

Grapevine

A word from the Editor,

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Welcome to the April edition of Grapevine!

I'm sure you've noticed - we've gotten a whole new makeover! Yes! We're ONE year old! =) Exactly 1 year ago, the first edition of Grapevine was launched, and 12 issues later, we are grateful to all of you for your continued support and article contributions!

In this anniversary edition, we have lined up:

- a whole new design and layout! Many thanks to Christopher for his time and energy, without which, this wouldn't have been possible!
- a special anniversary bumper edition, featuring a 2-part interview feature with Dr Rilly Ray! Dr Rilly worked for 2 weeks in a small village hospital run by Opus Dei in Kenya, at the invitation of Fr Conor. Read on this month for a glimpse into the work environment in the slums and the interesting cases she faced, as we follow-up with our second installment in May, tracing her experiences!
- Our regular columns bringing you an update of the happenings of the past month; our doctor's blog features, and the upcoming events in the next few months!
- and... a rare photo appearance by the editor! =P

Of note, this is the month of Lent - of prayer, sacrifice and penance. As we go about our daily doings, let us always keep this in mind, as we try to bring out Christ in our interactions with the people around us.

So keep reading and keep sending those articles in! See you at our upcoming activities!

Cheerios! =)



From Kenya, with love...

(Part I)

Q Why Kenya ?

For a long time I looked at the sad faces and the malnourished children, women and cattle in pictures and television that impressed in my mind the fact that Africa suffered the worst poverty and famines in the world. I had a desire to help in any way possible. The opportunity came when my good friends and neighbours asked me if I was interested in attending a 4 days retreat there and see the state of the poor.



Q What did you see ?

There were two main areas we saw. They were the slums in **Eastland**, in Nairobi and the **Muthale Mission Hospital** in the county side diocese called Kitui, which is 3 hours by car from Nairobi.

Let me tell you about the **Mukuru slums first**. The people here are homeless, in a huge area of a few acres, with no sanitation., no piped water supply, no proper homes and no basic facilities and no food . Most people do not even have a meal a day. There were 2 rows of huts with straw and zinc roofs, cardboard and paper walls, barely one stuffy room without ventilation where the large families sit, cook, and sleep. You cannot imagine the squalor until you see it, We will never see this in Singapore thank God.

Father Conor's team of young people from the Opus Dei Spirituality are helping him with a number of projects, like helping boys to go to school, building a school in that area for education, a basket ball field for the kids and so on.

The people were jobless, young boys in groups loitering around, no school, no

jobs, nowhere to go. The women were mostly single mothers with an average of 5 to 7 kids all below 10 to 12 years old. Fathers were nowhere to be seen. Women are docile, uneducated with no rights whatsoever. They are dominated by men. Their lives are ever so full of pain and suffering.



Q What did you do in Muthale Mission Hospital?

This hospital is situated in one of the 24 dioceses in Kenya. The hospital has 78 in patient beds. The staffing is minimum no of nurses , one MBBS trained doctor and 3 diploma trained doctors. The MBBS trained doctor does medical, surgical and O&G cases.



Only the very serious cases are referred to the nearest hospital far away, which requires a 3 hour long car journey.

The first day I was taken round the hospital to see the services. I started work the next day from 8.30 am to 5 pm and on night duty alternate nights. I did all the work there except the surgeries and LSCS as I was not trained for that. So I treated medical cases of all types, children with malaria, AIDs and malnutrition and URTI. I treated several adults with AIDS and malaria, besides diabetes hypertension and bronchial asthmas.

The night calls were especially exciting and challenging .



Q Why do you say that?

My first night was dramatic. We can sleep in out cottages and go to hospital when the call comes. An emergency call from the hospital came at 1 am. It was a 15 year old boy staying in a school hostel. He complained of a headache at 8 pm. The next minute he fell on the floor unconscious. The teachers and relatives rushed him to hospital.

I saw him lying motionless on the hospital bed with all the teachers and relatives around me. A quick eye balling saw the young boy lying motionless on the bed, not a movement noted. My heart was fluttering and my head searching "What could it be? " Clinically GCS 4 , pupils non responsive, not dilated, neck rigidity. No motor reflexes . I could only think of cerebral malaria. We can only go by clinical examination. Pump in intravenous quinine 600 mg with dexamethasone 30 mg in a IV saline drip slowly infused after a quiet prayer .

I went to sleep which was not forthcoming, tossing and turning, worried for that young lad. The next morning at 7am, I went to the ward to check Amos. I found him standing at the door of the ward, looking fine. He said he was well. At once my response was "Jesus. Thanks a lot".

The next night, I was called to see a case of septic abortion after a GP injected a oxytocin like medicine to induce abortion . The woman was in severe abdominal pain and screaming. She was stabilised and eventually had an EUA and removal of products of conception the next morning, before improving.

... To be continued!

† Upcoming Events:

1. Personal Compass: Navigating Love, Sex & Marriage



- Date: 26 Apr, 3,10,17,24,31 May, 7 Jun 2011
- Time: 7.30 - 9.30pm
- Venue: CWS Auditorium, #08-00, CWS Building, 55 Waterloo St
- Lecturer: Fr David Garcia,
- Cost: \$80
- Register: www.catholicspi.org
- Enquiries: Janice (68587912, janice@catholicspi.org)

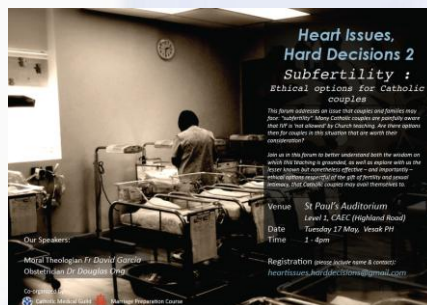
This is a core module of "Personal Compass", a year-long systematic course in moral theology. Details at the website above!

2. 2011 HO Welcome Tea

- Time: 2nd May 2011, Monday 3-5pm;
mass at chapel 5-6pm
- Venue: Mt Alvernia Lecture room / Chapel

Make time to welcome and share your experiences with our Catholic brothers and sisters who will be joining us in the hospital wards after their MBBS!

3. Heart Issues, Hard Decisions: Subfertility - ethical options for Catholic couples



- Date: 17th May, 1-4pm
- Venue: St Paul's Auditorium, CAEC 2 Highland Road, S(549102)
- Register: heartissues.harddecisions@gmail.com

Missed the "Heart Issues, Hard Decisions" last National Day? Or thought it was really helpful?

Don't miss out on this session in the series! We'll be addressing the issue of sub-fertility, and the effective and ethical options respectful of the gift of fertility and sexual intimacy that Catholic couples can turn to.

More details [here](http://heartissues.harddecisions@gmail.com)

† What's New on Doctor's Blog:

▪ "A Job"

A news article sparked off a facebook thread; the thread triggered off an avalanche of emotions; and a friend's concern inspired an article...

Read the full article for what's cooking in the news!

[Full article](#)

March 2011 – Its All About Love



An initiative of the CMG, the inaugural forum on sexuality education for Catholic parents and formators was held on 5th March 2011 at the CAEC.

Guest speakers included Dr Colin Ong, Fr David Garcia, and Bro

Collin Wee, who touched on various topics ranging on the factors leading to pre-marital sex, how to prevent it, and to techniques on proper sexuality education by parents to their children.

All in all, it was a fruitful afternoon of discussion and sharing for catechists, parents and all present!

Check out the [website](#) for more details and photos!



If you would like to advertise for your upcoming events; or are seeking assistance in any functions - feel free to email us:

cmgsingapore@yahoo.com.sg

Send in your Doctor's Blog contributions to

cmg_grapevine@gmail.com



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† Regular Events:

1. BYOB (Bring your own Bible)

- Time: 21st April, 5th, 12th, 19th May
7.15pm

- Venue: CANA, 2nd floor CWS building, 55 Waterloo St

Join us for our weekly BYOB sharing and fellowship, held on every Thursday except the last Thursday of the month!

2. CMG Monthly Mass

- Time: 27th May, 7.30pm,
Wednesday

- Venue: CSCC Level 9, Solomon's Hall, CWS building, 55 Waterloo St

Our regular monthly mass takes a break in April for the HO Welcome tea / mass! Join us for our next regular monthly mass, held on the last Wednesday of May!

3. Outram Campus Weekly Mass

- Every Wednesday, 12.15pm

- Venue: Medical Alumni Association Hall, Level 1 (Junction of College Road & Outram Rd)

More details [here](#)