

# ASSOCIATED TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY

## I ASSOCIATED FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE POOR

### OBSERVATIONS

#### 1. ASSOCIATION IN THE PRESENT WORLD

It is clear that societies are taking people and their hopes increasingly into account. More and more, each day, concerned individuals and groups seek to take the future into their own hands and to influence the course of events, by expressing their opinions and making decisions in areas which concern them. It has been noted that, in most parts of the world, large organisations such as NGOs, especially those which promote education and the rights of children, are linked to numerous associations.



For its part, the Church is trying to promote a broader concept of the Kingdom of God, one in which each person becomes aware - both through his own and other traditions, history, culture and hopes - that he or she is a son or daughter of the same Creator, a member of the same family, called to take part with others in building up a Kingdom of God in which all will see themselves as sons and daughters of God.

The Church is very interested in Christians who work on behalf of their brothers and sisters, and who wish to do so in the 'Areopagus' (VC 96-99) where previously only religious congregations were present. The Church recognises the action of the Spirit in this and gives its support.

## 2. LASALLIAN ASSOCIATION

Association has existed since the origins of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, but has developed in an altogether unprecedented way during the past forty years. The foundation event which links the Institute today to its origins is that of June 6th 1694, when John Baptist de La Salle and twelve of his followers came together to consecrate themselves for life, to the Christian education of poor boys. The link between this foundation act of association and the growing interest in association in the Institute today can be clearly seen in the following chronological sequence:

- The 39th General Chapter reminded the Institute “that working with the poor is an integral part of the finality of the Institute” (D 28.2) The association of the Brothers is a response to this demand. The Brothers are conscious of this, and Partners will discover this gradually.
- The 40th General Chapter made a serious study of its origins and attached great importance to this vow of association. This coincided

with the consecration of the first members of Signum Fidei.

- The 41st General Chapter addressed itself to the Lasallian Family, thereby recognising thousands of persons who were contributing to the mission.
- The 42nd General Chapter treated the theme of Shared Mission and spoke of Partners. For the first time, Consultants had the right to speak at a Chapter.

During this same period, more or less everywhere, the formation being given developed a certain expectation in Partners who, not satisfied with being simply collaborators, wished to share in the spiritual heritage of the Institute, and have a place in the Lasallian mission as volunteers or Associates.

This present-day movement towards association obliges Capitulants and Consultants to examine what is happening on an international level, and lay down a number of guidelines for the future. Since we know that life is more dynamic than any definition or constraint, what we need, at the present moment at least, is a mini-

num framework which allows us to say clearly both who is associated today with the Lasallian Mission of Human and Christian Education, and how. This is the purpose of the following guidelines for individuals and groups.

## **GUIDELINES**

The development of the Lasallian Mission requires the Institute to allow itself to be stimulated by the dynamism apparent among partners and associates, and to encourage and support collaboration among themselves and with the Brothers, so that all can deepen their own understanding of association, in the light of the observations made, the Lasallian charism and the present theology of the Church.

This guideline is evidently dependent on how persons and groups function vis-a-vis the Lasallian charism and their involvement in the Lasallian mission. That is why, at the outset, we define “who is who.”

## **THE INSTITUTE OF THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS**

The Institute is the first form of association desired by St. John Baptist De La Salle. The original vow for the service of the poor, which associated the Founder with twelve Brothers in 1694, is the source of Lasallian associations of lay persons and religious who wish to be part of the Lasallian Mission. This is where new forms of association for the mission have their origin.

In the light of this, the Brothers need to question themselves continually on how, in practice, they are associated among themselves, so that this association may be a



source of nourishment for them, and stimulate their growth as persons, their solidarity with others, and their listening to what God says about the community mission, the educational service of the poor, the reason for their association.

This has consequences for their lifestyle, relationships, fidelity and their various loyalties.

## PARTNERS

There are Partners who in fact share our mission in its multiple educational, catechetical, apostolic and professional aspects, and make it possible for the mission to be accomplished. They collaborate with conviction for the time they are with us.

We need to reflect on the process they need to follow to become Associates, if they so wish.

## ASSOCIATES

There are partners who have a long record of collaborating in the Lasallian Mission, and who feel a

call to deepen the charism, spirituality and Lasallian communion in which they wish to participate. In particular, their lives are already marked by a number of distinctively Lasallian characteristics:



- a vocation inspired by the charism of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and his values;
- a life of faith which discovers God in everyday life understood in the light of Scripture and, for persons of other religions, in the light of their own sacred texts;
- a community experience of some form or other suited to the identity of its members;
- a mission of some duration which associates persons with the educational service of the poor;
- an openness of mind which makes it possible to see beyond the individual and his immediate environment.

Given this, there are many different ways of living in association: as individuals and as groups.

#### A) Individuals.

For some persons who are involved in the mission, sharing tasks and responsibilities is a truly personal response to an interior call which they feel, and which motivates them to give their time, to accept formation, to share, and to listen to Lasallian appeals for commitment to the service of young people in difficulty. By mutual agreement they may eventually be associated with a community of Brothers or a District, depending on their type of commitment. Perhaps they are already part of a process which will lead them, later on, to join an intentional group, if they so desire.

In certain cases these persons, if they so wish, and at their request, may express a desire to be associated in a more formal way with the Institute. It is for the Brother Visitor and his Council to recognise these persons as Associates.

#### B) Intentional Lasallian groups.

We call groups 'intentional' when

their members, in response to an interior call, come together voluntarily to practise some aspects of Lasallian life, each group choosing a particular type of life and the length of their members' commitment. For this to be considered an intentional Lasallian group there are three necessary conditions:

- that some aspects of Lasallian practice are clearly visible;
- that there is a clear commitment to young people and the poor;
- that the Visitor and his Council have authenticated it in an official document for a prescribed time.

An analysis of the present situation leads us to recognise a number of intentional Lasallian groups:

- those which have their autonomy and proper recognition independently of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. This is the case of the Institutes of the Hermanas Guadalupanas La Salle, the Lasallian Sisters of Vietnam and the Catechists of Jesus Crucified and Mary Immaculate;
- those which are structurally linked with the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools: Signum Fidei and the Lasallian Third Order.

C) Other intentional groups.

In the medium term, we think that it is possible that a number of other intentional groups will be founded. In fact, these groups already exist, although they may have no juridical structure. They exist because their members have developed links and relationships, and have adopted projects, and have done so with explicit reference to the Lasallian charism which they share. If they so wished, they could envisage becoming intentional groups.

Such a request could come from a whole variety of groups. There could include, among others: Lasallian teams, teams of educators and teachers, joining forces temporarily to respond to the specific needs encountered by young people in difficulty, Christian Lasallian communities, volunteers, Lasallian Youth, young people doing missionary work, former pupils, parents of students...

We should note that in the composition of these groups one can meet Brothers, other Christians, members of other religions, and

persons of good will whose point of reference, as the 42nd General Chapter indicates, is the “human and spiritual values recognized and pursued by lived by all Lasallians- meditation, service of the poor, the family, human rights, the rights of children...”. (Circular 435, p.43.)

Consequently, we recognise as being associated with the Lasallian mission all intentional groups and all persons who respond to an interior call by an educational commitment which has Lasallian characteristics, and which has been authenticated by a competent authority.

Together, these persons and groups are associated with the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, in order to respond, in a complementary manner, to the demands of the Lasallian Mission. The charism inspiring this mission was given to Saint John Baptist de La Salle, and was authenticated by the Church, for the service of young people.

This imposes on the Brothers of the Christian Schools some obli-

gations with regard to the process of accompaniment and formation of Associates.

### *Recommendation 1*

*In the light of the guidelines of the 43rd General Chapter each Region, District, Sub-District, and Delegation promotes the association of Partners and/or Associates and Brothers, and of Partners and/or Associates among themselves, to reflect on their identities as associates, and to develop forms of association for the Lasallian Mission.*

### *Recommendation 2*

*The Institute has extensive educational experience of working with young people and educators professing other faiths. We ask that more serious thought be given in the Institute to the way in which we share the Lasallian charism with educators and young people who are of other faiths. That the Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations concerned establish groups to study this question.*

### *Recommendation 3*

*That our Institute continue to develop its collaboration at all lev-*

*els with the Institutes of the Lasallian Guadalupana Sisters, the Lasallian Sisters of Vietnam and the Union of Catechists of Jesus Crucified and Mary Immaculate, who share Lasallian spirituality and the Lasallian mission.*

### **Proposition 1**

**In order to encourage and support the development of Lasallian association for the educational service of the poor: that, in the next seven years, each Region, District, Sub-District, and Delegation decide on practical steps to promote the creation and development of groups of Partners and/or Associates and of Brothers, as well as of Partners and/or Associates among themselves, which will reflect on their identity in the context of the Lasallian mission, and to develop forms of association.**

### **Proposition 2**

**That Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations set up study groups on our way of sharing the Lasallian charism with educators and young people of**

**other faiths.**

### **Proposition 3**

**That Brother Superior General and his Council in consultation with the Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations organise an international meeting of Brothers, Partners and Associates, around the year 2004, with a view to:**

- sharing experiences of association;**
- analysing and evaluating the implementation of the process of association; and,**
- presenting plans of action for the next General Chapter.**

**That after this meeting, the Centre of the Institute publish a report describing the experiences of association that are most original and significant.**

## **II LEADERSHIP AND ACCOMPANIMENT STRUCTURES**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. The evolution of the forms of association is the result of a number of factors which need to be

considered together:

- the effort that the Institute has made to share spirituality and mission with Partners,
- the warm welcome given by many Partners to the proposal of the Institute within the framework of shared mission,
- the huge change that has come about regarding those involved in the mission, who have become more numerous and more diverse.

2. The ways of practising association today in the Institute are very diverse and vary a great deal from one District to another. In addition, the possibilities of association offered by Districts also vary greatly. The same is true of the availability of Brothers and Partners to promote and support association. During all this time the mission grows and the challenges it faces become more numerous.

3. At the present time, there exist various forms of association

- associations of a legal or functional type,
- associations of a spiritual type,
- associations of a canonical type.

At the same time, some forms of association have all three charac-

teristics. This is the case of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

4. As Districts already exist, it is natural they should be called upon to be the frame of reference for all forms of association already in place, or that are going to be



adopted. There is a need to:

- foster in all these experiments a deep sense of belonging,
- define more clearly the role and the identity of the Brother in them.

5. It is evident that, regarding the practice of association, the Institute is in a period of transition, and that it is important to take into account:

- the weight of certain of our historical structures which can make experiments with association difficult,
- the need for a multiplicity of experiments for a limited period, so that they can be examined and evaluated when they end.

- the nature and the evolution of each of these experiments,
- the need to direct and accompany these different experiments.

6. Consequently, we consider it necessary for the Institute to allow a period of freedom for the promotion and the accompaniment of structures and forms of association.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. The Institute is experiencing important changes today in Lasallian institutions, in the life and the expression of its spirituality, in the role of Brothers' communities, in the ownership of buildings and so on. All these changes call for modifications in the very concept of the District and its leadership.

2. Lasallian association, which collaborates in the mission of the Institute, adopts forms of community life adapted to local circumstances and to the identity of each person, Brother and Partner.

A) The Brothers welcome sharing

with Partners, and particularly with those who desire to live according to the Lasallian charism, the contribution of their respective identities. They see in this a sign of spiritual and apostolic fecundity.

For this purpose they contribute in a creative and dynamic way to the setting up, and the development of different structures of association, assuming the role of alert and, if necessary, critical judges. The specific character of their contribution is based on:

- the total gift of their life,
- the witness of their community life,
- the experience of God as a absolute.

B) Each District, while safeguarding the identity of the Brother (R 9,10) will leave to Partners the possibility of defining -ad experimentum- new types of association and commitment among themselves and/or with the Brothers, in the service of the educational mission of evangelisation.

C) By committing themselves to such associations, Associates re-

spond to their mission and to the Lasallian charism and live out their baptismal vocation. As for La-



sallian spirituality, it is important that lay people find an expression of it which is proper to themselves. Such expression will take into account the diversity of situations and the significant number of women committed to the mission of the Institute.

D) These associations will need to:

- affirm their attachment to St. John Baptist de la Salle and to his spirituality,
- work out a link with the superiors in charge of the District,
- establish forms of membership, shared life, and formation.

E) The District will need to assume responsibility for evaluating these experiments, in order to authenticate their commitment as Associ-

ates of the Institute. It will ensure that members of legally constituted associations which are responsible for the functioning and direction of Lasallian educational establishments, and in particular of schools, are aware that the educational service of the poor is a priority. In view of this, they will evaluate each year how, in practice, this has been a priority when administrative and financial decisions have been made.

3. Association develops especially when leadership and accompaniment are provided.

A) Such structures are developed in full collaboration with the local community of Brothers and with a strong conviction of belonging to the District, which is the guarantor of their Lasallian authenticity.

B) The Brothers will endeavour to contribute to the setting up of these structures by showing a willing acceptance, and by forms of commitment adapted to their possibilities and to those of the community. This will lead them to:

- facilitate the setting up of the

necessary structures,

- establish links between the different partners who meet there,
- take an active part in running these structures.

C) The General Chapter could ask the Districts:

- to involve in their structures partners who have leadership and accompaniment roles linked with the mission.

- to ensure that the leadership and accompaniment structures that are set up take into account all aspects of the personality of young people, so as to provide the integral education wished by John Baptist de la Salle;

- to ensure they make available to all educators, whatever their school or institution, the activities they organize;

- that Districts in which vocations are drying up, or which are affected by ageing, ensure that their leadership and accompaniment structures are gradually linked with those of other Districts.

D) These leadership and accompaniment structures, which give life to association, need to determine, from the outset, objectives,

means, and the amount of time needed to enable Lasallian identity to mature sufficiently. The implementation of these structures should come about as the result of genuine collaboration between Brothers and partners.

#### **Proposition 4**

**That, during the next seven years, the Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations:**

- evaluate and strengthen present forms leadership and accompaniment offered to partners in Lasallian establishments; and**
- encourage, sustain and evaluate new forms of collaboration and association, which will enable those who implement them to find new forms of commitment in the educational service of the poor.**

### **III THE PARTICIPATION OF LASALLIAN ASSOCIATES IN DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES CONCERNED WITH THE LASALLIAN MISSION**

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

The educational mission of the Institute to help young people, especially the poor, remains relevant today, and is even more necessary than ever before. In many places in the Institute, numerous men and women who collaborate with us, tell us they wish to work more closely with us in carrying out this mission, and to do so with greater energy.

In this they are motivated by the inspiration of John Baptist de La Salle, his charism, and his spirituality.

In a pluralistic and inter-faith context, and in countries where Christians are a minority, educators appreciate Lasallian educational values and methods, and they participate actively in the work of education. Also, in numerous places, many Lasallian Associates live out their baptismal vocation through a strong educational commitment, by sharing Lasallian spirituality and educational ministry, either with Brothers or by themselves, when no Brothers are present. We recognise in the diffusion of the Lasallian charism a grace of the Spirit for our time.

We have heard of numerous successful examples in various places, of our partners and Associates assuming leadership roles and contributing to the vitality of the Lasallian mission. In many places, precisely because of this vitality and commitment, we have given our partners and Associates the right to speak and vote when decisions are made regarding the mission and the running of establishments. But the situations in which this participation takes place are quite diverse.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. It is time, therefore, for the Institute, strengthened by these successful examples and sustained by these promptings of the Spirit, to formalise this participation to a greater extent and recognise it both in principle and in fact.

2. The Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations of the Institute have not advanced in the same way, or at the same pace, in this matter, but all are aware of its basic reasonableness. It is, therefore, necessary to take into account, in each instance, the local

and regional situation, while resolutely taking the steps needed to move in this direction.

3. Respectful of the particular identity of each individual and each group, Brothers and Associates must be allowed to live their respective vocations with the support and structures necessary for each group. As the Rule reminds us (Art. 39a), “The solidarity among the Brothers that results from their vow of association for the service of the poor through education, gives support to the apostolic activity of the Institute.”

Similarly, the Rule (Art. 146) declares, “The Institute sees the existence of the various Lasallian movements as a grace from God renewing its own vitality. . . . The Institute helps them [Lasallian Associates] to achieve their proper autonomy. At the same time it creates appropriate ties with them and evaluates the authenticity of their Lasallian character.”

4. Taking into account the diversity of local situations, we need to adapt existing structures and invent new ones where needed, in

order to ensure the participation of Associates in the Lasallian mission, both at decision-making levels and in the accomplishment of this mission.

**Proposition 5**

**That in Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations, the Brothers and their Associates create a structure, where it does not exist, or improve a structure responsible for the Lasallian educational mission, in which all participate with a deliberative vote.**

**Proposition 6**

**That in each District, Sub-District, and Delegation, the Chapter or the Visitor, the Delegate and the President of the Delegation and their Councils, in consultation with their Associates, determine the criteria for the participation of Brothers and their Associates in the structure responsible for the Lasallian educational mission, and define its relationship with the Visitor, the Delegate and President of the Delegation and their Councils. This plan will be submitted to Brother Superior General and**

**his Council for approval.**

**Proposition 7**

**That Brother Superior General and his Council create a Standing Committee for the Lasallian Mission,\* including among its members:**

- one or two General Councillors representing the Brother Superior General,
- a number of persons responsible for the educational mission in Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations; and,
- a Secretary for the Lasallian Educational Mission, based principally in Rome, but available to visit Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations.

*\*The Standing Commission for the Lasallian Mission, coordinated by the Secretary for the Educational Mission, should among other things:*

- serve as adviser to Brother Superior General on questions related to the educational mission
- accompany Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations through visits or appropriate interventions, in order to promote interdependence,
- encourage educational forums on education in the Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations,
- convoke the International Assembly on the Lasallian Educational Mission,

*-ensure Institute representation in civil and Church educational organisations.*

### **Proposition 8**

**That the Standing Committee convoke an International Assembly on the Lasallian Educational Mission. It will determine the criteria for participation and propose the objectives of the International Assembly. It will convoke this assembly at least once before the General Chapter.**



## **IV FORMATION OF BROTHERS AND PARTNERS FOR THE LASALLIAN MISSION**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. Despite the great diversity of formation programmes and experiences in the Institute, there is still a great need for the formation of Brothers and Partners. Lasallian formation tends to create unity in diversity among Partners, despite multi-cultural and multi-religious contexts.

2. In general, the Brothers have been responsible for the formation of Partners. There are now some Partners who also can assume this responsibility. However, there are some Brothers who still resist the formation of Brothers and Partners together.

3. Some programmes must be restructured to meet more fully the needs of Partners. Moreover, the formation of Brothers and Partners for the Lasallian mission sometimes tends to be insufficiently linked with the formation programmes of the local Church.

4. The expectations of some Partners with regard to association and formation do not always correspond to those of the Brothers.

5. There are some Brothers who resist giving responsibilities to Partners. However, some Partners feel pressured by Brothers to take responsibilities while others, with regard to the Lasallian mission, feel unsure about their exact responsibilities in that mission.

6. While many Brothers and Partners have followed programmes, often they are not appointed to positions for which they have been prepared, owing mainly to unforeseen circumstances and improvisations.



7. In some areas of the Institute, there is a lack of human and economic resources for the formation of Partners

## **GUIDELINES**

To ensure better formation for those involved in the Lasallian

mission of human and Christian education, the following guidelines are important;

1. With regard to spirituality:

- Ensure, as a priority, that Lasallian spirituality is the central element unifying all formation processes.

2. With regard to pedagogy:

- Create formation programmes for Brothers and Partners that are developmental and inculturated at every stage of formation.

- In general, ensure at the Institute level, that formation programmes and documents dealing with the formation of partners and Brothers are more widely publicised.

3. With regard to accompaniment:

- That Institute authorities at all levels ensure the accompaniment of Brothers and Partners in the formation process;

- That Partners be encouraged to assume progressively responsibility for their own formation;

- That competent Partners be encouraged to participate in the running of formation programmes.

4. With regard to evaluation:

- That the formation of Brothers and Partners not be simply intellectual, but also experiential, leading to conversion and commitment to association for the mission.

#### *Recommendation 4*

*Priority of Formation. In order to strengthen “association for the educational service of the poor as the Lasallian response to the challenges of the 21st century”, we recommend that formation of Brothers and Partners be a priority in the Institute for the next seven years.*

#### *Recommendation 5*

*Formation Centres. That Institute formation Centres for Brothers and Partners at international, regional and local levels promote the participation of Brothers and Partners in formation sessions organised in flexible modules.*

#### **Proposition 9**

**That the Centre of the Institute organize two sessions for the formation of formators during the intercapitular years, which will include a study of association for the educational service of the poor.**

#### **Proposition 10**

**That the Bursar General and the International Finance Committee, with the approval of the Brother Superior General and his Council, ensure that the appropriate funds are raised and administered to support the formation of Partners in Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations with limited resources.**

#### **Proposition 11**

**That those responsible for the organization of plans for Lasallian formation throughout the Institute ensure that they include a period of first-hand experience in the educational service of the poor, which is worthwhile, sufficiently long and accompanied.**

## Table of Contents

Associated to Respond to Challenges .....	1
II Leadership and Accompaniment Structures .....	8
III Associates in Decision Making Structures .....	12
IV Formation of Brothers and Partners .....	15



# THE MISSION TODAY: URGENT NEEDS AND HOPE

## I THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE POOR

### OBSERVATIONS

1. From its foundation, the Institute has defined itself as being called by God to the educational service of the poor. During the last thirty years this need has been regularly recalled.

*(Circular 403 of 1976; 1978 Letter of Brother Superior General; 1981 Inter-Capitular meeting; 1986 General Chapter; Circular 435 (42<sup>nd</sup> General Chapter); Declaration Nos. 28-2, 30-3, 32-1, 34-4).*



In the past as now, the Institute has always concerned itself and continues to concern itself with the educational service of the poor. (Intercom #112)

We need to remember, however,

that the question of the educational service of the poor is closely tied to social, cultural and economic contexts, which vary greatly from country to country where the Institute is present.

Despite this, a certain feeling of dissatisfaction exists among some Brothers, in particular among younger Brothers. The Institute is

not perceived sufficiently clearly as being dedicated to the educational service of the poor. A discrepancy exists between what we profess and what we do. This concern has manifested itself in the central theme of the present Chapter.

2. What are the causes of this discrepancy ?

- The need to continue with what we have inherited from the recent past, which has bequeathed establishments to us which, with time, may have forgotten, and made the

Brothers forget, the original purpose of their foundation.

- This has made it difficult to reconcile involvement with the poor and the necessary financial management of establishments, above all in countries which do not receive any government assistance. Moreover, the Institute must respond to requests from local Churches and ensure a presence, as for example, in the area of university education.

- The fact that, while the educational service of the poor calls for a constant conversion of heart and of lifestyle, the Brothers' lifestyle has become increasingly middle class, and this has moved them away from the living standards of the poor.

- The option for the poor involves Lasallian Associates who choose to adopt it. It is the responsibility of the Brothers to make them aware of this option, while respecting their right to adopt different lifestyles.

## **GUIDELINES**

We are aware that our educational service of the poor cannot presume to solve all the problems of pov-

erty in the world, but only specifically those which are related to education.

We wish to follow, as a group, the path which leads to the poor, acknowledging that God calls us to bring creative and generous responses to the world of the poor to-day, through fidelity to our founding charism.

We acknowledge the associative dimension of the Institute in which Brothers and Partners are involved together in initiatives and programmes to achieve the purpose of the Institute.

1. It is necessary to promote, over the next seven years, the evolution of our educational establishments, so that they may be genuinely dedicated to the service of the poor. Each of them will have to respond to the need for evolution in a different way, but we think that the following appear to be the characteristics which will allow us to identify a work as Lasallian in respect to the educational service of the poor .

- adopting an educational programme on justice and solidar-

ity which will give a specific direction to the activities undertaken, to the experiences proposed to the young people, and to the kind of relationships that are built up;

- thinking of ways (facilities, and pedagogical strategies) to make these centres accessible and effective for young people in difficulty;
- creating ways so that poor youth and their families feel welcome and at ease in our institutions.

2. Personal conversion and a profound experience of God on the part of Lasallians (Brothers and Partners) should be the motive force behind the process of drawing closer to the world of the poor in order to allow ourselves “to be evangelized by them “. This openness to the evangelization by the poor implies bringing about gradually, as an Institute and with Associates, a change in the “social standing” of communities and establishments, so as to come closer to the poor and share their condition.

3. The educational service of the poor presupposes a process of awareness-training and specific

formation. Consequently, a process has to be set in motion to raise the awareness of Brothers and Associates, and to train them. This process should concentrate on the factors which engender different kinds of poverty, and bring to light the root causes. To help in this process, the Centre of the Institute should adopt a clear position in this matter and communicates it to the Brothers, to the Lasallian world and, further afield, to the Church and society as a whole.



4. The Institute does not presume that it alone has an effective educational approach and strategy to deal with present forms of poverty. This why it considers it important to maintain relations and collaborate with other organizations and other agencies (political, social, and religious) that work to resolve urgent problems regarding the

poor at the local, regional, and international level. Within the Institute, in order to respond to the urgent situations of poverty among the young, subsidiarity, interdependence and authority at the Centre of the Institute need to act in harmony.

#### *Recommendation 6*

*As a way of encouraging personal and community conversion, each District sets up a structure which will enable Brothers and communities to examine to what extent they live as persons of modest means, and have contact with such persons (living standard, kinds of relationships, access to communities and schools, involvement in social and educational activities). It evaluates also how the concern for the educational service of the poor influences the way it administers its goods.*

#### *Recommendation 7*

*Each District will draw up a plan to offer formation, and increase awareness of new forms of poverty affecting young people, especially in its own country. This plan will involve the participation of young people, parents, Partners and*

*Brothers. This plan should include also direct experience of working with and for the poor. After 3 years, an evaluation will be made at the District level, and the results will be published at an Institute level.*

#### *Recommendation 8*

*The General Chapter urges those in positions of responsibility at all levels of the Institute to strengthen relations and collaboration with organizations which defend the poor and especially the rights of children, and which promote their education.*

#### **Proposition 12**

**In order to increase the educational service of the poor, the General Chapter asks Visitors of Districts and Sub-Districts, Delegates and Presidents of Delegations, and their Councils, to evaluate the degree to which the institutions of the District, Sub-District or Delegation contribute to the educational service of the poor. The analysis of this evaluation should lead to a plan of action, drawn up with the participation of Lasallian Associates, within three years at the**

**most. The evaluation and the plan of action will be the object of a report, which will be studied at a later date at a meeting between Visitors, Delegates, Presidents and the Brother Superior General and his Council.**

## **II EVANGELIZATION**

“God is so good that having created us, he wishes all of us to come to the knowledge of the truth...

and you are the ones whom God has chosen to help in this work by announcing to these children the Good News and the truths that are contained in it” (Meditation 193).

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Some young people have difficulty in accepting the Good News that we announce. Their environment is characterized by a secularised “global youth culture”, which is based upon questionable commercial and economic values, and which prevents long-term relationships and stable commitments. If true dialogue is to take place, we must know more about these

young people, and use language and forms of expression they understand.

While we are prepared to see what is good in other cultures, we must, nevertheless, seek to introduce the values of the Good News into the social environment of young people, so that family life is strengthened, and both the socially and economically disadvantaged, such as the illiterate or the homeless, and those experiencing new forms of poverty, such as those lacking affection, faith or meaning, are liberated.

Teaching is becoming more difficult every day. Parents also have to face the challenge posed by the great diversity and complexity of life today. The admirable commitment of numerous men and women, Brothers and Partners, old and young, working together in the Lasallian mission on behalf of the young and the poor, is increasingly an urgent need. Furthermore, we are glad to see that more women are now involved in the Lasallian mission, and are playing a more significant part in it.

The good example given by credible, authentic, and coherent witnesses is the best means of sharing the Good News. This example is most effective when given by a team or by a community of persons, such as a community of Brothers, Sisters, Catechists or a community of lay persons. Besides the implicit proclamation of the Good News, we must also make this proclamation explicit by such means as public expressions of faith, the catechesis and pastoral care of young people, and the vocations ministry.



For Lasallian establishments to be the living expression of the Good News, they must be places for dialogue in truth, freedom, and hope. In this way, the Brothers and Lasallian Partners can enter into the culture of the young to announce the Good News, and feel

the need themselves for continual conversion. Among Lasallian institutions, the school is an ideal place for an inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue which will bear witness to the values of all forms of faith. Lasallians working in universities have the opportunity to contribute to our mission, in a special way, by their commitment to research in the field of the faith development of young people, whatever their religion, and by the training and accompaniment of those persons entrusted with the difficult task of sharing the Good News in an increasingly secularized and multi-religious context.

The Lasallian charism is already a source of inspiration in the context of multi-cultural and multi-religious societies. Young people from all cultures and religious traditions have the right and freedom to benefit from, and to live according to the Lasallian charism.

For many young people, there is a widening gap between themselves and the institutional Church. The Lasallian school becomes the

place where they experience the message of the Good News in a way that touches their hearts, their needs, and their concerns.

The sharing of the Good News is more credible and more authentic when the young and their educators are in solidarity with the poor in the pursuit of justice. In this context young people are able to perceive the vocational call to commit themselves to the Lasallian mission, including as a Brother of the Christian Schools.

Many experiences around the world suggest that a good formula for faith development is one that integrates religious education, service, and community. To neglect any one of these three defeats the aim of the whole process.

#### *Recommendation 9*

*That each Lasallian, each Lasallian group and each Lasallian programme of renewal or formation adopt the following guiding principles:*

- *FAITH sharing (this makes possible inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue),*
- *SERVICE of the poor through*

*education,*  
- *COMMUNITY building.*

#### **Proposition 13**

**That each Region, District, Sub-District, and Delegation, urged on by the person responsible for the sector, establish, either independently or jointly with other sectors, a commission to provide reflection, leadership and coordination for organisations which, in our institutions, work with and for young people. This commission, having in view the faith development and apostolic commitment of young people, will be responsible for:**

- **directing and coordinating structures responsible for the pastoral ministry of youth,**
- **creating and running Lasallian youth groups,**
- **providing initial and continuing formation for those accompanying youth groups.**

**During the course of the year 2003, this commission will report to Brother Superior General and provide an evaluation regarding what it has accomplished.**

### III URGENT EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

#### INTRODUCTION

The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, like many other people and organisations, is clearly and patently aware of the urgent need that children, young people and adults have for education, at the beginning of this new century. Faithful to the original inspiration

resolutely to promote education:-

- 
- *Circular 435 of the General Chapter of 1993, pp 18 - 29;*
  - *the letter of the Superior General of January 1999;*
  - *the Report on the 5 colloquia, June 1999;*
  - *the Report of Brother Superior to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter, p 19, 95.*
- 

Given this educational need, the Commission proposes to strengthen the commitment of the Institute, for the next seven years, in the following four areas where the need is particularly urgent:

- the rights of the child,
- educational renewal
- the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, where this possible
- Lasallian presence in multi-religious societies.

Lasallian centres of higher education should bring their own specific strengths to bear on these urgent issues through their programmes of research and professional training.



of St. John Baptist de La Salle, it has spoken of this on numerous occasions in recent years, and particularly in the following documents, which are the fruit of the first-hand experience of Lasallians, and of consultation with international organisations which work

# 1. THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

## OBSERVATIONS

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is an internationally ratified agreement to oppose the exploitation of children and young people. Although the Convention was recommended by the 42nd. General Chapter (Circular 435, p.23, 2.1), and again in the Pastoral Letter of the Superior for 1999, its contents are little known and understood by Brothers and Partners.

Cultural norms are not always consistent with the articles of the Convention. Children often are not sufficiently aware of their rights under the Convention.

## GUIDELINES

1. Brothers and Partners need to be more aware of the contents of the Convention.
2. The implementation of the Convention has to be adapted to local conditions.



3. The Lasallian educational mission should concentrate on children whose rights are not protected.
4. The response of the Brothers and Partners to the demands of the Convention must be inspired by Gospel values.

### **Proposition 14**

**In order that the rights of the child be considered as a major focus of concern for the Lasallian mission of education during the next seven years, each District, Sub-District and Delegation should include this question in its plan of action. It will appoint at least one Brother or Partner who will help it:**

- to cooperate with local organisations which work for the promotion of the rights of the child
- to detect local violations of the rights of children;
- to alert local authorities when children's rights are violated;
- to ensure that its schools and universities teach and observe the rights of the child;
- to maintain contact with the secretariat for the educational mission.

**This project will be evaluated periodically.**

## **2. EDUCATIONAL RENEWAL**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The Chapter acknowledges and values highly the educational work of the 68,000 Brothers, teachers and educators who, together and throughout the Institute, are an educative influence by being present among their pupils and students "from morning till night". It urges them to continue exercising their ministry with great dynamism. It addresses this encouragement, especially, to those who face great difficulties at the present

time, in particular in their attempts to introduce educational renewal.

#### *Recommendations 10*

*That Districts and Regions organise continuing formation programmes for Brothers and Lasallian Associates and partners, which will enable them to respond positively to the rapid, profound and worldwide changes that affect modern society.*

#### *Recommendation 11*

*That during the intercapitular period, all Lasallian establishments stress in their educational programmes the following characteristics which should identify them clearly as being ours:*

- the sense of community and fraternity as a response to individualism and loss of identity;
- the fight against poverty and situations of injustice;
- education for justice and peace, tolerance and solidarity;
- formation of persons who are both just and free.

*Brother Visitor and his Council will require every Lasallian establishment to draw up concrete plans for providing opportunities for*

*first-hand experience inspired by these characteristics, and they will evaluate the organisation of these schemes and their results.*

#### *Recommendation 12*

*In order to give a concrete response to the educational needs of the poor, over the next 7 years, the Institute, at its various levels, should undertake new projects in the field of literacy in rural and urban areas (primary schools, evening courses, correspondence courses, radio broadcast courses). The initiative could be taken by Brothers and/or Lasallian Associates and partners. It could also be an apostolate for Lasallian Volunteers.*

#### **Proposition 15**

**That, in the course of the next 2 years, the Institute Secretariat for the Educational Mission, using current means of communication, establish a network of Brothers and Lasallian Partners; that this network be in contact with competent centres within the Institute, and with organisations outside.**

**The purpose of this network will be to share information, ideas**

**and research, particularly in the following areas:**

- the rights of the child;**
- the means for developing educational communities which are fraternal and rooted in the Gospel;**
- experiences and projects to promote justice and peace, the service of the poor and literacy;**
- pedagogical innovation, schemes for educating and evangelising .**

**The secretariat for the educational mission will take the appropriate means to ensure the effective communication of this information and research to Lasallian educators.**

**The Commission suggests the following approach:**

**Regarding the priority concerns mentioned above, the secretariat for the educational mission could call on particularly competent Brothers and Partners and other experts. It would establish working teams with members spread around the Lasallian world, dealing with assigned priority concerns.**

**These persons would agree to form themselves into a kind of**

**“temporary association” to work on the chosen priority concern, and would meet from time to time at the invitation of the secretariat, and at its expense. Obviously, these persons would set up their own network of experts locally, making use of the possibilities offered by non-Lasallian organisations. This approach would make it possible to practice Lasallian association in a new and flexible way.**

### **3. EXPLICIT PROCLAMATION OF THE FAITH**

---

#### *REFERENCES*

*Rule 12, 15, 15a, 15b, 15c;*

*Declaration 38, 40, 52;*

*Pastoral Letter of Brother Superior, January 1997;*

*Report of the Brother Superior General to the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter, p. 19, prop. 32;*

---

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. The explicit proclamation of the Good News poses problems in all continents:

- either because of the multi-religious context,
- or because of dechristianisation,

secularisation and unbelief.

2. When young people are forced to listen to the explicit proclamation of the Good News, they tend to respond negatively, feeling that they are not being respected.

3. The explicit proclamation of the Good News takes place during religion lessons, as part of the school timetable, and during extracurricular pastoral activities.



4. There are many resources available throughout the Institute, but they are not often shared with others. On the other hand, we are aware of the constant effort that has to be made to adapt the language of these materials to that of today's young people.

5. The explicit proclamation of the Good News is undertaken in par-

particular by partners working with the Brothers. Despite difficulties, their dedication is remarkable, demonstrated by their request for information and for the provision of catechetical training.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. The Chapter calls on the Brothers and Partners to renew their commitment to the catechetical mission and their specific formation in this domain.

2. Since acceptance of faith is a free act, the explicit proclamation of the Good News should be proposed to all. In this way constructive dialogue can be established.

3. Given the new forms of communication, Brothers and Partners ought to be creative in proclaiming the Good News. In this connection, it is important

- to gain access to the world of young people and their culture, which includes Gospel values;
- be open-minded regarding other youth movements not organised by Lasallians.

### **Proposition 16**

**That, before the end of 2001, every Regional Coordinator, in coordination with those responsible for Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, establish a Commission for the stimulation and education of faith, whose task will be:**

**- to study ways and means of adapting our language and our methods of educating in the faith to the culture of young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;**

**- to share information about existing projects as well as available resources so as to help and encourage Brothers and partners involved in faith education;**

**- to find ways of including in school programmes and/or in pastoral programmes social activities to help the poor;**

**- to offer practical suggestions regarding the training and guidance of Brothers and partners involved in faith education.**

**Periodically, and at least every three years, this commission will evaluate its work with the Regional Coordinator and the Visitors.**

## 4. LASALLIAN PRESENCE IN MULTI-RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES

---

### REFERENCES:

*Report of the Br. Superior General to the 43rd. General Chapter, pp 92-95;*

*The Lasallian Mission of Human and Christian Education: A Shared Mission Institute Bulletin Nos, 243 and 245;*

*Circular 435, Reflections on the Missionary Policy of the Institute;*

*“Dialogue and Proclamation, Reflections and Guidelines Regarding Inter-Faith Dialogue” (Rome, May 19th. 1991).*

---

### OBSERVATIONS

1. The Lasallian Mission is already being pursued in multi-cultural and multi-religious societies.

2. In these societies, Brothers and Partners experience a wide range of reactions to their presence, ranging from intolerance to indifference on the one hand, to respect often, on the other.

3. The work of the Institute in this multi-religious context is not well known in other parts of the Institute.



### GUIDELINES

The presence of the Institute in multi-religious societies calls for inter-faith dialogue on four levels:

a. Life: Brothers, Partners and young people build up friendly relations with others and nurture a fraternity which transcends religious differences.

b. School: A place where the child is the focus of concern, whatever his religious beliefs. It is a place where human and religious education is given, and the educational service of the poor is a priority.

c. Service: Despite their religious differences, Brothers, partners and young people show solidarity in

the service of the poor.

d. Institution: There is inter-faith dialogue at national and international gatherings.

### Recommendation 13

That the Superior General and his Council include among their priorities the promotion of the Lasallian Mission in multi-religious societies by:

- encouraging the exchange of information about current situations, about the guidelines and initiatives of the Brothers and Partners working in those societies and, in particular, information about those related to the educational service of the poor.
- ensuring the representation of the Institute at international inter-faith meetings and events.

## Table of Contents

The Mission Today: Urgency and Hope .....	1
I The Educational Service of the Poor .....	1
II Evangelization .....	5
III Urgent Educational Needs .....	8



# THE BROTHERS TODAY: IDENTITY AND FORMATION

## I THE IDENTITY OF THE BROTHER

### INTRODUCTION

A number of pre-Chapter Regional meetings recommended that the topic of the identity of the Brother be studied at the Chapter. Some 13 notes under the same heading were sent directly to the Chapter and the question was raised by implication in a number of notes received concerning the Shared Mission.

The Commission report has followed the directives given by the Central Commission by examining four aspects of the overall topic under the heading of OBSERVATIONS:

1. Why is the identity of the Brother being called into question?;
2. Community life and identity;

3. Association and identity;
4. The vocations ministry and Identity. (This aspect was passed on to the Commission on Formation, p. 26)

The work of this Commission does not claim to be exhaustive. It is primarily descriptive and analytical, but in its Recommendations and Propositions, it attempts to offer some practical suggestions which may help to reinforce those aspects of the Brother's life which are particularly important in helping him maintain his identity. In their first Proposition, the members of the Commission expressed their firm conviction that the topic needed to be studied further and in greater detail after the Chapter by a group established by the Brother Superior and his Council.



It is primarily descriptive and analytical, but in its Recommendations and Propositions, it attempts to offer some practical suggestions which may help to reinforce those aspects of the Brother's life which are particularly important in helping him maintain his identity. In their first Proposition, the members of the Commission expressed their firm conviction that the topic needed to be studied further and in greater detail after the Chapter by a group established by the Brother Superior and his Council.

## OBSERVATIONS

### 1. WHY IS THE IDENTITY OF THE BROTHER BEING CALLED INTO QUESTION?

#### *Perceptions of identity*

- Sometimes there is confusion between who we are and what we do. Reliance on an exclusively functional identity can create an imbalance between the professional and the vocational aspects of our lives.

- Identity is something built up gradually; it does not depend only on us, but also on the image of ourselves communicated to us by others.

- The perception which each Brother has of his identity seems to be influenced by certain variables, including among others: age, style of formation, ability to relate with Partners, understanding of the Church.

#### *Some elements which reinforce the Brother's identity*

Among others, the following can be mentioned:

- regular participation in the pas-

toral ministry;

- a vibrant and spiritual community life;

- the visibility of being established in poor surroundings.

#### *Insecurity and uncertainties*

Among all the factors that can cause them, we mention the following:

- the difficulties experienced in evangelization and catechesis;

- the devaluation of the role of the teacher in some societies, and the pressures on the school in modern society;

- the loss of control and leadership of schools in many countries;

- the difficulty of preserving the Lasallian characteristics in some schools;

- faith crises or spiritual stagnation among individual Brothers;

- the overall decrease in the number of Brothers;

- the vocations crisis.

### 2. COMMUNITY LIFE AND IDENTITY

#### *Spiritual life*

- There is better participation in

community prayer, but sharing the experience of God remains difficult.

- Some Brothers are not particularly interested in their continuing spiritual formation through spiritual reading, courses in Biblical studies or theology, new forms of prayer, etc.

### *Individualism*

Individualism can be observed in a number of areas:

- Commitment to the mission is sometimes more individual than community-based;

- Leisure and relationships outside the community with family and friends can take precedence over the needs of the community;

- Use of possessions: money, cars, television, computer...can isolate Brothers from one another;

There can be a lack of personal relationships, and little involvement by some Brothers in community life.

### *Difficulties in setting up community structures*

- Sometimes the community programme, intended to be a source

of new energy, is trivialised;

- Small communities require even stronger commitment from their members but often relationships among the members remain poor.

- Sometimes insufficient use is made of the Guide of the Brother Director.

- Evolution within the community can be slowed down by Brothers who have been there for a long time.

For these reasons, it can be difficult for the Brother Director to carry out his leadership role in the community.

## 3. ASSOCIATION AND IDENTITY

### *With the Brothers*

- The vow of association is not very well understood by some Brothers, nor given much importance; sometimes the community does not have a clear perception of its common mission.

- It can be that the feeling of belonging to the District is weak among some Brothers; there is a lack of co-responsibility, mobility, and availability for District service.

- At an Institute level, there has

been significant progress made in interdependence and solidarity between Districts.

### *With Partners*

The association between Brothers and Partners has an ambivalent effect on the identity of the Brother.



Positively:

- Some Partners challenge Brothers to adopt more meaningful commitments.
- Partners appreciate the role of the Brothers in the Lasallian mission, and work in fostering vocations to the Institute.
- A shared formation of Brothers and Partners has helped Brothers to rediscover the person of the

Founder and his charism.

- Some communities are renewed when they are sufficiently open to share their reflection , prayer and their community life with others.

Negatively:

- Some Brothers see Partners as in competition with them.
- Some Brothers feel that when the Shared Mission is mentioned, the Institute gives priority to Partners to the detriment of the Brothers.
- The role of Brothers in the school has changed. The fact that often they are few in number creates a certain insecurity which affects their identity and the fostering of vocations.

## **GUIDELINES**

### 1. GENERAL GUIDELINE

We believe that the identity of the Brother is clearly expressed in the effort to “integrate in his own person the constitutive elements of his vocation:

- consecration to God as a lay religious;
- apostolic ministry of education, especially of the poor;

- and community life” (R 10).  
Very many Brothers fully live out their identity as Brothers; they are at the same time the ‘heart’ and ‘memory’ of the Lasallian charism. We rejoice at this because “the young, the poor, the world and the Church need the ministry of the Brothers.” (R 141)

But, in the climate of uncertainty and insecurity, brought about and sustained by the escalating change, of which globalisation is a manifestation, questions remain about the Brother’s identity. This is particularly true where the loss of some traditional roles, formerly carried out exclusively by Brothers, has taken away what may have been only a functional identity, better expressed in terms of doing rather than of being.

## 2. GUIDELINES REGARDING COMMUNITY LIFE

It is necessary:

- to develop within our personal and community life the Christological dimension of Lasallian spirituality and give preference to the experiences of God which are linked with that spirituality;

- to submit apostolic initiatives and each Brother’s lifestyle to the discernment of the community, so as to overcome the individualism which threatens our identity;
- to take into consideration the existence of Association, and the new role which the Brothers and the Communities need to have in it; in our community programmes;
- to create and encourage, on a community and District level, opportunities and means to express friendship and fraternity, and by this means, develop and encourage the affective life of the Brothers.

## 3. GUIDELINES REGARDING ASSOCIATION

It is necessary:

- to strengthen our identity by attaching more importance to the meaning of the vow of association for the educational service of the poor, at the community, District and international level, and use this as a basis for clarifying our understanding of the other vows;
- to develop awareness of the community’s mission: each community, no matter what its situation, could, for example, be given

a letter of mission by Brother Visitor, defining its activities at a local level, and its contribution to District establishments;

- to induce Brothers to promote association and partnership in a spirit of sharing, and to practice association with Partners, so that we may allow ourselves to be challenged regarding our identity and our commitments.

#### *Recommendation 14*

*That the reception of the General Chapter documents throughout the Institute be accompanied by special pastoral activities - workshops, recollections, gatherings, retreats - which could help individual Brothers, communities and Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations establish and/or reinforce practices which help us to remember and express who we are as Brothers.*

#### *Recommendation 15*

*That each Personal Annual Plan (R 58b) and the Community Annual Plan (R 58a) make use of Chapter Documents to deepen our fidelity to the vow of Association, thereby strengthening our identity as consecrated men, living in com-*

*munity for a mission of educational service to the poor. Likewise, on the occasion of the preparation of the Community Annual Plan, there should be a ceremony in which each community member renews the vow of association, naming the other members of the community.*

#### *Recommendation 16*

*That each Brother participate regularly, preferably in a school, in catechesis, pastoral ministry, or some other service which makes him reflect upon and share his faith, given that the Brother's identity, and "his principal function", are intrinsically linked with evangelization and the educational service to the poor.*

#### *Recommendation 17*

*That we adopt and implement the following criteria with regard to the composition and life of communities:*

- that the community be composed of a sufficient number of Brothers, by preference more than three, so that the vitality of its own life and of its mission as a community is ensured;*
- that the necessary means are*

*made available to improve personal relationships, the affective life of each Brother, and the special attention given to young and to elderly Brothers, so as to make visible one of the most characteristic elements of a community - brotherhood;*

*- that new opportunities for experiencing community life be created for young people and Associates, making it possible to share faith and spirituality.*

#### *Recommendation 18*

*That, each District, when setting up plans for its establishments and administering its goods, upgrade its plan for the educational service of the poor, by creating or promoting communities in very poor areas, with the participation of Lasallian Associates, and in conjunction with other Districts and Regions;*

*That each community examine its own lifestyle and administration to see if its way of living conforms with that of people of ordinary means. (R 32)*

#### *Recommendation 19*

*That together with our Partners, within the framework of a deter-*

*mined policy, each District choose establishments whose priority will be the educational service of the poor, and encourage Brothers and Partners to work in them.*

#### **Proposition 17**

**The General Chapter requests Brother Superior and Council to set up and bring together an intercapitular commission to study completed or current research on the specific identity and role of the Brother as envisaged by the Founder. This commission will study also the results of completed or current research on the specific identity and role of lay religious in the Church. Brother Superior and his Council will communicate the overall results of this study to the whole Institute.**

#### **Proposition 18**

**The General Chapter requests all Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations to devote a year to the renewal of our community life, based on the study of the basic elements of the spirituality of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, which will allow us, among other things:**

- to share the experience of God;  
- to be better «expert guides in the spiritual life» (Vita Consecrata 55) in our mission.

### **Proposition 19**

**That the General Chapter decide that, following the Chapter, a year be devoted to our vow of association for the educational service of the poor. Formation programmes organised by the Centre of the Institute, Regional centres, Brothers' retreats, communities, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations will organise programmes for deepening an understanding of this vow. This will be a priority in personal and community annual programmes.**

## **II FACING OUR DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION AND LIVING BY ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE POOR**

**SOME DOCUMENTS FOR REFERENCE:**

---

- *The Rule: 16d, 56, 74a, 81, 101d,*

*101f, 145;*

- *The Declaration: 4, 13.3, 14.3, 24, 49.5, 53.2, 53.3;*

- *Circular 435: pages 65 to 71 (English edition);*

- *Vita Consecrata: N. 44, N. 63, N. 109;*

- *7 Notes to the Chapter;*

- *The 2nd Letter of the Preparatory Commission.*

---

### **A PRELIMINARY REMARK**

The previous General Chapter (42nd) produced a series of documents, recommendations and propositions concerning “*The Brothers in later years*”, which are still very relevant today. The 43rd General Chapter, having chosen as its central theme “*Associated for the educational service of the poor as the Lasallian response to the challenges of the 21st century*”, wished to have an overall view of our demographic situation, and its numerical evolution.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

#### **1. A WORLDWIDE DEMOGRAPHIC PHENOMENON**

Some figures will help us to un-

derstand the demographic situation of our Institute better:

- 61% of the Brothers are over 60 years of age,
- In 7 Districts, the average age is over 70. (1,794 Brothers).
- In 8 Districts, the average age is under 45. (375 Brothers).
- By the next General Chapter, we can expect to have 1,000 fewer Brothers in the Institute as a whole.

The fact that the total number of Brothers has decreased is not something that has just occurred; it has been going on for more than thirty years.

The demographic imbalance of the Institute is not peculiar to it alone:

a) In more economically developed countries, many societies are seeing an increase in the number of retired persons, while the number of active persons, in the sociological sense of the term, is decreasing. On the other hand, most other countries have very large numbers of young people.

b) In more economically developed countries, the vocations crisis affects practically all apostolic religious congregations and all the

dioceses. Lay teaching congregations have been particularly affected. We note, however, that new movements and congregations are appearing in the Church, which are attracting young vocations.

## 2. SOME CONSEQUENCES

Some consequences are positive:

- The development of the “shared mission” with its own internal dynamics;
- The apostolic religious life is being challenged and is looking for a new and prophetic reason for its existence in the Church and in the world.
- The availability of Brothers resulting from retirement and longer life expectancy has permitted them:
  1. to discover new ways of contributing to the educational mission, in particular, to that of the



poor,

2. and to provide a fraternal presence for elderly persons.

- The phenomenon of ageing makes us more sensitive to the human aspects of a Brother's life.

- The Institute is now more prepared to work with other congregations and/or organisations in order to pool resources. As a result, the awareness that our mission comes from the Church is reinforced.

- The witness of our older Brothers is often a stimulus for those around them as well as for the pastoral ministry of vocations.

Other consequences are negative:

- For the Brothers, there is a temptation to model their retirement on that of ordinary lay persons, and to forget that our mission does not end when we retire from our professional life.

- Some Brothers feel disorientated and do not understand the changes that are taking place. The result is a loss of identity and doubts regarding the value of their vocation.

- In addition to the fact that, as Brothers grow older they lose much of their energy, there is also a lack of Brothers in Districts to

respond to the always pressing needs of the mission today.

- The Institute, as an ageing social body, may find it difficult to free itself from old patterns of behaviour, especially if the past is remembered with nostalgia.

### 3. IMPACT ON THE FUTURE

In the past, many Districts responded generously by sending missionary Brothers to work in newly-founded Districts. Today, young Districts can no longer depend on such reinforcements, and must assume their own responsibilities regarding the mission.

Ageing Districts must face up to the financial and human requirements of their retirement houses for the older Brothers.

The Institute as a whole will see a decrease in its human and financial potential.

### GUIDELINES

1. Given the situation we have described, the Institute as a whole, and each Brother in particular, is called to be more humble and to

show a greater of poverty. At the same time, we need to give a new impetus to the pastoral ministry of vocations and to the process of association.

2. Just as all human beings have to accept that their life goes through various stages (birth, growth, old age, death), so the Institute also must learn to accept, without despairing, that it is dying out in certain countries, while, at the same time in others, it is being born and growing. The Bible, especially the Gospel, calls upon us to make the connection between ageing and the fulfillment of the Promise, between death and life.

3. As there is a certain perception of the vocation of the Brother, which leads some Brothers to identify it mainly with their work, leaving them at a loss when their professional work ends with retirement, greater care ought to be taken over formation programmes, and by formators, to ensure that the constitutive dimensions of the vocation of the Brother are assimilated properly.



4. Besides the necessary concern for Brothers still in active service, and in particular for the younger members, special attention ought to be paid to the elderly Brothers, to their living conditions, to the leadership of their communities, to their participation in the life of the District and of the Institute, and to the apostolic value of this new stage in their life.

5. Districts, in which a relatively large number of Brothers is approaching the age of retirement from their professional work, should invest resources in the formation and accompaniment of these Brothers, so that they do not lose their enthusiasm for the mission, and find other ways of being associated for the educational service of the poor, in existing establishments or in new ones.

6. It is important to give Brothers all the space they need to develop their creativity in order to respond to the challenges of the educational

service of the poor today. This concerns, in particular, young Brothers in Districts which have a high average age.

Consequently, the commitment of Brothers to establishments requires discernment, so that future needs may be met, by ensuring that existing establishments continue to function, and that the possibility remains of creating others.

7. Differences in age are a challenge to the fraternal life of a community. On the other hand, the successful mixing of generations can be a source of dynamism and richness for community life and for the mission. There is need for discernment which takes into account the situations and persons involved, because nothing can be taken for granted in this matter. It is important for Visitors and all involved in the government and running of the District to give this matter attention.

Joint projects, or at least collaboration between Districts, can prove helpful in preventing younger Brothers from feeling isolated in older communities, and can pro-

vide a stimulus for the pastoral ministry of vocations to the Brothers.

8. The psychological development of persons, their spirituality (orientated either towards human contact and relationships or, on the contrary, more attracted to rituals and exact observance), the course their lives have taken, which may be very different from that of others, their understanding of authority, etc. - these are all factors which make community life and the individual accompaniment of Brothers both complex and difficult. All this calls for training and a great attention to individuals on the part of those who exercise authority at whatever level.

9. At all stages of our lives we feel there is a tension in ourselves between two opposing forces: one which makes us concentrate on ourselves, and the other which draws us towards others. These two forces can have both a positive and a negative effect.

At the end of our lives, when we can no longer be active because we lack the necessary energy, we tend

to turn in on ourselves. It is a time when we look back over our past lives, when the link with our body takes on a particular significance, when the question of the meaning of our life is posed with exceptional clarity.

This stage of life is a trial. It can be also a gift, which enables us to recognise the presence of God in our lives, to thank him for it, and, with love and total confidence, to put ourselves entirely into his hands. Fraternal presence and accompaniment can help us to accept this gift.

#### *Recommendation 20*

*Grateful to the elderly Brothers for the witness they have given to those around them by the spiritual richness of their religious life, the Brothers of the General Chapter encourage them to pursue their mission in an apostolate appropriate to their situation, and by their presence, and their prayer.*

#### *Recommendation 21*

*That, in a spirit of interdependence and to promote the educational service of the poor, Regions suggest to the Centre of the Institute*

*which of their Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations should be merged, or, at least, between which there should be some form of collaboration, so that young Brothers do not feel isolated in communities where the average age is high.*

#### *Recommendation 22*

*We recommend that the Centre of the Institute study the possibility of a special session, with one module open to lay persons as well, for all those who have, or will have, the responsibility in their respective Districts for the accompaniment and the formation of the Brothers who reach the legal age of retirement, and of the old and infirm Brothers. This session ought to take place within the next three years.*

#### **Proposition 20**

**The Visitor will discern with Brothers who have reached legal retirement age, or the end of their professional career, the kind of apostolic activity they should undertake (location, duration, courses...). By preference, this should be one that benefits the educational service of**

the poor, and which responds to requests from the District or the Institute to work in existing establishments or in those still to be created.

#### **Proposition 21**

That, in order to implement our association for the educational service of the poor, Brother Superior and his Council, in consultation with the Regions, draw up a list of places where apostolic work is being done, and where retired Brothers can contribute to the educational service of the poor for a specific time, through a spirit of interdependence and of the 100 plus Mission.

#### **Proposition 22**

In order to enable Brothers, especially the younger Brothers, to choose to work in the educational service of the poor and to lead a meaningful community life, each District, at its next District Chapter:

- will evaluate the present work of the Brothers in the establishments and the governing structures of the District;
- will draw up a plan reflecting

future changes in the deployment of Brothers in existing establishments and in those still to be created;

- will determine what needs changing in the governing structures of the District.

## **III FORMATION OF BROTHERS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is a strong relationship between formation, renewal and the mission of the Institute. Formation is an important factor in the renewal of the Institute and in the assimilation of one's identity in a changing world. Quality formation is indispensable for the fulfillment of the mission of the Institute.

As we read in the Guide for Formation (cf. Chapter 5), we need to see formation as a life-long process, that continues through all the stages of development - from initial formation to retirement and beyond. This is the *leitmotiv* of this document.

### **1. STRENGTHENING THE STRUCTURES OF ACCOMPANIMENT**

## OBSERVATIONS

“To accompany a person means being with him in such a way that he finds...light and guidance for his own life. It means joining him on his way” (Guide for Formation 108). Although this refers primarily to the process of initial formation, personal accompaniment must be considered necessary throughout the whole process of initial and continuing formation.

1. In general, Visitors, as “principal animators” of the District (R 132), recognise the need for accompaniment in the life of the Brother even if, at times, both Visitors and the other Brothers resist it in practice.

2. Some Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations have excellent structures and personnel in place to ensure adequate accompaniment throughout the formation process from initial formation to preparation for retirement and beyond.

3. Other Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, while recognising the need for accompani-

ment, lack the necessary personnel and structures and, in consequence, the results are much less satisfactory.

4. Sometimes accompaniment is



seen as applicable only to initial formation with little attention being given to later stages.

5. The Formation Secretariat has helped to strengthen the organisation of the vocations ministry and of formation programmes in a number of Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, even if much still remains to be done.

## GUIDELINES

1. The Centre of the Institute needs to ensure that the good accompaniment provided by the Secretariat for Formation continues.

2. The Centre of the Institute needs to ensure effective accompaniment of Visitors.

3. Visitors should give special attention to the accompaniment of Directors, young Brothers, Brothers approaching retirement, and those who are experiencing serious personal or vocational difficulties.

4. Formation of Directors needs to be organised in such a way that they become more able to provide leadership, and to accompany their Brothers in a more personal way.

5. Directors of communities need to promote community discernment as an important element in the accompaniment of Brothers.

*Recommendation 23*

*That the Centre of the Institute maintain two Secretaries of Formation in the general services of the Institute*

**Proposition 23**

**That Brother Superior and his Council make one of their priorities for the next seven years the support and accompaniment**

**of Brothers responsible for Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, and especially for those lacking the human and financial resources and structures necessary for accompaniment.**

**2. FORMATION STRATEGIES FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE OF THE POOR**

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. Some Districts have handed over educational establishments to others so as to free Brothers for the educational service of the poor.

2. Some Districts have created new educational establishments and/or transformed existing establishments so as to make them more accessible to the poor.

3. Some Districts have moved their houses of formation to poor areas.

4. Some Districts have helped other parts of the Institute with finances and personnel for formation and the educational service of the poor.

5. Twinning between Lasallian institutions has promoted solidarity and a greater awareness of wider issues.

6. In some parts of the Institute, there is a discrepancy between the style of life in the houses of formation and that of other communities, and between official documents and the lifestyle of the Brothers.

7. In some parts of the Institute, there is a lack of formation and promotion of awareness regarding the causes of social injustice in the world today, phenomena such as secularisation and globalisation, and the mechanisms of economic and commercial exploitation, and of racial and ethnic conflicts.

## GUIDELINES

1. Throughout the process of formation, it should be borne in mind that the educational service of the poor and the promotion of social justice needs to be seen in the context of evangelisation.

2. In order to reinforce formation

for the educational service of the poor, and to provide an opportunity to live out more fully their consecration, Districts should invite more Brothers to take part in an “exodus” and conversion experience, similar to that of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

3. We should take greater advantage of the international dimension of the Institute to provide Brothers with opportunities to be personally involved in the educational service of the poor.

4. New houses of formation, communities and educational estab-



lishments should be established more and more in educationally and economically disadvantaged localities. The Brothers in these new establishments should adopt a modest lifestyle.

*Recommendation 24*

*That Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations ensure that, in formation houses, communities and Lasallian institutions, formation is given in social justice, and that it is accompanied by an analysis that is more critical, and by activities, inspired by the Gospel and the social teaching of the Church, which call for greater commitment.*

**Proposition 24**

**In order to promote a process of conversion to the educational service of the poor, the Centre of the Institute, Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, offer Brothers a personal experience of life and work in areas that are educationally and economically disadvantaged. The Brothers involved in these schemes would be accompanied in such a way that the three constitutive elements of the Brother's vocation (R 10) are respected.**

**(N.B. This opportunity might be offered, for example, during the session for new Visitors, during sessions for new formators in CIL, and in other formation**

**programmes etc.)**

**3. THE FORMATION OF FORMATORS AND FORMATION PROGRAMMES**

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. We note there is more inter-District cooperation and better participation in inter-congregational formation programmes.
2. Good documents have been produced on formation and on the vocations ministry, but in some parts of the Institute an effective methodology to implement these has been lacking. The result has been formation that is fragmented into stages that are unconnected.
3. In some parts of the Institute, formation has tended to be excessively intellectual, giving insufficient attention to aspects of a person which help him to acquire overall maturity as a human being and as a Christian.
4. Also, in the absence of a long-term plan to provide formation courses for formators, the alternative has often been a multiplicity

of short courses and meetings that are no substitute for a solid and prolonged formation.

5. Sometimes, more importance has been attached to professional training than to preparation for the



ministry, and to the nurturing of a desire to proclaim the Gospel.

6. In some parts of the Institute there is a great scarcity of formators.

7. Often there is difficulty in forming cohesive formation teams.

8. We note that few Brothers feel called to work in the ministry of formation, which is a vocation within the vocation of the Brother.

9. Brother Visitors and their Coun-

cils find it difficult to free Brothers so that they can prepare themselves to be formators and to take on leadership roles in the District.

This is mainly due to the lack of Brothers, their age, and pressing apostolic demands. This postpones

the acquisition of skills that are essential for the viability and vitality of the Institute in the medium to long term.

## GUIDELINES

1. The consecration of the Brother should be re-interpreted in terms of its evangelical character, and in the light of the specific vow of “association for the educational service of the poor”.

2. We should prepare Brothers who will be in charge of formation, sufficiently ahead of time.

3. During initial formation, we need to create a favourable attitude towards continuing formation, because this is something that promotes community vitality.

4. We need to improve formation

programmes for Brothers (between the ages of 40 and 55), and set aside sufficient time for this, so that these Brothers can take up with renewed zeal the ever-changing challenges of the mission, and of the various stages of their lives.

5. At a local level, we need to participate more in formation programmes organised by the Church, other religious congregations and new ecclesial movements.

6. We need to urge Brothers to publicise more their formation experiences and documents, and to organise periodical meetings for formators, taking advantage of the services offered by the Formation Secretariat.

#### *Recommendation 25*

*That during the intercapitular period, and as far as this is possible, each District, Sub-District or Delegation free some Brothers to be prepared for formation responsibilities. These responsibilities may be for any stage of formation - from initial formation to preparation for retirement and beyond. The preparation would be systematic and last one or two years.*

#### **Proposition 25**

**That, during their first year in office, the Brother Superior and his Council examine the objectives of the International Lasalian Center (CIL) and establish a plan for new sessions, taking into account the evaluations of the previous sessions as well as the recommendations and propositions of the 43rd General Chapter.**

## **IV THE PROMOTION OF VOCATIONS TO THE BROTHERS**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. We live in three different contexts which affect in a particular way the ministry of promoting vocations:

- cultures which support dynamic Christian communities, and which are often economically poor;
- secularised or de-Christianised cultures,
- multi-religious cultures.

2. In certain parts of the Institute, the ageing of the Brothers and the lack of vocations create an attitude of discouragement and resigna-

tion. In these sectors, there is a specific need, to rekindle hope and the willingness to foster vocations to the Brothers.

3. Vocation is a gift from God and a free human response, and that is why there is no single way of promoting vocations which can be applied in a uniform manner in the various contexts in which the Institute is present. There is a strong link between effective pastoral



youth programmes and fostering vocations to the Brothers. Despite great efforts in many parts of the Institute, results do not match expectations.

4. Prayer for vocations in Brothers' communities and in educational establishments is more regu-

lar and more creative than in the past.

5. In many parts of the Institute, there is serious personal accompaniment throughout the process of vocational discernment.

6. Nowadays, vocations to the Brothers' life that come from poorer backgrounds and are marked by experiences which are increasingly varied and complex, call for a more careful and thorough process of discernment.

7. Communities that are welcoming, humanly attractive and are signs of God's kingdom echo the invitation of Christ "to come and see". Some vocations die because of the lack of an explicit invita-

tion.

8. Schemes to evangelise young people and the poor, and to promote justice and peace, are attractive for young people today.

9. In an increasing number of societies, many young people are

afraid of making a permanent commitment.

10. There are many Brothers who see the vocations ministry simply as the role of the ‘recruiter’ and have not understood that the future of the Institute is now the responsibility of every Brother.

11. Partners appreciate the role of the Brothers in the Lasallian mission, and wish that there were new vocations to the Brothers. Some of these Partners are prepared to help in promoting and fostering vocations to the Brothers.

12. The vocations ministry is sometimes centered more on the Brothers and the continued existence of the Institute, than on young people, their aspirations, and the way to help them discover their vocation.

13. Support for the vocations ministry is most effectively organized at the local or Regional level.

## GUIDELINES

1. The pastoral ministry to promote vocations to the Brothers

should be part of the Church pastoral ministry of vocations.

2. Partners should be encouraged to join the Brothers in promoting all vocations for the Lasallian mission.

3. Every Brother involved in the Church pastoral ministry of vocations should make known the significant value of his lay consecration.

4. Every Brothers’ community needs to understand the role it has in the fostering of vocations in the Church and, in particular, to the Brothers. If vocations’ promotion is to be effective, Brothers must meet young people, take time to be with them, and tell them about their own faith, their life and their mission.

5. Brothers, including those who work with young people from different ethnic or racial groups, should be encouraged to become involved in awakening and accompanying vocations to the Brothers.

6. During the intercapitular period, Regions, singly or in cooperation

with one another, should organize sessions for those involved in the vocations ministry.

7. Brothers of all ages should have the courage to speak to young people about Jesus Christ and about their own vocation.

*Recommendation 26*

*The General Chapter endorses proposition 9 of the 42nd General Chapter which asks “each community to include in its community programme a plan for awakening vocations that is adapted to the local situation”.*

*Recommendation 27*

*That Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations take the means to ensure that there are communities which are more clearly recognisable as such, which are signs, and to which young people can be invited.*

*Recommendation 28*

*That each District, Sub-District and Delegation, organise, as far as possible, the training of Brothers and/or Lasallian partners, in order to ensure that the vocations ministry offers a high-quality service.*

*Recommendation 29*

*That Regions, singly or in co-operation with one another, organise sessions in the intercapitular period in order to:*

- *support those directly involved in the promotion of vocations to the Brothers;*
- *share vocations ministry programmes;*
- *promote the vocations ministry in participating Regions.*

**Proposition 26**

**That, in the course of 2003, each Region of the Institute, singly or in co-operation with others, plan and hold a Lasallian workshop on the pastoral ministry of vocations for the purpose of giving fresh impetus to the vocations ministry in Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations. Among others, the principal participants there will be:**

- **Brothers and Associates/Partners responsible for the vocations ministry,**
- **young Brothers,**
- **Associates and Partners interested in the vocations ministry,**
- **those who are preparing to work in this area.**

## Table of Contents

The Brothers Today: Identity and Formation .....	1
I The Identity of the Brother .....	1
II Facing Our Demographic Situation and Living by Association for the Educational Service of the Poor .....	8
III Formation of the Brothers .....	14
IV The Promotion of Vocations to the Brothers .....	20

# GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

## I GOVERNMENT

### DISTRICTS

### OBSERVATIONS

1. Since the last General Chapter, the General Council has helped eight sectors to merge. Nevertheless, especially in certain Regions of the Institute, some Districts are still too weak to respond to the criteria of the Rule (125a), and some sectors remain isolated.

2. Great efforts have been made to organise joint houses of formation, but the autonomy and the weakness of some Districts make it difficult to create formation teams.

3. Certain sectors have difficulty in finding Brothers to fill positions of responsibility in the District and its educational establishments.

4. Other sectors of the Institute,

particularly in the Young Churches, have young Brothers, but the number of expatriate Brothers is rapidly diminishing as their age increases. It is sometimes difficult to find experienced and trained personnel to fill positions of responsibility. These sectors are often geographically and culturally isolated and situated in poor and developing countries.



### GUIDELINES

1. The 42nd General Chapter defined a certain number of criteria (dynamic and viable communities, number of Brothers) that must be met in order to maintain or create a

District according to the Rule (Art. 125). These criteria are still valid.

2. “The vitality of the Institute depends on the quality and the fidelity of each of its members” (R 143). The vitality of the Brothers, the Institute, and the Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations is

promoted and can be increased by:

- the participation of Associates,
- effective leadership,
- the availability and mobility of the Brothers,
- local or regional initiatives, and
- the merging of sectors (Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations).

### *Recommendation 30*

*That, in order to strengthen the vitality of Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations which are in difficulty, Brother Superior and his Council ensure:*

- *that each of these sectors has a plan which takes into account its possibilities, and which concentrates all its resources;*
- *that each of these sectors operates interdependently with other sectors, so as to strengthen mutual support by encouraging the mobility of persons, if necessary.*

### *Recommendation 31*

*The General Chapter requests Brother Superior and his Council, in agreement with the sectors concerned, to create flexible structures which:*

- *remedy the isolation of certain sectors of the Institute;*
- *limit the number of leadership*

*positions, and make those holding them more aware of the realities of everyday life in the sector and of its members;*

- *respect the autonomy of each of the sectors concerned; and*
- *take into account the limited financial possibilities of these sectors.*

### *Recommendation 32*

*That Brother Superior and his Council, in case of internal or external difficulties regarding the appointment of the Visitor, be able to help a District to find a solution, even it lies outside the District.*

### *Recommendation 33*

*That, given the difficulties experienced by some Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations in filling their positions of responsibility, Brother Superior and his Council may appoint one or more Brothers to accompany the District, Sub-District, or Delegation during the process of appointing its Visitor, Auxiliary Visitor, or President.*

### **Proposition 27**

**That Brother Superior and his Council pursue and supervise**

**the process of reorganizing Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations, so as to strengthen the vitality of those sectors that are in need (cf. Proposition 19, 42nd General Chapter).**

## **REGIONS**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. We note that there is great diversity among the Regions of the Institute: there are Regions which consist of a single District, of a single country, or of a continent.
2. The Rule (article 127b) gives freedom and flexibility regarding the organisation of Regions.

### **GUIDELINES**

1. Given the new needs of Districts and Regions, it is necessary to increase solidarity and interdependence in the Institute.
2. So that no sector be isolated, it is necessary to promote, where necessary, the creation of new relationships between Districts.

### *Recommendation 34*

*That Brother Superior and his Council study with the Regions which have become Districts the possibility of their being part of another Region, or of establishing relationships of interdependence with other Regions.*

### *Recommendation 35*

*That Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations evaluate how their Region functions, in the light of the following criteria:*

- *single cultural and linguistic area,*
- *similarity of educational systems,*
- *mission,*
- *leadership potential,*
- *human and financial resources,*
- *new needs to be met within the framework of interdependence.*

### **Proposition 28**

**That Brother Superior and his Council provide guidelines to ensure that solidarity and interdependence continue to be promoted within and between Regions, by strongly recommending that they pay particular attention to the sectors in need.**

### **Proposition 29**

**In order to respond more effectively to their needs, Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations can, with the agreement of Brother Superior and his Council, establish specific relationships with sectors of other Regions.**

*closely. It seems to me that here, too, it would be during later dialogue that the idea could be fleshed out, in case the Chapter approves this model for the present mandate: This would not need any change in the Rule, which would simplify things. Being able to elect some Councillors later can ensure a balance in case there was none.”*

## **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT**

### **Proposition 30**

**That the General Council be composed of 6 members, including the Vicar General, elected by the General Chapter.**

### **Proposition 31**

**That for the choice of Councillors, Article 115b of the Rule be followed.**

*Taking into account the opinion of Brother Superior:*

*“In terms of the General Councillors, I have the impression from what the Regions have shared, that preference would be given to animation of areas of service; nevertheless, some Regions would prefer a closer type of accompaniment. I believe that both proposals can be integrated. Some Councillors could animate in areas of service especially related to the major themes of the 43rd General Chapter, and others could accompany some of the Regions more*

## **GENERAL SERVICES**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. The General Services of the Institute are designed to respond to the needs of the Brothers and are usually dependent on the availability and the assignment of Brothers from various sectors. The Lasallian mission today requires the best service possible, not only for the Brothers but also for Lasallian Associates. The 42nd General Chapter (Proposition 18) recommended that the question of decentralising certain General Services of the Institute be studied.

The Report of the Superior General (pp. 63-65) speaks of this study.

2. Effective communication is more than ever important. Consequently, there is a need for General Services that respond more adequately to the needs of an Institute which uses three official languages and many local translations.

**Proposition 32**

**That Brother Superior and his Council retain the services of qualified consultants to optimize the effectiveness of the General Services, the hotel service, and the overall running of the Generalate.**

**THE GENERAL CHAPTER**

*Recommendation 36*

*That Brother Superior and his Council invite some lay Associates, members of the Standing Committee on the Lasallian Educational Mission, to attend the next General Chapter for a few days, to present the work of the International Assembly on the Lasallian Educational Mission.*

*Recommendation 37*

*That Brother Superior and his Council, in consultation with the Regions, select the important themes for the 44th General Chapter, and set in motion an interactive process sufficiently ahead of time to enable all Brothers to participate in its preparation. This preparatory work would make it possible to shorten the Chapter.*

*Recommendation 38*

*That Brother Superior General and his Council invite the Preparatory Commission to envisage and implement an alternative model, in order to encourage substantial interchange and to stimulate reflection by the Capitulants on the future of the Institute.*

*Recommendation 39*

*That Brother Superior General and his Council ensure the presence of young Brothers at the next General Chapter.*

**II MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Commission undertook its work on two levels: that of the Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations, and that of the Centre of the Institute.

For both these levels, the following work scheme was used:

- a) the means available to respond to the needs of the Institute;
- b) some guidelines and observations which will make it possible to adjust means to needs;
- c) recommendations and propositions.

The Commission knows also that, if it wishes to encourage association and the participation of Associates and/or Partners in the educational mission as envisaged in Phase 2 of the Chapter, the financial impact of some of the recommendations have to be planned for. And above all, if this Lasallian mission makes the educational service of the poor a priority, the financial means for doing so will have to be planned for also. The commission studying the identity of the Brother, has given guidelines for our lifestyle.

## **DISTRICT / SUB-DISTRICT / DELEGATION LEVEL**

### **1. CONSTITUTION OF A PERMANENT ENDOWMENT**

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

In some Districts, the goods which constitute the permanent endowment are not clearly identified. Some Districts sometimes alienate, without previous authorisation, buildings and property which constitute the permanent endowment.

#### **GUIDELINES**

The International Finance Committee has done a lot of good work in this area, and needs to continue to do so. Districts must determine clearly what belongs to educational establishments and what constitutes the permanent endowment of the District. Experts can help them in this discernment.

#### *Recommendation 40*

*That District Chapters, or failing that, the Visitor and his Council, define the purpose and the conditions for the use of the income gen-*

*erated by the permanent endowment, in accordance with the mission of the Institute.*

## **2. TWINNING: SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ADMINISTER AND RUN THE DISTRICTS**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

This twinning between Districts has got off to a good start but, on the basis of a number of studies, the sums raised so far do not seem sufficient to respond to the administrative and formation needs of these Districts.

### **GUIDELINES**

1. The twinning scheme needs to be pursued, the needs of Districts evaluated, and the means found to constitute an adequate fund.
2. It is necessary not only to maintain the value of the capital fund, but also to ensure that the interest is used for what it is intended.
3. The training of administrators must also be ensured.

4. Finally, the long-term purpose of twinning is to help Districts to achieve financial self-sufficiency.

### **Proposition 33**

**That the process of twinning be actively pursued to provide all the beneficiary Districts with a sufficient endowment fund. Brother Superior General and his Council will make an appeal to the Districts capable of providing the funds needed to complete this process.**

## **3. ELDERLY BROTHERS AND RETIREMENT FUNDS**

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Forty-eight Districts, in their answers to the questionnaire, said they had a retirement fund for the elderly Brothers. Thirteen Districts said they did not. In any case, hardly any actuarial assessments have been made to see whether these funds are sufficient.

### **GUIDELINES**

Districts that have such a fund must maintain its market value, and administer it according to cur-

rent needs. According to article 35b of the Rule, they are careful not to capitalise beyond their needs, but are attentive to share “generously with the Districts most in need, and also with the poor”.

*Recommendation 41*

*In those Districts where the Brothers do not receive a retirement pension, or where these pensions are inadequate, a separate fund should be created and maintained for their support.*

**4. FORMATION:  
LASALLIAN FORMATION  
FUND (a permanent fund)  
AND THE SHARING FUND  
(a fund for distribution)**

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. The Lasallian Formation Fund has grown considerably since the last Chapter.
2. Where the Sharing Fund supports formation in a sector, it covers only 50% of the costs. This income will decrease in the years to come, given the diminution in the number of Brothers in the con-

tributing Districts. Beneficiary Districts could be affected if appropriate measures are not taken.

**GUIDELINES**

1. As, in the future, the Formation Fund will serve to meet formation needs, we must continue to increase it by reinvesting the interest generated, and by asking Districts which have the means, to contribute. Communities could, through solidarity, revise their budget and perhaps even their lifestyle, and contribute to this fund.
2. It is necessary to increase the Sharing Fund (a fund which does not accumulate, but which distributes annually whatever it receives), to meet present needs. When the twinning schemes achieve their purpose, and when the Formation Fund is adequate, the Sharing Fund can be done away with.

*Recommendation 42*

*That those responsible for Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations realise the importance of setting up the necessary funds to*

*guarantee formation programmes (to ensure the vitality and future of the Districts).*

**Proposition 34**

**That the Superior General and his Council study the possibility of making an appeal to Districts and Communities for contributions to increase the Lasallian Formation Fund and to permit it to achieve its objective.**

**5. INTERDEPENDENCE AND SOLIDARITY AMONG DISTRICTS: SECOLI**

**OBSERVATIONS**

In the course of the last seven years, SECOLI has distributed more than 7 million dollars in aid. Half of this was contributed by schools and Districts of the Institute; the other half by NGOs and various donors. Donors were kept informed of the use made of their gifts.

**GUIDELINES**

There is a need to coordinate the giving of financial aid by Districts, so as to avoid duplication of re-

quests, on the one hand, and on the other, to ensure that aid given complies with the missionary policy of the Institute, so that the financial self-sufficiency of Districts is achieved as soon as possible.

**Proposition 35**

**That the donor District inform the Centre of the Institute (SECOLI) prior to any decision to send aid directly to a District, Sub-District or Delegation.**

**6. PROPERTY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SHARED MISSION**

**OBSERVATIONS**

1. In several places, prudent measures have been taken to distinguish between goods belonging to educational establishments, and those belonging to the District, and efforts have been made to produce clear sets of accounts.
2. The present-day evolution of the Institute is such that a number of powers, traditionally recognised as

belonging to the Brothers, are being progressively transferred to lay persons in the context of the shared mission.

*Recommendation 43*

*The policy governing the management of property and the administration of educational establishments needs to take into account certain basic principles:*

- It must define clearly the nature of activities in order to respect tax, administrative and accounting obligations.*
- It must make a clear distinction between the owner and the leaseholder.*
- It must operate within the context of association with lay people, respecting the full and entire responsibility of each party.*
- It must ensure that the goods made available to educational establishments, including buildings, are used in the service of the Lasallian mission.*

**THE CENTRE OF THE INSTITUTE**

**7. CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION: DISTRICT CONTRIBUTIONS**

**OBSERVATIONS**

For the last seven years, District contributions have been sufficient for the Central Administration to be able to stay within its budget, without having to draw on invested funds. However, the Districts which provide to a great extent this source of revenue are those with decreasing numbers of Brothers. The care of elderly Brothers requires more money, and the income of the Brothers is diminishing.

**GUIDELINES**

Expenses must continue to be kept under control, and at the same time, income increased from sources, among others, such as the hotel service and its administration. The International Finance Committee will have to examine the question of District contributions and their calculation.

**8. PERMANENT ENDOWMENT OF THE CENTRE OF THE INSTITUTE**

**OBSERVATIONS**

Many Districts responded with generosity to the call of the 42nd General Chapter for help with the building up of a permanent stable endowment. In addition, all the interest and dividends generated by this fund have been re-invested, as directed by that General Chapter.

### **GUIDELINES**

As a way of remedying the decrease of income from ageing Districts, and of facing difficulties which may arise in the future, it is desirable for this fund to continue growing.

#### **Proposition 36**

**That for the next 7 years, the interest and dividends generated by the permanent endowment at the Centre of the Institute be re-invested in this fund, except in the case of an emergency recognised by the Superior General and his Council.**

#### **Proposition 37**

**That Brother Superior and his Council consider the feasibility of setting up a fund-collecting office with a view to finding new**

**sources of funds for the permanent endowment of the Institute, in order to allow it to support its educational mission of service of the poor.**

### **9. SPECIAL RESTRICTED FUNDS: DISTRICT CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS RECEIVED, ETC.**

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

Special or allocated funds cover needs such as repairs to the Generalate, the expenses of the next General Chapter, replacement of certain equipment, etc. These funds are maintained from District contributions.

#### **GUIDELINES**

This practice can continue for the next 7 years, after which, it will become necessary to think of other solutions, such as, for example, maintaining these restricted funds from the interest generated by the investment fund.

### **10. NEW UNDERTAKINGS BY THE 43rd GENERAL CHAPTER: SPECIAL FUNDS**

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Several of the recommendations and propositions approved by the General Chapter will involve new expenses, covered either by the Districts themselves, or by the establishment of special funds, or by the re-allocation of certain expenses.

## **GUIDELINES**

The International Finance Committee will have to offer the General Council suggestions regarding how the propositions of the Chapter can be financed.

### **11. ISTITUTO CONVITTO JESUS MAGISTER (ICJM)**

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

Some of the maintenance expenses of the property and of the Generalate are now covered by the Istituto Convitto Jesus Magister, the body which administers the hotel service offered by the Generalate. The legal approval of the ICJM as a body responsible for the hotel service is another step forward.

## **GUIDELINES**

In order to increase the income generated by the ICJM and in this way diminish District contributions, some measures are called for. It is desirable that an outside firm evaluate the service provided by the ICJM and make recommendations to the International Finance Committee and to the General Council. For instance, the possibility of entrusting the running of the hotel service to a professional firm could be envisaged.

## **III COMMUNICATION**

#### **OBSERVATIONS**

1. Modern communication technologies provide a new public forum for the expression of ideas and present-day cultures.
2. The Institute, like every society today, needs a communication system which is effective both internally and externally.
3. Communication takes place on two levels: on the Institute level, and locally, at the District, sub-

District and Delegation level.

A) *Documents coming from the centre of the Institute, in French, Spanish and English.*

Some are periodicals, others occasional. Until now, these documents have been printed in Rome and sent by post. Some Districts make their own translations and distribute them locally.

The establishment of an Institute website has permitted the wide diffusion of a variety of up-to-date information about the Institute.



This includes current affairs, Institute and Regional government structures, and printed and illustrated documents. These documents and information on internet are an indispensable way of contributing to the unity of the Institute, by creating links between the different Regions.

B) *Documents published at the local level.*

Practically all Districts, sub-Districts and Delegations publish documents which are distributed locally, and most of which are sent to Rome and filed in the document-room. These publications constitute a wealth of material from which the Institute as a whole does not draw enough benefit. New communication technologies ought to make it possible to publicise them more widely.

4. Not all Regions of the Institute have the same level of access to information, on the one hand, because their means of communication and/or technology do not permit this, and on the other hand, because the official publications of the Institute appear only in three languages.

5. There are often long delays between the publication of the documents and their reception by Brothers. In some cases these delays cause a loss of interest in the material.

## GUIDELINES

1. Means of communication cannot disregard people, whose relations depend to a great extent on the knowledge of languages. Learning languages is a priority, because it is at this level that contact is made with other people and their differences. Given the linguistic and cultural diversity of our Institute, language learning should be strongly promoted at every level of formation.



2. The use of computers is becoming increasingly important. Our concern for solidarity and interdependence, in order to provide a better educational service for the poor, should lead us to find practical ways of helping the poor to have access to modern means of communication.

3. Young people accept new means of communication. Inculturation in their world means that catechists, and those with pastoral responsibility, should be familiar with these tools and use them as a means of coming into contact with young people and proclaiming the Good News.

4. The Institute, spread as it is across the world, has the means to develop a communications network which will enable it to publicise its achievements, its initiatives, its values and its formation programmes for Brothers, Partners and students. This network should make it possible to exchange knowledge, expertise and research. On another level, local networks should be encouraged wherever they exist, and set up where they do not.

5. Effective communication requires not only equipment, but above all a team of persons, the planning of material, and regular evaluation. It is for the Superior General and his Council to define, in light of the priorities set by the Chapter, the main types of infor-

mation to diffuse.

*Recommendation 44*

*That those in charge at the various levels of the Institute encourage Brothers, whatever their age, to study new and modern means of communication, and to have access to them.*

*Recommendation 45*

*That the government team of the Institute draw up a policy of communication which will make it possible:*

- to share the wealth (cultural, spiritual, pastoral, educational) to be found in the various sectors of the Institute;*
- to promote in official organisations the thinking and ideas of the Institute on the important issues regarding our mission.*
- to coordinate and distribute Institute and/or sector publications to the public, which includes all who participate in the lasallian mission;*
- to evaluate and reorganise the publications produced by the Centre of the Institute, in light of the topics treated by the Chapter.*

*Recommendation 46*

*That the government team of the Institute continue to make use of new communication technologies in its work (internet, video conferencing, telephone conferencing etc.) and, at the same time, establish a policy that promotes access by all to these means of communication in the pursuit of the Institute mission.*

## Table of Contents

Government and Administration .....	1
II Government .....	1
II Management .....	5
III Communication .....	12



# THE RULE

## I A NEW PROPOSITION

### OBSERVATIONS

1. The present text of the Rule was adopted during the 41st General Chapter and subsequently approved by the Holy See on January 26th 1987.

2. Since 1986, there have been significant developments in the Church and in the Institute which warrant a review of the present text of the Rule:

- new Church documents, for example, *Christifidelis laici* (1988), *Congregavit nos in unum* (1994) and *Vita Consecrata* (1996);
- the Institute's new understanding of Shared Mission and Association for the Educational Service of the Poor as contained in the propositions and documents of the 42nd and 43rd General Chapters.

3. During the 43rd General Chap-

ter, notes were received from individual Brothers and groups of Brothers on possible changes in the present text of the Rule. These would require a more in-depth study by a competent group, which would formulate recommendations that were more precise.

4. The 43rd General Chapter has passed several propositions that are scheduled to be implemented

before the next General Chapter, and which may require changes in the structures and policies of the Institute as described in the present Rule, as, for example:

- the international meeting around the year 2004 which will return to the topic of Association;
- the call on the sectors to create structures which will allow our Associates to have a greater right to speak and vote;
- the creation of a Standing Committee for the Lasallian Mission (proposition 7); and,



- an International Assembly on the Lasallian Educational Mission (proposition 8).

**religious, priests, former students and friends, help one another to fulfil their specific roles.**

### **Proposition 38**

**That Brother Superior General and his Council appoint an ad hoc Committee to study what implications changes in the Church and in the Institute might have for the present text of the Rule. This committee will present the results of its work to Brother Superior General and his Council at least two years before the 44th General Chapter.**

### **Proposition 40**

#### **R 45**

**All that concerns the transfer of a Brother to another Institute, absence, exclaustation or dismissal, must conform to Canon Law and to the norms proper to the Institute (cf. AD 33-40).**

**AD 33.9. When the Brother Visitor gives a Brother leave of absence, he will inform Brother Superior General.**

## **II MINOR CORRECTIONS IN THE TEXT OF THE RULE**

*The French text of the Rule is the reference document.*

### **Proposition 39**

#### **R 17B**

**To fulfil the purpose of the school, the Brothers foster a spirit of collaboration and mutual enrichment among all the members of the educational community. They, that is, students, parents, teachers, other**

Comments:

Current Canon Law allows Visitors the right to give permission for a year's leave of absence. It often happens that when these permissions expires, there is no follow up on the part of the Visitors, and the Brothers remain absent indefinitely and illegally.

Consequently, the staff of the Personnel Office are somewhat embarrassed by these cases which are not all that rare.

By adding the word *absence* in R

45 next to *exclaustration*, and referring to the norms of the Institute (AD: Administrator's Directory), the text will remain in accordance with the norms of the Church, and the text of the Rule will not be overloaded.

### **Proposition 41**

#### **R95B**

**Vows are made according to the norms of Canon Law and the following prescriptions:**

**1° Admission to vows is decided by Brother Visitor.**

**2° The request of the candidate is examined by a Chapter of admission, made up solely of finally professed Brothers, and whose composition is determined by the District Chapter. When first profession is involved, at least one member of the novitiate staff is invited to take part. When final profession is involved, the Chapter of admission must include the members of the District Council with perpetual vows. The vote of the Chapter is consultative, except in the case of perpetual profession, when it is deliberative.**

**3° The Brother Visitor invites the candidate to come in person to speak to the members of the Chapter of admission, so as to inform them more fully of the reasons for his decision. If he prefers, the candidate is free to explain his reasons in a letter addressed to the Brother Visitor or to the members of the Chapter of admission.**

**4° In the case of special difficulties concerning the proceedings of a Chapter of admission to vows, or the non-admission of a candidate, the latter or the Brother Visitor can refer the case to Brother Superior General.**

**5° When perpetual profession is involved:**

**- If the majority vote of the Chapter of vows is negative, the Brother Visitor cannot admit the candidate to vows. Either he himself or the candidate can always refer the case to Brother Superior General.**

**- The minutes of the Chapter of admission must be sent to Brother Superior General, together with Brother Visitor's**

**decision for or against the admission. Brother Superior confirms or sets aside the decision of the Brother Visitor. The ratification of Brother Superior General is indispensable for the validity of perpetual vows.**

**6° Vows are received: in any part of the Institute, by Brother Superior General or his delegate, by the Brother Vicar General or by one of the General Councillors; and in a District, by the Brother Visitor or his delegate.**

Comments

In R138a-”The following acts require the consent of the District Council: 1° admission to final profession.” Admission to perpetual profession requires the consent (deliberative vote) of the Council participating as part of the Chapter of admission to vows. Consequently, it can be assumed that in the other cases of admission to vows the vote of the Chapter of admission is consultative.

However, R 95b 4° applies to all admissions to vows what is proper to a deliberative vote, that is, it does not allow the Visitor to ad-

mit to vows in the case of a majority negative vote.

In agreement with the opinion of the General Council, the commission proposes:

- That the deliberative vote be restricted solely to the Chapter of admission to perpetual profession;
  - That for admission to temporary vows, including first profession, the vote will be only consultative.
- The contents of R 95b will be redistributed, and paragraph 1 of 138a will be suppressed.
- 1 to 4: profession of vows in general,
  - 5: perpetual profession.

Some indications concerning the composition of the Chapter of admission and the role of Brother Visitor will be included also.

### **Proposition 42**

#### **R 106 (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph)**

**The members by right of the General Chapter are: the Superior General, former Superiors General, the General Councillors and the Secretary General.**

### **Proposition 43**

#### **R 127d 1°**

**Each Region designates its Re-**

**gional Coordinator and specifies his mandate and responsibilities in its statutes.**

Comments:

That the expressions *Regional Representatives who are full-time* and *Permanent Representative* be suppressed in the Rule. When it refers to the Regional, only these terms should be used: *Régional* (in French and Spanish) and *Regional Coordinator* (in English).

#### **Proposition 44**

##### **R 107A**

**In each District, Sub-District or Delegation, the Chapter or, failing this, the Brother Visitor, Auxiliary Visitor or Delegate, with the consent of his Council, determines the rules of procedure for the election of the allotted delegate or delegates, as well as for that of their substitutes, bearing in mind the following norms:**

Comments:

This change aims to avoid any ambiguity which could give the impression that the Council is autonomous and capable of taking action on its own.

#### **Proposition 45**

##### **R 119A**

**On the death or resignation or deposition of the Brother Superior General in office, the Brother Vicar General succeeds him with full rights and fills the office of Superior General with the title until the following ordinary General Chapter.**

Comments:

A simple indication to remove any hesitation if the situation occurs.

#### **Proposition 46**

##### **R 138D**

**1° Apart from cases where the Rule indicates expressly that the vote of the District Council is deliberative, this vote is only consultative.**

**2° What is said of the District Council applies also, all things considered, to Sub-District and Delegation Councils.**

Comments:

This addition (138d 1°) clarifies the cases where the Rule does not indicate the nature of the vote of the District Council and of other Councils.

### **Proposition 47**

#### **R 19B paragraph 2**

The work of the Brothers in such places becomes a presence of the Church, a witness to the charity of Christ, and a place for human and inter-religious dialogue and collaboration.

1718 from RC 1718 and add ch.2.

Margin of art.7: remove 1718 from RC 1718 and add ch.2.

26.3. P. 24 Margin of art 8: remove 1718 from RC 1718 and add ch.2

Margin of art.9: remove 1718 from RC 1718 and add ch.2

### **III Minor Corrections of terminology, typography, etc. in the FRENCH TEXT**

P. 28 Margin of art 13c: add c.666

### **Proposition 48**

**P.11 Add AD = The Administrator's Directory**

P. 35 Margin of art.19a replace AG 12 by AG 40.

**P.12 Remove 1718 from RC 1718. This will leave space for the number of the chapter.**

P. 37 Margin of art.21: remove 1718 from RC 1718

P. 39 Margin of art.25: remove 1718 from RC 1718.

**P.21 Margin of art.1: remove 1718 from RC 1718**

**Margin of art.1: add 1° to B.**

**Margin of art.2: add 7° to B:**

**In art. 2: add *of the Spirit* after *faithful to the call*.**

**P. 42: In art.32, line 3 of § 3: *the calls of the Church* replaces *the needs of the Church***

**P. 54 In art.54, last line of § 2, replace *le* (cohésion) by *la* (cohésion)**

**P.22 Margin of art.5: remove 1718 from RC 1718 and add ch.2.**

**P. 55 Margin of art.54c: add c666**

**P.23: Margin of art.6: remove**

**P. 64 In art.65, line 5. Read:**

*grâce, intercession*

**In art.66, paragraph 2, line 2:  
Read *père, qu'ils***

**P. 66 Margin of art.69: remove  
1718 from RC 1718.**

**P. 69: Margin of art.75: remove  
1718 from RC 1718.**

**P. 73 Margin of art. 80d add AD  
Ch. 8**

**P. 74 Margin of art.81: add c.661**

**P. 75 Margin of art.82; add LG  
11, 32, 39.**

**Margin of art.83: add c.233**

**P. 93 Margin of art.100 add PC  
18**

**P. 106 Margin of art.112: add  
cc.164-179**

**P. 112 Margin of art.118: add  
cc.164-179.**

**Art. 118a 4?: in the second line  
replace the full stop after “*celui-  
ci*” by a  
comma.**

**P. 113 At the end of art.118d add  
(cf.122b).**

**P. 114 At the end of § 2 of  
art.119: add (cf.122b).**

**P. 115 At the end of art.119b add  
(cf. 122b).**

**Art.120, at the end of § 2: add *et  
compte tenu de art.112.***

**Art 120, at the end of § 3: add  
(cf.122b).**

**P. 116 At the end of art.120a: add  
(cf.122b)**

**Art.120b, line 6, replace *ou* by  
*au*.**

**Art.120b, end of article add (cf.  
122b)**

**P. 117 At the end of art.120c add  
(cf.122b).**

**P. 118 Margin of art.122a add  
c.1292.**

**P. 130 Margin of art.132 add c.  
624.**

**P. 137 Margin of art. 138c: add  
c.1292,2**

**P. 138 Margin of art.139: replace  
cc.634-640**

**P. 143 Margin of art.141 remove  
1718 from RC 1718**

**P. 145 Margin of art.147 remove  
1718 from RC 1718 and add  
ch.16.**



## Table of Contents

The Rule .....	1
I A New Proposition .....	1
II Minor Corrections in the Text of the Rule.....	2
III Minor Corrections of Terminology, Typography, etc. in the French Text .....	6

# A Message from the General Chapter



Dear Brothers,  
Dear Friends, Partners and Associates in Lasallian mission,

“Holy Spirit...draw down upon us the wind and fire of a Pentecost for our times.” Like many of you, we prayed over the past few months these words of the prayer of the Institute for the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter. We dared to hope, in the weeks and months before our gathering in Rome, that the Spirit of God might once again light a new fire in us, re-energize and re-ignite the Institute and the Lasallian family, and so better enable us to be one with God’s mysterious and providential action to renew and transform the societies in which we live, the Church to which we belong, and the world of the young and the poor.

However, we never imagined, as the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter opened, that we would have lived such a significant experience here. And, as we write this letter, we cannot

help but wonder if our experience is anything like that of the twelve on that first Pentecost morning when, filled with the Holy Spirit and a certain trepidation, they prepared to leave the Upper Room and to share with the world the experience that they had lived together.

Like the other capitulants, the vast majority of whom had never participated in a General Chapter, we arrived in Rome with our own rather personal perceptions of the Institute and of the international Lasallian mission. Our understanding and appreciation of the diversity and complexity of the Institute’s lived reality was enriched as we listened to each other. We acknowledge to you today that in reflecting on the central theme of the General Chapter, “associated for the educational service of

the poor as the Lasallian response to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” our lives have been changed and renewed. We express to you our joy, and that of all those gathered here in Rome, as we came to know in a more clear and personal way the great progress of the past seven years. So many bold and decisive actions on behalf of the educational service of the poor have begun and so many inspiring and creative initiatives which give expression to new forms of association have been realized.

We are encouraged by the fraternal communion, animated by the Spirit, which we lived during these weeks in Rome. Young and old, Brother and Partner, north and south...we came together...we renewed friendships...we forged new bonds. We prayed. We listened...we shared...we formed community...we overcame differences...we celebrated our life together. At the same time, we were often painfully aware of the many Brothers and members of our Lasallian family who, even during these very days, find themselves in sectors of our world which are being ravaged by con-

flict and war. Their suffering touched us and allowed us to appreciate, in a more profound way, the goodness of God who blessed us with this experience of peaceful communion.

The Lasallian Partners, who were such a significant part of this experience, permitted us to realize how far we have already come over the past seven years in sharing the Lasallian mission and in strengthening the bonds of association so necessary for its future. The admirable commitment, often at great personal and family sacrifice, of numerous men and women in this immensely challenging work on behalf of the young and the poor in the fields of education, evangelization, and child care work inspires us. The presence of a mother and her child “in our midst” was a graced reminder of the many parents and guardians all around the world who have also forged with us a partnership on behalf of the education and formation of their children. To all of you who desire to identify yourselves more closely with Lasallian mission or spirituality – Christians who seek to give concrete expres-

sion to your own baptismal consecration in the ministry of education, and members of other religions and persons of good will who share in the Lasallian mission – we commit ourselves to take seriously your every effort at association.

We are happy to report that the capitulants of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter have been audacious in the key decisions which they made. New situations ask for new structures. The formation of a “Standing Committee of Brothers and Partners for the Lasallian Mission,” the convocation of an “International General Assembly” of Brothers and Associates – each having voice and vote – prior to the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, the promotion of new forms of collaboration and association among Brothers and Partners, the evaluation of all existing Lasallian works and the creation of new initiatives, and the clear and strong re-commitment of the Institute and Lasallian mission on behalf of “the most fragile and vulnerable members of our societies” are only a few of the bold initiatives which will sustain the momentum which

helps the Lasallian family be an even more effective instrument of God and of the Church today.

To achieve this, we are counting on you, the Lasallian Youth. We know that the reason for our vocation, in the words of our Founder, is “to touch hearts” and at the same time we feel that our hearts are touched by all of you. We are certain that with your creativity, drive and enthusiasm and by your commitment to the different youth movements and to the Volunteer program, you will help us reach the goals that the Chapter has proposed to us.

Who would ever have imagined what a profound impact the presence and integral participation of the thirteen young Brothers named as delegates and consultants and another twelve elected by their Districts would have had on the tone and deliberations of the General Chapter and the quality of its community life! From the bottom of our hearts, we want to thank these young Brothers for the great hope in our future that they have inspired in us and desire to communicate to all of you, Brothers

and Partners alike, how great is the confidence we have in our future and in the remarkable young Brothers with whom God continues to bless our Lasallian family.

Our thoughts at this time also turn to those Brothers of the middle years who, in many sectors of the Institute, continue in an heroic manner to shoulder the work of the functioning of Districts (Sub-Districts and Delegations), the vitality of consecrated community living, the care and accompaniment of both young and old Brothers, and the direction of many large and complex educational establishments. Thank you, Brothers, for the good work you do and for the witness of selfless service you offer the whole of the Lasallian family.

Before we conclude these remarks, we want to address, in a very special way, the senior Brothers of the Institute. Know, dear brothers, that you are a gift to our Institute. We wish to acknowledge all that you have done to bring us to this present moment in the history of the Lasallian family and to thank you for all that many of you con-

tinue to do even in your senior years. We thank you for your prayer for us during the General Chapter and for the extraordinary witness of fidelity to consecrated life you have lived during five decades of tremendous change and upheaval. Thank you for the excellent work that you have accomplished, often at great personal sacrifice, with generations of youngsters in our schools and child care agencies. Thank you for being our brothers. Please keep us and the whole of the Institute and its works in your prayers.

Finally, our hope and prayer today is that the reception of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter, in the weeks and months ahead, might be for each of us and for the whole of our Lasallian family a “Pentecost” kind of experience...giving us a renewed hope in our future and the courage and zeal needed to face together and by association the great challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There can be no doubt that the Reign of God, the proclamation of the Good News, the service of the poor, the defense of the rights of children, and ongoing renewal of our Lasallian educational mission

will call for continual conversion. And, yet, what each of us might fear to attempt alone is possible, by God’s grace, when we commit ourselves in faith to do it together.

We have, also, found ourselves particularly mindful this week of the experience lived by St. John Baptist de La Salle and the twelve Brothers gathered with him in prayer and discernment between Pentecost Sunday and Trinity Sunday in 1694. We suspect that, even more than we are, they were anxious about the future of their association and wondered how the news of what they had accomplished together would be received by others in the weeks following this most important moment in the history of the Institute.

Consequently, we unite ourselves with them, with you, and with the twelve in the Upper Room as we once again place our lives, our Institute, and our association on behalf of the Lasallian mission into the hands of divine Providence and, trusting in the compassion and mercy of God, recommit ourselves to “procure the glory of God as far as we might be able and as

God will require of us.”

Fraternally in St. John Baptist de La Salle,

Brother Alvaro Rodríguez Echeverría

and the members of the General Council:

- Brother William Mann
- Brother Miguel Campos
- Brother Marc Hofer
- Brother Yemanu Jehar
- Brother Juan Pablo Martín
- Brother Claude Reinhardt