



12-B-60

THE LA SALLE INTEGRAL FORMATION CENTER OF TIJUANA (1)

(Districts of San-Francisco and Mexico-North)

From 1978 until January 25 of 1982, the Brothers were given the task of discovering the most urgent needs of this city and they decided upon a Pastoral Center.

Tijuana, founded in 1889

This is the most visited frontier town in the world: 40 million tourists come here annually. It is the common home of more than a million and a half persons from different points of the Republic, and of foreigners, emigrants and immigrants. They belong to different social economic levels and to different cultures and religions.

Eighty percent of these people are less than 30 years of age and they study and work, battling for survival. They are confronted by such problems as broken homes, the lack of proper living conditions and conveniences, low economic conditions, and religious confusion.

As a result of the above mentioned conditions, there is frustration, bitterness, despair, and irresponsibility, thus creating the need for leaders who can, free of charge, stir up conviviality for the success of the common good and to give a meaning to their Catholic Faith.

The Brothers, well aware of this situation, designed the:

"GOALS OF THE CENTER".

These have been continually refined from 1982 until in 1986 they are the following:

To evangelize and form in the Lasallian Spirit, lay leaders, preferably those the least well off, so that from their parishes they can work together for the promotion of Christian Life in society, in response to Medellín and Puebla, as well as to Vatican II.

To achieve this objective, they have gone on seeking ways of giving basic courses which answer needs in four areas: Church, Leadership, Culture and Academics. They started off with seven courses and by 1985 it had risen to 70.

With the commitment of both Districts (San Francisco, Mexico-North), each year, each district has been sending 2 Brothers to evaluate the work. Until 1986 there have been 5 evaluations, each of three day's duration, a marvelous effort and intelligent support on the part of both Provinces.

From August 1985 until March 1986, a change was made in the work to integrate those areas within the program which were seen to be most urgent. Thus, three areas were decided upon:

- 1) Guidance of Catechetics for adolescents and youths,
- 2) Guidance of youth groups,
- 3) Guidance of Pre-Marital and Marital groups.

Each program consists of a basic area, a specific area, and a general area and hours of service.

We brothers are aware that this new project must be presented in such a way that the poor will be the principal option. Because of this, requisites should not close the door on anyone, but all should be allowed to join and to follow the program slowly and according to his own place until he achieves a level which will allow him to serve his community with more efficiency. We realize that not all are of leadership timber but they are all people seeking a better way of living.

What kind of students (whom we call promoters) have we?

From January 1982 until March 24, 1986, more than 2,000 people 14 years of age or older have finished a minimum period of 10 weeks of studies, with classes held twice a week.

Although these people come from all levels of society, preference is given to the more simple people, most of whom come to the center because of natural attraction or friendship rather than being sent by the parish priests.

Courses of ten weeks' duration are given four times a year, from January to March, April to June, July to August, and September to November. The reason for such a schedule is that the people who come to the Center are either working people or students; they are people seeking personal upliftment and a type of Christianity for service towards others, but they cannot count on much free time.

During the ten-week periods in 1984, 1985, and 1986, we had an average of 550 people per session. Many of them have been studying since 1982 and there are some who work in their own parish. Others do not finish the course because of the mobility of their work, studies, or living

conditions. Many of them return to their place of origin or to the United States and others just lack proper study habits.

“Mystique of the work”

1) The evangelical itinerary of Saint John Baptist De La Salle.

“I believe that this must have been the reason that God, who disposes all things according to wisdom and gentleness, and who is not wont to force the inclinations of men, was leading me to concern myself with the schools. He did this over a long period of time and in an imperceptible way. He worked in such a way that one commitment led me to another, without my having foreseen the final outcome from the very beginning”.

2) The La Salle Center of Integral Formation, wishes to live the LIBERATING EDUCATION of Medellín, 1968:

— A Systematic Education which all the while contributes to the creation of a certain popular culture and to increasing the desire for change.

— Education which produces agents for transforming the community.

3) The La Salle Center of Integral Formation wishes to live the LIBERATING EDUCATION of Puebla, 1979:

— To humanize and personalize, that is, Personalized Education.

— To exercise the critical function proper to education, which allows for the creation of a new truly participative and fraternal society, that is, Education for Justice.

— To convert the student in question, not only for his own personal development, but also for the service and development of the community, that is, Education for Service.

— To produce agents of change with the strength of the Gospel by means of civic, moral, religious, and political values inspired by the social teachings of the Church, that is, Evangelical Education.

4) The La Salle Center of Integral Formation, faithful to its Founder, Saint John Baptist De La Salle, wished to live Popular Education:

— Human development implies activities which help to awaken the consciences of men in all their dimensions and to esteem themselves as capable of becoming protagonists of their own human and Christian development.

— To educate people to live together, to give an impulse to their organizations, to arouse the well being of the Christian community, and to help people toward effective participation.

— To give priority to living together, to give a new impulse to the numerous poor sectors of our population who are both materially and culturally deprived; orienting them preferably in accord with the bishop of the place, and toward the services and educational resources of the Church.

— Likewise, the education of leaders and agents of change with the strength of the Gospel is a priority.

Gratuity

The thoughts of Saint John Baptist De La Salle on this point.

1) The prime motive for gratuity is that the children of the poor might be served. Its basis is the Gratuitous Salvific Love of God towards all of us.

2) The second motive is educational service guaranteed by the Brother which in this way appears as an expression of the mystery of the Saving God, active today in the lives of people.

3) “Thank God because in His Goodness He makes use of you to procure such great benefits for children. You must be faithful and exact in doing this without receiving any salary whatsoever, so that you may say with Saint Paul: ‘It is my great consolation to announce the Gospel without charge, so that it will not cost those who hear it anything’”. (Med. 194.1).

4) Abandonment to Providence is founded on these words of Jesus Christ in the Gospel: “Do not be overly concerned about what you will eat or what you will drink or about the other necessities of life, for you must exclusively and before all other things, seek the kingdom of God and all the rest will be added unto you”. (Med. 153,3 and Med. 134, 1).

5) We should like to finish with these words of Saint John Baptist De La Salle: “To serve gratuitously to announce the Gospel, is then, to imitate God and to participate, in virtue of the gratuitous gift of His mission, in His free and efficacious love for all men”. (Med. 201.3).