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The LEAD Council at the Singapore Arts Museum, which was the former building and campus of St. Joseph's Institution.

Canonical Visit | Meetings in Singapore. I spent 9 days in the sector of Singapore for canonical visits to the two communities plus LEAD Council Meetings. I arrived in the evening of April 13 and proceeded to St. Patrick's to catch General Councilor Br. David Hawke, who was leaving the next day, for reeditions. I began April 14, Sunday by joining some members of the community for Sunday mass in Mandarin. The whole morning of Sunday was devoted to interviews. There are currently six (6) members in the community led by Br. Nicholas Seet, Director. Nicholas is the only Brother teaching at St. Pat's. Br. Gregory Lim, the most senior of our LEAD monks but still very strong and sharp, brings stability to a very busy community. Br. Collin Wee works at Hope House. Brs. David Hawke and John Pill are members of the community. Postulant Raphael Tanet, from Thailand, will be part of the community for the next four weeks as he studies English.

Hope House is currently full house with 12 residents and about 6 staff. HH is recognized and subsidized by the Singaporean government and was visited last year by the Minister of Social Welfare.



I moved to SJI on the 15th. Like St. Pat's, SJI has six (6) members headed by Br. Director, Jason Blaikie. Jason has full load at SJI teaching English. He is kept busy on weekends handling a group of students who play bagpipes. Br. Paul Ho, sector leader, is a member of the community. This year he was appointed Brother President of SJI. The other member of the community teaching at SJI is Br. Kennedy from India. He teaches Tamil. There are two Brothers who travel everyday to SJI International: Brs. George van Grieken and Arian Lopez. Br. George is President of the school and Br. Arian is a full time teacher handling 3 levels. Br. Dominic Chong, is the most senior member of the community and teaches at St. Anthony's Primary.

We ended the visit on the 17th with a meeting of the two communities and then dinner at an Italian restaurant. I wish to thank all the Brothers for their hospitality and welcome and to Br. Paul Ho and the two Directors, Jason and Nicholas, for the organization.

On the 17th I moved to Bayview Hotel where the LEAD council members were booked for their meetings. LEAD Economic Council, convened by our Bursar, Br. Jose del Coss, met on the 18th. By evening, most of the District Council members arrived and a welcome socials was hosted by PARC General Councillor, Br. David Hawke, and PARC Lasallian Services Director, Br. John Pill. The evening culminated with an Asian dinner buffet sponsored by the Sector.

Exposure to the Sector of Singapore was on 19th of April, the District Council visited St. Stephen's School, one of four primary schools in the Sector. School administrators, led by the Principal, Mr. Thomas Koh, presented an overview of the school before proceeding to a campus tour. Next stop was St. Patrick's School for an exposure to a secondary education institution in Singapore. After an orientation Br. Nicholas Seet, Director of the Community, Principal Mr. Adolphus Tan and his Vice Principals brought the Council to the Heritage Room then to the Brothers' Community and Hope House. The exposure tour ended with a sumptuous Indian - cuisine lunch.

By late afternoon, the Council proceeded to St. Joseph's Institution International for the Affiliation Rites of Mr. Lawrence da Silva (1938-2013). The Letter of Affiliation was signed by the Superior General last 7 December 2012 but, unfortunately, Lawrence passed away last 1 January 2013. While he knew that he was granted an affiliation, he did not survive to receive the Letters personally. The rites began with a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. After Communion, the Affiliation Rites was emceed by SJII President, Br. George Van Grieken. Aside from receiving the actual Letters of Affiliation, Mrs. da Silva also received a Bible, a crucifix, and a six - decade rosary, which are items we usually present to new Brothers. The Mass was followed by a reception, where more tributes were given. The SJII sports complex was named after him. An excellent and entertaining formal plated dinner concluded the gathering with the Brothers interacting with the family of Brother Lawrence de Silva, administrators, staff, former students, parents and students of SJI and SJII.

On 20 April, the LEAD Council convened their 9th meeting for the whole day to discuss various concerns and activities of the District.

Meeting of Vocation Team and Postulancy Directors.

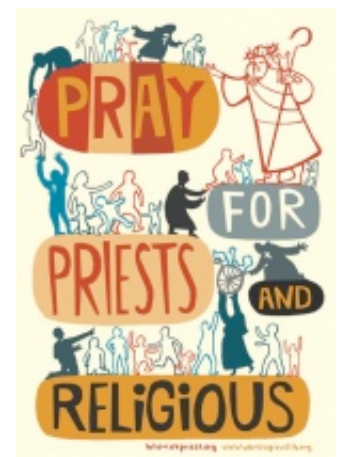
Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the LEAD Vocations Team had their 2nd Meeting and discussed recruitment concerns. One of the items they talked about was a LEAD Vocations webpage. The Vocations Team participated as consultants in the meeting of the LEAD Postulancy Directors in the afternoon which was convened by LEAD Formation and Vocations Director, Br. Victor Franco. The Vocations Team and Postulancy Directors enjoyed a Filipino dinner at Abe's Restaurant.



World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Sunday, 21 April 2013 marks the 50th Anniversary of the "World Day of Prayer for Vocations" with the theme: "Vocations as a sign of hope founded in Faith." The following website offers resources on prayers and vocations promotion: <http://www.worlddayofprayerforvocations.com>

This webpage from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops also offer a number of Prayers for Vocations: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers/prayers-for-vocations.cfm>

I am also attaching a prayer service shared by Br. Mark McKeon, Visitor of the District of ANZPPNG. I encourage everyone to use these resources in the days to come.





Brother Lawrence da Silva AFSC. Below are excerpts from the remarks I made at the reception after the affiliation rites. Also included are excerpts from Br. George's write up:

"In the 160-year history of the De La Salle Brothers in East Asia, we have affiliated a small group of outstanding Lasallians into the Institute. These are men and women who profoundly share our ideals and our vision of educating the young, especially the poor.

"It is not a reward but a recognition that those to whom we present Letters of Affiliation to are those who have consistently lived our values, shared our hopes, dreamt our dreams. The process is often long as it is discussed among the Brothers brought to the communities brought back to the council and finally endorsed to the Superior General who makes the final approval. We accord the name "Brother" to those whom we affiliate, even to the women, because we see them as one of us. And we often joke that they also have to live our vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

"I did not have the privilege of knowing Mr. Lawrence da Silva but from what I gather from Brothers and Lasallian partners is that his commitment to Lasallian education and support of the Brothers' works here in Singapore was second to none. When they speak of him they only do so with the highest respect and utmost esteem."



"For those of us who had the privilege of knowing Lawrence, he was a true Josephian who was extremely generous with his time and expertise in serving his alma mater. Lawrence completed his 'O' levels and pre-university education at SJI in 1956 and 1958 respectively. In school, he was known to be not only a capable student but also an avid sportsman.

"Lawrence also served as a member of the SJI Board of Governors for more than 20 years since the inception of the Board. He had only recently retired from the Board. While on the SJI Board of Governors, he chaired the SJI Family Assistance & Scholarships Committee. His heart would always go out to the less fortunate students. He would tailor policies and make decisions in a manner that would allow the less fortunate students

to be helped with dignity. In helping the less fortunate, he would always set the example by being the first to make the donation to help the less fortunate students.

“Lawrence was indeed generous in making donations to all kind of causes; from helping the less fortunate to scholarships and furthering Lasallian education. When asked about his generosity, he would reply that ‘SJI has provided me with a first class education and cared for me as a person. Surely, when the appropriate time came for me to give back to my alma mater and the society in general, it was not only natural but a pleasurable thing to do.’” (<http://www.sji.edu.sg>)

“Throughout our history as Brothers, many people have contributed significantly to our work of providing a human and Christian education to young people. Some have contributed financially; some materially; some by means of their services; still others by virtue of their outstanding leadership promoting Lasallian education. We Brothers are deeply grateful to all these people and pray for them daily. However, among these generous friends are those who have formed a special and close relationship with us—a relationship that we characterize as fraternal. It is these who are chosen for the honor of affiliation.

“We are about to confer on Lawrence da Silva a posthumous Letter of Affiliation signed by Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, our Superior General in Rome, who alone with his General Council has the authority to grant this honor. It is an honor that has a long history in the Institute of the Brothers, the first Letter of Affiliation having been given in 1753, over 250 years ago. We Brothers are bestowing Lawrence with the title of Affiliate. The Letter and title are given to him in recognition of his unfailing devotedness and support for us and for the educational work of the Institute that he has manifested for so many years here in Singapore.” (Br. George Van Grieken, Introduction to the Affiliation Ceremony)



Sudan Expels Secretary-General of Catholic Bishops' Conference. JUBA, South Sudan (CNS) -- Sudan's security force expelled the secretary-general of the Sudan Catholic Bishops' Conference and two other religious brothers. Father Santino Morokomomo Maurino told the Sudan Catholic Radio Network after arriving in Juba from Khartoum April 12 that security officials ordered him to leave the country for undisclosed reasons. The priest said he was called to National Intelligence and Security Services headquarters in Khartoum where he was briefly detained and given three days to buy an airline ticket. He said he was not given a chance to defend his work at the conference.

Brother Michael Fleury of France and Brother Hossam, an Egyptian, both members of the De La Salle Christian Brothers living in Khartoum, also were expelled, Father Maurino said. The two men had been working with children in the Sudanese capital. The radio network reported that the brothers had been under surveillance by the Sudanese government. Father Maurino arrived in Juba just ahead of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who was making his first official visit to newly independent South Sudan. His regime has a long record of actions against non-Muslims and South Sudanese residents working and living in Sudan. (<http://www.catholicnews.com>)

Thailand Songkran Festival.

Lasallians in Thailand joined the rest of the kingdom in celebrating the traditional New Year's Day from 13 to 15 April. Songkran falls in the hottest time of the year in Thailand, at the end of the dry season. Until 1888 the Thai New Year was the beginning of the year in Thailand; thereafter 1 April was used until 1940. 1 January is now the beginning of the year. The traditional Thai New Year has been a national holiday since then. The most obvious celebration of Songkran is the throwing of water upon others. Thais



roam the streets with containers of water or water guns. In addition, many Thais will have small bowls of beige colored talc sold cheaply and mixed with water which is then smeared on the faces and bodies of random passerbys as a blessing for the new year. At La Salle Bangna, Songkran was celebrated last 11 April with Br. Eugene and Sr. Mary Anne leading the traditional rituals. "สุขสันต์วันสงกรานต์" "Suk san wan songkran!"

INSTITUTE SNIPPETS

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, PAKISTAN AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Prayers. We request prayers for the father of Br. Thomas Yapo FSC from PNG. Br. Thomas had his novitiate in Lipa and studied at the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod in the mid 2000s. *"Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of PAULUS PALA YAPO (63 years) father of Br Thomas Mabol Yapo who passed away quite peacefully on Sunday morning after a short illness . Thomas had been talking with his father early in the morning and was with him when he died. In retrospect Thomas believes the trauma his father and all the family have suffered since the tragic house-fire at the end of last year, which resulted in the death of Thomas' two nephews and the serious injuries sustained by his sister, was the main cause of his father's illness and subsequent death. The funeral and burial is likely to take place in Thomas' home village of Kunjigal on Tuesday. Let us keep Thomas and his family in our prayers. (Br. Mark McKeon)*

Welcome Br. Michael Valenzuela. We welcome Br Mike Valenzuela (LEAD, Philippines Sector) who arrives this week to facilitate programs for Lasallians in Melbourne and Sydney, and the Auckland retreat beginning on April 21st. Brothers and Lasallian Partners may like to participate in Br Mike's workshops: St James College, East Bentleigh (Thursday 18 April from 4-6pm) or Lasalle Catholic College, Bankstown (Monday 29 April from 2-4pm). Contact Tony Cummins for more details or to register your attendance. *(Now You Know | ANZPPNG: 15/04/13)*

PNG Lasallian Family. From the 13th to 18th April, 90 Lasallian teachers from across Papua New Guinea will be gathering for the Lasallian Teachers' Conference at St Josephs' Pastoral Centre, Lae. Facilitated by Br John Cantwell, the conference takes up the churches theme, The Year of Faith, and will focus specifically on the Spirit of Faith. Teachers will have the opportunity to come together for Lasallian formation, prayer together, sharing of experiences, ideas and resources, as well as to become re-energised in the Lasallian Mission which we all share. Your prayerful support for this important event in the Lasallian Mission in Papua New Guinea would be appreciated. *(Now You Know | ANZPPNG: 15/04/13)*

Br Peter Bray writes from Bethlehem University. I am continually amazed at the resilience of our students and the way they get on with their lives in the midst of all the restrictions they face. I think it is part of the role of Bethlehem University to provide a place where our students can experience something of a normal life. I want students to know when they step through the gate onto campus that they are safe and that there are people there who really care about them. I think this is a very important aspect of what we do, because we need to work to keep hope alive. As I have reflected on the experience of our students I have realised that none of these students are responsible for the situation they have inherited, yet they have to endure it and somehow find a way to live a fruitful life. When I look back over the experience of the Palestinians during the past sixty years here there is nothing there that leads them to be optimistic that the future is going to be better. This leads me to wonder how to keep hope alive. The more I have reflected on that the more I have come to realize that hope is quite different to optimism. In speaking with graduates and many of our present students I have asked them what it is that leads them to hold onto hope? The answer has consistently been the knowledge that they are not alone, that there are people who are prepared to be here on campus walking with them and working for them, and people outside Palestine who are standing in solidarity with them - people who believe in them. *(Now You Know | ANZPPNG: 22/04/13)*

Signum Fidei News. "Greetings from Rome. I am pleased to send you the Signum Fidei News Bulletin. In a few days you will be also receiving the second letter of the Preparatory Commission for our International Assembly and a prayer to ask the Lord to guide our steps according to His will at this moment of our history. Please send this information to all communities and schools. I remind you that all information about the Assembly can be found at: www.lasalle.org" *(Br. Alberto Gómez)*



Faternally,

Br. Edmundo L. Fernandez FSC
Myanmar



Earth Day 2013. 22 April 2013 is "Earth Day 2013." This year's theme is "The Face of Climate Change". Find out more about "Earth Day" and how you can participate at <http://www.earthday.org> An article on "20 Ways to Support Earth Day This Year" can be found through this shortened website link: <http://goo.gl/aZMzR>

Don't Use Any Of These 20 Popular Passwords. Read the article and infographic at <http://goo.gl/bCTf2>