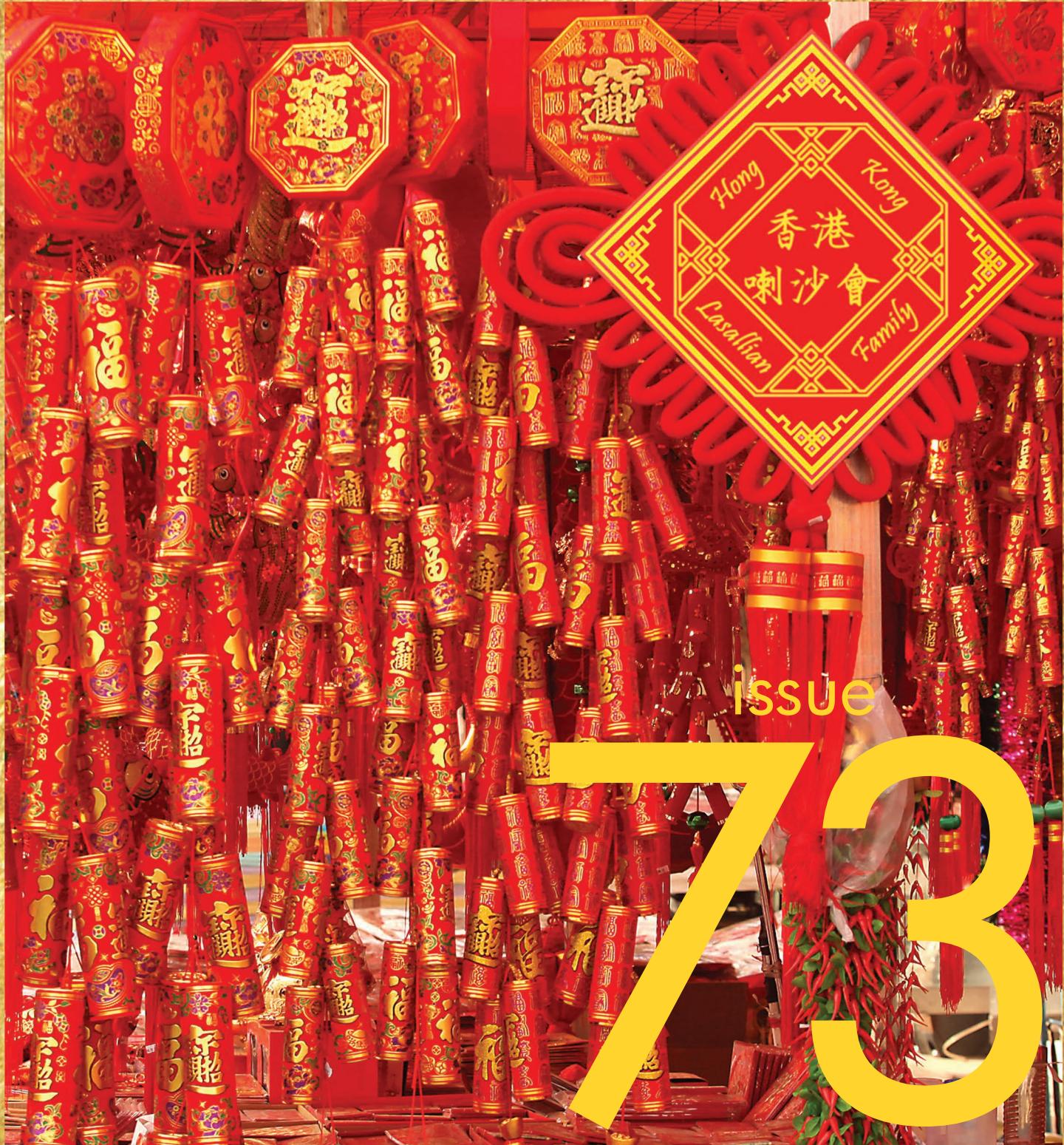


The gateway

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT



February 2018



73

HONG KONG LASALLIAN FAMILY BULLETIN



(Cover) The new octagonal Hong Kong Lasallian Family logo was designed by a student of one of our schools. Eight is a lucky number in the Chinese culture and it also happens that we have eight schools in Hong Kong. Our logo is an expression of our joy in mission.

The **gateway**

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issue 73

Welcome

The Gateway 73 starts on a rather sombre note with a feature on the life of Brother Thomas Favier. Brother Thomas died on the 7th of September 2017. He had been ill for a number of years but the end came rather suddenly. May he rest in the loving mercy of our Father.

The rest of this issue is full of updates. Since we are roughly at the half-way stage of the academic year, school activities are in full flow. The extent and variety is amazing. We could have doubled or tripled the number but the ones covered will have to suffice and will give you an overall flavour. They are also an indication of the balance being sought between the academic and extra-curricular life of the schools.



Two of our schools are celebrating special anniversaries this year. La Salle Primary School has already kicked off celebrating its Diamond Jubilee and will complete its celebrations in the summer. St. Joseph's Primary School has just kicked off its Golden Jubilee celebrations which will run through the calendar year.

The Gateway

Hong Kong

Lasallian Family

Bulletin

February 2018

Seventy-Third Issue

And now we are leaving the Year of the Rooster and approaching the Year of the Dog. Of all its virtues, the dog is perhaps best known and loved for its faithfulness and loyalty.

Let us be faithful and true to our noblest selves and to the beautiful vocation of a Lasallian educator. 



Brother of the Month

Brother Thomas Favier

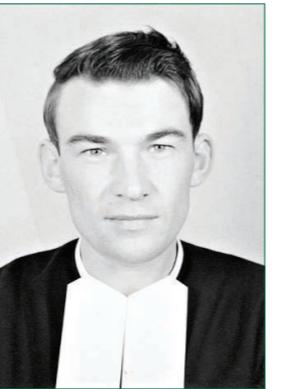
(9-2-1942 to 7-9-2017)

In many ways, Brother Thomas was an extraordinary missionary. Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect is that his first assignment was to St. Joseph's College, Hong Kong, and there he remained to the end of his days. Fifty-three years of unbroken service to the same school is an achievement in itself. The Brothers used to joke that he had married his first love and remained faithful to her all his life.

Brother Thomas left home in 1955, immediately after Primary schooling, to join the Brothers formation houses. His was a large family and he remained attached to them all his life. At one point he wrote a short account of the life of his father. He never failed to pay short visits to his family whenever he was in the country. He would also pay visits to the families of other Brothers.



Novitiate group in Ireland, 1959, Brother Thomas (front, third left), Brother Patrick (front, first left)



At the age of 18, he received the Habit of the Brothers and took first vows. That is 62 years ago and he never looked back. Brother Patrick Tierney had joined the Brothers at the same time and recalls: "Throughout the years of formation, Brother Thomas was quiet, respectful and a good companion. I never heard him utter an unkind word and never saw him take advantage of a weaker person. He studied diligently, without fuss, and did well in examinations."

During the spiritual formation year, called the Novitiate, there was a call for missionary Brothers to the Far East. A number of novices raised their hands. Brother Thomas was among six chosen. The decision meant there would be many changes in his life.

The first major change was that the prospective missionary had to leave his native land for further studies in England. 'O' and 'A' Level exams were taken at St. John's College in Berkshire, a rural retreat complete with rolling lawns and farm. One of the first things noted was the increase in food! Having completed 'O' and 'A' Levels, Brother Thomas was sent for a three-year teacher-training course at Hopwood Hall, Manchester.

Mention of Manchester, at least for some people, evokes images of football and in particular of Manchester United. Now, Brother Thomas was born in 1942 in Glenflesk, County Kerry, Ireland, near the beautiful Lakes of Killarney. County Kerry is also a Gaelic football stronghold and is sometimes referred to as 'The Kingdom'. While still supporting Kerry, he transferred his soccer allegiance to Manchester United. He would occasionally attend games at Old Trafford, in the days when footballers like Bobby Charlton, George Best and Dennis Law were working their magic. They were the glory days of United.

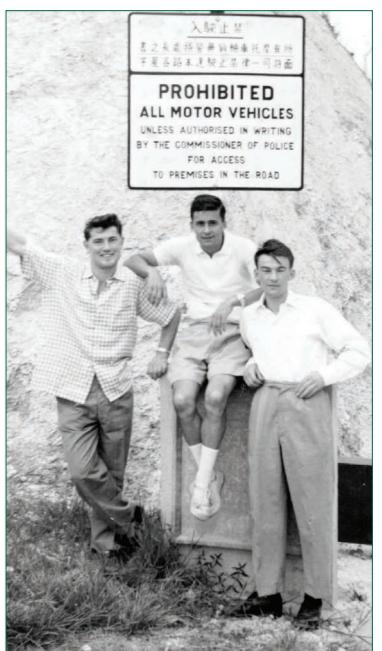


Training College successfully completed in 1964, Brothers Thomas and Patrick awaited news of their assignment. It turned out to be St. Joseph's College, Hong Kong. Bags were packed and they boarded their first ever flight in London.

The plane weaved its way across Europe, the Middle East, Iran, India, China and then Hong Kong was flagged. A typhoon, however, prevented landing and the passengers ended up in Rangoon (Yangon). It was their first real taste of the Orient – the heat, the creepy-crawlies, the noise and the colour included. It was also the first time that the meaning of a typhoon began to enter their minds. It turned out that the typhoon in question was Typhoon Ruby, and it packed a punch.

When they eventually arrived in Hong Kong on the 6th of September 1964 and stepped off the plane, the heat was high, sweeping up from the tarmac. The vehicular ferry took them across the harbor with the Peak forming a magnificent backdrop and then

St. Joseph's College came in sight. It looked impressive and the Brothers soon found themselves in class, teaching Chinese boys for the first time. There was no 'bridging programme' in those days. But there were a lot of Irish Brothers teaching there at the time, thus reducing the effects of homesickness.



Brothers Patrick, Livinus and Thomas

The question of football soon raised its head. St. Joseph's football 'field' was a narrow, rectangular playground. One kick and you could send the ball from one end to the other. In those circumstances, what had to be developed was football 'skills', especially involving some pretty fancy footwork.



in the middle of the campus, Every time when people mention about St. Joseph's College, they must remember the glories and trophies of our football team.

Generation after generation, Josephians have been enjoying their games on the pitch and I am sure that many guests have also enjoyed their visits to it. I remember Gordon McQueen, who was a player of Manchester United, and Jack Charlton, who served Leeds United, came to St. Joseph's to give the C Grade players a lesson more than once. That was really memorable.

Another remarkable event took place during a C Grade football training a few years ago. We used to have an excellent player who was really powerful. One time, he kicked the ball and it flew straight over the Old Building and landed on the triangular playground. That was unbelievable.

Whenever I was asked why we have so many lines on the football pitch, I replied, 'Because it is versatile, just like every Josephian.' As a matter of fact, students here can play football, volleyball and handball on the artificial grass pitch. Other than an arena for ball games, the pitch serves as the dining venue for the annual general meeting of the Old Boys Association every year."

It is not an exaggeration to say that Brother Thomas was football crazy, not only for Manchester United but for the football teams of his school. He looked after them like a mother with children. Football was in his blood, a passion. The following is his own take on the football culture of his school and especially of the school's football 'pitch':

"I have a lot of good memories about the football pitch in St. Joseph's.

The football pitch is the centerpiece of St. Joseph's, both geographically and symbolically. It is located



But life was not all fun and games and serious study was also the order of the day. Brother Thomas took his class work seriously and marked the exercise books conscientiously. He never raised his voice in class, preferring to establish discipline quietly and sensibly. He taught mainly English Language, Religion and Physical Education, with a little English Literature thrown in.

The first break came in 1968 when he was sent back to Ireland to take a degree. At University College, Dublin, he took English Literature, History and Ethics/Politics. On his return to Hong Kong in 1971, he resumed classroom teaching until Principalship beckoned in 1986. He remained as Principal until retirement in 2002, when he continued on as Supervisor of the school. It is worth recalling that from an early stage he took an interest in learning Cantonese and even attended the Chinese University to this purpose. He reached a stage where he could be quite easily understood in the language — as long as it did not become too idiomatic!

When asked in an interview what he thought he had achieved for the school, Brother Thomas had this to say:

"I hoped to continue the excellent tradition of St. Joseph's. I also hoped to improve the school facilities and make it a pleasant place for learning. Above all I wanted to establish good school administration as to give Josephians the best all-round education. I feel that good progress has been made in these areas and these aims will be our on-going concerns in the years ahead."

One way of achieving all-round education was to have students go on overseas trips. He was probably one of the pioneering Principals in this regard. He himself very much enjoyed these overseas trips with students, especially those to London, and sought sponsorship for them to ensure poorer students could join.

While Brother Thomas was faithful to his school duties he never lost sight of the role of religion and spiritual formation. He himself prayed the Mass and the Rosary regularly. In addition, he took over the role of Spiritual Director of Star of the Sea Legion of Mary Praesidium. He ensured that the Catholic life of the school was not neglected. When asked about the importance of this aspect of school life he replied:

"I do believe that religion plays an important part in school life. We show this by the religious services

ceremonies throughout the year which are so well organized by the Christian Union. We also show it by maintaining a Christian spirit and atmosphere in the school, by respect one another and by the practice of honesty and charity in our relationships with others."

And when asked about an appropriate motto for life, he had this to say:

"Our own school motto is a good guide: *Labore et Virtute*, we will succeed by good work and by good-living habits. I will give you another motto to help you in life. In Latin it says: *DABIT QUI DEDIT* and it means: He will provide who has provided. In other words, God will continue to look after us in the future as He has done in the past."

Brother Thomas had his own views on status in society. And so, when asked how he felt about having so many Josephian celebrities in society, he said:

"Yes, many Josephians are prominent in society today. Maybe we should not aim to be celebrities but rather to do our job to the best of our abilities. Let us use our talents to serve our society and to live a fulfilling life. Honest service of others is itself a great privilege."

St. Joseph's College and everything connected with it was his world. In an interview given in 1998, he summarises his passion like this:

"If I had a chance to start all over again I would certainly choose to work in St. Joseph's College. To be associated with St. Joseph's College and its staff, students and parents is a joy and a privilege. My heart is in St. Joseph's College and every day here is a good day!"

And, as Brother Thomas Lavin put it: "He loved talking to students, would know their names, invite them to his office and give them little presents. He was great for remembering birthdays and other special occasions. He would also write notes of appreciation."

There is one other Brother who has actually spent a longer period in St. Joseph's than Brother Thomas, although not from the beginning of his teaching career. Brother Alphonsus Breen started teaching



in St. Joseph's in 1962. He and Brother Thomas were living together in community since then. They became fast friends and supported each other down through the years. At one point in time, Brother Alphonsus took Brother Thomas to Australia, hoping that a change of environment would be beneficial.

Another Brother that he lived a long time with in community was Brother Brendan. They struck up a good relationship, perhaps partly because they hailed from County Kerry and also because both loved doing crosswords — the cryptic type, that is certainly not for beginners.

Despite playing much football and refereeing games, Brother Thomas's health was never that robust. He tended to snack, eating slowly and lightly. He needed strength and energy because responsibility weighed heavily and he sometimes took minor school setbacks too seriously. Over the years he had suffered from bouts of depression but emerged apparently unscathed each time. In later years, however, he fell into longer and longer troughs.

The Brothers were very concerned and various treatments were sought, even to the extent of trying out new environments. He did not take well to these changes and would not rest until he had returned to



St. Joseph's. Although he rested there, he could not summon enough energy to enter more fully into the life of the school and spent most of the time in his room.

The release from this kind of suffering came much faster than expected on the 7th of September 2017 while he was receiving treatment in Eastern hospital. The sad news spread rapidly and there was a huge turnout at both wake and funeral. The wake and funeral Mass were, fittingly, held in the school he loved. The funeral Mass, celebrated by Bishop Joseph Ha, was held on the 23rd of September followed by burial at St. Michael's Catholic Cemetery, Happy Valley. Brother Thomas was very attached to his family and so it was fortunate that one of his brothers, Michael, and two of his sisters, Margaret and Mary, were able to come from Ireland to attend.

Michael wrote to Brother Jeffrey Chan on behalf of the family: "It was a tremendous tribute to Tom that you wanted and succeeded in having the wake and funeral mass held in the college. That involved a lot of extra work and routine disturbance for very many at the college but most especially yourself. I am extremely appreciative of that."

Postings of Brother Thomas

Mallow, Co. Cork, Ireland	Juniorate	1955 - 1956
Castletown, Co Laois, Ireland	Juniorate	1956 - 1958
Castletown, Co Laois, Ireland	Novitiate	1958 - 1959
St. John's, Inglewood, England	Scholasticate	1959 - 1961
Hopwood Hall, Manchester, England	Teacher Training	1961 - 1964
St. Joseph's College, Hong Kong	Teaching	1964 - 1968
University College, Dublin, Ireland	Degree	1968 - 1971
St. Joseph's College, Hong Kong	Teaching, Principal, Supervisor	1971 - 2017

The eulogy was delivered by Brother Edmundo Fernandez, the Visitor/Provincial of the Brothers of East Asia. He concentrated on the three loves of Brother Thomas's life:

"Brother Thomas Anthony Favier FSC, whose life we celebrate today, knows what it is to fall in love and stay in love. He didn't have too many passions but the few that he had animated and energized his whole life: first, an extraordinary and exceptional love for St. Joseph College; second, and with equal fervour, a love for football. But these two loves of Brother Thomas come together in his biggest and most passionate pursuit: his devotion and love for his students and his Old Boys."

May our merciful Lord and Father welcome Brother Thomas into His Kingdom. ☺



May God continue to bless us.

Sincerely,

Bro. Thomas Favier

Bro. Thomas Favier



. . . ONE FAMILY



Family Updates

Eighty-Eight

There is something rounded and comfortable about the figure 8. When we add another 8, we come close to perfection. The Chinese have a fascination with numbers and the figure 8 is right up there, symbolising good health and prosperity. This, too, is what we wished Brother Lawrence when we celebrated his 88th birthday on the 1st of December. The birthdays of Brothers Sockie, Patrick and David Liao also arrived around this period but Brother Lawrence is the standard-bearer. To one and all, many happy returns of the day!



Speech Day

Speech Days are firmly fixed in the calendar as the highlight of the academic year. On that day the graduating class of 2017, together with high academic achievers at all levels of the school, receive their awards. The school Principal also gives a Report on the year past. It was the turn of La Salle College Speech Day on the 24th of November 2017. The Guest of Honour was Reverend Bishop Joseph Ha and he spoke about facing modern-day challenges with a strong desire to make a difference for the better in our society. We are to be men of courage and men for others. The Class of 2017 was congratulated heartily on their fine achievements.



Golds

First it was the Symphony Orchestra of La Salle College that was awarded the Gold Prize in the 2017 Hong Kong Music Interflows held in the Cultural Centre, on the 27th of November, 2017. The Wind Orchestra achieved the same feat. Around the same time, the musicians of La Salle Primary School emulated their elder brothers, also securing Gold at the Primary level Interflows. And, then it was the turn of the Chinese Orchestra who returned with Gold, something that they have made almost a tradition. To crown it all, the Wind Orchestra were declared the best of the best at the Music Interflow Finals. Music is on a high at La Salle.



Family Fun Day

La Salle College held its annual Family Fun Day on the 10th of December 2017. And a gloriously cool, sunny day it turned out to be. Visitors poured in, especially in family groups, and were treated to a spectacular Chinese drumming show, a Dragon Dance, as well as to the traditional mouth-watering food and attractive games. The boys and parents did a marvellous job manning the stalls. Later in the day the stage was taken by singers and musicians who entertained with high standards. All proceeds will go to charity.



Viability and Vitality

Some time ago the Lasallian East Asia District (LEAD) initiated a project whereby each of its seven countries was asked to study the viability and vitality of its mission and plan for the future. To this end, in Hong Kong, a central coordinating team as well as individual school review teams were set up. The most recent meeting of the two bodies was held on the 6th of January 2018 and chaired by Brother Thomas Lavin. Each school gave an update of progress to date and the timeline was set for the future, aiming to bring everything to a conclusion by October 2018. While acknowledging the great work being done, the emphasis is on major challenges and planning ahead. The whole exercise is proving very useful in this regard.



Principals Meeting

The Principals of our eight Hong Kong Lasallian schools held one of their regular meetings on the 9th of January 2018. The meeting is a good opportunity for them not only to catch up on news of the family but also to discuss some of the educational issues of the day. There is also a Lasallian formation segment at each meeting. In this case it took the form of 'Giving Thanks' to God for bringing us to this beautiful mission of the human and Christian education of youth.

Walkathon

Abracing winter's day on the 17th of December 2017. It was the 'Walkathon Day' as part of the celebrations for the Diamond Jubilee of La Salle Primary School. The walk snaked round the foothills of Lion Rock country park. The cold weather did not deter the participants — students, parents, teachers, school managers and a strong turnout from old boys. Mr. Stephen Lo, Chief Commissioner of Police, was Guest of Honour while Mr. Sunny Pong was Title Sponsor. A nice touch was a costume parade, with boys and families dressing up. And there was a nice medal souvenir for all participants at the end of the walk. No doubt the participants also worked up a good appetite for lunch.



Grand Gala Dinner

One of the major events of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations was the Gala Dinner held at the Grand Hall of the Convention Centre on the 21st of January 2018. The Guest of Honour for the occasion was the Vicar General of the Brothers Institute, Brother Jorge de Alba Gallardo, who gave an inspirational speech. Another special Guest was Brother Gregory Lim, a real link with the old days when he taught and was Principal of the PM session in the 1960s. At the age of ninety-three, he travelled all the way on his own

from Singapore! The Gala Dinner featured performances from the boys, the Principal, and old boys. There was also an auction and a lucky draw. Altogether, there were about 2,000 participants and there would have been more if the venue allowed. Considering the logistics, the organising committee did a marvellous job and the Diamond Jubilee is surely being written into the history and heritage of the school. The school is 'sparkling onwards and upwards.'



Service to the Elderly

Before Christmas 2017, Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School organised a service to the elderly who were living alone. Both parents and students took part and before setting out, they were blessed the school Chaplain. They brought presents and tried to help or entertain the elderly as required. The visit brought them joy, since they do not meet young people so often. At the same time, both students and parents learned the value of service.



Learn to Serve

From November to December 2017, members of the Voluntary Services Group and the Lasallian Youth Movement of Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College had completed a pilot outreach programme of providing afterschool care and homework guidance for children at the Caritas Wong Tai Sin Centre. The children have special educational needs or their parents are unable to supervise their studies. The service provided to them is therefore highly appreciated. At the same time, the Chan Sui Ki volunteer helpers are grateful to the Caritas staff for giving them such a precious opportunity to learn to serve the community.



CBSSA Inter-Collegiate Athletics Meet



The Christian Brothers Schools Sports Association holds an Inter-Collegiate Athletics Meet every year. This year, the meet was held on the 24th of January 2018 at Wanchai Stadium, on a mild winter's day. Athletes from our five secondary schools in Hong Kong enjoyed the gathering as well as the competitions. The meet gave them a chance to stretch their legs or their arms. The Guest of Honour this year was Mr. W.S. Tong, Principal of La Salle College. He congratulated all the participants and encouraged them to strive for the best.

APLYC 11

APLYC, Asia Pacific Lasallian Youth Congress, has been an avenue for our youth in the Pacific-Asia Region to meet and mix with the cultures of their fellow Lasallians. The programme is designed for young Lasallians between the ages of 16 and 30. From the 3rd to the 9th of December 2017, APLYC11 was held in De La Salle University, Dasmarias, Manila with the theme, "Lasallians Without Limits". Hong Kong sent a delegation of eleven members, including eight students from our schools, two Lasallian volunteers and our Lasallian Family Coordinator. To our young Lasallians, the Congress was an eye-opener and they were happy to have the opportunity to deepen their Lasallian identity with fellow young Lasallians in the PARC region.



St. Joseph's College Green and White Day 2018



The Open Day was held on the 28th of January 2018. The theme for this year is 'Landmark'. The school moved to the present premises at 7 Kennedy Road in 1918. During the past 100 years, 7 Kennedy Road has become a 'Landmark' as it has nurtured students in all walks of life to serve the society of Hong Kong. The Guest of Honour was an Old Boy Mr. David Leung, newly appointed Director of Public Prosecution of the Department of Justice. He has a lot of fond memories of his days in the College and he was grateful for the 'free' atmosphere of the school. He learned that 'freedom' must go together with self-discipline and this is very important to his work nowadays.

Folk Song Champs

A folk song competition, organized by the Hong Kong Professional Teachers Union, was held in late November 2017 for secondary schools. Our De La Salle Secondary School's Folk Song Team took part and came away with the championship. There was also a prize for the Best Guitarist. The folk song chosen was an old favourite 'Those were the Days'.



Never say die



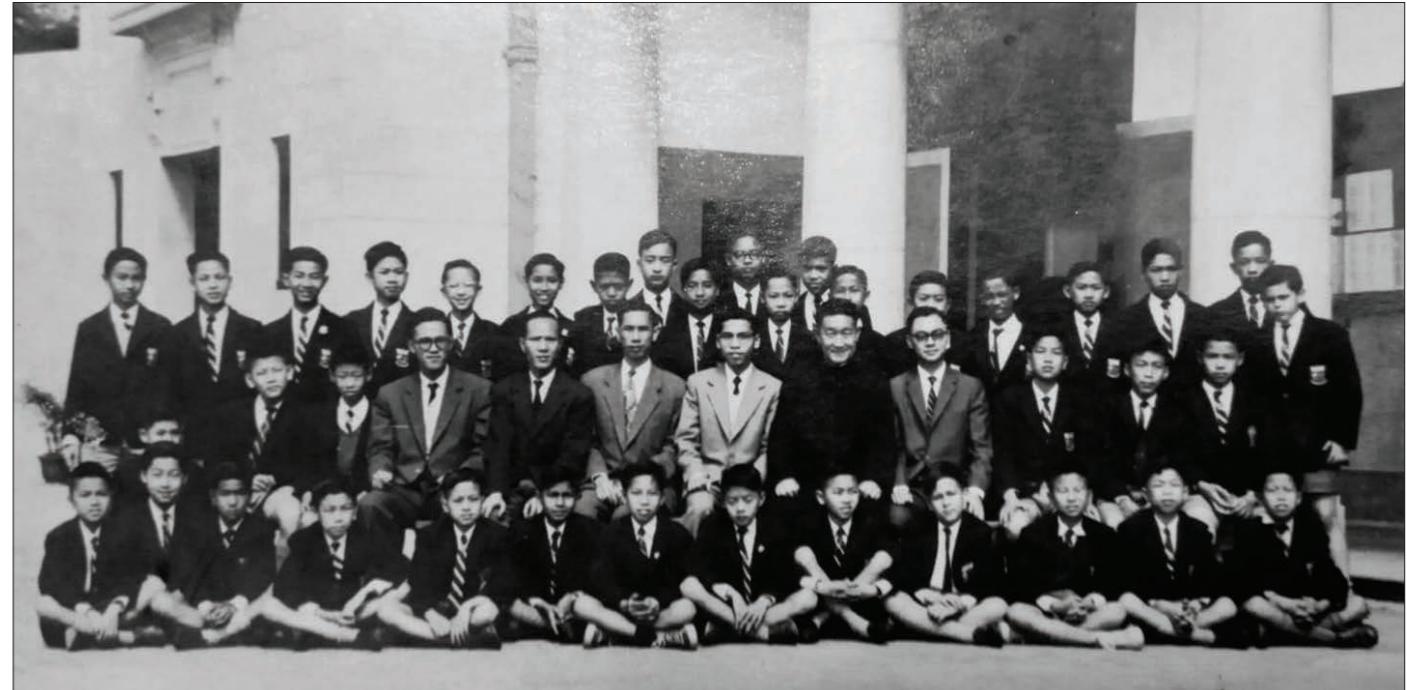
This year, Chong Gene Hang College decided to enter the Hong Kong Jing Ying Basketball Tournament. Each participating school is entitled to field one team per sport. After losing to a relatively weak team, the Chong Gene Hang boys were placed second in their group. On top of that, they were also placed in the 'group of death'. Confidence was low and it seemed only a matter of time before they exited the tournament. The coach had other ideas. He coached them to play what he called 'simple basketball'. They won the next two games and entered the final. Although they came up short in the final, the team members are now happy that they came so far. Hooray for Gene Hang Buddies!

Golden Jubilee

Congratulations to St. Joseph's Primary School which is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this year. The first celebratory event was an opening ceremony followed by a walkathon on the 3rd of February 2018. The day was cold but the colour and excitement of the opening ceremony warmed everybody up. A special feature of the ceremony was the procession of old boy representatives from the opening date 1968 to the current student representative of 2018. The participants were further warmed up by means of the walkathon which wound its way around the Happy Valley racecourse. All who finished received a nice souvenir. The school will organize a number of other events throughout the year.



Blast from the Past



La Salle Primary School is celebrating its Diamond Jubilee. Here is a class, 6C, from the very first year of operation. Some readers will easily identify Brother Paul Sun, who later founded St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School.

St. Joseph's Primary School is celebrating its Golden Jubilee. Here is a picture taken at the opening ceremony in December 1968. The Director of St. Joseph's at the time, Brother James Dooley, can be seen on the right talking with Sir Albert Rodriguez.





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