

The Gateway



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Statue of the St. La Salle outside the Brothers' Community at La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

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Welcome

We are well into Spring and never cease to marvel when it shows up in unlikely places, and sometimes right in front of our noses. One retired teacher remarked that he had spent the best part of forty years in one of our schools and never noticed the gems of nature nearby. School life is simply too busy!

The spider trees are already in full bloom, almost one month earlier than usual.

And it still is as can be seen from the Updates. In fact, they are just a few selected from so many. One of our schools, Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College, is starting a year-long celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. Many golden memories await.

One particular old boy supplies our feature article and he, too, has many golden memories of his time in school and after graduating. Nelson was ahead of his time, a budding entrepreneur, combining study with a start-up business. Although now retired, he still has a marvelous capacity for life-long learning.

This issue of The Gateway comes to you before the Holy Week liturgical celebrations leading up to the great feast of Easter. May the joy of our Risen Saviour rise in your hearts.



300 Years.....Still Growing



Over 300 years ago a young Frenchman, called Adrian, was on fire. He was on fire about education, especially education for the poor and needy. He began to establish schools. The problem was that Adrian, while a good young man, tended to start things and then move on. He did not, or did not know how to, consolidate.

Enter another young man, a priest called John. Adrian was led to

believe that John could help him. One day, as John was about to enter a convent of Sisters to say Mass for them, Adrian was lying in wait. At the door of the convent he told John of his plight. John promised to think about it.

Little did John think that the meeting with Adrian would be the first step in his life-long journey and that he, too, would be on fire with a passion for the education of youth. Gradually, step by step, he got involved until he found himself head over heels caught up in the educational world. All this took place in northern France in the 17th century.

John trained teachers, founded schools for boys, founded a school for unruly boys, founded a teacher's training college and introduced the native language, French, as the medium of instruction. There was opposition, much opposition, but John persisted until the movement grew and became sustainable. This was the kind of consolidation that had been lacking before. John left us a good body of writings. Let's listen to a few of his thoughts and instructions.

"You should not only take all possible care of your students, but consecrate your life entirely to procure salvation for them."

"It is not harshness and rigour that produce good order in a school but rather vigilance combined with mildness."

"To touch the hearts of your students is the greatest miracle you can perform."

John's Lasallian movement grew, first with schools throughout France, then to Rome, then to the world. And so today, 300 years since the death of John, there are Lasallian schools, universities and educational centres in 80 countries. Here in Hong Kong there are eight schools run in the Lasallian tradition.

The mustard seed, sown at the convent door so many years ago, has grown into a mighty tree.

1719

"Yes, I love the many ways God has guided me in all the events of my life."

St. John Baptist de La Salle
The Patron Saint of Teachers

2019

The Tercentenary of
our Founder's Death

April 7, 1719
Rouen, France

#300LaSalle

More than Something

Nelson Lee

The past pupils of our Lasallian boy's schools in Hong Kong are generally referred to as "old boys." They have served and still serve society in a multitude of ways.

The Gateway editors would like to feature one old boy of La Salle College who gave an interesting address at a recent dinner dance gathering. His name is Nelson Lee.

"It is my great pleasure to be the Guest of Honour tonight. Thanks to the encouragement I received in my Lasallian journey, I have been doing well at different stages of my life.

First let me take this opportunity to celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary with my classmates of 1958. We are here to thank God for keeping us happy, healthy and young at heart in our daily lives.

Tonight, I have the honour to share with you my humble, personal adventure through all the years, and the role that La Salle has played in it.

As the school song puts it: **La Salle is Something More. But, to me, La Salle is more than something.**



Before telling my story, I would like to pay tribute to the late Reverend Brother Patrick Toner, who admitted me to La Salle College *without even an oral test.*

One morning in November 1954, I knocked at his door and went in, presented him a letter of introduction, with reports of my previous school. After reading them, he stood up and asked me to follow him. We walked a short distance to the classroom of Form 2D, and he passed me over to the form master Dr. Peter Pan. They held a short conversation, presumably about me.

At recess, Dr. Pan asked me to go to the office to get the booklist, buy the relevant books and come back the next morning.

As easy as that, **I became a La Salle Boy!**



Before the final examination that year, Dr Pan told us that he would return to the United States to teach at Maryland University. As a new boy, I dared to propose a farewell dinner in his honour. I represented the class to say some words of thanks for his excellent teaching, and we all felt proud of being taught by a PhD in Form 2.

At the end of the party that evening, he privately asked me to visit his home on the day before his departure. When I went there, I was surprised because he gave me a very precious gift, a **portable typewriter.** He asked me to make good use of it, not just keeping it as a souvenir. In fact, it became my first tool when I started business in the following year.



Up to Form 3, I was taught by the late Brother Theodore. He was really a good teacher, particularly in Bible, which helped me develop a firm belief in God. I was then baptized. When my forehead got wet, I felt some light flashing in my mind, a signal that my life would be guided along the right track...

Then came a day when I read the Sunday Morning Post newspaper,

and was attracted by an advertisement "How to Start Your Business by Mail Order." I read it several times, and passed it to my brother Norman for his opinion. He simply said yes, and also said he would pay the US\$50 to subscribe for the whole course.

Upon receipt of the books, we began to read them overnight. We immediately decided to work together to start our own business at home, simply because it did not need any capital upfront.

The green book was a directory for all participants of the course interested in the mail order business.

Dr Pan's typewriter became my "weapon" to shoot out my first letter to all of them, asking what they wanted to buy from Hong Kong. Acting on their feedback, we went all the way in the afternoons to places like Tai Kok Tsui, Shum Shui Po, Shek Kip Mei to find suppliers, mainly family businesses, because of the small quantity we could buy to sell by mail order.

In Form 4, I joined the harmonica band. One purpose was to get to know more schoolmates of different classes.

In the same year, Norman and I formed a company. We took the letter "E" from LEE, "MAN" from Norman and "SON" from Nelson and called our company "Emanson Company."

Norman's duty was to look for magazines suitable for our advertising to sell single items. My job was to compile product lines to print catalogues, namely Merchandising Monthly, to send to potential customers on a regular basis. We had to buy directories to get name lists. To catch printing deadlines, one day, I skipped a PE lesson and stayed in the classroom to draft my sales letter. The then form master Mr. Francis Loo passed by, saw me writing something in the classroom, and asked me why.

I stood up and told him the truth. He was kind enough to come in and sit down with me, made some corrections on my draft, and taught me some techniques in writing a good sales letter.

This was really "something more" from a La Salle teacher!

At last, form 5 came! I had to concentrate on my studies because of the School Cert. Exam. That was an important milestone I had to go through in 1958.

That same year, the late Brother Paul Sun founded St. Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School, and invited graduates of La Salle to teach there.

When I started the mail order business, I considered it the stepping stone for my future growth. But I realized that dealing with other human beings was a very important skill which I needed to develop. I therefore accepted Brother Paul's appointment to teach Primary 6 in his school.

To motivate students with different learning abilities, I set up a new ranking system to recognize their achievements. For every test and examination, I offered five identical prizes, not to the top five, but to the 1st, 11th, 21st, 31st and the 41st, so that everyone stood an equal chance of winning.



This proved effective and the whole class worked very hard for the prizes. We grew as a team. Hoping to progress with my students as a team, at the end of the year, I asked Brother Paul to let me teach the same class of students as they moved on to Form 1. He was kind enough to accept my request.

I did the same again the following year and taught the same group of students when they were promoted to Form 2.

With great satisfaction, I considered my mission was complete. I left the school in 1961, and went to focus on my business.

By then, we had earned some money, so we decided to move our home office to a real working place, and diversified from mail orders to import-exports.

1967 was a bad year because of the riots. We took the chance to expand our business by renting an office in Star House, Tsim Sha Tsui so that we could recruit more people to work for us.

In the following year, a booming new industry in wigs began. We decided to set up our own factory to make the ready-to-wear wigs for foreign markets. Many aunts and friends came to my office for wigs, because none were sold in Hong Kong as yet.

This convinced us to concentrate on the local market with the goal of building up our brand name – “Emcolon” in Chinese ‘愛其麗’.

We set up counters in all department stores and fashion chains. We also participated in the Chinese Manufacturing Association exhibitions for two years with great success.

Unfortunately, this fashion trend suddenly dropped and came to an end in 1972. We then converted our factory into making handbags. The problem was that we never got enough workers, and had to sub-contract to outside people to keep up punctual shipments.

So in 1982, we started to move our base to Shenzhen to consolidate all productions back to our factory.



In October 1981, I received a telephone call from the late Brother Henry Pang, asking if I would like to join the Scout Committee as the vice-chairman to serve the 17th Kowloon (La Salle) Group. I promised him right away, as it was a chance for me to serve my Alma Mater.

When I became the committee chairman, I opened the door to old boys who were keen to re-connect with their Mother School. This resulted in a progressive growth of membership, and it is still ever growing today.

As a member of the La Salle Big Family, we would extend help whenever there is a call. In 2013 the College needed an I.T. room, we contributed part of the funds to make it possible. To congratulate Brother Thomas as the President of St. Joseph's International School Malaysia, we paid him a visit in September 2016. We were very impressed with his project as one of the most modern institutions in Malaysia, with an excellent image of La Salle.

In 2012, I passed the chairmanship of the Scout Committee to Mr. James Chiu. He is an all-round gentleman, very supportive to the GSL Mr. Chan Tong to increase outward bound activities. This widens the vision of our scouts to learn something more beyond the confines of Hong Kong.

To celebrate the 60th Anniversary of La Salle Primary, our committee raised funds to build a Cub Scout Den, designed by Mr. S.H.Pau, former Scout Commissioner, as the junior scout headquarters for the Primary.

I would also like to thank Brother Patrick, for inviting me to be the guest of honour at the Speech Day of La Salle Primary in 2015. Both Ellen and I were very happy to see so many little gentlemen winning so many prizes and awards in addition to their graduation certificates.

Yes, **La Salle is more than something**, not only to me, but also to my son Calvin. Thanks to the Principal Mr. Tong for offering the school hall for scout services so that Calvin could launch a scholarship to help the underprivileged, secondary students from band 1 to band 3, to enroll in Harvard Summer School with subjects of their choice and thus earn college credits.

I have been supporting this project for over 4 years and will continue to do so – it is heartwarming to see what the new generation of Hong Kong is capable of achieving, given the right motivation and empowerment.

As I said earlier, La Salle has provided a platform for me to discover myself and build up friendships that will last for my lifetime. I will always be grateful for that.

I am now enjoying my work as a shareholder of companies of my choice; giving advice to the new generation as needed.

As a La Salle Boy, I will never say retire! Thank you everyone.



Family Updates

Tercentenary Celebrations



Dec 2018:
Information Pack for school promotion
Prayer Service for Tercentenary Celebration

Jan – Mar 2019:
St. La Salle Tour (Founder's Life Exhibition
and Mascot Visit)
Human-face of St. La Salle photo shooting

Mar- Apr 2019:
Animation Video of St. La Salle

Apr- May 2019:
Human-face of St. La Salle photo exhibition

July 2019: Lasallian Youth Variety Show

Sept 21 2019: Tercentenary Thanksgiving Mass

Oct – Nov: Production of Tercentenary Calendar

Walkathon

A large number gathered at Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) College on the morning of the 23rd February for the first major event celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the College. A Walkathon was on offer and the Guest of Honour for the opening was Brother Thomas Lavin. The event was also supported by Brothers, Principals and Supervisors of Lasallian schools, students, old boys and parents. A light rain began to fall but did not dampen enthusiasm in the least. After the opening prayer by Brother Chris, the Principal said a few words and Brother Thomas emphasized the appropriateness of the theme chosen for the anniversary year – Roots and Wings. Participants set off in good cheer and, guided by the school scouts, completed the walk safely. The route was testing because of the number of steps that had to be climbed! The Walkathon was the first of many golden memories to come.



Grand Slam



The badminton boys of La Salle College have done it again. They have won all three grades of the Division 1 inter-school competition, at senior, middle and junior levels. The players had trained hard under the watchful and expert eye of

their coach and had the unwavering support of the teacher in charge and the parents. In fact, badminton has been on a high in the College for a number of years and the College seems to be blessed with natural shuttlers. Whereto from here? Represent Hong Kong?

Athletics Champions



After a long wait of 7 years, the La Salle College athletes emerged victorious in Wanchai Stadium on the 8th March after three days of battle. The victory was made memorable by a number of special features. The first was the manner of the fightback because there was a deficit of 63 points entering the final day. It seemed like an insurmountable obstacle. Yet, bit by bit, inch by inch, the athletes clawed their way back and eventually were within sight of their opponents when the first of the six relay races were about to commence. Then, lo and behold, the La Salle athletes took every single relay on offer, a record we believe in the history of inter-school athletics in Hong Kong. Joy was unconfined among the athletes, coaches, teachers, old boys and parents.

Farewell Lunch

Now that Brother Edmundo Fernandez (Br Dodo) is approaching the end of his two consecutive terms as Visitor of the Lasallian East Asia District (LEAD), the Hong Kong Lasallian Family took the opportunity to host a farewell lunch in his honour. The lunch was held on the 18th of March 2019 in The Hong Kong Club. Present were Brothers, members of the Hong Kong Lasallian Education Council, School Principals and a few invited guests. Brother Dodo thanked everyone not only for hosting the lunch but also for welcoming him to Hong Kong 8 years ago. He emphasized that as well as he was concerned, Hong Kong was the ideal choice for the Provinciate of the LEAD District. Hong Kong had become his second home! An old boy, Mr. Larry Leung, had been commissioned as calligrapher for an appropriate Chinese couplet scroll and this was presented to Brother Dodo at the start of the lunch. Lasallian Family of Hong Kong wish Brother Dodo the very best in his future endeavours and he will always be welcome back.



Paying of Respects

On 19 March 2019, seventeen members of the Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School family, including the Principal, Vice-principals, teachers, alumni, parents and students, went to the Lasallian Brothers' gravesite at St. Michael's Cemetery, Happy Valley. They went in order to pay their respects to Brother Herman, founding Principal and Supervisor, as well as to the other departed Brothers. The visit was timely because on 22 March 2019, Brother Herman's remains were exhumed, put in a marble container and then placed in the chamber underneath the altar.



Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*



Mr. Justice Roberto Ribeiro is a Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal of the Hong Kong SAR Judiciary. He was born in Hong Kong in 1949 and was educated at La Salle College where he became interested in English Literature and Debating. Since the University in Hong Kong did not offer Law degrees at the time, he decided to pursue reading law in the United Kingdom. He obtained his LLB (1971) and LLM (1972) degrees from the London School of Economics. On returning to Hong Kong, he taught as a Lecturer in Law at the University of Hong Kong from 1972 to

1979. These were the early days of Hong Kong's first law school, and Mr. Justice Ribeiro was instrumental in helping to lay down the foundational principles of the teaching of common law and in nurturing the values of the rule of law in his students. After entering private practice, he made his way up the ranks of the legal profession until, in 2000, he was appointed a Permanent Judge of the Court of Final Appeal. He is the longest-serving justice on the bench of Hong Kong's highest appellate court. He has also been the recipient of a host of civic and academic honours. In recognition of his contributions to the community of Hong Kong and to the rule of law, the University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* on April 2nd 2019.

Joint Lasallian Schools Workshop

On March the 30th 2019, teachers of English from our 8 Hong Kong Lasallian schools attended a programme in St. Joseph's College on the latest trends in the teaching of English. The speakers came from the Education Bureau. The concentrated on curriculum development, sharing good practices on how the diverse learning needs of students can be addressed through holistic curriculum planning and adoption of a student-centered learning approach. It was a good occasion for the teachers of English in our Lasallian schools to come together at both the professional and informal levels.



IELTS Masters Award



Mr. Chi Lai Tsang, a teacher at St. Joseph's College, has become the first Hong Kong person to receive the Caroline Clapham IELTS Masters Award. This international award is given annually to the Master's-level dissertation which makes the most significant contribution to the field of language testing. This year, the award goes to Chi Lai's dissertation 'Examining Washback on Learning from a Sociocultural Perspective: The Case of a Graded Approach to English Language Testing in Hong Kong'. Chi Lai's dissertation, which was also commended for the British Council Masters Dissertation Award 2018 earlier in the year, was published by the British Council.

CBS Exchange

For decades, the Lasallian Spirit has been treasured by all Lasallian schools. The organisers of the Christian Brothers' Schools Exchange Programme always have in mind the sense of responsibility of cherishing the legacy we have in common. They are all strongly aware of this and have therefore organised the "Christian Brothers' Schools Exchange Programme 2019" to enhance communication among brother schools. This programme is innovative and unique in Hong Kong as more than two schools can engage in a single exchange programme. The objectives are to understand different cultures amongst the Lasallian schools, to learn from one another and to appreciate the strengths as well as accomplishments of each participating school. In these ways we wish to consolidate our identities as part of the Lasallian Family of Hong Kong.





We are one, and we are many.....

