

35. THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

Summary:

1. The Christian teacher in the 17th century. – 2. The relationship between De La Salle and his teachers. – 3. The Lasallian vision of the teacher.

1. THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER IN THE 17th CENTURY

In the 17th Century various names were used to designate the person who exercised the teaching function. Among them were “School Master”, “School teacher” and, the most frequent, “teacher”. It appears that the designation “Christian teacher” was not among those used. It does not appear in Bathencourt’s “The Parish School” nor was it used by Démia, by Chennevière nor by Félix Vialard de Herse. Neither is it found in the “Collection of the Minutes of the French Clergy” nor in the “Essay on a Christian School” and neither De La Salle nor his biographers make use of it. At sight this seems strange in a century profoundly influenced by Christianity but, on deeper reflection, it is logical since practically all the French teachers of this century were Christian so that to add this adjective to the name was to create a redundant addition.

In fact there were many ecclesiastics among those who were dedicated to teaching in schools and throughout the century the number of religious who became involved in teaching increased. Those lay people who earned their living through this occupation were given the task by the Church which dominated and controlled teaching especially in the countryside. The Parish Priest and the

Bishop gave the teacher permission to teach — a permission which normally had to be renewed annually — on condition that he observed diocesan rules and statutes which regulated teaching. In Paris this permission, and its renewal, was granted by the “Grand Chantre” who was a kind of Director of Primary teaching appointed by ecclesiastical authorities.

While the “evaluation” of the teacher spoke, at times, of his competence and of his attitude towards the pupils and towards the local community, the focus was centred especially on his religious suitability and on his moral qualities. When considering a candidate the ecclesiastical authorities considered, above all, his “catholicism”, orthodox doctrine, goodliving and irreproachable habits.¹ In the school where such teachers taught the aim of the instruction was eminently Christian — the learning of the religious doctrine and a way of life in conformity with the Catholic or Protestant faith. In the same way, the contents and the practices of the teaching were markedly religious.

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DE LA SALLE AND HIS TEACHERS

The relationship which De La Salle had with his teachers was a relationship which evolved over

a period of time (MC cf. B1 167, 169; Bd 30, 34, 37, 39, 40). Firstly, with regard to the concept — at the beginning, he did not think much of the type of person who presented himself to take charge of the classes, considering them as lower than his valet. However, later he was to develop a very high concept both of their social function and of their religious mission. Secondly, with regard to his relationship with them, from a “purely exterior direction” of the teachers he moved to a complete involvement with those whom God had associated with him to work in the same mission (B2, 388; Testament). From being a well-endowed and willingly-disposed person who cared for and helped, “out of pure charity”, those who were in need, he became associated and committed with them in everything and for life (B1 313). He began working *for* them, being concerned for their subsistence and ensuring that they exercised their employment with piety and dedication. The following stage was to move progressively to live *with* them, initially by having them lodge near to his residence, having them spend part of the day in his own house and then, finally, to have them stay in his house. The process culminated when De La Salle, having renounced his canonry and disposed of his goods, came to live in the same way *as*, them, experiencing what they experienced and exercising the same work which they undertook (Bd 66) — in a word “being the same as them in everything” (B2 355). Having undertaken a physical, cultural and social exodus his family came to consist of “poor children and the teachers destined to instruct them” (B2 371).

However, it was not easy to undertake such a change (B1 169; B2 356, 357, 364; Bd 30, 38) for, as he was to later admit, if he had known from the beginning the sacrifices which were to be demanded he would not have had the courage to take the steps which he undertook in giving himself to the teachers and to the schools and, in fact, the very thought would have been intolerable for him. Educated in a “good” environment and used to social contact with people of the world and of the Church, it was only with much sacrifice and repugnance and with the effort of much renunciation that he became used to the meals and the manners of these “simple souls”, “uneducated” “Mr. Nobodies”. Without being able to foresee

the future, he gave himself to prayer and reflection and sought the advice of wise and enlightened people in the ways of God. Allowing himself to be led “from one commitment to another” he ended up by seeing clearly that his particular vocation was to commit himself to the schools and to the teachers, a vocation which he accepted with all its consequences. The consequences were that, over forty years, he was to be a tender father, a faithful and sincere friend, a vigilant, zealous and charitable pastor, a confessor and respected spiritual director, a skilful and experienced doctor and a teacher (B1 326; B2 367, 372) — in other words, a formator of his teachers as human beings and as religious and professional people.

He was primarily concerned for them (Bd 81; B2 363). To lead them to the perfection of their state and of their employment was the great objective of his zeal. He dedicated himself to sanctify others to the extent that they themselves were holy...” (B2 313, 336, 356, 364, 367). His love for them was tender and manly and he showed himself to be good-natured with them without, however, tolerating, for example, the performance of their duties out of mere compliance (B2 367, 375-376).

He frequently visited the schools (B1 315; B2 359, 367) and during these visits he reviewed both the progress of the teachers and of the work observing how the teachers taught, how they conducted themselves with the pupils as well as seeing whether they observed the norms established for maintaining discipline. Similarly, he was concerned that they were not exhausted by their ministry and he also indicated the faults which they committed in its exercise. The result of his presence was to renew and encourage them in their work. Another way of communicating with them was through his letters which are full of congratulations, warning and directions so that his disciples would be faithful and exemplary in carrying out their educational work.

He made himself their disciple — “he was more their disciple than they his”, as Blain remarked — listening to their judgements and to their just and, at times, agonized concerns (B1 437; B2 37). He consulted them in “a consistent and habitual way” (B1 340), listened to their opinions, gathered their votes and accepted the voice of the

majority (B2 389). He gave them responsibilities (Bd 84, 85; B1 356) and allowed them to participate, through assemblies and interchanges, in the shaping of his society, in the establishment of community and pedagogical practices and in the acceptance of new works (B1 232-233; CE Preface p. 1; B1 370). It is also possible that if, at times, he left them alone, he did so purposely (B2 108) to accustom them to cope without him, helping them to mature and to direct themselves, to take the entire direction and destiny of his new Institute in their own hands. In consequence of this, he renounced his own benefits and desires which had been lovingly nurtured (Bd 48, 49, 57).

Associated in the interests of the "children which the heavens had given him", he was delighted with the zeal for perfection manifested by his disciples and for the progress which they made (B1 236; B2 365, 369). He suffered as a result of the objections and reproaches which were made against them as well as through the persecutions of which they were victims (Bd 42, 82, 83) and he went to court with them to defend them against their accusers (B1 362). It is true, too, that he had to live with their weaknesses and that some of them caused him bitter pains (B2 386-387; Bd 18-19) while others disappointed him in not responding to the confidence he had placed in them (B1 215, 311-312, 343, 356, 357, 435) or made him suffer through their imprudence, disobedience and treachery (B2 361). However, these sorrows caused by the few were the exception and were more than compensated by the attention, tenderness, attachment and confidence of the others (B2 386). They admired him (B2 164) and responded to him as sons to a father and as disciples to a master (B1 412). They defended him and wanted him as their superior (B1 419; B2 118). For them he was neither an imposed authority nor a born superior — he was an elected and re-elected superior as long as age and health permitted it and until his arguments made them accept the election of his successor (B1 349; B2 135). He had captivated them in such a way that their hearts were united to his; "... Never was there more sincere or generous attachment than that of these good sons of a good father..." (B1 442, 443).

3. THE LASALLIAN VISION OF THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

During the Ancien Regime in France the position of teacher was frequently considered as the occupation of those who could find no other profession.² De La Salle realistically demonstrated to his disciples how their work was "... honoured and esteemed only by those who possessed the spirit of Christianity..." (MF 113,1) — and he possessed it. Consequently, he was to form himself and then to succeed in transmitting to his disciples a very elevated concept of the function of the Christian teacher. At the same time he was aware that the honour which was involved in Christian teaching also carried responsibilities and that it called for very demanding commitments. He was to make them aware of this, too — the Christian teacher must consider himself honoured in having been called to the ministry (MF 79,3) and, in response, he must honour his ministry and make himself worthy of it (MR 199,3; MF 102,3).

1. De La Salle expressed the particular vision which he had of the Christian teacher by means of similes and through a series of relationships which were established between the teacher and God, Jesus Christ, figures in salvation history, and with children. With regard to God, the Christian teacher is the cultivator of his fields, the labourer in his work, the administrator of his deposit, the sacrament of his love and action. Between God and man, the teacher is a visible angel and a providential mediator. With regard to Jesus Christ, the Christian teacher is his successor in the ministry (MF 138,3). Like Jesus he is the saviour of the poor (MF 86,3; 87,2) as well as a good shepherd besides being an architect of the body of Christ. As with those figures who contributed to salvation history, the Christian teacher is a prophet, miracle-worker, apostle and bishop. With children he is a father and a guardian. In summary, the Christian teacher is a person honoured and blessed by God.

A. Children are like young plants — They are the field of which God is the *farmer* and the

teacher is called by the Lord of the vineyard and of the harvest to work in his field and to collaborate in the ploughing and the harvesting of the Lord (MR 193,3; 201,1; 205,1; 207,3; MD 67,3).

B. The Christian educator is God's *labourer* employed by the Lord and by the Church, hired by Jesus Christ to do his work which is: to devote himself to the Christian school, to take great care of the souls of his disciples, to instruct and educate them in piety, to announce the Good News of the Kingdom, to reprimand and correct their vices and to lead them all in the way of salvation (MD 37,1; 44,2; 56,1; 59,3; 61,3; 67,1.3).

C. Those who educate in justice are honored with the glorious title of "*ministers* of God and dispensers of his mysteries", ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ and of the Church in spreading the fragrance of heavenly teaching throughout the world with a view to the salvation of man (MD 3,2; 58,3; MF 94,3; 146,3; 189,3; MR 193,1.3; 195,2; 199,2; 201,2).

D. God has entrusted a precious treasure to his ministers and ambassadors in their relationship with children — they are thus the *administrators* of the deposit of faith which has to be transmitted and developed in the Christian education of those who have been entrusted to their care (MD 61,1).

E. A *sacrament* is an outward sign of the efficacious action of God in the world and among people. According to De La Salle, this is precisely what the Christian teacher is for his pupils although he uses different terminology — thus, for him, the Christian educator is the voice of God who exhorts through him (MD 3,1; MR 193,3; 201,2). He is at times another Christ, re-presenting him once again here and now. The pupils have to view the teacher in the same way as they would view their Saviour and they should receive instructions from the teacher as if it was Jesus in person who was instructing them (MR 195,2; 196,1; MF 86,3; 138,3).

F. The teacher is the precursing *angel* sent by God as a means of preparing the way for the entry

of the Lord into the hearts of the pupils (MD 2,1; cf. MF 162,2) and he is also the *Guardian Angel* who reveals the truths and the Christian maxims to them, directing them in the path of goodness and protecting them from the dangers which threaten them (MR 197-198; 208,3).

G. This angel of the school is also a *mediator* — an intermediary between God and the pupils. As in the angels in Jacob's dream, every day he goes before the Lord in order to present the needs of his disciples and returns to them as the messenger through which God communicates and teaches them (MD 37,3; 56,3; MF 186,3; MR 196,1; 198,1).

H. Like Jesus Christ, the teacher is also the *shepherd* of the flock which has been confided to him. Like Jesus, he guides his sheep and does everything to ensure that they have life and have it in abundance (MD 33; MR 196,1; 201,3; 207,2).

I. The children are the building which God constructs and the Christian teacher is called to help God in this work (MR 193,3) — he is thus the *architect* of God. The work that he does is one of the most worthy and excellent works because it contributes to the building of the body of Jesus Christ, which is the Church, and because he sustains it by the solid foundations on which he constructs — religion and piety which lasts throughout life in the hearts of those children who receive a Christian education (MF 155,1; MR 193,2; 194,3; 199,2.3; 200,1 205,2.3).

J. The *prophet* is both chosen and sent. The Lasallian educator is called and missioned by God, Jesus Christ and the Church to carry out his work, to be a co-operator in sanctification and salvation, announcing the Gospel and transmitting the spirit of Christianity (MR 196,1.2; 198,2; 199,1; 201,1; MD 7,1; 39,2; MF 140,2). The prophet also both announces and denounces and, thus, the Lasallian educator is a true prophet instructing his pupils in religious truths while responding to the bad conduct of the mischievous with the zeal of Elias, saying to them "... I am so zealous for the glory of God that I cannot allow you to renounce the covenant which you made

with Him in your Baptism nor the privilege of sons of God which you then assumed..." (MD 60,3; MR 202,1).

K. The Biblical prophets were powerful in word and deed and normally they were also *miracle-workers* — they had the power to confirm their proclamations and denunciations through extraordinary signs. Similarly, the zealous teacher who carries out his mission in conformity with the will of God is gifted by the all-powerful God with the ability to work miracles and is called on to perform them as, for example, in touching the hearts of his pupils and inspiring in them the spirit of Christianity (MF 139,1; 180,3).

L. Those who catechise and instruct the poor are *apostles* — successors of the apostles, participating in their ministry, educating in the faith, strengthening the law of Christ in the hearts of the disciples and building up the Church of God (MF 102,1; 145,3; 159,2; 167,2; MR 199,3; 201,1).

M. De La Salle tells his disciples that they exercise a function which, more than any other, is similar to the priestly ministry (MF 186,3). But, above all, he insists on the parallel between the mission of the Christian teacher and that of the *bishop* — to watch over the flock which has been confided to both. It is the responsibility of a bishop to intercede for the salvation of souls and to carry out the will of God with regard to achieving this salvation. The Christian teacher has a similar responsibility — to intercede insistently for the salvation of the pupils confided to his care and to seek the means necessary for obtaining it as well as ensuring that the pupils make use of these means (MF 189,4). What are the means which the bishop makes use of to facilitate the salvation of his flock? In the exercise of his function he is careful on two points: in opposing vice and maintaining the faith with vigour and firmness. And what about the teacher? He has to ensure that his pupils do not give themselves to evil and must imprint the truths of faith on their minds (MF 132,3). He is a shepherd and exercises the role of shepherd in his relations with children (MR 199,3; 203,3; MF 61,3).

N. It is the responsibility of a *father* and a mother to educate their children in the Christian

faith. However, the majority of them do not do it through lack of instruction and of time and, consequently, the result is that, while many children actually have earthly parents, it is as if they did not have them. By Providential design it falls to teachers to substitute for parents in the instruction and preparation for life in conformity with the faith. Like St Joachim, the father of Mary, the Christian educator engenders sons for Jesus Christ and brings Jesus Christ to birth in his pupils. Similar to the Divine Saviour who came so that man would have life and have it in abundance, the Christian teacher procures a life of grace for his disciples in this world and eternal life in the next (MD 37,3; 61,3; MF 157,1; MR 193,2; 199,1; 201,3; 203,3).

O. Children are ignorant — morally destitute and spiritually orphans. They need teachers: they need the human help of *guardians*: "God looks on them with pity and cares for them as one who is their protector, their help and their father". However, he entrusts this care to the Christian teacher. He puts these orphans in their hands, submitting them to their guardianship (MD 37).

P. The Christian teacher is therefore *honoured* by God who entrusts him with the important employment which he exercises. He is honoured by Jesus Christ who chose him to proclaim his holy maxims to his pupils and he is honoured by the Church who has assigned him to such an excellent ministry (MF 157,1; 167,1; MR 199,1).

Q. The Christian teacher receives particular gifts and in this sense is *blessed* by God. In a general way it can be said that he receives the graces necessary to do good within and according to his ministry. More especially, he receives the graces and gifts to instruct children, to teach the ignorant; to announce the Gospel; to educate according to the spirit of religion; to exhort and correct the delinquent and to support the weak (MF 146,3; 170,3; 189,1; MD 37,1; MR 193,2; 194,3; 201,1).

Christian teaching, besides being an eminent way to collaborate in the salvific plan of God, a mediation between the Truth and those who seek it, a sacrament of the love and action of God for

others, is the greatest *guarantee of grace, sanctification and personal salvation* for the teacher. In carrying out his ministry well and fulfilling his obligations with God, the Christian teacher “will be lavished with so many graces that he sanctifies himself while contributing as far as he is able to the salvation of others” (MR 205,2). Finally, the greatness of the ministry can be gauged by the rigour of the account which God will demand from it and by the excellence of the rewards promised to those who exercise it with fidelity and dedication (MR 205-206; 207-208).

This faith in the value and necessity of Christian teaching was something which De La Salle not only preached by word but also practically demonstrated in his life: “...The most persuasive and effective argument...” which he presented to his disciples was to show them how he, “a former canon of one the most illustrious Churches of France, a priest and celebrated Doctor...”, considered it such a joy to take the place of a Brother in a school (B2 362). In this way he was unsparing in word and deed in order to have them assimilate clearly the conviction of the greatness and urgency of this vocation: “... No other work seemed to him as important as his own for the salvation of poor people...” (B2 366).

2. According to De La Salle, such a vocation had to be lived by a person displaying very definite and specific characteristics. According to the Lasallian vision, the teacher had to be a professional in education, a specialist in the Christian school and inspired by deep mysticism — a person who is completely dedicated, stable, responsible and competent, communitarian, available and inspired by the principle of gratuity; a man of God for others — a man for others that they might be of God.

He also indicated how teaching might be exercised as a profession in the full meaning of the word:

A. For De La Salle, the Christian education of children and youth was an end in itself, a complete ministry.³ Those who exercised this ministry had to be *completely dedicated* to a single function contrary to the custom of the time when school-teachers were often only part-time. He “created a

group of people who were trained to direct schools well and consecrated by state and vocation to this ministry of charity” (B2 358). This testimony of Blain was confirmed by Bouillet, treasurer of the schools of Lyon and executor of Démiá’s will: “...They devote themselves exclusively to the direction of the schools and have a single concern: to educate children in the best possible manner”.⁴ The testimony of Bouillet continued: “...They are lay people who do not aspire to the ecclesiastical state so that they are not diverted from their school functions by liturgical demands”.⁵

In order that they could be the completely dedicated people envisaged by De La Salle he did not want them to marry. Nor did he want them to become priests or to exercise para-ecclesiastical functions, nor did he want them to aspire to the ecclesiastical state nor even undertake studies which might prepare them for this state in life (RC 1,2; MH 47; 50; L 113,2): “... De La Salle does not have married school-teachers and he believes that if the school-teacher wishes to be assiduous in his school it is not appropriate for him to be a prisoner of an office (the sacristy)...”.⁶ De La Salle thus made a definite contribution to the evolution of teaching as a substantial full-time occupation to which the whole life and all the energies of a person could worthily be dedicated.

B. The Lasallian teacher is also completely dedicated with regard to his time since he is with his pupils the whole day, “from morning until night” (RC 1,3). Further, this commitment was life-long since the second vow made by De La Salle and his religious teachers was “to remain in society for life”. According to De La Salle, Christian teaching thus had to be a *stable* function rather than something provisional as it often was at this time.

C. In De La Salle’s view the teacher was to have a highly professional awareness. He was *responsible* — ie. he responded through commitments. He made use of all the time that he had at his disposal to do all that he had to do. He sought to be effective in his work and regularly evaluated his experiences as an educator.

D. Among the first teachers who presented themselves to De La Salle there were some whom

he had to send away because "... they had no talent nor vocation for the school although they were quite pious..." (Bd 46; which was in contrast to others who presented themselves at the end of 1681 and the beginning of 1682 who were described as "having talent for the school..." (Bd 47). Thus, for De La Salle, the person who wanted to devote himself to teaching had to be *competent* — ie. he had to understand the doctrinal contents so as to faithfully transmit them; he had to know his pupils so as to deal with them adequately; he had to develop his pedagogical approaches and dispositions such as respect for his employment exercised with joy along with empathy with his pupils and attention to their specific needs; he had to know how to correctly control his class, what was the pedagogical manner of relating to the pupils, of observing them, of having them participate in school life; he had to use the best methods for teaching reading, writing and counting as well as for teaching catechism and the rules of politeness; he had to know how to concretise the contents of his teaching, to adapt his language to the world of the child and to appropriately administer correction.

De La Salle gave the following stipulation to his teachers as a third commandment: "...You will teach children with care..." (RC 16,8) and to enable them to do this he created the Training College for teachers, codified the pedagogical experiences of the early years of his Institute in the Management of Schools as well as establishing exercises of permanent personal formation with them — eg. a daily half-hour for studying catechism; a similar time devoted to the reading of manuscripts and of Latin, to the study of arithmetic and of reading; pedagogical reading during some reflection periods; periodic examinations of conscience on educational conduct etc.

E. The previously quoted testimony of Bouillet on the Brothers at the beginning of the 18th century highlights yet another element: "...They live in community". This allows them to use uniform pedagogical methods "in such a way that the replacement of one teacher by another does not harm the pupils..."⁷ De La Salle could not conceive of his teachers without a *community* dimension. After the departure of almost all the first

teachers new candidates presented themselves and were accepted "because they had the disposition to live in community..." (Bd 47).

"Brother was the name adopted... He told them that, as Brothers to each other, they must demonstrate reciprocal expressions of tender but spiritual friendship..." (B1 241). In the Rule, in which De La Salle and his teachers codified years of lived experience, it stipulated that "the members of this Institute will be called Brothers" and that whenever they referred to each other they would do so with the name "Brother" (RC 1,1) and that in this Institute "a true spirit of community will be expressed and preserved" (RC 3,1). In Lasallian practice it was always a temporary exception that a Brother was engaged in "isolated" work. The norm was that work was community-based. The first vow which De La Salle and his disciples pronounced was: "... to unite ourselves in society to maintain gratuitous schools together and by association". One of the characteristics of the pedagogy of the Founder was community action and certainly one of the reasons for its success with his teachers was that he led them to discover and follow it: "... He had given the Brothers a principle that, when they had any difficulty, two of three of them must come together and accept for the common good what is there decided..." (B2 124).

The reference of Bouillet to the "uniform methods" which were followed reminds us that the community dimension of the Lasallian teacher led to a corporative discipline which, from the point of view of religious rules, was called "regularity" and from an educational point of view was expressed in a uniformity of pedagogical practices: "...They will teach all pupils according to the method prescribed and practised everywhere in the Institute..." (RC 7,3).

F. The third and final vow which De La Salle and his Brothers took was the vow of obedience: "... to do whatever will be asked of me..." and to go "... wherever I may be sent...". Thus, *availability* is another aspect of the Christian teacher envisaged by De La Salle. It is a disposition which is the source of educational and apostolic vigour and effort since it makes available to the common cause, in an unconditional form, the good will and

the talents of all.

G. De La Salle wanted his teachers to be imbued with the principle of gratuity practising, in the first place, material gratuity: "...The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is a society in which profession is made to maintain schools *gratuitously*..." (RC 1,1). Moreover, the second part of the third commandment of the new congregation was that "they will teach children *gratuitously*..." (RC 16,8; R 5). They were to receive nothing from the pupils nor from their parents (CE 121; RC 7,11) and this was "essential" for the Institute (RC 7,1); "... Say with joy... that the greatest source of your joy in this life is rooted in having preached the Gospel free of charge to those who listen to it..." (MR 207,2).

He also demanded that they live in complete detachment (MF 148,3) which is a form of spiritual gratuity, in dedication and self-giving, out of pure love of God and for no other motive than that of pleasing him (MF 153,2; MR 206,3; 207,2). Does all this appear too much? "You will never be able to do too much with regard to being disinterested in the exercise of your ministry..." (MF 153,3).

H. It was impossible to think of achieving this ideal of the Christian teacher by relying on human ingenuity and purely natural efforts. Its achievement was based on the assumption of divine grace and a life of *holiness and piety* along with virtue beyond the ordinary. De La Salle knew this and repeated it many times (MD 33,2; 39,2; MF 110,1; 186,2) — such sanctity demanded a deep interior life involving constant contact with God, union with Jesus Christ, self-giving to his Spirit, prayer, meditation, sacramental life, recollection as a condition of daily life and periodic retreats in the sense of the "spiritual exercises". It demanded asceticism and renunciation and pre-supposed in the teacher not only the practice of the "Twelve virtues of a good master" but much more that had to

be practised in his relations with God and with his pupils.

I. Among the first virtues which De La Salle wished to see in his teachers were "zeal for instruction and *purity of action*", a purity which, more than being a virtue, is the sum of the virtues which brings to birth in the teacher that spirit which guarantees the efficacy of his zeal (MR 203,3).

J. But there is one basic virtue which relates the teacher to God and which is expressed in zeal for the pupils. This virtue enables the teacher to see the child — the young person, the poor person — with the eyes of God and leads the teacher to treat the person accordingly. It enables the teacher to perceive the excellence of an employment which "is little valued by men" (MF 155,3). It leads him not only to be committed professionally to his pupils but also apostolically both transforming his motivations and opening new educational horizons for him. It enables the teacher to see how, through his human actions, God carries out his salvific plan with man and permits him to live his profession as a vocation, as a ministry of salvation. Through this he is enabled to reflect the action of the Lord in his disciples and it leads him to a proclamation of praise and thanksgiving of the God who does marvels in and for his creatures. The Christian teacher as envisaged by De La Salle is thus a *man of faith*.

¹ Cf. GIOLITTO, P., "Abécédaire et Férule", Imago, Paris, 1986, pp. 66, 68, 69, 71, 89...

² GIOLITTO, P., op. cit., p. 60.

³ POUTET, Y., "Le XVIIe. Siècle et les origines lasalliennes", (2), Rennes, Imprimeries réunies, 1970, p. 247.

⁴ POUTET, Y., "L'enseignement des pauvres dans la France du XVIIe siècle", in XVIIe Siècle N° 90-91, p. 108.

⁵ POUTET, Y., "L'enseignement des pauvres dans la France du XVIIe siècle", in XVIIe Siècle N° 90-91, p. 108.

⁶ Letter of LESCHASSIER to the Parish Priest of Crosne, cf. POUTET, Y., "Le XVIIe Siècle..." (2), p. 81, n. 17.

⁷ POUTET, Y., "L'enseignement...", p. 108.

Complementary themes:

Apostle; Child-Pupil-Disciple; Correction; Decorum and Christian Civility; Disciples; Education-To bring up; Example-Edification; Formation; Gentleness; Guardian Angels; Heart-to touch hearts; Parents of the pupils; Teacher-Pupil relationship; Silence; Vigilance.

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