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**Concerning the La Salle - Moët families**

**An abundant richness.  
An analysis of some observations.**

**Brother Miguel Prieto**

I have verified and compared the total number of children that the parents of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, LUIS DE LA SALLE and NICOLE MOËT, had, comparing these with the years that they were married, the number of surviving children (7) and those which died (4).

LET'S LOOK AT THE FACTS: (1)

<i>Surviving children</i>	Jean-Baptiste 30-Apr.-1651	Marie 26-Feb.-1654	Rose Marie 29-Feb.-1656	Jacques-Joseph 21-Sept.-1659	Jean-Louis 25.Dec.-1664	Pierre 3-Sept.-1666	Jean-Rémis 12-July-1670
<i>Other children</i>		Rémis 11-Dec.-1652		Marie-Anne 2-Feb.-1658	Jean-Louis 15-Feb.-1663		Simon 10-Sept.-1667 † 22-Apr.-1669

Looking at these facts I was struck by:

1. The regularity of births.
2. The control of the birth rate.
3. The great number of births in the marriage.
4. The almost regular death rate.
5. The rate of survival among the children.

a) With regard to the first item - the regularity of births - we can observe that if we just look at the data expressed in the table we see that there is an almost precise mathematical interval for the births. Approximately every two years there is a new offspring in the De La Salle family.

b) In terms of the control of the birth rate, as a layman in this area I can see, keeping in mind the prior reasoning and also my own ignorance, that said control did not exist at all. I must emphasize that this statement has no scientific basis whatsoever, but it is merely an intuitive observation. They had all the children that God gave to them, natural law being that which controlled the birth rate as well as the survival of each of the children they had.

c) Looking at the regular intervals, in terms of the time between births, there are approximately two years between them and this is verified by the number of years of marriage, 21 (from August 25, 1650 until July 19, 1671). From this information I notice the following:

Every two years there was a birth.

There were eleven children in all, a fact which coincides with the quotient  $22/2 = 11$ .

Given this number of children and the amount of time married, there simply is no physical time in which to produce a new birth.

But there is another item which has struck me the most and has caused me to propose the following:

d) No child ever died so that there was not the birth of another in-between.

Faced with this fact my reasoning is as follows, not based on science but only on observation and intuition:

d-1) The mother personally nursed her child for about one year.

d-2) During the lactation period the mother was not fertile. After this time the child began to be fed by some other means since lactation was diminished or stopped totally; the fertile period began again and with it the possibility of having another child. This was repeated during the entire marriage.

d-3) Why is it that after each new child the next one died?

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My reasoning for this is as follows:

\* During the lactation period, which I would suppose lasted approximately one year, the mother's fertile period stopped. But the fact of having to nurse the newborn with the mother's milk produced in the mother a weakness and loss of energy which would effect the development of the new embryo which was conceived too soon and whose development in the uterus would not be sufficiently nourished for the reasons cited, so that it was born weak due to the mother's weakness.

\* Neither did the weakness of the mother aid the sufficient nourishment of the new child after it was born, so that death occurred as a result; given these premises and the lack of sanitation of the era, it seems logical that the worst would happen.

\* The recovery of the mother's strength between the cessation of lactation, due to the death of the infant, and the new pregnancy, would lead us to believe that the embryo of the new pregnancy would be guaranteed a rich nourishment that would allow it to be born with enough strength to survive.

\* The fact that the subsequent child who was conceived and born might survive may be due to the fact that, not having a prolonged lactation prior to the birth because of the death, would allow the mother to recover physically. That recuperation helped her to face a new pregnancy with increased resources for the embryo so that it would be born with greater strength and thus survive.

I sincerely believe that the scientific value of these issues may be null; they are simply speculations that have occurred to me as I verified the facts which, as a curiosity, I offer them just as they are and nothing more. If new issues or considerations occur to someone the topic is still open for debate. •

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(1) Data obtained from "Orígenes 1651-1726), by Brother Henri Bédel, FSC, page 21; also from "Cronología Lasaliana", by Brother José María Valladolid, FSC, Lasalliana, number 31.