



The Gateway

Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin

May 2010

Twenty-third Issue

Welcome

The month of May is a rich one in our Lasallian calendar.



The month itself is dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. In our Lasallian tradition we are well aware of the devotion of St La Salle to “the Blessed Virgin Mary” and how he wrote many meditations in her honour. The last day of the month is the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St La Salle reminds us: “Since you have the honour of being visited by God every day in prayer, make sure that his visits may procure for you abundant grace which will help you advance in virtue every day”.

May is also the month for celebrating the feast of our Founder, traditionally on or near the 15th May. Besides celebrating Mass, our schools came up with a number of activities, some of them quite creative. They all aim at keeping the spirit of faith, service and community alive.

Our Superior General, on his recent visit, spoke about the importance of China. Some of our parents, teachers and students decided to pay a visit to our Lasallian Centre in Changjiao to experience and see for themselves what happens there. They have returned with interesting reflections.

Oriental Flavour makes a comeback with two poems. They belong to the *ci* genre but one was written about a thousand years ago while the other is relatively recent.

Our Lady of the Star, pray for us.



Brothers of the Month

Brother Hidulphe-Marie Nicholas (1835-1886) and Brother Cyprian Gendreau (1845-1887)

In a break with tradition, we feature two Brothers in this issue. They have long gone to their reward. Yet it can be truly said that they were largely responsible for establishing the Lasallian presence in Hong Kong and setting it on a firm foundation. They were the first two Directors/Principals of St Joseph's College.

The first Director, Brother Hidulphe, hailed from France. There were four French and two Irish among the first six Brothers to arrive in November 1875. The second Director, Brother Cyprian, was a Canadian. This international dimension among the Brothers holds good to this day.

Let us take a closer look at the life and times of these two pioneering Brothers Directors.

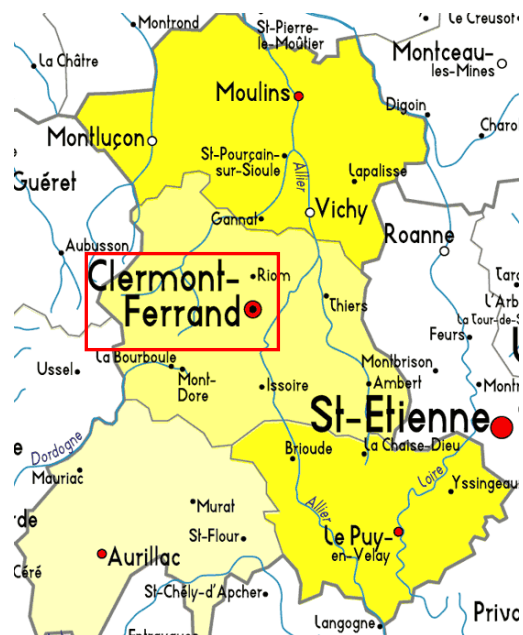


Brother Hidulphe was the first Director/Principal of St. Joseph's College, Hong Kong, from November 1875 to 1879. He had already experienced a taste of the East and had helped with organizing schools in Agra, India, and in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Born in the Auvergne, France, he made his Novitiate at Clermont in 1853. His two nephews also joined the Brothers and they were to be among the six pioneers who arrived on the 7th November 1875, after a voyage of 42 days, to take charge of St. Joseph's College. These two nephews were twins.

When the Brothers arrived in 1875 the existing Catholic school for Portuguese/European boys, situated at the junction of Pottinger Street and Wellington Street, Central, was called St. Saviour's College. Brother Hidulphe may have been somewhat disappointed at the cramped conditions of the school which had 4 classrooms and seventy five boys. The situation was exacerbated after a few weeks when enrollment had doubled.

Brother Hidulphe began by changing the name of the College. It was henceforth to be called St. Joseph's College. He thus placed the school under the protection of St Joseph,



the patron of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Bishop Raimondi may have felt a little sad at the change of name but accepted it graciously.

Before long, the Bishop got another shock for Brother Hidulphe told him that they could not take Chinese pupils unless more space was provided. Until then they would be taking pupils of mainly Portuguese descent.

But the Bishop and Brother Hidulphe were in full agreement about one very important policy, that the school would be open to rich and poor alike and that Chinese pupils could enroll once larger accommodation was secured. The Bishop took action and in January 1878 the Brothers and students moved to a somewhat more spacious Buxley Lodge at 9 Caine Road. Enrollment continued to rise and by 1881 there were more than 300 boys on the rolls.



Brother Hidulphe saw the need for English style education for Chinese boys, and the school at first concentrated on teaching them English conversation and writing.

In 1879 St. Joseph's came under the Grant-in Aid Scheme whereby, subject to Government inspection, the school would receive an annual grant. It was the first Catholic school to receive Government aid. According to Bishop Raimondi, the College "under Government inspection, prospered even more that it did before".

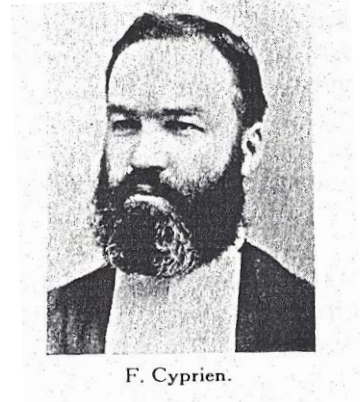
Brother Hidulphe had set St. Joseph's on a strong foundation. He himself, however, began to suffer from ill health and had to return to France. The departure date was fixed for All Saints Day, 1st November 1879, and it seemed like the whole Catholic population of Hong Kong accompanied him to the ship that was to take him away from the East forever. By means of his affable character and gentle disposition he had endeared himself to the clergy, religious, parents and students alike. Brother Hidulphe died in Marseilles on 11th May, 1886.



The second Director/Principal, Brother Cyprian, was born on the 28th January 1845 in Saint Thomas de Montmagny, a small village opposite the well-known Shrine of St. Ann de Beaupré on the south side of the St. Lawrence River. He attended the Brothers' school in that town and, on indicating an interest in becoming a Brother, was sent to the novitiate in Montreal. In those days, this was regarded as saying goodbye to

the world. He took the habit on September 1859 and was given the name Cyprian. At the end of his novitiate he was sent to New York and to Quebec city. When 30 years old he was sent to London and to Paris. In 1879 he was sent to Colombo, Sri Lanka, to begin his life as a missionary Brother.

On the 18th February 1880 he arrived in Hong Kong to replace Brother Hidulphe, Director of St. Joseph's College, who had fallen sick and departed for France. Brother Cyprian was to be Director of St Joseph's for four years.



He was well equipped to lead St. Joseph's to further success. He had a dynamic and outgoing personality. He had been a distinguished teacher and Principal in his native land. The four years he was in charge of St Joseph's were among the most important in its history. It was through Brother Cyprian's energy and drive that the school emerged as one of the leading institutions of the Colony.

The move from Buxley Lodge to Robinson Road, Glenealy, in 1881 played a large part in putting the school firmly on the map. The new school building dominated the harbour. As a Brother's report to the Motherhouse in Rome puts it: "The building is situated on a height which commands an extensive view of the city and the harbour of Victoria. It is surrounded with trees and patches of green which render it one of the most delightful spots of the Colony". The foundation stone was laid by Governor Sir John Pope Hennessy on the 3rd November 1881 and the new building was ready for occupation the following September. 190 boys enrolled on the first day. The school soon became a landmark in Hong Kong and for the first time both the Portuguese classes and the Chinese classes were under the same roof.



St. Joseph's College, Robinson Road 1881-1918

Brother Cyprian was then sent to Rangoon on April 18th, 1884 but he frequently asked to be allowed to return to Hong Kong and in 1885 his request was granted and he returned to take charge of finances. This was an occupation congenial to him as he was an accomplished accountant and everybody expected he would be of great service to the College. Besides being the school bursar, he was to take charge of the boarders.

Up to this time, Brother Cyprian had enjoyed robust health but at the beginning of March 1887, he was suddenly attacked by dysentery. After medical treatment he was judged sufficiently improved to allow for a trip to Japan for a rest. There he would be able to relax among a number of his fellow French-Canadian Brothers. On May 2nd he left on the "Tanais" bound for Yokohama. The steamer arrived in Kobe on the evening of 7th of May. As Brother Cyprian felt too weak to go further, Father Chatron, MEP, went to see him on board and accompanied him to the local hospital for foreigners.

Father Chatron did all he could for the ailing Brother. He says that Brother Cyprian prayed and was perfectly resigned to the will of God, and that he remained alert and tranquil to the end. The end came on the 10th of May around 3 p.m. Brother Cyprian was 42 years old.

On 13th of May a funeral Mass was said and Brother Cyprian was buried in the cemetery reserved for foreigners. In those days it was near the harbour. Later it was moved to a location up the hill, near Futatabi Park 再度公園. The local Catholic religious, laypersons and schoolchildren accompanied the funeral procession. Father Chatron was convinced a Saint had been buried on Japanese soil.

In more recent years, the Brothers in Japan, led by Brother Marcel Petit, decided to erect a new tombstone for Brother Cyprian. On the 15th September, 1991, with the help of the Marist Brothers Community in Kobe, a new lettering was etched on Brother Cyprian's tombstone and all through the years, Brother Ramon Bereicua, a Marist Brother, has faithfully looked after it. For this esteemed service, the De La Salle Brothers in Japan regard Brother Ramon as "a Marist Lasallian".



Brother Ramon, on the left,
with Brother Marcel

A photograph of a handwritten address in cursive script. The text reads: "My future address." followed by "Bro. Cyprian" and "St. Paul's Institution." and "Rangoon." The handwriting is elegant and fluid.

Family Updates

St Joseph's Primary Family Fun Day

Playgrounds, classrooms and corridors rang to the sound of happy feet for the school's Family Fun Day held on Sunday 18th April. The day revolved around the theme of "Love and Care". Parents, students, teachers and old boys thronged the school. Mr. Paul Tang Kwok Wai, an Old Boy and the Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, did the honours. Games, musical performances and free gifts added to the good cheer. What a lovely way to spend Sunday, the family day in Hong Kong.



Primary 1 and 2 Swimming Gala

The six and seven year olds of La Salle Primary School kicked up a storm at their annual swimming gala on the 24th April. They start young nowadays and no doubt some of them at least have dreams of Olympic glory. In many ways the parents were more excited than the boys and they cheered roundly. The Guest of Honour for the occasion was Mr. Frankie Jim, Chairman of the Parent-Teacher Association.



Christian Brothers Schools Exchange Programme

Each year our Lasallian Youth Movement organizes an exchange programme for Form 4 students in our Lasallian secondary schools. At the opening ceremony, the students have a chance to introduce their own schools. It is a good way to strengthen our Lasallian sense of brotherhood and sisterhood.



Primary Schools Football Tournament

St Joseph's, La Salle, and two guest schools, Wah Yan and Diocesan Boys, have a friendly football encounter each year. This year the event fell on April 24th and a lovely, sunny day it was. At the end of the day the Junior team honours went to St Joseph's and the Senior to La Salle. Whatever the rankings, all the players had a good time and there was great support from the parents.



Our Departed Brothers

La Salle Primary School has made it an annual pilgrimage. A group of primary six students is selected for a visit to St. Michael's Cemetery, Happy Valley, where many of the Brothers who served in Hong Kong are laid to rest. The boys offer prayers and flowers to the deceased. Fortunately, an Old Boy with wide knowledge of our Lasallian history in Hong Kong, Mark Huang, was at hand to make the visit even more meaningful.



Musical Drama

After nine months of intense preparation, the first ever musical drama produced by Chong Gene Hang College, took place on the 30th of April 2010. Much of the credit goes to Mr. Mead who took charge of the script, dance routines, songs, costumes, props and rehearsals. The students did not let him down and the guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



Chinese Folk Dance

Recently, Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School students were invited to entertain the residents in the vicinity of their school. They performed a beautiful Chinese folk dance of the Harvest Festival which went down very well with the spectators.





The first World Expo was held in the Crystal Palace, London, in 1851. One hundred and fifty nine years later Shanghai has the honour of hosting the event, the biggest Expo ever. The grand opening was held on May 1st 2010 and the Expo will close on October 31st 2010.

The theme of Expo 2010 is "Better City, Better Life," representing the common wish of humankind for better future urban environments.

As part of the preparations for the event, children from all over China, aged 6 to 14, were invited to enter a drawing competition. They were encouraged to show their versions of 'future city and future living' in their drawings. Successful entries would be displayed in the China Pavilion.



A Primary 4 boy of La Salle Primary School and his younger sister spent two weeks in designing and drawing their 'future city and future living'. Gabriel To Kai Hei, 杜啓熙 believes that rockets will replace vehicles and that people can keep dinosaurs as pets in his future city. His sister Raphaela To Kai Yiu, 杜啓瑤, dreams that a UFO will come and join her birthday party and that all animals and humans will live in harmony.



To the great joy of the budding artists, both paintings were selected, the only ones from Hong Kong. They are now exhibited in the China Pavilion.

Oriental Flavour: Plucking Mulberry Leaves



Chinese poetry is the most highly regarded literary genre in China. Traditionally, it is divided into *shi* (詩), *ci* (詞) and *qu* (曲). Towards the end of the Tang dynasty, 'ci' became more and more popular and reached its height in the Song dynasty.

Ci were originally written to be sung to tunes of unique titles, with set rhythm, rhyme, and tempo. Later the ci poem began to free itself from its musical background and became primarily a literary creation. The poet may not even know the underlying melody of the poem. Therefore, the title may have nothing to do with its contents, and it is common for several *ci* of completely different

meaning and style to have the same title. Here we have two ci poems called "**Plucking mulberry leaves**". The original melody of the song would probably have been sung by village girls while plucking mulberry leaves to feed the silkworms. However, these two selected ci written by Ouyang Xiu (歐陽修) and by Mao Zedong(毛澤東) surely have nothing to do with mulberry leaves or silkworms.

歐陽修：采桑子

群芳過後西湖好，狼藉殘紅，
飛絮濛濛，垂柳闌干盡日風。
笙歌散盡遊人去，始覺春空，
垂下帘櫳，雙燕歸來細雨中。

毛澤東：采桑子

人生易老天難老，歲歲重陽，
今又重陽，戰地黃花分外香。
一年一度秋風勁，不似春光，
勝似春光，寥廓江天萬里霜。

Ouyang Xiu (1007-1072), Chinese poet, historian, and statesman of the Song dynasty who reintroduced the simple "ancient style" in Chinese literature and sought to reform Chinese political life through principles of classical Confucianism. He was instrumental in raising the lyric *ci* form of poetry into a widespread and important Song poetic style. His plain style and use of colloquial expressions made his poetry accessible to larger audiences and helped preserve its freshness for audiences today.



"Plucking Mulberry Leaves" by Ouyang Xiu

***When the many scents are gone,
The West Lake is charming,
All over a little red is left.
Floating fluffs blur the air,
Fence-like willow twigs catch the wind
and rain.
The airs of a panpipe accompany
traveling people,
Reminding them that spring is gone.
At the hanging of the window curtains,
A pair of swallows turn back in drizzling rain.***



Mao Zedong, (1893-1976), is the founder of the People's Republic of China. Mao was one of the most prominent Communist theoreticians and his ideas on revolutionary struggle and guerrilla warfare have been extremely influential, especially among Third World revolutionaries.



Politics aside, Mao is considered one of modern China's most influential literary figures, and was an avid poet, mainly in the classical ci and shi forms.

"Plucking Mulberry Leaves" by Mao Zedong 1929



***Man ages all too easily, not Nature;
Year by year the Double Ninth* returns,
On this Double Ninth, the yellow blooms on
the battlefield smell especially sweet.
Each year the autumn wind blows fierce,
Unlike spring's splendour,
Yet surpassing spring's splendour,
See the endless expanse of frosty sky and
water.***

*Double Ninth: Chung Yeung Festival in Hong Kong and Tết Trùng Cửu in Vietnam. It falls on the ninth day of September in Lunar calendar. On this day, some Chinese visit the graves of their ancestors to pay their respects.

What it means to be a Lasallian today

Form 1 students of La Salle College, who are about 12 years old, recently completed a project on 'what it means to be a Lasallian today'. They have compiled their report which highlights the following:

1. We believe good Lasallians should be proud of their identify, have good conduct and be loyal to their schools
2. Some observed that the longer they study in school the sense of belonging to the Lasallian family grows.
3. We have learned how to relate the Lasallian spirit to our daily lives, to help the poor, pray for them, and give donations.
4. One group compared St. La Salle to Confucius. One of his famous mottos goes 有教無類 which means that 'no child should be deprived of educational opportunity'. (Confucius was willing to teach anyone, whatever their social standing, as long as they were eager and determined)
5. One group says that "when there is no Lasallian spirit, the world would be cruel".
6. Another sums up 'what it means to be Lasallian' in very beautiful words, "the Lasallian Spirit is an attitude and a lifestyle."
7. Lasallians help each other and there is a strong spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood among them.
8. St. La Salle showed great zeal to serve others. Some say they are impressed by St. La Salle's Christian love and self sacrifice.
9. Alumni in particular say it means serving the needy, being generous, and not giving up on naughty students.



Visit to Changjiao, China

From 16th to the 18th of April, a contingent of La Salle Primary School teachers, parents and students paid a visit to our Lasallian Centre in Changjiao. They were accompanied by Brothers Steve Hogan and Joseph Hung. Students and parents wrote some reflections on the visit.



The environment

The environment is very comfortable. When I was in the classroom, I could hear birds singing and see insects moving. I could even feel the warm breeze. It is a wonderful place for learning. The school is surrounded by hills and fields. There are hens, ducks, dogs and even goats nearby.

Cheng Shing Hing P. 5



The Students

I think the students' high English standard is due to the effort of Brother David. He is a very enthusiastic, very good and very kind teacher. Apart from teaching English he also teaches his students to be kind and helpful. He has set a good example for everyone by helping to build a new house for an old villager. I believe that his students will learn to care for others from him.

Alexander Kwok P.4

The students come from different places. Some of them live far away and have to travel a long distance to learn English. Even though they are poor, they are all very happy and like to smile a lot. When Brother David is teaching them English, they all listen patiently and attentively. They all respect their teachers and speak politely. They have the determination to work hard, too.

Lo Tin Bo P.6



Love and Care

The Study Centre is actually the house of Brother David's grandpa. He uses this house as a place to teach English to the children. He shows love and care to everyone. The students are outgoing and well mannered. They are like brothers and sisters. The teachers treat them as their own children. They are poor, but they always smile. Brother David is also poor, but he is full of love. I hope I can visit them again.

Owen Lai P.5



What I gained from the visit

I admire the students' work ethic and positive attitude towards life. When they came across some difficulties during their speech, they persisted and accomplished their task with courage. They truly demonstrated the "never give up" Lasallian spirit.

This was an unforgettable trip which broadened my horizon. I should be grateful for what I have, and not give up or complain about any difficulties in life.

Jeffrey Ip P.6



In gratitude

I'm deeply impressed by what you do in the La Salle Study Centre, Changjiao. I'm touched by the warm welcome from your students and their parents. I really appreciate their learning attitude. They grasped every opportunity to practice their oral English. Your love and care are indispensable to make such change.

Menza, Parent Organizer



Have you ever seen a little girl curiously peeping through a classroom door to express her eagerness to become a student there? Or a group of youngsters of humble backgrounds struggling from afar to attend lessons in a simple little village house just to learn basic English? Have you ever met a man who returned home after living abroad for years and now contributes all he can to his home village? He teaches these youngsters and even rebuilds a house for a helpless old man nearby without asking for any reward in return.

These were sights that our group recently witnessed when we visited La Salle Study Centre in Changjiao. Our group consisted of the principal and some teachers, students and parents of La Salle Primary School. When we arrived one cool spring morning, a group of young village kids from LSSC greeted us with warm and cheerful smiles. We were then welcomed by speeches delivered by the local students. Some of them struggled through the difficult English speeches. Nevertheless they had a strong determination not to give up and successfully finished their task. I couldn't help reflecting that while boys in Hong Kong complain about too much homework and too little time for electronic games, the kids in Changjiao treasure every single chance to learn, in a much less comfortable environment.

I can't help wondering, amidst all the reviews, debates and confusion of the ever- changing education system in Hong Kong, where the fundamentals of education have gone. The example in Changjiao is one where the village kids are eager to learn and Brother David is willing to teach, without any bureaucratic influence. This simple education system in Changjiao seems to be ideal. Isn't that the type of education Hong Kong experienced in earlier days?

Fortunately we were able to see once again that the spirit of St. John Baptist de La Salle, and his devotion to the poor and needy students over 300 years ago, lives on in La Salle Study Centre, Changjiao, - with a dedicated Brother simply having his students' education in mind.

Frankie Jim
A parent and an Old Boy



From left: Brother Steve Hogan,
Ms Emily Leung, Brothers David
Liao, Joseph Hung and Mr. Frankie
Jim