

# BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

CIRCULAR 469  
November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014



## The Documents of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter

“This work of God is also our work”



**General Council**  
Via Aurelia – Rome, Italy

*November 2014*

**Brothers of the Christian Schools**

Generalate

Via Aurelia 476

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# Introduction

Dear Brothers,

The 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter opened on Easter Tuesday and extended to Pentecost Sunday. Our conversations, decisions and discernment were accompanied by liturgical readings that took us from Jerusalem to Emmaus to Galilee and back to Jerusalem. This liturgical movement held up a mirror to the internationality of our Institute and the emergent call to move toward the periphery and the resurrected Christ.

The Chapter was an intense and profound experience of fraternity. On a daily basis our exchanges and encounters challenged us to move beyond the diversity of culture and perspectives toward unity. The gift of our fraternal union allowed us to hear one another “speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God” (Acts 2.11). As in past Chapters, the considerations were numerous and far-ranging. Finding the imperceptible movement of the Holy Spirit in the many voices and words was a challenge the capitulants undertook with apostolic energy. The fruit of their engagement is the text you have in your hands.

Every Chapter builds on the organizational work of the preparatory commission. It also builds on the deep reflections of the Brother Superior, Brother Councilors and gatherings of Brothers and Partners. In this regard, we would be remiss if we were not to thank all of those whose discernment provided a solid foundation for this Chapter. The symposium of young Lasallians in Rome, the young Brothers assembly in Manila, and the international mission assembly in Rome all offered reports that were indispensable to the momentum realized in the Chapter. These were complemented by the thoughtful Brother Superior's report and circulars from the Inter-capitular period on economic self-sufficiency (460), association (461) and centrality of the Gospel in our life and mission (466).

These pre-Chapter experiences remind us that the opening and closing prayers and ceremonies do not by themselves mark the beginning and ending. If the Chapter is the crest of a



large wave, then it began as small ripples. Just as a wind blows over calm waters to create the forward motion of energy that we call a wave, the Chapter was a peak moment made possible only by the creative energy that preceded it. We were convinced that these pre-Chapter experiences represented far more than reports for cursory consideration. Rather, they were creative and faithful expressions of the Lasallian movement toward humanity and God, set in motion by our Founder's yes. It was our privileged work to integrate the convictions and calls of our Brothers and Partners into our own discernment of the direction our loving God was urging us toward.

As Brother Superior and Brother Councilors, we were elected to implement the vision and reach of this Chapter. It is our number one job. We accept this mandate knowing that we do so in the ongoing historical context of the adaptive renewal called for by the 39<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. We accept this mandate trusting in your full support. As you read, reflect and pray with the Acts of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, we invite you into an enlargement of your imaginative field.





We trust that you are inspired as we are by the ambition and zeal to push us to frontiers, both new and old. We sincerely invite you into a full sharing of this direction.

Fraternally in St. John Baptist de La Salle,

*Brother Robert Schieler, Superior General  
and the members of the General Council:  
Brother Jorge Gallardo de Alba, Vicar General  
Brother Timothy Coldwell  
Brother Aidan Kilty  
Brother Ricky Laguda  
Brother Pierre Ouattara  
Brother Paulo Petry*



45 ANNI DI CAPITOLO GENERALE  
DOMINE, QVVS TVAVV  
L'ORDINE DEI SACERDOTI DEL SANTISSIMO SACRAMENTO  
E' UNO DEI PIU' ANTICHI E PIU' NUMEROSI  
L'ORDINE DEI SACERDOTI DEL SANTISSIMO SACRAMENTO  
E' UNO DEI PIU' ANTICHI E PIU' NUMEROSI

La Sallio



# 1. Life of the Brother in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

## The Event that inspires us

**1.1** In 1714, John Baptist de La Salle was 62-years-old and wearied by the relentless opposition to his life's work of founding a society of men associated for the gratuitous educational service of the children of the artisans and the poor. He was carrying the heavy weight of external opposition from legal, social and ecclesial forces, and even internal opposition from some Brothers. His spiritual strength was waning and his spirit was in a state of disarray, confusion and distress. He felt a sense of alienation and profound loss. There is evidence to suggest he was tempted to turn over his role completely and to retire to a life of solitude. Brother Michel Sauvage suggests that he was no longer sure he was truly Founder, Father, and Brother (CL 57, pp. 162-163).

**1.2** In this story we hear echoes of the post-crucifixion story of the disciples heading toward Emmaus (Lk 24). They were in shock at their loss and were heading

away from Jerusalem, away from their discipleship. Jerusalem only reminded them of the trauma of losing their Master, Brother and Lord. To return is to be reminded of their emptiness and broken hopes.

**1.3** As Brothers today, we hear resonances in these two iconic stories. Subjected to one loss after another, some of us are tempted to ask whether there is a viable future, whether there is something to hope for. The Brother Superior General's Report noted some signs of these losses. While there seems to be an increased interest in deepening their spirituality, many Brothers live absorbed by activity and bureaucracy leaving little time for mental or interior prayer, "the first and principal exercise."

**1.4** In some places, Brothers are not open to sharing responsibility for the mission with lay people resulting in Brothers assuming too much responsibility, often without appropriate preparation.

**1.5** Although we seem to have given more



effort to the ministry of vocations, the number of novices globally has decreased over the last several decades.

**1.6** Perhaps our current style of community and common prayer life is not attractive to young people today.

**1.7** We see works dedicated to the poor closing for solely financial reasons while those serving middle-class and wealthy students expand. Little is heard from Lasallian educators in national and international pedagogical forums of reflection today. While there has been a global financial crisis, our personal and communal lives as Brothers have experienced very little inconvenience, resulting in lives disconnected from the economic reality of the people we serve (cf. *Report of the Br. Superior General*, pp. 6-7).



**1.8** These realities evoke disenchantment in many of us. Henri Nouwen's reflection on the Emmaus-bound disciples might well be our own, namely, "Long cherished ideas, long-practiced disciplines, and long-held customs of celebrating life no longer warm our hearts, and we no longer understand why and how we were so motivated" (*With Burning Hearts: A Meditation on the Eucharist Life*, p. 26).

**1.9** On Easter Sunday, April 1, 1714 the principal Brothers in the communities in the north wrote a letter calling De La Salle to return to Paris and resume leadership of the Society. The force of the words "we command you in the name of, and on the part of, the body of the Society to which you have vowed obedience" touched the Founder in the depths of his heart and soul, and confirmed an interior choice that Soeur Louise at Parménie had helped him make. The very men with whom he had committed his life were calling him back to his vow of association. The memory of this association broke through the darkness that seemed to envelop him and cast a new light on his relationship with God and the Society.

**1.10** The disciples on the way to Emmaus had an encounter with the same Lord who had first called them. When the Lord asked what was happening they responded, "You must be the only person who does not know the things that





have been happening!" They also felt so fragile they could not imagine going back. But their encounter with the risen Jesus opened their hearts and changed their minds. They set out that instant in the direction of the community of believers.

**1.11** These encounters represent a call and a choice. For the Founder, it was whether to stay at Parménie or to return to Paris. For the disciples it was whether to keep heading to Emmaus or to return to Jerusalem. It was more than a change of direction of course, it was a change of heart. It was a call to choose life over death, hope over despair.

**1.12** This Easter encounter at Emmaus

sheds new light on the Easter Letter (1714), and we are reminded of our radical identity as disciples and Brothers. We are broken and fragile. We have chosen a life of dependence on God and openness to a future that we cannot know. Though we live in a very different time, centuries distant from these experiences, we share the same story. Among many current calls from within the Institute and Lasallian Family, we have received the Letter of the Young Brothers. It is a letter brimming with power, quality and energy. They call us to joyfully embrace our educational and evangelizing mission which is at the heart of our vow of association.



**1.13** It seems clear that we are faced with a choice. To begin again or to remain untouched, indifferent. To live a life of gratitude or a life of resentment. To enter the mystery that fragility and strength are both graces. The only authentic choice is discipleship, the only direction is Paschal, and the only life is in Christ.

**1.14** These choices provide the starting point for our lives as Brothers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are mindful of the following: recent Chapters that have challenged us to maintain Association to respond to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (GC 43); the call to be interior men who live the simplicity of the Gospel (GC 44); and the invitation to

live the richness of *They Will Call Themselves Brothers* (C 466).

**1.15** We are living in a time of grace, a time of transition, a time to return to the heart of our charismatic and Gospel-centered history. It is a time that inspires us to return to the freedom, audacity, and creativity of the first mystical experience. We face this moment as a call for a personal and institutional conversion toward the world of the vulnerable and impoverished.

## The Word that brings us together

**1.16** As the Body of the Society, we invite all to:

- Re-ignite a spirituality centered in Jesus Christ, as one of his disciples, based on the joy of the Gospel;
- Place ourselves in the heart of our charismatic identity, return to our first love;
- Live out our universal vocation: together and by association, as members of the Institute in consecrated life, and in the Church;
- Help us to move to the peripheries, borders, and deserts, from the point of view of our charism;
- Live communion radically and prophetically; and
- Share the reasons for our fraternity.

## Signs for the journey

**1.17** Therefore we commit ourselves to the following:

- A journey of conversion that will help us make the transition from our individualism to community discernment.
  - A journey that moves us from our triumphalism and self-centeredness, to focus our attention on humanity in distress.
  - A journey to live and share the Word of God in community.
  - A journey that moves us from the security of our possessions and our own efforts, in order to place our trust in the One who calls us.
  - A journey that moves us from the search for comfort in order to understand our lives as a parable of fraternity and humanity.
  - A journey that moves us out of sterile routine and the status quo, to live the Gospel radically and joyfully.
  - A journey that moves away from an over-concern on efficiency, to place our gaze, our heart and all our efforts into energizing and supporting what God has entrusted to us.
- A journey that moves away from the discouragement of being few in number, to being attentive to, and present with, the poor in the struggle for justice.
  - A journey that moves us out of our comfort zone to the places where the poor are.
  - A journey of fidelity to our charism, to develop the work that God has entrusted to us.
  - A journey that takes us into the world of young people through the responsible use of social communication.



## Proposition 1

That the Brother Superior sign and send the accompanying “Letter to the Brother” to all Brothers throughout the Institute.

### 1.18

Brother,

Between Easter and Pentecost we gathered together in Rome, to think about the coming years in the life of our Institute.

Whatever your age, whatever your involvement, whatever your community; whether in ill or good health, retired or fully active, we have been thinking about you above all during these 50 days.

Responding to Christ’s call, you have committed yourself for life with other Brothers, because you loved youth and you wished to serve them through education.

Even if the decreasing number of Brothers, and the lack of vocations upset you, you are convinced that our Institute is most necessary for the Church and the world.

The Founder’s Easter journey, begun in his old age, when he received the call from the “principal Brothers” asking him to come down from Parménie’s hill, to take care of governing the Society, moves us to share our hope with you.

Gathered together in Chapter, in this year 2014, we are convinced:



- That our consecration to the Trinitarian God energizes us.
- That the Gospel is our first and principal Rule.
- That our Vow of Association is the foundation of our community.
- That the educational service of the poor, and with the poor, is our priority.
- That our Founder’s charism is today a gift for the Church and for the world.

Like John Baptist de La Salle in 1714, returning to his Brothers, we invite you to say:

“Here I am, what do you want of me?”

We need your faith and your doubts, we need your strength and your weak-

nesses, we need your prayers and your suffering.

The world of today, searching for its humanity, needs your energy, your hope, your brotherly presence and

your witness. We thank you for being ever ready to serve. God needs you to accomplish His work!

On behalf of the Brother Capitulants,

*Brother Superior General*

## Proposition 2

That the Intercapitular period be constituted as a time of profound revitalization. This revitalization must be based on a critical reading of the (a) Gospel and (b) living memory of the origins of the Institute, as a credible response in the Church and the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**1.19** To do this, Brother Superior and his Council will issue a pastoral call that invites us to a dynamic and creative process in Districts and communities with a view to personal and community revitalization.

**1.20** To support this Institute renewal (2014-2021) we suggest that Regions and Districts organize a formation process for the Brothers on the Community Annual Program.

**1.21** Among the areas to focus on would be how:

- the community integrates its life into the mission of the District;
- each Brother's personal plan responds to the conversion to which we are called;
- the community shares its life of prayer, fraternity and discernment with the young, our colleagues in the mission, and the poor;

- the community strives to be present in ecclesial and inter-congregational spaces;
- the community's budget helps it live a simple, frugal and fraternal lifestyle;
- the community lives its gratuity and hospitality as expressions of fraternity; and
- the community's elder members offer as their mission the witness of their consecrated life.

**1.22** Areas of particular attention include:

- Interior life (Circular 455)
- Integrated spirituality (Circular 466)
- Vow of association and association for mission (Circular 461)

## Ensuring the District patrimony and mission

**1.23** In spite of great efforts in the



aging Districts, a fundamental break with the past is seemingly inevitable and irreversible. We are arriving at a point where some Dis-

tricts will no longer have Brothers to serve as Visitors or who can animate the Brothers' communities or care for their material needs. In the next few years, the Institute will need a new vision of administration and animation for these Districts.

**1.24** Proposition 48 of this General Chapter (cf. p.53) establishes a strategy for dealing with this concern. At the same time, the Chapter wishes to offer a word of fraternal support to the Brothers in these areas of the Institute. The Chapter is grateful for their witness. The example of their lives in the service of education is a source of pride for all Lasallians.

## 2. Association for the Educational Service of the Poor

### An essential dimension of the life of the Brother of the Christian Schools

#### Ecclesial framework in which we live communion for mission

**2.1** Today, the Institute is called to be involved, together with the entire Church, in a new stage of evangelization marked by the joy of the Gospel (*Evangelii Gaudium* 1). We allow ourselves to be challenged by Pope Francis, who opens us to the dynamic force of the Holy Spirit: “Are we determined to break the new ground that the novelty of God presents to us or to dig in on old structures that have lost the ability to respond?” (Homily on the Feast of Pentecost, 2013).

**2.2** We renew our focus on those who have inspired our association, poor children and youth. “Today and always, the poor are the privileged recipients of the Gospel, and the fact that it is freely preached to them is a sign of the Kingdom of God which

Jesus came to establish.” (EG 48). In the Pope’s call, we hear an echo of our Founder’s invitation “to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society” (EG 187).

**2.3** In this new stage of the Church, the importance of the laity as protagonists of evangelization has once more been highlighted: “There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church” (EG 102). But this observation is accompanied by a rejoinder from

the Pope that, perhaps, involves us as well: “At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in all places. In some cases, it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities. In others, it is because in their particular Churches, room has not been made for them to speak and act,





due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making.” (EG 102).

**2.4** Our religious consecration leads us to support the laity with whom we work in the mission so that they become authentic protagonists in the Lasallian mission. In this communion of Brothers and Partners, there is an inspiring pivotal point: the Lasallian charism. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. As Pope Francis notes, charisms “are not an inheritance, safely secured and entrusted to a small group for safekeeping; rather, they are gifts of the Spirit integrated into the body of the Church, drawn to the center which is Christ, and then channeled into an evangelizing impulse” (EG 130).

**2.5** In sharing the charism, we Brothers have a special responsibility which defines us: fraternity. It is a gift that we have received for all. We have become its sign; hence, we feel called in a special way when the Pope declares, “I

especially ask Christians in communities throughout the world, to offer a radiant and attractive witness of fraternal communion. Let everyone admire how you care for one another, and how you encourage and accompany one another: ‘By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another’” (Jn 13.35) (EG 99).

**2.6** We are urged “to abandon the complacent attitude that says, ‘We have always done it this way,’ to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the objectives, structures, style and methods of evangelization in the respective communities” (EG 33). It is the prophet’s word that comes to us today and proposes, to the Institute, a commitment to life: “Enlarge the space for your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly; lengthen your ropes and make firm your pegs. For you shall spread abroad to the right and left; and your descendants will dispossess the nations and shall people the deserted cities” (Isaiah 54.2-3).

**2.7** The Lasallian tent has continued to expand, especially after the Second Vatican Council, with new forms of consecrated Lasallian life such as Signum Fidei and other forms of lay association. People of other faiths and many varied cultures also join Catholics and members of other Christian denominations today to participate in the Lasallian charism, spirituality and mission in various ways.



## The charismatic power of association for educational service with the poor

**2.8** The letter that the Brothers wrote to John Baptist de La Salle on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1714, is a prophetic memory: it reminds us of the generative power that association for the educational service of the poor has had, not only during the lifetime of the Founder, but in our entire history. It is a memory that is challenging because it confronts us at the precise historical moment that we are living and invites us to live it as a time of grace and salvation, a celebration of resurrection.

**2.9** That letter presupposed first, for those who wrote it, and second, for the Founder, an awareness of, and an expression of, an act of faith implicit in the vow of association: we are a fraternity living the same history of salvation, with the same spirit, for the same mission.

**2.10** Much more than just a simple command issued by the body of the Society to one of its members, the letter is a celebration of the work of God which has been accomplished by the person of the Founder; and, at the same time, by “this new Society which is so useful for the Church.”

**2.11** The letter shows the solidarity of the Brothers in action. It is, above all, an awareness of the same spirit that



brings them together for the mission, the same charism which makes them live “for the greater glory of God.”

**2.12** Challenged by the memory of that event, we Brothers want to remain as “heart, memory, and guarantor” of the Lasallian charism. We rejoice because with us, in ever greater numbers, many other Lasallians are participating in that same experience. With them, we are called to keep constructing this story of association for the educational service of the poor.

**2.13** The 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter recognizes the experience that the Institute has lived in the area of association in recent years. It reaffirms the centrality of the vow of association both for the educational service with the poor and also for understanding the Brother’s identity. Thus, the following propositions are presented:



### **Proposition 3**

That the Brothers will support and demonstrate their primary belonging to the Institute by making themselves available to serve the mission wherever they may be sent.

Communities will assume the practical implications of the vow of association in community life and in their educational service with the poor.

Starting in the novitiate, Districts and Regions will take into account the centrality of the vow of association in the formation of the Brothers.

### **Proposition 4**

That the Brothers will actively continue the process of promoting their association within educational communities.

The Brothers will be witnesses of faith, promoters of fraternity, and of the gift of freely saying yes, for the educational service with the poor.

The Brothers will accompany Partners, and also will allow themselves to be accompanied by them, in their respective journeys as Lasallian educators.

The Brothers will encourage and welcome the specific contribution that Partners bring to the Lasallian charism.

### **Proposition 5**

That the Chapter reaffirms its global commitment to association for educational service with the poor in line with the spirit of Circular 461, *Associated for the Lasallian Mission...an act of HOPE*.

It asks that efforts being made in this area in various parts of the Institute be evaluated, supported and enhanced.

It asks that particular attention be given to those areas where the application of the global commitment to association is slow.

### **Proposition 6**

That the Institute support and strengthen a strategic network for association at every level of the Institute.

To do this:

Each District or Sector will have a person, or team of persons, charged with this mission. This person, or team, will network with the Region and with the center of the Institute.

The network of communication will be supported by a Secretariat and by the Communication Service

of the Generalate, the objective of which is to share information and best practices on Association.



### **Proposition 7**

That the Center of the Institute will give to the Lasallian Family general orientations as to the financing of formation initiatives related to association.

### **Proposition 8**

That the Institute will ensure support for priority 3.1.1 of the IAMEL 2013, "To assure and accompany meaningful experiences of association in all Lasallian works."

### **Proposition 9**

That the Institute will maintain the position of Young Lasallian Coordinator and its accompanying International Council.

### **Proposition 10**

That the Institute will support the representation of Young Lasallians in Sector, District, and Regional structures.

# 3. One family, one mission

## Brothers with passion for the educational service of the poor

### International Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission (AIMEL 2013)

**3.1** This mission is the work of God who has come to us through Jesus and His Word; it is also the work of Lasallians who carry it out following in the footsteps of John Baptist de La Salle. We Brothers, together and by association, wish to be signs of hope within the educational service of the poor.

#### Proposition 11

That, as members of the Lasallian Family, we capitulants of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter agree with the propositions from the International Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission (AIMEL 2013), "One Family, One Mission: Lasallians associated for the educational service of the poor." We share its challenges and responses while at the same time we explicitly commit ourselves to develop them and to put them into practice.

**3.2** In the spirit of AIMEL, we wish to renew our evangelical commitment to be signs of hope within the educa-

tional service of the poor. In this way, we wish to offer our contribution as Brothers.

### The International Council for the Lasallian Educational Mission: an organization to respond to the educational needs of the present

#### Proposition 12

That in order to respond to the needs of the educational service of the poor in the most effective manner, we will create the International Council of the Lasallian Educational Mission (CIMEL) for the animation and direction of the Lasallian educational mission, during the first quarter of 2015, as asked for by the previous two General Chapters and Assemblies.

**3.3** This Council is established:

- To identify the District and Regional structures of the Lasallian educational mission that already exist and to foster their formation in places where they do not exist:

- To carry out and to evaluate the lines of action proposed by AIMEL 2013;
- To accompany and to develop the characteristics of Lasallian identity in educational ministries;
- To promote the integral formation for Lasallians (School Heads, Presidents, Directors, etc.);
- To support and to consolidate good administration in existing works;
- To strengthen the Lasallian network of ministries in accordance with the criteria of solidarity and interdependence;



- To facilitate educational projects on the international level in favor of the vulnerable; and
- To network with universities and centers of higher education.

**3.4** As a process for establishing the CIMEL we suggest that the Brother Superior and his Council appoint an *ad hoc* commission made up of Partners and Brothers in order to create statutes for CIMEL that will:

- respect the authority of District Mission Councils and the works in the Lasallian educational network;
- assure effective representation of Partners and Brothers in each Region;
- establish the term of the members and determine the frequency of meetings;
- take into account “online” communication;
- consider the financial implications of CIMEL; and
- confirm the ultimate authority of the Brother Superior and his Council.

**3.5** The proposed timeline for this work is as follows:

- Council during the first quarter of 2015.
  - The Brother Superior and his Council will appoint the members of CIMEL by the first half of 2015.

- The CIMEL will hold its first meeting during the second half of 2015.
- The CIMEL will present a first report of activities during the Intercapitular Meeting.
- The awareness of God's presence in the educational enterprise.

## The vitality and the guarantee of the shared Lasallian mission

**3.6** To assure the vitality of the corporate commitment of Lasallians “that the school runs well,” we propose the following criteria:

- The presence of teachers who consider themselves responsible for the development of an educational community.
- The personal attention to every student, especially to the poor.
- The active and committed participation on the part of students to their own formation.
- The offering of explicit religious formation for all: students, parents, teachers, staff members, etc.
- The promotion and formation, in all schools, of intentional groups and communities of faith or of service: Associates, Signum Fidei, Young Lasallians, Lasallian Volunteers, etc.
- The promotion of mutual inclusivity and collaboration in all areas.
- The quality of human relationships everywhere.

### Proposition 13

That the Secretariat for the Lasallian Mission, in collaboration with the other secretariats, and taking into account the ongoing experiences in the Institute up to the end of calendar year 2016, formulate a series of criteria that help to strengthen the degree of belonging of an educational work in the Lasallian network.\*

**3.7** That the International Council for the Lasallian Educational Mission of the Institute (CIMEL) appoint a group which, during the year 2017, will draw up a guide for institutional evaluation so that, by applying the adopted criteria, it will assess the degree of membership of a ministry in the Lasallian educational network and it will offer

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\* The Lasallian educational network is a structure for discernment, coordination, leadership, accompaniment, participation and administration in service of the Lasallian educational mission. It is made up of networks of educational ministries at different levels within the Institute: Sector, Delegation, District, Region. This structure has as its purpose to promote the educational mission. In order to do this, it has special influence in education, pastoral ministry, shared mission and association, formation and administration. It is rooted in the cultivation of personal relationships in a participatory and supportive way.

guidelines for improvement. This evaluation will be adopted in each District in the Institute during the 2017-2018 school year.

## Called to safeguard the rights of children and the young

**3.8** The Church invites all to holiness in accordance with the Gospel of Jesus. Those who exercise their ministry within the Church are called to live in an exemplary manner, that is to say, in accordance with the Gospel.

**3.9** Lasallians—Brothers and Partners—find inspiration in a tradition with over three-hundred years of service in the protection of, and care for, the young. As required by our ministry at all times and under all circumstances, we make clear our ethical and moral commitment for those we serve.

**3.10** We are inspired by the call of our Founder to be “good shepherds” and “ministers of Jesus Christ,” and to work for the defense and the promotion of the rights of children and the young.

### Proposition 14

That the Institute pledge itself to promote awareness among Lasallians, to act on the challenges that confront children and youth, and to continue to defend their rights consistent with the proposals of the International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE).

**3.11** The Institute as a member and co-founder of BICE collaborates with it and supports its objectives:

- Respecting the right to life;
- Fighting against poverty;
- Fighting all forms of violence against children;
- Supporting families;
- Taking into account child workers;
- Guaranteeing quality education to each child;
- Guaranteeing the right to health;
- Providing a space for disabled children;
- Humanizing juvenile justice ; and
- Placing new technologies at the service of the child.

## Evangelization and catechesis

**3.12** For the proclamation of the Gospel, we consider the following as urgent calls:

- To honor the priority of educational service of the poor with the proclamation of the Gospel as our mission.
- To promote a life of faith among the young.
- To be effective ambassadors of Jesus Christ, witnesses and ministers of his Word.
- To offer words of encouragement and confidence to those engaged in



evangelization in the many diverse situations in the Institute.

- To present the Gospel with credibility in a world marked by violence, intolerance and a troubled Church.
- To proclaim the message that Jesus is our liberator.
- To address the need for effective catechetical preparation of the Brothers.
- To encourage the principal role of the Brother as catechist.
- To provide a voice of leadership in the area of catechetics, including contributions to the multi-cultural and interreligious dialogue.
- To help our Partners—especially young Lasallian teachers—to progress in their faith journeys and in their study of the Christian message.
- To meet young people where they are, treating them with respect and approaching them through dialogue.

**3.13** We wish to maintain the unity between the educational service of the poor and the proclamation of the Gospel:

“Jesus is the center. A missionary disciple cannot be self-complacent. He either points to Jesus Christ or to the people to whom Jesus should be proclaimed. The center is Jesus Christ, who calls and sends us forth. The disciple is sent to the existential peripheries” (Pope Francis to the Coordination Committee of the Council Latin American Bishops’ Council, Brazil – July 28, 2013).

**3.14** “On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: ‘Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you’” (EG 164).

## Proclaiming the Good News

**3.15** There is an enormous diversity of social and religious settings in the Institute. We recognize the call of *Evangelii Gaudium* to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the Institute, this means proclaiming the Gospel to the poor, through the ministry of education. Therefore, we propose:

### Proposition 15

That the International Council of the Lasallian Educational Mission (CIMEL), will establish, within the



next three years, an *ad hoc* commission (a) to carry out a study of the activity of pastoral ministry in the network of Lasallian educational works and (b) to develop methodologies for the proclamation of the Gospel with sensitivity, openness and dialogue. The commission will bring together Lasallians from the diverse sectors of the Institute, especially those from multi-religious contexts, in order to share experiences, challenges and best practices in the area of pastoral ministry.

**3.16** Among the elements that need to be considered with regard to catechesis are:

- Evaluate how the proposals of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter (2000) have been implemented throughout the Institute.
- Analyze and disseminate various methodologies and approaches toward catechesis that seem particularly engaging, effective and innovative.
- Develop a public response regarding the contribution of Lasallians in various socio-religious environments, with regard to activities and catechetical research.

**3.17** The CIMEL will appoint a coordinator who will work in close collaboration with the Center of the Institute to develop a cost-effective process.

## The Brother as catechist

### Proposition 16

That initial formation of the Brothers in the Institute will have as a priority their preparation as catechists. In addition, the emphasis on the Brother as catechist will be part of the continuing formation of the Brothers.

## Lasallian education

**3.18** We want to consider the AIMEL proposition about a Declaration on Lasallian Education in order to respond to the most urgent educational needs today.

To achieve this we propose that:

### Proposition 17

That Brother Superior and his Council will work with the CIMEL in drafting a Declaration on Lasallian Education that will reflect on the particular traits of our educational practices in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**3.19** The following observations are offered for this study:

- Lasallian education seeks to foster excellent teaching, committed learning and effective management of schools.
- Education is the art of helping students to learn. In Lasallian terms,

"education" is the process of helping students to attain their salvation by discovering their potential and their mission in the world.

- Lasallian education begins from a Catholic theological orientation:
  - All are created in the image and likeness of God.
  - God wishes that all have fullness of life.
  - Each human being has a God-given purpose.
  - Human beings have been gifted with free will and they share the responsibility as faithful stewards of the world and its resources.
  - Education establishes a synthesis between faith and reason, faith and culture, faith and life.
  - Education integrates the preferential option for the poor.
- Lasallian education starts from the perspective of the poor.
- Lasallian education offers special insight into the dignity of the work of the teacher.
- Lasallian education believes that students are primarily responsible for their own education.

## Higher education and the Lasallian educational mission

**3.20** The Chapter believes that the work done in higher education is an important contribution to the Mission.

The Chapter acknowledges this role of higher education and encourages it to continue its contributions to teaching and learning, research, and societal development.

**3.21** Naturally, higher education has a significant role to play for the Institute, society, and the Church.

- First, universities are places that allow for research to contribute to scientific thinking and they provide the tools to improve the quality of life of men and women today, particularly the poor. That is why the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU), in its 2013-2018 work plan, has called for research in the areas of nutrition and health, the environment, innovations in education, and learning aimed at serving the poor.
- Second, universities are places where opportunities for dialogue between culture and faith can be encouraged and explored in all its depth and richness. This is an important aspect of evangelization as has been pointed out on repeated occasions by Pope Benedict XVI.
- Third, universities are places where further research in pedagogy can be investigated to ensure the promotion of education in general and the Lasallian mission in particular. It goes without saying that our existing teacher training centers can also do some further research in the area

of pedagogy wherever they are situated.

- Fourth, universities are places where professional training of Brothers and Partners can be undertaken to ensure the development of the Institute, the society and the Church it serves.

**3.22** In many parts of the Institute there are questions that must be answered in fraternal dialogue between Sectors, Districts and their own higher educational institutions.

Going forward, we encourage the Institute and institutions of higher education to:

- Bring about greater mission effectiveness in Lasallian universities in coordination with the Districts and IALU in terms of Lasallian charism, and stewardship of financial, mate-

rial and human resources in aid of the Lasallian mission.

- Explore what type of institutional relations should exist between IALU and the Center of the Institute.
- Promote and strengthen the effectiveness of IALU.
- Collaborate and strengthen the existing relationships between the Lasallian Universities in developed countries and academic centers in emerging countries where the Lasallian mission exists.
- Develop mutually beneficial projects between institutions of higher education and their District.

In order to respond to these challenges and opportunities there is a need to promote conversations between institutions of higher education



and the Center of the Institute. To do this:

### **Proposition 18**

That Brother Superior will appoint a General Councilor to accompany Lasallian Higher Education and recommend his appointment to the Administrative Council of the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU).

**3.23** The General Chapter encourages the Lasallian formation of the teaching staff at Lasallian universities.

**3.24** The General Chapter suggests that IALU, together with the Districts, continue to promote relevant projects, that may be common to several universities and contribute to the formation of professionals in developing countries.

**3.25** The General Chapter suggests that IALU and the Center of the Institute establish a team to promote the participation of Lasallian universities in the evangelization of its students. This team will identify and make known innovative and best practices for evangelization.

## **Beyond borders**

**3.26** We want to respond boldly and creatively to the urgent needs of the vulnerable, (e.g., immigrants, refugees, the homeless, unemployed youth, etc.) that are found on “the borders.”

This may be done by:

- Going beyond our own geographical borders to places where the Institute is not yet present.
- Going beyond our own personal borders to places that challenge our comfort zone and, at times, our personal ability.
- Going beyond our own congregational borders in terms of a shared common project.
- Going beyond our own cultural or religious borders to a work where people of different creeds share the same mission.
- Going beyond the borders of our own official retirement age to volunteer work with the most vulnerable.
- Going beyond our own borders of academic and social prestige to an educational project where we have the privilege to work with and for the poor.
- Going beyond our own borders of self-interest in the interest of community service.
- Going beyond our own borders of discouragement to a place of hope committed to God's saving plan.
- Going beyond our own borders of pre-established structures in order to generate a space for freedom and apostolic creativity.

- Going beyond our own borders of consumerism in order to create a world that is more inhabitable, just and in solidarity with others.

To achieve this we propose that:

### Proposition 19

That each Region of the Institute, before the Intercapitular meeting, will have begun an initiative that will deal effectively with the needs expressed in the metaphor of “beyond borders” and determine the process in order to establish and manage it.

**3.27** As a process we suggest the following:

- In the next seven years, each Brother will include in his Personal Annual Program a concrete commitment in relation to the metaphor of “beyond

borders.”The Brother will discern this commitment with his community.

- In the same way, each community will consider in its Community Annual Program, how to “go beyond borders.”
- Each District at its next Chapter will study the possibility of opening a new ministry where Brothers and/or Partners, will respond to one or more of the “border images” previously expressed and it will propose this ministry to the Region.
- Each Region will present a report during the Intercapitular meeting of how these initiatives have been implemented
- The Brother Superior will appoint a coordinator to accompany these initiatives.

## Communication: A priority for the Lasallian mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**3.28** Communication is a necessary tool for achieving the strategic objectives of any institution. Furthermore, for us Lasallians, this is a way of evangelizing and a concrete way of carrying out the “Lasallian mission.” We do not doubt that such communication is needed, but above all it has to do with the manner and style of the messenger and the message as it relates with people and with the world.



**3.29** To achieve this we want to:

- Foster a communication process that will be a sign of communion.
- Integrate communication within the educational and pastoral framework of the Lasallian mission.
- Protect, strengthen, and promote the visibility of a public image of the Lasallian institutions, both in internal and external forums, while respecting local communication processes.
- Establish communication procedures that serve to promote the interaction of the members of the educational community with the different secretariats and services of the Institute.
- Develop and promote a global Lasallian culture in both internal and external relations.

### **Proposition 20**

That the Institute, the Regions and the Districts will draw up a Plan of Communication based on the directives of the document entitled *Guide for the Development of the Plan of Communication*, adapting it to local needs. This Plan of Communication will be at the service of the educational and evangelizing mission.

**3.30** As a process we suggest the following:

- The leadership team (of the Institute,

Region, District) will coordinate the evaluation of the communication plan at least once yearly, in order to see how the specified objectives were met or need to be adjusted in the following areas:

- Institutional (corporate) communication
  - Marketing and Promotion
  - Internal communication
  - Crisis communication
  - Public relations
  - Corporate social responsibility
- Depending on what is possible, teams will be organized on three levels (Institute, Region, District) to respond to the defined lines of action in the Plan of Communication. Special attention will be paid to the official spokesperson (Brother or Partner) and to their press office.
  - Each Secretariat will define the key messages they want to prioritize at a given time. Communication teams will establish the channels and the best means to convey the information.
  - Communication teams will ensure appropriate Lasallian press releases.
  - The Institute's Communications Service will establish channels to gather Lasallian thinking in the area of education.
  - The Communications Service supports the use of social networks and their importance in evangelization.

- The Communications Service, in coordination with the Secretary General, will evaluate Institute publications

and propose concrete ways to make most impact.



# 4. Our lasallian vocation

## A sign of hope for the church and the poor

**4.1** “God is so good that he wants all people to know the truth and to be saved” (M 193.1). In this way, our holy Founder invites us to see our existence as a gift from God for the service of others.

**4.2** It is in this salvific context that we Brothers and Partners live our lives. Each one, according to his specific vocation, is invited to reflect on his life not so much from the perspective of “What am I called to do?”; but rather, from the perspective of “Whom am I called to serve?” In the depths of our hearts, we hear the desperate cry of children, young people and adults.



**4.3** We recall how the disciples of Emmaus felt their hearts on fire while Jesus was explaining the Scriptures to them. We also remember the Brothers’ 1714 letter to John Baptist de La Salle and how, through this letter, he discovered the Brothers’ desire that he continue to collaborate with them. Brothers and Partners, through reflection on the Emmaus event (Lk 24.13-35) and the Institute’s foundational experience, are invited to rekindle our foundational experience and to start anew.

**4.4** Our belief is that God continues to act in the world and contributes to an environment favorable to the fostering of vocations (C 466, 3.27). We derive hope and meaning from our daily experiences as *cooperators with Jesus Christ* (M 196.2). Our life and witness can inspire others to reflect about the meaning of their lives.

### The Brother: heart, memory and guarantor

**4.5** Today’s world, especially that of young people and the poor, needs authentic witnesses of Christian faithfulness, fraternal relationships and a Gospel life with and for others.



### Proposition 21

That during the Year of Consecrated Life, each Region will set up a network of Brothers and Partners responsible for vocation ministry, especially for vocations to the Brothers.

**4.6** Before June 2015, the Brother Councilor, in cooperation with the Region's Visitors, will designate the members of the regional network. Before January 2016, this team will create an action plan and present it to the Visitors' Conference for approval.

### Proposition 22

That each Region, in the spirit of interdependence, will ensure that there is at least one person responsible for vocation ministry in each District.

### Proposition 23

That Districts ensure that every community includes in its Community Annual Program specific actions related to vocation ministry, as recommended in Circular 466. These actions should involve all of the Brothers.

**4.7** Each community will be encouraged to reflect on the following points:

- What ignited in you a love for the Brothers' vocation?
- What nurtures your vocation and how can you share this experience with others?
- Keeping in mind the importance of catechetics and evangelization, can your community do something new and daring?

Based on this reflection, the community will establish an action plan for vocation ministry. This plan will be submitted to the Director of Vocation Ministry and/or to the Visitor before the start of the 2016 school year.

## A Culture of Vocations

**4.8** A "culture of vocations" is a setting in which life's meaning is understood as a personal call to serve the mission in community.

### Proposition 24

That the Institute will undertake, in collaboration with youth ministry, to create structures and dynamics for vocation promotion that give continuity to the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapters.

**4.9** In order to implement this proposition the Chapter asks for:

- The Center of the Institute, with the cooperation of the Regions, to establish a vocations clearinghouse, to

cover issues related to vocation ministry: people, programs, themes and outcomes.

- The creation of materials that help to foster an environment favorable to vocation ministry throughout the Institute.
- The support for vocation ministry initiatives of the Regions and Districts, giving special attention to those places experiencing greater difficulties.
- The promotion of lay vocations through active participation in the vocation ministries of local churches.
- The appointment of a Brother, by July 2015, to coordinate Institute-wide vocation ministry.



### Proposition 25

That the Brother Superior and his Council designate 2019, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of John Baptist de La Salle, as the “Year of Lasallian Vocations.”

### Proposition 26

That the Brother Superior and his Council appoint a Brother to serve, from the Center of the Institute, as the coordinator of vocations to the Brothers.

## Vocational paths: “Come and follow me”

**4.10** The objective is to facilitate a dynamic vocation ministry that helps to enrich the different forms of Lasallian community life. To help achieve this, we propose the following:

### Proposition 27

That the Center of the Institute guarantee an international community of Brothers and Volunteers in each Region where vocation ministry and discernment will be offered in the context of a community life dedicated to the service of the poorest.

**4.11** We suggest the following process:

- In places where such experiences exist, the Visitors Conference will evaluate the experiences and their contributions to the fostering of vocations.
- The Visitors Conference will determine the process, mission and place to establish a Regional community to promote volunteer opportunities for young people.
- This project will be linked to the Young Lasallian movement in the District in which it is located.
- Before the end of 2016, the Regional Councilor and the Visitors Conference will determine the specific project and the source of the funding.
- Before the end of 2017, the project will be ready for launching and will be open to prospective volunteers.



## 5. Formation and accompaniment to be disciples and apostles

**5.1** The Brothers understand the charism and mission proper to the Institute in the light of the Paschal mystery. This mystery is essentially the source of life for all. As disciples of Emmaus, we also have been called, formed and sent as apostles to proclaim the Good News with renewed hope. The Parménie experience that we recalled reminds us of our ability to respond as a community of disciples and apostles to this work of God that is ours as well.

**5.2** We commit ourselves to assure the life and vitality of the charism as a gift of the Spirit in the way John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers responded to God's call. We Lasallians are aware that the vitality and viability of our charism is the result of our faith-

ful commitment, a commitment that is "strengthened by formation and accompaniment" (AIMEL 2013, Challenge 1.2, p. 27).

**5.3** At this time in our lives, the needs of the world and the Church demand new and bold responses from us. In this effort we cannot ignore the calls of recent Chapters and Assemblies. In particular, we support the propositions from the most recent AIMEL with regard to formation and accompaniment.

**5.4** This General Chapter is aware of the importance of formation. We desire to pay special attention to:

1. The need for formation personnel and their preparation.
2. The strengthening of a "culture of accompaniment" for all.
3. The updating of the *Guide for Formation* for the Brothers.
4. The optimizing of resources for the formation of all Lasallians.



## The need for formators and accompanying personnel for the Lasallian mission

**5.5** As persistently reminded by recent Assemblies, the Institute and the entire Lasallian Family are in need of formation personnel to live and share the Lasallian charism with current and future generations (*Report of the International Assembly 2013, International Young Brothers Assembly –2013, 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium of Young Lasallians –2014*).

**5.6** Formation and accompaniment are at the very heart of each educational community, and need to be effective, sustainable and relevant for local needs.

### Proposition 28

That each District will strengthen or create formation programs for the Lasallian mission for formation personnel, Brothers and Partners, for the purpose of building teams of facilitators on the local level that can effectively train and accompany all who work in the mission.

**5.7** Stages and activities:

1. Make known and implement “Formation for the Lasallian Mission: A Common Frame of Reference” (MEL Bulletin 51).

2. Constitute teams of Brothers and Partners on the Regional/District/Sector level who will be in charge of training formation personnel at the local level.

a. Establish training teams for formation personnel for the Lasallian mission at Regional, District and Sector levels where they do not exist.

b. This team will develop a formation plan for local formation personnel.

3. Develop formation programs and appropriate modules for different groups (boards, teachers, young Lasallians, administrators, etc.). These resources can be made available on Lasallian websites.

**5.8** Indicators:

1. As soon as possible, the dissemination of “Formation for the Lasallian Mission: A Common Frame of Reference” (MEL 51) to all formation groups.

2. By the end of 2015, all Districts and Sectors will have a training team for formation personnel with a formation plan.

3. By the end of 2017, each District will have drawn up formation plans for different groups of Lasallians.

4. By the end of 2018, each District will have a bank of resources for formation that will be networked with the Region and the Institute.

## Formators and those who accompany Brothers at different life stages

**5.9** The Institute needs to prepare Brothers and Partners who form and accompany the Brothers in order to:

- improve the quality of the formation of the Brothers in Regions;
- ensure that efforts and human resources are optimized at District and Regional levels ;
- promote interdependence among Districts and Regions and the exchange of Brothers who work in formation; and
- promote a culture of personal and community accompaniment.

### Proposition 29

That each Region, in conjunction with the Center of the Institute, will take charge of the formation of Brothers and Partners who collaborate, now and in the future, in formation programs for the life of the Brother.

**5.10** The Chapter recommends the following stages:

1. Organize a forum for exchanging views on Regional formation in the Institute.
2. Conduct a Regional evaluation of formation needs so as to identify how

Districts can contribute to answering those needs.

3. Identify current and future formators and their formation needs. Districts should encourage Brothers to be available for formation and accompaniment work for a specific period of time.
4. Identify quality inter-congregational programs for training formation personnel.
5. Establish a formation program for formation personnel on the Regional level in order to optimize resources.

### 5.11 Indicators:

1. Formation personnel from different formation stages meet together and/or communicate with each other periodically for their own mutual formation and accompaniment.
2. Brother Councilors, with the Visitors, assure the accompaniment of formation personnel and prepare future formators.

## Strengthening a culture of accompaniment for all

**5.12** Accompaniment is considered to be intrinsically linked with formation, as discussed at all Assemblies and at the preparatory meetings for the 45th General Chapter. We see in this a sign of the great need for accompaniment. (cf. *International Young Brothers Assembly*–2013, p. 10, 2.1).

### Proposition 30

That all Institute levels – Regions, Districts, Sectors, and especially at the community level – will contribute to the creation of a "culture of accompaniment" for all Lasallians throughout their entire lives.

**5.13** The Chapter recommends the following steps:

1. To promote mutual accompaniment among the Brothers.
2. To train Brother Directors and formation personnel to accompany Brothers in communities.
3. To promote the human and spiritual accompaniment of the Brothers at different stages of life by means of retreats, meetings and experiences for specific age-groups or personal renewal programs.
4. To offer general guidelines for accompaniment that are accessible and flexible for both Brothers and Partners.
5. To ensure that the formation and accompaniment plans of Districts and Regions are reflected in the community and personal annual programs.

## Updating the *Guide for Formation*

**5.14** We must live out our Lasallian consecration adapted to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence, the rationale below for updating the *Guide for Formation*.

### 5.15

- The first *Guide for Formation* (1991) was well received.
- The Lasallian mission is now being carried out in a new context of Lasallian association and critical changes in the Institute and Brothers' life (cf. *Report of the Br. Superior General*, 3.1.3, p. 10).





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- Young Brothers have included in their dreams and concerns the need for renewed formation and appropriate accompaniment (cf. *International Young Brothers Assembly, 2013*, pp. 5-7; VII.2, pp. 10-11).
- The lack of prepared formation personnel and those who work in the area of accompaniment will adversely affect the vitality of community life and the mission (cf. *Report of the Br. Superior General, 3.1.1*, p. 10).
- The plural nature of the world and the multi-cultural character of an Institute such as ours require a frame of reference that will allow us to preserve unity and, at the same time, be aware of our identity as Brothers.

### Proposition 31

That the General Council constitute an ad hoc commission to update the Brothers' Guide for Formation, taking into account the revised Rule, MEL 51 and the current reality and diversity of the Church and the Institute (*Report of the Br. Superior General, 3.2.3*, p. 10).

**5.16** Once the ad hoc commission has been established, the Chapter recommends the following steps:

1. Study and consider reference documents:
  - Acts of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter
  - Guidelines from the updated *Rule*



- “Formation for the Lasallian Mission: A Common Frame of Reference” (MEL 51)
  - AIMEL 2013
2. Propose a broad consultation for the drafting of the *Guide for Formation*.
  3. The draft will take the following into account:
    - a. Formation that encompasses the Brother’s entire life.
    - b. Formation that integrates the following dimensions:
      - Human, Christian, Lasallian
      - Intellectual, affective, social
      - International and inter-cultural
      - Ecclesial and inter-congregational
    - c. Formation oriented in terms of images such as “the desert,” “the periphery,” and “the border.”
    - d. Formation that integrates theory and practice with significant and challenging experiences, especially with the poor.
    - e. Formation that includes a proposition for learning a new language and training in communication and the new technologies.
    - f. Formation that promotes higher educational qualifications in response to the mission.
    - g. Formation in association (Brothers and Partners) for the educational service of the poor.

4. Publish the draft *Guide for Formation* for Institute feedback.
5. Integrate the feedback and present the draft to the General Council for approval.
6. Design a pedagogy for the application of the *Guide for Formation*.

### 5.17 Timeline

1. The *Guide for Formation* will be approved in 2016.
2. The *Guide for Formation* will be implemented in Districts by 2018.
3. A follow-up report will be presented to the Intercapitular Assembly.

## The optimization of resources for the formation and accompaniment of all Lasallians

**5.18** Adequate and equal access to quality formation and accompaniment, in the spirit of independence and solidarity, should be assured for all.

**5.19** The duplication of personnel, programs and buildings is inefficient and costly, especially at this moment when we have a limited number of qualified personnel and when our financial resources are becoming more and more limited.

**5.20** Attention should be paid to the issues of culture, language and the

size of the community. A formation community should not be too large in order to be able to prepare for life after initial formation.

### **Proposition 32**

That Regions and Districts ensure the best use of resources in order to provide quality formation and accompaniment of Brothers and Partners.

#### **5.21 Steps**

1. With regard to formation, Brother Visitors, with the support of the Brother Councilor, will ensure the proper implementation of self-sufficiency policies and good financial practices.
2. Visitors, General Councilors, and the Institute Secretariat for Formation, will evaluate personnel, programs and buildings and eliminate unnecessary duplication.
3. Districts will identify local, quality programs for learning the official languages of the Institute in the various Regions.
4. Districts will encourage the Brothers to learn at least two of the official languages of the Institute.
5. Lasallian Universities (through IALU) will be requested to develop, and partially subsidize, training programs for formation personnel, for the prepara-



tion of persons to work in the area of accompaniment, and for the learning of the Institute's official languages. A good community life for the Brothers will be assured for those who enroll in these programs.

6. The Secretariat for Formation will organize formation programs, either in Rome or in the Regions, assuring the best use of financial and personnel resources.
7. The Secretariat for Formation and the Service of Lasallian Research and Resources, in coordination with Districts and Regions, will produce materials and resources that are related to formation and accompaniment for the benefit of Brothers and Partners. With assistance of the Communications Service, these resources will be made available on Lasallian websites.

## 5.22 Timeline

1. Beginning in 2015, an annual progress report on the implementation of this proposition will be made at the Visitors Conference.
2. A progress report will be presented by the Secretariat of Formation at the Intercapitular Meeting.

## Resources for formation and accompaniment

### Proposition 33

To ensure the funding of formation and accompaniment proposals, the International Economic Council is requested to advise Brother Superior and his Council, by June 2015, about the feasibility of:

- a) allocating additional monies from the Permanent Endowment Fund of the Center of the Institute to augment the Lasallian Formation Fund and to use the interest to support the initial formation of Brothers in developing sectors; and
- b) allocating an amount of money from the Permanent Endowment Fund of the Center of the Institute to establish a Shared Mission Formation Fund to provide financial support for the Lasallian formation of Partners in developing sectors.

## 6. The government in the service of vitality in the Institute



**6.1** “The Brothers consider the exercise of authority as a way of serving the community” (R 102). This conviction, already present in the letter of 1714 in which the Brothers asked John Baptist de La Salle to resume “the care and the general direction of the holy work of God that is also yours,” has guided this reflection on governance.

**6.2** It is in this spirit that the Chapter proposed a new model of government for the Institute that, in a spirit of service, enables a better response to the evolutions and challenges that we are already facing along with those that will emerge in the coming years. The concerns with regard to vitality, viability, solidarity and of leadership also guided the approach to the proposed

restructuring of the central government of the Institute.

**6.3** This model is linked to the need for responses and initiatives that address:

On the one hand:

- the rapid changes in society;
- the present realities and the emerging difficulties of our Institute as it deals with the significant diminution in the number of Brothers;

- the sensitive questions posed by the organization of certain Regions;
- the reduction from 56 to 34 of the number of Districts since the last Chapter;
- the restructuring of some of these Districts that has already taken place and that needs to be evaluated; and
- the necessity to reorganize the Secretariats.

**6.4** And on the other hand,

- the expectations and needs of the mission which continue to develop;
- a mission that is ever more dependent on Partners; and
- a mission that needs to be organized

at different levels of the Institute.

**6.5** With confidence, we consider the present context as an opportunity to engage our creativity to develop an even more effective structure of government. With regard to the responsibilities of the Brother Councilors, we were guided by the Acts of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter with particular reference to Chapter 8 on Government and Animation in paragraphs 3.1.1 and 3.2.

**6.6** The key principle underpinning the reflection and elaboration of our propositions on government was to introduce greater flexibility and suppleness and to take greater advantage of what the *Rule* already offers. Regarding this need for flexibility, we also highlight the need for different styles of relationships which would be more regular and interpersonal and which facilitate collaborative interaction among those responsible for leadership in the Institute: for example, the Brother Superior with his Vicar; the Brother Superior and Brother Vicar with the Brother Councilors; and, Brother Superior with Brother Visitors.

**6.7** Additionally, we believe that modern technology must be used to facilitate more spontaneous and responsive communication.

**6.8** The two pillars of the propositions



for the government of the Institute are (a) flexibility and the adaptation of the way the Center operates and (b) more personal and direct communication from the Center.

**6.9** There is a desire for more active leadership from the Center of the Institute. There is no doubt that pastoral leadership is important but, at this significant moment in the life of an Institute that is aging and fragile, and yet energized by a mission that is still viable and vital, we need leadership that has administrative capabilities and that can intervene in the life of a Region and District as needed. In this regard clear, rapid and effective communication is important and making better use of new developments in technology and communication should help to devise a more agile and flexible administrative structure. This structure will need to address a reality that has seen the number of districts reduce from 56 at the end of the 44<sup>th</sup>

General Chapter to 34 at the end of this Chapter. It will also have to address the reality of an institute that operates at different speeds in different areas of Institute life.

## The mandate of the Brother Superior General

**6.10** After the reflections of the General Chapter during the discussion on the Revision of the Rule, it was decided to maintain the current position regarding the renewal of the mandate of the Brother Superior.

## The role of the Brother Superior

**6.11** With the reduced number of Districts, it was recommended that the Brother Superior should interact more directly with the Brother Visitors, meeting them at least once a year in the Regional Visitors Conference and perhaps at other times through a video conference or similar technology. The purpose of these “visits” would be to support and animate the Visitors and monitor the implementation of General Chapter orientations. These visits would be distinct from the pastoral visits of the Brother Superior to the District which would continue to be programmed over the Intercapital period.

**6.12** With regard to these pastoral visits of the Brother Superior to the Districts, the Chapter offered a number of suggestions.

- These visits should be based on a strategic plan put in place well ahead of the visit in which key areas for attention could be mutually identified.
- Since these visits are actually canonical visits in which Brother Superior can exercise his authority, it was suggested that he should play a more active role with the District Council during these visits.
- At the same time, it was recognized that “presence” and the “message” of the Brother Superior are very important sources of encouragement to Brothers and other Lasallians alike, and that this direct contact will become progressively more important in the future.
- It was also recognized that, while there are inevitable “protocol” di-



mensions involved in such pastoral visits, their essential purpose is animation.

## The election of the Brother Vicar General

**6.13** Given the need for close collaboration between the Brother Superior and the Brother Vicar and the need for complementary gifts in leadership, the Chapter proposed that the Brother Vicar be elected from a list of three names presented by the Brother Superior after his election, and the discernment process that preceded it.

### Proposition 34

That the Brother Vicar be elected from a list of three names proposed by the Brother Superior to the Chapter.

## The Role of the Brother Vicar

**6.14** The Brother Vicar General is the first General Councilor (R 119) and the first collaborator (R 112) of the Brother Superior. Other than, as his title indicates, substituting for the Brother Superior when called on, he should collaborate very closely with Brother Superior in all areas of the Institute Life. His position is seen primarily as a relationship rather than a function. He acts as a close companion to the Brother Superior in a similar relationship that Brother Visitors have with

their Brother Auxiliaries. This is the model that the Chapter has in mind.

**6.15** With regard to the functions of the Brother Vicar it is proposed that his portfolio should include, among other areas, the co-ordination of the Secretariats and Services of the Generalate including responsibility for the coordination of the CIMEL. In this coordinating role, the Chapter understood the role of the Brother Vicar as a facilitator of unity of purpose within central services. Accordingly it suggested the following proposition.

### Proposition 35

That the Brother Vicar will be responsible for, among other areas, the coordination of the Secretariats of the Central Administration of the Institute.

## The composition of the central administration of the Institute.

**6.16** The Rule gives the Brother Superior the freedom to appoint two additional General Councilors should they consider this necessary. The Chapter believes that this should be a decision based on need. It should be decided by the Brother Superior when he has assessed post-Chapter needs. This was the context for the proposal to suppress the role of General Councilors in residence and propose that the Institute's central administration should be composed of the Brother Superior, the

Brother Vicar and five General Councilors who would also have responsibility for the five regions of the Institute. The Chapter agreed that the Brother Superior and Council should also be left free to restructure the Secretariats in function of present and future needs.

### **Proposition 36**

That the Central Government of the Institute will be composed of the Brother Superior, the Brother Vicar and five Brother Councilors who would have responsibility for the five Regions.

### **Proposition 37**

That the Brother Superior and his Council will determine the number and function of the Secretariats in view of the developing needs and circumstances of the mission.

## **The Regions and the Brother General Councilor with responsibility for a Region**

**6.17** The Chapter decided after reflection not to support the suggestion that additional authority be given to the General Councilors with responsibility for the Regions. The view was that the authority granted by the *Rule*, in particular with regard to delegated authority from the Brother Superior, is

sufficient. The role of the Brother Councilor with responsibilities for the Region is regulated by Regional statutes which should be regularly reviewed to ensure that the Brother Councilor has the necessary authority to exercise his responsibilities. The Chapter suggested that Brother Superior should participate in the annual Regional Visitors Conference, along with the Brother Councilor. This would provide an opportunity for him to deal in a direct way with some of the issues of accountability of the Brother Visitor that were raised in *Report of the Br. Superior General*.

### **Proposition 38**

That a review of Regional Statutes be undertaken by each Region to ensure that the Brother General Councilors who would have responsibility for the five Regions have the necessary authority to allow them to function effectively and to address the needs of the Region. This review will be sent to the Brother Superior and Council for approval within a year of the General Chapter.

**6.18** During discussions on the floor of the Chapter it became clear that there is a great diversity in the regions with regard to financing and resourcing regional structures and programs. To help address this diversity and support those regions in need of financial sup-



port, it proposed that a review of regional funding would take place.

### **Proposition 39**

That, given the financial difficulties experienced by some Regions, the International Economic Council, in dialogue with the conferences of the Brother Visitors, advises the Brother Superior and Council as to the most appropriate way to finance the Regional structures within a year of the General Chapter.

## **The role of Sectors in the Institute**

**6.19** Brother Superior's report called on the Chapter to review the position of the Sectors in the Institute. Accordingly present practice throughout the Institute was reviewed and the following proposition was accepted by the Chapter.

### **Proposition 40**

That the function of the Sectors, and the role of the Brother Coordinator of the Sector, be clearly defined in District Statutes approved by the Brother Superior and his Council within a year of the General Chapter.

## **The future use of the Generalate in Rome.**

**6.20** The Chapter was asked to respond to the request in Brother Superior's Report for directions with regard to the future use of the Generalate. Accordingly, it put forward the following two propositions which were adopted by the Chapter:

### **Proposition 41**

That the Brother Superior and his Council be empowered to conclude the study of the Generalate as efficiently and quickly as possible and to make all decisions deemed necessary by them in the light of that study.

### **Proposition 42**

That in the event of a possible sale of the Generalate, that decision will be the responsibility of Brother Superior and his Council following a consultation process that they judge most appropriate with the Institute.

# 7. Stewardship of resources in the life of the mission and of the brothers



Christian education of young people especially the poor.

## Human and financial resources

**7.2** The Institute is committed to sustaining its mission– the human and Christian education of young people especially the poor. The mission requires continuity in the availability and development of resources both human and financial. Continuity is assured by: adequate and equitable access to formation and training; ongoing development; adequate income; and intervention by the Institute when necessary.

## Stewardship

**7.1** The Gospel call to stewardship invites us to “use whatever gifts you have received to serve others” (1 Pet 4.10) and to preserve the integrity of creation. This stewardship involves not only the development and accumulation of resources, but also the equitable and just distribution of these according to the purpose for which they have been entrusted to us. For us Brothers, the use of our resources should always be with the view of advancing our mission of the human and

## Solidarity

**7.3** A strong sense of interdependence, co-responsibility and solidarity has constantly sustained the mission of the Institute. This attitude is even more important today when the Institute is confronted by challenges and looks to its future. Everybody is invited to cooperate in strengthening the establishment of the Institute in the younger Districts and to foster the autonomy and sustainability of our mis-

sion. At the same time every Sector must strive towards self-sufficiency as a matter of dignity and full participation in the life of the Institute.

## Stable Patrimony funds at all levels of the Institute

**7.4** Following the recommendation of article 40 of the 43rd General Chapter, this Chapter asserts that stable patrimony funds are important at all levels of the Institute. It is equally important that each level define the purpose and the conditions for the use of the income generated by its stable patrimony funds.

## Risk assessment

**7.5** Any new project has financial risk involved in it. In order for leaders to make informed, transparent and responsible decisions, a risk assessment is essential in order to assure the stability of the patrimony.

## Accountability and transparency

**7.6** Accountability and transparency are essential at all levels. We must all acknowledge responsibility for our actions, and be transparent in our dealings. We must, with honesty and integrity, report to our superiors and receive results and decisions that are both accurate and informative from those in our charge. Only with this motivation will there be adequate dia-

logue among those with whom we are engaged in ministry.

## Stable Patrimony Fund of the Center of the Institute

### Proposition 43

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter agrees to establish formally the Stable Patrimony Fund of the Center of the Institute.

- a. The Stable Patrimony Fund is composed of the capital invested now.
- b. The annual revenues of the Permanent Endowment Fund will be used to provide financial resources for the operating costs of the administration of the Center of the Institute, and if possible, to assist formation programs, to supplement the Development Fund, etc. according to the priorities of the General Council.
- c. Every District will consider as an objective, from now until the next General Chapter, to establish its own permanent endowment fund that may provide the necessary ordinary operating financial resources to cover the costs of its annual ordinary budget.
- d. The District Chapters will define the purpose and conditions for the use of the income generated by the Permanent Endowment Fund.

## Stable Patrimony Fund management team

### Proposition 44

That a management team be established (which could be the International Economic Council) for the Stable Patrimony Fund of the Institute.

a. This management team, after consulting experts, will advise the Brother Superior and his Council on the percentage of the market value to be taken from the Stable Patrimony Fund yearly.

b. The amount used during any year could be increased if there is an emergency recognized by the Brother Superior and his Council.

## Sharing Fund

### Proposition 45

That District contributions to the Sharing Fund continue for the next seven years.

## Twinning funds

### Proposition 46

That the purpose for which funds are made available under twinning arrangements be extended to in-

clude the additional purpose of sustaining the mission.

In keeping with the mandate of the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter, the following steps will be implemented:

- The purpose, if other than formation and administration, must be shown to contribute to the sustainability of the mission of the Institute, such as a project or a loan from the fund to initiate a project.
- Both parties to the twinning agreement conduct a joint feasibility study that demonstrates the capacity to repay any debts that are incurred.
- These repayments are included in the annual budget of the Sector or District.

## Solidarity Contributions (For the establishment of a Development Fund for developing Districts)

### Proposition 47

That the District contribution to the Center of the Institute, which assisted the Casa Generalizia develop self-sufficiency, be continued at a rate that is 50% of the current contribution for the next seven years in order to provide a Development

Fund which could help fund new initiatives to help move toward self-sufficiency in developing sectors.

The 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter accepts that a Development Management Team, appointed by the Brother Superior and his Council, will manage the Development Fund, taking into consideration the finances and human resources in consultation with the beneficiaries.

## Aging and fragile Districts

### **Proposition 48**

That the General Councilor, with the Brother Visitors of the Region, consider the aging and fragile Districts as an area that affects the whole Region.

They shall develop a vision, a structure and an administrative plan in order to guarantee the vitality and pastoral care of the Brothers, the patrimony of the Brothers, and all that is important for the continuity of the Lasallian mission.



## 8. The revision of the Rule



**8.1** Developments in the Institute, the Church and our world during the past quarter century led delegates to the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapters' call for revisions to our 1987 Rule. As in the time of our Founder and the first Brothers, communities and Brothers throughout the Institute were invited over a period of several years to offer their reflections, comments and suggestions as to what revisions to the Rule seemed necessary. This collaborative work resulted in the Revision of the Rule Commission presenting a draft to the Institute in September 2012 with the proposed revisions.

**8.2** During the first phase of the General Chapter members of the Revision of the Rule Commission presented the orientation that guided their work. The 1987 Rule was the basis for the work. The “reading keys” essential to their work included:

- reference to the origins of our association;
- the desire to recognize that our mission is greater than what we do on a daily basis in our ministries—it also includes the elements of witness, service and communion;
- the poor are the first beneficiaries of the mission and then all young people and adults;
- there is a bond between the vow of association and vow of stability;
- a spiritual life that is more than just a life of prayer;
- formation as a continuous process, extending beyond initial formation;
- government is understood in terms of authority as service; and
- the identity of the Brother is understood within the context of the world today and the sharing of the mission and the charism.

**8.3** The September 2012 draft of the revisions to the Rule was proposed and approved as the working document for the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. The Chapter engaged in the final work of revision.

**8.4** The capitulants entered into their deliberation with the attitude that John Baptist de La Salle recommends to us in his meditation for the Eve of the Ascension. In this meditation St. La Salle reminds us that prayer is a conversation with God through our Brothers. This is the attitude in which the work of revision commenced; a prayerful conversation on the essentials of our identity and vocation as Brothers.

**8.5** Also desiring the unity of heart and mind St. La Salle so earnestly asked the first Brothers to have, capitulants asked the Holy Spirit to fill them with “one and the same convictions, the same will, the same affections...” (M 39.3). Carefully listening to one another and collectively discerning God’s will, the thematic groups went forward in the hope of completing this important task in the Chapter’s final two weeks.

**8.6** As the final phase of the Chapter came to conclusion the basic work of revision was completed. However,

preparing the definitive text in French and organizing the work of the thematic groups into a coherent whole was still necessary. Therefore, the Chapter delegates approved the following propositions relative to the revision of the Rule:

#### **Proposition 49**

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter agrees that small working groups be created for the purpose of assisting the Brother Superior and the General Council.

#### **Proposition 50**

That the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter agrees that, in order to conclude the revision of the 1987 Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Brother Superior may create a group of Brothers to act under his control and direction.

**8.7** As a consequence four Brothers were appointed by Brother Superior to present a draft for approval in the three Institute languages. The definitive text in French is now being prepared for submission to the Vatican.

# 9. Young Brothers

**9.1** The young Brothers in the Institute contributed to the Chapter reflection and to the Revision of the Rule. In the Chapter assembly, there were 8 young Brother Delegates, representing 10% of the Delegates. Besides instilling a spirit of optimism and hope for the future of the Institute, these young Brothers, on their own initiative, presented to the Chapter Assembly a message and a proposal primarily aimed at other young Brothers in the Institute.

## Proposition 51

That the Chapter Assembly, on behalf of the Young Brother Capitulants, allow the sending and distribution of the following message:

## Message addressed to the young Brothers

**9.2** "Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way..." (Luke 24. 32)

Dear young Brother:

We have thought much about you and it is for that reason we want to show our appreciation and support for the work you carry out daily with deep passion and commitment.

As participants in the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, representing young Brothers, we want to speak to you heart to heart. It is a joy to share with you what is burning within us at this time. The diversity and richness of our Institute, reflected in the ninety-four capitulants, have allowed for God's intervention in a story that we continue to construct "together and by association."

The experience of Parmenie was our inspiration for the General Chapter. After three-hundred years, the courage of the Founder and the first Brothers continues to awaken a spirit of conversion that impels us to take up the reins of commitment to fidelity, discovering with hope and joy, that this "work of God is also ours."

As companions on the journey, we share with you three invitations that challenge us as young Brothers:

## Let us open our minds...

- It is the time to throw ourselves into the void of uncertainty and to open our ideas to new borders, new challenges, new calls.
- The world needs new thinking. We are invited to make incursions into inhospitable terrain and from there





to offer our educational, evangelical, missionary and human contributions.

- What is needed is to go beyond our personal barriers, to leap over obstacles that the diversity of our communities may present, and to go out of ourselves in order to share our treasure, that which unites and calls us: fraternity.
- Today we have the challenge of helping others to open their horizons, to contemplate God's presence in those who surround us and are entrusted to us and, in that way, to take the risk of transforming minds and touching hearts.

### Let us open our hearts...

- The cries of the world cannot go unnoticed nor can they be submerged in indifference and silence. Our hearts, moved by reality, beat with hope and lead us to the adventure of discovering God amidst the cries of the poor.
- Let us continue to be the source of love and welcoming for all those

with whom we share our lives and mission. This is the time to open our hearts to the reality of an international Institute and to live the adventure of universal love.

- The time has come to dare to feel the depth of God's loving presence and in that way to renew each day the initiative of a Father who called us and invites us to show that "life is worthwhile when love is placed at the service of all."

### Let us open our hands...

- As young people, the zeal proper to our Institute is bursting within us. We dedicate our lives to the most vulnerable, knowing that we are sent by God as his "guardian angels."
- We are teachers in a world that needs risky and bold responses. Let us open our horizons of creativity in order to ensure that the mission deploys its strength in the promotion of a world that is more just and in solidarity with others.

- The school challenges us to continue recognizing the faces of God's preferred ones, allowing the Lord to dwell in our hearts and raise questions in the lives of all Brothers.

With open minds, willing hearts, and ready hands, we call on you, Brother, to play an active part in this transformation in communion with the entire Institute. Draw near, with your dreams and concerns, to the documents of the General Chapter and let us contribute to the creative construction of this work of God. It is in the day-by-day contact with the young, in the Brothers' community, in the simplicity of apostolic commitment, where true renewal takes place.

Thank you for sharing in this project which is filled with dreams and hopes that will allow for a happy and generous response to the action of the Spirit. We can not live minimally, our contribution is a path of evangelical innovation to live with human and spiritual quality. Let us continue praying for one another so that it is the Lord who journeys close to us in this decisive moment of our lives. Let us go out to the world with the intention of proclaiming the Good News, as living witnesses to fraternity and as bold builders of a civilization of love.

Fraternally yours, your Brothers,

*The Young Brother Capitulants*

## International assembly for representatives of the young Brothers

### Proposition 52

That before the next General Chapter there be an international assembly for representatives of the young Brothers from different Regions, for the purpose of sharing their experience, dreams and concerns, with fraternity, in an atmosphere of prayer and with apostolic work experience.

**9.3** In this sense, we recommend that,

- The promotion of meetings of young Brothers at District and Region levels.
- The young Brothers who are delegates of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter develop a brief report for the Superior and his Council that will include their experience in Dasmariñas and at the General Chapter, for the purpose of proposing suggestions for planning a future Assembly.



## 10. Closing Message to the Brothers

### 10.1 Dear Brothers,

The paschal stories of Emmaus and Parménie shed, for the Brother capitulants, a special light on the themes that we believe will frame and shape our consecration, mission and community for the next several years. We too will allow the paschal mystery to critically interpret and shape our destiny as an Institute. In the leadership ministry you have entrusted to us, we will be attentive to “signs and times.” Signs of fragility and decline, signs of stability and growth. Times of sorrow and distress, times of joy and enthusiasm. There will be signs of dying and times when we allow the old to ascend. There will be signs of new life that is rising and times to follow the spirit that God has entrusted to us.

**10.2** This “paschal imagination” guided the Chapter’s heart and mind. As you have read in this circular, some of the stirring images that surfaced were *moving toward the periphery and border, fraternal solidarity, living the joy of our vocation and mission, the sacred dignity of the young, and working for and with the poor*. These images are compelling precisely because they took shape as propositions that were concrete, specific and clear. The capitulants want to offer to the Institute and Lasallian Family more than platitudes. They want to move us from a static sense of the possible to a dynamic commitment to the probable.

**10.3** It is clear we stand at the intersection of imagination and resources. Without turning a blind eye to the scarcity in human and financial resources they draw our attention to the abundance. They want us to invest our Gospel energy in what is emerging rather than in a consuming anxiety about what is diminishing. They want our imaginations to tap into the courageous response of the discouraged disciples on the way to Emmaus and the discouraged Founder in the south of France. Called together as the Body of the Society, they impel us to respond with the radical hope of the first disciples, the Founder, and the first Brothers.

**10.4** Radical hope is apostolic and a characteristic of our Lasallian history. Hope is disruptive and does not tolerate inertia. It calls for mobility and flexibility, for going to the periphery and beyond the border. Undoubtedly, these images were inspired by the words and example of Pope Francis who constantly invites us all to leave our areas of comfort in order to encounter the poor and vulnerable. The

vulnerable, we well know, are “there.” By the border. These propositions invite us to answer with audacity and creativity the urgent needs of those who often dwell on the peripheries of our own personal interests.

**10.5** Many propositions refer to new initiatives related to this metaphor. They frequently use the prefix “inter”: inter-regional, inter-District, inter-congregational communities. They insist on communities with mixed membership: Partners and Brothers, Volunteers and Brothers, Young Brothers and Young Lasallians, etc. They issue a call to go beyond the border to a place where the need is great and the Lasallian presence is absent.

**10.6** The capitulants also imagine another kind of mobility that isn’t geopolitical, rather, an inner mobility to go deeper in a personal process of exploring interior “borders.” This kind of inner movement is into the depths of the heart, where we are urged to leave behind hurts and injuries and to set aside our pre-occupations with securities and comforts. Our hearts invite us to the insecurities of a life committed to total service. Our hearts invite us to celebrate the abundant grace of our call to self-giving in God’s economy of salvation.

**10.7** We continue to look for structures to draw us together as a global community. We recognize that sectors, districts and regions are necessary organizational structures. More and more, we recognize the importance of reaching beyond these lines to ensure the health and integrity of one another. Not only do we want to go beyond local understandings and practices to learn from one another, we want to share in one another’s aspirations and longings. This calls for a dialogue and increasing fluency in order to understand one another’s challenges and limitations.

**10.8** Of course, it is unthinkable that our perspectives would assume a frictionless harmony. Our Institute is heterogeneous. As views are expressed and positions are outlined, tension and apprehension are not uncommon. In a complex, mingled community such as ours, there are profound disagreements over issues of great importance. At times there are no satisfactory resolutions. We are faced with the perennial options for uniformity or diversity. It is telling that the capitulants chose to live in a creative tension, a sign to the Institute that our health and holiness are to be found in an imaginative love that is expansive and inclusive. The mature grace of the capitulants moved us toward stability and fraternal solidarity.

**10.9** Our vocation and mission is a source of joy for us. This image of joy reflects a profound gratitude for the privilege to share this work with God. The Brother

capitulants offer us an image of joy and call us to a revitalization to ensure that our zeal “is a product of the love of God living in you” (M 171.2).

**10.10** In a world that often expresses contempt for young people and introduces new forms of exploitation, the Brothers of the Chapter urge us to ensure that our educational communities are places of welcome and safety. Our belief in the sacred dignity of young people leads us to an unqualified response to provide optimal conditions for human growth and transformation. We want our educational spaces to be holy ground where we “Give honor to all, love the community, fear God...” (I Pet 2.17).

**10.11** And so we conclude where we always begin: our association for the educational service of the poor. When we reach out and offer the message of salvation we do so free of charge. We give our time, our presence, our unconditional acceptance. But in this encounter we are evangelized. Note though, that the international council of Young Lasallians meeting at the Generalate in February 2014 put their accent on “service with the poor.” They point us to a truth at the heart of our charism. The poor are “living images of Jesus Christ” (M 80.3) and they are living Good News for us.

**10.12** In our ongoing effort to renew and revitalize we need look no further than those entrusted to our care. They are the font and source for our personal, community and Institute renewal.

Your brothers in Christ:

*Brother Robert Schieler, Superior General*

and the members of the General Council:

*Brother Jorge Gallardo de Alba, Vicar General*

*Brother Timothy Coldwell,*

*Brother Aidan Kilty,*

*Brother Ricky Laguda,*

*Brother Pierre Ouattara,*

*Brother Paulo Petry*



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