

*Supplementary Guide for:  
A Declaration: The Brother of the  
Christian Schools in the World Today*



*With Related Selections from The Rule*

## ***Introduction***

## **CHAPTER I FIDELITY TO THE FOUNDER**

### **Articles 5-7 Correspond to Articles 2, 10, and 160 in The Rule**

**2.** In their following of Jesus Christ, and in their faithful response to the calls of the Spirit and to the charism of their Founder, the Brothers consecrate themselves to God to procure his glory by fulfilling “together and by association” their apostolic ministry of education.

**10.** Convinced that the Holy Spirit revealed himself in a special way in the life, work, and writings of St. John Baptist de La Salle, their Father, and subsequently, in the living tradition of their Institute, the Brothers find in these sources the principal inspiration of their mission and their conduct. For this reason, they strive to deepen their knowledge of the Founder and of the history of the Institute.

**160.** As Brothers, we show Saint John Baptist de La Salle the love due to our Founder. We follow him in his abandonment to God, his attachment to the Church, his creative apostolic spirit, and his life-long commitment to the evangelization of young people.

The life of our Institute, along with the updating of its mission, constitute a never-ending series of creative acts inspired by fidelity, which at times, call for difficult commitments, as John Baptist de La Salle himself experienced.

Today, the Founder still calls to us, continuing to inspire and support all men and women who identify with him.

Imbued with the spirit he bequeathed to us, and with the Partners who share our mission, we remain faithful to the living tradition of the Institute. In communion with all those who preceded us, we continue to respond with burning zeal to the calls of the Lord, of the Church, and of the world, to give glory to God.

### **Articles 6-7 Correspond to Article 158 in The Rule**

**158.** The Rule manifests the charism of the Institute and defines the meaning of the Brothers’ life in today’s context. It shows them how to live out the Gospel as the Founder did.

Individually and as a community, they study it, meditate on it, and assimilate its riches and its spirit. By being faithful to it, they follow and serve Jesus Christ.

### **Article 7, 1 Corresponds to Article 45 in The Rule**

**45.** John Baptist de La Salle was led to found a community of men who, enlightened by God and sharing in his plan of salvation, joined together to respond to the needs of young people who were poor and far from salvation. Even today, every Brothers’ community finds in this event a fundamental source of inspiration.

## **CHAPTERS II THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

### **Articles 8-11 Correspond to Article 18.1 in The Rule**

**18.1** The Brothers discern God's calls in community and respond to them in faith and with zeal. Their discernment takes place also in gatherings in which other people involved in the Lasallian mission take part.

They take into account the gifts of each person as well as the signs of the times, the challenges of the Gospel and of the Church, and the guidelines of the Institute.

### **Articles 9-11 Correspond to Article 67 in The Rule**

**67.** The Brothers find the principal source of their prayer in the Word of God, in the liturgy and in the calls that come from their ministry, the Church, and the world.

### **Articles 10-11 Correspond to Article 160 in The Rule**

**160.** As Brothers, we show Saint John Baptist de La Salle the love due to our Founder. We follow him in his abandonment to God, his attachment to the Church, his creative apostolic spirit, and his life-long commitment to the evangelization of young people.

The life of our Institute, along with the updating of its mission, constitute a never-ending series of creative acts inspired by fidelity, which at times, call for difficult commitments, as John Baptist de La Salle himself experienced.

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### **Article 11 Corresponds to Article 14 in The Rule**

**14.** The Brothers seek to understand the deep aspirations of those they work with. Sensitive to social and religious contexts, they discern the most appropriate ways of announcing the Good News.

**CHAPTER III**  
**THE CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS**  
**OF THE BROTHERS VOCATION**

**Article 13, 3 Corresponds to Articles 18 and 18.2 of The Rule**

**18.** The mission of the Brother finds its sustenance in the passion of God for the poor. Sharing this same passion, the Brothers have, from the beginning of the Institute, carried out their mission “together and by association.”

Communion among the Brothers is both the source and the fruit of the mission they carry out. Each one carries out his apostolate as a member of a community by which he knows he is recognized, supported and sent. Together with them, he reviews the joys and difficulties of his ministry. This communion extends to all who are committed to the mission.

**18.2** By virtue of their vow of Association, all the Brothers participate as a body in the ecclesial mission of the Institute. By carrying out their ministry, whatever their function may be, they contribute to the realization of this mission.

## **CHAPTER IV PERSONAL SYNTHESIS**

### **Article 14, 2 Corresponds to Article 88 in The Rule**

**88.** All the Brothers, and in particular those responsible for formation, are careful, when dealing with candidates, to take into account their age, their culture, their social background, the level of their religious, intellectual and professional training, and their personal experience of the Church and of the Institute.

### **Article 15, 1 Corresponds to Article 87 in The Rule**

**87.** Those who come to the Institute to discern and to develop their vocation need to find points of reference and persons to accompany them. The formation of candidates therefore is one of the Institute's major concerns. In consultation with the center of the Institute, each District or Region ensures that it draws up and implements a coherent formation program for all the stages of introduction to the life of the Brother. This coherence ensures a correct balance between human development, spiritual initiation, studies and a first-hand experience of the life and ministry of the Brother.

**CHAPTER V**  
**THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE BROTHER:**  
**AN APOSTOLIC AND COMMUNITY LIFE**

**Articles 16-27 Correspond to Articles 90 and 93.4 in The Rule**

**90.** Initiation into the life of the Brother is a unified process which goes from the period of preparation before the novitiate to perpetual profession. Its aim is to help candidates acquire the spirit of faith and of zeal proper to the Institute, to meet Christ in their life and to follow him. It supports them as they mature and discern their personal vocation; and it prepares them to commit their entire life to a process of growth in the faith and of progressive integration into the Institute.

**93.4** To implement the aims of the novitiate an atmosphere is required which is conducive to recollection, to long periods devoted to prayer, reflection, and the assimilation of what has been taught; as well as a practical introduction to community life, and a reasonable amount of apostolic work. The novitiate provides opportunities for taking stock which help the novice to continue the process of integrating the constitutive dimensions of the Brothers' life.

**Articles 17 and 18 Correspond to Article 24 of The Rule**

**24.** The consecration of the Brothers expresses the richness of baptism in a distinctive way which complements other forms of Christian life. This consecration gives meaning to the specific activities which it inspires, and gives unity to all the moments of their life. It is for all a constant sign that the work to which they are committed is the work of God. It is a manifestation of the mystery of communion in the Church, an expression of the love of God for humanity, and a prophetic sign which establishes the values of the Reign of God as criteria for discerning human realities.

**Article 18, 1 Corresponds to Article 100 of The Rule**

**100.** By his perpetual profession, the Brother expresses his commitment to unite himself and to remain in society for his whole life with the Brothers of the Christian Schools. His feelings are similar to those of the Founder and of the first Brothers when they formed an association at the beginning of the Institute.

**Article 18, 7 Corresponds to Articles 74 and 101 of The Rule**

**74.** The Brothers recognize that the Eucharist, a communion with Jesus Christ and his paschal mystery, is the principal source of their sanctification, the growth of their union, and the vitality of their ministry.

As far as possible, they take part in the Eucharist every day.

**101.** The nature and importance of the definitive commitment call for certain preconditions: human and spiritual maturity, growth in faith, assumption of personal responsibility for his life as a Brother, and an understanding of the values which underpin his commitment.

**Article 20, 2 Corresponds to Article 46.1 of The Rule**

**46.1** The community values each Brother and supports him as he seeks to respond to the will of God.

**Article 20, 8 Corresponds to Articles 34 and 56.3 of The Rule**

34. The Holy Spirit reveals himself usually in community. Each member of the community should be listened to since the Holy Spirit speaks and acts in every Brother.

Differences of age, outlook and formation are a valuable asset when it comes to drawing up the guidelines and making the decisions which the competent Superior has the responsibility of confirming.

Obedience sometimes seems difficult and can conflict with one's legitimate personal convictions. If the Brothers do not find a solution by explaining their own point of view to the community and to the Superiors, they accept, by an act of faith, the decision of the Superiors.

56.3 Community meetings are an important occasion for reflection in the light of the Gospel. At these meetings, the Brothers are able to give their opinion, make suggestions and share their experience and knowledge. They consider them to be a necessary part of community life and they participate in them willingly.

**Article 20,9 Corresponds to Articles 47 and 73 of The Rule**

47. The Brothers' community is a community of prayer. The Brothers pray together. Together they hear the Word of God and meditate on it. Together they recognize that they are sinners before God and participate in the Eucharist. Together they seek and find God.

73. The Brothers meet together at least in the morning and in the evening to celebrate the liturgy of the hours in union with the praise and continual intercession of the Church. They may also organize different forms of prayer by which to express the life of the community.

**Article 20,10 Corresponds to Article 74**

74. The Brothers recognize that the Eucharist, a communion with Jesus Christ and his paschal mystery, is the principal source of their sanctification, the growth of their union, and the vitality of their ministry.

As far as possible, they take part in the Eucharist every day.

**Article 21 Corresponds to Articles 54.1 and 62 of The Rule**

54.1 Every community contributes to the implementation of the District's apostolic plan by its witness as a community. Individual Brothers contribute directly by their work in educational establishments, by their prayer, by their sharing in Christ's sufferings, and by other means available to them.

62. Each local community forms with the other communities of the District an integral part of the Institute as a whole. It maintains a bond of communion and cordial relations with the other local communities, as well as a readiness to provide fraternal help where needed. It offers a welcome also to other members of the Lasallian Family.

**Article 22 Corresponds to Article 3 of The Rule**

3. The purpose of this Institute is to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it.

Christian schools, which need to be constantly renewed, are the preferred sphere of activity for the Brothers. The Institute is open also to other forms of teaching and education, suited to the needs of time and place.

**Article 22, 1 Corresponds to Articles 6 and 7 of The Rule**

6. “The spirit of this Institute is a spirit of faith” which leads the Brothers “to look upon everything with the eyes of faith, to do everything in view of God, and attribute all to God.”

By faith, they judge all the realities of life in the light of the Gospel.

By faith, the Brothers find God in their work, in their concerns, and in their joys.

By faith, the Brothers learn to discern in every event, and in every person, especially in the poor, a sign and a call of the Spirit.

By faith, as “cooperators with Jesus Christ,” the Brothers dedicate their whole life to the building up of the Reign of God through the service of education.

By faith, the Brothers abandon themselves, like their Founder, to God’s guidance.

7. The spirit of faith inspires the Brothers with an ardent zeal to serve those entrusted to them and to work with those who share this aim. This zeal, stimulated by the Holy Spirit, infuses life into their apostolic prayer and into all the activities of their educational ministry. Commitment to the apostolate is an integral part of the Brother’s consecration to God. The spirit of the Institute implies that all its members are imbued with zeal inspired by the life and teachings of the Founder.

**Article 23 Corresponds to Article 153 of The Rule**

153. Today, with their Partners, the Brothers wish to respond in a creative way to the educational and spiritual needs of young people, especially of those who are the most vulnerable.

**Article 25 Corresponds to Article 12 of The Rule**

12. Each Brother takes upon himself the responsibility for integrating within his own person these constitutive dimensions of his vocation: consecration to God as a lay religious, the apostolic ministry of education, especially among the poor, and community life.

**Article 25, 4 Corresponds to Article 54 of The Rule**

54. Dedicated to the apostolic ministry of education, the community realizes that its mission constantly needs to be discovered at the different stages of its life and as it comes into contact with new situations. Accordingly, it takes part in the reappraisal of both its aims and methods, with a view to coming closer to the spirit of the Gospel and to re-examining the pastoral value of its activity.

**Article 26, 4 Corresponds to Article 54.3 of The Rule**

**54.3** In educational institutions, the visibility of the Brothers' community should be a form of Gospel witness.

**Article 27, 2 Corresponds to Article 46.1 of The Rule**

**46.1** The community values each Brother and supports him as he seeks to respond to the will of God.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**SERVICE OF THE POOR THROUGH EDUCATION**

**Article 28 Corresponds to Article 28 of The Rule**

**28.** By the vow of association for the educational service of the poor, the Brothers promise to conduct as a community, educational works accessible to the poor.

**Article 28, 1 Corresponds to Article 1 of The Rule**

**1.** Deeply moved by the human and spiritual distress “of the children of artisans and of the poor,” and in response to the call of God, John Baptist de La Salle and his first Brothers made a lifelong commitment to God to provide these children with a human and Christian education, and so extend the glory of God on earth. They reformed the kind of schooling available at the time to make it accessible to the poor, and to offer it to all as a sign of the Reign of God and as a means of salvation.

**Articles 29-33 Correspond to Article 29 of The Rule**

**29.** In the light of the Gospel, the Brothers always keep in mind the promotion of justice and the direct or indirect service of the poor -- the economically poor, the victims of social injustice, delinquents and those excluded from society -- which is the preferred option of their ministry of education. When they work with pupils from better-off families, they teach them the duties imposed by responsibility, and those regarding social justice and worldwide charity. The Brothers give special attention to those of their pupils who have greater difficulties at school, personal problems, or problems adjusting to family life or society.

**Article 30 Corresponds to Article 40.3 of The Rule**

**40.3** Through love of the Gospel, and as signs of the hope to which the Reign of God invites them, the Brothers make themselves poor and commit themselves resolutely to love the poor and to fight against poverty.

**Article 31 Corresponds to Article 1 of The Rule**

**1.** Deeply moved by the human and spiritual distress “of the children of artisans and of the poor,” and in response to the call of God, John Baptist de La Salle and his first Brothers made a lifelong commitment to God to provide these children with a human and Christian education, and so extend the glory of God on earth. They reformed the kind of schooling available at the time to make it accessible to the poor, and to offer it to all as a sign of the Reign of God and as a means of salvation.

**Article 32 Corresponds to Article 3 of The Rule**

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

Christian schools, which need to be constantly renewed, are the preferred sphere of activity for the Brothers. The Institute is open also to other forms of teaching and education, suited to the needs of time and place. Brothers are the "ministers of God and the dispensers of God's mysteries."

**Article 32, 2 Corresponds to Article 16.1 of The Rule**

**16.1** Sent primarily to the poor, the Brothers, both as individuals and as a community, are led to discover the root causes of the poverty which surrounds them, and to undertake, with great determination, the promotion of justice and human dignity by their educational service.

This concern inspires also the activity of the Brothers when it takes place in a better-off social context. They increase the sense of solidarity in those entrusted to them, and make them sensitive to unjust situations of which the poor are so often the victims.

**Article 34, 2 Corresponds to Article 40 of The Rule**

**40.** By evangelical poverty, the Brothers choose to follow Jesus Christ who, out of love, made himself poor in order to enrich us all by his poverty. Following his example, John Baptist de La Salle divested himself of his goods to make himself similar to the poor teachers, and with them, he put his hope in God's Providence, making possible the "Society of the Christian Schools."

Today the Brothers, men of hope, set out on the same path to become poor in spirit and be converted to God, their true treasure. In this way, they make possible association among themselves, availability to their Partners and to the calls of the Church, and a solidarity and closeness to the poor they wish to serve.

**Article 34, 4 Corresponds to Article 29.1 of The Rule**

**29.1** Regions and Districts draw up plans which enable all their works to be really committed to helping the poor and combating the causes of poverty. These plans, which include cooperation between congregations, develop the community dimension of educational works, and encourage the shared mission to open up more to the service of the poor.

## CHAPTER VII EDUCATION IN THE FAITH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

### Article 38, 1 Corresponds to Article 17 of The Rule

17. The life and the educational activity of the Brothers are an integral part of the Church's work of evangelization. They believe that catechesis, as the Founder insisted, is "their principal function." This conviction determines their formation as well as the choice of tasks to which they may be assigned.

### Article 38, 2 Corresponds to Article 17.2 of The Rule

17.2 To enable baptized persons to live as Christians and become disciples of Jesus Christ, the Brothers accompany them as they seek to grow in faith, fraternity, and service. They help them develop a personal relationship with God; to make their contact with his Word, the liturgy and the sacraments a life-giving one; and to prepare themselves for social commitment.

In their contact with people with different religious traditions, or in highly pluralistic or secularized countries, the Brothers seek inventive ways to announce the Gospel; the witness of a Christian presence and fraternal relations, gratuitous service, the experience of prayer in common, interreligious dialogue, and sharing with one another the story of Jesus Christ. In their turn, the Brothers allow themselves to be questioned by these people.

When they work with Partners with different beliefs and religious traditions, the Brothers seek to establish common ground for cooperation on the basis of the promotion of human dignity, solidarity among all human beings, and the integral development of the individual, in line with the Lasallian tradition.

### Article 38, 4 Corresponds to Article 21 of The Rule

21. "Ministers of God and of the Church," anxious "to touch hearts," the Brothers carry out their mission with the "ardent zeal" which the Lord's work requires.

Urged on by this zeal, and with the attitude of Jesus Christ the servant, they generously put their time, their talents, their energy, and their sufferings at the service of those God entrusts to them.

That is why they constantly strive to improve their competence, the quality of their relationships, the witness of their life, and the strength of their faith.

The whole life of the Brothers is transfigured by the presence of the Lord who calls, consecrates, sends, and saves.

### Article 38, 5 Corresponds to Article 8 of The Rule

8. In order to enter into and live according to the spirit of their Institute, the Brothers constantly seek sustenance in the Word of God, which they study, meditate on and share with one another. They have a very profound respect for Sacred Scripture, and especially for the Gospel, their "first and principal Rule."

Through a spirit of prayer and attention to the presence of God, the Brothers remain open to listen to the Holy Spirit, who increasingly reveals to them the truth of faith.

By their biblical and theological studies, the Brothers nourish and strengthen their faith. By their constant efforts to achieve interior purity and self-mastery, they strive, as far as possible, to perform all their actions "by the guidance of God, by the movement of his Spirit, and with the intention of pleasing him."

**Article 39, 4 Corresponds to Article 16 of The Rule**

**16.** The Brothers consider their professional work as a ministry. They strive to combine cultural growth with the proclamation of the Word of God, helping those they serve to discover, appreciate, and assimilate human and Gospel values.

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

They are convinced that an education which promotes the integral development of individuals makes them open to the grace of God and the light of faith.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY OF THE BROTHERS AND ITS RENEWAL**

#### **Articles 44 and 45 Correspond to Article 1 in The Rule**

**1.** Deeply moved by the human and spiritual distress “of the children of artisans and of the poor,” and in response to the call of God, John Baptist de La Salle and his first Brothers made a lifelong commitment to God to provide these children with a human and Christian education, and so extend the glory of God on earth. They reformed the kind of schooling available at the time to make it accessible to the poor, and to offer it to all as a sign of the Reign of God and as a means of salvation.

#### **Article 48, 7 Corresponds to Article 16 of The Rule**

**16.** The Brothers consider their professional work as a ministry. They strive to combine cultural growth with the proclamation of the Word of God, helping those they serve to discover, appreciate, and assimilate human and Gospel values.

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

They are convinced that an education which promotes the integral development of individuals makes them open to the grace of God and the light of faith.

#### **Article 49, 5 Corresponds to Article 19.2 in The Rule**

**19.2** Since their foundation, the Brothers have contributed to the promotion of the Christian laity, and especially lay educators who wish their professional work to be a form of Gospel ministry. Each District recognizes the important role of all the Partners in the mission. For this purpose, and as an expression of the spirit of association, it establishes participative structures intended to help the Brother Visitor in areas which concern the mission.

#### **Article 51 Corresponds to Article 3 of The Rule**

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

Christian schools, which need to be constantly renewed, are the preferred sphere of activity for the Brothers. The Institute is open also to other forms of teaching and education, suited to the needs of time and place.

## CONCLUSION

### **Article 53 Corresponds to Article 160 of The Rule**

**160.** As Brothers, we show Saint John Baptist de La Salle the love due to our Founder. We follow him in his abandonment to God, his attachment to the Church, his creative apostolic spirit, and his life-long commitment to the evangelization of young people.

The life of our Institute, along with the updating of its mission, constitute a never-ending series of creative acts inspired by fidelity, which at times, call for difficult commitments, as John Baptist de La Salle himself experienced.

Today, the Founder still calls to us, continuing to inspire and support all men and women who identify with him.

Imbued with the spirit he bequeathed to us, and with the Partners who share our mission, we remain faithful to the living tradition of the Institute. In communion with all those who preceded us, we continue to respond with burning zeal to the calls of the Lord, of the Church, and of the world, to give glory to God.

### **Article 53, 2 Corresponds to Articles 103 and 111**

**103.** Throughout his formation and its follow-up, the fidelity of each Brother to the Institute is reinforced by his continual conversion to Jesus Christ, and by his vow of stability. The Brother witnesses to his fidelity in the mission.

**111.** In imitation of Jesus Christ who serves his brothers, and following the example of their Founder, the Brothers consider the exercise of authority as a way of serving the community. Authority has for its purpose to promote communion among all the Brothers, the vitality of the Institute, the efficacy of the mission, and interdependence among the various units that compose it.

### **Article 53, 3 Corresponds to Articles 75.1 and 76 in The Rule**

**75.** Spiritual life is nourished also by traditional Institute devotions. The Brothers have a special devotion to Mary, Mother of God, to whom John Baptist de La Salle consecrated his Institute. They learn from her the docility to the Holy Spirit which characterizes a true disciple. In her total “yes” they see a model for their own consecration and an example of abandonment to God.

The Brothers find a model for their whole life in St Joseph who shared in the work of salvation by the human education of Jesus Christ. They invoke him, remembering that the Founder placed the Institute under his protection.

**76.** To St. John Baptist de La Salle, they accord the honor and love due to their Founder and spiritual master. They immerse themselves in his writings and in the lessons to be drawn from his life. They seek to make him known and invite others to follow him as Patron Saint of Teachers. They imitate him in his love of the Church and his dedication to humanity.

They keep in mind the saints and the beatified Brothers, and have recourse to their intercession.