

The

gateway

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT



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69



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(Cover) This issue of *The gateway* talks about the outreaches of the Hong Kong Lasallian Family, go to page 8 for an in-depth story.

The gateway

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issue
69

Welcome

The second term is in full swing in our schools, complete with its share of academic, cultural and sporting pursuits. We have tried to give at least a taste of these in this issue.

St. Patrick's Day has come and gone and it now makes its own mark on our territory. Indeed, the Irish Consulate is an active body, with many fruitful outreaches to our society.

Another type of outreach has been initiated by our Hong Kong Lasallian Family in the form of educational outreaches to the disadvantaged. We are in our infancy in this regard and have much to learn and, hopefully, give.

Memories are memories and there will be some 'old boys' who will relate closely to what Father Khong has to say. The memories are a piece of history which we do not wish to forget.

The lovely season of Easter is approaching and the Resurrection makes all things new. Many trees and shrubs are about to bloom. In our Catholic tradition we thank and praise our risen Lord. ■

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Memories

A Voice from the “Wooden Squatters” Era

— by *Father Edward Khong, alias Edward Hong when in school*

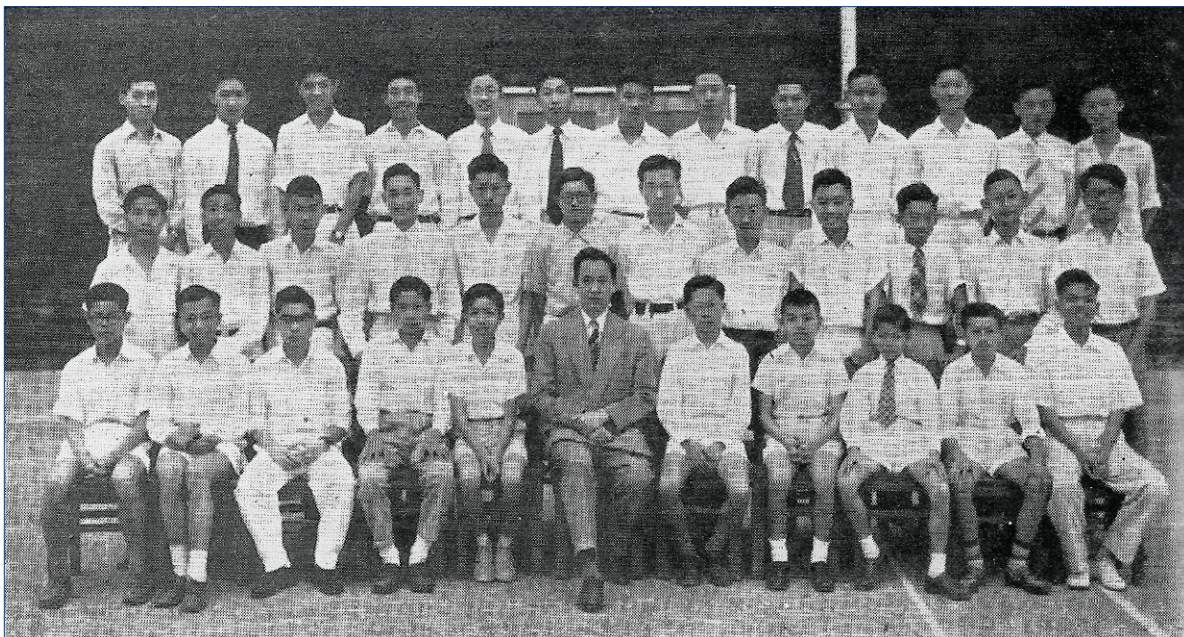
Father Edward Khong, the writer of these memories, is the Director of the Hong Kong Catholic Centre, overseeing accounts, publications and the bookstore. Until recent years, he had also been the Procurator of the Diocese.

He spent all his secondary school years in the Perth Street campus of La Salle College. The Brothers had been forced to move there by the British Army who took over the College and transformed it into a military hospital in 1949, just as everyone was settling back after the destruction of the War.



Father Khong has vivid memories of the time in Perth Street, in the “wooden squatters” as some called it. It was a far cry from the ‘majestic dome’ campus with its grand façade and open spaces. Yet, staff and students got on with it and high standards were maintained.

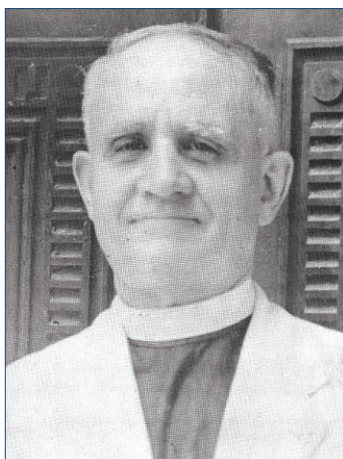
He remains a staunch Lasallian, always willing to oblige and always coming to say the Christmas Eve Mass in the College Chapel.



Form 2B
1954 Perth Street
Father Edward,
second row,
second from right

was in a Brothers' School for six years, between 1952 and 1958, but, strangely, I was never taught by a Brother in all those years. Yet, I learned a lot from the Brothers, as I shall explain.

During my early school years, the only impression of the Brothers was that they were religious men dressed in black or white. That form of dress was enough to gain the respect of staff and students alike. As I moved into the upper forms, my impression of the Brothers changed and matured. They were not just 'men in white', they were a living symbol of a group of religious people who have vowed before God that their whole lives would be devoted to the teaching of the young — not as a means of earning a living but as a way of life in the footsteps of their Master.



Brother Cassian

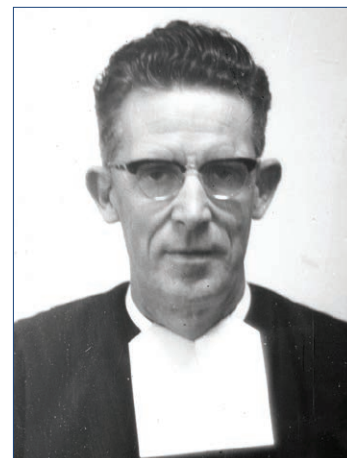
I learned much from Brother Cassian Brigant who interviewed me as a 12-year-old boy and enrolled me in Form 1; to Brother Felix Sheehan who replaced Brother Patrick Toner as Principal and to Brother Henry Pang who became my boss and master. They were

mortals just like we are, and they all had their temperaments, shortcomings and imperfections like all who are born of flesh and blood. Yet somehow or other their presence in the school gave me something that I could not learn from books or from class work. It had to do with their devotion to their mission to the young.

To me, Brother Cassian was a happy and kind-hearted Santa Claus who loved children. Regrettably, he died in an accident at the age of 57. Brother Patrick was a serious scholar and seldom spoke, at least to us students. Instantaneously he could draw that kind of awesome respect and attention the moment he walked past or as he just stood by the school entrance watching the students go by.

Brother Felix was a very different type. He was an

'avant-garde' man of his time. He would crack out Doris Day's 'Que sera, sera' and other top hits and joined our Christmas Parties. In those days, about half a century ago, that was something rare or unheard of among the Hong Kong Church religious circles. Even in the minds of us somewhat rebellious youngsters, religious people were only expected to be talking about Jesus and the Bible and would only be singing hymns, or perhaps nursery rhymes, and nothing else! Yet that was Brother Felix.



Brother Felix

Brother Henry was a friend, a boss, and a Master to me. Besides being put in charge of the college stationery store, he was also put in charge of all religious activities. Though everybody agreed that his English was much better than his Cantonese, he was the only Chinese speaking Brother in the College for many years. He liked to walk around the college making the acquaintance of the students. I was then an altar boy at St. Teresa's Church and quite active in parish work. As he came to know me better, he also came to know of my wish to become a priest. When he knew this, he made every effort to encourage and guide me before I graduated from the College. My father died in 1957, the year of the School Certificate public examination. Brother Henry as well as Brother Felix personally talked to and comforted me, encouraging me not to give up my ideals. They were aware that I might be persuaded to follow another course since I was the eldest son in the family.

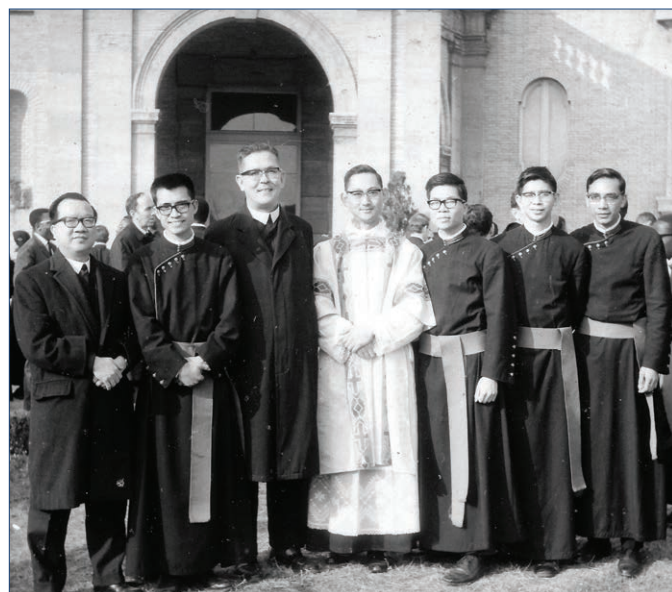
After I had completed Form 6, I was forced to leave school because of a pulmonary ailment. I rested for one year. After I recovered, Brothers Felix and Henry sent word that they needed an additional clerk for the new La Salle Primary School. It was in the process of development into a full standard school since up to then there had been only Primary 5 and 6 classes. Brother Henry was the Principal of



Brother Henry, second from left

this new school and he wanted me to take up the school clerk post. He knew there would be plenty work to do in the school office and I believe he also wanted to guide me further along the road to the priesthood.

During office hours, he was my Boss and he could drive everyone in the office crazy with work! After



Father Edward, centre, visited by Brother Michael and Brother Anthony in Rome

office hours, however, he would call me into his office and gently gave me private tuition in the Latin language — a ‘must know’ for all seminarians and priests of those days. I never realized he was so well versed in this archaic language!

The Primary had to borrow some space in the College until an extension was completed. So I worked in the College for one year. The College had just resumed possession of its proper school building on Boundary Street/La Salle Road. The ‘Wooden Squatters’ days were over. Two years later, when the new Primary School extension was opened, I left La Salle Primary to pursue my priesthood studies in the Hong Kong Catholic Seminary and later in Rome.

Though I have left La Salle physically, my heart is still there. The Brothers know it, for I have given them my word.

The year was 1957. It was the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Boy Scouts movement. I remember going to the Golden Jamboree and singing The Jamboree Song of 1957. A line in the song was:



“... And we’ll march along together another fifty years”. Well, 2007 was the second 50th year, which happened to coincide with the 75th La Salle College anniversary. It is with some regret that I was not able to see any event or function marking the centennial anniversary of the Boy Scouts on my visit to Hong Kong for the 75th celebrations. Perhaps it was a question of the timing of the visit. ■



Father Edward, fifth from right

Hidden Hong Kong



The Hong Kong Lasallian Family has embarked on a new initiative, an educational outreach to the disadvantaged. One part of the formation for this took the form of a study tour in the To Kwa Wan district. It was arranged with the help of Caritas for the afternoon of Sunday, the 19th of February. The tour focused mainly on the ethnic minorities living in the district. Representatives of the Lasallian Education Council, school Principals and Brothers took part.

First off, there was an input session by social workers. This was followed by a visit to a “madrassah,” a local Islamic school. The school tries to gather together the young Muslim people, especially at weekends, to teach them the Koran and how to live moral lives. Members of the tour asked the imam a number of questions. Tour members found the visit very interesting, especially since it was, for them, the first of its kind.

The next stage was to buy some daily provisions from a store manned by ethnic minority shopkeepers, for visits to two local homes. An elderly Pakistani lady





lived in one and a family with two children in the other. The elderly lady lived alone on the 6th floor of a building with no lift and no staircase lights. She has to walk up and down the stairs every day and depends much on social workers for support in difficulty. The parents of the family were most concerned about the education of their children, realising its importance for their future. A major area

of concern for the children is becoming proficient in the Chinese language.

The tour concluded with an evaluation. Participants were unanimous in agreeing that the tour was very worthwhile and enlightening. The Lasallian Family are planning to follow up with a relevant educational programme for ethnic minority children. ■

Educational Outreach



The Hong Kong Lasallian Family has been mulling for some time over the most feasible form of social outreach to the disadvantaged in our society. We eventually came down in favour of some form of educational service, since we believe that is where our strength lies. Identifying a suitable service has taken time but we now think the wait was worthwhile.

We have begun. Our first outreach educational programme is to help some of the newly-arrived

young people from mainland China. Their standard of English is below par and they lack confidence in speaking the language. They come together in a centre run by Caritas Hong Kong. Currently we are helping about 20 of these students with late night classes. Our volunteer teachers find much consolation in the self-motivation of the students. Despite the challenges, they are very keen to learn.

Our next target is helping students with special educational needs. Most of them come from low income families and are unable to afford private tuition. Half of those in the Centre we have identified have more than one type of special education need such as Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Dyslexia.

They therefore need small group or even individual tuition responding to their unique learning need.

They suffer from academic failure experiences which tend to destroy their self-confidence and impair their learning motivation. They have low self-esteem and need lots of encouragement and recognition. ■





Family Updates

Dance Teams

Congratulations to the La Salle College Dance Teams (Jazz Trio and Group). Both teams won the Highly Commended Award and the Choreography Prize for their dances entitled "The Gangsters" and the "Police Cadets", at the 53rd Hong Kong Schools Dance Festival on Wednesday, the 18th of January. There was great applause for the two teams whose energy, timing and rhythm were well-nigh flawless. Credit for the performances should go to the dance coach, Mr. Bon Kwong and teacher advisers, Miss Poon and Mr. Mak, as well as to the dancers themselves.



Patrick's Day Parade

On its third year, the St. Patrick's Day Parade wound its way through the central waterfront of Hong Kong on the 12th of March 2017. What a colourful sight! Of course green predominated but went well with splashes of many other colours. There was something for everyone ... music, song, dance, Chinese dragons and lions, the stilt man and, not forgetting, St. Patrick himself ... transformed into a Chinese face!

A sizable group from La Salle College also paraded, led by student Irish ambassadors, the Principal and Vice-Principals, the Old Boys President and PTA Chairperson. A well-known old boy, Philip Chan, was also on hand to give a moving rendition of Danny Boy. The Brothers were ably represented by Brothers Sockie and Patrick. The Irish Consul General in Hong Kong, Mr. Peter Ryan, and his team deserve plaudits not only for organising the Parade but for many outreaches to society.



De La Salle in Action



Rope Skipping



Junior Police Call

The Junior Police Call is an organisation which encourages communication between the Police and the youth of Hong Kong. It seeks to develop a sense of responsibility and instil positive values. The organization held a Photographic Competition in the New Year and some students from De La Salle Secondary School, N.T. took part. One of them, a F.5 boy, came away with the championship.



Martial Arts

Around the same time, a De La Salle team also claimed victory in a junior rope skipping competition. And, more recently, a F.3 boy called Yu Yui Cheung, won two gold medals and one silver in an international martial arts competition. Well done all round.

Double Happiness



La Salle College Orchestra

The Chinese Orchestras at both La Salle College and La Salle Primary School have been there or thereabouts over the last number of years. This year they took it on the double, emerging as champions in the Hong Kong Music Festival. The Festival calls out the best in the territory and the opposition is very stiff; but the long hours of practice, the dedication of the players, the coaches and the conductor were well rewarded. Both schools have also had great success in other music events during the Festival, including orchestral, choirs and individual performances.



La Salle Primary School Orchestra

Shades of Green

Our Lasallian schools in Hong Kong have developed a close and fruitful relationship with the Irish Consulate in Hong Kong. One such is Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School. The Consul General, Mr. Peter Ryan, and his staff have organised quite a number of programmes for the school. These included 'English is Fun', 'Interview with the Deputy Consul', 'Irish Food-Tasting' and a 'Harp Performance'. Staff and students have taken well to all this opening up and more exposure is expected in the future.



Marathon Man



The 2017 Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon was the 21st anniversary of Hong Kong's most popular mass participation sporting event. This year it was held on the 12th of February, 2017. Up to 74,000 runners took part. About 35,000 people took part in the 10km race and among them was our own Brother Dodo. As you can see from the picture, he was happy to see the finishing line!

Writing Talent



The writing talent of boys from St. Joseph's College has blossomed this year. In fact, a F.1 boy called Joseph Wong captured 1st Place at The Hong Kong Young Writers Awards 2017 (non-fiction). Joseph wrote about "Old Shanghai" with particular reference to the world of jazz and to the oldest jazz band which played on a regular basis in the Peace Hotel. Besides Joseph's achievement, the writings of Sean Wong (3E) and Parco Li (5E) were also shortlisted. Congratulations to all.

APLEC Plenary

The Asia Pacific Lasallian Educators' Congress (APLEC) has had a long history in the Asia Pacific region. The first gathering was in 1994 in the Philippines. The most recent, APLEC 9, was held in Melaka, Malaysia in December 2016. The Hong Kong Lasallian Family have had delegates at all nine gatherings. These delegates have regular follow-up meetings, the most recent being on the 1st of April 2017. Besides regular reports, there is usually a Lasallian formation segment on the agenda. This time the concentration was on the educational service to the disadvantaged in Hong Kong.



Mr. Sze Kin Kwan RIP

Mr. Sze Kin Kwan, who was Principal of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College from 2005 to 2010, passed away on Wednesday, the 18th of January, 2017. Mr. Sze began his teaching career in Chan Sui Ki in 1972, when the school was in its infancy. He gradually moved up the ranks to the post of Vice Principal before his appointment as Principal in 2005. Even after his retirement he continued to serve the Hong Kong Lasallian as a manager of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School. We are deeply saddened to learn of Mr. Sze's passing and offer our sincere condolences to his wife, to his sons and to his relatives. May his soul rest in peace.



Lenten Activities



Our schools mark the Lenten season with a number of activities. Here are a few examples. The Lenten Mass at Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College was held on the 3rd of March 2017. It was celebrated by Father Paul Kimson Nguyen, the assistant priest from St. Patrick's Parish. Before the Mass, a moment of silence was called in order to show respect to a former principal, Mr. K.K. Sze, who passed away in January. Father Nguyen shared the meaning of the Lenten Season and encouraged everyone to experience and reveal God's love in daily life. Teachers and students were involved in meditation and singing hymns. Meanwhile, Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School decided to hold a Lenten fast. Staff and students were invited to partake of a simple meal at lunch time. St. Joseph's Primary School, students presented their offerings for the poor while La Salle Primary School held a Prayer Service for the whole school.



Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School



St. Joseph's Primary School

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