

### Academic talk 3 - Fr. Vincent Sanchez – “Forgive and Forget, is it possible?”

On the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009 we had our third annual academic talk. This time the subject of the talk was about *Forgiveness* and many aspects relating to this. In this talk we had the great opportunity of watching a specially chosen film clip starring veteran actors Gabriel Byrne and Blair Underwood in a powerful drama about a father in search of the reasons why his son, a military pilot may have committed suicide. The main aim of this film was to show how the person in question may not have been able to forgive himself for a terrible mistake which cost the lives of innocent people. Also, it looks at the inner battle of a father who questions himself about the method he used to raise his son during his childhood and whether that may have been a contributory to his sons suspected suicide.

Fr. Vincent also educates us in how he believes that people in general are never born evil, but our surroundings are a major factor in how we turn out as a person. For this he uses an excellent example of the worst criminal in history being Adolf Hitler. Here, we are given the understanding of Hitler’s childhood and the environment he grew up in, which led to his warped logic that resulted in the deaths of millions of innocent Jews for his unjust reasons. The message here is that how we are treated as children can have adverse affects to what was intended. What this means is that the initial good intention of the action taken can backfire in the future.

The problems with part of Hong Kong parents teachings were also addressed in terms of the communication level and technique used. The major problem of many parents scolding, insulting and basically putting down their children was a great shock to many people. This may be due to the traditional environment and culture of Hong Kong and China that is gradually changing. Fr. Vincent Sanchez educates us in advising there are better ways in communicating and that positive feedback and encouragement are far better than the scolding and putting down people.