Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the District of Indochina (1896-2021)

The more than 150 years history of the La Salle Brothers in Vietnam, having gone through many ups and downs over the generations, shows us that La Salle Brothers have gradually served the education of Vietnam and Indochina. With the successes and sufferings encountered and with a spirit of faith, the Brothers have always listened to the call to dedicate themselves to the cause of educating young people and the poor.

Generation after generation, the Brothers have persisted in saying "yes" to God in all circumstances in all historical periods of Vietnam, which lasted for more than a century and a half.

On January 6, 1866, the first Brothers came to Vietnam and on January 9, 1866, they accepted to run **Adran's school** in Saigon. Nearly 20 years later, due to political conditions, the schools were closed. The Brothers were forced to leave Saigon. In January 1890, the Brothers returned and ran the **Taberd's school**. About six years later, on January 1, 1896, the Center of the Institute decided to establish the **District of Indochina**, separated from the **District of India**. La Salle schools were opened across the North, Central, and South of Vietnam and in Cambodia.

Thu Duc Novitiate's first novices group made their first vows on April 5, 1896. In October 1951, the first Vietnamese Brother was elected as Brother Visitor, and the District was renamed **Saigon District**.

In 1954, Vietnam was divided at the 17^{th} parallel. Therefore, the Brothers had to evacuate to the South, leaving eight schools in the North. In the South, with some schools established decades ago, after 1954, La Salle Brothers continued to open more La Salle schools. Up to 1975, in the South of Vietnam from Hue to Soc Trang, more than 40 schools and establishments of the La Salle Institute were established and operated.

With the loss of South Vietnam on April 30, 1975, under the new regime's policy

of nationalization of education, all La Salle schools were confiscated by the state. The District was renamed as the District of La Salle Vietnam. The Brothers during this painful time lived silently and prayed.

With the grace of God, the Brothers once again had a new life and started engaging in a totally different society. Vocational classes, charity classes for the poor and illiterate children were opened, and boarding houses were established. The "door" to society gradually opened and schools were gradually established. The Brothers entered a new opportunity to provide society and the Church, especially the young and the poor, an important and necessary educational service. It is to educate young men and women on humanity and faith.

The year 2021 is the 125th anniversary of the establishment of the District of Indochina. Chronicle pages help to look back on the past to give thanks to God, thanks to the missionary Brothers, thanks to late and senior Brothers, to help readers understand the Christian Brothers and their educational work for the young and poor in Vietnam, and finally to express gratitude to all those who have entered the Lasallian vocation journey, together write down pages of history titled La Salle Vietnam.

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Visitor of Vietnam District