



PROVIDE A HUMAN,
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
TO THE YOUNG...

“The purpose of this Institute is to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it.” *(Rule, Article 3)*

“Human and Christian” - What is that?

That phrase dates from the 1987 Rule of the Brothers, where it was first introduced. It emerged because of an important exchange very early in the first days of the 1986 General Chapter, after a Brother from Pakistan had given a brief outline of the Brothers' works in a Muslim country and another Brother asked, “Why are we in Pakistan with all the limits you have described? How many conversions did you make last year?” When the reply came, “None” the questioner asked, “What are we doing there?” The reply was, “We are a Christian presence offering the gift of education gratuitously as best we can to people who otherwise would not have it.”

This led to many conversations about our presence in non-Christian countries. The interventions of the Brothers working in Asia was decisive. As they said, “If we were seen to be proselytising we would be kicked out of the country. Our clear intention since the documents announcing the first school in Singapore [1852] has been to be a Christian presence offering a human education to people who would otherwise not have any education.”

In the end the phrase “human and Christian” was voted as the best way to describe the kind of education that we are about.

- *Recollections of Br. Gerard Rummery, FSC.*

Why should I care?

Everybody wants to provide a “quality education.” No school would say otherwise. But then there are the details - where, what, how, and who - and the relative priority of things.

For us, the “WHO” is the most important piece because Lasallian educational is finally a relational enterprise, based on student needs and on teachers in community who address those needs with professional competence plus personal care and commitment, all of which is part of a well-tested, living educational tradition that has successfully educated millions of students for well over 300 years all over the world.

So it's worth knowing more about how all that may be done.



Some Identifying Hallmarks of “Catholic” and “Lasallian”

From the Congregation for Catholic Education (2014)

What schools should ensure:

- respect for individual dignity and uniqueness;
- a wealth of opportunities that are offered to young people for them to grow and develop their abilities and talents;
- a balanced focus on cognitive, affective, social, professional, ethical and spiritual aspects;
- encouragement for every pupil to develop their talents, in a climate of cooperation and solidarity;
- the promotion of research as a rigorous commitment towards truth, being aware that human knowledge has its limits, but also with a great openness of mind and heart;
- respect of ideas, openness to dialogue, the ability to interact and work together in a spirit of freedom and care.

From the Lasallian Catholic Assessment Process (LCAP)

We engage in quality education together as students, staff, and faculty by thinking critically and examining our world in light of faith.

- A Lasallian Catholic school provides a student-centered, college preparatory education that connects the academic disciplines with the total development of each student.
- A Lasallian Catholic school is responsive to students in need – intellectually, culturally, socially, economically, and spiritually – through innovative educational programs.
- Educators in Lasallian Catholic schools are lifelong learners who engage in professional development in order to keep current in their fields and to meet the needs and challenges of their students’ learning.

From the 1987 Rule of the Brothers

... accompany them as they seek to grow in faith, fraternity, and service.

... establish common ground for cooperation on the basis of the promotion of human dignity, solidarity among all human beings, and the integral development of the individual.

... helping [others] discover, appreciate, and assimilate human and Gospel values.

... accompany each person in their search for meaning and for God.

De La Salle



What advice does De La Salle give about quality education?

Your zeal for the children you instruct would not go very far and would not have much result or success if it limited itself only to words. To make it effective, it is necessary that your example support your instructions, and this is one of the main signs of your zeal.

Example makes a much greater impression on the mind and heart than words, especially for children, since they do not yet have minds sufficiently able to reflect, and they ordinarily model themselves on the example of their teachers. They are led more readily to do what they see done for them than what they hear told to them, above all when the teacher’s words are not in harmony with their actions.

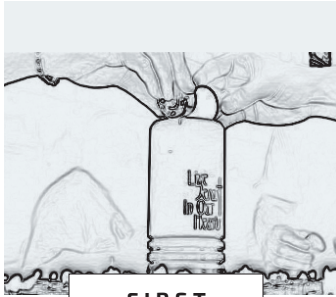
Five Core Principles



• QUALITY EDUCATION •

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

De La Salle: "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."

[PAUSE]



SECOND

REFLECTIONS & CONVERSATION

- What stands out to you about how quality education is described in the various documents that are quoted in the INFOSHEET?
- How do you see "Quality Education" being lived out your institution? Be specific.
- What else could or should be done to insure quality education in your institution for the future?



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

When St. John Baptist de La Salle died on Good Friday, April 7, 1719, there were 100 Brothers who lived in 23 communities. Many communities ran more than one school, the Brothers going out in the morning in pairs and returning each evening.



Five Core Principles



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INSIGHTS FROM OTHER DOCUMENTS

Three Major Characteristics

(From Dr. Greg Kopra)

In the prologue to *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*, the authors comment on “three major characteristics that are widely shared by Catholic secondary schools: an unwavering commitment to an academic program for all students, regardless of background or life expectations, and an academic organization designed to promote this aim; a pervasive sense, shared by both teachers and students, of the school as a caring environment and a social organization deliberately structured to advance this; and an inspirational ideology that directs institutional action toward social justice in an ecumenical and multicultural world.”

They go on to say, “These characteristics vitalize an educational philosophy that aims not only to influence what students know and can do but also the kind of people they will become. Central to this philosophy are certain shared aims for all students: to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to function in a world economy; to foster an appreciation for their social connectedness and individual responsibility to advance social justice; and to stimulate those critical dispositions of mind and heart essential to the sustenance of a convivial democratic society.” (p. 10)

- Bryk, A.S., Lee, V.E., & Holland, P.B. (1993). *Catholic Schools and the Common Good*.

True Apostolic Ministry

(Edited for inclusivity)

1 - The context of the world today makes it possible for us to discover a new significance for [the original Lasallian] insights; it allows us to discern some new ways for [Lasallian educators] to exercise the ministry of the Word of God, even when it is not possible for them to proclaim the Gospel explicitly.

2 - In certain places, [Lasallian educators] find that they are constrained to limit their activity, at least in appearance, to the human education of the young, and often for long periods of time. But they should not believe that they are hereby unfaithful to the apostolic mission of the Church. The act of faith is the free response of a person to the Word of God. Working for the education of free persons is already a way of disposing them to faith.

Thus [Lasallian educators] exercise their apostolic ministry whenever they strive to awaken the young to an awareness that life is to be taken seriously, to a conviction of the greatness of human destiny; when they help them to be able to experience, with intellectual rigor and a desire to seek the truth, the autonomy of personal thought; when they help them use their liberty to overcome their ready-made prejudices and ideas, as well as to overcome social pressures and those that derive from the forces of disintegration within the human person; when they dispose them to use their freedom, their intelligence, and their training in the service of their fellow human beings, to open them to others, to teach them how to listen and try to understand other people, to trust and to love them; when they instill in the young a sense of justice, brotherhood, and fidelity.

- Brothers of the Christian Schools. *A Declaration*. Rome: 1967

A LASALLIAN REFERENCE



“Supervise the children carefully, for there will be no order in the school except insofar as you are watchful over them. That is what assures their progress. Their improvement will not be brought about by your impatience, but by your vigilance and prudent behavior. Do take care that they are well-behaved and devout in the church and at prayer. This is one of the first things you should make them learn.” (Letter 40)

De La Salle