

De La Salle
TODAY

A magazine for the Lasallian Community in the
United States and Toronto Region

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LASALLIAN ASSOCIATION
SIX YEARS AFTER SALT LAKE CITY

DeLaSalle TODAY

VOL. VII, NO. 2 SUMMER 2011

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Dear Lasallian Reader,

The growing need to spread our mission in today's world is largely met by the thousands of lay men and women who serve in the hundreds of Lasallian ministries all over the globe. Like the Brothers, they share the Lasallian charism and are part of the Lasallian family. All are invited to live a life of spirituality, community and service for the purpose of providing spiritual and human education to the young, especially those who are economically poor and disadvantaged.

Throughout the Institute, there is an active effort to strengthen the association of Brothers and Partners in order to ensure the continuation of the Lasallian Mission in the future. The recommendations of the 2006 International Assembly, which were endorsed by the 44th General Chapter, have laid the groundwork for establishing structures of association at all levels of the Institute. "We seek structures of animation and government where the mission is carried forth by all those associated for the mission, where the Lasallian spirituality is shared and enriched, and where the Brothers fulfill their proper role." (Circular 455, 3.2)

Six years after the Regional Assembly at Salt Lake City, we now have the Regional Council of Lasallian Association for Mission (RCLAM), making the USA-Toronto Region the first in the Institute to establish a structure of voice and vote between the local and international levels of the Institute. This issue of *De La Salle Today* celebrates this significant step in our history as we move towards establishing a stronger union between Brothers and Partners in living the Lasallian Mission. Let us continue in our journey of educating the poor "together and by association" for the greater glory of God.

All the best in the new school year!

Celine
Editor

About the cover art: Icon of De La Salle with Adrian Nyel, the first Lasallian associate. This is one of the three icons on the Bethlehem University triptych greeting card by Sr. Marie Paul, O.S.B. © Monastère des Bénédictines du Mont des Oliviers and Editions CHOISIR, Genève. See Page 24.

PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS



Professing their first vows are (l-r) Brothers Anthony Baginski, Ken Kalinowski, Anwar Martinez, and Michael Miller with their sponsors.

Four Brothers professed their first vows Thursday, August 4 at La Salle University in Philadelphia, PA during the District of Eastern North America Retreat. Brothers Anthony Baginski, Ken Kalinowski, Anwar Martinez, and Michael Miller each read their first vows and signed vow statements. They also received a medal in honor of the occasion. As tradition, each Brother in attendance embraced the four Brothers. Approximately 240 Brothers attended the ceremony, along with the families of Bro. Michael and Bro. Anthony.

The four Brothers are now preparing to enter new ministries. Bro. Michael will serve at The San Miguel School in Providence, RI; Bro. Anthony at Central Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, PA; and Brothers Anwar and Ken at La Salle Academy in New York City.

The Brothers began the Novitiate together in August 2010 in Napa, CA, along with Brother Lewis Harwood from Australia. During their year of study and prayer, they participated in classes, workshops, and retreats. They also worked with students and teachers once a week at Justin-Siena High School in Napa.

COLLECTING CHANGE TO SAVE LIVES

Meghan Gallagher attended the April 2010 Lasallian Convocation on the Rights of the Child at the United Nations as a junior at Justin-Siena High School in Napa, CA with four classmates. They returned with a passion to help students around the world.

“I really felt inspired to do something together with the other Lasallian schools after getting to know so many



Lasallian Student Leaders from Justin-Siena High School who helped to make the Change for Our World drive successful hold a mosquito net.

students from across the United States,” Meghan said. “I found that we each shared common ground in supporting our twin schools so it was only fitting to send the mosquito nets there.”

Meghan worked with students she met during the U.N. trip, who brought the malaria net plan to their schools. “It was really remarkable how the other Lasallian schools were so willing and enthusiastic to get involved and help our fellow Lasallian schools in need,” she said.

In all, eight schools signed on: Christian Brothers High School, Sacramento, CA; Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, San Francisco, CA; La Salle High School, Pasadena, CA; La Salle High School, Yakima, WA; De La Salle High School, Concord, CA; St. Michael’s High School, Santa Fe, NM; Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA; and San Miguel High School, Tucson, AZ. In lieu of monetary support, San Miguel students wrote prayers that were published weekly for their collaborative success and for those who struggle with malaria.

Andrew Hodges, campus ministry director at Justin-Siena, said the goal of the Change for Our World Drive was not only to collect money, but to educate students about a social justice issue and show them how they could help end the disease if they followed the mission of “Together and By Association.”

This fundraising program collected ‘spare change’ from students during Lent. The schools raised \$22,645, which will buy approximately 3,235 nets for students in five Lasallian schools in the Lwanga District of the Institute in Africa that are twinned with Lasallian schools in the U.S. and Toronto.

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REGIONAL NEWS

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LASALLIAN EDUCATION BRAND UNVEILED



The development of a brand for Lasallian ministries in the USA-Toronto Region has been completed. The leadership of the Christian Brothers Conference announced that “After testing numerous brand platforms and visual identities for the USAT Region with over 3,500 individuals and 45 schools and institutions across the country, a consensus was made and approved by the Visitors.”

The components of the new brand strategy include:

- The Brand: Lasallian Education
- Unifying Statement: Lasallian Education: Transforming Lives Since 1680
- Logo: Crossed L. This distinctive mark speaks directly to an education rooted in Catholic faith and values. (The Lasallian Education logo is a supporting identity. It is not intended to replace existing school or ministry identity systems.)
- Our Promise: The Lasallian educational mission provides transformative experiences that are innovative and holistic.

A detailed guide has been prepared for implementation of the brand platform and has been distributed to all ministries/schools throughout the Region. It includes the visual identity, a narrative, promise, reasons to believe and proof points of a Lasallian Education experience.

In the cover letter to the Brand Guide, Brother Robert Schieler, General Councilor, and Brother Dennis Malloy, RCCB President, summed up the benefits of the project:

“More than marketing and recruiting the brand initiative has also been an education and formation experience. Never in the Region’s past have so many constituents been involved in a two-year national conversation about the fundamentals of our Lasallian identity... An additional benefit of this project is the Lasallian network of elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, San Miguel schools and child-care agencies has been strengthened. Many participants have

grown in their knowledge and appreciation for our vast network not only in the United States and Canada but around the globe. This in turn has led to increased collaboration and cooperation among the diverse ministries.”

The Brand Guide is available on the Regional website at http://www.lasallian.info/doc/Lasallian%20Brand%20Guide%2008_5_2011_Final.pdf. Implementation sessions to ensure successful adoption of the Lasallian Education brand strategy will begin in the fall.

THE MESSAGE OF WORLD YOUTH DAY



At WYD in Madrid, (l-r) Dr. Maggie McCarty, RCLAM Executive Director, Bro. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría and Bro. George Van Grieken, Regional Vocation Ministry Director.

“Share with others the joy of your faith.” This was the message of Pope Benedict XVI at the 2011 World Youth Day in Madrid, Spain. Lasallians from the USA-Toronto Region joined the thousands of young people who attended this bi-annual rendezvous with the Pope last August.

Highlights included the opening Mass, catechesis sessions, and Mass with Pope Benedict XVI.

Superior General Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría addressed an international gathering of a thousand young Lasallians during the WYD event.

Dr. Maggie McCarty, RCLAM Executive Director, facilitated two English-speaking catechetical sites on behalf of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. “World Youth Day has become a significant marker of Catholic identity in the lives of many young Catholics,” said Dr. McCarty. “The Young Lasallians gathering in the midst of such a major event created a solid identity for those students that they are part of something bigger—the universal Lasallian community.”

In his closing address, the Pope invited all those present “to give a bold witness of Christian living” to their friends when they return home. “In this way you will give birth to new Christians and will help the Church grow strongly in the hearts of many others.”



LVs RIDE COMPLETES CROSS-COUNTRY TREK

LVs Ride cyclists dipped their bike tires in the Pacific Ocean June 16 in Astoria, Oregon, kicking off a 3,600-mile cross-country ride to support the work of Lasallian Volunteers, raise awareness about poverty, and encourage service. Riders lived their mission of service by participating in volunteer work on stops along the way. A total of approximately 50 riders joined at various points including national, regional, and day riders. Twenty-one riders splashed into the Atlantic Ocean in Long Branch, NJ August 13 to end the ride. LVs Ride broke its \$100,000 fundraising goal with approximately \$106,000 so far. Read more at www.lvside.com. Donations are being accepted through October 1.

BRO. FREDERICK MUELLER HONORED WITH REGIONAL AWARD

Brother Frederick Mueller, FSC, EdD of the District of Eastern North America is this year's recipient of the Brother John Johnston, FSC Award. The award honors Bro. Frederick for actively advancing the Lasallian Mission on the international or regional levels for many years. He is currently the Coordinator of Faculty/Staff Professional Development and Lasallian Formation at La Salle Academy, Providence, Rhode Island. Brother Frederick has taught at the elementary, secondary and tertiary levels. He has held the following administrative positions: Principal (La Salle Academy, Providence, RI, and La Salle Center, Oakdale, NY), Assistant Superintendent of Schools (Diocese of Providence, RI), Director of Education and Auxiliary Visitor (Long Island-New England District), and Institute Secretary for the Lasallian Education Mission (MEL, Rome).

He will be presented with the award at the Distinguished Lasallian Educator Awards Banquet on November 19, 2011, during the Huether Conference in Washington, DC.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

- Kimberly Williams, Associate Director, Lasallian Volunteers, Washington, DC, effective June 15, 2011
- Curt Feilmeier, Principal, Bishop Kelley High School, Tulsa, OK, effective July 1, 2011
- Jeffery D. Hazel, Principal, St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute, Buffalo, NY, effective July 1, 2011
- Tim Joy, Principal, De La Salle North Catholic High School, Portland, OR, effective July 1, 2011
- Ted Kanelopoulos, Interim Principal, La Salle High School of Yakima, Union Gap, WA, effective July 1, 2011
- Dr. Margaret Wilson McCarty, D.Min., Executive Director, Regional Council of Lasallian Association for Mission, Washington, DC, effective July 1, 2011
- John O'Connor, Principal, Archbishop O'Hara High School, Kansas City, MO, effective July 1, 2011
- Susan Smith, Principal, De Marillac Academy, San Francisco, CA, effective July 10, 2011
- Roonie Leittem-Murrell, Principal, De La Salle Blackfeet School, Browning, MT, effective August 1, 2011
- William Hebert, AFSC, President, De La Salle High School, New Orleans, LA, effective August 5, 2011

The Centrality of the Vow of Association: Yesterday and Today

BY BROTHER ROBERT SCHIELER, FSC, GENERAL COUNCILOR

INTRODUCTION

It may come as a surprise to many that at one time in the recent past the Institute contemplated the suppression of the Brothers' specific vows: association for the educational service of the poor and stability in the Institute. Ironically, the call for the suppression of these two vows came at the Institute's renewal Chapter, the 39th General Chapter in 1966-67, following the Second Vatican Council.

At issue were the meanings behind the specific vows and the practicality of teaching the poor gratuitously. Several factors influenced the delegates' call for their suppression. I will refer to three. During the previous two centuries, nations, particularly in the West, began assuming responsibility for education, including free education in publicly funded schools. This had two consequences for the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools: the poor had a place to go for a free education and as the

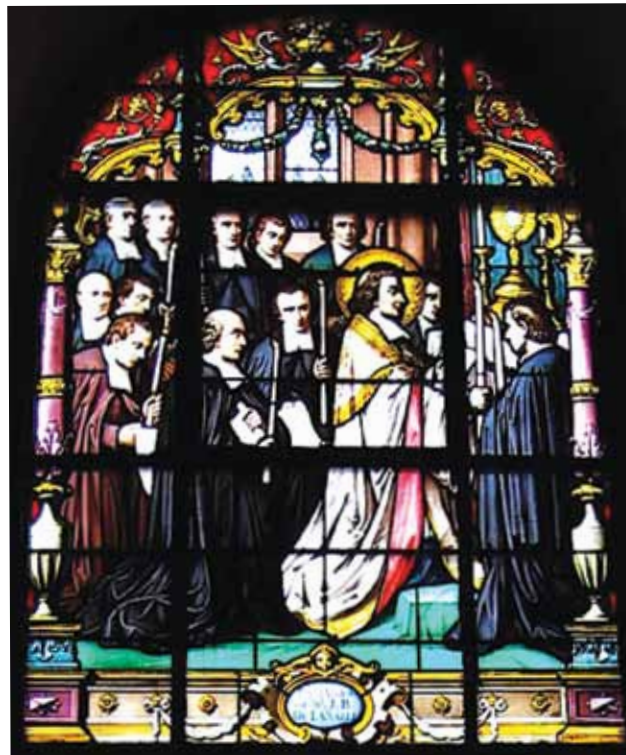
Institute expanded around the globe it became increasingly difficult to maintain uniformity in Institute practices where educational policies, including funding, differed from one country to the next.

Agathon, distinguished between "a vow of teaching, whereby one promises to do one's best to teach the pupils well... and a vow of gratuity by which the brothers must teach all their pupils gratuitously."¹

In the 19th century, Superior General Brother Philip wrote a Circular and "distinguished three vows: a vow of teaching, a vow of teaching gratuitously, and a vow of teaching catechism."² In all his explanation, there is no specific reference to the poor.

With the onset of the 20th century, the schools of the Brothers found it increasingly necessary to charge some school fees. This necessitated constant requests to the Superior General for dispensations from the rule of gratuity. Then in 1917, the revised code of Canon Law gave canonical status to congregations with simple vows similar to the old monastic orders. This

would influence the next two generations of Brothers on the nature of religious life as being more defined by the three evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience rather than the totality of religious consecration and an institute's own specific character.



Stained glass of the first public vow in 1694 with De La Salle and 10 other Brothers, from the former Brothers' novitiate in Barrytown.

The meaning and interpretation of the vow to teach the poor gratuitously was also problematic. At times the vow formula simply said, "to teach the poor," or "to teach gratuitously" or "to teach the poor gratuitously." In the late 18th century, the Superior General, Brother

Address at the DENA Brothers Retreat on August 2, 2011, La Salle University, Philadelphia.

While these specific vows were not highlighted during the initial formation period for a majority of the Brothers in the Region, today, I think most would agree it was the spirit of the vow of association that attracted them to the Brothers' vocation. As students they saw and interacted with the Brothers who taught them. They encountered a group of men who "together and by association" took an interest in them, were available to them and inspired them by their camaraderie and a commitment to a life so different from the many other adults in their lives.

39TH GENERAL CHAPTER

With the vantage of hindsight we can be thankful that calls for the suppression of the specific vows at the 39th General Chapter were not heeded. Rather, wiser voices suggested they be retained and renamed for the time being in the hope that greater understanding and acceptance would come at a later time. Thus, the Chapter keeps the Brothers' specific vows renaming "teaching the poor gratuitously" to "service of the poor through education" (81 votes in favor, 22 against) and "stability in the Institute" to "fidelity to the Institute" (74 votes in favor, 32 against).³ Why did the Chapter decide to retain our specific vows? It did so because:

- The Second Vatican Council and the Chapter, following its lead, laid primary stress on the value of religious consecration rather than on vows. The essential thing about the religious life is the consecration of the whole person to God.
- The Council calls upon religious congregations to get back to

their own specific character, and to exploit it more fully.

- The renewal of the specific vows reminds us of and emphasizes the community dimension of our religious consecration.⁴

In retaining and renaming the Brothers' specific vows at this time, it should be noted that the emphasis was on service to the poor, more so than the sense of association. In fact, the word "association" does not appear in the new terminology. Still the decisions of the renewal chapter puts the Institute on a path toward reuniting the vow of association with the educational service of the poor as envisioned by De La Salle in the beginning.

THE VOW AT ITS ORIGIN

Lasallian scholars who have studied the history behind the vow of association offer several convictions they believe motivated De La Salle to take the steps he did. We will refer to three: it was a faith response to a crisis, it was an act of creative hope, and it was a plan of action. As Circular 461 outlines, the group of teachers De La Salle gathered after his encounter with Adrian Nyel in 1679 begin to form themselves into a community throughout the 1680s. The decade ends with crises but also crossroads of opportunities. Elements of the crises include the departure of a number of the first Brothers, the illness and death of others, lawsuits from the Writing Masters and struggles and difficulties with both civil and ecclesial authorities. The Heroic Vow of 1691 is De La Salle's response to this dark night as he "makes his act of faith yet one more time to surmount the crisis and move on. With Nicolas Vuyart and Gabriel

Drolin, he consecrates himself unconditionally to the work, even though they might have to beg alms and live on bread alone in order to achieve it."⁵

In his analysis of the vow formula, Bro. Michel Sauvage stated that De La Salle firmly believed God committed him to the establishment of the society; it was God's work and he could not give up on it. "The living God who had been there at the start, who was ever present in De La Salle's dark night and spoke to the heart would always be at hand: he would continue to call De La Salle to creative work and would give the necessary strength and light to answer positively."⁶

Sauvage sees the vow as an act of re-creative hope. "It was a hope that rested on human signs. Yes, Brothers had left but some remained...How could De La Salle abandon them when they had dedicated themselves to him? How could he abandon the young people, the poor?"⁷

The vow was a re-launching of hope, not to simply ratify what the fledgling society had already accomplished, but a plan to go forward. "In the midst of his trials, De La Salle's visionary dream converted the future into a project."⁸ Blain reminds us that the Heroic Vow is part of an overall plan that included this association with two Brothers, to find a decent house near Paris for the tired and sick Brothers as well as a place of gathering for holidays and retreats, and to set up a novitiate.

In a similar vein, Bro. Antonio Botana says the Heroic Vow projects what is already being lived into the future. It is a prophetic gesture: they state that God is present

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in what they are endeavoring to do, and that is why, in spite of its apparent fragility, they can commit their life in giving continuity to the experience. It is a future not yet built. The Heroic Vow expresses the concrete willingness to invent the good, to answer the needs, to produce efficiency...and it is all discerned in community.⁹

In summary, the vow of association at its origins recounts a gospel journey. It is a faith response to a crisis, an act of re-creative hope and a plan of action. Above all, association is not an end in itself but a means to an end—the Christian education of the artisan and the poor who are far from salvation.

THE VOW'S RECENT EVOLUTION

In these pages we can only highlight the Institute's collective gospel journey, since the decision of the 39th General Chapter to retain our specific vows that has resulted in the 2007 General Chapter's decision to give central place to the vow of association in the life of the Brother. Similar to the experience of many religious congregations following the Second Vatican Council, the Institute experienced a mass exodus of Brothers. With so many Brothers seeking dispensations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Superior General, his General Council and the Visitors at the 1971 Intercapitular meeting recommended the creation of a

commission to study commitment to religious life and the meaning of the vows.

The most radical recommendation this commission would make for consideration by the 40th General Chapter in 1976 was that the vow of association be the only vow by the Brothers. According to Bro. Luke Salm, this was not meant to be a rejection of the traditional vows. Rather, members of the commission believed the single vow of association "would be to translate the

and the entire report of the commission, according to Bro. Luke, never entered into the substantive deliberations of the Chapter and "so the attempt to give first place to the vow of association, and perhaps the only vow, died aborning at the 40th General Chapter."¹¹ Still, the notion of the value of this vow to the identity of the Brother is growing.

Following the 1976 General Chapter, the Superior General and his council published Circular 406, "Our Consecrated Life in 1977."

This circular noted that, while not a vow any longer, a renewed interest in "association" was appearing among the Brothers during the previous decade.

This interest is motivated by both spiritual and apostolic considerations. Because we live in a period of rapid evolution, we are obliged to create continuously. For this reason, it is necessary to grasp again, in some way, the dynamism of the time of our foundation. Furthermore, some Brothers see in the notion of "association" a means to help us live in unity and peace, and of grounding our apostolic community life in profound harmony and love of God.¹²

For the Brothers in the United States and the English speaking world, the renewed and on-going interest can be attributed to the increasing availability of the writings of De La Salle, thanks to the Region's Lasallian Publication Series begun in the 1980s, and Regional formation programs such as the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies and the Lasallian Leadership Institute.

Twenty years after the decision to retain our specific vows, the 1986



Stained glass of De La Salle teaching, from the former Brothers' novitiate in Barrytown.

dynamism implicit in the lifetime goals of the Brother. It would give a more specific direction to the values traditionally associated with the canonical vows, i.e., the witness of a simple lifestyle, service of the poor, commitment to community life, and a personal and communal search to discover the plan of God."¹⁰ This recommendation

General Chapter and the revised 1987 Rule restore the original terminology of our specific vows and the spirit behind them. In the words of Superior General Bro. Álvaro, “what the Founder had united at the very beginning would once again be united: *association for the educational service of the poor*.”¹³ Thirteen years later “Associated for the Educational Service of the Poor” became the theme at the 43rd General Chapter in 2000.

Finally, Bro. John Johnston’s intervention at the 44th General Chapter in 2007 restored the vow of association at the center of our consecration. He believes, the opening paragraph of our vow formula expresses the act of our total consecration to the Blessed Trinity. The paragraphs that follow make the meaning of our total consecration more explicit. In particular, the second paragraph states the purpose: to unite ourselves (association) and remain in society (stability) so as to give a Christian education to the artisans and the poor gratuitously. Why? For the mission that has been entrusted to us.¹⁴

STABILITY AND ASSOCIATION

The Brothers’ vow of association is linked to the vow of stability. The 39th General Chapter kept the vow of stability, responding to those who sought to suppress it, saying:

This vow appears useless only because it has been emptied of its true and very rich spiritual meaning; it has been understood as a static sort of fidelity bound up with a fixed period of time, one or three years for example. But this vow can be understood as having a dynamic value, as an act of confidence in God, in the Institute, and in the Brothers; as something that will stir up

initiative, promote the gift of self, and be a support in times of trial.¹⁵

In other words, we are associated together for mission and we are faithful to one another for this mission. We consider fidelity to our vocation as a response to God’s fidelity to us. We live this fidelity as an ongoing process of conversion. Our Rule tells us we are ready to respond to the

abandon, just as a father will not abandon his own.” We are “faithful to persons, in particular, to the young who are poor and for whom we came into existence. It is for them that we begin anew, recover strength, look ahead, and promote new projects.”¹⁶

REFLECTION

What is the Institute recovering by giving first place to the vow of association in the life of the Brothers today? Certainly giving priority to our educational service of the poor that is so fundamental to the mission of our Institute. This was the position of the delegates to the 39th General Chapter when the vow was renewed and renamed. That position was further emphasized at the 43rd General Chapter in 2000, where association for the educational service of the poor was identified as the Lasallian response to the challenges of the 21st century. Over the past half century the Institute, Region and Districts have responded to this call to service of the poor. “We are witnessing an impressive number of new projects, activities, and even schools and centers [in service to the poor]. These initiatives are not ‘on the margin’ as they perhaps would have been a few years ago. They are instead in the ‘mainstream’ of District apostolic works.”¹⁷ In addition to acknowledging that we associate not as an end in itself but for the mission, there are at least four key elements I see in the centrality of this vow for the Brothers.

*Most Holy Trinity,
Father, Son and Holy
Spirit, prostrate with
the most profound
respect before your
infinite and adorable
majesty, I consecrate
myself entirely to you
to procure your glory
as far as I shall be able
and as you will require
of me.*

FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE
VOW FORMULA

successive calls of God in the various stages of our lives.

Both Superior Generals Bro. Jose Pablo and Bro. Álvaro encourage us to understand the vow of stability in relationship to persons and not abstract principles. It is “to living beings whom we love with a heart of flesh and whom we will not

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VOW OF ASSOCIATION

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La Salle's Gospel Journey. Lasallian research of the past half century has enriched our knowledge of De La Salle's personal itinerary. As Circular 412 (The Education of the Poor and Social Justice) reminds us, "Little by little John Baptist de La Salle discovered poverty, be it through the school masters, be it by direct contact with the youth in whom he interested himself more and more while founding the schools. The consistent element present in this spiritual progression is the way in which John Baptist established his relations with God. This was not with a God who revealed his plan to him from the beginnings of the enterprise, but a God who made the journey with the founder, as Christ had accompanied his disciples on the road to Emmaus, a God who *gently and in an imperceptible manner created the new identity of his servant.*"¹⁸

A good approach to a better understanding and deepening of the vow of association is to welcome it as an invitation to emulate De La Salle's own gospel journey. The vow evolved from his lived experience.

Our Own Gospel Journey. How has God been acting in my life? How has each successive assignment been a response to God's call in my life? As Brothers, how do we read the events of our lives as gospel journeys as De La Salle did? Has each assignment led me closer to God and living my consecration more fully as a Brother of the Christian Schools? Have these assignments helped me integrate the constitutive elements of our vocation and identity—consecration,

mission and community—in my day-to-day living? Ultimately, this is the path laid before us in our Rule. Certainly a point of the recovery of our vow of association is to bring us back to the fundamental reason for entering Religious Life, to follow Jesus. Article 6 of our Rule states: "To acquire and live by the spirit of their Institute, the Brothers find endless sustenance in studying, meditating and sharing among themselves the word of God. They have a profound respect for Holy Scripture, especially the Gospel, their first and principal Rule." If we wish to imitate John Baptist de La Salle we do so not by repeating his words and actions but by going to the Gospel as he did. Fidelity to De La Salle is fidelity to the Gospel.

Regarding this gospel journey, Bro. Álvaro at the conclusion of the 2004 Interchapter meeting, commenting on the richness of Lasallian research offered this challenging remark:

In the last years, we have made an extraordinary effort to return to our founding origins. However, I am not sure that we have made the same effort to return to the Gospel, to a Gospel without glosses as Saint Francis liked to say.¹⁹

Association and Community.

Our consecration to secure the glory of God is more than an individual commitment. The vow of association has a social and relational dimension. Bro. Álvaro reminds us our consecration and mission revolve around our association and that our community should be for us the primary place where association is experienced. Botana writes: "the gesture of consecration binds the person to the community, the community to the beneficiaries of the mission, and all of these to God."²⁰ Looking back on our three

original vows—association, stability and obedience—each, he says, reinforces an aspect of communion for mission:

- It names with whom one is associating and why we are associating (education of the poor).
- It promises faithfulness.
- It promises group discernment.

Of course this communal nature of our vow is most beautifully expressed by De La Salle in *Meditation 39.3*:

Since God has given you the grace of calling you to live in community, there is nothing that you should more earnestly ask of him than this union of mind and heart with your Brothers. Only by means of this union will you acquire that peace which ought to be all the joy of your life. Entreat the God of hearts to keep your heart and those of your Brothers one in the heart of Jesus.²¹

As Bro. Miguel Campos once said in reference to this meditation, "it is from the depths of each one of us, God is speaking... we discern God's voice together, this is our association."

Lasallian Association. Circular 461 reminds us that "Association has existed since the origins of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, but has developed in an altogether unprecedented way during the past 40 years." The circular itself is a clear description and affirmation of the impact of that small seed planted in the 1690s, which has now sprouted a global Lasallian charism on behalf of the education needs of young people. The 1997 Institute document, "The Lasallian Mission of Human and Christian Education;" the Acts of the 43rd General Chapter; Institute Bulletin No. 250 (Associated for the Lasallian

Educational Mission); and the Report of the 2006 International Assembly are all excellent resources to appreciate how the Lasallian charism is being lived and the mission is being accomplished through the commitment of thousands of Lasallians around the world.

TOWARDS A FUTURE STILL BEING BUILT

In *Announcing the Gospel to the Poor*, Sauvage and Campos tell us the vows of association in 1691 and 1694 did “not mark an absolute beginning” but gave “expression to a reality of which they have already had long experience...” and pointed the first Brothers and the young Institute to a future still to be constructed.²²

As we have seen, it was a plan of action. What is my personal plan of action today, the plan of my community, our District, Region and Institute? Like De La Salle and the first Brothers, is the recovery of the vow of association and the growing Lasallian association not so much a new beginning as it is an expression of a reality all Lasallians have been living, or growing into these past several decades? We have two contrasting situations today: the diminishing number of Brothers and an expanding Lasallian Mission, thanks to the participation of Partners. Are these problematic or providential? I believe providential with several benefits.

A benefit of the diminishing numbers of Brothers is we live in smaller communities which challenge us to be more responsible for the life of the community and for one another. It was easy to get lost in the crowd when the size of the community was 20 or 30 Brothers. In a community

of 30, one might say, “It’s okay if I sleep in this morning and miss community prayer. I won’t be missed. There’ll be enough other guys there.” But in a community of three or four, you will be missed!

Speaking of this diminishment and linking it to association, Bro. Luke Salm wrote:

Perhaps the inevitable decline in numbers that lies ahead, together with the simplification of structures that this will require, can serve to heighten the experience of personal interdependence. [And if that happens] It is not unthinkable then that, in due time and with sufficient preparation, some future chapter might propose and endorse the one vow of association as the best means to express the consecration of the Brothers.²³

A benefit from Bro. Álvaro’s perspective is seeing association as a time of grace and renewal. He says:

I know that within the Institute some Brothers have their doubts about this and they fear that our vocation might be watered down. Personally I think just the opposite. We know that the charism came from a movement and we have made it into an institution. This is an inevitable and necessary process. But it is important to revive the fire that gave us birth and to re-live the mystical moment of our origin. Are we not living in a time of new charismatic freshness with new blood and a new reading that is being done by lay persons? Might not this new reading be an opportunity to renew our community life?²⁴

Is it possible to view fragility as a benefit? At the most recent Intercapitular meeting the General Council shared with the Visitors its priorities for the remaining years of our mandate. First among these is to respond to the most fragile areas of the Institute today, areas where the Institute may disappear in the next five to 10 years.

Of course, Bro. Álvaro reminded us that the entire Institute is fragile. During his visit to the Midwest and San Francisco Districts last April, in response to a question about the current demographics and fragility of the Institute, he said: “Brothers, fragility is our patrimony.” The 1691 and 1694 vows of association were a response to the Institute’s original fragility. After all isn’t Christianity at its best when we are at our most vulnerable and not when we are the Church triumphant? Doesn’t Saint Paul remind us that it is when we are at our weakest that we are most strong thanks to God’s grace?

Finally, I believe it is beneficial to see the giving of first place to the vow of association from the point of view of the last General Chapter’s two major priorities: the interior life and community life of the Brother. We can understand this if we see the faith context of De La Salle’s decisions in 1691 and 1694. The USAT Region’s *Called To Be Brothers* project is a response to this linkage of the vow of association to those two priorities so integral to the original vow pronounced by De La Salle and the first Brothers.

Reflecting on the beginnings of the Institute, Bro. Sauvage wrote:

De La Salle ponders the bitter failure of the departure of almost all of his first companions in the light of the Gospel of spiritual freedom. He understands that when it is a question of a vocation and an evangelical project, structures though essential, cannot make up for the lack of vocation or the absence of interior assent. Fortunately some other young men come forward, men whom De La Salle says are anxious ‘to know Jesus Christ crucified and to devote themselves to a ministry in favor of the poor.’ La Salle will henceforth dedicate

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VOW OF ASSOCIATION

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himself to changing men to interior men, men of the Spirit.²⁵

That is why the 44th General Chapter with its emphasis on interior prayer and community life is so important. Something the Institute's 1980 Symposium on Prayer was attempting to address as well; a Brother is more than a professional educator, he is a consecrated religious committing himself to the complete following of Jesus. The 44th General Chapter may not have been as glamorous as the renewal Chapter of 1966-67 with the inspiring *Declaration of the Brother in the Modern World*, but it recalls what the Declaration and all Institute documents have said since. Renewal and creative responses to new realities happen when it is lived and led by men of the Spirit who live and thrive in communities where their experience of God is shared.

CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion, the vow of association invites us:

- To reflect on our own personal gospel journeys and that of our District to discern how God is acting in our lives.
- To make our communities places where we cultivate, together and by association, our relationship with the God of Jesus (Circular 455, p. 12)
- To develop new projects or support projects already underway which meet the urgent educational needs of today.
- To dedicate ourselves to accompany our Partners and with them be authors of new expressions

of the Lasallian charism today, a charism until this time carried by celibate men but now a charism shared with laity, particularly women, and other religious.

- To serve as “spiritual guides” accompanying others in their search for their own identity within the Lasallian Mission.

The recovery of the vow of association and its centrality to the Brothers' life is a welcome reminder that our consecrated life is a special kind of brotherhood: “it requires us to be brothers to one another, brothers to the adults with whom we are associated, brothers to the young people confided to our care.”²⁶ Together and by association, we are called to procure God's glory by living totally consecrated “to the Father, who loves, chooses, and sends us; to the Son who asks us to be his loving presence in the world of youth; and to the Holy Spirit who enables us to touch the hearts of those he confides to our care.”²⁷

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RCLAM: A Structure for Sharing the Responsibility for Mission

BY CELINE A. QUINIO



RCLAM members: (l-r) front row—Dr. Carole Swain, Dr. Celestino Fernandez, Sr. Jeanne McGowan, SSJ, Bro. Robert Wickman (Chair), Bro. David Sinitiere, Charles “Skip” Gaus; back row—Mr. Gery Short (Vice Chair), Sr. Doris Gottemoeller, RSM, Bro. Kevin Convey, Dr. Mifrando Obach, Dr. William Hudson, Loras “Red” Sieve, AFSC, Bro. Frederick C. Mueller, Alan Weyland (Recording Secretary).

The 2005 Regional Assembly in Salt Lake City, Utah was a significant point in the USAT Region’s Lasallian Association journey. One hundred twelve Partners and Brothers gathered for six days to fulfill the 43rd General Chapter mandate:

“to convene groups of Brothers and Partners to reflect upon the wide array of issues related to the Lasallian Educational Mission, the current governance structures sustaining that Mission, and the manner by which individuals associate for the mission.”

The International Assembly that followed in 2006 proposed “that the Districts and Regions create an intermediate structure/council (Regional level) of voice and

vote between the local and international level. This new structure/council will work in collaboration with existing Regional structures.” The 44th General Chapter in 2007 approved the proposal of the International Assembly for a new governance structure for mission.

The Regional Task Force (RTF), which was an outcome of the 2005 Regional Assembly, proceeded to address the directives of the General Chapter on new structures for mission. After three years of exploring the complexities of association and conducting 15 listening sessions representing a cross section of Lasallians in the Region, the **Regional Council of Lasallian Association for Mission (RCLAM)**

was established. This governance structure makes the USAT Region the first to implement the actions put forth by the 44th General Chapter as proposed by the International Assembly in moving the Lasallian Mission forward.

THE PURPOSE OF RCLAM

RCLAM is a policy and governance body. It provides the structure through which Brothers and Partners share the responsibility for the Lasallian Mission of providing a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor. For this purpose, RCLAM serves the Districts in the USAT Region by developing policies and programs on formation for mission, supporting and expanding mission activities and ministries, and creating greater Partnerships within and outside the Lasallian world.

FUNCTIONS

RCLAM provides services and support for programs that are effectively and efficiently rendered at the Regional level, which include—

- Programs in support of leadership for mission and of formation for Lasallian ministry;

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RCLAM

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- Regional branding and marketing;
- Collaborative efforts to secure funding from foundations and other funding entities;
- Networking with leadership groups in Catholic education at all levels; and
- Advocacy and leadership on matters of importance to those engaged in Catholic, Lasallian education.

The creation of RCLAM brings structural changes at the Regional level, preparing Brothers and Partners for leadership positions that are crucial to continuing the viability of the Lasallian legacy in Catholic education and advancing the spirit of Association.

The Council serves as a platform for Regional and mission-related collaborative efforts among the Districts. It provides a forum for planning future Regional Assemblies on Mission and focuses continually on how best to encourage and support the initial and continuing Lasallian formation of Brothers and Partners engaged in ministry.

RCLAM will be especially attentive to the expectations and mandates articulated in the Acts of General Chapters, International and Regional Assemblies on Mission, and any other Acts centered on Mission put forth by the Regional Conference of the Christian Brothers (RCCB). The implementation of policies and programs arising from these Acts are a key focus for RCLAM.

Through the delegation of authority received from the Visitors, the

Regional Council represents the Visitors as a collective body and is empowered by them to engage in Regional mission issues and to provide services on their behalf. This allows RCLAM to promote solidarity among the Districts in advancing the mission which is shared across Districts and between Brothers and Partners.

MEMBERSHIP

The members of RCLAM reflect a diversity and balance within the Region, with respect to ethnicity, geographic area, expertise, ministerial experience, age, etc. The Council consists of 12-15 members, one-third of whom are Brothers and two-thirds are Partners. Presently, the Council has 14 members, with 4 Brothers and 10 Partners. This includes the inaugural Chair of the Council who was appointed by the RCCB.

Initial RCLAM members will include the following

- *District Members:* four members who are ex officio, voting representatives from each District to be named by the Visitor (e.g., District leader/administrator, Mission Council member, Director of Education, Director of Mission and Ministry).
- *Lasallian Community Members:* five members from the larger Lasallian community representing a type of organization (e.g., colleges/universities, secondary schools, San Miguel schools, child care agencies, Christian Brothers Services) and a ministry leadership position (e.g., president/CEO, provost, board chair, CFO, etc.).
- *At-Large Members:* four members with specialized expertise by position and/or resources (e.g.,

benefactors, leaders of professional/religious/educational organizations and networks, former board members, etc.).

Outside the four Districts members (ex officio, voting) positions named by the Visitors, the inaugural members of the Council will be appointed to serve four-year terms, renewable once and staggered at the start of the renewed term. The staggering of the initial second term will be as follows for the 10 non-ex officio positions: one year (two members); two years (two members); three years (three members); four years (three members), determined by lottery. Thereafter, appointed, non-ex officio members shall serve a term of four years. These appointed members are limited to two consecutive terms. Having served two consecutive terms, an appointed member may be reappointed after a one year absence from the Council. Uncompleted terms may be filled by the Chair following consultation with the Council and approval by the members (Visitors). A year is defined as July 1 through June 30 of the following calendar year. This does not include the initial start-up period for the Council from January 28-June 30, 2011.

RCLAM officers consist of the chair, vice chair, and recording secretary.

MEETINGS

The Council meets three times a year. Meetings this year are scheduled on July 24-25, 2011, Chicago, IL; November 20-21, 2011, Washington, DC; and February 29-March 1, 2012, San Antonio, TX.

For more information on RCLAM, please contact Dr. Maggie McCarty at mmccarty@cbconf.org. ■

REGIONAL COUNCIL OF LASALLIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION

ROSTER OF MEMBERS

BRO. KEVIN CONVEY, FSC
Midwest District Provincial Office
Former Director of Education and Mission

DR. CELESTINO FERNANDEZ
University of Arizona
Department of Sociology

MR. CHARLES "SKIP" GAUS, JR., AFSC
De La Salle in Towne, Philadelphia
Director

SR. DORIS GOTTEMOELLER, RSM
Catholic Health Partners
Sr. VP - Mission and Values Integration

DR. WILLIAM HUDSON
Totino-Grace High School, Minnesota
President

SR. JEANNE MCGOWAN, SSJ
La Salle Academy, Philadelphia
President

BRO. FREDERICK MUELLER, FSC
La Salle Academy, Providence
Coordinator for Faculty/Staff Professional
Development & Lasallian Formation

DR. MIFRANDO OBACH
College of Mount St. Joseph, Cincinnati
Associate Professor of Education

MR. GERY SHORT (Vice Chair)
District of San Francisco
Director, Office of Education

MR. LORAS "RED" SIEVE, AFSC
Midwest District
Consultant to the District Council
BRO. DAVID SINITIERE, FSC
New Orleans-Santa Fe District
Auxiliary Visitor/Director of Education

DR. CAROLE SWAIN
Saint Mary's College of California
VP for Mission and Faculty Development

MR. ALAN WEYLAND (Recording Secretary)
District of Eastern North America
Executive Director of Mission and Ministry

BRO. ROBERT WICKMAN, FSC (Chair)
Principal
De La Salle High School, Concord, CA

DR. MARGARET (MAGGIE) MCCARTY
Executive Director
RCLAM

Behind the Scene: The Regional Staff at the Christian Brothers Conference

BY ELIZABETH MOORS JODICE

Christian Brothers Conference (CBC) is undergoing changes to implement a new and innovative structure designed to advance the Lasallian Mission. The Regional Council of Lasallian Association for Mission (RCLAM) is the newest addition to the Conference, which includes the Office of the Brother General Councilor, the Office of Vocation Formation, and the Lasallian Volunteers.

On this spread, we are pleased to introduce the team responsible for providing the services needed to efficiently and effectively implement the work of RCLAM. For more about the structure and functions of RCLAM, please turn to Page 11.



Dr. Margaret (Maggie) Wilson McCarty, D.Min.

was appointed in June 2011 as RCLAM's founding Executive Director. She serves in a major leadership role in developing programs and services to advance and promote the Lasallian Mission in the USAT Region. She is a key representative

of the Lasallian network to a variety of church, educational, civic, and governmental entities, as well as business and philanthropic organizations nationally and internationally. Dr. McCarty has served the Church in several positions for the past 34 years. From 2007 until 2011, she served as President of Education for Parish Service, a Catholic theological certificate program offering courses in three Catholic Dioceses on the East Coast.



Alisa Macksey filled the newly created position of Regional Programs Director in June 2011. She oversees the mission and formation programs, including the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, the Lasallian Leadership Institute (LLI), the Lasallian Social Justice Institute

(LSJI), and the Huether Lasallian Conference. Alisa works with planning committees to organize the programs, along with facilitating them. As the Lasallian world adapts to changing times, Alisa evaluates existing programs to ensure that they meet the Region's needs with a focus on the future. She will also play an integral role in developing any new programs if the need arises. Alisa's Lasallian connections run deep. After graduating from Saint Mary's College in Moraga, CA in 2000, she served as a Lasallian Volunteer (LV) from 2000-2002. She became LV Associate Director in 2003 and was appointed Director in 2007, where she served until she assumed her current position.



Brother Gerard Frendreis, FSC, Chief Financial Officer, joined Christian Brothers Conference in 2005. He is responsible for human resources and financial management for the Regional Conference of Christian Brothers, the Lasallian Volunteers, and RCLAM. He is also the Corporate Secretary and

the Treasurer of Christian Brothers Major Superiors and a member of the Regional Finance Committee.

Bro. Gerry has been a Brother for 45 years, taught high school in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, taught at both La Salle University and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, served as the CFO of La Salle College High School in Wyndmoor, PA, and served as the Director of Socially Responsible Investing for Christian Brothers Investment Services.



Celine A. Quinio, Communications Director, has been with CBC since 2006. She leads the Regional communications efforts, oversees the website, creates program materials, is editor of *De La Salle Today*, manages the production and distribution of all books published by Christian Brothers Conference,

and serves as the Region's Twinning Coordinator. Before joining the Conference, Celine managed the publications of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy for five years. While in the Philippines, she was publisher and editor-in-chief of a value formation magazine for teens and was director of the publications and information department at the Central Bank of the Philippines.



Elizabeth Moors Jodice, Communications Specialist, joined the Conference in 2010. She is responsible for gathering and writing stories for the website, writing for *De La Salle Today*, maintaining the Region's Facebook presence through the page "Lasallian Link," and

working on special projects. Before moving to the Washington, D.C. area, Elizabeth worked as a television news reporter/anchor/producer since 2002 at television stations in Texas and Illinois. She is a 2002 graduate of La Salle University in Philadelphia, and is a new member of the University's Alumni Board of Directors.



Regan Quinn, Event Planner, joined the Conference in 2006. She coordinates the planning of events and formation programs sponsored by CBC, which includes working with planning committees to design the

content of conferences and identify conference speakers, the selection of venues, the negotiation of event contracts and providing support in the planning of Regional committee meetings. Regan is currently participating in LLI, Cohort V. Prior to joining the Conference staff, Regan spent over two decades in higher education as administrator, research and clinical audiologist, and development officer at Gallaudet University and The Catholic University of America. She was also a religion and English teacher.



Michele Beauboeuf, Event Planner, joined CBC in 2005. She provides planning and administrative support for events and formation programs sponsored by the Conference, including preparation and mailing of registration materials, collection of fees, logistical support

at meeting venues, ensuring the needs of participants' are met, and maintaining the participants' database. Michele participated in the 2011 LSJI in Memphis, TN. Before joining CBC, Michele worked as a parish secretary at St. Joseph Church in Largo, MD from 2001-2005.



Christy Carl, Administrative Assistant, joined the Conference in 2005. She is the voice you hear on the phone when you call the Conference office. Christy manages the front office, maintains the Regional database, fulfills book orders, and provides administrative support to various

groups as needed. Additionally, Christy collects and compiles Regional statistics annually on Lasallian ministries. Before joining the Conference, Christy held various general administrative positions and managed a day care center. She was also a dance instructor for many years.

Building Association from the Grassroots

BY CELINE A. QUINIO



RILAG Commissioning Ceremony in 2010.

Responding to the challenge of the 43rd General Chapter to encourage new forms of association and to provide Partners with Lasallian formation experiences and accompaniment, three grassroots groups have emerged in the East Coast since the Salt Lake City Regional Assembly in 2005.

RILAG

The Rhode Island Lasallian Association Group (RILAG) emerged out of a desire to “build strong connections and communities” and to “demonstrate the sense of Lasallian Mission, values, and worth.”

Back from the 2005 Regional Assembly, Brothers Frederick Mueller, Charles Kitson, William Mann, and Michael Reis of the Long Island-

New England District immediately brought together Rhode Island Brothers and Partners in spirituality, community and service through the creation of RILAG. A steering committee from the Lasallian ministries that participate in RILAG provides leadership for the group. Currently, the committee consists of Brother Kevin Junk, Nancy Benoit, Carol Peloquin, and Sarah Laitinen.

At the start of each school year, an invitation to the first meeting is sent to all Lasallian colleagues in Rhode Island. All are welcome and encouraged to attend any meeting throughout the year. The group gathers six times during the academic year at the various Lasallian ministries in Rhode Island. The meetings begin at at 6:30 p.m. and conclude by 8:30 p.m.

RILAG meetings focus on topics that are centered on the three Lasallian pillars: faith, service, and community. Members take turns in preparing the prayer service at these gatherings. A commissioning ceremony is held each year and members are invited to participate in a group affirmation of the RILAG Mission Statement. Opportunities for service are available to members, such as the Christmas caroling at the Jeanne Jugan Retirement Center, distributing Christmas gifts for local families in need, and painting at Tides Family Services. Social events are held to build community among the members.

“I appreciate the opportunities that RILAG offers me to deepen my Lasallian association and it is my hope that we continue to invite others so they may experience a piece of the Lasallian Mission through this association group,” said Sarah Laitinen.

PALM

At the close of the 2005 Regional Assembly, delegates from the Baltimore District consulted the Visitor, Brother Robert Schieler, for ways in which alumni of Lasallian formation programs (LLI, CIL, Buttimer, etc.) might stay connected and continue formation and networking in support of the ministries. Brother Robert offered the group the use of the

Spiritual Center in Manayunk for the first meeting in February 2006. Meetings were envisioned to have spiritual, social and educational (i.e., formation) components.

PALM stands for Philadelphia Area Lasallian Ministries. It includes Lasallians from La Salle University, St. Gabriel's System, St. Gabriel's Hall, De La Salle in Towne, De La Salle Vocational, Brother Rousseau Academy, St. Gabriel's System Reintegration and Administrative Offices, La Salle College High School, West Catholic High School, La Salle Academy, and formerly San Miguel Camden.

The original group consisted of Brother Dennis Malloy (then Executive Director of the St. Gabriel's System), Nick Coggins (La Salle College High School), Ray Ricci (La Salle University), Skip Gaus (De La Salle in Towne), Jim Logan (De La Salle Vocational), Immaculata DiBeneditto (St. Gabriel's System), Marianne Gauss (La Salle University), Mike Wisniewski (La Salle University), and Sister Jean McGowan (La Salle Academy).

PALM has a volunteer Steering Committee which consists of a representative from each participating ministry. Gatherings are organized by the committee and announced to all ministries through e-mail and other forms of communication. An extensive e-mail list of attendees at gatherings has been developed and is circulated at each gathering.

During the 2010-2011 year, PALM began to post events on the District of Eastern North America (DENA) website.

PALM is a grassroots group of Lasallian educators—Brothers and

lay Partners—who share a desire to deepen Lasallian Association in service of the shared educational mission. PALM offers varied opportunities for growth in faith, community, and Christian service.

PALM provides opportunities to share in prayer, liturgy, and collegiality that are particularly tied to Mission. “We work to build Association for Mission by staying informed and engaging in dialogue around the concerns of the Lasallian world,” said Kate Ward-Gaus. “We view PALM as a way to build Association for Mission (service in education to the young especially the poor) and a networking opportunity to share resources for Mission.”

To support its activities, PALM collaborates with other ministries and receives some assistance from the DENA office. Brothers' communities have provided space and meals, and attendees at gatherings make donations.

In the coming year, PALM plans to continue to gather at least four times. The schedule last year worked very well with a focus on prayer, sharing, dialogue, and continued formation opportunities such as reflecting on Institute Circular 461 and the opportunity to share in an evening of reflections with Brother Gerard Rummery. In the next five years, PALM will continue to assess the need in the Philadelphia area and in collaboration with DENA's attempt to be of service to local Lasallians.

Current Steering Committee members include: Ray Ricci, Mike Wisniewski, Kate Ward-Gaus, Skip Gaus, Pam Walker, Jim Logan, and Matt Joram.

LAMAS

The Lasallian Association of Metropolitan Area Schools (LAMAS) was established in New York at the encouragement of the DENA Association Committee, since Rhode Island had RILAG and Philadelphia has PALM.

Bill Gault of St. Peter's Boys High School and Cecilia Gottsegen of Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School, who both serve on the DENA Association Committee, initiated LAMAS with the help of other people who shared their interest. The group meets three times during the school year. Invitations to the meeting are sent to Lasallian schools and agencies in the New York metropolitan area. Lasallian ministries in the area take turns hosting meetings.

LAMAS provides a time and space for Lasallians to enjoy each other's company, reflect on the Lasallian heritage and Mission today, and reenergize people to go back to their ministries feeling supported.

“It is our hope that through word of mouth more Lasallians will want to come to a meeting and take some initiatives to set a vision that we can work toward,” Cecilia explained. ■

Information provided by Sarah Laitinen (RILAG), Kate Ward-Gaus (PALM) and Cecilia Gottsegen (LAMAS). Thank you.

Women in the Lasallian World

BY BROTHER JOHN M. CRAWFORD, FSC, PhD

For three hundred years the writings of John Baptist de La Salle have inspired his followers with his spiritual and practical guidance. Contemporary scholarship has made these writings even more accessible to Lasallians around the globe.

There is, however, a significant issue that anyone who engages the Lasallian texts must confront. *There are no women's voices in the original texts.* Just as contemporary feminist Biblical scholarship confronts the androcentric (that is, material that is written with an exclusive bias in favor of men) reality of sacred texts, anyone who seriously considers Lasallian texts must admit that these documents were written in an androcentric context. John Baptist de La Salle composed his writings for his all-male Brothers' community. These Brothers taught only male students. Lasallian scholar Yves Poutet goes so far as to say that De La Salle's "...pedagogy aimed at adapting his schools to masculine psychology."¹ Does the Lasallian charism have room for women as students, teachers or administrators?

Texts often move beyond their originally intended readers and take on meanings that their authors never

anticipated. The "sacred scriptures" of many traditions may have circulated first among a tiny group of believers, but over time these documents became meaningful texts for a wider audience. Although texts may have contained a particular meaning to the community of origin, their lasting qualities allow them to speak beyond their initial audience.

Those Scriptural dynamics are helpful when trying to understand

Lasallian texts. While Lasallian texts do not claim to be inspired like the Sacred Scripture, Lasallian writings, too, contain a multiplicity of meanings. What do these writings say to women when the voices of women are absent? My contention is that the best way to understand the role of women in the Lasallian world is to appreciate the major thematic inclusiveness of La Salle's vision, while acknowledging that his writings provide limited references to women.

John Baptist de La Salle's own life was influenced by significant women. He was nurtured in faith by his mother and was assisted in caring for his younger siblings by his maternal grandmother Perrette Lespagnol. He was instrumental in obtaining formal legal status for the Sisters of the Child Jesus, founded by his priestly mentor Canon Nicholas Roland in Reims, before he had any notions about the Brothers of the Christian Schools. His introduction to Adrian Nyel took place at the convent of those Sisters, a meeting that La Salle regarded as providential to his own vocation as founder of the Brothers' community.² Late in life, he turned to the mystic Sister Louise for spiritual guidance at Parmenie. These biographical insights indicate that La Salle was not misogynistic.

John Baptist de La Salle's era had clear rules for separating the sexes in schools. English historian Elizabeth



Nicole Moet de Brouillet (1633-1671). Of the landed gentry by birth, De La Salle's mother lost her claim to nobility by marrying Louis de La Salle, a bourgeois. Married at the age of 17, she bore 11 children during 20 years of married life. Nicole Moet de Brouillet was known for her deep and genuine piety, and one biographer of De La Salle attributes to her the deep sense of the presence of God that was to become such an important part of De La Salle's spiritual vision.

The author is an Assistant Professor of Religion at La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA. He has a doctorate in Religion and Education from Boston College.

Rapley puts it succinctly, "...both Church and Crown forbade the reception of girls in mixed classes." Perhaps some of La Salle's devotion to the establishment of the Brothers can be understood as his desire that poor boys in Reims accessed the same educational opportunities that the Sisters of the Child Jesus already provided for girls. Since the Brothers' schools were designed to serve a male-only population, in accordance with the restrictions of French law and Church practice in his time, La Salle devoted his energies to the development of this special enterprise. La Salle never envisioned that this community would educate women, nor would the Brothers share their ministry with female colleagues.

John Baptist de La Salle codified the "male-only" nature of his vision in several places. The Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools from 1718, among the last of the texts that La Salle would have edited, states:

They (the Brothers) will not allow either girls or women to enter (the school) for any reason whatever, unless it is to visit poor children and they are to be accompanied by the parish priest or some other priest responsible for the care of the poor in the city.⁴

Not only were unaccompanied girls and women unwelcome, and female pupils or women co-workers unanticipated, but also the attitude toward women that was expected on the Brothers (and manifested in Chapter 19 of the Rule of 1718) required this behavior:

[9] When speaking to persons of the other sex, they will always keep some steps away and never look them steadily in the face.

[10] They will never speak to them except in a very reserved manner and far from the least liberty or familiarity.

[11] The affability with which they are obliged to speak to the mothers of the pupils, in order not to repel them, ought not to prevent them from maintaining this reserve in their regard, and they will take care to complete their conversation with them in few words.⁵

While there may be genuine wisdom in keeping respectful professional boundaries, the Rule manifests this distancing from "the other sex" in a way that is consistent with the post-Tridentine Church. Extreme caution was de rigueur, since there was a sense that most mortal sins were sexual ones. La Salle's texts echo the widely held beliefs of his times. These restrictions in French law and Church practice from La Salle's day became calcified into educational practice that lasted nearly three hundred years. The Brothers were forbidden to teach girls until that particular restriction was explicitly lifted by the General Chapter of renewal in 1966-67.

In 2011, women are vitally present and essential to the ministry of Lasallian education. Not only are women engaged in teaching and



Guadalupe De La Salle Sisters in Mexico.

administrative roles in Lasallian schools and ministries worldwide, but also they are integral to Lasallian organizations such as Young Lasallians, the Signum Fidei Fraternity, and the Union of Catechists. There are two canonically established congregations of women religious in the Lasallian charism and tradition: the Mexico-based Institute of the Guadalupe De La Salle Sisters and the Viet Nam-founded Congregation of Lasallian Sisters, both of which have dedicated women in the ministry of education to youth in multiple countries in the world. Therefore, the question of how women relate



La Salle Sisters in Viet Nam.

Continued on Page 20

to Lasallian texts certainly begs to be answered. Women have not been shut out of Lasallian schools, but how are women to read themselves into the Lasallian texts? Are women expected to accept the limitations of the texts as an accident of history, easily forgiven and quickly overlooked? Rather than reject La Salle's texts outright as hopelessly out-of-touch with the contemporary needs of women in education, women must raise difficult questions about the texts may prove to address their concerns and opening the texts to creative interpretation. I cannot speak for women, but I hope to offer some insight that helps.

What distinguishes La Salle and still resonates today is his vision about deeply committed educators finding their vocations by meeting the needs of the students entrusted to their care, most especially the poorest, the least, and the most neglected. Thus, the concerns of women require that Lasallian texts come alive with new possibilities to inspire ministers to serve contemporary pupils. I am suggesting that a creative understanding of the core values expressed in Lasallian texts does address and resonate with women, because at the heart of the Lasallian charism stands a powerful witness to equality, to relationship, and to shared siblinghood before God.

The Lasallian charism is a particular way of living the Christian life of service. Through Baptism, all Christians embrace a universal call to serve. Baptism knits all believers into a common family of brothers and sisters, united as the Body of Christ, sharing the gift of dignity in

the community of God. Christian disciples will serve as God's children—brothers and sisters united in humble service. Christians understand that their effectiveness comes by attributing all gifts to God and recognizing our shared sibling-status. For those called to teach, we are to be brothers and sisters to our younger siblings, if we are to imitate Jesus' praxis.

This connection was not lost in John Baptist de La Salle and his followers. The group chose as its name "Brothers of the Christian Schools," and called each other "Brother." La Salle indicated that the shared "brotherhood" of the members of the group grounds their ministry. Teachers, as more experienced pilgrims along life's paths, act as elder brothers and sisters to their students. Sibling-minded teachers extend themselves to their colleagues as mentors, offering sympathetic ears, working as collaborators in ministry, and demonstrating genuine concern for one another as well as for the students.

The Lasallian charism invites teachers to meet young people as their elder brothers and sisters, lightening their burdens through sharing the Gospel's hopeful message, inspiring them to work to make the reality of God's Reign alive in their world, and by sharing practical elements of learning that will encourage and prepare them to serve others in their futures. The purpose of this ministry is not to aggrandize the teacher, but to invite the learners to understand themselves as the next generation of brothers and sisters to those who will follow after them. To be brother or sister to the young is to

invite them to Christian unity and community.

La Salle recognized the radical nature of brotherhood. In one of the earliest of his texts, the *Memorandum on the Habit*, he identified the meaning of brotherhood quite simply:

The Community is commonly called the Community of the Christian Schools and at present rests upon—indeed, is rooted in—Providence alone. Those who live in it follow a Rule and are dependent for everything, having no personal possessions, and treat one another as equals.⁶

La Salle identifies the Brothers' equality as a radical sign of their shared siblinghood for ministry.⁷ La Salle, having learned from his own experience of caring for his siblings after the death of their parents, recognized the power of brotherhood/sisterhood as a sign of our common heritage before God.

Serving others as their "elder siblings" becomes one of the most fundamental characteristics of Lasallians. The goal of Lasallian education, therefore, is to encourage young people to recognize their goodness before God as fellow siblings of Jesus Christ. This extraordinary human dignity, forged especially in Baptism, becomes another way of proclaiming that we are all brothers and sisters. Lasallians, who attempt to see everything with the eyes of faith, with God in view, and attributing everything to God, believe that our radical equality as God's children is the noblest title which we humans may claim. As brothers and sisters to the young and to one another, we must give particular attention to those who stand in need of the greatest assistance. Lasallians must embody the radical equality that we all share



Lasallian Volunteer Dori Smith with her class at The San Miguel School in Providence, RI.

before God for others, then we must understand our ministry as one in which our common siblinghood is foundational. La Salle assured continuity for his schools by bringing together like-minded “brothers” to share a community life. As men vowed to serve the ministry of education, we Brothers of the Christian Schools have a special obligation to sustain and share our charism. The sibling-model of service is a significant part of the Lasallian legacy. For that legacy to thrive today and into the future, we Brothers and our brothers and sisters united in educational service to younger siblings must find creative ways of continuing to relate with one another. While Lasallian texts are time-bound and lack explicit connection to women, women are welcomed in a world that understands our siblinghood with Jesus as the core of our identity. ■

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Mercy at La Salle

BY SISTER MARY CATHERINE MINDLING, RSM



Catherine McAuley, founder of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy.

In 2006, an innovative principle based on the experience of a multi-modal learning environment began to take shape and influence educators in the United States. It soon gained momentum and is currently known as “The Flat Classroom Project.”¹ The underlying premise is that through collaboration, teachers will attempt to set up and adopt an approach to education that is holistic and inspires a quest for learning. It includes the belief that through the use of technology students around the world will be able to unite and enter into each other’s world where they will learn with and from one other. Teachers who build upon this

The author is head of the Language Department and teaches advanced Spanish at St. John’s College High School in Washington, DC.

model will be global educators and will incorporate methods and tools that will lower classroom walls and extend the room to include a world dimension. Students who learn in classrooms based on this model will merge together, appreciate what unites them, and learn to become more globally minded.²

At the same time as these dynamics are inviting teachers to weave together worlds of experience, other realities are changing the makeup of our student body. Our classrooms are places where diversity and multiculturalism thrive. These in turn are demanding that teachers grow in sensitivity to these demographic changes and craft creative lessons using innovative techniques.³

A similar trend is occurring in the Catholic Schools in the United States where members of teaching orders of men and women religious are working with laity and enhancing together the charisms that gave the original impetus for the founding of their orders and schools. These realities are bringing communities and classrooms together in numerous and creative ways.⁴

The experience of educating adolescents from a variety of backgrounds in a school founded by the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the tradition of Saint John Baptist de La Salle has provided me the opportunity to learn more about the Lasallian charism, while continuing



John Baptist de La Salle, founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

to live out fully the heritage that is mine as a Sister of Mercy. Teaching at St. John’s College High School in Washington, D.C. has been a smooth and seamless continuation and celebration of all that I have been called to live out as an educator in the tradition of our Mercy foundress, Catherine McAuley. There are a variety of areas where the two charisms blend and complement each other, while there are also dimensions that are uniquely Mercy and others that are uniquely Lasallian. This reflection takes a closer look at three characteristics found in the writings of each founder, identifying attitudes and values that were deemed essential for educators schooled in these longstanding traditions. It acknowledges the similarity and complementarity in the heart of what both founders wanted to inspire in teachers, and

celebrates the privilege I have had living my own commitment to education in the tradition of John Baptist de La Salle (1651-1719), while steeped in the spirit of Catherine McAuley (1778-1841).

The writings of both founders reflect three ideals: the inclusion of zeal and humility as key virtues needed by all educators; the insistence that every teacher approach the classroom experience only after having prayed for guidance and for a renewed awareness of God's abiding presence throughout the day; and the foresightedness to ensure that the schools would choose to stay up to date on pedagogy, while always providing teacher mentoring support.

Zeal and humility are two of the 12 virtues listed in *The Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher* by Superior General Brother Agathon. According to Brother Agathon, for De La Salle, zeal is a virtue that directs the teacher to "procure the glory of God with great affection." And he further cites De La Salle as saying, "a zealous teacher instructs the pupils by good example,...by solid teaching,...and by wise and moderate corrections."⁵ Zeal also holds a key place in the virtues emphasized by Catherine McAuley and was listed in her original rule.⁶ Mary Sullivan, RSM, in her discussion of Catherine's five principal virtues for teachers lists zeal in the first place.⁷ It seems that Catherine had such an immense love of children and was so intent on their development, that some who observed her interacting with them would even criticize her, suggesting she might have been spoiling them by demonstrating such a deep interest in their well being. Yet, in her observations about how Catherine influenced

the understanding of characteristics of Mercy Higher Education, Mary Sullivan commented that in cases like this Catherine was rather demonstrating "her zeal for their [her students'] development, her humility and purity of heart before them, and her absolute confidence in God's ultimate care for them."⁸

Zeal for the good of each and every student is even more important today when the society in which they live tends to promote giving a more surface-level response

Through collaboration, teachers will attempt to set up and adopt an approach to education that is holistic and inspires a quest for learning.

THE FLAT CLASSROOM PROJECT

to others. By presenting as indispensable a multiplicity of consumer products, a fast-paced consumer culture can tend to lure students away from reinforcing their inner strengths. Zeal for good is a natural instinct of the young and they need to see it modeled through the dedication of teachers who maintain a strong focus on excellence. De La Salle did not believe that lukewarm individuals could perform great works. For him, Christian zeal would show forth in "constructive creativity, positive energy, and empowerment of other people."⁹

Then, how important it is that, while being true to both traditions, teachers be zealous, attempting to hold tight to the inspiration so characteristic of the Mercy tradition to "show [our] instructions in [our] actions as much as [we] can" and "cheerfully submit to every labor and fatigue" attendant on the care and instruction of children, animated by a burning zeal for their advancement in every virtue.¹⁰

The second virtue, humility,¹¹ is clearly a pre-requisite for any successful teacher, and even more so for the teachers drawn to the instruction of adolescents who were considered less appealing, the poor and outcast of society, be they the young boys in France or the poor girls in Ireland. For De La Salle, a humble person is [one that is] approachable and obliging, especially with those who might be less interesting to deal with.¹² For Catherine McAuley, humility was utterly basic to what she envisioned the teacher would be and represent, taking inspiration from the life of Jesus. She wanted that virtue to stem from the experience of teachers being present to those whom they taught, walking the streets with them, learning of their poverty and their misfortune as well as their hopes and dreams. She expected that all the sisters would understand that the primary principle and method of education was "to be and do what we teach," acting and speaking mercifully, forgiving and asking forgiveness, serving and respecting those who are economically poor.¹³

John Baptist de La Salle and Catherine McAuley both emphasized the great need for every teacher to be prepared before

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entering the classroom, to take the time to ask for the grace to perform well, and to entrust to God's care the full instruction of the students. Both were aware that authenticity required a day-to-day renewal of each teacher's personal commitment to live by the gospel, learning about and imitating Jesus in every detail of dealing with the management of the classroom and the plan of instruction. In writing chapter two of the original rule, Catherine McAuley took great care to spell out the ways she would want the teaching sisters to grow in virtue. She trained the teachers to model their lives after those of Jesus and Mary. She stressed the idea that prayer should be a tone-setting, pre-classroom ritual. "The sisters are to pray to God and to Mary...before they enter school, not when they enter... that kind of prayer [...] done only privately, with clear anticipation of [acquiring] the attitude and practice to which the example of Jesus calls."¹⁴ Catherine encouraged the sisters to stop into the convent chapel for that pre-school visit, in order to pray that each might "become a good teacher, implore special blessing on each work of the day, and invoke the aid of the pupils' Guardian Angels."¹⁵ At St. John's, each school day as well as the entire school year is framed in an attitude of prayer, be it Mass together in the Chapel, the mantra of "live Jesus in our hearts forever," or the movements of prayer-filled sharing that rise spontaneously in response to the joys and sorrows of the community. Even though at times their motives were criticized and misunderstood, both founders from the very start

were forward thinking and circumspect when setting up their schools and implementing a variety of educational innovations. Each ensured that the schools they founded and where their members would teach should be certified institutions of learning in which trained teachers would provide instruction parallel to and perhaps even more faithful to the programs and ideals set out in the standards for the national schools. Both also were committed to the instruction and preparation of teachers. The origin of the innovative "training colleges" is attributed to De La Salle¹⁶ who established three such schools in France:¹⁷ 1687 in Rheims; 1683 in Paris; and 1709 at Saint Denis. More than a century later, Catherine McAuley established a training school for the women teachers who would instruct the poor children in Dublin, Ireland. The school was located at the place on Baggot Street where she had founded a poor school (non tuition) and a center for the works of Mercy.¹⁸

As she sought to provide a solid education for those who, because of economic or cultural deprivations, did not heretofore have that opportunity, Catherine McAuley made it her business to become acquainted with every recommendation for education that was introduced by the state in 1831. To ensure that her students performed well in national exams, Catherine visited the Kildare Street Establishment, "a system which inaugurated an excellent method,"¹⁹ and in 1839 placed her school at Baggot Street under the National Board of Education, an evaluative system initiated in 1831,²⁰ the year after Catherine founded her religious community. By having that connection,

Catherine knew the students would have a stronger motivation to succeed.²¹ It was also a requirement that the schools employ certified teachers and be attentive to the regulations required. These affiliations opened doors for having better prepared teachers and for tapping into national grants.²² Her plan for teacher training was certainly effective; for later, the School Inspector, James W. Kavanaugh said, "In Religious schools, Convents have a staff of efficient teachers such as we cannot command for our other schools."²³

In addition to educating teachers, Catherine also pioneered a program called the Monitorial System of Education. In 1840, in a letter to another sister, Mary Ann Doyle, superior of the Tullamore convent and overseer of its school, told her to "get a well qualified monitress from the Model School in Dublin until your sisters know the method."²⁴

To focus on the virtues, the prayer stance, and the insistence on quality education found in the admonitions of both Catherine McAuley and John Baptist de La Salle represents a unique and inspiring insight for me at this time when being a Catholic school educator is such a vital vocation.

The virtues of zeal and humility are counter-cultural and have both a key place in our lives as teachers and in the world our students will help to shape. The need for a prayer-filled focus, one that propels and energizes each and every day of teaching, is at the very heart of education in the Catholic, Mercy and Lasallian traditions. The retreat programs for students and faculty, the daily prayers that frame our schedules, the mantra prayer that weaves

prayer throughout the day, and the ever present faith community are inspiring. There is a direct carryover seen in the grace-inspired relationships among our former students, teachers, families, and current student body.

To teach at St. John's is to be involved in an ever present challenge to keep up with professional training, technological innovations, Partnering education, special needs programs for gifted and challenged students, and so much more. There are always opportunities for stretching and growth. There are always new teachers who need mentoring and who contribute to seasoned teachers a knowledge of the most recent educational studies and methodologies. Many of the veteran teachers continually seek to find new ways to enhance and expand the possibilities for our students.

Given the rapidly changing educational advances, these 25 years of teaching at St. John's College High School, and inspired by the ideals of De La Salle and McAuley, I believe that these values will find ever new expression in a world of increasingly wallless classrooms. I pray for the grace to live out fully the vocation to Mercy and to join efforts with lay and religious teachers alike at all levels so that our combined energy will inform, give shape to and offer to our students an increasingly more global vision of our world. ■

NOTES

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Organized according to the diversities of persons and vocations, but vivified by the same spirit of communion, the educational community of the Catholic school aims at creating increasingly deeper relationships of communion that are in themselves educational. Precisely in this, it «expresses the variety and beauty of the various vocations and the fruitfulness at educational and pedagogical levels that this contributes to the life of the school »[39], referring to Congregation for Catholic Education, Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools.

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17. www.catholicfounders.org/johnbaptist.htm.
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19. Denham OMAB, SM. *Mother McAuley and Education: Educational Influence of Mother Mary Catherine McAuley in the United States*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1928), p. 39.
20. Carroll, Mother Teresa Austin, RSM. *Life of Catherine McAuley* (St. Louis, MO: Vincentian Press, 1927), p. 3.
21. Catherine wrote: "We intend to have the new school [renovated and enlarged] connected with the Board of Education. The children will improve so much more expecting the examination." Sullivan, ed. *Correspondence of Catherine McAuley*, p. 99.
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24. Bolster, RSM, Angela. *Correspondence of Catherine McAuley*. Cork, Ireland, 1989), p. 148.

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This greeting card portrays three icons that have significant inspirational value to the Lasallian heritage. Sister Marie-Paul Farran, OSB was commissioned by Bethlehem University to design the icons. All proceeds from the sale of these cards will be used for the Lasallian formation of faculty, staff, and students.

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Thoughts on My Lasallian Journey

BY STEPHANY SCHLACHTER, EdD



Dr. Stephany Schlachter with (l-r) Brothers Larry Schatz, Frank Carr, Robert Schieler, Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría and James Gaffney.

My journey as a Lasallian began more than 20 years ago. It includes such experiences as facilitating the Lewis University Mission renewal project in the early 1990s, attending the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, serving as one of the first lay participants and chair of the Ministry Commission for the 1994 Midwest District Chapter, and participating in international Lasallian academic meetings, Regional and

Dr. Stephany Schlachter has served as Provost for Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois since 2001. In previous years she held the roles of Executive Assistant to the President for Mission Effectiveness, Vice President for Mission and Planning and Vice President for Mission and Development. She joined the University in 1979 and is a professor in nursing.

District assemblies, Huether gatherings, and District meetings.

This journey did not begin with an intention to become Lasallian. Rather, it happened over time, starting with a work-related task which required learning about the Brothers and their Founder, turning along the way to a deeply personal encounter with my own faith, and somehow evolving over time into an overarching context for all aspects of work and life. Throughout the years, it has been a privilege to share these experiences with other lay colleagues who together, with great energy, creativity, passion and conviction, have advanced our collective understanding of and dedication to the Lasallian family. Most of all, however, the guidance, instruction and

example of countless Brothers of the Christian Schools have brought us to this way of life. The Brothers have served as our teachers, our spiritual advisors and our friends. They prepared us for our journeys and keep us always gently steadfast toward Mission. We are associated for the Lasallian Mission with them and because of them.

Reflecting on my Lasallian journey, I offer some personal musings, insights and hopes for the future.

What shall the lay colleagues be called? If you have been a Lasallian long enough, you have been called a Partner, an associate, a colleague, a family member, and probably five more general titles. This was a very lively topic years ago, but today it's just not that important. Somewhere along the way we came to understand that it is not about us or what we are called, but rather, about the Mission. Given the international nature of the various apostolates, local norms will most often answer the question and for that I am grateful.

How shall lay colleagues' commitment be expressed? Circular 461, titled "Associated for the Lasallian Mission...an Act of Hope," beautifully describes Lasallian association: "It is a progressive conversion...it is a gift given, and not a status attained." (2.4) While there are various affinity groups for Lasallians and many opportunities to demonstrate one's

commitment, public recognition or a designated status need not be our most pressing issue. Expressions of commitment await us every day through our work in Mission.

Lasallian faith and spirituality. The impact of Lasallian association on one's own faith life is something that few of us initially anticipate. What starts out often as a work related experience deepens over time and eventually challenges many things in our lives. "Association stems from the awareness through faith of receiving a vocation that combines personal and social aspects of the individual's own life." (2.5) This journey of faith can have a significant impact on our lives and an influence on our families as well. It is both a treasure and a responsibility.

Association. Association is a lived experience toward Mission. "Association implies a process—a spiritual path that takes one where he or she might never have chosen to go....[it is a] graced journey." (2.6.1) I have yet to meet a committed lay colleague who understands how this journey happened. It is something none of us start out hoping for or planning. While the future is often unclear, what is certain is that there is much to do in the present.

A preference for the poor. Over time, the phrase "preference for the poor" takes on a deeper meaning. It is both simple and profound. It challenges us personally and in our daily work lives. A preference for the poor requires addressing complex issues that encompass every aspect of life whether social, cultural, political, or economic. It is not just a conviction but rather a call for innovation, creativity and unrelenting determination. It is a "lifetime project." (2.2.3)

The Brothers of the Christian Schools. Every lay colleague can readily recount the many Brothers who gave him or her mentoring and support along the way. These relationships are treasured. While the Brothers have provided important leadership in developing the policies, structures and evolution of the Lasallian family, equally important have been the kind words, socials, visits, and stories that have touched our hearts. The time spent with us is invaluable.

Responsibility. As much as we look to the Brothers for leadership and support, it is understood that lay colleagues have an increasing responsibility for the advancement of Mission. As stated in the 44th General Chapter, the Brothers are the heart, memory and guarantors of the charism, but "at the same time, we rejoice when other Lasallians take on this responsibility." (6.6) For many years, we have participated in and benefitted from the various formation programs and gatherings that have been specially planned for us. While many new structures are being developed for lay participation, it is clear that the need for greater levels of involvement of our time, talent and contributions will be needed in the future.

Educational excellence. It is my hope that in the coming years we are publicly and widely known for educational excellence. Effective pedagogy that addresses the contemporary needs of students is critical to our Mission. While this has always been important, the need has never been greater as students come to us with increasingly complex learning and social needs.

Lasallian women. We need to take a deeper look at the role of women, who now compose more than half

of the total personnel involved in the Mission. As stated, "Their presence, undoubtedly, will help to construct a more humane and community-centered society; help to re-examine ways of thinking; help to situate the entire Lasallian work a bit differently in history and help to organize social, political, economic and religious life in a way that can be more intuitive and relational." (1.14)

An international Lasallian family. Finally, we have hardly begun to tap the potential of our international Lasallian family. The ability to use technology and travel to collaborate and Partner with each other is full of promise. Our Mission is universal and it is time to address the global context of our work.

In closing, I can only recount these inspiring words from Superior General Brother Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría on Lasallian association: "The image of a God who welcomes, who walks alongside of us, who asks us to trust in the unimaginable, is the daily act of faith that has sustained the Brothers of the Christian Schools for more than three centuries. This image also symbolizes the vocational call of all Lasallians to confide in a God who calls 'in a quiet imperceptible way... so that one commitment lead[s]...into another without...having foreseen it in the beginning.' Let us rejoice in this pledge of hope...this bright future... this life-giving dream that invites us to remember always the holy presence of God and to touch the hearts of the young, especially the poor, together and by association." (7.3, 7.4) ■

Numerical references in parenthesis following text quotations are from Circular 461, "Associated for the Lasallian Mission...an Act of Hope" (Rome, Italy: Brothers of the Christian Schools, September 2010).

A Conversation with My CIL Experience

By CHARLES LEGENDRE, AFSC



Small CIL group (l-r): Brother John McGoldrick, Brother Brian Cunningham, Parn Viriyan, Greg Kopra, Vivienne Cheong, Charles Legendre, Brother Achille Buccella, Ninette Thwin, and Brother Amalan.

My experience at CIL (International Lasallian Center) and my new position as Director of Lasallian Mission for the New Orleans-Santa Fe District are inextricably entwined, though absolutely unplanned. Going through the pages of my CIL journal, let me share with you my reflections on a few of my entries.

From my CIL Journal: Day 1

We had a prayer service today in the main chapel. We all gathered around the sanctuary under the reliquary containing the bones of Saint La Salle. His skull and many other major bones are there.

Charles Legendre has been a teacher at Saint Paul's School in Covington, LA for the past 30 years. On August 1, 2011, he began his new ministry as Director of Lasallian Mission for the New Orleans-Santa Fe District.

I journeyed to CIL as a pilgrim. I looked upon the CIL program as an opportunity to earn my scallop shell at the end of the Lasallian Camino. The Motherhouse in Rome captivated me, and I was overcome with the sense that I had indeed reached the terminus of a great pilgrimage. Over the course of the weeks that we were there, the sacredness of the place took on a much more familiar feel as the 80 participants, staff, and presenters of the CIL program began to form community. The CIL community enriched the meaning of those relics just as my life in my Saint Paul's community and the greater Lasallian world has enlivened for me the charism of the Founder. I sensed sacredness of the holy relics and historic Lasallian treasures housed in Rome, but even more the sacredness of the Lasallian

community gathered to answer the call to love God in the service of young people.

From my CIL Journal: Day 11

The following passage by Karl Rahner was quoted in a presentation by Brother Miguel Campos:

The real future is the one that comes in its own time and often leaves our predictions and plans in shreds. What is perhaps most difficult as a way of living in preparation for the real future is of letting go of something beautiful which we ourselves have helped to create. It must be relinquished, not because it has lost its beauty, but because the time has passed. Some other new beauty is being made.

Despite the signs of hope, there is such sadness in all of this. When I sit in the chapel at Saint Paul's, I realize that I'm sitting among "something beautiful" which I will have to let go... So many questions and concerns. Will the Mission remain? What will the Institute look like? Association and stability are the two critical pieces in all of this. What forms of association do we promote? How do we develop structures/communities that will be stable? Nothing new here—these are the same questions that I had when I arrived at the Rome airport.

Throughout the CIL program, I encountered the "some other beauty being made" in the persons who have committed themselves to the Lasallian Mission, often in very trying difficult circumstances.

Brother Miguel spoke of the reality of the mentality “that started with the Brothers in the 1700s and has endured until now: the Brothers are the only visible community, and they are in charge.” He continued, “It’s no wonder that Brothers don’t understand the role of the lay person, and it’s also no wonder that many lay simply want the Brothers to stay in charge.” I see the life and vitality of the Lasallian Mission in the myriad forms of association, but I also recognize the difficulties and growing pains which lie ahead. In the midst of the operation of new structures, I sometimes yearn for the simpler days when the Brothers were in charge. But perhaps my memory resembles more fantasy than it reveals fact in that every iteration and generation of Lasallian association has carried its own messiness—attacks from without and dysfunction from within.

Considering “letting go of something beautiful” also struck a very personal note for me. For some time I had a hunch that God may have something ahead for me that would take me away from my comfortable little life in Covington that I had known for so long. I felt as though I were on a launching pad awaiting the countdown.

From my CIL Journal: Day 4

I believe that the most prevalent question being asked by participants here is this: Why are we here? For myself, I’m still trying to sort that out, but I’m beginning to have an idea... I have felt about myself, that I have been put into the positions to be a bridge builder— someone who greets us from one side to the other. I’m getting a handle on the side from which I’m building, but the other shore remains in the distance. I just hope that I can

(have), in fact, helped this Lasallian enterprise move toward transformation in a way that honors our tradition and those who have given so much to establish it.

I often visit the retired Brothers on the campus of Saint Paul’s School. These are the men who literally built our schools with their own hands. These are the ones who collectively spent hundreds of years teaching and administering our schools and who continue to contribute to the life of Saint Paul’s by building furniture for classrooms, working with our Lasallian Youth leaders and Eucharistic ministers, taking care of the sacristy needs of the school liturgies, praying daily for the needs of the school, and offering us all models of what it means to be a servant. They are such a great blessing in my life and are family to me. In the midst of great change in the Lasallian world—in the changing Regional structures, in the move to create a new District with the San Francisco District, even in the renovation of their residence—these men have handled the changes with grace and a certain characteristic toughness. Throughout all of the change, they have supported the movement of increased roles of the lay Partners in our new forms of Lasallian association.

When I place my experience with the Brothers side-by-side with my CIL experience, I recognize that the fundamentals of building bridges to our Lasallian association ahead must contain the same elements that our retired Brothers have modeled for all of their lives—authenticity, prayerfulness, openness to change, attention to the needs of others, and a certain calmness which comes with the assurance that God

is with us. And that is exactly what I encountered in Rome as I came to know the dedicated Lasallian educators, many of who teach in the face of great adversity.

From Bro. Álvaro’s presentation to CIL: November 22, 2010

That is why I consider that the most important things in our association are not the structures, or the measures to ensure a certain efficiency, but a goal: answering the needs of the children and young people, especially the poor. What matters most are persons. This is the concrete way we give glory to God, the God of Jesus Christ, who wills that all be saved and have life and have it abundantly. (John 10:10) This is the prophetic witness of association.

In the end, I left CIL with a few concrete plans, a stronger sense of direction, a renewed sense of hope, and gratitude for the relationships I have with those in this great work. I realized that I needed to work on me, to allow God to make me more available to new possibilities.

When I was presented with the position of Director of Lasallian Mission, I recalled the words of the young preacher in a film on the integration of churches in America. Urging his congregation to break new ground, he said, “What are you waiting for?”

Like the oft-quoted words of the Founder, God has moved me again “from one commitment to another.”

Getting to Know Our Twin Schools

BY ELIZABETH MOORS-JODICE

Building and maintaining relationships between Lasallian schools in the United States-Toronto (USAT) Region and the Lwanga District in Africa can be a challenge. But a personal encounter can make a difference.

Recently, five Lasallian groups from the United States traveled to Africa separately to visit schools in the Institute's Lwanga District. The groups included Brothers Dennis Lee and John McMahon; Martin de Porres (MDP), New York; DeLaSalle High School, Minneapolis, MN; Holy Family Catholic High School, Victoria, MN; and Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY.

While these were first-time visits for some and reunions for others, the outcomes were similar: tighter bonds, witnessing the need for financial support, and a desire to continue building relationships.

KENYA

Saint Mary's Boys Secondary School. The first-time visitors were unprepared for what they would witness. Emmanuel "Sarge" Boyd, a counselor at MDP Elementary/Junior High School in Springfield Gardens, NY, was surprised by daily life at Saint Mary's Boys Secondary School in Nyeri, Kenya. "I wasn't expecting the kids would get meat only twice a week," he recalled. "I wasn't expecting over 700 kids and most of them



MDP hosted a basketball clinic for St. Mary's students.

homeless. To see their faces, you can never tell."

The MDP group toured Saint Mary's, delivered donated sports equipment, played bingo with students, taught them basketball, and

more. "The boys that attend Saint Mary's are incredible, remarkable," said LaNette Burgess-Kelly, MDP Social Worker. "That's the main thing that I take away from the trip and that's the first thing that hit me when I got there because they were so friendly and so welcoming and so curious and so knowledgeable."

Bro. John, who had collected twinning donations for Saint Mary's as Campus Minister at Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in Brooklyn, NY, visited Africa with Bro. Dennis, who served two stints at the Brothers' novitiate in Kenya. They were wowed to see 700 Saint Mary's students participate at Mass. "To listen to the voices, to see the movement of the students, to see



DeLaSalle students with Rongai students.

the innocence in their bright faces,” said Bro. Dennis.

While visiting classrooms crowded with 60 desks and little room to move, the students’ seriousness impressed Bro. John. “It’s like sacred space. You walk in and it’s palpable, the silence,” he said.

Rongai Agricultural and Technical Secondary School. Visitors to Rongai Agricultural and Technical Secondary School in Rongai, Kenya included Bro. John and Bro. Dennis, the DeLaSalle group, and the Manhattan College team. In addition to formal education, students maintain the school farm and raise livestock.

DeLaSalle students interacted with students and Brothers, spent time in classrooms, completed service, and fed and cleaned pigs. “I took away from this visit a new understanding of the importance of education,” said Samantha Schrepfer. “The students we met were so gracious and kind-hearted.”

Mwangaza College. What impressed Bro. John during their visit to Mwangaza College in Nakuru, Kenya was the dedication of students to learn skills to land jobs. “It’s a wonderful compound. It’s like a little paradise within the walls of this vocational college,” he said.

Child Discovery Centre. While the Manhattan group also visited Mwangaza, more time was spent at Child Discovery Centre (CDC) in Nakuru. They shared stories, songs, dances, and poems with students, along with playing sports. The students’ stories of struggle touched Jenn Edwards, Coordinator of Social Action. “It’s just



Manhattan student Christopher Shemanski reunited with Josbot at CDC.

amazing—coming from a Lasallian school, understanding Lasallian heritage—and just literally witnessing it with our own eyes,” she said. “What De La Salle was about and what it’s become in 2011 and to physically witness that.”

This was the second visit to CDC for Manhattan’s Christopher Shemanski ‘11, which reunited him with a student named Josbot—who

was very excited to see his old friend. “It was really humbling, but also challenging because now I felt like I had these big shoes to fill,” he said.

The CDC visit was also humbling for Bro. Dennis. “To be there to see that they don’t have a lot to eat, they don’t have a lot to wear, they don’t have a family support,” he said. “Yet, through our Lasallian institution, they’re safe, they’re receiving an education, they’re cared for.”

Christ the Teacher Institute of Education. Bro. Dennis, Bro. John, and the Manhattan team also visited Christ the Teacher Institute of Education in Nairobi, Kenya, which is not a twin school but is Lasallian. “That’s where I was able to actually see my peers in another Lasallian community outside of Manhattan,” said Shemanski. “That was really inspiring in the aspect that they have their Lasallian movement there while we have one as well. It was nice to see the challenges that they have [are similar to] the challenges that we have.”

Continued on Page 32



Manhattan and CTIE students shared stories during their visit.

GETTING TO KNOW

Continued from Page 32



DeLaSalle students bonding with St. Paul's students.

St. Paul's Secondary School.

DeLaSalle students spent the majority of their time at St. Paul's Secondary School in Marsabit, Kenya. They painted an entrance sign with St. Paul's students, attended classes, helped teach, and participated in programming about social justice and St. La Salle.

"The students at St. Paul's made our students feel so comfortable right away," said Peg Hodapp, Vice President for Lasallian Mission. "I was just really amazed by how quickly that transition happened which was great because then they had three solid weeks to continue to build those relationships."

To read more about these visits and for more information about the Twinning Program, visit www.lasallian.info/index.cfm/twinning.

ETHIOPIA

The Holy Family group taught English at Meki Catholic Mission School in Meki, Ethiopia and Besrate Gabriel School in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia. John Dols, Holy Family Assistant Principal and Campus Minister, described the lessons as "quite chaotic, but awesome."

With the help of a Holy Family parent, Intel donated 25 computers, a recharging hub, two local servers, 12 LEGO robotics kits, and two microscopes to Meki. Two Intel employees delivered the computers and provided training, while the Holy Family group brought microscopes and LEGO kits and worked with students.

"I didn't imagine that I would build such lasting relationships and how hard it would be to leave those behind," said Micaela Larose, a Holy Family student.

They also paid a short visit to St. Joseph School in Nazareth, Ethiopia.

PROMOTING TWINNING

Developing relationships has helped Lasallians in the Region feel more unified with their counterparts in Africa and more inspired to support twinning. "I think one of the beauties about twinning is money matters and all of these ministries can use the money," said Bro. Dennis. "But I think the other thing is the relationship piece." He acknowledges that developing relationships has challenges and encourages schools to use technology to connect.

Motivated by their recent visits, the different groups are developing plans to boost support for their twin schools in Africa. "It's about connecting to the schools and learning," Dols said. "The lessons that we learned at Meki are lessons that I think every school can gain from, especially those that are connected to Meki."

The travelers have all returned with the same message: promote relationships and raise money. ■



Holy Family student Jessica Cook poses with students she met at Meki.

IN MEMORIAM

*"Those who teach others unto justice shall shine like stars
for all eternity." —Book of Daniel, 12:3*

- Bro. Patrick (Leander Patrick) Craine (MW) passed away July 24, 2011
- Bro. Timothy Dean (DENA) passed away June 24, 2011
- Ronald Doyle, AFSC (NOSF) passed away July 18, 2011
- Bro. Gerard Duncanson (DENA) passed away August 28, 2011
- Bro. Daniel Duplantis (NOSF) passed away May 30, 2011
- Bro. Anthony Flynn (DENA) passed away June 7, 2011
- Bro. Hilary McGovern (DENA) passed away August 12, 2011
- Bro. Aloysius Myers (DENA) passed away May 12, 2011
- Bro. Joseph Wilhelm (Midwest) passed away September 6, 2011
- Bro. Lawrence (Larry) Zeman (MW) passed away June 11, 2011

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 2011

8-10 Regional Vocation/
Formation Committee, TBA

17-31 Visit of Superior General to
NO-SF District

18 Regional Finance Committee
Romeoville, IL

20-22 Lasallian Leadership
Institute-East
Mt. Pocono, PA

26-29 RCCB Meeting
New Orleans, LA

27-29 Lasallian Leadership
Institute-Midwest
Bloomington, MN

NOVEMBER 2011

2-17 Visit of Superior General to
DENA District

17-20 Huether Lasallian Conference
Washington, DC

FEBRUARY 2012

23-26 RCCB Meeting
San Antonio, TX

26-29 LASSCA
San Antonio, TX

MARCH 2012

15-17 Lasallian Leadership
Institute-East
Mt. Pocono, PA

22-24 Lasallian Leadership
Institute-Midwest
Belleville, IL

APRIL 2012

13-15 Sangre de Cristo Center 50th
Anniversary Celebration
Santa Fe, NM

16-19 Regional Vocation/
Formation Committee
New Orleans, LA

25 Regional Finance
Committee

MAY 2012

7 - 19 New Visitors Meeting

JUNE 2012

20-23 RCCB Meeting
Baltimore, MD

24-July 6 Buttimer Institute of
Lasallian Studies
Moraga, CA

JULY 2012

15-19 Called To Be Brothers
Assembly
Romeoville, IL

Superior General Álvaro
Rodríguez Echeverría visit to
NO-SF and DENA Districts

OCT. 16-NOV.17, 2011

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