

The

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT



gateway

June 2016

issue

66



St. John Baptist de La Salle

聖若翰喇沙

HONG KONG LASALLIAN FAMILY BULLETIN

Live Jesus in our hearts

耶穌基督活於我們心中

Forever

直到永遠

June 2016



(Cover) This bronze statue of St. John Baptist de La Salle, with a boy and a girl, stands at De La Salle Secondary School, N.T. 22.50°N 114.11°E
(Family Updates, page 11).

The gateway

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Mr. Paul K. K. Tam

issue

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Welcome

The cover of Gateway 66 features the newly installed bronze statue of St. La Salle at De La Salle Secondary School, N.T. We chose this statue because a boy and a girl are represented and this is in keeping with the fact that the school is co-educational.

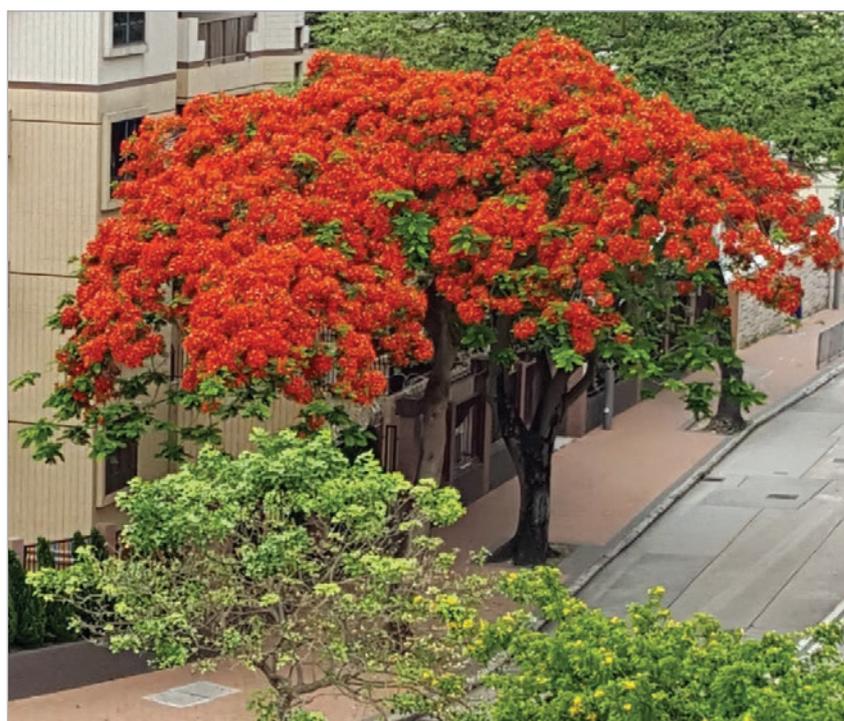
In this issue we also start a new thread entitled 'Memories'. We are trying to collect school-day memories of our alumni. We start our walk down memory lane with a piece by Mr. Felix Chun who was a student at St. Joseph's College in the 1950s and who, after teacher training, became a teacher there. His memory is sure and clear.

You will notice that this issue contains more family updates than usual. This is a reflection of the time of year. As the academic year draws to a close, a large number of activities and functions have to be completed. The schools are full of life right up to the final examinations.

Our reflection this time comes from Brother Francisco, familiarly called Brother Sockie. The young ones of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School certainly kept him on his toes. He says there is nothing like it for stirring the blood!

The flame of the forest has been much in evidence with the approach of high summer. It brings a blush of beautiful red to our streets.

Since this is our last issue for the academic year, we pray that those on holidays will be kept free from harm and that all our readers will enjoy peace and happiness. ▣



**The Gateway
Hong Kong
Lasallian Family
Bulletin
June 2016
Sixty-sixth Issue**

Memories

My Days in St. Joseph's

— by Felix Chun

Recently, a former student and long-standing teacher at St. Joseph's College, passed to his reward. Some years ago, he had been good enough to pen some of his youthful memories, especially about school life. We hope you will find this trip down memory lane both interesting and enlightening.



Although I have been studying and teaching in St. Joseph's College for 47 years I cannot pretend to know everything about it because it has a long history, stretching back to 1875. In this article I hope to connect present-day Josephians with the past and perhaps spur more reunions.

I joined St. Joseph's as a student after the Second World War, in 1951. The main block, called the German Club, was along Kennedy Road. The North

Block, facing Garden Road, accommodated most of the classrooms. The West Block contained the school Chapel and what is now called the Old Hall.

In fact there was an old 'Old Hall' on the 2nd floor of the German Club block. I have very fond memories of that Hall. When I was studying in the equivalent of Primary 6 to Form 2 the late Brother John Lynam would require many classes of the same level to take unseen dictation there. Even as I write, I have vivid images of myself and other classmates climbing up a narrow spiral wooden stairs, in single file, hearts throbbing with tension.

Dictation is no longer used as an important method in teaching English. In those days it was.

It was not unusual for us to make umpteen mistakes in each unseen dictation. It created quite a scary stir in us each time we were called up for this grilling exercise. However, we gradually got used to it and made fewer mistakes. Looking back, I must say it played a big part in pushing up our standard of English.

When Brother Brendan Dunne was the Headmaster in 1961, many teachers told me that each time they sent a naughty boy to see him, the boy would return to the classroom, candy in hand and smiling. It was never known what kind of punishment Brother Brendan had





meted out to the student and Brother Brendan did not elaborate. You may take it that Brother Brendan was an approachable Headmaster or you may say that he had his way of telling the teachers to find a better way of dealing with naughty boys than sending them to see the Headmaster.

Another Headmaster, Brother Raphael Egan, would also find time to give us composition lessons when we were in Form 4. We had to get used to his accent and it was due to him that we were able to write longer and more readable essays.

Brother Brendan was fond of going into Form 4 classes to teach grammar. He had a very effective way of making us understand even the smallest difference between the finer points in English. He would spend a whole lesson teaching just a few sentences. He seemed to know all the common mistakes made in English by Chinese boys. He helped us gain many distinctions and credits.

In the leaving certificate year of Form 5 Brother Brendan would not allow us to write more than 10 sentences in English Composition. We were not allowed to make more than two or three grammatical mistakes in those 10 sentences. If we did he would not raise his voice or become fierce. He simply had the greatest amount of patience known on earth. He would talk with you about your mistakes for hours on end. He would make you write one fine copy after another until the piece was perfect. Anyone who had the experience of dealing with Brother Brendan would surely remember how difficult it was to beat him in regards to patience, argument or anything else so that, in the end, you simply had to submit.

One of the reasons for the success of St. Joseph's College must surely have been its great teachers. Chief among them were the La Salle Brothers. They were the backbone of the whole set-up. All of them were dedicated teachers, having come a long way from their homeland for this purpose. I will mention some of them in person, for the sake of old times. Don't forget to say a prayer for them. I will begin with those Brothers from whom I have benefited as a student.

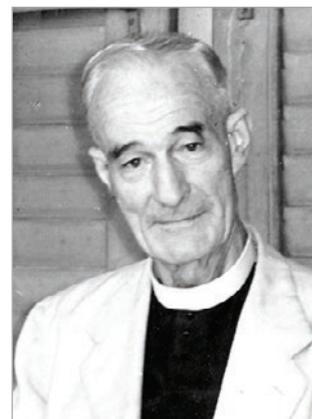


Brother John Lynam was the Headmaster when I entered. As mentioned previously, he often took Dictation and a serious business it was too. Brother John was one of the few Brothers allowed to stay in school during the Japanese Occupation. After the War, he picked up the pieces and got St. Joseph's back into shape, with strong help from the school secretary, Mr. Rosario.



Brother John

Brother Paul O'Connell can be easily remembered because he was always followed by his faithful shepherd dog, even into the classroom. The dog was huge but very tame and friendly. Boys in class loved to play with it. Have you ever been in a



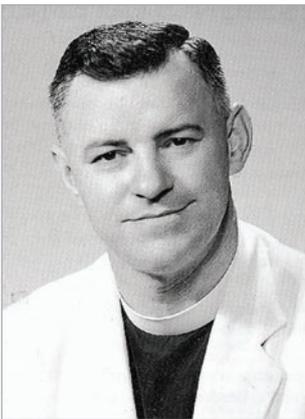
Brother Paul



Brother Raphael

classroom with a big dog lying by the side of your teacher?

Brother Raphael Egan became Headmaster in 1947 when Brother John retired. He would carry a 20-inch cane behind him on his rounds and would always stand at the front door to meet students who came late.



Brother Brendan

Brother Brendan Dunne took over from Brother Raphael as Headmaster in 1958. He was responsible for the demolition of the old German Club building and erecting a modern block along Kennedy Road. It was Brother Brendan who invited me back to teach in St. Joseph's. I accepted although I had had other offers.



Brother Felix

Brother Felix Sheehan whistled as he walked along on springy feet. He taught us Geography in Form 5. We thought he was rather fierce in class and were somewhat relieved when he was transferred to La Salle College!



Brother Hilary

Brother Hilary De Mello was a tough guy. Even when retired he did odd jobs around the school and helped in the Library. He would often go to the school playground to maintain discipline. If any

young lad did not stop playing after the ringing of the bell, he would either encircle his neck or show his giant fist close to the eye — without of course hurting anyone in the end.

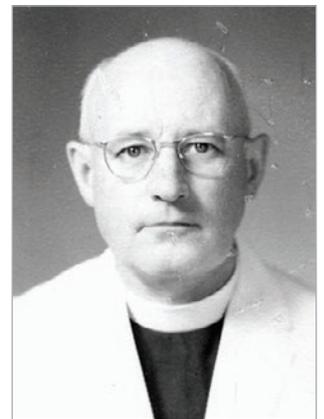
In the 50's, all students had to 'freeze' on hearing the first bell at the end of recess. They were not to move again until the second bell when they would proceed to their classrooms. It was a rather funny sight to behold. One would get the impression that the whole world had suddenly come to a complete halt — the kind of scene one gets in the movies.

Brother Michael Curtin was the scholarly type. He taught Advanced Level Maths and Geography. Many a time I and a few friends used to take Brother Michael for a day in the countryside where he would enjoy some fishing, reading and the relative peace there.



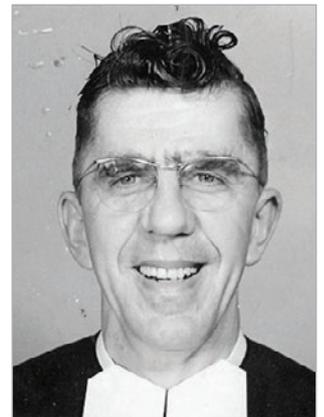
Brother Michael

Brother Meldan Treanor was a country squire type of person. He was always very soft-spoken. It took us a while to get used to his Irish accent. He was my Form-master in Lower 6 in 1957, the year there were riots in Hong Kong over the question of flags.



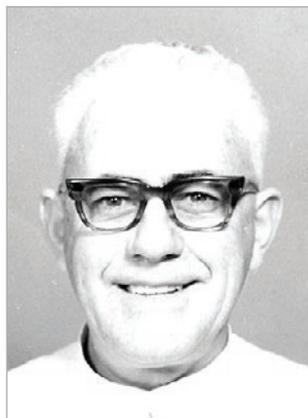
Brother Meldan

Brother James Dooley became Headmaster after Brother Brendan and he often wore a stern face. One day I met him on the corridor outside the Form 3 classrooms. I was holding a glass of tea. Brother James stopped me, pointed to the glass and said "Drinking so early in the morning?"



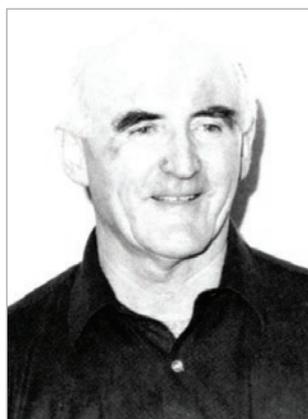
Brother James

Once he introduced me to an education officer who came to inspect me for promotion saying I was a jack-of-all trades. I think he meant that I was a 'willing horse' willing and capable of carrying out many instructions.



Brother Lawrence

Brother Lawrence Kelly came to us from South Africa. He enjoyed teaching Form 1 and 2 classes and spent every free moment helping the Cubs and Scouts in the school. His grey hair gave him a revered appearance, although I find it difficult to believe the rumour that his hair turned grey overnight.



Brother Peter

Brother Peter Phelan preferred the kind of quiet life he found in Borneo. I finally met up with him when he returned to St. Joseph's for Brother Brendan's funeral. A very gentle person, who did not forget old friends.



Brother Patricius

Brother Patricius O'Donovan appeared in St. Joseph's in the late 60's. He had a 'walking doll' look with his large belly thrust forward. He was often seen taking long walks with Brother Brendan and Brother Meldan.

Brother Patrick Tierney and **Brother Thomas Favier** came in 1964. Soon after their arrival they made their presence felt with their stamina and skills on the football field. Later, they had to use up some of their energy as Headmasters of St. Joseph's while never giving up the sport.



Brother Patrick



Brother Thomas

Football was always the game of the school and talented players were somehow given privileged treatment outside the classroom. Football was so strong that there was a football team called St. Joseph's playing in the Hong Kong League.

The classrooms were not air-conditioned until the 80's. We were still fairly comfortable because there was a breeze from the harbour and the ceilings were high. If a student was tired of what was going on in the classroom, he could look out of the windows and command a mountain and sea view of the harbour. Those sitting near the windows could count the number of battleships and aircraft-carriers coming into and leaving the harbour.

Remember at that time the Second World War had just ended and there was a civil war on mainland China. There was also the Korean War and later the Vietnam War. Battleships in the harbour were a common sight. Nowadays, from the same classrooms, you can only see cars going up Cotton Tree Drive and can hardly get a glimpse of a patch of water. The school canteen was small in those days but the simple Portuguese style food served was most appetizing. The Portuguese couple in charge served only one dish of either stew or curry. When the aroma of the stew or curry found its way into our classrooms we had an uncontrollable urge to run to the canteen. One dish cost something like Hong Kong \$1.50.

Those who wanted to save a little would either bring their own lunch or patronize the Kee Chui Store nearby at Kennedy Terrace and buying two pieces of bread and a Coke. A small bottle of Coke cost 30 cents and



a piece of bread 20 cents. The old lady who keeps the Kee Chui Store still remembers me as one of her customers in the old days. Marvellous memory!

When we were in Form 6, some classmates and I ventured much further afield, even lunching at the theatre district of Causeway Bay. How could we get time to do that? Well, four of us came to school on scooters. After *'Roman Holiday'* starring Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck, scooters were the craze of the day.

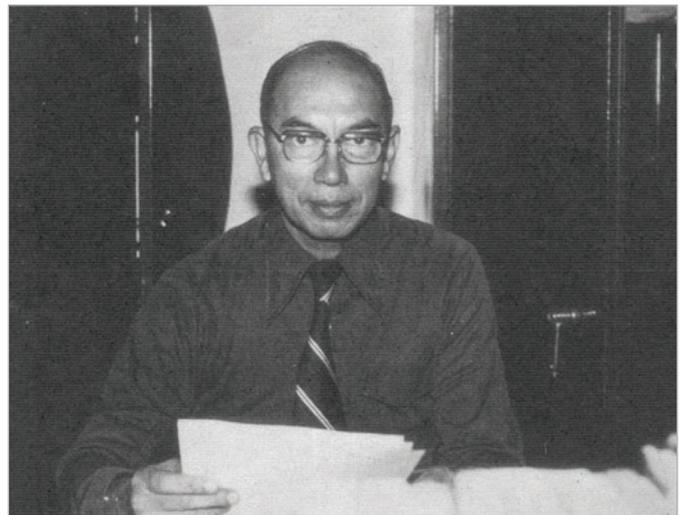
The very first Camera Club which I started equipping was actually in a small room in the German Club block. In my final year (Upper 6) I used sometimes hide in the Camera Club to do private studies during so-called 'free periods.'

A friend and I would also use the time to do darkroom photographic work for the school magazine, the *'Green and White'*. We did our own developing, printing and enlarging.

One afternoon I was driving into Garden Road from the carpark of St. Joseph's Church. I heard a police siren behind me and a police inspector, in full awesome gear,

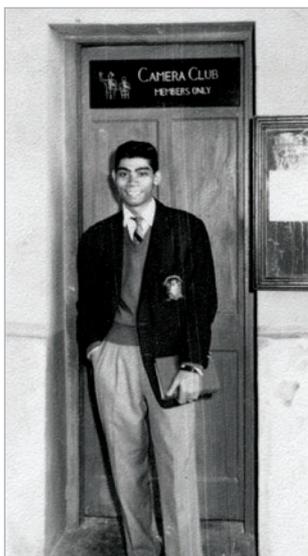
motioned me to slow down. As I was wondering what rule of the road I had broken, the officer said, "Please drive carefully, Sir. How are you today, Mr. Chun?" The police officer turned out to be a former student who had once been a prominent member of the Camera Club.

I must give credit to other great lay teachers of my time in St. Joseph's. One of them was Mr. Rosario. On the first day that I set foot in St. Joseph's I had to sit for an entrance exam. This was on the 16th of July 1951. The exam was conducted by Mr. Rosario. He spoke very clearly and simply so that I could understand his instructions in English. It may sound like a simple task today, but to a student who had learnt little more than the ABC after a few years in a Primary school, and had never heard English spoken in complete sentences, it could be a frightening experience.



Mr. Rosario was not a regular teacher but would regularly stand in for teachers who were absent. He could teach almost any subject and his explanations were so crystal clear and so logically put that we picked up more knowledge from him in one month than we would normally pick up in a whole year.

Miss Agabeg, another Portuguese teacher, was the one who helped me to upgrade my spoken English. She was my Form-mistress in Form 1. When all other Form Teachers gave their tests and exams in written form she insisted on giving all her grading in the oral format. This made me study and read almost all my waking hours but I came first that year and it spurred me on ever since. I am most grateful to her.

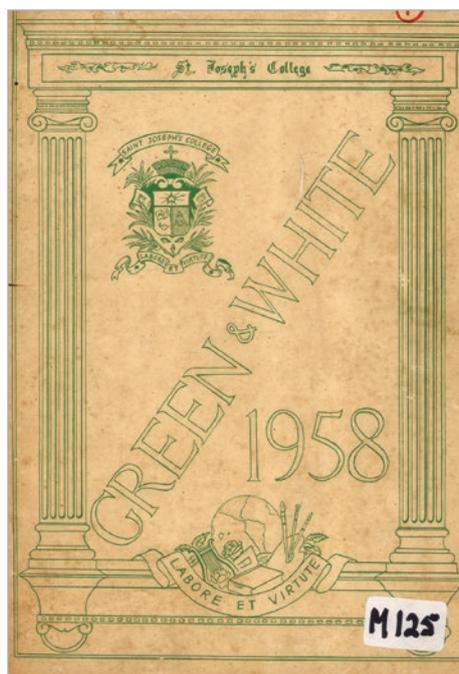


My clothes were hand-me-downs and a little tattered. Not wishing to be labelled 'un-angelic' and realizing that outward appearance was important, I thought perhaps better 'packaging' might help. I threw away all my hand-me-downs and started wearing an all-white uniform to school. I even saved enough to buy a white 'Arrow Shirt'. 'Arrow' was the best brand in those days. I took it off to play basketball and never saw it again!

At that time there was no fixed uniform as such in school. This was allowed because economic conditions were quite difficult after the War. There were still schools built on rooftops of re-settlement estates. Later, as economic conditions improved, students began wearing white school uniforms.

As for winter blazers, there was no fixed colour when I was in Form 5. Mr. Rosario had a green-coloured blazer since before the War. Many of us now began to wear blue blazers along with grey trousers. Some did not and some who did wear blue blazers did not wear the badge on it. This was because the badge was very expensive. The badge was beautifully made, lined with gold-braided wires and amounted to almost a third of the cost of the blazer itself. It took three months to order before delivery.

The school magazine, called the 'Green-&-White', is another matter worthy of mention. One day some of us dug up an old copy of the *Green & White* of the pre-war years. We felt a strong urge to resurrect it and asked advice of Brother Michael. He said that if we could get Brother Raphael's permission he would support us all the way. I am glad to see that the *Green & White* has never missed one issue ever since.



After finishing my primary school education in St. Paul's Primary in 1951, I was promoted to St. Paul's College. But I decided to try my luck in St. Joseph's, mainly because the medium of instruction was English. Moreover, my elder brother was studying there and he told me that English was spoken widely.

When I started teaching in St. Joseph's, I kept up the tradition. Not a word of Chinese was spoken in the classroom. This practice was adhered to so strictly over my 37 years in teaching that some curious students wondered whether I was Chinese or could speak Chinese at all!

May St. Joseph's forever remain one of the best schools in Hong Kong! ■



Family Updates

Table Tennis Champions

Skye Wong and his classmate Lee Ka Him of La Salle Primary School were the proud winners of the Hang Seng All Schools Championships in Table Tennis. This was a major achievement on the part of the boys and has perhaps made table tennis history in the school. Well done.



Archers

For the second year in a row, the student archers of La Salle College came away with the Grand Slam in the inter-school competition. It is not at all easy to become champions at the under 20, under 16 and under 14 levels. It was a well-deserved victory because the archery team, under the good guidance of the teachers in charge, goes about its business quietly and seriously, practicing long and hard. These archers must have a good aim.



HKICPA Accounting and Business Management Case Competition



The HKICPA Accounting and Business Management Case Competition is one of the most popular and significant annual inter-school business-related events. This year, exciting rounds of business proposal selection and oral presentation were conducted. Out of more than 500 teams, our team, with team members Martin Wong, Gavin Li, Gabriel tang and Eugene Wong, successfully captured the Champion of the HKICPA Case Competition 2015–2016 and was also awarded the Best Written Proposal. Gavin Li captured the Best Presenter Award. Another team from SJC achieved a promising result as one of the merit teams. The encouraging performances of our teams this year have definitely displayed the talents of Josephians in the business sector.

Raffle Draw

The Hong Kong Lasallian Mission Fund Raffle Draw took place on the 20th of May 2016. The raffle is held annually. Proceeds from the raffle tickets are mainly used to help Lasallian projects for the disadvantaged in Hong Kong, mainland China and in other parts of Asia. The Fund is also used for sponsoring major Lasallian formation programmes, both locally and overseas. All our eight schools participated in selling the raffle tickets and raised a goodly sum for the above purposes. Raffle prizes ranged from useful IT products to book vouchers.





Chong Gene Hang Hosts

On the 4th of May it was Chong Gene Hang's turn to host the lunch gathering for the Lasallian Education Council and Alumni Presidents. The opportunity is taken to give participants an update on the host school. The Chong Gene Hang Principal, Mr. Alan Li, gave the update, assisted by Supervisor Mr. Ho Kong Hin. A large concern is the dwindling school population in the Hong Kong East district which makes for admission problems. Whatever the concerns, the school continues to take great care of its students, including those with special educational needs.

Past President's Dinner

There is a tradition for the past presidents of the La Salle College Old Boys' Association to hold an annual dinner together with the current Executive Committee of the Association. The gathering is usually held on the Friday nearest the Feast of St. La Salle. It was of special significance this year because it was a farewell occasion for the Principal, Brother Steve Hogan. Tributes were paid and souvenirs presented to Brother Steve who made a fond farewell speech. Brother Chris Soosai also attended and introduced himself to the gathering. In addition, Brother Thomas Lavin brought the participants up to speed on the new St. Joseph's International School in Malaysia. The dinner came to a fitting end with the singing of the school song.



De La Salle's Golden

De La Salle Secondary is coming to the end of its year-round Golden Jubilee celebrations. To round them off, a solemn Thanksgiving Mass was held in the school hall on the 12th of May with Bishop Joseph Ha as chief celebrant. Prior to the Mass, the Bishop blessed the newly-installed brass statue of the Founder. It is currently the only one of its kind in Hong Kong because the founder is flanked by both a boy and a girl. This looks right in a coeducational school. Congratulations and here's looking forward to the Diamond Jubilee.



Reaching Out



To celebrate the “Dragon Boat Festival”, 20 Hong Kong Lasallian Youth Movement students from our five secondary schools teamed up with Caritas for a large scale Visit to the Elderly on the 28th of May 2016. They targeted the elderly living in two public estates in Shum Shui Po. During the programme, 367 elderly people were visited by and presented with a gift pack of rice dumpling and fruits. Most of the elderly are widowed, unmarried or live alone. Other than the gift pack, the volunteers took an update of the health status of the elderly and had a chat with them. When the programme was done, the Lasallian volunteers gathered to have a debriefing session as well as a Lasallian reflection before leaving.

Cultural Prize-giving

A Cultural Prize-giving was held at La Salle College on the 27th of May. The Guest of Honour was Mr. Philip Chan. Philip is an old boy and a well-known singer, movie actor and entertainer. He certainly entertained the prize-giving audience with stories of his days in school. He has the ability to bring such stories to life. Meanwhile, the achievements of the school’s musicians, visual artists, dancers, speech and drama boys were duly recognized. The happy occasion was rounded off with the singing of the school song.



Worlddidac Asia

Worlddidac Asia is an exhibition and conference for education professionals which features world-class education resources and is a platform for collaboration and exchange. For the second year in a row the event was held in Hong Kong. It lasted for three days and featured 47 speakers from 12 countries. Our Lasallian East Asia District (LEAD) took a booth at the exhibition, manned by Hong Kong Lasallian Volunteers. Our purpose is mainly to increase our networking potential rather than selling any products. It was a good opportunity to expose our Lasallian educational mission and practice to a wide audience.



Heritage Centre Opening

It has taken some time but the result was well worth waiting for. The opening of the new Heritage Centre of La Salle Primary School took place right after the Blessing of the statue of St. La Salle. Mrs. Emily Leung, former Principal and her teams of helpers and designers have done a marvelous job. The attendance was treated to a well thought out animation video suitable for lower Primary levels. There was no shortage of enthusiasm and enquiry as those attending walked round examining the heritage items on display. The school plans to make use of the center for the ongoing formation of its pupils.





Blessing

Three large bronze statues of our Founder, St. La Salle, were commissioned and purchased over the last year. Two of them have already been installed. The third was installed at La Salle Primary School on the 11th of June. Father Peter Leung, Parish Priest of St. Teresa's Church and a La Salle old boy performed the blessing ceremony while Brothers Thomas Lavin and Patrick Tierney did the unveiling. The rainy weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the large attendance and the choir sang beautifully. May St. La Salle look kindly on his children.



Bend it like Beckham

On his way to mainland China, football superstar, Sir David Beckham, stopped off at La Salle College on the 27th of June to help coach some of the younger generation. And the younger generation were thrilled. Sir David, with the assistance of another coach, gave some instructions, showed the way and the young ones obeyed to the letter. It was a memorable morning for the school community.

Principals' Conference

The Principals of all our Lasallian schools in Hong Kong met on the 14th of June and addressed various current educational matters. This meeting was somewhat special because we were saying farewell to four members. Miss Caroline Chan of St. Joseph's College, Mrs. Betty Ho of La Salle Primary School and Mr. Eric Ku of De La Salle Secondary School are retiring on the 31st of August while Brother Steve Hogan of La Salle College is being given a new assignment by his superiors. All four have rendered sterling service to our Lasallian mission in Hong Kong and we wish them the very best on their future journeys.



LEC Meeting

The Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council met on the 18th of June. Among the topics addressed were the Lasallian Mission Fund, Property, the Asia Pacific Lasallian Educators' Congress, Peace Days and the Viability and Vitality of our mission. The LEC is the advisory arm of the Brothers Sponsoring Body and helps to set policies and directions for our schools. The meeting was also marked by the presentation of souvenirs to two long-standing and dedicated members, Michael Tse and Victor Ling who now make way for new blood.



Reflection

Storytime at Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School

Brother Francisco de La Rosa, 'Sockie'

Let me begin with a short background: My teaching background has always been at Secondary and University levels. It would not be an exaggeration to say that I have never read a story to young children, so I was quite nervous that Friday, the 27th of May. At some points during that week and in the morning of the event, I was questioning why I had agreed to this engagement!

I arrived in CSKP, accompanied by Ms. Nikki Chan of the Lasallian Family Office, pleasantly surprised that the pupils knew me and greeted me by name. (It seems that their teachers had prepared them for this). After a warm welcome by the Principal Brenda Wu and Vice-Principal Alice Lau we proceeded to the School Library to select the story for the day. Since it was raining, I chose, "Mr. Strong and Flood" — perhaps the weather that day would make the story a bit more interesting for the kids. There was some spare time so I got to visit with the kids in the canteen and was able to greet them. (I was quite hungry by this time, but could not eat because I was nervous)

I expected a handful of kids, but as I was beginning the story, more and more began to stream in! I had to keep on moving back and eventually I had to stand in order for me to be seen and heard. I also had to use my "classroom" voice so those at the back could hear. The kids were so attentive and interested! They answered every little question I had about the adventures of the main character, Mr. Strong, with enthusiasm.

Mr. Strong is about a clumsy yet strong person who saves others using his strength. My story that day was about a nervous Brother who is saved by the cuteness and affection of little kids. All nervousness gone, I am certainly looking forward to the next story-telling time. ■



... ONE FAMILY





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