

# Casa de Macau no Canada (Toronto)

## Newsletter

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### From the President



On behalf of the Executives, I would like to wish members a **KUNG HEI FAT CHOY** and hope everyone had a joyous festive season with life now returning to normal.

The monthly first Thursday Social continues to be very successful. We have had well over 45 – 50 members attending every month. Some of you will have noticed the mats and carpets at the clubhouse entrance. These accessories were installed to protect and preserve the wooden floors from the inclement weather.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2004. As this is election year, we urge the members to start thinking about taking an active role in the Casa.

Although ‘Senior’ members (age 80 and over) are not required to pay membership dues, we do require them to submit an application form to verify their membership. If you are a ‘Senior’ and have not sent in your membership application form, we would appreciate it if you do so at your earliest convenience. Once again, we would like to thank the Senior members who have

contributed their membership dues to the Casa. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity.

This is the final reminder for Membership Renewal. If you have not submitted your application, please do so as soon as possible. There will be no further reminders.

### Bate Papo

The Bate Papo was held on Sunday, January 25, 2004 with 30 - 35 members attending. As usual, there was much chatter and exchange of news between members

### Cooking Competition

The initial meeting took place on Saturday, January 24, 2004. An update report on this meeting was mailed to members with a registration form. The last day for registration was Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>. We received four applications.



Happy Easter

### Board of Executives

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### Table of Contents

From the President .....	1
Editorial.....	2
Casa News .....	2,3
Cook's Corner.....	3,4
The Goddess of the Dawn .....	4,5
Across the wires.....	5,6
A Film to Move Hearts.....	6
List.....	7
Funny Bone .....	7,8
Reminiscences.....	8,9

## Editorial Briefly speaking...



To the Executive, Members and friends, Monica and I would like to wish you all a Very Happy Easter. As you turn the pages of this issue, you will discover that many of the articles relate to this sacred time of the year. We hope you enjoy the contents.

To all who have contributed to this issue of the newsletter, Monica and I would like to thank you for getting involved. As you may know, we normally have to contact members to ask for their help by submitting something to the newsletter. The variety we receive makes it more interesting for everyone, so we thank you for getting involved!!!

In our last issue, when we encouraged members to give some thought to take over the reins of the Casa's newsletter once this term is up, we certainly did not expect to receive so many complimentary, and concerned, comments – thank you!!! Hopefully, now that you have an idea of what will happen in a few months, you will also have had the time to convince yourself and say: “yes, *I will consider giving it a try.*” Monica and I signed on with the current Executive, but as their term comes to an end in September, so does our commitment. The incoming Executive may very well have different ideas about the format and content.

Most, if not all, committees and positions terminate when the Executives changes guard. So many new volunteers will be required; failing which activities will have to be curtailed.

*Gloria*

## Casa news



### Ringling in the New Year

An intimate group of Casa members gathered for the third year running at the Raddison to welcome in 2004. The larger room given for our use enabled members to mix and mingle with ease.



L to R: David Tavares; Marie Louise Rocha Chang; Barbara Baptista; Anna Tavares

After partaking in the generous buffet, people worked off their calories as the D.J. played a great selection of tunes. There was space enough in the room to even allow members who have been attending Line Dancing classes to strut their stuff as well. For some lucky people, spot dance prizes were awarded with 5 bottles of wine, generously donated by David Brander. Thanks also go to Rosa Oliveira Cheung who donated two sets of Avon products. The final three prizes were drawn and the respective winners were: Anna Tavares who held the ticket for a cordless Panasonic phone; Marie Louise Rocha Chang who won a Panasonic DVD player, and David Tavares walked away with the big one, a Sony Digital

Camera. With much noise and tooting of noisemakers, 2004 was ushered in.

Our thanks go to the Social Committee for all their hard work in arranging this event. Unfortunately the party broke up when the fire alarm in the hotel went off at around 12:30 am. We never found out the cause, whether it was a ‘prank’ or if indeed there was a fire

somewhere but whatever the case, it put new meaning into the saying “ringing in the new year”

### Pot Luck/Dai Sei

Thirty-three members gathered at the Clubhouse on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup> to enjoy a scrumptious dinner followed by a beautiful selection of desserts. The great variety of the dishes is a testament to the diversity of talented cooks our Casa has.

Once the tables were cleared those interested joined in some games of Dai Sei while others socialized. By the end of the evening there was no significant damage done to anyone's wallets while some lucky members did come out ahead.

Thanks to: Mike Barros for assuming the role of 'dice shaker' and banker; Nena Noronha for collecting the pot money and distributing the house 'profits'; Barbara Baptista; Helena Barradas; Joyce Barros; Susana da Costa and Celsa Larcina for organizing the event; Nancy Barradas for the loan of the Dai Sei game and everyone else who helped make this an enjoyable evening.

There are now a combined total of 18 members attending. I would like to thank my new fellow 'students' and not forgetting the 'senior' group for your continued commitment to come to classes and to share in the learning and exercise.



Pot Luck/Dai Sei

L to R: Anne Brander; Barbara Baptista; Andrew Brander; Mike Barros; Joyce Barros and Susana da Costa.

## Tai Chi Beginners Class

The month of January was particularly brutal in terms of extreme temperatures and snowstorms. As a result the Tai Chi Beginners Class began with what could best be described as a sputtering start because several classes had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. Despite this, an enthusiastic group of eight members have committed to learning Tai Chi. They are: Joyce Barros; Sheila Chan; Nena Noronha; Selina Nunes; Cacilda Ribeiro; José Rodrigues; Virginia Santos; and Cintia do Serro. Although it all seems rather daunting and impossible to follow in the beginning, with time, patience and practice everything will fall into place.

## Congratulations



Cameron Barradas, born February 12, 2004 has the honour of being the first fourth generation member of the Casa!!!!

His Parents are: Christopher and Joanne Barradas

His Grandparents are: Tony and Helena Barradas

His Great-Grandparents are: Mickey and Annie Barradas

Welcome aboard Cameron – we look forward to seeing you at future kiddies' functions.

## Cook's Corner



### Lilia Vieira's Imitation Vaca Stofado

#### Ingredients:

1 Blade Steak (boneless or with bone)  
1 can Stewed Tomatoes (398 ml)  
1 pkt. Lipton Onion Soup  
3 – 4 potatoes (peeled, cut into chunks)  
1 bay leaf

#### Marinade

Dark soy  
Lea & Perrins  
Pepper

#### Method:

Marinate the steak with the above marinade in an ovenproof dish to fit the steak and potatoes for at least an hour or overnight in the fridge.

When ready to cook open the can of stewed tomatoes and pour over the steak, use a fork to break up the tomato pieces. Sprinkle the onion soup over the tomatoes, add the bay leaf. Cover and put in the oven at 350° for 1 hour. Remove and add the potatoes and continue to cook for another hour at 325°. To serve cut into pieces and serve with rice or flat pasta.

Note: If the steak is a large one use a larger can of stewed tomatoes.

### Clara Soares' Crème Caramel Pudim Flan

#### Ingredients:

Sugar ½ cup  
Water 1/3 cup

Milk 2 – 2 ½ cups  
Sugar ½ cup  
Egg Yolks 2 large  
Whole eggs 2 large  
Vanilla extract 1 tsp

### Method:

1. In a small saucepan put in first lot of sugar and water. Low heat until sugar is dissolved. Simmer until syrup is golden brown. Pour into 4 individual ramekins. Swirl to coat base. Cool

2. Warm milk and sugar until dissolved. Do not boil. Cool.

3. Beat eggs and yolks till well blended. Add vanilla extract and cooled milk. Stir to combine. Strain. Pour into prepared ramekins.

4. Place ramekins in a roasting pan with hot water coming half way up.

5. Bake in centre of preheated 325° oven about 40 minutes. Cover top with foil if getting dark/skin forms. Cool. Custard is ready when centre jiggles. Will set when chilled.

6. Chill 2 hours or overnight before turning out

N.B. For a richer custard use all yolks  
Recipe can be doubled or tripled.  
Baking time will take longer.

## **D**id you know...

### **THE GODDESS OF THE DAWN....By William Edelen**

The word "Easter" does not appear in the entire bible. The word was not Christian, and was not even used in church literature until late in the church's history. "Easter" is the name of the goddess of Spring. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the spring festival was celebrated honoring "Easter", the goddess Eostre, or Ostara. The church borrowed the festival, mythological continuity, and kept the goddess' name.

Even older than Easter as goddess of spring was a much wider wor-

ship and adoration of her as the goddess of the dawn. In our own language, the root of "Easter" is "East," the place of dawn. In nearly all of the languages of Northern Europe the words for "Easter" come from a root meaning the dawn.

Three thousand years before Jesus was born, poetic and pious Hindus kindled their morning fires, made their morning sacrifices, and sang their morning song of praise to the Goddess of the dawn in ancient India. Many scholars consider the "Hymn to the Dawn" as among the finest of the Vedas. How they praised her, reborn in beauty in every dawn, coming with radiant face to drive away the darkness and its dangers and arouse all creatures to the joys of another day.

This was the original Easter worship, the daily praise and adoration for the dawn. It survives to this day in the year 2001. We still have our Easter sunrise services in every village and hamlet, a vestige of a celebration to the dawn that began 5000 years ago, maybe longer. And 5000 years later, we still sing as a processional hymn on Easter Sunday in Christian churches.."All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voices...thou burning sun with golden beam...thou rising morning...in praise.rejoice..."

Today, we cannot even speak the word "Easter" without remembering when the Eastern sky was alive with the presence of a glorious goddess, robed in gold and purple and radiant with beauty as she rose to wake the world and call all to their morning worship.

It is worth remembering in this Easter season. It makes it far larger and more significant for me to remember how millions of people, from Iceland back to India have shared in this same worship. It places me within the larger context

of the human family, of brotherhood and sisterhood.

I like knowing that worshippers of the Christian Jesus, the Roman Jupiter, the Greek Apollo, the Norse Odin to the Vedic Indra have all been sharing similar feelings...praise for the morning and the human spirit behind it all.

The original celebration of the Hebrew Passover celebrated by Jesus as what we know as "The Last Supper" was a festival of Springtime. How significant and meaningful to celebrate the miracles of the resurrection of the earth, the mystery of life and light in this season of dawn and springtime.

A Passover feast is provided for us all with a divine impartiality in swelling seed and bud and reminds us that the death of winter is always followed by the resurrection of dawn and springtime.

In many spiritual traditions, such as Zen and Taoism and the American Indian, death is approached with no fear as it is only a part of the natural rhythms and cycles of the universe. How could anything as natural as death, which follows birth, be feared?

An elderly member of the Taos pueblo used these beautiful thoughts; "Today is a very good day to die... every living thing is in harmony with me.... every voice sings a chorus within me.... all beauty has come to rest in my eyes...today is a very good day to die...my land is peaceful around me...my fields have been turned for the last time...my house is filled with laughter...yes...oh yes...today is a very good day to die."

The truth of death...and whatever truth is beyond... could only be a part of the beauty of the nature and

rhythm of things...of harvest and springtime.....of birth. and death...and rebirth.....The flowers of a rainy spring.....and the grasses of a showery summer.....are good and beautiful and sufficient....even though they will vanish.....but only to return again.....

## **A**cross the wires



### **Hong Kong seeks to preserve its past for the future**

Development in Hong Kong has done away with much of the former colony's heritage

AFP , Hong Kong  
Wednesday, Feb 18, 2004, Page 16

Among Hong Kong's gleaming skyscrapers and huge futuristic shopping centers lie pockets of the old city: ancient quarters, historic buildings and preserved streets which offer glimpses of days gone by.

In a cramped city where space is at a premium, however, many of these neighborhoods are under threat from developers keen on cannibalizing old properties for new projects.

But a dedicated effort by residents, politicians and architects has all but managed to save one of the city's oldest neighborhoods from the wrecking ball in a campaign, which is being watched by residents of other zones earmarked for redevelopment.

Lee Tung Street in the Wan Chai district is better known as Wedding Card Street because it has been home to the city's wedding invitation printing shops for as long as anyone can remember.

There's hardly a sign in English on the shops along some of its side streets, in the heart of the former red-light district made famous in

the film that was based on the book, *The World of Suzie Wong*.

Almost every property has a traditional mini-Buddhist temple at which offerings are burnt or laid.

While other areas have given in to the redevelopers, stakeholders in Wedding Card Street have fought back. And they have won a major victory.

After residents, local politicians and architects attacked the redevelopment plan, fearing century-old Wan Chai could be in danger of losing its unique character, the government has agreed to think again.

"We are currently reviewing our situation, said Urban Renewal Authority (URA) spokesman Leo Law, following uproar caused by the redevelopment proposal.

"We will continue to meet with the shop operators as well as the local community. There are two more years before we need to demolish the buildings so we will have enough time for consultation."

Ada Wong Ying-kay, chairman of Wan Chai District Council, welcomed the review. "A lot of Hong Kong people don't think history is important -- they want everything new," said Wong.

"But people in the foreign countries, they like historic buildings ... we have different values here," she added.

"I agree urban renewal is important otherwise the inner city would be at risk of becoming a slum but we must also preserve the unique and cultural character of Hong Kong."

The URA, established in 2002 to regenerate the shabbier parts of the city, is one of the preservationists' greatest concerns.

With a war chest of HK\$3.58 bil-

lion (US\$461 million), its brief has been to attract private investment to the city's crumbling districts and bring renewed vigor to the down-at-heel neighborhoods that sit alongside the towering modern edifices.

Admittedly many of the zones earmarked for redevelopment desperately need help: rats often swarm the streets, roads are cracked and pot-holed and businesses are leaving in droves.

But the government's broad-brush approach threatens to sweep away some architectural and cultural gems which preservationists believe would be of more benefit renovated rather than destroyed.

"Hong Kong needs a proper heritage-protection policy," said Wong Wah-sang, associate professor in the Department of Architecture in the University of Hong Kong, and the chairman of Urban Watch, a non-profit organization that was set up to observe and care for the city's urban environment.

"Conserving our heritage does not only give cultural and tourism value, it also helps educate young people and helps them understand the history of Hong Kong."

Johnston Road, not far from Wedding Card Street in northern Wan Chai, is one place where history looks set to disappear.

Under threat, in particular, are five fine pre-war buildings with special character, including a row of four Cantonese terrace-style buildings and a four-story shophouse building in nearby Ship Street.

But residents seem resigned to change in the crowded street, where trams rumble past old pawn shops, Western fast-food stores, mobile phone shops and old-style market stalls.

"When something gets old, it

should be replaced, otherwise the whole city will become a slum," said the owner of Wo Cheung Pawn Shop, which recently moved across the street to make way for the demolition men.

"If you are given a good sum of money, why wouldn't you move out?"

### **Beijing warns of Hong Kong crackdown**

By Hamish McDonald (China Correspondent, Beijing)  
February 19, 2004

A warning from Beijing that it would intervene if democrats gain control of Hong Kong in this year's limited elections has sent tremors through political circles in the territory.

China has made it clear that it has no intention of allowing Hong Kong to move to fully elected government. The message is being interpreted as meaning that Beijing regards most of Hong Kong's opposition politicians - and the half-million people who demonstrated against a draconian security law last July - as "unpatriotic" and therefore not fit to rule.

After Hong Kong's Beijing-appointed chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, withdrew the security bill in the face of massive popular unease, attention turned to a promised review of Hong Kong's basic law or constitution for broadening the voting franchise in 2007, the 10th anniversary of the handover from British rule.

Beijing's muted response to the security law rebuff encouraged hopes of flexibility on the part of China's recently appointed generation of leaders around President and Communist Party chief Hu Jintao. The appointment of fifth-ranking party leader and Vice-President Zeng Qinghong to head Beijing's top pol-

icy committee on Hong Kong added to the optimism. Mr Zeng has a track record of effective diplomacy with the US and other democracies.

This optimism has now been shattered. Mr Tung is looking even more a lame-duck leader out of touch with Hong Kong's increasingly politicised 7 million people. And elections in August for the territory's parliament - the Legislative Council, known as the "Legco" - could worsen the divergence between Beijing and Hong Kong if democrats increase their representation.

In a briefing for selected pro-Beijing journalists in Hong Kong on Sunday, a senior Chinese official is said to have warned that Beijing might use emergency powers to dissolve the Legco if democrats won control.

"I have a sword," the official said, quoted in the Beijing-controlled paper *Wen Wei Po* on Monday. "Normally, I would not use it. Now it is the democrats who force me to use it."

Under the current system, only half the Legco is directly elected by popular vote, with the other half of the 60 seats chosen by special constituencies of conservative professions and business. The chief executive, who retains most powers of the former British governors, is effectively appointed by Beijing through an electoral college it selects.

The basic law now allows the Legco to change how it is elected by a two-thirds vote and the chief executive's approval, reporting the changes to the standing committee of the Chinese parliament, the National People's Congress, "for the record". Changes to the method of selecting the chief executive require both these steps, plus standing committee approval.

### **A Film to Move Hearts**

According to *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories* the definition of the word 'passion' is: "[Middle English] *Passion* is from Old French, from late Latin *passio(n)* (used chiefly a term in Christian theology), from Latin *pati* 'suffer'. *The Passion* refers to the suffering of Jesus Christ." The derivative, 'passionate': "in late Middle English included the senses 'easily moved to passion' and 'enraged' from the medieval Latin *passionatus* 'full of passion', from *passio*."

Unless you have been living in a vacuum these past few weeks, you cannot help but be aware of the controversy and passionate reviews surrounding the just released film *The Passion of the Christ* directed and co-written by Mel Gibson which depicts the last 12 hours of the life of Christ.

From reading a number of these reviews of people who have actually seen the movie at special screenings one thing is for sure, its affect on everyone has indeed been very profound.

One such article written by Paul Harvey who was privileged to have had a private viewing of "The Passion" in Washington DC wrote:

"I really did not know what to expect...From the gripping opening scene in the Garden of Gethsemane, to the very human and tender portrayal of the earthly ministry of Jesus, through the betrayal, the arrest, the scourging, the way of the cross, the encounter with the thieves, the surrender on the Cross, until the final scene in the empty tomb, this was not simply a movie; it was an encounter, unlike anything I have ever experienced."

Conventional wisdom says seeing is believing but perhaps in this case one can say believing is seeing.

## The list we should all carry around

- The most destructive habit ...Worry
- The greatest Joy ...Giving
- The greatest loss...Loss of self-respect
- The most satisfying work... Helping others
- The ugliest personality trait....Selfishness
- The most endangered species....Dedicated leaders
- Our greatest natural resource .Our youth
- The greatest "shot in the arm"...Encouragement
- The greatest problem to overcome ... Fear
- The most effective sleeping pill...Peace of mind
- The most crippling failure disease...Excuses
- The most powerful force in life...Love
- The most dangerous pariah...A gossip
- The world's most incredible computer....The brain
- The worst thing to be without...Hope
- The deadliest weapon...The tongue
- The two most power-filled words..."I Can"
- The greatest asset...Faith
- The most worthless emotion...Self-pity
- The most beautiful attire...a SMILE!
- The most prized possession...Integrity
- The most powerful channel of communication....Prayer
- The most contagious spirit...Enthusiasm
- To the WORLD, YOU may be ONE person; but to ONE person, YOU may be the WORLD!

## Funny bone



### Confessions - By George Remedios

*Dear Padre "Sun Foo"*

I am not Macanese but I went to the funeral Mass of a Macanese friend. After the service in the church the family members looked frozen when I expressed my sympathy by shaking hands and saying "Parabens", a greeting I had heard at many Macanese social functions. I have a nagging feeling I did something wrong.

*Mr. Ho Cham*

*My child*

All sins must be intentional and with full knowledge. You have not sinned. Go in peace. By the way "Parabens" means "Congratulations" or "Kung Hei"

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

In Hong Kong I was baptized at St. Teresa's Church. My First Holy Communion and Confirmation were at Rosary Church. I attended Mass at Wah Yan College Chapel and Christmas Midnight Mass at La Salle College Chapel. My wedding was at the Cathedral in Mato Mouro. The Macanese community attended all these churches. What do you think of my feat?

*Senhor Triunfo*

*My child*

I am impressed. What did you do at the little Franciscan chapel in Kowloon Tong? Did you attend any retreats on humility?

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

In the Fifties in Hong Kong I willingly and intentionally saw many movies that were listed as "Condemned" in the Sunday Examiner (Catholic newspaper). To make matters worse I always went on Fridays and ate "ngau yuk kon" (beef jerky) while watching

the movie although we had to abstain from meat on Fridays.

These movies showed people lying on the beach in swimsuits in the sunset, or actresses wearing tight sweaters, smoking and looking seductive or dealt with naughty themes such as children born out of wedlock. Did I commit a mortal or venial sin?

*Anonymous*

*My child*

I will leave it to your conscience. It all depends on your intentions. I can forgive you for watching the movies but not for eating ngau yuk kon while watching.

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

When I play "dado farinha" (Macanese dice game) with other FM (filhos de Macau) each time I take my winnings from the pot I take an extra quarter. Nobody notices my sleight of hand. Does this count as stealing?

*Jack Roubar*

*My child*

Your conscience knows the answer. You are hoping I say no. Nice try.

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

I have been invited to a First Holy Communion Party. What is an appropriate gift?

I was thinking of giving a Michael Jackson CD.

*Mr. Presente*

*My child*

First Communion parties were very common in the Macanese community in Hong Kong in the Fifties. We usually gave a rosary, prayer book, holy medal, a book on the lives of the saints and so on. Anything bought at the Catholic Centre was appropriate. This still applies today. A Michael Jackson CD is not appropriate. Nor are computer games, skateboards, videos of the movies of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Nike shoes, Calvin Klein underwear

and so on. It should be something religious or at least spiritual in nature.

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

Thirty years ago in Hong Kong I went to confession in St. Teresa's Church on Prince Edward Road and I "feejee" (fingir) or pretended I spoke neither English nor Cantonese. I did the confession in Maquista so that the priest would not know the awful sins I committed. I am bothered today whether it was a valid confession. Should I confess again?

*Anonymous*

*My child*

So that was you! Thirty years ago I was the assistant pastor at St. Teresa's and only one person ever confessed in Maquista. It is fresh in my memory. I remember you used words like "chipi" (pinch) and "rabo" (bum) and "brincar" (play) and "ah mui" (maiden) and "tocar" (touch) and "ahmfada" (almofada = pillow, double meaning). Your intentions were not good. Come see me and do it in English this time.

*Reverend Padre*

*Dear Padre*

I am 9 years old and I learned in school "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife". My next-door neighbour works in Hong Kong but he is from Macau. He has no wife but has a "namorada" (girl friend). I eavesdropped and heard my mom say "That 'malandro' (scoundrel) has a wife in Macau". What does it mean to "covet" his wife if he has one?

*Johnny*

*My child*

Why can't you be like other children and just recite your Ten Commandments even if you don't know what they mean? Haven't you heard "Curiosity kills the cat". Don't ask so many questions. Also stop eavesdropping ya!

*Reverend Padre*

## **R**eminiscences

### **40 days of Lent (Quaresma) ..**

#### **...my recollection**

By Doreen Remedios

Besides Christmas, the other big festival is Easter. The Macanese piously observed the forty days of Lent as they spiritually prepared for Easter (the essence of our faith....The Resurrection).

During this time of spring cleaning for our souls, there are usually three things that we do:

- 1) Prayer: As a youngster in the mid-1950's, I remember my parents taking me to the Stations of the Cross at St. Theresa's church every Friday during Lent. It was semi-social for me, as we would encounter many other FM families. In those days, all the statues were solemnly covered in deep purple. Very sombre. On Holy Thursday, some Macanese men would go "church hopping/visiting" several different churches (St. Theresa's, Rosary Church, etc.) for an all-night vigil and did not return home until the crack of dawn.
- 2) Almsgiving: Our people always had their favourite charities:
  - The Carmelite nuns led a contemplative life at Stanley. Often when prayers were needed due to illness or other serious matters, alms were sent to the Carmelites to pray for their intention.
  - During Holy Week, at the Bank Flats, the Little Sisters of the Poor would visit for their yearly donation. FM's are glad to donate to these good Sisters who have been in Hong Kong since 1923. A few Filhomacs (including my aunt) have lived out their final years under the care of these kind nuns.
  - The St. Vincent de Paul re-

mains close to the Filhomac hearts. Many remember the tough years after WWII when the Society was there with food and clothing for various Filhomac families.

Nossa gente (our people) are known for their generosity and many have left lasting legacies to their favourite religious charity.

- 3) Fasting & Abstinence: Our fasting meal usually consisted of vermicelli noodles with shrimps. Observing the meatless Fridays somehow was never a sacrifice for me because I enjoyed my shrimp fried rice or vegetarian meals. We did not have Fillet-o-Fish in those days.

#### The Early Years

The Catholic Church in Hong Kong was established in 1841. With the arrival of missionaries (churches, schools, hospitals) many Chinese baptisms took place yearly. However, in Macau the 'faith' was handed down from our Catholic Portuguese forefathers since their arrival in China in 1557. In the latter part of the 1800's many young Macanese families moved to Hong Kong because of better job prospects, etc. This generation's deep faith and culture bonded them regionally to Matto Moro

#### Matto Moro

The HK Macanese largely lived around a neighborhood at mid-level between Caine Road and Robinson Road. South East Asians also inhabited this vicinity and built their mosque. Therefore, this surrounding area became known as MATTO MORO, the "Muslim Mountain" in Portuguese.

Everybody knew everybody in Matto Moro. Hence, future generations grew up together and were drawn to each other through their unique Filhomac culture, food and values. To this very day, many FMs would say "quem sa filha/

filho” (whose daughter/son?) because somewhere in the past there would be a link.

Church ties were very strong and my grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins often attended daily mass before dawn. My ‘avo’ (grandmother) often wore a black shawl and lacy veil and was immediately recognized as an ‘avo’ from Matto Moro.

#### The “Cathedral”

From Robinson Road, a flight of zigzag stairs cut through the mid-level mountainside down to Caine Road below. The stairs ended at the plaza of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

The first Cathedral of Hong Kong was built in 1843 and destroyed by fire in 1859. Caine Road was then selected as the site for the current Cathedral. In 1883, a British company started construction. Dedicated to the Immaculate Concep-

tion, patroness of the Diocese of Hong Kong, the Cathedral’s first Mass was offered on 7 December 1888.

#### Procissão do Nosso Senhor dos Passos (Procession of Our Lord of the Passion)

The Cathedral was the hub of Macanese life in Matto Moro. Following a 15<sup>th</sup> century tradition passed on from Portugal to Macau and then to Hong Kong, a procession known as ‘Nosso Senhor dos Passos’ (Our Lord of the Passion) was held on the second Sunday of Lent. Literally this means ‘Procession of Our Lord of the Steps’; the steps referring to the steps Jesus took to Calvary. (‘passo=‘step’).

However, our extended family made up of ‘avo’, aunts, uncles and lots of cousins lived on in Matto Moro. We would often visit on festive occasions. The ‘Procissão do Senhor dos Passos’ was one such important occasion on our family’s

calendar. This devotion was well attended by many Kowloon Macanese families who made their annual pilgrimage to the ‘Cathedral’. Packed with pilgrims, we lined the grounds for this sacred outdoor event.

From the gothic arch of the Cathedral processed the angels. In those days it was a privilege for little Macanese girls of First Communion age to be “anjo” (angels) in the procession. The sashes tied around the angels’ waists were of a purple color rope. Followed by rolls of altar boys, dozens of priests, nuns and streams of religious organizations raising their colorful banners.

Then the solemn moment arrived when the life size statue of the Senhor dos Passos draped in a purple garment carrying a cross to his crucifixion made its way out of the

Cathedral. The statue affixed to a platform was borne on the shoulders of ten strong purple-clad Filhamacs, including my godfather. As soon as the Senhor dos Passos emerged to the sunlit plaza, the faithful would devotedly fall on both knees, not one!

There was a lot of ‘purple’ as part of the procession. Amidst the singing of hymns and incense, the procession slowly circled the Cathedral twice. Along the way, a young woman would impersonate Veronica (the woman who wiped Jesus’ face on the way to Calvary). This was the ultimate privileged role for the chosen Filhamac.

To this very day, the Procissão do Senhor dos Passos takes place annually in Macau, Portugal and other related countries. However, in Hong Kong this tradition disappeared some time in the late 1960’s, coinciding with the second Diaspora.

*The statue of Senhor dos Passos can still be found in the Catholic Cathedral, Caine Road.*



L to R: Cassiano Azedo; Father John de Souza leading the procession of Senhor dos Passos in 1967 and Henrique Antonio ‘Ari’ Noronha, another one of the bearers of the statue.

*Picture courtesy of Rita Souza*