LASALLIAN RESOURCE CENTER
INFOSHEET

The Five Core Principles

The Star of Faith is a fitting representative image for the Five Core Principles that have emerged as accessible signposts into conversations about Lasallian education.

Where Did These Come From?

In March 1992, a Student Leaders Workshop was held for student leaders from Lasallian schools across the District of San Francisco. One of the presenters was Br. Ronald Isetti, FSC, a Brother at Saint Mary's College, an author and teacher of history. He presented a list of six Lasallian characteristics that were derived from his reading of one of the principle documents from the 2nd session of the 39th General Chapter (1967), "The Brothers of the Christian Schools in the World Today: A Declaration."

The following year, students at a similar workshop condensed the six characteristics into the five core principles we have today. Short phrases based on those five principles were put on banners for the main hallway of La Salle High School in Milwaukie, OR, and began to appear in some format elsewhere in the District.

These principles have resonated with the experience of many Lasallians and have been adopted by many Lasallian schools, colleges, and other ministries. They are an accessible organizational means of engaging in serious conversation about Lasallian ministry and those who live it out every day.

Why should I care?

Over the last 25 years, these five phrases have come to articulate five key aspects of Lasallian education. Many have found them very helpful when they talk about the things that set Lasallian education apart.

As such, they deserve our best attention and serious consideration. They are seen as conversational door-signs into different areas or aspects of Lasallian priority.

They are not slogans. Rather, they are meant to be engaged, questioned, applied, and lived.

Discover the realities that lie behind their popularity..

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The Five Core Principles of Today

1. Faith in the Presence of God
"Let us remember ..." is said at the start of all that we do. All things are seen with the eyes of faith, the reality of God's saving presence in the midst of daily experience. Lasallians readily share their faith life with others, both in their zeal for education and in their personal encounters. God's presence gradually becomes an evermore living and appreciated reality.

2. Respect for All Persons
Mutual respect and its results - cooperation, generosity, patience, humor, and humility - are not the exception but the rule in Lasallian institutions. Others have an inherent dignity derived from a humanity that God created, shares with us in Jesus, and has fully redeemed. We treat others as God would.

3. Inclusive Community
Community is at the heart of all Christian education and especially Lasallian education. Relationships are the privileged means of the educational encounter, and inclusion is the privileged means for realizing their transformative potential. We educate together as one community and in association with our other communities.

4. Quality Education
Lasallian education is more than facts, figures and skills. Genuine education forms a person slowly towards spiritual maturity and responsible character. Lasallian schools intentionally educate a wide range of students by providing a comprehensive curriculum with solid, diverse programs that meet recognized standards of excellence.

5. Concern for the Poor and Social Justice
The poor, the neglected, the less appealing or talented, the marginalized, and all who endure social injustice are an evident, clear priority in the planning, approach, exercise and evaluation of Lasallian ministries and those involved in them. They are our heroes.

The Six Characteristics

(Based on the 1967 document: The Brother of the Christian Schools in the World Today: A Declaration.)

From Br. Ronald Isetti's original 1992 presentation to students.

1. *Concern for the Individual*
2. *Academic and Original Freedom*
3. *Inclusive Community*
4. *Respect for All Persons*
5. *Concern for the Poor and Social Justice.*
6. *Quality Education*

What does it mean to be "Lasallian" today?

Being Lasallian is more about attitudes and views of education than about formal structures, because these shape structures.

Lasallian education has the school as its setting, the teacher as its focus, and the salvific potential of education as its inspiration.

De La Salle's writings show that the Lasallian educator's life with his or her students constitutes the very center his or her religious experience. God is encountered in the school, in the classroom.

There is no separation between the professional journey and the spiritual journey. Both are aspects of a single vocation and commitment to education.

Likewise, Lasallian pedagogy is Lasallian precisely because of, not in spite of or along with, its spiritual dimensions. It is ultimately their spiritual life that motivated, shaped, and realized the pedagogy of De La Salle and his Brothers.

Lasallian spirituality focuses on the approach, implementation, and context of the activity of education. De La Salle described the spirit[uality] of the Institute in terms of faith and zeal, a single spirit consisting of two parts that are intimately related. Both come to fruition in the single ministry of teaching and the very practical and spiritual work of education.

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Five Core Principles

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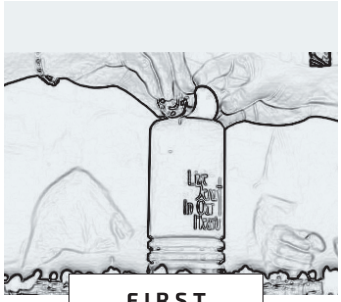
GROUP REFLECTION

On this sheet are the three suggested movements for thoughtfully considering the topic and guiding questions that were provided to you as part of your board packet.



FIRST

REMEMBERING GOD'S PRESENCE

Let us remember that we are in the Holy Presence of God

"We can consider God present in the place where we are, because our Lord says in Saint Matthew's Gospel, For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (De La Salle)

[PAUSE]

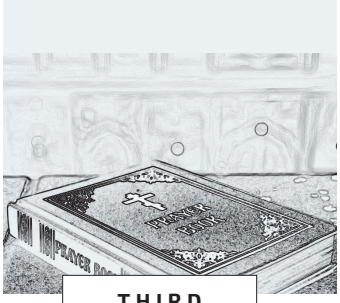
SECOND

REFLECTIONS & CONVERSATION

A) What do you think about these five core principles? Do they make sense? Are they the right ones? Do you understand them?

B) Which one do you think is the most important one? Why?

C) Is there something missing in this list? Please explain?



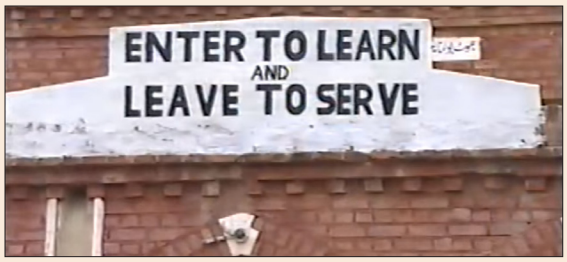
THIRD

CLOSING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God. All of us at this school work to make the loving and saving presence of your Son, Jesus Christ, a living and effective reality in the lives of those who are entrusted to our care. Be with us in all that we talk about and do, so that all those involved with Lasallian education here may discover your presence in their midst and come to hold dear what we hold dear. It is your work that we do. Help us to be worthy of the task. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

The phrase "Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve" is not unique to Lasallian education. First shown in a 1998 District video, showing a Catholic school in Kushpur, India, it has been used by schools since at least 1922. Go to goo.gl/Brm9im for some of the history.



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SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Faith in the Presence of God

He said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD. But the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a small, low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

– 1 Kings: 11-23

Respect for All Persons

Now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

– Galations 3: 25-28

Inclusive Community

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. … God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

– 1 Corinthians 12: 12-20

Quality Education

Rejoice in the Lord always…. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

– Philippians 4: 4-8

Concern for the Poor, and Social Justice

'Come, you who have won my Father's blessing!... For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was lonely and you made me welcome. I was naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you came and looked after me. I was in prison and you came to see me there. … I assure you that whatever you did for the humblest of my brothers you did for me."

– Matthew 25: 34-36, 40

A LASALLIAN REFERENCE

"Jesus Christ compares those who have charge of souls to a good shepherd who has great care for the sheep. One quality they must possess is to know each of them individually. This should be one of the main concerns of those who instruct others: to be able to understand their students and to discern the right way to guide them."

De La Salle

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