



ESCOLA SECUNDÁRIA CATÓLICA RAILACO NOSSA SENHORA DE FÁTIMA

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS 2015

Our dear Benefactors and Friends,

With deep joy and overflowing thanksgiving, we at Escola Secundária Católica Nossa Senhora de Fátima Railaco (NOSSEF), would like to wish you and your loved ones a very **Merry Christmas** and a **Blessed New Year 2016!** This year has been filled with so many surprises for us at NOSSEF. Visits from many more "angels" blessed us with signs of God's generosity and mercy, filling us with great joy and gratitude.

MOVEMENTS

While the two Jesuit scholastics had to leave for further studies and formation, another two came. One is taking care of the pastoral care, another is so involved in Information Technology and School Canteen operations. Sr. Rita Hayes, SGS had to return to Australia for her new assignment, but she has remained fully committed in bridging us to long-time donors and benefactors. This year, we decided to look for more part-time teachers who could stay longer during the day and be more involved in our formation processes.



MALE TEACHERS OF NOSSEF IN EARLY 2015

DAILY BUSINESS

The parish of St. Canice in Sydney, Australia, continues to greatly help ensure NOSSEF delivers good quality education. To educate a student, about \$200 per year is needed, where the presence of government-paid teachers significantly lessen that financial burden. However, the annual school fee (comprised of tuition and building fees) paid by new students enrolled in 2015 and beyond is less than that, at \$125. Prior to 2015, the annual school fee was \$78, and continues to apply to those yet to graduate. As such, all of NOSSEF's students are benefiting from the comparatively lower school fees (compared to the cost of education), mainly made possible by St. Canice's generous contributions.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS CONDUCTED
AROUND THE SCHOOL IN LENT 2015

Beyond that, scholarships to pay for the annual school fees are also given, based not only on academic merit but also on need. The number of scholarships given out this year: Sr. Rita - Good Samaritan Sisters (23); Catholic Regional College, Sydenham (20); Fr. Pat Smythe (20); Joe Roach and Family (30); St. Joseph's College Geelong (9); Friends of Ermera (10); Students of Ms Helen Taet in Australia (1); NITL from Singapore (1). The grand total is 114 recipients. As early as now, we already have new donors for 2016: Kevin Slattery, Phil Yacuno, Colégio de São Jose Alumni and more slots for St. Joseph's College Geelong. St. John the Evangelist of Nowra has also expressed interest contributing scholarships.



THE NEW STUDENT COUNCIL FOR 2016 WITH
MESTRI AFONSO, THEIR TEACHER ADVISOR

Apart from scholarships, gratefully accepted help in many forms had been forthcoming for NOSSEF, as the following demonstrates.

The parents from Catholic Regional College, Sydenham, through Mr. Paul Reed donated some amount to buy our school supplies and learning resource materials. To encourage our students to religiously take down notes, we have been providing ball pens and notebooks, but they have to show that their pen is dry and their notebook is filled.



VISITORS FROM THE CATHOLIC REGIONAL COLLEGE OF SYDENHAM

Rotary in Australia has been sending goods to us like furniture, kitchen ware, bags, clothes and school supplies. Sr. Rita has been working very closely with them.



ALUMNI WITH SR. RITA DURING HER RECENT VISIT

Mater Christi College continues to be one of our major benefactors. Their contribution pays for the salary of our school gardener, and they organize an exchange program for two of our graduating girls to have an intensive English learning experience in Australia. They have also made available some funds for miscellaneous needs of the school.



END OF SEMESTER PRESENTATION OF STUDENT & SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Aside from scholarships, St. Joseph's College Geelong has also given us some funds for the finishing touches of the floor of the first building and for other minor building repairs. They also agreed to allocate some amount for our Technology and Computer needs.



BR. NOEL OLIVER, FR. KLAUS SCHREITER AND FR. FRANZ PITZAL VIEWING THE FIRST TEMPORARY DORMITORY BEING BUILT

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS

Through the introduction of Br. Noel Oliver, SJ, we were helped by Fr. Franz Pitzal of Germany to set up our Learning Resource Centre. His contributions also allowed us to provide tables for each of our teachers, organize our records and files more securely, as well as other small yet significant improvements. The remainder of Fr. Pitzal's contribution also became the seed money to construct our first temporary dormitory for boys from far-flung villages.

In August 2015, together with Fr. Klaus Schreiter, Fr. Pitzal visited Br. Noel, and also us here in NOSSEF. After viewing NOSSEF firsthand, they gave additional funds that encouraged us to start construction of the second (and better) temporary dormitory for boys. Soon after, some girls from Mater Christi also personally raised money for this project, which was completed with timely contributions from the Catholic Regional College of Sydenham.



THE SECOND TEMPORARY DORMITORY FOR BOYS IS NOW COMPLETED

In June of this year, we started operations of the school canteen. Sr. Rita Hayes, SGS has been the prime mover of this project from its conception, construction and now, its operation. She worked so hard to raise funds. In particular, Loyola College Watsonia in Australia raised funds for the salary of the staff. Sansan Hakim, an Indonesian businesswoman who works in Brunei, has been helping us in buying food supplies.

On a sad note, we lost Miss Lucy Yoong, the Malaysian lay volunteer who organized, started up, and managed the canteen for its first three months of operations. She succumbed to cancer last October. Jesuit scholastic Michael Phung, SJ, is the new canteen manager.

This canteen is the fulfillment of Sr. Rita's dream of providing healthy food to students who walk long distances and study for eight hours at school. To keep the canteen in operation a bit longer, we sell food at a subsidized price. But for those students who cannot afford, we give free food, in return for doing simple household chores or collecting firewood.



TWO OF THE CANTEEN WORKERS PREPARING LUNCH FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

With all the helps we have been receiving, the teachers and the students are getting more motivated to do well in our daily school activities. With available funds, we were able to continue with our many extra-curricular activities such as in sports, academics, music, dance, camping, field trips, science demonstrations, and computer classes.

In the 2015 National Examinations, our graduates achieved a 100% passing rate. Furthermore, we were pleasantly surprised by the increased number of new student applications for 2016 to NOSSEF. In 2015, we had 67 new students, compared to 2014, where 74 new students entered. But in **2016**, we are now expecting **120** new students.



THE FULL-TIME TEACHERS AT THEIR REFLECTION WEEKEND

LOOKING FORWARD

Early in December, the full-time teachers of NOSSEF were given a reflection weekend. During that time, they reviewed NOSSEF's last two years of activities, with a view towards the future. One of the highlights was their awareness of how Ignatian Spirituality had greatly enriched the pedagogy employed in NOSSEF, and they wished to increase and to deepen this influence in the years to come.

Apart from this yearning of ours, we continue to dream for NOSSEF. We hope to intensify our efforts to do better in our classroom instruction. We would like to do more discussions and strategizing for our dream 2-story building with science laboratories, computer center, library and more classrooms. While waiting for potential donors, we already have to construct a 3 classroom temporary building, due to the increased student intake for 2016.

Much has been given to us. The Spirit of Christmas is truly in our hearts. God has been so good and kind to us, and His mercy is beyond measure. We pray that you too shall be blessed, now and always, because of your generosity in sharing your resources with us.

The Lord our Savior chose to be born in a manger, to show us how to fully trust in the providence of the Father.

We at NOSSEF know very well our many poverties and limitations, but 2015 has shown us once again that God remembers, He sustains, as long as we keep Him in our hearts and minds.

Thank you very much for all your letters and visits. Your contributions are very important, but more than just the financial aid you provided, your personal interest, enthusiasm and concern have been always very enriching and empowering for us here in the margins.

Once again, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Very truly yours,




Pe. Roberto M. Boholst, S.J.
School Director



THE NOSSEF SCHOOL COMMUNITY for
LUCY YOONG'S MEMORIAL SERVICE



SCHOOL LANDSCAPING WORKS BY
STUDENTS AFTER THEIR FINAL EXAMS