

Myanmar Young Brothers' Gathering



The Young Brothers Gathering was really a great opportunity for us to share and talk about the brotherhood and the mission in Myanmar. I really appreciated the value of being together for a couple of days. It was a joyful and heartfelt experience for me. This gathering was quite historical since it was the last gathering was in 2002!

The theme of this gathering was “To share, to listen and to renew” the identity and the vocation life of the Young Brothers and the mission in Myanmar. The program for the first day was hosted by Brother Moris (Young Brothers’ Coordinator); we talked about the identity and the image of the young Brothers in Myanmar in order to witness the gospel value to the young people in 21st century. We also discussed about the mission-vision, the shared responsibilities, some fraternal concerns and professional training for the young brothers.

For the second day, Brother Mark Sixtus shared on the topic “Life History”. The purpose of this session was to look back and renew our own life history and our mission in

Myanmar. For the last day, we mainly focused on talking about our own vocation and the vocation journey of the young people, especially in those who are in the process of formation in Myanmar. After that we had fun activities on Chaung Thar beach. Over-all, it was a successful and fruitful gathering. (Br. Jospahat FSC)

Singapore Vocation Camp

The Inter-country Vocation Team (ICVT) of Singapore held their first Vocation Camp with an appropriate theme, Discovering My Vocation, to young men with ages ranging from 15 to 18 years. Bros. Edgar (Philippines) and Benedict (Thailand) planned and accompanied the boys throughout the 4 days, 3 nights camp from 8th to 11th December. The days went passed so quickly that the boys wanted more days and eagerly marked down the dates of the next camp in 2017. The Brothers working in Singapore with St. Patrick's community together supported this camp in whatever ways possible; from sharing sessions of faith, prayer to providing one-to-one redditions. The boys enjoyed this time as they got an opportunity to encounter the Brothers on a personal basis, not one Brother but two Brothers, lasting forty-five minutes each. We enjoyed ourselves tremendously as we centered our activities including cycling, kite-flying and watching movies all on the theme of "Discovering My Vocation". Our objective is to plant a fertile seed for them to consider the vocation of a De La Salle Brother.

In addition, Singapore had a wonderful Christmas gathering on 11th December. The Brothers in Singapore together with 3 young adults who are discerning the Brothers' vocation joined us for our Christmas dinner with meals specially prepared by our very own Master chef, Bro. Paul Ho. It was a fulfilling week for Singapore as we tried to promote vocations to the young as well as the older adults. **(Br. Kelvin Tan FSC)**



Praying for Country Through Peace Cranes

Students of St. Joseph School – La Salle in Bacolod City are standing up against extra judicial killings and the culture of death through prayers for peace expressed in a creative way.

They are writing their prayers on bright colored paper that they fold into peace cranes, using the art of origami, and have, so far, made 20,000 of them, Bro. Manny Hilado, president of SJS-LS, said. Considering the age of the students, “The best way we think could move these young people from reflection to action is through prayer,” Hilado said.

“We should think of prayer and fasting as possible parts of our response to the situation. Jesus did say that there are spirits who cannot be driven away except by prayer and fasting,” said Hilado, who introduced the paper peace cranes as a creative form of prayer.

“What makes it so heartwarming is to see that these paper cranes actually contain prayers. You will be moved to see that even without rewards and punishments, these young people are seriously praying for peace to reign,” he added. The advocacy on peace at SJS-LS does not end with the celebration of the Lasallian Peace Week. In partnership with the Association of Negros Artists, we will be making an installation art out of these cranes in order to provide a medium for the voices of the youth to be heard, Hilado said. “As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, we find it is a perfect time to promote love and peace this Christmas season,” he said.



At the height of the issue of Extra Judicial Killings and several issues concerning human rights and peace in our country, the President of De La Salle Philippines (DLSP), Br. Jose Mari Jimenez, issued a statement calling all Lasallians to stand against the culture of death, Hilado said. “As a Catholic institution and as concerned Filipino citizens, we are disturbed by the current issued on peace and human rights that our country is facing today,” he said.

After the issuance of the DLSP statement, SJS-LS held activities to increase awareness and move people to action, among which has been the making of the peace cranes, Hilado said. (Excerpt from **Carla P. Gomez, The Visayan Daily Star**)

APLEC 9 gathers Lasallian educators for Justice and Peace

The 9th Asia Pacific Lasallian Educators Congress (APLEC 9) was recently held at the Equatorial Hotel, Malacca Malaysia from December 4-8, 2016. The congress was attended by around 150 delegates from member countries of PARC (Pacific Asia Regional Conference) namely Hongkong, Singapore, New Zealand, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India and the host country Malaysia.

APLEC engages educators and leaders of the various educational institutions in PARC to meaningful conversations on understanding and promoting the Lasallian mission. This year with the theme *“Lasallians Working Towards Peace and Justice”*, the congress gathered resource speakers that focused on understanding the realities and issues of the world today that challenges the attainment of peace and justice in societies. Br Armin Luistro, FSC as keynote speaker, posted questions to the educators on how to respond to the influence of social media and its threats on the truths of peace and justice that shape the minds of the youth today.

Other presenters during the first day were Dr Edmund Chia and Br Mandy Dujunco FSC who both shared about how Lasallian Spirituality is vital in the formation of educators and how it is adapted to a multi-religious context. The following plenary sessions raised the current issues on peace and justice that young people should be aware and take action. (Continued)





Dr Gemma Tulud Cruz presented ways on how educators can teach students of certain responses towards attaining justice and peace. Human Rights Commissioner of Malaysia Jerald Joseph, on the other hand, described the various issues on peace and justice that affect the different member countries of the region. Both speakers reminded the participants to ensure that these issues are discussed and help students to discern ways on how to address them. Finally the congress ended with a workshop on strategic planning focusing on the principles of Lasallian education. The workshop was an opportunity for the educators to identify challenges and issues on Lasallian education and pedagogy. It also allowed sharing of solutions and responses coming from different perspectives of PARC.

APLEC has been a very effective program of PARC in gathering the network of educators since its inception in 1994. Its objective to form Lasallian educators contributes to the inspiration of working in association for the mission of providing human and Christian education to the young especially the poor. (Ms. Frtizie De Vera, Photos from: <http://aplec9.blogspot.hk/>)

News Bits

Prayers Requested. Let us pray for the speedy recovery of Br. Leonard Lewis from Myanmar who has undergone surgery to remove a blood clot in his brain.

Reminder. Online Registration Senior Brothers Conference is still ongoing. Community Directors are requested to remind and assist Senior Brothers in their communities to accomplish registration.

Reminder. Community Directors are reminded to accomplish their C2 (Supplement to the History of the House) and submit via the file request link sent earlier.

Distribution. The Prayer Guide 2017 will be mailed to the Country Coordinators this week . Can we request the Country Coordinators to distribute these to the communities in their respective countries? (They are already sorted and bundled by community). Thank you: The bulk of the work for the prayer guide was done by the 1st year Scholastics.

Health and Wellness

Br. Leonard is having an operation for a blood clot. It is suspected that this came about due to head trauma caused by a fall a few months ago. I urge all Brothers, especially Senior Brothers to take extra care. Perhaps Directors can look into making our houses "fall proof" and "senior friendly"?

Blood Clots in the Brain (<http://www.md-health.com/Blood-Clot-In-Brain.html>)

Blood clots in the brain are frequently caused by injury to the vessels in this area. Symptoms of blood clots include speaking difficulties, dizziness, lack of coordination, headaches and others which indicate that you should seek medical attention.

A blood clot in the brain can cause an Ischemic stroke, a stroke that is caused by an artery to the brain becoming blocked and starving a portion of the brain of oxygen and nutrients. A clot in the brain can also cause a buildup of cellular waste and carbon dioxide because the brain will be unable to clear this waste properly. This can cause the cells around the blockage to die, and the neurons in this portion of the brain to stop working, which can cause damage throughout the body. If you suspect that you have a blood clot in the brain, immediate treatment will be necessary to avoid a life threatening condition.

Symptoms of Blood Clots in the Brain:

Headaches, Speaking Difficulties, Confusion, Changes in Personality, Dizziness, Depression, Loss of Coordination, Seizures, Paralysis, Ischemic Attack

Treatments for Blood Clots in the Brain

If you suspect you have a clot in your brain it is vital that you seek medical attention right away, including contacting emergency medical services if you believe you may be suffering from a stroke.

Fraternally,

Edmundo Fernandez FSC