

# 83. MINISTRY, MINISTER

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*"De La Salle likes the word minister, used by him about 100 times (as well as ministry, with more or less equal frequency). The Meditations for the Time of Retreat are particularly rich in this regard: one or other term occurs 38 times in 16 meditations" (Raymond Brisebois).<sup>1</sup>*

## 1. USE AND MEANING OF THESE TERMS IN THE TIME OF DE LA SALLE

### 1.1. Etymology and use

The terms "minister" and "ministry" were known in the 17th century, and were used equally in ecclesiastical, administrative and governmental circles, and in the Catholic and Reformed Churches.

The two terms are derived from classical Latin: *minister* (servant), *ministerium* (service, office), *ministerialis* (in charge of a service). These are learned formations, unlike the more currently used *métier* (profession, trade) also derived from *ministerium*.

Up to the 16th century, minister was used mostly with the meaning of servant of God, of worship. This explains the use of the word to describe those who preside over Protestant services.

In the 17th century, "ministry" and "minister" took on in addition a new meaning. The minister is one who is in charge of a function, an office. He is the person who is asked to perform certain tasks in the name of some high authority, such as God or the King. This can be on the religious level (minister of the Lord, of Jesus Christ, of the Gospel, of Religion, of the Word of God, of the altar), or in a diplomatic or governmental context (the person delegated to sign in the name of the Prince, or who has a high post in administration).

The two terms gradually took on extra meanings, such as

- **ministry** : an activity which constitutes a craft, profession, service, responsibility, office, function, mission and sometimes government;

- **minister** : an executive, receiving his orders from the source itself of authority, a high functionary delegated to sign documents.

## 1.2. In ecclesiastical publications

When ecclesiastical functions are concerned, "ministry" almost always refers to the functions of the bishop or of the priest. One of the quotations from St Paul most often used by De La Salle in his meditations: "The ministers of Jesus Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Co 4,1-2), is explained as follows in the *New Testament* published in Brussels in 1700: "Bishops and other pastors are only the depositaries of hidden divine truth and dispensers of the sacraments".

It would be interesting for us to know whether among the contemporaries of De La Salle there was anyone who used the word ministry when referring to schoolmasters and mistresses.

St Joseph Calasanzius (1556-1648), Founder of the Clerks Regular of the Pious Schools, in Italy, stressed the importance of the "ministry of the school", but had to defend his point of view because of the interpretation the Council of Trent had given this term. A short while after his death, in 1687, it was decreed

that only the priests and clerics of this Institute, and no longer the Brothers, could teach in schools.<sup>2</sup>

Anne de Xainctonge (1567-1621), who established the Company of St Ursula, in the Franche Comté, for the Christian education of girls, considered her activities as foundress as "an apostolic ministry".<sup>3</sup>

The anonymous author of *Règlements et méthode pour les écoles* (Paris, 1710), writes: "The man must teach through his ministry of the word only what Jesus Christ has taught". He adds later that "a part of the apostolic ministry" is entrusted to teachers.<sup>4</sup> The context implies that these teachers could be lay persons.

In the writings of François Giry<sup>5</sup> (1687), this is affirmed more explicitly. Women teachers fulfil "in part the office of parish priests, bishops and the highest prelates of the Church", working in "the great ministry of the salvation of souls" (Med 2,1). He writes also: "Your ministry" (Med 3,1) and "Consider that a schoolmistress even exercises the office of Jesus Christ" (Med 2,3). This is because the mistress is "like the vicar or representative" of the pastor; "she is very much like the deaconesses of the first centuries of the Church".<sup>6</sup>

And so, when De La Salle speaks to the Brothers about the ministry they exercise, he does so as someone belonging to a minority trend. While he is not the first to speak in this way, it can be said that he is the one who developed the theme of the ministry of Christian teachers most fully, in particular on the basis of St Paul's epistles. This did not prevent him, however, from using "minister" and "ministry" with the meaning current at the time.

De La Salle never defines "ministry". He knows that the King has a "Minister of State" (CL 19,245 = RB 210,1,625). Elsewhere, speaking of Christ, he mentions "the ministry with which he is entrusted" (MF 93,3) and the "functions of his ministry as lawgiver and redeemer of mankind" (MD 40,1). Several times he uses the word minister in the context of sacraments (to indicate who is the minister of a particular sacrament), as well as in the context of other ecclesiastical functions which often constitute ordained ministries.

To grasp his thinking about ordained ministries, it is best to read his catechisms.

## 2. THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH IN THE “DUTIES OF A CHRISTIAN”

### 2.1. Power of orders and power of jurisdiction

In the *Duties of a Christian*, De La Salle says that the organisation of the Church is derived from the mission of Christ: “Before returning to heaven, Jesus Christ left to his Church in the person of his Apostles two things which were his: power and doctrine” (CL 20,69 = DA 105,3,1).

“The power of orders belongs to priests and ministers of the Church by virtue of their ordination” (*id.* 2). “The power of jurisdiction is what the Pope and the bishops receive and exercise as successors of the Apostles”. It “resides in the principal ministers of Jesus Christ and pastors of the Church” (CL 20,70 = DA 105,3,3f).

De La Salle returns to these parallel powers at the end of his explanation: “The invisible guidance of Jesus Christ is not enough for the government of the Church. As it is an external and visible body, a visible head was needed to govern it”. Jesus Christ “wished even that there should be other priests and other ministers to serve in the Church, who would work to instruct the faithful, to administer the sacraments to them and serve at the holy altars” (CL 20,74 = DA 105,4,3f).

In DA, “minister” and “doctrine” are rarely associated. “Lectors are ministers of the Church whose function is to read the Holy Scriptures during divine office and to teach the basic principles of Christian doctrine to the children and faithful who are ignorant of them” (CL 20,81 = DA 105,6,8). But DA notes that “the lower ministers of the Church [...] normally do not exercise any more any other functions in the Church except those concerned with the sacrifice of Holy Mass” (CL 20,82 = DA 105,6,9).

### 2.2. Ordained ministries

“Orders give power to the ministers of the Church to guide and govern it” (CL 20,203 = DA 301,1,8). “The character of orders is the mark that one is a minister of Jesus Christ and an officer of the Church” (CL 20,209 = DA 301,2,11).

De La Salle lays great stress on the sacramental “power” conferred by the sacrament of Holy Orders. “It is priests alone who, as ministers of Jesus Christ, have the power to consecrate the body and blood of

Jesus Christ in the Eucharist” (CL 20,250 = DA 304,2,5). “By the power of the Holy Spirit whom they received at ordination” bishops and priests can “forgive sins by virtue of being ministers of Jesus Christ” (CL 20,315 = DA 307,5,1).

“There was a need to have in the Church officers and ministers of Jesus Christ who would offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist to God, and who would administer the sacraments to the faithful and instruct them in their religion and in all their duties. This is what Jesus Christ, the sovereign lawgiver of the law of grace, founder and head of the Church, provided by instituting the sacrament of Holy Orders, in which the power to exercise the functions and the ministries of the Church is given to those who receive it” (CL 20,365 = DA 390,1,1).

Here again, the ordained ministries are associated with the sacraments and the instruction of the faithful. Nothing is said of ministers concerned with charitable and social work, as might be undertaken by “deacons”, except with reference to “the early Church where deacons were also entrusted with the goods of the Church and distributed alms according to the orders of their bishop” (CL 20,80 = DA 105,6,3).

On the other hand, there are qualifying phrases such as “ministers of Jesus Christ” and “in their capacity as ministers of Jesus Christ”, which do not mean that only those who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders are ministers of Jesus Christ, but that the priest acts by virtue of an explicit mandate from the Church linked to his sacramental ordination. He acts *in persona Christi*. That is why De La Salle writes that “lay people should have great veneration and profound respect for priests and other ecclesiastics because they are pastors of the Church, ministers of God and dispensers of his mysteries” (CL 20,373 = DA 309,2,4 quoting 1 Co 4,1-2).

We should note that in De La Salle’s catechisms “ministry” always applies to Jesus Christ or to ordained ministries, except in three passages which speak of the ministry of an angel (CL 22,272 = DC 44,18,6), the ministry of Moses (CL 20,104 = DA 202,0,6) and faults committed by the ministry of hands (CL 20,263 = DA 308,2,11). In this last case, “by the ministry” means simply “by the use of”.

When De La Salle speaks of the ministry of the Brothers, he sometimes indicates that this involves participation in the ministry of bishops and priests, but there is no mention of “power” or “jurisdiction”. The Brothers’ ministry is not in any way an ordained

ministry. The Apostles joined prayer and counsel when they chose Mathias in place of Judas “to share in the holy functions<sup>7</sup> of the apostolate. It is thus that God wishes you to act in all that pertains to your conduct and your ministry” (MF 107,2).

### 3. THE MINISTRY OF SUPERIORS IN THE “MEDITATIONS FOR SUNDAYS AND FEASTS”

A small group of meditations (MD 21,72,73,75 & MF 91) speak of the “ministry of superiors”. What is strange is that the expression never refers directly to the “Brother Director” who, in any case, is hardly mentioned in the meditations (MD 19 & 71, MF 99). But in two instances (MD 19,1 & MF 99,3), “director” and “superior” are synonymous, and in one (MD 72,3), a distinction is made between “superior” and “confessor”. It is probable, therefore, that “superior” should be understood in a broad sense and that it applies to the Brother Director of a house, despite the fact this is forbidden by the *Rule of the Brother Director* (CL 25,154 = FD 1,1).

De La Salle bases the need to have superiors on the same reasons that lead the Church to have pastors (cf. CL 20,74 = DA 105,4,3 quoted in § 2.1). Because man is at the same time both spiritual and material, God’s guidance, which is totally interior, cannot be enough for the Brothers: it must be complemented by the visible guidance of their superiors who guide them exteriorly. The meditation for December 30th asks the Brothers: “How have you acted towards

your Superiors during the past year? Have you looked upon them as being the ministers of God given you by the Almighty himself, and taking his place, since it is only in virtue of the authority that he has given them and because they participate in God’s power, that they have the right to guide you and command you?” (MF 91,1; cf. Rm 13,1f).

The Brothers must be dependent on their superiors as they are on God, and obey them in all things as they obey God, because all that they say, they do so in his name, or rather, it is God who says it to them. “Whoever listens to you, listens to me” (Lk 10,6).

The guidance given the Brothers has, therefore, two aspects: spiritual direction and a unifying ministry (MD 72,2). Unlike other, more ascetical meditations, what we have here is a mystical approach: taking God’s place visibly (MD 73,1), speaking the truth learnt from him (MD 21,1), the superior having to watch over himself to avoid doing anything that might be a bad example or opposed to “the duties of his ministry” (MD 75,1).

### 4. THE MINISTRY OF SCHOOLMASTERS IN THE “MEDITATIONS FOR SUNDAYS AND FEASTS”

#### 4.1. A word about semantics

Apart from one instance in a letter, “Take great care not to be impatient in the exercise of your ministry” (LI 104,1), it is only in his meditations that De La Salle speaks of the ministry of the Brothers and of other teachers in the Christian Schools.

All in all, the terms “minister” or “ministry” are used 42 times by De La Salle in his meditations when referring to Christian educators (6 MD out of 77, 26 MF out of 110, 10 MR out of 16). This figure becomes 45 if we count the 3 times when the teacher is

described as fulfilling the function or employment of a saint whose ministry is stressed. “Ministry” is always used in the singular in this context, whereas “ministers” are always in the plural and, more often than not, borrowed from a New Testament text. MR 207,1 mentions twice “a more extensive ministry” as a reward. Everywhere else, “ministry” is used with the definite article, the demonstrative article (this ministry), the possessive adjective (your ministry) or an adjective that defines it (such a ministry, MR 193,1,2; 199,1; such a holy ministry, MR 197,3).

Among the terms frequently associated with “ministry” or “minister”, we find “state”, “function” and especially “employment”. In the *Lasallian Vocabulary* as a whole, “state” and “employment” are used more frequently than “ministry”. The MR, however, uses “state” only twice. The explanation for this is simple if we remember that this term is used by preference to refer to the Brothers’ status. Since, relatively speaking, the MR speak much more about “ministry” than the other meditations, we shall examine them separately, especially as we think that they deal with the topic in a more systematic way.

#### 4.2. The work of schoolmasters

**Who are these ministers?** Those who teach others (MD 3), children (MD 56), the poor (MF 99.2,2); teachers in their classroom, often addressed as “you” (MD 6,2), persons living in community whose work involves them with children who are sometimes disolute (MF 180,2), persons withdrawn from the world, called to the holy task of instructing children and teaching them to be pious (MF 99,2); quasi religious whose ministry is to instruct children (MF 114,1). Together, all these terms describe recognisably the Brothers of the Christian Schools working in schools.

**The activities of the ministers are directed towards** the “souls” in their charge (MF 107,3), the “children they are charged with”, their pupils, their disciples, their neighbour (MF 135,1), poor children they have to instruct (MF 166,3). In other words, everything that constitutes “the work of a schoolmaster”, whose model is St Cassian who, while teaching his pupils to read and write, formed them in piety and the fear of God: “You are his successors in your employment”. You must expect the same reward — persecution — “if you have God in view in your ministry” (MF 155,3).

Other **comparisons** are suggested: the work of St Joseph (MF 110,2), the ministry of John the Baptist (MF 138,3), Paul (MF 99,2), Denis (MF 175,3). “You perform one of the chief functions of the Apostles by instructing the new Christians, that is, your pupils, who are newly filled with the spirit of God in baptism” (MF 102,1, St Ignatius, martyr). “Your employment resembles more closely than any other that of the priest” (MF 186,2, St Marcellinus, bishop).

“But you too, like St Denis, are called to announce the truths of the Gospel” (MF 175,3). This biblical

use of the passive signifies **the call of God**: “Your whole study should be to seek God alone. You should apply yourself to the ministry to which he has called you” (MD 58,3). Jesus Christ having called you to accomplish the mission of Paul and to teach the poor (MF 99,2), “do you not bear in vain the name of Christian and Minister of Jesus Christ in the functions you exercise?” (MF 93,3). MD 56 is addressed directly to the Brothers: “Since by your state you are the ministers of God...” (cf. MR 195,2). This is something which is established: now we have to consider **its scope and its demands**.

MF 140,2, basing itself on the apostolic work of St Paul, summarises in two sentences the doctrine of the **ministry of Christian educators**: “It is God who, in his infinite goodness and power, has called you to impart the knowledge of the Gospel to those who have not yet received it. Look upon yourself, therefore, as the minister of God, and acquit yourself of your duties with the greatest possible zeal as having to render an account to the Lord”. In another meditation, the reader is asked to examine his conscience: “You received great graces from God when he called you from the world to a ministry where you are concerned solely with the salvation of souls. Have you consecrated yourself so wholeheartedly to God as to renounce all else and to think only of him and the duties of your state?” (MF 146,3, St Anne; cf. 175,3).

#### 4.3. The spiritual growth of the minister

It is important, therefore, for ministers to recognise “the gifts that God has given them” so that they can proclaim them to their disciples, “using words with which the Spirit of God inspires” his ministers (MF 189,1 quoting 1 Co 2,12f), considering themselves as “the ministers of God and dispensers of his mysteries” (MD 3,2 quoting 1 Co 4,1). Make yourself worthy of so holy a ministry by retreat and application to prayer (MF 102,1 quoting again 1 Co 4,1). Being daily with the poor and charged, like St Martin, with “the duty of clothing them with Jesus Christ”, you must “clothe yourself with him” before undertaking so holy a ministry (MF 189,1).

Having to work for the salvation of their neighbour, the Brothers must bring to the exercise of their employment the same dispositions as St Cajetan brought to the exercise of his ministry: “mental prayer, mortification” and also “study, because your ignorance

in such matters would be criminal, since it would cause ignorance in those whom you should instruct" (MF 153,1). Their lives must be like those of the angels (MD 50,3), their piety and virtue must be uncommonly great in order that they may be worthy of this ministry (MF 110,1), they must also have enough knowledge in order to teach children the good and sound doctrine of the Church (MF 120,1), in such a way that they are well instructed in the mysteries of our holy religion (MF 175,3).

Several meditations describe **the state of life** of the Brother: retreat (MF 135,1), separation from the world in order to lead a life superior to that of nature and human inclinations (MD 58,3), regularity (MF 131,2), detachment from creatures (MF 180,2), withdrawal from secular and outside interests (MF 114,3), temperance (MF 136,1). Others emphasise rather **the zeal of the Christian educator** who makes his words effective (MD 2,2), the application and the zeal in his employment that the Lord asks of him (MF 93,3). God, in fact, will ask everyone to give an account of the zeal with which he acquitted himself of the duties of his employment (MF 140,2).

What is at stake, is **the salvation of children** (MD 56,1), of our neighbour (MD 58,3), of souls, "which is the purpose of your state and your employment" (MF 107,3). To achieve it, it is necessary to form children in the spirit of Christianity (MD 6,2), the spirit of religion and Christianity (MF 186,2). It is necessary also "to prevent your children from becoming a prey to vice and impiety" (MF 132,3) and touch the heart of wayward children. "In order to contribute to the good of the Church" and of the State, it is necessary to make true Christians of the children, open to the truths of the faith and the maxims of the holy Gospel, not neglecting at the same time to teach them to read, write and any other skills your ministry re-

quires you to teach (MF 160,3). MF 180,3, in its turn, describes pious and recollected children, industrious at school and at home.

However, this ministry is not without its **trials, afflictions and persecutions** (MF 78,3), its insults, injuries, calumnies and persecutions (MF 140,3 quoting 2 Co 12,10). This is the only kind of gratitude we should expect from teaching children and especially the poor (MF 155,3). "And after having exhausted yourself in this noble work of your apostolate, expect no other recompense here below than to suffer and die" (MF 175,3).

It remains to speak of the importance of the interior source of this commitment which is capable of taking over completely the personality of the minister, as in the case of the ecstatic and enraptured Brother Dominique standing in front of his class, and saying to the inspector as he pointed to the children: "I see only God". School duties performed in this way, far from disturbing the deep recollection of Brother Dominique, actually nourished it (CL 8,B,77). He was putting into practice the teaching of De La Salle: "You should learn to recognise Jesus beneath the poor rags of the children whom you have to teach. Adore him in their person [...] since the poor are the members of Christ" (MF 96,3).

The meditation for the feast of St Nicholas offers us a mystical approach to educational work: "You are under the obligation to instruct the poor. You should therefore have a great tenderness towards them and supply their spiritual wants to the best of your ability, looking upon these children as members of Jesus Christ and as his much loved ones. The faith which animates you should lead you to respect Jesus Christ in their person, and should make you prefer them to the rich ones of earth since they are the living images of Jesus Christ our Divine Master" (MF 80,3).

## 5. THE THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY IN THE "MEDITATIONS FOR THE TIME OF RETREAT"

### 5.1. The literary genre

The sixteen meditations composed by De La Salle, known to us as the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* also said "Meditations on the Employment", occupy a special place in his writings. Numbered 193 to 208 ever since the 1922 edition, these texts were tra-

ditionally used by the Brothers, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to stimulate their thinking during their annual eight day retreat.

An analysis of the meditations shows first of all that De La Salle's attention is centred throughout on the apostolate, and that references to the community

and religious life of the Brothers are absent. Words such as community, society, director, rule, regularity, obedience, renouncement, separation from the world, etc, are not used. State occurs twice, Brothers only in the titles (MR 202, 203, 206, 208) and in MR 208,2 (“O, what joy a Brother of the Christian Schools will have...”). Institute is used only in MR 207,3 (“That it may please him to make your Institute grow”) and retreat only in the title. What we have said here confirms that essentially, that is, by its argumentation, this work is addressed, as the frontispiece informs us, to all persons who are employed in the education of young people.

## 5.2. The Christian schools in salvation history

If we bear in mind that the sixteen meditations are constructed on the chiasma pattern,<sup>8</sup> we see also that De La Salle has given them a “historical” dimension. The first two show the state of abandonment of the children of the artisans and the poor before the exercise of the ministry, and the two last ones contemplate the effects of its redemptive action in its heavenly reward. MR 193 presents as follows the ministry of men in salvation history, from the creation of light to the unveiling of the glory of God:

- God reveals himself as the Truth,
- men need to be instructed about it through the ministry of other men whom God awakens, calls and sends for this purpose (MR 193,1).

MR 193,2 and 194,1 look with the eyes of faith at the lives of the children of the artisans and the poor: the inability of their parents to provide education for them, the conflict between their physical survival and this education, the inability of parents to transmit the faith because of their lack of Christian formation.<sup>9</sup>

“In his providential care, God has appointed others to take the place of fathers and mothers in this responsibility. He sends persons with the necessary enlightenment and zeal to help children attain the knowledge of God and his mysteries. [...] You have been called by God to this ministry. Use these gifts you have received [...] in order to fulfil the main duties of fathers and mothers towards their children” (MR 193,2).

And so, God gives children teachers to accomplish this task, which is to announce the Gospel of his Son

(1 Co 3,9). “This is why you must glory in your ministry and keep trying to save some of these children” (MR 193,3 quoting Rm 11,13). God has made you **his ministers in order to reconcile others to him.**

MR 194 indicates the practical means by which this ministry is exercised: **the establishment of the Christian Schools**, the gratuity of these schools, the children occupied all day long, vigilant teachers who wish to form them in piety. The term ministry is not used.

However, in the same way as MR 193 shows that “it is God in his providence who has established the Christian Schools”, it is clear also that **the Christian School is where the ministry of its teachers is carried out.** MR 207,3 sees as a reward, even in this life, the fact that “by means of the Christian Schools, the practice of religion and piety has increased among the faithful, especially among the artisans and the poor. [...] Thank God every day, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, that it has pleased him to establish this great good and to help the Church. Pray to him fervently that it will please him to make your Institute grow and to make it bear fruit day after day”.

The parable of the talents speaks of another reward, that of receiving “a more extended ministry” and a greater facility in bringing about the conversion of souls (MR 207,1). As talents are not given to be hidden away, a minister is responsible for his own cooperation in the mission of salvation.

## 5.3. Cooperators of Jesus Christ

MR 195-196 and 205-206 remind the ministers of Jesus Christ of the gifts they have received and of the fact that they will have to render an account of the use they make of them. No trace of Quietism about this! Christ died for mankind, but his grace requires the cooperation of our will: “Each of us must complete and finish the work of our salvation. [...] Since you are obliged to help your disciples to save themselves, [...] you must teach them to benefit from the death of Jesus Christ Our Lord, in order to make its fruits and merits efficacious in themselves. Since you are ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ in the work that you do, you must do it as representing Jesus Christ himself” (MR 195,1 & 2). The identity of the minister must be visible and recognised by his pupils. Jesus who wants them to look upon the teacher as they would upon himself, gives the teacher authority over them.

The Spirit of God will make him triumph over the obstacles opposed to their salvation (MR 195,1). The trinitarian structure of this passage should be noted.

Being an ambassador (cf. 2 Co 5,18f) is no sinecure! The minister is expected to have the dedication of the Good Shepherd who looks for the lost sheep, and the apostolic prayer of one who has faith in God's will to save all mankind through his own humble efforts: "You must therefore devote yourself very thoroughly to prayer in order to succeed in your ministry. You must constantly represent the needs of your disciples to Jesus Christ, explaining to him the difficulties you experience in guiding them. [...] Jesus Christ [...] will not fail to grant you what you ask" (MR 196,1). Representing Jesus Christ means proclaiming the truth about things, persons and events, a necessary condition for obtaining the conversion of hearts (MR 196,1) to the Gospel of the Beatitudes (MR 196,2).<sup>10</sup>

The teacher must read the Gospel to see **how Jesus formed his Apostles**, who were his cooperators, to exercise their ministry (*id.*), by proposing to them evangelical paradoxes which, then as now, run counter to the received wisdom of the "world".

The utopia proposed by De La Salle is a realistic one,<sup>11</sup> because the Gospel can change the world. He has to begin, however, by changing the mentality of the minister, making him enter intimately into the views and intentions of Christ (MR 196,3) and by ridding his mind of all human views and vain glory (MR 196,3).

"It is God who has given you the ministry that you exercise" (MR 205,1) and who will ask you to render an account of "the salvation of the souls of the children entrusted to your care. You will have to answer for it on the Day of Judgment, just as you will for your own. [...] God will begin by making you give an account of their souls before making you give an account of your own" (MR 205,2), because, **by procuring God's salvation for young people, the Christian teacher procures his own**. These are not two separate responsibilities: "Have you up to present looked upon the salvation of your pupils as your personal concern so long as they are in your care? You have exercises established for your own sanctification. However, if you have an ardent zeal for those whom you are charged to instruct, you will not fail to perform them and relate them to this purpose" (*id.*).

We have already met the 3rd point of this meditation when considering salvation in the context of a Church, full of glory, without stain, wrinkle or fault. Children are its most innocent part, called to be saints and to form that perfect man who is Christ, so that they may be so united with and in the Church that, through the secret virtue that Jesus Christ gives to all his members, they may share in the promises of God in Jesus Christ. **In their ministry, Christian teachers work to build up and support the Church**, having been engaged to do this by Jesus Christ.

MR 206 helps the teacher to **evaluate in practical terms the means of salvation he uses in his work with young people**:

- To instruct them in order to enlighten the eyes of their heart.
- Teach them catechism and prepare them to frequent the sacraments.
- **Instruct** them in secular subjects, such as reading, writing and arithmetic, without neglecting to form them in piety.
- Watch over them in and out of school. The Founder mentions some possible shortcomings: neglecting the most ignorant or the poorest, having favourites, wasting time, neglecting to continue one's own instruction, losing interest in the everyday life of the pupils...

The 3rd point stresses the purity of intention necessary in order to be united with Jesus Christ, the seriousness, the zeal, the moral purity, the patience and the mastery of one's passions in order to fulfil one's ministry. This is the mystical and ascetic path we have already met in the MD and MF.

#### 5.4. The mission of salvation and conflicts

MR 197 and 198 compare the ministry of the Christian teacher with that of guardian angels: making children practise the Gospel, young creatures who have not yet attained the maturity of men. The Christian teacher must give them a taste of the Gospel maxims and introduce them to their practice (MR 197,2 & 198,2-3).

All this requires vigilance and discernment. Vigilance is needed to see the obstacles to the good of their soul; discernment, to prevent them from falling, as far as possible: "It is the main reason why God has entrusted you with so holy a ministry" (MR 197,3). "You must, in imitation of the great Apostle" (cf. 1 Th 2,12) encourage them to make their lives worthy

of God, "since God has called them to his Kingdom. Your zeal must go so far in order to achieve this that you are ready to give your very life for the children entrusted to you. This is how dear to you they must be" (1 Th 2,8). "It is your duty therefore to reprimand those who are unruly and ensure they give up their former life" (MR 198,2).

Inspired by Ep 4,30-32, MR 198,3 lists the points the Christian teacher must teach his pupils if he is to accomplish his ministry :

- Not to sadden the Holy Spirit whose seal they received in baptism,
- to renounce their past life, and in particular lying,
- to love one another as Jesus Christ has loved them.

The Christian school is a place where true Christian life is learnt.

The Christian school is seen to be a place where children are taught to lead a **truly Christian life**.

MR 203 and 204, which in the chiasma structure balance MR 197 and 198, teach the art of dealing with conflict, something inevitable in education, which is intended to help young people acquire "the freedom which Jesus obtained for us" by dying for us (MR 203,2 quoting Ga 3,41). The Brother can experience the God who saves in all aspects of his professional activities, and these include the most difficult ones of his ministry,<sup>12</sup> such as having to "correct" young people, that is, to work on their conversion. De La Salle does not refer to ministry here in so many words, but it is certainly in the forefront of his mind when he reminds teachers that **they take the place of parents and pastors of the Church**, and speaks of "the function with which God has honoured them" (MR 203,3).

MR 204 describes this salutary method of warning and correcting young people. The teacher recollects himself, putting himself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to see what is involved, and assesses the motives of the youngsters so that they can accept their punishment as a remedy for their fault and as a means of becoming better behaved (MR 204,1). All the time, he maintains self-control, inspired by charity and zeal for the salvation of the souls of his pupils (MR 204,3).<sup>13</sup>

### 5.5. Building the Church with zeal

The heart of the "Meditations on the Employment" (MR 199 to 202, the central part of the chiasma struc-

ture) speaks of the Church and of zeal. It is here that we find the highest concentration of references to the ministry of the Christian teacher. As J.L. Schneider points out,<sup>14</sup> we can see that the Church at the end of the 17th century accepted with difficulty De La Salle's new vision, and showed scant appreciation for the Brothers. The Founder was able to see beyond the image and even more the reality of a clerical Church tied in with the aristocracy, of male religious life largely in a state of crisis, of theological and pastoral conflicts connected with Jansenism, Quietism and Gallicanism, which drained the life out of Catholicism. MF 106 paints the picture of a Church that is very Roman, with bishops as the first among "the ministers of Jesus Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (MF 106,3 quoting 1 Co 4,1).

In the two other cases in which this quotation from the Epistle to the Corinthians figures in the MR, it is applied to teachers. At this point, however, we are being given the broader view. The Church is founded on the Apostles, especially Paul (MR 199,1 & 3), on the bishops who evangelised and on the saints (MR 199,3). "Jesus told his Apostles: 'I must announce the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, for this is why I have been sent'. You too should say that it is for this purpose that Jesus Christ has sent you, and that the Church whose ministers you are employs you. Take all the means necessary, therefore, to fulfil this function with as much zeal and success as the saints before you" (MR 199,2). "Thank God for the grace he has given you in your employment of sharing in the ministry of the holy Apostles and of the principal bishops and pastors of the Church. Take pride in your ministry, by becoming, as St Paul says, worthy ministers of the New Testament" (MR 199,3 quoting Rm 11,13 & 2 Co 3,6).

The Church, inspired by the Holy Spirit, creates the ministries it needs in order to grow and to fulfil its mission. Paul planted the Church in various places and, as a good master-builder, laid the foundation of the building of faith and religion which God erected in the towns where he had announced the Gospel (MR 199,1). "Without comparing yourself with this great saint (and bearing in mind the due proportion between your work and his), you can say that you are doing the same thing as he did, and that you are exercising the same ministry in your profession. For this reason, you must look upon your employment, entrusted to you

by pastors, fathers and mothers, as one of the most important and most necessary functions in the Church" (*id.*).

The principal mission of the Church is in fact to instruct those who are baptised, to announce the Gospel following the example of the Apostles as well as that of Jesus Christ himself. "You are successors to the Apostles in their task of catechising and instructing the poor. If you want to make your ministry as useful as it can be to the Church, you must teach them catechism every day (MR 200,1). Like them, you must also afterwards "leave your work and devote yourself to reading and mental prayer", so as to continue your own formation and obtain the graces "you need in the exercise of this employment, according to the spirit and intentions of the Church which entrusted you with it" (*id.*).

In order to announce the Gospel, the teacher must know the text intimately as the real "Good News". To announce it to children, he must make it understandable (MR 200,2). If it is going to bear fruit in the children, they have to be prepared to receive the sacraments (MR 200,2), and made to perform the good works they are capable of at their age (MR 200,3).

And so, the Founder wishes to include the ministry of Christian education with the other ministries of the Church. MR 201 deserves to be quoted in full. However, we shall restrict ourselves to the following section: "Reflect on what St Paul says, that God has established in the Church apostles, prophets and doctors (1 Co 12,28), and you will be convinced that it is he also who has established you in your employment. The same saint expresses the same thing in another way when he says that there are various ministries, each with its own function, and that the Holy Spirit manifests himself in all these gifts only for the common good, that is, for the good of the Church. To one, the Spirit gives the gift of speaking wisely, to another, the gift of faith (1 Co 12,5-9). You must not doubt that the grace God gives you by charging you to instruct children, to announce the Gospel to them, and to bring them up in the spirit of religion, is a very great gift indeed. But by calling you to this holy ministry, God requires you to acquit yourself of it with burning zeal for their salvation, because it is the work

of God" (MR 201,1).

For the teacher as for St Paul (2 Co 6,3-9), the fruit of charity and zeal is abundant patience to bear with the difficulties of the employment. As De La Salle says, "be willing to be dishonoured by men and mistreated, even to give your life for Jesus in the fulfilment of your ministry" (MR 201,1). "You must imitate God to some extent, for he so loved the souls he created that he gave his only Son" (MR 201,3 quoting Ep 5,1-2).

Then the perspective changes to salvation history as a whole. You are ministers not only of God but also of Jesus Christ and of the Church (MR 201,2), "since it is for the Church (which is the body of Christ) that you work, whose ministers you became when he commanded you to dispense his word" (MR 201,2 quoting Col 1,24f) for the sanctification of his children. Make these children become part of the structure of the Church so that they may be in a state to appear before Jesus Christ one day, filled with glory, without stain, wrinkle or defilement (Ep 5,25f), and become one day heirs of the Kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ (Rm 8,17).

Like the other meditations with even numbers, MR 202 describes **the practical aspects of zeal** that a Brother of the Christian Schools must show in his employment. Even if the term "ministry" is not used, this meditation has a number of clear analogies with MR 200 which has ministry in its title: it speaks of making children avoid sinning against God, their parents and their companions; of making them do good and the good actions they are capable of (always telling the truth, forgiving insults, praying...), not to obtain the approval of others, but because of their relationship with God. Like Elias, the Brother must be able to say to them: "I am so zealous for the glory of my God that I cannot allow you to renounce the covenant you contracted with him in baptism, nor the status of children of God that you received at the same time" (MR 202,1). But his words will have no effect if his example does not match his instruction, especially where children are concerned, because they model their conduct on that of their teachers (MR 202,3). The Word he proclaims as a minister comes back to challenge him in their person.

## 6. SCRIPTURAL SOURCES OF DE LA SALLE'S TEACHING ON THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The "Meditations on the Employment" make abundant use of scripture and include, in particular, many allusions to St Paul and quotations from him. Br Miguel Campos,<sup>15</sup> who has demonstrated this so well, shows how the Founder draws attention to "the gift of speaking with wisdom and to the gift of faith" which the Brother receives from God. De La Salle declares in Pauline language that the ministry of the teacher is established by God and that it is a specific gift which manifests the action of the Spirit for the good of the Church. We will restrict ourselves to pointing out some of the important scriptural texts which helped De La Salle to understand the ministry of education.<sup>16</sup>

The missionary activity presented to us in **the first letter to the Corinthians**, shows clearly the difficulty of rooting the Christian message in a culture that up till then has been alien to it. De La Salle applies to the teachers of the Christian Schools Paul's description of his work of evangelisation in Corinth: "For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Good News, and not [...] in the terms of philosophy, lest the cross of Jesus Christ be destroyed by them" (1 Co 1,17; cf. MR 193,3; 199,3). "We have not received the spirit of this world, but the spirit that comes from God, so that we may know the gifts that God gives us" (1 Co 2,12; cf. MF 189,1). "We help God in his work; you are the field which he cultivates, you are the building he erects. I have laid the foundation, like a good architect, according to the grace God has given me" (1 Co 3,9-10; cf. MR 193,2 & 3; 199,1; 205,1).

MD 3,2; MR 193,1; MF 166,3; MR 205,1 and MR 201,2 quote 1 Co 4,1-2: "Let each one of us consider himself as a minister<sup>17</sup> of Jesus Christ and a dispenser of the mysteries of God. What is needed is a faithful dispenser". St Paul ends this section by describing how he is despised: "We are treated as the offal of the world [...] and the scum of the earth" (1 Co 4,13; cf. MF 95,3; 140,3; 166,3).

Further on, St Paul declares that, in order to preach the Gospel freely, he has given up his rights: "Am I not free? Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Our Lord Jesus Christ? Are you not my work in Jesus Christ?" (1 Co 9,1; cf. MR 207,2 & 199,1 which, like 1 Co 4,15, introduce the idea of spiritual father-

hood). "And what is my reward? It is to preach the Gospel freely, without it costing anything those who hear me" (1 Co 9,18; cf. MR 194,1).

Various disorders in Christian assemblies oblige Paul to explain some of the criteria governing charisms and ministries: the common good (1 Co 12,12,30), the edification of the community (14,1-19) and, above all, love (13,1-13). MR 201,1 quotes 1 Co 12,4-9: "There is a diversity of gifts, but it is the same Spirit; a diversity of ministries (*diakonia*), but there is only one and the same Lord; and there are different tasks, but there is only one and the same God who does everything in all of us. The Holy Spirit, however, appears in each one of us only for the common good. One receives from the Holy Spirit the gift of speaking with wisdom; another, from the same Spirit, the gift of speaking with knowledge: yet another, the gift of faith from this same Spirit. [...] And God has established in the Church 1<sup>st</sup>. apostles, 2<sup>nd</sup>. prophets, 3<sup>rd</sup>. doctors..." (1 Co 12,28; cf. MF 170,3).

In **the second letter to the Corinthians**, Paul defends his apostolate against his adversaries: "Do we need, like certain people, letters of recommendation for you or from you? [...] You know that you are the letter dictated to us by Jesus Christ and which we have written down, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God, and not on tables of stone, but on the tables of flesh of your hearts" (2 Co 3,1-3; cf. MR 201,2; 195,2). Paul continues, referring to "the ministry of the new Covenant". (De La Salle speaks of the "ministers of the New Testament" in MR 199,3). "God has made us qualified to be ministers (*diakonoi*) of the new covenant. [...] If the ministry of death [...], the ministry of condemnation was glorious, how much more will not the ministry (*diakonia*) of justice be so" (2 Co 3,6f). "Since God, in his mercy, has given us such a ministry, we do not lose courage, but we detest base and shameful actions which are done in secret, not acting with deceitfulness, not watering down the word of God, but acquiring, before him and in the minds of every human being, the glory of discovering the truth" (2 Co 4,1-2; cf. MR 193,1).

"For we are not preaching ourselves, but Jesus Christ Our lord, and we declare that we are your serv-

ants in Jesus, because God, who commanded that light should come from darkness, has himself enlightened our hearts, so that we can enlighten those of others by revealing to them the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. However, we carry this treasure in earthenware vessels, so that the greatness of its power may be attributed to God and not to us. We are hard-pressed on all sides, but not crushed. We are confused, but we do not despair. We are persecuted, but not abandoned. We are knocked down, but not killed" (2 Co 4,5-9; cf. MF 166,3).

**The exercise of the apostolic ministry** is described by Paul as being that of an ambassador, whose function is to reconcile in the name of love: "Because the love of God overwhelms us, when we consider that if one man died for all, then all men are dead. And Jesus Christ died for everyone, so that all those who are alive should not live any more for themselves, but for the one who died and rose again for them. [...] And all comes from God who has reconciled us with himself through Jesus Christ, and has made us his ministers (*diakonia*) in order to reconcile men with him. For God was in Jesus Christ in whom he reconciled the world with himself, not imputing to men their sins, and he has entrusted to us the words of reconciliation. We are therefore the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, and it is as if God himself exhorted you through us" (2 Co 5,14-20; cf. MR 201,2 & 193,3).

Chapter 10 of the **letter to the Romans** recalls the rôle of the profession of faith in salvation: "Whoever calls on the Lord's name will be saved. But how can they call upon someone if they do not believe in him? Or how will they believe in someone they have not heard of? And how will they hear of him if they have no preacher? [...] Faith comes therefore from what we have heard, and from what we have heard through the preaching of the word of God" (Rm 10,13-17; cf. MR 193,1). In chapter 11, the same letter announces the **final admission to salvation of the new Israel** composed of Jews and pagans: "I declare to you that as long as I am the apostle of the nations, I

shall be proud of my ministry (*diakonia*), trying to make envious those who are of the same race as I and to save a few of them" (Rm 11,13f; cf. MR 193,3; 199,3). The Brother also will try "to save a few" of the young people and "be proud of his ministry".

**The letter to the Colossians** opens with a prayer for the Church and a hymn to Christ. There follows a section on the apostolic ministry whose aim is to accomplish what was celebrated in the hymn: "You yourselves, whose minds were formerly alienated from him and who, because of your evil actions, were his enemies, have been reinstated in his grace. For he suffered death in his body in order to make you holy, without stain and irreproachable before him. But you must remain firm and unshakable in the faith, and immovable in the hope of the Gospel which you have heard, and which was preached to all creatures under heaven, and by the ministry (*diakonos*) to which I, Paul, have been appointed. I rejoice now in the sufferings I have to endure for you and which accomplishes in my body what is lacking in the sufferings of Jesus Christ, for his body which is the Church, and of which I was made a minister (*diakonos*) according to the command God gave me to dispense to you his word and to complete its preaching among you" (Col 1,21-25; cf. MR 195,1; 201,2; MF 112,3; 165,2).

Finally, **the first letter of St Peter** is intended to strengthen the faith of the Christians whose zeal runs the risk of weakening. He urges them to be vigilant in their common life: "Let each one use in the service of others the gifts he has received, acting as the faithful dispensers (*diakonoi*) of the various graces of God" (1 P 4,10). "If a person speaks, let it be as dispensing the word of God; if a person exercises some ministry (*diakonia*), let him do so as acting with the power given to him by God, so that God may be honoured in everything through Jesus Christ" (1 P 4,11; cf. MD 3,2). And so, those who teach are simply the voice of the one who speaks through them, when they speak of him and of what concerns him.

## 7. THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY

### 7.1. A long silence and a rediscovery

The teaching of De La Salle on ministries did not receive the attention its importance deserved either in the Institute he founded or outside. Printed in 1730, eleven years after the death of their author, the MR went through only 5 editions in French in 230 years.<sup>18</sup> Their distribution was almost totally restricted to the Brothers of the Christian Schools, who themselves made very little use of them outside of the annual retreat where they were used as subjects for meditation. In the circulars written by the Superior Generals for the Brothers there is no quotation, let alone analysis, from them. The vocation of the Brothers was treated under the two aspects of religious life and apostolate. Ministry, in theological language, was used only in reference to the sacerdotal ministry.

The foundation of Lasallian Studies in 1956 and the thesis written by Br Michel Sauvage<sup>19</sup> for his doctorate in theology which he defended in 1961, led to a rediscovery of the thinking of the Founder on ministries. A few months before the opening of Vatican II, the Superior General, Brother Nicet Joseph, devoted a long and important circular to "the catechetical mission" of the Brothers, which included no less than 10 quotations from the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat*. While not stressed the way it is today, the term minister is used.<sup>20</sup> Since then, various publications have shown how much the Brothers have become aware again of this aspect of their spiritual heritage.

### 7.2. An episcopal document dated 1973

In the course of its 1973 assembly, the Bishops' Conference of France adopted a study document entitled *Everyone with responsibility in the Church?* The question mark at the end of the title should not deceive us: the authors of the document were looking for a positive response.<sup>21</sup>

God does not intend to save people separately, without mutual links between them.<sup>22</sup> With those that accept the Gospel message he builds his Church. Living in the fulness of his Spirit, baptised people receive from him the gifts which enable them to be the leaven of his evangelisation in the world. In addition, this same Spirit enables them to have responsibilities in

the life of the Church for the various aspects of its life: worship and prayer, catechesis, apostolic formation, spiritual help, charity work, etc.

At the invitation of Vatican II, the Bishops' Conference wrote, we must change "from being a Church which is very heavily reliant on the clergy to a Church which depends on the shared responsibility of Christians according to the diversity of their ministries". Ministries are seen as service functions given to certain Christians. Apart from "ordained ministries", one can speak of "instituted ministries" in the Church, when the task accomplished by them:

- provides something necessary or useful for the common good of the community;
- has and requires the stability of a lasting and specific mission;
- is recognised in the community by its institutional character, because of a public commitment, for example, or appointment. In such cases, one can speak of fully instituted ministries.

The authors of the document feel that the Church should not restrict its point of view to that of *Ministeria quaedam* (August 15th 1972) which speaks of liturgical ministries which could be confided to lay people (and which previously were restricted to candidates for the priesthood).

### 7.3. The 1987 Rule<sup>23</sup>

During the same period, documents from the Holy See continued to avoid speaking of lay ministries, restricting the term to the sacerdotal ministry or to cases of very explicit or exceptional delegation (such as during violent persecutions).

In 1982, the Roman Congregation for Catholic Education published a text entitled *The Catholic lay person, a witness to the faith in school*. The authors refrained from using the word ministry even though it figured in preliminary drafts previously made public.<sup>24</sup>

Since then, other bodies within the magisterium have considered the question of ministries, but most often from a pastoral angle. The time has not yet come, it would seem, to draw conclusions: this question remains an open one in the Church. We shall bring a

temporary halt to our reflections by considering the *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, a document which is in force now, and see how the mission of Christian education is carried out in Lasallian schools.

Article 3 of the *Rule* defines the purpose of the Institute: "To give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it". We have here an instance of a ministry not only recognised, but actually entrusted by the Church to an Institute.

God raised up John Baptist de La Salle (1) and his Spirit showed him the mission his Institute was to undertake (4). The Church recognises this charism and entrusts to the Institute the apostolic ministry of Christian education.

"The Brothers, in fidelity to the call of the Spirit and the charism of their Founder, consecrate themselves to God in order to exercise, by association, their apostolic ministry of education" (2). He "consecrates himself entirely to the Holy Trinity to procure the glory of God in the ministry of Christian education" (22). "The Brothers live their faith as a gift to be used for their ministry of Christian education" (20). Each day, they "go up to God by mental prayer" (MR 198,1), as apostles responsible for the salvation of those entrusted to them. In this way they hope "to receive from the Lord the internal freedom and the spiritual discernment which their ministry requires, and the graces they need to work effectively for building up the kingdom of God" (69). Their zeal, "enlivened by the Holy Spirit, inspires their apostolic prayer and all the activities of their educational ministry" (7). "The Brothers consider their professional work as a ministry" (13), convinced that "any education that respects the human person is a way to open people to God's grace and so dispose them to accept the faith" (12).

As religious vowed to the ministry of Christian education, "the first apostolate of the Brothers consists in the witness of their consecrated life" (24). "In fulfilling their ministry [...], they are contributing, as a community, to the unique mission of the Institute within the Church" (16). The community which they constitute is "dedicated [...] to the apostolic ministry of education" (51). "The Brothers have always in view the promotion of justice [...] and either the direct or indirect service of the poor as the preferred aspect of

their ministry of education" (40). "Ever since the time of their foundation, the Brothers have contributed to the promotion of the Christian laity, especially among those educators who want their professional work to be a form of gospel ministry" (17).

By approving the *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools* by a decree published on January 26th 1987, the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes approved in it "the faithful expression of the charism of St John Baptist de La Salle and of the tradition of the Institute: consecrated to God as lay religious, the Brothers are called to provide a human and Christian education for young people, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to them".

#### 7.4. In the context of the shared mission

The mission of the Institute comes from God and from his Spirit. The ministry can be entrusted therefore only to Christians. We have noted, however, that the work of the Institute went beyond the confines of the Church. It is reasonable to think, therefore, that persons rooted in non-Christian religious and humanistic traditions can contribute to the mission of the Institute, if they offer education that is open to the spiritual dimension of people and, consequently, to "the grace which disposes them to accept the faith" (12). However, in the case of Christian teachers, aware of the grace they received in baptism, can we say nowadays that they participate in the ministry of the Brothers — an "instituted ministry"?

The case of the Brothers themselves needs to be given some thought: how can they practise the spirituality of a minister of the Gospel when they live in a situation which is so different from the one which enabled the Founder to undertake the establishment of the Christian Schools? At the present time, in most parts of the Institute, the Brothers are in a minority in the schools in which they work. Also, and for praiseworthy motives, teaching as a profession is organised according to criteria which are more rational than relational. A teacher going from one class to another to teach a highly specialised subject cannot easily project his mission within the Church.

Without going deeply into the questions raised by this subject, we should recognise that there are nu-

merous Brothers and lay Lasallians who exercise the ministry of Christian education. We outline briefly what characterises them :

- awareness of being called by God to cooperate in his work of salvation,
- active participation in an educational team or in a community committed to the same work,
- concern for poor young people and a willingness to adapt school establishments to their needs,
- a deepening of the experience of God in this close contact with young people, with the purpose also of

preparing them better to take their place in society and the Church,

- explicit reference to the person of St John Baptist de La Salle in this process of personal and community growth.

And so it is that the term ministry, representing a new kind of force, offers a rallying point for Christians called to it by the challenges of the world, and through them, by the Holy Spirit. It is to be hoped that theological research will go on and continue to guide the growing numbers of baptised persons who will respond to this call, creating a new face of God in the Church for the salvation of the world.

<sup>1</sup> *Étude de mots du Vocabulaire lasallien*, Paris (photocopied document, undated, around 1990).

<sup>2</sup> SAUVAGE, M., *Catéchèse et laïcat*, p. 335. See bibliography.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by POUTET, Y., *Spiritualités d'enseignants*, Revue d'ascétique et de mystique, January-March 1960. (Article due to appear in CL 55).

<sup>4</sup> *Règlements et méthode pour les écoles*, Paris, chez F. Muguet, 1710. Quoted by SAUVAGE, p. 412.

<sup>5</sup> *Méditations pour les sœurs maîtresses des écoles charitables du Saint Enfant Jésus*, Paris, 1687. The author, François Giry (1635-1688), a Minim, became after the death of Nicolas Barré the spiritual director of the women's community founded by him (see *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*).

<sup>6</sup> The preceding quotations are taken from CAMPOS, CL 46,55 and from SAUVAGE, p. 424 & 441.

<sup>7</sup> Functions. Diakonia, according to the Greek text of Ac 1,25.

<sup>8</sup> A stylistic arrangement of antithetical elements according to the following pattern : ABC-C'B'A'.

<sup>9</sup> SCHNEIDER, J.L., *Chercheurs de Dieu avec JBS*, Paris, 1995 (photocopied document), § 4.1.

<sup>10</sup> On the same topic see MD 33, which shows the teacher, like the Good Shepherd, using discernment (1st pt.), in his relations with his disciples (2nd pt.) and as an attempt to adapt to them (3rd pt.).

<sup>11</sup> SCHNEIDER, § 4.2.

<sup>12</sup> SCHNEIDER, § 4.3.

<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting the connection between this norma-

tive description of De La Salle and the social ideal of his times, the ideal of the *honnête homme* who, by exercising self-control, is able to control also any situation that arises, however heroic it may be.

<sup>14</sup> SCHNEIDER, § 4.4.

<sup>15</sup> CL 45 & 46. See bibliography.

<sup>16</sup> Scripture quotations in English are taken from the Jerusalem Bible. De La Salle uses the French translation by Amelote (1685). Introductory remarks are taken from the TOB Bible.

<sup>17</sup> Amelote translated the Greek *hupeteres* by *ministre* (minister). The French translation printed in Brussels in 1700 does the same. At the present time BJ and TOB translate it by *serviteur* (servant), Osty, by *auxiliaire* (auxiliary).

<sup>18</sup> See CL 13,III.

<sup>19</sup> A thesis published under the title *Catéchèse et Laïcat*. See the bibliography.

<sup>20</sup> Circular 371, dated February 2nd 1962, *The Catechetical Mission of the Brother of the Christian Schools*.

<sup>21</sup> *Tous responsables dans l'Eglise ?* Plenary Assembly of the French Hierarchy, Paris, Centurion, 1973. See on p. 55 the note on the word *ministre* by Mgr Raymond Boucheix.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 9; *Gaudium et Spes*, 32.

<sup>23</sup> *Rules of the Brothers of the Christian schools*, Rome, 1987. The numbers in brackets in the text refer to the articles of this Rule.

<sup>24</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in schools, Witnesses to the faith*, Rome, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1982.

**Complementary themes**

Apostle	Consecration	Mission
Association	Disciples	Reward of the teacher
Brothers of the Christian Schools	Education	Salvation
Christian teacher	Employment	Teacher-pupil relation
Community, society, Institute	Formation	Zeal

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