

## Two Songs for Our IJ Teachers, 2021

The pair of lyrics for this song-writing project was specially written for us by our alumna, Ms Low Ying Ping. We would like to thank her for her labour of love, as well as Mr Bang Wenfu for helping Phoebe and Cheryl to arrange their songs so beautifully. The completed songs were gifted to our teachers as a Teachers' Day gift this September. We hope you will enjoy listening to them!

**Bring Her In** by Phoebe Chan (Class of 2020), sung by Dawn Yam (Class of 2021)



The persona in the song could be Mother Mathilde or any of the other pioneering IJ sisters who made the perilous five-month-long journey from France to Penang in 1852. They eventually set up the first CHIJ school in Singapore in 1854. Her strong faith and selfless love for children (many of whom are poor and/or homeless; some are babies left at the Gate of Hope, which is referenced in the song) helped her to overcome her nostalgia for her homeland and the many hardships of missionary work in a foreign land. Listen to Phoebe's sonic painting of the oceanic journey to the hustle and bustle of the convent at Victoria Street.

**Gift of Hope** by Cheryl Khoo (Class of 2020), sung by Dawn Yam (Class of 2021)



As a counterpoint to "Bring Her In", "The Gift of Hope" is from the perspective of one of the pioneering IJ sisters' beneficiaries. The persona could be a "Gate of Hope" baby given up by her biological parents, or an ill and destitute orphan rescued by the IJ sisters. She questions her own miserable existence, but the sisters convince her that every life has a purpose. They encourage her to leave her sad past behind and begin anew. Fortified with love, faith and strong values (including the IJ motto of being "Simple in Virtue, Steadfast in Duty"), a whole new world opens up to her with endless possibilities. Fast forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is our teachers who now carry on the IJ mission to educate young ladies for the future.

### **Bring Her In<sup>1</sup>**

Don't ask me why I left my home  
Of autumn reds and summer blooms  
Don't tell me that the way is long  
He'll help me bear what must be borne  
Just show me where the children roam  
I'll tell you where I'll make my home

Chorus:

Is there a cry outside the gate?  
Is that another helpless babe?  
Bring her in, we'll wash and clothe her  
Sing her songs of love and teach her  
Bring her in, oh, bring her in

Don't ask me if I miss my home  
Of clear spring skies and winter snows  
Don't ask me if I'll leave or stay  
There's work to do and much to pray  
Just show me where the children roam  
I'll tell you where I'll make my home

### **Gift Of Hope**

I don't think I will ever know  
The life I had before she left me  
The tears I'd shed are all that's left of my past  
In your eyes I was whole, unbroken  
A precious soul, born for a reason  
You showed me a love I knew would last

Chorus:

I guess some might say that I've been lucky  
I like to think that I am blessed  
The gift of hope is never given lightly  
Thank God for you who raised me from the  
dust

You taught me in virtue to be simple  
You showed me that in duty, be steadfast  
Today I see my futures laid out before me  
Countless dreams within my palms I grasp

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<sup>1</sup> **Bring Her In** was also selected for publication in 'IJ Voices' to commemorate the 400th Birth Anniversary of IJ Founder Blessed Nicolas Barré (2021).