



Lasallian Family magazine

intercom

CIL: Animating Lasallian Communities

One of the organizational, clarification questions in the planning of the program was, "What Lasallian communities are we talking about? "Is it only the residential Brothers community or are we thinking of something broader?" The answer was "All Lasallian communities; the Brothers residential community, the 'intentional' Lasallian communities of lay partners choosing to live in community, the Lasallian Family as community, as well as the ministerial community."

Hence, from January 7 to 31, the CIL presented a program entitled "Animating Lasallian Communities." A total of 53 participants came, 24 of whom were Spanish-speakers, 17 were French-speakers, and

12 were English-speakers. All five regions of the Institute were represented: PARC, RELAL, RELAF, RELEM, RELAN.

The vision was to have an international encounter of Lay Partners and Brothers for four weeks to see how they might learn new ways of animating the Lasallian Community, through various presentations and the lived-in community experience itself. Integral components of the program were plenary assemblies and small group sharing, by languages and by type of community the participants were currently animating. Creating and animating the international community itself that they formed, with its own unique dynamics, was a constitutive element of the pro-

gram as well. This meant spending time together in prayer and liturgy, meals, socials, and other group activities.

The CIL Team and the Vicar General and the Brother Director of the Central Community welcomed the participants on the first morning, and after some group dynamics, a review of the program and personal expectations, some community planning and a general orientation of the house and the neighborhood, they buckled down to serious work.

Brother Pierre Ouattara of the CIL Staff set off with the first presentation, on the anthropological and philosophical underpinnings of why people form communi-





ties, exploring the dynamics that happen between individuals and societies, and the interplay of various motives and forces in what we understand by “societies”, “associations”, and “communities”. He stressed that it is always important to take into account the political and economic context where communities are situated...

Following this, Rev. Johannes Füllenbach, SVD spent several days speaking of the Scriptural basis of the Communion Ecclesiology of the Church, especially since Vatican II.

Brother Alberto Gomez, FSC General Councilor, then spent one afternoon exposing the participants to the vast variety of Lasallian communities that presently exist throughout the Lasallian world. The different types of communities

(Brothers’ communities, mixed lay and Brothers’ communities, volunteer communities, communities of educational centers, etc.) presented was an ‘eye-opener’ for many participants.

A leading expert on the topic of Lasallian Association, Brother Antonio Botana, FSC, then spent one week speaking of community within the context of Mission, Faith, and Communion. Brother Botana also spoke of the Lasallian Community that we see on the horizon, an interesting and challenging adventure for all who heard him.

This first week of challenge was balanced by a pilgrimage to see the great shrine of Assisi.

Returning to the Motherhouse, Monday saw the presentation on ‘Accompaniment’

in the various types of Lasallian communities by Brother Vincent Pelletier of the CIL Team. Drawing on his many years of experience, his series of presentations focused on the various elements that are involved in the creation of community and practical ways of dealing with real issues that arise within any community.

This practical focus was then followed by a change of pace with presentations by Rev. Jesús Sastre on Community as we see it in the Gospels and the early Church. He also described the journey of a group toward forming a community.

The participants then had the opportunity to reach back into the history of the Institute to see the vision of Community as seen by the Founder and the first Brothers in presentations given by Brother Alain Houry, FSC. Further, he highlighted

the importance of the accompaniment of the Brothers at this time.

This was followed by a lively series of presentations by Brother Diego Munoz, Secretary of the Secretariat of Lasallian Studies and Resources based in the Motherhouse. Brother Diego helped the participants to get a realistic ‘feel’ for community as envisioned and lived in the founding days of the



Institute and well into the 20th century through Vatican II. He ended with animation challenges presented by the 21st century contexts of our international Institute.

Not everything was serious work. Friday evenings were something to look forward to, as everyone animated the community with different kinds of activities.

Week-ends were also spent imbibing the local culture of Rome and tirelessly visiting its most famous and spectacular sights.

One of the best features of the program was the prayer services prepared by various groups. There, creativity, and intimate contact with God, ruled, as group after group invited everyone to commune with the Totally Other and with one another.

With all of this rich content given over a period of three and a half weeks, it was time to slow down and try to assimilate all the richness. Brother José Ricardo Moreno Rodríguez, FSC, of the CIL Team, led the participants in a three day experience inward. The first day was a "Personal Integration Day," during which the participants had a 'mini retreat day;' it was a day for themselves, to go over all that had been presented and shared, and to internalize it and make it real in their own lives. This was followed by "Returning from the Mountain." Brother Jose Ricardo showed how the use of parables can facilitate in



going more deeply into oneself and seeing the richness within, to then be shared in community. The final day was then a day of Synthesis, a day of practical planning of how to keep alive what was experienced and shared and learned in the previous four weeks.

How was this four week CIL experience received by the participants?

The following is a small sampling of some of their responses.

"The small group sharing was rich and rewarding."

"The variety of different types of groups; small group and interest groups."

"It [the groupings by type of community being animated] was much more valuable than being only in one small [linguistic] group for the whole time."

"As lay partners, we have appreciated the opportunity to be participants in the program and we have learned much about animating communities and about ourselves as Lasallians."

CIL Staff



The 2013 2nd International Assembly...The work continues



Scarcely six months have passed since the 2nd International Assembly and the reflection continues, always seeking the best strategies to face the challenges of the Lasallian educational mission. In the various Regions and Districts of the Institute in recent months activities are going forward to put into practice responses to the challenges of the mission which the Assembly defined. At the last meeting of the International MEL Council, held in October 2013, the members of the Council shared the achievements in each of the Regions in terms of making known the Report of the 2nd International Assembly and the challenges of the mission and how to respond to each of them on the Regional, District and local levels.

The Lasallian educational mission will have a future if we respond effectively to the urgent needs of the needy as Brother Álvaro stated in his final talk at the Assembly. "We will have a future only if we are able to not close in on ourselves and our daily problems, and if we are continually open to the needs of the young, especially the most vulnerable, so as to respond to them in light of the Gospel with boldness and creativity."

It is also important to underscore that the 2nd International Assembly will continue bearing fruit to the extent that we continue to work together, Brothers and lay Lasallians, to continue responding in the right way to the challenges presented to us as we carry out the mission and as we face the problems of the world educational situation.

The report from the 2013 2nd International Assembly can be found at: www.lasalle.org

Let us recall here the challenges that were established for one of the three themes – Lasallian Education.

CHALLENGE 1

There is an urgency to renew Lasallian pedagogy in light of contemporary pedagogical trends and the Gospel in order to create our own criteria of excellence that will strengthen our identity and ensure inclusive works which respond to the educational needs of all, especially those most vulnerable.

CHALLENGE 2

The effectiveness of Lasallian institutions depends on the commitment of members of the educational communities. This commitment is strengthened by effective formation and accompaniment in Lasallian Mission. Quality formation and accompaniment is currently not available for all Lasallians. A challenge is to provide a formative journey and accompaniment to reach more members of the educational community and to ensure their commitment to Lasallian Mission. This will require, among other things, enhanced formation of formators.

CHALLENGE 3

The Lasallian Mission of human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, is rendered vulnerable due to inadequate programs, resources and structures. Our challenge is to ensure the continuity, development and sustainability of this Lasallian Mission, in the spirit of solidarity and interdependence.

Educating for intercultural dialogue in catholic schools living in harmony for a civilization of love

The Congregation for Catholic Education of the Vatican presented in the month of December 2013 a new document of orientations to arouse the reflexion about inter-cultural dialogue, a very important aspect in the life of school today. In this Intercom we want to share the conclusions of this document which presents a general vision of the inter-cultural dialogue in the catholic school.

“The Catholic tradition is familiar with the intercultural aspect. Today, however, faced with the challenges both of globalization and of cultural and religious pluralism, it is essential to develop a greater awareness of its meaning. In this way, Catholic schools will communicate better – in their presence, witness and teaching – their own particular way of being *Catholic*. They are schools that are open to the universality of knowledge and, at the same time, have their own specific nature, which come from their being rooted in their believing in Christ the Teacher and their belonging to the Church.

Catholic schools avoid both fundamentalism and ideas of relativism where everything is the same. Instead, they are encouraged to progress in harmony with the identity they have received from their Gospel inspiration. They are also invited to follow the pathway that lead to encountering others. They educate themselves, and they educate to dialogue, which consist in speaking with everyone and relating to everyone with respect, esteem and listening in sincerity. They should express themselves with authenticity, without obfuscating or watering down their own vision so as to acquire greater consensus. They should bear witness by means of their own presence, as well as by the coherence between what they say and what they do.

To all educators we want to address the encouraging and guiding words of Pope Francis: “Do not be disheartened in the face of the difficulties that the educational challenge presents! Educating is not a profession but an attitude, a way of being; in order to educate it is necessary to step out of ourselves and be among young people, to accompany them in the stages of their growth and to set ourselves beside them. Give them hope and optimism for their journey in the world. Teach them to see the beauty and goodness of creation and of man who always retains the Creator’s hallmark. But above all your life must be witnesses of what you communicate. Educators... pass on knowledge and values with their words; but their words will have an incisive effect on children and young people if they are accompanied by their witness, their consistent way of life. Without consistency it is impossible to educate! You are all educators, there are no delegates in this field. Thus collaboration in a spirit of unity and community among the various educators is essential and must be fostered and encouraged. School can and must be a catalyst, it must be a place of encounter and convergence of the entire educating community, with the sole objective of training and helping to develop mature people who are simple, competent and honest, who know how to love with fidelity, who can live life as a response to God’s call, and their future profession as a service to society.” (Pope Francis, *Speech to the Students of the Jesuit Schools of Italy and Albania*).

To see the whole document go to:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/index_it.htm





3rd International Symposium



Generation 'H'

Building Hope Together. This was the theme of the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians (adolescents and young adults involved in the Lasallian Educational Mission). Over 40 students, young Brothers, teachers, administrators, and volunteers hailed from almost 30 countries to meet at the Generalate in Rome between February 10th and 14th, 2014.

The main intended outcome of this meeting was to identify and prioritize objectives and lines of action for the Young Lasallian Movement. Br. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, Superior General, encouraged the delegates to feel impelled by the words of Pope Francis:

"Through you the future is entering the world. I ask you then to be protagonists of this change. Continue getting beyond apathy and offering a Christian response to the social and political problems that are occurring in various parts of the world. I ask you to be builders of the future (Pope Francis)."

After prayer, discussion, and reflection, the entire group engaged in a process that resulted in creating priorities and challenges for



the Young Lasallian Movement. The outcomes of this Symposium will be communicated in two phases. We here present the message to the Institute and the Lasallian Family that expresses the passions and commitments of adolescents and young adults involved in the Lasallian Educational Mission, and the main elements of the message of the International Council of Young Lasallians to the 45th General Chapter. In the coming weeks, the full report of the Symposium will be published, and accessible through the Institute website.



Symposium of Young Lasallians



Main elements for reflection in view of the 45th General Chapter

The International Council has reflected on the Young Lasallian Mission Objectives that emerged from the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians, as well as the Council's experience working together and within the Institute over the last 7 years, and will call on the Chapter:

- for the continuation of the International Council of Young Lasallians and the position of the International Young Lasallian Coordinator;
- for the integration of new projects and ideas into current and successful projects (i.e. International Lasallian Days for Peace, Lumen, Social networking presence) of the ICYL;
- to encourage those responsible for Districts and Regions to empower the Young Lasallians, especially the ISYL'14 delegates, to promote and adapt the implementation of the Young Lasallian Mission Objectives;

- for representation within existing structures in sectors, Districts, Regions and the Institute so that our hopes and dreams find full expression in the Lasallian Family.

Conclusion

On the last day of the Symposium, Brother Charles Kitson, FSC provided delegates with time for prayer and reflection prior to the prioritization process. He reflected back to the Symposium what he had seen, heard, and felt during the week of the meeting, as well as during his 5-year term as Coordinating Secretary of Lasallian Family & Association accompanying the Young Lasallian Movement. Perhaps his most powerful statement was, "We need forever Lasallians, please, be forever Lasallians. Make an extravagant gesture with your life, for God's sake!" May the Institute and the Lasallian Family recognize the full potential that a strong and effective Young Lasallian Movement would have in supporting more adolescents and young adults discovering their vocational call as lifelong Lasallians.

Our Message to the Institute and the Lasallian Family

hope is like the little sister of faith and charity, ... it seems that the two big ones are leading the little one, but it's not like that at all - the little sister rather is leading along her big sisters.

Charles Péguy

Dear Lasallians,

The Young Lasallian Movement aims at awakening awareness of the personal and collective vocational journey of adolescents and young adults involved in the Lasallian Educational Mission. This movement engages us on a personal, professional, and spiritual level to go beyond our boundaries to reach out so that we and those we accompany may have life, and have it in its fullest. (John 10:10)

1. Our Vision and Passion

As Young Lasallians, we are passionate about:

- 1.1 making more and better use of the sometimes latent potential of the Lasallian global Network;
- 1.2 advocating the need to provide young people with the tools and support required to holistically integrate their life experiences through effective accompaniment that leads to personal and vocational growth;
- 1.3 being active in the Lasallian Educational Mission, especially through service with the poor.

This inspires us to be agents of change in our world and challenges us to be stewards of the vitality and sustainability of the Lasallian Family and the Lasallian Educational Mission.

2. Our Commitment

Hence we commit to:

- 2.1 Exploring and understanding local realities in order to respond to specific needs;
- 2.2 Connecting Young Lasallians with each other at different levels - local, sector, District, Regional, and International;
- 2.3 Inviting the different groups of Young Lasallians to begin a reflection on accompaniment;
- 2.4 Networking among service and social justice opportunities, projects, and programs among Lasallian schools and works;
- 2.5 Promoting the values of faith, service, and community through exposure and connection to the worldwide Lasallian Educational Mission.

3. Our Voice

While the Lasallian Family, especially we Young Lasallians, is aware of the privileged role young people play in evangelizing other young people, there is inequality with regard to the recognition and representation of Young Lasallians in Institute structures. We wish to ensure that our participation in the Lasallian Educational Mission is effective and that the voice of Young Lasallians is heard.



Therefore, rather than only parallel structures for Young Lasallians at different levels of the Institute, we call for representation within existing structures so that our hopes and dreams find full expression in the Lasallian Family.

Hence, we **also call for:**

- 3.1 Young Lasallian representatives to be appointed at each of the schools and other works to connect with Lasallian Animators and Vocation Directors.
- 3.2 Young Lasallian groups and resources that exist, or will be created, be linked with pre-existing Lasallian structures, groups, and resources to strengthen and support each other.
- 3.3 Young Lasallian Councils at local, Sector, District, Regional, and International levels to be continued or created.

Conclusion

We accept the challenge of Br. Álvaro's invitation to be Generation 'H' - the Hope Generation¹. We commit to building together a world that is more livable, more human and more fraternal. We do this mindful that we are the future and the future is now², and that with the help of those who have marched through the night before us³, we can authentically respond to God's call in our lives. May the Spirit continue to open our eyes wider, so that we may touch hearts more deeply, and our work be guided with greater zeal.

Finally, may the Spirit, as the Founder expressed, 'help us not be troubled about the present or disquieted about the future, but be concerned about the moment we must now live!' May we move forward knowing that God, 'who guides all things with wisdom and serenity, whose way it is not to force the inclinations of persons,'⁴ will us 'now' to commit to this work.

¹ Br. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, Superior General of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, during his opening address to the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians, February 10th, 2014.

² Br. Thomas Johnson, Vicar General of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, during his address to the 3rd International Symposium of Young Lasallians, February 11th, 2014.

³ Br. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, *ibid.*

⁴ St. John Baptist de La Salle, 'Memoir on the beginnings'.

Fruits of Emergency Appeal in response to Typhoon Haiyan

When super-typhoon Haiyan, known locally as typhoon Yolanda, hit the Philippines on 8th November 2013, more than 14 million people were affected. With a Category 5 ranking, this tropical cyclone was one of the strongest storms in the world's history, sending meters-high surges from the sea on to the land. More than 6,200 Filipinos died as the storm made landfall in Guiuan, Eastern Samar and then passed west bringing catastrophic devastation to the Visayas, particularly on Samar and Leyte.

While the vast majority of De La Salle operations in the Philippines were not significantly impacted by the storm, De La Salle Philippines and its network of Lasallian schools banded together to immediately respond and actively take part in the relief efforts for communities which were affected. With a common objective and direction, Lasallian schools in the Philippines pooled available resources --- both donations in-kind and cash -- to respond to the areas hit by the Typhoon, especially those areas which were not much publicized by media.

At the Generalate, the Solidarity network of the De La Salle Brothers was immediately activated according to a pre-existing emergency response plan. Through internet communications, web site announcements, and school notifications, Lasallians around the world were able to contribute to the Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund through regional offices. Collections were accepted by the Lasallian Foundation (Australia), the La Salle International Foundation (U.S.A.), Proyde (Spain), EDDE (France), SECOLI and the De La Salle Solidarietà Internazionale - ONLUS (Italy) as well as through local Lasallian networks in the Philippines. The cumulative amount raised by these groups is likely to exceed a quarter of a million dollars.

The strategic location of University of St. La Salle (USLS) Bacolod – Visayas allowed the Lasallian network to aid in relief operations offering a quick response to the nearby islands of the Negros province. De La Salle University (DLSU) Manila – Luzon served as the main packing center for in-kind donations and the creation of 5-day relief packs for distribution. De La Salle Zobel (DLSZ) – Luzon spearheaded dispatches of relief goods to Guiuan, Eastern Samar, the area where typhoon Haiyan made its first land fall.

While some of the donations made were used for immediate expenses during the relief operations, a substantial amount was also set aside for rebuilding programs in partnership with our La Salle supervised schools and with the Department of Education of the Philippines. Making use of the strengths and competencies of the Lasallian network in the Philippines, this rebuilding and rehabilitation program is envisioned to provide assistance for two or three typhoon-affected communities. The program will be comprehensive, sensitive to local needs, open to partnerships with other organizations and institutions and sustainable for at least three years. Intervention will include such actions as the rebuilding of classrooms, provision of other classroom materials (chairs, blackboards, chalk...), school supplies for students, books and the restocking of damaged library collections.



Update on Institute Survey on Volunteerism in the Lasallian World

In May 2013 a questionnaire was circulated among all Lasallian Institutions worldwide. They were invited to participate in the project with the intent of getting a snapshot of the breadth and depth of the many facets of volunteerism in the Lasallian Network.

The development of this questionnaire has been a joint activity between the Secretariats of Solidarity and Development and Lasallian Family and Association.

Thirty-six responses from the 5 regions were received. These figures are a little disappointing if we consider the multitude and diversity of Lasallian volunteer initiatives currently in operation.

At the moment the data collected is being processed and important indicators of good practice are emerging from various examples of successful programs.

In the near future a decision about the best way to share this useful input will be decided.

We would like to thank all the people who have put their effort in this important project. We will keep you updated about the next steps concerning this project.



The first La Salle Technical College in Africa: a dream that is coming true.

The District of Central Africa (District of Douala merged together with the Sector of Equatorial Guinea) has launched the ambitious project of creating the La Salle College of Douala.

The idea has been harbored for a few years, while the parents of the children attending La Salle Secondary School (general and technical teaching programmes) were asking the Brothers to go and open a Lasallian University in Douala, the La Salle Secondary School being the best technical secondary school in Cameroon according to the National Exam Result Statistics, families were worried about the quality of education their children would have had leaving the La Salle environment.

Also the young professionals who go to specialize at the Centre the Brothers run next to the School called CFPC-DLS (De La Salle Professional and Continuous Formation Centre) complain about the lack of practical formation they received at University. This lack of practical skills is for them a handicap to enter the labour market, as employers look for people who already have experience and practical skills. This is the reason why about a thousand young people, employees in search for recycling courses, small businessmen... enroll at CFPC. They are looking to complete their formation.

Thus the Brothers decided to fill this educational gap and develop the project of opening the La Salle College of Douala. The BTS programmes (Brevet Technicien Supérieure, according to the French system) that will be offered combine academic formation with practical training to prepare students to enter into the labour market more easily.

The College will provide undergraduate studies in the fields of Engineering, Administration, Business, Human Resources Management... to form the professionals requested most by companies.

This first La Salle Technical College follows the path of 2 successful Lasallian Colleges in Africa: the C.E.L.-A.F. in Abidjan and the C.T.I.E. in Nairobi, both specialized in pedagogical and humanities fields.

IALU is involved and supports the initiative particularly in terms of human resources and for organizational aspects. Once in function, the new Technical College will take all the steps to become a member of IALU, being part of this international network of excellence will be an element of strength for the young institution.

The Solidarity and Development Secretariat is committed to fundraise for this meaningful project which is expected to open its doors to the first students in 3 years time. The Belgian Official Development Aid Agency has already approved a grant of more than 700.000 €. But there is still a long way to go to reach the total amount needed.

Once more we count on Lasallian Solidarity to achieve such an amazing goal! For whoever is willing to donate, these are the bank details:



Europe*:

De La Salle Solidarietà Internazionale ONLUS
 Banca Popolare di Sondrio
 IBAN for €: IT52 R056 9603 2070 00007241X70
 IBAN for \$: IT10 M056 9603 207V ARUS 0007241
 SWIFT: POSOIT22
 Reason: La Salle College - Douala

USA*:

La Salle International Foundation
 HSBC Bank Account # 389102865
 SWIFT: MRMDUS33
 Reason: La Salle College - Douala

* Donations are eligible for tax reduction. Please specify a contact detail for sending a receipt.

A new seedbed of Lasallian Researchers for the 21st century

A little bit of history

On June 18, 1987, Brothers Michel Sauvage and Miguel Campos presented to the then Brother Superior General John Johnston and the General Council a *Report on Lasallian Studies*.

Said report came into being as the result of a request that the same Superior General had made to Brother Michel, who recently had taken over this service for the Institute after the death of Brother Maurice-Auguste. The content of this report, which was qualified as "preliminary" by Brother Michel himself, was drawn up by a group of Brother Lasallian researchers who at that time worked in the Generalate. Others as well contributed to the report by means of a written questionnaire.

In speaking about the guidance for *Lasallian Studies* given by the 41st General Chapter of 1986, it was recalled that:

"This same proposal places the emphasis on spreading the Lasallian message; with this in mind two SIEL sessions will be organized" (Report, p. 16)

In this way:

"If we wish to guarantee a widespread diffusion of the Lasal-

lian message, it is necessary, with priority, relaunch research and prepare the formation of researchers".

Twenty-seven years on from this report we still lack at the Center of the Institute a solid group of Lasallian researchers who are systematically organized in developing priority topics for the Institute. Nevertheless, the efforts of many Brothers and lay Lasallians throughout the world attest to the fact that the road has been paved and the interest in producing Lasallian thinking continues on its course.

Perhaps what we do need is greater articulation among research groups in Lasallian universities with whom we could create some synergy along with discussion groups on Association and the Educational Mission in Districts and Regions. These insights will serve to clarify the path towards greater understanding of the processes of reflection for the entire Institute, as envisioned in the Report of the Brother Superior General in view of the 45th General Chapter (see page 26).

2012 - 2013 SIEL concludes

As you will recall, the participants in the last SIEL session, held between October 2012 and June 2013, had committed themselves to present the results of their work in Lasallian research to their Districts and/or universities.

In spite of their apostolic commitments and especially their many administrative and leadership responsibilities in schools, universities and Districts, they delivered their research reports and participated in various District and university events where

they exhibited their work to Brothers and to lay Lasallians and even to students in the field of education in our universities.

We will present what one of them said about the work. It represents a small seed, a germinating project from which we can together build up Lasallian thinking in dialogue with the reality of the 21st century.



Testimony by a SIEL Participant from RELAF

I- Review of the On-Line Work

After the Rome session of October 20 to November 16 2012, each of the SIEL participants left Rome with the aim of continuing their formation in a second phase in the form of some on-line work to be followed by a report on the results of the research. This second phase was longer than the initial session and consisted in receiving a document on-line at the start of every month and sending a personal summary report of it to the SIEL Team. This was followed in the second week of the month by participation in an open forum via Moodle, developing an idea suggested by the topic for the month or reacting to ideas put forward by other participants.

With regard to my own work, I received all the documents sent by the experts. I participated in four of the five forums and sent in all my personal summary reports and research results. The task was not an easy one.

I found the on-line work very interesting but also very demanding, because while I was reading the documents, I also had to find out all about the topic of the forums so as to be able to take part in them. The contents of the documents I found very enriching. As a Lasallian, it gave me pleasure to read them. I also made my summaries immediately after reading the documents, and very soon the third week arrived, when I had to meet the deadline for sending in the report.

II- Difficulties Encountered

The main requirement for work on-line is to have access to the internet, since that is the only possible means of communication. Consequently, my first and greatest difficulty involved my internet connection. I live in a town and a country where the internet is a luxury, and connection is not always very good. In the Novitiate where I work, the connection was not set up until January, so I used to go to a cyber-café where it was very difficult to open the Moodle page. This meant that I missed one of the forums, and I had to send one report by email rather than post it on Moodle. In May, my Moodle page was down and I had to get help from Monsieur Javier Flaque.

Language presented the second difficulty, especially with regard to participation in the forums. Most of the SIEL participants spoke Spanish and wrote their contributions in Spanish. I found it hard to read them and understand them immediately. To resolve this problem, I used the Reverso site recommended by Brother Diégo. That often enabled me to translate the topics from Spanish into French and to put my own reactions into Spanish. Occasionally I did the same from English to French and from French to English. When I was short of time, I posted my contributions in French without translation.

In spite of these two difficulties, I persevered to the end, and in May I sent in my final report with great satisfaction.

III- Personal Reactions

I was very happy to be able to complete the second phase of SIEL, because that was the goal set from the start, as we were reminded in Rome in November. The SIEL participants were all presented with a pilgrim's staff to help them reach the Goal. When times were difficult, I often reached for my staff to support me as I carried on, and I also looked at the photos of the other participants. This had a positive effect.

I was very satisfied with what was for me the first experience of academic work on-line. My happiness is all the greater when I think of the relations I enjoyed with the 25 other participants, and I hereby send my fraternal greetings to Oscar, Bertha, Elie, Hortensia, Alejandro, Ernest, Voltaire, Jorge and Ben. Even though we have not always kept up our on-line communication, relations between us have been established beyond geographic and linguistic boundaries. We are closely united in Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle and by the Lasallian charism which we share, and also by the care we have for the welfare of young people, especially the under-privileged. It is something truly wonderful!

Let me finish by thanking all the members of the SIEL Team of 2012-2013 and all those who made presentations either in Rome or on-line. Your availability and your good example encouraged me and made me proud to be a Lasallian Brother of the Christian Schools.

I must also thank my Brother Visitor, Sauras, who allowed me to have this SIEL experience by enrolling me, and the Brothers of the staff of the Inter-African Novitiate in Bobo-Dioulasso, who supported me in my work and encouraged me to persevere, as well as all the novices of the cohorts B. Jean-Paul II and B. Jean XXIII.

Jacques Monchébi, District of Golfe du Bénin,
De La Salle Novitiate, Bobo-Dioulasso
The centrality of the pupil in Lasallian Pedagogy
Lasallian Digital Research Review 7, 2013, p. 27-49



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