

STARFISH NEWS

PO BOX 668, Malvern VIC 3144 Australia T: 03 9508 2700 E: info@lasallianfoundation.org W: lasallianfoundation.org

REBUILDING DE LA SALLE COLLEGE BOMANA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA



De La Salle Bomana students in their new uniforms

After decades of lay leadership, the De La Salle Brothers have returned to the management of De La Salle College Bomana, on the outskirts of Port Moresby. After eight years as Principal of La Salle Technical College Hohola (formerly Hohola Youth Development Centre), Brother Antony Swamy has taken on the challenge of renewing and redeveloping Bomana. He is currently developing a master plan with assistance from Lasallian volunteer, Mick Brosnan.

The De La Salle Brothers first arrived in PNG in 1946 establishing their first community and primary school at Bomana. In 1947, the school was moved to Yule Island. De La Salle College Bomana was established as a boys' secondary boarding school when the Brothers returned to Bomana in 1964, and it is one of the oldest schools in the country. It became a boys' day school in 2009. Former students of the schools include prominent community leaders, educators and parents who have contributed to the development of the local community and the country more widely, for example the former PNG Prime Minister the late Sir William Skate.

Free education in PNG was introduced in 2013, which has substantially increased enrolments for all primary and secondary schools. Prior to free education due to

limited space, schools had a stringent selection process for selecting students to continue from Year 9 and each subsequent grade, forcing approximately 50% of students out of school. So the change of education policy is welcome in terms of ensuring more young people continue their secondary schooling. However, the local schools have not received additional Government funding support to expand or improve their infrastructure to support the change in policy. This has led to overcrowding in many classrooms with up to 55 students at Bomana and up to 70 students per class in other schools.

There are currently 1,200 boys attending the college primarily from low-income families, including a number of students in their early 20's who dropped out of other schools when they were younger. The free education policy has given these young men another opportunity to complete their high school education. For many of these older students, life without their Year 10 and Year 12 qualifications made it difficult to obtain work.

Most of the college students live in poor, nearby settlement communities, which have no access to basic amenities such as electricity and running water. Many come from broken families and difficult circumstances. Over the years, the school

There are currently 1,200 boys attending the college primarily from low-income families, including a number of students in their early 20's who dropped out of other schools when they were younger. The free education policy has given these young men another opportunity to complete their high school education.

has aimed to not only help each student reach their academic potential but to also improve their behaviour and morale and strengthen their life values. The school's efforts have resulted in an increasing number of graduates continuing onto university and college courses.

Over the years, due to wear and tear, lack of funds, poor building management and maintenance, the buildings and facilities have deteriorated. The school used to



De La Salle College Bomana classroom windows, guttering, roofing, classrooms, toilets and electrical wiring that need repairs and replacement



spend a significant percentage of funds to maintain the buildings, facilities and essential school services, and could ask parents and the local community for project fees. However, the introduction of the Government's "free education" policy prevented all schools from making requests to parents for these additional contributions towards school development and maintenance, making it even more difficult for Bomana and other schools to fund the maintenance and upgrades of their infrastructure, facilities and equipment.

Renovations and upgrading of the infrastructure, electricals and facilities is a key priority for the college. Like all

Lasallian schools in PNG, there is also a critical need for teacher housing to enable Bomana to employ and retain quality teaching and support staff. The school is fortunate to have quite a number of teacher houses but again poor maintenance has also impacted these buildings. This has been another key challenge for Bomana due to limited funds and the inability to garnish staff wages for rent and maintenance costs.

Fortunately, the school is on a large piece of land with available space to commence new construction works without impacting the day-to-day operations of the school, or having any

impact of student and staff safety.

Brother Antony, Brother Thomas, Brother Shashi and their team have already commenced building a new student toilet block, installing clean drinking water facilities and reconfiguring the administration office.

This project is seen as a key priority in coming years for the De La Salle Brothers of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (PNG), and has strong support from Cardinal Ribat. The college will also continue to receive donated school resources and equipment from Australia via the shipping container project.

UPDATE ON VIETNAM

PLEIKU PRIMARY SCHOOL

The ground has been broken on a new project to extend the hostel at Pleiku Primary School. The children have been sleeping two (siblings or cousins) to a single adult bed as the school did not want to turn children away from attending school. Unlike Australia, hostels provide an important avenue to improve access to both primary and secondary education for children particularly from distant and rural areas. As parents work long hours, they are unable to adequately look after their children after school. There are no after-school care centres so the preference of the majority of

parents is to send their children, even their six year olds to a school with a hostel. And a distance of only 15 km in Vietnam can be prohibitive as a commute to and from school for these children, so again hostels are a solution to this dilemma.

Knowing their children are always safe and cared for and have access to additional activities such as after-school tuition programs and additional sports programs, is a great comfort for parents. The life skills that children gain whilst staying at the hostel such as making their bed, keeping their clothes and possessions tidy, cleaning

up after eating, self-care (brushing teeth, washing hands etc), complemented by the values education offered by the school and hostel – being kind and respectful, how to be a good citizen of your community etc are all aspects of school hostels that appeal to busy parents.

The school used to allow children to remain at school during weekends and even school holidays, however the school changed this policy a few years ago to ensure that family relationships remain strong and that the school is not used as a permanent care centre for children.



New hostel construction in progress at Pleiku Primary School



Children sleeping two to a bed during their after-lunch nap



Children in the school library

DAKMIL

The new Dakmil School was inaugurated on 15 May 2018, the feast day of St John Baptist De La Salle with hundreds of the local religious priests, Brothers and Sisters from a number of congregations, Lasallian alumni, members of the local Catholic community and government officials turning out in support, reflecting the wide and diverse support for the new school. The Bishop presided over a mass in the morning, followed by a ribbon-cutting and tree-planting ceremony at the school.

The workers were still toiling away during the evening of 14 May to complete and clean the final touches in time for the celebrations. The school will not be complete until July as the toilet blocks need to be constructed and further landscaping completed. The main school building is striking, rising above the neighbouring houses and rice paddies, with large, light and airy classrooms with excellent views of the valley below. The school's new logo was designed by Br Joe Hung.



New Dakmil Secondary School



Inside on of the large, well-lit and well-ventilated classrooms

NOEL AND CARMEL O'BRIEN FAMILY FOUNDATION

Our sincere thanks to everyone at the Noel and Carmel O'Brien Family Foundation for their support of the following projects:

- Reaching the Unreached Jeevan Jyothi Hospice HIV/Aids community support program, India
- Expansion of the school hostel facilities, Pleiku, Vietnam

- Renovation of De La Salle College Bomana, PNG
- Replacement of the roof at Diyagala BoysTown, Sri Lanka

Each project is underway and all expected to be completed (excluding Jeevan Jyothi HIV/Aids program which is a two-year program) before the end of 2018.



Br Arockia Doss with some children infected with HIV/Aids in India



Jyothi Jeevan program community workers



The Diyagala BoysTown, Sri Lanka lathe workshop students

BOARD DIRECTORS

- John Harry (Chair)
- Alfred Ablaza
- Sr Eileen Ann Daffy
- Arthur Hubbard
- Br John Pill
- Patrick Trindade
- Steven Wharton



The Lasallian Foundation is a signatory to the Australia Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct.
www.acfid.asn.au

GET INVOLVED BY:

- ★ Donating much needed funds
- ★ Organising your own fundraising event – donating the proceeds to the Lasallian Foundation
- ★ Making a gift in lieu (Birthday, Christmas, In Memoriam etc) to Lasallian Foundation
- ★ Asking your employer to start a Workplace Giving Program, nominating the Lasallian Foundation as a recipient
- ★ Leaving a Bequest in your Will to the Lasallian Foundation



Australian Government



Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

We are registered with the Australian Charities and Not For Profits Commission (ACNC)
www.acnc.gov.au

WE CAN HELP!

Please call the Lasallian Foundation on (03) 9508 2700

or write to us:
PO Box 668, Malvern VIC 3144

or visit us:
6/ 322 St Kilda Rd, St Kilda VIC 3182



facebook.com/lasallian-foundation



twitter.com/lasallian



pinterest.com/lasallian



linkedin.com - Lasallian Foundation

Yes! I would like to help improve De La Salle College Bomana for the boys of Port Moresby

Title First name Surname

Address.....Postcode

PH (Home)..... PH (Work) Mobile

DOBEmail

I have enclosed my gift of: ☐ \$2500 ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$250 ☐ My choice \$.....

☐ Please accept my regular monthly donation of \$.....

☐ Please find my cheque enclosed (made payable to the Lasallian Foundation) or

Please charge my ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa Card No: _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _

Expiry Date: _ _ / _ _ / _ _ Name on card Signature

All donations over \$2 receive a Tax Deductible receipt.

Please send me further information on the Lasallian Foundation Programs:

- ☐ Leaving a gift in my Will ☐ Regular Giving ☐ Workplace/Payroll Giving ☐ Additional Newsletters (Qty ☐)
☐ Lasallian Foundation Endowment Program ☐ Annual Report (please send via ☐ Email or ☐ Post)



Please return this form with payment in the reply paid envelope provided to:

Lasallian Foundation:
PO Box 668,
Malvern VIC 3144

You can also make your donation by:

Phone: (03) 9508 2700

Email: info@lasallianfoundation.org

Online: lasallianfoundation.org
ABN 74 113 234 889