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FORMER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# Lasallian Newsletter

## Editorial

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Recently we had another opportunity to reflect on our understanding of being Lasallian. Very likely, it was due to one of our committee members being singled out to sit on the International Council of Young Lasallians. A recent letter of appointment by Bro. William Mann, Vicar General, informed Mr. Joseph Gilson of his new responsibility.

Here are our reflections of what our understanding of being Lasallian is.

- Faith in the presence of God
- Respect for all persons
- Working for a more Inclusive Community
- Greater concern for the poor and for social justice
- Quality Education

We will have opportunity in subsequent editions of the Newsletter to elaborate further on these core principles.

Carlo Galea  
Editor

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Be LASALLIAN!

**FAITH** sharing, **SERVICE** of the  
poor through education and  
**COMMUNITY** building

You're invited to log into our website on:

[www.fsamalta.org](http://www.fsamalta.org)

## Progett Tama – Kenya 2006

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In our May edition reference was made to a call by Mons. Frans Baldacchino, Bishop of Malindi, for volunteers to carry out work in Kenya in the months of July/August 2006. Mr. & Mrs. Charles and Mary Decelis enthusiastically answered the call and after a year's preparation found themselves in Mpekatoni, a parish of Malindi.

Here is Charles Decelis himself narrating ...

“The people of Mpekatoni received us as a gift from God. Their smiling faces literally lit up whenever we accosted them and cheerfully extended their hands in welcome saying: “Jambo! Habari?” (Hello! How are you?)

Work performed involved the whole group, males and females, young and not so young. Jobs were various and included masonry, tiling, electrical work, painting, steel and wood work, and a thousand odd jobs connected with the building trade. Besides this work, some of us gave computer and English lessons and helped to update the school library.



We started the day at 0630 with prayers and morning praise followed by tea or coffee and sandwiches. Breakfast over, we set to work at about 0730 right till 1800 in the evening.

After a normal day's work, we used to return back to our residence for a cold shower - no hot water being available- quickly followed by Mass (more often than not by candlelight since the only generator supplying electricity in the village would be out of action). This was followed by our evening meal, kindly prepared by two ladies from our group.

Everyone gave a helping hand with plates and dish washing. The average day would come to a close with a brief evaluation exercise. Thereafter, most would call it a day and retire to bed. A gallant few would spend another hour or so indulging in a game or catching up with some reading. Most recorded our Kenya experience on video or via digital pictures. But all recorded this unique experience in their heart, never to be erased.

## An Inclusive School and a path finder in Maltese Education

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Bro. Martin, Bro. Austin and Bro. Charles with the wholehearted support of the Lasallian community, can rightly be regarded as the Founding Fathers of inclusivity in Maltese Education.

This vision is aptly summed up in a recent edition of the Staff Handbook pp 80-81, edited by Bro. Martin. It reads “De La Salle College ... welcomes children from different social and cultural backgrounds and it fosters among its pupils attitudes of tolerance and sensitivity to the individuality of each person.”



*5th Form Class of June 2006*

As Lasallians we welcome the lead given by our College, fully conscious that it tallies with the third of five core principles of our understanding of being Lasallian. (cf. Editorial)

We also welcome the acknowledgement that the ‘Inclusive and Special Education Review’ (June’05) gives to the De La Salle initiatives in this field.



## August Albania Adventure by Bro. David Mizzi

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As I write from the relative comfort of our Retreat Centre in Mellieha my mind looks back over three gruelling but exciting weeks in Albania.

A group of ten teenagers (16/18 and two adults) left for Tirana via Milan on 20/07/06. Our first eight days were spent in the South in KORCA. Here we held educational and social exchanges with Albanian youths the same age as our 6<sup>th</sup> Formers. We spent the mornings teaching English; the afternoons familiarizing ourselves with the country, the people and the language; the evenings we set aside mostly for informal gatherings with local youths.



After KORCA we moved to EL BASAN an industrial city right at the heart of Albania. Here we experienced squalor and poverty at their worst. We worked side by side with the SISTERS OF MOTHER THERESA also known as 'Sisters of the Poor'. We organized an intensive activities programme for the street children who kept flocking to our centre so that when we exceeded the hundred we forcibly had to refuse further admittance. The activities with orphans and unwanted children were the highlight of our brief visit to Albania. After two more weeks we had to bid a sad and nostalgic farewell. The students (aged 17/18) literally fell in love with these street kids and the amount of appreciation and gratitude we received were nothing compared to the unique privilege of being in their

midst. We also dedicated a number of afternoons and evenings to the Sisters' Orphanage. We also found time to carry out some maintenance work mostly by way of plastering and painting. Unlike in Korca we kept the late evenings to ourselves being too exhausted to do much else. In any case we had to start the day rather early.



*Above: Andrew and Stephanie mothering and fathering young kids at the Orphanage.*

*Below: Street kids from El Basan who literally flocked to our workshops. This picture was taken in the course of a puppet theatre.*



## *Some reflections emerging from the Rome*

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In Rome, 150 young Lasallians from all over the world held the 2nd International Symposium of the Young Lasallians Movement from the 25<sup>th</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2006.

Here are some extracts from the Malta delegates' (Christine and Joseph) diary :-

Day 1 .. Familiarisation exercises .. Getting to know each other .. Meetings with Bro. Alvaro, Superior General and his Council .. Inaugural celebrations in the Chapel of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

*Malta delegates with Br. Alvaro (Sup. General)*



Day 2 .. reflections on the theme “What kind of world are we called to build?” .. We were reminded by the Italian philosopher Emilio Baccharini that “we are important and unique precisely because of our interaction with other people, accepting their differences and characteristics which make them unique.”



Day 3 .. Our brief stay in Assisi made us more conscious than ever of the Franciscan mission statement “Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace”

*St. Francis Basilica in Assisi*



## *Symposium* by Joseph C. Gilson

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Day 4 .. We appreciated the diversity of responses that Young Lasallians are providing in situations of poverty and desperation we can see all around us. Young Lasallians from the Philippines, Australia, France, the USA, Colombia, Italy, Spain, Sudan, Mexico, etc. all shared their vision of committed Lasallians. Despite the great diversity of their experiences they all shared two fundamental points in common: they arise both from a faith-based

interpretation of reality, and they are united to a powerful experience of life and fraternity.

Day 5 .. We concentrated on the present situation of the International Council of Young Lasallians (ICYL) and discussed the future model(s) of Young Lasallians proposed by the delegates.



*ICYL members during a plenary session*



Day 6 .. Bro. Alvaro foresaw a future full of meaning only to the extent that the Lasallian impetus focuses on the poor.

*Bro. Alvaro Rodriguez, Superior General addressing the delegates*

## We need your help: Renew your Membership!

As you may well understand, the Former Students' Association relies completely on the kind and generous contributions of its members; that is YOU!

Kindly renew your membership for :

1 year Lm 2

3 years Lm 5

Life Membership Lm 20

Name & Surname: .....

Address: .....

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Email: .....

Mobile: .....

Present Occupation: .....

Last Year at De La Salle College (State Date and Class)

Date: .....

Class: .....

We thank you in advance for supporting our FSA initiatives!

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*Please also suggest the names and contact details of former students or teachers who would be interested in receiving our Newsletter*

Please email this information (and any other correspondence) to any member of the Editorial Team or post to:

Carlo Galea, 'Shalom', Triq iz-Zebbug, St. Julian's STJ12