



01-C-01

EVANGELISING A WORLD IN A STATE OF CRISIS

PRESENT EXPERIENCE

We are witnessing bewildering **changes** in our society in the matter of standards and values (keeping in mind particular situations in different countries).

This quickening rhythm is accompanied by connotations which demand from the believer **serious reflection** on the **foundations of his faith**. In effect, a naive or triumphalist attitude, lacking a critical sense is of no value. On the other hand, we cannot remain disorientated or resigned to accepting a state of discouragement and nostalgia for the past.

WARNING BY THE CHURCH

"The Church has recognised that a wide gap has opened between herself and modern culture. The enormous variety of cultures, customs and traditions throws down a challenge that, at first sight, might appear to be above our strength... The modern world feels fascinated by its conquests. Too often it accepts ideologies, standards of morality and behaviour which are in contradiction with those of the Church or, at best, it quietly ignores Christian values." (John Paul II: Address to the Pontifical for Culture)

FROM DE LA SALLE TOWARDS A MORE CHRISTIAN WORLD

"The Brothers, as members of the Church, live in this world and are necessarily sensitive to the problems which arise in each successive period of human history." (Declaration 8,1)

A world marked by the greatness of man and by his technical and economic progress.

A world become more and more secular in the continuing process of desacralisation.

A world where life, liberty and human dignity are more and more threatened.

A world where God is missing or rejected. (Declaration 11,2-3) These needs are not less urgent than they were at the time of the foundation of the Institute. (Declaration 23,2)

DE LA SALLE'S REQUIREMENTS: STANDARDS IN THE APOSTOLATE

De La Salle is a realist in his projects. He starts from the basis of faith which renders his zeal fruitful. (Declaration 47,2)

— He seeks a purpose in life (especially for the most deprived).

— His moral teaching is always based on the Gospel.

— His highest aspiration bears "the sign of the faith."

Based on these principles, the evangelising action of De La Salle and his disciples is the redeeming salvation of Jesus which becomes:

★ History because it enters the world through a preferential decision in favour of the poor.

★ Word of God, incarnate in the prophets, messengers of Christ.

★ Celebration in which we look forward to encountering the living Christ.

★ Community, where we feel responsible for one another because we love one another and share with one another. "In the Christian school the students experience true community." (Declaration 44,3)

AN URGENT APPEAL — BEYOND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES — COMMUNITIES OF BROTHERS

The spirit of de La Salle cannot be confined to communities of Brothers. It must produce fruit among those who have been enriched by it.

STUDENTS - FORMER STUDENTS

"The Brothers will remember that, instead of doing everything themselves, they can involve their students and alumni in some of their educational and apostolic activities." (Declaration 52,4)

EDUCATIVE COMMUNITY

"Lay teachers make a unique contribution through their knowledge of the world, of family life and civic affairs." (Declaration 41,3).

TEACHERS

"Lay teachers should be completely involved with the whole life of the school: with catechesis, apostolic organisations, extra-curricular activities and administrative positions."

"In certain cases it may become necessary for the teachers to take charge of these leisure activities." (Declaration 46,3; 47,2)

PARENTS

"The Brothers work closely with parents, keeping in mind that they can learn much from parents as well as give them information." (Declaration 47,2)

"LAND OF OUR SWEAT" - EDUCATION, OUR SPECIFIC APOSTOLATE

"The end of this Institute is to give a Christian education to children: it is for this purpose the Brothers keep schools." (De La Salle: Rules, 1705)

PARENTS, TEACHERS, FRIENDS OF DE LA SALLE

Brothers; we exercise our apostolic mission by providing Christian education in schools. De La Salle wants us to live in the world, to interest ourselves in its needs and to share its preoccupations and hopes. By our formation and life style we invite people, especially the young, to live fully and joyfully their own lives. "Very conscious of the ways in which God speaks to the young today" we exercise our faith and find stimulus in our work. ("Very... to-day" Paul VI)

A PROPHET IN DIFFICULT TIMES

For our activity to be effective it must be based on present reality, accepted with love. This presupposes and demands:

Avoidance of prejudice:

God's salvation is for everybody. Respect reality. Do not distort it.

Commitment to the place where we live:

Organisations and structures: cultural, recreational, professional. Cultivate human relations — in families, at work, in political circles. Promote values supportive of human dignity: campaigns for supporting human dignity at school, parish, diocesan and international level etc.

Conformity with the faith we profess:

Autonomy of the individual conscience. Respect for those who live by another ideology. Encouragement for local forms of religious expression. Conformity of life with faith.

Professional Integrity:

Have a thorough knowledge of what we are doing. Be qualified for our professional task. Make our methods and procedures known. Become integrated in a conscientious and responsible laity.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND SUPPORT IN OUR APOSTOLATE

- ★ Luke: 1:21,24: The wisdom of the simple.
- ★ De La Salle: Called by the Church (Meditations: 199,1; 203,1; 198,3).
- ★ In my position I judge conflict situations from the view point of faith: their causes, their manifestations, their solutions.

MY SONG OF HOPE:

I shall rise every day
above all discouragement.
You, yourself will saturate the air
with those droplets of hope
That, sometime or other
will bring back to me.
The little joys long forgotten

Brother Augustin Cabria
*Visitor of the Central District
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(1) Como referencia doctrinal, cfr. «Exposición preliminar de G.S.».