



In This Issue

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Focus: | An Experience Connecting with the Impoverished – Barefoot Walk |
| Learn a Little More: | Unveiling Human Trafficking |
| Back to the Bible: | Have You Ever Died? |
| Taking Action: | A Step of the ‘Love Your Neighbor’ Command |

Editor's note

Businesses have returned to normalcy after the epidemic, and CEDAR Fund's ministries, too, that our colleagues can revisit overseas partners and beneficiaries. Yet, our partners from different countries expressed the same that human trafficking is severe and it needs more resources to combat. Therefore, the CEDAR Barefoot Walk 2023 is coming back this November with the title 'Remove Price Tag, Free Body & Soul' to encourage participants to raise funds for anti-human trafficking work by walking barefoot. In this issue's 'Focus', three Barefoot Walk participants shared how the Walk connected them with people experiencing poverty. The authors of 'Back to the Bible' and 'Taking Action' led us to reflect on the importance of tasting the impoverished's situation through the Bible and the testimony of a 'Barefoot Walk' volunteer. And 'Learn a Little More' laid out common myths of human trafficking, deepening our knowledge about this illicit industry.

FOCUS

An Experience Connecting with the Impoverished – Barefoot Walk

Written by Clara Chiu (Head of Partnership Development)

Awakened by Getting into the Impoverished' Shoes

CEDAR Fund organises Barefoot Walk, our flagship walkathon, every November. Participants have to walk barefoot along a designated route in Hong Kong. We have to prepare almost a year in advance to make it happen, including venue application, route planning, experiential activities' design, promotional collateral production and event registration. One of the preparation works involves all our colleagues: our trial barefoot walk on the planned route, and it recalls my first day in the CEDAR Fund – 'Colleagues Barefoot Walk'.

It was my first time walking on the street barefoot. Apart from dirtiness, I got worried about people's gaze. Yet, I was walking with my colleagues, and the process was quite relaxing, which helped me overcome my embarrassment. Unfortunately, we did not have enough time and had to return before reaching

(Incorporated with limited liability)

Office Addr.: Flat B10-B11, 5/F, Block B
Mai Hing Ind. Bldg.,
16-18 Hing Yip Street, Kowloon,
Hong Kong

Postal Addr.: G.P.O. Box 3212 Hong Kong
TEL (852) 2381 9627 | FAX (852) 2392 2777
eng.cedarfund.org
sharing@cedarfund.org

 CEDAR Fund 施達基金會
 cedar.fund
 (852) 63836861
 施達基金會 CEDAR Fund

HSBC 004-600-385678-001
BEA 015-185-68-00931-7 SSA
BOC 012-581-2-020114-7
DBS 016-478-001364162

Board

Dr. Chan Nim Chung (Chairman)
Dr. Christine Lau Pui Ting
Dr. Alex Ip Hon Ho
Mr. Joseph Chan Kwok Fong

The Rev. Anders Chan Ming Chuen
The Rev. Anthony Lee Chap Yung
Mr. Benjamin Yam Kwok Hei
The Rev. Irene Suen Ching Man

Chief Executive

Dr. Chan Pui Si

the finishing point.

On the day of the Barefoot Walk, as the leader of a group, I had to lead participants to walk from the starting point to the finishing point along Ma On Shan Promenade. The last part of the journey, our colleagues' unfinished trip in 'Colleagues Barefoot Walk', consisted of only two short crossroads, and then we would reach the finishing point at the church. I knew it took two minutes, and I dashed with an excited heart for the finishing point. However, when I stepped onto the crossroad, I immediately knew something was wrong: the asphalt pavement was hot and prickly. I felt like walking on pins and needles, and the pain in my feet made every step heavy and difficult.

I, the leader, watched my teammates walking towards the goal one by one, and I could only bear the pain and limp. The journey was short, but I felt eternal. I became more anxious when my teammates walked further away. 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' I could only forgo my desire to catch up with my team.

At the finishing point, volunteers who had done their work stood at the church's entrance, formed a 'cheerleading squad' to welcome the participants close to the finish. As a staff, I should thank our volunteers for their passion, but I was too drained to respond to others by the end of the journey. I could only focus my energy and willpower on finishing the route.



Debriefing and sharing at the finishing point after the Barefoot Walk and colleague's introduction of CEDAR Fund to the participants.

When I entered the church, the floor was smooth like silk. 'This is the Heaven!' I thought at once. Dirtiness and others' gaze were no longer significant. I imagined myself living in poverty and walking barefoot every day, and I found that walking comfortably was already like living well in heaven. Knowledge-based believers in wealthy countries may have many theological discussions on 'heaven' or 'the Kingdom'. However, for people experiencing poverty, the Kingdom they long for may be as simple as a healthy body and a worry-free life. If I did not experience the difficulty of barefoot walking in the Barefoot Walk (streets in Hong Kong are much smoother and safer than those in developing countries, as shown in my colleagues' overseas trip photos), I could not have the awakening by putting myself into the impoverished's shoes. When the general public lacks experience in frontline work, they can only hear about the circumstances of poor countries from the news and NGOs. The increase in their head knowledge cannot connect them emotionally with people experiencing poverty. I thank God for letting me connect with the poor through the Barefoot Walk, which awakened and motivated me to care about the poor.

Entering the Life of the Poor

It was my first time participating in the Barefoot Walk on my first day of work at CEDAR Fund, but a loyal supporter has participated for more than ten years since 2006. This experienced barefoot walker is Rev. Ben Cheung.

When we asked Rev. Cheung why he had joined the Barefoot Walk for years, he shared that the Walk was a learning platform to challenge himself to be humble and to

abandon comfort. So how did he overcome the pain in his feet? He said the Barefoot Walk was just held annually in urban areas that were relatively comfortable. And the time walking barefoot on rough pavements was short, and he did not find it too difficult compared to those living in poverty and not even having basic living conditions.



The author (second from the left) and Rev. Cheung (fifth from the right) belonged to the same team in the Barefoot Walk in 2018.

In his past participation, the Barefoot Walk was held on the Peak and even in the school. Later, 'exploitation' activities were added, bringing him insightful experiences. No matter where the event occurred and what it included, he believed that taking off one's shoes meant laying down one's identity and dignity. To him, believers should follow Jesus, who became flesh and dwelt among us with a humble identity, washed the disciples' feet and served others. Barefoot Walk gave him a down-to-earth experience to enter the poor's life and reflect on their circumstances, making him humble and more empathetic toward people experiencing poverty.

Rev. Cheung joined the Barefoot Walk every year, and he would encourage church members to participate in groups when pastoring the church. Although brothers and sisters have sacrificed so much time for their family, work and ministry, they responded happily to Rev. Cheung's call to join the Walk. According to Rev. Cheung, his church's gathering is divided by age, while the Barefoot Walk is for all ages, allowing brothers and sisters to join together like an extra church gathering. However, persistence is a challenge. Therefore, Rev. Cheung signed up every year and hoped his members could support it in the long run.



The 'trafficked' Rev. Ben Cheung in the Barefoot Walk.

Connecting People to Serve the Poor

CEDAR Fund's walkathons in the earliest days were not barefooted. Such experience was added in November 2001. Our former colleague, Alice, was on the organising committee. She wanted the event not only to raise funds but also include experiences related to the people living in poverty, with the hope that the barefoot touch on the ground could create a more profound experience for participants, enhancing the Walk's educational meaning and helping the participants know clearly who (people experiencing poverty) and what (poverty alleviation) they were walking for.

Being amongst the pioneers of organising the Barefoot Walk, what remarkable experience does Alice have? She highlighted a year when she invited four children to be the

Barefoot Walk ambassadors, who were sons of hers and another colleague. The colleagues thought it could encourage supporters who could not come in person to support others, like children and the elderly, to participate in the event. 'Give what you can' is a cliché, but this is also a way to connect with people. Everyone contributes what they can afford toward the same goal. Colleagues poured out their energy and time to organise this event, and they were thrilled to see people endeavouring for the impoverished.

Before touching moments emerge, be it 2001 or 2023, colleagues always feel uneasy while preparing for the Barefoot Walk: government department's approval for the route; contingency plans for the route, the use of the venue and bad weather; the fewer-than-expected registration number, and whether the fundraising amount met our target. Alice encourages current colleagues that our joy comes from the participants' satisfied faces when they accomplish the challenge and lift their dirty feet for group photos at the finishing point.

We hope to see you, the joyful people, on 4 November at the Barefoot Walk.



Myth: Human trafficking is an isolated incident

Truth: Human trafficking is often associated with organised crime groups that operate globally to profit from it and control the entire trafficking network. Criminals use high-tech methods and complex operating models to make trafficking activities more covert and difficult to crack.

Myth: Victims of human trafficking hate only those who exploit them.

In an interview, a girl rescued from a brothel expressed that she did not hate those bad people as much. They were just bad people doing bad things. Yet she could not help but hold a grudge against the good people in the world because she was humiliated daily and hoped that someone would rescue her whenever she looked out the window, but no 'good people' showed up...



Hopefully, our understanding of the truth about human trafficking is not only to enrich our knowledge but also to respond to the Lord's calling. The Lord abhors evil and loves mercy for the victimised. May you join CEDAR in the fight against human trafficking, release those in bondage, capture the evildoers, and uphold justice.

Learn a Little More

Unveiling Human Trafficking

Written by Tony Chan (Partnership Development Consultant)

For years, CEDAR has been sharing the issue of human trafficking and has found that many people misunderstand this issue and the victims involved. Let us unveil the dark industry behind human trafficking.

Myth: All victims suffer from sexual exploitation



Truth: The forms of exploitation that victims suffer vary, including sexual exploitation and forced labour. The author knows a survivor who was once sold to religious fanatics as a sacrifice and was thankfully able to escape in the end.

Myth: Only women are sold

Truth: About 40% of victims worldwide are men, which is rising. In addition to labour exploitation, they are often forced into illegal work, and many men are sold into red-light districts for sexual exploitation.



Myth: Traffickers directly kidnap victims



Truth: Although some cases involve victims being kidnapped, it is more common for traffickers to use deception and abduction methods, such as offering fake job opportunities, educational opportunities, or marriage promises to lure victims into the trap.

Myth: Those who are deceived are all greedy or 'got what they deserved.'

Truth: Many victims are not lured into trafficking because of greed. Due to despair, many poor people knowingly take the risk of being sold to take up the various opportunities offered by traffickers, and to fall into the trap of criminals.



Back to the Bible

Have You Ever Died?

Written by Rev. Sameul Leung (Senior Pastor, Ma On Shan Ling Liang Church)

Scriptures: 'Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.' (Romans 6:3-4)

Believers should all say they have 'died', because we are united with Christ in His death and burial. When reading these scriptures, Christians emphasise being united with Christ's death and resurrection but often overlook the word 'buried'. By focusing on burial, it reinforces the fact of death and highlights that for Jesus, death was not just a passing event but a process. Jesus on the cross said, 'It is finished' and said to the Father, 'Into your hands, I commit my spirit.' It signified His death, but this was only the beginning of death. Afterwards, he went into a state of death from Friday night to Sunday morning when He was finally resurrected. The Apostles' Creed mentions that Jesus was 'crucified, died, and buried' and then goes on to say, 'descended into hell (or to the dead)' which more clearly pointed out that He did not just touch death, but fully entered and participated in it. Jesus 'might taste death for everyone' (Hebrews 2:9), it was not a shallow experience but a complete immersion into the reality of death in full senses. Being scalded is uncomfortable, and even more uncomfortable is to maintain in the hot state. The true significance of death lies in the essence of the 'journey' it entails. That is the real deal!

Let's talk about experiencing poverty. A few years ago, I was honoured to participate in the 'CEDAR Barefoot Walk' and experienced scuffed feet and the sensation of walking on scorching hot rocks. Living in an era of material abundance, I may consider this a little valuable experience, feeling a taste of poverty. Who knows that it was just a drop in the ocean, not the whole picture? Truly experiencing poverty goes

beyond merely tasting a morsel. When it comes to places where the war just broke out or regions hit by a strong earthquake that's still on the news, instinctively showing concern, making a donation is a kind of emotion, but it's not a true act of mercy. The death of Jesus is the ultimate form of identification with humanity. Believers should be united with His death, an ongoing process rather than just for a moment.



Rev. Leung (left) participated in the 'CEDAR Barefoot Walk' in 2019.

Taking Action

A Step of the 'Love Your Neighbor' Command

Written by Ken Wong (Communications Officer)

The 'Barefoot Walk' is an activity that allows participants to experience the situation of poverty. Before the participants start walking, the staff of CEDAR Fund will first clean up the walking route, hoping that participants can experience the feeling of poverty through the 'barefoot' experience in a safe environment, thereby establishing a connection with the poor.

In 2019, a volunteer named Brother Adolphus Yuen participated in the 'Barefoot Walk' for the first time and helped with crowd management on the day of the event. He was willing to volunteer, devoted his time, and donated money to sponsor participants joining the 'Barefoot Walk'. When asked why he was willing to give both money and effort, he said that he hoped to help participants experience the lives of people in the developing countries through small contributions of his time and money. He also shared that after the 'Barefoot Walk', he understood that being able to live a safe and secure life is something to be grateful for. We, as Hong Kong people, find the pain and fear of the poor hard to imagine.

Indeed, many poor people in the world may be living in hunger and cold, and shoes may not be necessary, leaving their feet exposed to risks. In many impoverished areas, dangers are everywhere on undeveloped roads, such as rocks, nails, glass, cigarette butts, etc., which can easily cause foot injuries. Further, there are a lot of bacteria and parasites on the ground, especially in humid climates, where soil and sewage are more likely to produce harmful substances. Without the protection of shoes, walking barefoot on dirty roads for a long time can easily lead to parasites entering the bare feet, causing parasitic diseases such as sand flea disease. If not treated in time, the person may suffer from a secondary infection such as virus, tetanus or gangrene.

Walking barefoot not only poses health risks, but it is also a mark of the bottom rung of society and attracts prejudiced looks. As early as in ancient Rome, shoes were used to distinguish between social classes: the nobility typically wore dyed and decorated shoes, commoners wore rawhide or

flat-headed boots, and slaves were often required to go barefoot. Today, while many countries have officially abolished traditional forms of slavery, many poor people still cannot afford shoes, and thus going barefoot remains a symbol of poverty. Some people believe that poor people are poor because they are lazy, but they do not understand their plight. Poor people live in the same city as other social classes and are inevitably being discriminated against and subjected to these prejudices. When we participate in the 'Barefoot Walk', we may also attract curious looks. Do we have the courage to experience this uneasy feeling?

It is natural for people to try to stay away from danger, discomfort and strange looks. However, these are exactly what poor people experience in their daily lives. Jesus came to the world in the flesh and shared our joys and sorrows, teaching us what love is. We can participate in the 'Barefoot Walk' as a participant, or learn from Brother Adolphus Yuen and become a volunteer, donate to support, learn to enter the pain of the poor, build up empathy, and take a step towards practising Christ's 'love your neighbour' command.



A child in Dhaka, Bangladesh walking barefoot.

2022/2023 Operating Statements

In the period of Jul 2022 - Jun 2023

| Income | HK\$ 26,171,776 |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Donations | 17,108,938 |
| Grants | - |
| Appeal for Relief | 8,505,452 |
| Other Income | 557,386 |

| Expenditure | HK\$ 28,784,164 |
|---|------------------------|
| Development Projects - Asia | 8,866,586 |
| - Middle East | 1,358,152 |
| - China & HK | 2,546,667 |
| - Africa | 2,806,480 |
| Disaster Relief & Rehabilitation Projects | 7,120,624 |
| Partnership Development | 2,850,427 |
| Administration | 2,148,758 |
| Annual depreciation | 1,086,470 |

Account profit and loss / (Deficit) HK\$ (2,612,388)

Note: CEDAR's fiscal year is from July 1st to June 30th of the following year. The total budgeted expenditure for the fiscal year 2023 to 2024 is HK\$21,958,000. Please pray for and support CEDAR and its partners in their ministry. The financial report is not yet audited.

Donate
to us

FPS ID
3354016

PayMe
Scan >

