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**Canonical Visit to Japan.** As has been my practice the past three years, I scheduled my Canonical Visit to the Sector of Japan in March towards the end of winter. I landed in Fukuoka on the 16th and was kindly picked up by Br. Domingo who accompanied me by train to Kagoshima. I stayed two nights and flew to Hakodate on the 18th and then on the 20th took the train to Sendai where I was privileged to be present for Br. Ohtomo's 90th birthday celebration. The visit was capped by a Sector Council meeting on the morning of the 22nd.

Throughout the visit Sector Leader, Br. Rodrigo Trevino, accompanied me. He would join me in the community meetings but he also had informal interviews with some of the Brothers.

The community at Sendai has three Brothers including the Sector Leader, Br. Rodrigo, Br.



Antonio. Br. Rodrigo and Br. Antonio are kept busy with their workload at La Salle Home but they often manage to find the time to look and take care of Br. Ohtomo.



The community at Kagoshima is composed of five Brothers, Br. Jose is the Principal of the school and the Director of the community, Br. Fujita, Br. Domingo Villamil, Br. Victor Gutierrez and Br. Fujikami round up the community. The latter is in a retirement home for Seniors. The three Mexican Brothers are all assigned in the school and therefore follow a schedule that is more or less regular. Most regular of these, and the venue for most of their community building, would be their meal times except when Domingo and Victor need to be in the dormitory.

The community at Hakodate is composed of three Brothers, namely: Br. Andre Labelle, the Director of the Community; Br. Fermin Martinez, Principal of the school; and Br. Mark Maheu. Br. Andre, aside from being Chairman of the Board, keeps himself busy with involvement with alumni. Br. Mark does “ministry of presence” to the students every morning and also tutors some students in French. Br. Fermin is totally involved in all aspects of school life and administration.



I wish to thank all the Brothers for the warmth and hospitality that was accorded to me during my visit. I thank Br. Rodrigo for the organization.

**Youth Camps in Japan.** “At the end of the school year in Japan in the middle of March, Japanese students have a two week holiday between one school year and next. In spite of the holidays, students have many activities related with the school. Here in La Salle Kagoshima, for example, students start with sports activities called “Gashuku” (“Sports Training Camp”) immediately after graduation ceremony. Coaches and students spend about five days training during the entire day and at the evening they have studies. In Japan during the holidays, kids have homework to do and sometimes holidays are called “home studies”. I guess that is one of the things that made the society of Japan disciplined and at times overwork people. But the results in the life style are very good and the Japanese are very proud about their culture and manners.

“After spring sports concentration training, we had some activities for youth Catholics in the south part of Japan. From 27 - 30 March, we participated in a Youth Catholic Camp in Kyushu (the third main Island in Japan). Catholics Schools in this area have been gathering in this camp for the last 14 years. The camp is organised by the Salesians and others religious congregations in Kyushu and those who run schools. For the last 3 years, La Salle Brothers have been involved in the organization as part of the staff while kids from La Salle Kagoshima are participants. The purpose of this camp is to promote the spirit of the Christianity in Japan since Catholics are the minority and with Buddhism or Shintoism being the main religions in this nation. This is an opportunity for our Catholic students and those who want to become Catholics to be rooted in the values of Christianity in their lives and proclaim the Gospel with their own witnessing.



“The theme of the camp this year was “The Church: to be tied together in Jesus”. About eleven Catholic schools participated with 53 young students from Junior and Senior High Schools. The members of the staff was composed of Priests from different congregations like the Jesuits and Salesians, La Salle Brothers, Marists, Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Sisters of Caritas, Sisters of Canossa (Canossian), and lay people who are very close with religious congregations and the Church. The ambience of the



camp was really good and students were very interested in the talks provided by the different Priest and lay Catholics. The prayers and meditation times we had was a very nice moment, especially because the retreat house had a wonderful view of the ocean and we had nice warm weather during those days. Also the recreation activities were fun and relaxing times in which every students and staff enjoyed together. We really felt the Church Spirit because it was not just the spirit of one congregation but many congregations together creating a new Power and New Era for our Catholic Church in Japan.

“Finally, in spite of Japan being a non Catholic country, the Spirit of Jesus is everywhere and we can feel it when young people still look for the meaning of their lives and try to make the values of the Gospel their own. The mission is not easy and evangelization has a lot of challenges in Japan. But nothing is impossible if God is the leader of our projects and we accept to Jesus as a leader of our lives. Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever! (Br. Domingo Villamil)



**La Salle College Students Win Samsung ‘Solve for Tomorrow’ Competition.** “On Friday the 4th April, CHOW Chun Hin (4G) and WONG Gabriel Chun Hei (4G) were announced winners of the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Competition. The competition required students to create ideas using technology to solve an environmental issue and create a greener Hong Kong. There were over 1,000 entries. The winning students will receive \$100,000.00 in cash and products and La Salle College will also win \$250,000.00 for IT resources. <http://support-hk.samsung.com/solvefortomorrow/en/winner.html>

“Thank you to everyone who voted for CHOW Chun Hin and WONG Gabriel. La Salle College received 13,511 votes and was one of the top five entries to go through to the final judging round and was finally selected as the best innovative idea.” (<http://web.lasalle.edu.hk>)

**Christian Brothers Schools Exchange Programme.** “April 7-11 about 100 students from the five secondary Christian Brothers Schools that form the Lasallian Family in Hong Kong participated in an exchange programme hosted by each of the schools. The opening ceremony attended by the five Principals, Supervisors and Br. Patrick was held at La Salle College on Sunday the 6th April. The ceremony included welcome speeches followed by lunch and activities. During the week students from each of the schools attended classes at each other’s school. The Exchange Programme will conclude with a closing ceremony, games, and activities at De La Salle Secondary School, Fanling, on Friday 11th April.” (<http://web.lasalle.edu.hk>)



**St. Francis Institution’s 134th Founding Anniversary.** Below is an article from the Malaysia Star Online by Mr. Percy D’Cruz:



The Franciscan spirit lives on as former and current students meet

“The fabulous Franciscan camaraderie, true blue friendship and strong bonding were the hallmark characteristics that stood out foremost among a thousand old school and classmates, teachers, De La Salle religious brothers, friends and supporters of St. Francis Institution (SFI) at its recent 134th founding anniversary “Homecoming and Reunion” dinner.

“Adhering to tradition, the event attended by around one thousand guests was held at SFI’s open air quadrangle along Jalan Banda Hilir and right in the heart of the state’s heritage, historic and tourism belt. Former and current students came from all over the country and even from Singapore



and Australia to the gala gathering where many still spoke highly of the Franciscan and LaSallian spirit.

“Ninety-two year old Horace Sta Maria, a former student and teacher now residing in Perth and who always makes it a point to “return home” for the biennial affair remarked that the dedication, steadfastness and unfailing fidelity of the founding LaSallian ideals and Franciscan spirit were second to none. He called on the present day generation of

students to adhere to tradition and uphold the unique LaSallian philosophy and code of ethics. Only then will SFI justify its continuance as being something more than just an ordinary school and be totally committed to the service of the country through proper education, formation and training of its citizens, he added.

“Horace along with five other octogenarian Franciscans were given the honour when called up to the podium to render tribute to their former alma mater and then jointly cutting a large celebration cake bearing the school’s crest. The other five included Sim Bin Teck, 82, Choe Sim Chye, 80, Cyril De Witt, 81, **Brother Matthew Liew**, 80 and Sidney Fernandez, 83. Like Horace, both Sim and Choe were former students and teachers at the school while Cyril and Sidney were notable sportsmen of the fifties who also donned state hockey and football colours respectively.

“Among the highlights of the night was the rousing singing of the School Rally led by **Bro. Micheal Kum** to the accompaniment and beating of the school’s 24-Season Drum Troupe and a 15-minute fireworks display courtesy of the Class of 1977 and lucky draws. The four-hour event wound up with roaring and hand-waving rendition of Auld Lang Syne complete with a promise of meeting up again at the same venue come April 2016.” (<http://www.thestar.com.my/News/Community/2014/04/09/SFI-is-134-years-old-The-Franciscan-spirit-lives-on-as-former-and-current-students-meet/>)



**Prayers Requested.** Br. Marc Maheu’s sister, Marie-Rose † passed away last Saturday, 5th of April. She was 88 and was hospitalised at that time. Let us keep all the family, especially Br. Marc in our prayers.

Fraternally,

**Br. Edmundo L. Fernandez FSC**  
Hong Kong

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## DE LA SALLE BROTHERS



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