



A heart for France

Fascinated by romantic poetry, beautiful scenery, artistic heritage and fine food, Maureen Ma fell in love with France when she was young. She said, "I read French literature when I studied Comparative Literature at university. I loved them so much and began to learn French. Upon graduation, I pursued my studies in France."



In France, Maureen had the first encounter with OM. "I joined a mission conference organised by OM France. It echoed the message that there were only few Jesus followers in France. I was impressed by OM's efforts in engaging young people, no matter if they have mission experience or not," she shared.

Since then, Maureen has developed a passion to serve in France. After returning to Hong Kong for a few years, she decided to study theology in France. When she completed her studies in 1989, she joined OM France.

There she witnessed the work of God in the lives of young people. "Young people here feel lonely as they may be the only Jesus follower among their peers. It was hard for them to live out the

values of God while others were against these values. At OM, I had the chance to participate in the TeenStreet event where teens are gathered to cultivate a deeper relationship with God. I saw many young people receive spiritual support and be transformed," said Maureen.



Having served in France for 30 years, Maureen has walked with many young people along the road to missions, from interview, exploring their calling, training and pre-field arrangements. Though she is retired now, her heart is still with France. She said: "I go to the OM office here every week. I want to help young workers adapt to the OM family."



OUR PURPOSE
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1st Biannual Report 2021

Celebrating 50 Years of OM Ships





Celebrating 50 Years of OM Ships

During 2021, OM is celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the ships ministry. Throughout the years, many lives have been transformed as a result of serving onboard an OM Ship. In this report, we hear from Suanne and Wai Sum.

Serving together despite our differences

A few crewmembers were singing along as they worked in OM's ship, doing tasks like cleaning, repairing, putting books on shelves. They seemed not to be singing in harmony, and sometimes things got messed up as they worked. This was a drama performed by crewmembers when the OM ship visited Hong Kong. Seeing young people serving together though they were different and not in sync, Suanne Li was amazed.

With crewmembers from all parts of the world having different mindsets and work practices, Suanne got a taste of serving in a multicultural team onboard OM's ship, Logos Hope, between 2010 and 2012. "As part of the events team, I was responsible for planning and organising ship events. I was the team leader and I soon realised how difficult it was to get a multicultural team working well. On one occasion, we organised an event and I felt that the programme was not well-delivered, and we didn't keep things in control on-site. A local staff member also told me that the programme was below expectation. But what surprised me is that after the event, someone from the audience approached me saying that she felt encouraged. I really couldn't believe it!" Suanne recalled.

"At that time, I just thought we were imperfect. But God opened my eyes, letting me see that He could use imperfect people in His work. It is God, not us, who makes things happen,"

she continued.

She thinks that the OM ship is a good place for young people to grow in Christ. "We need to go through a process when God transforms our lives. God's timing is different for each of us. Today we may be imperfect, but God's grace is sufficient to cover our inadequacies. The OM Ship serves as a training ground where young people from different cultures learn how to work as a team and let God shape their lives," she concluded.



Holding God's hands



"I'm willing to serve in any role that God leads me to," said Wai Sum Lai who served on Doulos from 2005 to 2007.

Wai Sum first joined the book fair team in which she assisted in tasks like arranging book displays and cashiering. She enjoyed working in this team as she could serve many book lovers. After 8 months, she was invited to transfer to another department as Assistant Purser. The role is to act as the Captain's Secretary and assist the Purser in custom clearance.

"I didn't have relevant experience and thought that I couldn't handle the tasks. After praying I decided to accept

the challenge. I remembered that the Captain called a meeting and I was responsible for taking minutes. Attendees included staff from Scotland, Netherlands, Korea and India. I worried that I couldn't understand different English accents, and I was not familiar with marine terms. I prayed and asked God for help. In the meeting, people spoke with their own accents as expected. But surprisingly, I could understand all they said!" she said.

Later God gave Wai Sum another challenge. She said, "I was invited to take up the role of Purser. Again this was no easy task for me since Purses are required to handle a large amount of documents, ensuring crewmembers of different nationalities can get a visa."

Wai Sum followed God's steps to take up the second challenge. "Once, we arrived at a port where all crewmembers were required to apply for visa. I collected all passports to get them stamped by the customs. Knowing that all crewmembers had handed in their passports, I couldn't figure out why there were three passports missing. I was stressed out because we couldn't open the ship to the public or do outreach if we couldn't get visas. I counted the passports again and again and at last I found that we had triplets in the ship. The children were two years old and their information was included in their mother's passport!" she recalled.

She added: "For anyone who wants to serve as a missions worker, the first thing to consider is not language or any other obstacle. It is whether we can maintain a close relationship with God, holding His hands wherever we go. If we stay close to God, we will be empowered to achieve what God asks us to do."