

APLEC 10

Educating for Life

ONE HEART. ONE COMMITMENT. ONE LIFE.



The Asia-Pacific Lasallians Educators' Conference (APLEC) Conference has officially begun!

A Wurundjeri Elder led us in a smoking ceremony and a special Welcome to Country before Br David Hawke FSC presented his opening address, welcoming Lasallians from across the PARC Region and around Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, and for the first time, Samoa! Not only is it the first time APLEC is being held in Australia, but it is the first time the event is being held simultaneously with the Lasallian Youth Gathering (LYG) that is only held every two or three years. The room was filled with a mix of ages, a first for so many Lasallians, coming together with experienced educators and those in the process of their education.

Br David Hawke, the Brother Visitor for the District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua



New Guinea, became a Brother 50 years ago as of last week and was inspired as a child after the Brothers visited his school in New Zealand. When asked what the Tercentenary Year means to him, Br David shared that it is an opportunity to reflect on one's personal commitment and serves as a reminder that St John Baptist de La Salle's mission is just as essential today as it was 300 years ago.

Br David spoke words of welcome, 'Our educators gather under the banner "Educating for Life" while our young men and women assemble under "One Heart, One Commitment, One Life", ...may these themes not just be slogans but be engraved in our hearts and inspire us to action'. Inspiring the audience of both APLEC & LYG delegates, Br

Check out the APLEC Website (<http://bit.ly/aplec2019>)

David announced 'We gather here as Lasallians without borders, and over a few days we will live and breathe that reality'.

Following Br David's address Palm Sunday Mass was celebrated, its significance as the start of Holy recognised by Father Dean Mathieson, an Old Collegian from St Bede's College in Melbourne, who led the celebration of Mass.

APLEC welcomes more than 190 delegates from 13 countries including 29 brothers from 9 countries. LYG has over 200 delegates from 5 countries including Samoa. There are 24 youth ministers, 10 Lasallian Volunteers and 6 Brothers at LYG. While the two conferences are taking place in separate locations, the two will come together again on Tuesday for a closing ceremony.

Prior to the start of APLEC we sat down with Sir Br Patrick Lynch who is an icon for Lasallians, to talk about his life as a Brother and his contribution to APLEC this year. With his 60-year anniversary as a Brother just last week, Sir Br Pat remembers the day that the Brothers from Australia visited De La Salle Mangere East in New Zealand. He always knew he wanted to be a teacher, but the way the Brothers interacted with him and his peers



inspired him to be not just a teacher, but a Brother as well. He came to Australia at the age of 17 to become a Brother and has always had a passion for working in New Zealand and developing and growing the lives of Lasallians. He has taught at various schools between 1963 and 1993 in both New Zealand and Australia. He served as president of the Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand from 1992 to 1994 which led him to become Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Catholic Education Office for the next 21 years.

A challenge Sir Br Pat revealed to us as the life of a Brother is 'assisting people to have a broader view of the world and to think about things that aren't on their list of priorities'. Br Sir Pat has never believed that having a comfortable life is the best way to grow and learn. There are more than 1.2 million children being educated by over 100,000 Lasallian, and the growth of this Lasallian family is what he finds to be one of the best things about being a Brother.

The title of Sir in Br Pat's name came about as a result of his role in changing the way the government worked with principals of Christian schools. In recognition of all his work for education in New Zealand he received a letter in the mail from



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the Queen through the Governor General offering him a Knighthood. As Sir Br Pat was speaking of these memories, there was a sense of humility and pride in the room. His contribution to New Zealand was recognised through being Knighted and has become an honour for him that is recognised daily as we say his name. He has since received a lot of appreciation from people who have admired the work he has done and continues to do.

Sir Br Pat featured in the first Keynote Panel of APLEC with Br Armin Luistro and Dr Jim Waterston on Sunday night. Br Armin from the Philippines has recently been appointed Visitor of the Lasallian East Asia District (LEAD). The keynote panel discussed the realities of the contexts in which Lasallians serve around the world.

Br Armin told us the story of his visit to Kalinga, a town ten hours north of Manila in the Philippines. Initially, meeting the Kalinga was a scary and violent experience. Their main motto for their lifestyle was 'an eye for an eye, a life for a life, vengeance is a way of life'. This surprised a lot of the audience, as well as Br Armin. He spoke of an event in the town that shook one member of the town to instead of taking revenge in a time of temptation, they chose to be kind and faithful. This led the town to celebrate a patron saint in their summer season, and they chose St John Baptist de La Salle. Since then, the Br Armin has visited the town to see it grow to have 'indefatigable Lasallian spirit'.

Dr Jim Watterston is a Dean at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne. Dr Jim provided an overview of the statistics behind education in Australia, depending on location, age and subjects. Dr Jim raised our consciousness of "How do we change the trajectories for those that would otherwise be unsuccessful?"

Concluding the presentation from Sir Brother Pat Lynch, De La Salle Mangere students performed a sign of respect for Sir Br Pat, taking the audience by surprise but also leaving them in awe of such pride and respect the boys from the school had for Sir Br Pat. There couldn't have been a more special way to conclude the first day of APLEC.





Life Support Program

Are you looking for something to do for your staff development days?

Are you looking to recognise the essential value of your administrative and support staff?

Speak to us about our Life Support Program

See What Attendees Thought:

- *"A knowledgeable insight into La Salle, his life and works; the chance to meet new people and make friends."*
- *"A new feeling of worth."*
- *"Every time I attend a Lasallian program I learn something new; remembering that I am helping young people even if it is in a small way."*
- *"A renewed sense of purpose and confidence in the future of our school."*
- *"I loved all the interaction with so many lovely people. Loved hearing the La Salle story."*
- *"Informal atmosphere; organised; informative."*