



First Vows in the Philippines

The vows ceremony held in La Salle Green Hills, last August 25, was the last in a series of three vows ceremonies held this August. The first two, at the beginning of August, were held in Thailand and Myanmar. This vow ceremony was preceded by a whole day of meetings, reports, and educational lectures. Four young men pronounced vows for the first time: Br. Ivan Umali (Lipa), Br. Jeanoel Endaya (Lipa), Br. Kino Escolano (DLSU), and Br. Mico de Leon (CSB). Three LEAD Novices received their religious habit: Brs. Carlo Rementilla (Dasmariñas), Jake Lumakang (JBC), and Miggy Crisostomo (Bacolod). Lester, the lone LEAD postulant this year was formally accepted into the formation “pipeline”. Thanks to the Philippine Brothers and Central House staff for excellent preparation. Brothers, I enjoin you to continue to pray for and actively promote vocations to our Institute!

I am attaching my shared reflection during the Mass and photos taken by the Central House staff.

Understanding is Love's Other Name

In 1986 a movie about four boys searching for a dead body became the sleeper hit of that year. Stand By Me, Rob Reiner's classic, coming-of-age movie is a story of Gordy, Chris, Teddy and Vern, four 12 year old boys on the verge of Junior HS.

The time is summer of 1959 in a place called Castle Rock and the boys are preparing to enter a new phase of their young life --- high school. They find themselves at a crossroad --- they love being children their age but they are also beginning to be aware of the realities in their lives. And like normal 12-year-old friends during summer, they hang around doing really nothing, until news of a missing boy's body – that of 12-year-old Ray Bower – gets them excited. So they embark on a 2 day journey using railroad tracks as their guide. Their journey takes them to the backwoods of Oregon and through the course of two days they have fun, do crazy things, talk about profound matters for 12 year olds like can Mighty Mouse defeat Superman or is Pluto a dog.



The trek to uncover a dead body becomes a journey of self-discovery and loss of innocence. In the course of two days they share with each other their joys, their hurts and sorrows, their fears, their anxiety about their future. Here is an iconic scene from the movie where they need to pass through a bridge that's meant only for trains and going another way meant a 4 hour detour.

While Stand By Me is a classic coming-of-age movie, it is also as much a movie about friendship. They all come from dysfunctional families but their friendship not only allows them to weather their dysfunction but actually gives them the strength to embrace it. These two themes come together in the climactic scene where they discover the

body they were looking for but there's another group out to claim the body: teenagers who have always bullied them. This is where they come of age: they meet mortality for the first time in a dead boy their age and they conquer their fear by not just standing up to the bullies but driving them away. (Continued)

I look at our young men about to take vows today and I am reminded of this movie. The journey of Mico, Jeanno, Kino and Ivan are similar to the journey taken by Gordie, Chris, Teddy and Vern except that theirs is a 2-year journey and not 2 days and they are not searching for a dead body but they are searching for God, or the experience of God. Sandra Schneiders calls the early years in formation as “The God Search”.



After two years in formation, one in the postulancy and another in the novitiate, our four young men are ready to publicly proclaim that the life they choose to live is that of a religious. They will publicly profess vows that will define their identity and their lives, at least for the coming year. Like the four boys in the movie, their journey towards today's Rite of Passage was fraught with challenges but also with joy. They have gotten to know each other deeply, even profoundly. They are very different from the men that joined us in 2016 and when they return to their own “hometown”, whatever hometown means to them, it will probably look a little smaller than it was when they left. In today's First Vows, the four of you come of age. (Continued)

But the other point I wish to bring up is how the two-year journey bonds the four you profoundly. There is no one you have been with in the last two years more intensely than with, what we fondly call, your batchmates. You've shared meals together, you have prayed together, you've had classes together, shared and listened to your life stories. You have seen each other cry and you know each other's hopes and aspirations. By sheer body language or a mere twitch of a face muscle you know what mood your batch mate is in. You know when to give space and you know when to give support.

You first learn of the idea of Association from each other. Aside from the God who called you, the group you associate with are, of course, the Brothers. But it is your batchmates that you identify and associate with on a deep level. From being together so long and so intensely, you understand each other even if you don't like each other, and as THICH NHAT HANH, Vietnamese Zen Buddhist Monk and Peace Activist writes, "Understanding is Love's other's name". So there is a lot of love that goes around among batchmates. And as you go grow older, your Love becomes more mature, more subtle, less in your face. A bit like good Russian River Pinot Noir.

And this is the gift of Religious Life. And I hope you will stand by each other when things get hard, because that's what we are all about.



La Salle Games, Malaysia



PETALING JAYA, Saturday, July 14, 2018: Some 800 students from 8 Lasallian schools gathered for the revival of the La Salle Games after a 30-year lapse at the grounds of La Salle PJ Secondary School. The La Salle Games is an age-group limited competition which is only open to students below the age of 14. The strategy is talent development – identifying students with potential from an early age, and nurturing their capability and skill so that they can compete effectively in the mainstream MSSM competitions at the Under-15 and Under-18 levels.

The 8 participating Lasallian schools in this inaugural La Salle Games were the hosts, La Salle School Petaling Jaya, La Salle School Klang, La Salle School Brickfields, St John's Institution and St John's International School of Kuala Lumpur, St Paul's Institution of Seremban and St Francis' Institution of Malacca. The students competed over 6 different sports – football, hockey, badminton, basketball, table tennis and a road relay run. The Games also had the sanction of the Ministry of Education Malaysia.

St Francis' Institution took top honours in the 4 x 1.8km Road Relay Run clocking 30 minutes and 16sec, followed by La Salle PJ 31:29sec and La Salle Klang 32:29sec. In Basketball, St Francis' cagers were too strong for St Paul, trouncing them 17-0 in the final.

The Organisers – the De La Salle Brothers and the Malaysian Federation of Lasallian Alumni Associations (MFOLSA) have plans to extend the Games into an annual event and plans are afoot to run the Games as a National Program from 2019 that will involve the participation of all the Lasallian schools nationwide, including all the states in Peninsular as well as East Malaysia. (**Br. Andrew Loke**; Photos: **Mr. James Sia**; Read the entire article and more photos at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pzhlb0rr617l9xc/AAAvJetEb-AhiiFSY41euh9Pa?dl=0>)



Singapore Lasallian Day Out!



On the 20th of June, volunteers from the Lasallian community brought Lasallian Primary (Elementary) school students, belonging to the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS), as well as 'at risk' students to the Maritime Museum and S.E.A Aquarium in Resorts World Sentosa, Singapore. These volunteers include delegates from the 11th Asia Pacific Lasallian Youth Congress (APLYC11), Lasallian Youth Network (LYNK), teachers, parent volunteers and secondary students.

On the morning of the event, the facilitators gathered early outside the Maritime Museum to prepare for the day. Children arrived from their various schools and formed smaller communities. While each group was made of Primary and Secondary school students from multiple schools, both the participants and facilitators were quickly able to warm up to each other. Despite the age gaps, every group had formed new friendships by the end of the day.

At the Maritime Museum, the children learnt a lot about the history of Maritime trade in Singapore in the past by exhibitions and shows. Shows included experiencing the typhoon show, which truly exhilarated the children. The interactive exhibitions made it both fun and easy for the children to learn about their heritage. Following this, the students were treated to lunch at McDonald's, before heading to the S.E.A Aquarium. The children shared that they had the most fun here, exploring exhibitions like the Ocean Dome and the Discovery Touch Pool. One student, Gareth Phee commented, "I had great facilitators and teammates that I became friends with and we got to touch sea cucumbers and starfishes." Another student from St Stephen's School, Joakim commented "My new friend is actually a facilitator and her name is Perlie and her hobby is running and reading!"



The values of Faith, Service and Community were represented through this event as we saw members of our Lasallian community, regardless of age, gender, occupation, coming together to support their fellow young Lasallians. It was heartwarming to see Lasallians from different schools volunteering to give their younger brothers and sisters this experience, as well as Alumni showing their lasting dedication to the Lasallian spirit, helping to sponsor the event.

We would like to thank the following schools for their support in participating in this event: St Joseph's Institution

Junior, St Anthony's Primary School, St Stephen's School, St Joseph's Institution International, St Joseph's Institution and St Patrick's School. We would also like to thank the following sponsors for their generous support without which this event would not have been possible: F&N, LYNK and LYNKsters Lee Xian Yi, Sun Zixiang and Jason Tan. **(Lin Wenkang, Vedant Chauhan, Thia Lee Lian, Subha Priya Sundararaj, Ong Wen Shin, Ng Hui Zhen, Ewan Minjoot, Joshua Leong, Matthew Ng, Raphael Setiawan, Antoine Kwok, Istvan Heng, Jaxsen Chew; Photos: Goh Chiang Yang)**

SJIIM Founding Students Ace IGCSE Examination Results

The founding students of St. Joseph's Institution International School Malaysia (SJIIM) have recorded another set of sterling academic results by securing outstanding scores in the recent Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations.



Overall, 22% of the grades achieved were graded at A* which is an outstanding achievement while 53% were graded at A* - A which is significantly higher than the World IGCSE Examination Result Average of 49% in 2017. Meanwhile, 78% of the grades achieved were graded A* - B and an impressive 93% were graded at A* - C, a distant better than the World IGCSE Result Average of 83% in 2017. There were also loud cheers in the High School as well when it was revealed that 94% of our students who sat for the IGCSE examinations achieved a minimum 5A* - C grade for all their subject papers which assures the student's further education pathways for the future.

The top scorer of SJIIM was Ter Shin Huey who scored 8A* 2A in her IGCSE results. She was ecstatic with her achievements and credited her success to the learning experience in SJIIM. "My learning journey in SJIIM has always been a fascinating one. To me, the community of SJIIM is one big family. The support and guidance given by my teachers has helped me in many ways besides enriching my basic knowledge. It is never too hard to approach our teachers, whether it is to seek for help in our academics or an advice about life".

The Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular international qualification for 14 to 16 year olds. It is recognised by leading universities and employers worldwide, and is an international passport to progression and success. Developed over 30 years ago, it is tried, tested and trusted by schools

worldwide and is used as the high school academic assessment by top international schools around the world including SJIIM. (Mr. Neoh Soon Ken, Full Article: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pzh1b0rr617l9xc/AAAvJetEb-AhiiFSY41euh9Pa?dl=0>)

NewsNotes

Formation. This school year, the first year LEAD scholastics who have taken their vows (Brs. Ivan, Jeanoel, Kino, and Mico) together with PARC 1st Year Scholastics will be staying at the the Lasallian Formation Centre in Green Hills under the Director, Br. Alex Diaz, assisted by Brs. Raffy, Kelvin, and Moris. The second year scholastics who have already begun their teaching practice at De La Salle Zobel will remain in HOST (Taft) under the supervision of Br. Dat.

Health and Wellness

These 5 Habits Literally Add Years to Your Life, According to a New Harvard Study

1. Don't smoke.

If you smoke, quit. If you haven't started smoking, keep it that way. Other studies have shown that on average, if you smoke, you'll seven years earlier than you otherwise would.

2. Maintain a low body mass index.

We've seen this one many times, too. For example, if your waist measures more than 40 inches (men) or 35 inches (women), you need to lose belly fat fast in order to add years to your life.

3. Work out for 30 minutes per day.

Again: we've seen it before. A short period of jogging each day, for example, can make your body at like it's nine years younger, according to another study.

4. Drink alcohol moderately.

Obviously, don't drink to excess. But other studies have found that drinking moderately improves health and longevity outcomes over not drinking at all. ("I have no explanation for it, but I do firmly believe that modest drinking improves longevity," is how the author of one recent study put it.)

5. Maintain a healthy diet.

It's a bit difficult to define a healthy diet by Harvard's standards in this summary, but they describe it as having "a high diet quality score (upper 40%)." Of course, you already know what a healthy diet looks like most likely. Start with foods that are high in antioxidants

Full article: http://inc-asean.com/the-inc-life/these-5-habits-literally-add-years-to-your-life-according-to-a-new-harvard-study/?utm_source=inc&utm_medium=redir&utm_campaign=incredir



Faternally,

Edmundo Fernandez FSC