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Greetings to all from La Salle College, Kowloon, Hong Kong, China. Peace and Joy is within you.

It is a pleasure for me to write and to keep in contact once again after being silent for two and a half years. I was unable to return to LSSC Changjiao because of the Covid-19 travel restrictions. The last time I wrote about LSSC Changjiao was on All Saints Day 1st November 2020. At that time I was at La Salle Provincialate, Petaling Jaya under Covid-19 home restriction regulations.

Early this year I could see a light in the tunnel. Malaysia had already allowed overseas travel and so I decided to travel to Hong Kong in late February so that I could return to LSSC Changjiao once ordinary visitors were allowed to travel into China. I was transferred from St Joseph's College community to La Salle College Kowloon community in 2020 but did not physically move over as I was locked down in Malaysia. I returned to Hong Kong on Sunday 26th February and reported to my new community at LSC Kowloon. Having been resident at SJC since March 2001, I had lots of things to attend to ... especially teaching materials generously donated by Hong Kong Lasallians ... as I moved residence from SJC to LSC.

My China Temporary Resident Permit expired on Aug 2020 so when it was announced on 15th March 2023 that foreigners visitors could again enter mainland China via Hong Kong I had to apply for a Visitor Visa. The China Visa issuing office was immediately deluged by thousands of applicants. The process was tedious. First one has to get access to an online application site. Just a single inappropriate detail the application will be rejected and one has to get another online access to start all over again. I gave up after two days of trying and enlisted the assistance of a teacher at La Salle College who in turn enlisted the assistance of an ex-Lasallian whose family runs a China Tour Agency. It took his office three days to get me registered before I was given an appointment to go the Visa Office on 18th April. The face to face appointment was smoothly arranged and a Visitor's Visa was granted on 21st April.

The way back to LSSC Changjiao was opened once again. However, it was too close to May 1st Labour Day holiday so I decided to wait a little longer before crossing over to ShenZheng on 5th May to visit my nieces, nephew and their families in Buji. After an absence of 3 years and 5 months, I finally returned to LSSC Changjiao by coach from ShenZheng Buji... a 5 hours 30mins bus ride ... on 8th May.

This was what greeted me when I reached LSSC Changjiao ... the front portion of LSSC was still presentable ... my well known three wheels motorbike car had rusted away ... the jungle behind LSSC had advanced to the back of the house and branches were touching the roof of the house ... the open area inside the resident was tidy but the rooms had become home for insects, rats and spiders. I decided to stay in the town of Dabu that first night. Lots of cleaning, clearing and tidying up had to be done. The next day I had my room washed and tidied up and moved in. I spent my first week catching up with villagers, receiving visits of friends and parents of former students and local officials.



The front portion of LSSC was still presentable



My motorbike car had rusted away



All five Iron Palms were in full bloom ... four male flowers and one female flower

Once all the formalities of “coming home” were over, I asked for assistance from local officials and police to apply for a China Temporary Resident Permit. A total of 7 documents had to be prepared and stamped by village authorities, bank and police authorities. On Monday 22nd May, a retired local official drove me to Mexian to assist me in applying for the Temporary Resident Permit. My presence was required as I had to be computer photographed and my fingers’ printstaken. Within an hour it was done. The next morning I received a phone call from the local police asking me to present a certified document that my grandfather was born in the village of Changjiao.

So once again I had to do the running around, looking through our village book of genealogy 族谱[zúpǔ], to locate my grandpa's name, my father's name and my name on it and presented a photo of my grandpa's gravestone in Kuala Kangsa with the words Dabu on it. A certified document was issued. I did not have to go to Meixian to deliver the document as the local police offered to deliver the document for me. Surprisingly on Thursday 25th May I was informed that the Guangzhou Immigration Department had approved the application and issued the permit. The next day I travelled to Meixian and retrieved my passport with the Temporary Resident Permit on it. I can now travel in and out of China freely for three years ... till May 2026.

With the assistance of villagers and parents of former students we worked to get LSSC tidy and ready to run our English programme once again



The trees and shrubs behind LSSC at the sheltered mini hall beside LSSC



Daily cutting, gathering and controlled burning of overgrown trees, shrubs and grass.



After clearing and neatly tidied up



My two faithful motor buggies repaired

After three weeks of hard work LSSC the cleaning, clearing and tidying up of LSSC was completed. We were ready to run our popular Summer English Programme.

I had been away for almost 4 years thus these four years I did not have the opportunity to train local students as “小老师 xiǎolǎoshī” to assist me during the summer programme. In all my summer programmes I had a few friends from Malaysia, Singapore or Hong Kong assisting me. While I was fully occupied in teaching, they looked after the discipline and small groups teaching activities thus ensuring

that all activities outside of my lecture hall ran smoothly and orderly. These friends were unable to reorganise their schedule as no one expected me to return to Dabu to resume running LSSC Changjiao so soon after China reopened her borders.

After consulting a few friends and some local officials I decided to run a limited version of our Summer English Programme for just about 60 students ... 30 primary students and 30 secondary students ... as I did not have a team of adult and students assistants. Ha haha ... that was what I thought. Without announcing that the summer programme would be on, students and parents came asking for a place even before schools close for the summer. On the first day of the interviews the number of students accompanied by parents/guardians at LSSC just kept growing in numbers. I had to say goodbye to the number 60. We had to issue queue numbers. On Saturday morning we interviewed 30 students from 8am to 12 noon. In the afternoon we interviewed another 30 students from 2pm to 7pm. In two days we had to terminate the first come first served interview. I kept 40 places for Changjiao villagers who had grandchildren, nieces and nephews coming back to stay in the village.

This year I insisted that parents/guardians must be present for the interview. The interviews were very revealing ... the apparent eagerness of most students to study English at LSSC based on the reputation of LSSC; the hope of parents/guardians that LSSC will improve the English marks of the chargers and some even hope that LSSC will change their chargers from uninterested students to determined and hard working students; the disagreement before my eyes between parents who wanted their child to study at LSSC and the child telling me that they were not interested; the utter surprise of parents when right before their eyes they realised their child could not even read the alphabets when presented to them at random order and not the usual a b c .. to x y z memorised reading order.

The interviews with parents/guardians present gave me the opportunity to point out that the learning process of the students depends on three pillars ... the student wants to study English and willing to read aloud when studying; a teacher giving the proper guidance; and the parents/guardians supervising the study schedule of the child. The vast majority of parents/guardians had an earful from me for not supervising the study schedule of the child at home. I emphatically told them that LSSC does not teach any school based lessons. For Primary 4, 5 and 6 students we teach them of our special PinPhonics approach to reading which is based on China's PinYin reading method. For Lower Secondary 1, 2 and 3 students who are able to read ... otherwise they have to attend the PinPhonics lessons ... we introduce them to our 15 Basic Structural Sentence Approach to English Conversation. As for Upper Secondary students, if they already mastered the 15 Basic Structural Sentences we introduced them to the full 56 Structural Sentences based on the Verb to Be rule, the Verb to Have rule and the Conditional Verbs rule.

Note: PinPhonics Approach to Reading and Structural Sentence Approach to English Conversation are both products of 20+ years of teaching and learning at LSSC. Singing has a big role in the process and the question and answer activities are the key to the success of this approach.

On Sunday 22nd July, a day before we start our Summer English Programme, the makeshift team and stay-in students gathered at LSSC. We had a mother, son and daughter threesome from Gangsu, northwest China joining us as students. An ex-student who just resigned from her job came to assist me full time and her Lower Secondary son whom she hoped that I could influence. An adult student and parent of a former student joining us to take charge of the kitchen and assist me to put my lessons live via DǒuYīn [抖音]. We had a former student who just graduated from university who was keen to offer his service to LSSC to teach and to learn more. His sister, also former student and now a fully qualified English teacher offered to assist us in the first week of our programme. We also had students from Hubei, Shenzheng, Baiho as well as from Dabu and our village of Changjiao staying with us. There were 16 of us staying in at LSSC and we were divided into three teams to manage the cooking and cleaning up as well as help to run the programme. Thank God it went off very well. My apprehensions about not

having a regular team vanished on the first day. Those who were given duties executed them well and I was able to concentrate on teaching my lessons without having to worry discipline and order.

Just after our programme took off, a senior official of Dabu, the Director of Information visited us and we were in the local TV news. A few days later, the Meixian TV sent a crew to film and interviewed us. So, LSSC is still a feature in the local news. Two days ago, a former student of LSSC who is a regular school teacher sent me a video clip where LSSC was presented by local education officials as a model of service to society. She is extremely proud to be a Lasallian trained teacher.



An official visit by Dabu's Director of Information.



Being filmed for Dabu's TV news

An official photo for the local record

With this happy and affirmative note I end this report. I thank everyone who has been supporting us morally, materially and spiritually. For me this mission at LSSC Changjiao is a special gift of purposeful living at this stage of my life. I thank God for my relative good health and I thank you for being by my side and supporting me all these years.

Take care and God bless you and your loved ones.
Peace and Joy is within you.

As always with love in DLS,
BDLiaoFSC



Blankets flyin in the sun.



Pillows getting a breath of fresh air.



Mattresses sunbathing



Pillow cases and bed sheets drying



Slaughtering a pig.Carving out the meat.



Cooling and packing.





Students assemble orderly before class.



Reading the PinPhonics sound system card.



BD ... the Prefix and Suffix sounds.



The hall full of students.



Small groups taught by former LSSC students.



A senior former LSSC volunteering full time



Visitors from LSC Kowloon with some students.SJC Br Jeffrey interacting with LSSC students.



Visit over ... on the way to lunch.



A photo to remember LSSC Baijiang.



A moment of "Thanks Giving" before meals.



A typical daily breakfast



Review of the day before dinner



Individual reading before supper



Two birthdays celebrated ... Happy Birthday!!!



What was going?

Who's up there?