano

The FABC-Youth Desk in coordination with the Diocesan Youth Commission of Hong Kong, held the first consultation on youth in East Asia.

East Asia includes ecclesiastical territories namely - Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Macau and Hong Kong. Since Central Asia is still a growing sub-region and with a similar context as East Asia, Mongolia was also invited to participate.

Fifteen national youth animators/chaplains from the youth commissions participated in the meeting held in the Diocesan Pastoral Center of

Hong Kong. Some youth movements present in Hong Kong were also invited to participate. The meeting explored concrete ways of collaborating for the young in Asia. While the Asian youth gatherings (Asian Youth Day and Asian Youth Ministers' Meeting) made it possible to get to know each other and find ways of exchanging resources and expertise, the consultation enabled the group to focus on the similar realities young people are facing in the sub-region.

Among many concerns raised, was a need among young people in East Asia to be assisted in the formation of self-identity. The youth ministers cited the difficulty in young people to trust themselves and others. Intimacy within the family is not established and because of this young people find it even more difficult to

adjust to the bigger community where they need to belong.

They also expressed the need to be recognized for their capacities and gifts as well as their distinct role in the society. Their modern, complex lifestyle has also affected their sense of values. They have equated material wealth with the value and capacity of a person. With this prevailing reality is an obvious need to re-establish the important relationships in young people's lives – family, peers, school and the parish community.

A quick look at the services provided by the youth ministry and the church, awakened the youth ministers on the challenges of restructuring and/or reorienting youth ministry in the sub-region.

Firstly, making youth ministry more family-oriented will provide formation not only to the young people but to their families as well. Regular dialogue with the family and tapping into their resources will be very helpful.

A family retreat organized with the family life ministry can be mutually enriching. With the growing needs of young people, youth catechesis that focuses on youth issues and needs will make ministry more relevant in their lives. Clearly, introducing Jesus and bringing them to a personal relationship with him is a crucial factor for Catholic youth.

With all these, the ministers were one in expressing the need to train youth workers to act on these concerns. Apart from understanding the reality of young people there is the need to gain pastoral skills to help them become more relevant in their walk with young people.

They need to be equipped with skills on designing youth formation programs as well as a holistic process in planning their services on a national level that can cascade down to the parishes.



Youth animators and chaplains with Bishop Rolando Tria Tirona (standing second from left) Chairman of the FABC OLF



Participants mull over what is needed by the Churches to work with youth

Though there is much need for concrete work in the local level, the commissions feel that a network in the sub-region can clearly provide support for them in many ways.

Thus, at the end of the consultation, some concrete plans were laid by the participants for a network. At the end was a commitment to establish, the East Asian Youth Ministry network which aims to foster collaboration among the youth

commissions and youth organizations within the sub-region through communication of programs and activities and sharing of resources and other materials in youth ministry.

The network hopes to organize regular consultative meetings to share progress reports in the ministry and respond concretely through common concerns/ issues affecting the young.

They agreed to develop the following:

- 1. Faith formation for young people which includes a retreat with exposure program
- 2. Youth ministry formation program for staff/fulltime youth ministers
- 3. School of formation for community animators and youth ministers (Mongolia and China)

The group also appointed Hong Kong and Taiwan as new coordinators for the term 2010-2013.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled on March 3-6, 2011 to be held in Macau or Korea.

## AsIPA Desk

### AsIPA Resource Team (ART) Meeting - Sri Lanka from 12th – 15th April 2010

The ART team comprises trainers from 6 countries. They are: Ms Hyun Joo Ro (left) currently a doctoral student, previously working in a pastoral research centre



in Seoul Korea (in-coming executive secretary of AsIPA desk); Fr Thomas Vijay formerly director of the Pallotine Animation Centre in Nagpur and currently on the National Service Team for SCCs, India;

Fr Arthur Pereira parish priest in Mangalore Diocese, formerly Director of SCCs and Director of Mangalore Diocesan Pastoral Centre, India;

Fr Rohan Dominic CMF, previously national AsIPA coordinator for Sri Lanka and currently on national team and provincial of the Claretians in Sri Lanka;

Ms Cora Mateo, now working in the pastoral department of Hsinchu diocese, Taiwan - formerly AsIPA desk Executive Secretary;

Dr Estela Padilla member of the national BEC organization of the Philippines working in the pastoral retreat house Bukal Ng Tipan in Manila, Philippines;

Fr Albert Rabe of Nueva Segovia diocese, Philippines and regional

coordinator for BECs in Northern Luzon; Ms Wendy Louis out-going Executive Secretary for AsIPA Desk FABC – OLF and previously Director of the Singapore Pastoral Institute, Singapore. In-coming executive Secretary for the FABC – OLF and Women's Desk.

#### General Assembly 6 in Sri Lanka 2012

The team discussed the details concerning the 2012 AsIPA General Assembly which will be held in Sri Lanka.

Discussions were held with Bishop members of the Laity Commission of Sri Lanka, Bishop Kingsley Swampillai Diocese of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Bishop Harold Pereira of Kurunegala diocese who will lead the host team for preparations of the GA6. Also joining the meeting were National SCC Director Fr Eric Fernando and national team coordinator, Mr Nimal Pereira.

#### Research & Evaluation project with East Asian Pastoral Institute 2009-2010

Fr Ando Macalinao SJ from Ateneo de Manila's Loyola School of Theology, joined the meeting on the first day to discuss the outcomes of the research project commissioned by the AsIPA desk together with the East Asian Pastoral Institute. The project begun in December 2008 will be completed in July 2009.

Fr Ando gave an overview of the five diocesan reports and his summary.

The final summary will have to be completed after listening to the comments of the ART team.

The research team was led by the Director of the EAPI Fr Jeyaraj Rasiah SJ who has since moved back to Sri Lanka as Provincial of the Jesuits in Sri Lanka as of May 2010.

The project will be completed by Fr Ando and results will be published in the East Asian Pastoral Review. Copies will be available for sale from the AsIPA desk.

#### BILA I on SCCs & AsIPA One – Pattaya, Thailand. October 18 – 30 2010.

Invitations have been sent. Also on the agenda was a discussion on the programme content and execution of the BILA I and AsIPA One in October this year. Future plans for the AsIPA desk were discussed with some points emphasized.

We need to accompany the training teams in dioceses more closely to really see any fruit of our training and the people sent for training should be appointed for long enough for them to develop sufficient confidence and competence.

The team enjoyed immensely the hospitality extended by the Claretians in Negombo and the local AsIPA team who provided for a very enjoyable stay.

## Executive Secretary Retires ...



As I leave my responsibility as Executive Secretary of the FABC Office of Laity & Family and Women's Desk, I feel a sense of relief because I leave the work in the hands of an experienced and dedicated person like Ms. Wendy Louis. I look forward to a life that keeps me more at home but as much involved to bring justice, peace and wholeness to women, families and people in general.

I am sure that the vision of the FABC of helping the Church evolve into participatory, co-responsible communion of communities will permeate all the work of the office, as this truly is the Church of the future.

I hope that women will continue to work as leaders not only at the community level, but are helped to

emerge as leaders at the parish, diocesan and national levels as well. Women need to be trained to take up leadership responsibilities. The presence of women are very necessary to bring wholeness and healing in the Church that is being rocked by scandals of clerical abuse of children, young people and women. I hope and pray that the hierarchy sees the importance of the role of women that will contribute to bring a balance and stability since both man and woman together can make the image of God truly present. (Gen 1:27).

The family is important and necessary for the future of humankind and society, but it is loosing its importance. Society has to be helped to have a long term vision to replace the myopic short term gratification and goals of individualism promoted by the market that are detrimental to the family and family life.

Men have to be trained to respect and help women in the family. A lot needs to be done to ensure that all violence to women is controlled and handled in a timely way so that women are not forced to make decisions against going in for marriage to protect themselves.

The present work culture is definitely anti-family. The Church together with the laity have to become proactive to lobby governments in the interest of the future of the family and society to change this work culture that places great burdens on young parents who want to have a family.

I pray that the Office of Laity & Family together with the Youth, Women and Small Christian Communities will help bring wholeness to the Church in Asia.

Virginia Saldhana, Outgoing Executive Secretary FABC Office of Laity and Family

## Women's Desk



With the retirement of Virginia Saldhana from the Office of Laity and Family, Wendy Louis takes over the Women's desk. The address and email addresses are as follows:  
Wendy Louis  
Office of Laity and Family, FABC,  
2 Highland Road #01-09  
Singapore 549102  
Email: fabc.laityfamily@gmail.com

**AsIPA Desk**  
CAEC, 2 Highland Rd, #01-09  
Singapore 549102  
Tel: 64557030  
asipafabc@singnet.com.sg

**Women's Desk**  
CAEC, 2 Highland Road, #01-09  
Singapore 549102  
Tel: 64557030  
fabc.laityfamily@gmail.com

**Youth Desk**  
Maryhill Compound, Km.  
22 Ortigas Ave. Ext., Taytay,  
Rizal, Philippines.  
(63-2) 658 5064  
asianyouthdesk@gmail.com



# Laity

## EAST ASIA BISHOP'S INSTITUTE ON LAY APOSTOLATE (BILA) ON WOMEN II "Mary Truly a Woman of Our Times"

4th to 7th May 2010, Hsinchu Diocese, Taiwan



### FINAL STATEMENT

#### A. Introduction

*"My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour"*

In this spirit we were drawn to attend the BILA II on Women in East Asia, in Taoyuan, Taiwan from 3rd May to 7th May, 2010 on the theme "Mary, Truly A Woman Of Our Times." Delegations from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Macau & Taiwan comprising of women, women religious, men, bishops and priests met to encourage the Church to look at Mary as a woman who lived through many of the trying situations that women experience today, and to encourage them to draw strength and inspiration from her as Mary has a universal message for all Christian disciples today.

#### B. Insights:

"The Almighty works marvels for me, Holy is God's name"

The celebration of liturgies, the talks, silent reflections, sharing from countries in the region and our discussions brought us to a deeper sensitivity of women's plight and an urgent need for all men and women to follow Mary's model of femininity (recovering the femininity of God), virginity (filled with the Spirit closely following God's Word), and maternity (nurturing life through work for peace and justice).

*"God has scattered the proud; has brought down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly."*

#### In the country sharing:

1. We heard the cries of women
  - i. In the environmental problems, as women are closely connected to the earth;
  - ii. In women carrying the double burden of family care and career;
  - iii. In the impact of modern day work culture on people – causing stress and conflict in families; resulting in the destruction of the

### FABC Office of the Laity and Family



Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences FABC  
Office of Laity and Family  
2 Highland Road #01-09, Singapore 549102  
Tel: 65-64557030  
Email: fabc.laity@gmail.com

APR - JUN 2010