



Lasallian Family magazine

intercom

International Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission (IA) - 2013

One family, one Mission: Lasallians Associated for the Educational Service of the Poor

We are delighted to share with you in this issue of Intercom a report of the lived experience during the Second International Assembly for the **Lasallian Educational Mission**. It was an experience of prayer, reflection, multi-cultural awareness, evaluation and planning for the Lasallian Educational Mission for the coming years. The Second International Assembly was held from May 5 to 17 at the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome with 152 persons (Brothers and lay colleagues) in attendance.

The goal of this Assembly was to continue the work begun at the 2006 Assembly which included discerning, discovering and articulating the realities of association and the educational mission in light of the Lasallian charism. Then the goal was to express a collective vision of current challenges that we have in our mission as well as possible responses to those challenges in order to

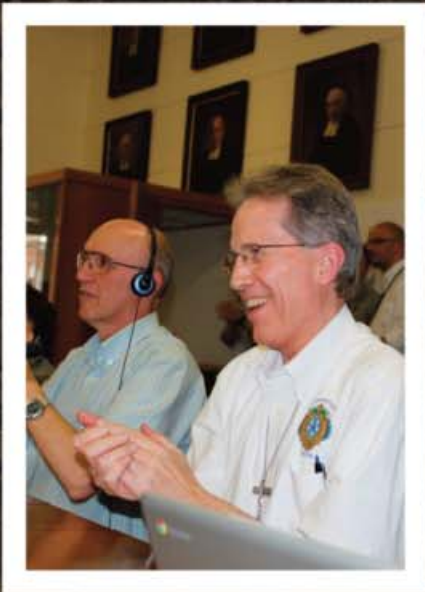
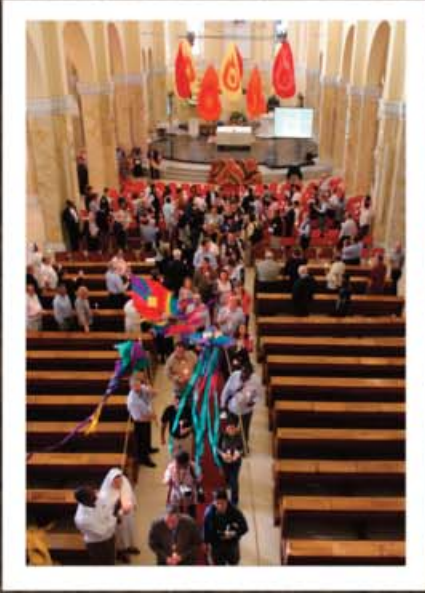
respond to the needs of children and the young, especially the poor.

The Assembly was carried out in two phases: the goal of the first phase, which took place in each Region, was to reflect on the three working themes, to draw up summary reports to be shared with the other Regions and to prepare an oral presentation to be shared by all during the first days of the International Assembly; in the second phase, in Rome, the 152 delegates synthesized the 9 challenges of the mission and the 24 responses that we can give to these challenges from our charism. Said challenges and their responses will be presented to the 45th General Chapter in 2014.

- **Slogan**

Discussion in recent years about the theme of Association for the





Mission has brought to light very significant experiences that strengthen our mission and this led the Preparatory Commission to propose the central theme for the preparation and carrying out of the Second International Assembly: **One Family, One Mission: Lasallians Associated for the Educational Service of the Poor.** Brother Álvaro, in his welcoming address at the Assembly, underscored the idea of the Lasallian Family that is committed to the same mission and he encouraged the evaluation of lived experience and planning the future of our ministry, especially with the poor.

• Reflection Themes

Assembly reflections centered around three themes: Lasallian Education for the service of the poor, Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry for the service of the poor, and the Educational Community for the service of the poor. Each one of these themes was the focus of discussion, first in Regions and then at the Assembly in Rome.

• Opening address by the Superior General

Brother Álvaro, in his opening address, underscored the slogan of this second Assembly, saying that the conviction of our hope in the mission should be anchored in God and he recalled the words of the Founder (M 193): "God is so good that he wills all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth." In addressing the theme of Lasallian education he invited us to reflect on the following questions: How would you characterize the Lasallian school of the future in a world that is so diverse economically, socially, and religiously? How can you assess and attend to the local situation and still be open to and aware of our global world? How can you strengthen educational communities in a world that is individualistic, fast-paced, filled with relationships that are superfluous and fluid? How do you create trust, peace and security in a world that is violent, aggressive and unjust? How do you really exercise the option for the poor, the unloved, for those who do not find meaning in their lives, for those who have learning difficulties, for immigrant children and young people, while integrating gratuity with efficiency? Regarding the theme of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry, he invited us to permeate all our Lasallian educational activity with the Gospel. Finally, with regard to the theme of the Educational Community, he invited us to foster educational renewal that will promote a sense of community and fraternity.

• Multi-cultural socializing

One of the many rich experiences of the



Rome meeting was the cultural diversity of the participants who came from 51 countries, representing their Districts and the five Regions of the Institute: PARC, RELEM, RELAN, RELAF, and RELAL. The many languages spoken was not an impediment for communication and sharing, as each delegate looked for the best way to communicate during the informal times. It was a time of cultural rapprochement and mission sharing.

• The Assembly Phases

The Assembly took place in four phases, corresponding to the seasons of the year: autumn, winter, spring and summer. Each phase had its own special emphasis in the discussions and work of the Assembly.

Autumn gave us the opportunity to look more closely at the reality of the Lasallian Mission in each Region. This phase included a





talk by Dr. Francesc Torralba who spoke about the type of education that we should offer in a plural context and especially among populations that are more vulnerable. At the end of this first phase Tracy Adams, a Lasallian and the Executive Director of Boys Town in Australia, shared her experience about this program which offers assistance to children and young people through initiatives, such as a 24-hour help line for kids who are at risk and support programs for parents as well as employment for the young.

Winter, the second phase, helped us to reflect on the challenges of the Lasallian mission in the world and the delegates, in Thematic Groups, had to prioritize three challenges for the Lasallian mission within each of the Assembly's central reflection themes.

Spring was the phase where the responses had to be fleshed out – responses that the Lasallian Mission should give to each of the challenges that were prioritized in the Thematic Groups. Two days of dialogue, listening, agreement and commitment to the responses that can and should be given to each of the challenges in the themes under discussion.

Summer was the phase of commissioning that represented the hard work that remains in order to transform our lives and dreams into reality and to make significant contributions to the needs of the world today.

• Prayer and meditation

During the Assembly there was ample time for prayer, meditation, retreat and sharing, all of which facilitated the work and progress of each of the four seasons that energized the Assembly: fall, winter, spring and summer. Each one of the seasons was guided by Bible passages that lit up the path by means of images that invited reflection; music and song that brought one to seclusion and abandonment and interiorization of the work that was done on a daily basis.

• A Look at the Regions

At various times of the Assembly the Regions of the Institute

were examined. One of these times was that of reflection in which the Regions drew up a summary of the progress made in Regions since the 2006 Assembly. Challenges of the mission were examined in each Region. Another important time was when each Region gave its presentation of its own Regional report on the first day of the Assembly. Each Region also had a display that highlighted its program involving the Lasallian Mission the world over.

• Cultural Interchange

This Assembly was not all work as there were times for cultural interchange. Each Region organized a social gathering in the evening that emphasized the cultural customs of the various Regions. These were times for relaxation and sharing to celebrate the Assembly's progress.

• Celebration of Founder's Day

May 15 was an opportunity to celebrate the Feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and educators in the Church of the Founder where his relics are located. The Eucharistic celebration was the central point of the day's festivities.

• Art during the Assembly

Brother Felipe Ocadiz made good use of his artistic talent and visually reconstructed each phase of the Assembly by creating a wonderful mural in the front of the Assembly Hall. The mural was added to each day and it captured the significant moments and progress of the Assembly. In the end, his great artistic talent reflected the lived experience and the results of the Second International Assembly.

• The Regions and their priorities

At the conclusion of the Assembly delegates from each Region got together to identify the priorities for their Region, keeping in mind the challenges and responses to those challenges that were defined by the Assembly.

• Closing words from the Superior General

In his closing words Brother Álvaro invited us to continue living joyfully and to place our trust in God to continue our mission – to help in enabling persons to transform the world. Recalling the words of Pope Francis, he invited us to spread the Gospel with our lives and to share what we experienced in this Assembly in order to continue growing in our life commitments and to ensure the continuity and timeliness of the Lasallian charism, especially for children and the young, among them the most vulnerable.

This Second International Assembly was an experience for the entire Lasallian Family because we all participate in the same Mission: **One Family, one Mission: Lasallians Associated for the Educational Service of the Poor.**

From the Secretary's Desk



The International Assembly has just ended. The corridors of the Generalate may be emptier now, but the themes of association, sustainability, co-responsibility, formation, community, inclusivity, vocation, tradition and interdependence still echo through the halls. The assembly's identification of new challenges and their respective responses will surely bring new life, vision and hope to our Lasallian Family. It was a wonderful experience of our Family at its best!

Not only the Assembly has ended... my time as the Coordinating Secretary for the Lasallian Family & Association is also coming to an end. Serving the Institute has been an honor for me. Now, after five years in Rome, I have been reassigned to my home District (DNA) as Auxiliary Visitor beginning in September. I return to the USA with a wealth of unforgettable international experiences, friends and memories. Thank you all for allowing me to journey with you as we explored, together and by association, what it means to be Lasallian Family in the 21st century. May our "Stories of Hope" encourage us. May our dedication to the Mission never fail. Live Jesus in our hearts... Forever!

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Brother Charles Kitson



Lasallian Indonesia

Divine Providence best captures my experience of being Lasallian. In Indonesia, my parents and I live in Manado, North Sulawesi province. In 2000, the diocese of Manado began collaboration with the De La Salle Brothers from the Philippines to establish a Catholic university in Manado. Meeting the Brothers was my very first step into an amazing world; the world of education that involves the heart and not only academics. When I decided to write 'teacher' as my ideal career in the elementary school yearbook, it was based on my desire to help others learn new things. Later, I realized that there was something much more powerful than this. The Lasallian Mission taught me concern for others through selfless dedication.

I have been privileged to participate as a member of Signum Fidei in the 2006 International Mission Assembly, the 2011 PARC Lasallian Women's Symposium, and various other formation programs offered in our Region. Today the De La Salle Brothers are no longer physically present here in Indonesia, but the Lasallian spirit lives on! We Lasallians keep it alive.

I am sure there are many powerful stories about how St. John Baptist de La Salle has inspired countless lives. Based on my lived experience, I would say it all comes



down to simplicity, compassion and faith. I try to keep the Lasallian 'flame' inside of me burning and to continue the Founder's work wherever I am.

Together with the De La Salle Brothers and Sisters and my fellow Lasallian teachers, I consider myself a "Lasallian in the making." Please, may we keep touching hearts, teaching minds and transforming lives!

Margriet "Mimi" Taher



International Council Lasallian Family & Association Spotlight



I joined the Lasallian Family in 1991. Since 1999, I have worked in the Office of Education for the District of San Francisco. My ministry is Lasallian Formation for teachers, staff members, and administrators in the schools of our District.

I have enjoyed serving on the International Council for the Lasallian Family and Association for the past six years. The people on the Council are faithful, dedicated, generous, marvelous, and very talented Lasallians. In some ways, we form a microcosm of the worldwide Lasallian Family, a family notable for its “unity in diversity.” We come from many different nations and represent every Region of the Institute. We speak many different languages and we serve in a great variety of ministerial settings. Yet, we share a common bond of association in the Lasallian Family. As a Council, we have collaborated and have consulted on some important projects during our time together, including an Association & Lasallian Family Survey of all the Districts in the Institute, Circular #461, and Bulletin #254. Circular #461 has become a useful and inspiring formation tool in my ministry in the District of San Francisco, and I look forward to sharing Bulletin #254 in the same way. All of these activities have deepened my own experience of Association and my

commitment to the Lasallian Educational Mission.

Thank you, Brother Charles Kitson and Montse Nieto, Co-Secretaries of the Council, for your leadership and your tireless efforts to form and nurture community among the members of our Council.

Greg Kopra

To be a Delegate for the 2013 International Mission Assembly

I can define being a Delegate for the 2013 International Mission Assembly with the following words: privilege, commitment, responsibility and opportunity, all carried out with the heart and in a family setting.

To form part of a multicultural group that undertakes a journey to seek out the challenges the Institute is facing today and to try to find answers for them as well as lines of action for the growth of our mission may seem complicated due to the diversity involved. But when you find yourself from the very beginning in a family and fraternal environment then the diversity no longer matters – it all becomes a privilege and an opportunity to respond to the needs of the Institute in a universal way.

It was a privilege to be a Delegate and to put into common our thoughts, voices and votes; to understand the other from his or her perspective and to understand that it was no longer possible to think in a personal way or based on just our own schools, works, Districts or Regions but that now it was time to think, discern, see options for growth and respond to needs based on the universal nature of the Institute.

This commitment was accepted by everyone which allowed for doing your best and channeling work with open eyes and hearts throughout the duration of the Assembly and to look at what was really urgent and needed attention.

It was vital to understand the responsibility, importance and transcendence of the work we were doing so that it could be done respectfully. This helped in increasing our capacity for tolerance, listening, analyzing and discerning, always in God's company and inspired by Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

This event became an opportunity to see and to assess through daily living, prayer, reflection, and experience, everything that has been, is now, and will come to be in a living Institute that continues to grow and become stronger on the five continents – always keeping the mission in mind.



Juana María García Cantú – District of North Mexico

Launching the Logo for the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians (February 9-14, 2014)



On April 15th 2013, with 300 days separating us from the official opening of the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians (ISYL'14), the International Council of Young Lasallians (ICYL) launched the official logo of this very important event for the Institute and the Lasallian Family.

Who is this Symposium, ISYL'14, for?

This symposium hopes to capture the hopes and aspirations of as many young people as possible who are connected to the Lasallian Educational Mission; also known as Young Lasallians. This network of young people includes youth and young adults whose involvement in the mission ranges from a de-facto presence and contribution, to a structured and intentional commitment.

What does ISYL'14 want to discuss?

We will identify and prioritize the objectives and lines of action leading to the formalization of an international movement within the network of Young Lasallians. ISYL'14 intends to link these objectives directly to the orientations of the 2nd International Mission Assembly and other major Assemblies to be held in 2013.

Who will be attending ISYL'14?

The selection process to identify the delegates representing the 5 Regions of the Lasallian World – Europe and the Mediterranean, North America, Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific – is already underway. Most Regions have already finalized their lists of names. The Symposium will have almost 60 participants in all.

Why is ISYL'14 so important?

All structures for Young Lasallians at whatever level (local, District or Regional), provide space and voice to and for young people in the Institute and the broader Lasallian Family. Such structures act also as a reminder by and to the Institute and the Lasallian Family never to cease inviting young people to be protagonists in the Lasallians Mission any way they can. ISYL'14 is the clearest and most inclusive expression of the Young Lasallians' (YLS') collective voice and aspirations.

Does ISYL'14 have a theme?

As featured in the ISYL'14 logo, the theme is **Building Hope Together**. We will be focusing on the significance and symbolism of this theme in our next issue of Intercom.

International "Signum Fidei" Assembly

The First International Signum Fidei Fraternity Assembly took place in 2006. This year, from July 1 to 13 the Generalate will host the 2nd International Signum Fidei Assembly. Participants will include 23 lay persons and five Brothers from the various Regions of the Institute in addition to Brother Charles Kitson, Coordinating Secretary for the Lasallian Family and Association and Brother Alberto Gómez, the International Advisor for the Fraternity.

The birth of the "Signum Fidei" Fraternity is due primarily to a new ecclesial vision and the vitality of the Lasallian charism. Groups and communities in said Fraternity are communities of faith made up of lay Lasallians who find inspiration in the spiritual and educational style of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. The dedication of each of its members constitutes a gift of priceless value for the Lasallian mission and for the Church.

The primary objective of the 2nd International Assembly is the revision and definitive approval of the "Style of Life" document that will become the Rule of Life for all Signum Fidei members throughout the world. Besides this work, delegates will devote time to studying the lines of action from the 2nd International Assembly including the theme of formation of new members and ongoing formation for those who have been in the Fraternity for some time. In addition, educational, apostolic and social commitment will be studied as well as community dynamics, twinning, self-sufficiency, communication and new vocations.

Beyond these objectives, this will be an experience in international living and in formation that will help the delegates to feel that they play main roles in the Lasallian mission in communion with the entire Lasallian Family.



From the perspective of the Being Brothers Today Secretariat what took place at the International Assembly?

The Assembly was a great opportunity to get a global view of the broad range of the Lasallian mission throughout the world. The representatives from all the countries and continents shared their personal perspectives before the entire assembly or in small groups.

One of the words that came up over and over in the discussions and exchanges was the word "formation." In the beginning, the topic of formation was aimed more or less at the "Community" thematic group. Nevertheless, all groups spoke about the topic in one way or another. The decision of the coordinating commission was also interesting. Instead of aiming the discussion on "formation" towards the "Community" group, they allowed each group to continue the discussion from their own perspective so that nothing would be lost in the process of discussion.

It seems to me that this way of working would be the best for the present and the future of formation for all Lasallians. Formation needs to be a process that permeates all areas and all functions. The future of the Lasallian mission plays out and is defined by everything we do on the level of formation.

During the Assembly the need to form a new generation of those who work in formation was emphasized, to establish formation programs appropriate for each person according to their reality and to strengthen formation in the charisma and in spirituality.



At various times during the Assembly another concern emerged: the need to underscore the importance of the vocation of the Brother at this particular time. Although in recent years the importance of association with the laity has been emphasized, for some participants in the Assembly it was clear that this is the time to pay special attention to the vocation of the Brother. Without denying this need, for other representatives it was clear that it was also necessary to emphasize the importance of all vocations within the Lasallian identity: Brothers, Sisters, lay persons, married couples, young people, non-Christians, etc.

Is it that the Brother's vocation today is more vulnerable than other vocations? Or is it the very sense of "vocation" that is more vulnerable today? In any case, our formation programs for all Lasallians need to consider these vulnerabilities to be able to respond today and in the future to the needs of the mission. The Lasallian mission today, more than ever, needs a vocation ministry program that is alive and creative.

Brother Jesús Rubio

Get to know the new members of the Secretariat: Br. José Ricardo Moreno and Br. Felix Joseph.

Brother José Ricardo Moreno has been called to work as a member of the CIL staff and Brother Felix is the new Secretary for Initial Formation for English-speaking areas. José Ricardo is from the District of Bogotá and Felix is a member of the Delegation of India. Both are part of the "Being Brothers Today" Secretariat. Intercom interviewed each Brother so that the entire Lasallian Family could get to know better the members of the teams that work in our Generalate. We asked both of them the same questions.



Br. José Ricardo Moreno

1) Can you tell us something about your experience in the mission and in Lasallian formation?

Of my 32 years as a Brother, I feel blessed to have worked in the mission for nearly 12 years in popular works; I am also blessed for the privilege of accompanying a considerable number of Brothers in various houses of formation for almost 11 years. Being near the poor has helped me to understand my

consecration better and to have the courage to live it; accompanying Brothers in formation has made me feel more directly responsible in building the future of the Institute.

2) What are the most important challenges that you sense at this time for the formation of Brothers and lay Lasallians?

To help all Brothers, especially the young ones, to become more convinced of their consecration to ensure the vitality of the Institute and the mission. For lay colleagues, apart from assuring them a good formation in many areas, especially in our spiritual heritage, the great challenge is that we offer them a credible witness of a fraternal, spiritual, and simple life and excellent quality in the educational mission. To live the charisma with them in a radical way.

3) How do you see the Institute in terms of the countries of Latin America? What are the most important signs of hope in the Institute from your perspective as a Colombian?

The Institute still continues to be greatly needed to help in the education of so many children and young people. Districts that have aged will need new blood and perhaps new ministries. There is great hope with the new vocations but their perseverance rate must be improved. The lay Lasallian movement is growing and it is a precious gift.

4) What does the opportunity and the commitment to be part of the CIL staff mean for you?

It means to serve with the talents that I received from the Lord to achieve the goals of the Institute. To help to see the future of our charisma with more hope; to give my best in order to attend to the needs of the CIL staff and the CIL groups and to live out this international experience of faith, fraternity and service joyfully.



Br. Felix Joseph

1) Can you tell us something about your experience in the mission and in Lasallian formation?

In my 21 years as a Lasallian, I spent six years in the Lasallian mission. It is a mission of love and gratitude. The reciprocal love between me and students and the lay Lasallians brought presence of blessings and wider understanding of inter-dependence in the field of mission.

I spent 15 years in initial formation. My three years of Vocation promotion gave me joy in being a De La Salle Brother. My involvement and animation in formation gave me opportunities in tune with the Institute and its resources and love for the Lasallian vocation.

2) What are the most important challenges that you sense at this time for the formation of Brothers?

The quality presence in formation, the testing patience – are to me challenges of formation of Brothers.

3) How do you see the Institute in terms of the countries of Asia and the Pacific Ocean? What are the most important signs of hope in the Institute from your perspective as an Indian?

I would like to bring the 41st General Chapter's motto: "The mission still continues..." The Lasallian star will continue to shine globally with its radical inclusion of our Lasallian partners. PARC is a sign of hope. The time has come that we should be also reciprocal in GIVING.

4) What does the opportunity and the commitment to be one of the Secretaries for initial formation mean for you?

I believe that "Five Minds for the Future" written by Howard Gardner explicitly conveys **my commitment** as the Secretary for formation as follows: **a disciplined mind, synthesizing mind, creative mind, respectful mind and ethical mind.** Of course **it is an opportunity to build bridges between people.** It is all about to **"work with integrity and try to succeed with integrity" AS FAR AS I AM ABLE.**

Reopening of the La Salle Museum

April 2013



**Faith and Zeal. De La Salle:
Three -hundred dynamic years.**

Two words, the same spirit.

Energy today that lives in the hearts of all Lasallians.

*This display is a brief journey
about the reason for our vocation,
about our Lasallian mission.*

On April 30, 2013, the 362nd anniversary of the birth of John Baptist de La Salle in Rheims, the Service of Lasallian Research and Resources in the Generalate reopened the doors of the La Salle Museum, thereby beginning a new phase of the preservation and promotion of our historical-cultural Lasallian heritage.

Two months prior to this date the members of the Service of Lasallian Research and Resources began a project to clean and reorganize the permanent exhibition, which has always been identified as the "Founder's Room." Currently, some teaching materials have been added to the Museum and we hope that they will give an idea to the public about the life journey of John Baptist de La Salle and the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools over the course of its three-hundred and thirty-four year history.

The Museum is now organized in six different zones:

Zone A: Welcome

In this area there are two components: the portrait of the Holy Founder by Léger (1734) and the chair used by De La Salle in Grenoble in 1714.

Zone B: De La Salle, man of God

Here we can admire some personal items of De La Salle as priest; a time line with eighteen key moments in the Founder's life and a showcase with some of his spiritual items, among other things.

Zone C: Lasallian spirituality

This small, emblematic corner shows the habit that De La Salle wore. In the background is a copy of the Founder's portrait from the Sévres series and a composite rendering of the poor from yesterday and today. This is one of the most revealing corners in the current exhibit.



Zone D: Educational responses

This area is an overview of the pedagogical and catechetical works of De La Salle, notably the first edition of the Conduct of Schools (1720) and a series of photographs and documents that help in perceiving the evolution of the Lasallian school that had evolved over time. One novel item is a composition about the participation of the Brothers in the Paris Universal Exposition (1900).

Zone E: Lasallian sanctity

This area puts you into contact with Brothers of the Institute who have been recognized as Saints, Blessed, and Venerable. Of course, De La Salle himself occupies a good part of this area. Here one can admire and be thankful for the gift of the Lasallian vocation within the Church.

Zones F-G: The Institute Today

This area preserves some of the objects that have been part of the exhibit for some time. Additions include the Bull of Approbation of the Institute and the decree proclaiming De La Salle as the universal patron of teachers. The last room of the exhibit houses a composite photographic rendering of today's Institute in its diversity.

Texts of the exhibit have been prepared in Italian but visitors can use plasticized cards in each area in French, Spanish and English.

The Museum project continues:

- We need to complete our paper and digital Museum cataloging so that the Museum may be visited through the Institute web site.
- Future plans for the Museum include a blog on topics that will encourage discussion on Institute topics connected with history. This project may involve teachers in the area of Pastoral Ministry and Catechesis from our schools who are interested in studying specific Lasallian themes.



- We are interested in dialoging with Lasallian universities on incorporating some audio-visual techniques that may enrich our exhibition.
- Between September and December of this year a mural will be produced for the last area in the Museum. This mural will encompass the present, past and future of the Institute. In this way, we will continue adding worthwhile art to the heritage of our Generalate.

We hope that these initiatives will spark interest in rediscovering our rich historical-cultural heritage.



International Council of Solidarity & Development Secretariat 2013

The International Council annual meeting was held at the Casa Generalizia from April 15th to 17th with participants from all the Regions (including Bro Saúl Elvert, newly appointed as the RELAL representative) and several donor agencies.

Over the years, one goal of the International Council has been to create a network of Lasallian solidarity and development agencies. Today that network is a reality. Thanks to the cooperation of various Lasallian NGOs, numerous projects - especially in Asia and Africa - have been completed successfully. Because of the success of this synergy among development agencies around the world, additional collaborative projects are being

studied for possible implementation. Through this interaction, Lasallian solidarity bonds have been strengthened, a larger vision of the Lasallian world is emerging, significant work on behalf of the poor has been fostered and a stronger cooperation exists among Lasallian development agencies.

Building positively on our success, the International Council has plans to further expand the network. In this regard, two priorities for the immediate future were set:

- to better appreciate, understand and collaborate with RELAL's NGOs inviting them to a fuller participation within the network;

- to help to create one or two active NGOs in RELAF.

Strengthening the Lasallian development network world-wide enhances our Lasallian visibility and consolidates its image before international and national funding organizations. This will foster the fundraising potential of the individual network members.

In cooperation with the Lasallian Family and Association Secretariat, the first half-day of the meeting was devoted to Lasallian volunteer movement. Representatives of the volunteers movement were invited to share their experiences and organizational frameworks. The participants universally reported on volunteer experiences as being powerful educational instruments which teach global social justice and sustainable development. The Lasallian volunteer world draws participants from many different Lasallian institutions and involves people across the generations, from school students to retired individuals.

Three ways to strengthen the network of the volunteer movement will be (a) to share best practices, (b) to foster the formation of international volunteers groups, and (c) to improve both the coordination and information sharing among our volunteer movements. Accordingly, a survey is being launched by both the Lasallian Family and Solidarity & Development Secretariats to quantify the breadth and depth of Lasallian volunteer activities around the world.

As Brother Pedro Arrambide steps down from his position as head of the Solidarity and Development Secretariat, the International Council takes this occasion to thank him officially for his dedicated service, engaging personality, deep knowledge, and unswerving commitment to hundreds of thousands of the world's poor, especially children. While Brother Pedro will return to his home District in July, he will continue to consult and advise the Solidarity and Development Secretariat.



The new school in Port-au-Prince was built thanks to support from Lasallians all over the world.



Thanks to the new building Parmenie Learning Centre can provide primary education to 239 stateless children.



The new school in Port au Prince is a sign of hope for the future of Haitian youth and of the country.



LCES in Colombo provides access to education for the poor children of the slum.



HYDC in Papua New Guinea gives a chance to drop out students who can learn a vocation.



The new library at Meki Catholic School enhances the opportunity for students to study also in the evening in an adequate facility and positive environment.



The construction of LaSalle College Faisalabad allows girls – who otherwise had to stop going to school because of Pakistani Legislation - to continue getting junior secondary education.

Gratitude to Lasallian donors

The recent International Assembly and this current issue of Intercom present wonderful opportunities for us to thank the many generous Districts and Benefactors who have assisted SECOLI in providing funding for Lasallian projects around the world. As has been repeated in the past five General Chapters, your working with SECOLI to advance the principles of solidarity and development enables Districts with resources to assist Lasallian operations which lack such resources. Thank you, Brothers and Associates, for your collaboration with SECOLI in aiding our fellow Lasallians.

In financing important projects in developing areas, grant-making professionals differentiate between “restricted” and “unrestricted” gifts. A “restricted” gift is a donation towards very specific project at a designated location. Understandably, many donors want to know the specific project for which their funds will be used in advance of giving financial assistance. As an example, most of the money given to SECOLI has been “restricted” gifts. During the current fiscal year, SECOLI has managed more than \$900.000 (€697.229) in gifts, of which 99% has been restricted. (This does not consider the restricted gifts – sometimes called twinning – in which a number of Districts participate).

As we look towards the future needs of the Institute, we would like to suggest that Districts consider supporting SECOLI not only through “restricted” but also “unrestricted” fund-

ing. Such “unrestricted” funding allows the Secretariat for Solidarity and Development to discern the greatest need at any given moment and to use the funds for those needs. As such, it provides development professionals the financial means and strategic flexibility to

address critical issues which, for a number of reasons, cannot be handled as “restricted” gifts.

For example, a financially strapped District approached SECOLI requesting assistance in paying for a motorized wheelchair to assist a Brother who has recently developed a degenerative illness leaving him otherwise immobile. Fortunately, the District of North Mexico had given unrestricted fund to SECOLI to use at its discretion, and these funds were used to address this pressing need. Without those unrestricted funds, SECOLI could not have immediately assisted this Brother.

When possible, SECOLI will continue to link potential donors with fundable “restricted” opportunities. At times when this is not possible, responding to Lasallian needs through “unrestricted” gifts truly enables SECOLI both the strategic capacity and the financial strength to continue its mission of altruistically serving the least among us.

This year as Districts, Associates and our institutions look towards funding charitable opportunities, why not consider an “unrestricted gift” to ensure that SECOLI can respond appropriately to Lasallian needs around the globe?





Project CLIMA is training local farmers how to be agriculturally self-sufficient in Burkina Faso.

2 boys find friendship and security at the Lasallian Intiganda Center which serves as a refuge for street kids in Rwanda.



In South Sudan, the De La Salle Brothers are teaming with other religious congregations to provide teacher training throughout the country.

A Lasallian teacher at a night session of Sangklaburi Bamboo School teaches stateless Myanmar children and adults how to write and read Thai.



Many Thanks!



The Guadalupanas Sisters of De La Salle have had a community at the Generalate since 1957. Since that time, for all Lasallians who have come to Rome, the Sisters have been part of the international face of the Institute. Their discreet yet effective presence has been a constant in the various tasks they have carried out, especially in the services of welcoming, library and the archives. Always smiling and friendly, their enthusiastic participation in all community activities, whether in prayer or in festive celebrations, has been a testimony of dedication and fraternity in the purest sense of the Lasallian spirit. We heartily thank them for their contribution to the Generalate over the course of these 56 years. A special **"THANK YOU"** to the five Sisters who have been part of this community in recent years: Sister **Anita Torres**, Community Superior, from Mexico; Sister **Stella Herrera**, from Colombia; **Máxima Almodóvar**, from Spain; **Odette Mukaygire**, from Rwanda; and **Verónica Alcántara**, from Mexico. We wish them a safe return to their countries of origin and we join together with their Institute in giving thanks for gifts received and for the common seeking, in association, of appropriate responses to the challenges of educating the disadvantaged in today's world.

Brother **Charles Kitson**, Coordinating Secretary for the Lasallian Family and Association Secretariat, is returning to his District - the District of Eastern North America (DNA). To him is owed, in great part, the energy that has promoted initiatives in association throughout the Institute in recent years. Here in the Generalate, we also are indebted "in large measure" to "Charlie" for the growth of the spirit of welcoming and inclusiveness that characterizes true Lasallian association. Brother **Pedro Arrambide**, after six years as the Coordinating Secretary of the Secretariat for Solidarity and Development, is returning to his beloved Basque Country where he will continue working with the tenacity that characterizes him, in Lasallian solidarity organizations. Brother **Joan Farrés**, an accountant in the Office of the Bursar General as well as community sacristan (a curious combination of duties which he accepted with grace and professionalism), also after six years, is returning to his native Catalonia, in the ARLEP District. Brother **Alfonso Novillo** also is returning to the Iberian Peninsula after twelve years, first as a CIL staff member, then as CIL Director but always as the "factotum," able to solve problems of all kinds with his habitual gentleness. Brother **Joseph Fernando**, from the Delegation of India, returns to his country after serving six years as Institute Secretary for Formation; his work in formation will continue; despite the fact that he is only 62 years of age, he is one of the "older" Brothers in his sector.

We thank all these fine men and women for their work here in this house, their full participation in this community, and for the service they have rendered through their various ministries to the entire Lasallian world.



The MEL Assembly and Technology

The recent MEL Assembly also made news in the area of technology. Maintaining more than two-hundred devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones...) simultaneously connected in the Generalate's Great Hall (Aula Magna) was a real challenge. But this was a "sine qua non" requirement if we really wanted to have a "paperless" meeting. We used Google Drive as a communications tool. Among other positive aspects were:

- The financial savings on paper and ink/toner was very significant.
- The reduction of work hours (especially in making photocopies) and secretarial work was very high.
- Immediate communication was near 100%. Delegates could send information to their Districts or social networks in real time.

The delegates' evaluation was very positive. The average score from the 114 delegates who responded to the survey was 4.26 (out of a possible 5) concerning the use of Google Drive. The average score was 4.55 in terms of how the technology worked in the Generalate and 4.53 regarding tech support. All of this was possible, to a large extent, thanks to the work of the Communications Service and the support of one Brother in particular (thanks, Gus!) as we had no support from any external company. One thing we want to work on is to give future participants some training before, or if possible, during the meeting.

The Preparatory Commission for the 45th General Chapter, who were there as observers, took copious notes about this experience.

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 Brothers of the Christian Schools
 Via Aurelia 476
 00165 Rome, Italy
 Postal Address: C.P. 9099 (Aurelio)
 00100 Rome, Italy

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 Web: www.lasalle.org