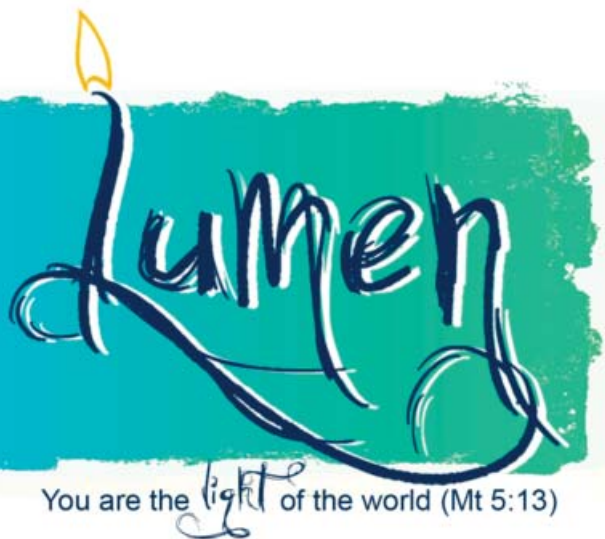




a publication  
by and for  
Young Lasallians



You are the *light* of the world (Mt 5:13)

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Antoine Béland, International  
Coordinator for Young Lasallians

Greetings from the Generalate, in Rome! A new LUMEN newsletter is waiting for you to read and share with others.

We would like for you to become familiar with the four priority areas for Young Lasallians that we first introduced to you in the previous issue. We have decided, therefore, that we would focus on one of these four priority areas in each of the forthcoming issues. The theme of the newsletter you are about to read today is the "Culture of Vocations."

In this issue, you will be able to deepen the meaning and the importance of this priority, in addition to reading reflections on the topic from all corners of the Institute.

Please note also that this issue includes a few announcements regarding important upcoming events.

I hope you will enjoy this LUMEN newsletter. Don't forget to talk about it and share it with your whole Lasallian network.

Live Jesus in our Hearts . . . Forever!

Antoine  
International Coordinator for Young Lasallians





# The Culture of Vocations

In a world where the pace of life continually gets faster and faster, where technology keeps evolving, where human relationships are relegated to social media, where instantaneity reigns and where the value of long-term commitments is sometimes questioned, perhaps it is good to pause and reflect upon the meaning of our life. We need to slow down to listen to God's call and see the plan he has laid out for each of us.

In our hectic world described above, it is sometimes challenging to pause. This is why the Young Lasallians Movement invites young people to take a break, to listen and to discover their own goals. We wish to awaken in each young person the awareness of God's call. We invite vocation.

This process of discovering one's own vocation best happens in an environment which is encouraging, stimulating and nurturing. In our communities, our educational ministries, our Districts, and our Institute, together we can build a culture of vocations in which every young person will comfortably journey towards his or her vocation.

This culture should promote all possible vocations, all lifestyles and all ways of belonging to a community of believers, although some vocational itineraries, such as the one of the Brother of the Christian Schools, are worth a specific attention. The Lasallian charism becomes a lens through which one looks at the road ahead in his or her life.

It is of utmost importance to place the individual at the center of this culture. This means that the accompaniment of youth is essential in the unfolding of their experience. In addition, formation programs adapted to youth's different development stages allow them to discover and utilize their full potential.

Together, let us build a culture of vocations in which each young person moved by the Lasallian charism will blossom.



## RELAF - Madagascar : The Lasallian movements, opportunities for a lifelong vocational journey

Outside of formal teaching, the schools and Lasallian educational centers in the District of Antananarivo (Madagascar) offer many opportunities for children and young students to be a part of a Lasallian movement.

In the primary schools, children can choose to participate in a movement called Lasallian Missionary Children. This movement, which has been active for fifteen years, organizes activities (prayers, gatherings, outings, camps) adapted to its members which introduces them to the Lasallian values. When they graduate to high school, these children participate in the Young Lasallians group, whose activities are based around the three pillars of faith, service and community.



The 2016 MLY national camp

On the "Great Island," those two groups are a part of the Madagascar Lasallian Youth Movement (MLY). Among other activities, the movement holds a national camp for the schools and educational centers. This year, the national camp was held at the Saint Joseph Ambatondrazaka School from March 19th to 24th. Supervised by twenty "aunts and uncles" -- the familiar names given to the teachers who are responsible for the movement -- the 120 youth who participated were involved in activities that focused

on the promotion of faith, service and community. Formation, community service, prayers and much more was on the agenda at this year's national camp. It is worth mentioning that the MLY national camp has always been a time to show solidarity with the most disadvantaged through social action: this is why the camp is conducted during Lent. The community service was focused on the renovation of the Saint Joseph School in order to offer a healthy and appropriate environment to those who are attending the institution.



The 2016 MLY national camp

Once they graduate and go to university, youth still have the possibility to journey as Lasallians. They can participate in the Young University Followers of the Blessed Brother Raphaël Louis Rafiringa, founded twenty years ago. When they finish university, they can then integrate the Former Lasallian Students Association, whose professional and Lasallian experience is a great support to the Lasallian mission in the country.

A great number of children, youth, aspirants and some young Brothers of the District are proud to have journeyed and nurtured their vocation in these movements. For many of them, these Lasallian movements provide opportunities for a lifelong vocational journey.

Brother Michel Tolojanahary



# RELAN - A Reflection on Lasallian Volunteers



In reflecting on my vocational journey, the experience I had as a Lasallian Volunteer played a foundational role in recognizing how God calls me to be of service to others. Like many Lasallians, the founding story of St. John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers resonates with my own experience, particularly the movement down a path I may not have foreseen at the beginning.

At present, that movement has taken shape in my new role as Regional Coordinator for Lasallian Vocation Ministry, being charged to promote Lasallian vocation in its diversity of expressions,

especially to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Part of my new ministry has been the privilege of walking with current Lasallian Volunteers. It has been both humbling and inspiring to witness their service advancing the Lasallian Educational Mission across the United States.

The Rule of the Brothers offers “firsthand experience of the poor through voluntary service, and living and working with them offers young people the opportunity to understand the value of a vocation and the service of others.” The value of a vocation discerned through voluntary service is expressed not only through educational ministry, but also through single, married and ordained and vowed religious life, especially as Brothers of the Christian Schools. We can all give thanks for our personal vocational journey rooted in our shared Lasallian charism and mission.



I am struck that over 700 women and men are alumni of Lasallian Volunteers and of those 20% work in Lasallian ministries while many others continue working with underserved youth in a variety of settings. Through their year of service, each Lasallian Volunteer is given the opportunity to reflect not so much from the perspective of “What am I called to do?” but rather, from the perspective of “Who am I called to serve?” Grounded in our mission and values of faith, service and community, we are invited to the understanding that to be Lasallian is to have a vocation, and also that the entire people of God is responsible for awakening vocations in the Church.

Each of us is invited to accompany and invite young people into experiences of faith, service and community, and to affirm their gifts and talents to provide a setting in which life’s meaning is understood as a personal call to serve the community. May we all be challenged to invite and accompany young people in this way, that we may continue to be blessed with Lasallian vocations in all their forms.

Chris Swain  
Regional Coordinator for Lasallian Vocation Ministry

# RELAL - God is calling you by your name... listen to him!

After years of efforts to live intensely my spiritual life, I keep asking myself some questions: Where am I as a Christian? What progress have I made? Do I love God more than in previous moments of my life? Has my faith matured since I started to walk this spiritual journey as a Christian Brother? Definitely, these are questions that help me examine the meaning of my religious life as consecrated, Lasallian educator.



It is important to have a clear understanding about what a vocation means as a personal experience of life. Vocation is the call that God makes to everyone in the core of his or her heart. From birth, we are called to the vocation of a decent life. We are called to respect creation, being co-creators with God who has given us wisdom to continue building and creating knowledge for the benefit of society.

“And he went up into the hills and summoned those He wanted. So they came to Him...” (Mc 3, 13-14) God

calls whom He wants, naming them personally. He does not call people in general, he calls a person. A person who can be perfected by Him, that One, whom by his grace and our own efforts, will reap the best possible sheaves.

With this brief reflection, I would like to talk about my personal experience as a Pastoral Agent for Vocations at Colegio San José De La Salle in the city of Medellín (Colombia), where I carried out my apostolate these last two years.

The first contact I have with young people unfamiliar to the life of the Christian Brothers is through my ethics, human values and religious education course. It is a place where I not only teach what I know, but also show who I am as a Brother. I am their brother! In this environment, I recognize myself as



“a communicating vessel, an instrument, a transmitter” for the message and will of God. My ministry is serving these young people, clarifying their vocational choice, and responding to the deepest questions of every teenager, indeed, of every human being.

In 2015, I was able to accompany to a vocational meeting three young men who sought to live a deeply personal experience with God. At the end of this meeting, these young people were able to strengthen their professional and vocational choice, recognizing that they are beloved children of God, called “vocati” to selflessly serve people who really need a helping hand.

Although there were years of silence in this great school where young people did not know about the Christian Brothers, things have changed.





This year, God came back to sow the seeds in some young people interested in learning and living these vocational experiences. Let it be what God Himself wants . . . time filled with many blessings from the Creator, our beloved Father.

His Holiness Pope Francis says:

*“Dear young friends, never be afraid to go out of yourselves and begin the journey! The Gospel is the message which brings freedom to our lives; it transforms them and makes them all the more beautiful. How wonderful it is to be surprised by God’s call, to embrace his word, and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, in adoration of the divine mystery and in generous service to our neighbors! Your life will become richer and more joyful each day!”<sup>1</sup>*



Isn't that wonderful to know that God, in his endless love, gives us the strength to go and meet with him? To know that He is the one who manages to set us on the right road, giving us full freedom to search, listen and respond to his call?

At Peter and Andrew's house, Jesus approaches Peter's mother-in-law, takes her hand, and raises her up, to serve. Let us allow God to come to us, to take our hand, raising us up and leading us to better paths of love, peace, mercy and ways of truth. And at the

end, being able to say with joy and gladness with the Psalmist: *Here I am, Lord, to do your will!*

Brother Reinaldo André Valera Iglesias

<sup>1</sup> Message of Pope Francis for the 52<sup>nd</sup> World Day of Prayer for Vocations, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

## PARC - Life-changing



I was quite surprised, but extremely happy and grateful, at how the 2016 PARC Youth Coordinators Program has awakened me to the many other things that I can do, the many other things that I may be called to do, and the many other things that I, now more than ever, actually want to do. I started the program on April 11<sup>th</sup> as a mere teacher-representative of my school. I was almost clueless regarding why I had been sent to the program. By April 18<sup>th</sup>, I had been transformed into a very willing volunteer

of the Mission (probably just as clueless!) but tremendously optimistic about the impact I could have on others.



Not only did the week-long gathering of Lasallians from the Asia-Pacific Region challenge me to go out of my comfort zone, but also it inspired me to be proactive so that I can accompany others who have the courage to step out of their comfort zone. Should this prove a bit too much too soon, I am ready to, at the very least, join them in working harmoniously with other faith groups, always taking into consideration the benefit of others as much as, if not more than, ourselves.

As a coordinator of Young Lasallians (a role I have now learned to embrace), I will dream big. I am fully aware though that doing so means I must be willing to start small, and that I should start now. Most importantly, I am reminded that I should not have to do it on my own, that there are so many others who have the faith and the zeal for service. I just have to be in communion with them in realizing the mission. I just have to ask. Sometimes, I do not even need to. I may just have to be open. To listen.

Wherever I head, my response is "Why not?" This is a simple, yet most powerful, statement that Brother Gus Boquer, President of De La Salle University Dasmariñas, used in challenging us during the program.

Meanwhile, I will be one of the sparks within my community. I will start with myself, with my wife Roda and my daughter Aria, the students in my English classes, and my ministry with the Kundirana singing group. All my endeavors with each of them from this point forward will be anchored in being sensitive to the needs of those around us, on carefully crafting ways through which we can address these needs, and by wholeheartedly committing to bringing hope to others – things I learned from my new family from all over the Region.

Big words, I know. I also know though that God accompanies me, and that all of you, my Lasallian family, have my back. The program has, indeed, been life-changing. You are all in my prayers. Please keep me, too, in yours.

Joseph Angelo M. Santos  
La Salle Green Hills, Philippines



# Announcements

Here are two important messages:



The **World Youth Day** in Krakow is approaching quickly! The Lasallian Gathering, uniting all Young Lasallians present at the event, will be held on July 27<sup>th</sup>. If you will be in Krakow and you are not registered yet to the Lasallian Gathering, there is still time to do it by sending a message to the following email address: [icyl@lasalle.org](mailto:icyl@lasalle.org).

**Date: Wednesday July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Place: Saint Jana Kantego church, 18 Jabłonkowska street, Krakow.**

**Time: 2:30 pm to 5:45 pm**

The preparation for the next International Lasallian Days for Peace has begun. The theme for the next edition of the campaign, which will be held from September 21<sup>st</sup> to October 21<sup>st</sup>, is "Our Voices of Mercy Are Calling for Peace." You are all invited to begin planning what your institution or District will organize to celebrate and promote peace during this time!

See you soon!

