

Journal

La Salle ANZPPNG

“Think highly of your work”

- Meditations for the Feast of Saint Matthew



Lawyer Tim Dick, writing in today's Fairfax publications about the upcoming Federal election, noted that, "The campaign has been almost civil, a genteel tussle between decent politicians advocating moderate policies. Vote 1 for comparatively modest change".

And while plenty of voters on all sides of the political spectrum will quibble with Dick's view, expecting more forthright vision and exciting, inclusive planning for the country, the fact is that our current leaders and would be leaders do generally debate, argue, and attempt to persuade in a decent fashion without resorting

to the vitriol and personal invective seen all too commonly elsewhere on the world's political stage. Of course, we are not immune from crassness and stupidity, and we have our own share of fringe-dwelling politicians and would-be leaders who must be carefully watched, contained and hopefully sent packing courtesy of the ballot box.

Worldwide, however, it seems there's a daily crisis of quality leadership. Has it always been this way? Has the pervasive scrutiny of the 24/7 news cycle only highlighted the feet of clay that marks most human endeavours? Would respected leaders of the past be just as critically assessed in light of today's standards?

I've recently reread David McCullough's magnificent biography of Harry S. Truman, 33rd President of the United

States. Ten years in the research and writing, this is a story of a leader for the ages. Leaders, and those who aspire to lead, would do well to read it. This is Harry S. Truman of "The Buck Stops Here" plaque which adorned his Oval Office desk. Courage and confidence, genuine sympathy for others, humour, common sense, personal and professional pride, determination, and a fundamental, unshakable faith in democracy were his hallmarks. Wm J Hopkins, Executive Clerk in the White House for 40 years wrote: "Truman liked people, he trusted people, and in turn he engendered unqualified loyalty and devotion among his staff", while his Naval Aide, Lieutenant Rigdon noted that "From first to last, he remained entirely himself. There was no pretence whatever about him". McCullough noted that Truman welcomed others' ideas.

"He was not afraid of the competition of other ideas... Free of the greatest vice in a leader, his ego never came between him and his job".

A second reading of this brilliant tome provided a few reminders-quality leadership is founded on integrity, honour and honesty, lofty ideals and nobility of intent. Or as Truman himself noted, quoting Mark Twain, "Always do right. It will please some people and astonish the rest".

Whether it's Malcolm or Bill, Hillary or Donald, man or woman, mother, father, principal or priest, the same lessons apply. And so too, to Lasallians who dare to hope in the face of despair. To be Lasallian is to be people of heart!

Merv McCormack

Executive Director, Lasallian Mission Council

Lasallians lead landmark Confirmation Retreats

The youth ministry team from Lasallian Mission Services has won praise from primary schools and parishes for an innovative new Confirmation Retreat program held last month at Cronulla in Sydney.

Youth Ministry Coordinator Philippe Dulawan was approached by the Pastoral Associate at St Aloysius Parish in Cronulla, Mrs Cathy Sammut to coordinate the program which involved 82 Year 6 students from government and Catholic schools in the area.

The program was enhanced through the involvement of a number of Year 10 Lasallian Leaders from De La Salle College at Caringbah and from the all girls school, Our Lady of Mercy College at Burraneer.

Both these Year 7-10 schools are feeder schools for the Year 11 and 12 coeducational school, De La Salle College at Cronulla.

The Year 10 students helped run small group activities and games and acted as older mentors to the Year 6 students who generally came from feeder primary schools.

Assistant Youth Ministry Coordinator Jordan Bottalico and the Lasallian Youth Minister at De La Salle College Caringbah Jake Wedesweiler also helped to coordinate the activities, aimed at preparing the students for their Confirmation Day.

The event helped to forge closer ties between the Year 6 students and the Cronulla parish and also helped them learn more about the Catholic secondary schools they are attending next year.

It also helped strengthen ties between Lasallian youth ministry, the local parish and the schools in the region.

"The program was relevant to the students, pitched at their level and they were all totally immersed in

it", explained the Pastoral Associate at St Aloysius Parish, Mrs Cathy Sammut.

"I really hope that we can make this an annual event", Mrs Sammut added.

The Religious Education Coordinator at De La Salle College Caringbah, Mr Peter Strudwick

said it was a great learning experience for the Year 10 students which helped enhance their leadership skills.

"The boys who represented the college were a credit to our school and the primary teachers on hand remarked upon the great difference they made to the success of the retreat", Mr Strudwick said.



Committed Lasallian: Di Herron



As Performing Arts Coordinator at Oakhill College over a period stretching back 40 years, Mrs Di Herron has directed countless productions of an outstanding calibre and helped nurture the careers of some of Australia’s most talented actors.

In so doing, Mrs Herron has established a remarkable tradition at the Sydney school which sees large numbers of Year 12 students take drama as an HSC elective every year.

Many of the senior students work on stage productions for six years, starting in Years 7 and 8 where drama is a compulsory subject.

The college recently made history, staging the first amateur production of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical “Starlight Express” to packed theatres over six performances.

It was a particularly ambitious venture given all the cast members had to perform their parts entirely on roller-skates.

“I remember when I first broke the news to the senior students that I had chosen Starlight Express as our next production”, Mrs Herron says with a chuckle.

“They told me they had no idea how to roller-skate and couldn’t possibly manage it”.

“But after I encouraged them to learn over the Christmas holidays, they quickly picked up the new skill and it all went remarkably well”, Mrs Herron adds.

Oakhill College has a particularly strong tradition in musicals, including a memorable production of Cats in 2012 and Miss Saigon in 2014.

Mrs Herron believes the coeducational senior classes at Oakhill have helped a great deal in allowing for a greater range of productions than would be possible at a single sex school.

But in a college with an all-boys junior school, Di Herron’s down to earth teaching style has helped make drama an appealing subject choice with captains of the college rugby team frequently taking a lead role in major musicals.

The college’s rich tradition in the performing arts has also helped foster many professional careers, with Oakhill alumni including talented stage and film actors such as Steve Le Marquand and Luke Joslin.

The talented comedian David Collins from the Umbilical Brothers also made his stage debut at Oakhill.

“It’s certainly been really rewarding as a teacher seeing some of the alumni go on to careers in the performing arts”, Mrs Herron explained.

“But what I find equally rewarding is when I go to the theatre myself and have former students come up to me in the foyer and tell me how the school helped foster a love of the theatre in them that’s stayed with them for life”.

Mrs Herron believes the strong Lasallian heritage of Oakhill College is a key factor behind its success in the performing arts.

“Through our major productions, the senior students act as big brothers and sisters to the juniors and there is a real sense of community where everyone is working together to make sure the musical or the play succeeds”, she explained.

“As a director, I do set the bar very high for our students, but I always come away inspired by the dedication they show in not only reaching their potential, but going well beyond what I could have imagined for them”.

“And I believe ultimately that is what we are called to do as educators; to ensure that we set consistently high expectations and then put our faith in our students to reach their full potential”.

Lasallian schools at the forefront of positive psychology program



Two Sydney Lasallian schools, De La Salle College Revesby and Holy Spirit College Lakemba are seeing better student results in the classroom and on the sporting field as a result of a comprehensive positive psychology program which is popular with sports stars.

The Boomerang Effect is an eight module program developed by

psychologists which focuses on optimising performance through minimising negative thoughts and developing effective strategies to cope with fears and setbacks.

It includes key slogans which students are encouraged to regularly repeat, such as “What you put out is what you get back” and “Words, Thoughts and Actions always Positive. No exceptions, Everyday in everyway. 24/7 On!”

It is referred to as the Boomerang effect based around the theory that those who throw out positive boomerangs will get positive boomerangs thrown back to them.

De La Salle College Revesby and Holy Spirit College Lakemba were selected as pilot schools when the program was first introduced in the Archdiocese of Sydney in 2014, following great levels of success in the Diocese of Wollongong.

The program has been used successfully by Olympic athletes and a number of National Rugby

League teams including the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs and the Sydney Roosters.

The Principal of Holy Spirit College Lakemba, Mr Phillip Scollard says the program has helped to foster a highly positive atmosphere at the school which is focused on encouraging every student to reach his/her full potential.

“It’s all about being able to reframe setbacks into a more forward-looking, positive mindframe which is really just a healthy life skill which can be applied in so many different areas, from the classroom through to the sports field”, Mr Scollard said.

Both Holy Spirit College Lakemba and De La Salle College Revesby have integrated the program into their PDHPE curriculum in Year 9 and formed a peer support program around it as well.

In a true reflection of the Lasallian tradition of senior students acting as mentors to the junior secondary students, both schools have appointed Boomerang leaders in



the senior years who teach the program to junior students.

Mr Scollard believes the Boomerang Effect has helped contribute to stronger academic results at Holy Spirit College.

The school was ranked in the top 30 secondary schools nationally earlier this year based upon its improved results in Year 9 literacy.

Mr Scollard says that is a particularly satisfying result given 85 percent of students at the school speak a Language Other Than English at home.

St John's College Dandenong takes up innovative learning program

St John's College Dandenong has been selected by Catholic Education Melbourne to be part of an exciting three year professional development program aimed at improving results for all students, regardless of their ability level.

The Collaborative Impact Program-Visible Learning is based on detailed research carried out by an internationally respected researcher, Professor John Hattie from the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education.

Professor Hattie has drawn together findings on classroom learning involving more than 80 million students around the world.

The studies have consistently highlighted the importance of collaborative learning and moving away from the lecture-based, "chalk and talk" approach adopted by past generations of teachers.

The professional development program linked to this research helps teachers gain a better understanding of the classroom practices that work best which in turn leads to more effective learning outcomes.

The program is gradually introduced with groups of teachers across a



three year cycle to ensure it becomes embedded in the culture of a school.

"It is fundamentally about teachers seeing learning through the eyes of their students and students seeing themselves as their own teachers", explains St John's College Principal Mr Andrew Walsh.

The program has been targeted at schools like St John's with large numbers of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, including recently-arrived migrants in need of additional resources and support.

The Lasallian school has received funding from Catholic Education Melbourne to implement the program which includes an upcoming professional development day in July involving 150 primary and secondary

teachers from across the Dandenong region.

It has also allowed St John's College to forge closer ties with its feeder Catholic primary schools which have also adopted the program.

This in turn will lead to a real sense of continuity in the learning approach adopted across primary and secondary education in the region.

Mr Walsh believes the program will have some long term benefits for students and teachers as well.

"It will give students a greater sense of ownership over their learning and they will be able to clearly track how they are performing and for teachers, that will make for a very positive and collaborative classroom environment as well", he said.



Gerry Lambert appointed new Chair of yourtown

Brother Visitor Br David Hawke has appointed experienced company director Mr Gerry Lambert as the new Chair of the Lasallian welfare agency, yourtown.

Mr Lambert succeeds outgoing chair, Br Ambrose Payne who retired from the role in May after 14 years of dedicated service to the organisation.

Mr Lambert has been a member of the yourtown Board of Directors for the past six years, including the past two years as its Deputy Chair.

He brings with him over 25 years of experience as a senior corporate executive, with a broad range of experience across the mining, building and property development industry.

Mr Lambert has been a board member across a number of publicly listed companies and is currently a Senior Consultant with Directors Australia, a consultancy firm specialising in board consulting and director recruitment.

yourtown CEO Ms Tracy Adams has welcomed Mr Lambert's appointment, saying he will bring a wealth of experience and strong values into the role.

"Gerry has a strong commitment to the work of yourtown, to our combined belief that together we can create brighter futures and to the Lasallian Charism which underpins our mission and values", Ms Adams said.

"He is a very experienced Director and Consultant on matters related to Governance, which through his role as Chair, the organisation will continue to benefit from", she added.

Staff from De La Salle Revesby engage in outreach to the homeless

A group of 15 staff members from De La Salle College in Revesby braved torrential rain on a cold Sunday morning in June to provide food and other essential items to the homeless in central Sydney.

In a great display of the Lasallian values of faith, service and community, the staff put together 100 care packages which were distributed through the St Vincent De Paul Brekky Van to those in real need this winter.

The staff spent two hours handing out the packages in very difficult weather conditions and offered caring support to the homeless.

The volunteer effort was coordinated by the school's

hard-working Religious Education Coordinator, Mrs Marg Marriott with strong support from Principal Mr Tim Logue.

Brekky Van is a service which provides a cooked breakfast, cereal and hot drinks, each weekend morning to the

homeless and those in social or financial hardship.

The service not only helps provide a hot meal to the disadvantaged, but also helps to break down feelings of loneliness and isolation faced by many homeless Australians.

It is complemented by a Night Patrol service where volunteers spend a number of weekend nights handing out hot drinks and food to the homeless in inner Sydney and the outer western suburbs.



Committed Lasallian Principal- Patrick Walsh



The Principal of John Paul College in Rotorua, Mr Patrick Walsh is a familiar face to many New Zealanders.

As a past President of the Secondary Principals' Association, Mr Walsh has been at the forefront of major policy debates in school education in New Zealand for well over a decade.

He has also led John Paul College for the past 13 years into a position where it is regarded as the top performing Catholic secondary school in the country, based upon its academic results.

"I attribute our success to the strong set of values we unashamedly promote at the school", Mr Walsh explains.

"Those values are the core Lasallian ones of faith, service and community, backed by high expectations for our students".

The co-educational school with around 1200 students is named after Saint Pope John Paul the Second and it has a rich history as a multi-charism college.

When it was founded in 1987, it brought together an all boys school run by the Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice College with an all girls school run by the Sisters of St Joseph, MacKillop College.

"It has really enhanced our religious education program", Mr Walsh said.

"We are able to invite Christian Brothers, De La Salle Brothers and the Sisters of St Joseph to talk to our students and it means students have a number of key saints to inspire them too".

Throughout his period as head of the Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand, Patrick Walsh called for schools to be given stronger powers to combat one of the great challenges they are facing in the digital era- cyberbullying.

"I believe schools should have the right to search students' mobile phones if they suspect that the health and safety of fellow students is being compromised", Mr Walsh said.

"We should also integrate firmly into our curriculum, the need to promote respectful relationships which is closely tied to our Lasallian and broader Catholic values", he added.

"Here at John Paul College, we link this in with the teaching of the Parable of the Good Samaritan and the importance of not being a bystander, allowing others to be bullied while you merely stand on the sidelines".

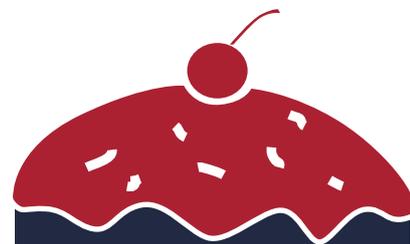
Through his executive roles in secondary education in New Zealand, Patrick Walsh has also taken a strong interest in promoting stronger professional standards for teachers and he believes this is particularly important in the digital age.

"There needs to be clear boundaries set around the use of social media with it being inappropriate for teachers to post personal comments for example on students' Facebook pages", he said.

Mr Walsh believes Lasallian schools also have a clear obligation to promote faith-based programs that are geared towards serving the needs of the most marginalised.

"Our students recently visited a Refugee Centre in Auckland where they were able to meet young people who have fled the conflict in Syria and hear the tremendous suffering they have endured", he explained.

"That service to the community is a fundamental part of our work, whether it is through offering hot food to the homeless through the St Vincent De Paul or fundraising to help a fellow Lasallian school in Pakistan or the Philippines".



Cupcakes for Cambodia

Students from the Lasallian secondary school John Paul College Rotorua have used a cupcake competition and an International Food Festival to raise vital funds to support a fellow Lasallian school in Cambodia.

The fundraisers were a celebration of the rich cultural diversity of the New Zealand school with students coming from over 50 different nationalities.

Through the food stalls, students and staff were able to enjoy culinary delights from countries such as China, the Philippines, South Africa and Israel.

The combined events raised just over \$2400 which will be presented to La Salle School in Po Thum when senior students visit Cambodia in July.

Year 12 teacher Mr Brendan Davis and Prefect Bradley Ramlose had the tough task of judging the cupcake competition.

Year 11 student Fisher Wang was declared the winner with "Pina Colada" cupcakes from Puerto Rico.

A team of Year 13 students came second with a "Chinese Dragon" made of cupcakes.

Year 8 student Blake Evans was in third place after baking cupcakes decorated with Cambodia's national flower, the rumdal.

The latest fundraisers are another reminder of the strong emphasis on social justice at John Paul College.

The college was selected in April as the host school for the annual Caritas sporting challenge involving all Catholic schools in the Diocese of Hamilton.

This year's Caritas Challenge also helped raise funds to support disadvantaged communities in Cambodia.

Lasallian Alumni: Bishop Elect Richard Umbers



Pope Francis has appointed an Old Boy of De La Salle College Mangere as a new Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney.

45 year old Auckland-born Fr Richard Umbers will be officially installed in a ceremony at St Mary's Cathedral on 24 August,

alongside another new Auxiliary Bishop, Monsignor Anthony Randazzo.

They will join current Auxiliary Bishop Terry Brady in the governance and pastoral care of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney which is led by Archbishop Anthony Fisher.

"I was stunned when I heard the news", Fr Umbers said.

"But I accept the Holy Father's appointment in a spirit of filial obedience and the ardent desire to serve the Church as she needs".

"I bring with me a love for people and ideas which often finds expression in my preaching on the Gospel", he added.

Father Umbers is a priest of Opus Dei and has undertaken service

projects in disadvantaged communities in Vietnam, including through the Phy Ny Orphanage in Ho Chi Minh City.

Since his ordination in 2002, Fr Umbers has worked as a school and university college chaplain and as a member of the team of spiritual advisors at the Seminary of the Good Shepherd in Sydney.

Fr Umbers has a doctorate in Philosophy and has been a lecturer and tutor at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney.

The Bishop-Elect has a particular interest in mainstream and social media and how they can be used for evangelisation.

In his spare time, the former De La Salle Mangere student enjoys long distance running and using a rowing machine to keep fit.



Lasallian Alumni: Freya Blackwood

One of the world's most talented children's book illustrators, Freya Blackwood attributes some of her success to the inspirational teachers who helped foster her love of art at James Sheahan Catholic High School in Orange.

Freya's illustrated books, including *Maudie and Bear* (2010), *Harry and Hopper* (2009) and *The Treasure Box* (2013) are household names on children's book shelves and school libraries around the globe.

Her work has been recognised through prestigious international awards, including the Kate Greenaway Medal for children's book illustration in Britain for *Harry and Hopper*, written by Margaret Wild and published by Omnibus Books.

Freya undertook all her secondary education at James Sheahan Catholic High and has many fond memories from her years at the

Lasallian school, especially its strong emphasis on the arts.

"I had some fabulous teachers in art, music and English who were a great inspiration to me", Freya explains.

"I was also fortunate to grow up in a very creative household, with my mother a gifted painter and my father an architect", she adds.

After tertiary studies in design at the University of Technology in Sydney, Freya turned her talents to the film industry.

She moved to Wellington in New Zealand to work as a special effects artist for all three of the Lord of the Rings films.

"It was a fantastic experience to be working on such an enormous project like that", Freya said.

"And it was through this work, that I realised that my first love was drawing and illustration".



Freya returned to her home town of Orange and quickly launched herself into a remarkable career in children's illustration which has seen her work published in many countries including Australia, the United States, South Korea and France.

There is a strong social justice dimension to her work which is particularly noticeable in *My Two Blankets*, a book she co-wrote with Irene Kobald in 2014 which depicts the story of a young refugee girl fleeing a war-torn country for somewhere safe.



In his role as Executive Director of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Parramatta, Oakhill College alumni Greg Whitby is responsible for nearly 80 schools in one of Australia's fastest growing and most culturally diverse regions.

Mr Whitby is the nation's longest serving director of a school system, having spent ten years in his current job and seven years prior to that directing Catholic schools

in the Diocese of Wollongong, south of Sydney.

From his office overlooking St Patrick's Cathedral, he reflects back on how his strong values and faith were shaped by the De La Salle Brothers.

"My education at Oakhill College provided me with a sound education and I was very fortunate to have had some powerful

Lasallian Alumni: Greg Whitby

mentors, including a number of Brothers who strongly supported and encouraged me for many years after I left school", Mr Whitby explained.

A graduate of the Class of 1971, Greg Whitby has fond memories from his years at Oakhill in classes of up to 50 students where there was strong, but fair discipline and amazing teachers who inspired their students to make the most of their potential.

"Br Ambrose Payne taught me English and he has made such an incredible contribution to Catholic education in Australia, especially in teacher education", Mr Whitby said.

"Another teacher who had a powerful influence on me was Br Nivard or John Mitchell as he was widely known, who used to write a personal letter to me every year, congratulating me on my achievements and letting me know how proud the Brothers were of me".

After graduating from Oakhill College, Greg Whitby undertook his teacher training at Macquarie University in the early 1970s, before working as a primary and secondary teacher in government and Catholic schools in western Sydney over a 20 year time period.

A visionary reformer, Greg Whitby has been at the forefront of adapting classrooms across the Diocese of Parramatta to meet the challenges of the digital age.

Greg Whitby's outstanding contribution to Catholic education was recognised in 2012 with the awarding of a Papal Knighthood.

"While the award itself is a tremendous personal honour, it would never have been possible without the support of a great team of people here around me in the Diocese of Parramatta", he said.

"And as I look back on what led me here, I'd also like to think that the De La Salle Brothers can take a share of the credit as well".



Around Mount Hagen with Br Luke Warvanuk

He undertook his novice training in the Philippines with one of his eight classmates being the current Lasallian Youth Minister for Pakistan, Br Rehman Javed.

Br Luke has been a Brother in active ministry now for four years and currently holds the position of Sector Director of Vocations for Papua New Guinea.

“I find it really rewarding being able to speak in the schools and teachers colleges about the work of the De La Salle Brothers and being in a position where I can help influence others and encourage them to consider a religious vocation”, Br Luke said.

“There is so much potential here for vocations with such a vibrant Lasallian community across PNG”.

The Mount Hagen-based Brother has a passionate commitment to addressing inequity in education in his home country.

“There is a genuine lack of resources in the more remote schools in PNG and we’re trying to address that through Twinning programs across the District”, he explains.

“It will allow Australian and New Zealand schools to share, not only financial resources but professional development and support to fellow Lasallian schools and teachers colleges in PNG”.

Br Luke says he draws a lot of personal inspiration from the Papua New Guinean students and new graduates emerging from the Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart Teachers Colleges.

“They leave me very optimistic about the future direction of the Lasallian mission in PNG”, he says.

“I have no doubt that great leaders are coming through these teacher colleges who will help to spread the Lasallian mission to some of the remotest provinces of our country”.

As a young student attending government schools in Papua New Guinea’s remote Highlands region, Br Luke Warvanuk never imagined becoming a De La Salle Brother, promoting potential vocations across the country.

But his faith journey changed when he came under the influence of the Brothers during his years as a student at the Holy Trinity Teachers College in Mount Hagen.

“I greatly admired the work they were doing at the Teachers College, helping to train new teachers to work mainly in primary schools in some of the most remote parts of PNG”, Br Luke explained.

After graduating from the teachers college, Br Luke initially worked as a teacher himself, but soon realised he had a stronger calling in life- to become a De La Salle Brother.

Port Moresby Lasallians Gather for Historic Cultural Show

Thousands of Lasallians from across the National Capital District of PNG have come together for an outstanding Cultural Show, featuring traditional dance performances by students from all four schools and teachers colleges in Port Moresby.

It was the first time that all the Lasallian schools and teachers colleges from the PNG capital had come together for a cultural event on this scale.

Similar cultural shows are held at different times of the year in other provinces of PNG.

The Cultural Show for the National Capital District was hosted by De La Salle Secondary School in Bomana and also involved students from La Salle Technical College, Jubilee Catholic Secondary School and Sacred Heart Teachers College.

The students eagerly practised their dance

routines every afternoon after school over many weeks in the lead up to the event.

The celebrations have taken on a special significance this year, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of continuous

Lasallian education in Papua New Guinea.

All proceeds from ticket sales at the show went towards key programs in Port Moresby schools, including the highly popular Breakfast Club for students.



Around St Michael's College with Sr Nithya Tayappan



Since arriving at St Michael's College in Adelaide, Passionist nun and social worker Sr Nithya Rayappan has offered comfort and touched the hearts of countless

students undergoing grief or trauma in their personal lives.

In a school with a growing student enrolment of 1500 pupils, Sr Nithya has helped many students cope with the loss of close family members in her role as Pastoral Support Worker.

She has helped to not only counsel them through these life-changing events, but also arrange funeral liturgies for their families.

Her work has also extended to the sacramental program at St Michael's College, helping primary students prepare for their confirmation and offering spiritual direction to Year 12 students on their retreats.

"In many ways, the students have helped me grow in my faith, more than I have been able to help them", explains Sr Nithya with a smile.

Born in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, Sr Nithya has travelled widely around the globe and holds a Masters degree in Psychology after undertaking studies at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.

She is one of only five Passionist Sisters in Adelaide, all of whom are involved in similar ministries in parishes and schools.

The Sisters were founded in 1815 in Italy, but they have a much shorter history in Australia which only began in 2000.

"I feel very much at home with the Lasallians because we both have a strong commitment to education and we also link that to those core notions of faith, service and community", Sr Nithya explains.

Sr Nithya has been a familiar face at many Young Lasallian events including last year's District Conference in Melbourne and she has a particularly strong passion and zeal for working with young people.

"I am also very grateful for the strong support I've received for my work at St Michael's College, especially from the Principal John Foley", she adds.

Committed Lasallian: John Dunn

The Director of Faith and Mission at De La Salle College Ashfield, John Dunn has had a remarkable journey as a Lasallian which stretches back to his time as a primary school student in the 1960s and then as a teacher across three Sydney schools.

Initially trained as a Science Teacher, Mr Dunn has spent most of the past forty years in the profession and largely in Lasallian schools.

He has held the position of Lasallian facilitator at three Sydney

schools- De La Salle Caringbah, La Salle College in Bankstown and his current school, De La Salle Ashfield.

An Old Boy of De La Salle Colleges at Caringbah and Cronulla, he believes the Brothers had a powerful influence upon his career path.

"I had an old Irish Brother as my teacher at Caringbah, Br Dermot Brosnan who had an incredible influence on me, along with Br Ray Ryan or Br Killian as he was known back then and they were

both fantastic role models", Mr Dunn explains.

"Then at Cronulla, I was there before the school went coeducational and I remember what a great mentor Br Celestine Gavin was to the students when he was Principal in the 1970s", he added.

"Br Celestine encouraged the students to aim high and the school started getting outstanding results, producing many doctors, lawyers and engineers".

It was that sort of encouragement that helped John Dunn win a Commonwealth Teachers' Scholarship and after graduating he was initially sent to work at a boarding school near Leeton in rural NSW.

But after two years he returned to Sydney and his fond memories from his school days led him to take up a job at his old school, De La Salle Caringbah in 1981.

It marked the start of a decades-long commitment to Lasallian education, broken only by a short stint in a Marist school in the 1990s and three years

in the legal profession.

Mr Dunn's zeal for the Lasallian mission has extended well beyond Australian shores and includes months of formation at the Mother House in Rome and as a lay representative for the Pacific Asia Regional Council (PARC).

Through the SIEL program in the late 1990s, widely known as the International Lasallian Studies Sessions, John Dunn had the opportunity to spend three months immersing himself in Lasallian studies in Italy.

"It was definitely the most formative experience I ever had and I quickly realised the global extent of the Lasallian family which I wasn't as conscious of from my work as a teacher in Sydney", he added.

"I came back filled with zeal for the Lasallian mission in Australia and have still kept in contact many years later with some of the French and American Brothers I met through that program".



New Postulants in Pakistan- by Br Aloysius Hurrell

The feast of the Sacred Heart on the 3rd of June was a very special day in Faisalabad, because it was the Robe Taking day for two postulants, Robin and Taimoor.

The new postulants are among a growing number of young men in Pakistan who have felt called to the vocation of the De La Salle Brother.

Holy Mass, which included the Robe-taking Ceremony, started with an Affiliated Member of the Institute, Father Francis Bashir presiding.

The liturgy was organised by Brother Qumar John and the Aspirants made up the choir, under the guidance of their music teacher.

Auxiliary Visitor Brother Shazad Gill, representing the Superior General, led the Robe-taking Ceremony.

The community was happy to welcome Robin's and Taimoor's families plus four Brothers from the Khusphur Community.

Brothers Gregory and Aloysius had the privilege of being Robin's and Taimoor's sponsors.

After Mass and congratulations to the two new Pre-Novices, a celebratory meal was hosted by the Faisalabad Community with the Aspirants as guest masters.

The Pakistan Sector of the District is grateful to Brother Vincent Keating for preparing Postulants Robin and



Taimoor for this special day.

The two new Pre-Novices flew back to Sri Lanka that evening where they have begun the Pre-Novitiate programme.

Around Malvern

Q&A with Br Mandy Dujunco

Philippines-born Br Mandy Dujunco's path towards becoming a De La Salle Brother began early in high school when he was moved by the kindness shown by one of the Brothers at his old school near Manila.

"I went to an all boys' school, La Salle Green Hills and when I was in Year 7, one of the Brothers noticed I had a broken crucifix while we were saying the rosary together in our dormitory", Br Mandy explained.

"I got a shock when that same Brother invited me over to the Brothers' community a few weeks later and presented me with a new set of rosary beads. That had a really powerful impact on me which has remained with me through my life", he added.

Br Mandy taught for a number of years in the Philippines and Myanmar and is a former president and principal of Br Jaime Hilario Integrated School- a Lasallian coeducational primary and secondary school in Bagac in the Philippines.

The Manila-born Brother has an amazing talent as a childrens' book author and this was recognised through a prestigious Cardinal Sin Catholic Book Award in 2013.

Br Mandy's award-winning book, Johnny's Big Secret, is aimed at primary school students preparing for the sacrament of reconciliation and teaches them about the

dangers involved in playing with devils through the experience of the main character Johnny.

"I thought about a way of making the sacrament of reconciliation more understandable for Year 2 students who may not understand the significance of all the ten commandments", Br Mandy explained.

"I find that lessons based around stories with a clear message can be very powerful at that infants and primary school level".

Br Mandy is currently writing two more childrens' books which will be published soon in the Philippines- Crank the Crab and The Monkey's Hammer.

Crank the Crab teaches students not to be crabby if they want their classmates to be their friends, while The Monkey's Hammer is a tale around leadership with the monkey adopting too forceful a style to be considered a good leader.

Br Mandy arrived in Melbourne in January and has quickly adjusted to a different Lasallian culture



in Australia compared with his homeland.

"It's not uncommon to see Lasallian schools in the Philippines with up to five thousand students", he explained.

"The Lasallian culture is also a lot more clerical in the Philippines, whereas here in Australia, the involvement of the lay partners is particularly strong in schools and workplaces and has been for a long time".

Br Mandy has enthusiastically taken on a new role on the Vocations Commission in our District which has involved regular visits to a number of Lasallian schools around Australia, promoting the work of the De La Salle Brother.

Vocations ministry is a vibrant part of the Lasallian mission in the Philippines with Br Mandy among a small group of Brothers who have featured in TV commercials.

"Often it takes a De La Salle Brother to open up the invitation to a young man to consider a vocation to religious life because they may be reluctant to take that first step on their own", he said.

"And in Australia, there is such a rich Lasallian culture which has been enriched by the involvement of the lay partners in the mission and that's a special gift and really a role model to share with the rest of the world".

UPCOMING EVENTS

Australia
2016
Lasallian Youth Ministry Workshop, Phillip Island, Victoria 4 July
Catholic Lasallian Heritage (Level One), Sydney 26-27 July
World Youth Day celebrations, St Bede's College Mentone 30 July
Leading from the Middle Conference, St Bede's College Mentone 28-29 August
Lasallian End of Year Mass, Bankstown 24 November
2017
Lasallian Leaders Gathering, Wollongong NSW 26-28 February

New Zealand
2016
Lasallian Retreat, Auckland 17-22 July
NZ Lasallians Gathering, Hamilton 17 September
2017
Lasallian Womens Symposium, Auckland 16-18 July

Pakistan
2016
Canonical Visit of Br Visitor David Hawke 3-10 October

Papua New Guinea
2016
National Gathering of Lasallian Teachers in PNG 10-13 July
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:



- Lasallian Teachers Gathering in PNG
- NZ Retreat for Brothers and Partners
- Lasallian Alumni: John De Candia and Michael Hirst
- Around Middle Swan with Stephen Beirouti

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