

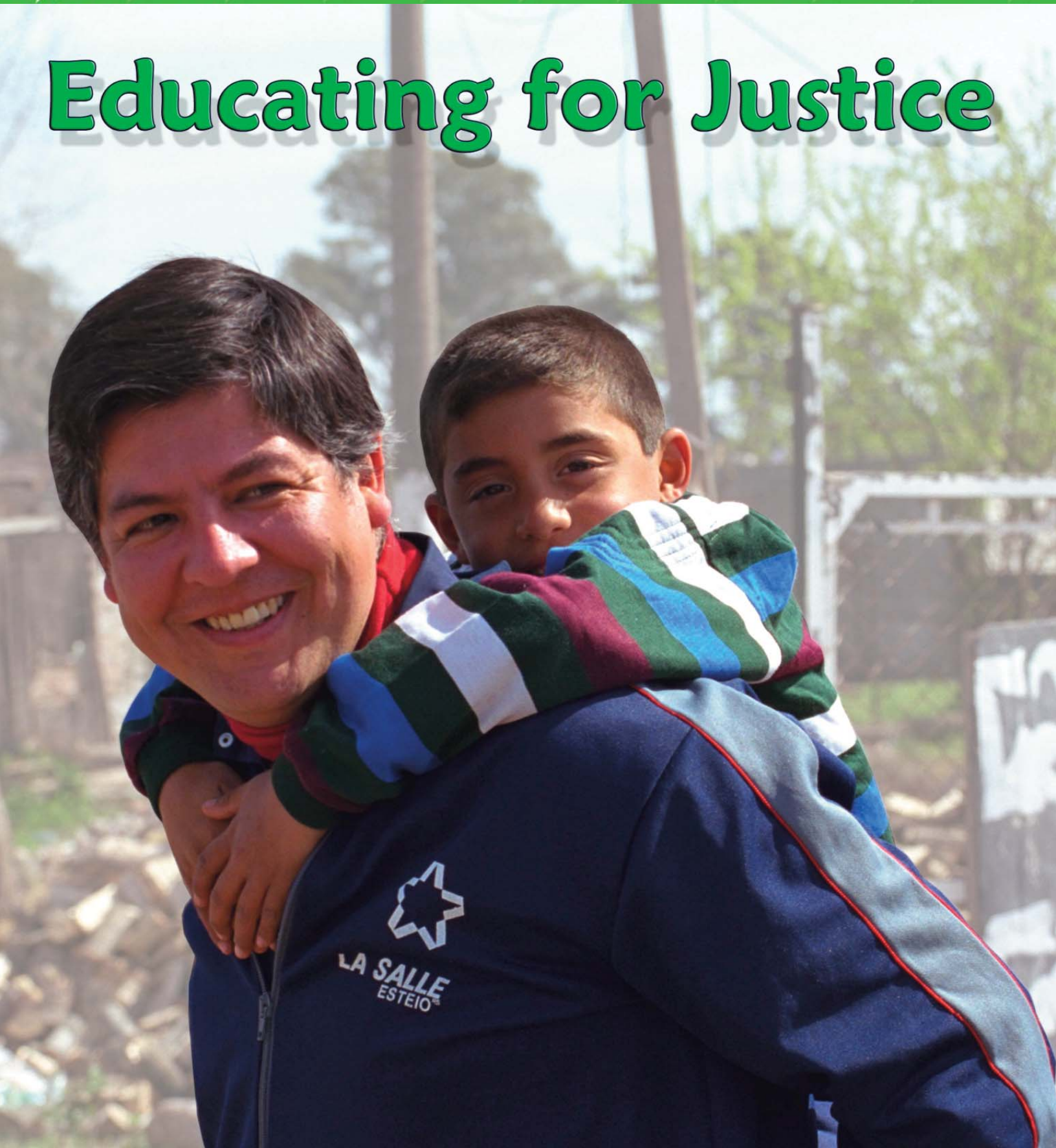


Lasallian Family magazine

intercom

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Educating for Justice




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We who have developed, personally and vocationally, at various levels in the field of education, have of late found ourselves called to pursue our work in different areas of specific emphasis. These calls are addressed to educators under a variety of labels such as *educating for life, educating for employment, educating for peace, educating for interiority, educating for freedom, educating in rights*. We Lasallian educators in particular have repeatedly received the call and recommendation to practice educating for justice (to which some would add the preposition 'in').

When we read the writings of the Institute, in particular the recent document on educating for justice¹, it is clear that the topic is closely linked with the embrace of and the commitment to the cause of the poor, as Scripture puts it: *learn to do right, seek what is just, give the oppressed their rights, give justice to the orphan, plead the case of the widow*.²

Fidelity to our founding story also requires us to make such a commitment. *Concerned about the situation of the abandoned "children of the artisans and the poor", and in response to*

their contemplation of God's salvific plan, Jean-Baptiste de La Salle and the first Brothers joined in association to establish gratuitous Christian schools. Today, the Institute is concerned about the educational needs of those who are denied their dignity and fundamental rights. In its mission, it is committed to making it possible for them to live as befits the children of God.³

The 45th General Chapter renewed the call to undertake this commitment boldly and creatively. *We are living in a time of grace, a time of transition, which leads us to examine the heart of our charismartic and evangelical story, a time which inspires us to turn with liberty, boldness and creativity towards that initial experience and to face up to this moment as a time for personal and institutional conversion to the world of the vulnerable and the impoverished*.⁴

The Church calls on us to show this commitment by going out to the frontiers and the peripheries. *Where today are the boundaries? They are found in the impoverished countries, among peoples still in development and in the depressed areas of developed countries. The limits coincide with the tragic state experienced by so many men and women, in an environment marked by poverty, migration, hunger, injustice, indifference and insensitivity to the suffering of others, by superficiality and a lack of religious and human values.*

The move towards the boundaries shows itself in a preferential option for the poor

and for all those in situations of urgent need. Consecrated people, who have made a public profession of conformity to Jesus, are called to act consistently with their commitment to living for the poor and also to living with the poor and like the poor, to the extent that their charism requires it.⁵

We now need to ask ourselves how we can respond today to the call to *educate in and for justice*. I believe that we Lasallians have sufficient means to do this, and especially because of the following.

The holistic nature of the education we provide.

Our concern to favour the development of all dimensions and aspects of the individual should ensure that we educate people who are *competent and ethically responsible, sensitive to social problems, respectful of human dignity, defenders of justice and equality, concerned for the environment, creative in the search for solutions to the current complexities, and who participate in the political and democratic processes of their countries and communities*.⁶

Thankfully, we are in fact doing this effectively. Proof of this comes from the following testimony. *We are sure that you are called to improve the process of development in our country, because we, as products of the Fundación La Salle, have been given a holistic, quality education and are have been prepared to respond to every situation with ethical professionalism, respect and values*.⁷

The central place which our teaching gives to the individual person.

The centrality of the individual in our process of education enables them to

¹ *Educating for Justice*. Brothers of the Christian Schools, Bulletin No. 249, Rome, 2004.

² Isaiah, 1, 17

³ *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, no. 13. Rome, 2015.

⁴ *This work of God is also our work*. Documents of the 45 General Chapter. Brothers of the Christian Schools, Circular 469, No. 1.15. Rome, 30 November 2014.

⁵ *The Identity of the Religious Brother 2*, III, No. 30. CIVCSVA, Rome 2015.

⁶ Gómez Restrepo, Carlos, FSC, Rector of the Universidad De La Salle, Bogotá, Colombia. Former President of the International Association of Lasallian Universities.

⁷ Rojas, Betsy, Head of Division of IUTEMAR extension Guayana, Venezuela. Speech to Graduates, July 2015.



realise their central place in God's plan of salvation and hence to become aware of their dignity, which is based on their likeness to God and their status as children of God, and to realise that they share that dignity with others. This recognition of a shared dignity based on likeness with God gives strength to mutual respect and consideration. Respect produces a notable balance and equilibrium in the various relations that people establish, and the result of this is harmony. These two concepts are the basis of justice.

A personalised and fraternal style of education

The Lasallian school is a school of brotherliness where people recognise one another as brothers and sisters. *The Brothers desire to be at the same time brothers among themselves, brothers to their collaborators and acquaintances and older brothers to those entrusted to them.*⁸ Certainly, fraternal relations are not exempt from difficulties, but in general brothers and sisters take care to avoid

anything that can damage the relationship. It is to be hoped that the same is true for those who have completed their education and leave our schools to participate in a society which needs a strong dose of fraternity in order to counter the injustices that are deeply rooted on the social fabric. Inspired by the experience of fraternity they had in our schools, they leave with a determination to fight against the roots of poverty and injustice.

A methodology inspired by the story of the Founder.

Jean-Baptiste de La Salle was first of all shocked by the situation. He then considered the design of God, and finally he founded the schools and a society to maintain them. Each step in this story can easily be linked to the stages in the methodology of see-judge-act created by Cardinal Cardijn for the Young Catholic Workers of Belgium. According to this method, educating for justice means more than just teaching about the subject; it must be a lived experience. In support of this affirmation, we can recall

the words of Brother John Johnston. *Like De La Salle, we have to move beyond mere indignation to act, to discharge the prophetic potentiality to unmask acts of injustice.*⁹

The curriculum

It would be a mistake to think that education for justice is just another subject matter, and that its inclusion in the curriculum is a sufficient response to this urgent call. Rather, education for justice has a cross-curriculum role and should influence all subject areas at all levels.

The above ways and means, plus many more, are being used in the experiences reported in this edition of INTERCOM. It is to be hoped that reading about them will inspire many more.

⁸ *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, No. 53. Rome, 2015.

⁹ Johnston, John, FSC, *Jesus Was Indignant... Are We?* Presentation to the Huether Conference. Washington, DC, 15 November, 2001, p. 6. Quoted by R. Schieler in *A Gospel Adventure: Outside the Camp*. Rome, 25 December, 2016, p. 33.





The theme of education for justice is also presented to us for consideration during the Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis. This happy and interesting coincidence is a lesson for us that mercy should impel us to practice the best kind of justice. When he announced the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis said, *Let us open our eyes to see the miseries of the world and the wounds of so many brothers and sisters deprived of their dignity, and let us feel provoked by their call for help. May their cry become our cry, so that together we can break down the barrier of indifference*

*which remains unruffled and hides hypocrisy and egoism.*¹⁰

Our Superior General, for his part, reminds us that *An encounter with mercy happens every time the Gospel meets humanity through the corporal works of mercy. For Lasallians, the works of mercy also include providing a human and Christian education, especially for persons living beyond the borders of contemporary society.*¹¹

The strong link between justice and mercy does not appear strange to general

thinking. In the Spanish literary masterpiece, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, we read the following piece of advice given by the wise knight to his page. *If by chance you bend the rod of justice, let it not be because of the weight of a gift but rather because of mercy.*¹²

The General Chapter of 2014, invited us to see the inter-capitular period as *a time of profound revitalisation, which will renew our life and our mission as a credible response to the gospel in the Church and in the world of the XXI century.*¹³ Surely, we will reach such an ambitious goal, if we renew our dedication to the practice of justice and teach others to do the same. Our reward will depend on this. *Those who teach many unto justice, will shine as stars for all eternity.*¹⁴

Brother Gustavo Ramírez Barba
General Councillor

¹⁰ Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, Bull of Convocation of the Year of Mercy, No. 15. Rome, April 11, 2015.

¹¹ Schieler, Robert, *A Gospel Adventure: Outside the Camp*, p. 22f. Brothers of the Christian Schools, Rome, 25 December 2015.

¹² Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel. *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, Part 2, Chapter XLII.

¹³ *This work of God is also our work.* Documents of the 45 General Chapter. Brothers of the Christian Schools, Circular 469, p. 13, Proposition 2. Rome, 30 November, 2014.

¹⁴ Daniel 12, 3; cf. Matthew 5, 19-20.

Education for social justice

It seems sometimes that education for social justice is one of the choices among many other choices in education. Some consider it simply an educational process and nothing more. Others believe that it is part of the school organization, among many other concerns proper to education.

Let me say that there is nothing more erroneous than this statement. It is not an educational option: it is the essence of the educational process. Education is for social justice or it is not education at all: it may be a pastime, a constraint, a social justification, the preparation of meritocracy and competition but it is not education. Speaking of education in its strictest sense means referring to a process of transmission and construction of knowledge that a generation of adults offers to young people so that they can be more critical in society giving greater attention to the lives of everybody; with different responses to major world problems such as inequality, abuse of the rights of children, sexual and ethnic violence, capitalism, dehumanizing and fierce competition, extreme individualism and the loss of meaning of life, the destruction of the planet and poverty ... and we could continue...

No one initiates "education" or knowledge, in the full sense of the word, to look at reality, to understand it, to live it and, in turn, at the end of this process, to make reality become an almost terrible source of death for all. We educate so that the world in which we live can be a better place.

Theodor Adorno¹ puts it in a more radical way: "The requirement that Auschwitz will not be repeated is, primarily, education. And this must be before all other obligations and should not even be explained."²

This is the context in which we try to work with the District of Argentina - Paraguay. We are very far from this goal but we know we'll have to get there. We are a body of educators with a clear vision of what our job is. This educational task, building a Christian vision so that together, with new generations, we can learn to see the world through the eyes of those in need, the marginalized, with the eyes of those who are neglected and left behind, with the eyes of minorities and the oppressed. That is why we try constantly to train

educators along these lines so that they can choose critically the content of this paradigm. This is so that they can build their education systems and their methodological approaches to education following the same lines of social justice³. They also organize their evaluative systems and their educational experiences in the context of what we have outlined. And that goes for both the educator who works in a formal school as well as

for a non-formal educational program; for the person who is in town or in the countryside; for those who work in the maintenance of the school or library as for those who run the schools; for those who work with the poor and for those who care for people of the dominant social classes ... All are called to be educators following these guidelines.

All can do it. We have to understand that we do not want the world as we see it at present, that our best gift to new generations is a future of a better world where there is room for everyone.

Brother Patricio Bolton
District of Argentina/Paraguay

¹ 1903 Germany – 1969 Switzerland.

² Conference made by Hesse Radio, April 18, 1966.

³ R.W. Connell, *Escuelas y Justicia social*

Guidelines for Education in Justice

The guidelines for the De La Salle centres in the District of ARLEP accord a fundamental value to Justice.

"The aim of a Lasallian school is to ensure that young people know about and are able to interpret and transform the world, that is to say they will be responsible persons and citizens and active members of the Church. We should help them to become aware of social injustices and committed to a society that is more just and fraternal. We emphasise the

importance of ecology, respect for the integrity of creation, peace, human rights and the rights of children and the need for disinterested working together for the common good.

For us, educating in and for justice, peace and solidarity supposes that we come close to the children and their concrete situations as the most vulnerable. Because of this closeness, we help them grow in knowledge, increasing their sensitivity through study and reflection. We help them to ask the right questions and to discover the answers which will lead them to become involved in social action individually and collectively. They are encouraged to take part in solidarity projects and joint commitments of the whole educational community through socio-educational works and through the Lasallian NGOs."

Every one of our educational centres should have a specific action plan for Education in Justice and Solidarity with clear aims and goals involving all levels of the educational community.



This plan should specify the targets, aims and the nature of the actions to be achieved during the school year, the persons responsible and the time-line for each individual element in the plan. The whole teaching staff is responsible for the action plan, and there is a coordinator in each establishment who is responsible for monitoring its implementation. An evaluation every quarter will check whether the proposed actions and goals are rolling out as expected and whether further initiatives can be taken to improve things in that school year or the following years.

The first focus of attention will be on the school itself. Therefore in each school there will be a plan for screening calculated to identify the children with greater educational difficulties and to ensure the means and resources to attend to those in greatest need.

However, education for justice as a value does not finish with activity as part of the school timetable, it needs to be made part

of the lives of the pupils, so that each individual pupil personally develops a lively attitude of sensitivity to these values and appropriates them. To achieve this it is necessary to organise solidarity actions of a voluntary nature outside the school, involving the pupils and their families, through associations of parents or of former pupils, Christian groups or leisure groups. All these activities can be developed through socio-educational groups or Lasallian NGOs or any other associations or movements in the Church.

We continue to accept the challenge to involve all members of the educational community, working in conjunction with the local Church and the universal Church and networking with other movements in society or the Church. Pope Francis urges us to be the Church which is near to the poorest and most needy, to work for justice, solidarity, peace and the integrity of creation.

Brother Ignacio Aguilar
District of ARLEP

The Awakening of New Realities



The District of Brasil-Chile currently comprises more than a hundred communities and institutions committed to developing citizens through education, inclusion and culture. The focus of their work is in line with the basics of the Lasallian mission, namely dedication to those most in need.

One example of this is the Fundación La Salle, a work of the District located in Canoas, Rio Grande do Sul. The Fundación is ten years old this year and it reaffirms the commitment to working for social transformation by initiatives on different fronts. Its social projects, training programmes, evaluations and public competitions aim at the development of individuals, empowering them to achieve dignity and their place in society.

One of its work projects is called "Mujeres de la Paz" [Women of Peace]. It trains women who are vulnerable to be aware of their rights, combating violence and seeking quality of life. The programme "Casas de los Juventudes" [Houses for Young People] is based on values such as the strengthening of citizenship and the promotion of a culture of peace, so as to give young people at risk the chance to have positive experiences. Among other things it provides them with professional courses, cultural workshops and psycho-social care, all of which serve to prepare them for the employment market.

The work of the Fundación La Salle is achieved through public-private agreements. In the sporting domain, its projects involve more than nine thousand cases per month dealing with the support of local teams, training, community participation and para-sports. Currently there are two social projects in operation aimed at young people and adults, in addition to the Fundación's other areas of work.

District of Brasil-Chile



Bartolo Longo a forerunner in solidarity

Among the beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, we read «Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven». We can conclude that Bartolo Longo the founder of Santuario of Pompei, a lawyer from Puglia beatified by John-Paul II in 1980, must have had this clearly in mind when he decided to give shape to what was undoubtedly his most brilliant idea, to found the Hospice for the Children of Prisoners.

When he gave life to this most modern activity in 1892, the positivist mentality of the age could not understand it and fought against it ferociously. According to the dominant thinking, the sins of the parents were destined to be repeated in the children, so any idea of redemption was precluded. Right from 1907, Bartolo Longo wanted his institution to be directed by the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the sons of St Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (among whom we must mention Brothers Adriano di Maria, Nicolino Sicignano, Bartolo Ubaldo). He was convinced that every human being was unique and that if well guided they could all turn to an upright and honest path of life. In the course of more than 120 years, hundreds of boys and girls from various situations, localities and families at risk have learned the true meaning of justice, thanks to the love of God and Our Lady imparted to them by our "carissimi fratelli", as the Blessed Bartolo called them.

They learned to become law-abiding, honest and upright. A prime example of this is seen in Domenico Pullano, the first son of a prisoner to be received into the Pompei institute and who later became a priest. The work of the Santuario di Pompei and the Brothers of the Christian School still continues today, giving a new and at the same time an old meaning to the word justice. Living examples, contacts with the forces of order and the judiciary, organised meetings, various initiatives and above all the constant, everyday work help the boys and girls to have a proper sense of justice. Daily activities such as study, sports, pottery, computers and especially music, provide the children with the right tools to face the life which awaits them in the near future and to save themselves from a fate too often marked by violence and abuse of power. In that way, they too can become doers of justice for themselves, their families, their friends and for the whole of society.

*Loreta Somma
District of Italy*

Promotion of justice through indigenous education



While the cause for indigenous peoples (IP) is not a new story of poverty, it is clear that due to greater consumerism, global inequality and climate change, they are not only in a worse situation but also pushed to extinction and death. Despite decolonization and legal remedies to protect the rights of the IP, marginalization continues worldwide. Global population of the IP is estimated at 400 million and divided into 5,000 distinct tribes in 90 countries. They comprise 6% of the world's population but represent 90% of the world's cultural diversity. Within the 20% of the earth's land mass that they live lies 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity and precious natural resources. They are a third among the world's extremely poor rural people and 70% of them live in Asia. In the Philippines, they are about 14.1 million in 110 ethnolinguistic groups.

Most IP fall prey to various myths and misconceptions by people in the urban areas. Part of the 100,000 strong Mangyan tribe are the Hanunuo Mangyans. Sadly, they are thought and known to be destroyers of the environment, beggars, illiterate and humans who have tails. In nearby provinces, the word 'Mangyan' is being used to replace 'dumb' and 'incapable'. This is because few people know

and appreciate the richness of the Hanunuo Mangyan culture and access to education for the tribe is absent, if not limited.

In 1983, Dr. Carmelita Quebengco (who later became an AFSC) started the Pundasyon Hanunuo Mangyan School, a culture-specific elementary school as a response to the request Hanunuo Mangyan Elders and as an output of a research project for De La Salle University. When it became a government school in 2009, the elders continued to hope for an education that is relevant to their culture, inclusive in operations and responsive to the challenges faced by the community. In 2015, the De La Salle Brothers (Philippines), the Pundasyon Hanunuo Mangyan Association and the Department of Education formally agreed to collaborate as a response to this request. Governance of the school will be shared through:

- the government, continuing to provide school infrastructure and teachers
- the De La Salle Brothers and their partners, drafting the indigenous curriculum and instructional materials and training the teachers for its use; and
- the tribal organization, assisting to monitor and provide feedback to the project leadership.

Alongside the promotion and enrichment of the Mangyan culture are two ways of advocating an informed and just relationship with the indigenous peoples. First, through the empowerment of the government teachers who came outside of their culture, they will be able to respect and promote the good values that have been forgotten by urban civilization. Second, being chosen to be part of the

University of St. La Salle - Bahay Pag-asa (House of Hope) Youth Center, Bacolod City, Philippines

When USLS - Bahay Pag-asa Youth Center opened in 2002, children as young as 9 could be found in crowded city jail cells full of adult prisoners. In this brutalizing environment, they were subject to neglect, abuse and indoctrination into gangs. Bahay Pag-asa was established to provide an alternative to the destructive environment of jails and to enable "children in conflict with the law" the opportunity to grow and develop academically, vocationally, morally and spiritually while living in safe, clean and homelike surroundings.

Today, progressive laws have reduced the number of minors in jail, but children accused of crimes still face the problems of unrelenting poverty, a lack of educational opportunity, dysfunctional families and violent retribution. USLS - Bahay Pag-asa continues to extend the outreach of Lasallian education to youth on the margins, those rejected by society and most in need of hearing and experiencing the good news of the Gospel.

Lasallian Ministry Action Project, the education through videos and printed materials would increase the awareness among students and partners of the Lasallian schools how the welfare of the indigenous peoples should be promoted. The response of the community since has been very positive. Enrolment increased this school year and more students who stopped studying came back due to the confidence of the community to the presence of 'La Salle'. It is hoped that the project continues not only for the sake of the Hanunuo Mangyan youth but also for better Lasallians who respect indigenous culture and share the value of education.

Brother Aikee Esmeli
District of LEAD (Lasallian East Asia District)

Utopía: Working for Justice



Four months ago, when I shared in this project, I was able to admire the work and those who founded it and those who devote their lives to ensuring its operation and effectiveness. As a De La Salle Brother, I am proud of it, and I give thanks to God and to the Institute, because this project incarnates its charism and the insistant orientations that emanate from its documents such as the General Chapter, the District Chapters, Assemblies and meetings of IALU. Utopía is a response which takes up all the guidelines regarding dedication to those in greatest need.

Why is UTOPIA something to be admired?

For its dedication to working with the peasants. The pupils come from all corners of Colombia, from the villages and hamlets. In their localities they were very limited in terms of education, having no access to any kind of study or training.

For the goodness and generosity of the young people who come to Utopia and their readiness to respond to the what is demanded of them. They show sufficient judgement and social awareness to be able to return to their native regions and contribute to their enhancement.

For the devotion of the members of the teaching staff and their assitants in the classrooms or in the fields and production lines.

What is still needed to make Utopia perfect?

Utopía is a section or faculty of the De La Salle University of Bogotá, which is based on Catholic thinking and on the spirit of Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, which guides its educational

activity and its option for the poor (AILU, IX Assembly).

Besides conferring diplomas in agricultural engineering, Utopía strives to provide a significant experience which is sufficiently powerful that it can serve as a memory in which each student finds meaning and direction for his or her life.

Our roots and those of Utopía have their origins in the charism of De La Salle which is essentially inspired by COMMUNITY. We are a ministering Community which shares its evangelising mission with the lay people who work with us.

It is the Community which supports the institutional nature of the projects which have their source in it. It inspires them and associates the lay staff in the same inspiration. Continuity will be assured so long as many men and women of faith in community service understand what is needed and respond so that they become associated for the mission.

From the above it is clear that what is needed to develop Utopía is a strengthening of the Brothers' Community and the involvement of more lay people in the work. That is what we must succeed in doing, and it would crown this work which is so loved and admired.

Utopía deserves the best.

As I read the documents of the 45 General Chapter, I see that they make an irresistible call to the whole Institute to «go to the peripheries, the frontiers and the deserts, for the sake of our charismatic finality»; «in a life that is a parable of fraternity and humanity»; «leave our individualism and look for discernment in Community».

There are Brothers today who are asking where and how they can respond to the propositions of the General Chapter. The answer is; in Utopía, at Yopal (Casanare), in Colombia. We are each called to be a light, but in Utopía we need to carry lanterns, because the nights here are very dark.

With all my love for this work,

Brother José María Martínez (ARLEP)
District of Bogotá



The Martin De Porres Educational Community, an Agent of Justice



More than 43 years ago, the Martin De Porres School (MDP) began in New York with a simple and clear goal: to create a school where children with severe emotional problems received an excellent education, were provided with social support, and were protected by strong adults who would advocate for their rights. Programs like this did not exist in New York City at the time.

MDP began in the basement of a social service center in 1972 with two students. Today, it has grown into a school system serving close to 400 students in three programs: The MDP Elementary / Junior High School in Elmont, New York, the MDP High School in Rockaway Park, New York, and the MDP – Casa de La Salle in Ozone Park, New York.

As part of the District of Eastern North America (DENA) in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), Lasallians at MDP believe that in their commitment to “bring the fullness of life to the working class and poor through education,” they are ministers of social justice as well. The students and their families have long experienced neglect in our world. Access to quality education, economic resources, health care and equal opportunity are just a few of the long list of rights denied them.

In the fight for justice, MDP provides enriching academic programs that correspond to the educational and emotional needs of students. MDP also reaches out to families to ensure their basic housing, food, health care, mental health care and emotional needs are met. MDP also advocates for students and families in the educational and legal systems.

Partnerships are essential to MDP’s success. Through partnerships, MDP has implemented a plan to infuse trauma informed care and its evidence-based therapies more deeply into its work, and developed a sensitivity to and ways to prevent human trafficking. MDP is continually finding new ways to be an agent of justice for youth and families.

District of Eastern North America (DENA)

San Miguel School, Chicago, Partners for Peace

San Miguel School in Chicago, Illinois, is located in a neighborhood plagued by violence. Most who live in the community are good, hard working, thoughtful and faithful people. However, a byproduct of economic poverty leaves some desperate for a sense of power. San Miguel was founded to replace that desperation with opportunity through education. It is a ministry of the Midwest District in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN).

San Miguel has begun to work closely with neighborhood organizations to tackle the seemingly intractable problem of youth violence on the streets. As the problem grows, there is a renewed sense of urgency in the community that something has to change, and change soon.

The Peace and Education Coalition (PEC) in the “Back of the Yards” neighborhood was formed in to make use of education as a way to reduce and prevent violence. The organization involves eight schools, three parishes, law enforcement, civic officials and several different non-profit agencies in the task of creating a more peaceful neighborhood. After a particularly violent summer and early fall, the PEC received a great boost in support from neighbors. The coalition organized a community forum held in the fall of 2015 at San Miguel with an open invitation to neighbors interested in making life better and safer. The event was well attended and there was real excitement among the participants, perhaps primarily because many were for the first time simply made aware of all the good work underway and the genuine mutual desire of so many to effect positive change.

A follow-up forum was held in March 2016, where participants identified priorities for the coming months. A de-escalation of youth violence and the organization of more youth activities for the summer of 2016 were clearly identified as next steps. San Miguel School is committed to working with neighbors to create alternatives to violence in the community and promote justice.

District of Midwest



De Marillac Academy Works for Justice

Growing up surrounded by poverty, violence, drugs, gangs and homelessness can set young people on a troubled path. In the District of San Francisco New Orleans in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), De Marillac Academy in San Francisco, California, changes that path for at-risk youth by offering tuition-free education that focuses on academic excellence in a values-based environment. Founded in 2001, the school also provides graduate support.

The commitment to students extends into their neighborhood. The school has immersed itself into a number of efforts aimed at improving the lives of students and their neighbors. Among those initiatives is 4 Corner Friday, a community-building event with the goal of strengthening relationships. More than 25 neighborhood organizations, businesses, corporations, police and residents gather for a specified amount of time at drug-ridden intersections for activities including poetry reading, drawing with sidewalk chalk, sharing information about neighborhood services, and more.

4 Corner Friday is a project of Golden Gate Avenue Block Safety Group, an informal coalition of organizational stakeholders that De Marillac helped start. The group has also led efforts to engage civic leaders, discourage drug dealing and use, encourage homeless neighbors not to lie on sidewalks during school hours, pick up trash, and more. Additionally, the group has taken an active role in revitalizing the neighborhood by attracting new businesses.

“By getting involved in creating positive change in their home community, our students and graduates discover their own public voice and model incredible compassion for their neighbors,” said Michael Anderer, De Marillac’s vice president for mission advancement.

De Marillac students also make their voices heard by publishing an annual book of poetry and producing videos to show a glimpse of their lives. Through these efforts, and many more, De Marillac instills education for justice as a way to transform lives.

District of San Francisco New Orleans

RELAN’s Lasallian Social Justice Institute

In the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), Lasallians get a close look at justice through the Lasallian Social Justice Institute (LSJI), a summer formation program that immerses participants into the realities of the poor in order to be evangelized by them. LSJI is based on the Gospel and our Lasallian vocation for the promotion of social justice and service with the poor. It is designed to be experiential, educational, creatively practical and reflective.

The foundation to create LSJI was underway when the 43rd General Chapter was held in 2000. The Chapter emphasized a need for formation that was not only intellectual, but also experiential with a first-hand look at educational services for the poor. Following the direction of the Chapter, Christian Brothers Conference, the Regional office, created LSJI. The program ran first the official cohort in 2004. Since then, the program has focused on immigration, violence, homelessness and civil rights.

LSJI opens the eyes of participants to injustices, and inspires them to try to make a difference. Blake Pickart, business professor at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota in Winona, participated in the 2015 program on violence and peacemaking in Chicago, Illinois, and returned home changed. “After my LSJI experience, I came back to campus with a different mindset. I interacted with students differently, especially those from areas in larger cities known for violence,” Pickart explained. “Given my new knowledge about violence, I am able to pierce their hard shells because I have a better understanding. I advocate for students from dangerous areas when we are discussing how to best get new students acclimated to the university.”

The 2016 program will examine human trafficking in communities and around the world. Learn more about LSJI at www.lasallian.info/lcji



Amid the Anguish in South Sudan



What happens when a country goes to war with itself? There is fighting between former allies, there are far too many violent deaths, several million people are displaced from their land and their homes destroyed, deep rifts open up between tribal groups and the already fragile economy plunges into crisis. People become desperate and hungry. This has been the experience of the past 28 months in South Sudan. Initially, the fighting was confined to three out of the ten States of the country but the cancer of conflict has now spread to previously healthy regions and more and more innocent people face a fight for survival.

Solidarity with South Sudan, the combined response of many religious congregations to the invitation of the Catholic Bishops to assist this fragile country, is now facing a new situation of declining law and order; but 20 Sisters, 4 Priests and 8 Brothers, including three De La Salle Christian Brothers, are still living and working together to help the people of South Sudan. The actions of the present leaders have debilitated this country from within; it is only help from outside that slows the slide toward anarchy. That is why we stay in solidarity with the people.

We are here with the ordinary people to provide hope and opportunity, to build a more just society through the pastoral and agricultural programmes we offer. In our health training and teacher training colleges, young people from all tribes live and study together in peace. They learn that reconciliation is possible, that what unites can be more powerful than what divides. Looking from afar, South Sudan may appear unsafe but we are well prepared and know that we are doing what needs to be done. *'A ship in the harbor is safe,'* the adage says, *'but that is not what ships are for.'* It is not only religious but many foreign nationals working for humanitarian organizations who are also here trying to help develop a more just and prosperous South Sudan.

In 2016, Solidarity is educating record numbers of South Sudanese to be teachers, nurses or mid-wives - more than two hundred in full-time, multi-year, residential programmes. It is a remarkable collaborative effort not only in providing future education and health professionals for this country but also in producing future leaders who will understand the importance of a just and peaceful society. Yes, we could perhaps be safer back in our home 'harbours' but we know it is good that we are here!

Intercongregational project - Solidarity with South Sudan

Reception Centre "La Salle Home", Iasi - Romania

The Reception Centre "La Salle Home" in Iasi is a Lasallian foundation dating from 2003 and run by the Brothers working in Romania.

It caters for boys in difficulty and it gives them one last chance to attend school and to benefit from the family atmosphere it provides in order to develop and be educated. We currently have 16 boys between 14 and 19. They have all been sent to us by civil authorities. Most of them are Orthodox Christians.

In the 13 years of its existence, the Centre has provided help for 50 young people. Self-reliance and maturity are the qualities that characterise the former pupils of the Home. They return to visit us whenever they can, although some of them live a long distance away. They also attend the major events in the life of the Home, and some of them work with us as volunteers.

The schooling for our boys is provided in the local state schools of Iasi. The Centre acts as the 'home' for the boys and provides the 'extra' element of informal education and all that goes with it.

The educational community is international, being made up of Brothers and Lasallian associates, men and women, employed or voluntary, some of whom come from other countries.

Financial support from outside is a challenge for us, since the State contribution covers only one third of the Home's Budget. So benefactors are always welcome.

Brother Iosif Beda
District of Europe Centrale



6th International Session for Lasallian Studies (SIEL) 2015-2016

October 12, 2015, saw the start of the 6th International Session for Lasallian Studies in the Casa Generalizia. It followed on from the work done in the 5th Session of 2012-2013, which began with four weeks in Rome and continued its work over the next seven months. At the end of this whole process, we hope to receive from the 33 participants fresh contributions in Lasallian research relevant to the educational and pastoral scene of the XXI century. Each participant is expected to publish his/her work and make a public presentation of it (in their University or District), once it has been evaluated by the SIEL Council.

What did we learn during this study session on what is "Lasallian" in the context of the Institute today?

Here are some observations.

- Regarding the nature of Lasallian thinking

There is no consensus regarding what is meant by "Lasallian". Certainly, some reference to the spiritual and educational context of France in the XVII century is essential for understanding the Founder and the first Brothers. But "Lasallian" seems to be a static construct which remained unchanged and invariable throughout the XVIII, XIX and XX centuries. More work is needed to clarify the itinerary of an Institute which has lived through historic ups and downs and which has given account of itself in the face of profound political, social, and ecclesial changes in all our countries not just in France, although that remains the basic point of reference. How is the "Lasallian thing" able to permeate the context of the XXI century? Are we able to give a fresh account of our shared identity?

- Regarding Lasallian Formation of Brothers and Lay Lasallians

The diversity of the Institute –especially in terms of the contents and the depth of reflection on the life and writings of the Founder– is very evident in such international gatherings. On the one hand, we are pleasantly surprised to see the vitality and critical ability of the participants from some Districts and

universities. This reflects the tenacity in work and leadership of those Brothers who, often in the wings, have enriched Lasallian reflection over recent decades. At the same time, we see that in some places Lasallian formation is more occasional than continuous and that it is more a reaction to emergencies in the mission than a strategic plan by which the Brothers give support and training to Lay Lasallians. What new perspectives and strategies can we develop to ensure the ongoing formation for ministry of the Brothers and Lay Lasallians in the context of the educational mission in the XXI century?

- Regarding Periods of Personal Formation

The urgency of the educational mission means that the important element is overlooked; we find it difficult to give the right amount of time to formation. Once the SIEL participants return to their usual work, there is a drastic reduction in their chances of finding personal time to continue their research. And that is so not just for the Brothers; Lay Lasallians also have the urgent demands of their family lives on top of the demands of the mission. That simply reinforces our Lasallian characteristic of being pragmatic rather than reflective. To be educators we are required to be present "from morning till night". We are passionate about giving service. However, recognising that formation is essential for the vitality of our educational mission, we must ask how we can enrich our shared formation amid all the tasks that we must fulfill.

No doubt these and other reflections will help us to think about the processes of formation which we will offer in the future. For the present, we can be glad that thirty three Lasallians have responded to the challenge of doing research concerning our educational mission in the XXI century. The fruits of their work will be published in the *Revista Digital de Investigación Lasaliana*. [Digital Review of Lasallian Research]

Brother Diego Muñoz
Lasallian Research and Resources

CIL 2016 – Brothers in Mid-life



A new session of **CIL** took place in the Generalate from the 11th of January to April 3rd. It was organised by the Institute Secretary for Formation as indicated in Circular 470. It was entitled *"Personal Renewal and Growth"* and was intended for Brothers "in mid-life" between the ages of 40 and 50. In all 35 Brothers took part from 19 Districts (Argentina-Paraguay, Bolivia-Perú, Norandino, Bogotá, México Norte, Antillas-México Sur, Lwanga, Congo-Kinshasa, Gulf of Benin, Central Africa, West Africa, Antananarivo, Colombo, LEAD, ANZPPNG, Near East, Central Europe, France and ARLEP, plus the Delegations of India and Rwanda).

The session had three goals: 1) to provide an occasion for renewal in human development, spirituality and Lasallian life; 2) to form community by sharing personal experiences and cultures; 3) to suggest new perspectives via input relevant to our lives as Brothers in mid-life. The themes of the programme were all directed to aspects of personal renewal delivered in the following modules of work: Human Development, Christology, Ecclesiology; Liturgy, Prayer, the Signs of the Times, Religious Life Today, Leadership in Community Life, Affectivity in Religious Life, Lasallian Spirituality and Prayer. Special attention was paid to the Rule of 2015. The input was supplemented by lots of time for personal work in the afternoons and by work in linguistic groups.

Most of the input was given by the CIL Team, comprising Brothers Paulo Dullius, Vincent Pelletier and José Ricardo Moreno. Various other contributions were made by Brothers from the Generalate (Louis de Thomasis, Jesús Rubio, Diego Muñoz and Felicien Bora), by Members of the General Council (Robert Schieler, Jorge Gallardo, Aidan Kilty, Rafael Matas, Gustavo Ramírez). Other contributors included Brother Bruno Alpago and, from outside the Institute, Father Miguel Ángel García, SJ, and Sister Emmanuela Viviano, PDDM.

To help us to get to know the current situation in the Institute, extra afternoon sessions took the form of presentations by those responsible for the different Services of the Generalate. We heard about the work of the Secretary General, the Econome General, the Procurator General and the Postulator General, the organisation of the Generalate, the Communications Service, the Secretary for Formation, the Secretary for Lasallian Research and Resources, the Secretary for Solidarity and Development and SECOLI projects. This all helped to give us a clear idea of the work of the Centre of the Institute.

Other aspects that should be noted include the close relationship we had with the Brothers of the General Council. This was partly because the CIL session coincided



with the Central Community and various times for socialising over coffee and table talk. We inaugurated the new CIL premises, situated in what used to be the library, with large rooms that gave us space for gatherings. We enjoyed periods of free time which enabled us to explore the many secrets of the Eternal City, and we also made many trips outside of Rome. One trip that stands out was the pilgrimage to Assisi on February 27, where we absorbed the Franciscan spirit of the town. We participated in various events in the Vatican, benefitting from the Jubilee of Consecrated Life (February 2), a General Audience (March 23) and not forgetting the liturgies of Holy Week.

The final week of the programme, already in Eastertide, was given over to synthesising all that we had learned and spending some days in a personal retreat, in the Generalate itself. It was not possible this time to organise the customary pilgrimage to the emblematic Lasallian places in France, mostly because of visa difficulties.

All in all, we can say that this CIL session was an interesting experience and a real gift for all the participants, which gave us the opportunity for various key moments of encounter, reflection and synthesis. It helped us discover new aspects of our vocation as Brothers, and gave us impetus for the new tasks we shall undertake in the future. For that reason, our thanks are due to all those who made it possible for us to participate in the session and to achieve its goals.

Brother Javier Abad Valladolid
District of ARLEP – Sector of Valladolid

with the February plenary session of the General Council, and partly because of the meetings with the Councillors who gave presentations on the situations in their respective Regions – the light side and the dark side – and the projects they have in hand. In the same way, a very interesting meeting and social time with the whole Council served to establish a dialogue and better understanding between the two groups.

As in other CIL Sessions, our group made an effort to form Community working on the main aspects conducive to creating a sense of belonging and fraternity, in spite of the cultural and linguistic differences. We had our own prayer life as a group, with morning prayer and evening Eucharist in the CIL chapel, in the three official languages. We shared meals



In memoriam



Today, we've lost a brother who brought so much joy to all of us. On behalf of the General Council, the Central Community and the Institute, I offer my sincere condolences to you, Charlie's dad and family.

In a reflection from today's Scripture readings there was this sentence, "the measure of a life well lived is the virtue that continues to grow in the lives of those who were touched by it." Charlie touched so many lives. I think especially of those students—La Salle's artisans and the poor—that he committed himself to as a De La Salle Brother. We all have our own particular image or photo that captures Charlie's love for others and his vocation. Mine is of Charlie on a stage in robe, sunglasses and umbrella dancing with a group of San Miguel students. He was a brother who our Rule reminds us gave "special attention to those of their pupils who have greater difficulties at school, personal problems, or problems adjusting to family life or society. Charlie felt most at home with such students, particularly during his years at San Miguel.

To leave San Miguel and come to Rome in response to Brother Alvaro's request is an example of Charlie's virtue. He was engaged in a ministry that we say is so important to our identity and mission as Brothers. And it is! But Charlie understood all the dimensions of his vocation and responded positively. He stepped onto a larger stage. So many others now came to appreciate and love the Charlie so well known and loved by us. Circular 461, Associated for the Lasallian Mission ...an act of Hope is among his legacy and gifts to us.

We will continue to keep you in our prayers as you grieve the loss of our brother. And Charlie will keep us in prayer as he now experiences the "joy a Brother of the Christian Schools will have when he sees a great number of his students in possession of eternal happiness, for which they are indebted to him by the grace of Jesus Christ!"

Fraternally,
Brother Robert Schieler, FSC
Brother Superior

New post of "Communications Director"



From March 1st, the FSC Generalate has appointed Dr. Ilaria Iadaluca as Community Manager. This is a new position in the Service of Communications and Technology.

Her role includes, among other things, the development of a new communications plan and responsibility for maintaining and updating information via the official web page and via social networks as well as for relations with all the communications media.

She graduated in the Theory and Practice of Mass Communications, and has occupied the position of Person in Charge of Publications and Communications for the Association SEDOS (Service for Documentation and Research on Global Communications).

She has worked with the Catholic Biblical Federation and with the Review 'Popoli e Missione' (Italian Bishops Conference).

We congratulate her on her appointment and promise her our support and collaboration for every success in her new role.

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