

# Journal

## La Salle ANZPPNG

“Think highly of your work”

- Meditations for the Feast of Saint Matthew



### Dear Lasallian Partners and Brothers.

This edition of Journal La Salle reminds us that Br Robert Schieler, Superior General will visit Australia and Papua New Guinea next month. He will be accompanied by Br Ricardo Laguda, General Councillor. The Brother Superior General was elected at the 45th General Chapter in 2014 and once during his seven years in office he visits each of the five Regions of the Institute. In 2016 he continues the visit he began last year to the Pacific-Asia Region (PARC). The Rule of the Brothers reminds us; “The Brother Superior General and his Councillors have as their mission to strengthen communion and interdependence in the Institute” (Rule #124.1)

It is no accident that Br Robert will set foot in Australia in Perth where he will give the keynote address at the inaugural District Educators’ Conference next month. This event will gather people from the four countries of the District and several countries in PARC. It will be an expression of “communion” and no doubt the presence of our Superior General will strengthen that communion. Later in the year four other Brothers of the General Council, including Br Jorge Gallardo da Alba, Vicar General will visit various parts of the District.

The recent successful Lasallian Leaders’ Gathering held for the first time in Victoria was yet again an

experience of “communion” and an expression of our solidarity as a District. There were many high points but the report of Miranda Chow, Chief Executive Officer of the Lasallian Foundation Australia on the progress of the twinning programme spoke volumes about that solidarity that exists across the various ministries in our District. Yes “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:6-7). And on behalf of those who receive; thank-you.

On 28th February BoysTown became “yourtown.” This is a significant change in the growth of this organisation since it commenced in 1961. Congratulations to Tracy Adams, Chief Executive Officer, the Board of Directors and all at “yourtown”.

Best wishes and God’s blessings.

**Br David Hawke FSC**  
Visitor

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**yourtown**  
let's create brighter futures

BoysTown has changed its name to **YourTown** to better reflect the inclusive, community-wide nature of its work.

YourTown’s mission and values have always been firmly framed within the ethos and beliefs of the De La Salle Brothers since it opened its doors as BoysTown in 1961.

It currently has more than 600 staff and volunteers around

Australia, providing critical support through counselling, family refuges, parenting services and employment programs targeted at those in greatest need.

This includes the award winning counselling service, Kids Helpline which was launched in 1991 and supports over 220 thousand children and young people every year.

It has evolved over recent years to include the highly successful KidsHelpline@School

program, in which social workers conduct web counselling sessions in primary classrooms on topics such as cyberbullying, peer pressure and family conflict.

“The decision to change our name from BoysTown to YourTown wasn’t taken lightly”, YourTown CEO Tracy Adams explains.

“The change better reflects what we do and the inclusive nature of our work”.

“We’re here for every young person, from every street, suburb and town”, she adds.

All YourTown staff and volunteers must commit themselves to Lasallian values, including being a Brother and Sister to all and maintaining commitment and zeal in their work.

While predominantly focusing on young people aged from 5-25, YourTown assists many others who reach out for help.

The scope of the charity’s welfare work extends to covering refuge and support for the victims of family violence, support for the mentally ill and culturally appropriate employment services for Indigenous Australians.

Around three quarters of YourTown’s funding comes from the general community, through its highly successful Art Union prize homes.

It is one of Australia’s largest and longest running charitable Art Unions.

YourTown CEO Tracy Adams says the name change is an important recognition of the way the charity has evolved over many decades.

“Our name may be new, but the spirit of a charity dedicated to tackling the issues that impact young people’s lives will most definitely remain”, she added.

# Lasallian Leaders Gathering - Unity in Diversity



The annual Lasallian Leaders Gathering in Victoria has been an outstanding success, helping to strengthen the common bond uniting schools and Lasallian works across Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea.

Over 50 delegates attended the event at the Grange Cleveland Winery, north of Melbourne, including representatives from YourTown and the Lasallian Foundation.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Lasallian Foundation Miranda Chow won support from a large number of Lasallian school

principals for a joint plan with the Lasallian Mission Council to implement formal twinning arrangements around our District.

Miranda outlined her plans in a presentation at the Leaders Gathering.

Twinning arrangements have been in place in many other parts of the worldwide Lasallian family over a number of years, including between schools in the United States and fellow Lasallian schools in Africa.

Through twinning, Lasallian schools in Australia and New Zealand would be able to send

funds raised through their Mission Action Days directly into supporting fellow schools in Pakistan and Papua New Guinea.

Twinning also creates brother/sister school partnerships, allowing for example for principal, teacher and administration staff exchanges between schools in New Zealand and PNG.

The Head of the De La Salle Campus at Southern Cross Catholic College in Scarborough, Paul Begg believes twinning is a powerful reflection of Lasallian values, particularly around giving preference to the poor.

“We could introduce teaching around the concept of solidarity into our curriculum in primary school and then allow a sense of continuity right through our students’ education”, Paul explains.

“We would also like to form a twinning arrangement with one of the teachers colleges in PNG, allowing our teachers to travel over and help prepare primary teachers to work in remote parts of the country”.



## Superior General to visit our District in April

Lasallian Region of RELAN (USA and Canada).

He also spent 13 years as a missionary in the Philippines and holds a doctorate in Educational Administration.

Br Robert will be attending the Lasallian Educators Conference in Perth where he will deliver a keynote address.

The conference will bring together around 150 delegates not only from around our own District, but also from other countries including Malaysia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

It will feature presentations from representatives from Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and New

Zealand and from Lasallian works including YourTown.

Special thanks to Catholic Church Insurance and Australian Catholic Super for sponsoring the event. Their generosity will assist delegates from overseas countries to travel to Perth for the conference.

Following the conference, Br Robert will travel to Adelaide for a visit to St Michael’s College on 20 April.

Alongside Br Robert at the Lasallian Educators Conference will be Pacific Asia Regional Councillor Br Ricardo Laguda who is returning to Australia after a visit late last year.

The Superior General will also be visiting Melbourne and Sydney,

including visits to schools and Brothers communities and meetings with the Young Lasallians.

During his visit to Brisbane on 22 April, Br Robert will be visiting the YourTown offices in Milton and enjoying a lunch with the Brothers community in Logan.

He will then travel to Papua New Guinea on 24 April and will visit schools in Bomana and Hohola and attend a meeting of the PNG Mission Action Committee.

Br Robert will then return to Sydney on 27 April and hold further meetings with Brothers and members of the Lasallian Mission Council before departing the District on 1 May.

## An Inclusive Approach to Indigenous Education at La Salle College, Middle Swan

Drawing upon the inspiration of our Founder, St John Baptist De La Salle, La Salle College Middle Swan has developed an innovative boarding program over the past ten years, targeted specifically at Indigenous students from remote communities in Western Australia.

Through La Salle Boarding, the coeducational Perth school works closely with Indigenous Elders from communities across the Kimberley and Pibara to offer 40 places each year to students from years 8-12.

The Dean of Diversity and Boarding at La Salle College, Tricia McGregor says the school has developed a culturally sensitive program which started back in 2007 through a conversation between the Principals of La Salle and Lurnpa Catholic School in Balgo Hills.

“Every year, we send representatives from our school into the remote communities to meet with the childrens’ guardians and Traditional Owners to ensure

the boarding program here is respectful towards Indigenous peoples, their story and culture”, Tricia explains.

There are currently 22 students in the boarding school this year from Balgo Hills with large numbers of students also from Halls Creek and from Geraldton.

A strong effort is made to ensure there is an equal balance between boys and girls in the boarding school.

New students received a warm Welcome to Country at the start of the school year from Noongar

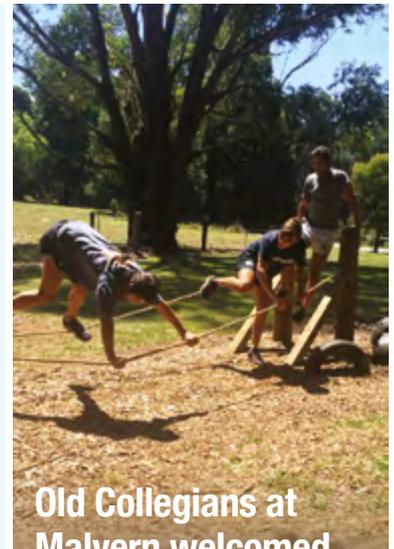


Elder Phillip Walley-Stack.

“We encourage the students to maintain that sense of pride in their culture, we empower them and provide them with a more diverse curriculum and greater resources than they would have access to in a remote community”, Tricia McGregor explains.

Tricia says the boarding school benefits greatly each year from the arrival of Lasallian Share the Mission volunteers who act as older brothers and sisters to the students.

This year there are three volunteers at the boarding school who were all recent graduates of St Bede’s College Mentone- Aleksander Grizelj, Matthew Blake and Dominic Kenny.



## Old Collegians at Malvern welcomed as Mentors at Year 12 retreat

A group of recent graduates from De La Salle Malvern have played a pivotal role in this month’s retreat for Year 12 students, acting as powerful mentors to the current students.

The school’s Principal, Peter Houlihan selected six Old Collegians from the graduate classes of 2014 and 2015 to act as group leaders at the three day retreat, which was held at Rawson Village in the Gippsland region.

Peter says the 42 Year 12 students responded very well to the involvement of the recent graduates as they came together to discuss key topics such as resilience, values and beliefs, relationships, goal setting, faith and motivation.

De La Salle College Malvern’s Deputy Principal (Faith and Mission), Mrs Rana Brogan said the retreat was greatly enhanced by the involvement of the Old Collegians, acting as big brothers to the current students.

“The Year 12 students really look up to them with many having excelled at the school over recent years”, Rana explains.

“It’s also a powerful way of keeping the former students engaged with the Lasallian family because they really want to show how grateful they are to the school and contribute back in this way”.

Rana says there was a lot of time at the retreat dedicated to faith formation along with outdoor activities aimed at strengthening teamwork across the Year 12 class.

“The response has been overwhelmingly positive with a lot of the current Year 12 students volunteering to return next year as mentors and the Old Collegians indicating they want to come back in 2017 as well”, Rana adds.

## Great support for Sponsor a Child Program at James Sheahan Catholic High

Students from across all Year levels have enthusiastically backed a Sponsor a Child Program at James Sheahan Catholic High School in Orange, raising valuable funds to support education and nutrition for disadvantaged children in India, Indonesia and Guatemala.

On a fundraising day on 5 February, all students at the Lasallian school brought in a gold coin donation aimed at supporting the needs of one child from each of the three countries.

The students then used their gold coins to create maps in the playground of each of the three countries they are supporting.

Over two thousand dollars has been raised so far to support the fundraising campaign which is being coordinated through an aid agency, Compassion Australia.

The latest fundraising project has been coordinated by the Year 12 leadership team and it will continue throughout the year.

“It’s very much part of the culture of our school to contribute generously to charities which fits in with the Lasallian tradition of reaching out to those in greatest need”, explains Year 12 team leader, Caleb Hewitt.

Fellow Year 12 student leader, Hanna Khalil says the project has raised greater awareness about the extent of poverty and disadvantage in a number of countries.

**“It’s been really rewarding, involving the whole school in this and we are hoping some of the senior students can travel over to the countries involved in the program and visit the communities we’re helping”, she says.**

The Religious Education Mission Coordinator at James Sheahan Catholic High, Amber Calleja, says the fundraising has been directly linked to the school’s broader social justice program.

“We are also involved with an immersion program to Sri Lanka, through the Lasallian Foundation, where senior students travel to Mannar and help with the rebuilding and painting of a new La Salle Medium School”, Amber explains.



## Lasallian Alumni and Mentor: Kane Raukura



Kane Raukura’s inspiring journey as a Lasallian leader stems right back to his own time as a student at the school he has taught at for the past 20 years.

As the Head Boy at De La Salle College Mangere in Auckland in 1991, Kane had an amazing mentor as his Principal, Veteran De La Salle Brother and long time Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Catholic Education Office, Br Sir Patrick Lynch.

“I really enjoyed my time at the school and the De La Salle Brothers and the other teachers were all fully versed with what it means to be a Lasallian in the way they nurtured a strong faith and a commitment to serving others”, Kane explains.

Now as Lasallian facilitator and Head of Science at Mangere, Kane reflects back on what led him into a career in teaching.

“A friend of mine invited me to come along with him to an introductory lecture for prospective students at one of the teachers colleges in Auckland”, Kane says.

“I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do after leaving school, but as I was listening to the lecture, I had a real epiphany and knew instantly this was the right career for me”.

“Then once I finished my training, I applied for a job at De La Salle Mangere and I’ve never looked back from there”.

Kane has been immersed in the culture of the school since childhood which has in turn helped to enhance his role as a mentor to generations of students.

“It’s been really rewarding to have former students come back and tell me how much they remember all the motivational and inspirational talks I gave them in class, even if they can’t remember the first thing about chemistry”, he laughs.

**“So for me being a Lasallian is about touching hearts, giving students a faith in their God and in themselves and then most importantly that they can go on and touch other people’s hearts”.**

Kane’s efforts have been rewarded with a National Teaching Award in 2010.

He has no doubt played a pivotal role in inspiring countless students from De La Salle Mangere to aim high for prestigious careers in areas like law and medicine.

“I’m just extremely pleased to see students coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds and doing so well after emphasising to them that their background is no barrier and no excuse because if they’re willing to put the effort in, they can indeed reach their dreams”, he says.

“My own personal life was touched by that message when my wife was being treated in hospital after a serious car accident”, Kane explains.

“Both the doctors treating my wife in the intensive care ward on the morning and evening shifts were students I had taught at De La Salle Mangere and I was very proud to have helped nurture them along their career path”.

Over recent years, Kane has turned his attention to promoting

Lasallian formation, through a number of highly regarded publications and prayer blogs which he sends around the world.

His Walking Daily with De La Salle prayer is popular with Lasallians across not only our own District, but also in countries such as Singapore, the Philippines and Canada.

Kane also produces an excellent publication, the Messenger, a monthly resource for professional development for teachers and board chairs in Lasallian schools.

He is also a member of the board of the Lasallian Mission Council, working alongside his long-time mentor, Br Sir Pat Lynch as the two New Zealand representatives on that body.

“I just want to ensure that the legacy that we have through St John Baptist De La Salle and the Institute is not lost”, Kane explains.

**“As a Lasallian associate, I’m passionate about walking alongside the De La Salle Brothers to drive the Lasallian vocation forward, whether that’s through encouraging young men to consider becoming Brothers or through being a Lasallian in other ways”.**

### Life-changing Immersion for Graduates from Mangere

Located in one of the lowest socio-economic areas of New Zealand, students attending De La Salle College Mangere East in south Auckland, rarely get the opportunity to travel overseas with their parents.

But through an immersion program over the summer holidays, a group of senior students and recent graduates were able to experience daily life in two very different parts of South-East Asia, accompanied by their teachers.

Deputy Principal Dermot English led 17 senior students on the trip to Hong Kong and the Philippines.

They firstly spent time at La Salle College Hong Kong, where New Zealand-born

Principal Br Steve Hogan leads a highly academic school which produces countless graduates bound for prestigious universities in Britain and the United States.

From there, the students travelled to the Philippines where they saw first hand, young children living in poor slum areas and spent three days building a concrete road through a project funded by an organisation called Couples for Christ.

As part of their Lasallian outreach to the marginalised, the students also spent some time at the Bilibid Prison, where they were able to meet with individual prisoners who shared their personal stories with them.

Dermot English says the trip was a life-changing experience for the students, many of whom had never left Auckland and he believes it will help many of the recent graduates to stay connected with the Lasallian family over future years.



## Historic Student Leadership Seminar for PNG



De La Salle Secondary School in Bomana has played host to an historic Student Leadership Seminar involving around 150 senior secondary students and trainee teachers from across Port Moresby.

The event brought together student leaders from Jubilee Secondary School, La Salle

Technical College, Sacred Heart Teachers College and the host school, De La Salle Secondary School for three days of discussions around Lasallian spirituality and leadership.

In previous years, the Student Leadership Seminar in PNG relied upon the involvement of some

Lasallian youth ministers who travelled over from Australia to help at the event.

But this year, the event was entirely run by the PNG Young Lasallians, led by their energetic Youth Minister Dagia Aka, himself a recent graduate of Jubilee Secondary School.

“It was a great way of breaking down any barriers by bringing all the young people together from the different Lasallian schools because geographically we are quite far apart here in Port Moresby”, Dagia explains.

Alongside Dagia at the event was his predecessor as Youth Minister of PNG, Elizabeth Aribi Kwaudi and another former Youth Minister for the country, Desma Kombe.

Dagia says students clearly came away with a stronger sense of what it means to be a Lasallian leader, while also enjoying some fun group activities aimed at fostering closer ties between the four Lasallian institutions.

He says the event has been a great success and planning is underway to try and expand it to cover Lasallian schools in the remote Highlands region as well.

“As the Youth Minister for the whole of Papua New Guinea, it’s important to continue this ministry to our fellow schools in Mainohana and Kondiu, so that they can also benefit from an event like this to ensure all Young Lasallians in PNG can receive the same sort of formation, no matter where they are”, he adds.

## Lasallian Outreach to young adults with disabilities

The youth ministry team from Lasallian Mission Services has been involved in some inspiring outreach work with young Catholics with a disability in Sydney.

Youth Ministry Coordinator Philippe Dulawan has been working alongside a group set up in St Aloysius Parish in Cronulla, Assisted Pilgrimage Services, to help run regular camps and retreats over the past two years.

Philippe led a lenten retreat day for 20 young adults from the group in the Provincial Office at Bankstown last month.

He also helped coordinate a youth camp at the Benedict the 16th retreat centre in Richmond late last year where the group came together for mass and enjoyed fun activities like cooking and soccer.

Philippe was introduced to the group by St Aloysius Pastoral Associate Cathy Sammut who has a daughter with disabilities who attended De La Salle Cronulla.

“The young adults in our group have disabilities including Down’s Syndrome, Autism and Cerebral Palsy”, Cathy explains.



“Working with our young people can be confronting and challenging at times”.

“But the Lasallian team led by Philippe have always been so respectful, compassionate and caring”.

“Our team now cries when they have to leave and say goodbye to your team because they feel so much a part of the Lasallian family now”, Cathy adds.

Cathy says the Lasallian youth ministry team has helped the young adults greatly as they prepare for Lent.

“The Lasallian team are really inspiring and are the face of Christ to these young men and women with disabilities”, she adds.

“I hope and pray that we will continue to share in your Lasallian mission with this group of amazing young people”.

## Pakistani Brothers help enrich Lasallian Leaders Gathering in Australia

The recent Lasallian Leaders Gathering in Victoria was enriched by the attendance of a number of delegates from Pakistan.

Br Zafar Daud is the Principal of La Salle Higher Secondary School in Multan and celebrated his 25th year as a De La Salle Brother last year.

In his sector report, Br Zafar revealed some great insights into Lasallian education in Pakistan, in a country where only one percent of the population is Christian.

Br Zafar revealed how Lasallian schools are educating thousands of Muslim and Christian students in the country and through that work, they are playing a significant

role in promoting interfaith harmony in the country.

“Muslim parents are in some cases choosing to send their children to our schools because of the values we instil in our students, based around the teachings of our Founder, St John Baptist De La Salle”, Br Zafar explained.

The Lasallian schools in Pakistan are also at the forefront of promoting girls education, providing growing numbers of young women with the opportunity to pursue a tertiary education.

Br Zafar explained how the schools are facing some security challenges though as Pakistan confronts

threats from militant groups in a number of neighbouring countries, including Afghanistan.

“It’s been really exciting to have this opportunity to come to Australia, meet with fellow Lasallian teachers and Principals and feel a stronger bond to our District”, Br Zafar explains.

“This is a great forum to meet and share ideas on best practices in schools, wherever we are based”.

Alongside Br Zafar at the Lasallian Leaders Gathering was the Principal of La Salle House



Catechist Training Centre in Khushpur, Br Sajid Bashir.

In a country with a marked shortage of Catholic priests, especially in rural areas, catechists play a pivotal role in administering some sacraments, such as baptisms, marriages and funerals.

“The catechists help to spread the Catholic faith in Pakistan by conducting Sunday school classes and preparing children for confirmation”, Br Sajid explains.

Br Sajid leads a centre that is currently training 52 catechists who are undertaking a three year course.

“Many people are attracted to this vocation and they’re united in a common passion for promoting the Catholic faith”.



## Lasallian Alumni: Greg Barns

The National President of the Australian Lawyers Alliance, Greg Barns has a proud record in defending the disadvantaged as a barrister and human rights lawyer stretching back 30 years.

A graduate of De La Salle Malvern in the late 1970s, Greg says he started taking an interest in a legal career during his senior years at the Melbourne school.

“There was a very strong emphasis at Malvern on social justice and fairness and advocating for the rights of the marginalised which had a profound influence on me and my career path”, he explains.

“The school has always taken a strong internationalist view on human rights and we were very much encouraged to focus on poverty in neighbouring countries like Papua New Guinea.”

After his studies at Malvern, Greg went on to study Arts and Law at

Monash University and was called to the Victorian Bar in 1986.

In the late 1980s, his attention turned to politics and he was an advisor to both the former Premier of NSW, Nick Greiner and the former Premier of Tasmania, Ray Groom.

He also served as Chief of Staff to Federal Finance Minister John Fahey and was the Chair of the Australian Republican Movement from 1999-2002.

A strong advocate for the rights of asylum seekers, Greg left the Liberal Party in 2002 because he clashed with the former Howard Government’s position on the issue.

Over recent years he has also taken on the role of Ambassador with the mental health advocacy organisation Beyond Blue.

Greg said the values he learned through his Lasallian education at Malvern still underpin his legal and charity work today.

“There was a great openness at the school towards cultural diversity coupled with that support for fairness and equality of opportunity”.

He would encourage today’s generation of Lasallian students to consider a career in law or politics.

“We need people with strong values and a commitment to social justice in those professions more so than ever before”, Greg said.

“In politics, we definitely need more people who are guided by strong humanitarian values rather than short term self –centered ambition”, he added.



## Lasallian Alumni- John Sidoti MP

New South Wales Liberal MP John Sidoti attributes his skills as a public speaker and his commitment to fighting for fairer access to government services to his education at De La Salle College Ashfield.

A graduate from the class of 1988 at Ashfield, John made history in 2011, winning the inner-western Sydney seat of Drummoyne which had been held for nearly 50 years by the Labor Party.

He increased his margin in the seat at the last state election in 2015 and was subsequently promoted to the position of Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Roads, Industry, Resources and Energy.

John has many fond memories from his years at De La Salle Ashfield and has maintained friendships with fellow students and some of his old teachers as well.

“I had a great Maths teacher, Michael Lewis who helped shape a lot of my values”, he explains.

“There was such a strong sense of camaraderie at the school and it was a really inclusive, multicultural setting where we were taught to respect each others’ views and beliefs even if we disagreed with them”.

John says that same Lasallian spirit is alive and well in the NSW parliament today where he has formed a good friendship with a fellow Old Boy from De La Salle Ashfield, the Labor MP for Fairfield, Guy Zangari.

The Drummoyne MP says he would encourage young Lasallians to consider a career in politics because of the profound impact MPs can have on their local communities.

“I often meet young students through the Youth Parliament that’s held each year”, John explains.

“I tell them how rewarding politics can be, whether it’s through reducing congestion on roads and improving public transport through to improving facilities at the local hospital”.

“I’ve often drawn on that Lasallian ethos of serving the community and my education certainly gave me the confidence to assert strong values in what can be a very tough and combative environment”.

## Lasallian Alumni and Missionary of Mercy: Fr Richard Shortall SJ



As part of the current Year of Mercy, Melbourne based Jesuit Priest Fr Richard Shortall is embarking on what has been termed a “ministry on wheels”, with the full blessing of Pope Francis.

The Old Boy of St Francis Douglas College Memorial College in New Plymouth, New

Zealand is one of 700 priests selected by the Pope to be a Missionary of Mercy.

Fr Richard has a dedicated motor home which he is using to reach nearly 30 different communities across the New South Wales diocese of Newcastle-Maitland over coming months.

His journey began with a blessing from Bishop Bill Wright, calling on him to offer a listening ear, hope, forgiveness and understanding to those in need across some of the state’s most disadvantaged communities.

“I’ve only just started my mission and I see it very much

as an act of service, helping to do the work my Jesuit brother, Pope Francis, has called me to do”, Fr Richard explains.

“I’ve already seen so many people touched by real sorrow and hurt who are calling out for help and understanding”.

Fr Richard’s faith journey began as a student at St Francis Douglas College in the 1960s where he developed a strong commitment to Lasallian values that were instilled in him by the Brothers who taught him there.

“It was only a small school then with eight De La Salle Brothers and two lay teachers”, he said.

“But the Brothers all knew you by name and had an inspiring commitment to social justice”.

Fr Richard felt a strong vocation to religious life as a priest and chose the Jesuits because they shared the Lasallians’ commitment to helping the marginalised and the disadvantaged.

“I see some great similarities in the lives of our two Founders- St John Baptist De La Salle and St Ignatius of Loyola”, Fr Richard explains.

“I’ve maintained an ongoing connection to the Lasallians and have travelled back to New Plymouth for some school reunions over the years as well”.

“My experience with the De La Salle Brothers had a pivotal influence on my faith journey and definitely shaped my decision to follow a religious vocation”.

## Champion for Lasallian Education in PNG: Bernadette Ove

The pioneering Principal of Jubilee Catholic Secondary School in Port Moresby, Bernadette Ove has played a pivotal role in Lasallian education in her home country, guiding her school into a position where it is regarded as one of the best high schools in PNG.

The journey began 16 years ago when Bernadette was Principal of a state high school in Boroko and she delivered a presentation at an educators conference.

“After my presentation, Brother Dennis Loft who was the Principal of the Hohola Youth Development Centre approached me and asked me if I would like to be the Principal of a new secondary school the De La Salle Brothers were setting up in Boroko”, Bernadette explains.

“I was a graduate of Sacred Heart Teachers College where I had first come under the influence of the Lasallian charism and I greatly admired all it stood for, including its commitment to the disadvantaged, so I eagerly took up the opportunity”.

From humble origins in 2000, Bernadette now leads a coeducational school with over 600 students with 40 of its final year students last year gaining entry to university courses in PNG.

“When the school first started, high standards were set from the very beginning with the pioneer class and that’s continued every year after that”, Bernadette says.

The school was named Jubilee Catholic Secondary because it was founded in the year 2000- a jubilee year for the Catholic Church, marking 2000 years of Christianity.

The Year 2000 was also a jubilee year for Lasallians, marking 100 years since St John Baptist De La Salle was canonised and 50 years since he was declared the Patron Saint of Teachers.

Educated by the Franciscans and the Patrician Brothers in PNG, Bernadette had what she describes as an “Adrian Nyal” experience, being led into the Lasallian family through her time as a student at Sacred Heart Teachers College.

Adrian Nyal was a layman who had a chance meeting on the doorstep of John Baptist De La Salle which led him to help the Founder expand his network of schools over 300 years ago in France.

In today’s world, Bernadette sees great potential to expand the Lasallian mission and foster closer ties between Lasallian schools in our District through Twinning.

Twinning has worked well over the past 20 years in the Lasallian Region of North America (RE-LAN) where a number of schools

in the United States are twinned with fellow Lasallian schools in the Lwanga District in Africa, which includes the countries of Kenya and Ethiopia.

“Twinning will help students and teachers by forging stronger connections between our schools in PNG and fellow Lasallians in Australia and New Zealand”, Bernadette explains.

“It ties in closely with that Lasallian commitment to unity and solidarity wherever our schools happen to be”.



## Committed Lasallians - Norma and Thomas Coorey

Norma Coorey and her son Thomas have an inspiring commitment to Lasallian education in Sydney, stretching back well over 30 years.

Norma is one of an elite number of Lasallian Benefactors in Sydney, an award conveyed upon her in recognition of the 30 years she has worked in administration roles at Casimir College in Marrickville.

Thomas is a former school captain of the old senior school Benilde College in Bankstown and also spent his junior secondary years at De La Salle College in Revesby.

He is now a dentist in Revesby and he and his wife Tina and their four

children were selected to represent the Archdiocese of Sydney at the World Meeting of Families in the United States last year, where they had the honour of meeting Pope Francis.

Thomas attributes his strong Catholic faith to his Lasallian education.

“It had a massive impact on my life and it really helped me to engage with the Catholic community and then go on later to take an active role in my own parish at Kingsgrove”, Thomas explains.

“I think that sense of belonging is critical for young people”.

Thomas says the positive experience he had in Lasallian schools led him to continue his faith journey as a young adult.

He met his wife Tina at World Youth Day in Paris in 1997.

Thomas says he has many fond memories from his time at Benilde College and De La Salle Revesby and counts a number of De La Salle Brothers as mentors.

“At Benilde, I was fortunate to come under the influence of Br Garry Coyte as Principal then and he was always really concerned for the welfare of the students and at Revesby, Br Michael Johnson was Principal and he encouraged a real sense of service and community at the school”, he says.

Norma has seen first hand the changing face of Lasallian education from the founding Principal of Casimir College, Br Colin Griffin in 1983 through to the leadership of a number of non Brothers, including the current Principal, Daniel McInerney.

“Now with not as many De La Salle Brothers around, it’s so important to keep the Lasallian legacy alive and it’s great to see Br

Colin visiting Casimir and Revesby so that the students can meet the Brothers who have contributed so much to the success of the schools”, Norma says.

Thomas believes one of the great strengths of Lasallian schools has been the way they have been able to reach out to many students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, giving them a sound education and leading many of them onto tertiary studies and fulfilling careers.

“The De La Salle Brothers have provided a quality education to many who could least afford it”, Thomas explains.

**“Education is a pathway out of poverty”.**

Norma says she saw many inspiring examples of that during her decades on the staff of Casimir College.

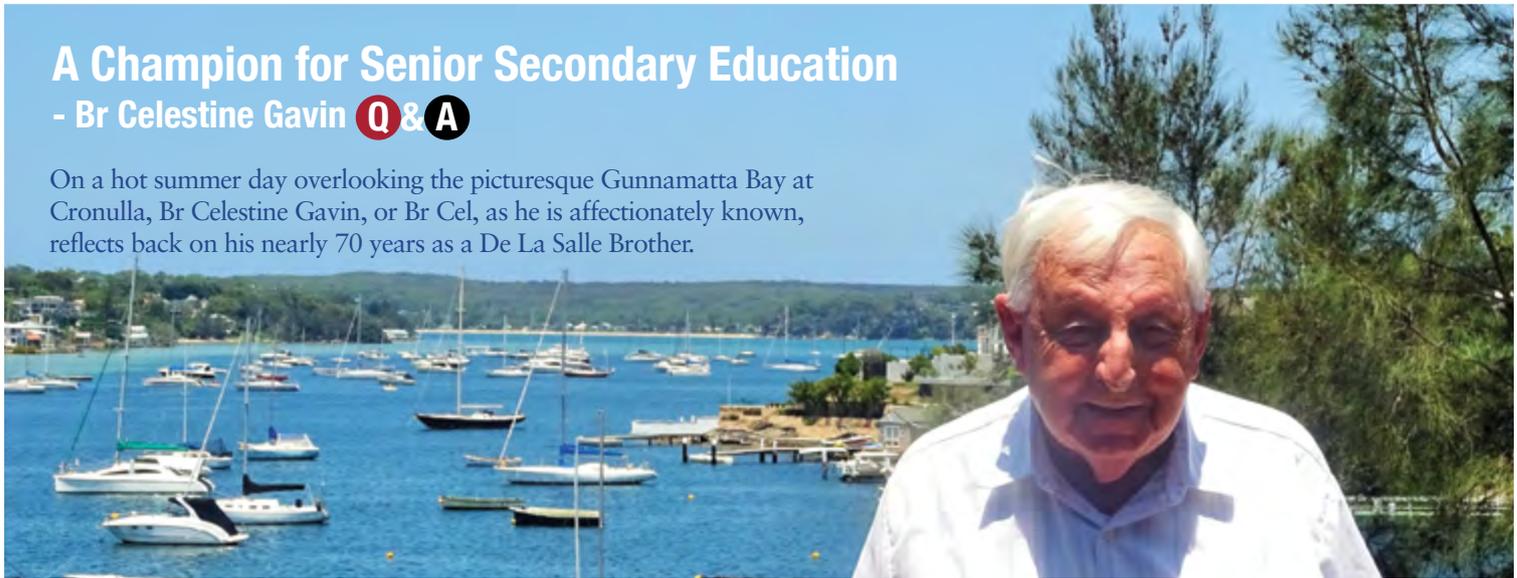
“There were so many students helped that way who came back to school reunions as lawyers, doctors and judges and many of them were from migrant backgrounds whose families had come to Australia with nothing”.



# A Champion for Senior Secondary Education

- Br Celestine Gavin **Q&A**

On a hot summer day overlooking the picturesque Gunnamatta Bay at Cronulla, Br Celestine Gavin, or Br Cel, as he is affectionately known, reflects back on his nearly 70 years as a De La Salle Brother.



Educated at De La Salle College Marrickville, Brother Celestine had a strong admiration for the work of the Lasallians and decided to become a Brother in his final year of high school.

“I had been thinking seriously about a teaching career and I had discussed the decision with my parents”, he explains.

“I started off briefly in the Juniorate and then a well respected Brother from the United States, Br Francis De Sales, who was Novice Master at the time, asked three of us whether we would like to come over to the Novitiate”.

“We didn’t know what that was at the time, but we all said yes and I became a Brother in 1947”.

Br Celestine has worked across many parts of the District, starting in Malvern in Victoria in the 1950s, had a brief stint in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s and was a former Principal of James Sheahan College in Orange in the early 1990s.

But he has a particularly strong passion for senior secondary education, having been Principal of two senior colleges, De La Salle Cronulla and Benilde College in Bankstown.

Br Celestine has had a long and revered association with the senior coeducational school in Cronulla where a library is named after him and where he has played a strong role as mentor to many current and former students dating back to the 1970s.

“I’ve seen first hand so many great changes in senior secondary education and there is so much more flexibility in the system now with students able to do a few days each week in an apprenticeship and some subjects at school and other subjects at TAFE”, he explains.

Br Celestine has a keen interest in curriculum development and has continued to play a liaison role with the Board of Studies over recent years.

## One of his fondest memories from his time at the Lasallian school was a visit by Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta in 1972.

“That was organised by the Mothers’ Auxiliary at the school and the parents here formed the first Co-workers for Mother Theresa group in Australia which was quite an achievement”.

Br Celestine is also a talented linguist who took up the study of Italian while he was teaching in the 1980s in Bankstown and completed an Honours degree in the field through the University of South Australia.

“I wrote a thesis on a Franciscan poet from the 13th century in Italian which helped me upgrade my Bachelor of Arts degree which I’d completed earlier in life to the honours level”, he said.

As he looks to the future for Lasallians in our District, Br Celestine believes declining vocations to religious life are empowering Young Lasallian volunteers to keep the spirit of the Founder alive in today’s more secular society.

“I really admire the Share the Mission volunteers for example who travel out to the remote Indigenous community at Balgo Hills in the Kimberley region and often come back again once they’ve done their first trip there”.

**“They are keeping the Lasallian spirit alive”.**

### In next month’s issue:

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- Lasallian Educators Conference preview
- NZ Affiliated Member- Monsignor Brian Arahill
- Modern Day Lasallian Leaders- Rose Pongi
- Around Bankstown: Br Eugene Nguyen

To contribute to the newsletter, please contact, Michael Kenny  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Australia**  
**2016**

Lasallian Facilitation (Level 3), Sydney  
March 6-8

Lasallian Educators Conference, Perth  
April 17-20

Lasallian Middle Managers Conference (Level 3), Brisbane  
June 7-8

Pilgrimage for Young Lasallians- In the Footsteps of St De La Salle  
September 25-October 9

**New Zealand**  
**2016**

NZ Mission Action Committee meeting, Rotorua  
5 March

Heritage Program for new Lasallian teachers  
26-28 April

Lasallian Retreat, Auckland  
17-22 July

NZ Lasallians Gathering, Hamilton  
17 September

**Pakistan**  
**2016**

Teachers Induction Program, Faisalabad and Multan  
26 March

Pakistan Chapter of Vows, Faisalabad  
7 May

Annual Retreat 2016, Murree  
12-18 June

Canonical Visit of Br Visitor David Hawke  
3-10 October

**Papua New Guinea**  
**2016**

Student Leaders formation program  
11 June

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