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#WeAreLaSalle

lasallian Vocations

4

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INTRODUCTION

The 45th General Chapter rejuvenated the spirit of the Institute with a new outlook, new thinking, a new vision, a new mission and a new approach to our Lasallian world. *“We are living in a time of grace, a time of transition, a time to return to the heart of our charismatic and Gospel-centered history. It is a time that inspires us to return to the freedom, audacity, and creativity of the first mystical experience. We face this moment as a call for a personal and institutional conversion towards the world of the vulnerable and impoverished.”* (1.15, Circular 469).

Responding in hope to the 45th General Chapter, Brother Rafa Matas, General Councillor, initiated various strategies for using the year 2019 as the Year of Lasallian Vocations, in order to renew the vocational spirit, culture, expectations and structures on the Regional, District and Community levels. One such initiative is the Vocation Bulletin which keeps un touch with the entire Lasallian world and makes everyone “focus” on 2019 as the “Year of Lasallian Vocations”.

The First Vocation Bulletin featured the introduction of the International Committee for

Vocation Ministry, an interview with Brother Superior on the pastoral ministry of vocations from the Institute point of view, testimonies of various vocations and strategies for action that are used in certain Districts.

The Second Vocation Bulletin highlighted various articles related to the pastoral ministry of vocations, vocation discernment, various vocations cultures and testimonies.

In **The Third Vocation Bulletin**, while highlighting the culture of vocations, Rafa Matas recommends two areas (Brothers' Communities

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and Educational Communities) in which to promote the culture of vocations. He affirms that this is a need today, requiring us to have greater awareness and to commit ourselves to it more strongly.

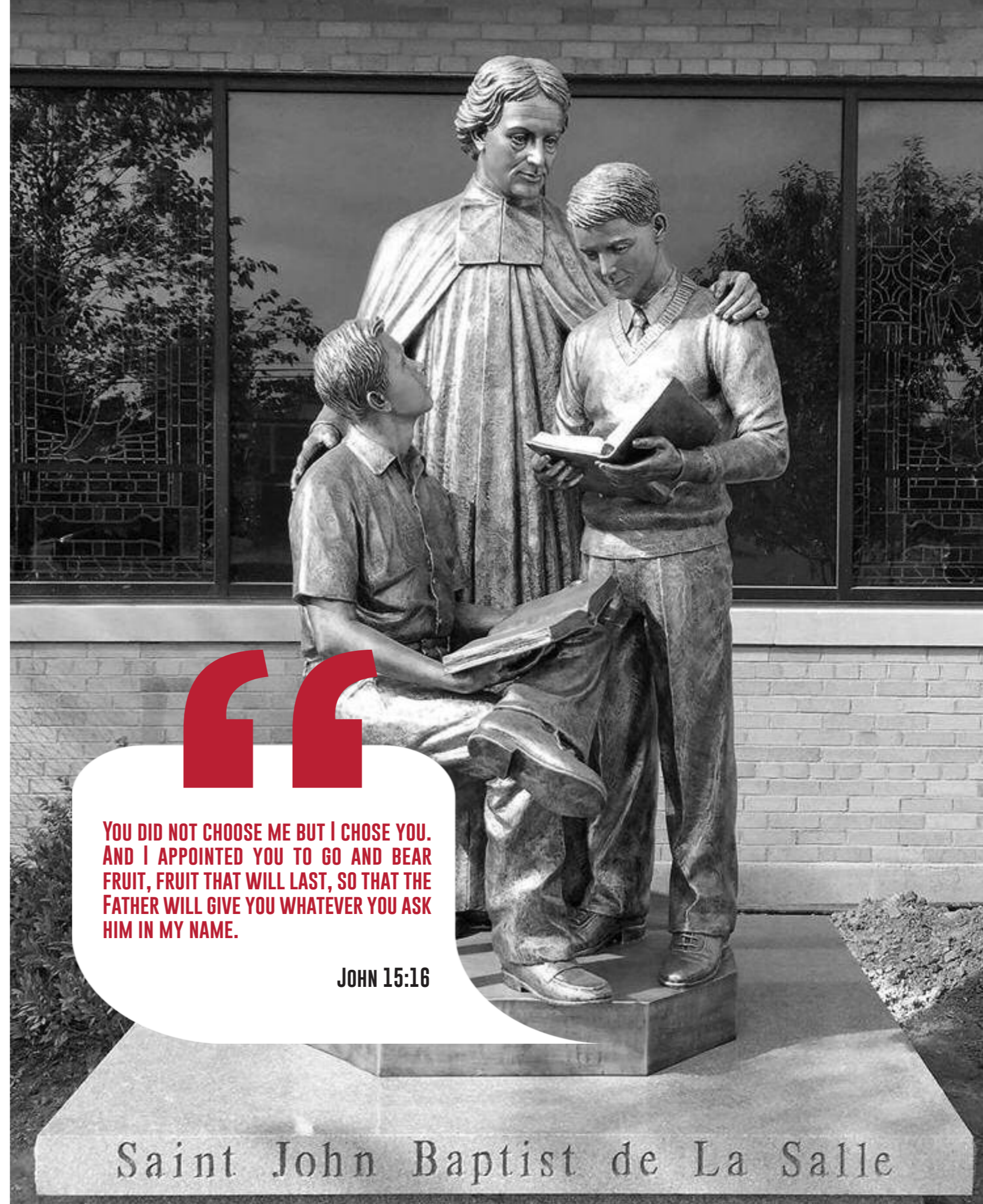
In **The Fourth Vocation Bulletin**, we underline best practices being used in Brothers' Communities and educational institutions in collaboration with the local Church in the field of the Pastoral Ministry of Vocations in which Brothers act together with the lay partners. We learn from one another how to interconnect in the Lasallian Spirit.

In it you will find Biblical quotations, Pope Francis' appeal to youth on the occasion of the forth-coming synod in 2018, Brother Superior's appeal to all for new models for the vocation ministry together with lay partners who are protagonists

with us, a summary of the survey sent to all 33 Districts and Delegations, thoughtful responses from all five regions to three questions related to the vocation of a Brother, a Sister, lay partners, young Lasallians, together with an infograph and pictures related to their vocations ministry. I am sure that by reading the best practices and personal testimonies of every Lasallian in this issue of the Bulletin we will become more appreciative of our vocation and of the Pastoral Ministry.

May the messages and testimonies of every Lasallian continue to rekindle our passion for a meaningful celebration of the Year of Lasallian Vocations in 2019. I invite you to enjoy an enriching Lasallian experience as you go through **The Fourth Vocation Bulletin**. Let us continue to keep passing on our passion.

Brother Felix Joseph, F.S.C.



YOU DID NOT CHOOSE ME BUT I CHOSE YOU. AND I APPOINTED YOU TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT, FRUIT THAT WILL LAST, SO THAT THE FATHER WILL GIVE YOU WHATEVER YOU ASK HIM IN MY NAME.

JOHN 15:16

Saint John Baptist de La Salle

**LETTER OF THE HOLY
FATHER POPE
FRANCIS TO YOUNG
PEOPLE ON THE
OCCASION OF THE
PRESENTATION OF
THE PREPARATORY
DOCUMENT OF THE
XV ORDINARY
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BISHOPS**



Jesus, too, looks at you and invites you to go to him. Have you found this look, dear young people? Have you heard this voice? Have you felt this urge to set out on the road? I am sure that, although noise and confusion seem to reign in the world, this call continues to resonate in the hearts of each individual to open it up fully to joy. This becomes possible when, accompanied by expert guides, people know how to undertake a journey of discernment to discover God's plan in their lives. Even when the road is marked by uncertainty and falls, God is rich in mercy and will reach out to raise them up.

Dear Brothers, Young Lasallians and Partners,

The Institute has designated the year 2019 as the *Year of Lasallian Vocations*. It will be a special moment for our Lasallian world. We will recall the 300th anniversary of St. John Baptist de La Salle's entry into eternal life. At the time of his death there were just 100 Brothers in France and one Brother in Italy. Led by the Holy Spirit, who inspired the birth of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian School, De La Salle's creative response to God's call led to a movement that continues to call men and women today for the Lasallian Mission.

As in De La Salle's time, the Spirit subtly breaks into our lives through "many voices" and events. The Gospel, our first and principal rule, the Church, our students, the cry of the poor, the culture of violence, the ministerial co-responsibility of our Partners, and the generosity of young people are transmitters of the invitation to be disturbed and to change for the sake of the Kingdom.

We Brothers welcome occasions to share with the entire educational community the Christian duty of announcing the Gospel to the poor. Our religious consecration leads us to support our

SUPERIOR'S MESSAGE

Partners with whom we work so that they become authentic protagonists in the Lasallian mission.

In this communion of Brothers and Partners, there is an inspiring pivotal point: the Lasallian charism. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. As Pope Francis notes, charisms "are not an inheritance, safely secured and entrusted to a small group for safekeeping; rather, they are gifts of the Spirit integrated into the body of the Church, drawn to the center which is Christ, and then channelled into an evangelizing impulse.

As Brothers, we recognize the various Lasallian vocations, each with a specific identity, and, at the same time, we are consciously aware that we are at the heart of the Lasallian Family, the first guardians of the Lasallian charism, a source of inspiration for all Lasallians and especially responsible for sharing the Lasallian pedagogical and spiritual heritage with all those with whom we work.

We are convinced that the Lord still calls young men to be Brothers and so we consider our active involvement in the pastoral ministry of vocations to be a source of vitality and a pledge for the future. (Pastoral Letter 2016)

Pope Francis announced and called for a synod in 2018 with the theme of "Youth

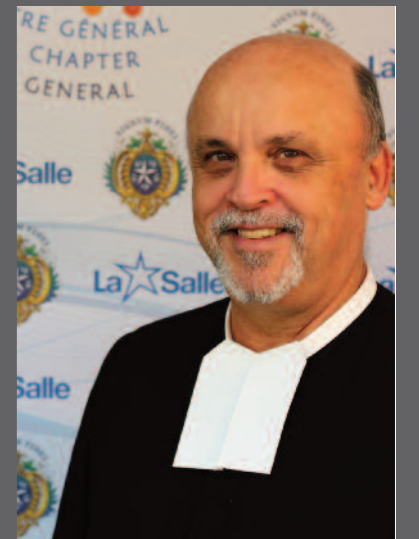
and Vocational Discernment". He invites young people to reflect on the following: "A better world can be built...as a result of your efforts, your desire to change and your generosity. Do not be afraid to listen to the Spirit who proposes bold choices; do not delay when your conscience asks you to take risks in following the Master."

As we approach the year 2019, we encourage initiatives that promote a culture of vocations. Such can be the unifying force for the growth of the Institute. As a hope-filled people we shall create and develop new models for the Pastoral Ministry of vocations. On behalf the Institute, I especially invite you, our Young Lasallians, to prepare yourself internally for this synod as men and women of FAITH and ZEAL".

May all of us extend the rays of HOPE for the Institute in this changing world.

Sincerely,

Brother Robert Schieler, F.S.C.
Brother Superior



Introduction

Having sent the survey to all the Districts and Delegations of the Institute, we were able to get 21 responses. The summary of the entire Institute in all five regions rejuvenates our Lasallian Spirit in the way they are responding to the 45th General Chapter. There is no doubt that these wonderful initiatives in the Pastoral Ministry of Vocations taken by various Districts and

Delegations, together with lay partners, will continue to transmit the passion of Lasallian life to a new generation with FAITH, TRUST and HOPE.

District leadership teams fully support the promotion of a “*culture of vocations*” through various means that shows healthy signs pointing towards the future of the Institute.



1. Brothers' communities commit themselves to :

- Giving vocation talks to Lasallian educational centres;
- Having a consistent plan of praying together with young people, parents, the Signum Fidei movement and parishioners in FSC communities in collaboration with other congregations;
- Providing venues for interested candidates to discern the religious life and get to know the

Brothers, e.g., live-in programs, socials, faith-sharing, spiritual accompaniment, sports, etc.

- Inviting (explicitly) interested contacts to seriously consider the religious life;
- Working on identifying and accompanying students from our own Institutions.

BEST PRACTICES- PASTORAL MINISTRY OF VOCATIONS- BROTHERS AND PARTNERS

2. Lasallian Institutions commit themselves to:

- Establishing and supporting various groups such as “*Route plan*”, “*Parmenie Program*”, “*Emmaus Experience*”, “*Called and Chosen retreat plan*”, “*Meeting in Search*”, “*Lasallian Vocation Expedition*”, “*Parmenie itinerary*”, “*Vocational Search group*”, “*Semi-structural focus youth groups*”, “*Local vocation teams*”, “*Faith, Service and Community program*”, in collaboration with Brothers and Partners;
- Promoting Brothers' Vocations by having a group of young Brothers, Middle-aged and senior Brothers and partners initiate activities in various Lasallian ministries- at least twice a year. E.g. vocation camps, vocation seminars, classroom interaction, personal interviews, immersion programs, and pastoral activities;
- Having a network of relationships between the government schools and Catholic schools as a way of getting others to understand the Lasallian vocation and mission from a public relations point of view (image branding);
- Conducting Youth seminars, Youth camps, Vocational Discernment Programs, “*come and see activities*” and interaction with parents about the culture of vocations and their role;
- Celebrating Founder's day, Teachers' Day, Lasallian mission days/ weeks and Service Days;
- Publishing vocation related materials and making them available to students and the rest of the educational community;

- Involving Partners and student organizations to play a part in promoting the vocation to be Lasallian and the vocation to become a Brother;
- Supporting and accompanying, at all levels and together with partners and well-wishers, the candidates who express their willingness to join us.

3. Brothers and Partners join with Parishes:

- Working closely with the Church and inter-religious communities to highlighting various vocations in the Church for both gender groups;
- Going to different parishes and parish schools at least once a year to introduce the Lasallian vocation of being a Brother;
- Participating in church/parish choirs, youth groups, youth ministry, Sunday schools, Catechism etc...

4. Vocation Teams consider:

- Producing vocation videos and other promotional materials where a systematic campaign needs to be sustained throughout the school year. The importance of a regular follow-up and evaluation on a monthly basis needs to be emphasized.
- Utilizing social media properly and effectively e.g., Instagram, Face Book and Twitter.
- Tapping into Church and Institute magazines to make the Brothers' vocation more understood by the general public.

TESTIMONIES

I want to open hearts and let what is in them come out, because from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. It is possible to give your heart forever to anyone who makes the world more human and better than they found it.

God acts in the life and history of each individual with unconditional love. As young people we are able to live to the full a life with meaning as we move forward in self-knowledge, self- acceptance and merciful empathy toward others.

I want to tell the world that God is worthwhile and that life is stronger than death. Solidarity will save us. God is still calling. He is faithful and demanding, active creative, and he desires our happiness. I am happy and it is possible to live passionately every day, with simplicity and attentiveness to the needs of others. I put my life in the hands of God who is love and presence.

Brother Dan Cruz Mora, F.S.C.
Panama



TESTIMONIES

What attracted or motivated you to choose the life of a Brother?

Among the many reasons that have guided my choice of the Brother's life was the smiling welcome and accompaniment I have received since my first encounter with the Brothers, and the way their joyful mission and community life made me understand the Lasallian life well. Their love, care and concern for vulnerable young people, especially the poor and downtrodden, made the school environment a "house of love". Their involvement in the wellbeing of the students and in the Parish was remarkable. This made me appreciate the Brothers' life.

What attracted and motivated you to maintain this choice of Brother's life?

The joyfulness of the Brothers' community, and the way the Brother Director who accompanied me spent quality time with the group in spiritual activities, and community programs such as monthly meetings of the group, recollection, sports, prayers and vespers and work in the parish. The group witnessed the Brothers' active presence everywhere. I had the opportunity to be involved in the parish as a catechist. This experience measured my aptitude to become an educator involved enthusiastically with young people. Brothers and parents helped me a lot in my choice.

What gives meaning and significance to your continued life as a Brother?

The community gives meaning to my continued life as a Brother. The community plays a big role in my understanding of my vocation as a Brother. Community prayer, mission, life together, meetings, socials, the children whom I encountered, joyful occasions of learning from Brothers and partners are the means of my happiness. I feel welcomed, supported and accepted by my Brothers. I feel there is a force that allows me to overcome differences and to create a space for listening and mutual dialogue.

Brother Guillaume YAMOE, F.S.C.
District of the Gulf of Benin



TESTIMONIES

What attracted and inspired you to choose the life of being a Sister?

I was attracted by the power of the Holy Spirit and inspired by the life of Father La Salle. I would like to follow him, and contribute to the world and to serve the Church and the human and Christian education of the young, especially poor children and the poor.

So I have chosen the life of being a Lasallian Sister.

What attracted and inspired you to continue to choose the life of being a Sister today?

I have been living with the Sisters together for more than 40 years. The spirituality of St. John Baptist de La Salle and his zeal for the poor still motivate me to follow our Lasallian charism. The Sisters accepted me as I am and expressed solidarity with me with kindness, which keeps me going in my religious life. So, I am happy to be a Lasallian Sister today in Vietnam.

What gives sense and meaning to you for continuing your life as a Sister?

Children in the world are caught up in a secularized culture. They lack love in every sense. As a Sister I am someone chosen for the educational work of the poor. That is the priceless gift which God gave me, despite my strengths and weaknesses. I will always love my mission, because it is very important and it maintains my life in the congregation. I am determined to follow our Holy Founder, together with our Lasallian Sisters and Brothers in our MISSION.

Sr. Magdalene Vũ Thị Thờ, L.S.S.,
Vietnam



EMERGING TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN VOCATION MINISTRY

CHRIS SWAIN

Director, Office of Lasallian Vocation Ministry
in RELAN

Our Lasallian charism invites each of us to share in the responsibility for awakening vocations. In our diversity of cultural contexts, how do we best share in this common call to invite, encourage, and walk with young people in discerning God's call in their life?

One example in the United States, the National Religious Vocation Conference, partnered with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate to "identify and understand the characteristics, attitudes, and experiences of the men and women who are coming to religious life today as well as the characteristics and practices of the religious institutes that are successfully attracting new candidates and retaining new members."

In September 2017, Bro. Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, former executive director of the NRVC, shared highlights from that report with the International Lasallian Vocations Committee at the Generalate.

Best Practices for Vocation Promotion:

- Being proactive about vocations.
- Creating a culture of vocations.
- Having a vocations director and/or team.
- Use of media for vocation promotion.
- Discernment programs.
- Targeting specific age groups.

New Members are interested in:

- Living in larger (8 or more) or medium-sized (4-7) communities.
- Younger respondents expressed a strong preference for living with members of their Institute in large community settings.
- Spirituality and community life are two key factors entrants gave for joining.

Paying Attention to Discerners:

- Discerners don't know who we were in the 60s, 70s, 80s; they care about who we are today and who we will be in the future.
- Media must move discerners to a face-to-face encounter; it is a doorway for entrants.
- Targeting discerners who are 17-30, media must be attractive to that demographic group.
- There is a high correlation of congregations with full time vocation directors and entrants.

Don't Underestimate the Witness of our faith:

- The most successful institutes in terms of attracting and retaining new members at this time are those that live together in community, are faithful to common prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist and have a strong Catholic identity.
- How do we present to discerners the idea that by joining the De La Salle Christian Brothers they will deepen their relationship with Jesus and do that in a community?

LASALLIAN GLOSSARY

F.S.C.

Initials which follow a Brother's name to indicate membership of the Institute. In Latin, **Fratres Scholarum Christianarum** (Brothers of the Christian Schools- or De La Salle Brothers).

Brother

Title given to vowed religious of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Comparable to titles such as "Sister," "Father," "Reverend." Commonly used in other religious orders to denote a vowed religious who is not an ordained priest. The official religious habit worn by the Brothers throughout the world, especially on formal occasions, but replaced in various places by other approved forms of garb, is a black robe with a white 'bib' called a 'rabat,' similar to that worn by judges and barristers in England.

Lasallian

Lasallian is a term used to describe a person who is personally fulfilling the mission set out by St. John Baptist De La Salle.

Lasallian Partners

Lasallian Partners refers to the thousands of professional, non-Brother colleagues who work together and in association with the Brothers to conduct Lasallian works and guide the Lasallian mission.

Young Lasallians

Young Lasallians are adolescents and young adults who are moved by the spirit of St. John Baptist De La Salle and who wish to be active agents of change against poverty and injustice as they contribute to transforming the lives of the young, especially the poor, through education. The term Young Lasallians is an inclusive reality that brings together all groups of young people who are in some way or another connected to the Lasallian Educational Mission, while acknowledging their different realities and needs.

Charism

It is a grace or spiritual gift given to those in apostolic or missionary work in the service of others; e.g., the gifts of preaching, prophecy and healing are charisms; the term is sometimes applied to entire Institutes as well as to individuals.

Lasallian Volunteers

Lay men and women, primarily recent graduates from Lasallian schools, who donate one or two years of service to Lasallian schools and works in various parts of the world.

Lasallian Youth

An international movement and formation program which empowers students to be examples of faith, service, and community through mission experiences, retreat programs, social justice education, and service-learning opportunities.

Affiliated Member (AFSC)

A person formally honoured by the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for having served Lasallian ideals in some extraordinary way. The affiliated member of the Institute may use the initials 'AFSC' after his or her name.

Aspirant

A man who is seriously considering, usually in a non-residential program, whether or not he is called by God to become a Brother of the Christian Schools or a De La Salle Brother.

TESTIMONIES AND REFLECTIONS OF LAY LASALLIANS

What excites you in being a Lasallian today?

Working with the young. They have so much energy and many things to teach us and most of all remind us of our responsibility.

What can the Partners today contribute to the Lasallian spirituality and mission?

The Partners can contribute their time, their expertise and most of all their presence. Many young people are looking for role models and the Partners can play that role especially to those who have no parents or have single parents.

What kind of future would you like to see for the Lasallian Mission?

That the Brothers be more willing to let the lay Partners be more empowered in caring for the mission of the Brothers.



Isaac Stephen
La Salle Centre
Ipoh, Malaysia
Lasallian East Asia District
(LEAD)

TESTIMONIES AND REFLECTIONS OF LAY LASALLIANS

What motivates you to be a Lasallian today?

What motivates me to be Lasallian is to give the best of me in a work environment that goes beyond the simple tasks that one shares in life. Moments of prayer, reflection and dialogue which arise from a personal encounter with God are the things that motivate me. I am motivated to continue the work of a man whose dream it was to offer all his effort and love especially to those who live in poverty.

What can the laity contribute today to Lasallian spirituality and mission?

A committed lay person is a person who lives the Gospel and who has a ministry and a vocation rooted in committed service. From that vocation arises the desire to be ready each day to provide a better service. The laity represent a human capital in the Church prepared by their experience in the catechesis of children and young people to be a leaven in Lasallian establishments. By sharing the richness of each experience, we renew one another and offer people the spiritual legacy and wealth of the Lasallian undertaking.

What kind of future would you like to see for the Lasallian mission?

I would like to see a community where each contributes from their reality and vocation, the talent that God has given them. I would like to see a vocation lived from the personal to the community and from the community to the personal, a vocation that is active at all times. I want the Christian schools to continue to offer all those kinds of experiences that enrich life, brotherhood and unity, so that the presence of God will be felt among us all.

Handy Osuna Garcia



What motivates you to be Lasallian today?

More than 350 years after Jean-Baptist de La Salle's time on earth, his mark has been so strong that it survived all these years. Today, we celebrate 110 years of its presence in Brazil. Without God's help this work would not have thrived at all. So what motivates me is the thought that we are carrying on this great work, the evangelization today of the young Lasallians entrusted to us and for whom we must do our best.

If you had a message that you would like to share with today's youth about the Lasallian spirituality and mission, what would you tell them?

We are La Salle with different languages, cultures and faces! One voice!

We believe in our strength and in the potential and vital energy of young people to change the world! Live Jesus in our hearts!

How and where can young people contribute to spirituality within the Lasallian mission?

Young people are the "spirituality and the Lasallian mission". It was for them and with them that all this work began. Their life, their existence and their voice are their great contribution to the continuation of the mission. We must always turn our eyes, our ears and our action to young people, and then we will see how much they can contribute.

TESTIMONIES AND REFLECTIONS OF LAY LASALLIANS



Cilene Bridi
*Pastoral Advisor in the District
La Salle Brazil-Chile*

TESTIMONIES AND REFLECTIONS OF LAY LASALLIANS

Now more than ever - our world cries for positive, uplifting, and inclusive people. This desire is perfectly matched with the charism of the followers of St. John Baptist de La Salle and of Lasallians worldwide. As a Young Lasallian I am excited at the opportunity to share this gift with the world. Young

people all over our District are sharing their excess, not to feel good about themselves, but because they truly feel connected to their brothers and sisters around the world. And they have wonderful adults accompanying them on this journey.

Lasalle reminded all his early Brothers, and reminds us today, "to see Christ in the faces of those entrusted to your care". When a

student includes someone who has historically been left out - we are being Lasallian. When a teacher stays late to help a struggling student - we are being Lasallian. And when we see Christ in the face of the least, lost, and last of our society - we are being Lasallian.



Christopher Panepinto

*Campus Minister
St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute
Buffalo NY USA
RELAN*

VOCATION PRAYER

Lord of the Harvest,

BLESS your young people with the gift of courage to respond to your call. Open their hearts to great ideals, and to great things.

INSPIRE all of our disciples to mutual love and giving- for vocations blossom in the good soil of faithful people.

INSTILL those in religious life, parish ministries, and families with the confidence and grace to invite others to embrace the bold and noble path of a life consecrated to you.

UNITE us all to Jesus through prayer and sacrament, so that we may cooperate with you in building your reign of mercy and truth, of justice and peace. Amen.

Pope Francis.

