

The

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT



gateway

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62

HONG KONG LASALLIAN FAMILY BULLETIN

December 2015



(Cover) The cover of this issue is a photograph of the participants at the Hong Kong Lasallian Family gathering.

The gateway

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Welcome

The Gateway 62 comes to you just before we celebrate the great feast of Christmas. Fittingly, it is a festive issue with pretty good news all round.

The main focus of the good news consists of two visits, one by the Superior General together with his Councillor and the other by a large group of Young Brothers. Brother Robert Schieler is our Superior General while Brother Ricky Laguda is one of his Councillors. Their pastoral visit was the highlight of the month of December.

At more or less the same time, a group of over 40 young Brothers held an Assembly using a YMCA campsite as their base. Both visits brought early Christmas gifts and cheer to our Hong Kong Lasallian Family.

The series of articles on our intriguing 'China Mission' of the 1930's and 40's continues. The venture is historically interesting and gives a lovely insight into the individual persons involved.

As usual, our Family Updates are many and varied. Not least among them is the continued celebration of the Golden Jubilee of De La Salle Secondary School.

We wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As our Founder St. La Salle reminds us: "What a marvel! What a wonderful sight to see the great God reduced to the state of a tiny child." ■

**The Gateway
Hong Kong
Lasallian Family
Bulletin
December 2015
Sixty-second Issue**



Superior General's Visit

10th to 13th December 2015

Our Superior General, Brother Robert Schieler, together with Councillor Brother Ricky Laguda paid us a pastoral visit from the 10th to the 13th of December 2015. What follows will give you a taste of their experience of the Lasallian Mission in Hong Kong.



Brother Robert Schieler

Visit to Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School

The first official function of the Superior and Councillor was a visit to Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School. They were taken on a tour of the school which included visiting classrooms, the library and the school chapel. Some of the younger girls and boys seemed to regard the visitors as their 'uncles'! The visitors ended up in the school hall where some of the pupils put on a juggling display. The visitors tried their hands at the juggling with mixed fortunes.



Brother Ricky Laguda





Gathering with the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council Members

Brothers Robert and Ricky were happy to have the opportunity of meeting with members of the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council on the 11th of December. Brother Robert was well aware of and sympathized with the desire to have more Brothers in Hong Kong. However, he emphasized that the only long-term solution was the promotion of local vocations. On another question, it remains to be seen if and when mainland China will further open up its educational sector to allow for Lasallian expansion there. Brother Robert thanked the members and encouraged the Council Members to continue playing an active role in the future.

Gathering with the Lasallian Volunteers and Youth Movement Members

Brothers Robert and Ricky had a gathering with the members of the Lasallian Volunteers and the Lasallian Youth Movement on the 12th of December. Brother Jeffrey Chan and some teacher-helpers also attended. The young members of the Hong Kong Lasallian Family shared with the Superior the difficulties they encountered as well as the lessons they learned in the process of serving others. Brother Robert in turn told them about the story of our Founder and how he led the growth of the Institute in the midst of difficulties. Those who attended were pleased with the recognition and encouragement given to them.



Lasallian Family Gathering

One of the highlights of the visit of Brothers Robert and Ricky was the gathering and dinner hosted by the Hong Kong Lasallian Family on the evening of the 11th of December. The venue was the spacious hall of La Salle Primary School. Participants included Brothers, members of the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council, School Managers, School Principals, staff and students, members of alumni association and PTAs. A special feature of the gathering was the unveiling of a portrait of Bishop Raimondi, the bishop who, after a long struggle, was responsible for getting the Brothers to Hong Kong. A general photo of the participants at the gathering graces the cover of this *The Gateway* issue. ■







A Lasallian Mission in a Forgotten Land

The Story of the First Foundation of De La Salle Brothers in China 1936-1948

Part 3

Introduction:

“We came up that far and we will continue to China.”

In October, 1940, five Brothers from Montreal were sent to China. They were met in Yokohama by Brother Marcel Petit, who was serving in Japan at the time. Brother Marcel told them that a war was likely to start shortly and that it would be safer for them to sail back to Canada. Instead of heeding the warning, the Brothers decided to march on to China.

Letter from Brother Marie-Liguori (Director of the Community in Moukden) to Brother Assistant Romuald Hosea

13th November 1939

Dear Brother Assistant,

Since March his Excellency Mgr Blois has added another priest to the staff of the seminary. I discreetly asked his Excellency if he required the services of another Brother, and he assured me that he did not.

We work flat out at the seminary, putting all we have got into the work. It is not our project, but we give ourselves fully to it as if it were. After all we are labouring for the Lord and for His Church. There is great merit in what we are doing, we work away in all humility, leaving to others the glory of our achievements.

During the last holidays some of us were not well, though normally we enjoy good health for the most part, except for Brother Barthelemy who is not so strong and he frequently suffers from gastric problems.

Times are becoming difficult now for us. Coal, flour and rice are no longer freely available, they have become rationed items. The community has stocked up some supplies, we feel this is prudent. The Father Procurator has informed us that there will be an increase in salary. The matter has been decided in principle, but I still do not know by how much.



Brother Liguori and his cook



Brothers' residence
in Moukden

Letters from Rome reach us, as did your latest, via Siberia. It is not the same with America. Canadian shipping in the Pacific is quite irregular.

Recently the Education Department in the capital Hsinking 盛京 voted a budget to establish 500 middle schools over the next four years, perhaps by the end of 1943.

We sincerely hope in the course of 1940 that you will be able to send us three new Brothers here to Moukden. For the first two years these Brothers should study Manchurian and if possible at least one among them should study Japanese. I also believe good relations with them will be a major factor when it comes to establish a new work ...

Here is a project for your consideration which we have been reflecting on for some time. We happen to know and in fact have the most cordial relations with a group of local Brothers with a rule very similar to ours, founded by Belgian Bishop Mgr Janssens. They are currently working in Jehol 熱河, which is a neighbouring province. The congregation has 36 professed members and they run a middle school as well as a number of elementary schools. I knew their superior in Tokyo, we followed the same Japanese classes. Every time they come to Moukden they never fail to come by to visit us.

Here is our proposition: I believe Mgr Janssens would give us two Brothers for a period of two years who would teach Chinese to those Brothers you would like to send us. These local Brothers would actually live with the new missionaries, manage a common routine, and have recreation together. This would allow for immersion in the language. This is obviously very desirable. One could not do any better with lay (language) teachers. There are some very competent people among these local Brothers. The superior is a graduate from Peking University. Another speaks excellent French. How do you feel about this plan?

It seems there is a move among some of these local Brothers for a merger with our Congregation. The superior has given us some hints of this. Right now it has not been easy to see our way, and it may be best to wait for a while.

All three of us feel that a language school — not on the same grand scale as at Sendai — but one offering just French and English, would have a good chance of success. Such a school already exists for girls. We are sure that boys would join such courses in even greater numbers. This project would help to make us better known among the people, and once they get a little more acquainted with us, we will win hearts. That means everything when dealing with the Japanese. We are not thinking of big things, we just want to do God's will. It is pointless, as you said in a previous letter, to start 'building castles in Spain'. We need to consider carefully the available resources, finances and personnel of the Montreal District and decide accordingly.

Your most humble and devoted inferior,
Brother Marie-Liguori



Mgr Janssens

December 2015

In 1940, a house was bought in Moukden called Saint Francis Xavier for the Brothers studying the language. On the 19th of October, Brother Marie-Marcel, Brother Marie-Mederic, Brother Jules, Brother Odilo, Brother Hippolyte and Brother Guy arrived in China.

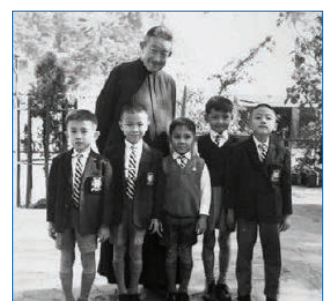
Soon a house was bought in Kirin and five Brothers were appointed to run a seminary school called 'Seminaire St. Joseph's' there. The Brothers were Barthelemy (Director), Marcel, Guy, Jules, Hippolyte and Odilo.

Unfortunately, less than two months later, on the 8th of December, 1940, they were informed by a Japanese officer, a former student of the Marianists who treated them with respect, that they were going to be interned and were not allowed to leave town. ■



Front from left: Brothers Marie-Marcel, Marie-Mederic
Back from left: Brothers Jules, Odilo, Hippolyte and Guy

Postscript: The Congregation mentioned in Brother Liguori's letter is called 'The Society of the Disciples of the Sacred Heart of Jesus'. Its founder Mgr Janssens had chosen St. John Baptist de La Salle as the principal Patron of the Society. One of the local Brothers from Jehol, Brother Paul Sun, fled to Hong Kong in 1949. Brother Paul, Superior General of the Society, lived with the Brothers in La Salle College and he helped in teaching in La Salle Primary. He sought at first to integrate with the De La Salle Brothers and for this purpose, he spent two years at the Brother's Novitiate in England. However, he was advised by the Pope to retain his post of Superior General as well as the separate identity of his congregation while working in close association with the De La Salle Brothers in Hong Kong. With the help of the Brothers, he established St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School, which has flourished into a popular school in the eastern part of Kowloon. Brother Paul was affiliated to the Institute of the De La Salle Brothers in 1972.



Family Updates

Life Saving

The Inter-school annual Life-saving Competition was held in Kowloon Park on the 26th of November 2015. There was good news for the St. Joseph's College Life-saving Team who bridged an eight year gap and did so in style by winning the grand slam. Congratulations to the team members, coaches and teachers in charge.



Cross Country

An annual highlight of the sports calendar is the Inter-School Cross Country race held in the pleasant surroundings of the Hong Kong Golf Club. Boys and girls compete in the age group under 20, under 16 and under 14 categories. Three of our Lasallian secondary schools, La Salle College, Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College and Chong Gene hang College, were involved this year. La Salle College managed to win the under 16 race, came 2nd in the under 20 and 3rd in the under 14, thus gaining second overall.

Birthdays

Brother Lawrence celebrated his 86th birthday on the 1st of December. Some of us remarked that he looked no different when we celebrated his 76th birthday! In any case, a lovely cake was cut and eaten and, please God, we will do the same again this time next year. Brother Patrick's birthday fell a few days later and a similar ritual was observed. Calories will have to be burned off after consuming so much sweet cake.



CBSSA

The Christian Brothers Schools Sports Association held its annual sports meet on the 2nd of December at Wanchai Stadium. Athletes from our five secondary schools participated and all gave of their best with a number of new records set. The weather was ideal for the occasion. The Guest of Honour was Mr. Eric Ku, Principal of De La Salle Secondary School. He reminded us that, whatever our endeavours, we can and should seek improvement and that we can often learn more from failure than from success.





Family Fun Day

La Salle College holds a Family Fun Day each year. This year it fell on the 13th of December and there was a special element because the opening honours were performed by our Superior General, Brother Robert Schieler. After tasting the mouth-watering food at various stalls there was no need for lunch afterwards. The games stalls were well designed and there were long queues of hopefuls hoping to win the tempting prizes on offer. Songs were sung and Lasallian products were on sale. All proceeds will go to charity. Hearty congratulations to the organizing committee.

Uganda Choir

Watoto is a holistic child-care solution initiated to serve the dire needs of orphaned children and vulnerable women in Uganda. The Watoto Children's Choir visited Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College on the 13th of December, 2015.

There was a large audience for the two sessions of the choir performance. Clad in traditional African attire, the children presented Watoto's mission through their stories, music and dance. Special thanks to the school's Scout Group, the PTA and the student volunteers for their support to the event.



LEAD Young Brothers Assembly 11th to 16th December 2015

It is not an everyday occurrence to see about 50 young Brothers on the streets of Hong Kong. These young Brothers came from the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan and even as far away as India. Some young Brothers representatives were also expected from Vietnam and Sri Lanka but, unfortunately, encountered visa problems.

The young Brothers were based in the YMCA Wu Kai Sha Youth Village where presentations were given by Brothers Felix and Chuy. They also welcomed a visit from Brother Robert, Superior General and Brother Ricky, Councillor. On their final full day in Hong Kong, the young Brothers visited La Salle College where they interacted with students both at games and in reflection sessions and where the closing ceremony was held. We believe that this Young Brothers Assembly was a good exercise in community bonding.



Christmas Variety Show



La Salle Primary School held its Christmas Variety Show on three consecutive nights from the 17th to the 19th of December. The spacious Hall of the school was the venue. The LED background screen made for immediate audience impact. Over 400 students took part in the various performances and the acting and singing were of a very high order. All items on the programme had meaningful themes. The school orchestra and choir blended in beautifully with the final musical drama of “The Elves and the Shoemaker.” The staff and all involved in the production should take a big bow.

Chinese Orchestra Gold

La Salle College Chinese Orchestra has won Gold for the 8th consecutive time. On Wednesday the 16th of December the La Salle College Chinese Orchestra won the Gold Award at the Music Interflows with their piece ‘The Legend of the Wind Lion God’ by Taiwanese composer Su Wen-Cheng. This is the 8th consecutive year that the La Salle College Chinese Orchestra has won the Gold Award. The school principal reminds us that music is the nectar that develops the heart and soul of a person.



Celebrations

50th Anniversary

De La Salle Secondary School



GOLDEN GALA DINNER

The De La Salle Secondary School, N.T. is celebrating its Golden Jubilee. It was Brother Lawrence O'Toole, Assistant Superior General, who laid the foundation stone in 1964. Brother Felix Sheehan was the founding Principal. The school is located close to the border with mainland China and is the only co-educational Lasallian secondary school in Hong Kong. A well-prepared and well-attended celebratory Gala Dinner was held on the 8th of December. The atmosphere was joyous and the alumni had a great time reminiscing. Advantage was taken of the occasion to pay tribute to Principal Eric Ku who will be retiring in the summer of 2016. May the school and its community continue to sparkle until its Diamond Jubilee in ten years' time. ■



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