



75th Anniversary as a De La Salle Brother

On May 14, 2017, Br. Harry Reynolds FSC celebrated his 75th anniversary as a De La Salle Brother at age 93. The event was held at the Residencia De La Salle with his community. The celebration started with Mass wherein he renewed his vows followed by a hearty lunch. His Brother Director presented him with a certificate, signed by Brother Visitor, as an award for his 75 years of faithful service to the Lasallian mission (**Br. Dan Sanding FSC**)

Philippines Vocation Summer Camp 2017

The Annual Vocation Summer Camp brought 49 participants from different Lasallian communities all over the country from April 22 to 25, 2017. The Brothers, as well as our lay partners from La Salle University, Ozamiz and La Salle Academy, Iligan graciously hosted the 4 day camp that was filled with activities that truly fostered fellowship between the campers as well as the Brothers.

Br. Angelo Paragas FSC, the National Vocations Director, as well as 9 other young Brothers from the Philippines joined the Summer Campers for VSC 2017.

The first day at La Ferme de La Salle in Ozamiz City gave the participants the opportunity to reflect and meditate as they went through several recollections that made them understand more about the Brothers' Vocation. The following days were spent venturing into the city of majestic waterfalls, and witnessing and engaging with the Subanen Tribe as the participants were given the opportunity to make their own dream catchers and increase their knowledge about the tribe's life and culture.

The participants were also involved in the interfaith dialogue together with their Muslim brothers and sisters in La Salle Academy, Iligan City. The last day was then spent in preparation for the thanksgiving mass and culmination night that were ably planned and facilitated by the Discerners.

After every activity to let the participants embrace their faith and continue another step into the path of brotherhood, this year's Vocation Summer Camp has indeed created a great bond of brotherhood. Truly, all of those experiences, will indeed let them live Jesus in their hearts forever. (**Jexter Jefferson Soliguen**)



Project Cope 165: A Reflection



The Lasallian Family in Singapore embarked on a month long project in response to a big change by the authorities. An announcement was made a year ago on all national television and radio stations stating that the 2G network will be diminished to make way for more 3G and 4G bandwidth. A 2G user will have to replace his or her SIM card as well as their phone or they will not be able to use it after 1st April 2017.

I thought to myself, what will happen to those who are unable to change their mobile phones then? Would our aging society be able to cope with this change? But I did nothing then. Fast forward to February 2017, I came across leaflets announcing the change but there was no governmental help or any organisations working on this.

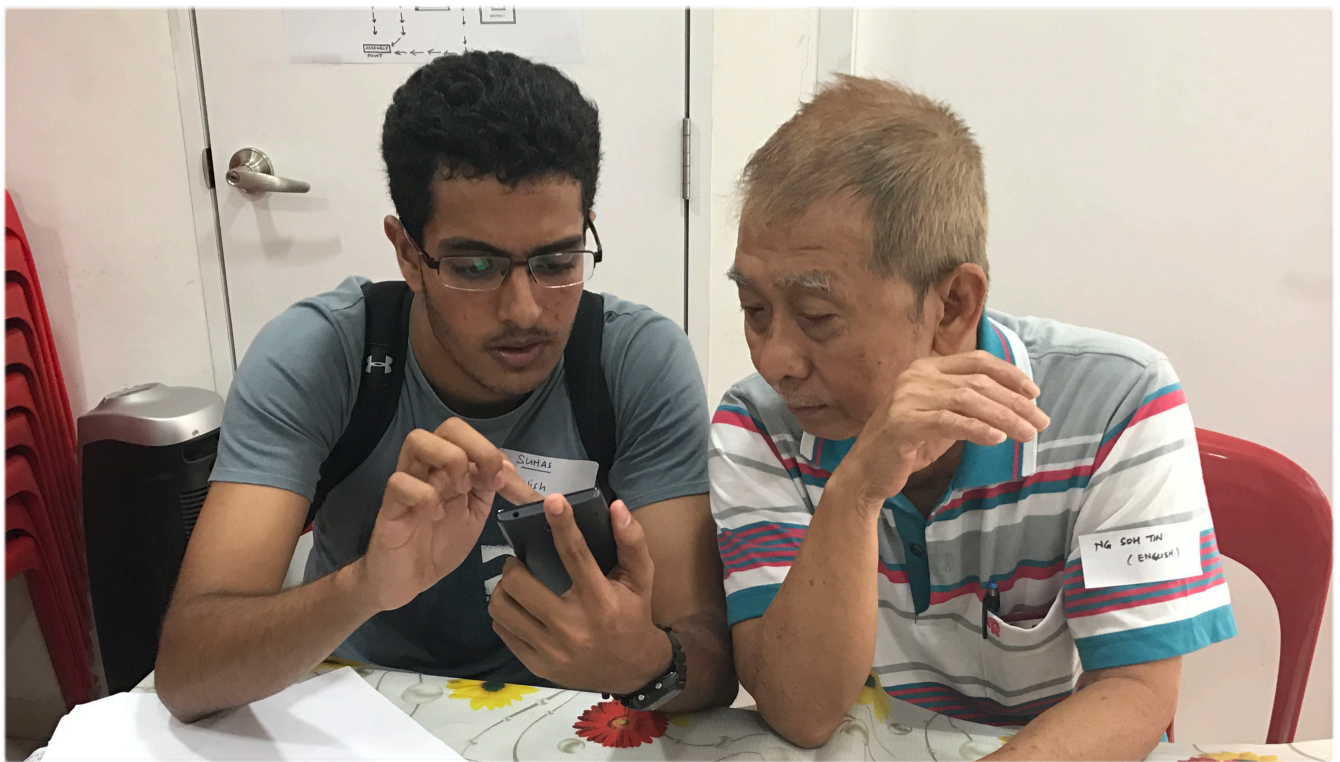
This triggered an idea. Project Cope 165 was conceived, which will be in conjunction with our 165th anniversary of Lasallian presence in Singapore as well. We started with a feasibility survey to get a sense of what potential donors and targeted beneficiaries thought of the idea of the project. While we were doing this, centres were unable to answer the queries of the elderly in their centre and told us that many elderly were clueless about this change. This survey was done with three senior activity centres catering to the one-roomed flats in their area and shelter for migrant workers. (Continued)

We worked with a very tight schedule and limited manpower. We planned it such that the Lasallian family could work together on this. Many schools took this up as part of their Lenten observance.

We experienced many hiccups along the way. This led to frustrations and confusions. One frustration that we experienced was our communication with the telecommunication companies. We were given many versions of what we should do with the phones, SIM cards and whether the elderly needs to be present in person to change their phone plans, but each time, we came back with different answers. In the end, we brought the elderly to the telephone companies to have their cards changed.

One of the most tiring part for me was to recruit volunteers and ensure they commit to it. There were many occasions when the volunteers pulled out on that day itself and I had to scramble to look for replacements. There was one day when we had a collection, a visit to the phone shop and the checking of phones all happening at the same time. Thankfully, we always had just enough numbers to get us going.

The most enjoyable bit for me was seeing how supportive the schools and Brothers were towards this project. We had students, parents, staff members, members of the public stepping forward and seeing LYNKsters returning to offer whatever they could. The other thing was getting to know the beneficiaries and seeing their smiles after they have received our help. (Continued)



Here are some reflection from our volunteers.



When I was helping out to distribute the phones at Jalan Kukoh, i was not able to communicate with the elderly as they spoke in dialect which I had never learned but despite this mini setback I continued to help with whatever I can from delivering phones to some houses and fixing older model phones. Overall the experience was truly great as I got to interact with some of the volunteers and see how dedicated these people are to this great cause. (Linus Chee, student, St Patrick's School)



My experience with Project Cope 165 was quite different because I was involved with the collection and checking of the donated phones. It was a very tedious process as we had to write individual receipts for each phone that we had collected, and had to go through a whole checklist of procedures. The checking of phones was very thorough as well, as we had to ensure that they were in working condition. However, through this, I learned to be more thorough with my work and to pay attention to even the smallest of details, skills that will no doubt serve me well in the future. (Richard Lee, LYNKster)

The collection and checking of phones was no doubt a very long process that required utmost meticulousity. We had to record the model of each phone and ensure the phone was in proper working order to be able to donate them. However mundane the process, it all paid off when we accompanied those receiving the phones to the telcos. Seeing the joy on their faces made this process all worthwhile as we knew that our hard word was going to make a difference in the lives of these people. Sara-Robyn Pang, LYNKster)

It was different and eye opening. It showed me how we go about our daily lives not knowing there are people in need, people who could have been disconnected from the "world". I have now realised how important it is to give a helping hand, no matter how small, it could change the way someone's lifestyle. (Bryan Lee, LYNKster)



To date, we are still following up with the various organisations. Since 1st April 2017, we have been visiting the centres on a weekly basis to answer queries, distribute phones to homebound residents and handle phone repairs. For example, during the distribution, we handed a hand phone set to one of the seniors. However, there were some problems with the phone which led him to being very frustrated. We help replace the phone and that meant the world to him.

We are happy that this project was a success. We managed to bring the Lasallian family together to serve our Last, Lost and Least. This is an example of responding to the current needs of our fast moving Singapore. This project allowed us to assist 58 seniors and 53 migrants from four different centres. Even though we didn't manage to collect enough used 3G phones, we did receive adequate donations which allowed us to buy new basic 3G phones. We would not have done it without the help of our 34 conscientious volunteers. We are also thankful for the generous donors and the schools who helped with the publicity of this project. **(Ed-Linddi Ong)**

Arts and Culture

Tuen Ng Festival | Dragon Boat Festival

Duanwu means ‘double fifth’ because Tuen Ng occurs on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month in the Chinese calendar.



Tuen Ng is also called the Dragon Boat Festival and it's the astounding time when the waterways around Hong Kong come to life with dragon boats competing against each other and myriads of decorated junks and other watercraft. Teams even come from overseas to compete.

The dragon boats are built in the shape of massive war canoes. They vary in size and have crews from 20 to 80 people, which often now include teams of women. The crew paddles according to the thunder of the drummer who sits in the middle of the boat and beats on a drum.

The ‘support crowd’ on the shores and in watercraft alongside also joins in the noise. From the moment of the starter’s gun, cheers and loud banging of cymbals (believed to ward off evil spirits) deafen those nearby.

The holiday is also a celebration of the Goddess of Heaven who takes care of fishermen. It is assumed, naturally, that the goddess will also take care of the dragon boat racers. (<https://publicholidays.hk/tuen-ng-festival/>)

Photo: https://i.ytimg.com/vi/jZE-zuO_b88/maxresdefault.jpg

Fraternally,

Edmundo Fernandez FSC