

HEART of ASSISI

JULY 2021

Bringing you the heart of Assisi Hospice

Son of former patient will ‘Race for Nurses’



Tan Weide is the son of Assisi’s former patient, 64 year-old Mr Tan Leng Cheok. Mr Tan Leng Cheok had liver cancer. His condition deteriorated and was hospitalised in July last year. Weide witnessed the change in his father after he came under the care of Assisi Hospice’s Day Care service.

Weide said, “After discharge, he seemed to have lost 80% of his memory. He couldn’t remember how to use the phone and couldn’t even count from 1 to 10. His mood was also very low, and he even took to drinking. We were very worried for him.”

Mr Tan Leng Cheok came under the care of Assisi Hospice Day Care in Sep 2020. As Mr Tan was staying alone, his family hoped that the medical care and interaction at the Day Care Centre would help him.

Weide said, “The progress was amazing. We had been worried that he would soon forget us, but after going to Day Care daily, his memory really improved. He would tell me about the friends he made, and share what he had learned. He never used to cook but he would tell me about what he made during the cooking sessions at Day Care. He



Mr Tan Leng Cheok (left) enjoying Yu Sheng with Weide at our Chinese New Year celebrations at Assisi Day Care Centre in Feb this year.

did gardening. He enjoyed the music therapy sessions and was part of the Senior Boleh Chimes Choir. I was present for his first performance during Christmas last year, and was really proud of him.”

Emotionally, Mr Tan also managed to reconcile with his family. He got divorced when his children were young due to drinking problems. Weide said, “He apologised to my mother and us. He also told me that he had time to sit down and think and reflect, and he was ready to be with the Lord.”

Weide was touched by the care both him and his father received at the Day Care, and especially the attention from the nurses. He said, “She would text me often, to update me on my father’s health condition, medication and how to care for him, and send photos of his activities and progress. We were also worried about his care arrangements if he deteriorate further, and the nurse shared that inpatient care was an option. When we were concerned about whether we could cope financially, the nurse also provided information on what to expect, the cost involved and lots of assurance that help was available.”

Mr Tan passed on in February this year. When Weide heard about Assisi’s “I Race for Nurses”, he decided to take part to show his appreciation to the nurses who cared for his father. He said, “I would always remember how helpful and comforting they were, providing assurance and calming us when we were worried and lost.”



Mr Tan Leng Cheok (1st from right) performing during Assisi Christmas celebrations last year as part of Senior Boleh Chimes Choir.



Appreciate nurses by walking, running and donating!

Nurses often “walk the extra mile” for patients. To care for patients with terminal illnesses, an Assisi Hospice nurse has to walk 12 km per day. This Nurses’ Day, show your appreciation to nurses by walking or running! For every 100km covered, a \$100 voucher which can be redeemed for shoes will be gifted to an Assisi nurse by adidas Singapore. All Assisi nurses will receive a \$100 voucher each for Nurses’ Day when we reach the collective goal of 15,000km.

Sign up now for “I Race for Nurses” at web.42race.com/race-bundle/iracefornurses to walk/run a total of 12km, 21km, 50km or 250km from 1-31 July, anywhere and anytime at your convenience. To go the extra mile to support the work of our nurses, start a fund-raising campaign page at giving.sg/assisi-hospice/i_race and rally your family and friends to support the cause! Funds raised will provide care and comfort to patients with terminal illnesses and their families.



Sign up

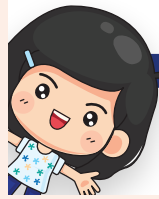
web.42race.com/race-bundle/iracefornurses

Start a fund-raising page or donate at:

giving.sg/assisi-hospice/i_race

Find out why nurses walk so much at

<https://tinyurl.com/iracefornurses>



Service with love during Lent at Assisi



As the Catholics in Singapore celebrate Catholic200SG this year, we invited them to live out the meaning of Lent at Assisi and join us to carry on our Mission of serving those in need by journeying with our patients and their loved ones. During the period of Lent in March and April, over 100 of them took part through offering their helping hand by volunteering, offering their wallet through donations, and offering their voice by increasing awareness of palliative care through their social media platforms.

About 40 of them signed up as volunteers at our “Kopi Delight” sessions; taking kopi/tea orders, making beverages and serving patients with love, or delivering Chinese New Year goodie bags to our patients and their families at their homes.



Our volunteer at our “Kopi Delight” session serving patients with love.

Anne Goswami was one of the volunteers. She could not forget the care that her grandfather received at Assisi Hospice 30 years ago, and seized the chance to revisit Assisi as a volunteer for the “Kopi Delight” session. She said, “I am happy to do my small part to help. Seeing their loved ones around them was so heart-warming. It brought back many memories of my grandpa.”

The experience was memorable for some first-time volunteers. “It really opens up my heart that serving others, be it in small or big ways, can bring so much joy to the recipient,” said Helene Wong, parishioner of Church of St Mary of the Angels.

We would like to say a big thank you to all who offered your helping hand, wallet and voice to care for the more vulnerable among us this Lent at Assisi!



Volunteers at our “Kopi Delight” sessions taking kopi/tea orders and making beverages.



LEAVING A LEGACY OF CARE

Over the years, Assisi has benefitted greatly from individuals from all walks of life who have left us a legacy of care. They include former patients, families and caregivers of former patients, and many others who believe in our mission to provide compassionate palliative care to patients with life-limiting illnesses. Their lasting gifts came in the form of residual bequest of estate, bequest of a sum of money stated in a will, nomination of Assisi Hospice as a beneficiary of CPF monies, gifts of insurance policies and other ways.

We are deeply grateful for their generosity and their commitment to contribute to the growth of specialist palliative care, enabling us to bring comfort and dignity to patients and their loved ones for many years to come. Their loved ones share the stories of why they decided to create a lasting impact in the lives of others.

A Lady of Faith

Valentine Chuah was a domestic helper at the Lim household, and also a former patient of Assisi Hospice Home Care service. Fiona, whom she had taken care of since young, shared her fond memories of “Aunty Val”, and why she decided to leave a legacy gift to Assisi.

“Aunty Val was born in Malaysia and at a young age, became an orphan who was raised by nuns. I believe her faith community was her family for much of her life. She had wanted to become a nun but when it was clear that was not the path for her, she chose to travel to Singapore and explore what else life had to offer. As it turned out, she became a fixture in many Church communities in Singapore, dedicating herself to the Church in countless ways.

While volunteering at the Church canteen and weekly cleaning of the church, she also worked for families as a caregiver and housekeeper. She eventually came to our family. Aunty Val was with our family for 35 years. She looked after my brothers and I when we were little children, while cooking and cleaning and marketing and ensuring everyone in our house was looked after. Her dedication and love were limitless, her patience was endless, and her presence is treasured forever. She went on to look after my cousins, my grandparents and even my mother and father. She was a nanny, an aunt, a friend, a confidante, a Goddaughter, a Godmother and above all, she was family. She has been an instrumental part of all our lives and has her own special place in family stories and happy memories.

When Aunty Val received her diagnosis of colon cancer, she was quietly shaken and shocked. It did not take her long to turn to her faith, to seek the

answers she needed and wanted. It was along that journey, that we came to know of Assisi and its Home Care service. Aunty Val felt comfortable and secure with Assisi. Her Catholic background and faith certainly played a part in this. Perhaps she felt she was becoming a part of another family in that stage of her life.

I have no doubt that it was the caring team of Home Care nurses and doctors at Assisi that fortified Aunty Val's decision to be comfortable at home where she was cared for. The Assisi team was meticulous, caring, nurturing and supportive of Aunty Val and her wishes, while patiently supporting any questions and decisions that had to be made. Quite simply, their presence and their approach made all the difference to an emotional and challenging time for us all. It was plain to see that Aunty Val felt this as well.

She was at peace with her physical caregivers and she was at peace with her Spiritual Caregiver. And I do believe that it brought her great comfort and ease to know that they were both very much intertwined.

The legacy gift to Assisi is simply a way to pay forward Aunty Val's gifts of Faith, Care and Meaningful Work. As we rush through our days and our lives, may we never forget the need to slow down and look beside us, to offer comfort and solace when it is needed most. May we start and end each day with reflection and gratitude, just as Aunty Val did.”



Valentine Chuah (front row, 3rd from left in pink polo shirt), fondly known as “Aunty Val”, with the Lim family



A Lifetime of Giving and Changing Lives

Mr Teo Joo Meng is a retired Mathematics teacher from Montfort Secondary School. His daughter, Clarissa, shared on his behalf on why he wrote a will to leave a legacy gift to Assisi.

“My father experienced poverty when he was young, and he always felt the need to help those who are poor. He was the eldest son of a large family. After completing his O levels, he could not pursue further education but had to go out to work to contribute towards the financial needs of the family. He worked hard for more than 40 years as a teacher. He was the sole breadwinner of my family of seven. My parents were married for 56 years before my mother’s passing.

My mother suffered from colon cancer and was referred to Assisi Hospice in September 2019. Even though she required full time care for her basic needs, she decided to stay home as my sister and I were able to take time off our work to care for her full time. We decided together as a family that she would go for inpatient hospice care if we could no longer cope with caring for her at home.

Caring for my mother at home did not mean that we were left on our own. My mother came under the care of Assisi Hospice Home Care team. A team of

staff including a palliative doctor visited us at home the day after my mother was discharged. The team explained to us their services and checked that we had the equipment necessary to care for my mother. They also offered helpful suggestions on how to care for her. She passed on peacefully at home in October 2019.

In a small country like Singapore, we are truly blessed to have a facility like Assisi Hospice. The staff working towards the vision and mission of the hospice aim to provide the dignity everyone desires in their last days.

My father believes in the mission of Assisi Hospice and wants to help the Hospice achieve its mission. As such, he has been donating just a little each year to Assisi Hospice. He hopes to continue to support the Hospice and hence decided to put it in his will. My father hopes that anyone in need of hospice care will not be denied because of financial constraints, and that his small contribution will help other needy families, especially when they are already struggling with the difficulty of bearing a terminal illness.”

To find out more about leaving a legacy of care, please contact Ms Chng Li Ming at chng.li.ming@assisihospice.org.sg.

Mr Teo Joo Meng (right) and his wife.



Interfaith Memorial Service Goes Virtual

About 100 family members and friends of former Assisi patients and our staff gathered virtually to remember their loved ones who had passed on. This first virtual Interfaith Memorial Service was broadcasted on the Assisi YouTube channel on 22 May. There were also 400 family and friends who tuned in after the broadcast.

Though we could not gather physically, we were together in spirit to celebrate life and embrace and honour shared memories. Loved ones of former patients shared their memories through precious photos and heartfelt words which were presented as a photo montage, and the husband of a former patient and our colleague shared their experiences of journeying with our patients in their final lap. Prayers and words of comfort by religious leaders from five different faiths – Buddhist, Muslim, Taoist, Hindu and Christian, provided encouragement to all the caregivers.

We started our first Interfaith Memorial Service in 2005, holding it every four months for caregivers and staff in remembrance of patients who had passed on.



Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we were unable to gather physically last year. We are glad to be able to gather once more virtually to remember our loved ones.

Sister Eucheria lighting the candles in memory of patients who had passed on.

Assisi Fun Day E-Edition is back!



The E-Edition of Assisi Fun Day will be back from 7-17 Oct this year! Supporters will be able to shop for yummy food and interesting products online and do good and have fun at the same time.

If you are running F&B/retail businesses or providing consumer services, you can help by setting up a virtual stall at our E-Fun Day and sponsoring your products and services. If you are not a business owner but would still like to do your part for charity, you can also sponsor a stall. Funds raised will be used to provide comfort and care to our patients and their caregivers.

Contact Sue-Ann for more information regarding stall partnership

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