Every Riccian, long or short haired, has a part to play

Rev Fr John C Coghlan, SJ, Warden of Ricci Hall

"Just over 400 years ago Matteo Ricci arrived in China. He travelled so far from his native Italy because he was convinced he had something valuable to offer to the people of China. Very quickly he grew to respect and love the people, and because he loved and respected them, he found that he had much to learn from them which he could offer in turn to the people of the western world.

Just 78 years ago two Irish Jesuits, Frs Byrne and Neary, following in Ricci’s footsteps, arrived in Hong Kong. Within 3 years Ricci Hall stood in solitary glory looking out over Green Island and the Western Harbour to Lantau Island.

The change in the western landscape of Hong Kong mirrors the changes that have taken place in China, in Hong Kong and in the University over those 75 years...

Riccians, I ask you to take a very active part in the social and political life of Hong Kong. I ask you to show the world that Hong Kong people are well capable of taking charge of their future.... Every one of you has a role to play, even those among you who, to my pain and grief, are sporting a very, very short hair style. I can’t wait for your hair to grow again! However, no matter how long or short your hair, you have a part to play. Past Riccians have made a huge contribution to the development of Hong Kong. Present Riccians, follow in their footsteps and even surpass them."

Speech at 75th Anniversary Dinner, October 7, 2004