



The Gateway

Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin

May 2008

Third Issue

Welcome

Here is the third issue of 'The Gateway'.

At this moment in time we are acutely aware of the sufferings of our brothers and sisters caught up in the Myanmar cyclone catastrophe and the Sichuan Earthquake. The Catholic Church as well as other agencies in Hong Kong is contributing to the relief efforts both in cash and kind. Our hearts go out to the victims and their families.

Here is our prayer for them.

Let us pray to St. La Salle for the suffering people of the world, and especially for the victims of the recent disasters in Myanmar and China.

Saint John Baptist De La Salle, you saw the suffering of the poor and you heard the call of the Gospel. You allowed yourself to be "open" to what God wanted of you.

Open our minds and touch our hearts, that we may share with others all that we have and all that we are.

You lived at a time of war and famine and human suffering, a time when many considered themselves superior to others. We ask you to help us to notice when people need encouragement and care, so that they, in turn, may be able to bring strength and comfort to others.

We ask all this through Christ our Lord, Amen.



Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them. (Matthew 5: 4)

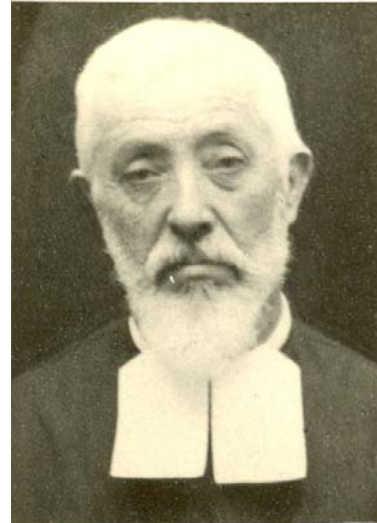
Brother of the Month

Brother Aimar Sauron (1873-1945)

Among all our dedicated and distinguished Brothers there is one Brother whose outstanding vision and determination helped to set a solid foundation for the future development of the Hong Kong Lasallian family. To him, difficulty was a source of inspiration.

The Brother Assistant Superior General, Michael Jacques, in his speech at the Centenary Celebration Dinner, told the guests:

“ I am sure you would like to join me in expressing our very deep debt of gratitude to all those Brothers who down the years and up to the present time have toiled here in Hong Kong...Each of you will retain individual memories of your beloved tutors, some of whom have made such a tremendous impact. I would like to mention one name, that of the late Brother Aimar, whose contribution to St. Joseph's and the creation of La Salle College, Kowloon, have been such significant landmarks in the history of the past century. He is representative of a tribe of completely dedicated men to whom we are so indebted and whose spirit should fire us all to emulate their noble example.”



Born in 1873 of the sturdy stock of the Cevennes Folk, France, Brother Aimar received his professional training at the Brothers' Central Normal College of Paris. He held a record of 52 years as a Missionary Teacher in the Far East. Brother Aimar first served many years in St. Joseph's Institution in Singapore. Under his guidance the boys won many highly prized contests. St. Joseph's Institution became one of the foremost educational establishments in Singapore. Brother Aimar later became the Director of St. Xavier's Institution in Penang. In 1910, a large piece of land was acquired and Brother Aimar contributed greatly to the redevelopment of the school.

It was in Hong Kong however that Brother Aimar's many talents were unleashed. In 1914, Brother Aimar was made Director of St Joseph's College after the sudden death of Brother Peter Close, who survived his appointment as Director only one month and who died on the 30th April. Brother Aimar arrived in Hong Kong on the 21st May and assumed management of the College, then at Robinson Road. Under Brother Aimar's leadership the College grew in size and fame. Eight new airy and bright classrooms were soon added and a new building was later put up. To spare the young boys the trouble of crossing the harbour daily, Brother Aimar purchased a house in Chatham Road, Kowloon, and there opened a branch of St. Joseph's College in September 1917.

In 1918, an earthquake damaged the College building in Robinson Road. It was considered unsafe to remain in occupation of the building. Under the pressure of the ever-increasing demand for admission and the necessity of returning the Robinson Road campus to the Catholic Mission, a new building, which could meet all up-to-date requirements, was planned, though resources were very limited.

Thanks to Brother Aimar's unflinching courage and determination in the face of all financial difficulties, the acquisition of Club Germania on Kennedy Road was made and with the help of the Brothers' schools in Singapore and Penang and a Government building grant, the North Block (1921) and the West Block (1925) were also erected.

After securing a solid foundation for St. Joseph's College, Brother Aimar turned his attention to a much more daring project.

Anticipating the growth of Kowloon and to spare the students of the Chatham Road Branch School the trouble of crossing the harbour several times a day, Brother Aimar began to look for a suitable site for a new school in Kowloon. From the experience of struggling to find enough space and classrooms to accommodate students at St. Joseph's College, Brother Aimar was determined to acquire a larger piece of land for the new school.

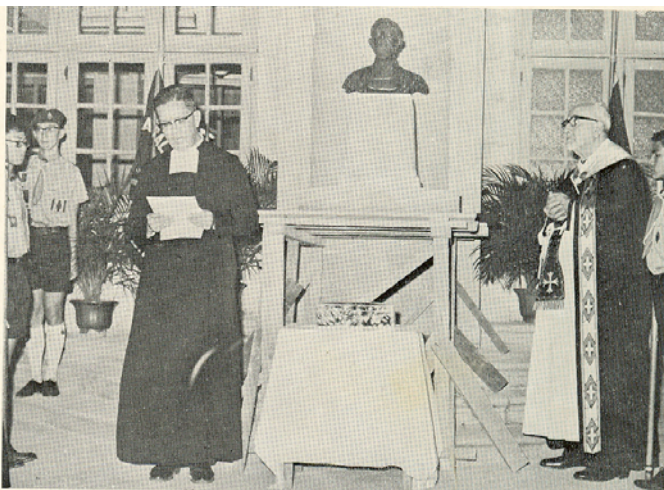
He roamed the hills of Kowloon in search of a suitable site and negotiated with the Government officials for years, In 1928, he finally obtained 10 acres of land at public auction for HK\$120,000 (about 28 cents.per square foot) and began designing and building a new school which he named after St John Baptist de La Salle. He also managed to purchase 3 more acres of land nearby which would in time house La Salle Primary School.

Brother Aimar was the first Principal of La Salle College when it opened its doors in 1932 until the Japanese soldiers forced the Brothers to leave the College in 1942. To this day many old boys swap fond memories of their days under the "Dome", the crowning glory of Brother Aimar's school.

Brother Aimar spent his last days in exile in Vietnam. Exactly 15 years after the laying of the Foundation Stone of La Salle College, on 5th November 1945, he passed away at Nhatrang, Vietnam. He was buried in the small cemetery on the site of the Brothers' Formation House at Nhatrang. In 1966, with much respect and dignity, Brother Michael Jacques brought his remains back to Hong Kong.

Brother Aimar's role in the Lasallian Mission in Hong Kong was summarized by Mr. J.P. Braga, a prominent old boy of St. Joseph's College, as follows:

'Retiring and unassuming, Brother Aimar never impresses one with the outward appearance of a financial genius. Nevertheless, he may be likened, metaphorically, to a unit of "silent service".'



Brother Aimar
Director.

THE RE-INTERMENT OF THE MORTAL REMAINS OF BRO. AIMAR
Speech of The Brother Assistant-Superior General
Rev. Brother Michael Jacques

Brother Patrick Tierney composed the following poem in memory of Brother Aimar:

A Man of Vision

**Not for him the shining brilliance
of stoked fire spewing out
red-hot sparks of burning ash.**

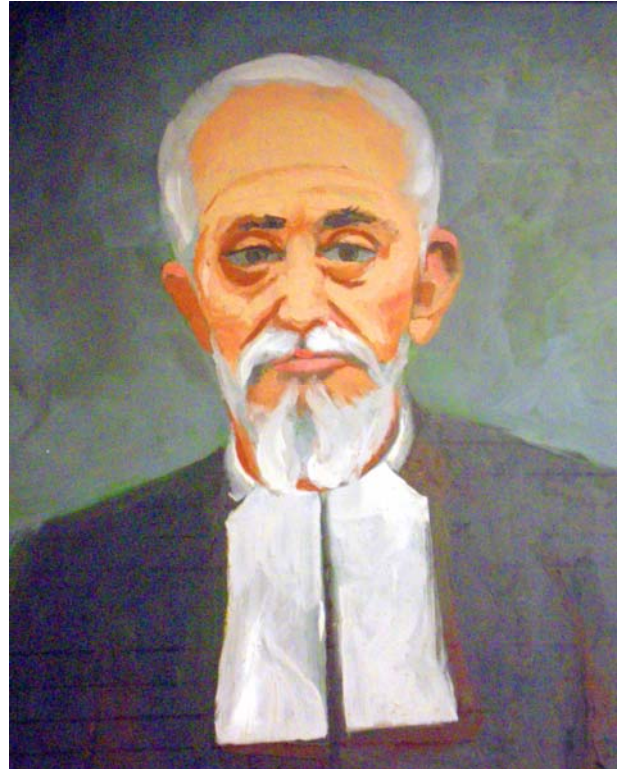
**Not for him the garish show
of vulgar ostentation flaunting
in loud strutting display.**

**Not for him the cut or dash
the dazzle and razzmatazz
of catwalk glamour.**

**I contemplate his portrait;
the enigmatic, still aura
of dignified love,**

**The eyes calmly inviting,
kindling the flame of learning,
lighting up the soul.**

**Here was a man
who saw the divine
in the heart of a child.**



We are indebted to the Community of St. Patrick's Singapore for kindly donating this portrait of Brother Aimar to La Salle College Kowloon. The portrait is by our renowned artist, Brother Joseph McNally



Brother Aimar and Community at La Salle College, 1937

The First Lasallian Mission to China 1936 - 1948

It may come as a surprise to some readers that our first Lasallian mission to China was as early as 1936. The story of this brave venture should not be forgotten. This is the story.



Moukden, called Shenyang in Chinese, is the capital of Liaoning Province.
Kirin, called Jilin in Chinese, is a major city in Jilin Province.
Szupingkai, called Siping in Chinese, was where the Brothers were kept in the concentration camp during the war. (1942-1945)

The Northeastern part of China was called Manchuria in the 30s. The Japanese army completed the occupation of Manchuria and proclaimed the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. The Japanese military kept strict control of the administration and fought a continuing guerrilla war with native resistance groups. Full-scale war between China and Japan started in 1937. In 1941, the Japanese army arrested all foreigners in the area and most of them were interned in the concentration camp in Siping until the Japanese surrendered in 1945. Civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists continued in the area until 1948 when the Communists gained control and ordered all foreigners to leave. It was in the midst of such chaotic circumstances that the Brothers strove to establish the first Lasallian mission to China.

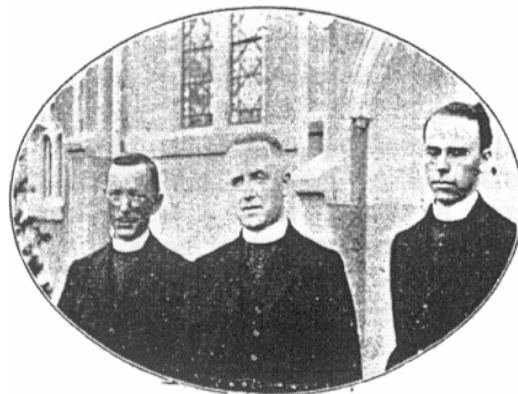
In 1933, Mgr Michel Blois, Vicar Apostolic of Moukden, wrote to Brother Adrien Petiot, Superior General, requesting Brothers to teach and manage his seminary schools.

Brother Martial-Paulin, retiring Visitor of Montreal was appointed by Brother Superior General to examine the possibility of a foundation there. He gave a favourable report.

On the 16th of October 1936, Brother Marie Liguori (Director) 39, Brother Modestus Leopold 54, and Brother Melchiade Barthelemy 29 from the District of Montreal arrived in Moukden.

The Brothers began a course in Chinese which commenced on 23rd October. On 30th October, the Brothers started their ministry with the Junior seminarians, accompanying them at recreation and, for a start, teaching them Catechism, French and Arithmetic.

The first Lasallian foundation in China was off the ground.



Brothers Leopold, Liguori, Barthelemy

Although the Brothers found it difficult to make contact with the outside world because of the unstable environment, they found their diligent students a great source of consolation.

In 1939, Brother Liguori wrote to Brother Visitor in Montreal and humbly suggested plans for the development of the mission. Brother Visitor accepted the plans and agreed to send six Brothers for the work.

In 1940, the Brothers bought a house in Moukden called after Saint Francis Xavier. This was meant especially for the Brothers who would be studying the Chinese language. Brother Marie-Marcel was waiting in Japan for the arrival of the new Brothers. On their arrival, however, he told them that a war was to start shortly and that it would be safer to sail back to Canada. Their response was, "We have come this far and we will continue on to China."

So, on the 19th of October 1940, Brother Marie-Marcel accompanied by Brothers Marie-Mederic, Jules, Odilo, Guy and Hippolyte arrived in China.



The second batch of Brothers

Front from left: Brothers Marie-Marcel, Marie-Mederic

Back row: Brothers Jules, Odilo, Hippolyte and Guy

In 1941, another house was bought in Kirin and five Brothers were appointed to run a seminary school there. The Brothers were Barthelemy (Director), Marcel, Guy, Jules, Hippolyte and Odilo.

The political situation was worsening however and in January 1942, all nine Canadian Brothers in China were interned in the Szupingkai camp.

In September 1942, Brothers Marie-Marcel, Jules, Hippolyte and Mederic were transferred to Japan and they were held in various concentration camps there until the war ended.

About the same time, Brother Leopold was released from Szupingkai concentration camp because of his age, and he returned to Moukden.

In 1943, Brother Liguori caught Manchurian Fever in the Szupingkai camp. For a whole month, he was confined to his bed with intermittent fever. He passed away on the 28th of October and was buried in the garden of the Immaculate Conception Sisters at Szupingkai. To this day we do not know the whereabouts of his grave and perhaps he is the only De La Salle Brother buried in China.

In the summer of 1945, the Brothers were set free. Brother Leopold remained in Moukden. Brothers Barthelemy, Odilo and Guy returned to Kirin. They resumed their mission work immediately and waited eagerly for the younger Brothers to return.

In 1947, a house was bought in Beijing and called after St. Benilde. Brothers Isidore Savaria (Director), Cyprian Lebel, Adrien and Gilbert Perrier left Montreal and arrived in Beijing on the 16th of November. They began learning Chinese and were waiting for the chance to start their mission in China.



St. Benilde House, Beijing, 1947

Because of the chaotic political and social situation in Manchuria, Brothers Leopold and Odilo took refuge in Beijing while Brothers Barthelemy and Guy went back to Canada.

The Brothers in Beijing became increasingly anxious about the political development and in December, 1948, Brothers Leopold, Isidore, Cyprian, Gilbert, Adrien, Odilo and a postulant*, Pai King, were asked to take refuge in Hong Kong. Brother Cyprian Lebel taught at La Salle College and Brother Isidore Savaria taught at St. Joseph's College until 1950 when they were assigned back to Japan. Brother Gilbert Perrier however chose to stay in Hong Kong, taught at St. Joseph's College and became Principal of the Primary School, until his death in September 1977. Many students and teachers still have fond memories of Brother Gilbert but perhaps only a few of them know that he had actually come to Hong Kong from China!

The postulant Pai King continued his novitiate in Penang and Vietnam. He was given the name Brother Savator and taught in Thailand. He died there in 1994.

*(*Postulant: a man formally accepted as a candidate for entry into the De La Salle Christian Brothers and the Novitiate)*

Brother Gilbert keeps a fond eye on his students at St. Joseph's Primary School in 1976



Brother Cyprian and class, La Salle College 1950.

La Salle College Class 4A [1950]
 Top row: Richard Brown | António Noronha | Baventura da Luz | Alex Sales | António Jiminez | John Clamber | Hilary Giggins | David Kwan | David Silva | Gerry McDougall | Henry Chan
 2nd row: Marcus Souza | Eddie Loureiro | Lionel Remedios | Joe Braga | John Wong | Conrado Kicomp | Robert Stewart | António Guterres | David Wilkinson | Luiz Guterres | Vincent de Souza
 3rd row: Henry Souza | Benny Ehrenberg | Manuel Remedios | Eric Remedios | Brother Cyprian | Unknown | Gary Lucido | Peter Richards | Jackie da Silva
 Bottom row: Carlos Xavier | Arnaldo Remedios | Carlos Noronha | Kenneth Wong | Robbe da Costa | Gerald Cunha | Arnaldo da Luz | Johnny Ip
 Courtesy: Gerald and Virginia Collaps McDougall | collection

Let us remember these Brothers in our prayers because of their dedication and courage in carrying out the Lasallian mission in China, that immense country, so ancient and so new. May their souls rest in His peace!

An Oriental Touch

Love of the Lotus By Zhou Dunyi (1017 – 1073)

Many are the lovely flowers on land and water.

Tao Yuanming* loved only the chrysanthemum.

From the Tang dynasty, the peony came into special favour.

But my love is for the lovely lotus,
Whose beauty is untainted by the mud from which she springs.

Cleansed by the pure waters but not seductive.



Chrysanthemum

Her centre is hollow, the stem straight,
without creeping vines or branches.

The fragrance she exudes is more delicate,
wafted from a distance.

She welcomes the admiring gaze but shuns intimacy.

I say the chrysanthemum is a recluse,
The peony is richly endowed,
While the lotus is noble and virtuous.



Peony

Regrettably, love for the chrysanthemum is seldom heard except for Tao Yuanming.

Where are the people who, like me, love the lotus?

Meanwhile the peony flourishes!



Lotus

*Tao Yuanming (A.D. 317-420) was a pastoral poet who had a profound influence on Chinese poetry down through the centuries.

Appreciation

In China, the lotus is the symbol for a person of integrity. This person pursues the noblest ideals even in the most adverse circumstances and remains free of all deceit.

We would like to think that St. John Baptist de La Salle exemplified in his life the beautiful virtues of the lotus.

愛蓮說 周敦頤

水陸草木之花，可愛者甚蕃。晉陶淵明獨愛

菊；自李唐來，世人盛愛牡丹；予獨愛蓮之出

淤泥而不染，濯清漣而不妖，中通外直，不蔓

不枝，香遠益清，亭亭靜植，可遠觀而不可褻

玩焉。

予謂菊，花之隱逸者也；牡丹，花之富貴者

也；蓮，花之君子也。噫！菊之愛，陶后鮮有

聞；蓮之愛，同予者何人；牡丹之愛，宜乎眾

矣。



Let people think what they wish of you, and do not be troubled, provided you are doing what you ought.

St. La Salle

祇要問心無愧，做你應該做的事，便毋需理會別人如何評價你。 聖若瀚喇沙

To be unperturbed when not appreciated by others is the mark of a gentleman.

Confucius

人不知，而不愠，不亦君子乎？” 孔子

Guan Yin, the Chinese goddess of mercy, gazing upon a patch of pink lotus blossoms.

The lotus is ubiquitous in Asian art and usually depicted with a celestial saviour, an archetypal symbol of the infinite and eternal.

Olympic Torch Fever

It was Hong Kong's turn to host the Olympic torch relay on 2nd May 2008. One hundred and twenty torchbearers were selected for this honour. Among them were at least nine Lasallians, including the youngest, Chiu Chung Hei, at the age of fourteen.



Eason Chan



Chiu Chung Hei



Alex Fong



Ronnie Wong



Kong Chak Fung



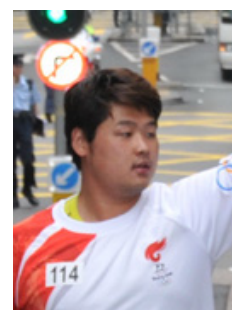
Tam Wai Yeung



Samuel Yu



John Chan



Alexander Chung

The torch, after a pretty eventful world journey, is now back on home soil. The Beijing Olympics promise to be the most spectacular ever.

In Remembrance

We pray for the repose of the souls of our departed Brothers.

Brothers	Service in HK	Date of Death	Place of Burial
Anthony Kilbourne*	1936-1942&1949	3 rd May 1961	Manila
Cyprian Gendreau*	1880-1887	10 th May 1887	Kobe, Japan
Casimir Husarik	1933-1977	10 th May 1977	Hong Kong
Hidulphe-Marie Nicolas	1875-1879	11 th May 1886	Marseilles
Osmind(Gregory) McGrath	1894-1895	15 th May 1913	France
Henry Pang	1954-1993	22 nd May 1993	Hong Kong
Anthony Cheung	1960-1966	25 th May 1998	Malaysia
Hugh Bates	1946-1953	31 st May 1953	Hong Kong



Brother Anthony Kilbourne



Brother Cyprian Gendreau



Brother Casimir Husarik



Brother Hidulphe-Marie Nicolas



Brother Osmind McGrath



Brother Henry Pang



Brother Anthony Cheung



Brother Hugh Bates

* Brother Anthony Kilbourne was interned for a while in Stanley Prison, Hong Kong, during the war.

*Brother Cyprian died in Kobe, Japan, on his way to receive treatment for dysentery.

Family News

Not an ordinary Birthday

Brother Herman is the Dean of our District and shows little sign of relinquishing the title. On 16th April, we had the pleasure of celebrating his 95th Birthday.



Anniversary Celebrations

The year 2008 is the 40th Anniversary of St. Joseph's Primary School at its present site in Wanchai on Hong Kong Island. Before 1968, the Primary section was attached to the College at Kennedy Road. It is the feeder school of St. Joseph's College and very popular with Hong Kong parents.



La Salle Primary School, Kowloon, celebrates its Golden Jubilee this academic year. It too had been attached to La Salle College originally and is its feeder school. It is also very popular with Hong Kong parents. The Founder of the school, Brother Henry Pang, is well remembered.



APLEC 7, 2008



Here is the logo for the Asia Pacific Lasallian Educators' Congress (APLEC) which will be held in Hong Kong from the 7th to the 12th December 2008.

The Theme of the Congress is

'Lasallian Values in Education : Challenges to Youth in Asia Pacific Today'.

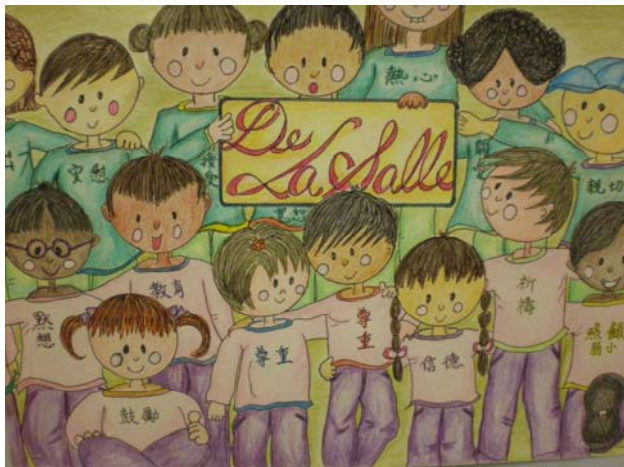
The preparatory committee is working hard to ensure the success of the Congress.

The Feast of Our Founder

As Lasallians, we usually associate the month of May with the Feast of our Founder. Our schools in Hong Kong celebrated with Masses, Assemblies, Projects and Exhibitions.

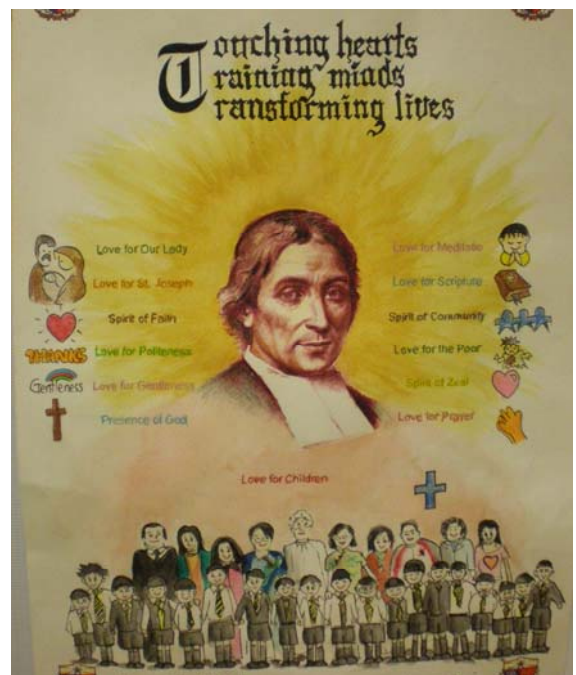


Our Founder portrayed through the eyes of little children



This little artist names what he regards as the Lasallian virtues and values such as faith, zeal, mutual respect, forgiveness and caring for the weak.

This is what another little artist thinks our Lasallian mission is all about.



**St. John Baptist de La Salle, pray for us.
Live Jesus in our hearts, forever!**