

Journal

La Salle ANZPPNG

“Think highly of your work”

- Meditations for the Feast of Saint Matthew



Along with a very significant contingent of Australian and New Zealand colleagues, I recently attended Buttimer in the US. The facilitator for Buttimer II, Dr Greg Kopra, asked the class to write their vision of Lasallian education. We later shared our thoughts with classmates. The approach taken by this writer was that of a Principal addressing teachers new to the Lasallian family:

You have chosen to teach, a decision to work in a most noble profession.

You will have as many challenges as you have successes in your teaching,

You will have the exquisite privilege of touching the hearts and inspiring the minds of the children entrusted to your care. Please pause and consider for a moment, both the responsibility and honour implicit in that statement, “to touch the hearts of the children entrusted to your care”.

God has chosen you to do this work... so now that you have joined the ranks of fellow Lasallians, it is indeed, your work, it is our work. You have the privileged responsibility to cultivate those under your care.

Remember that always, the heart comes first, then understanding. Your students will inherently understand whether your words are reflected in your actions. Your students, and their families, are rich

and diverse in backgrounds, intellect, attitudes, preferences and prejudices, hopes and aspirations. It is your privilege to inspire them- to nurture a fundamental belief in them that, made in the likeness of God, they possess great potential to undertake virtuous deeds, and make an enormous contribution in our world, a world crying out for good. It is your task to help develop in your students, a confidence, optimism and faith in a loving God.

You must be a role model for them, where your mercy takes precedence over holiness. Tolerance and empathy cannot be preached alone- they must be authentically modelled. Education can sometimes distance people from others, especially the poor and marginalised. A Lasallian education, on the other hand, is one where grace

comes before judgement, where forgiveness and understanding are the hallmarks. Teachers who purposefully connect with students and engage in positive interventions provide pivotal moments in the lives of those they teach. Such teachers exercise the fundamental virtues of a good teacher: patience, exactness, prudence, wisdom, vigilance, constancy, order and impartiality. Their leadership is underpinned by such Gospel and Lasallian values.

As Lasallians, we never give up on the students entrusted to our care.

We never give up.

Live Jesus in our hearts.

Merv McCormack

Executive Director,
Lasallian Mission Council

PNG Lasallians unite at National Teachers Gathering

To mark the 70th anniversary of continuous Lasallian education in Papua New Guinea, a record number of delegates from across the country have gathered in Port Moresby for the National Gathering of Lasallian Teachers.

Hosted at the La Salle Technical College in Hohola, the event is held once every three years and this year has proven to be by far the most popular ever- with 230 delegates attending from urban and remote provinces.

The high attendance is a powerful reflection of the inspiring zeal and commitment to the Lasallian charism which is helping it to expand well beyond Port Moresby to some of the most remote areas of the nation.

This year’s event has featured keynote addresses and workshops on topics such as Lasallian leadership, classroom management, using smartphones in

teaching and engaging Lasallian youth.

In her opening keynote address, the Principal of Jubilee Catholic Secondary School in Port Moresby, Mrs Bernadette Ove reflected upon the rich and enduring legacy left by St John Baptist de la Salle over 300 years ago and which continues to inspire generations of teachers today.

“The Founder faced many obstacles in setting up his network of schools for the poor in France, but he never gave up”, Mrs Ove said.

The Bishop of the Diocese of Bereina, the Most Reverend Rochus Josef Tatamai paid tribute to the remarkable contribution generations of Lasallian teachers have made to the success of Catholic education in Papua New Guinea.

In his keynote address at the conference, Bishop Rochus told

the teachers, that they were very fortunate to be part of the Lasallian charism, given the way it has fundamentally shaped the direction of school education over recent centuries.

“And it is therefore critical that laypeople who choose to become

Lasallians recognise it as more than simply a club that you belong to and reap the benefits from that, but rather that you see your spirituality as having a pivotal role to play in the broader mission of the Catholic Church in PNG”, Bishop Rochus added.



Committed Lasallian: Craig Mooney



It's rare to find a Principal in charge of the school they once attended themselves.

But when they do find themselves at the helm of their alma mater, their background can help make them one of the school's strongest and proudest ambassadors.

That is certainly the case with De La Salle Cronulla Principal Mr Craig Mooney, himself a graduate of the school and the nearby all boys feeder school, De La Salle Caringbah.

Mr Mooney took on the Principal's job earlier this year, returning to the school where he

had also worked as Assistant Principal from 2008 to 2011.

De La Salle Cronulla offers a very unique model of schooling- a coeducational stand-alone campus for Year 11 and 12 students with a total enrolment of 500 students.

Set against the picturesque backdrop of Gunnamatta Bay, the school offers a rich and highly diverse curriculum to its students covering traditional academic subjects, alongside vocational education and training, TAFE subjects and apprenticeships.

This includes a highly regarded hospitality training course where students can practise their skills in a fully equipped café on the school grounds.

"The students here tend to be more mature and the teachers more specialised, so it's a win-win situation for everyone", Mr Mooney explains.

"Students quickly realise that they have reached the business end of their schooling and so we put a strong emphasis here upon encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning", he adds.

Mr Mooney says the approach is working well with a number of students placed in the top 10 in the state in individual courses in last year's Higher School Certificate.

As a senior college, the school also has a comprehensive leadership program with around 30 Year 11 Lasallian Student Leaders helping to run retreat programs at the Year 7-10 school, De La Salle Caringbah.

It also has a strong commitment to social justice, reflected in a newly signed twinned school agreement with La Salle Girls High School at Gokkuwal in Pakistan.

De La Salle Cronulla students have begun fundraising efforts to help improve teachers' salaries, water filtration and general maintenance at the fellow Lasallian school which mainly caters for students from shanty towns near Faisalabad.

Craig Mooney said teachers at the senior college feel a great sense of responsibility as they prepare students for adult life, helping to shape their values and career path.

"It's our last chance to sow the seeds for their future development and it's wonderful being able to do that within our rich Lasallian tradition", he adds.

De La Salle Ashfield teams up with ACU to deliver Positive Psychology Program

De La Salle College Ashfield is drawing upon some of the world's most highly respected researchers in educational psychology in the delivery and evaluation of an innovative program aimed at fostering a positive learning environment at the Sydney all boys school.

Researchers from the Australian Catholic University's Institute for Positive Psychology and Education have been leading a series of staff development days at De La Salle Ashfield as it implements the internationally respected SPIRE Framework.

SPIRE was developed by Professor Martin Seligman from the University of Pennsylvania and it adopts a holistic approach to positive psychology, nurturing the Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual, Relational and Emotional (SPIRE) aspects of each student.

Through the program, students are encouraged to develop stronger resilience to confront adversities, to nurture their physical health through regular exercise and to nurture a constructive relationship with themselves and with others.

There is also a strong spiritual basis to the program, drawing upon the importance of meditation and periods of silent reflection as a way of improving concentration in the classroom.

De La Salle College Ashfield Principal, Mr Stephen Kennaugh said the program was introduced last year and has been integrated across the curriculum through a team of staff members, led by the Director of Learning and Wellbeing Mr Martin Corcoran.

"Since we've introduced it, we've seen absentee rates for both students and staff reduced and our students are now far more likely to engage in co-curricular activities at the college", Mr Kennaugh said.

"We've now also engaged two top researchers from ACU- Professor Rhonda Craven and Professor Alexander Yeung- to help us with staff development days as we look towards expanding the program further and drawing upon academic research to allow us to continually assess its effectiveness".

Mr Kennaugh said the school also organised a parent forum last year



to explain the rationale behind the program to ensure there was a strong continuity between the classroom and the home.

"The parents have been really enthusiastic about it and many of them have also remarked on how much more structured their sons have been with their homework and study plans as a result of the program", he added.

The whole school approach to the SPIRE program has even extended to the canteen at De La Salle College Ashfield which has replaced fruit and vegetables with the unhealthy processed food of the past.

"I've always maintained that if boys are fit and healthy, both in body and in mind then when it comes to learning in the classroom, they'll concentrate more effectively and produce better results", Mr Kennaugh explained.

"And that's backed up by all the scientific evidence as well".

La Salle Middle Swan Christendom Tour

Senior staff and students from La Salle College in Perth have undertaken a 16 day tour across the key Christian sites of Europe, retracing the footsteps of St Paul across the Mediterranean.

Acting Principal Mr Adrian Martino, Religious Education Coordinator Mrs Jenny Waller and the Director of Lasallian Volunteers, Br Tony Cummins accompanied the students on the tour, which ties in closely with the Religion and Life Syllabus.

The tour included visits to historic cathedrals and basilicas in Italy, Malta, Croatia and Greece.

There was a distinctly Lasallian theme to the tour with students and staff visiting the Generalate in Rome and the De La Salle Retreat Centre in Malta.

Students and staff also spent time visiting historic sites in Rome, including St Peter's Basilica, the Basilica of St Paul and the Vatican Museum.

In Malta, they presented gifts to the Archbishop of Malta, His Grace, Charles Scicluna (pictured) and the country's President, Mrs Marie Louise Coleiro Preca.

They also visited the Maltese island of Gozo, visiting historic churches there and joining in celebrations to mark the Feast of St Paul.

In Greece, they had the opportunity to visit the Acropolis in Athens and the historic Mykonos and Delos Islands.

In Croatia, they spent time in the seaside port of Dubrovnik, visiting key sites including the Cathedral of St Blaise.

The tour provided the students with a unique vantage point from which to better comprehend the history of the Christian faith which will no doubt enhance their studies in religious education.



Francis Douglas Memorial College excels in Race Unity Speech Awards

The Head Boy of Francis Douglas Memorial College in New Plymouth, Polaiu'amea Kirifi has been declared runner-up in a national public speaking competition for New Zealand schools, aimed at promoting racial harmony.

The annual Race Unity Speech Awards were initiated by the nation's Baha'i community in 2001 and have been sponsored by the New Zealand Police over recent years with strong support from the Human Rights Commission.

150 students entered the competition this year and they were all asked to focus their speech on the central theme- "Stand Up for Race Unity- Don't Be a Bystander!"

The speechmakers were asked to focus on what they could do to inspire others to stand together for race unity in New Zealand.

In his speech, Francis Douglas Memorial College student Polaiu'amea Kirifi drew upon his Samoan heritage, comparing the bringing together of different cultures with constructing a 'fale' or house.

"See the true strength that holds the whole fale together?," Polaiu'amea asked those gathered

for the competition final in Auckland.

"That's the afa- the plaited coconut fibres, that when woven tightly can hold something as large as a fale", he added.

"In my lifetime, I would like to see an' afa being woven tightly around our differences, holding us together with love, forgiveness and belief, in unity".

In recognition of his outstanding achievement as runner-up in the competition, Polaiu'amea was presented with a personal and school award by the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Dame Susan Devoy.

Francis Douglas Memorial College students also joined in a boisterous haka to mark the achievement.

Representatives from the New Zealand Police, including Area Commander Keith Burrell were also at the presentation ceremony at the school, alongside Jill and Mervyn Chivers from the Baha'i community.



Br Ambrose Payne honoured through new portrait at ACU

To mark his outstanding contribution to the founding of the Australian Catholic University in the early 1990s, the institution has unveiled an official portrait of Brother Ambrose Payne, AO fsc at the Peter Cosgrove Centre in North Sydney.

In his occasional address, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Greg Craven, spoke of his own coming to realise that without the extraordinary coordination undertaken by Brother Ambrose, ACU would not have come into being.

'In every real sense,' he said, 'Brother Ambrose was the University's first Vice Chancellor', Professor Craven told the guests at the official unveiling of the portrait.

As founding Principal of the Catholic College of Education in Sydney in the 1970s and 1980s, Br Ambrose identified a critical need for teacher education which was tailored to meet the specific needs of trainee teachers who wished to work in Catholic schools.

While a number of different religious orders each had their own training colleges at that time, Br Ambrose took responsibility for amalgamating these bodies into Australia's first Catholic university which opened in 1991.

It was no easy feat and it involved bringing together four separate Colleges of Advanced Education on eight different campuses, spread across three different states and the Australian Capital Territory with a total of over 9000 students.

Br Ambrose's formidable organisational and diplomatic skills helped him win critical support for the establishment of ACU from senior Catholic church leaders, four state governments and the Commonwealth government.

He has since been recognised for his efforts through being made a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to education and through the Australian Catholic

University's highest honour, Doctor of the University.

An Old Boy of De La Salle College in Ashfield, Br Ambrose has made a remarkable contribution to the Institute over the past 60 years including as Chair of yourtown for over a decade and as Principal of a number of Lasallian schools.

At the unveiling of the new portrait, Br Ambrose paid tribute to the work of the three Vice Chancellors under whose leadership the University had become a

remarkable 'community of scholars' known to care for its students.

Several past and present members of the University, as well as many of Brother Ambrose's friends and colleagues attended the unveiling of the portrait, painted by Mr Shen Jiawei.

The portrait depicts Br Ambrose standing in front of a statue of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Australia's first saint and the cofounder of the Sisters of St Joseph at ACU's North Sydney campus.



Lasallian Alumni: Superintendent John De Candia



From tackling criminal motorcycle gangs through to coordinating security at international sporting events, Superintendent John De Candia has been at the forefront of policing in South Australia and nationally over recent decades.

The proud graduate of St Michael's College is perhaps best known for the prominent role he took leading a national taskforce in 2012, responsible for

investigating the illegal activities of some motorcycle gangs and their criminal associates.

The ground-breaking work led to the barring of criminal members of the Hells Angels and Finks motorcycle gangs from every licensed venue in South Australia.

Superintendent De Candia is currently responsible for 450 police officers across central Adelaide and its northern and

eastern suburbs and is the Police Commander for all sporting events at the Adelaide Oval.

Looking back on his schooling at St Michael's in the 1980s, the senior policeman says he was strongly influenced by the core Lasallian values that were instilled in him by the De La Salle Brothers and by lay teachers.

“There was a really strong sense of purpose at the school and an emphasis upon firm but fair discipline”, Superintendent De Candia explained.

A graduate of the class of 1987, John De Candia counts Br Alphonso Zoanetti as one of his mentors, praising him for giving the students a broad international perspective through the religious education curriculum at that time.

Over the past 20 years, John De Candia has worked across a

broad range of investigative fields of policing, covering drug seizures and combating organised crime.

He also undertook an exchange with the Singapore Police in 2014 where he spent a month gaining fresh insights into training and recruitment which he has drawn upon strongly in his current role.

Superintendent De Candia enjoys acting as a mentor to new police recruits and he also has some words of advice for senior secondary students contemplating careers in policing.

“Never lose sight of your core values and your integrity”, the St Michael's graduate emphasised.

“And make sure you are well prepared for all the challenges you will undoubtedly face in what can be a very satisfying and rewarding career”.

Lasallian Alumni: Michael Hirst



As Managing Director of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank, St Bede's College Mentone graduate Mr Michael Hirst is a leader to over seven thousand staff and is accountable to over 1.6 million customers.

A graduate from the St Bede's Class of 1975, Mr Hirst was honoured alongside leading judges, Paralympians and AFL

footballers earlier this year in being inducted into the school's prestigious Hall of Fame at an Old Collegians' Dinner.

“It was a great personal honour for me and seeing others honoured in the same way, it just reflected the rich diversity of talent that St Bede's has produced, whether that is in business, in the legal profession or on the sporting field”, he said.

Mr Hirst has spent nearly 40 years in the banking and finance industry, including with Westpac, Chase AMP Bank and Colonial Ltd.

He has worked in his current position since 2009, leading Australia's fifth largest retail bank.

Bendigo and Adelaide Bank prides itself on its commitment to ecological sustainability, having made a firm guarantee not to invest in fossil fuels.

Under Mr Hirst's leadership, the bank has also strongly promoted cultural and religious diversity, tolerance and inclusiveness.

The St Bede's graduate attributes his outlook to the strong Lasallian values that were instilled in him at the school.

“There was a very strong emphasis upon social justice and providing students with a moral compass to navigate ones way through life, always mindful of the impact your decisions would have on others around you”, Mr Hirst explained.

“We were always encouraged to respect

others and never lose sight of the importance of empathy- being able to put yourself into another's shoes and appreciate their perspective”.

As a member of the Business Council of Australia, Michael Hirst strongly believes that companies with strong values earn greater community respect and this in turn makes them more profitable.

“I am also very fortunate to be working in an industry that is at the forefront of technological change”, he said.

“We now see more bank customers carry out transactions on mobile devices than ever before and this as revolutionising banking in Australia”.



Committed Lasallian: Louisa Opu

As Deputy Principal (Academic) at La Salle Technical College in Hohola, Ms Louisa Opu plays a pivotal role in promoting a strong and diverse curriculum for nearly 600 secondary students in Port Moresby.

But her commitment to the Lasallian charism extends much

further to coordinating formation programs for teachers in the National Capital District and helping to organise the recent National Teachers Gathering which brought together 230 delegates from across the country.

Her journey as a Lasallian began in 1993 as a student at Mainohana Catholic Secondary School.

It was her positive experiences here that led her to eventually pursue a career in teaching herself through a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Goroka.

But Ms Opu never expected to return to her old school as a teacher after graduating from her course.

“I was really proud to return to Mainohana Catholic Secondary School because I wanted to give something back to the school as a sign of my appreciation for the great Lasallian education I received there”, she said.

Louisa Opu said she came to appreciate the rich heritage of the Lasallian charism far more as a teacher than she ever had as a student.

As she read more of the writings of St John Baptist de la Salle, Ms Opu decided to take a more active role in formation programs and became Lasallian Facilitator at Mainohana in only her third year as a teacher.

Her enthusiasm and dedication to the Lasallian charism continued to grow and she increasingly turned her attention towards also helping to coordinate formation programs for Lasallian teachers.

Ms Opu drew upon the highly successful formation programs run in Australia and applied them to meet the needs of PNG teachers.

It was around this time that she found a strong mentor in Br Ignatius Kennedy who encouraged her to take on the key role of Secretary in the national office for the PNG Lasallian Family.

It was an incredibly rewarding experience for a young teacher which helped enhance her organisational and leadership skills.

It no doubt helped lead Ms Opu into her current role on the executive team at La Salle Technical College and onto the board of the Papua New Guinea Mission Action Committee.

It is through her work on this committee that Louisa Opu has deepened her commitment to twinning in our District.

She sees significant long term benefits in Australian and New Zealand teachers helping to provide professional development support for PNG teachers working with limited resources in some of the most remote parts of the country.

“In the Milne Day province of PNG, for example, the only realistic way of getting there is by travelling on a dinghy for many hours and our fellow Lasallians there have to contend with poor telecommunication and no electricity, so they are in desperate need of more support”, Ms Opu explained.

“I am very optimistic that we can expand the Lasallian mission to other remote areas such as Oro (Northern) province, but we need support to ensure that there are Lasallians across every province in PNG”.

Restorative Justice Workshop for PNG Teachers

Teachers from across Papua New Guinea say they are looking forward to implementing key aspects of a classroom management strategy they learned more about at last month’s Lasallian Teachers Gathering.

Former De La Salle College Caringbah Principal Mr Gary Burrows delivered a thought-provoking keynote address at the Hohola conference, offering some insights into the Restorative Justice program he implemented during his nine years at the school from 1999-2008.

The model moves away from the authoritarian approach to classroom discipline adopted by past generations.

It instead relies upon students taking personal responsibility for

their own behaviour in a positive environment which focuses upon the need for respectful relationships in schools.

Mr Burrows told the PNG teachers, the program led to a far more productive environment at De La Salle College Caringbah, including a 43 percent drop in absenteeism in its first two years and much improved academic results.

“It helps students appreciate how their behaviour has a direct impact upon those around them because time is set aside for daily conferencing where teachers can meet with students and discuss the behaviour which is generating the concern”, he explained.



Mr Burrows said restorative justice practices tie in closely with Lasallian education because the Founder himself emphasised in his writings the need to move away from corporal punishment and more towards correction of bad behaviour.

One of the teachers at the PNG Gathering from the Southern Highlands region, Mr Erick Maukos said he was looking forward to implementing restorative justice

practices in his classes when he returns to school this term.

“There is definitely a danger in focusing too much on the negatives when trying to tackle bad behaviour”, he said.

“We really need to create avenues to give students the opportunity to learn from their own misbehaviour and this is a very sensible way to go about it”.

From Youth Minister to Aspirant- Stephen Beirouti



Looking back on his high school years at the Melbourne Lasallian school, St John's College Dandenong, Stephen Beirouti never felt a clear calling to religious life, but still knew he wanted to live a life of service in some way or another.

Four years after he was Vice Captain of St John's, Stephen has made a courageous leap of faith and taken his first step towards becoming a De La Salle Brother.

Last year, the 22 year old youth minister wrote to Brother Visitor David Hawke and he was accepted into the aspirancy program.

Now based at La Salle College at Middle Swan, where he is the Christian Learning Service Coordinator, Stephen is currently the only Australian training to become a De La Salle Brother.

Over the past four years, he has been an enthusiastic volunteer through Share the Mission programs in Cambodia on two occasions and he spent one year volunteering in the Indigenous community at Balgo Hills in 2013.

Stephen has also worked as a Lasallian youth minister at St James College in Melbourne and in his current school in Perth.

He believes the seeds for his vocation were sown during his senior years at St John's College, even though he was not fully aware of that at the time.

"Brother Tony Cummins was our campus minister at St John's and he had a big photo of the Indigenous community at Balgo Hills in his office", Stephen explained.

"I would spend some lunchtimes in his office talking about the work of the De La Salle Brothers and he definitely became a strong mentor to me then and still is today".

Br Tony encouraged Stephen to attend the Lasallian Youth Gathering in Rotorua when he was in Year 12 and he believes this also turned out to be a pivotal moment on his faith journey.

"It was my first interaction with the broader Lasallian community beyond Melbourne and I immediately felt at home with what I came to see as a Lasallian extended family", Stephen said.

The zeal to serve that was instilled in Stephen during his years at St John's led him to embark on not only a year at Balgo Hills, but also two shorter volunteer stints at La Salle School in Po Thum in Cambodia.

The school caters for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including some orphans.

And Stephen believes it was here that he experienced a real "light-bulb moment" as he began discerning a vocation as a De La Salle Brother.

"I lived within the Brothers community and joined with them in morning prayers over five or six days there and alongside my work with the children there, that was definitely a pivotal time for me on the journey", he added.

Stephen's mentor, Br Tony Cummins was Vocations Director for the province at the time.

Br Tony knew that Stephen was now in the early stages of his discernment and suggested he experience community life alongside a group of other Young Lasallians at La Salle Community at Malvern in Melbourne.

Through this residential community, Young Lasallians can go about their everyday commitments, while being accompanied by each other, sharing their faith in a community living arrangement.

"I started asking a lot more questions about the life of a Brother at that stage", Stephen explained.

"And through that, I've been fortunate to have a number of mentors along the way, including Br Quentin O'Halloran in Mentone who has helped me a great deal during my first year as an Aspirant".

Stephen said his faith and commitment has definitely been strengthened through his current role as Christian Learning Service Coordinator at La Salle College in Perth.

"I've found it really rewarding being responsible for encouraging students across Years 7-12 to volunteer with not for profit organisations which sits so well alongside that Lasallian ethos of being of service to others", he said.

Stephen now also sees himself increasingly as a mentor to senior students and other Young Lasallians who may be discerning a vocation to religious life.

"If you wait for an absolute sign, sadly you may be waiting forever", he said.

"Ultimately, you need to trust in God, leap in and take that first step".

Young De La Salle Brothers unite at District Gathering in Thailand (by Br Lewis Harwood)

18 young De La Salle Brothers from the District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea have gathered to unite, reflect and to share as brothers without borders in mission and community.

The gathering was held at La Salle High in Bangna which is a school in Bangkok for 5000 students from Kindergarten to senior levels.

There were positive signs for future vocations in the District with 11 young De La Salle Brothers from Pakistan and five from Papua New Guinea attending the event.

All brothers in temporary or within five years of their perpetual vows were encouraged to attend the week of seminars.

The week was greatly assisted by the presence of Br Ricky Laguda General Councillor of the Pacific Asia Regional Conference, Br Chris Gorrings, Auxiliary Visitor and Br Felix the Secretary for Formation for the English speaking Institute.

The theme of the gathering was centred on "healthy living" of mind, body and soul as 21st century Religious men.

The Brothers were fortunate to have the services of Dr Geradine and Dr Tony Robinson from Australia in leading sessions on self-knowledge and self-awareness in ministry and community.

They were also greeted by Dr Awais from Pakistan who specialises in

the treatment of pain and body management giving an exciting and interactive presentation on muscle stretches and relief.

A special highlight of the week came on the day the Brothers visited the Redemptorist refuge for Disabled Youth in Pattaya.

This refuge was established to

support marginalised young people from the streets who were made to feel like outcasts due to their disabilities.

The young brothers were able to experience a sense of shared mission with the ministry in seeing the importance of caring for the last, the lost and the least in society.



Lasallian Induction Day for yourtown staff



Welfare workers and employment services staff from the Lasallian agency yourtown have undergone an extensive induction program, led by two experienced De La Salle Brothers, David Zande and Tim Peter.

All 600 staff members across yourtown's agencies undergo Lasallian formation as part of their induction when they join the organisation.

Br David and Br Tim led a morning program for new staff members at St Mary's Leagues Club in

Sydney, close to the workplaces of many of the participants in the city's outer western suburbs.

The two Brothers recently marked their Golden Jubilees with the order and were able to draw upon their decades of experience across schools and welfare agencies to pass on the significance of the Lasallian charism and how it lives on through the mission and vision statement of yourtown today.

"Just as De La Salle reached out to the disadvantaged in setting up

schools for them in France in the 17th century, we are still reaching out to the disadvantaged today through our yourtown services, whether that's through helping a single parent escape abuse or a young person to find work", explained Br Tim Peter to the group.

The participants came from the San Miguel Centre for homeless families in Richmond and yourtown employment services and enterprise programs in Mount Druitt, Blacktown and Saint Marys.

Through the induction program, Br David and Br Tim provided valuable insights into the life of St John Baptist de la Salle and linked his early work setting up the St Yon Centre for troubled youth to the contemporary work of yourtown.

They explained the rich heritage of yourtown which can trace its modern history back to 1917 when Fr Edward Flanagan established what was then known as BoysTown for orphaned boys in Nebraska in the United States.

They then turned their attention more towards the organisation's long Australian history and its highly successful Kids Helpline program which recently marked its 25th birthday.

Br David and Br Tim concluded with a session which looked at how yourtown's current values are directly drawn from its Lasallian heritage, including the importance of "being a brother and sister to all" and a commitment to "faith and zeal" in their staff member's work.

"The staff really enjoy learning more about the history and the Lasallian heritage of the organisation and as Brothers, we are very much the contemporary face of John Baptist de la Salle at yourtown", Br David Zande explained.

One of the participants in the program, Thomas Reid, joined yourtown's employment services team in Blacktown around a year ago.

"The program really helped me to gain a greater appreciation of our Lasallian background and how it shapes what we do", he said.

"Just as De La Salle set out to make a difference in the lives of the young people he taught, so we too can draw upon his inspiration in helping equip the youth of today with the skills they need to find a secure job and a decent standard of living".

De La Salle Brother Principals from Pakistan forging closer ties with Australian schools

Two De La Salle Brother Principals from Pakistan say they have benefited immensely from a three week visit to Lasallian schools in Australia.

Brother Waseem Sulakhan and Br Sajid Bashir also joined in a week-long Youth Ministry Induction week at Phillip Island where they gained valuable insights into the work of youth ministers in Australia and Papua New Guinea which will help enhance their work back home.

Br Waseem is Principal of La Salle Urdu High School in Faisalabad, while Br Sajid is Principal of the Catechist Training Centre, La Salle School of Culinary Art and La Salle Sewing School in Khushpur.

The visit comes as Pakistani schools look towards forging closer professional links with fellow Lasallian schools in Australia through a twinning project.

In Melbourne, the Brothers received a warm welcome at St Bede's College Mentone and De La

Salle College Malvern where they were able to share professional insights with fellow Principals and see first hand the great learning programs in place.

Similarly in Sydney, they have had the opportunity to meet with Principals and members of senior executive teams at De La Salle Colleges at Ashfield and Caringbah and at La Salle Catholic College in Bankstown.

At De La Salle College Ashfield, the Brothers were given a personal tour of the school by Principal Mr Stephen Kenneough and Acting Director of Faith and Mission, Ms Julia Malley.

Br Waseem Sulakhan said he has gained a lot of valuable insights from the schools he has visited in Sydney and Melbourne, especially in the areas of curriculum and classroom management.

"The Principals have been so welcoming wherever we have gone and through visiting schools and

Brothers' communities here, it has helped us feel a much stronger connection to our District", he explained.

Br Waseem is looking forward to forging stronger professional ties with Australian schools through Twinning.

"For many of our students, Urdu is their first language, but we are moving towards making English the medium of instruction and by making use of video links, we are hoping our students will be able to practise conversing in English with fellow Lasallian students in twin schools here in Australia", he explained.

"Many of our students are from very disadvantaged backgrounds and their parents struggle to pay more than 10 dollars a month in school fees", he said.

"So through Mission Action fundraising in Australian schools, this will help us greatly towards covering school fees, books and uniforms as well as upgrading our classrooms and computer labs".



Students and staff at La Salle Urdu High School have to contend with poor electricity infrastructure which can leave classrooms without power for up to four or six hours in a school day.

Br Waseem said Twinning would help fund the cost of more electricity generators which will ultimately enhance student learning.

Br Sajid Bashir said he has seen a lot of great programs in Australia that he would like to draw upon in Pakistan schools.

"I particularly like the Lasallian Youth Leader program here where the senior students are encouraged to take on that role of big brother and big sister to the juniors", he explained.

"I can see a model like that also working well in our schools in Pakistan".

Around Ashfield

Q&A with Br Patrick McCarthy

As he relaxes over a mug of tea in the staffroom at De La Salle College at Ashfield in Sydney, Br Pat McCarthy reflects back on over half a century as a De La Salle Brother, with lengthy periods spent as a counsellor in Australia and overseas.

His story is a powerful reminder of the rich diversity of the Lasallian Mission in Australia that has extended well beyond the classroom over the past 50 years, thanks to the welfare agency, yourtown, formerly known as BoysTown.

A graduate of St Bede's College at Mentone, Br Pat said he came under the influence of some young De La Salle Brothers in the late 1950s who helped nurture his religious vocation.

"There was a great group of Brothers at St Bede's who were aged in their 20s at the time- Brothers Quentin O'Halloran, Owen Mason and Cletus Storey", Br Pat explained.

"And I have no doubt that the powerful role modelling from those young Brothers led to three of my classmates at the time also becoming Brothers, including Peter Smyth who is now based in Malvern".

After completing his studies through the novitiate, Br Pat began teaching at a newly established Lasallian school in Sydney- Benilde College- which catered specifically at that time for boys in Years 11 and 12.

The Melbourne-born Brother went on to work in senior roles at De La

Salle College at Malvern, O'Connor Catholic College in Armidale and Oakhill College in Castle Hill.

However he never gained the same satisfaction from administration roles as he did from working directly with students in the classroom, especially those experiencing psychological problems.

It was the then Provincial Br Bill Firman who identified a real talent in Br Pat and encouraged him to undertake counselling studies at the Jesuit-run Santa Clara University in the United States.

Along the way, Br Pat gained some incredible work experience, counselling AIDS patients at San Francisco General Hospital in the late 1980s.

"It had a life-changing impact on me, seeing the tragedy of young men dying in their 20s and 30s because no cure could be found for the illness", he said.

"And I definitely learned more from working with those patients than I had in the decades I had spent before that as a teacher and then a principal in Australia".

His great zeal for helping the disadvantaged then led Br Pat

across the Atlantic to counselling drug addicted parents at a family therapy centre in Dublin.

Run by the Daughters of Charity, the centre was located in one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Europe and it had been declared a 'no-go zone' for local police.

"The centre worked hard to stop so many children being taken into state residential care", Br Pat explained.

"And if they had to be taken away from their parents because of abuse or neglect, our aim was to work with the children and the family to reunite them as soon as possible".

Upon returning to Australia in 1991, Br Pat took on a new challenge which helped transform the Lasallian Mission in the country over coming decades- the establishment of the highly successful Kids Helpline.

Working alongside its pioneer Br Paul Smith, Br Pat helped set up what was then a purely phone counselling service that was confined to taking calls from Queensland.

It has since expanded to be an award-winning national service with web counselling available both on an individual and a classroom basis through the Kids Helpline@School program.

"I'll never forget the first day we opened it", Br Pat explained.

"We didn't know if we'd ever get even 100 phone calls, but we received 10 thousand calls on that day in Queensland alone".



"So we quickly trained up another 60 counsellors and Kids Helpline is now one of the greatest works the De La Salle Brothers have been involved in in Australia".

25 years later, Br Pat has turned his attention to helping as a counsellor and spiritual advisor for students and staff at De La Salle Ashfield.

"It's all ultimately about being a good listener and confidant", Br Pat adds.

"In some cases, it involves working with students from troubled backgrounds and I find myself slipping back into the role of Big Brother to them in that uniquely Lasallian way".

"But we can sometimes lose sight of the stress and demands on teachers and senior staff and it is important to be able to reach out to them as a counsellor at times as well".

UPCOMING EVENTS

Australia 2016
Leading from the Middle Conference, St Bede's College Mentone, 28-29 August
Young Lasallians Evening with Brother Visitor David Hawke, De La Salle Revesby, 25 August
Lasallian End of Year Mass, Bankstown, 24 November
2017
Lasallian Leaders Gathering, Wollongong NSW, 26-28 February
Lasallian Youth Gathering, De La Salle Ashfield, 10-14 July

New Zealand 2016
NZ Lasallians Gathering, Hamilton, 17 September
2017
Lasallian Womens Symposium- Auckland 16-18 July

Pakistan 2016
Induction Program for Teachers, La Salle High Schools in Faisalabad and Multan 24 September
Canonical Visit of Br Visitor David Hawke 3-10 October

Papua New Guinea 2016
Back to Bomana, 70th anniversary celebrations of the De La Salle Brothers in PNG 27-28 August
What makes a Lasallian Leader?- formation program, 29 October

In next month's issue:



- Leading from the Middle Conference at St Bede's Mentone
- 150 years of the Lasallian Mission in Vietnam
- Committed Lasallian- Grace Wraikia
- Lasallian Alumni: Monsignor Stuart Hall and Mayor Carmelo Pesce

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