



COMMISSION
FOR LASALLIAN
VOCATIONS.
BULLETIN 1.

VOCATIONS





Reflection: “A new impetus”

There are many challenges that the Pastoral Care of Vocations has raised in our Lasallian Family. The Circular 470 expresses the need to “encourage emerging structures and networks for vocations ...” as one of the main objectives (p. 34). This Commission is born from this decision as a new structure which will try to be the binding link of all existing networks or those that can be created from now, at the district and regional levels.

Our desire is to be the “meeting point” of reflection and discernment, a space to coordinate and promote a vocational culture in all its dimensions with the spirit of Proposition 24 of our 45th General Chapter.

In this new Commission we are Lasallians who are committed to “promote a culture of life understood as a vocation” (CG 45 4.8) and to that we dedicate our efforts. Realistically, none of us is full time employed in the Commission, however, we would like to do our best to create a new impetus.

This new momentum adds a new thrust to many important commitments no in progress in our vocational animation of the Youth Ministry and in other Lasallians areas. There are many initiatives and with good results. This vocational reality is truly diverse in the Lasallian Family as are places and people, but the vocational work being done actually is increasingly serious and committed. Yes, we have much to keep on doing ... Thank God!

The Commission has started its way. In this first period we want to:

- Develop, both physical and virtually the “Lasallian Vocational Centre”, from which we can see, judge and propose actions. A space that will not remain in the “necessary analysis of reality” but “looks toward the future”. An observatory that will complement the creation of a “Resource Center” in which we bring together everything available related to the Youth and Vocation Ministry. A space for questioning, research, analysis and projection.



– Enhance communication. It is important to update the content we project to others through an institutional web page and by other media. We need to disseminate what we are and are doing. We need to facilitate access to such information and, at the same time, generate a vocational culture through it.

– Collaborate with Secretariats of the Institute and especially: the Secretariat for Formation, Young Lasallians, Lasallian Family and Association. From this perspective we are in dialogue with them and willing to get involved in what we mutually decide.

It is from these perspectives that we come now to a new digital medium: the “Lasallian Vocations” as a tool not only to share news, but also to create synergies, to disseminate ideas, as the virtual meeting point of the work of our network. It is our desire to serve both personal and community levels as a spur to our commitment with and for Lasallian Vocations, because we want to “live according to the vocation to which we have been called” (1 P 1:13 -25).

That's what it is: a new impetus. Without forgetting that we still need to deepen our conviction that God never denies his Church what she really needs: “The Holy Spirit does not cease in calling the children of the Church to witness the Gospel anywhere in the world” (NV 4). Hence, Saint John Baptist de La Salle calls us to ask the Lord. “... Ask him fervently too that he will be pleased to make your Institute grow and produce good day by day, so that, as Saint Paul says, the hearts of the faithful may be strengthened in holiness and in justice” (MR 207,2,2).

Brothers, sisters and lay associates continue to walk in faith and hope. It is a great task to continue building the Kingdom with the Lasallian educational mission.

Br. Rafa Matas
General Councilor



Commission for Lasallian Vocations



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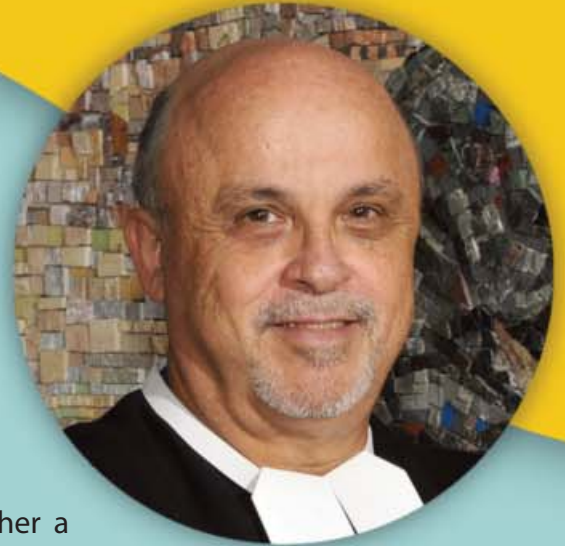


Br. Joseph Félix
Secretario para la Formación



Br. Jesús Rubio
Secretario para la Formación

Talking with... Brother Superior General



How does the pastoral ministry of vocations focus on the future and invite to a new way of being Church?

When Saint La Salle, led by Divine Providence, brought together a group of lay men to educate poor boys in 17th Century France, he introduced a new way of being Church. Those first Brothers remained lay; they would not become priests or vow the three evangelical counsels that traditional religious made. The Lasallian vocation is a call for all those involved in the ministry of education. It's a gift of St. La Salle, patron Saint of Teachers, to be shared for the whole Church. The invitation to a new way of being Church is very much embedded in our vow of association for the educational service of the young, especially the poor. By engaging ourselves in education in whatever form, we are building a Church that is inclusive and models the first Christian communities where God's love and mercy, peace and justice are its pillars.

How is the pastoral ministry of vocations not only the work of a committee, or vocation directors but of our Lasallian family together?

We have a collective responsibility to build a culture of vocations. To be successful in our efforts we all have to be involved. I believe our young Brother delegates to the 45th General Chapter said it best:

- The cries of the world cannot go unnoticed nor can they be submerged in indifference and silence. Our hearts, moved by reality, beat with hope and lead us to the adventure of discovering God amidst the cries of the poor.
- Let us continue to be the source of love and welcoming for all those with whom we share our lives and mission. This is the time to open our hearts to the reality of an international Institute and to live the adventure of universal love. (9.2)

As God, in his love for humanity and all creation, first called us, we each have the responsibility to respond to that call. It is in one's response that the person is able to share his or her passion and make sure that others also discover their true vocation in life. We cannot do this alone. We have to do this with others. I am convinced that if we take to heart that fundamental Lasallian inspiration of "together and by association", we will not only support and confirm each one's own vocation to the human and Christian education of the poor, the young and adults, we will contribute in our own small way to the coming of the Reign of God.

What is significant in approach the pastoral ministry of vocations?

The Brothers' Rule is very clear on this: "The entire People of God is responsible for awakening vocations in the Church." (Rule 84). It goes on to say: "First-hand 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." (Rule 84.3).

Communities have to take responsibility to welcome and invite young people to “come and see”, come and experience community life based on the Gospels. The community has to be convinced they are the instruments of creating a culture of vocations. They do so by their very lives when they give “witness to the presence of God among people, to the liberating force of his Spirit, and to the tenderness of his love...” (Rule 86) In an atmosphere of welcome Communities are able to invite others to discover their true passion and vocation in life.

How do we re-motivate Brothers who may be discouraged in their commitment to new vocations?

By re-discovering their own initial motivation and repeating their own stories often to others, Brothers can re-ignite their passion to transcend their own discouragement and disheartenment. To help Brothers and even Lasallian Partners who may have become discouraged, the delegates to the 45th General Chapter invited us to reflect on these three questions: 1) What ignited in you a love for your vocation? 2) What nurtures your vocation and how can you share this experience with others? and 3) Keeping in mind the importance of catechetics and evangelization, can your community do something new and daring? Based on these reflections, Lasallian communities are invited to develop an action plan for vocation ministry (4.7). I encourage all Lasallians to engage in such a communal exercise.

All are called to promote vocations. No matter our age, no matter our situation, we are all instruments for vocation promotion. Our Partners in particular see that in us as Brothers. Young people see that in us. They want our presence. Simple acts, such as Brothers opening the community for young people to “come and see”, or being present at a school activity are invigorating for Partners and students. They welcome and invite our presence. Those Brothers who do these simple acts find themselves re-energized.

Chris Swain



Why do you want to be a Brother?

If I had to answer this question in a few words, I would summarize my thoughts by saying that I want to be a Brother because I have discovered my happiness in this way of life.

I never thought, five years ago when I was 19 years old, that my future would be among the Christian Brothers, but God, with its fine prudence and wisdom has put before me great experiences and people who, almost involuntarily, became benchmarks for all my life.

Today, after living two years in community with De La Salle Brothers in Arucas (Canary Islands) and at the Sacred Heart high school in Madrid, and after having worked with hundreds of children and young people, in classroom and elsewhere, I must admit that it's worth, and I am convinced that God is calling me to give my life as did John-Baptist de La Salle, because when you discover finally what makes you happy, why not to bet your life there?

Br. Miguel Serafín Marcos Hernández



Why do you want to be a Sister?

My name is Nerlande Jean-Pierre, a member of the Community of the Lasallian Servants of Jesus. I'm from Vallières, the same city of Brother Austinvil, FSC. I am the second of a Christian family of five children. My parents taught me to pray every day. Their biggest dream was to see that their children might become religious, brothers or sisters.

While doing my primary education with the Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, I said I wanted to be like those sisters. Since then, the idea of becoming religious grew in me. In the summer of 2002, I met Brother Hermann and Sister Majorie who were passing in Vallières. I was invited to participate in a vocational workshop in Port-de-Paix. After the workshop, I decided to follow the community. That was how, with God's blessing and my parents, in September 2007, I entered the community of the Lasallian Servants of Jesus and in March 25, 2011, I made my first vows. Finally, I realized my favourite project, with my parents: to be a vowed religious in order to offer myself to the service of the Lord working with others, especially those men and women who are in need. Today, I devote myself, body and soul, to the service of the children of the poor for the glory of God.

Indeed, I feel happy and proud to be what I am: a nun with the Lasallian Servants of Jesus. Well. I am at ease where I am. I encourage all young people who want to be religious to accept this idea, it is a beautiful life.

Sister Jean-Pierre Nerlande SLJ.



Why do you want to be associated?

A friend of mine, now a priest, when we worked together with children and youth in a parish, told me that there are no coincidences. It was his way of making me see, with the eyes of faith that God is working in our lives almost imperceptibly.

It happened that, I came to La Salle by chance in 2001. Since then, my day to day life has been driven by small steps and commitments with groups and my family that God has put in my way and I have increasingly felt Lasallian, identified with Jesus and closer to the educational mission.

To be a Lasallian is to respond daily to what God is asking me, to announce the Gospel through education, coaching children and families, full teamwork ... And, of course, in a spirit of prayer in the presence of God.

I am feeling that signs and experiences of everyday life have not been mere coincidences. Every step in my commitment to the Lasallian vocation has made me and is making me grow as a Christian and a Lasallian.

I feel that God wants me to continue my deepening of the Lasallian charism in community, sharing this faith that gives me the strength to serve others, especially the poorer.

That is why I started the process towards "association", because I want to keep growing as a Christian following the charism of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, because I am feeling that this is the path where God is guiding me.

Manel Boluda

Why do you want to be **SIGNUM FIDEI**?

I would like very much to belong to the fraternity "Signum Fidei" to give meaning to my lay vocation in the Church and in society by giving Christian education to young people following the Lasallian charism. I felt this desire growing in me when I belonged to the Lasallian Youth in my college where I am now teaching the Spanish language for almost 8 years.

Very soon, I noticed the dedication and spirit of sacrifice which animated Brothers and teachers in their work. That touched me and I am now interested and would like to follow them and practice everything I have learnt to share it now with the young people the Lord has entrusted to me.

I would like to dedicate my life serving the poor in education. I would like with the other members of Signum Fidei, meet their needs, be their model, their reference in this world where they face several challenges. I cannot do it alone but together we can carry out this work dedicated to Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

Édith Touvi



Vocation Stories



I'm **Dilasha Gamage**, female, 18 year old, a student at De Mazenod College, Kandana, Sri Lanka.

I, as a Buddhist Young Lasallian, find it a gift to be able to study at a Catholic Lasallian school. I joined De Mazenod college in 2012 and I can vouch that from then on, I am no longer the person I was. I used to be more of a self-centered girl, always complaining about life and the society, but never attempted to make a change. I was not bothered about the struggle the other people go through, I was too busy with only my own life, and I did not take the time to think of others. But, things changed after I became a Lasallian. I met angles hidden in white robes the Lasallian Brothers! They formed me, molded me, made me look at life from a new perspective, and I'm very grateful.

By entering De Mazenod, I became a Lasallian without a choice, but now I am a Lasallian at heart, because I learned that being a Lasallian is not based on religion, color, race or culture, but based on who I am, and on my capacity to let the greater good shine through me. And it occurred to me that religion, color, race or culture do not make one different from another. Because as I so beautifully learned it is what I am to other and what I do for the benefit of those in need that make the difference.

As a Lasallian, I see the world not for what it is but for what it could be. I've learned how connected each and every one of us is. Today nothing gives me more satisfaction than being able to help someone less privileged. I know that I cannot change the world, but I know that if I help at least one person today, I'll be making a difference and that difference will one day help change the world.

Being a true Young Lasallian is quite challenging and often difficult. For a young Lasallian to have his/her interest focused on the people in need, rather than, on the attractive and distracting advancement of this present age electronic development could be an uphill task. But to me, that's where the strength is born, faith is developed, love and compassion spring up.

I find that being a Lasallian is also very rewarding and enriching. As a member of this young Lasallian family, I've got into the habit of getting in touch with the God given goodness within me and experiencing a sense of belonging to a global group of one minded Young Lasallians.

I'm really proud being a young Lasallian, inspired by the teachings of St. De La Salle, to be able to think of the others' needs, spend some time teaching and touching the hearts of the poor and marginalized children and I now look forward to touch the hearts of more underprivileged and less fortunate children.

Dilasha Gamage
PARC
District of Sri Lanka



Vocation Stories

In a hurry, like Mary

Like most young Lebanese Maronites, I joined since my childhood Catholic movement groups in the parish and I also had the chance to be student of the Christian Brothers in Lebanon.

At school, the Lasallian movements were for me very important. It was the place where I could find myself with friends to relax, pray and learn about Jesus and Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle. The presence of the Brothers around me at the College and in the movement reassured me and I enjoyed their company. In the course of time, I was given the responsibility of Lasallian movements. Contact with the Brothers became more frequent and I would join the community for dinner and community prayer, following the request of the Brothers. I felt at home among the Brothers. At age 16, Brother Daoud Kassabry invited me to a spiritual weekend where I met other youth in search of meaning and other Brothers. For three years, I continued the journey: proposed prayers and gospel texts well chosen, especially those about "the salt of the earth and light of the world" (Mt 5: 13-16) helped me understand that I must be salt and light in what I will do. I met the same text three times in a short period of time. Through the support provided by the Brothers and personal prayer, I realized that it was a sign from God. After that, it was clear to me that I had to choose a path that was not common to all those of my age. The decision was not easy especially because the Brothers are not priests - which is a lack of status in Lebanon - and I had to start my academic career. "Vocation is like the flame of a candle. Whether enclosed or exposed to the wind, it will die. We must protect it well," said Brother Georges Absi. My vision then changed. I wanted to protect my "candle", that's why I chose to join the postulancy program before going to the university. I answered "in a hurry", it was my way to check and be sure of my choice, even by making sacrifices, because I thought my academic career would take me away, with time, from the call of God. My priorities have changed and I have faced a lot of family and social opposition concerning my choice.

I'm thrilled by the call of God asking me to serve as a De La Salle Christian Brother with children and youth. Since I entered the Institute, I continue to receive unexpected visits of God through my Brothers, children and my experience. It's a great responsibility to bring Jesus to children, like Mary to Elizabeth sharing with others my experience of God. I trust him. He called me and will give me the faith and zeal needed to continue.

Brother Louis Mjalli
RELEM
District of Proche-Orient

Vocation Stories

Made with the Lasallian ADN

"May the Lord enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you" (Eph 1:18).

I was already Lasallian even without knowing it. I was born in Medellín, the City of Eternal Spring, in a beautiful country called Colombia, as dusk fell on January 13, 1994.

From 1999 until 2011, I did my studies at San José de La Salle school, the first Lasallian institution in the country. I am currently, finishing my university studies in economics and something has remained in me all these years: my Ministry with young people and Vocations.

I first felt the call of God in 2005, when I was not only Lasallian but also a pastoralist. It is a lifestyle that I carry with pride and that led me to be the first and current Coordinator general of the Lasallian Association of Pastoralists - ALDEP, from the Lasallian Norandino District, Sector Medellín.

Personally I think there may be people in La Salle who are O.K, but the important thing is to involve human beings who feel Lasallians and live the five values of our star, day by day; those who share the will of the Founder wanting to do something different, perhaps rebellious and daring, something exciting to transform the context in which we live. So, all being said, and with great self-confidence, I dare say, I'm Lasallian!

Following the above and being consistent with what the Pastoral contributed to my training, I follow a lifestyle based on three pillars: first, faith in God as the light of life that illuminates each of my actions, allowing me to persevere following my dreams; the second, reflecting my authenticity on others, understanding me as being full of virtues and defects, a human being who lives his own reality; and third, the service as thanksgiving not only for the blessings received from God, but for the grace of sharing my reality with others, bearing witness to life and achieving the task John Baptist de La Salle has left us: to educate people to be human and Christian, regardless of creed, race, religion, profession or any other condition that "marks" our society.

Every day I am astonished by the uncertainty of the future. Being 22 years old, I think that what needs to be done is much greater than what has been done. Nevertheless, when we speak of projections, I do hope that my vocation to service, will keep me sensitive to the reality of those around me and, with my testimony of life, I may contribute to personal and cultural growth with the ultimate goal of transforming and transcending our reality in need of God, the reality of all those who are convinced that it is possible to do things right, properly and better.

Let Jesus always live in our hearts!

Brother Vélez Herrera.

RELAL

District of Norandino, Sector of Medellín



Everything is possible!

Meeting on Pastoral care of Youth and Vocations – RELAL

We found the Responsible for Youth and Vocations of the Districts of the Latin American Lasallian Region (RELAL) in May 2016 in Santiago de Chile. The experience was not only enriching but has left us pleasant learnings about different realities that we currently live in the region.

With the excellent hospitality of the Brothers of the Sector of Chile, we had the opportunity to visit some Lasallian institutions in the capital. We visited the Institute La Salle (La Florida), Colegio La Salle (La Reina) and San Gregorio- Colegio de La Salle. In the latter, we met the *"Dining Room Community"* which has been created some years ago by the initiative of students and parents to provide daily food to low-income people.

In the days of our meeting we shared good practices and reflections now in progress on the Culture for Youth Pastoral and Vocations, its new dynamics of organization in the Districts and the challenges we have to meet the needs of children in our Institute and the Church.

Most Districts of the Region are international as a result of the integration and restructuring processes that have been taking place in recent years. This reality brings to the region the potential of a very large renewal and strengthens our work together, specifically regarding the Pastoral of Youth and Vocations.

There are some divergent realities that draw our attention as well as the desire to meet the different calls that are in this dynamic of "tension" (to put it in some way). The icon of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth is a sign that reminds us that "everything is possible" as we remembered Br. Rafa Matas reflection: "There are more reasons to walk, that motivations to stand still". In our pastoral action, we find "variables" not always in our favor. This is what we have and where we have to start our mission.



Some of the situations we encounter are:

1. The responsibility to promote a culture of vocations in educational institutions (and communities of Brothers) according to the new guidelines of the Church and the Institute and also, to specifically promote the vocation of the De La Salle Christian Brothers.
2. Assuming a speech and pastoral action that focuses on the person and allows the universal acceptance of all young people, Catholics and non-Catholics, Christians and non-Christians, believers and nonbelievers, given the situations that we find in some territories ; on the other hand, promoting explicitly the Christian message as part of our pastoral proposal.
3. The responsibility of assuming generously the laity in animation teams of Pastoral care of Youth and Vocations, in the Region and in the District; on the other hand, a perceptible withdrawal of the Brothers from the places where young people are.
4. The tendency to strengthen the practices we have, that gives us security and who for years has given us results; on the other hand the need to go beyond "our borders," leaving what is comfortable and accepting the wealth of others.

The challenges we have encountered encourage us to work with enthusiasm in the mission we have in our Districts. There are many pending tasks we have as a region, and we hope that everyone can contribute from his own latitude. Most important of all is that those who share this mission, which is God's work and also ours, would keep the hope burning, hoping that the impossible becomes possible.

Br. Víctor Ramos





Vocation Ministry Lasallian District San Francisco - New Orleans

*“The harvest is abundant...”
Matthew 9:37*

Purpose & Goals:

The Core Purpose of the Vocation Ministry program of the San Francisco New Orleans District is to awaken, nurture, and accompany God’s call in the lives of those entrusted to our care, both those we serve as well as with those whom we live and work.

The following Core Values of Vocation Ministry support the purpose and guide our goals and develop a culture of vocation:

1. There is a call (mission) from God that is given to everyone.
2. Living one’s vocation in authentic witness promotes vocation awareness.
3. Nurturing one’s relationship with God is fundamental to identifying one’s vocation.
4. Identifying one’s vocation leads to liberation and wholeness.
5. Accompaniment is both communal and individual.
6. The vocational call is based in the experience of community and mission.
7. Vocation Ministry is the responsibility of everyone and is an aspect of living out one’s own vocation.

The following Goals direct vocation efforts at all levels in the District:

1. All Brothers, teachers, staff, students and parents articulate their own vocation and awaken, nurture and accompany others in their vocation.
2. All teachers, staff and students will have a basic understanding and direct experience of the Brothers and the Brothers’ life in order to communicate and promote the viability of the Brothers’ life and to see it as a possibility for some of them.
3. The Brothers promote their vocation to groups and individuals outside of our works.
4. Vocational support will be available for persons beyond their time in a Lasallian Ministry.



Current Efforts: Structures that support a Culture of Vocations

For the past 20 years, the legacy District of San Francisco and now the Lasallian District of San Francisco New Orleans have made it a priority to set up and support structures that facilitate communication and collaboration. The following structures have been helpful to District Vocation Ministry efforts.

1. Community Vocation Plans: Another important “structure” that has created a culture of vocations across the District is the encouragement that each Community articulates a vocation plan as part of their Community Annual Program (CAP). This done annually and is submitted to both the Brother Visitor and Vocation Director.

2. Contact Program: The Contact Program allows for college-age young men to discern their vocation as well as the possibility of the call to a life as a De La Salle Christian Brother. Currently, the Contact Program has 35 young men who have the opportunity to gather for discernment retreats and participate in live-in/ministry experiences as part of their accompaniment.

3. Novena Prayer: We should not fail to mention the novena prayer we ask communities to pray as this also keep vocation ministry as a priority for the Brothers in particular and is a reminder that we must “pray unceasingly.”

4. Service with the Poor: The continued presence and engagement of Brothers at ministries working directly with the working class and poor and/or a high percentage of Catholic students has had a particular effect on those students. It students from these ministries who have recently expressed interest in the vocation of a De La Salle Christian Brother.

5. Vocation Coordinators: Each ministry and Brothers’ community is asked to identify a Vocation Coordinator. This has allowed for the District and local ministries/communities to work together and has directly engaged lay partners in vocation promotion. It has encouraged schools and communities to engage in vocation ministry to the level possible given their particular reality.

At the very least, it gives the District Vocation Director a point of contact; at its best, it allows for each school/community to take initiative in the area of vocation ministry (setting up local vocation teams, engaging faculty/staff in sharing their vocation stories, ensuring the school culture is attentive to fostering vocations, etc...).

6. Vocation Retreats: The District has also sponsored vocation retreats for both young men and women. These retreats have become part of the District culture and facilitate the opportunity for young men and women to reflect on their particular call.

In the



men's case, the intentional focus on the Brother vocation has become our "pool" of candidates for the Contact Program.

There has been a consistent and persistent commitment to the structures above. Finally, the fact that District formation programs often allow time for individuals to reflect on their own call (directly or indirectly) contributes to a District culture that includes fostering vocations.

Needs & Priorities: Looking towards the Future

Our 2016 - 2020 Strategic Plan identified 3 priority areas for our future efforts:

1. Increase the visibility and presence of the Brothers within and outside of the Lasallian family
2. Ensure that formation and accompaniment opportunities related to vocation ministry are available for Brothers, Lasallian Partners, Vocation Coordinators, and students.
3. Increase Lasallian Vocation promotion efforts and public relation strategies.

In addition, we are also mindful of the following needs:

1. Continue to engage all Brothers in the work of Vocation Ministry: prayer, invitation, promotion, and accompaniment.
2. Continue to work with school vocation coordinators and leadership on fostering a culture of vocations at each ministry.
3. Better use of social media and technology to tell the story, promote Lasallian vocation, and communicate the fruit of our labor (mission).
4. Supporting creative and bold responses to mission-related needs in order to give witness to a life with and for the poor.
5. Remaining attentive to the diversity of candidates, especially ethnic and spiritual diversity.
6. Ensure vibrant communities that have a regular prayer, apostolic, and community life..

Conclusion: "...Whoever remains in me will bear much fruit"

In 2011, the Constitutive Assembly that formed the District of San Francisco New Orleans named Vocation Ministry as a priority for the new District. District leadership has responded by ensuring the full-time Vocation Director along with a District Vocation Team that includes 3 additional Brothers and a lay woman. The District Vocation Team provides accompaniment and support to each of the District's ministries and communities as they seek to foster a culture of vocations always mindful that it is God who calls as He wills.

Br. Chris Patino

A common mission



When we stop a moment to reflect on the vocation ministry which we should offer to young people, a question arises very quickly: what kind of pastoral for vocations do they need? Or, in other words, we have to start from the needs of young people, and this is, generally, a successful approach.

But if nothing is less sure than to define clearly what young people need today, some items appear, nevertheless, clearly enough. Among them, the certainty that they discover gradually meaning in their life through a multitude of experiences, thus leading us to design the pastoral of vocations differently. The path is then shorter before we can say that anything that helps the young to find meaning in their life should be part of the vocation ministry. Indeed, anything?

Take the case of Isabella. Isabella, sixteen-year-old, is member of the Lasallian Youth group at her school and participated in retreats organized this year by the pastoral of vocations at school. Like any teenager, she asks about her vocation, what she will be later. She knows she is not destined to become a nun, but an educator, why not?

What kind of pastoral of vocations does Isabella need to reach her full potential?

Our mission as agents of pastoral, as educators is to accompany her on her journey. Several people could help: the head of youth ministry in her school, the vocation ministry director of the District, the coach of the school football team, where she invests a lot of energy and learns a lot about herself, and many other.

What does all this mean for us?

This means that to effectively accompany a young, all actors can play an important role in his or her vocational process working together to guide the young. In particular, the areas of youth ministry and vocation ministry appear as natural collaborators for that task. It is crucial for both areas to develop a common approach, in the institutions of the District, in the Region and in the Institute.



This common approach should include common goals, a common vocabulary, sharing of experiences and information. It should focus on the joint work, not in parallel teams. This means that youth ministry should put more emphasis on the vocational process. It also means vocation ministry should focus on supporting the Lasallian vocation in all its forms, whether religious or not.

And all this just begins sitting at the same table and talking. Some Districts have adopted a synthetic approach that goes quite in that sense. At the Institute level, my participation in the last meeting of the Commission on Vocations Ministry is a sign that we are moving in the right direction.

It takes a lot of energy to accompany Isabella in his vocational journey. But to support hundreds of thousands of young people entrusted to us every day, it takes more than energy: it takes a full mobilization of all the resources we have, and total collaboration.

In a common and shared mission let us work together for a better integration of pastoral processes at all levels: in the institutions of our Districts, in the Regions, in the Institute. Thus, we can hope that each young person entrusted to us can find meaning in his or her life within the Lasallian Family.

Antoine Béland



The Community of Servants of Jesus Lasallian Port-de-Paix-Haiti



The first girls who have given birth to the Lasallian community of the Lasallian Servants of Jesus worked as teachers for several years at the School of Our Lady of Fatima, led by the Christian Brothers. We are in 1992. The workplace was for these girls a good opportunity to gradually discover St. John Baptist De La Salle a great apostle of God's love to children in vulnerable situations. Touched by this discovery, affected by the suffering of disadvantaged children attending the institution, they were accompanied by Brother Hermann Austinvil and other Brothers. They are now committed to living a Lasallian experience that led them to found the Lasallian community of Servants of Jesus.

This community is a church institution located in the parish of Our Lady of Fatima, Port-de-Paix, Haiti. It is totally dedicated to human and Christian promotion of poor children. The whole life of the Sisters is prayer, community life and apostolate. Their fields of action are health, education and the teaching of catechism. The bishop of the Diocese of Port-de-Paix acknowledged their existence as a religious community, as a Lasallian foundation in the diocese, on 23 January 1998. This recognition was a blessing for this delicate institution, weak and fragile. It is the Good God's work.

The mission of Lasallian Servants of Jesus is carried out through the following institutions:

1. An orphanage; 2. A basic primary school; 3. A dispensary; 4. A High School in Port-de-Paix. They sporadically contribute to the animation of youth groups in the parish. They are currently 7 Sisters, 3 prenovices and a dozen young girls interested in this vocation.

In a country where political instability, social injustice, natural disasters, chronic poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, malaria, AIDS, cholera and other plagues are rampant, the Lasallian Servants of Jesus consider themselves a small contribution to improving the living conditions of their brothers and sisters as better than nothing. They rely on the power of prayer, solidarity and friendship to continue their actual mission to those entrusted to them by God.

Br. Hermann Austinvil, Fsc.



Experiences



Welcome to the Parménie Experience

A bell rings. It is an early call to prayer because God always shows his face at dawn! After breakfast we left for the School Santo Hermano Miguel de Santiago de Los Caballeros (Dominican Republic). With a Brother I will accompany the teaching of our teachers and four young men will go to study their last secondary year. Upon returning to our community house our time-table is transformed into a range of colors that indicate our life and its continuous movement.

The Parménie Experience is the result of a vocational journey which seeks to promote “vocational culture” in our environments. In the District of Antilles-Mexico South each school creates a “Parménie Vocational Group” of young people who want to start an accompanied life to further their vocational discernment.



In the Dominican-Republic-Puerto Rico sector, the vocational process provides an opportunity for young men who specifically want to be Brothers to be part of the Parménie experience before beginning the Postulancy.

The Parménie Experience is a year of discernment, studies and apostolate. Young men live in community with Brothers who accompany them at school, in prayer, in catechesis in the neighborhood, doing sports, going up to the mountains, living together, in days of retreat and sharing many moments of fun... We are located in the Pekín neighborhood of Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic).

Finally, the Parménie Experience is a privileged way of training which allows to grow holistically young men who have shown a special interest in knowing the vocation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle Brothers); and they want to analyze carefully whether if it is the ideal for their life.

In our community vocation becomes an experience that we live in the heart of Parménie.

Br. Arístides Peralta

Experiences

The Symposium of Lasallian Vocations

The Symposium of Lasallian Vocations is a new space to allow Lasallians to meet and discern together which contents and experiences are needed to bring forth a culture of vocations and a renewed pastoral care of vocations.

Two Brothers, two Associates, a Signum Fidei lady and Young Lasallians gathered with the community in Scampia (Naples-Italy) to live this time of discernment. Scampia has been chosen to enable the poor living there to inspire these days of reflection and work; importance was also given to the creation of communities, allowing participants to know each other, to tell their stories, to share experiences and important moments of their lives.

The parable of the talents, the Gospel of the first day of the Symposium, has illuminated the work as well as the passage of the miraculous catch of John's Gospel. Both texts gave us the illumination of the newness and creativity that Jesus is expecting from us today.

The participants did not want to give us some drastic responses, knowing the Italian reality, but to suggest concrete and feasible actions so that we can begin a conversion and engagement process for a renewed culture of vocations.

Some suggestions made at the entrance of the symposium and the various advices thereafter were:

- Choose the "Pastoral Invitation" way, the will to care about and pay attention to every Lasallian vocation so that everyone feels happy with the call of God and is incited to recognize those who are called to the Lasallian Educational Mission.
- A ministry that is not linked only to the individual or to the individual vocation, but it is the result of a new Lasallian community in which different Lasallian vocations are born, grow, and grow rich together.
- Ensure training experience thanks to the service of the poor in which youth and adults work together and together they are evangelized by the poor;
- Create processes to get personal and community formation in accompaniment.



Br. Enrico Muller

Experiences

World Youth Days in Krakow



Where can you find all the young people of the world together in one place? The answer is easy. Go to the World Youth Days.

From Monday 25/07/2016 onwards, Krakow was alive with the rhythm of the world and of the universal Church. The world of young people was present in the Polish city, which welcomed us with wide open arms.

What can we say about the time we had there ?

- As is always the case during World Youth Days, it was the festive aspect which predominated. People enjoyed meeting one another and were happy to share with one another.
- We were transported into another world by the presence of the flags of different countries from America to Australia. The T-shirts worn by young people indicated the groups they belonged to or the countries they came from.
- The enthusiasm they showed during the liturgies revealed their faith commitment.
- The number of young people we met who were already committed to the religious life or the priesthood was very encouraging and a sign of hope for the Church of tomorrow.
- The presence of the Pope, and ease with which we could meet with the bishops, gave us a feeling of solidarity with the Pilgrim People of God.



The Lasallian Element

It was with great joy that more than 400 Young Lasallians and around 40 Brothers, from more than 20 countries, came together on the Wednesday afternoon to meet one another, to share with one another and to compare life stories. It was a rich time for exchanges, celebration and discovery of the Lasallian world, in the presence of Brother Robert, Superior General, and Brothers Aidan Kilty and Rafa Matas.

What more can we say? Words cannot express all that we experienced at a very deep level. Lasallian life and Church life are very much alive in these young people.

And now we start to get ready for the World Youth Days in Panama, 2019.

Live Jesus in our hearts.



Kracow 01/08/16.

Br. Jacques-Vincent le Dréau, FSC

Prayer



Because you are my God

Oh Lord, at dawn
and trembling with joy,
the grace of your call wraps me up,
and I discover the greatness of your mercy
in my fragile answer:
A Father, listening to the cries of his people,
enfolding in his arms the promised salvation
of the alliance.

Today, too many words, and only a heartbeat speaks within me:
the soft and rebellious whisper of your Spirit
resounding in my littleness,
widening my horizon
looking for my brothers and sisters,
marginalized ,disenfranchised, disappeared and voiceless,
children of the intifada, sold,
exploited by oversights and outrages...
And a dumbfounded silence,
thunderous, deafening me and saying:
They are your love in your creation,
the treasures of your harrowing passion!

Lord, you call me to reach out, to walk, to climb the mountain,
to become easy to be found,
to look after you and to find you, to visit you among the walkers
wandering in our world.
Become strong in my weakness,
and do not let me give up
your efforts to put everything upside down...
Make me one of your dreams,
accomplice in caring your creative work.

Make my life leap up for joy
in the womb of our afflicted and needy humanity,
a life filled by the blessed fruit of Mary,
your Son, Jesus.

Let me acknowledge, O Lord,
that I am loved
in your Father arms,
waiting always
with eternal confidence
for my steady pace of my given life, accessed and filled;
and let its song be,
the grateful praise for your passage through our history.

Lord Jesus, here I am,
laying in your hands
my fears and my hopes, my dreams,
the desires that hold me attached to your Word.
Seeking out echoes of a conquered fraternity,
I mean to say, always, yes,
despite my failures.
For you alone hold me
and you love me.

Welcome me in your arms,
wake me from my securities,
curl me up in your heart of hearts,
and bless me with the abundance of your call...
For you are my God.

Br. Juan González

