

A. From Hong Kong to England

Serran Annie Bligh studied high school in Hong Kong and left to study at the University of Essex in 1979. This was her first turning point, starting a new life (or sentence) studying for a B.Sc. at the University of Essex. There was no phone, no social media, no money and so she studied hard every day with no distraction. She was baptized as a Baptist on graduation.

B. Academic Career

After graduation with her B.Sc., she worked for 3 months at Ciba – Geigy in Switzerland. During this time, she was motivated to study for three more years at the University of Essex and got her Ph.D. in Chemistry. She joined the Chinese Overseas Christian Fellowship (Baptist) at around this time and received much support from peers and friends. She later joined the Anglican Church after getting married as her mother-in-law was an Anglican.

C. Academic Life

After getting her Ph.D. in Chemistry, she did one year research at the University in “Chemistry on to Biology”. She then worked at Roche for 6 months on a “Royal Society Industry Fellowship”. She started a new programme of “Pharmaceutical Science” at the University of Essex after this. She then received a research grant from the Royal Society of Pharmacy for doing research into Chinese herbal medicine. With this research, she was able to become a “Visiting Professor” at the Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and travelled between London/Hong Kong/Shanghai – “a tale of three cities”. She also worked at the Shuguang Hospital in Shanghai which was located on a hill – thus “Hillside to bedside”. A common Chinese herb (aloe berry) is an ingredient for making gin – so also “hillside to barside”.

She became a fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (FRSC), the Royal Society of Biology (FRSB) and the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). She was chosen as a “Foreign Expert” and appeared on the front cover of the 175th anniversary of the Royal Society of Chemistry with a picture the founder of the Society.

D. 2017 – Another Turning Point (CIHE)

In 2017, offers a high post came from the University of Westminster in the U.K. and the Caritas Institute of Higher Education in Hong Kong. At around this time, she was also interested in the Catholic faith and she and her husband were converted into Catholic Church. There were many questions and doubts such as fulfilling her mission in education, of continuing with her research in chemistry and biology and family surroundings. The message from Luke 14: 26:-

“If any man come to follow me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple”.

helped her to choose the Caritas Institute of Higher Education with its dedication to “Personal Development, Sound Education and Positive Life Values”. The motto of the Caritas Institute of Higher Education is “Destinatum Persequor (自强不息) – empowering the Last, the Least and the Lost to realize his or her full potential.

(E) Current Status of CIHE

The CIHE is undergoing the “Programme Area of Accreditation” to become the future ST.

Francis University:-

1st PAA (in 2019)

2nd PAA (in 2020 – 2021)

New programmes

B. Ed – in Early Childhood Education

B. Sc. – in Physiotherapy (planning stage)

B. Sc. – in Artificial Intelligence as applied to business etc. (planning stage)

Programme Expansion

Bachelor of Nursing – increase from 200 to 360 students

Bachelor of Social Work – from 60 to 90 students.

F. Present Status

Any Regrets ? – No personal regrets on her move back to Hong Kong after so many years in England. Stronger in faith.

Any Hurdles/Brick Wall ?

Looking at things from the joyful side – hurdles are good challenges to mount; must keep learning new things.

Brick Wall ? – most brick walls are bad and often man-made, sometimes invisible and unexpected. Always slow down on-going work and often need to find another route.

G. CIHE

Caritas Institute of Higher Education means Christ Is Here Eleison (have mercy). Our guest speaker Annie Bligh believes in the words of the famous song “You Raise Me Up” to more than I can be.