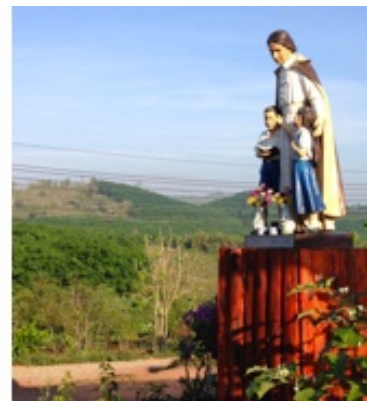




7 April 2013 • 93 Feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle



Canonical Visits to Two Communities in Thailand. I flew in to Thailand on 16th of March to visit two communities --- the Bamboo School and Nakonsawan. The schools were already on holidays with some having started their summer program. Temperatures were up to the mid 30s, warm but at least it was dry. Together with Sector Leader, Br. Stephen Kan and Br. Simon Phanom, we departed mid morning of the 17th for Sangklaburi (Bamboo School). It was a six hour relaxed ride with a short break at the river Kwai near Kanchanaburi. We arrived at about 4 in the afternoon and after washing up proceeded to the original campus near the Myanmar border. We had mass celebrated by the parish priest and we were together with Sacred Heart sisters who were on exposure and who were with their candidates. The next day was devoted to interviewing the three Brothers, namely: Br. Joseph Klong, Director, Br. Victor Gil and Br. Stephen Pitchit. The latter travels daily to the original campus while Bros. Joe and Victor work and look after the Parmenie campus. I ended the visit with a meeting with the Brothers and a meal outside.



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An interesting project for the community is their effort to grow Spanish Melons which, Br. Victor Gil swears, are the sweetest in the world! They are on a third batch of melons as the first ones weren't too successful and, well, were also stolen!

We drove out the next day for Nakonsawan for another six hours and arrived late afternoon. Br. Peter Boonchert is the Director of the school and the community. The members are Br. Alphonso Danai, Br. Benilde Preecha and Br. Dominic Chamlong. The latter was also Director of the the Juniorate. Brothers Danai and Benilde were responsible for some areas in the school and worked closely with Br. Peter. I ended the visit with a meeting and a Chinese dinner.



I spent the following week, Holy Week, on retreat with the Brothers of the sector. We were in the Provincialate of the Redemptorists in Bangkok starting on the evening of Palm Sunday all the way to Easter Sunday. Our retreat master was an 84 year old American Redemptorist, Fr. Leo Travis --- a very holy man. Sharing many stories and his rich experience as a missionary he spoke of prayer, witnessing, and what it means to be Religious. He would speak for an hour every day and the rest were left for prayer and some small meetings. We would have morning prayers, mid day meditations and eucharist in the evening. During the triduum we went to the Redemptorist parish to join the services. On Easter Sunday four Young Brothers renewed their temporary vows: Br. Francisco Teerayut, Br. Benilde Preecha, Br. John Niran and Br. Sebastian Charoen.



I am personally grateful to the Brothers for the warmth and hospitality. It was a quiet, restful and prayerful retreat for me and was glad to have had the opportunity to settle down a bit. I wish to thank Br. Stephen Kan for the organization of the visits; to Br. Simon Phanom for accompanying us and

helping out in many different ways; to the Brothers of the two communities especially to Br. Joseph Klong and Br. Peter Boonchert, Directors.



La Salle Learning Center, Penang. I am attaching an article by Mr. Alvin Ung on the La Salle Learning Center that was published in “The Star Online” of Malaysia last 25 March 2013. Brother John D’Cruz established the center in 1984. The La Salle Learning Centre’s approach emphasises skills acquisition, character formation and the building of human relationships rather than the memorising of facts. “In a school classroom, students sit in rows, and the teacher tells them what to do,” said Brother John. “Here, we want our children to understand that learning is something they give themselves by choice. The children take responsibility for their learning and apply their learning skills to their school.”



Lasallian Wins POYi. “Congratulations to Justin JIN (Justin King) who has recently won the Award for Excellence by Picture of the Year International (POYi) for his work ‘Zone of Absolute Discomfort’. Justin graduated from La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong around 1989 and completed an Honours degree from Cambridge University in Social and Political Sciences. Before embarking on an independent career in photography Justin worked as a Reuters correspondent in Beijing. Today Justin is a renowned photographer working with the world’s leading publications and organizations to photograph themes in Europe, China, and Russian-speaking countries. He is the recipient of a Magnum Foundation award, the Picture of the Year International (POYi) prize, and a World Press Photo Masterclass scholarship, among other prizes. A special edition of his work has been exhibited and collected by the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Justin is currently based in Brussels.” You can view his works at his website: <http://justinjinn.com> (<http://web.lasalle.edu.hk>)



La Salle Study Centre, Changjiao. Below are excerpts from the 1st Quarter Report of Br. David Liao on the La Salle Study Centre in Changjiao, Dabu, China:

“After being away from LSSC Changjiao for exactly 2 months, I was excited to be “home” again. It was late so no villagers turned up to welcome me. That was alright. When I opened the door to my room I found to my dismay that there were “unwelcomed guests” living in my room while I was away. I was careful to bar the bottom of the wooden door of my room with a metal plate when I left as rats are known to chew their way in. I must acknowledge that I underestimated the intelligence of the rats. They made their way into my room through the ventilation duct above my



closed window. I had to spend my first night home in store room as the rats had made a mess of my room. Silence (no one around) is golden has another meaning as far as rats are concerned! In future, I will employ “grandma’s remedy” of spiking my room with ground pepper when I away for long duration.

“News of my return spread around very fast and as in previous years, there were many visitors to LSSC before we started our Winter Programme on 3rd February. Then it was time to celebrate the Spring Festival of the Year of the Snake. The events that followed were very much like in previous years. On the 27th day of the Lunar month, we had our annual slaughtering of two pigs except that this year, the pigs are from our own pig farm. I had my regular rounds of lunches and dinners with different families throughout the season. We had our drumming activities to liven up the evenings. The old Year of the Dragon passed smoothly into the New Year of the Snake amidst a cacophony of drums, gongs and cymbals, the thunderous blasts of firecrackers and the explosion of fireworks that lit up the sky.

“However all is not well at the Chinese Visa front. I was told by some in Hongkong that entry visa application has changed and tightened up. I am also a “victim” as I was granted a Yearly Multiple Entry Visa with a limitation of just 30 days per entry. I will have to eventually sort this out with the local authorities here in Dabu when things return to some “normality” as there were many changes in the government departments because of the leadership change in China. Meanwhile, it means that I have to return to Hongkong every 28 days (it is always advisable to have 2 days to spare!) I returned to Hongkong on 18th February and came back to Changjiao on 21st February. It was a tiring 4 days trip with 2 days spent traveling 10 hours each way.

“On the publicity front, LSSC is again in the news. We are first placed in the 10 Top News Media Personality of Guangdong 2012 survey beating 19 other nominees hands down. We were more than 2000 votes ahead of the second placed nominee and garnered almost 40% of all votes cast. The Guangdong Provincial TV crew was here to interview and film us on 1st and 2nd March. The Award Ceremony will be held in Guangzhou on Friday 22nd March. Another feather in our cap!

“Thank God, most things are running smoothly. LSSC as an English language learning centre is getting more and more well known. The pomelos plantation project to improve the overall standard of living of every family in Baijiang is going well. Most villagers spend their free time tending to the pomelo plants. Unfortunately though, we are hitting a snag in our projected plan to cement the 1.2 km of gravel hill road. Every family whose land is required to build this road had signed agreement to allow the road to be built except one. Verbally they had agreed and in fact encouraged us to open 30 meters of the road right through the middle of their land.

“I must admit that I was too trusting and didn’t think they will renege on their verbal agreement because I had helped that family many times as they are my close relatives. I am very disappointed as they are using this to blackmail





me. They want me to finish building one of their houses and build them a pig farm. They even have the audacity to warn others not to get involved as they say that this matter is “solely between them and I”. I have, as usual, handed this matter to the village administration to settle. Meanwhile, I have had discussions with other villagers and we are confident that we can circumvent their land by cutting into hill again. They are not stupid either, as they make sure that two brothers whom I helped in the past are still in “good terms” with me, one who demanded the house renovation has left town, and they make the youngest and poorest brother as the “sacrificial lamb” to “fight” with me. Such is village politics. Please pray that I will not turn vindictive when the dust settles and the problem is solved as their pomelo plots use the watering system that I designed and built and they will have to use the road to bring their produce out in future.

“There is a very positive development for our Catholic Diocese of Meizhou. The government of Meizhou has allocated a choice piece of land 11,591 square meters for the building of a Cathedral Church , a Bishop House, a Convent, a Catholic Hospitality Home and an Education Training Centre. I am excited about this development because as I strive to make LSSC self sufficient by 2017, I sense I now have sufficient reputation in Meizhou to develop the Education Training Centre as an English learning centre. The Bishop has already invited me to move down to Meixian to help him.

“On another front, our “live-in community” has grown. The couple from Hunan , Mr and Mrs Su is back. We have a lady teacher from Shantow who had taken a full semester leave to study English. Her two primary school daughters are also with us and have registered to study in the nearby village school. One 4th Year University student from Zhang Jia Jie also joined us to study English instead of looking for a job for his practicum. Our oldest student is a 58

swimming instructor from Guangzhou. So, with my teaching assistant Lucy and I, we are a community of 9. Volunteer English teachers are always welcome!”

LEAD Personnel Movement. The following Brothers are transitioning and moving into new assignments around the months of April to June. Let us remember them and their intentions in our prayers.

Name	Sector	Current	New Assignment
Br. Angelo Paragas	PHL	Scholasticate, Lasallian Formation Center	Jaime Hilario Integrated School, Bagac
Br. Alex Diaz	PHL	Vocations Director, Philippines Lasallian Formation Center, LSGH	Vocations Director, Philippines House of Studies, DLSU Manila
Br. Alphonso Danai	THA	La Salle Nakonsawan	St. Patrick's Community, Singapore * MA studies at LaSalle College of the Arts
Br. Bernie Oca	PHL	Vice Chancellor for Mission, De La Salle University, Manila	President, De La Salle Santiago Zobel * DLSU Manila Community

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Name	Sector	Current	New Assignment
Br. Benildo Feliciano	PHL	De La Salle University Manila Community	Maison De La Salle, Dasmariñas City
Br. Bong Servando	PHL	Vice Chancellor for Administration, De La Salle Lipa	Director, Bacolod Community Director of Scholastics Administration, USLS
Br. Cris Moreno	PHL	De La Salle University Manila Community	Maison De La Salle, Dasmariñas City
Br. Dennis Magbanua	PHL	President, De La Salle Zobel Community Director, DLSU - Dasmariñas	President, DLS College of St. Benilde Director, DLSU Manila Community
Br. Dominic Chamlong	THA	La Salle Nakonsawan	La Salle College, Bangna <i>* teaching and further studies</i>
Br. Felipe Belleza	PHL	President, La Salle Green Hills	President, La Salle Academy, Iligan Director, Iligan Community
Br. Franciso Teerayut	THA	La Salle Bangna	La Salle Nakonsawan
Br. Frank Suriya	THA	La Salle Bangna	Director of the Juniorate La Salle Nakonsawan
Br. Gene Tiangco	PHL	De La Salle University Manila Community	Maison De La Salle, Dasmariñas City
Br. Harry Reynolds	PHL	Residencia La Salle, DLSU - Dasmariñas	Maison De La Salle, Dasmariñas City
Br. Ignaci Heri	MYS	Scholasticate, USLS Bacolod Community	Nabawan, Sabah, Malaysia
Br. Joseph Lian Thang	MMR	Maymyo, Myanmar	De La Salle Lipa, Philippines
Br. John D’Cruz	MYS	Ipoh	Kota Kinabalu
Br. Jun Erguiza	PHL	DLSU Manila Community	St. Benilde Community (LSGH)
Br. Lazaro Rodriguez	JPN	De La Salle Zobel / DLSU - Dasmariñas	La Salle Home, Sendai, Japan
Br. Manny Hilado	PHL	St. Benilde Community (LSGH)	Lasallian Formation Center, LSGH
Br. Manny Sia	PHL	Jaime Hilario Integrated School, Bagac	De La Salle University - Dasmariñas
Br. Mario Zammit	THA	La Salle Nakonsawan	Myanmar (<i>formation apostolate</i>)
Br. Michael Broughton	SGP	Associate Vice Chancellor for Lasallian Mission, DLSU Manila	Vice Chancellor for Mission, De La Salle University, Manila
Br. Peter Foo	MYS	La Salle Novitiate	Director, Kota Kinabalu <i>* full - time by November</i>

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Name	Sector	Current	New Assignment
Br. Peter Ng	MYS	Tambunan	Kota Kinabalu
Br. Raffy Reyes	PHL	President, La Salle Academy Director, Iligan Community	De La Salle Lipa Director, Lipa Community
Br. Victor Franco	PHL	President, DLS College of St. Benilde Director, St. Benilde Community (LSGH)	President, La Salle Green Hills Director, St. Benilde Community (LSGH)

Brothers in Initial Formation:

Name	Sector	Current	New Assignment
Br. Butch Alcudia Br. Dan Sanding Br. Joseph Daluz Br. Toby De La Cruz	PHL	Scholasticate 1, House of Studies, De La Salle University, Manila	Scholasticate 2, University of St. La Salle Community, Bacolod <i>* practice teaching at USLS Integrated School and St. Joseph's High School</i>
Br. Timothy	MMR	House of Studies, DLSU Manila	Scholasticate 2, Maymyo, Myanmar
Br. Bosco La Ga Mung Br. Francis G. La Seng Br. John Win Kyaw	MMR	La Salle Novitiate	Scholasticate 1, House of Studies, De La Salle University, Manila
Br. Rehman Javed Br. Tabish	PAK		
Br. Abet King Pia Br. Angelo Paolo Mata Br. Cliff Ferdinand Sy Br. Edgar Esparagoza Br. Mark Salvan	PHL		
Br. Luke	PNG		
Br. Johnny Perapong	THA		

Br. Patrick Chaiyot (Thailand) and Br. Vincent Tang (Malaysia) have decided not to renew their vows. Let us include them in our prayers.

Faternally,

Br. Edmundo L. Fernandez FSC
Philippines

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