



The Gateway

Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin

March 2009

Twelfth Issue

Welcome

Welcome to the first anniversary of The Gateway.



We are reminded of the importance of good beginnings by an old Chinese proverb which goes like this:

“Plan your year in Spring, your day at dawn”

一年之計在於春，一日之計在於晨。

Spring is in the air, lifting our spirits. Our featured Chinese Poet, Du Fu, has something to say about this too.

March, at least to those of Irish ancestry, is the month of St. Patrick. We thank God for sending so many zealous Irish missionaries to this part of the world.

Happy feast day to all our Irish readers.



March is also the month of St. Joseph. Many of our Lasallian schools are named after this Saint, including St. Joseph's College and Primary School in Hong Kong.

Mention of St. Joseph reminds us of Brother Paul Sun whose devotion to this Saint was admirable. Brother Paul is our Brother of the Month. We hope you find his story interesting and edifying.



Brother of the Month Brother Paul Sun: (1907-1986)

Brother Paul was born into a well off family in the province of Jehol, (熱河), (in modern day Inner Mongolia). He was strongly influenced from early childhood by the piety of his father and grandfather. As a young man he studied in a seminary. Later, having graduated from Fu Jen University (輔仁大學), he decided to devote his life to education.



Brother Paul Sun was not a De La Salle Brother. Yet, to the Brothers, he was a true Lasallian in all but name. It came as no surprise that he was made an affiliated member of their Institute. The 13th of March is the anniversary of his death and perhaps the right month to attempt a life sketch.

A man of unusual charm, culture and spirituality, he had been closely associated with our Brothers in Hong Kong since his first arrival there from China in 1949. Eight years previously he had been appointed superior-general of a diocesan society of Brothers which operated schools in northern China. They were called the Society of the Disciples of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



This Society had been founded by Bishop Janssens in 1911 in the province of Jehol in the north-east which at that time was situated in inner Manchuria. The Bishop had chosen St. John Baptist de La Salle as the principal Patron of the Society. After each religious exercise the invocation “St John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us”, was said. The Brothers ran a number of primary and secondary schools but one by one they had to close as the Communist net tightened. In 1947, the Brothers were compelled to leave their diocese for Beijing where they opened a primary school but that too was taken over by the Communists in 1953.

Meanwhile, in 1949, Brother Paul and some of the Brothers managed to get to Hong Kong. Some of them, including Brother Paul, were given accommodation by the De La Salle Brothers in Kowloon, while others went to Indonesia and opened a Chinese

middle school there. Brother Paul thought it best to merge his Society with that of the De La Salle Brothers and he himself spent 2 years at the Brothers' Novitiate in England. Rome, however, decided that Brother Paul should retain his post of Superior General as well as the separate identity of his society while at the same time working closely with the De La Salle Brothers in Hong Kong.



While planning to open a school in Hong Kong, Brother Paul began to teach Religion and Mandarin in La Salle Primary School, Kowloon, in 1956. Here are the recollections of one of his students: "More popularly known as Brother Sun, he never failed to strike us as a very kind and patient teacher. He had a strong physique, quite typical of Northern Chinese. Though strong and tall, he exuded passion and love for teaching, and was approachable at all times".



With staff and students of La Salle Primary School

With the encouragement, help and support of the De La Salle Brothers, as well as through his own personal charm, hard work and doggedness, Brother Paul succeeded in establishing St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School, first the Primary section in 1958, and later, in 1968, the Secondary section. The De La Salle Brothers have St Joseph as Patron of their Institute. Brother Paul and his Society also had a very special devotion to St Joseph and so the school was named after him. There were 300 pupils on opening day, but, with the building of the secondary school, numbers shot up to 3,000 pupils. Brother Paul personally managed both schools.



St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School

The De La Salle Brothers not only gave Brother Paul moral support, but allowed some of their own Brothers to teach and administer in St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School. Chief among these was Brother Anthony Knoll who helped the English department in particular. It was normal to see Brother Anthony marking pupils' scripts day after day. He and Brother Paul became soul-mates and, together with some teachers, they would hike the hills of Kowloon at every opportunity. Brother Henry Pang was also a valiant supporter and, in the earlier years, would help with the registration of new pupils.



The St Joseph Anglo-Chinese Schools flourished. Brother Paul never advertised his schools. His own magnanimous and dynamic personality was advertisement enough. He worked quietly and tirelessly to make the schools earn a good name. He also gathered together a band of loyal, hardworking teachers and, together with Brother Paul, they set the schools on a prosperous course.



There was accommodation in the school for Brother Paul and he resided there until his death. He was a familiar sight to the staff and students as he greeted them each morning near the school entrance. He became a fatherly figure, reassuring and benign and in many ways taught them more by example than by word.

Brother Paul was unceasing in his expressions of gratitude for the help he had received from the De La Salle Brothers. Even after his schools were up and running, he would unfailingly visit La Salle College or St Joseph's College every weekend and invariably bearing gifts. For nearly all practical purposes he was one with them in devotion to St La Salle and he joined in their prayers, retreats and major functions.

His wonderful attachment and good example was recognized when, to his great delight, he was affiliated to the Institute by the then Superior General, Brother Charles Henry. Brother Charles was making a visit to Hong Kong as part of his programme of visitations to the Brothers in Asia and could therefore perform the ceremony in person. The ceremony took place on the 5th March, 1972.



L to R: Brothers Henry Pang, Paul Sun, Charles Henry and Michael Jacques

As the years began to take their toll, the effects of spondylitis and arthritis began to show. Brother Paul had to use a neck brace. There was curvature of the spine and of the fingers. Still he soldiered on, fulfilling his educational mission, never giving way to or looking for pity.



Eventually ill health compelled him to take to the bed. He was cared for by friends and by Father Philip Chao. He would receive visitors graciously and enquire after Brothers, staff and students.

Brother Paul's death at the age of 78, while not unexpected, was greeted with genuine outpouring of grief. Many who had been close to him felt they had been in the presence of a saint.

It came as no surprise that his funeral was a big one. At a packed requiem Mass in St Teresa's Church, presided over by Bishop J.B.Wu, Brother Henry Pang had this to say in the homily: "With his passing, we have lost an exemplary religious, an outstanding educator and, dare I say, a saint. He was one of nature's gentlemen. He was a man of God, with a vision and a mission. Today his mission is accomplished. May you, Brother Paul, realize your vision also, as our Lord opens his arms to receive and welcome you".

Brother Paul was laid to rest in Cheung Sha Wan Catholic Cemetery, Kowloon.



Brother Paul was not a De La Salle Brother but he was a true Lasallian, a model of the spirit of faith, of zeal, of community union, faithful to the Lasallian ideal of the Christian education of youth. To this he had devoted his whole life, all that he had and all that he was.

Brother Philip O'Callaghan had only met Brother Paul in passing. He was obviously touched by the encounter and dedicated a poem in his memory.

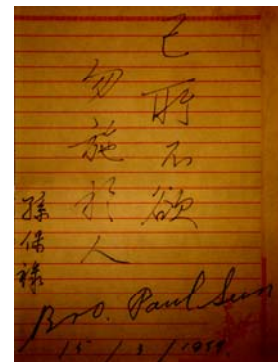
VALE

***Anchors weighed, your ship sets sail
Across a chartered sea;
Billowing white, no violent gales;
On course to eternity's lee.***

***Decks cleared, swabbed, washed down;
Main-sail pointing to the stars;
A luminous wake darkness confounds,
Trolling light, our hope from afar.***

***Down in the hold your cargo's stored,
Talents increased hundred folds;
Mellowed wines, seasoned, amphor'd
Wheat abundant – merits untold.***

***There's a wedding gown for the nuptial feast,
Symbol of a mystical bride.
Eternal joy, everlasting peace
As you sail on the outgoing tide.***



Faithful
companions

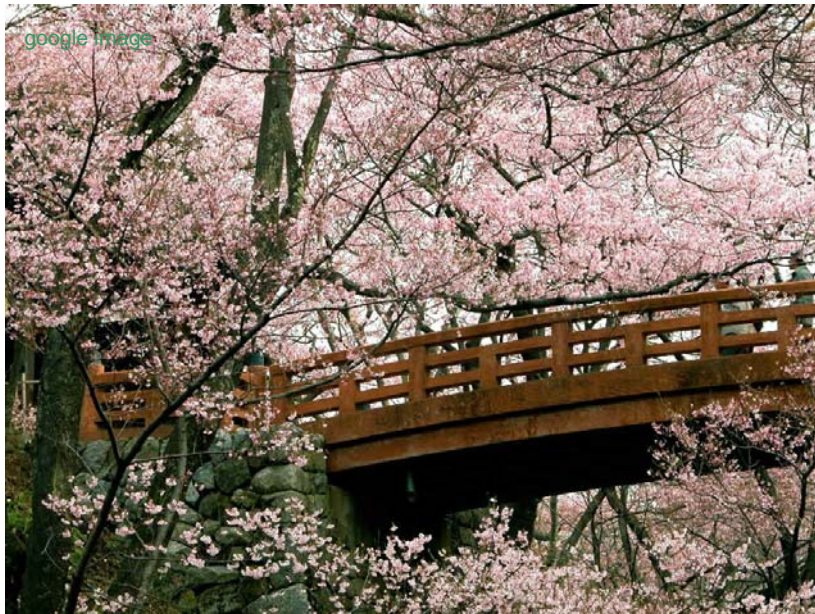
Oriental Flavour

Du Fu (about 712-770) was born in China and raised as a Confucian. He was one of the most prominent Chinese poets of the Tang Dynasty. Along with Li Bai (Li Po), he is frequently called the greatest of the Chinese poets. He gained but little distinction in the official examinations, and remained a minor civil servant. He lived through the devastation caused by the civil war which began in 755, and the last 15 years of his life were a time of almost constant unrest. He was usually poor, and occasionally close to starvation. In his lifetime, and immediately following his death, Du Fu was not greatly appreciated. However, his popularity grew to such an extent that it is as hard to measure his influence as that of Shakespeare in England.



Du Fu was an outspoken critic of the bloodshed and devastation caused by border wars and of the rebellions that often followed them. He subsequently travelled throughout China, observing the conditions of the people and recording his impressions in poems of great passion and emotion.

Perhaps the most famous poem that he wrote during this terrible time of war was, "Spring Prospect,"



Spring Prospect

春望

Though a country be sundered, hills
and rivers endure;

國破山河在

And spring comes green again to
trees and grasses

城春草木深

Where petals have been shed like
tears

感時花濺淚

And lonely birds have sung their
grief.

恨別鳥驚心

After the war-fires of three months

烽火連三月

One message from home is worth a
ton of gold.

家書抵萬金

I stroke my white hair. It has grown
too thin

白頭搔更短

To hold the hairpins any more.

渾欲不勝簪



Family News

Brother Herman Fenton RIP

The Lasallian Family in Hong Kong as well as many friends and relations were saddened to hear of the passing of Brother Herman at the ripe old age of 95. He had served in Hong Kong since 1947, taught in La Salle College, was Principal of La Salle College Evening School and founded both Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College as well as Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School.



We had become used to frequent hospitalizations and each time Herman would reappear and carry on as if nothing had happened. When he was admitted to St Teresa's Hospital on the 31st January, we expected a similar outcome. It was not to be. Three weeks later, on the 21st February, he passed away quietly and peacefully.



Herman was laid to rest in the Brothers' burial plot in Happy Valley, beside his long time friends and survivors of jungle wartime days, Brothers Patricius O'Donovan and Brendan Dunne. Many of those who attended the Mass also came for the burial. After the burial rites, the Brothers sang the Salve Regina in good Lasallian tradition.

PARC 32

The annual regional conference of the Asia Pacific Region was held in the Redemptorist Centre, Pattaya, Thailand from the 2nd to the 5th of March 2009.

Brother Edmundo Fernandez, Visitor of the Philippines, chaired the Conference.

As we have come to expect, the hospitality of the Thai Lasallian Family was second to none.



Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School Walkathon 15th February 2009

Despite the inclement weather, there was a good turn out for the annual walkathon. Proceeds derived go towards school development. Redesigning the school chapel is one item on the agenda for development.



Inter-school Athletics Meet

This is an annual 3 days affair held in a Government stadium. The third and final day was on the 13th of March 2009. Athletes from nearly all our Lasallian secondary schools were involved. The cheering from the various competing schools has to be heard to be believed!



St. Joseph's Feast Day

Since St. Joseph is the Patron of our Institute and St. Joseph's College and Primary School are named after him, Masses are said in his honour. We can all surely learn from this great saint, this 'just man'.

'For you have been made responsible for these children just as St. Joseph was for the Saviour of the world.'

(St. La Salle)



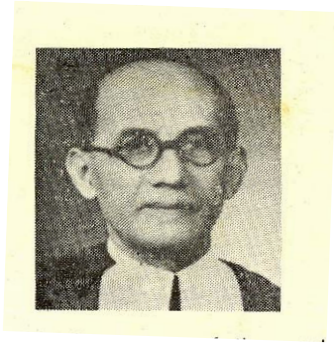
In Remembrance

We pray for the repose of the souls of our departed Brothers.

Our Brothers	Service in HK	Date of Death	Place of Burial
Augustus de Cruz	1915-1926	25-03-1975	Malaysia
Benedict Puricelli	1889-1897	24-03-1897	Hong Kong
Brendan Dunne	1932-1935&1969-98	06-03-1998	Hong Kong
Eugene Sharkey	1953-1994	16-03-1994	Hong Kong
Hubert Pilz	1932&1966-1980	04-03-1980	Hong Kong
James O'Keefe	1895-1899	22-03-1918	USA
Joshua Barre	1901-1904	12-03-1908	Sri Lanka
Julian Richardson	1899 -	31-3-1942	Burma
Ladislaus Sziklavary	1932-1934	24-03-1942	Hungary
Lawrence Bot	1904 -	09-03-1947	France
Martin Kelleher	1936-1954&1966-82	08-03-1983	Ireland
Paul Sun	1950-1958	13-03-1986	Hong Kong



Blessed are they that die in the Lord!



Brother Augustus De Cruz



Brother Brendan Dunne



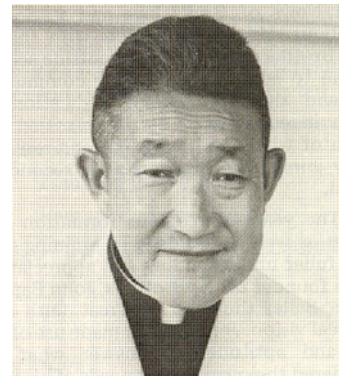
Brother Eugene Sharkey



Brother Hubert Pilz



Brother Martin Kelleher



Brother Paul Sun

Lord God,
as you are the fount of mercy and wish all men to be saved,
have mercy then on our deceased brethren, relatives and benefactors.
Through the intercession of Blessed Mary ever-virgin,
and of all your saints,
bring them to the fellowship of eternal joy.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Love for St. Joseph

John Baptist de La Salle had a special love for St. Joseph, so much so that in his last will and testament he named St. Joseph as the Patron and Protector of our Institute.

Another indication of our Founder's devotion is that the very first seal of the Institute depicts St. Joseph with the Child Jesus.



In his meditation for the Feast of St. Joseph, La Salle explains the main reasons why he considered love for St. Joseph so important. First, St. Joseph was “a just man” that is “holy in every way” and therefore fully fit to care for and guide the son of God. Second, he obeyed God's will perfectly. “He did not hesitate a single instant” to do what God required. Finally, he cared for the child Jesus and protected him from all harm.

“Take St. Joseph as your model since he is your patron. You have been made responsible for your students just as St. Joseph was made responsible by God for the Saviour of the world.”

We are, then, to treat our students in the same way Joseph treated Jesus. A tall order indeed!

The original prayers of the Brothers included a Litany to St. Joseph and had this concluding prayer:

“O God, who in your unfathomable Providence was pleased to choose blessed Joseph for the husband of your most holy Mother, grant that we may deserve to have as our advocate in heaven him whom on earth we revere as our protector, you who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.”

Note: When the Brothers first arrived in Hong Kong in 1875, they took over a small school called St. Saviour's but promptly renamed it St. Joseph's College. We suspect they did so in honour of the Patron and Protector of our Institute.

**St. Joseph, our well beloved patron,
Pray for us.**



Statistics of Hong Kong Lasallian Schools (2008-2009)

Name of Schools	Number of Students		Number of Staff		Number of Catholics	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Students	Teachers
Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College	1092	0	50	34	61	9
Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School	695	337	18	54	36	9
Chong Gene Hang College	1003	25	54	35	48	9
De La Salle Secondary School	466	264	46	31	4	7
La Salle College	1605	0	72	56	374	25
La Salle Primary School	1295	0	20	65	545	17
St. Joseph's College	1194	0	51	38	229	7
St. Joseph's Primary School	1686	0	20	75	661	25
St. Joseph's College Kindergarten	160	0	1	15	52	3
Total:	9196	626	332	403	2010	111
Total number of students:	9822					
Total number of staff:	735					
Number of Brothers:	10					