



中国广东省梅州市大埔县湖寮镇长教村 La Salle Study Centre, Changjiao, China.

Website: www.lasallechina.com

Email: liaodavid@yahoo.com
Mobile: +86-13536733440

3rd Quarter Report 2017

Greetings from La Salle Study Centre, Changjiao, Dabu, Meizhou. Peace and Joy is within you.

Every year my 3rd Quarter Report is centred on LSSC Summer English Programme. Well, those of you who read my 2nd Quarter Report will remember that I had to apply for a new passport and also a new China Visa in June and because of that I had to return to Malaysia. Time was against me and I had to cancel Summer Programme 2017. So, this report is about typhoons, pomelos and cleaning up LSSC.

Now, before all else, I like to refer to the passport problem in June that I wrote about in the 2nd Q Report as truly a blessing in disguise. My long absence and the cancellation of the Summer Programme did not go unnoticed. The local Dabu authorities made the extra effort through Meixian to Guangzhou and finally within a month of my return to LSSC Changjiao, I was issued with a 3 Years China Resident Permit. I did ask for 5 years as per the 5 years validity of our Malaysia Passport but was told that 3 years was the maximum allowed but I can easily apply for renewal now that it has been approved and issued by the Guangdong Authorities. Thank God, all is well that ends well. I can now move in and out of China any time.

I begin with the typhoons. As you know, this year, the south east coastal areas of China suffered considerable damage from typhoon strikes. Even some schools and universities were forced to remain closed on September 1st which is traditionally the 1st day in the academic year, to clean up and repair damaged facilities. We are inland and in the hills therefore the typhoons did not bring strong winds but it affected the raining pattern. I noticed that a day or two after the typhoons made landfall along the coastal regions, it would rain in our village. This year, we experienced extremely dry weather in between typhoons and that affected our pomelo orchards. We also had one day of strong wind that blew down a tree and disrupted our power supply.



Typhoon - Tree down



Power lines down

The main story for 3rd Q Report is about LSSC Community Development Project – Pomelo Farming in Baijiang. I begin with a big thank you, on behalf of all the farmers of Baijiang, to all Lasallian donors who helped financed the construction of 1.2 km of cemented 2 to 3.5 meters wide road into the hill behind the village of Baijiang and the opening up of land for pomelo farming activities from 2011 to 2016. Your donations assisted us to clear the hill slopes, set up irrigation and buy pomelo saplings. Now 7 years down the line the trees are beginning to produce adequate harvest that supersedes fertilizer and labour cost i.e. there is profit. There is no success like success and so a few farmers have told me that they are willing to invest more in labour and fertilizers so that the harvest next year will be better and hopefully double what they earn this year.

We had anxious moments throughout June and July because of the exceptional dry weather that affected the flowering season – some trees even flowered 3 times! Then there were the off and on heavy rains and very dry hot days in August and early September because of the typhoons. Thank God for the good weather in late September, all the farmers had good harvest this year. Some made more money others less. You read on and you will know why.



Weighing the fruits



Manpowered loading



One – two – up



Mechanized loading



Bulldozer power



Down they go



Machine work ... farmers just look and rest



Almost full ... double the speed in loading

It is important for us to accept that attitude change is never easy in a rural environment among die-hard farmers. Those of you who have read my 3rd Q Reports in 2015 and 2016 will know that I have been trying but not very successful in allaying the fear of farmers who are always afraid of not being able to sell their harvest. I have been telling them the key is to produce good fruits and reputable good fruits will always have a market.

This year, as usual, the early middlemen collectors came before the fruits are fully ripe and some of our farmers, through fear of not being able to sell, sold their crops before they are properly ripen. As to be expected per bag of about 20 pomelos on the average only weighed 40-45 katies whereas those who held on for three weeks and plucked their fruits after a week of rain, their fruits weighed on the average 70-75 katies per bag. The good news is that all our fruits were sold and all were happy that the harvest was easily 40% more than last year. The not so good news is that some villagers got greedy and bought fruits from elsewhere which were not as good, to sell as fruits from our village.

Two families were prepared to do more to earn more and they almost double their income. One family made full use of the hand-phone to advertise and conclude transactions with buyers directly via WeChat and send in bags via Express Delivery. The other family went one step further and decided to clean and pack their fruits in boxes, hired a delivery truck and travel to Shenzhen and Guangzhou to sell directly to supermarkets and fruit shops that had been contacted before the harvest season. These two families had to work harder but earned easily 100% more than those who sold early to middlemen collectors. I hope next year more farmers will engage in the business of selling directly to consumers and fruit sellers.



Out of Collection bags and Cleaning



Selecting and Grading



Choosing and Boxing



Transporting to Delivery Truck



Loading into Truck



Direct Delivery to Fruit Sellers

While still on this business topic, I must say I was taken aback during the Gold Week Holiday on 1st Oct when a good friend told me that a butcher in town was selling pork at a higher price that day by claiming that the meat was from a pig that I slaughtered. Many in town know that during the summer programmes I slaughter pigs that are at least a year old to feed student volunteers staying in LSSC and the meat are exceptionally tasty. So, there you are ... there are many ways to make money!

LSSC had visitors from Malaysia, Singapore and Hongkong, a Sister, a Brother and two laymen. I thank them for coming over to be our guests. All are welcomed. I hope to see you here one day. It will be great if you can come to be with us as a Lasallian Volunteer during our Winter or Summer Programme. If you cannot speak Chinese, it is a blessing for us as LSSC is an English speaking community during our Winter and Summer programme sessions.

Just before the 1st Oct Golden Holiday, we were visited by Senior Retired Officials from Guangdong. They were accompanied by the Mayor of Dabu. Those from Guangdong have heard about and seen LSSC on local TV stations and National CCTV stations. They expressed appreciation that LSSC is an exemplary model of service in education to nation building, in action.



Visitors – Malaysia-Singapore-Hongkong



Visitors – Seniors Officials from Guangdong



Dabu Mayor explaining



LSSC – FSC – Touching Hearts-Changing Lives

The weather here is getting cooler as the northern winds are beginning to blow south. Autumn has set in and in the north the cold weather is getting cold and in some places it is already snowing. Every year, at this time I wonder if I should reorganize my schedule to spend September and early October in Malaysia and the rest of the year teaching at LSSC Changjiao.

With is note, I end this quarterly report. As always I want to say a big THANK YOU to all of you who have been so supportive of this Project Mission China – LSSC Changjiao. Please keep us in your prayers.

As always with love in the service of youth and nation through DLS,

BDLiaoFSC
LSSC Changjiao
16th Oct 2017

A picture speaks a thousand words ... BD in action



The farmer Harvesting



Peeping through ... Can you see me?



The carpenter ...



... building a pantry



... chiselling



... varnishing furniture



Washing up LSSC



with high pressure gun



Relaxing with two old ladies



Listening ... Asking



My mother's - The Kok Family Ancestral Home in Dama

