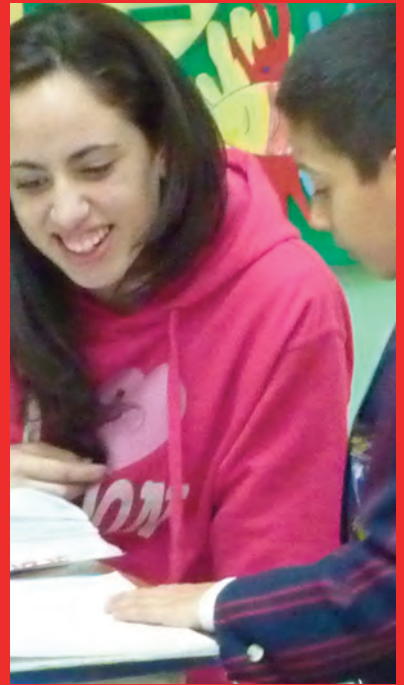




Living in a Spirit of **Faith**



Acting in a Spirit of **Zeal**

Reflections for Lasallians

Volume 2

A resource for reflection and prayer
for Lasallians discerning the way forward
in today's world.

Reflections for Lasallians

Living in a Spirit of Faith, Acting in a Spirit of Zeal

Volume 2

compiled by the Lasallian Association of Great Britain

Published by Lasallian Publications (GB)
De La Salle Provincialate, 140 Banbury Road, Oxford, UK. OX2 7BP

First edition 2012

Private Circulation

ISBN for complete set of four volumes : 978-0-9540562-2-3

ISBN for this volume: 978-0-9540562-5-6

To obtain further copies of this volume or for information
regarding the other volumes in this series, email:
publications@lasalle.org.uk

© Lasallian Publications, 140 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7BP

Copyright

All biblical quotations are from THE JERUSALEM BIBLE, copyright ©1966 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd and Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

The copyright details for all other quotes are acknowledged on the following page.

Acknowledgements

The publishers are grateful for receiving the following permissions:

Darton, Longman and Todd for permission to use extracts from *Bread for the Journey* and *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Henri JM Nouwen; *Community and Growth* and *The Scandal of Service* by Jean Vanier.

The Diocese of Westminster (Bishop Arnold) for permission to use an extract from *At Your Word Lord*.

Joan Chittiser for permission to use an extract from her writings.

The Editor of *The Tablet* for permission to use extracts from articles by Richard Pring, Paul Gaffney (9.06.2012) and Vincent Nichols (29.10.2012).

JM Dent a division of the Orion Publishing Group for permission to use the poems *The Coming* and *The Kingdom* by RS Thomas.

John Powell SJ for permission to use an extract from *Why Am I Afraid to Love* published by Resources for Christian Living, Alen, Texas.

McCrimmond Publishing Company, Great Wakering Essex for permission to use an extract from the writings of Etta Gullick

The Orion Publishing Group for permission to use an extract from *Simon Weil* by Francine du Plessix Grey.

Pendle Hill Publications, Wallingford, PA 19086 for permission to use an extract from *Dark Night Journey* by Sandra Cronk.

St Pauls Publishing for permission to use an extract from *Healing and Revealing* by Bernard Haring and extracts from *To be a Pilgrim* by Basil Hume.

Michael Riddell for permission to use an extract from *Godzone* published by Reed Books (Octopus Publishing Group NZ Ltd)

Ronald Rolheiser for permission to use extracts from his writings.

Twenty Third Publications, Mystic CT for permission to use an extract from *A World of Stories for Preachers and Teachers* by William Bausch

Whilst extensive efforts have been made to trace and contact all owners of copyright, two or three attempts have not met with success in some cases. We apologise if there have been any inadvertent omissions or failure to acknowledge original sources, and we would be glad to put this right in future editions of *Reflections for Lasallians*.

publications@lasalle.org.uk

Lasallian Sources

The second quote on each page is a specifically Lasallian one and have been sourced from various works by De La Salle, or from books written on him or about the Institute he founded. Besides De La Salle, we have quoted from the writings of two Superior Generals, John Johnston (1986 - 2000) and Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría (2000 - 2014), who at the time of publication is the present Superior General. We have also taken quotes from various Lasallian publications such as *Intitute Circulars*, *MEL Bulletins* (see page V) and the *Brothers' Rule*.

Where possible we have tried to make the quotes relevant to all Lasallians. To this end we decided to change one word in the *Brothers' Rule* of 1987, replacing the word 'Brother' with 'Lasallian'.

Our Vision

The vision behind the creation of this book has been to bring together writings which speak of our distinctively Lasallian focus, including ideas to inspire and encourage, challenge and unsettle and lead towards a deeper relationship with God in Christ. It has been compiled by a team of people representing the different branches of the Lasallian family, all people committed to live in the awareness of God's presence: Brothers, former Brothers, students and staff from Lasallian schools, people toiling in the vineyard in both formal and informal education, those who have spent a year touching and inspiring hearts at St Cassian's Retreat Centre, Kintbury, and those who have accompanied the poor with the Lasallian Developing World Projects (LDWP). We hope that this resource will be like a well that people can return to many times to receive spiritual nourishment and a deeper insight into what it means to be a Lasallian.

As a group we found it difficult to pinpoint exactly how we have been influenced and inspired by the significant experiences that shape us as Lasallians. As we shared our experiences we found twelve themes (see opposite) that resonated with all of us because they represented what for us is distinctive about Lasallian spirituality. These twelve themes became the foundation stones of this publication.

We then chose twenty-five relevant Christian headings, notions relevant to the whole church, to which we as Lasallians may wish to respond. Our hope is that the Lasallian themes might be like a prism through which all the headings could be interpreted and given a distinctively Lasallian light. The twelve themes run throughout each book, and the headings are intended to throw a different light on them, just as in our own experience we may come to understand the theme in different ways, at different times in our lives.

This book, is the second in a series of four and contains the themes, 'Trusting God's Providence', 'Recognising God's Love for Each of Us' and 'Living the Creative Cycle of Death and Resurrection'.

We hope you will use this book as a vehicle for praying and reflecting upon your own Lasallian vocation. The book is a resource that can be used in many different ways. For example, an individual may simply choose a page and spend ten minutes reading and meditating upon the quotations, whilst a group may also take a page and have someone read aloud a quotation followed by a period of silent meditation, and ending with an opportunity for everyone to share their thoughts and reflections. We hope it may also prove of value in the school context for staff and students.

For those of us who have worked over several years on this publication we offer it to you in a spirit of faith and zeal, that it may deepen your spiritual life and enrich your vocation as a Lasallian.



Living in a Spirit of Faith, Acting in a Spirit of Zeal

The Structure



The complete publication, published in four volumes is divided into the two major Lasallian characteristics, spirit of faith and spirit of zeal, which in turn are subdivided into six themes:

Living in a Spirit of Faith

1. Being Aware of God's Presence
2. Responding to God's Calling
3. Discerning God's Will Now
4. Trusting God's Providence
5. Recognising God's Love for Each of Us
6. Living the Creative Cycle of Death and Resurrection

Acting in a Spirit of Zeal

7. Together and by Association
8. Respecting Others, Bringing Those at the Margins to the Centre of Our Lives
9. Loving the Vulnerable Self
10. Accompanying the Poor
11. Being Educators, Especially of Youth
12. Touching and Inspiring Hearts with the Christian Spirit

Each of the above themes is subdivided by the same 25 headings listed below, each page containing a biblical, a Lasallian and a modern-day quote.

1. Opening to God's word
2. Allowing intimacy with God
3. Trusting
4. Being a disciple
5. Receiving and responding
6. Embracing uncertainty
7. Risking
8. Recognising a shared spirit and shared humanity
9. Living hopefully
10. Celebrating
11. Accepting ourselves as God's gift to others and accepting others as God's gift to us
12. Transforming
13. Building community
14. Living our commitment
15. Being a communion of saints
16. Witnessing
17. Serving as mission
18. Accompanying
19. Being good shepherds
20. Honouring
21. Seeking wholeness
22. Reconciling
23. Collaborating
24. Peacemaking
25. Hungering for justice



Lasallian Mission and Spirituality 1719 to 1880



St John Baptist De La Salle

The inspiration of St John Baptist is important for us today, as reflected by the publication of these books. His life and spirit could become somewhat disassociated unless we remember that we are linked to our origins by a lived history embodying the same spirit and mission of generations of Lasallians, Brothers and lay people alike. We stand on the shoulders of these generations who have sometimes courageously, sometimes misguidedly, sometimes weakly, tried to live out their understanding and commitment to De La Salle's inspiration.

During his last five years of life De La Salle did everything possible to ensure that his successors would be able to maintain and develop God's mission, to which they had committed their lives. He edited his writings on an educational spirituality contained in the 'Meditations', especially those 'For Time of Retreat' and in the 'Method of Mental Prayer' with its insistence on recognising and responding to God's presence throughout the day. He also wrote about how the community lived their mission, editing the 'Rule' and the 'Conduct of Schools'. His witness, teaching the novices how to pray, and his obedient support for his elected successor, Br Barthélemy, showed the Brothers how to respond to God's call.



Br Barthélemy

After De La Salle's death on Good Friday, 7th April 1719, there were about 100 Brothers in about 22 communities. The Brothers soon felt it important to obtain official approval from civic and Church authorities. Civic approval was granted in 1724, though as the Brothers discovered, it did not always mean that life was plain sailing as different authorities around France each wanted to give their own approval. The Church's approval was even more complicated. In order to be recognised by the Church, the Brothers were required to change their vows of Association for the education of the poor, of Stability in community for that purpose and Obedience to the Rule, to the body of the Institute and its superiors. They were now required to pronounce the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, which took precedence over their other vows. Effectively, this changed the understanding of their priority for mission supported by the Brothers' religious life, to a priority of the religious life which structured the Lasallian mission. De La Salle's resistance to seeking formal approval during his lifetime appears to show his clear-sightedness and wisdom in this matter.

Despite this change in focus, the Brothers attempted to live through the tension which this caused, with courage and commitment. This state of affairs lasted until the 2007 General Chapter when, following years of study and Br John Johnston's intervention, the precedence of the vow of Association was restored, in line with Vatican II's directives.

Under the leadership of Br Timothée the Institute's mission expanded with more schools opening and more Brothers committing themselves to the Spirit's movement. Boarding education developed as did an expansion of technical and commercial subjects. Br Timothée started the process to recognise De La Salle's contribution to the Church.



Br Timothée

The French Revolution (1787–1799) affected the lives and the mission of the Brothers. During this time many Brothers suffered imprisonment and even martyrdom for refusing to take the 'Con-



Living in a Spirit of Faith, Acting in a Spirit of Zeal





stitutional Oath'; four Brothers of this period have been beatified; Solomon Leclercq, Léon Mopinot, Roger Faverge and Jean-Baptiste Guillaume. Initially Communities continued operating until the formal suppression of 1792. Some Brothers took up other jobs and slipped anonymously back into society, whilst a few Communities and individuals kept teaching in civil dress with the support of the local population; their aim was to keep their heads down and wait for the time when the Institute would be re-established in France. Some Brothers managed to leave France and join Communities in Switzerland and Italy; some went to live in Belgium, whilst Brother Germain, along with other refugees from France, sought the safety of the island of Jersey.

During this period of suppression Br Gerbaud maintained informal contact with about 200 dispersed, isolated and 'anonymous Brothers' in France. Although the Institute had ceased to function in France a small remnant was still operating in Italy. Since the Superior, Br Agathon, was living on his own in France and unable to lead the Institute, Pope Pius VI, in 1795, appointed Br Frumence in Rome as Vicar General to lead the Brothers. Br Agathon died alone in 1798, the Institute by this time being reduced to only two Communities in Italy and a dormant, scattered fragment in France.

When in 1805 Br Frumence, supported by Cardinal Fesch, Napoleon's uncle, was able to return to Lyons, he was soon able to re-establish some schools and communities in France. With the agreement of the "University" which controlled education, the Brothers were given general responsibility for Primary Education in France. In 1815 alternative teaching methods were being proposed, especially the Monitorial System, a debate that lasted at least eighteen years; eventually, the Brothers' simultaneous method became the accepted method.



Br Frumence

In the 19th Century the number and types of schools expanded greatly. Secondary and technical schools increased, as did teacher-training, prison teaching, schools for adults, apprentices and evening classes. Early foundations were established in several new countries: Réunion (1817), Belgium (1931), Canada (1837), Turkey (1841), and USA (1845). This expansion could not have happen without the dedication and sacrifice of the Brothers, of whom Br Scubilion and Br Benildus were shining examples.

Br Scubilion went to Réunion in 1833 and it was through his work here, especially amongst the slaves, that his holiness became apparent for all to see; he was beatified in 1989. Whilst in Saugues, France, the faith and zeal of Br Benildus shone through the every day work of a teacher; he was canonised in 1967.



Blessed Scubilion

By 1880 there were about 12,800 Brothers and 'novices employés' (Brothers who never made vows or made only annual vows) teaching in thirty-three countries, including England.

The Brothers came to England in 1855 and opened a small school in Clapham, South London. However, they did not have the relevant qualifications to obtain State assistance and soon the school was in financial trouble. Br John of Mary was sent from the USA to remedy the situation, but the £8,000 debt was an impossible burden upon the school. After several attempts by other Brothers to reverse the situation, the Institute, in 1863 paid off the debt and appointed Br Abban, a young Canadian, to put the mission in England on a sound financial footing. This school was named St Joseph's College (now at Beulah Hill) and in 1860 members of the Community founded St Joseph's Academy (now St Matthew Academy, Blackheath).



Living in a Spirit of Faith, Acting in a Spirit of Zeal

Abbreviations

- DEC: 'The Declaration: The Brothers of the Christian Schools in the World Today.' One of the principal documents of the Brothers' 39th General Chapter (1967), published in 1968.
- DLS: De La Salle – St John Baptist De La Salle, 1651–1719, founder of the De La Salle Brothers.
- L. Sch: 'The Lasallian School' by William Mann, published in 1991 by Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle), Long Island – New England Province, Rhode Island, USA.
- LDWP: Lasallian Developing World Projects, part of the District of Great Britain, which runs summer mini projects in poor parts of the world that assist local communities in improving their educational facilities.
- Let: Letters written by De La Salle taken from 'The Letters of John Baptist de La Salle' translated by Molloy & Loes, published in 1988 by Lasallian Publications, Romeoville, USA
- MED: 'Meditations' written by De La Salle covering Sundays and the principal feastdays of the Church, was first published in English by Battersby in 1953. A more recent translation was published by Lasallian Publications, USA, in 1994.
- MEL: The MEL Bulletin is an on-going series of booklets published by the De La Salle Generalate in Rome that covers topics related to the Lasallian Educational Mission. 'MEL 7' refers to the seventh book in the series.
- MTR: 'Meditations for the Time of Retreat', written by De La Salle and first published in 1730. English version published by St. Mary's Press, Winona, USA in 1975.

Scripture: We have used well known common abbreviations for all the scripture references.

A glossary of Lasallian terms used in this volume can be found on page 80.



Theme 3

Trusting in God's Providence



1691 John Baptist De La Salle, Nicolas Vuyart and Gabriel Drolin, trusting in God's providence, profess the 'Heroic Vow' to remain together in the society, even if it meant living on bread alone.



Opening to God's word

Rm 11:33-36

How rich are the depths of God - how deep God's wisdom and knowledge - whose motives and methods are impossible to penetrate or understand! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be counsellor to God? Who could ever give or lend God anything? All that exists comes from God who made all and to whom be glory for ever! Amen.

Let 111

If you cannot pray, tell God that you cannot and then remain at peace. God will not ask you to do the impossible. Or say to God as the apostles did: Lord, teach me how to pray. Then be humbly attentive as one who is incapable of doing anything, and that will be your prayer.

Anonymous

I am only a spark
Make me a fire.
I am only a string
Make me a lyre.
I am only a drop
Make me a fountain.
I am only an ant hill
Make me a mountain.
I am only a feather
Make me a wing.
I am only a rag
Make me a king.

*If you cannot pray,
tell God that you cannot
and then remain at peace.*

De La Salle



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Allowing intimacy with God



Nb 6:22-27

Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,
'Say this to Aaron and his family: "This is how you are to bless the children of Israel." You shall say to them,
"May Yahweh bless you and keep you.
May Yahweh's face shine on you and be gracious to you.
May Yahweh's face be revealed to you and bring you peace."
This is how they are to call down my name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.'

Med 54 & Med 195:2

St. John Chrysostom attributes to holy communion yet another effect, which is beyond all that we can conceive, and which confers on us the highest dignity. By this sacrament we are so closely united with Our Lord that we become one body with him; the body of Jesus Christ himself. "As many grains of wheat become one and the same bread," says the Saint, "so that no difference can be seen between them, food in the like manner has this effect, that it produces so intimate a union that it becomes substantially identical with the body which consumes it." Even so, Jesus Christ unites himself to you in holy communion, in order to transform you into himself, so that you form but one heart and soul with him, and his interior dispositions become your own.

The Spirit helps you overcome all the obstacles to the salvation of your disciples, enlightening them in the person of Jesus Christ.

Augustine

Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new,
late have I loved you!
You were within me, but I was outside,
and it was there that I searched for you.
In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things that you created.
You were with me, but I was not with you.
Created things kept me from you;
yet if they had not been in you they would not have been at all.
You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness.
You flashed, you shone and you dispelled my blindness.
You breathed your fragrance on me;
I drew in breath and now I pant for you.
I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more.
You touched me and I burned for your peace.



Trusting

Mt 6:25-34

“That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. Surely life means more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are we not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, in spite of worrying, add one single cubit to your span of life? And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the field which is there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will God not much more look after you, you of little faith? So do not worry; do not say, ‘What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?’ It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on the kingdom first, and on God’s righteousness, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Med 59:1

The more fully we abandon ourselves to the care of Providence, the more attentive God is not to let us want for anything.

Michael Riddell

No one can give you a detailed map for your travels; all they can do is tell you their own tales of the road. Even the valleys and deserts and peaks will only become known as you experience them for yourself. The key to finding your way is to trust the road. Don’t leave it when it goes through hard places. Return to it when the wonders of some place have drawn you aside. When it winds back on itself, there is a reason. There are no short-cuts to be taken, no helicopter rides to lift you out of trouble. The road has its own wisdom, and the followers of it arrive eventually at their next destination, with many new stories to share.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Being a disciple



Lk 17:5-6

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith".
The Lord replied, "Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea', and it would obey you."

John Johnston

To let Christ reign over our whole life is to accept him without reserve. It is to enter into a personal relationship with Christ who is for us the WAY, revealing by his life and teaching what being human is all about; the Christ who is for us the TRUTH, revealing by his life and teaching who God is and what God is like; the Christ who is for us the LIFE, filling us with his Spirit, enabling us to live as children of his Father, as his brother, and as channels of that Spirit for those he entrusts to our care.

Aidan Kilty

Any authentic vocation has to be rooted in a relationship with the God who calls. Admittedly, at the beginning of a vocational journey the element of service, such as wanting to work with youngsters, especially deprived kids, may well be the 'hook' that God uses to catch us. But if a vocation is to be sustained, it has to be based on a developing relationship with the God of love. Consequently, one of the other challenges in vocational discernment consists in leading others into a prayer relationship with God. This developing relationship with God usually brings with it some personal challenges to the individual concerned. It usually involves some mini-exodus moments, an experience that traditionally has been called 'conversion', and which is usually reflected in challenges to values, attitudes and behaviour.

Lord, *increase our faith.*

Luke 17:5



Receiving and responding

Mt 7:7-8

Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For those who ask always receive; those who search always find; those who knock will always have the door opened to them.

Circular 447

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 listen to Lasallian appeals for commitment to the service of young people in difficulty.

Anonymous

I asked for strength,
God showed me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom,
God showed me problems to learn to solve.

I asked for prosperity,
God gave me brawn and brain to work.

I asked for courage,
God showed me dangers to overcome.

I asked for love,
God showed me troubled people to help.

I asked for favours,
God showed me opportunities.

I received nothing I wanted.
I received everything I needed.
My prayer had been answered.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Embracing uncertainty



Lk 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. The angel went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you,' the angel answered, 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary. 'Let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

John Johnston

Paul's life was not changed as a result of some kind of rational process. He had a profound experience of Jesus Christ, an experience that turned his life upside down, an experience that he never forgot. Whatever happened to him was so intense and so significant, that he considered everything else as loss, as rubbish. 'What he formerly thought important now seems negligible to him and holds no importance at all.'

But it may seem that in my discussion of 'closing the gap' I have placed the emphasis not on an experience with Christ, but on our own determined effort to change what needs to be changed in our lives as Lasallians. I have in fact urged that we take responsibility for our lives, that we not play "victims". But none of that is incompatible with an insistence that the profound conversion and "new life" which we desire for the Institute requires the grace of God. Whenever we wrestle with the question of conversion, we encounter inevitably the mystery of grace and free will, and the 'problem' of the reconciling the two. I think that we need to take as our guide the words of Augustine: 'We pray as if everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on ourselves'.

Francis de Sales

Do not look forward to what might happen tomorrow, the same everlasting father who cares for you today, will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either he will shield you from suffering or he will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginings.



Risking

Psalm 4

God, guardian of my rights, you answer when I call,
when I am in trouble, you come to my relief;
now be good to me and hear my prayer.

You people, why shut your hearts so long,
loving delusions, chasing after lies.

Know this, wonders are worked for those whom Yahweh loves,
Yahweh hears me when I call.

Tremble: give up sinning, spend your night in quiet meditation.
Offer sacrifice in a right spirit, and trust Yahweh.

'Who will give us sight of happiness?' many say.
Show us the light of your face, turned towards us!

Yahweh, you have given more joy to my heart
than others ever knew, for all their corn and wine.

In peace I lie down, and fall asleep at once,
since you alone, Yahweh, make me rest secure.

Sauvage - Campos

The Founder likes to point out to his disciples that the difficulties they encounter, the sufferings they must endure, the inconveniences they meet with, and even the temptations they experience are especially favourable opportunities for the exercise of abandonment and for training in it. In short, abandonment to God is a necessary and apostolically fruitful spiritual attitude because it flows from the faith that motivates and inspires it.

John Henry Newman

Softly and gently, dearest sweetest soul,
In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And o'er the penal waters as they roll,
I poise thee, and I lower thee and hold thee.
And carefully I dip thee in the lake,
And though, without a sob or a resistance,
Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,
Sinking deep, deeper into the dim distance.
Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou liest;
And Masses on the earth, and prayers in heaven,
Shall aid thee at the Throne of the Most Highest.
Farewell, but not for ever! Brother dear,
Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;
Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,
And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Recognising a shared spirit and a shared humanity



I Co 3:5-9

After all, what is Apollos and what is Paul? They are servants who brought the faith to you. Even the different ways in which they brought it were assigned to them by the Lord. I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but God made things grow. Neither the planter nor the waterer matters: only God, who makes things grow. It is all one who does the planting and who does the watering, and each will duly be paid according to his share in the work. We are fellow workers with God; you are God's farm, God's building.

MEL 2

All the communities — the Community of the Christian Schools — assume in solidarity the responsibility for the educational works. The problems or needs of a local community are considered a problem or a necessity of the whole system. The vow of association allows us to speak of a ministerial community.

Association develops bonds of communion among people integrated in it in such a way that the collective structures which characterise the Lasallian Association — the Institute in the first place, and each district later on — tend to constitute themselves as communities that foster personal relationships, and not simply as organisations for an adequate running of the works.

The main objective of Association is to achieve living communities that can be signs for the mission. Its partners assume their contribution to the establishment of the communities as their first commitment.

Richard Pring

With many new teachers each year, a Headteacher in Boston, USA, undertook to inform them of what the main driving force behind the school should be. She wrote to each this letter:

Dear Teacher,

I am the victim of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no-one should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians; infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates. So I am suspicious of education.

My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

There is something odd about proclaiming the virtues of an education which simply makes those who succeed within it more efficient at that which is evil, or more able to exploit their fellow citizens, or more adept at pursuing their own interest at the expense of others.

The most important argument for the preservation of church schools is that they have a distinct and defensible answer to the question: 'What makes children more human?'



Living hopefully

Ph 4:12-12

I know how to be poor and I know how to be rich too. I have been through my initiation and now I am ready for anything anywhere: full stomach or empty stomach, poverty or plenty. There is nothing I cannot manage with the help of the One who gives me strength.

Med 131:1

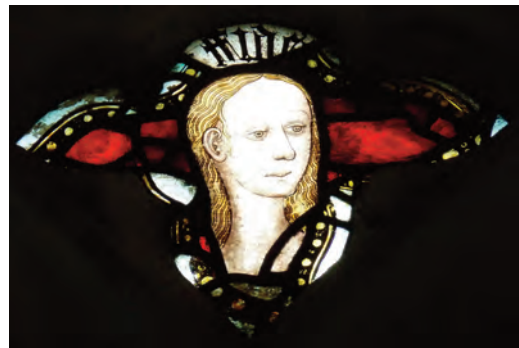
Adore God's fatherly providence in your regard.

Bob Barrett

Lord, make me an instrument of your hope
for those who are daunted by discouragement,
for those whose passion for life has been
crushed by anxiety or despair.
Enable me to share their uncertainty
and walk with them through the ordeal of their darkness,
confident in a God who listens to our prayers.
Meet us on this journey
so that the power of our fears and anxieties
may be replaced by a daring
inspired by the unconditional love of Jesus Christ,
who descended into death
so that we might have hope and be life-giving for others.

*Lord,
make me an instrument
of your hope.*

Bob Barrett



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Celebrating



Joel 2:23-27

Children of Zion, be glad, rejoice in Yahweh your God;
for you have been given the autumn rain, since God is just,
and has poured the rains down for you, the autumn and spring rain as before.
The threshing-floors will be full of grain, the vats overflow with wine and oil.

'I will make up to you for the years devoured by grown locust and hopper,
by shearer and young locust,
my great army which I sent to invade you.'

You will eat to your heart's content, will eat your fill,
and praise the name of Yahweh your God
who has treated you so wonderfully.
(My people will not be disappointed any more.)

And you will know that I am in the midst of Israel,
that I am Yahweh your God, with none to equal me.
My people will not be disappointed any more.

De La Salle

Leave aside all worry about the present and all your anxiety about the future; occupy yourself with what you have to do at each moment as it is given to you, and do not burden the day which is passing with doubts about the day to follow.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shared man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings



Accepting ourselves as God's gift to others and accepting others as God's gift to us

Rm 8:7-39

Take yourselves for instance, friends, at the time when you were called: how many of you were wise in the ordinary sense of the word, how many were influential people, or came from noble families? No, it was to shame the wise that God chose what is foolish by human reckoning, and to shame what is strong that what is weak by human reckoning was chosen; those whom the world thinks common and contemptible are the ones that God has chosen - those who are nothing at all to show up those who are everything. The human race has nothing to boast about to God, but you, God has made members of Christ Jesus and by God's doing he has become our wisdom, and our virtue, and our holiness, and our freedom.

Rule 54

The community is for Lasallians their home. It is there that they live together. It is there that they experience each day anew the friendship, the esteem, the trust and the mutual respect that they have for one another ... By their active presence and by their sensitivity to one another, Lasallians assure the solidarity of the community.

Jean Dominique Martin

People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. When you figure out which it is, you know exactly what to do.

When someone is in your life for a **REASON**, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed outwardly or inwardly. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend, and they are. They are there for the reason you need them to be. Then, without any wrong doing on your part or an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up or out and force you to take a stand.

What we must realise is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled; their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and it is now time to move on.

When people come into your life for a **SEASON**, it is because your turn has come to share, grow, or learn. They may bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it! It is real! But... only for a season.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons; those things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person/people (anyway); and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life.

It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

I Sam 10:6-7 - LK 9:28-36

Then the spirit of Yahweh will seize on you, and you will go into an ecstasy with them, and be changed into another person. When these signs are fulfilled for you, act as occasion serves, for God is with you.

Now about eight days after this had been said, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah'. - He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.' And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

Med 180:3

You can perform several miracles in regard both to yourselves and your work: in your own regard by an entire fidelity to grace... and in regard to your work, by touching the hearts of the children entrusted to your care... Such are the miracles God gives you the power to perform, and which are asked of you.

Simone Weil - Jean Vanier

Grace fills empty spaces... it can only enter where there is a void to receive it, and it is grace itself which makes this void... only when we accept the void can grace rush in.

Loss and grief will be with us our whole life through, because growth in Jesus' love is a long process that involves struggle. This struggle is not so much against disobeying moral laws and commandments, but the struggle to trust in Jesus' call, in his promises of love and his invitation to give our lives totally to him. It is the struggle to let the Holy Spirit take over our lives, guide and inspire us in all we do. It is a struggle to remain constantly open and faithful to the Holy Spirit on this new path of love.

And no matter how beautiful a community may be, community life still remains difficult, due to all our inner resistance and our need to feel important. There is such a fear in us of not existing if we are not held in esteem and this fear will remain with us all our lives. Transformation takes time and continues through times of joy and times of purification, until our last breath.



Building community

Rm 12:4 - 7

Just as each of our bodies has several parts and each part has a separate function, so all of us, in union with Christ, from one body, and as parts of it we belong to each other. Our gifts differ according to the grace given to us. If your gift is prophecy, then use it as your faith suggests; if administration, then use it for administration; if teaching, then use it for teaching.

Med 10:1

To live in a Community that is faithful to the Rule is to live in the boat with Jesus and his disciples, because those who live there have left the world to follow Jesus, have put themselves under his guidance, and have become his disciples.

Nick Smith

My gap year was spent at a retreat centre for young people that had been set up by the De La Salle Brothers several years previously. The work was residential, and while I knew the type of ministry I would be doing before I went, though by no means the extent and intensity of it, of my fellow workers I had no idea. To this end, we made as much contact as we could with each other, keen to build community at the earliest stage. I remember speaking to one of my fellow Team members for the first time several months before we moved in together at St Cassian's. What was strange was the feeling that this stranger, hundreds of miles away and at present just a voice at the other end of the phone, was to be someone I'd learn to trust and love intensely. There was no question about this. It was a fact to be fulfilled, but not to be proved. One of the greatest challenges for people joining a Kintbury Team, or any community of people with a purpose, is that initial trust. To be involved in something you must care about it, and when that something cannot be done alone you must trust others with it too, and this is what is so hard.

One person cannot build community, because one person cannot trust. If I am to see all love as coming from the divine source of God, I must also see God as a source of all trust, as for much of the time loving and trusting are one and the same. I have to accept that any trust others have in me is the trust of God in me to relate with them and complete the task in hand. In our life partners we look for love and trust as so close to the same thing it seems ridiculous to separate them. God loves and trusts us in the same way that I knew I'd love and trust my fellow Team members, without action and without pre-requisite.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Living our commitment



Heb 9:11-14

But now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than the one made by human hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively the blood of Christ, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self from dead actions so that we do our service to the living God.

Lasallian Sch.

The Lasallian School is characterised also by the sense of service and teaching gratuitously, effective availability and voluntary service, a simple manner in dealing with others, mutual confidence and the quality of the reception given, openness to dialogue and cordiality, all of which are means that guarantee the richness of life in common.

Anselm

Come now, little man,
turn aside a while from your daily employment,
escape a while from your daily employment,
escape for a moment from the tumult of your thoughts.
Put aside your weighty cares,
let your burdensome distractions wait,
free yourself awhile for God
and rest awhile in him.
Enter the inner chamber of your soul,
shut out everything except God
and that which can help you in seeking him,
and when you have shut the door, seek him.
Now, my whole heart, say to God,
'I seek your face,
Lord, it is your face I seek.'



Being a communion of saints

Jm 4:13-16 - 5:8-9

Here is the answer for those of you who talk like this: 'Today or tomorrow, we are off to this or that town; we are going to spend a year there, trading, and make some money'. You never know what will happen tomorrow: you are no more than a mist that is here for a little while and then disappears. The most you should ever say is: 'If it is the Lord's will, we shall still be alive to do this or that'. But how proud and sure of yourselves you are now! Pride of this kind is always wicked.

You too have to be patient; do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming will be soon. Do not make complaints against one another, friends, so as not to be brought to judgment yourselves; the Judge is already to be seen waiting at the gates.

Med 205:3

When Jesus Christ made you responsible for the instruction of children and their formation in religious practice, he entrusted to you the task of building up his body, which is the Church.

William Blake

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no, never can it be,
Never, never can it be!

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrow small,
Hear the small bird's grief & care,
Hear the woes that infants bear,

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast;
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant tear.

And not sit both night & day,
Wiping all our tears away?
O, no, never can it be,
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all;
He becomes an infant small;
He becomes a man of woe;
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a
sigh
And thy maker is not by;
Think not thou canst weep a
tear
and thy maker is not near.

O, he gives to us his joy
That our grief he may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.



Living in a Spirit of Faith



2 Pt 1:5 - 8

But to attain this, you will have to do your utmost yourselves, adding goodness to the faith that you have, understanding to your goodness, self-control to your understanding, patience to your self-control, true devotion to your patience, kindness towards your fellow people to your devotion, and, to this kindness, love. If you have a generous supply of these, they will not leave you ineffectual or unproductive: they will bring you to a real knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Carl Koch

De La Salle knew that, by meditating on the word of God, people encounter Jesus Christ. Upon encountering Jesus, they will believe. In believing and deepening this belief, they will be so filled with faith that they will spread the Good News effectively, and will live full lives.

US Bishops (1983)

It is clear today, perhaps more than in previous generations that convinced Christians are a minority in nearly every country of the world - including nominally Christian and Catholic nations. In our own country we are coming to a fuller awareness that a response to the call of Jesus is both personal and demanding. As believers we can identify rather easily with the early Church as a company of witnesses engaged in a difficult mission. To be disciples of Jesus requires that we continually go beyond where we now are. To obey the call of Jesus means separating ourselves from all attachments and affiliation that could prevent us from hearing and following our authentic vocation. To set out on the road to discipleship is to dispose oneself for a share in the cross (cf. Jn. 16:20). To be a Christian, according to the New Testament, is not simply to believe with one's mind, but also to become a doer of the word, a wayfarer with and a witness to Jesus.

*To set out
on the road to discipleship
is to dispose oneself
for a share in the cross.*

US Bishops Pastoral Letter, 1983



see page 79

Br James Miller FSC
1944 - 1981



Serving as mission

Ezk 17:22 - 24

The Lord Yahweh says this: 'From the top of the cedar, from the highest branch I will take a shoot and plant it myself on a very high mountain. I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel. It will sprout branches and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Every kind of bird will live beneath it, every winged creature rest in the shade of its branches. And every tree of the field will learn that I, Yahweh, am the one who stunts tall trees and makes the low ones grow, who withers green trees and makes the withered green. I, Yahweh, have spoken, and I will do it.'

Nick Hutchinson

We pray, Lord, that we may live in such a way
that we may bear witness
to your presence among your people,
to the tenderness of your love,
and to the liberating force of your Spirit

George Herbert

Lord, who hast formed me out of mud
and hast redeemed me through thy blood
and sanctified me to do good

purge all my sins done heretofore
for I confess my heavy score
and I will strive to sin no more

enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me
with faith, with hope, with charity
that I may run, rise, rest with thee



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Accompanying



Rv 1:4 - 6

From John, to the seven churches of Asia: grace and peace to you from God who is, who was, and who is to come, from the seven spirits present before the throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead, the Ruler of the powers of the earth. He loves us and has washed away our sins with his blood, and made us a royal line, priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Med 198:2

Your zeal must go so far that you are ready to give your very life, so dear to you are the children entrusted to you.

Anon. - John Norden

One time a beggar woman with cancer of the face tried to kiss Dorothy Day's hand. Dorothy commented, 'The one thing I could do was kiss her dirty old face with the gaping hole in it where an eye and nose had been. It sounds like a heroic deed but it was not. What we avert our eyes from today can be borne tomorrow when we have learned a little more about love.'

I am forced, good Father, to seek Thee daily, and Thou offerest Thyself daily to be found: whensoever I seek, I find Thee, in my house, in the fields, in the temple, in the highway. Whatsoever I do, Thou art with me; whether I eat or drink, whether I write or work, go to ride, read, meditate, or pray, Thou art ever with me; wheresoever I am, or whatever I do, I feel some measure of Thy mercies and love. If I be oppressed, Thou defendest me; if I be envied, Thou guardest me; if I hunger, Thou feedest me; whatsoever I want Thou givest me. O continue this Thy loving-kindness towards me forever, that all the world may see Thy power, Thy mercy, and Thy love, wherein Thou hast not failed me, and even my enemies shall see that Thy mercies endure forever.

*Your zeal must go so far
that you are ready to give
your very life,
so dear to you are the
children entrusted to you.*

De La Salle



Being good shepherds

I Pt 5:2 - 4

Be the shepherds of the flock of God that is entrusted to you: watch over it, not simply as a duty but gladly, because God wants it; not for sordid money, but because you are eager to do it. Never be a dictator over any group that is put in your charge, but be an example that the whole flock can follow. When the chief shepherd appears, you will be given the crown of unfading glory.

MTR 4:1

Be convinced of what St Paul says, that you plant and water the seed, but it is God, through Jesus Christ who makes it grow, that he is the one who brings your work to fulfillment. So when you encounter some difficulty in the guidance of your disciples, when there are some who do not profit from your teaching and you observe a reckless spirit in them, turn to God with confidence. Earnestly ask Jesus Christ to make his Spirit come alive in you, since he has chosen you to do his work.

Consider Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd of the Gospel seeking the lost sheep, placing it upon his shoulders, and bringing it back to the fold. Since you are taking his place, look upon yourself as obliged to do the same thing. Ask him for the grace needed to bring about the conversion of the hearts of those in your care.

You must, then, devote yourself very thoroughly to prayer in order to succeed in your ministry.

Gandhi

Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, try the following expedient: Recall the face of the poorest and most helpless person you have ever seen and ask yourself if the step you are contemplating is going to be for any use to him or to her... Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.

Be the shepherds
of the flock of God
that is entrusted to you.

St Paul



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Honouring

Ps 62:5-8

In God alone be at rest, my soul;
for my hope come from him.
He alone is my rock, my stronghold,
my fortress: I stand firm.

In God is my safety and glory,
the rock of my strength.
Take refuge in God all you people.
Trust him at all times
Pour out your hearts before him
for God is our refuge.

Med 134:1

It is difficult to realise how much good a detached person is able to do in the Church. The reason is that detachment shows a deep faith; when a person abandons himself to the Providence of God it is like a man who puts himself out on the high seas without sails or oars.

A De La Salle Brother

We honour God by doing his will and thereby become part of his plan of salvation. He enables us to follow his will by providing what we need, not want; 'God's providence'. A fundamental part of St John Baptist De La Salle's spirit of faith was trusting in God's providence as a way of confirming to himself that he was following God's will. That is why De La Salle gave the honour of the founding of the Institute to God; De La Salle being his instrument.

Our present western culture puts a great emphasis on individuality, and has created the cult of the celebrity. We give honour to God if we recognise, as De La Salle did, that God is our creator, and our gifts and talents, which he gave us, are for the continuation of his work.

We will know when we are following God's work if we make ourselves aware of God's providential work in our lives. We can only do that if we take time each day to reflect on our day, asking ourselves the question, 'Where have I encountered God today?'



Seeking wholeness

2 Co 5:20 - 6:2

So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. As his fellow workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace of God that you have received. For God says, 'At the favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the favourable time; this is the day of salvation.'

De La Salle

Earnestly ask Jesus Christ to make His Spirit come alive in you since He has chosen you to do his work. MTR 4:1

Abandon yourself entirely to the influence of the Holy Spirit that He may ask of the eternal Father all the graces you need for your own soul and those of the children entrusted to you, and that you may never act but through His impulse. Med 62:2

Ronald Rolheiser

Notice in this story [Mk 5: 25-34 cure of the woman with a haemorrhage] that the woman is healed simply by touching Jesus, even before she actually speaks to him. There are two moments of healing: the initial, mute touch, and the explicit exchange between her and Jesus that later takes place. Why two? What does the explicit exchange add to the essential moment of touch? Risking an interpretation through other categories, one might say that when she touched the hem of his garment she was essentially healed and when she spoke with Jesus explicitly and told him the full truth she was fully healed.

This text is a paradigmatic one. It lays out a pattern. In it we see in terms of the Incarnation, how healing and reconciliation work in our world. Simply put, what it tells us is that, just like this woman, we will find healing and wholeness just by touching the body of Christ and, as members of the body of Christ, we are called upon to dispense God's healing and wholeness by touching others.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Reconciling



Lk 15:20 - 24

So he left the place and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found."

Med 74:1

God has cancelled an immense debt of yours, and it is expected in return that you should remit something of what is owed to you – perhaps by some of those close to you.

H. Nouwen

The question is not "How am I to find God?"
but "How am I to let myself be found by him?"
The question is not "How am I to know God?"
but "How am I to let myself be known by God?"
And finally, the question is not "How am I to love God?"
but "How am I to let myself be loved by God?"
God is looking into the distance for me, trying to find me, and longing to bring me home.

*God is looking in the distance
for me,
trying to find me,
longing to bring me home.*

Henri Nouwen



Collaborating

Ep 4:15 - 16

If we live by the truth and in love, we shall grow in all ways into Christ, who is the head by whom the whole body is fitted and joined together, every joint adding its own strength, for each separate part to work according to its function. So the body grows until it has built itself up, in love.

Med 196

Jesus Christ has chosen you among so many others to be his co-operators in the salvation of souls.

Catechism 307

To human beings God even gives the power of freely sharing in his providence by entrusting them with the responsibility of “subduing” the earth and having dominion over it. God thus enables people to be intelligent and creative in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbours. Though often unconscious collaborators with God’s will, they can also enter deliberately into the divine plan by their actions, their prayers and their sufferings. They then fully become “God’s fellow workers” and co-workers for his kingdom.

*Christ has chosen you ...
to be his co-operators
in the salvation of souls.*

De La Salle



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Peacemaking



Mt 5:45 - 46

In this way you will be children of your Father in heaven, who causes the sun to rise on the bad as well as the good, and the rain to fall on the honest and dishonest alike. For if you love those who love you, what right have you to claim any credit? Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not?

Álvaro Echeverría

It seems to me that one of the most important elements needed to live out an authentic type of fraternity is a sense of realism. The realism would mean making peace with my own personal traits and with my own personal history...

If I want to live community life authentically, then my first step would be to accept my own situation as something that helps determine who I am and that at the same time opens up new possibilities for me.

Based on faith, self-acceptance comes from the personal acceptance of God's unconditional and free love, of God's tireless forgiveness, of the certainty of God's close presence. These are attitudes I am invited to live out, based on Gospel values, based on my relationships with other Lasallians.

John Paul II

To you, Creator of nature and humanity, of truth and beauty,
I pray:
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.
Hear my voice, for it is the voice of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons of war.
Hear my voice, when I beg you to instill into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice and the joy of fellowship.
Hear my voice, for I speak for the multitudes in every country and every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.
Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love,
to injustice with total dedication to justice,
to need with sharing of self,
to war with peace.
Oh God, hear my voice,
and grant unto the world your everlasting peace.



Hungering for justice

Ps 146:5 - 10

Happy are those who have the help of the God of Jacob,
whose hope is fixed on Yahweh God,
maker of heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that these hold!
Yahweh, forever faithful, gives justice to those denied it,
gives food to the hungry,
gives liberty to prisoners.
Yahweh restores sight to the blind,
Yahweh straightens the bent,
Yahweh protects the stranger,
keeps the orphan and widow.
Yahweh loves the virtuous,
and frustrates the wicked.
Yahweh reigns for ever, your God, Zion, from age to age.

Bill Wolff

When troubled youth are accepted for whom they are; and when God is seen in the eyes of each of these young people; and when all who are in service to these young people are confident that their work has purpose and meaning; and when the work is informed by the best practices and science available so that innovation and excellence will naturally follow; and when the devotion of St John Baptist De La Salle and the legacy of the Brothers is an inspiration to all ... It is then you are assured of finding a Lasallian response to children and youth at risk.

Joan Chittister

Every day people that are church-educated go quietly and serenely to factories where they assemble warheads, to laboratories where they increase the megaton capacity of our arsenals, to boardrooms where they vote to increase our "defence" capabilities, to churches where they pray the "Our Father" without discomfort. The role of the Church in such a culture is surely a clear one. It is, of course, to pray for peace, not to cajole God to save us from our own insane sinfulness but to make ourselves receptive to God's inbreaking in our lives and culture. It is, as well, to be centres where strangers can become sisters and brothers in Christ. It is, finally, to become models of disobedience. Fromm describes the "revolutionary personality" as a person who is independent, who has the capacity to identify deeply with humanity and who has the ability to disobey in the interest of more fundamental values. The prophets, Christ, the early Christians, would understand the role completely. It is up to us to reclaim and recall a conforming world to the burning burden of that promise.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Theme 5

Recognising God's Love for Each of Us



Contemporary icon of St John Baptist De La Salle holding a copy of the Brothers' Rule.



Opening to God's word

Mt 7:2

As you have judged, so will you be judged, by the same rule; award shall be made you as you have made award, in the same measure.

Álvaro Echeverría

The Word of God must be our 'ration of the day' (Ex 16:4) which nourishes and allows us to know better the will of God. It permits us to integrate our own identity in a better way. Prayer inspired by the Word presented to us each day in the liturgy is a unifying element of our spirituality. In the morning, we allow ourselves to be permeated by the Word as a field is permeated by the rain. Like Mary, we relive the mystery of the Incarnation, the Word made flesh in us. Then, like Mary in the mystery of the Visitation, we bring the Word to others. The Word upon which we meditated should become the Word that we share.

Philip Pare

Very often, when people first turn towards God and realise that God loves them and that everything about them matters to Him, a wave of joyful emotion overwhelms them. But actual faith is mostly the realisation that, even though we don't in the least deserve it, God believes in us and finds us loveable. This is astonishing.

*The Word upon which
we meditated should
become the Word
that we share.*

Álvaro Echeverría
Superior General
2000 - 2014



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Allowing intimacy with God



Rv 22:12 -14

Very soon now, I shall be with you again, bringing the reward to be given to everyone according to what they deserve. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Happy are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they will have the right to feed on the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.

Bill Mann et al

Reflect on the Mystery of God's Love at Work in Your Own Life

Who has loved you and taught you how to love?
Who has helped you learn how to be charitable to others?
Who are the people coming to you in need of love?
Is it easy for you to reach out to other people?
What are the obstacles to your doing this?
Do you believe that bearing one another's burdens and failings is an act of love?
How about challenging those who doubt their abilities?
Where in your society do you see a great need for love today?
How do you evaluate your own commitment to living in a charitable way?

Etta Gullick

Lord, teach us how to be open to your Spirit. Lord, make us receptive to your comings.

*Who has loved you
and taught you
how to love?*

Bill Mann et al





Trusting

Mt 10:29 - 31

Can you not buy two sparrows for a penny? And yet not one falls to the ground without your Father knowing. Why, every hair on your head has been counted. So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

Med 42:3

Ask God, that after filling you with the Holy Spirit to sanctify yourselves, God may also communicate God's self to you in order to procure the salvation of others.

Rule for a New Brother

To choose God means giving yourself up to Him in faith. Let your life be built on this faith as on an invisible foundation. Let yourself be carried by this faith like a child in its mother's womb.

And so, don't talk too much about God but live in the certainty that He has written your name on the palm of His hand. Live your human task in liberating certainty that nothing in the world can separate you from God's love for you.

So never let yourself lose heart but go on seeking him in everything, in everybody – they are all pledges that you will finally meet him face to face.

So there is no need to be afraid; you are worth more than hundreds of sparrows.

Matthew 10:31



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Being a disciple

Mk 3:33 - 35

Who are my mother and my brethren?... Here are my mother and my brethren! Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Med 122:3

Is it thus that you take every possible care to win over to God those who are entrusted to you, when you find them inclined to evil ways? Can you truly say that there is nothing you would not do to enable them to overcome their vicious tendencies? Do you pray to God to obtain the required change in their conduct? As you are responsible for their souls, you must make every effort to place them on the path to heaven.

Stephen R. Carl

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? For me it means daily learning who Jesus is by connecting with him through prayer, study and action (i.e. putting the relationship to work). Those high points along the path for me all have in common something akin to falling in love—a desire to be in Jesus' presence all the time. What I have learned is that God is always present, always ready to be with me and to have me conscious of God's presence, always loving me, always loving those around me (even those who I'm letting take my attention off God), always nudging me to maturity, to the deeper waters of God's love and truth.

*What I have learnt is that
God is always present,...
always loving me,
always loving those around me ...*

Stephen R. Carl





Receiving and responding

Mt 10:8

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, so freely give.

Med 165:2

When, therefore, you have any trials to endure, unite your sufferings with those of Jesus Christ. Love the Cross of our Lord because you are one of his members. This union of love will sweeten your trials and will render them much more easy to bear.

Basil Hume

There is, for instance, a danger of being in love with love- that is, with the idea of love- to the extent of making God an impersonal object of love or someone we know about already. Instead, through a willingness to surrender ourselves, we should discover that we can know and relate to the inner nature of God as a person.

*...freely you have received,
so freely give.*

MT 10:8



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Embracing uncertainty



Hab 3:2, 15 - 19

Lord, I have heard of your fame,
I stand in awe at your deeds.
Do them again in our days,
in our days make them known!
In spite of your anger, have compassion.

For even though the fig does not blossom,
nor fruit grow on the vine,
even though the olive crop fail,
and the fields produce no harvest,
even though flocks vanish from the folds
and stalls stand empty of cattle,

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord
and exult in God my saviour.
The Lord my God is my strength.
He makes me leap like the deer,
he guides me to the high places.

Alfred Calcutt

Whilst on retreat at Parménie, De La Salle consulted Sister Louise over the direction of his life, for he was desiring a quiet life of solitude. Sister Louise's clear view, that he was called by God to the work and government of the Institute, made De La Salle perceive afresh what he seems not to have been able to see for some time now: that God's call to him to be Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was a lifelong one: that God supported him to the end; and there was something still for him to do.

Susan Jeffers

If we try to control everything on our own (which, of course, we can't), we get very weary and very discouraged and very frightened. But once we can feel comfortable turning our worries over to a Higher power in whatever form that feels right for us, we feel the weight of our world being lifted from our shoulders. In effect, we say to ourselves, 'Take over, God. I trust it's all happening perfectly.' This is our acknowledgement that we can't see the bigger picture, the Grand Design, and we really don't have any control over so many outcomes in our life.





Risking

Jr 29: 11-14

I know what my plans are for you,
plans to save you and not to harm you,
plans to give you a future and to give you hope...
When you call on me I will listen...
I will gather you up from among all the nations...
I will bring you home.

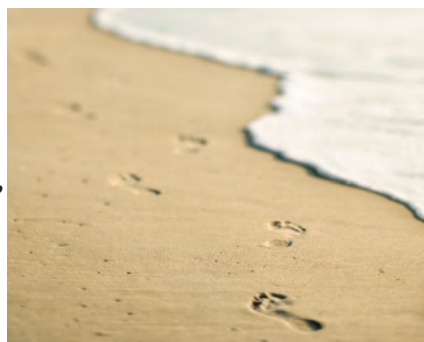
Circular 461

The image of a God who welcomes, who walks alongside of us, who asks us to trust in the unimaginable, is the daily act of faith that has sustained the Brothers of the Christian Schools for more than three centuries. This image also symbolizes the vocational call of all Lasallians to confide in a God who calls "in a quiet imperceptible way...so that one commitment lead[s] ...into another without... having foreseen it in the beginning." This was De La Salle's miraculous adventure with a God who always welcomed him. All you who serve the Lasallian Mission remember what God has promised us. As He spoke to the prophet Jeremiah (29:11-14) so He speaks to us today.

Paulo Coelho

Pitiful is the person who is afraid of taking risks. Perhaps this person will never be disappointed or disillusioned; perhaps she won't suffer the way people do when they have a dream to follow. But when that person looks back – and at some point everyone looks back – she will hear her heart saying, "What have you done with the miracles that God planted in your days? What have you done with the talents God bestowed on you? You buried yourself in a cave because you were fearful of losing those talents. So this is your heritage; the certainty that you wasted your life.

*The image of a God
who welcomes,
who walks alongside of us,
who asks us to trust in the unimaginable,
is the daily act of faith that.....
symbolizes the vocational call
of all Lasallians....*



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Recognising a shared spirit and a shared humanity

Rm 13:10

Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Med 40:3

You should acknowledge that it is most advantageous to you that Christ should have ascended into heaven. It is from thence that you receive all the graces with which your soul is enriched, for it is in virtue of the power over all creatures, both in heaven and earth, which Jesus Christ receives on this occasion, that he bestows his gifts liberally on all people.

Miroslav Volf

Forgiveness flounders because I exclude the enemy from the community of humans even as I exclude myself from the community of sinners. But no one can be in the presence of the God of the crucified Messiah for long without overcoming this double exclusion — without transposing the enemy from the sphere of monstrous inhumanity into the sphere of shared humanity and herself from the sphere of proud innocence into the sphere of common sinfulness. When one knows that the torturer will not eternally triumph over the victim [as the cross demonstrates], one is free to rediscover that person's humanity and imitate God's love for him. And when one knows that God's love is greater than all sin, one is free to see oneself in the light of God's justice and so rediscover one's own sinfulness.

Let brotherly love continue.

Rm 13:10



Living in a Spirit of Faith





Living hopefully

Jn 3:16

God so loved the world, that God's only begotten Son was given to our world, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Michael Meister

In their spirituality, Lasallians cooperate with God in the work of their students' salvation. They celebrate the God who empowers them as instruments and mediators of his saving gifts. As instruments of God – tools in the hands of God – they communicate for and with their students in their role as ambassadors. Their message from God is a message of hope, of love, and of dignity and respect which empowers their students to see themselves as fashioned in the image and likeness of God and worthy of his love. Not only does this perspective touch on the spiritual realm, but in the Lasallian school it has the potential to shape the curriculum and the very education the students receive – all of which gives meaning and purpose to Lasallian association. Mel 27

Bob Barrett

Hope is a thin beam of light
shining through the chink of an opening door.
Keep your eyes on that light.
Keep pushing on that door,
and slowly,
perhaps too slowly from your point of view,
the door will open more and more
and the darkness will be behind you.



*God so loved the world,
that God's only begotten Son
was given to our world*

Jn 3:16



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Celebrating



Lk 1:32 - 45

She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'

Med 154:1

The love and esteem which St. Lawrence had for the poor can hardly be conceived. So great was his love that when Pope St. Sixtus, whose Deacon he was, was on his way to martyrdom and told him to distribute among the poor all the wealth of the Church, which he had placed in his hands, St. Lawrence acquitted himself so faithfully of his duty that he completely emptied the treasury. And as for his extraordinary love of the poor, it was manifested when the Emperor, who had learnt that the riches of the Church had been entrusted to him, demanded the treasures which were thus confided to his safekeeping. The Saint at once gathered together the poor, and having presented them to the Emperor, informed him that these were the treasure of the Church.

Let us admire the great faith of this Saint, which made him look upon the poor as the wealth of the Church, that is to say, all that is richest and best in the Church, as bearing a closer resemblance to Christ. Let us enter into his sentiments, since to us God has confided the most precious and treasured portion.

D. Wheeler

His Love enableth me to call every country my country, and every man my brother.

*His Love enableth me
to call every country my country,
and every man my brother.*

D. Wheeler



Accepting ourselves as God's gift to others and accepting others as God's gift to us.

2 Co 9:7

Everyone should give what they have decided in their own mind, not grudgingly or because they are made to, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Rule 49

The Spirit of love who dwells within each Lasallian is what creates the unity in their community. Animated by the Spirit, Lasallians build community by the joyful gift of themselves for the service of others.

Antoine de St Exupery

The little prince went off to look at the roses again.

'None of you is at all like my rose. As yet you are nothing,' he said to them. 'Nobody has tamed you and you have tamed no one. You are like my fox when I first encountered him. His was just a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But I made him my friend and now he is unique in the world.

And the roses were greatly embarrassed.'

'You are beautiful but are empty,' he continued. 'One cannot die for you. To be sure, an ordinary passer-by would believe that my rose looked just like you, but she is far more important than all of you because she is the one I have watered.

*But I made him my friend
and now he is unique
in the world.*

Antoine de St Exupery



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Transforming



Ps 118:1 - 2, 15 - 17, 22 - 24

Give thanks to Yahweh who is good,
whose faithful love endures forever.
Let the House of Israel say, 'God's faithful love endures for ever.'
Shouts of Joy and Salvation in the tents of the upright,
'Yahweh's right hand is triumphant,
Yahweh's right hand is victorious,
Yahweh's right hand is triumphant!'

I shall not die, I shall live to recount the great deeds of Yahweh.
The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
this is Yahweh's doing and we marvel at it.
This is the day which Yahweh has made,
a day for us to rejoice and be glad.

Let 110 - Med 51:2

I pray that God will open your eyes more and more so that you will realise on the one hand the depth of the abyss from which you have been saved and, on the other, the infinite love that has lifted you from it.

God has given you so many graces and still gives you special and notable graces every day.

John Powell

Wherever you are in your development, whatever you are doing, with a strong affirmation of all your goodness and good deeds, with a gentle understanding of your weakness, God is forever loving you. You do not have to change, grow, or be good in order to be loved. Rather, you are loved so that you can change, grow, and be good. Your realisation of this unconditional love is extremely important.



Building community

Rm 8:28

We are well aware that God works with those who love, those who have been called in accordance with the purpose of God who turns everything to their good.

Med 74:1

God has cancelled an immense debt of yours, and expects in return that you should remit something of what is owed to you - perhaps by some of your fellow Lasallians.

John Johnston

A healthy spirit of community must permeate Lasallian schools. The Declaration of the renewal Chapter of 1967 expressed it well:

“The school will be a living community where young people, coming from different social and family backgrounds, educate one another by mutual understanding and respect, openness of mind in dialogue, acceptance of the uniqueness and limitations of each, growth in the spirit of service, and the practice of justice and fraternal charity” (46.2).

But that paragraph needs to be completed. This “living community” includes not only the students. All those involved in the school – administrators, teachers, staff personnel, Brothers’ community – are constitutive members of the school community.

*God has cancelled
an immense debt of yours ...*

De La Salle



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Living our commitment

Dt 30:15 - 17

See, today I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. If you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God that I enjoin on you today, if you love Yahweh your God, following the ways, and keeping the commandments, laws, and customs, you will live and increase, and Yahweh your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to make your own. But if your heart strays, if you refuse to listen, if you let yourself be drawn into worshipping other gods and serving them, I tell you today, you will most certainly perish; you will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

Med 10:3

God gives us not only the will to do what is right, but also the grace to accomplish it. God smoothes out all obstacles.

Basil Hume

The commandment to love God is clear, and we are furthermore expected to put our whole selves into it. It is easy enough to give notional assent to this proposition, but the real assent, translated into a programme of action, is quite another thing. And in any case we can see our neighbour, but how can we love someone whom we do not see? The answer is given by St John in his first letter when he writes that it all starts with our realising that God loves us first. When that becomes clear, then we begin to want to love God in return...

[Furthermore] we have to try to discover what is good and loveable in all those with whom we come into contact. It is only thus that we shall come to see them as God sees them, for each one of us is made in the image and likeness of God. So the more we approach others with sympathy and concern the more our eyes are opened to see God in them. In this way our attempts to get our relationships right with others should lead us to a greater love of God. Such an approach makes heavy demands on us.

We have to try to discover what is good and loveable in all those with whom we come into contact.

Basil Hume



Being a communion of saints

I Cor 12:12 - 13, 20, 26

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these part, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

As it is, the parts are many but the body is one.

If one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it. If one part is given special honour, all parts enjoy it.

Med 183:1

What happiness the saints enjoy in heaven in being thus like to God by participating in God's nature and divine perfections. It is there that God is truly in the saints by communicating divine greatness to them, and that the saints are in God by being entirely transformed by God and by being unable to contemplate or love anything but God alone.

Honour the saints, therefore, but let it be in God, since it is in God that you find them all. Admire the great joy that is theirs and the outstanding glory that they receive, and ask them to obtain for you from God a share in this happiness after your death.

Diocese of Westminster

It is inconceivable how much Jesus Christ loves those who give up everything for him and how many graces he gives them both for themselves and for others. As their hearts are empty of the things of this world, God fills them with his Holy Spirit.

Lord Jesus, in your great love for me, you have saved me and set me free. You have chosen me to bear fruit and to take on an active role, becoming a sign of your reign. May I joyfully do your will today in all things.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Witnessing



Rm 8:30 - 31

God called those who were intended for this; those who were called were justified, and with those who were justified God shared the glory. After saying this, what can we add? With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare God's own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that God will not refuse anything that can be given.

Let 125 - Med 146:2

Do not forget to thank God for all the blessings bestowed on you.

God has chosen you to make him known to others.

Scott Fry

After Kintbury I became a PCSO* and found it challenging dealing with youths on the streets of a different calibre to those I had sat in a small group with a few months earlier. Whilst at work I was unable to wear my Crucifix for safety reasons and so wished to get something more permanent to symbolise my new enhanced faith. So for my 21st birthday I got a tattoo of Jesus' crucifixion on my back. I posed for the drawings as I wanted for it to be my own drawing of Jesus and unique to me. The position of HIM is that he is on my shoulders and I chose this because I wanted it so that on the good days I could carry Him but on the bad days He carries me.

It is my faith that determines how I deal with people. Whilst at work it is not my job to be judge and jury, it is simply to get them in front of those who are. It's not always easy being civil with people who are drunk, hate the uniform you wear and know the system better than you, but I have to remain professional and they remain my challenge for that day. On the flip side I get to help very many people, and who knows which one of them is Jesus for that shift? I want to get to the end of every shift knowing that I did not let Him down and just walk on by, although morality and the law don't always run side by side.

* Police Community Support Officer





Serving as mission

Rm 14:7 - 8

For none of us lives for himself and none of us dies for himself; while we are alive, we are living for the Lord, and when we die, we die for the Lord: and so, alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.

De La Salle

I shall consider the work of my salvation and that of establishing and directing our community as God's work. Hence I shall commit to God the care of all this, so as to do nothing of what concerns me without God's orders. I shall often consult God on all I shall have to do, whether it relates to the one or the other, often saying to God those words of the prophet Habakkuk: 'Lord the work is yours'.

Personal Rule 8

J. H. Newman

Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as you shine: so to shine as to be a light to others. The light, Jesus, will be all from you. None of it will be mine. No merit to me. It will be you who shine through me upon others. Let me therefore praise you, in the way, which you love best, by shining on all those around me. Give light to them as well as to me. Teach me to proclaim your praise, your truth, your will. Make me preach you without preaching — not by words, but by my example and by the catching force, the sympathetic influence, of what I do — by my invisible resemblance to your saints, and the evident fullness of the love which my heart bears to you.

*For none of us lives
for himself and
none of us dies for himself*

St Paul



Living in a Spirit of Faith



The Martyrs of Valencia

see page 79

Accompanying

I Co 9:19 - 23

So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. I made myself a Jew to the Jews, to win the Jews; that is, I who am not a subject of the Law made myself a subject of the Law to those who are the subjects of the Law, to win those who are subject to the Law. To those who have no Law, I was free of the Law myself (though not free from God's law, being under the law of Christ) to win those who have no Law. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all people in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessings.

John Johnston

The first characteristic of a Lasallian school is therefore respect, reverence even, for each student as a unique person. Canon Blain, biographer of the Founder, says that the term “school masters” was in no way adequate to describe the early followers of De La Salle and their relationship with the pupils. He said that the Brothers chose the name “Brothers” not only because it expressed very well the union they considered important, but also because it expressed the relationship they wanted to have with their pupils, a relationship of elder brothers.

We Lasallian teachers are called to be brothers and sisters to the young people God confides to our care – whatever their race, ethnical heritage, language, religion, economic class, economic ability or personal talents. They came to visit us with questions, convictions, perplexities, concerns, hopes, fears, frustrations... We must meet them “where they are” – not where we think they should be, not where we were when we were their age, not where our past pupils were in the 60’s and 70’s and 80’s. We must meet them where they are today. As their elder brothers and sisters we must respect them, accompany them, and walk with them side by side.

Henri J. Nouwen

The person who prays not only discovers themselves and God, but in the same meeting they discover who their neighbour is. For in prayer, you not only profess that you are human and God is God, but also, that your neighbour is a fellow human being; that is a person alongside you who is also loved by God.





Being good shepherds

1 Tm 4:12

Let no one disregard you because you are young, but be an example to all the believers in the way you speak and behave, and in your love, your faith and your purity.

Med 43:3 - 195:3

You carry out a work that requires you to touch hearts, but this you cannot do except by the Spirit of God. Pray to God to give you today the same grace given to the holy apostles, and ask God that, after filling you with the Holy Spirit to sanctify yourselves, life will also be communicated to you in order to produce the salvation of others.

All the good that you are able to do in your work for those entrusted to you will be true and effective only insofar as Jesus Christ gives it his blessing and as you remain united with him.

John Powell

Being a loving person is far different from being a so-called 'do-gooder.' Do-gooders merely use other people as opportunities for practising their acts of virtue, of which they keep a careful count. Living people learn to move the focus of their attention and concern from themselves out to others. They care deeply about others. The difference between do-gooders and people who love is the difference between a life which is an on-stage performance and a life which is an act of real love. Real love cannot be successfully imitated. Our care and concern for others must be genuine, or our love means nothing. This much is certain. There is no learning to live without learning to love.

You carry out a work that requires you to touch hearts, but this you cannot do except by the Spirit of God.

De La Salle



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Honouring



1 Jn 4:7-12

My dear people, let us love one another since love comes from God and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love. God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away. My dear people, since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God; but as long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us.

Let 105 - Rule 11

Be sure to be warmly affable toward everyone, to speak to and answer everyone with a very great gentleness and deference.

Mildness, humility and respect for your neighbour should always be apparent in your conduct.

Bernard Häring

Three nights later my wounded friends and I were enjoying the hospitality of an aged couple. They gave us the last of their bread and prepared a marvellous meal of potatoes with salt and onions. It was all they had. More important was the kindness they showed towards the sick men. I said, 'You are so kind as to give us your last piece of bread, although we are people of an alien nation that has brought great suffering to your country. May I ask why you do?'

The old gentleman answered, 'In times of starvation,' he said, 'I was working in the mines, and after losing my job I had to walk home several hundred miles. Day by day on that long journey, someone would share his bread with me, and I made a vow to God that I would never refuse hospitality to someone in need of it.'

This was the mark of the Orthodox believer: that he would share his bread, knowing that he could not receive the Bread of Life if he would not share his own bread with others. In a time when they could not partake of the Eucharist, since they had no priest, they kept spiritual contact with the 'breaking of the heavenly bread' by sharing their daily bread in generosity.



Seeking wholeness

2 Tm 1:7

God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the spirit of power and love and self control.

Med 104:3 - 38:2

The more you give to God, the more you will be blessed.

Be convinced that God is ready to refuse you nothing that you ask with faith and confidence in God's goodness.

Basil Hume

Only Christ could give the kind of love which can satisfy God the Father's longing to be loved. That is a remarkable and deep thought. Only Jesus Christ can give to the Father the love that the Father wants to receive. And the other great secret revealed to us, and yet can never be fully understood by us, is that God the Father wanted to restore to us the privilege, the dignity, the joy of being his beloved sons and daughters. And why? So that we can share in Christ's love for the Father. So Jesus Christ, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, became man, and shared our life, shared our problems, in order that we should be able as sons and daughters of God, to give back love where love has first been given

A well-known Archbishop of Canterbury, and one much respected, once said that there is a space within each person which only God can fill. It is a saying that I have always found to be helpful, and important. That space within me is waiting for God; if I do not admit him into my life, then there will always be emptiness within me, a void. You may wonder about that space within you, as I do about mine within me. But I find consolation in this thought: there was no room for him in the inn, so it was in a stable - a cave hewn out of the rock on the side of a hill - that Jesus came into this world. Could any place be more unsuitable or unpromising than this? So take heart. Your space may seem to you to be unsuitable; certainly unpromising. He does, however, wish and choose to occupy that space within you. How do I understand that coming of him into that space? I believe that it is the language of friendship or love which will help us to do so. God wants to dwell in our thoughts. He wants to have a place in our affections. Two lovers thinking about each other; two lovers wanting each other: there is a good starting point for our reflection.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Reconciling

Hos 2:16 - 18, 21 - 22

That is why I am going to lure her
and lead her out into the wilderness
and speak to her heart.
I am going to give her back her vineyards,
and make the Valley of Achor a gateway of hope.
There she will respond to me as she did when she was young,
as she did when she came out of the land of Egypt.

When that day comes - it is Yahweh who speaks -
she will call me, 'My husband',
no longer will she call me, 'My Baal'.

I will betroth you to myself for ever,
betroth you with integrity and justice,
with tenderness and love;
I will betroth you to myself with faithfulness,
and you will come to know Yahweh.

Med 74:1

One will have a capricious temper; another will be combative; one will have disagreeable manners, another will be haughty; one will be too obliging, another will speak his mind too freely; others again will be too reserved or dissimulating or critical. It is rare that such varied dispositions, such different mentalities, do not lead to difficulties amongst Lasallians, and if grace did not come to the rescue, it would be almost impossible for them to be mutually forbearing, and to avoid offending seriously against charity.

Martin Luther King

During his ministry in the sunny villages of Galilee, Jesus talked passionately about forgiveness. This strange doctrine awakened the questioning mind of Peter. "How oft," he asked, "shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Peter wanted to be legal and statistical. But Jesus responded by affirming that there is no limit to forgiveness. "I say not unto thee, until seven times: but until seventy times seven." In other words, forgiveness is not a matter of quantity, but of quality. A man cannot forgive up to four hundred and ninety times without forgiveness becoming a part of the habit structure of his being. Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude.



Collaborating

Ep 1:17 - 19

He came to bring the good news of peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. Through him, then, we both in the one Spirit have free access to the Father. So you are no longer aliens or foreign visitors; you are fellow citizens with the holy people of God and part of God's household.

Med 39:3

Since you are privileged to be called by God to live a community life, there is nothing you should pray for with greater insistence than union of heart and mind with your fellow Lasallians. Only by means of such harmony will you be able to maintain that peace which constitutes the whole happiness of your life. Ask, therefore, the Lord of all hearts to make yours one with those of others, in that of Jesus.

R. W. Emerson

God evidently does not intend us all to be rich or powerful or great, but he does intend us all to be friends.

*God ...
does intend us
all to be friends.*

R. W. Emmerson



Living in a Spirit of Faith



Recognising God's Love for Each of Us

Peacemaking



Mt 10:34 - 39

Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth: it is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A person's enemies will be those of their own household. Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take up their cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds their life will lose it; anyone who loses their life for my sake will find it.

Lasallian Sch.

The Lasallian School creates and deepens an atmosphere of familial relationships among those who form the educational community. "To live together" is a style of life which continues beyond the obligatory working time and increases the number of gestures of humanity, solidarity, sharing, community celebrations and possibly generous acts of forgiveness.

Pat Gaffney

Many ways exist to raise awareness for the need for peace and reconciliation in our world.....The icon [shown in the illustration] was dedicated to Pax Christi, the international Catholic Movement for peace in Jerusalem in 1999. The icon, in its style and in some of the stories presented, symbolises the connection between Eastern and Western Christianity and our links with Judaism and Islam. We see the risen Jesus, teaching the Lord's Prayer in the New Jerusalem. People are living in unity with God's peace coming to reign on earth. Christ is our source of reconciliation, liberation and peace.

The icon's ability to engage people has been a valuable reminder that too many words are sometimes used and words are sometimes inadequate in expressing deep emotions and aspirations about peace. In his book *Praying with Icons*, Henri Nouwen talks about how icons help us to access the mystery of the invisible through the gate of the visible – taking us closer to the heart of God. He suggests that when we gaze at the icon, we become present with it and with the painter and we may be led to a new clarity. Over the years we have developed resources to help this engagement with the message of the Pax Christi Icon.





Hungering for justice

Mt 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their fill.

Álvaro Echeverría

Education for justice should not be merely a specific subject area but a common thread that runs through the entire curriculum. The common thread should be reinforced by daily practice within the school. It is important to create a kind of micro-climate that does not support the anti-values which society often presents to us: market worship, corruption, fighting, competition and consumerism. It is important that within the school there exists an experience of justice in which values such as solidarity, communion and participation are top priorities.

Diocese of Westminster

St Maximilian Kolbe died in a concentration camp because he took the place of another prisoner who had been condemned to die that day. It is remarkable example of how someone would actually make the total sacrifice. Most of us struggle with the idea of giving up a part of our freedom, even temporarily, for others. There is, however, no greater sign of God's presence in us than when we love one another as fully and completely as possible - with no holding back, no exceptions. Jesus loved us completely when he died on the cross for us, giving his very life for us. When we think first of others, and their needs, and offer ourselves in service of others, God - who is love - is most present in us.

*When we
offer ourselves
in service of others,
God - who is love -
is most present in us.*

Diocese of Westminster



Living in a Spirit of Faith



Theme 6

Living the Creative cycle of death and resurrection



On Good Friday, April 7 1719, De Phly painted the portrait of John Baptist De La Salle, who had died earlier that morning. It is the only portrait we are sure was painted with the Founder's features before the artist. Unfortunately, this painting was lost in 1905 and we now have only two photographs of it, both in poor condition.





Opening to God's word

Is 9:1 - 2, 5 - 6

The people that walked in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who live in a land of deep shadow
a light has shone.
You have made their gladness greater,
you have made their joy increase;
they rejoice in your presence
as people rejoice at harvest time,
as they are happy when they are dividing the spoils.

For there is a child born for us,
a son given to us
and dominion is laid on his shoulders;
and this is the name they give him:
Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God,
Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.

DLS

I shall unite my actions with those of Jesus Christ at least twenty times a day, and I shall strive to make all my views and intentions accord with his.

Caryll Houselander

Advent is the season of the seed: Christ loved this symbol of the seed. The seed, He said is the Word of God sown in the human heart.

The one thing that Mary did and does is the one thing that we all have to do, namely, to bear Christ in to the world.

Christ must be born from every soul, formed in every life.

Every work that we do should be a part of the Christ forming in us which is the meaning of our life, to it we must bring the patience, the self-giving, the time of secrecy, the gradual growth of Advent.

During this tender time of Advent we must carry Him in our hearts to wherever He wants to go, and there are many places to which He may never go unless we take Him to them.

At this point there is a question which will occur to a great many people. It is this: does this experience of Advent occur once in a lifetime or many times? The answer is that this depends upon the dealings of the Holy Spirit with each separate soul but that usually it occurs many times.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Allowing intimacy with God



2 Co 1:2 - 10

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, a gentle Father and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows, so that we can offer others, in their sorrows, the consolation that we have received from God ourselves. Indeed, as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so, through Christ, does our consolation overflow. When we are made to suffer, it is for your consolation and salvation. When, instead, we are comforted, this should be a consolation to you, supporting you in patiently bearing the same sufferings as we bear. And our hope for you is confident, since we know that, sharing our sufferings, you will also share our consolations.

For we should like you to realise, friends, that the things we had to undergo in Asia were more of a burden than we could carry, so that we despaired of coming through alive. Yes, we were carrying our own death warrant with us, and it has taught us not to rely on ourselves but only on God, who raises the dead to life. And God saved us from dying, as we will be saved again; yes, that is our firm hope in God, that in the future we will be saved again.

Let 108

The profound darkness which you experience is the means that God gives to draw you more surely to God's self.

Vincent Nichols

For Newman, "conscience" has far more than a moral dimension to its meaning. Rather, it is an awareness of a mysterious other in one's own self-awareness, which may be better described as a "consciousness" – a consciousness of the divine presence within the very depths of our being.

If we can create the times and spaces to cultivate this human conscience wherein the divine is discovered, then people will hear the voice of God who wants to communicate himself to them even more fully. God not only transcends the capacities of our unaided human nature, not only satisfies our deepest human desires in a manner beyond our imaginings, but does so by opening for us in Jesus Christ the personal relationship in which we can find the true and startling fullness of faith. It is a relationship formed and sealed in our baptism and strengthened in the sacraments.





Trusting

Mi 7:8, 9b, 11

Do not gloat over me, my enemy:
though I have fallen, I shall rise;
though I live in darkness, Yahweh is my light.

I will be brought out into the light
and I shall rejoice to see the rightness of God's ways.

The day is coming for rebuilding your walls.
Your frontiers will be extended that day,
people will come to you that day from Assyria as far as to Egypt,
from Tyre as far as to the river,
from sea to sea, from mountain to mountain.

Let 110

Throw yourself into God's arms;
God is your father
and will carry you when the road is rough.

William Penn

They that love beyond the world, cannot be separated by it.
Death cannot kill what never dies.
Nor can spirits ever be divided that love and live in the
same divine principle, the root and record of their friendship.
If absence be not death, neither is theirs.
Death is but crossing the world as friends do the seas;
they live in one another still.
For they must needs be present that love and live in that
which is omnipresent.
This is the comfort of friends, that though they may be said
to die, yet their friendship and society
are ever present because immortal.

*God is your father
and will carry you
when the road is rough.*

De La Salle



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Being a disciple



Jn 11:20-27

When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, it will be granted you'. 'Your brother,' said Jesus to her, 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day'. Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection.
If anyone believes in me, even though they die they will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.
Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Med 145

It was the happiness of Saint James to be present at the Transfiguration, and... his privilege to accompany Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Are you as ready to follow Christ to Calvary as to Mount Tabor?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The path of discipleship is narrow, and it is fatally easy to miss one's way and stray from the path, even after years of discipleship. And it is hard to find. On either side of the narrow path deep chasms yawn. To be called to a life of extraordinary quality, to live up to it, and yet to be unconscious of it is indeed a narrow way. To confess and testify to the truth as it is in Jesus, and at the same time to love the enemies of that truth, his enemies and ours, and to love them with the infinite love of Jesus Christ, is indeed a narrow way. To believe the promise of Jesus that his followers shall possess the earth, and at the same time to face our enemies unarmed and defenceless, preferring to incur injustice rather than to do wrong ourselves, is indeed a narrow way. To see the weakness and wrong in others, and at the same time refrain from judging them; to deliver the gospel message without casting pearls before swine, is indeed a narrow way.

The way is unutterably hard, and at every moment we are in danger of straying from it. If we regard this way as one we follow in obedience to an external command, if we are afraid of ourselves all the time, it is indeed an impossible way. But if we behold Jesus Christ going on before step by step, if we only look to him and follow him, step by step, we shall not go astray. But if we worry about the dangers that beset us, if we gaze at the road instead of at him who goes before, we are already straying from the path. For he is himself the way, the narrow way and the strait gate. He, and he alone, is our journey's end. When we know that, we are able to proceed along the narrow way through the strait gate of the cross, and on to eternal life, and the very narrowness of the road will increase our certainty. The way which the son of God trod on earth, and the way which we too must tread as citizens of two worlds on the razor edge between this world and the kingdom of heaven, could hardly be a broad way. The narrow way is bound to be right.



Receiving and responding

1 P 1:3 - 9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his children, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like Gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you loved him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is the salvation of your souls.

John Johnston

We, therefore, must be ready. Each of us must meet the Lord every day in personal prayer with the dispositions of one who longs, of one who searches, of one who honestly acknowledges his sins, of one who begs the Lord to transform him:

“Behold I come to do your will, O God
Lord, what will you have me do?
Speak, Lord, your servant is listening”

Anon.

Each of us is like a grain of wheat planted by God. Just as a grain of wheat must die so as to produce a harvest, so we must die to self in order to bear the fruits of love. This dying to self is a gradual process and happens in little ways.

Every act of humility involves dying to pride.
Every act of courage involves dying to cowardice.
Every act of kindness involves dying to cruelty.
Every act of love involves dying to selfishness.

Thus the false self dies, and the true self, made in God's image, is born and nurtured.

It is by giving that we receive;
it is by forgiving that we are forgiven;
it is by dying that we are born to eternal life.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Embracing uncertainty

Jr 6:16 - 17

Yahweh says this, 'Put yourselves on the ways of long ago, enquire about the ancient paths: which was the good way? Take it then, and you shall find rest. Instead they have said, 'We will not take it.' I posted look-outs on their behalf: Listen to the sound of the trumpet!'

Med 22:2

From this hour let us endeavour to receive Him in the fulness of His Spirit by abandoning ourselves entirely to His direction. In allowing ourselves to be so governed we may truly say, "It is Christ that lives in me."

Sandra Cronk

Contemplative experience often results in creative restructuring of our patterns of thought and behaviour. In the death of the old, the new can appear. Through being stripped of the usual inward ideas and illusions about ourselves, our world, and even about God, we are able to let go of narrow or false understandings of the nature of human existence which were manufactured out of our fears, hurts, angers, desires or were passed along by the social order in which we live. As a result we are able to see more clearly. We are released from enslavement to false expectations and wrong desires. Our lives are now centred in that empty place with God. Out of that new centring comes a freedom to make new decisions, to see new truth, and to enter a new pattern of life.

*In the death of the old,
the new can appear.*

Sandra Cronk





Risking

Mk 8:34-38

He called the people and his disciples to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let them renounce themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save their life will lose it; but anyone who loses their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. What gain, then, is it for someone to win the whole world and ruin their life? And indeed what can anyone offer in exchange for life? For if anyone in this adulterous and sinful generation is ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of them when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

Med 99:2

Do you often say, like Saint Paul, "Lord, what would you have me do?"

R S Thomas

The Coming

And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look he said.
The son looked. Far off,
As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings
Cast their shadows: a bright
Serpent, a river
Uncoiled itself, radiant
With slime.

On a bare
Hill a bare tree saddened
The sky. Many people
Held out their thin arms
To it as though waiting
For a vanished April
To return to its crossed
Boughs. The son watched
Them. Let me go there, he said.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Recognising a shared spirit and a shared humanity

Rv 21:1-5

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'You see this city? Here God lives among men. God will be at home among them; they shall be God's people, and the Lord will be their God whose name is God-with-them. God will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone.' Then the One sitting on the throne spoke, 'Now I am making the whole of creation new'.

Med 67:2

Accomplish your duty and devote yourselves entirely to bring about God's reign in your hearts and in the hearts of others.

Martin Luther King

One day...
Youngsters will learn words they will not understand.

Children from India will ask:
What is hunger?
Children from Alabama will ask:
What is racial segregation?
Children from Hiroshima will ask:
What is the atomic bomb?
Children at school will ask:
What is war?

You will answer them.
You will tell them:
Those words are not used any more,
Like stage-coaches, galleys or
slavery –

Words no longer meaningful.

That is why they have been
removed from dictionaries.





Living hopefully

Is 42:1-9

Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. I have endowed him with my spirit that he may bring true justice to the nations. He does not cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in the streets. He does not break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame. Faithfully he brings true justice; he will neither waver, nor be crushed until true justice is established on earth, for the islands are awaiting his law.

Thus says God, Yahweh, who created the heavens and spread them out, who gave shape to the earth and what comes from it, who gave breath to its people and life to the creatures that move in it: I, Yahweh, have called you to serve the cause of right; I have taken you by the hand and formed you; I have appointed you as covenant of the people and light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon. My name is Yahweh, I will not yield my glory to another, nor my honour to idols. See how former predictions have come true. Fresh things I now foretell; before they appear I tell you of them.

Med 38:1

God has a greater wish to bestow his favours upon you than you have to receive them. His compassion for your miseries is greater than the anxiety you have to be delivered from them.

Flor McCarthy

I believe in death.
I believe that it is part of life.

I believe that we are born to die,
To die that we may live more fully;
Born to die a little each day, to selfishness, to pretence, and to sin.

I believe that every time we pass
From one stage of life to another,
Something in us dies and something new is born.
I believe we taste death in moments of loneliness, rejection,
Sorrow, disappointment and failure.

I believe that we are dying before our time
When we live in bitterness, in hatred, and in isolation.

I believe that each day we are creating our own death by the way we live.

For those with faith, death is not extinguishing the light;
it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Celebrating



Jn 16:22, 28, 33

Jesus said,
“I shall see you again and your hearts will be full of joy,
and that joy no one shall take from you.”

I came from the Father and have come into the world
and now I leave the world to go to the Father.

I have told you all this
so that you will find peace in me.
In the world you will have trouble,
but be brave: I have conquered the word.”

Med 208:2

What joy a Brother of the Christian Schools will have when he sees a great number of his students in possession of eternal happiness, for which they are indebted to him through the grace of Jesus Christ! What a sharing there will be between the teacher and his disciples!

Jean Vanier

Celebration is nourishment and resource. It renders present the goals of the community in symbolic form, and so brings hope and a new strength to take up everyday life with more love. Celebration is a sign of the resurrection which gives us strength to carry the cross each day. There is an intimate bond between celebration and the cross.

*Celebration
is a sign of the resurrection
which gives us strength
to carry the cross each day.*



Accepting ourselves as God's gift to others and accepting others as God's gift to us.

Jn 15:12-13

This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. No-one can have greater love than to lay down their life for their friends.

Aidan Kilty

As in De La Salle's time, "God has had the goodness to remedy so great a misfortune" by providing educators who can witness to more lasting values and who, by their gestures of grace, act as Guardian Angels or Good Shepherds to those confided to their care. This is not to deny the obvious difficulties that are inherent in the vocation of a Lasallian educator; rather it is to acknowledge that it is a grace-filled ministry in which we are invited "to work according to the grace that has been given to instruct by teaching and to exhort by encouraging those who are entrusted to our care..."

Benedict XVI

Augustine noted that the two words, "holy" and "Spirit" refer to what is divine about God; in other words, what is shared by the Father and the Son – their communion. So, if the distinguishing characteristic of the Holy Spirit is to be what is shared by the Father and the Son, Augustine concluded that the Spirit's particular quality is unity of lived communion: a unity of persons in a relationship of constant giving, the Father and the Son giving themselves to each other True unity could never be founded upon relationships which deny the equal dignity of other persons. Nor is unity simply the sum total of the group through which we sometimes attempt to "define" ourselves. In fact, only in the life of communion is unity sustained and human identity fulfilled: we recognise the common need for God, we respond to the unifying presence of the Holy Spirit, and we give ourselves to one another in service.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Lk 23:35-46

The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. 'He saved others,' they said, 'let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.' The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer vinegar they said, 'If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself'. Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews'.

One of the criminals hanging there abused him. 'Are you not the Christ?' he said. 'Save yourself and us as well.' But the other spoke up and rebuked him. 'Have you no fear of God at all?' he said. 'You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,' he said, 'remember me when you come into your kingdom.' 'Indeed, I promise you,' he replied, 'today you will be with me in paradise.'

It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, '*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit*'. With these words he breathed his last.

Med 86:2

In choosing our state we should have resolved to be as lowly as the Son of God when he became man, for this is what is most noticeable in our profession and our work. We are poor Brothers, forgotten and little appreciated by the people of the world. It is only the poor who come looking for us; they have nothing to offer but their hearts, ready to accept our instructions...

R S Thomas

The Kingdom

It's a long way off but inside it
There are quite different things going on:
Festivals at which the poor man
Is king and the consumptive is
Healed; mirrors in which the blind look
At themselves and love looks at them
Back; and industry is for mending
The bent bones and the minds fractured
By life. It's a long way off, but to get
There takes no time and admission
Is free, if you will purge yourself
Of desire, and present yourself with
Your need only and the simple offering
Of your faith green as a leaf.



Building community

I Co 3:9-17

We are fellow workers with God; you are God's farm, God's building. By the grace God gave me, I succeeded as an architect and laid the foundations, on which someone else is doing the building. Everyone doing the building must work carefully. For the foundation, nobody can lay any other than the one which has already been laid, that is Jesus Christ. On this foundation you can build in gold, silver and jewels, or in wood, grass and straw, but whatever the material, the work of each builder is going to be clearly revealed when the day comes. That day will begin with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If their structure stands up to it, they will get their wages; if it is burnt down, they will be the loser; and though they are saved themselves, it will be by going through fire. Didn't you realise that you were God's temple and that the Spirit of God was living among you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy them, because the temple of God is sacred; and you are that temple.

John Johnston

Canon Blain writes, 'This was the sad situation of the pious Founder at the end of 1690: after so many sacrifices, after so many difficulties and labours, after so many crosses and persecutions, after so many apparent successes, he found himself in almost the same state as he had been ten years before. He had few brothers, his work had progressed hardly at all; he was afraid it would be destroyed [he found himself] in great perplexity.'

My intention ... is to propose what has come to be called the 'Heroic Vow' (of 1691) as a model of response to crisis, and suggest that we need to respond with similar faith-filled resolve to the different, but no-less-real crises which [we] face three hundred years later.

Marcus Aurelius

In the morning when thou risest unwillingly, let this thought be present - I am rising to the work of a human being. Why then am I dissatisfied if I am going to do the things for which I exist and for which I was brought into the world? O have I been made for this, to lie in the bed clothes and keep myself warm? Dost thou not see the little plants, the little birds, the ants, the spiders, the bees working together to put in order their several parts of the universe. And art thou unwilling to do the work of a human being?.. One man, when he has done a service to another, is ready to set it down to his account as a favour conferred. Another is not ready to do this, but still in his own mind he thinks of the man as his debtor, and he knows what he has done. A third in a manner does not even know what he has done, but he is like a vine which has produced grapes, and seeks for nothing more after it has once produced its proper fruit. As a horse, when he has run, a dog when he has tracked the game, as a bee when it has made the honey, so a man when he has done a good act, does not call out for others to come and see but he goes on to another act, as a vine goes on to produce again the grapes in season.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Living our commitment



Ph 2:1-11

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other s people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus: His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Med 79:2

The more humble people are, the more God accomplishes great things through them.

Anon.

The Host

I did not know his name
When he said 'Come',
And took my arm in his
And led me to my gate,
As if the house was his
and I the guest.

I did not know his name
When he said 'Listen',
And spoke of other folk
I never knew
But who were soon to come
and knock my door.

I did not know his name
When he said mine,
And asked for loaves of bread,
A glass of wine
And two small copper coins
For one old dear
who'd just arrived.

I did not know his name
When he said 'Take',
And at my table, with his
friends,
He broke a roll and shared his
glass,
And said 'This is for you.'
And sang a love song to us all.

I never knew his name
Until he rose to leave
And kissed me on the brow
And said 'I'm with you always
now.'
I said, 'My Lord.'
He keeps his word.





Being a communion of saints

Rv 7:9-17

After that I saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language; they were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted aloud, 'Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels who were standing in a circle round the throne, surrounding the elders and the four animals, prostrated themselves before the throne, and touched the ground with their foreheads, worshipping God with these words, 'Amen. Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'

One of the elders then spoke, and asked me, 'Do you know who these people are, dressed in white robes, and where they have come from?' I answered him, 'You can tell me, my lord'. Then he said, 'These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne, serving day and night in God's sanctuary; and the One who sits on the throne will spread a tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Med 70:3

The Saints see clearly the nature of God, whereas we enjoy God only by faith.

George Eliot

O may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And, with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues . . .
This is the life to come.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Witnessing



Jn 18:33-38

So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called Jesus to him, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' he asked. Jesus replied, 'Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?' Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?' Jesus replied, 'Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.' 'So you are a king then?' said Pilate. 'It is you who say it,' answered Jesus. 'Yes, I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.' 'Truth?' said Pilate 'What is that?'

MTR 3

You are ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ!.

George Herbert

Who would have thought my shrivell'ed heart
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone
Quite underground, as flowers depart
To feed their mother root when they have blown
Where they together
All the hard weather
Dead to the world, keep house unknown

These are thy wonders, Lord, Power
Killing and quickening, bringing down to hell
And up to heaven in an hour;
Making a chiming of a passing bell.
We say amiss
This or that is;
Thy word is all if we could spell.

*You are ambassadors
and ministers
of Jesus Christ!.*



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Serving as mission

Lk 2:22-35

And when the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord - observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: *Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord* - and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons*. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said,

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel'.

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected - and a sword will pierce your own soul too - so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare'.

Michel Sauvage

The route followed by De La Salle is like that of Jesus Christ - one of 'kenosis', of stripping of self, and finally death. It is difficult not to think of Saint Paul's description of Christ's humiliation when we see De La Salle to be one with the teachers and sharing their life, living as one of them and hence abandoning his own milieu, giving up his fortune, privileges and culture, even renouncing any ideas he may have had concerning his apostolate as a priest. In the path of incarnation and self-deprivation, he thus shares in the sufferings and struggles of Christ: he experiences the anguish and loneliness of one who is abandoned by God and accepts that situation... In this incarnation and history nothing is settled in advance: growth in the mystery of Christ cannot be separated from a real insertion among mankind.

Ignatius Loyola

Take Lord and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding, and my will.
Receive, Lord, whatever I have or possess.
You have given all these things to me;
To you Lord I return them.
They are yours; dispose of them according to your will.
Give me your love and your grace: for this is enough for me.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Accompanying



Lk 16:19-31

‘There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and feast magnificently every day. And at his gate there lay a poor man called Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to fill himself with the scraps that fell from the rich man’s table. Dogs even came and licked his sores. Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried.

‘In his torment in Hades he looked up and saw Abraham a long way off with Lazarus in his bosom. So he cried out, “Father Abraham, pity me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.” “My son,” Abraham replied, “remember that during your life good things came your way, just as bad things came the way of Lazarus. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony. But that is not all: between us and you a great gulf has been fixed, to stop anyone, if he wanted to, crossing from our side to yours, and to stop any crossing from your side to ours.”

‘The rich man replied, “Father, I beg you then to send Lazarus to my father’s house, since I have five brothers, to give them warning so that they do not come to this place of torment too.” “They have Moses and the prophets,” said Abraham. “Let them listen to them.” “Ah no, father Abraham,” said the rich man, “but if someone comes to them from the dead, they will repent.” Then Abraham said to him, “If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead.”

Med 133

Look upon those whom God has entrusted to you as the children of God. Take much more care over their education and instruction than if they were the sons of a king.

US Catholic Bishops

Jesus came to bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, give sight to the blind and release prisoners. His mission became that of the Church, and it is now ours.

Had Jesus merely said that his mission was to set people free from sin and all forms of oppression, his words would have fallen on deaf ears. He had to work at this task of liberation. He not only talked about freeing the poor and oppressed but, undeterred by criticism, actually welcomed the poor and sinners to share at his table. Like Jesus, we must be able to accompany others in their suffering and be willing to suffer with them.

In its openness to all, the Church’s mission makes a special option for the poor and powerless. This special option is deeply rooted in the mission of Jesus, who rejected no one but was especially sensitive to those who needed him most. The poor, destitute and powerless of the world help us see and evaluate the evils of our society and the evils that one society or nation inflicts on another. Accompanying the poor assures us of the relevance of our message of salvation.



Being good shepherds

Ezk 34:17-27

As for you, my sheep, the Lord Yahweh says this: I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats. Not content to graze in good pastures, you trample down the rest; not content to drink clear water, you muddy the rest with your feet. And my sheep must graze on what your feet have trampled, drink what your feet have muddied. Very well then, the Lord Yahweh says this: I myself am now about to judge between fat sheep and lean sheep. Since you have butted all the weak sheep with your rumps and shoulders and horns, until you have chased them away, I am going to come and rescue my sheep from being cheated; I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I mean to raise up one shepherd, my servant David, and to put him in charge of them and he will pasture them; he will pasture them and be their shepherd. I, Yahweh, will be their God, and my servant David shall be their ruler. I, Yahweh, have spoken. I shall make a covenant of peace with them; I shall rid the country of wild animals. They will be able to live safely in the wilderness and go to sleep in the woods. I shall settle them round my hill; I shall send rain at the proper time; it will be a fertile rain. The trees of the countryside will yield their fruit and the earth its produce; they will feel safe on their own farms. And men will learn that I am Yahweh when I break their yoke straps and release them from their captors.

Med 38:2

God has a greater wish to bestow favours upon you than you have to receive them. God's compassion for your miseries is greater than the anxiety you have to be delivered from them.

William Bausch

In Eugene O'Neill's play, *The Great God Brown*, a man is on his deathbed, and he's very frightened. At his side is a woman who has become something of a mother figure to him in the last moments of his life. So she speaks to him as though he were a child, saying, 'Go to sleep, Billy. It's all right.' And he says, 'Yes mother.' Then he starts to explain what he has experienced in life.

'It was dark,' he says, 'and I couldn't see where I was going, and they all picked on me.' The woman then says, 'I know. But you're tired now, go to sleep.' And he answers, 'And when I wake up?' She replies, 'The sun will be rising.' Then Billy interrupts and says, in great seriousness, 'To judge the living and the dead.' And in great fear, he adds, 'I don't want justice, I want love.' The woman replies quietly, 'There is only love.' As he dies, Billy begins to repeat the words of the only prayer he knows: 'Our Father who art in heaven...'



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Honouring

Is 66:18-23

I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They shall come to witness my glory. I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put, Lud, Moshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, to the distant islands that have never heard of me or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory to the nations. As an offering to Yahweh they will bring all your brothers, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules, on dromedaries, from all the nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem, says Yahweh, like Israelites bringing oblations in clean vessels to the Temple of Yahweh. And of some of them I will make priests and Levites, says Yahweh.

For as the new heavens
and the new earth I shall make
will endure before me - it is I Yahweh who speaks -
so will your race and name endure.

From New Moon to New Moon,
from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all peoples will come to bow down
in my presence, says Yahweh.

Med 88:1

You are in a profession in which you need to be honoured with the friendship of Jesus Christ.

Viktor Frankl

Usually, to be sure, man considers only the stubble field of transitoriness and overlooks the full granaries of the past wherein he had salvaged once and for all his deeds, his joys and also his sufferings. Nothing can be undone, and nothing can be done away with. I should say that having been is the surest kind of being.

...we might say: The pessimist resembles a man who observes with fear and sadness that his wall calendar, from which he daily shares a sheet, grows thinner with each passing day. On the other hand, the person who attacks the problems of life actively is like a man who removes each successive leaf from his calendar and files it neatly and carefully away with its predecessors, after having first jotted down a few diary notes on the back. He can reflect with pride and joy on all the richness set down in these notes, on all the life he has already lived to the fullest. What will it matter to him that he is growing old? Has he any reason to envy the young people whom he sees, or wax nostalgic over his own lost youth? What reasons has he to envy a young person? For the possibilities that a young person has, the future that is in store for him? 'No, thank you,' he will think. 'Instead of possibilities, I have realities in my past, not only the reality of work done and of love loved, but of sufferings bravely suffered. These sufferings are even the thing of which I am most proud, though these are things which cannot inspire envy.'





Seeking wholeness

1 Pt 5:6-7

Bow down, then, before the power of God now, and he will raise you up on the appointed day; unload all your worries on to the Lord who is looking after you.

Med 195:3

Earnestly ask Jesus that all your work be energised by his Spirit and draw all its power from him.

Anon.

Just as the leper in the gospel story (Mark 1:40-45) moves Jesus with pity, we too are moved, moved by this man's condition and by his faith. It was he who approached Jesus, he who asked for healing. He surrendered himself to Jesus by acknowledging that his healing was entirely in the hands of Jesus and under Jesus' own will. Are we surrendering our selves when we pray, acknowledging his power in all things? Or do we think we know best? This leper, through his faith in Jesus, saw the shackles of his life fall from him at the divine touch. Are we giving Jesus the same chance to change our lives?

Jesus did not stand off or keep his distance. He was not afraid to touch others. He touched lepers, sinners, sick people and even the dead.

Physical contact is precisely what gives people, especially sick and wounded people, a sense of warmth and joy. By the very act of touching another person, we accept that person exactly as he or she is. Lord, give us a warm heart and kind hands.

Lord, give us a warm heart and kind hands.

Anonymous



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Reconciling



Rm 6:1-11

Does it follow that we should remain in sin so as to let grace have greater scope? Of course not. We are dead to sin, so how can we continue to live in it? You have been taught that when we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When Christians die, of course, they have finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

Med 32:1 and 85:1

Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, enters a room where the Apostles were assembled, though doors were closed, to show us that the entry to a soul which does not live a new life, a life of grace, is closed to all the interior movements of the Holy Spirit, and is reconciled to merely human and natural acts. This is a result of the blindness of intellect and hardness of heart which are caused by sin.

How long has Jesus been knocking at the door of your heart and been waiting to enter, and you have not wished to receive him?

Jean Vanier

In Holy Scripture, water signifies life and forgiveness, water cleanses, purifies, refreshes, gives life. No water means no life. The earth becomes a desert; there is death.

To forgive means to give life, to remove what has been an obstacle to friendship and communion: those inner, psychological walls that had prevented dialogue and communication. These walls are judgements that separate and isolate us from others and push people into anguish and inner death. To forgive means we no longer judge others. Forgiveness breaks down blockages to communication and communion so that we can say to another: 'I appreciate you just as you are; I love you and want you to live.' Isn't the washing of the feet a prefiguration of the sacrament of reconciliation and the power that Jesus gives?



Collaborating

Lk 23:26-31

As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus. Large numbers of people followed him, and of women too, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, "Happy are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!" Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!", to the hills, "Cover us!" For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?'

DLS

I commend first of all my soul to God, and next all the Brothers of the Christian Schools with whom God has united me.

Institute Bulletin 249

To set off for a foreign country desiring to integrate, is synonymous with openness of spirit, tolerance and respect for others and their differences. It is a lesson in humanity...

Openness to a new culture teaches us to open ourselves to others, teaches us humility, respect...

In Abidjan (with the street children) it was to experience fraternity in action, contact with cultures and minds. It was the apprenticeship in tolerance which is not indifference but respect for and interest in others...

On arrival, the shock is so violent in the face of so much misery that the first feeling is one of anger, a feeling of revolt. How can there be so much inequality, so much injustice on the same planet...

The hardest thing is to accept this reality as it is presented to us and then be able to try to understand it. It is not a matter of giving in before such misery but of opening one's eyes to see things as they are and be able to go beyond that feeling of compassion which very often prevents us from really sharing and discovering.

Faith, fraternity and service were words which were lived every day and truly, and so making real the message left by Saint John Baptist de La Salle...

From this project I will retain the experience of life in a group...



Living in a Spirit of Faith

Mi 4:1-3

In the days to come the mountain of the Temple of Yahweh will be put on top of the mountains and be lifted higher than the hills. The peoples will stream to it, nations without number will come to it; and they will say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the Temple of the God of Jacob so that he may teach us the ways and we may walk in his paths; since from Zion the Law will go out, and the oracle of Yahweh from Jerusalem.' He will wield authority over many peoples and arbitrate for mighty nations; they will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, there will be no more training for war.

Álvaro Echeverría

Once again the risen Lord invites us to share his triumph over death and to fight for the values of life. The Risen One is the Good News of love who conquers death and renews and builds up life. He is the Good News of justice and freedom, who conquers all forms of oppression, marginalization and slavery. He proclaims that the forces of evil do not have nor will have the last word in the history of humankind. The definitive word is the word of life and peace. We are the bearers of this word in our ministry of human and Christian education.

The resurrection of Jesus is the central core of our faith and of our vocation. It gives deep meaning to our lives as members of the Lasallian Family and it opens a door for us to a definitive future, filling our hearts with great hope despite the crises we may experience today.

Ronald Rolheiser

Life is what happens to you while you are planning your life. So, too, conversion. Having cancer taught me some lessons other than the ones I'd planned. Most important among these was this: like everyone else in this world, I've always wanted joy in my life. But, and this has been the big handicap, I have always (however unconsciously) felt that the joy and celebration I so longed for could only come my way when I was finally free from all anxiety, emotional tension, pressure, overwork, illness, frustration and stress of all kinds. We nurse this strange fantasy that it is only after all our bills are paid, our health is perfect, all tensions within our families and friendships are resolved and we are in a peaceful leisured space that we can finally fully enter life and enjoy it. In the meantime we put our lives on hold as we perpetually gear up, get ready and wait for that perfect moment to arrive where we can finally rejoice within life.

While undergoing cancer treatment, to my own surprise, I found I was living through one of the richer happier periods in my life. In the tiredness, nausea and neuropathy I was finding a rich enjoyment in friendships, colleagues, work and (on days I could actually taste them) food and drink. The six months in which I was undergoing cancer treatment turned out to be, to my own surprise, six happy and deeply meaningful months.





Hungering for justice

Is 58:6-8

Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me;
to break the chains of injustice,
to untie the cords of the yoke
to let the oppressed go free.
Is it not sharing your food with the hungry,
and sheltering the homeless poor?
Then your light will blaze out like the dawn.

Med 25:3

Jesus cried out, shortly before dying,
that he was thirsty.
The holy fathers understand this thirst
as the longing for our salvation
which impelled him.

Glen Argan

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

That is quite a promise. It says that if you are a voice for truth and justice and that if you act for justice – if your hunger for righteousness is so palpable that not even fear can hold it back – then justice will be done.

This seems too good to be true. There are powerful people and entrenched interests everywhere. Those who challenge those interests are often likely to pay a price. Their fear is not misplaced.

There was Archbishop Oscar Romero who spoke the truth to a bloody, repressive regime and asked soldiers to lay down their arms, whose hunger for righteousness cost him his life. There were four students in the United States who went to Mississippi in the 1960s to work in the civil rights movement and who were lynched for their efforts.

Those are but high profile examples of the price that someone, somewhere is paying every day for their hunger and thirst for justice. How can we say that such people will be satisfied?

This beatitude – along with the others – makes no sense except in the light of the resurrection. No magic bullet exists that will set this world aright without the grace of God. The knowledge that the horrible injustice of this world will not be eliminated this side of Christ's Second Coming can evoke one of two responses. On one hand, a person can become cynical and believe nothing will ever change.

On the other hand, one's hunger and thirst for justice can be strengthened by a trust that Christ will come again. One will not be satisfied with waiting until heaven for justice to be finally fulfilled. Just as the Eucharist is a sacramental sign of the fullness of Christ's presence so too are the small acres of justice and peace in the world signs of the fullness of God's kingdom.



Living in a Spirit of Faith

James Miller FSC

On February 13th, 1982, whilst Brother James was repairing a wall for the Brothers' school for Mayan Indian boys, three men approached him and shot him, each emptying their guns to make sure he was dead. A few days after his death the De La Salle Brothers Regional Superior in Guatemala, Brother Paul, released the following statement to the press:

'I want to state very clearly that Brother's death was no accident, Brother James died for what he was and for what he stood for – A Christian educator, and apostle of the poor and underprivileged, a worker for justice and of social change.'

As Brother Paul, Regional Superior for Guatemala, wrote at the time of the murder "It is extremely difficult to say with any certitude who Brother's murderers might be... Nor can it be said that Brother James was singled out as an individual."

James was from Wisconsin, USA and was a conscientious, capable, and zealous teacher, who had a deep faith and a strong commitment to the poor, especially those in Central America.

At James Miller's funeral Mass, Bishop Frederick Freking said,

"I see in Brother James' death the witness of Christ's love, a witness to the dignity of the human person, and the right to freedom and justice that should be all of ours. Today we need to take a stand on these rights, especially of the poor. Thank God there are people like Brother James to do that".



James Miller FSC
1944 - 1981

The Martyrs of Valencia

In 1936, five Brothers, Honorato (28), Florencio (23), Ambrosio (22), Bertrán (23) and Elias (35) were martyred in Valencia during the Spanish Civil War. Honoratio, Florencio and Ambrosio were killed on 22 October and the other two on 22 November. Their crime: being De La Salle Brothers. They were beatified, along with 221 other martyrs from the Diocese of Valencia in 2001. Their feast day is on September 22.



The Martyrs of Valencia

God our Father,
we give you thanks
for the witness to your love
in the life and death
of our Martyrs of Valencia.
May their prayer
help us transform our good intentions
into loving deeds.
We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.





Glossary of Lasallian terms

Abbreviations: Lasallian Abbreviations can be found on page V of this publication

Association: One of the vows the Brothers take and is seen as one of the defining elements of being a Lasallian, that they work 'together and by association' in carrying out the Lasallian educational mission.

Circular: Refers to publications from the Brothers' General Council in Rome.

Consecrated life: Denotes a form of Christian living, usually in Community, the members of which take the vows of Religion. The De La Salle Brothers first vow - Association for the education of children, especially of the poor - asserts their commitment to God's Mission, which is supported by taking the vows of Religion, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. At final profession they also make a vow of Stability.

Declaration: The full title of the Declaration is, The Declaration on the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the World Today. A document prepared for the General Chapter in 1966 that gives an understanding of the spirit, purpose and work of the Brothers.

Founder: St John Baptist De La Salle, who set up the religious Institute known as 'Fratres Scholarum Christianarum' (Brothers of the Christian Schools), known also as the De La Salle Brothers or, in the USA, 'The De La Salle Christian Brothers'. 'FSC, from the Latin, is usually written after the Brothers' names.

General Chapter: The General Chapter is conducted at the Generalate in Rome and is representative of all Brothers worldwide; legislation is undertaken, and the Superior General is elected for a seven-year term. The General Chapter held in 2007 was the 44th in the history of the Institute.

Institute: The De La Salle Brothers are often referred to as a Religious Order but technically they are a Religious Institute approved by the Catholic Church. Therefore in some documents the overall organisation is referred to as the Institute.

Lasallian: The word Lasallian is often added to another word such as school or spirituality indicating that there is a connection of ideas with St John Baptist De La Salle and with the De La Salle Brothers. On its own, the word Lasallian can also refer to a person who in a spirit of faith and zeal wishes to be involved in the Lasallian Educational Mission (see below).

Lasallian Charism: In a context of faith, Charism is a gift which the Holy Spirit gives a person for community service or, better yet, to enable the person to contribute to the community's mission. The two major gifts of the Lasallian Charism that De La Salle identified were faith in God, and zeal for the Lasallian educational mission.

Lasallian Educational Mission: 'The purpose of this Institute is to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it.' (Rule 3)

Lasallian School: A school run on the principles outlined by St John Baptist De La Salle and the founding Brothers.

Mission: from the Latin root meaning 'sent', the term includes various works or apostolates to which the Church sends people and institutions.

Partners: A term used to describe people who are co-workers, associates, or colleagues of the Brothers.

Rule: The Rule for the De La Salle Brothers published in 1987 and revised in 2002. See also below the note on Lasallian Sources regarding changes made to the Rule in this volume. As we go to print, the Rule of 1987 (updated 2002) is being revised for the General Chapter of 2014.

Themes: Refers to 'Lasallian Themes', a three-volume publication published by the De La Salle Brothers, Rome, in 1992.

