



By Dr. Joseph Shao

The Role and Challenges of BSOP After 55 Years of Service

We thank the Lord for the great celebration during the 55th founding anniversary of BSOP last September 2012. We have experienced our Lord's love and faithfulness in making BSOP His significant vessel of blessings under His mighty guidance. With the recent visit of the Visiting Evaluation Team of the Asia Theological Association in February, 2013, we are pleased to inform you that we have been accredited for another five years (2013-2017). We thank God that we have received the vote confidence for what we are doing. Of course, we shall continue to improve by God's grace.

Relationship Feature

In the early years of BSOP's existence, she was instrumental in the training of God's servants for key cities in Asia. At each major founding anniversary year, we do witness this evidence of God's grace when a majority of representatives from various churches came to attend our celebration. Our BSOP friends and family members also continue to support us through prayers and finances. During our alumni and student retreat right after the celebration, the alumni in the 60s and 70s were able to rub shoulders with the younger alumni. Some alumni came from afar to join us. It was exciting to see the growing and global community of leaders being trained at BSOP, coming together to exalt our Lord and Master, who calls us at different points in time, and who makes us *one in Him. BSOP is on the move under His unified and untiring guidance.*

Aside from being a strategic center in teaching Biblical Studies, Christian Education, and Pastoral Counseling with our three-

pronged masteral tracks, BSOP has added the ThM and PhD programs, in cooperation with Asia Graduate School of Theology, to train faculty in Asia in the areas of Biblical Studies and Intercultural Studies, respectively. BSOP, now on the global map of theological world, is very much connected with the international theological community. God is amazing, in allowing us to be part of the global theological community. With this unique status, all the more the Lord would demand some added responsibilities from us.

As a member of the global theological community, we (BSOP) need to be the link for our stakeholders with the global trends and challenges. We have started by setting up of our Research Center, under the leadership of Dr. Stewart Young, in attempting to know more about the cultural, contextual challenges of the Chinese-Filipino churches. We shall gradually expand our research study into the global world, as we allocate enough personnel and funding for various projects. We are hoping that through our research, churches will benefit from our findings and descriptive studies with regards to contemporary and relevant issues affecting our Chinese-Filipino churches such as church growth trends, church conflicts, family issues, discipleship agendas and other relevant topics.

During our 55th anniversary celebration, in one of our seminars under Dr. Edward Choa, we attempted to analyze the life cycle of the church. One of our Board members who attended the seminar (he is also an active elder of a local church) did express the need for BSOP to organize a team to ana-

lyze and gauge the health of a church. We shall gather a team of experts to assist this matter, upon the invitation of the interested churches. We shall venture on other creative ministries as the Lord leads us. *Symbiotic relationship of BSOP and the Chinese-Filipino churches surely will be strengthened with this new challenge.*

Relevance Factor

We are very happy that almost all our alumni are serving in their respective ministries. In the Philippines, most, if not all of the churches have our alumni serving as the Senior Pastor, guiding other younger pastors for God's ministries. Many of our alumni are actively serving as administrators and leaders in many para-church organizations. Many alumni do have their opportunities to join global consultations to benefit their respective churches. We also witness some senior leadership willing to serve as biblical Paul in mentoring the younger Timothy among us. We pray that God will continue to guide us in our training at BSOP, so that she will continue to be *a school that will equip God's workers who will be effective in their ministry.*

Throughout these years, BSOP not only interviews in-coming students to evaluate their calling and purpose of studying at the seminary, we also have personal exit interviews, and group process to access their learning. The purposes of the exit interviews are to improve the integrated and balanced learning of BSOP in three areas – academic learning, character development, and ministry skills – and to solicit constructive ideas and suggestions from graduating students for the overall improvement and development of wholistic theological training at BSOP. *We aim not only to educate our students to be equipped with exegetical skills in expounding the biblical texts, but also to speak to the world with relevant and challenging message.*

The Chinese-Filipino church is now at a crossroad. With intentional development of disciples in our church, we shall see a surge of quality and quantity spiritual growth in our church. The Care and Share Group, our weekly regular time of mentoring and discipleship at BSOP, trains a group of caring pastors and counselors. The more we love the Lord, the more we are able to bear each other's burdens and problems that come our way. With more sin-

gles and single parenthood at our church, all the more they need the love of God to experience His grace. By focusing on love for God, our attention will be on Christ as the Head of the church. *A trained Christian counselor at BSOP, with biblical knowledge, will be able to serve God's people effectively in our post-modern world.*

It is true that the Chinese-Filipino churches have lots of spiritual heritage from our previous generations. For our generation to be effective and relevant, it would be best for our church leaders to discuss some strategic plans in our respective churches, and also corporately for the growth of God's church in the 21st century. May God continue to lead us forward to face the challenges of this century!

Conclusion

BSOP will continue to stand firm, being true and sure of her vision and mission of existence: *to equip God's workers with God's Word for God's work in God's world.* Under God's sufficient grace, BSOP will continue to play the role that God has given to us. The Chinese-Filipino church will continue to bless BSOP, as BSOP in turn blesses the church.

BSOP Family in Mourning

BSOP bids farewell to board director Samuel Go Bendicion who is the son of alumnae Rebecca Go Bendicion. A deacon of the United Evangelical Church of Malabon, he passed away on February 25, 2013. BSOP conducted a Memorial Service on February 26, 2013 at the Sanctuarium. Cremation and inurnment took place on Friday, March 1, 2013.



Faculty Publications

Dr. Jean Uayan's article entitled "From South Fujian to the Philippines: 19th Century Mission and the Rise of Philippine Protestant Chinese Churches" was published in the *Journal of Asian Mission* 13:2 (October 2012).

Dr. Rosa Shao's article on "Age and Gender Differences in Chinese-Filipino Parent-Adolescent Conflict, Family Cohesion and Autonomy" has been published in the *International Handbook of Chinese Family* (Springer, 2012).

Alumnae Awarded

BSOP alumnae Ptr. Nancy Loo Tan, principal of Harmony Christian Education Foundation, Inc., was awarded as the 2012-2013 most outstanding school administrator in the Philippines by the Family of "Cebu Anonymous (Philanthropist) Shih Wei Peng." The awarding ceremony was held on March 9, 2013 at the Federation Center of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. in Binondo, Manila. This annual search is conducted with the help of the Philippine Chinese Education Research Center.



NEWS AND EVENTS

- Dr. Joseph Shao will be participating in a Theological Consultation on April 4-6, 2013 as a speaker and panelist. The event will take place in Seoul, Korea.
- Dr. Joseph Shao and his wife, Dr. Rosa Shao, will attend the OCI Institute together with presidents and deans of Chinese seminaries. The event will be held in Taipei on April 22-29, 2013. President Shao will then proceed to teach at the International Reformed Evangelical Seminary in Indonesia from April 29 to May 3, 2013.
- Dr. Jane Chuaunsu attended the 4/14 Window Missiology Conference in Bundang, South Korea on February 26-28, 2013. The theme of the conference was "Children and Mission: Recognizing Children and Youth as Strategic Partners in Mission." It was undertaken by the 4/14 Window Global Movement and attended by more than a hundred international participants. The host church was the Hallelujah Community Church.
- Dr. Jean Uayan attended the ALAM 2013 Seminar in Davao City on March 6-8, 2013, at the Ritz Hotel/ Garden Oases Convention Center. ALAM stands for Advancing Libraries, Archives and Museums and is organized by the University of the Philippines Library Science Alumni Association (UPLSAA). The theme this year was "Improving Services through Adaptability of New and Existing Technologies and Initiatives."
- Dr. Thomas R. V. Forster and Dr. Samson Uytanlet (having finished his doctoral studies in the London School of Theology) will join the faculty in June 2013. Dr. Forster is the former Systematic Theology and Church History assistant professor at Evangel Seminary in Hong Kong. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Dr. Uytanlet was formerly a pastor at the Christian Bible Church of the Philippines. His wife, Juliet, is an alumnae of BSOP and is also finishing her Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary.
- On April 22-26, 2013 Dr. Tan Chiu Eng, Dr. Stewart Young, Dr. Jay Hallowell, Prof. Anthony Hao, Prof. Dennis Yam, Prof. Samuel Tan and IT staff Johann Xie will be attending the *ATA Seminar on Theological Education and On-line Learning in the 21st Century*. The venue is the International Graduate School of Leadership in Quezon City.
- Majority of the BSOP faculty, students and staff will be attending the Global Discipleship Congress on May 22-25, 2013. This will be held at the Christ Commission Fellowship Worship and Training Center in Pasig City.
- BSOP has a new IT staff in the person of Johann Jeus Xie, grandson of the late alumnus Rev. Philip Ang.



Nering Cañete 黄婉兒



Time flies very fast and I just can't help but thank God for everything. My journey in BSOP had its ups and downs and through it all God never left me all alone. He has given me the courage to face each challenge by trusting in Him always. He gave me true friends who were always there for me. I enjoyed learning more about God through His Word with the courses that I took. I thank God that he gave me wisdom and strength in the requirements that we needed to fulfill in each course. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:9 - *My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* In this passage, Paul is talking about God's revelation and the thorn that was given to him. He pleaded with God that the thorn would leave him, but this is the reply of God. I too experienced "thorns" in my life, but he allowed it for a purpose that I may depend on Him more. Indeed, His grace is sufficient for me and His power is made perfect in weakness. Although it is hard to boast about my weaknesses, I know that by doing this, the power of Christ will rest upon me. He is the one who called me to the ministry and He is always faithful, enabling me to finish my seminary training. I have learned many things and I will forever be grateful to God for this opportunity. May He continue to guide and strengthen me as I step out into the ministry. To God be all the Glory and Praise!

Outstanding Councilor Award

Alumnus Ptr. Jerry Yaokasin was given the national award as the top-ranked (out of ten) outstanding councilor on March 7, 2013 by the Philippine Councilors League and the Philippine Jaycees, Inc. and the office of Senator Edgardo Angara. Venue was at the SMX Convention Center. Jerry serves as pastor at the Tacloban Christian Church. He has also served as councilor in that city for 9 years (3 terms). He will be running for vice mayor in the coming national election. Soli Deo Gloria!

