

(A) Gift of Life (禮物)

Fr. Zhang was a very sick infant and was not expected to survive. His parents prayed to different deities for assistance with no result. As a last resort, they prayed to the "Catholic God" for cure and he survived. The whole family was baptized in 1988. His life was considered as a "gift from God".

(B) Growth (成長)

The family belonged to the underground church, and catechism was taught by nuns and priests only during the summer holiday. At age 12 (Primary 5) he informed his mother that he wished to become a priest. In his form 4 and 5 years, he became an altar boy. During his university days, he taught catechism and attended monthly Mass. He met Dominican nuns and a Dominican priest during this time.

(C) Spiritual Growth (Giant Leap Forward)

At age 21, he managed to meet regularly with a Dominican priest while working in Shenzhen, and later joined the seminary without parental knowledge. During a telephone conversation with his mother when she was trying to introduce a girl friend to him, he informed her that he had joined the Dominican seminary. In his home village, the boys are expected to get married by age 24. After a period of two years, his mother finally accepted the fact that he was going to be a priest and remained unmarried.

(D) Thanksgiving

He was once asked how can he repay his parents for all the effort in bringing him up from childhood. As a priest, he cannot repay them in a material way. He can only repay them by being a good priest and serve God and others. There are about 200 - 300 persons in his home village. Their family is the only Catholic family in that village. There is a lot of peer pressure in the village for all young men to get married by age 24. His parents suffer the same social pressure, but cannot reveal that their son has become a Catholic priest.

This interesting and timely talk was followed by sharing by Serrans.