

**5<sup>th</sup> IYCS EAST ASIAN SESSION**  
**25th February – 1st March, 2008**  
**Sangji Retreat Center, Seoul, Korea**

**FINAL STATEMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

East Asia has experienced many rapid changes over the years, especially in the development of mass media. These changes have influenced the lifestyles of young people but have had a greater impact on us, the students. With that in mind, the 5<sup>th</sup> IYCS East Asian Session was organized with the theme “*Mass Media- A Plus or A Minus In Your Life?*”, which was held from 25<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2008 at Sangji Retreat Centre in Seoul, Korea. Participating countries Korea and Taiwan, with Fiji as an observer, together with the organizers, brought together a total of 39 individuals for this eventful gathering. As it has been seven years since this session was last held, there was a rich exchange of ideas, experiences and culture, making it a joyous occasion for us all.

**SEE**

At the beginning of this week- long session, we ascertained that mass media is generally the means of information that is communicated to the public. From the exposures, we clearly noticed the growing variety of mass media nowadays, for example: television, internet, published-periodicals, telecommunication, radio, advertisements etcetera. We see that mass media is affecting us- both in terms of values and perspectives- as we presented our country reports. Also, we started to realize the great impact that mass media is having on our daily lives. During the different sessions, we got to understand further about mass media through different activities and games. As we tried to figure out the ‘Plus’ and ‘Minus’ of mass media, we also got to think about the existence of mass media- which is to entertain, inform, connect and remind. On the other hand, mass media has negatively influenced us students, our thoughts, perceptions, relationships and actions. Social ills and political conflicts are also negative impacts of mass media. Students’ addiction to mass media causes them to neglect their spiritual, physical and social health. Time, money and perhaps, energy might be wasted for the unlimited usage of mass media. Therefore, we should make our choices wisely.

After analyzing the situation of the media, we recognized the factors; economical, political and social, determining the control over mass media. The content of information published or broadcasted is greatly influenced by big corporations who own subsidiary media companies, and as expected, mostly aim to increase their profits. In addition, this then gives way to corruption, as the news and information may be exaggerated or falsely presented to suit the agendas of

influential people who are associated with these various corporations.

## **JUDGE**

To further deepen the understanding on mass media, we underwent the process of reflection as Christians. God is the perfect communicator. Created in His likeness and image, we are blessed with His gift of communication. We should not be dependent on modern technology so much so that we forget our roles as media in this digitally cultured world. With our sense of creativity, despite the usage of modern technology, we should still be capable of coming up with alternative media – games, songs, dances, writings etcetera to innovatively express ourselves.

Are we Plus or Minus as media? We are often challenged to be positive alternative media. Hence, realizing that, we should constantly review our lives through the use of our YCS methodology (See-Judge-Act).

The world we live in is cruel and harsh. Reality is very much in contradiction with our spiritual faith. Joseph Cardijn, the inspiration of YCS, saw the vast differences for the two worlds and believed that a change could be made for the betterment of everyone, especially those who are in need in one way or another. When encountering a situation, we should always question what our Lord would feel, what He would think and do. Based on this, we should then act accordingly, taking into account our faith, and connecting it with reality. In addition to this, the presence of YCS cell groups should also function as peer support to look within and beyond these situations as well.

## **ACT**

We recognized that HIV/AIDS is one of the issues where alternative media can be utilized. Through group discussions and creative workshop, we became more aware on this disease and our misconceptions were clarified.

We were also required to personally respond and renew our commitments towards the YCS movement. These renewed commitments were then blessed by our chaplains during the closing mass.

An action plan for each country was also tailored by us, the participants, according to the various situations faced by our national YCS movements. This action plan is to be implemented and followed back home. The action plan focuses on:

- Regular Cell Meetings
- Organizing workshop/sessions on Mass Media which would also discuss the media's influences on creating awareness for HIV-AIDS.
- Conducting regular mass
- Be more critical of articles one posts on the internet, ensuring that the message positively

communicates with others.

- Remembering those affected with HIV-AIDS in our prayers, especially in our meeting prayers.
- To wear the red ribbon, in support of people who are affected with HIV-AIDS.
- Encourage YCS members to post “blogs” on the internet that creates awareness on HIV-AIDS.
- Orientation session about mass media.
- Students only spending an hour on the internet or playing computer games – ‘One Hour Action’
- To have ‘Review of Life’ as the theme for national camps
- Translate documents provided by the Asian Team to the native language of the various participating countries.

## **CONCLUSION**

As this is the first time Korea YCS is hosting an international level IYCS session and after a 7-year hiatus since the last East Asian Session, the 5<sup>th</sup> IYCS East Asian Session was truly a history marking event. The present individuals were truly blessed to be part of this memorable journey. Through the practice of the IYCS Review of Life methodology; See, Judge and Act; our knowledge and understanding about both the positive and negative effects Mass Media has on our lives have significantly been deepened. As we believe that faith without action is dead, we students would have to act out for positive change.

On behalf of the all the participants

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YCS Korea

YCS Taiwan

YCS Fiji