

March Reflection

READING

John 7:40-53

Some in the crowd who heard these words of Jesus said,
“This is truly the Prophet.”
Other said, “This is the Christ.”
But other said, “The Christ will not come from Galilee, will he?...”
So a division occurred in the crowd because of him.
Some of them even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

REFLECTION

There was once a little girl who lived next to a little boy. They never played together because the little girl wanted to play house while the little boy wanted to play pirates. Bored with their own games that they played pretty much by themselves, the two decided to get together and play a new game : a young girl who lived in a house with a pirate as next-door neighbor.

In this Year of Mercy, God’s loving concern that reaches beyond boundaries, is the lens through which we are asked to understand ourselves and our mission. Jesus’ offer was a challenge to a way of thinking that had been ingrained – even institutionalized – for many years. As we walk with him this Holy Week, let us take to heart His offer of new life and his invitation to open our brotherhood and mission to the situations of persons outside of our institutions and places of comfort : migrants, indigenous peoples and all those who do not fit into our formal systems of education. If we but open the doors of our heart to welcome these new voices which our Institute asks us to welcome, we hope that new spirit will be breathed into our communities and ways of expressing brotherhood. It is not so much abandoning one work in favor of another as it is coming to a new understanding of how one work is related to another.



What structures and processes do we need to change so that our brotherhood can include those who at present, are excluded from our reach? What new structures or processes do we need to create so that our brotherhood can be truly a sign that God’s love is for all?

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RESPONSE

(Based on Beyond the Boundaries by Br. Leo Burkhard FSC)

Lord,
Open our hearts to know that real wealth consists in being free,
In not being possessed by possessions,
In sharing and loving,
Teach us to be like children, among whom
there is no class distinction.

Give us courage to live in this way today
Beyond the boundaries that enslave us
And may this world, which you have loved
Become a brighter place
And people can live closer to justice
Closer to happiness
And closer to peace.
AMEN.

The Pundasyon Hanunuo Mangyan School Project (Philippines)



Cultural diversity is key in today's globalized world and culture is an essential aspect of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2003). Indigenous peoples have a broad knowledge of how to live sustainably. Formal education systems, however, have replaced these with abstract and academic ways of learning. Today, there is a grave risk that much indigenous knowledge is being lost and along with it, valuable knowledge about ways of living sustainably (UNESCO, 2009).

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There are 260 million **indigenous peoples in Asia**, making it the most culturally diverse region in the world. As an indigenous peoples face problems such as denial of self-determination, the loss of control over their land and natural resources, discrimination and marginalization, heavy assimilation pressure and violent repression by state security forces. Several countries have legislations that to some extent protect the rights of indigenous peoples. These rights are, however, systematically watered down, often simply ignored or overruled.



In 2015, the De La Salle Brothers entered into an agreement with the Philippine government through the Department of Education and the Pundasyon Hanunuo Mangyan to ensure quality and culture-specific education for the Hanunuo Mangyans who live on the eastern part of the island of Mindoro. The project is a continuation of the work began by Dr. Carmelita Quebengco AFSC in 1983 upon the request of the Hanunuo Mangyan elders. The project covers two public schools with a combined enrollment of around 380 students. The project hopes, that with the accompaniment of the Lasallian community, the corps of 15 teachers who serve in these two schools will be enabled to evolve a curriculum that integrates the integrates the Mangyan culture's rich heritage with the community's changing needs and realities.



St Patrick's Day Parade

On Sunday 13th March La Salle College joined 30 other parade groups and marched from Central Pier to Tamar Park in the 2nd Hong Kong St. Patrick's Day Parade, flying the school flag in celebration in what is a global annual event in the great cities of the world, home and host to the Irish diaspora. The College salutes the many Irish Brothers who served education here in Hong Kong since 1875. This year also marks the 10th Anniversary of the 'Easter Uprising', the historic event in 1916 that finally led to Irish independence from England in 1921. The PTA and the OBA joined the College in the parade and Mr Phillip Chan sang Danny Boy to start the concert at Tamar Park.



(Clipped from <http://web.lasalle.edu.hk/eng/home.php>; Photo courtesy of Mr Thomas Wong)



Is it I Lord?: 2016 Discerners' Retreat

(by John Galang, Aspirant)

How hard or how easy is it to say “Yes” to a path that is unclear?. To a life that is different from the usual but may have the passion and happiness you are longing for? *“Take heart; get up he is calling you”* this is the theme that surrounded the last weekend of February 2016, for 14 aspirants from different communities who took time to discern God’s will for them in Shambala Silang Cavite for this year’s Discerner’s retreat. Coming together as brothers, the retreat was facilitated by Br. Kenneth Martinez FSC President and Chancellor of De La Salle Lipa with Br. Angelo Paragas FSC the National Vocations Promoter and Br. Mark Salvan FSC, the Community Vocations Promoter of Residencia De La Salle Brothers’ Community.



The retreat became a special time between the aspirant and God. During the course of the retreat the discerners came to recognize God in their own personal history. While the facilitator gave a session on basic discernment principles, discussing what discernment is, its challenges and how the process of discernment goes about. Sharing by dyads and by groups with regards to their own reflections accompanied by a Brother, the Discerners tackled their own experiences, worries and concerns about their own journey in knowing their own vocation. A special prayer service happened by which the Discerners shared their own

realizations and prayer intentions, which the group communally prayed for. Inspired by the story of Bartimaeus the blind man in the gospel, during the last day the discerners formally ended their retreat by sharing their own learning's and symbolized by cloak left behind by Bartimaeus in the story, the participants were asked to share and leave behind their own worries and anxieties as they continue to journey in the path God is calling them.

Summing the experience of the event, the discernment retreat was a venue for the aspirant's own personal time with God, and maintaining an open heart to answer God's call. Keeping in mind that the "Yes" they are about to answer shall lead them not to the end of a journey, but to the new beginning, or a new life God prepared for them. Through various activities focused on the acts of discernment and prayer the discerners are called to say *Here I am Lord, is it I Lord? I will go Lord, if you lead me.*



Reminders

- Brothers Director, please accomplish the C2-Supplement to the History of the House and pass it on to your respective Country Coordinators and LEAD Administrator hopefully before our retreats begin.
- Retreat Instructions: Those travelling to another country for their retreat, instructions for Thailand and Philippines will be sent to you by today. Malaysia has sent instructions to you already. Thanks to Br. Andrew.

Health and Wellness

SUPERFOODS (Runner's World, December 2015 issue, page 46 – 47)

Sweet Potatoes. Rich in carbs, they have a low glycemic index when boiled (not baked), helping keep blood-sugar levels steady. A medium sweet potato also contains about the same runner-friendly potassium as a banana. EAT IT. Bake and drizzle with honey and cinnamon for a prerun snack.

Fraternally,

Edmundo Fernandez FSC
Manila