



We must view young people not as empty bottles to be filled but as candles to be lit. - **Frederick Robertson**

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When everything else is taken away What can you offer this Christmas?

When people are yet to regain their dignity and recover from the natural and man-made calamities; when the daily wage is barely enough to buy a meal instead of the three meals a day, then is there still reason to celebrate Christmas?

We have come to a point where we cling to all that glitters and essence forgotten. We have become people who are attracted to the wrapper instead of the contents. So, when the Yuletide Season arrives, we tend to silence the cries of the needy with our half-hearted renditions of carols; we draw away attention from the pleading eyes of a street child who probably has not eaten food for days amidst the multi-colored holiday lights. And when holidays are over and our energy spent; when the Christmas cd's and decors are tucked away in a dusty box in the storage room, we go back to what we were before --- grumbling and bemoaning our fate and the burdens of living every day of the year 'til another holiday comes.

Let us stop this culture of superficiality now. May this be a season to celebrate the fact that despite the turmoil and perils that mankind is experiencing right now, we are ALIVE and we have the capacity to still initiate change.

Celebrating Christmas, may we look at the world with open eyes and realize that we can go out of our way and reach out to those who need our helping hands. It may be beyond our capacity to offer them lights, carols, and sumptuous foods every day, but in this special season, a simple sharing of hope and compassion may turn the birthday of our Lord into a truly Holy day.



Senior Norm Vincent Jalipa 1st Runner-up in Impromptu

ISA fourth year learner Norm Vincent Jalipa won second place in an impromptu speaking competition with a theme "Building Culture of Peace" organized by the Rotary International District 3850 held at St. John Institute in Bacolod City last 21 November 2009.

ISA Executive Director Attends Phil. Chinese Education Forum

ISA Executive Director Mr. Peter M. Chan was in Manila on 27-28 November attending the first Philippine Chinese Education Forum and the 9th Chinese-Filipino Schools National Congress held at Century Park Hotel. 32 articles concerning the state of Philippine Chinese education were submitted to the body. Ms. Cai Yaxun, Dean of the Applied Chinese Language and Literature Department of the Taiwan Normal University, was the guest lecturer. Mr. Chan shared his insights on the importance of reading during the forum.

IloPRISAA Academic, Lit-Mus ISAers Won in Math, Declamation



The annual Iloilo Private Schools Athletic Association (IloPRISAA) academic, literary-musical competitions took place in the third week of November. Forty-six private schools in Iloilo City joined this year's events. ISAers performed well in high school math and declamation. High school math team composed of Karl Francis Chan, James Eduard Chiu and Jan Jemi Gerwayne Tiu won third place; and Randolph Tom Sumaray won third place in English declamation.

44th IloPRISAA Sports Competition ISAthletes brought home 27 Awards

The 44th Iloilo Private Schools Athletic Association sports competition opened on 21 November. As expected, ISAthletes performed remarkably, and maintained their strong presence, in table tennis, badminton, and track and field. For three consecutive years, ISA's Table Tennis Elementary Boys and Girls teams proved unbeatable, both teams were champions again this year. Moreover, Table Tennis Secondary Boys and Girls teams won second and third place, respectively. ISA's Badminton Secondary Girls team won second place, while both Badminton Elementary Boys and Girls teams won third place. In track and field, the elementary girls ISAthletes brought home 3 gold, 5 silver, and 5 bronze, making them second place in the overall tally. Their boys counterpart, on the other hand, won 1 gold, 1 silver, and 1 bronze. ISA's track and field secondary girls team won 2 silver and 1 bronze, while the boys team won 1 bronze.

Rotary Club of Midtown Iloilo Donates Books to ISA Library

Headed by its president, Mr. Enrique 'Ike' Te, Midtown Iloilo Rotarians brought nearly 200 copies of hard-bound reference books to ISA as part of their social project 'books distribution'. The donated books were received by Mrs. Vina Jalipa, ISA Board member, and Executive Director Mr. Peter M. Chan last 6 November. This has been the second batch of books received by ISA from the Rotary Club. Our sincere thanks go to the service-oriented Rotarians, more particularly to Mr. Ike Te, for their valuable contributions to the educational cause in their district.



National Career Achievement Exam 80% Graduating ISAers rated >91%

Results of the Department of Education (DepED)-administered National Career Achievement Examination (NCAE) given to all secondary graduating learners nationwide last 26 August were released early this month. Among the 20 graduating ISAers, 16 received general average ratings of higher than 91% in Math, English, and Science. They constitute 80% of the total graduating learners. ISA's 3rd graduating batch earned a general average of 91.4%, the highest since ISA's first batch of graduates took the exam in 2006. Karl Francis Chan and James Eduard Chiu both earned a rating of 99+%. 8 received scores ranging from 95% to 99%; 6 earned scores between 91% and 94%. 1 received the lowest rating of 69%, 3 rated 83%, 76%, and 71%. The following are the descriptions provided by the DepED on certain range of ratings: 51% ~ 85%, average; 86% ~ 97%, above average; 98% ~ 99%, very high; 99+, excellent. Although this year there are 5 learners rated very high and excellent, slightly more than last year's 4, still ISA's graduating learners are generally seen as 'above average' (91.4%). Taken by subject, they fared best in Math, 85% of the ISAers received ratings higher than 85%; followed by English, 72%; and, Science, 50%.

Unlike in the previous years, this time DepED did not release the list of schools ranking. But comparing this year's results with those of the previous batches, it is safe though to presume that ISA's 3rd batch could easily have ranked one of the top five performing secondary graduating classes in Iloilo City. ISA's first batch ranked 3rd, while the second batch ranked 6th.



ISA Executive Director Mr. Peter M. Chan submitted an academic paper entitled "Reading and Comprehension Skill: The Central Factor in the Current Philippine Chinese Education" to the 8th Southeast Asian Chinese Studies Forum held 17-20 December 2009 at the Century Park Hotel, Manila. On 19 December, Mr. Chan made an oral presentation of his thesis. He advanced a hypothesis: "Reading skill fills out the gap between classroom Chinese speaking skill and the effective social interaction using Chinese as medium". The premise of his hypothesis is "given a very weak Chinese language speaking environment in a country like the Philippines, speaking skill acquired in the classroom does not by itself lead to effective social interaction using Chinese as medium". His view poses a categorical anti-thesis to the widespread belief in the Philippine Chinese Education academic community that: "Listening-Speaking should take the lead; while Reading-Writing comes after". To quote Mr. Chan, "As in any hypothesis, empirical data are needed to ultimately determine the validity of my position *right now*". It is perfectly understandable if this matter occupies much of his time and attention at present and even in the years to come.