



## **The Gateway**

**Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin**

**January 2013**

**Forty Fourth Issue**

## Welcome

We are about to bid farewell to the Year of the Dragon, and many will not be unhappy to see the end of it, what with recessions, austerity measures, crises, etc.

And so we usher in the Year of the Snake and hope for better things. Ancient Chinese wisdom has it that a snake in the house is a good omen because it means your family will not starve. Most of us would probably be unable to sleep if we thought there was a snake in the house!



YEAR OF 蛇 SNAKE

The coming Chinese New Year is the year of the Water Snake, black in colour. The colour black symbolizes the dark depths, the colour of deep waters. It is therefore wise to be very prudent, cautious and focused.

Personality-wise, snake people are clever, rational, self-reliant and seem to be born with a sixth sense. They come in many beautiful, colourful designs and are stylish and have good taste. As we know from the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible, the snake is also a charmer, a seducer and can be very loving in relationships.

Snake people also have a way with money, though sometimes they will take punishing risks.

Appropriately enough, Oriental Flavour has an interesting story featuring a snake and a holy man.

Monday is the lucky day of the week for snakes, so 'Thank God It's Monday.'



## Brother of the Month

### Brother Casimir L'Angellier (1900-1975)



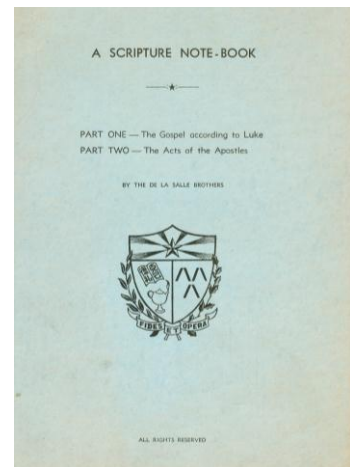
Alexander Casimir L'Angellier was born in Singapore on May 5<sup>th</sup> 1900. He belonged to a highly-respected, long-standing Catholic family. After receiving his early education in St Joseph's Institution, Singapore, he was among the first aspirants to join the De La Salle Brothers at the newly opened Juniorate and Novitiate in Kuala Lumpur, in 1916. He took the Brother's habit in 1918 taking the name Casimir and then continued with his religious formation and studies in Penang.

After his religious and pedagogical training, he taught with success in Singapore and Malaysia. In due course he was made school Principal, a post he held for more than 20 years.

He was Principal of St George's School, Taiping, Malaysia, from 1947 to 1952 and of St Paul's, Seremban, Malaysia, from 1954 to 1959. In St Paul's he presided over the celebrations for the school's Golden Jubilee in 1949. The school had reached its full capacity and was bursting at the seams. The Brothers decided that it was time to split the school into two campuses. This involved the building of a new secondary school on a site called Mont La Salle. Brother Casimir was the man for the job and he had the joy of witnessing the opening of the new school on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 1959. It was also during this period that he was awarded with the Pingat Jasa Kebangsaan (PJK), in recognition of his contribution to education. In both St George's and St Paul's, Brother Casimir was admired and well-liked by all the school community.



Brother Casimir was a sound religious and a kind-hearted and understanding Principal. He was also a scholarly man. He could teach almost every subject with remarkable success. He wrote extensively. He wrote plays and operettas for the younger students as well as articles and features for religious magazines. He also wrote a series of textbooks on Scripture which were widely used in schools and are still in circulation today. His Scripture, Geography and History Notes sold like hot cakes, best sellers in the school textbook circles.



In the twilight of his career, he was posted to Hong Kong, arriving at La Salle College on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1969. Initially he was sent to help Brother Paul Sun in the recently opened St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School. His health was not robust and he gradually moved to helping Brother Henry Pang at La Salle Primary School.

On the occasion of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Brother Casimir, his friend Brother Anthony McNamara had this to say:

“A teacher's life is not always an inspiring one. A teacher, and especially an old teacher, is often referred to as Mr. Chips, and for those of us who have read the book, or seen the film, we know that James Hilton's hero was endearing as a character, but a failure as schoolmaster. The teacher spends his life goading others to a success that he himself does not attain, and to which perhaps he does not aspire. He seldom exhibits the infallibility he is supposed to possess. The smarter pupils for whom he prophesies a brilliant future often disappoint him, and the lazier and more backward ones for whom he foretells a future of misery sometimes end up as millionaires. When a boy is successful in the exam he claims all the glory, but if he fails it is the teacher who reaps the blame. Teachers never get decorated. Headmasters do, and if a teacher does get signaled out for commendation it is not for teaching. With age he is expected to suffer from pedagogical rust and academic dry-rot. A colleague who was celebrating his 40th anniversary in the profession was asked what he considered was his greatest achievement in those forty years. He replied that without a doubt it was the fact that he had survived.

This is a very depressing picture, but it changes, and changes completely the minute a teacher survives fifty years. Then he becomes a hero, he is feted, toasted, wined and dined, is congratulated by colleagues, pupils and friends, and on this

occasion he gets honourable mention in the press. That is what has happened to Bro. Casimir, and that is why we are gathered here to-day. Not only has he survived fifty years in a teaching Institute, he is still going strong.

I first met Brother Casimir in 1925, in Taiping, Malaysia, then a very peaceful town as it had the largest jail, and with all the law-breakers inside, the rest of us lived in peace outside. Since then I have been associated with him. Sometimes we were teaching in the same school, and if we were not, we had many opportunities of meeting, and even outside of Malaya we cannot keep out of each other's way. This good man is ubiquitous. At the opening of a teachers' training college at Manchester, the clerical looking gentleman that helped me to get a cup of tea turned out to be Brother Casimir. I also met him cycling along a snowy road in England coming from the remote village of Coton, and on another occasion we met in Rome. I once went to Kai Tak airport (Hong Kong) to see the landing of the much advertised Lufthansa aircraft, and although I was impressed by the aircraft I was still more surprised to see Brother Casimir disembarking with the other passengers. If ever I take the polar route to Europe and crash-land on the North Pole, I am certain that the first Eskimo to come to my assistance will be Brother Casimir.



As I said, I first met Brother Casimir in Taiping. That was in the days of heavy rickshaw traffic and no electricity, when school uniforms did not exist, and boys could come to school in sarongs, and barefooted if that were more convenient. Age limits had not been imposed, and with a wide age range in each class it was possible to have in class

pupils as old as the teacher, and even married pupils, although no student ever admitted that he had a spouse. In his long years of service as a teacher Brother Casimir has witnessed an evolution in our education system.

He was a teacher of no ordinary calibre. He was not just good and competent, he was a master of method and dedicated. He comes from an intellectually brilliant family. His brother and a nephew were both holders of the highly competitive and much coveted Queen's scholarship.

His pupils realised that they were taught by a teacher sound in knowledge, and with the ability to impart whatever he taught. From the time he began teaching he has

always been in the Cambridge classes.

His surname is L'Angellier which he claims means 'Angel-maker', a name he has lived up to, to make his boys good, morally and intellectually. He was able to get the best from his students and the academic achievements in his class were always of a high standard. The many boys that he has taught all over the country from Singapore to Penang know him to be an adept in teaching many branches and not limited to specialisation in one branch of knowledge.

His students are to be found in all walks of life, in the ranks of the clergy, in the various professions, and serving their country as law-abiding citizens.

In the various offices where he has business to contract, his former students see to it that in the case of their former teacher the rule is 'last come first served', and from his former students who make inquiries about him we know that he was a good and kind teacher.

While celebrating the Golden Jubilee of his being a Brother it is also 25 years since he became the head of a school, and in the capacity of Principal he has been responsible for the direction of St. George's, Taiping, St. Paul's, Seremban, St. Andrew's, Muar, La Salle, Brickfields and is at present Principal of St. George's, Balik Pulau.



No school has been second rate with him as head. He sees to it that there is a harmonious balance between what is academic and what is extra-mural, sacrificing neither one to the other and insisting on success at the highest level in studies and in achievement on the playing field.

He has the title of P.J.K., the Medal of Merit, conferred for his excellent contribution to education in the state of Negri Sembilan.

Most heads of schools like to show off their show-pieces, such as playing fields, laboratories, school hall and lecture theatre, and other amenities. Brother Casimir has all that at Balek Pulau, and at present is the only Brother Principal who can boast of having a domestic science unit in his school. If any of you are invited to a function in his school I advise that you accept it. His domestic science unit will make it worthwhile.

He was responsible for raising the funds, and making the plans for the primary school at Taiping, for acquiring the land and building the industrial arts centre at Muar, and the well-selected site and beautiful setting of St. Paul's, Seremban, will always stand as a tribute to one who always gave the boys the best he could. It does not matter where he taught, or where he was Principal; he made certain that his school could compare with the best, and results obtained were always gratifying.

At present he is Principal of St. George's Balik Pulau, an area which may be considered the "ulu", out in the wilds, but last year 82% of his pupils were successful in the Cambridge School Certificate examination, and from that school there has been a steady flow of students to the sixth forms, and pupils of St. George's have had their share of Colombo Plan, and Federal Scholarships.

Before the war he organised a very good museum in St Xavier's Institution which would be an asset at the present time if it had not been destroyed by enemy action.

As headmaster he believes that a united, and contented staff, is essential for good results, and judging by the number, and quality of his staff dinners, and get-togethers, he has been a great success in keeping everybody happy in his work."

Brother Casimir 'retired' to Hong Kong in January of 1970, at the age of 70. For a year he was actively involved with Brother Paul Sun's St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School as well as in La Salle Primary School, Kowloon. In La Salle Primary, he got particularly caught up in the development of the Story-telling Room. It was right in the middle of planning the painting of the Solar System for the Story-telling Room, all done in blue, that he suffered a stroke on the way to the Brothers' dining room. This was in January of 1971.



He was rushed to the nearby St Teresa's Hospital, run by the Sisters of St Paul de Chartres, who took loving care of him. The Brothers spared no pains to get Brother Casimir back on his feet but, despite expert medical care and physiotherapy, he never recovered his speech or the use of his right limbs. The Brothers would visit him regularly and take him back to the Community on Feast days and special occasions for a get-together. He would then be taken for a drive before returning to the hospital.

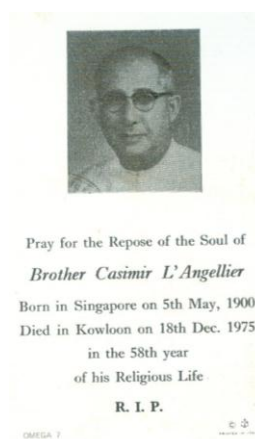
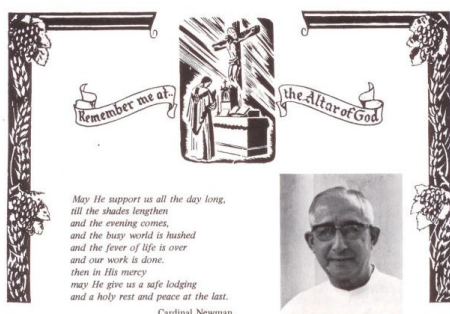
This went on for four years. Brother Casimir became the darling of the hospital. The Sisters, the nurses, the support staff and the patients came to know and love this simple, holy Brother. The staff would settle him in front of the TV and bring him for long visits to the Chapel where he attended daily Mass and prayed with the Sisters.

There was a set-back on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1975 and Brother Casimir began to fail. He drifted into a state of semi-consciousness and ran a high temperature. He died on the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>. The wake and funeral Mass took place in the hospital on the 19<sup>th</sup> followed by burial in St Michael's Cemetery, Happy Valley.

And so passed a fine scholar, a brilliant teacher, a devoted religious, an amiable companion and an understanding head of school.

### Postings of Brother Casimir

Penang	Scholasticate	1918
St. Michael's Institution, Ipoh	Teaching	1924-1928
St. George's Institution, Taiping	Teaching	1929-1930
St. Francis' Institution, Malacca	Teaching	1931-1933
St. George's Institution, Taiping	Sub Director	1933-1935
St. Xavier's Institution, Penang	Sub Director	1936-1939
St. Joseph's Institution, Singapore	Sub Director	1940
St. Paul's Institution, Seremban	Sub Director	1941-1943
St. George's Institution, Taiping	Director	1943-1945
St. George's Institution, Taiping	Sub Director	1945-1946
St. George's Institution, Taiping	Director	1947-1952
St. Charles, Bordighera, Italy	Second Novitiate	1953
St. Paul's Institution, Seremban	Director	1953-1959
St. John's Institution, Kuala Lumpur	Principal Brickfields	1960
St. Andrew's School, Muar	Headmaster	1960-1962
St. George's School, Penang	Headmaster	1963-1969
La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong	Teaching	1970-1971
St. Teresa's Hospital Hong Kong	Hospitalized	1971-1975





## PARC 36

The sector of Hong Kong was honoured to host the 36<sup>th</sup> Lasallian Pacific Asia Regional Conference (PARC) from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2013. Brothers Visitors and Auxiliary Visitors came from Australia, New Zealand, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the LEAD District. In addition, Brothers Charles Kitson and Joseph Fernando represented at Institute level while Mentie Knowles was secretary to the Conference.

The general Coordinator was Brother Thomas Lavin, very ably assisted by Nicholas Ng, AFSC. PARC 36 gave Hong Kong the opportunity of drawing on members of its Lasallian Family to help in the process. Ms Loretta Yu and Ms Millie Tam were asked to give a sharing, emphasizing the role of Lasallian women in the mission today. This sharing was much appreciated by the conference delegates. Mr Eric Ku, Principal of De La Salle Secondary School, situated quite near the conference venue, kindly laid on transport and opened the facilities of his school.

At the end of the Conference, the 5 Hong Kong Old Boy/ Alumni Associations hosted a Chinese dinner for the PARC 36 participants, a gesture that was much appreciated. Special guests at the dinner were Mr Henry Atayde, President of the World Confederation of Lasallian Alumni and two of his committee members. Mr Paul Woo, President of St Joseph's College Old Boys' Association, coordinated all the details of the dinner.

It has been a long time since Hong Kong hosted a PARC Conference and we thank Brother David Hawke, General Councillor, for giving us the opportunity.



## Family Updates

### Christmas Carnival 2012



The sun shone in a clear blue sky for the annual Christmas Carnival of La Salle Primary School held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The beautiful day, the aesthetically designed stalls, the interesting games, the special features, the tempting prizes and the performances all helped to attract a big crowd. The Theme this year was “Love and Care” so it was not surprising to see many heart-shaped designs. It was an occasion for a lovely family outing.

### Outstanding Global Lasallian

It took over a year before we were in a position to formally present Mr Arnaldo de Oliveira Sales with the Outstanding Global Lasallian award. Arnaldo, familiarly known as Sonny, had not been feeling well at the time of the original presentation by UMAEL in Manila in October 2011 where Mr Nicholas Ng Wing Fui had kindly accepted the award on Sonny’s behalf.



At the conclusion of the Christmas Eve Mass this year in La Salle College, Sonny was formally presented with the award by Brother Thomas Lavin, Auxiliary Visitor of the Lasallian East Asia District. The award is given for a lifetime contribution to Nation Building and to our Lasallian Mission. Heartiest congratulations to Sonny who is still going strong at 93.

## La Salle Primary Sports Day

January and February, on average, are the two coldest months in Hong Kong. On the afternoon of the 19<sup>th</sup> January, however, the sun shone brilliantly and contributed to the festive atmosphere of the La Salle Primary School Sports. The venue, conveniently, was the track and field of La Salle College. The Guest of Honour, Mr Leonard Chu, Chairman of the Primary School Parent Teacher Association and an old boy himself delivered a stirring and inspirational speech. Then the athletes took over and gave it their all.



## Birthdays

The St Joseph's College Old Boys' Association Executive Committee members celebrated the birthdays of Brothers Alphonsus Breen and Thomas Favier at the Brothers' Quarters on Sunday 6 January. Both Brothers are former Principals of the College and have left a lasting impact on generations of students. Old boy Anthony Yeung ('76) took the opportunity to show his support of our Alma Mater by presenting the Brothers with a Birthday Present - a HK\$100,000 cashier cheque, made out to the St Joseph's College Foundation and earmarked for the current refurbishment on the top floor of St Joseph's Primary School. Ad multos annos.



## Brother Charles Kitson

During the days of PARC 36 and for some days afterwards, we had the pleasure of hosting Brother Charles Kitson, coordinating Secretary for our worldwide Lasallian Family. Brother Charles was able to visit a number of our schools as well as address our Principals' Conference. His visit to Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School had been long pre-arranged and the school put up a lovely programme. Everywhere he went, Brother Charles encouraged all the members of our Lasallian Family in their work for the mission.



## Principals' Conference

The most recent Principals' Conference was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 and opened with a prayer on the spirit of faith. Two special guests attended. First of all there was Mr. Lester Huang, legal advisor to our School Sponsoring Body, who put us through the final refinements as each school prepares to establish an Incorporated Management Committee. Then there was Brother Charles Kitson who delivered an inspiring address which lifted the hearts of all. The question of Moral and National Education was also discussed. All schools agreed that it was unnecessary to use the word National and we will continue with traditional name usages for our religious studies curricula. Reports highlighting school activities rounded off the meeting.



## Oriental Flavour

### The Snake and the Holy Man

Once there was a snake with a rather bad attitude. The villagers near where the snake lived were very fearful. You see, this snake slithered through the grass, silently, seeking its victims, and without warning would strike and devour its prey. It was known to eat hens, dogs, and even big animals like cows. However, what was most upsetting to the villagers was that the snake was even eating their children.

The villagers wanted to be respectful towards all creatures but this snake had simply gone too far. They knew that something had to be done and they came together to get something done. The villagers gathered at the edge of the field, and with drumming and shouting, and sticks and stones, and with their minds made up started their search to find the snake and to kill it.

A holy man came upon this loud and angry crowd and asked, "What is this about?"

The villagers told him of the snake's wickedness and how it was even eating their children. The holy man asked, "If I make this snake stop, and it no longer eats your children, or hurts your farm animals, will you spare its life?"

The villagers argued among themselves. Some wanted vengeance and others were willing to let the holy man try. Most of the villagers did not believe that the holy man would succeed. However, reluctantly, they agreed to give the snake one chance.

The holy man entered the field and commanded the snake to come to him. The power of the holy man drew the snake to the path and to the feet of the holy man.

"What issss it?" the snake hissed.

The holy man's words were simple: "Enough! There is no need for this. There is plenty of food without eating the villager's children or their animals."

Now it was not so much what the holy man said but it was how he said it. There was a kindness and an authority in the holy man's voice. The snake knew the holy man's



words to be true. The snake did not hiss a word but nodded in agreement and slithered away.

Before long, the villagers discovered that the snake would not harm them. They were grateful that the snake would no longer bite. However, some of them could not control their anger at what the snake had done before and began to beat it with sticks and stones. Day after day the snake suffered more and more abuse until it could take no more and it hid underneath a large rock.

The snake hid underneath that rock, determined not to break its word to the holy man. However, it was very confused, and thought to itself, "Why is this happening to me? I listened and followed the holy man's words." The snake was so fearful of leaving its hiding place that it grew weak and was near death from the villagers' beatings and the lack of food.

One day, the weakened snake heard the footsteps of the holy man and with all its strength crawled out to meet him on the path. The holy man, seeing how beaten and sickly the snake looked, asked, "What has happened to you?"

The snake, with great effort, spoke about the beatings and torment that it had suffered from the villagers and how for days it had hidden underneath a rock for protection.

The holy man stood silently shaking his head. Then he said quietly, "Oh, foolish snake, I told you not to bite but I did not say anything about hissing."

And with that the snake understood and slithered away hissing.

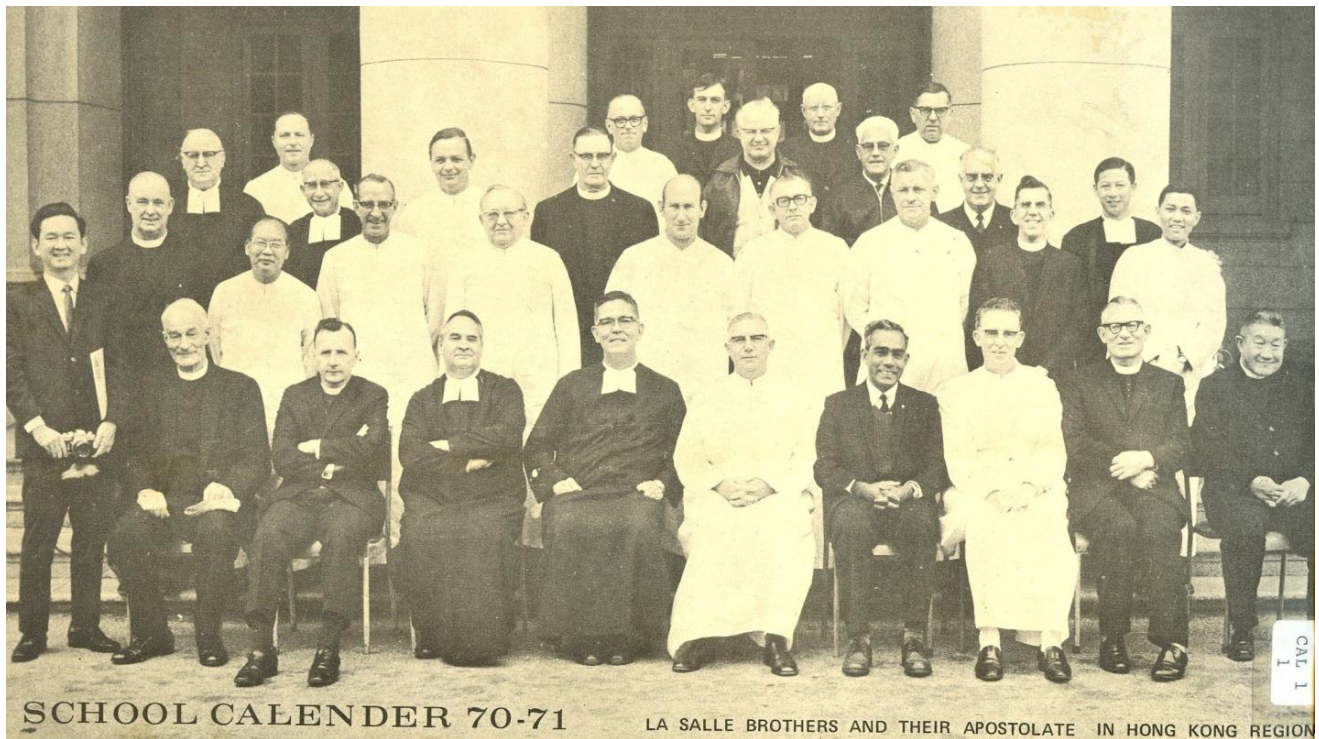


## Blast from the Past

Here we go. Just over 40 years ago, when the Brothers were thick on the ground  
Even this issue's Brother of the Month is there.

And there are two Brothers Alphonsus, both thankfully still with us.

Old Boys of the 60s and 70s vintage, in particular, will surely have been taught, formed,  
or been influenced by some of these good men.



First row from L to R:

Brothers Paul O'Connell, Alphonsus Breen, Casimir Husarik, Michael Jacques, Charles Buttimer, Finian Boudeville, Felix Sheehan, Herman Fenton, Paul Sun

Second row From L to R:

Brothers John Wong, Patricius O'Donovan, Henry Pang, Anthony Knoll, Cronan Curran, Eugene Sharkey, Pius Kelly, Brendan Dunne, James Dooley, Anthony Chan

Third Row from L to R:

Brothers Michael Curtin, Casimir L'Angellier, Paul Hackett, Martin Kelleher, Ladislaus Bednar, Lawrence Kelly, Gilbert Perrier, Alphonsus Chee

Back Row from L to R:

Brothers Alban Lynam, Hubert Pilz, Columba Tarrant, Meldan Treanor, Vincent Kozak

## A Teacher's Prayer

Another day has dawned, another long full day,  
But ere I go to teach, O God, to thee I pray.  
I thank thee for the will, the power, the blessed right  
To lead immortal minds in ways of truth and light;  
And yet I feel how small, how futile all my power  
Unless thou grant thy help and grace to me each hour.  
Teach me that I may teach; and by thy grace I pray  
Let me not dim for one the brightness of this day;  
Grant me thy wondrous love that I may touch their souls,  
And turn their eager hearts to high and noble goals.  
Give me, for I am frail, thy patience so divine,  
That I may deal with them in tenderness like thine.  
Let me be kind to them, the dull who often call;  
The trying, restless ones; the weakest, poorest – all!  
Oh, let me not forget that for each little one  
An angel ever pleads before thy holy throne.  
Grant me thy strength, thy love, thy wisdom deep and free,  
So shall the day be bright and blest, for them and me.

(Found attached to a diary of La Salle College, Kowloon, starting in 1931)

