

# Spirit OF THE STAR

LASALLIAN YOUTH MINISTRY NEWSLETTER, DISTRICT OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

## LIVE THE MESSAGE

by BR MARK MCKEON fsc DIRECTOR OF VOCATIONS AND YOUTH MINISTRY

### St John Baptist De La Salle strove to

#### live the message of the Gospel

throughout his life bringing the presence of Christ to the young people entrusted to his care. In practical ways this resulted in him providing educational opportunities that met the needs of the young people of his day. The schools he established were available to everyone regardless of whether they could afford to pay for tuition or not. He ensured that young people received an education that would enable them to live the Christian message, earn a living for themselves and make a useful contribution to society.

De La Salle believed in the presence of a loving, caring and supportive God. Prayer was his lifeline to God. It was through prayer he developed a deep relationship with God, which sustained him in his ministry.



### De La Salle stressed that you can not

compartmentalise the various

aspects of your life. Basically,

he taught that your prayer

life influences your work

and that the work you

do becomes a source

of reflection for your

prayer. It is clear

in his writings that

John Baptist De

La Salle devoted

regular time

to prayerfully

reflecting on

scripture. This

enabled him to

become more "in

tune" with the person of

Jesus Christ. One of his

prayers he said often was "I

will continue, O my God, to do

all my actions for the love of You."

For De La Salle, loving Christ meant

loving those he lived with and the young people

entrusted to his care. As Lasallians we are challenged

to put our faith into action and make a difference in the

lives of others. **What are you doing this year to live**

**the message of the Gospel?**

**"FOR DE LA SALLE, LOVING CHRIST MEANT LOVING THOSE HE LIVED WITH AND THOSE HE MINISTERED TO."**

# INTRODUCING BEC BARRETT

## NEW LASALLIAN YOUTH MINISTER

About a year and a half ago I decided office work was not quite for me and I decided to spend more time working in youth ministry and I have not looked back! This year I joined the Lasallian Vocations & Youth Ministry team as a Lasallian Youth Minister at Holy Spirit College Lakemba in Sydney.

I've always been interested in Lasallian Youth Ministry since school at St Michael's College in Adelaide. After I finished school I studied exercise and sport science but I still maintained my involvement with Lasallian youth by helping out at Camp La Salle and leadership programs, as well as participating in two Asia Pacific Lasallian Youth Congresses in 2001 and

2004. A few years ago I was invited to go to Rome as a member of the International Council of Young Lasallians (ICYL). This Council is made up of young Lasallians from around the world to help promote the involvement of young people in the Lasallian Mission. It was an awesome experience!

There are many reasons why I am passionate about being Lasallian and about Youth Ministry in particular, one being the awesome opportunities to meet young people who enjoy sharing and living their faith. I have met young Lasallians from all over the world and it is amazing to realise that there are people just like us running programs such as Camp La



Salle and Youth Leadership on the other side of the world!

I am excited about my role as a Lasallian Youth Minister and I look forward to meeting many of you soon.

Bec Barrett

# SHARE THE MISSION VOLUNTEERS BEGIN

## THEIR JOURNEY OF SELF DISCOVERY

The new intake of 2007 volunteers for the De La Salle Brothers Share the Mission program attended a ten day orientation program in Sydney on February 8-18th 2007.

The volunteers will spend ten months living and working with the De La Salle Brothers in schools at Balgo Hills in the Western Desert of the Kimberley in Western Australia and Bankstown a south western suburb of Sydney.

Br Gary Wilson, Manager of the program which has been in operation for four years, said the orientation program provides the volunteers with strategies and a support network to help them deal successfully with their volunteer experience.

"Living in a Brothers community away from family and friends and working in a new cultural environment can be quite a confronting experience.

Whilst we choose participants who are altruistic, compassionate, good communicators and open to new cultures, the realities of the experience are really challenging."

Eighteen year old Amy Bisschops from Rotorua, New Zealand who will live and work with the De La Salle Brothers in the Aboriginal community of Balgo Hills said she joined the program to challenge herself.

"I didn't really feel like going straight to Tech after finishing school, but I didn't want to have a gap year just working. So I decided to do the program because it offers so many opportunities, and is probably the best way to become an individual, without influences like family and friends. I felt that this year was not only an awesome experience career wise, but a chance of self discovery".

When asked why she chose to live and work in the poor, remote community at Balgo Hills, Amy replied "Well, my friends all think I'm nuts going to a place so isolated, but I chose Balgo because it is one of the most different places and cultures compared to the one that I am used to living in. Not only does this allow for self development, but it means I can learn a whole new way of life. I think the biggest reason Balgo appealed to me was the fact that I can not only give something to the community, I can learn about it too.

I hope to gain a greater understanding of the Aboriginal way of life. I hope to form new friendships, develop my compassion for others, gain courage and self discovery.

Ryan Scanlan, 18 from Malvern in Victoria will join Amy at Balgo Hills and Sunia Lafo'ou-Lusa, from Mangere in NZ will be living and working with the Brothers at LaSalle Catholic College, Bankstown.

Why not think and talk about it? Applications for the Share the Mission Program for 2008 close on Friday, 28 Sept 2007. The program offers big opportunities in cross-cultural experience and leadership.

Visit [www.delasalle.org.au](http://www.delasalle.org.au) or contact Br Gary Wilson, Program Manager (02) 9795 6422 email: [garywilson@delasalle.org.au](mailto:garywilson@delasalle.org.au) or you can ask one of the Lasallian Youth Ministers in Sydney or Melbourne.

# LOOKING FOR A GOOD NIGHT OUT IN SYDNEY?



The Sydney Lasallian Youth Ministry team invite you to attend their Lasallian Youth Ministry (LYM) nights throughout 2007. Check out the website for dates.

These gatherings provide a great opportunity for Lasallians to come together and "catch up" with other people in the Lasallian network.

The first Sydney Lasallian Youth Ministry night for 2007 was held on Feb 27th and attracted a crowd of 45. The majority of those present were current Yr 12 students from Cronulla, Revesby, Lakemba, Ashfield and Bankstown as well as a number of former students. Br Mark gave a short reflection on the life and influence of John Baptist De La Salle. This was followed by a report by three participants from the recent Balgo Hills Summer program. News of the upcoming Lasallian Youth Gathering in July was discussed, as well as a proposal for an ongoing outreach service at Auburn Homework Centre.

LYM nights follow a simple format. They begin with prayer, followed by a discussion on a topic to further our understanding of our Lasallian heritage and mission, and conclude with supper and the chance to share with others what has been happening!

The gatherings are held in the Brothers' house (community) usually at Bankstown (530 Chapel Road Bankstown).

If you would like to know more about these nights and when they are on, contact a member of the Sydney Lasallian Youth Ministry Team (see Contact details) or visit the news and events page on the youth site at [www.delasalle.org.au](http://www.delasalle.org.au).

# BALGO BOUND



20 senior students and teachers from De La Salle schools in Sydney, Melbourne and New Zealand travelled to Wirrimanu Balgo Hills in WA to provide support and play games with the local aboriginal community during the Christmas school holidays. DARREN PERRETT, a Lasallian Youth Minister at Lasalle Catholic College went along...

"Driving along a road which seemed endless, I found myself pondering what Balgo Hills would be like.

I thought before getting to Balgo that it would be a tough two weeks in the desert and I would most probably be eager to return home. However, the long trip and the unbearable heat was soon forgotten when we finally made it to Balgo and were welcomed by friendly faces.

We were really surprised by the kids out there. These young people have had many traumatic things happen in their lives yet they were so happy in the way they

communicated with us and showed huge resilience in the face of change. 'These kids', I thought 'are so appreciative of what they have, and so happy just to be alive'. I was dumbfounded.

It was such an amazing experience being with them and noticing the simple pleasures they enjoyed. They loved being spun around, shoulder rides, colouring in, making bracelets, face painting, cricket and playing basketball. Seeing the smiling faces waiting for us at the basketball court made our trip worth it.



The most amazing day we spent was when we travelled to Lake Gregory where the 'Rainbow Serpent' lives. Before swimming in the lake, the young people told us the story of the Rainbow Serpent and then they smeared black mud over our skin telling us that this would prevent the rainbow serpent from smelling us and therefore we would be protected whilst swimming. It was a great day, we had a bush BBQ, went hunting, gathered bush onions and swam.

Balgo Hills has made an impression in my life and an indent in my heart. I loved every minute of being there and can't wait to return. The reason I love the place so much is the young people and their amazing way of welcoming you and the way they immediately accept you into their lives. It's people like these that truly help bring meaning to the Lasallian prayer "Live Jesus in our hearts, forever".

# IS A BROTHER'S LIFE FOR ME?

This is your opportunity to take "time out" of your everyday busy life for some prayer and reflection.

Explore religious life as a De La Salle Brother by attending the "Zechariah Weekend" on 25-27th May in Sydney or on 26-28th October in Melbourne.

Give yourself the chance to share your faith with others and in doing so hopefully come to a clearer understanding of your vocation in life.

For over 350 years the De La Salle Brothers have been providing a human and Christian education to young people, especially the poor. Today, in over 80 countries they provide a range of innovative education and welfare services for young people to assist them to create a positive future. It's the vocation that offers purpose, diversity, personal fulfilment, spiritual growth, community living and more. **Maybe it's the vocation for you...**

CONTACT BR MARK MCKEON ON 0412 853 573 or email [markmckeon@delasalle.org.au](mailto:markmckeon@delasalle.org.au)



## INTO THE FUTURE>>>>

### LASALLE QUEENSLAND

May 29th will see the team from the Sunshine State host "De La Dinner". This will be the major fundraising event for Camp Lasalle. The night will feature a live band and a silent auction. It is hoped that the night will also raise awareness of the activities of the Lasalle Queensland team. For information contact Troy Fernandez on 0403 692 632 or email [troyfernandez@hotmail.com](mailto:troyfernandez@hotmail.com)

### APLYC8 - SINGAPORE

Young Lasallians aged 15-25 are invited to attend the 8th regional **Asian Pacific Lasallian Youth Congress** in Singapore on December 2-8, 2007.

APLYC8's theme, "Many Lives, One Mission", will celebrate the rich diversity of Lasallians in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the one Lasallian Mission that binds us together. Participants from 15 Asia Pacific countries will be there.

The District of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea has been allocated 30 places at this Congress. Registration cost is approx \$220 plus airfare. For more information about **APLYC8** please contact your Lasallian Youth Minister or Br Mark McKeon on 0412 853 573 or visit [www.aplyc8.org](http://www.aplyc8.org).

### INTERNATIONAL LASALLIAN YOUTH GATHERING 08 - MELBOURNE

Young Lasallians from around the world are invited to attend the **International Lasallian Youth Gathering** in Melbourne on 9-12 July, 2008 prior to **World Youth Day** in Sydney on 15-20 July.

It is expected that 600 participants will attend the gathering, the format of which will include keynote speakers on Lasallian youth spirituality and mission, workshops, liturgies and social activities.

For further information contact Br Adrian Watson: [adrianwatson@delasalle.org.au](mailto:adrianwatson@delasalle.org.au) or visit [www.ilyg08.org.au](http://www.ilyg08.org.au) which will be online in April this year.

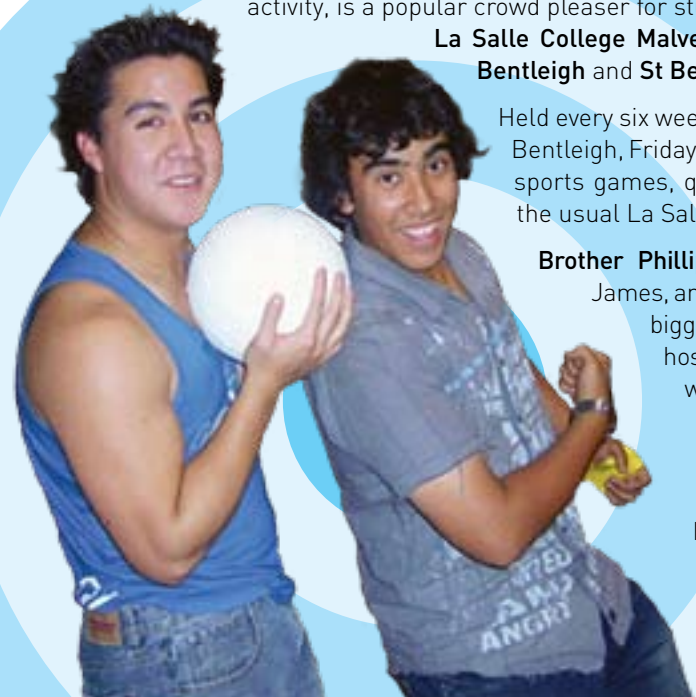
## FRIDAY NIGHT GAMES

Friday activity night, introduced in 2005 as a Lasallian Youth Ministry activity, is a popular crowd pleaser for students from Melbourne's **De La Salle College Malvern, St James College East Bentleigh** and **St Bede's College Mentone**.

Held every six weeks at St James College, East Bentleigh, Friday Night Games involves indoor sports games, quizzes, problem solving and the usual La Salle standard of Murder Ball!

**Brother Phillip Sheridan**, Principal of St James, and one of La Salle Melbourne's biggest supporters, is our gracious host for Friday Night Games and with the crowds growing bigger we have moved the games to St James new multi purpose area and chapel.

If you are in Melbourne and are keen to get involved with Friday Night Games, contact **Craig Almeida** on **0412 980 304**.



## CONTACT DETAILS

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### WEBSITES

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