

**DE LA SALLE AS CATECHIST (2)**

**Brother Manuel F. Magaz**

Among the 386 titles of works or articles mentioned by Brother Saturnino Gallego in volume 478 of "BAC", "Life and thought of St. John Baptist de La Salle, II: his writings", not even one of them names De La Salle a "catechist". In very few of these works does even the term "catechesis" appear in connection with De La Salle. There is Brother Pascual Maymi's "Life of Faith and catechesis of Faith according to St. John Baptist de La Salle" and "Outlines of catechesis according to St. John Baptist de La Salle" by Brother Leone di Maria; we also have Brother Jean Pungier's "Message of St. John Baptist de La Salle to educators and catechists of the Faith". Those seem to be the only ones.

However, De La Salle is a catechist of the first order. We must restore the well-merited title of "catechist" to our Saint, by considering his writings, his studies and his classroom experiences.

This paper is an attempt to prove how in the pages of De La Salle's meditations, numerous and enduring principles of genuine catechesis lie just below the surface. All they need is perception, a filial affection and some intelligent attention which is willing to recognise and adapt them to present day catechetical terminology.

**WHAT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE THINKS THE CATECHIST SHOULD BE LIKE**

**THE PERSON OF THE CATECHIST**

Called by God 2.1, 7.1, 39.2, 61.1, 78.2, 79.1, 87.2, 110.3, 131.2, 140.2, 156.3, 157.3, 167.2, 193.1.2, 196.1.2, 201.1, 205.1.	Cooperator, minister of God in whose name s/he speaks. 3.1, 56.1, 87.1, 140.2, 193.1, 201.1, 205.1, 207.3.	Ambassador and minister of Jesus Christ, whose place s/he takes with students. 195.2, 196.1.2, 201.2.
Minister of the Church who sends him/her on the mission. 199.1.2, 200.1, 201.2.	Taking the place of parents who confide their children to him/her. 193.2	Witness of what is taught. 33.2, 37.2, 39.2, 60.3, 69.1, 84.1, 91.3, 98.3, 102.2, 128.1, 131.1, 138.3, 153.2.3, 155.2, 158.3, 178.1, 194.3, 203.3.

**QUALITIES OF THE CATECHIST**

As a human. Human knowledge. 37.2, 91.3, 92.3, 170.2.	As a human. Religious knowledge in general. 41.3, 60.3, 61.3, 91.3, 108.1, 116.2, 120.1, 166.2, 170.2, 174.1, 206.1.	As a human. Knowledge of the Bible, Sacred Scripture. 37.2, 44.2, 119.2, 120.1, 159.1, 167.2, 170.1.2, 201.1.
As a teacher. Psychological: knowledge of students. 33.1.3, 91.3, 186.3, 193.3, 197.1.3, 198.1, 202.3, 206.1.	As a teacher. Methodology Cf. Guide pp. 96-109 and passim, the whole.	As a teacher. Human qualities: kind manner ... love of students. 33.2, 101.3, 134.2, 150.1.
As a religious apostle-catechist. Must be a person of FAITH. 80.3, 107.3, 117.3, 133.3, 134.3, 139.3, 175.2, 178.1.	As a religious apostle-catechist. Must have an ardent ZEAL 62.1, 78.3, 79.3, 80.3, 81.2, 93.2, 99.2, 111.3, 114.2, 122.3, 140.1.2, 148.2, 150.2, 160.3, 171.2, 179.1, 181.2, 200.1, 201.1.	As a religious apostle-catechist. Must be a person of prayer. 3.2, 37.3, 41.3, 56.3, 64.2, 78.2, 80.2, 95.1, 102.1, 107.1, 122.3, 125.3, 127.1, 129.2, 232.2, 148.2, 153.1, 159.2, 161.2, 172.3, 179.3, 182.2, 196.1, 197.3.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CATECHIST**

God will ask soul for soul "rigorously" 53.3, 186.3, Guide 103.	Must explain the catechism each day: one of the principal obligations. 39.2, 61.2, 91.3, 92.3, 100.2, 106.1, 145.3, 150.3, 159.1.2, 166.2, 168.2, 200.1, 206.1.	Has to instruct students in Christian living: The Word of God. 33.3, 41.3, 44.2, 56.2, 60.3, 64.2, 67.1, 78.2, 80.2.3, 81.1, 87.2, 94.3, 99.1, 106.1, 109.3, 120.1, 132.1...
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**EXCELLENCE OF THE MISSION OF THE CATECHIST**

Shares in the nature of the ministry of the Angels. 2.1, 197.1.2.3, 198.1.2.3, 208.3.	Continues the ministry of the apostles; of the bishops who are their successors. 61.3, 78.2, 99.1.2, 102.1, 114.2, 145.3, 159.2, 167.2, 186.3, 199.3, 200.1, 201.1, 203.3, 207.2.	Has been and is honoured by the witness of many great saints of the Church. 79.3, 131.3, 132.2, 133.2, 155.2, 168.2, 175.3, 186.3, 199.2.
<b>REWARD OF THE CATECHIST</b>		
Persecution, insults, ingratitude. 87.3, 100.3, 119.2, 120.3, 145.3, 155.3, 167.3, 168.3, 175.3, 182.2.	Seeing that God is served and his reign spread. 59.3, 67.1, 143.3, 207.3.	Has proof that students live a Christian life. 207.3.

**HOW DOES ST. J. B. DE LA SALLE CONSIDER THE PERSON RECEIVING CATECHISM?**

A child of God who shares in the life of the Trinity because of the sanctifying grace which s/he possesses. 46.3, 67.1, 189.1, 198.3, 199.3.	Is excellent soil for receiving and making the message of the Gospel fruitful, especially if poor. 80.3, 86.2.3, 96.3, 113.1, 132.2, 133.3, 137.2, 143.2, 150.1, 166.2, 173.1, 206.1.	As a person, has the right to have qualities respected. 33.3, 91.3, 186.3, 193.3, 197.3, 198.1, 202.3, 206.1, Guide: 8, 9, 15, 16, 49, 52, 163, 164, 209, 215, 217, 219, 220, 225...
As a sensitive subject who needs instruction in catechism in order to enlighten his/her intelligence and move his/her heart and strengthen his/her will. 61.1, 91.3, 92.2, 100.2, 106.1, 195.2, 196.3, 197.2	As a person with wavering will who needs to be guided in and outside the school, about bad company: 3.3, 56.2, 60.3, 61.3, 111.3, 114.2, 126.1, 194.1. about the occasions of sin: 33.3, 56.1.3, 60.3, 67.1, 111.3, 162.2, 192.2, 202.1.	As a person who gradually and knowingly commits oneself to the Gospel message to which s/he becomes attached. 2.2, 43.3, 115.3, 129.2, 148.2, 202.3.  Guide: 96-109 and passim.

**DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CATECHESIS OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE****OBJECTIVES**

To proclaim and extend the Kingdom of Christ. 39.2, 56.1, 59.3, 67.1, 111.3, 143.3, 162.2, 192.2.3, 194.2, 196.2, 202.1.	Forms the genuine Christian. (Spirit of Christianity) 6.2, 37.2, 62.1, 80.2, 98.3, 110.3, 113.1, 115.3, 116.2, 119.2, 131.1, 132.1, 136.3, 139.3, 157.2.3, 159.1, 169.3, 175.2, 186.2, 194.2.3, 196.3, 199.1, 206.1, 207.3, 208.1.
Promotes and extends the Kingdom of Christ. 39.2, 56.1, 59.3, 67.1, 111.3, 143.3, 162.2, 192.2.3, 194.2, 196.2, 202.1.	And succeeds in bringing about the salvation of the students. 37.1, 43.3, 56.1, 57.2, 58.3, 70.2, 81.2, 83.3, 86.3, 87.2, 92.3, 97.3, 107.3, 108.1.2, 119.3, 135.1.3, 137.3, 146.3, 148.2, 150.2, 153.1, 166.1, 193.3, 182.2, 187.1, 189.2, 195.1, 196.2, 197.1.3, 201.1.3, 202.2, 204.3, 205.2, 206.2, 207.1.2, 208.2.3.

**SOURCES**

Biblical. 100.1, 170.1.2, 178.2, 192.1, 198.1.	Gospel. 37.2, 44.2, 61.2, 78.2, 81.2, 84.1, 87.1, 91.3, 100.1.2, 116.2, 117.3, 138.3, 140.1, 159.1.2, 160.3, 166.2.3, 167.2, 170.1, 171.3, 175.2, 180.3, 191.2, 193.3, 194.3.	Early Fathers. 79.3, 31.3, 132.2, 155.2, 168.2, 175.3, 186.3, 199.2.
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**CONTENT**

Christocentric: Christ as source, agent and end. 6.2, 87.2, 102.2, 157.1, 173.1, 182.3, 189.1, 195.2, 196.1.2, 198.3, 201.1.2...	Ecclesial: it is presented in, with and for the Church. 61.3, 106.2, 170.3, 186.3, 199.1.2, 200.1, 205.3, 208.1, etc.	Sacramental 47.2, 56.2.3, 198.2, 200.2, etc.
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**REFERENCE TO SOME CIRCULARS OF THE INSTITUTE IN WHICH MENTION IS MADE OF CATECHESIS**

The first number is that of the Circular, the second is that of the page.

2, 28-13, 17-15, 10-21, 26-25, 14-27, 21-28, 22-33, 26-38, 7-41, 6-52, 5-57, 10-62, 25-64, 4-66, 13-69, 54-71 passim -73, 19-75, 20-97, passim, -102, 25-107, passim -109, 77-113, 6-118, 48-125, 6-127, 25-133, passim -135, 14-136 passim -143, passim -148, 35-150 passim -152 passim -158, 7-188, 13-189, 39-197, 34-210, 38-231, 31-236, 26-241 passim -255, 57-258, 25-260, 40-266, 36-269, 18-276, 38-283, 31-288, passim -297, 37-300 all of this -311, 5-13-314, 6-20-315, 25-33-318, 82-83-323, passim -328, passim -329, 58-59-334, 59-60-340, 25-27-342, 36 ff. -346 all -354, 56 ff. -371, all the above on "our mission as Catechist".