

26 September 2013 • 119

Catholic Education Conference. 58 Catholic schools all over Singapore including 8 of our Lasallian institutions gathered last 13 - 14 September at the Performing Arts Centre of the Catholic Junior College for the inaugural Catholic Education Conference to “discuss the goals and features of effective Catholic education in Singapore that reflect the Church’s teachings.” According to conference’s programme guide, “Catholic schools were formally established only with the arrival of the De La Salle Brothers and the Sisters of the Infant Jesus from Europe in 1852. Hence, St. Joseph’s Institution (SJI), which was founded in 1852, is the oldest Catholic school in Singapore.” The programme also aims to allow opportunities to share good practices in Singapore Catholic schools and gather feedback to improve Catholic education.

The Keynote Speaker is our very own confrère, Brother Gerard Rummery FSC, who presented two themes, the “Essence of Catholic Education In Singapore” and “Living My Vocation as a Catholic Educator” during those two days. Brother Gerooge Van Grieken, Brother President and Head of School at St. Joseph’s Institution International, was one of the Response Speakers and Panelists. Other notable Lasallians in the conference was panelist Rev Fr Edward Seah, who is a former Brother and St Patrick’s old boy, and panel moderator Dr Koh Thiam Seng, the first Alumnus Principal of St Joseph’s Institution. The conference was attended by about 339 religious, teachers, school leaders and parents.



New Residencia De La Salle. I am happy to announce that the transfer to the new Residencia is nearly complete. First to transfer are the Brothers assigned in the school and now they are waiting for the senior Brothers set to move in today. It is actually a complex with the Brothers House attached to the senior brothers' wing. The complex was made possible through the generous help of Mr. Eduardo Cojuanco, chairman of San Miguel Corporation. I wish to thank Br. Gus for spearheading the construction and the transfer. Below is an article from Br. Sockie De La Rosa:



"*Lipat Bahay*" (transliterated: Transfer House). Aside from the literal physical transfer of residences, "*lipat bahay*" as a cultural term, has a deeper connotation: saying goodbye to one's familiar home and saying hello to new beginnings. "*Lipat bahay*" can be very stressful and tiring but it can be worse when it's done in the midst of super typhoon "Odette" (International Name: "Usagi"), like we did.



On September 22, our Community began our final move to the New Residencia De La Salle, located in the Campus of De La Salle Health Sciences Institute. (I say final because in the weeks leading to this day, our furniture has been moved incrementally. We went through a week in our old house without any television.)

Aside from moving and adjusting our personal things in our bedrooms, we also worked on setting up the various "components" of house. Wifi, Computers, and printers for the teaching Brothers had to be up and running for classes the next day. The chapel vestments and sacred vessels had to be ready for "Man does not live on bread alone..." More importantly: Our household staff made a heroic effort to get our kitchen and laundry room ready for normal operations. After all, the hurly burly of "*lipat bahay*" is better tolerated on a full stomach.



In the next few days, we will have some time to prepare for the arrival of the rest of the sub-community of retired Brothers who we've heard are very excited to move into their new home. By September 26, the New Residencia De La Salle will have its complete line up of eight Brothers: Br. Gus (Director), Br. Manny, Br. Sockie, and Br. Solofo; the sub-community of retired Brothers is composed of: Br. Benildo, Br. Crisanto, Br. Gene, and Br. Harry.



Brother Harry Reynolds in his new bedroom.



Jesus said there are many rooms in His Father's house. We certainly look forward to that final “lipat bahay” someday. But for now, we are quite happy and satisfied in our new home. *(Br. Sockie dela Rosa)*

Residencia De La Salle will provide the best comfort for ailing Brothers. It has function rooms, a physical fitness room, massage room, hobby room, studio and exhibit halls, medical clinic, library/music/IT Room, a chapel in the garden with a short covered walk, and a swimming pool with Jacuzzi. The facility also has 17 regular well-equipped air-conditioned bedrooms and three convalescent air-conditioned bedrooms for the residents. A full complement of medical staff from the De La Salle University Medical Center, DLSHSI Colleges of Medicine, Rehabilitation Sciences, Nursing and Midwifery, and Medical Radiologic Technology will be assigned to staff the Residencia. The Residencia will also offer the Brothers various opportunities to nurture their different interests, such as research writing, events and tour management, information technology, arts, photography, and music. *(De La Salle Philippines Central House Bulletin 1314 - 09)*

Give back to alma mater, Sim tells old Josephians. Old Josephians, or former students of St Joseph’s School in Kuching, are urged to give back to their alma mater to play a role in producing quality future leaders. President of Old Josephians’ Association Prof Dr Sim Kui Hian said SMK St Joseph would achieve more if every alumnus set a good example by contributing towards the school’s development.

He was pleased with many old Josephians having come forward to make the school a better place for young Josephians, but believed more could be done. “Life is not meant to be easy. If you have an easy life, you are not good for anything as you tend to take things for granted. Today, I am glad to see many of you here to preserve the environment,” he said at the launch of La Salle Garden in memory of the La Salle brothers at the school here yesterday. The event was also held in connection with SMK St Joseph’s 131st anniversary.



Dr Sim asserted only through hard work and commitment could people appreciate what they had and shape their thinking. He said the school would not be what it was if not for the dedication of old Josephians. “I remember our school block was so run down back then, but Josephians have contributed to make the school better. We have to give back to our school.” He also lauded the school for keeping up its ‘Go Green’ project, which would educate the young generation to appreciate nature and protect the environment. “While it is a form of giving back to the earth and not take our resources and nature for granted, we also want to make sure people do not forget the La Salle brothers.”

Earlier, SMK St Joseph principal Thomas Lau said the La Salle Garden was to commemorate the dedication, contribution and sincerity of the La Salle brothers who had officially served the school. He added students ought to shoulder the obligation to make the school a better place while doing their part to excel academically. About 100 students took part in the event to plant trees and flowers at the La Salle Garden, located next to the school's indoor stadium. *(Lim How Pim | <http://www.theborneopost.com/2013/09/22/give-back-to-alma-mater-sim-tells-old-josephians>)*

Lasallian Team Heads to Australia for World Solar Challenge.

De La Salle University held a send-off last September 18 at the Central Plaza for the “Sikat II” team as they will be participating as the Philippine’s official entry in the 2013 World Solar Challenge. This challenge, which will be held in Darwin, Australia on October 6 to 13, entailed them to “design and build a car capable of traveling across the Australian continent on the power of sunlight and prove it by undertaking the 3,000 kilometer journey in the spirit of friendly competition against other teams.” Sikat Solar Philippines will battle it out with 42 other teams from various universities from different countries.



 The LaSallian
Photo by Alects Ongcal

Since 2007, the country, through De La Salle University, has been joining the said event. Its first entry, Sinag, finished 12th place while its second entry, Sikat I, finished 19th place. However, this year, Dr. Alvin Culaba, hopes to finish in the top three. This would be possible with the solar car’s different modifications: lower coefficient of drag, lower ride height and smaller canopy, new brake design and suspension system, new Schwalbe Sleek tires with low coefficient of rolling resistance, a new battery management system and an improved telemetry and wiring- all of which took seven months to develop. More than bringing pride to the Lasallian community, “this solar car represents our hard work and the creativity of our students” says Dr. Rosemary Seva, dean of the Gokongwei College of Engineering. Sikat II team comprises of mechanical and electrical engineering students and teachers. Sixteen students make up the electrical team and 15 for the mechanical team. Seven students, on the other hand, make up the race team. *(<http://thelasallian.com/2013/09/20/sikat-ii-team-heads-to-australia-for-world-solar-challenge>)*

Rascals Attack Hohola Secondary Technical School. Br Antony Swamy telephoned with the news that eighteen rascals invaded the Hohola property in the early hours of Thursday morning. The security guards on site were tied up and one was physically assaulted. Fortunately, he did not sustain serious injuries. The rascals targeted the computer room and broke through three steel doors to take off with forty lap tops. As you might imagine it is a devastating blow for the student and staff at Hohola. *(Now You Know... ANZPPNG District News | 23 September 2013)*

New Zealand Catholic Secondary Principal's Conference. One of the keynote speakers at the conference was Bishop Charles Drennan from the Diocese of Palmerston North. Bishop Drennan, reflecting on Catholic schools, emphasised the following:

- *There is often lots of talk in our schools about Founders and charism but not about Jesus*
- *We are not only about results we also need to be communicating Jesus*
- *The Church is not an NGO and we need to more than examining society's symptoms we need to deal with the causes*
- *Let's promote teaching to our students as a great profession.*

(Now You Know... ANZPPNG District News | 23 September 2013)

Celebrating 175 Years of the Lasallian Mission in North America. The Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) marked a milestone with the 175th anniversary of the arrival and permanent establishment of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in North America.

The District of Francophone Canada hosted a celebration for approximately 300 people September 14 in Montréal with a ceremony, Mass, and banquet. The Vicar General of the Diocese of Montréal, four bishops, and several other priests celebrated the Mass, which was held in the Parish Church of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. The church, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary, houses the tomb of the Venerable Brother Adolphe Chatillon. Read the full story at <http://lasallian.info/2013/09/20/celebrating-175-years-of-the-lasallian-mission-in-north-america>

Postulancy. If my information is correct and up to date, we have 7 postulants in RELEM : 3 Spaniards, 2 Portuguese, 2 Poles. 4 of them are in their last year of postulancy and 3 are beginning their first year. If God and those concerned so decide, our RELEM novitiate will open its doors again next year in Madrid with the four postulants. *(News from RELEM | 20 September 2013)*

Pastoral Work for Vocations. We assembled a team for this under the chairmanship of brother Esteban. The team informed us at our Seville Conference of some of their ideas. Two of the team will follow the CIL course on Pastoral work for Vocations from 28 October to 29 November in Rome. Sixteen persons will follow the course, 5 lay women and men being from RELEM. For our Vocations team members this will be an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and ways of organising affairs with Brothers and lay members of other regions. I have asked two members of our team to use this opportunity to discuss with other members of RELEM possible action plans within the districts and the Region. *(News from RELEM | 20 September 2013)*

RÉGION LASALLIENNE EUROPÉENNE - MEDITERRANÉENNE

Situation in the Near East. The following is an account of the situation written by Brother Jean-Claude Hérault, secretary of the District of the Near East:

Sudan

The community of Khartoum has been closed because two brothers were forced to leave the country and the government refuses to renew visas for « missionaries ». The District of the Near East has decided to explore the possibility this year of opening a community in South Sudan. This could possibly be a chance to consider a joint project for RELEM... cf. later.

Egypt

None of our Lasallian Establishments in Cairo, Alexandria or Bayadeya has suffered the damage inflicted on the institutions of other Congregations, in the region of Minia, for example the Jesuits, Good Shepherd Sisters, Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyons. The school year began on the 21 September. Because of the emigration of Christians, including teachers, the teaching staffs have had to be replaced, so an effort at quick training is needed and in fact has continued. The political situation is not yet settled but free speech has been restored and the fear of an Islamic winter is receding.

Holy Land and Jordan

The school year has begun and courses are continuing.

Lebanon

More and more Syrians fleeing the fighting have had to be accommodated in Lebanon. An effort has also been made to provide some schooling for children and young people, otherwise they will miss a school year and become easy victims to fanaticism anxious to recruit them for some militia or other: there are plenty of those ready to recruit them. To sum up, the country is faced with no end of problems, especially there has been no official government for the past five months. Diplomatic contact has begun again with Syria, and this has somewhat lowered tensions so that everyone seems to have taken up their jobs again. Schools have opened again and are doing their best to deal with the new situation.

Turkey

Recent events have pointed out discontent which among people in large towns. Moreover, Turkey has to deal with the huge crowds of Syrian refugees and with the unrest of the Kurds. Those are circumstances with which the school year has begun. *(News from RELEM | 20 September 2013)*

Faternally,

Br. Edmundo L. Fernandez FSC
Malaysia

Visitor's Calendar		
October		
5 – 7	LEAD Finance Meeting	
7 – 14	Canonical Visit	<i>Myanmar</i>
17 – 20	Canonical Visit	<i>East Malaysia</i>
20 – 26	Formation Comm Canonical Visit	<i>Mindanao, Philippines</i>