



*MAY THE HEART OF JESUS LIVE IN THE HEARTS OF ALL."*

## **“Asia Pacific Universities (ASPAC) Collaboration Forum**



**Dates: Tuesday to Thursday, 29 to 31 October, 2013**  
**Venue: Fu Jen Catholic University, New Taipei City, Taiwan**

**Sponsored by**  
Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan  
ASPAC SVD Universities Association

**Organized by**  
SVD-Mission and Identity Office, Fu Jen Catholic University

**Participants:** 1. **Fr. Mark Weber, SVD** , General Secretary for Formation and Education, SVD- Generalate, Rome.

2. **Dr. Sebastian Maria Michael, SVD**, SVD ASPAC Zonal Coordinator

3. **Dr. Michael Calmano, SVD**, President, Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan

4. **Fr. Yulius Yasinto, SVD**, Rector, Universitas katolik Widya Mandira, Kupang, Indonesia.

5. **Dr. Fransisco Estepa, SVD**, President, Holy Name University, Bohol, Philippines

6. **Fr. James Vyathappan SVD**, Coordinator of ASPAC SVD- Universities, SVD- Mission and Identity Office, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

**Speakers:** 1. **Fr. Mark Weber, SVD** , General Secretary for Formation and Education, SVD- Generalate, Rome.

2. **Fr. Frank Budenholzer, SVD**, Provincial Superior, China Province

3. **Dr. Peter Chou, Ph.D**, Vice-president for Academic Affairs, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

4. **Dr. Michael Kwo, SVD**, Former Vice-President for Mission and Identity Office, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

**Absentees:** 1. **Fr. Jan Czuba, SVD**, President, Divine Word University, PNG

2. **Dr. Dionisio M. Miranda, SVD**, President, University of San Carlos, Cebu, Philippines

**Note:** 1. **Fr. Dionisio M. Miranda, SVD**, after his arrival in Fu Jen, left for Philippines due to his mother's demise. His papers were presented by **Fr. Fransisco Estepa, SVD**.

2. The Forum was open for all SVD's and SSPS Sisters working at Fu Jen University.

**Prepared by:** Fr. Anthoniappen Jesuraj, SVD  
Miss. Maria Paz J. Espiritu

## **Day 1: Tuesday, Oct 29, 2013**

Registration began at 4:00 pm at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Cardinal Yu Pin Administration Building. The first session which was open for all, followed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 1<sup>st</sup> Conference Room of the same building. An opening service and welcome address were led by Fr. James Vyathappan and a video presentation on the Society of the Divine Word and its apostolate in various parts of the world was played, with a specific focus on the ASPAC zone.

### **Opening Session (5 p.m – 6 p.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Fransisco Estepa, SVD.**

Orientation talks were given by Fr. Mark Weber, SVD, General Secretary, Generalate, Rome on *A Word from the Generalate* and by Fr. Frank Budenholzer, SVD on *The Many Roles of the Contemporary Catholic University*.

A Welcome Dinner was hosted by Dr. Vincent Han-Sung Chiang, The President of Fu Jen Catholic University, at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Campus Chapel. The ASPAC participants and some invited guests from Jesuit administered Educational Institutions from India attended the dinner and was anchored by Manna Organic Life Association team.

## **Day 2: Wednesday, Oct 30, 2013**

### **Session 1 (8.30 a.m – 10 a.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Victor C. Y parraguirre SVD**

The session began with the two key note speeches titled “*Fu Jen catholic University: Prospects and challenges*” by Dr. Shang- Shing P. Chou, and “*Mission and Identity of Fu Jen Catholic University*” by Dr. Michael Kwo, SVD. Both the speakers emphasized on the challenges that Fu Jen catholic university is facing from the perspective of academics and catholic mission in the present competitive and globalized context. What concerned the forum most is the challenge of dwindling Christian presence and our influence on the policy makers. However, both the speakers were optimistic in facing the challenges as the prospects are very much realizable.

### **Session 2 (10.30 a.m – 12 Noon)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Sebastian Maria Michael, SVD**

After the tea break, each participants were given ten minutes each to present about their respective university/ institutions at Room 220, Cardinal Tien Memorial Building. In all the presentations, the common element was the community service/outreach program that is being done by their institutions.

[Lunch was served at noon at Life Tea On Campus where a presentation on the *Fu Jen Service Learning Projects* was made by Prof. Chwo, Miao-Ju, FJCU Nursing Department.]

### **Session 3 (2.30 p.m – 3.30 p.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Yulius Yasinto, SVD**

The whole session was dedicated to deliberate on the recommendations of the Asia and Pacific SVD-Administered Universities Conference held at the Widya Mandira University Kupang, on January 23 to 25, 2012.

**Recommendation 1:** *We recommend that the General Chapter resolves to recognize the Education Apostolate as an integral element of our mission in ASPAC and consequently an urgent priority in terms of planning and assignment of personnel at all levels of SVD administration.*

#### **Discussion:**

- The general chapter has accepted this and emphasized in the chapter document. However, the subsequent question is how well this is being realized at the local and provincial levels?
- What are efforts being made at the formation level especially at major seminaries?
- Though the challenges, needs and the prospects vary from province to province, from universities to universities, the fact of identifying and promoting gifted and suitable young seminarians at early stage for educational apostolate remains fundamentally essential.

Therefore, the forum decided to come up with a recommendation as requested by Fr. Mark weber. (Recommendation No. 1)

**Recommendation 2:** *We recommend that each concerned province in cooperation with University Administration submit Guidelines of its working relationship between province and university to the Superior General by December 2012.*

**Discussion:**

- Holy Name University, University of San Carlos and Fu Jen catholic University have already submitted the guidelines.
- Whereas, Nanzan University, Universitas katolik Widya Mandira, and Divine Word University have not yet submitted due to various reasons.

Therefore, the forum felt the need to set the deadline for the submission. The due date for the submission was extended up to July 2014.

**Recommendation 3:** *In order to facilitate an effective working relationship between the Generalate, Provincialate and University Administration, we recommend the drawing up of a Standardized Operational procedure (SOP) facilitated by the Secretary for Formation and Education.*

**Discussion:**

The forum unanimously felt that The SOP guidelines should be part of the guidelines required as per recommendation no. 2

**Recommendation 4:** *We recommend that the Generalate Secretary for Formation and Education coordinates effective communication between the Generalate, Provincial Administration and University Management as regards SVD personnel assignment and other relevant matters.*

**Discussion:**

The forum felt that this is very much related to **Recommendation No. 1** and does not need further discussion. However, Fr. Mark Weber assured that he would do his part based on the reports and recommendations from provincials and superiors.

**Recommendation 5:** *We recommend to the administration of SVD colleges and universities to take active interest and initiative to motivate the formandi about the importance of Higher Education Apostolate.*

**Discussion:**

- This is being done in different ways. For example, Fr. Dionisio Miranda had given a talk to major seminarians at Tagatay emphasizing the need to commit for higher education.
- In Japan, all the OTP students are encouraged to pursue higher education. This has become part of their formation program.
- In china province, the situation is different and challenging in recruitment since

all the universities directly come under the ministry of Education.

**Recommendation 6:** *In view of the importance of our higher educational ministry at university, we recommend to the respective Formation Boards that suitable individuals from among the formandi may be identified and be encouraged for this apostolate at the earliest stage of their formation.*

**Discussion:**

This recommendation is once again very much related to **recommendation no. 1**; thus, the forum did not discuss anymore.

Since separate sessions are scheduled to discuss on *2012 general Chapter Caucus Question* and on *SVD-ASPAC Assembly on 2011* which specifically focus on recommendations 7 and 8, the forum did not discuss it then.

**Session 4 (4 p.m – 5 p.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Sebastian Maria Michael, SVD**

After the Tea-break, in this session two concerns were raised and discussed.

**1. Collaboration with Holy spirit Sisters at the University level**

**Discussion:**

- The sisters have their own educational apostolate in countries like Philippines and they need sisters to work in their schools.
- We do not find many qualified sisters to work in the universities.
- Funding for higher studies seems to be an issue for them.
- They can work in non-academic fields.
- How many are willing to work as staffs or dormitory in charge or campus ministers? These days we do not find many native speaking sisters to hire them in the foreign language department in Fu Jen. So, we do find the problem of lack of personnel.
- In Japan, they have their own schools and Hospital. So there are not many sisters for University level.

Therefore, the forum felt that we keep the doors open for them in whatever capacities possible.

**2. University communities should be more and more intercultural and international.**

**Discussion:**

- We need to examine what is the advantage of our universities becoming more and more intercultural and international?
- First of all, it helps in the evaluation of our universities. Secondly it gives witness to our international charism.
- In this regard, networking among our university faculty should be encouraged.
- All the efforts ought to be made to share the resources among our universities in terms of personnel, research and community service.
- Efforts have to be made in order to accommodate international confreres those who are qualified to work in the universities even they may not belong to provinces that have universities.
- In most of the cases, a confrere goes for higher studies (M.A or Ph.D) after the age of 35 since he has to learn the local language and have 2 or 3 years of pastoral experience. It might become very difficult to pursue higher studies after particular age. Therefore, individual Provincial Administrations have to provide opportunities at the early age for those who are suited for the universities.
- If possible, let the interested confreres have at least M.A degree before getting their mission appointment.
- Fr. Mark Weber emphasized that we need to prepare confreres for creative ministries at the age. One needs to think that vocation to priesthood is not only pastoral but also as academicians. Therefore, Formators have a great role to play in this regard.

The forum then decided to come up with a concrete recommendation.  
(Recommendation No.3)

The day ended at 5. 00 pm with Quarter hour prayer lead by Fr. James Vyathappan.

### **Day 3: Thursday, Oct 31, 2013**

**Session 1 (8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Michael Calmano, SVD**

Holy Spirit Sisters were also invited to partake in the discussion. The main agenda of discussion were the 2012 general Chapter Caucus Question and SVD-ASPAC Assembly on 2011.

- 1. On the 2012 general Chapter Caucus Question in Education Action Plan**  
***Could the ASPAC area team be expanded beyond universities, to all levels of our involvement in the education apostolate? (Ref: Memo from the SVD generalate)***

**Discussion:**

- Fr. Mark Weber opened up the discussion by stating that the discussion would depend on how much relevant is the basic education representation to the present Forum.
- The inclusion of basic Education representation is essential in order to establish network and linkages among our institutions although some of our universities already include Basic education.
- Subzone like India which has around 20 schools, it may not be practical to get representation.
- In Philippines, all our educational institutions come under Divine Word Educational Association (DWEA). So getting representation from the association would not be difficult.
- In Japan, Basic education has the same Board Composition.
- With the expansion of the group, a common topic needs to be identified.
- Therefore, representatives from the Asia-Pacific region can be invited in the next ASPAC meeting and allow them to decide on the direction of their group in terms of whether they want to be part of this forum or they will keep a separate identity.

After meaningful discussion, the forum decided to come up with a recommendation.  
(Recommendation No. 5)

## **2. On SVD-ASPAC Assembly on 2011**

***“MER coordinator and the coordinator of the SVD-administered universities collaborate to create linkages between MER and universities within the Zone, e.g. combined conferences, combined research, elective courses in the universities and formation houses”***  
**( Ref: ASPAC SVD-Provincials Assembly 2011)**

### **Discussion:**

- The MER (Mission Education and Research) should not be self-contained. There should be opportunities for them to interact with the universities.
- Although in some cases (China province) have linkage between FJU and the MER, there is no need to create an institutional connection of the MER and the universities since the latter is composed of Missiologists.
- However, the forum felt that there is a need to encourage MER to hold their meetings in the universities rather than anywhere else.
- Given the situation, the hosting university can provide the logistical support while the board and lodging has to be shouldered by the sending provinces.

After sufficient deliberation, the forum decided to come up with a recommendation.  
(Recommendation No. 6)



## **Session 2 (10.30 a.m – 12 Noon)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Michael Calmano, SVD**

### **Review of the Letter from the SVD Generalate to Fr. James Vyathappan, SVD, ASPAC SVD University Coordinator.**

After reading out the letter, he invited the forum for the comments and responses. The first comment from the Generalate letter suggests the forum to *review the status of all the recommendations from the previous meeting*. The recommendations already reviewed and discussed at length in the past sessions.

The second comment suggests to *review the Congregational Directions Ad Extra from the perspective of University context*.

#### **The responses are:**

- Holy Name University, has the Community Extension and Development (CEDev) Office which coordinates outreach activities of the university. A community is identified and adopted and each college shares their expertise to the adopted community.
- In Fu Jen University, the College of Child and Family Studies extend help to the migrants. The Mission office collaborates with the government for the tribal and migrant's welfare. Moreover, In China Province evangelization, education, research and migration are the four main thrusts.
- In Widya Mandina University, a team is formed with the SVDs and they underwent capability-building. Currently efforts are made to rewrite the history of the university, the university core values are defined and research on Anthropology is promoted. Students initiate inter-religious and prophetic dialogues. Opportunities are created for students even from foreign universities to join their team to partake community development programs.
- Nanzan University organizing itself to bring outreach programs along with the academics.

The third comment suggests to discuss on the 2012 general Chapter Caucus Question in Education Action Plan. This is already been discussed elaborately.

In the last part of the letter, the Generalate Mission Secretary raised a question: *what are the possibilities of research in our universities regarding poverty, human rights, justice, and social concerns? How to promote these type of researches?*

#### **The responses are:**

- Fu Jen University has five Centers of Research which make researches on migrant families, justice and peace, environmental issues, sexual abuse and others. They collaborate with the Department of Social Work for the internship

of students.

- In Holy Name University this still needs to be emphasized although a research on Commercial Sex Workers was already made in the past.
- Nanzan University has Institute of Social Issues and Institute for Religion and Culture. They actively partake in UNESCO projects.
- In Widya Mandira University, research in the above mentioned areas still needs to be strengthened; however, they have a signed agreement with Singapore University to explore researches in poverty issues.

The Forum unanimously agreed that social concerns have to be and should be an integral part of the Academics and the efforts will be made to implement these researches through publications, conferences by coordinating with MER.

### **Session 3 (3 p.m – 4 p.m)**

**Moderated by: Fr. Sebastian Maria Michael, SVD**

#### **Discussion on 2014 November ASPAC Assembly, Mumbai and future action plans**

This session was chaired by Fr. S. M. Micheal, SVD, ASPAC Zonal Coordinator. He mentioned that in the previous meeting which was held in Kupang, Indonesia, there was a proposal to let the Rectors/Presidents of the universities to meet the provincials and be able to share their concerns during the 2014 Zonal meeting. He invited the forum to comment on this. The responses are:

- What will be the agenda to talk with the provincials for one full day?
- This would entail cost. Therefore, one representative could be sent to participate in the entire assembly, not just for one day.
- University concerns could be incorporated as one of the agendas for the assembly.
- Area coordinator for SVD-administered universities along with one more representative will attend the 2014 zonal assembly. He will contact all the rectors/ presidents to consolidate the concerns.
- The ASPAC Zonal Coordinator will present these suggestions to the Zonal executive committee and it will be subjected to it.

#### **Next Asia Pacific Universities (ASPAC) Collaboration Forum**

The Forum opined that the next meeting could be either in University of San Carlos, Cebu at around October/ November 2015 or in Nanzan University, Japan at around January 2016. The area coordinator will contact both the universities in this regard.

**Few Concluding remarks:**

- Fr. Weber said that he will try to include university work as one of the assignment options of newly ordained priests aside from missionary work. He will also request formators to identify seminarians with academic talents even in their Philosophy and Theology years so that they can be asked to pursue further studies in their areas of interest.
- Fr. Michael emphasized the uniqueness of ASPAC Zone is the presence of several universities presence and it is a missionary sending Zone. Therefore, all the efforts have to be made in order to promote more vocations.

The session ended with a closing prayer by Fr. James Vyathappan. The Asia Pacific Universities (ASPAC) Collaboration Forum concluded with a thanksgiving Eucharist at 5 p,m presided by Fr. Mark Weber and dinner hosted by Fu Jen SVD Community.

**Recommendation of the Asia Pacific Universities (ASPAC)  
Collaboration Forum, 2013**

1. The forum proposes that the formators/provincials/regional superiors identify and encourage suitable candidates at post novitiate levels in view of working in SVD colleges, universities and research centers.
2. We encourage collaboration with the Holy Spirit sisters in the SVD universities.
3. It is recommended that we work to make the SVD personnel of our communities more multicultural and international.
4. We commit ourselves to submit the guidelines (Res. 2 of 2012 Asia and Pacific SVD-administered Universities Conference) by July 2014.
5. In order to have a deeper understanding of the SVD educational apostolate, the area coordinator for the SVD-administered universities invites one representative from the primary and secondary educational institutions of China and Japan provinces and India, Indonesia, Philippines subzones for the next SVD-administered university meeting.
6. We recommend that the MER (Mission Education and Research) consider holding its research conferences at the SVD-administered universities.
7. We propose that in addition to the Area Coordinator, one more representative of the Rectors of the SVD-administered universities participate in the 2014

ASPAC Zonal Provincial Assembly in Mumbai, India to voice the concerns of the universities.

**Appendix:** For clarity and smooth progress of the forum, copies of the following compiled materials related to various University issues were provided for reference.

**1. Information Materials.**

**2. Past ASPAC-SVD Universities Meetings.**

**3. Relationship between SVD-University and SVD-Provincialate.**

**4. International Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian Higher Education in Multi-Cultural Asian Societies.**

**5. SVD and SSpS at Fu Jen University: Reflections on University Education.**