



The Gateway

Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin

April 2010

Twenty-second Issue

Welcome



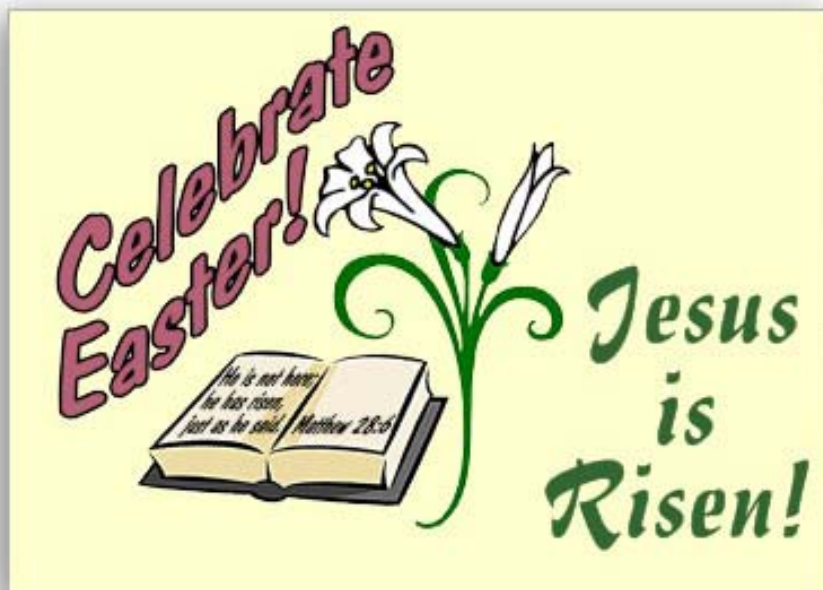
Welcome is the operative word for this issue. First we welcomed Brother Jeffrey Chan who has joined us from his native Singapore. He says he appreciates the fact that we have seasons here and has enjoyed the relatively cool weather of late winter.

Then from March 24th to 27th we had the honour of welcoming our Superior General, Brother Alvaro Rodriguez, as well as General Councillor, Brother David Hawke. At the same time we welcomed members of our District Council who may have created history since this was perhaps the first ever District Council held in Hong Kong.

Another highlight of the Superior's visit was a Gathering of representatives of the Hong Kong Lasallian Family. About 300 students, staff, alumni and parents created a vibrant and festive atmosphere. The inclusion of an Affiliation ceremony added a certain solemnity and lustre to the occasion.

During the season of Lent, some of our Primary students were asked to draw pictures and compose prayers. We hope you like these offerings from youthful hearts. The prayers should certainly please our Heavenly Father.

A happy Easter to all our readers and may the joy of the risen Lord fill our hearts.



Visit of the Superior General and Councillor, 24th to 27th March 2010

The Superior arrived on schedule at 1430 at Hong Kong International Airport on the 23rd March accompanied by Brother David Hawke, Councillor, and Brother Thomas Lavin, Visitor. They were met by the Area Director, Bro Patrick Tierney, by Brothers Jeffrey Chan and Joseph Hung and by Lasallian partner, Paul Tam. The guests were taken to La Salle College where they met the Brothers and had time to exercise and rest before facing a pretty hectic schedule the following day.

The first port of call on the morning of the 25th was a visit to De La Salle Secondary School, New Territories. This co-educational school is located close to the Mainland China border and indeed caters to quite a number of day students from the Mainland. Highlights of the visit were a school TV broadcast by the Superior, Councillor, and Visitor, a visit to the school's weather observatory and a sharing with students from the Mainland and with teachers. A delightfully informal lunch with teachers and students rounded off the visit.



Observing China from the school roof top

The afternoon was devoted to a sector meeting with the Brothers followed by an evening with about 300 representatives of the Hong Kong Lasallian Family. We availed of the presence of the Superior and the large gathering to confer Affiliation on two of our stalwart old boys, Mr. Arnaldo de Oliveira Sales and Mr. Nicholas Ng Wing Fui. Along with the conferring of the diploma, they were presented with 3 Lasallian spiritual symbols, a New Testament, the Rule of the Brothers and a six-decade Rosary. In addition, there were student performances, speeches, souvenir presentations and photo taking and then all were treated to a rather good buffet. An interesting slideshow was shown during the buffet. It was entitled “Amazing Journey” and illustrated aspects of our Lasallian mission in Hong Kong. The Organising Committee of this function deserves high commendation for immaculate planning.



FSC and AFSC together



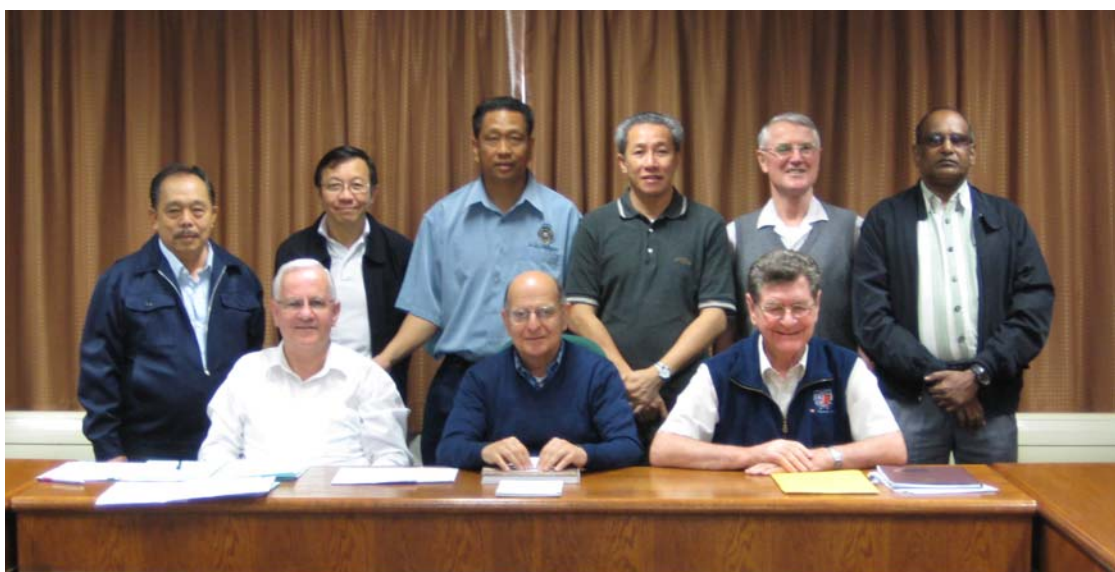
Organizers enjoy a break

The morning of the 26th was devoted to two major meetings. The first was with members of the Lasallian Education Council (LEC). They gave an overview of our mission and tabled a paper on the educational scene in China and the possible opportunities for Lasallian involvement. This topic was enriched with the presence and input of Brother David Liao who has first-hand experience of working in China. The Superior and Councillor responded appropriately to the points raised.



With the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council

The second meeting was with the District Council. God knows when, if ever, a District Council meeting was held in Hong Kong! We certainly appreciated the occasion. All the Brothers were treated to lunch after the meeting. Brother David, Councillor, had to depart for Rome at this stage. Meanwhile the District Council continued their discussions until late evening.



With the Penang District Council

It was the turn of our Hong Kong Lasallian Youth Movement and Lasallian Volunteers on the morning of the final day. They gave a power-point presentation of their activities and then enjoyed a sharing session with the Superior. The young people asked interesting and meaningful questions.



Brothers also availed of the final day for personal interviews with Brother Alvaro.

In the afternoon it was time to wind down in preparation for the Superior's departure. Brother Patrick Tierney drove him to the Airport, accompanied by the Visitor, Thomas Lavin, and Brothers Jeffrey Chan and Joseph Hung.

The visit of Brother Superior and Councillor has been a grace for our Hong Kong Lasallian Family. It has strengthened our faith and renewed our zeal for the education of young people. Brother Alvaro repeatedly stressed that we should do all in our power to promote a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood in the world, fostering a spirit of community, our third main Lasallian value. We are all brothers and sisters in the eyes of God.



Affiliation of Mr. Arnaldo de Oliveira Sales and Mr. Nicholas NG Wing Fui

It has been a very long time indeed since an Affiliation Ceremony was held in Hong Kong. We were delighted to avail of the opportunity of the Superior's visit to have one. The citations follow:

Mr. Sales has already celebrated his 90th birthday and, thank God, is of sound mind and physically mobile.

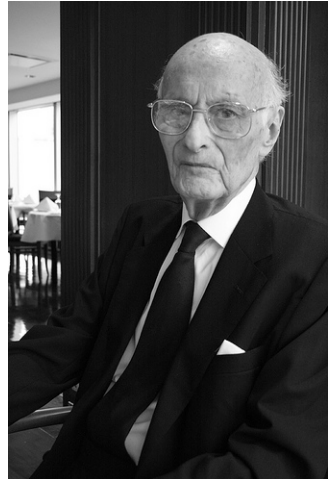
He was a student in La Salle College when it opened in 1932. After graduation he engaged himself deeply in both community services and Lasallian affairs.

For some time he was Chairperson of the Urban Council which did much for the less well off and disadvantaged in Hong Kong society. He was also elected President of the Hong Kong Amateur Sports Federation and Olympic Committee and retained this post for three decades. This says much for the public esteem in which he was held as well as being a vote of confidence in his personal integrity.

In our Lasallian world, Mr. Sales served as president of the La Salle College Old Boys' Association from 1957 to 1960. He supported close liaison with the International Confederation of Past Presidents of the Christian Brothers and was elected to the Confederation Council, a signal honour for the Lasallian Family in Hong Kong.

Throughout his life he has been a staunch Lasallian, taking an active and constructive part in various functions and activities. Even in his advanced years he continues to attend Lasallian events and can always be relied upon in time of need.

As a person, Mr. Sales is not only respected but highly esteemed both in society and in our Lasallian Family. He professes and practises the Catholic faith and his moral integrity is beyond question.



Mr. Ng is about 60 years old. In the late 50's and early 60's he was a student in both La Salle Primary School and La Salle College.

After graduation and further studies he joined the Hong Kong Government and gradually rose in the ranks up to Ministerial level. Though officially retired from Government, his value and expertise was such that he has been recalled to head the Public Service Commission, a body that oversees the integrity of the civil service appointments and discipline systems. He has carried out all his governmental responsibilities with efficiency and integrity.



In our Lasallian world, Mr. Ng served as President of La Salle College Old Boys' Association from 1982 to 1984. He headed the La Salle Foundation between 1997 and 2005. He is currently a member of the School Management Committee of La Salle College as well as being its Alternate Supervisor. He also served as Vice Chair of the Redevelopment Committee of La Salle Primary School and on many occasions acted as Chair.

In addition, Mr. Ng was appointed by the Superior General to the Executive Committee of UMAEL from 2003 to 2007.

Mr. Ng is a first class Lasallian whose devotion and loyalty is beyond doubt. The Brothers often turn to him for help in government, educational and medical matters.

He is also a devoted and practicing Catholic and actively helps the Hong Kong Diocese.



Speech by Mr Nicholas Ng, AFSC and Member of the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council, at the reception for Brother Alvaro Rodriguez, Superior General of the De La Salle Brothers, on 25 March 2010

Brother Alvaro, Brother David, Brother Thomas, Brother Patrick, Brothers and Members of the Lasallian Family in Hong Kong,

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Lasallian Family in Hong Kong, to welcome you, Brother Alvaro, to Hong Kong on the last leg of your South East Asia pastoral visit. Indeed, some of us here had the pleasure of giving you an advance welcome in Melaka only a few days ago. A lot more of us of course remember it was in this very place, seven years ago in 2003, that you first came into direct contact with the whole Lasallian Family in Hong Kong. We are most honoured that you have graced us with a second visit. As the Chinese saying goes, first time stranger second time bonded, we have no doubt that the bond that first started to form between us seven years ago would strengthen further with this visit.

There have been some significant developments in the Lasallian mission here in these seven years. Allow me to briefly recount some of them.

The presence of Brothers is a centre-piece of the mission. Seven years ago, we made a strong plea for the deployment of additional Brothers to Hong Kong. We are most grateful to you and to the Institute that this special wish and need of ours has been most generously acceded to. In the past few years, we have seen several Brothers from Vietnam and Singapore being deployed here, and in September this year, an experienced Brother from New Zealand will be appointed as the Principal of La Salle College. Such reinforcement of Brothers is a tremendous help to our mission. The generosity of the Institute shown to Hong Kong is deeply appreciated.

We have also seen some headway being made in the Brothers' efforts to branch into Mainland China. Seven years ago, Brother David Liao was just starting his La Salle Study Centre in his native village of Changjiao in Southern China. Today, the Centre is firmly established and thriving. Only the limitation of manpower and resources restricts its growth. The Lasallian Families of Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong, true to form, have rendered considerable support towards the development of this Centre. Do rest assured that we in Hong Kong will continue to offer whatever help we can for the continuation and expansion of Brother David's work. It is still early days to contemplate a proper Lasallian school in Mainland China, but, please God, we look to the day when the solid foundation laid by the Brothers in Hong Kong and the seeds planted by Brother David Liao in Changjiao grow into full blossom to meet the education needs of the many children of China.



Another significant development in the mission here is the gradual devolution of the work to the lay partners. We saw the establishment of the Lasallian Education Council in 2004 following the directions of the 43rd General Chapter. The Council now has three Brothers and ten lay members. It is advisory in its role but it plays an active and important part in supporting the Brothers' mission. With its advice and participatory involvement, it is building up its experience in the work of the mission. We see room for further opportunities for broadening the lay partners' support of the mission, either directly through their involvement in the LEC's work or indirectly through supporting the various Lasallian activities. We are confident that the LEC will play a more significant role in future.

The LEC is of course not the only avenue for involvement by lay partners in the Lasallian mission. The various partners contribute in different ways. The administrators and teachers in school lead and nurture our young people through their formative years. Their dedication and commitment is vital. The parents have the same role from home. Their continued support of the Lasallian mission is important. The alumni keep the family flag flying high by their contributions to society and also by ploughing back what they receive to their alma mater. Here I must mention the achievement of one prominent alumni: Professor Charles Kao, who received his formative education from the Brothers in St. Joseph's College, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics last year. His achievement bears testimony to the contribution of the Brothers in the betterment of mankind. The alumni not only win prizes, they have been most generous in supporting their schools in need, through their concern, involvement and material help. Their involvement in the LEC, in School Management Committees and in various ad hoc projects of the schools speak well of the extent of their commitment and loyalty. Indeed, we now have two alumni leading their schools as School Supervisors.

The greater involvement of the various partners in the Lasallian mission is welcome and in some ways inevitable. It does not come easy. We have to prepare them. To this end, two structured formation programmes have started since last year to help provide intensive training to our lay leaders on the Lasallian ethos and to deepen their understanding of the holistic education of our youths. Over time such formation programmes would help develop and train up our lay leaders as partners of the Lasallian mission.



Brother Alvaro, we have been busy consolidating the work of the mission and meeting the various challenges. In the midst of all these efforts and achievements is the leadership of the Brothers here under your direction. We are indebted to the Institute, to you and to all the Brothers who toil tirelessly to fulfill the Lasallian vision of providing education opportunities to each and every child with the ultimate aim of making the world we live in a more caring, a more tolerant, and a more charitable community.

Brother Alvaro, we welcome you to Hong Kong again and we wish you a most enjoyable and satisfying visit.

Thank you.

Extract of Report of Superior General on his Visit to Hong Kong

Our fraternal greetings to the Brothers and all who embrace the Lasallian family in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong. We appreciate the organization and planning that you and the Area Directors along with their collaborators put into the visit which enabled us to know more fully the reality of the District and the unique characteristics of the Lasallian family in the three countries that constitute the District. It is fair to say, in keeping with the theme of the 44th General Chapter, that upon conclusion of the visit our “eyes were opened and our hearts burning.” We valued also the meetings with the Archbishops of Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

We witnessed a love for and loyalty to the Brothers by lay people and especially alumni which is extraordinary to say the least. The active role of alumni and their interest in the Lasallian educational mission is a gift to the District.

Hong Kong is indeed a “Lasallian City” with Shared Mission as its hallmark. While the Brothers continue to play an important role in the management of the schools and serve as supervisors to some, there are now lay supervisors also. The appointment of foreign Brothers adds a new and welcome dimension but serves also as a challenge for those who have given many years of service in the area and the new arrivals inviting adaptation on the part of both. Our visit to De La Salle, Fanling gave us new insights into Lasallian schools in Hong Kong. De La Salle responds to the new forms of poverty that were a focus of the 44th General Chapter. It welcomes also, students from Mainland China. Our lunch time meeting with the students made a lasting impression on us. The decreasing birth rate in Hong Kong is a challenge for all Lasallian schools in the area. The Affiliations of Mr Ng and Mr Sales were indicative of the outstanding support given by these two men over many years to the Lasallian educational mission.

The District’s mission to China with its foundation laid by Brother David Liao highlights that outreach to the mainland is an Institute priority. The paper; “Opportunities for Education Services in Mainland China” prepared by the Lasallian Education Council in Hong Kong is very informative and served as the basis for our discussions. We must be open to the reality of China and see its priority to be included in future planning by LEAD and the PARC Region.

We thank the Brothers and all Lasallians for a very inspiring visit to the District of Penang and wish you God’s blessings.

Yours fraternally



Brother Alvaro Rodriguez Echeverria FSC
Superior General



Brother David Hawke FSC
General Councillor for PARC Region

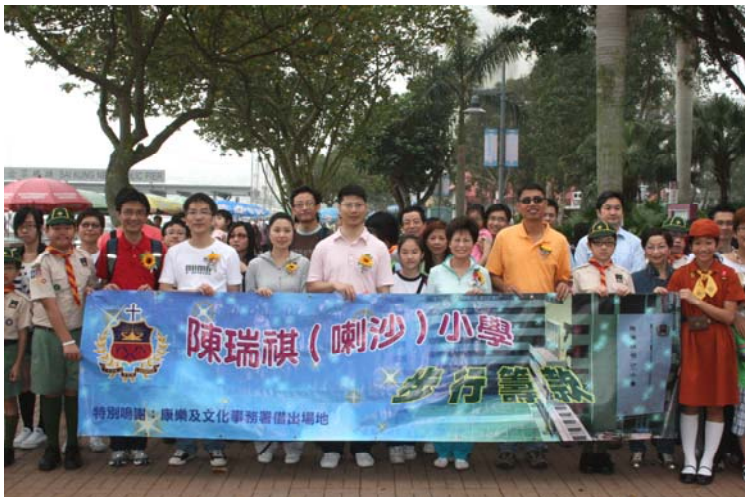
Family Updates

Welcome Brother Jeffrey

The Lasallian Family in Hong Kong welcomes Brother Jeffrey Chan to its midst. He arrived here on 21st of February from tropical Singapore. Currently he is residing in La Salle College. Since Brother Jeffrey speaks Cantonese, we are confident he will adapt very quickly.



Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary Walkathon



This annual fund-raising walkathon was held on 28th February 2010. The guest of honour, Mr. Wong Chung Ki, old boy of both Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College and Primary and Principal of Po Leung Kuk Tong Ngai Kan Junior Secondary School, opened the proceedings and management, staff, parents and students enjoyed the occasion.

St. Joseph's Feast Day

Both St. Joseph's College and Primary School celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph with Masses of Thanksgiving. The Brothers who arrived in Hong Kong in 1875 took over a Catholic Diocesan school called St. Saviour's College. But right away they decided to rename it after St. Joseph, the Patron of their Institute. May St. Joseph guide and protect our schools just as he looked after the infant Jesus.



Inter-school Athletic Meet



This three-day annual battle for secondary school athletic supremacy ended on 12th of March. There was a ding-dong struggle between La Salle College and Diocesan Boys' School, the latter prevailing when it came to the wire. Altogether, four Lasallian secondary schools take part in this annual competition.

Project on the Founder

Recently, Form1 Students of La Salle College, interviewed students from fellow Lasallian schools on their understanding of our Founder St. John Baptist de La Salle. They plan to compile a report on the meaning of Lasallian Identity. It is good to see our schools involved in such ventures and all sides enjoyed the interaction.



Brother Peter Phelan RIP

The news of Brother Peter's passing came as quite a shock to many of us. As recently as November 2009, he came to Hong Kong to the 50th anniversary celebrations of his St. Joseph's College Old Boys. Little did they think that they would not see him again. Brother Peter returned to Ireland for care and treatment on the 21st of February 2010 but passed away suddenly on the 27th. May his noble soul rest in the love of the Lord.



Lenten Prayers

'From the mouths of children and infants, you have got perfect praise.' (Mt 21-16)

Some students of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School do just that.



Dear Lord, please bless all the people in the world especially those who are lonely and those who are living in desperate circumstances. Please help the people in Haiti who are dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake, and those who lost their homes in Ma Tau Wai. Please help those who are injured and grant them a speedy recovery. For the homeless, please grant them shelter. Lord, hear my prayer. Amen.

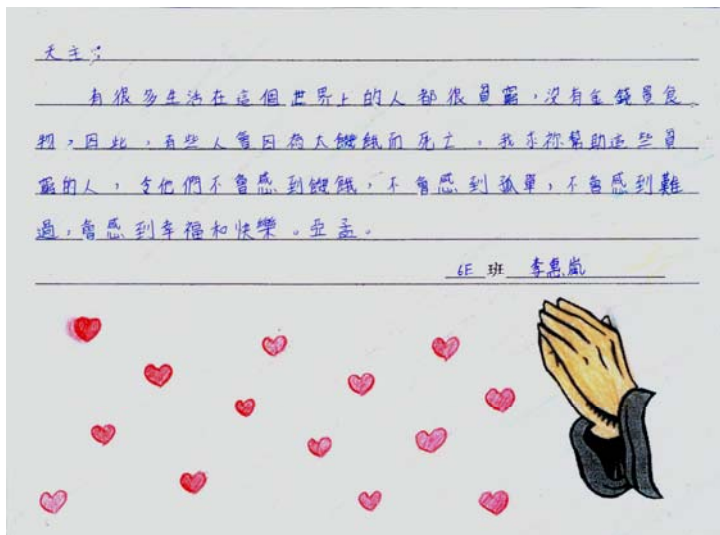
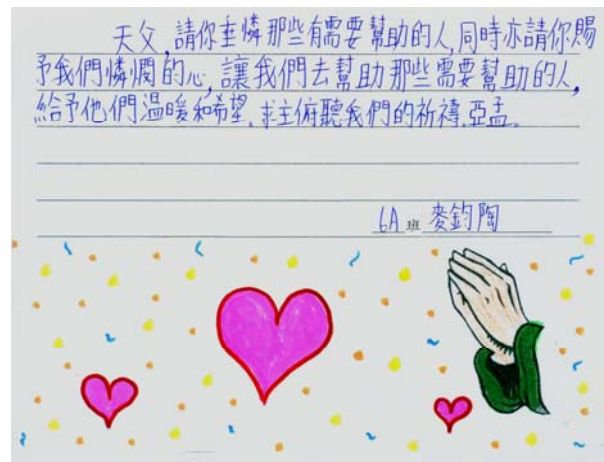
Dear Lord, please let the poor and the needy have houses to live in, food to eat, water to drink and clothes to wear. Please also give them a sense of happiness and hope. Amen.





Dear Lord, thank you for giving me Mother Teresa. What she did has touched my heart. From her I learned that I should share my love generously and I have to try my very best to help those in need of help. Amen.

Lord, have mercy on those who need help. Please let us have merciful hearts so that we can help the needy and give them warmth and hope. Lord, hear us. Amen.



Lord, there are many poor people in the world. They don't have money to buy food and many of them die of starvation. Please grant them happiness so that they will not suffer from hunger, feel sad or lonely. Amen.

St. John Baptist de La Salle
Pray for us
Live Jesus in our hearts
Forever