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CHRIST IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!



La Salle Home, Sendai, Miyagi, Japan. The time for the first group of girls going to Junior High School has arrived (April, 2013). This means that it is been more than 10 years since conceiving the idea of accepting girls at La Salle Home (LS Home). One of the main reasons for accepting girls was to offer the same place for those with siblings, which until that moment needed to be separated because of the lack of infrastructure. Of course after being more than 45 years as an all boys Institution, it will bring a new whole set of challenges that require open minds and a lot of training to respond adequately to this new reality.



Another big challenge is the new orientation for Children Welfare Policies in Japan. There is an emphasis on the “Role of Fosters Parents” as a first option and “Small Groups Care” (depending from the existent institutions) to provide a family centered lifestyle for the children in the welfare system. New big institutions will not be approved. The existing institutions will have to decrease its numbers to a maximum of 45 children.

LS Home has a capacity for 80 children. This process of giving family oriented and individual care (already in practice in LS Home) required by the Japanese Government to put it in practice is 15 years. At the moment LS Home has one main building with 8 apartments and a big room for 16 little kids (2 to 6 years old). Each apartment hosts 8 kids, so from primary education to tertiary education we have 64 children. In the near future (15 years) LS Home will have to decrease by 35 children in its main housing building although the limit will be still 80. These 35 children will be allocated in groups of 6 in 6 houses in the neighborhood. These small groups will be also La Salle Home and the staff will be provided by La Salle Home as well.

With the ever increasing cost to provide care for the aging Japanese society, will the Government have enough funds to support this new way of doing children welfare? After the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, accommodation for residents and refugees, especially from nuclear accident in Fukushima, is not that easy, there is lack of housing in Sendai. Will it be possible to find 6 houses in the neighborhood? Because these small groups by themselves are like independent institutions, will these Institutions have enough qualified personnel to attend to these new small groups? These are some of the questions that come to mind. I think that the objective of giving a



more family oriented service to these children centers it is worth give it a chance.

Our Work as Brothers in La Salle Home:

Br. Ohtomo: With his 89 springs, for the kids, he is the grandfather of the Brothers' Community. His presence in some moments in the Institution is a sign of a live dedicated to education for the staff.

Br. Rodrigo: He has many facets in LS Home. First of all, he is the principal of the Institution. He has a weekly prayer session with the kids and it is another very important aspect of the education of our children.

Br. Antonio: (I'm sorry to write a lot about me) For me one of the most important roles in my work at La Salle Home is being present. Being physically present where our kids are. Of course my presence is almost instantly felt with my 100 "plus-alpha" KG. ("Plus-alpha" is a very much used expression in Japan, especially if you do not want to say something exactly.)



The whole year we have kids at La Salle Home. During schools holidays, to change the atmosphere of the daily life, particularly with the hectic schedule of the school year; we program leisure activities in which the kids can decide freely to participate on it or not.



I would say that one of our duties that we have with these kids is to raise them in a way that can become responsible citizens. We have to be mediators with them in respecting their own decisions but also mediators with their parents, even though many neglect their education, they have the right also to be involved in the decision of their son or daughter about their future.

These are some thoughts about La Salle Home. It is a concrete way of doing something for the needy in Japan as LEAD. The challenge is that everything is in Japanese. (Br. Antonio Cubillas)

45th General Chapter Logo Design Contest. The Preparatory Commission for the 45th General Chapter and the Communications Service of the Generalate invite all Lasallians – Brothers, teachers, students, alumni, etc. to contribute their creativity, art and ingenuity in a logo contest for the 45th General Chapter to be held in 2014. Kindly publicize this contest by sending the attached rules to schools, communities or groups that you deem appropriate to receive them. Thank you in advance for spreading the word about this contest and for the generous support that you give to the Preparatory Commission!





La Salle Explorer's Brother Chaplain. I am attaching an article from New York Times on Br. Ed Sheehey of the District of Eastern North America. Br. Ed is a History Professor of La Salle University in Philadelphia and is the team chaplain of the men's basketball team, the Explorers. The article is not so much about basketball but a plug about the Christian Brothers and St. La Salle. You can also access the article at this New York Times website: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/28/sports/ncaabasketball/la-salles-team-chaplain-is-a-calming-influence-at-the-end-of-the-bench.html?_r=1&



Hong Kong Holy Week.

The Brothers in Hong Kong gathered last 25 - 27 March for a Sector Holy Week Retreat that was facilitated by PARC General Councillor, Br. David Hawke. This also coincided with Br. David's Pastoral Visit to the Sector which lasted almost a week.



During those three days, Br. David presented the following themes for the reflection and faith sharing of the Brothers:

(1) Spirit of Faith: *Living our Vows and Identity*; (2) An Integrated Lasallian Spirituality: *Mission, Community Life and Interior Life*; and (3) Evangelical Mission of the Brother: *Being a Brother - A Life Centered on the Gospel*. Among the documents he shared as spiritual reading for the Brothers were the penultimate draft of the revised Rule and Circular 466: *"They Will Call Themselves Brothers"*. Each day concluded with a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Br. David also shared the priorities of the General Council particularly on the future of the Institute in certain areas of the world. From Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday, the Brothers participated in the Easter Triduum in various Catholic Churches in Hong Kong.



Philippines Holy Week. 26 March (Day 1). As the Brothers gradually arrived at PHINMA Training Center, this year's venue for the Sector Retreat, the air of excitement likewise slowly filled the air. Since there were no scheduled activities prior to dinner, the Brothers took the time to settle down, share stories and reconnect with one another. The exchange of stories continued over supper and socials.

27 March (Day 2). The day started with a prayer service on Leadership in Faith prepared by our scholastic, Br. Timothy La Salle (Myanmar). Afterwards, Br. Bong Servando FSC, chair of the Directors' Association formally welcomed all the Brothers to this year's Sector Retreat. After the formal welcome and announcements have been said, our sector leader, Br. JJ Jimenez FSC then introduced this year's retreat facilitator, Br. George Van Grieken FSC, president of St. Joseph Institute International (Singapore).



This year's retreat topic revolved on leadership. After presenting a concise outline of the topics that will be tackled for the week, the Brothers were then lead to reflect on the different context of leadership, given the "bigger picture" on the realities that we face as a sector and institute as a whole. As part of the process, Br. George also integrated the concepts discussed with the Stations of the Cross. In the afternoon, the Brothers, grouped in their respective communities, gathered to share the fruits of the reflections for the day. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist then followed. After supper, Br. JJ convened the Brothers to present the significant developments concerning the Sector and De La Salle Philippines.

28 March (Day 3). The Brothers started the day with their best smiles for the Sector and community picture taking. After the formal and the wacky group photos were taken, the Brothers then proceeded to the conference hall for the day's session which focused on looking at Leadership Models both from inside and outside of the Lasallian Family. The session ended with the sharing of Br. Vic Franco FSC on his leadership experiences. After lunch, the Brothers gathered per age group to share on the points that spoke to them during the session. Afterwards, the Brothers then proceeded to the chapel for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist where the Washing of the Feet was reenacted. Some Brothers, after dinner, then went out for the traditional Visita Iglesia.



29 March (Day 4). The day's session focused on looking at Jesus' and St. De La Salle's leadership style. Br. George shared some points from the book, Jesus, CEO as well as from the Founder's life events and meditation. At the end of the session, Br. Dennis Magbanua FSC shared some leadership principles which he learned from the "Pros and the Bros". In the afternoon, the Brothers gathered in the chapel at 3 o'clock in the afternoon for the Good Friday rites. Afterwards, some of the Brothers opted to have their personal Way of the Cross. The Brothers then went to their assigned groups and venues for the exercise of fraternal affirmation.



30 March 2013 (Day 5). The day’s session focused on leadership vis-à-vis the following: our association as Brothers and with our Lasallian Partners, looking at and enhancing our creativity skills and our leadership principles as individuals. Br. Aikee Esmeli FSC was asked to share his leadership experience as a student-leader while Br. Armin Luistro FSC was likewise invited to share his experiences and reflections from his leadership work at the Department of Education. Late in the afternoon, the Directors’ Association had their meeting which was followed by a brief meeting of the new communities. After dinner, the Brothers then gathered outside the chapel for the Service of the Light which marks the start of the Easter Vigil Rites. Before the end of the Eucharistic Celebration, as a gesture of “sending” the Brothers to their respective “missions”, Br. JJ requested the community directors to receive the crosses and don them to the members of their community.

The celebration of the Lord’s resurrection and our brotherhood continued in the socials prepared by Brs. Mandy Dujunco FSC and Alex Diaz FSC. Brothers who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 40th and 50th anniversary were likewise honored in the said gathering. *(Br. Angelo Paragas)*

Easter Greetings of the Superior General. “When I went to Bujedo during my pastoral visit to the District of ARLEP, the Brothers gave me an Easter Card containing a photograph of an old olive tree in their garden. The trunk is old and decayed, but a beautiful new shoot is sprouting from it. I think this is a lovely image of what Easter should mean in our lives: an act of faith and hope by which we know that Christ has risen, and that shoots of new life can always appear to enable us to face the future with the confidence that life will overcome death.



“In recent weeks, we have lived through exceptional events in the life of the Church, and I believe that the call made to us by Benedict XVI, during Mass on the Day for Religious Life, to undertake an interior pilgrimage so as to renew the ardour of our first love in the light of our knowledge of our weakness, and the call made to us by Pope Francis to transform power into service so as to discover God as essentially mercy, not to be afraid of tenderness but to be a Church that is poor and for the poor, are calls which constitute a beautiful Easter present for us to incorporate into our lives and transmit with great love to all those whom the Lord has entrusted to our care.” – Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría (<http://www.lasalle.org/en/2013/03/easter-greetings-2013/>)

Fraternally,

Br. Edmundo L. Fernandez FSC
Hong Kong

Visitor’s Calendar		
Date	Event	Venue
April		
07 – 13	Sector Council Meeting National Mission Council Meeting	<i>Philippines</i>
13 – 21	Canonical Visit LEAD Council 9	<i>Singapore</i>
22 – 30	Retreat Sector Council Meeting	<i>Myanmar</i>