



Sister Anna Haydee Librojo: Canadian Witness to Faith



Born in a Filipino Catholic family of nine children, I entered the Canossian Novitiate in Hong Kong in 1966. In 1969, I was sent to Rome to pursue graduate work at the Pontifical Institute “Regina Mundi” and then at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

After Rome, my area of influence became our Canossian schools in the Philippines where I served in various capacities as Principal, Curriculum Developer and Superintendent.

My mission in Canada started in 2004. Here, my ministry expanded to include collaborative ministry with a nursing home and involvement in parish and its schools ministries – St. Barnabas Parish in Scarborough. In 2008, my call brought me to work with committed lay people in the identification of needs and possibilities in the spirituality and ministry, particularly with Couples for Christ. The pursuit to understand the emerging needs of newcomers to Canada, particularly caregivers and domestic workers brought me to work as a Pastoral Assistant at Holy Rosary Parish in Milton.

Q. If you had to create a Catholic Resume which highlighted ways you are a WITNESS to the Catholic faith, what would be on it?

Come October 2011, I will be working full time with Carers ARK, a new charitable organization with a group of Catholic lay people to assist, support and guide Live-in Caregivers about their rights, privileges and the limitations of their working status. We are committed to help live-in caregivers, domestic workers and other migrant workers live a fuller and happy Christian life in Canada. We begin by helping them face their short term issues and progressively to provide pathways for alternative career development. Many of these people have put their own families, careers and life on hold in search of a better life. They have come to Canada in the hope of

finding that, but instead have little or no support to assist them in this time of change in their own lives. They suffer from separation from their families, isolation and despondency. Many are victims of unscrupulous recruiters charging high fees and making false promises. Some have been subjected to abusive practices by their employers. Others just do not say anything and get by on what you or I would not accept or understand as a person living under the Canadian Charter of Human Rights.

What kind of difference do you hope to make in living a life based on Jesus' teachings?

In my response to Christ's on-going call to influence others for the sake of the Kingdom, the elements of my navigational guide are rather simple:

- 1. The Seven Steps of the Our Father** which address foundational life principles: the necessity of cultivating our primary connection with God ; the nurturing of belonging, adoration and thanksgiving, and the proclamation and work for establishment of a Kingdom of justice, truth and love.
- 2. One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church** – Code words we upheld in our creed for faith referent thinking, feeling and acting with the *'ekklesia'* – the gathering of the called:
 - a) One – the push for what unites with our God who is an organic developer teaching us how to integrate, not eliminate; to live as one with the One; to recognize all creation.
 - b) Holy – I am not just me but I was made for and belong to a God – creating, redeeming and holding all things together. I am nudged to live in attentive, contemplative silence, fostering an awakened life with the Spirit that rejoices in my dreams and realities; my greatness and my miseries.
 - c) Catholic – in Greek (*kath'holou*), meaning "on the whole," This engages me to promote a mind-set and a heart-throb that are inclusive; that foster connection, collaboration and community.
 - d) Apostolic – in Greek ἄποστολος (*apóstolos*), meaning 'one who is sent forth as a messenger'. My message is Christ who lives in me and sends me to influence by caring – the service of the heart informed by the mind and hands.
 - e) Church – [Greek](#) ἐκκλησίᾳ, *'ecclesia'* – a gathering of a living community inspired by the living God and motivated by the rich texture of the human fabric of our Catholic faith tradition.
- 3. The Beatitudes** – The way of responding to a deeper call for anyone who perceives the 'look' of Christ in their response to daily, ordinary life. These are eight ways of becoming a blessing.

What advice do you have for a young Catholic finding ways to express their faith?

I would invite her/him to consider what Pope Benedict wrote in Spe Salvi 4: *"the Christian message was not only "informative" but "performative". That means: the Gospel is not merely a communication of things that can be known—it is one that makes things happen and is life-*

changing. The dark door of time, of the future, has been thrown open. The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life.”