



The Gateway

Hong Kong Lasallian Family Bulletin

February 2012

Thirty-seventh Issue

Welcome

The month of February is usually the coldest month in Hong Kong and it has lived up to expectations again this year. People dressed in woolies and even heaters and electric blankets were in evidence. Of course the cold is nothing compared with what is experienced in some other countries.



The Catholic Church in Hong Kong has been celebrating the elevation of its Bishop, John Tong Hon 湯漢, to the rank of Cardinal. The Ceremony took place in Rome on the 18th of February 2012. Bishop Tong is the seventh Chinese Cardinal in the history of the Catholic Church. ‘The appointment’, he says,

“shows the Holy Father’s great love and concern for the Catholics in China, as well as an encouragement to the diocese of Hong Kong.” Cardinal Tong is a gentle soul but by no means shy of speaking his mind on matters spiritual and social and political.

Our Brother of the Month and Liu Yuxi have at least one thing in common in that they were both poets. Moreover, both of them believed in the virtue of simplicity and were determined in their pursuit of the higher things in life.

In Catholic tradition, the season of Lent is upon us. As Lasallian educators, it gives us a chance to reflect on our mission, especially to those who are most in need of our help.



Brother of the Month

Brother Hugh Bates 1912-1953



Brother Hugh was Irish, and was born on the 4th April 1912 near the pleasant town of Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. The town of Clonmel is situated in a valley, on the banks of the River Suir, surrounded by mountains and hills. It was built up in medieval times as a walled town and many remnants of the past can still be found there.

Brother Hugh entered the Senior Novitiate of the Brothers at Castletown in 1930 which was followed by three years of scholastic training in Co Waterford. He had volunteered for work in the Far East and set sail for Singapore, arriving there in 1934.

He was first assigned to teach at St. Joseph's Institution, Singapore, and afterwards to several of our Lasallian schools in what was then called Malaya, now called Malaysia. His main subjects were Languages, English Literature and Mathematics. He had a particular passion for English Literature and wrote poetry. The only sample to hand is a piece he wrote for the 1952-1953 school magazine of La Salle College entitled "My Dreams". One verse goes as follows:

And then my soul had yearnings
For things both old and true,
And all my dreams were centred
On Beauty ever new.



His other main love was for music and singing and he could play the accordion and mandolin with ease. He and his good friend, Brother Patricius O'Donovan, would strum and sing-along, as part of their recreation.



What appeared to be one of Brother Hugh's most remarkable qualities was his capacity for work. He was a man of tremendous energy, and he expended it lavishly both in the classroom and on private tuition. He seemed to be happy only when working. He didn't believe in periods of rest or relaxation or in aimless sauntering around. He had always some specific task on hand. If it wasn't extra tuition for some of his backward pupils, it was study in preparation for his own examinations. By his devotion to work, especially the work of teaching and study, he was a model to all.

During the Second World War, Brother Hugh was attached to St. Francis' Institution, Malacca. When the Japanese arrived he was afraid he would be transported to a camp in Japan. To avoid this less than pleasant prospect, Hugh decided to "woo" the Japanese, to convince them that he and his country were not anti-Japanese and that Ireland was still at war with Britain. This strategy worked and Hugh was allowed to remain in the Brothers' Community.

As soon as the war ended, however, Brother Hugh felt his presence in the Community could be troublesome and embarrassing, that some might even regard him as a 'traitor' for co-operating with the Japanese. On the spur of the moment he made up his mind to leave Malacca. He managed to get a bus or rail ticket to Singapore and arrived there almost penniless. He slept in an open car park not far from St. Joseph's Institution and probably looked for leftover food from the nearby Cathay Hotel. This state of affairs could not go on. One day he spotted a platoon of British soldiers and asked to speak to their commanding officer who turned out to be from Dublin, Ireland. The officer enrolled Hugh as an army reservist and had him fitted out. He was put in charge of collecting trucks and other vehicles used by the Japanese. The vehicles were now lying around, mostly in poor shape. However Brother Hugh managed to make a few dollars selling off some of the better preserved 'wrecks'.

One day he happened to call into the “Portuguese” Church and spoke to the parish priest. When the priest discovered that Hugh was, or at least had been, a De La Salle Brother, he was delighted to offer him the job of Headmaster of the school attached to the Church and also found him rented quarters.

In the meantime two old friends, Brothers Patricius O’Donovan and Herman Fenton came to know of Brother Hugh’s situation and would visit him regularly, keeping him up to date about what was happening among the Brothers. When it was learned that Brother Assistant, Lawrence O’Toole, was on his



way to visit the Brothers in Singapore, Brothers Patricius and Herman were determined to let him know of Hugh’s whereabouts. A meeting was arranged. Nobody was really sure if Brother Hugh was still a Brother or not but the upshot of the meeting was that he was given a flight ticket to Hong Kong and told to report there to Brother John Lynam, Director of St. Joseph’s College. Brother Hugh followed instructions and arrived in Hong Kong in October 1946. All was well again. He was back where he belonged. After teaching for only a few months the Brothers decided to send him to Cambridge for further studies.

Two years later he returned to Hong Kong and joined La Salle College in February 1948. Brother Hugh did not take long to get back to class teaching. By all accounts he was a workaholic, taking and giving extra courses and lessons. As a teacher Brother Hugh was known to be somewhat stern. He inspired in his pupils a healthy degree of awe and respect. Shirkers soon discovered that their best chance of survival was to settle down to painstaking effort. But considering that senior pupils in general who are preparing for a serious examination appreciate push and earnestness in their teacher, Brother Hugh was actually popular with most of his pupils, and the more serious-minded of them considered it a privilege to be under his instruction. His ascendancy over them was further strengthened by the scrupulous care with which he avoided everything savouring of partiality or preferences based on purely natural considerations. If it could be said that he gave more attention to some pupils than to others, it was to the less naturally gifted ones, provided they showed the necessary degree of goodwill and co-operation.

His special aptitude for languages enabled him to render appreciable service to many a student by means of extra coaching. One of his students at the time had this to say about Brother Hugh: “He was a firm, generous, kind, no- monkey-business teacher. He gave me special tuition in Latin as a second language for my Matriculation.”

It must be emphasised that Brother Hugh's admirable zeal for examination success never seems to have diverted his mind from the primary duty of a Religious Teacher, namely, the formation of his pupils to piety and training them to be true Christians. His daily Reflections were solid and appropriate. And the same earnestness that characterised his lessons in Literature or History was carried over into his Religious Instruction periods. He eschewed mere gush and sentimentality and concentrated on what was concrete, practical, and vital.



Brother Hugh was blessed with a genial, buoyant, and expansive disposition. He was on that account an admirable community man. He was never dull, sour, or morose. He loved a good joke, but never the sort of joke that left a sting. At recreation he was the soul of the party. His hearty laughter had a contagion about it and must often have had the effect of clearing away the clouds in the minds of those who were inclined to worry or be sad.

Then suddenly his name cropped up on a British army list and he was called up again to help counter the threat of Mao Tse Tung on mainland China. This time Hugh was made an auxiliary policeman, was rigged out and had to report to duty two or three evenings a week. He was attached to the Special Constabulary Division at Kowloon

City. Soft-spoken and genial, he was popular with all the members of his unit.



Brother Herman remembers him arriving back from those tours of duty almost totally exhausted. At that time, the Brothers' house was located at No 1 Perth Street because the British Army had requisitioned La Salle College, including the Brother' quarters. The Perth Street residence was dubbed the 'White House' partly, at least, because the external walls were white.

A number of boarders were allowed to live in the Brothers' house at that time. They looked forward to the presence of Brother Hugh because he would sometimes break into song. He would do this while lying in bed, a book in one hand and a cigarette in the other. The "Spinning Wheel" and a Welsh song were two of his favourites.

Brother Herman recalls a nice anecdote about a visiting French priest from Burma who happened to turn up one day. The Brothers welcomed him to lunch. Now the Director, Brother Patrick Toner, was a quiet man, not given to too much talk. Hugh, as was his wont, was talking volubly! The priest turned at one stage and asked Hugh if he were the Brother Superior. Quick as a flash, Hugh responded, "Actually I am not 'the' Superior but I am 'a' superior man!"

It seems that all this time Brother Hugh had a heart condition and had pills to take. Apparently he often forgot to take them and when he did remember he would take a handful and swallow the lot. He had also been suffering for some months of a duodenal ulcer.

Come Sunday morning of May 31st 1953. The custom was for Brothers to go to Mass at different churches. At lunch Brother Patrick, Director, enquired whether Hugh was around. Nobody had seen him that morning. The Director then asked Peter, the cook and cleaner, to have a look in Hugh's room. Peter knocked, but the room door was locked and there was no answer. He looked in through the window and saw Hugh lying on the bed. He was already dead. It was diagnosed that he had died in the early hours of the morning. The cause of his death was diagnosed as coronary thrombosis.

It was Trinity Sunday and the senior boys of La Salle College were poring over their final preparation for the matriculation examination. They were, one by one, informed of the sudden and sad bereavement of Rev. Bro. Hugh, their teacher. With heavy hearts they

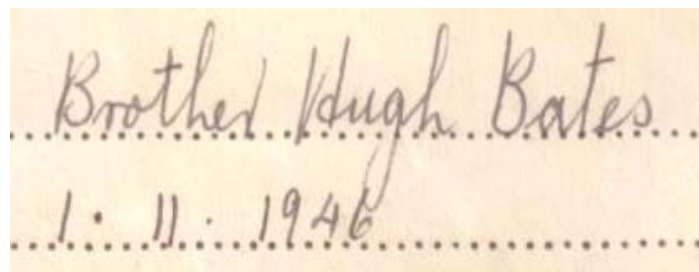
rushed back to pay their last respects to their master, who was, to all those who had the good fortune to know him, a helpful mentor learned and witty, though at times strict and solemn.

There was a spontaneous presence of the whole school at the funeral Mass in St Teresa's Church. A majority of the students accompanied the cortege all the way to the cemetery, truly an expression of exceptional attachment to the deceased Brother.

We leave the final tribute to one of his students: "Dear and beloved Brother, we bid you good-bye, with a prayer on our lips, gratitude in our hearts and a firm conviction that yours will be the reward promised by God in Holy Writ: "They that teach many the way of virtue shall shine as the stars for all eternity."

Postings of Brother Hugh

Castletown, Ireland	Novitiate	1930-1931
Kilmacow, Waterford	Scholasticate	1931-1933
St Joseph's Institution, Singapore	Teaching	1934-1935
St Xavier's Institution, Penang	Teaching	1935-1937
St John's Institution, Kuala Lumpur	Teaching	1937-1938
St Paul's Institution, Seremban	Teaching	1938-1939
St Francis Institution, Malacca	Teaching and War Time	1939-1946
St Joseph's College, Hong Kong	Teaching	1946-1947
Cambridge, England	Studies	1947-1948
La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong	Teaching	1948-1953



Brother Hugh Bates
1. 11. 1946

On Western Hill (Penang) 1934-1937 by Brother Patricius O'Donovan
(Dedicated to the memory of an old friend – Brother Hugh Bates)

*I stood on a hill
While golden, still,
Glowed the bright west, far away;
And a light serene
Fell o'er the scene
From the closing eyes of Day.*

*On the sea below
Fell a rosy glow
From the crimson clouds o'erhead,
As the sun in the west
Sank down to rest
Into the ocean bed.*

*O'er jungle and dales
Came floating the veils
Of a white mist from the sea,
And it wrapped the wolds
In its fleecy folds
And shrouded each phantom tree.*

*Then we rose to go
For the twilight's glow
Was paling midst shadows grey,
And the sails of the light
O'er the ocean of night
Were dimly fading away.*

*Then from forests quiet
Came the spirit of Night,
Wandering o'er land and sea,
While the Angels of light
Hung their star-lamps bright.*



Oriental Flavour

In Praise of My Humble Home by Liu Yuxi (772-842 A.D.)

Liu Yuxi came from Henan Province, from Luoyang. He was an official who passed the highest imperial examinations in the Tang dynasty and was promised a bright future in the government. He joined a party of young scholars that urged for political reform and as a result, he was demoted and sent to work for nine years in a minor position in Langzhou in Hunan Province. Though he was later recalled to the capital, he continued to have political problems, offending officials with his satirical writing, and finding himself again exiled to various postings around the country. He was considered an important poet in his day. His repeated exile was a direct result of the political views expressed in his poetry.

'In Praise of my Humble Home' was written during the time of his exile in Langzhou. To

please the officials in power, the local governor placed Liu in a hut with only a bed, a table and a chair, somewhat like an old monastic cell. To Liu Yuxi, however, the absence of material goods was filled with spiritual riches.



陋室銘 In Praise of My Humble Home



In Praise of My Humble Home

A mountain needn't be high;

It is famous so long as there is a deity on it.

A lake needn't be deep;

It has supernatural power so long as there is a dragon in it.

The moss creeping onto the doorsteps turns them green.

The color of the grass reflected through the bamboo curtains turns the room blue.

Erudite scholars come in good spirits to talk with me,

And among my guests there is no unlearned boorish man.

In this humble room, I can enjoy playing my plainly decorated qin, or read the Buddhist Scriptures quietly,

Without the disturbance of the noises that jar on the ears, or the solemn burden of reading official documents.

My humble home is like the thatched hut of Zhuge Liang of Nanyang, or the Pavilion Ziyun of Xishu.

Confucius once said: "How could we call a room humble as long as there is a virtuous man in it?"

Zhuge Liang (181–234) was a chancellor of the state of Shu Han during the Three Kingdoms period of Chinese history. He is often recognised as the greatest and most accomplished strategist of his time.

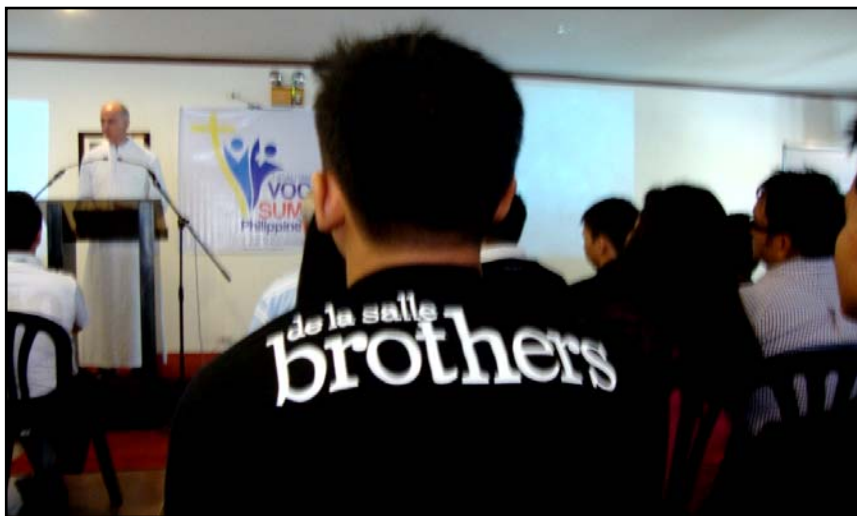
Yang Xiong, owner of Pavilion Ziyun, (53 BCE–18), was a Daoist poet. He was hailed as the "Confucius from the western parts".



Family Updates

LEAD District Vocation Summit

The Brothers have had a number of Vocation meetings, seminars and workshops in the past but nothing quite like the Lasallian East Asia District Vocation Summit held in La Salle University, Dasmariñas, the Philippines, from the 23rd to 25th January 2012. About 80 young men aspiring to join the Brothers' way of life gathered together with about 30 Brothers for a programme of input, sharing and mission exposure. The very presence of so many young aspirants and young Brothers was energizing. Now the hard work begins as each country evaluates its vocation promotion programmes.



Christian Brothers Schools Athletic Meet

Although it was mid-winter in Hong Kong, January 31st dawned bright and sunny, a lovely day for our Lasallian secondary schools annual athletic meet. By the end of the day, six new records had been recorded. The Principals of the various schools attended to show their support and they helped to give out the prizes. The Guest of Honour was Brother Patrick Tierney. He encouraged all athletes to cultivate healthy minds and healthy bodies. The day ended with individual and group photo-taking.



The Green and White Day 2012



Every year, St. Joseph's College hosts a Green and White Day, opening the school to the public. This year the school is celebrating its 137th Anniversary and the theme chosen was 'Limelight'. The Guest of Honour was a distinguished Old Boy, Kumar Ramanathan, who is currently President of the Bar Society of Hong Kong. The day turned out fine and was enjoyed by the large crowd who attended.

La Salle Primary School Sports Day

The rain stayed away, the sky turned blue and the sun shone on the afternoon of the 18th February 2012. About one thousand three hundred Primary School boys and hundreds of parents turned up at the track and field of La Salle College to cheer their teammates or sons. The Guest of Honour was Mr. Augustine Wong, a member of the Primary School's Management Committee. The day took on a special flavour since it was the final sports day for the current school principal, Mrs. Emily Leung, who will be retiring in August.



Carnival Time

La Salle Primary School has established a tradition of celebrating springtime by means of a Carnival that is open to the public. This year the Carnival was held on the 26th of February. Despite dire predictions, the weather held fair all day which boosted the attendance tremendously. The atmosphere was warm, the organization well-nigh perfect and the prizes appealing. A fine family day all round.



Congratulations

160 years ago, six De La Salle Brothers arrived in Singapore. Three of them proceeded to Penang, Malaysia. And so was born the District of Penang which came to cover Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong. More recently, a restructuring has taken place and the District of Penang is now part of the Lasallian East Asia District (LEAD). To commemorate the 160 years of Lasallian presence in Asia, celebrations will soon be held in both Penang and Singapore.



Some highlights from our schools

The minstrels from
Chong Gene Hang
College



Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School
on pilgrimage



The dancers from Chan Sui Ki (La
Salle) Primary School



Budding Scientists of St.
Joseph's Primary School

The Grand Slam

It has become known as the annual “Battle of Wanchai.” This refers to the inter-school 3 day athletics meet held each year in the Wanchai Stadium, located centrally on Hong Kong Island.

Traditionally, the quest for Division 1 honours is a battle between La Salle College and Diocesan Boys’ School and every single point for each event is carefully calculated. Each event is divided into 3 grades, A, B and C according to age. This year the spoils of victory went to the La Salle boys for the second year in succession. Not only that, but for the first time in its sporting history, the school athletes took the grand slam, a very pleasing 80th anniversary gift. Among the many highlights of the occasion was the winning of the High Jump in all three grades, a feat never achieved before.

The ‘battle’ draws numerous Old Boys to the Stadium while thousands more watch the proceedings, courtesy of the La Salle College Campus TV Team. Great credit for the victory goes to the athletes themselves, to their teachers and coaches as well as to the students cheering from the stands.

飛躍校園

橫掃ABC Grade 蟬聯總冠軍

港九區校際Division 1田徑賽 在灣仔運動場上演的「港九區校際Division 1田徑賽」經過3日激鬥，男女子團體總冠軍名花有主，大熱門喇沙書院及拔萃女書院順利封王稱后，其中喇沙昨在近150名舊生到場打氣下，以32分之差壓倒「宿敵」拔萃男書院，更首次以「大滿貫」姿態成功衛冕，師生賽後欣喜若狂。 ■圖/文：徐飛、Vien、Kin

●名人舊生的主將譚偉洋（曉慧，昨日都

首2日賽事決賽日先於田項及陳志威在A G弟易漢程更在B 81，首次贏下D

易

其後喇沙三級跳失金，在男拔，但最終擊，更首次校友及校賽後領軍下，

男子團體組

- 第1名 喇沙書院(517分)
- 第2名 拔萃男書院(485分)
- 第3名 旅港開平商會中學(235分)
- 第4名 聖若瑟英文中學(220分)

註：只列前4名

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●喇沙以大滿貫佳績蟬聯男團總冠軍，師生興奮合照。

●易氏三兄弟漢程（左起）、漢暉及漢聰共奪四金，是喇沙奪冠功臣。