Organ Donation Campaign Booklet

by Project “Act of Love”
Prayer for Organ Donation

Heavenly Father, You heal those who are sick and never leave the sufferers alone. You create in us a merciful heart that we never forget those who are in need, particular those who are on the verge of death expecting for organ transplantation. For the sake of your loving kindness, may we not be slow to show our compassion by willing to take a further step on organ donation and by that many more others may do likewise. Let not the hope of these patients be taken away and that their will to live may be encouraged and strengthened. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

About Project “Act of Love”

Project “Act of Love”, which is a care programme supported by the Province, promotes mutual helping and sharing among brothers and sisters of the HKSKH. The services include hotline, counselling, job referral, information seminar and care training etc. It aims to develop the congregation’s adversity quotient and sense of empathy towards other people, extending the Anglican tradition as a Caring Church.

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To Love is to Give

Please Support Organ Donation Campaign

Foreword

Project “Act of Love”, which is a care programme supported by the Province, promotes mutual helping and sharing among brothers and sisters of the HKSKH. “To Love is to Give ~ Supporting Organ Donation Campaign” is the key activity of the Project this year. It promotes organ donation throughout the year. By taking part in the organ donation, HKSKH members, their families and friends share Christ's love with organ recipients.

This booklet delivers organ donation messages from the perspectives of Christianity, medicine as well as donors and recipients. The Revd Lam Chun-wai, The Revd Fan Chun-ho and The Revd Lau Wing-kai explore the significance of organ donation with reference of Bible scripts. Dr Chow Ka-foon, the former President of the Hong Kong Society of Transplantation, gives a brief narration of the history of organ donation in Hong Kong, and states the importance of the care and acknowledgements of donor families.

Project “Act of Love” also interviewed some donors, recipients as well as their families and friends to share their touching life stories about organ donation with us. Through this Campaign, it is hoped that the congregation members can be encouraged to go the extra mile for the people in need, showing their support to organ donation in action.

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When it comes to doing good works, words like “sacrifice” and “generosity” immediately appear in people’s mind. Some people think that they could help the others only when they are available to do so. Yet, have you ever realised that true good deeds lie not in what you have done or how much you have given, but your thoughts at that particular moment. Those who do good are not forced, but are willing, voluntary and fearless of troubles. Even if he has only one dollar, he is still prepared to give it to people in need.

“If someone forces you go one mile, go with him two miles.” (Matthew 5:41) In the past, according to the Roman law, all Roman soldiers had the right to request any civilians to help them carry their loads for at most one mile. This was to reserve the army’s strength. One mile does not seem to be long, but it can consume much energy and time of the civilians, and may lead them to the other direction. Also, when you have already walked one mile, another soldier may come and ask you to walk another one mile. Imagine that you can be forced to the west even if you intend to go to the east – who would like to see a Roman soldier in the journey?

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ told His disciples to take the initiative to go one more mile. With the willingness to help, the civilian will no longer show a bad face, but even suggest going one more mile after finishing the first mile. Not only will the soldier be surprised by the civilian’s voluntary offer, he may also be curious to ask what drives the person to change his attitude and do such a good deed. Isn’t it a chance for the disciple to spread the good news of Jesus Christ? From this moment on, heaven is not only in the disciple’s heart, but in the heart of another person who has not yet believed in God as well.

In Hong Kong, there is flag selling every Saturday to raise funds for various charities. Sometimes, some Hong Kong people take out their wallets because there is no alternative. Like being forced to walk one mile by the Roman soldiers, the person is by no means voluntary. Money given out under this circumstance cannot even be called “donation”, let alone “sacrifice”. Indeed, Hong Kong people are usually willing to help the others, but mostly they go no further than donating money. The key point is that they want to avoid any troubles. As a result, it is very difficult to ask them to exert more efforts. To them, walking one more mile is no easy task.

In promoting organ donation, however, Christians must be more generous. Jesus Christ had said, “Go with him two miles.” The word “sacrifice” is no piece of cake. It is about forgetting oneself, being willing to help no matter how troublesome it may be, and even persuading people to work together.

Organ donation is a benevolent deed. It requires us to be willing to go one more mile for those who are desperately waiting for organ transplant. We need to register online, or submit the completed form to the authority. Before this, we need to discuss with our families, and tell them clearly our wishes. Granted, all these bring us “unnecessary troubles”. However, for the sake of those who are on the verge of death, going one mile or even two miles for them regardless of they being strangers must be an action that pleases God. Hence, don’t forget: initiative and generosity are the first step, essential step to go that one mile.
Utilise Our Body as a Blessing

for the Others and Ourselves

By The Revd Fan Chun-ho

As organ donation is against the Chinese tradition that the body should remain whole after death, Hong Kong people generally show negative attitude towards organ donation. Then, how about the Christians in Hong Kong? Can they donate organs? Would it make their bodies incomplete to face God after death, affecting their resurrection? On 24 December 2007, Hong Kong Christians answered these questions by action – the Church recruited two thousand members to sign the organ donation card together, giving the best Christmas gift to Hong Kong. But what is the theological standpoint of these Christians to support organ donation?

To explore this issue, we have to see what our role and mission are when God creates humans. We all know that humans are created by God according to His image. We are God’s co-worker to create and to manage everything on His behalf in the secular world. History, however, tells us that humans fail to perform their mission once and again due to greed and selfishness. Nonetheless, God has not changed humans’ mission as He has assigned. Arthur Peacocke, a theologian as well as a biochemist, thinks that humans who are still endowed with the Creator’s features should join hands with God’s co-worker to improve the well-being of all creatures with their gifted creativity. And this includes the medical research and development of organ donation because it is for the sake of human health, also our duty as God’s keeper in the world.

Does it mean we should acknowledge all medical or scientific development which is beneficial to human beings? Jürgen Moltmann, a German theologian, believes that humans’ God-assigned mission to manage and to co-create is based on the mutual respect among all creatures basically as nobody shall talk about one’s dignity without respect of all the other creatures. Sharing the image of God, humans should love their fellow creatures with the Creator’s love. It is also God-endowed mission for humans to show their love and respect to other creatures for we are all created by God. Humans should thus respect, protect and love all God’s creation – this is also our act of love and respect to God.

For further elaboration, not only should we strive for advancements in medicine and science for the sake of humans and the world, we should also learn from Jesus Christ to help the others by sacrificing ourselves. Apart from creative thinking, we should worship and contribute to other people in the mercy of God. Organ donation gives us such an opportunity to offer the bodies of the deceased to the patients in need. “I can no longer use my body. Take it if you need it,” the deceased told the helpee. As for living organ donation, the donors said, “I am healthy, and I am willing to share my bodies with you as you are in emergency.” It is just like how the Christ sacrifices Himself as the blessing for us all. In the same vein, Christians can offer themselves to help other people by donating organs.

However, will organ donation mix up our bodies for resurrection? From the nature of the Trinity, God is in the fellowship of love Himself. In the process of organ transplantation, people can break our barriers by giving and receiving organs for each other. Isn’t this “you in me and me in you” love fellowship a reflection of God’s image? Revived bodies ought to be an inter-related and heart-to-heart community. Let’s utilise our bodies as a blessing for the others and ourselves!
Organ transplantation is a brand new medical technology. Promotion of organ donation makes more and more people know and take part in it, giving hundreds of patients appropriate treatment and hope to survive. Since organ transplantation is a technology that has developed only in the past few decades, the Holy Bible written more than a thousand years ago certainly does not contain not even a word related to this topic. Yet, the Holy Bible did indeed record the first heart transplantation in history. And, the doctor carrying out this operation was no celebrity, but God our Lord. “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26) This “heart transplantation” was operated to replace human’s hardened heart with a soft one which allows human to listen to God’s words. Of course, this religious metaphorical operation and the actual medical heart transplantation cannot be mentioned in the same breath.

When we are striving to understand the meaning of organ donation through Bible teaching, we can easily discover that this act is an act for love. Through organ donation, we can live out Jesus Christ’s teaching, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” In Luke 10: 27-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan explains the meaning of this seemingly easy teaching. Loving your neighbour as yourself is not only a moral obligation, but an act that naturally comes out from the compassion at the bottom of our heart. What’s more, the Good Samaritan saves the man totally out of mercy, regardless of any reward. The half-dead man even has no idea of who has saved his life. In this way, we should follow the example of the Good Samaritan through organ donation only out of mercy, not out of sympathy. In compassion and mercy, our act of kindness urges us to share the feeling together with the patient, and even face the death together with the patient. Through this, we come to acknowledge God’s total sovereignty and may live a fruitful life.

Organ donation is a commitment that we make when we are still alive. It is normally realised only after our death. Therefore, at the moment we make the promise, we are probably thinking our own death and in the same time try to share some of our bodily parts with someone we do not know. Making this decision allows us to touch and realise the meaning of death and thus understand more about life. As for organ donation of the living, the questions involved would be much more complicated because it may bring a permanent harm to the donor’s health. Sacrificing one’s life to save another’s is really a complex issue that we have to wrestle with.

Granted, organ donation may bring about religious challenging ethical issues. However, when we see that desperate patients recover after organ transplantation, when we see that hopeless families rebuild after their sick members restore health, we would acknowledge organ donation as a behaviour of “loving our neighbours”. As what St Paul has said in Romans 12:1, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship,”, due to love, we all encourage each other to make the promise of organ donation.

Brothers and sisters, may we encourage each other and live a life that pleases God.
Blessed to Give and to be Given

~ Interview with Dr Chow Ka-foon,
Former President of the Hong Kong Society of Transplantation and
Honorary President of the Hong Kong Transplant Sports Association

By Amy Fung

“Do you know what the longest waiting period for organ transplant in Hong Kong is? It’s 28 years. He is a renal patient and is still on the waiting list. To a certain extent, though, he is lucky enough. When it comes to heart or liver transplant, the patient can hardly wait for eight months,” said Dr Chow Ka-foon (fifth from the right, front row), Consultant of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH). She took part in the first kidney transplant operation of QEH in 1991. Since then, she has been concerned about the development of organ transplantation in Hong Kong. She stated that, when organ donors receive high praise from the public for their good deeds, we should also acknowledge the pressure on the donor families after they give out their beloved’s organs. Hence, Dr Chow is keen on organising activity for both organ recipients and donor families in recent years. This opportunity allows the donor families not only to connect themselves with each other who have gone through the same hardship, but also to share the happiness of the recovered patients. From the smiles of the organ recipients, the donor families can realise that they are also blessed by lighting up people’s lives through the donation, thereby encouraging more people to support organ donation. “The word of the donor families could be more convincing than the organ recipients’ to promote organ donation,” said Dr Chow with a smile.

Recalling the time when she first participated in the work of organ transplant in the early 90s, Dr Chow said the waiting list requirement for transplantation was very strict due to a scarce number of organ donors. For example, the renal patients must be married, aged below 50, and financially stable as the family breadwinner then. As equality becomes more popular nowadays, all patients under the age of 70 are qualified for kidney transplant irrespective of their marital and financial status. Regarding this, the promotion of organ donation has become more important to resolve the demand-supply imbalance of donated organs.

Leave a living will, leave with no regrets

“Chinese people generally respect the last wish of their family members. If donors have told their families about their wish to donate organs after death, their families will mostly follow suit. The problem is, however, most family members do not communicate with one another very often so the donor’s wish is not well indicated in the family. As a result, the bereaved families may refuse to donate their beloved’s organs to avoid any bad feeling in future,” Dr Chow explained. She also suggested that the government should provide post-transplant care and support for the donor families to reduce their pressure in the aftermath.

Dr Chow said some donor families claim that they receive moans and groans from the dead in the dreams after donating their organs. Some are criticised by the other family members: “Why did you donate my son’s body without asking me?” The miraculous recovery of the famous Taiwanese news
broadcaster Ms Tanya Liu after being wrongly declared brain death in 2002 is another case in point. Dr Chow said this rumor has frightened a man for almost ten years as he was afraid he had made the wrong decision of donating the organs of his wife who was also declared brain death. Not until the last gathering held by Dr Chow when he was reassured by the attending medical practitioners could he be relieved. Obviously, the sorrow and pain the donor families confront after losing their beloved ones are by no means negligible.

Help start a new chapter of life through leisure activities

Through the network of the QEH Renal Support Group and the Hong Kong Society of Transplantation, Dr Chow has thrown herself in organising leisure activities, like BBQ party and picnic, for organ recipients, donor families and medical practitioners in recent years. It is hoped that the donor families can realise they did help make a difference in people’s lives by seeing the recovered patients’ happy faces in the gathering. Dr Chow said, “Last year, about 180 people joined the BBQ party in Lantau Island, including a three-generation donor family. The grandfather said in tears that it was his happiest day in the past three years. It made him forget all the sorrows.”

Dr Chow added that organ transplant does make a great change in the patients’ lives as it stops them from endless waiting and, more importantly, gives them a new life to live. “Having a new life, people would be either more willing to help the others, or eager to enjoy the best of life,” Dr Chow said. In 2008, she joined hands with other doctors to establish a non-profit making organisation - Hong Kong Organ Transplant Sports Association. The association aims at encouraging transplant recipients to take part in sports activities, and to lead a more active and positive life after transplantation. “Once there was a boy at the age of 16 or 17. After the transplant operation, he refused to put off his clothes publicly in order not to expose his scar to the others. After attending transplant games overseas, however, he found that everyone had scars, some of which were even much uglier than his. He then became happy again,” she laughed. She hopes that more people can respond to the promotion of organ donation, sharing their love and blessing with people in need.
Heartopener to Spread Gospel with a New Heart and Music

~ Interview with David Kwan,
Member of SKH St Paul’s Church and a heart transplant recipient

By Amy Fung

61-year-old David Kwan’s heart has been opened three times for surgery in his life. With luck, he eventually underwent a heart transplant in 2006 though being let down for three times while waiting. Three or four years later, his kidney function was found deteriorating that he has to receive peritoneal dialysis until a kidney transplant....... Despite the long life-and-death struggle, David (above photo) does not feel pitiful at all. On the contrary, with the new heart, he formed a band called, “The Heartopeners” (i.e. “Happy People” in Chinese), with his church members to spread gospel and to communicate with God through music. “God creates you, so you can count on Him. And you have to serve God as long as you live,” said David.

Heart problem first found at young age

Tuberculosis was prevalent in Hong Kong in the 1950s, so the Student Health Service Centre provided chest x-ray for all school children at that time. The size of his heart was found enlarged by the x-ray test when David was six, but his family doctor said it should not be a big problem. Therefore, nobody took it serious until he got the first heart attack when he had started working for two or three years after graduation.

David has all along been a Hi-Fi enthusiast and determined to develop his interest into career. At the age of 21, he finished his study of electronic engineering at the Hong Kong Technical College (predecessor of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University), and got a job at Shun Hing Group – the sole agent for many foreign branded Hi-Fi products. With his good English and sound knowledge of Hi-Fi equipment, David was soon promoted by the Group’s founder Mr Mong Man-wai to the sales department in the headquarters after working at the maintenance department for two years. “Perhaps the office’s air conditioning temperature was so low that let me get rheumatic fever. I felt very dizzy all the time, and my joints swelled. There were also lots of problems of my heart – it beat irregularly and the valves did not close properly that the blood was regurgitating backwards,” said David. Nevertheless, the doctor said that he was doing well, and would be recovered soon. David, therefore, got back to work after taking time off for six weeks. To his dismay, there was another heart attack after he returned to work for two weeks. This time, his situation was much worse; he had to take prescribed steroid for one year to enhance his strength.

Back to normal with primary treatment

Did it work? “Yes, of course, and very well! I can do almost everything, say hiking at Pat Sin Leng, playing tennis, and cycling around the Happy Valley Racecourse every Sunday after church,” David said. Indeed, he was very active and outgoing when he was young. However, five or six years later, he was no longer physically fit for vigorous activity, and had to follow the doctor’s advice to quit his favourite sport – tennis.

In spite of all the efforts, one of his heart valves had shrunk from a one-dollar coin to a 50-cent coin in size that David had to open his heart for the first surgery in 1980. Shortly after the operation, he married his wife and gave birth to his only son, Shaun (left on the above photo), leading a
happy, normal life until the relapse in 1994.

In 1994, David was working at the famous British-based trading company – Dodwell & Co. He was one of the key executives selected to facilitate the company’s localisation due to the Hong Kong handover in 1997. The intensive training, workload and frequent business parties increased the burden on his heart. He thus had to open his heart again to implant an artificial heart valve as replacement in 1995. This time, the success rate had however been dropped to 50% from 90% in last operation.

David enjoyed a few years of peace after the second heart surgery.

On the brink of death

Going to work one day in 2002, David felt dizzy all of a sudden. Used to pounding heavily, his heart seemed to stop beating, failing to pump enough blood and oxygen to the brain. After consulting the doctor, he was admitted to the Grantham Hospital for a 24-hour observation. It was found that his heart did stop beating several times, five seconds for each stop. “If I didn’t wake up and kept sleeping, I would pass away,” he said. Hence, he had a surgery to put an ICD (Implantable Cardiovertor Defibrillator) in his chest. This device delivers life-saving shocks if a dangerous heart rhythm is detected.

In the following two or three years, David got six ICD shocks because his heart stopped racing. As if in a roller coaster ride, he felt horrible after being shocked. “My whole body feels totally powerless after the ICD shock. It is like a massive thump on your head, and you can feel the pains from head to toe, simply awful!” he said. With irregular heart rate, David became tired very easily, and would feel short of breath just by climbing a short stairway. Sometimes, his mind went blank without sufficient blood and oxygen pumped to the brain. It was also terrible for him to feel the heart racing uncontrollably up and down inside his body. Every night before sleep, he had to pile up three pillows, and lay on it for half an hour to slow down his heart beat.

“From September to December in 2004, I had to go to the hospital once or twice a month and stayed for a whole week each time. My heart felt like a big balloon that I could hardly sleep at all.” David implored the doctor to place him on the heart transplant waiting list. Though his request was accepted, the doctor told him, “Whether you can make it is up to your luck but us.” In fact, only one in every five patients on the waiting list can receive the heart from the matched donor – the chance of getting a heart transplant is slim.

Stressed to wait for a new heart

On the waiting list for 14 months, David received calls from the hospital for heart transplantation for three times; yet none of them fulfilled his wish – he served as standby patient in two operations, and the donor family changed their mind at the last minute in the third one. “I was in the taxi rushing to the hospital. Suddenly, a nurse phoned me, ‘We’re sorry, David. There’s a problem with the donor family. Please go back home first.’ I was so disappointed. It’s just like asking a child to dress up for a good meal in a classy restaurant; but in fact there’s no dining out at all. He will be very upset after dressing up. And I was like that child.”

Bedridden and moody, David couldn’t help questioning his mother one day, “Why are you so selfish? Why am I the only one to get sick among the five brothers and sisters?” His mother quietly replied, “Perhaps this is God’s will to create you. Count on God and serve the Church with the best of you. This may be better to you. Remember, your lifeblood lies in the Church.” In good faith, David never doubted God’s will. Not only was he eager to participate in the ministry at St Paul’s Church, he was also appointed to establish St Matthew’s Church with members of other churches in 1993. David is always the hard-core member in the Church. Due to his health problems, he has been moving back from the front line gradually, still he keeps on supporting the service of the church’s brothers and sisters in spirit.

28 February 2006 is the most important day in David’s life - a not-yet-30-year-old man was killed in a traffic accident, and his family
followed his wish to donate his organs. It is the third time for David to open his heart, but this time, it is for transplantation.

Fortunately, David’s 57-year-old body does not reject the implanted heart from a young, healthy donor. On the contrary, it gives him a new lease of life with new energy. Besides starting his own company, he formed a worship band, “The Heartopeners” (i.e. “Happy People” in Chinese), with five church members to perform the music ministry of St Paul’s Church. Every month, they gather to play music, study Bible and share with each other on a specific theme. They have also been invited to give over 15 performances in many places, including chapels in Jiangmen, Guangzhou and Shenzhen in the mainland, as well as Dawn Island and elderly homes in Hong Kong. “We will go wherever we are needed,” David said. To him, music is not just the way to spread God’s Good News, but more importantly his communication with God.

David’s story is not yet finished however as he was diagnosed with renal problems in March 2009. Quickly getting deteriorated in just a month, his kidneys lost the function of detoxification because of anemia that made him give cloudy urine, throw up easily, and feel powerless of his limbs. The doctor estimated that his kidneys would fail to function in one year, and thus treated him with peritoneal dialysis. By inserting a catheter into his peritoneal cavity, dialysing fluid can be introduced via it to remove toxins and water from the blood through the peritoneum, and the “dirty fluid” is then drained out after a certain period of time. To go on playing guitar in the band, David successfully persuaded the doctor to insert the catheter into the left side of his abdomen, avoiding contact between the guitar and the catheter exit site on the right side of his abdomen.

Live to serve

“The mission of my life is to maintain the relationship with God, and above all, to serve God. If I failed to do so, why do I need the surgery to continue my life?” David said with no reservation. The doctor, also a Christian, did make an exception for him by surgically inserting the catheter into the left side of his abdomen as he requested. On dialysis three times a day, David has his kidney problems fixed at the end. A glutton for work, he is however medically advised to have less work, more rest, and it is hard for him to follow - you know, he had four business trips to the US, Canada and Europe in one month right after the heart transplant, and did not feel tired at all!

To help out with his father’s business, his only son Shaun, who had already obtained the Pilot License in Australia and was accumulating his flight time, suspended his training to rush back home in the mid of last year. “It must be lies if I said I’m not worried. Having no brothers and sisters but mum in Hong Kong, how can I feel not concerned when my dad is in trouble? It’s impossible.” To Shaun, family is always his top priority when compared to his career.

Crossing a hurdle after another, David feels most thankful for the support and prays of all the pastors and fellow church members. “It’s my illness that let me feel the love of everyone around, in particular my son’s devotion to the family.” As an organ recipient, David truly hopes that more and more people can support organ donation, giving the patients who are still struggling against death on the transplant waiting list a precious chance to continue their life and their service to God.
A Social Worker’s Life-and-Death Struggle

~ Sharing of Christine Kwok,
Supervisor of HKSKH Kowloon City Children and Youth Integrated Service Centre

By Amy Fung

Social worker is the helping professional, and they have the mission of assisting people in need with their passion and knowledge. Nevertheless, social workers are also humans having their blind side. The experienced social worker Christine Kwok (right on the above photo) kindly shared with us that when the helpee was a former team-mate and was dying due to serious illness, she could ignore all the code and guidelines in order to help him pull through.

Christine is the Supervisor of the HKSKH Kowloon City Children and Youth Integrated Service Centre. Under her supervision, Wong Lau-ho (Ah Ho, bottom right photo) had once worked as programme officer at the centre. In August 2008, Christine heard that Ah Ho, who had resigned to further his studies earlier that year, was admitted to hospital with acute liver failure. His bilirubin level was found nearly 30 times the normal level, and his liver function was so badly deteriorated that he was at the top of the liver transplant list. “The first time we visited him was on September 25. The doctor told us that Ah Ho’s liver function would sustain his life for only two weeks. We had no idea what we could do for him,” she sadly said.

Call for support to overcome the challenge

Soon after the visit, Christine spread his news through the SKH Welfare Council to call for help, and the response was encouraging. Whether experienced or new, ranked high or low, lots of colleagues had a wish to show their support by visiting Ah Ho and his family in the hospital. Christine thus suggested making a visitor timetable to avoid disturbing the patient. “In fact, I was once struggling if I should spread the news within the Council as he was no longer working with us. But everything went fine and smooth after our report to the supervisor,” she said.

The team also helped Ah Ho’s mother contact the media to cover the case so as to recruit more supporters of liver donation. The Department of Heath even invited Ah Ho to share his story in an organ donation promotion video to appeal public support.

On 9 October, Saturday, Christine received Ah Ho’s call in the office. He said the hospital had received a liver from a deceased donor, and was arranging the transplant operation for him. Ah Ho had to reply whether he would accept the donation; if not, the opportunity would be offered to another patient. Yet, Ah Ho’s mother, who would rather donate her liver to her dear son, was hesitant about the deceased liver transplantation. Already exhausted herself in looking after her son day and night, she had become physically very weak, and the doctor was unwilling to put her life at risk for the living donor transplantation. “Ah Ho told me that if he gave up the offer, it would be given to the other. And we all know that the chance is slim to wait for another suitable liver.” Without a second thought of informing her supervisor, Christine rushed to the hospital right away. “At that time, the respect of service users’ right to self-determination in the social worker’s code of practice was totally out of my mind.
I just want to persuade Ah Ho and his mother to accept the offer," she said.

**Care for each other like family**

At the last moment, Ah Ho’s mother agreed to let her son undergo the transplant operation. “That night, at around 3 am, I suddenly woke up, and felt very much scared. I was afraid how I could face his mother if Ah Ho would have any problem in the transplantation,” Christine said. “Luckily, he is now recovering gradually though there is a long way to go. For example, he has to be more careful about his diet and……” With her tender loving care, she sounded as if she were his family member. She hoped that Ah Ho’s story can inspire us to be more considerate of the people around, making the world a better place for everyone.
**Why Not Save A Life?**

~ Interview with Emily Mak, Member of SKH St Peter's Church North Point and a bone marrow donor

By Amy Fung

That the Customs Inspector Simon Hui Sai-man selflessly offered to save his fellow officer’s life by donating part of his liver was made known to almost everyone in town last year. In fact, quite the same story also took place in SKH St Peter’s Church North Point twenty years ago. At that time, a church member who was diagnosed with leukaemia (i.e. blood cancer) was in desperate need of bone marrow transplant for a cure. The Youth Ministry soon initiated the first-ever blood drive to recruit suitable donor for that brother in the Church. That night, near 40 church members showed up for testing, making the 1000-square-feet chapel almost impassable. In spite of all the efforts, the patient passed away because no matched donor was found.

The Church’s blood drive however offered Emily Mak (above photo), a secondary school teacher, a precious opportunity to save the life of an unknown patient later on.

Emily said that finding a matched bone marrow donor was as difficult as winning the Mark Six first prize. Though only 19 years old, she partook in the Church’s blood drive to try her best to help her godfather - the badly ill church member. Her data was thus registered in the Bone Marrow Donor Registry. Years later, Emily’s tissue type was found matched with another patient’s, making her become someone’s “Mark Six first prize”!

After discussing with the doctor about the donation process and the risk of the operation, Emily realised that blood stem cells have the regeneration potential so the donated cell will be replenished by the body within a short period of time. Therefore, she told her family about her wish to donate and took 3-day sick leave from the school she was working to prepare for the bone marrow donation in the hospital. “When generally anesthetised, you don’t know anything at all. I think I feel much worse to catch a cold than to give bone marrow!” Emily laughed. Her good friend even asked her mother to make a large pot of soup with two chickens for Emily as supplement after discharging from the hospital – so sweet and touching.

Emily has also signed the organ donation card to show her support. “Should there be a chance to save other people’s lives even when we are no longer alive, why not do so?” she said.

**Live the image of God**

The Revd Leung Ka-jor (below photo), Vicar of SKH St Matthew’s Church, also took the blood test at St Peter’s twenty years ago because the ill brother was his classmate at SKH St Michael’s Primary School. In The Revd Leung’s heart, this old good friend was active, clever and competent enough to manage his career, family, and service at Church properly at the same time. He was the vestry member and also the department head as well as leader of the youth ministry. Not only was he adored by the fellow church members, he was also the role model of The Revd Leung. People were so sad to know that he got so seriously ill all of a sudden,
especially those of his age. “We were all about 20 to 30 years old, in the prime of our lives. We had never thought of suffering from such a serious illness. It was our first time to face death,” The Revd Leung said. With the Vicar’s support, members of the Youth Ministry quickly contacted the Red Cross and wrote to promote the blood drive on the Church’s weekly, in order to help find suitable bone marrow donor within the shortest period of time. Although they could not save that brother’s life in the end, The Revd Leung was so moved by the heartfelt contributions of each and every church member at that time. He believed that it is from the bottom of the church members’ hearts to help when they know there is a brother in need, and this is also an act of faith in God that they have developed for years. Not only do they hear God’s word, but they also live His image.
Try to take the following five actions to support organ donation step by step:

**Step 1:** Follow Jesus’ spirit of sacrifice
~ Be kind to people and even those we do not know; willingly give our helping hands when necessary

**Step 2:** Recognise the value of organ donation
~ Realise the importance of organ donation and regard it as one of the ways to help the others in need

**Step 3:** Indicate our wish to donate organs
~ Join the Centralised Organ Donation Register to demonstrate our commitment

**Step 4:** Express
~ Talk to our family and friends that we wish to donate our organs when we pass away, sharing our love with the patients in need

**Step 5:** Invite
~ Spread the message around and mobilise our family, friends and colleagues to support organ donation, showing love and care to the patients

~ END ~