

De La Salle TODAY

A MAGAZINE FOR THE LASALLIAN FAMILY IN THE
LASALLIAN REGION OF NORTH AMERICA | SPRING 2021



You are Part of the Miracle:
Our Vision, Our Passion,
Our Future



letter from the editor

Dear Readers,

It's hard to imagine that it was a little more than a year ago when our lives changed. What started as a few weeks turned into a few months and then into one very long year ... and counting. COVID-19 has changed who we are and what we do.

This issue of *De La Salle Today* highlights how Lasallians have adapted to these changes. We share stories through the lens of Lasallian Reflection 6, "You are Part of the Miracle." The reflection reminds us how Jesus taught his disciples to see the abundance that God provides and encouraged them, and us, to look with gratitude at what we have, give thanks and give freely to work the "miracle of human and spiritual transformation" (Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 19).

We start this issue with examples of how Lasallians are part of this miracle by continuing the mission in new ways. Then, you'll see what we learned by asking leaders how they adapted to these challenging times and what this experience has taught them about the future of Lasallian education.

From there, we share stories of resilience and hope: how the Saint-Michel Lasallian Center in Montréal, Québec, has forged partnerships to help those most in need; how the Fratelli Project in Lebanon has responded to multiple recent crises to continue to serve the refugee community; and how Springtide Research Institute is listening to young people to provide a meaningful space to grow relationships. We also celebrate the legacy of Saint Gabriel's System, which closed its doors in 2020, completing a 122-year mission of serving at-risk young men.

Turn to the center of this issue to see our new section, Lasallian Essentials, through which we will explore Lasallian documents. We start with the *Declaration on the Lasallian Educational Mission*, with the goal of offering an understanding of the document and suggestions on how to engage with it.

As you read this issue, we invite you to keep this message in mind: "Our shared miracle stories remind us that ours is a living tradition that continues to call us into a courageous and creative future." (Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 21)



Elizabeth Moors Jodice, Editor

De La Salle Today is published by Christian Brothers Conference for the Lasallian family in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN).

Christian Brothers Conference
415 Michigan Avenue NE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20017
202-529-0047 | communications@lasallian.info | www.lasallian.info

General Councilor, RELAN
Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC

Executive Director, Office for Lasallian Education
Mark John Freund

Editor
Elizabeth Moors Jodice

Assistant Editor
Ashley Fletcher

Story Development
Bob Carrejo
Philip De Rita
Denis de Villers
David Genders

Editorial Support
Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC
James Lindsay
Chris Swain

Translation
Denis de Villers

Contributing Writers
Paul Evra
Skip Gaus, AFSC
Elizabeth Moors Jodice
Brother Matthew Kotek, FSC
Brother Robert Smith, FSC, Ph.D.
Ryan Wall

Photography
Rachel Bowers
Br. David Darst Center
Christian Brothers Academy, Syracuse
De La Salle Blackfeet School
De La Salle Vocational
District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea
District of Eastern North America
District of San Francisco New Orleans
Yara El Khoury/Fratelli
Al Henry
Legacy Baltimore District Archives
Larry Levanti/Christian Brothers Academy, Lincroft
Lewis University
Brother J.D. Macioce
Manhattan College
Saint-Michel Lasallian Center
San Miguel High School
Springtide Research Institute
TidesLearning
Villa des Jeunes

Design Consultant
Matthew Chverchko

Please email comments and suggestions to communications@lasallian.info. The editor of *De La Salle Today* reserves the right to edit and make final decisions regarding the content published in the magazine.

De la faller TODAY

- 6 You are Part of the Miracle
Compiled by Elizabeth Moors Jodice
- 9 Inspired by the Present to Form
the Future
Compiled by Elizabeth Moors Jodice
- 13 Met with Love: The Legacy of
Saint Gabriel's
By Skip Gaus, AFSC
- 17 Lasallian Essentials: Declaration on
the Lasallian Educational Mission
By Brother Robert Smith, FSC, Ph.D.
- 22 Creating Miracles through
Partnerships
By Paul Evra
- 25 Quand le partenariat rend
les miracles possibles
By Paul Evra
- 30 Connecting with Gen Z
through Relationships
By Ryan Wall
- 33 Accompanying the Most Vulnerable
through the Fratelli Project
By Brother Matthew Kotek, FSC

Letter from the Editor

2 News and Appointments

36 Calendar of Events

(Cover) Like many ministries, Lewis University has transformed the way it provides educational experiences in order to address the challenges of COVID-19. *Courtesy Lewis University*





Brother Gerard Rummery, FSC.
Courtesy District of Australia,
New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua
New Guinea

Brother Gerard Rummery Recognized with Brother John Johnston Award

Brother Gerard Rummery, FSC, was recognized with the Brother John Johnston, FSC Award for his lifetime of service to the Lasallian mission. The Brother John Johnston award is the highest honor given in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN). It was named in honor of Brother John, the 25th Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, for his uniquely significant lifetime contribution to the Lasallian mission. Established by the former Regional Education Board in 2009, the Johnston Award is now presented by the Lasallian Education Council (LEC).

The virtual ceremony, held April 6, 2021, invited Lasallians from around the world to gather together to celebrate Brother Gerard. The event featured an opening prayer by Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC, RELAN General Councilor, a congratulatory message from Brother Superior General Robert Schieler, FSC, and a closing prayer by Brother Ricky Laguda, FSC, General Councilor for the Pacific-Asia Regional Conference. Dr. Kurt Schackmuth, LEC chair and vice president for mission at Lewis University, hosted the event virtually and presented the award to Brother Gerard, with in-person assistance from Brother David Hawke, FSC, Visitor of the District of Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, Brother Gerard's home District. *(Editor's note: Due to the time of publication, this story was written prior to the event.)*

Changes to RELAN Summer Formation Programs

The 2021 summer formation programs hosted by the Office for Lasallian Education at Christian Brothers Conference will be postponed or held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies will now take place the summer of 2022, current participants will have opportunities to come together this summer for speakers, prayer and community building. The Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Practice will take place virtually July 12–16, 2021. The Lasallian Social Justice Institute (LSJI) will be held virtually July 20–22, 2021. This year's LSJI is the Oki-Ni-Soo-Ka-Wa "Come and See" offered by De La Salle Blackfeet School in Browning, Montana. Visit www.Lasallian.info/Programs to learn more.

Office for Lasallian Education Webinar Series Opportunities

As a way to provide professional development and ongoing support during the pandemic, the Office for Lasallian Education at Christian Brothers Conference is hosting webinars on a variety of topics. The effort started with the Lasallian Summer Webinar Series in 2020 and has featured topics including maintaining relationships, COVID-19 legal considerations, traumatic stress, post-pandemic education and restorative practices, along with opportunities to participate in listening circles. Speakers have included Ann Garrido, D.Min., Roy Petitfils, MS, Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, JD, Ph.D., and Jolleen Wagner. Visit www.Lasallian.info/Webinars to view available recordings and learn about future opportunities.

New DENA Leadership Announced



Brother Robert Schaefer, FSC, will serve as the third Visitor of the District of Eastern North America (DENA), and Brother Frank Byrne, FSC, will serve as Auxiliary Visitor. Brother Robert currently serves as Secretary of Formation for the Lasallian Mission for the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, based at the Generalate in Rome. A graduate of both La Salle College High School and La Salle University, both in Pennsylvania, Brother Robert previously served as a teacher, campus minister, assistant principal and principal. Brother Frank is president of Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft, New Jersey, a role he has held since 2009. Previously, he served as Visitor of the former New York District (2002–2009) and as a principal, assistant principal, teacher and vocation director. Brothers Robert and Frank will begin their four-year terms September 1, 2021.



New Dates for General Chapter and Gatherings

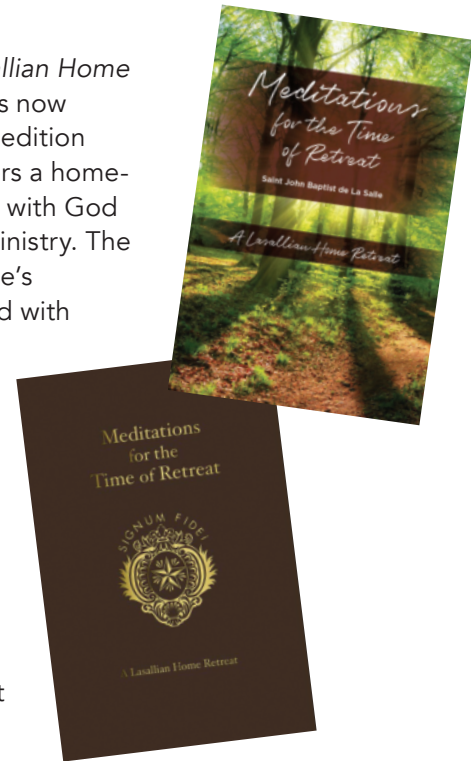
Following postponements due to COVID-19, new dates are scheduled or are in the process of being scheduled for the 46th General Chapter, International Assembly of the Lasallian Educational Mission (AIMEL), International Young Brothers Assembly (IYBA) and International Symposium of Young Lasallians (ISYL). The General Chapter, originally scheduled for May 2021, will now take place May 1–22, 2022, in Thailand. ISYL will be held virtually October 10–23, 2021, and IYBA will take place at the Generalate in Rome following the General Chapter in 2022. At this writing, details for AIMEL are being decided. Check www.Lasallian.info for the latest.

Brother Robert Schaefer, FSC, left.
Courtesy District of Eastern North America

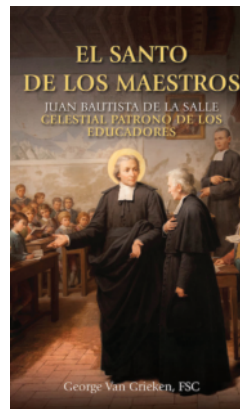
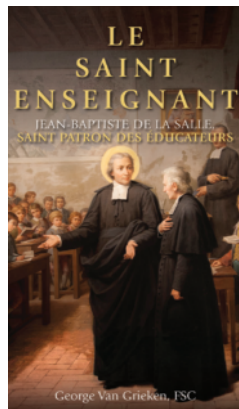
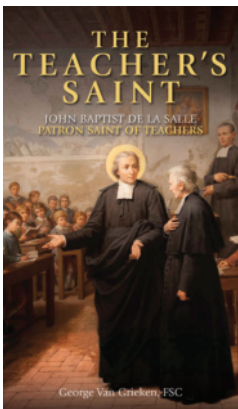
Brother Frank Byrne, FSC. *Courtesy Larry Levanti/Christian Brothers Academy*

New Retreat Book Offers Guide to Deepen Prayer Life

Meditations for the Time of Retreat: A Lasallian Home Retreat, by Brother Vincent Pelletier, FSC, is now available for purchase as a special, limited-edition hardback and in paperback. The book offers a home-based retreat to deepen one's relationship with God and grow spiritually in one's educational ministry. The book features Saint John Baptist de La Salle's *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* coupled with Scripture passages to deepen the reflection of each meditation. Brother Vincent relies on his many years as a spiritual director and retreat leader to offer the retreatant guidance in the spiritual process and dialogue with the Lord before, during and following the retreat. While the book can be used for individual reflection, it also offers the opportunity for sharing the retreat as a community or group. This book is a project of the Lasallian Publications Committee. The hardback edition is available through Christian Brothers Conference at www.Lasallian.info/Store for \$30, and the paperback edition is available through Saint Mary's Press at www.smp.org for \$15.



The Teacher's Saint Now Available in Three Languages



The Teacher's Saint, a short biography of Saint John Baptist de La Salle written by Brother George Van Grieken, FSC, is now available in English, French and Spanish. Published by Christian Brothers Conference, these editions are projects of the Lasallian Publications Committee. The editions in all three languages are available to purchase through Saint Mary's Press at www.smp.org for \$5.95 with quantity discounts available.

Higher Education Group Focuses on Advocacy and Social Justice



Lasallian Colleges & Universities
In Association For Justice

Lasallian Colleges and Universities in Association for Justice (LCUAJ) is engaging students, faculty and staff in the work of change through advocacy and social justice in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN). Its latest effort, a three-part Lasallian Teach-In for Justice, took place October 2020 through January 18, 2021. Inspired by the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the series focused on anti-racism with hopes to foster relationships of transformation within the Lasallian network. Following the series, students were encouraged to meet with their campus delegations to discuss how they can implement what they learned on their campuses. LCUAJ formed in January 2019 as a grassroots effort by 25 Lasallians who were planning to attend the Ignatian Solidarity Network's annual Teach-In for Justice in Washington, D.C. The organization is supported, in part, by a Lasallian Education Council initiative to help grow RELAN's capacity for and commitment to Lasallian advocacy. Participants are from Bethlehem University, Christian Brothers University, La Salle University, Lewis University, Manhattan College, Saint Mary's College of California, Lasallian Volunteers and the District of Eastern North America.

appointments

Brother Frank Byrne, FSC, Auxiliary Visitor, District of Eastern North America, effective September 1, 2021

Brother Ronald Gallagher, FSC, Ph.D., Executive Director, Bethlehem University Foundation, effective February 12, 2021

David Holquin, President, De La Salle High School, Concord, CA, effective July 1, 2021

Ted Kanelopoulos, President, La Salle High School, Yakima, WA, effective July 1, 2021

Michael Phipps, LV 09-11, Recruitment Coordinator, Lasallian Volunteers, Washington, DC, effective January 6, 2021

Richard J. Piwowarski, Ph.D., President, Resurrection College Prep High School, Chicago, IL, effective February 1, 2021

Richard Plumb, President, Saint Mary's College of California, Moraga, CA, effective July 1, 2021

Larry Rancilio, President, De La Salle Collegiate, Warren, MI, effective October 5, 2020

Daniel A. Santucci, President, Saint Patrick High School, Chicago, IL, effective July 1, 2021

Brother Robert Schaefer, FSC, Visitor, District of Eastern North America, effective September 1, 2021

Brother Steven Vasoli, FSC, Director, RELAN Novitiate, Chicago, IL, effective August 1, 2021

You are Part of the Miracle

Compiled by Elizabeth Moors Jodice

■ The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic is shrouded in negativity. Suffering. Illness. Death. Loneliness. Sorrow. But out of this darkness comes light. Light in the form of the Lasallian mission. Hope. Healing. Love. Community. Joy.

Despite the dark days of the pandemic, Lasallians have tapped into the innovation that

has long fueled the mission and transformed their work in these unprecedented times. From taking extra health precautions to developing new ways to connect with young people to creatively overcoming challenges and more, Lasallians in every type of ministry are rising above the pandemic to continue the mission in new ways.

Here, we offer a sampling to share just a few of the many examples illustrating how Lasallians have shown that they are part of the “miracle of human and spiritual transformation” (Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 19).

Among the heroes of this pandemic are valiant nurses, like those in the San Francisco New Orleans District (SFNO), who kept communities of Brothers healthy and connected. Nurses Mary Kelly, BSN, RN, Felisha Torres, RN, and Karen Dantin, RN, with Auxiliary Visitor Brother James Joost, FSC, balanced ever-changing and always different county regulations to formulate a coherent and evolving District-wide policy. That SFNO has not lost a Brother to COVID, although there have been a couple of contained cases, is a success for which the District credits much of the overall cooperation of the Brothers to the nurses’ recommendations and the care and concern that has been at the heart of their presence and in all of their policies throughout this health crisis. The Brothers of the SFNO District are profoundly grateful to this team of loving professionals who have led them through confusion and fear and on to the other side of the health crisis. (Pictured: Natalie Gonzalez, left, and Emily Ellis, certified nursing assistants)



When Christian Brothers Academy (CBA) in Syracuse, New York, faced a shortage of substitute teachers for the 2020-2021 school year, the school developed a creative solution. CBA reached out to recent graduates, like Dana Tuohey '16 (pictured), who were either attending college remotely or working from home to invite them to return to their alma mater to fill in. About 20 alumni have served as substitutes in a variety of subjects, which has offered the opportunity for graduates to give back to their former school and help them understand the challenges the pandemic has presented to younger students. This support of alumni has helped the school remain open for in-person learning.



At San Miguel High School in Tucson, Arizona, students participate in a Corporate Work Study Program (CWS), which places them at businesses to work one day per week. The program provides them with work experience and the opportunity to earn money to support the cost of their education. Despite the pandemic, the school and businesses have remained committed to providing students with this experience. Many businesses cannot allow students on site and some have had to reduce their staff numbers and take a break from the program. Still, 55 students have been able to shift to remote work, telecommuting either from San Miguel's campus or from their homes. While the students are missing the face-to-face opportunities that come in a workplace setting, they have embraced the experience, learning new technology and showing their resilience.

Students, like Shayla Gramajo, a junior at Manhattan College, are among those responding to the call to serve during the pandemic. While studying as a biology major and chemistry minor, Gramajo is also working as a contact tracer for United Healthcare Group and as a certified nurse aide at a Westchester County nursing home. Gramajo is a first-generation college student whose parents immigrated to the United States from Guatemala. She plans to pursue a career as a physician assistant because she wants to collaborate with physicians and learn from other members of a medical team. She also wants to be an advocate for her patients by providing care and truly listening to their needs to help make a difference in their lives.



Lewis University is taking extraordinary steps to stay healthy and protect each other during the pandemic. Students live The Flyers Promise by acting with great care, civility and profound respect for each other. Faculty members support students in numerous ways, including transitioning thousands of courses online. Staff do their part through a COVID-19 Hotline, meal delivery to those in quarantine, and making check-in phone calls to each student as part of the Flyer to Flyer initiative. The community effort led to the successful completion of more than 1,800 degrees in 2020; 90 percent of May 2020 graduates found employment or enrolled in graduate school.



“The Lasallian community’s *raison d’être* is to cooperate with God’s grace, and that includes working miracles.”

—*Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 20*

The Villa des Jeunes (VDJ) in St-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Québec, is a retreat center for human and Christian formation that welcomes more than 200 groups from 40 schools each year. In this particular year, the VDJ had to rethink how it operates by asking, “If students can no longer leave their schools, how can we reach them?” After a period of reflection, the VDJ decided to bring training/animation workshops on “knowing how to live together” and “persistence” directly into schools. The virtual and in-person visits touched the hearts of hundreds of young people, as they are experiencing a lot of stress and anxiety associated with the pandemic. Teachers shared with the VDJ staff that the students loved the presentations and found them to be just as beneficial as when they came to the VDJ.



Brothers Rafael Rodriguez and Joseph (J.D.) Macioce are the voices behind *Brothers’ Banter*, a podcast meant to connect Lasallians during these times of social distancing and isolation. The Brothers, who entered the Novitiate for a year of formal discernment and formation in July 2020, use the podcast as a platform to engage with Lasallians and share their stories. The podcast quickly gained an international following, with Lasallians from Malta, Rome, Bethlehem and the Philippines contacting the Brothers to share their Lasallian journeys. This excitement inspired Brothers Rafael and J.D. to involve other Brothers with the “Get to Know the Brothers” mini-series, which highlights vocation stories from young Brothers to senior Brothers. Through the podcast, the Brothers have been able to make unexpected connections and experience gratitude, inspiration and association. ■

Elizabeth Moors Jodice is director of communications for Christian Brothers Conference. All photos are courtesy of the ministries/individuals featured.



Inspired by the Present to Form the Future

Compiled by Elizabeth Moors Jodice

“Our shared miracle stories remind us that ours is a living tradition that continues to call us into a courageous and creative future.”

—*Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 21*

Above: A student from De La Salle Blackfeet School in Browning, Montana, attends class remotely. Courtesy De La Salle Blackfeet School

■ As COVID-19 shut down most Lasallian ministries and activities in the spring of 2020, leaders had to quickly pivot to develop new ways to meet needs while adhering to ever-changing safety precautions.

For a mission driven by relationships, social distancing and virtual learning presented additional challenges. The pandemic forced leaders to envision new ways of making connections and providing a positive educational experience, while placing additional emphasis on mental and physical health. They had to make these changes quickly and in ways that not only stayed true to the Lasallian mission, but also had an eye to the future.

We asked Lasallians across a range of ministry types to share how they adapted in these challenging times and what this experience has taught them about the future of Lasallian education. In their answers, you'll see common themes: dedication, resilience, commitment, care and hope.

Supporting Academic, Mental Health and Social Needs in a Virtual Environment

Brother Dale Mooney, FSC, President, De La Salle Blackfeet School, Browning, Montana: In March 2020, our school transitioned to at-home work packets and remained in at-home learning for one year. During that time, we continued the legacy of the Lasallian mission by teaching in the vernacular of the day. Today, that's technology. We were fortunate to have procured the funds for adequate equipment both for our teachers and students. Endeavoring to meet the needs of online learning, we provided a thorough orientation for teachers and reviewed strategies to address the stress that both teachers and students experience with online classes. We initiated a very powerful peer mentorship program to provide weekly support. Where possible, we doubled up on homeroom teachers so that students could be contacted on a regular basis for academic, mental health and social support. It is in the concept of collaborative team building that we have been extremely successful in these most trying of times.

Seeing through the Eyes of Administrators

Perry Martin, President, and Robert Nuccio, Board of Trustees Chair, La Salle College Preparatory, Pasadena, California: During these challenging times, the board and school leadership have developed a healthy degree of trust, with constant communication between us as board chair and president, who joined the school in June 2020. We have placed new emphasis on team building, changed our human resource processes, focused on the mental, physical and spiritual health of the staff and students, connected the school community with a comprehensive communication plan, and adapted to ever-changing local health regulations. We realize school life in the post-COVID era will be a "new normal." What gives us hope is how we've grown



The Br. David Darst Center uses online collaboration tools in its retreats and workshops, like this “root causes tree,” which helps participants explore various issues, their symptoms and causes.
Courtesy Br. David Darst Center

together as a school to develop a culture of appreciation and listening, with a focus on not only improving our educational process but better supporting our students’ emotional well-being. COVID-19 has reaffirmed education should prepare children for life and not for exams, and we are prepared for whatever the future holds.

Addressing Social Justice Virtually

Keith Donovan, Executive Director, Br. David Darst Center, Chicago, Illinois:

As a social justice retreat center, we have not been able to host in-person immersion retreat groups or visit our more than 30 partner agencies —homeless shelters, food pantries, re-entry programs, advocacy organizations, etc.—since March 2020. Early in the pandemic, we looked deeply at our mission, values and desired outcomes of our programming. After regrouping, we have hosted more than a dozen social justice retreats and workshops virtually, inviting speakers to share their stories, to answer questions, and to not only be a witness to the challenges people on the margins face, but also to provide ideas for how young people can change the systems that perpetuate injustice. While I have faith that we will be able to welcome people to our retreat center again, the future of Lasallian education will require us to continue to imagine new ways to accomplish the mission.

Building Community through Prayer

Maryann Donohue-Lynch, Associate Executive Director, Office for Mission and Ministry, District of Eastern North America (DNA):

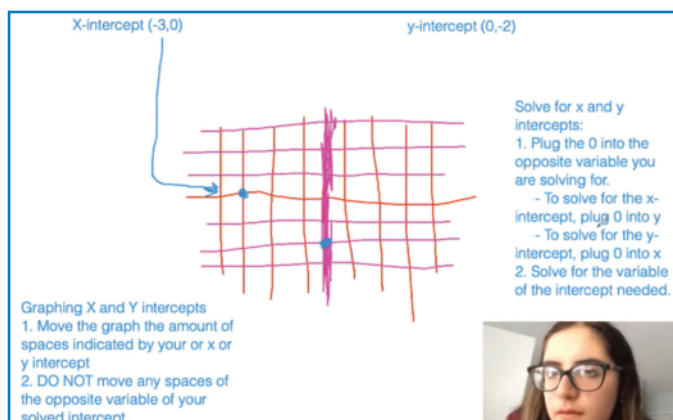
The pandemic has highlighted that community is at the heart of our educational mission and that we, like the Founder, had to be creative and innovative as to how we maintained our sense of community in these challenging times. One aspect of our community is our shared Lasallian spirituality. In DNA, we have responded by offering new forms of spiritual accompaniment, such as weekly Centering Prayer and Global Prayer Zooms for Lasallians across the Institute. Additionally, we conducted retreats virtually, including the annual retreats for women and legacy Lasallians. The online Advent and Lenten retreats recorded their highest subscriptions, and while nothing can take the place of being in person, attention and creativity as to how we can continue to provide spiritual accompaniment virtually will continue post-pandemic.

Collaborating to Provide Remote Support

Brother Paul Avvento, FSC, Coordinator, TidesLearning, Rhode Island:

Tides Family Services and Ocean Tides listened to concerned parents and staff as schools transitioned to remote learning. The

ensuing discussions focused on specific support services that would help students and parents reach their potential in this new environment. In collaboration with the District of Eastern North America, TidesLearning was launched shortly thereafter. TidesLearning provides free access to learning resources, parent counseling and digital tutoring sessions. Relying on dedicated partner ministries and more than one hundred volunteer educators and student tutors, TidesLearning demonstrates the strength and commitment of Lasallians by providing innovative and accessible educational opportunities. Inspired by Saint John Baptist de La Salle, the primary focus is addressing current needs, without the distractions of the past or future. As the pandemic has reminded us, the needs of today must be met before we can address the potential needs of tomorrow.



Danielle, a student at La Salle Academy in Providence, Rhode Island, supports students with free tutoring sessions through TidesLearning. Courtesy TidesLearning

Re-envisioning Formation

Mark Freund, Executive Director, and Sarah Laitinen, Director of Lasallian Programs, Office for Lasallian Education, Christian Brothers Conference:

We have found ourselves both responding to challenges and building new opportunities for formation, professional development, association and interaction. We moved the Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Lasallian Practice online with asynchronous elements, discussion groups and opportunities to build community. The 2020 Huether Lasallian Conference took place virtually, with prayer, keynote addresses, breakout sessions and networking. The first cohort of the Regional Formation Institute continues to gather virtually in preparing to provide future formation opportunities. Working with the Lasallian Education Council, we planned a global celebration to honor Brother Gerard Rummery, FSC, with the Brother John Johnston, FSC Award. Knowing that ministries could have financial challenges, we worked with colleagues and corporate partners (including Christian Brothers Services, Eduscape, Measuring Success, the Procedo Project and Ruotolo Associates) to build opportunities for professional development in areas ranging from distance learning to psychological wellness, legal implications of the pandemic, and advancement and admissions capacity building. Looking to the future of our programming, we embrace the innovation the pandemic has inspired to continue this momentum. Our office will continue to consistently evaluate programs and ensure needs are being met through Regional formation and education programs.

Providing Accompaniment from Afar

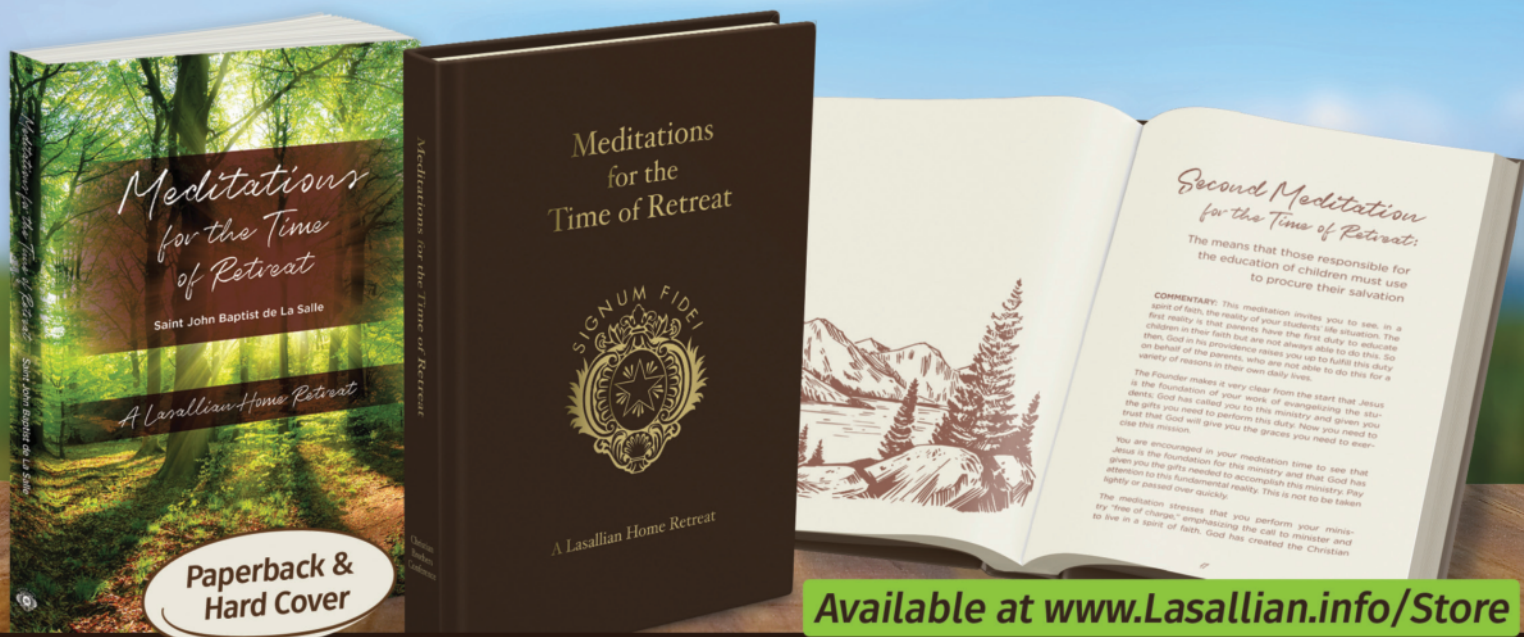
Kathleen Swain, Director, Lasallian Volunteers: Lasallian Volunteers (LV) continues to believe in the impact of the personal relationship—LV staff to LV, LV to student or client, LV to community member. One of the hallmarks of the program is the accompaniment of the LVs, which typically includes two visits a year from a staff member. With travel not possible, we adapted our approach and now connect with the LVs online weekly. This continued direct accompaniment has helped the LVs with professional and personal growth, as well as growing in our core values of faith, service and community. We have also had the opportunity to connect virtually with the LVs for the Debriefing Retreat, the Brother Charles Kitson Institute for Formation of Lasallian Volunteers and the Midyear Retreat. While I don't think we'll ever again take lightly the importance of being together in the same space, we know it's possible to build a strong community in creative and virtual ways. ■

Elizabeth Moors Jodice is director of communications for Christian Brothers Conference.



From left, Kayla Little, LV 20-21, Emma Mocker, LV 20-21, and Racheal Bailey, LV 20-21, stand at the Philadelphia Museum of Art after participating in the virtual LVs Run on November 21, 2020. They committed to running the stairs for each donation they received. Courtesy Rachel Bowers, LV 16-19

Deepen Your Relationship With God.



Home-based retreat features De La Salle's meditations & Scripture passages.

Met with Love: The Legacy of Saint Gabriel's

By Skip Gaus, AFSC

■ On September 25, 2020, the news came that Saint Gabriel's System would end its 122-year mission of transforming the lives of at-risk young men in the Philadelphia area. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced the closure, pointing to the declining popularity of congregate care facilities combined with the financial strain of COVID-19.

The 122-year legacy would come to a close with the last young man leaving Saint Gabriel's Hall in October, De La Salle Vocational in November, and reintegration services shortly after. The storied history of Saint Gabriel's System is one of countless Brothers and Lasallian Partners who met young men every day with love.

Brother John Johnston, FSC, then-Superior General, expressed it this way at the 100th anniversary of Saint Gabriel's Hall in 1999. He said, "Like Brothers everywhere who know this institution, I'm fiercely proud of it ... This institution over the last 100 years has touched the

hearts of thousands of young people ... by a transforming love, a redeeming love, a saving love. And that's what it is all about. That is our charism. That's profound reverence, and I'm very proud of what you have done over the years."

For the succeeding 22 years, the staff of Saint Gabriel's System continued to receive the young men entrusted to their care and continued their vocation of touching hearts.

The Beginning

The work of serving youth and families dates back to the very beginning of the Brothers' mission in France. Saint John Baptist de La Salle and the early Brothers

provided care and education in what were then known as General Hospices (hospitals) for the poor. In 1705, De La Salle innovatively started the Manor of St. Yon, which combined a training center for Brothers, boarding school, house of correction and house of detention. Brothers brought that aspect of the mission to the United States in 1846, when they took responsibility for Saint Vincent's Orphanage in Baltimore, Maryland.

Saint Gabriel's System continued this legacy of caring for youth and families, starting in November 1898 with the establishment of the Philadelphia Protectory. Archbishop Patrick Ryan had invited the Brothers to conduct the new Philadelphia Protectory,



A group of boys served at the Philadelphia Protectory in the 1920s. Courtesy Legacy Baltimore District Archives



From 1974-2020, De La Salle Vocational offered an academic program, along with career and technical education for young men in the fields of auto services, carpentry, building maintenance, culinary arts and more. Courtesy De La Salle Vocational

which he spoke of as very near to his heart. Its first director, Brother Candidus Francis, FSC, had a history in youth and family services, having served as director at numerous orphanages and protectories from New York to California.

The first young man the Brothers took in was 12-year-old John Todd, who was coming from a life experience that saw increasing immigration and industrialization, distress, slums and lack of housing, along with child labor abuse in factories and mills, and increasing juvenile crime. The protectory was not to be a reformatory or temporary child refuge, but a place where homeless boys and those without support from a caring family could escape the exploitations of an unscrupulous society. In addition to providing a home, the institution would offer education in general and vocational skills.

The initial program included basic academic instruction and gradual training in the shops of housework, culinary, baking, laundry and engine room. Shops later increased with farming, tailoring, carpentry, wood carving and clay modeling. From its opening until the 1960s, the protectory would have been considered a child custody program.

A New Era

What was considered the new era in childcare began with the appointments of directors Brother David Ryan, FSC, (1959) and Brother James Kirkpatrick, FSC (1963). The custodial model transitioned to a treatment model as evidenced by the renaming of the protectory to Saint Gabriel's Hall, the taking

“If we dare to imagine the presence and power of God in creation, we will deepen our advocacy for the most vulnerable among us.”

—Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 23

down of the large brick wall in the play yard and the addition of an increasing number of Lasallian Partners, which symbolized opening up and bringing in new ways of serving youth. Individual rooms instead of large dormitories, psychiatric care and caseworkers instead of a social service department, and family home visits all became part of the modernized youth service agency.

As research and thought on work with delinquent youth continued to change, Saint Gabriel's was at the forefront of best practice. Saint Gabriel's transformed into a continuum of care for youth, encompassing mental health clinics, partial hospitalization,

drug and alcohol treatment and trauma-informed care. The Gabe's, as it was known, became the Saint Gabriel's System with numerous innovations. Group homes (1968) were opened to serve youth halfway between the residence and going home to families. De La Salle in Towne (1972), De La Salle Vocational (1974) and Brother Rousseau Academy (1998) were opened initially as Day Treatment Aftercare Centers and grew into alternatives to residential care. On the residential campus, the Mitchell Program (1998) and a community-based detention shelter were opened.

Touching Hearts

In 2019, Brother Dennis Malloy, FSC, former Visitor of the District of Eastern North America, described how he came to "appreciate God's love and purpose through 28 years of working at Saint Gabriel's Hall with hundreds of poor and hope-starved young men, and the extraordinary women and men who cared about them." He went on to relate the story of one staff member who became known to the young men and staff as Love. "Love had a gift for knowing who our most hurt and angry guys were and making them feel safe in his presence, most often these were the most damaged and least loved."

celebrating the life & vocation of religious brothers

#WeAreBrothers

Religious Brothers Day | May 1, 2021

ideas & resources available at BrothersVocation.org



Skip Gaus, AFSC, right, celebrates with graduates of De La Salle in Towne in approximately 2011. Also pictured, the late Pam Walker, left, then-director of education for De La Salle in Towne. Courtesy Al Henry

Brother Dennis described an evening where Love spent three hours, mostly in silence, sitting with a young man who had gotten into a fight and pushed a staff person to the floor. After that evening the young man could be seen seeking Love out and could even be seen with a smile. Brother Dennis went on to say that for him, "Love is the iconic image of the loving father in the story of the prodigal son and representational of so many women and men at Saint Gabe's who sought these boys out, who saw something good in them that they could not see in themselves, who believed in them and who, like the Good Samaritan, bound up their wounds."

Richelle Sherwood, director of De La Salle Vocational, described the last day for students on

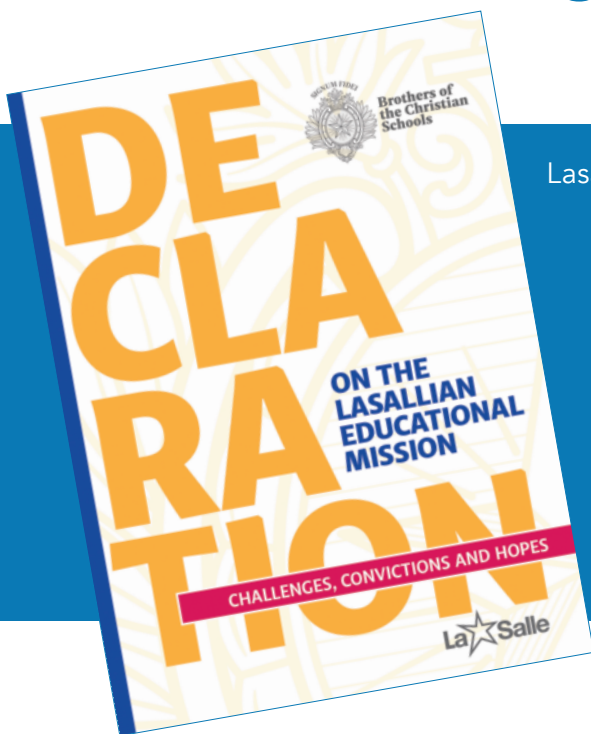
November 25, 2020, with these words, "As our last young man was walking out of the building today, he turned around to the full staff who were lining the hallway; he waved; and he said, 'Bye ... I love all you guys.' A lot of tears today balanced with hefty doses of happiness and contentment, knowing that we did good work and that we touched hearts. It has been an honor and a privilege to know, to teach, to encourage and to celebrate our final guys and, in the words of our Founder, to have had the opportunity to 'perform miracles.'" ■

Skip Gaus, AFSC, served for 42 years in the Saint Gabriel's System, including 25 as director of De La Salle in Towne and five at De La Salle Vocational. He retired in July 2019.

Exploring Lasallian documents.

Uncovering Lasallian research.

Sparking engagement to build a deeper understanding of mission and community.



Lasallian Essentials, a new section of *De La Salle Today*, will appear in each issue and focus on bringing Lasallian documents to life. The section will offer insight on Lasallian publications, share listings of valuable resources and explore topics of Lasallian interest. This inaugural section highlights the *Declaration on the Lasallian Educational Mission: Challenges, Convictions and Hopes* with the goal of offering an understanding of the document and suggestions on how to engage with it.

Do you have a suggestion for what you would like to see in this new section?
Email your ideas to communications@lasallian.info.

How to Engage with the Declaration on the Lasallian Educational Mission

By Brother Robert Smith, FSC, Ph.D.



The *Declaration on the Lasallian Educational Mission: Challenges, Convictions and Hopes* is the most recent substantive statement on our shared Lasallian educational mission. Released by Brother Superior General Robert Schieler, FSC, and the General Council on April 30, 2020, the anniversary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle's birth, the 45th General Chapter (2014) and the 2nd International Mission Assembly (2013) called for this document, which is intended to "give us a central reference point for our educational work so that it is life-giving and creative for [those] entrusted to our care" (Page 8). We are in debt to the members of the International Council for Lasallian Association and the Educational Mission (CIAMEL) for their forbearance and diligence in bringing this important document to fruition.

What is the Declaration?

The Declaration could well serve as a primer on the Lasallian mission, offering as it does four distinct parts that include the historical development of the Institute, those who have been and continue to be engaged in the educational mission, the fundamental theological and pedagogical principles that serve as the foundation of the mission, and a nod toward the future and

its challenges. The text is readable, engaging, informative and, at points, challenging. It speaks to those who have been engaged in the mission for many years and those new to the Lasallian family.

The Declaration is not an update of the 1967 then-seminal document *The Brother of the Christian Schools in the World Today: A Declaration*, which was written for and by Brothers. This Declaration offers a starting point for an ongoing reflection on the Lasallian educational mission. It is important to realize that while the Declaration was developed by the work of many individuals committed to the Lasallian mission over many years, it is officially published with the authority of the Superior General. Hence, it rightly has—or ought to have—a more weighty importance Institute-wide and should be recognized as the most comprehensive and "definitive" statement of the global Lasallian mission to date.

To complement the Declaration, it would be helpful to read the *Identity Criteria for the Vitality of Lasallian Educational Ministries*, which was also called for by the 45th General Chapter, composed by CIAMEL and released by the Superior General. That document offers 27 criteria to consider in assessing Lasallian educational ministries, as well as means and methods to apply such an analysis in unique settings.

Brother Robert Smith, FSC, Ph.D., a moral theologian, is senior vice president for university initiatives and special advisor to the president at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. A Brother and Lasallian educator for more than 40 years, he has studied the Declaration and led small group discussions on its content. Special thanks to Alisa Macksey, CIAMEL chair, for her editorial assistance.

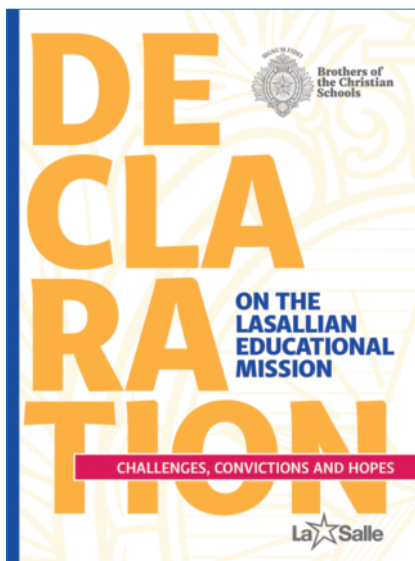
Five Key Takeaways

1. An unambiguous commitment to inclusion: "...inclusive of all cultures, open to all religions, and have a message for all the people who participate in the Mission." (Pages 9, 49, 78)
2. A reminder of and a renewed commitment to those on the edges, the poor, the less privileged, those generally unrepresented groups and those who are forgotten or written off by the societies in which they (and we) live: "...the great challenge of Lasallian education is, precisely, to be accessible to the poorest." (Pages 88–90)
3. A recognition of the changing nature of the educational enterprise, the means and methods of doing the work of education, and the truly extraordinary challenges to be overcome at all levels of education: "Education should not be viewed as synonymous with school. Our Mission has found other pathways to follow through informal education, pastoral action, evangelisation in other forums and by virtual presence in the media outside the school setting." (Pages 103–109)
4. An acknowledgment and celebration of the genuine vocation of committing oneself as a Lasallian educator and understanding this as a divinely-inspired call: "Brothers and lay Lasallians see themselves as being called together and united by God, each in their own individual vocation, to respond to the needs of society." (Pages 49, 63–64)
5. A presentation of 12 statements of belief or "declarations" at the conclusion, offered in the following spirit: "We accept the past with gratitude, embrace the present with joy and look to the future full of hope." These 12 declarations provide a wonderful opportunity for reflection, discussion, debate and engagement. (Pages 117–122)

"...Brothers and laity feel called and gathered by God, each one with his/her personal vocation to respond to society's needs." (Page 49)

For Reflection and Discussion

1. As I/we read and reflect on the document and its 12 declarations, what three declarations do I/we feel are most important and why?
2. If I/we were given the opportunity to add a 13th declaration, what would it be and why should it be included in this list?
3. Given the Declaration's strong affirmation of and commitment to diversity and inclusion, what can I/we (individual, group, institution) do to embrace and reinforce this reality through your participation in the Lasallian mission?
4. As the text comes near to its end, we read: "...God has guided the Institute to find, in every century according to different circumstances and places, the means, the people, the committed groups and associates to continue this mission of a human and Christian education..." (Page 116) How might I/we restate this in my/our own words and grounded in my/our own experience of the Lasallian educational mission?



“The realities of this world urge us to take proactive and not reactive positions that put us at the forefront of educational innovation.”
(Page 87)

12 Declarations

1. We firmly believe that children and young people are a call to hope and commitment.
2. We believe that in the faces of the impoverished and vulnerable we find God’s saving power.
3. We believe in the inspiring and mediating power of the educator.
4. We believe that the educational community is a core component in the building up of the person and the transmission of values.
5. We believe that our Lasallian association is a gift from God to the world and an extraordinary means to continue the legacy received from our living three-hundred-year heritage.
6. We believe that education makes possible the search for and transmission of the truth.
7. We believe that education is a fundamental, powerful and productive resource for the care of the Earth and the defense of the habitat where life can flourish and sustain itself.
8. We believe in the transforming capacity of education.
9. We believe that Lasallian education is an expression of Christian humanism.
10. We believe in the evangelizing power of the school.
11. We believe that today’s realities demand taking risks and being creative.
12. We believe that another world is possible, and that education is a fundamental force for building it.

*Read the Declaration at
www.Lasallian.info/Declaration.*



SHARING FAITH



SERVING THE YOUNG



De La Salle
BROTHERS
OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

As De La Salle Christian Brothers, we are called to educate and evangelize in community. Today, the Brothers & Lasallian Partners serve more than 1 million young people.



Learn more & connect with us at BrothersVocation.org



Paul Evra, left, and local celebrities deliver food baskets to families of young people who attend SMLC as part of the "Act Together" program.

Paul Evra (à gauche) et des célébrités livrent des paniers de nourriture pour les familles des jeunes qui fréquentent le Centre. Le tout dans le cadre du programme Agir-ensemble.

Creating Miracles through Partnerships

By Paul Evra

■ The Saint-Michel district is one of the most disadvantaged neighborhoods in Montréal, Québec, and has its own reality.

Rich in diversity, the Saint-Michel district relies on community organizations that understand its complexities to implement programs and services that meet the needs of community members, who face many socio-economic challenges. Efforts are needed to help students succeed both educationally and socially, as well as to provide food security for families. The challenges of the pandemic have affected community members in many ways, but

some have been impacted to a greater extent.

Vulnerability in Times of Crisis

By placing us in a climate of widespread uncertainty, unknown until now, the pandemic has made us vulnerable, worried and disoriented. But those who were already in precarious situations face even tougher times. The pandemic has revealed gaps that we had underestimated and widened those that already concerned us. The residents of the Saint-Michel

district, who were already dealing with overwhelming difficulties, saw the obstacles they faced grow.

The Saint-Michel Lasallian Center (SMLC) recognized the urgency of the situation and the importance of taking action. From this perspective, the pandemic was for the center a source of perseverance, rather than a deterrent. The SMLC team, faced with the injustice of the crisis, was able to mobilize and take an active part in achieving a common goal. Staff, volunteers and supporters of the center rallied together to serve those in need, inspired

“The Lasallian vision is seeing abundance where others see scarcity, and bringing nourishment where there is none.”

—Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 5

by their deep conviction of the value of their mission.

Faced with the restrictions imposed by the government and public health in response to the health crisis, the center had to reinvent itself. While almost all its activities previously took place on its premises, the new safety measures created an upheaval. Many activities have gone from in person to virtual. Moreover, the staff has found a way, while respecting health measures, to continue all efforts: reaching out to community members, rethinking interventions and responding to the new needs of the neighborhood.

Successes

Since the founding of the SMLC, academic achievement has occupied a central place both

in its mission and in its daily activities. From a perspective of education, perseverance and development, the administration has grasped the need for proper care for the youth.

In these extraordinary times, the academic success of young people can become a greater challenge, especially for those who do not have easy access to the internet or a suitable learning environment. For students with academic difficulties, support and monitoring are more difficult and less effective. To meet this growing need, the SMLC initiated a partnership with the schools of Sainte-Lucie, Marie-Rivier, Lucien-Guilbault, Reine-Marie and Louis-Joseph-Papineau.

This collaboration brings together key players in Saint-Michel in terms of education and youth development.

Most recently, the digital divide that isolates the neighborhood has turned out to be deeper and more damaging than we imagined. To reduce this serious gap, the SMLC worked with new and existing partners to give young people access to the internet on Louvain street, which, covering only approximately 1,000 feet, has six educational institutions that serve 4,500 young people daily. In addition, partnerships with key supporters allow students to receive personalized support adapted to their needs. The supporters act as a bridge between the school and the academic activities of the SMLC, offering young people targeted and effective support.

For students with intellectual disabilities, the SMLC has teamed up with the Louis-Joseph-Papineau school to set

The SMLC’s administrative team meets on a regular basis to discuss its impact on young people and their families and its next steps.

L’équipe administrative du CLSM se réunit sur une base régulière pour mesurer son impact auprès des jeunes et leurs familles et de décider de la suite des choses.





The traditional Christmas party for employees transforms into a food delivery program to help those most in need.

La traditionnelle fête de Noël pour les employés s'est transformée dans le contexte de la pandémie, en activité de partage avec les plus démunis.

up an interactive educational activity that allows them to flourish in learning. In addition, the language barrier is an obstacle that should not be overlooked and can be decisive in terms of vulnerability. To address this need, the SMLC started *Camp des pros*, a day camp for special-needs students who do not speak English or French fluently, to help with language skills that will promote their academic and professional success.

Although education is the primary mission of the SMLC, its team is committed to looking for ways to address poverty and social exclusion, in order to improve the living conditions in Saint-Michel. Since the start of restrictions in March 2020, several families of the youth attending the center have been struggling with food insecurity. So, the SMLC set up a food distribution program called *Agir-ensemble* (Act Together) that encourages local businesses to contribute and help families receive the food they need.

With this in mind, the SMLC redesigned the Director's Barbecue, the annual celebration for community members held at the end of the academic year. This event, which previously brought together hundreds of people around tasty grilled meats and music, had a new vision this year. A packed lunch was delivered to families in the neighborhood, to reward both the academic success of the students and the work of the parents.

On December 24, 2020, the SMLC staff Christmas party transformed into an opportunity to distribute food baskets to 100 families of Saint-Michel, allowing them to enjoy a Christmas meal worthy of their considerable efforts.

Continuing to Serve

During the next stages of this collective challenge, the Saint-Michel Lasallian Center will offer its continued support to community members. The SMLC team will do everything in its

power to put in place measures that will quickly remedy the shortcomings that are slowing and overwhelming the Saint-Michel neighborhood in this time of crisis.

Inspired by Saint John Baptist de La Salle, who, at every moment of crisis, developed innovative responses to meet the needs of young people, we wish to continue to put in place initiatives that make it possible to quickly overcome the difficulties that slow down and hinder young people's development.

Miracles are indeed possible in times of crisis. ■

Paul Evra is the director of the Saint-Michel Lasallian Center. The SMLC provided all photos for this story. The SMLC is featured in Lasallian Reflection 6.

Quand le partenariat rend les miracles possibles

Par Paul Evra

■ Le quartier Saint-Michel est l'un des quartiers les plus défavorisés de Montréal et connaît une réalité qui lui est propre.

Riche de sa diversité, le quartier Saint-Michel nécessite la contribution d'organismes communautaires qui comprennent ses particularités et mettent en place des programmes et des actions concrètes adaptées aux besoins et objectifs de sa population. Des efforts sont nécessaires, tant au niveau de la persévérance scolaire et de l'inclusion sociale qu'à celui de la sécurité alimentaire. Les circonstances particulières que nous

connaissons depuis bientôt un an nous ont affectés de plusieurs manières, mais certains d'entre-nous ont été touchés dans une plus grande mesure.

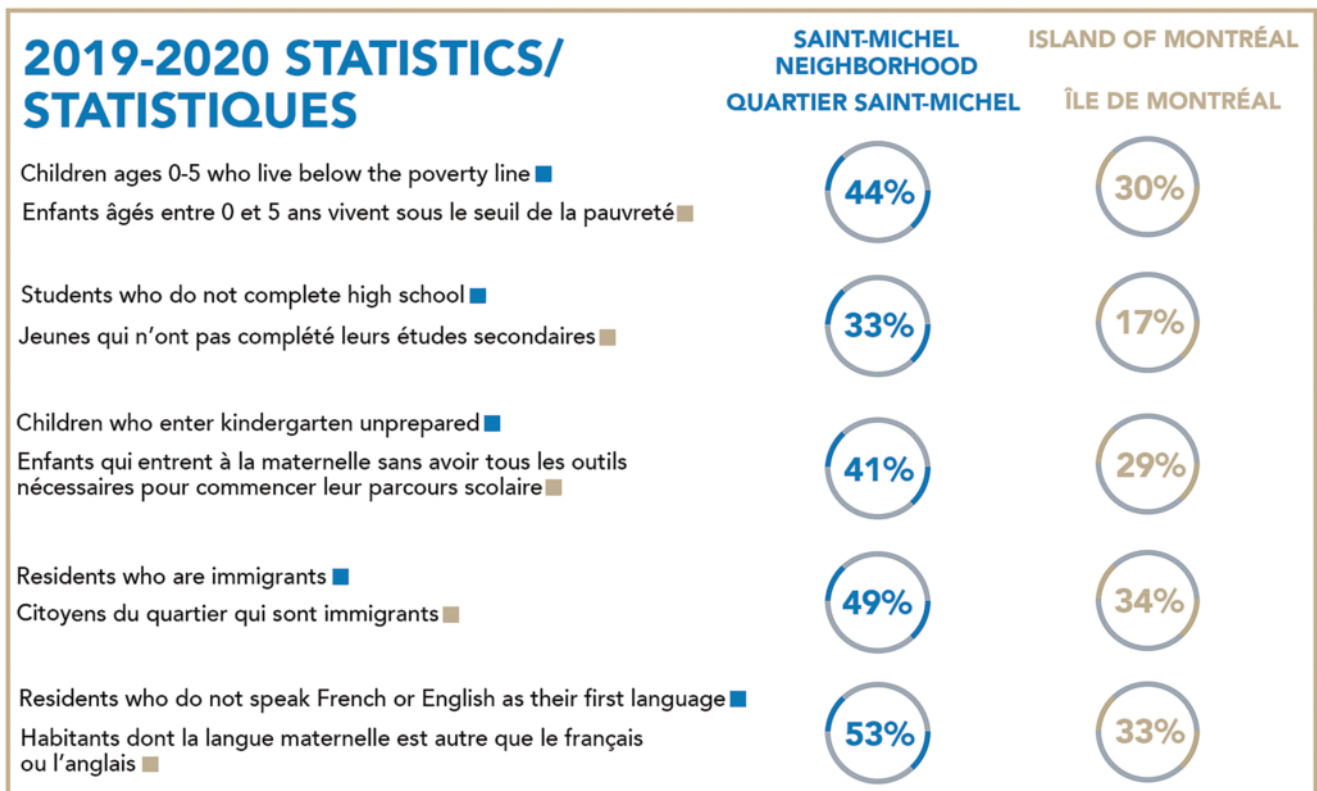
Vulnérabilité en temps de crise

En nous plaçant dans un climat d'incertitude généralisé, jusque-là inconnu, la pandémie nous a rendus vulnérables, inquiets, et désorientés. Mais ceux qui se trouvaient déjà en situation précaire ont été confrontés à des temps encore plus durs. La pandémie a révélé des écarts que

nous avons sous-estimés et creusé ceux qui nous préoccupaient déjà. Les habitants du quartier Saint-Michel, qui composaient déjà avec des difficultés accablantes, ont vu grandir les obstacles auxquels ils faisaient face.

Le Centre lasallien Saint-Michel (CLSM) a reconnu l'urgence de la situation et l'importance d'agir.

Statistics taken from / Statistiques tirées de : Centraide du Grand Montréal, Analyse territoriale 2019-20", URL <https://tinyurl.com/y33z4evv>, accessed / consultées le : January 12, 2021, pages 2-3



Dans cette optique, la pandémie a été pour le Centre une source de dépassement, plutôt qu'un frein. L'équipe du CLSM, devant l'injustice de la crise, a su se mobiliser et prendre part active à l'atteinte d'un objectif commun. Qu'il s'agisse du personnel, des bénévoles ou des partenaires du Centre, tous ont agi conjointement dans la conviction profonde de la valeur de leur mission.

Devant les restrictions imposées par le gouvernement et la santé publique en réponse à la crise sanitaire, le Centre a dû opérer une véritable réinvention. Alors que la quasi-totalité de ses activités prenaient place dans ses locaux, les nouvelles mesures de sécurité ont engendré un réel chamboulement. Bien sûr, les activités sont passées du présentiel au virtuel. Plus encore, le personnel du Centre a trouvé une manière, dans le respect des mesures sanitaires, de poursuivre tous ses efforts : aller vers les usagers, repenser les interventions, répondre aux nouveaux besoins du quartier.

Réussites

Depuis la fondation du CLSM, sa visée éducative occupe une place centrale tant dans sa mission, que dans ses activités quotidiennes. Dans cette optique d'éducation, de persévérance et de développement, l'administration du Centre a saisi la nécessité d'une bonne prise en charge des jeunes.

En ces temps hors du commun, la réussite scolaire des jeunes peut devenir un véritable défi, particulièrement pour ceux qui ne disposent pas d'un accès facile à Internet ou d'un environnement

« La vision lasallienne consiste à voir l'abondance là où d'autres voient la rareté, et à apporter de la nourriture là où il n'y en a pas. »

—*Réflexion lasallienne numéro 6, Page 5*

propice à l'apprentissage. Pour les jeunes en difficulté académique, l'accompagnement et le suivi se font plus ardues et moins efficaces. Pour répondre à ce besoin croissant, le CLSM a entrepris un partenariat avec les écoles Sainte-Lucie, Marie-Rivier, Lucien-Guilbault, Reine-Marie et Louis-Joseph-Papineau. Cette collaboration regroupe des acteurs clés de Saint-Michel en termes d'éducation et de développement.

Tout récemment, la fracture numérique qui isole le quartier s'est révélée plus profonde et néfaste que nous ne l'imaginions. Afin de réduire ce grave écart, le Centre et ses partenaires ont entrepris de donner aux jeunes un accès à Internet sur la rue Louvain, qui, sur une distance de seulement 300 mètres, compte six institutions éducatives qui accueillent 4500 jeunes quotidiennement. Par ailleurs, une coopération avec des intervenants-pivots est une autre initiative née de ce partenariat, qui permettra aux élèves un suivi personnalisé et adapté à leurs besoins. Les intervenants-pivots feront le pont entre l'école et les activités académiques du CLSM, offrant aux jeunes un accompagnement ciblé et efficace.

Pour les jeunes aux prises avec des déficiences intellectuelles, le CLSM a fait équipe avec l'école Louis-Joseph-Papineau pour mettre sur pied une activité éducative

interactive qui leur permettra de s'épanouir dans l'apprentissage. Par ailleurs, la barrière de la langue constitue un obstacle à ne pas négliger et peut être déterminante en termes de vulnérabilité. Le *Camp des pros* a été mis sur pied pour donner l'occasion aux jeunes allophones de relever ce défi de taille qui les sépare de leur succès académique et professionnel.

Bien que l'éducation soit la mission première du CLSM, son équipe s'engage à chercher des moyens de lutter contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale, afin d'améliorer les conditions de vie à Saint-Michel. Depuis le début des restrictions en mars 2020, plusieurs familles de jeunes fréquentant le centre sont aux prises avec l'insécurité alimentaire. Ainsi, le CLSM a mis en place un programme de distribution alimentaire appelé *Agir-ensemble* qui encourage les entreprises locales à joindre leurs ressources afin d'aider les familles à recevoir la nourriture dont elles ont besoin.

Dans cette optique, l'équipe a complètement repensé le Barbecue du Directeur. Cet événement qui regroupait des centaines de personnes autour de savoureuses grillades et de musique a connu une tout autre version cette année. Un panier-repas a été livré aux familles du quartier, pour récompenser à la fois la réussite scolaire des jeunes et le travail des parents. Le 24

décembre dernier, le Réveillon lasallien a été l'occasion de distribuer à 100 familles de Saint-Michel un panier, leur permettant de déguster un repas de Noël à la hauteur de leurs efforts considérables.

Poursuivre le service

Durant les prochaines étapes de cette épreuve collective, le Centre lasallien Saint-Michel continuera à offrir son soutien continu à la population du quartier. L'équipe du CLSM fera tout en son pouvoir pour mettre en place des mesures

qui permettront de pallier rapidement aux lacunes qui ralentissent Saint-Michel dans son développement et accablent le quartier en ces temps de crise.

Inspiré par Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, qui a su à chaque moment de crise, trouver des réponses ajustées pour répondre aux besoins des jeunes, nous souhaitons continuer à mettre en place des initiatives qui permettent de pallier rapidement les difficultés qui ralentissent et entravent le développement des jeunes.

Des miracles sont possibles en temps de crise pour continuer à rendre nos jeunes meilleurs pour les rendre heureux. ■

Paul Evra est le directeur général du Centre lasallien Saint-Michel. Toutes les photos sont une grâceuseté du CLSM. Le CLSM est cité dans la Réflexion Lasallienne no. 6.



Le nouveau système LÜ (projection interactive numérique) permet aux jeunes et au personnel de s'initier à la méditation et de prendre part aux activités.

The new LÜ system, an interactive projection device, allows young people and staff to meditate and take part in other activities.



LASALLIEN :
Tu participes
à ce miracle
Notre vision.
Notre passion.
Notre avenir.

La  Salle
RELAN

Quelle créativité et quelles innovations pouvez-vous offrir pour assurer un avenir sain et durable à la mission lasallienne?

Comment votre cœur est-il touché par la compassion pour ceux qui sont dans le besoin?

Quels signes merveilleux de la présence et de la puissance de Dieu sont à l'œuvre dans votre communauté éducative?

Comment approfondissez-vous vos prises de position en faveur des plus vulnérables parmi vous?

Comment pourriez-vous aider à transformer la violence qui existe et promouvoir la paix et la fraternité?

Comment offrez-vous des espaces significatifs pour l'apprentissage mutuel, le partage et l'épanouissement afin que les autres puissent entendre la voix aimante de l'intérieur?

Vos yeux sont-ils ouverts à la puissance miraculeuse de Dieu et à votre rôle dans les miracles ?

Quels signes et merveilles pouvez-vous identifier dans les origines de votre communauté éducative?

De quelle façon mettez-vous en pratique un respect mutuel qui transforme votre communauté et qui a ensuite un impact sur les autres?

Que pouvez-vous faire pour vous assurer qu'il n'y ait pas de pauvreté d'amour et de rires dans votre communauté?

Download these posters at www.Lasallian.info/Miracle.



LASALLIAN:
*You are part
of the miracle*
Our Vision.
Our Passion.
Our Future.

La  **Salle**
RELAN

What creativity and innovation can you offer in order to bring about a healthy, sustainable future of the Lasallian mission?

How is your heart moved with compassion for those in need?

What signs and wonders of God's presence and power are at work in your educational community?

How do you deepen your advocacy for the most vulnerable among you?

How might you help transform the violence that exists and promote peace, brotherhood and sisterhood?

How can you provide meaningful spaces for mutual learning, sharing and enrichment so that others can hear the loving voice within?

Are your eyes open to God's miraculous power and your role in working miracles?

What signs and wonders can you find in the origins of your educational community?

In what ways can you practice a mutual respect that transforms your community and then impacts others?

What can you do to make sure there is no poverty of love and laughter in your community?

Also available in Spanish.

Connecting with Gen Z through Relationships

By Ryan Wall

“We will stand with the young, who increasingly live in diverse cultural, religious, and ethnic settings. We will provide meaningful spaces for mutual learning, sharing, and enrichment so that they can hear the loving voice within.”

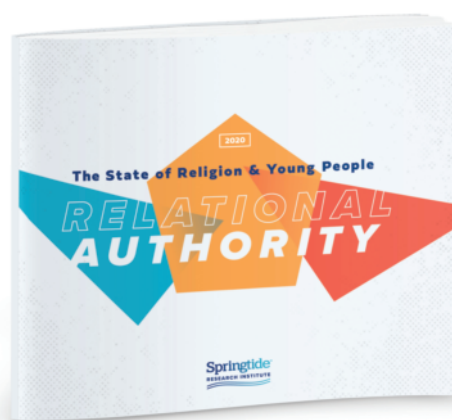
—Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 23

■ Pope Francis has said that young people are the present, as well as the future of the Catholic Church. But as they increasingly indicate changing attitudes toward religion, what does that mean for the future of the Church?

New research from Springtide Research Institute set to find out, compiling data from more than 10,000 surveys and over 150 interviews with the young people of Gen Z (ages 13-25) to better understand their lived realities. What they found was a complex and nuanced relationship with religion and spirituality, presenting unique opportunities and challenges for those who work with this group.

“Overall, Gen Z is an age range that isn’t studied very much. They have a unique worldview that is directly impacted by how they’ve grown up, and we need to start listening to them,” said Dr. Josh Packard, Springtide executive director. “We wanted to know how they felt about faith and spirituality, among other topics, and figure out how to connect with them in a way that was authentic.”

Springtide, a part of Lasallian Educational and Research Initiatives, issued a report, “The State of Religion and Young People 2020,” that showed how traditional labels like “affiliated” and “unaffiliated” have begun to take on different meanings, demonstrating how Gen Z approaches religion in a variety of different ways.



In the past, “affiliation” with a particular tradition implied a corresponding set of practices, beliefs and identities that came along with that designation. But that’s not the case anymore, according to the report. Fifty-two percent of “affiliated” young people have little to no trust in organized religion, and nearly a third indicated they do not think it is important to have a faith community. However, those identifying as “unaffiliated” indicated they’re not turned off by questions of God and meaning. Sixty percent said they are at least slightly spiritual, and nearly a fifth said they still attend religious gatherings at least once a month.

While these findings might seem contradictory, they reveal that Gen Z has a more complex relationship with religion than prior generations. Dr. Packard noted that, categorically, Gen Z is the most diverse generation the United States—and world—has ever seen. This means they are bound to have a breadth of lived experiences to inform their worldview.

“When the Church talks about disaffiliating, Gen Z was never 100% there to begin with,” Dr. Packard explained. “But that doesn’t mean they don’t want to have that relationship with religion. It’s just a much different relationship than it has been with generations before them.”

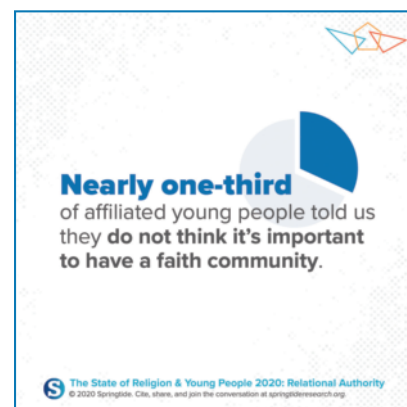
Despite this complexity, one thing most respondents indicated was a desire for connection—and that is an



opportunity for older adults, educators and religious leaders to make inroads in forging lasting relationships.

“For years now, religious leaders have been paying attention to the wrong things when it comes to understanding young people. The old categories just aren’t useful. We have to start looking at who they really are, what they believe, and how they form their identities, not just paying attention to which box they check on one question of a survey,” Dr. Packard said.

“Young people are more connected than ever, but also disconnected. They crave meaningful exchanges with peers and older adults,” Kevin Singer, Springtide’s head of media relations and public relations, noted. “Many in Gen Z are frustrated with not being taken seriously or ignored, which has led them to become vocal about issues that matter to them. They seek a trusted voice who can help them find purpose through honest, genuine conversations.”



These feelings have been exacerbated during the pandemic, when the world shifted almost entirely online. Some of Gen Z's most formative experiences, such as searching for college or beginning a first job, have occurred with minimal interpersonal interaction. This has heightened the need for adult mentors to provide support, guidance and encouragement. In the year ahead, fostering these relationships will be especially important to help students process trauma and feelings they can't explain.

For Lasallian educators in particular, this is a chance to connect with them by respecting and addressing them as equals—much like Saint John Baptist de La Salle did centuries ago.

"If young people aren't going to come to our door, we need to figure out how we're going to get to their door," Dr. Packard advised.

"There is a real opportunity for educators, in every sense of the word, to have conversations with young people and make them feel heard," Singer agreed. "Gen Z expects others to talk the talk and walk the walk."

Despite this openness for authentic relationships, Gen Z is also one of the most skeptical of organized institutions, whether they are religious, financial, political or business. With this in mind, Dr. Packard advised that the best way for faith educators to truly break through is to lead with an open heart and mind.

"To make a lasting connection, try to understand what the young person wants from their faith. Faith is not a one-size-fits-all approach. That doesn't mean you have to compromise values, but you shouldn't try to force a wholesale interpretation of religion," he said. "Your role is to make an impact in the young person's life, so keep their best interests in mind and don't worry about selling an entire institution or worldview to them." ■

Ryan Wall, a 2018 graduate of La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is a freelance writer for De La Salle Today. Springtide Research Institute provided all of the graphics presented in this story.

Resources in Action

Making an impact in a young person's life is easier said than done, and Springtide has resources available to help with this. Educators can visit Springtide's website to access research and download reports and manuscripts. Springtide also has an active social media presence and regularly shares blogs from students and faith educators, as well as tips for forging meaningful connections.

Districts in the Lasallian Region of North America are working to incorporate Springtide's research as a way to support ministries in listening to young people in order to better serve them. To start, this has included webinars, conversations and planning for future resources.

Springtide's impact also extends beyond the Lasallian world in the effort to listen to and connect with Gen Z. Organizations such as Teen Talk Hotline, Glean Network, The Global Center for Religious Research and Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry have also utilized Springtide's findings.



www.SpringtideResearch.org



[@wearespringtide](https://www.facebook.com/wearespringtide)



[@wearespringtide](https://twitter.com/wearespringtide)



[@wearespringtide](https://www.instagram.com/wearespringtide)



Students attend a basic literacy and numeracy program at Fratelli.
Courtesy Yara El Khoury/Fratelli

Accompanying the Most Vulnerable through the Fratelli Project

By Brother Matthew Kotek, FSC

■ It's 7:00 a.m. on a late October 2020 morning as the Brothers at the Fratelli Project in south Lebanon leave the chapel following morning prayer to be greeted by the sounds of revving engines. To the average person, the revving of engines may not have any significance, but to the Brothers this sound means that buses are warming up and preparing to pick up the children and young adults of the nearby Syrian refugee community and

bringing them to Fratelli. This sound is symbolic of Fratelli finally being able to return to serving its mission after many months of being closed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fratelli, an Italian word meaning Brothers, encompasses the mission of the Fratelli Project. Founded as a joint ministry of the De La Salle and Marist Brothers, Fratelli's mission is to serve the Syrian refugee community living in Lebanon. The formation of the

Fratelli Project came after discussions at the 2014 General Chapter called for the De La Salle Brothers to form relationships with other religious orders to create ministries to serve those most in need. So, in 2015, De La Salle Brother Andrés Porrás, FSC, from Mexico and Marist Brother Miquel Cubeles, FMS, from Spain formed a community in Lebanon to explore the possibility of establishing a project to serve the

educational needs of refugees from the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011.

In the spring of 2016, this dream was realized after the first students were welcomed to Fratelli. As the need for more space grew, the project soon moved to the former Collège de Notre Dame des Frères Maristes in Rmeileh, south Lebanon, and established a satellite campus in the Bourj Hammoud neighborhood of Beirut in the École Saint Vincent de Paul.

The Fratelli Project has grown exponentially thanks to the financial support from the De La Salle and Marist Brothers, as well as other charitable organizations from abroad. In addition to financial support, the Fratelli community has been blessed by the presence of Brothers and volunteers from abroad who commit to animating the mission along with the local Lebanese and Syrian teachers and staff. Currently, the Fratelli community consists of four Brothers. I serve with Marist Brothers Miquel

“Educational works that show the same movement of God’s presence and power.”

—*Lasallian Reflection 6, Page 10*

Cubeles and Esteban Ortega from Spain and De La Salle Brother Gilbert Ouilabegue from Chad.

In the wake of multiple crises affecting Lebanon, including the October 2019 revolution, COVID-19 and the Beirut port explosion in August 2020, Fratelli has worked hard to adapt in order to meet the ever-changing needs of the refugee community. In order to continue to safely provide programming to the Syrian children and young adults during the pandemic, Fratelli adopted protocols including temperature checks, mandatory mask wearing and social distancing in classrooms.

Fratelli’s programming currently includes morning and afternoon preschool programs, a basic literacy and numeracy tutoring

program for children and young adults currently enrolled in school, English and Arabic courses for young adults, sewing and childcare courses for young women, electrical courses for young men, and youth basketball and football (soccer) programs. Fratelli also hosts summer camps in July and August after the completion of the academic year.

In the months since my arrival in Lebanon in October, I have had the opportunity to observe and experience all that Fratelli embodies. From accompanying the drivers in the morning to pick up the children, to assisting the teachers in their classrooms and to co-teaching an English course, I am learning that my role as a Brother at Fratelli is to accompany the children and young



Brother Matthew, back right, participates in a group discussion in Reem Bazzal’s English class at the Fratelli Project in December 2020. Courtesy Yara El Khoury/Fratelli

adults we serve and to help them realize their potential.

The Brothers also accompany the staff at Fratelli and support them in a variety of ways. One way of accompaniment that I particularly enjoy is the daily lunch that Brothers prepare and share with the Fratelli coordination team. On any given day you'll find us four Brothers with the five members of our coordination team (Ali, Maria Pia, Rana, Reem and Yara) gathering to share a meal, discuss the pressing needs of the children and staff, and share stories of our daily lives—all done in a mixture of Arabic, French, Spanish and English. Though language can be a barrier to communication at times, I have found that the sharing of our own stories in a variety of languages to be a truly transformative experience.

In addition to the formal programming, celebrations are an important part of the Fratelli experience; they help lift the spirits of the children and bring them joy amidst their difficult situations. Though many celebrations have had to be canceled due to the pandemic, we were happy to have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas with the children. We welcomed Santa and our Fratelli mascot, Fra Fra, who greeted the children, sang songs with them, and gave them gifts. It's events like this that not only bring about great joy and laughter amidst a difficult year, but also serve as a symbol to the greater community in Lebanon and abroad of the ability of the Lebanese and Syrian



communities to work together in support of a common goal—providing vulnerable youth with an education so that they can have a brighter future.

As the day comes to a close and the children return home, the Brothers once again return to the chapel for evening prayer. As we do each day, we thank God for the people we have encountered that day, we pray for peace in our world, and we pray through the intercession of our Blessed Mother (Buena Madre, Bonne Mère) that we may continue to accompany those entrusted to our care at Fratelli. ■

Fra Fra, Fratelli's mascot, greets children during a Christmas celebration. *Courtesy Yara El Khoury/Fratelli*

To learn more about the Fratelli Project and donate to support its programming, visit www.LaSalleInternational.org/Lebanon.

Brother Matthew Kotek, FSC, joined the Fratelli Project in Lebanon in October 2020. He previously taught at Christian Brothers High School in Memphis, Tennessee, after completing his novitiate year in 2018. Read more about the Fratelli Project in [Lasallian Reflection 6](#).

calendar of events ■

APRIL 2021

- 14 Regional Formation Programs Advisory Committee (RFPAC) Meeting (Virtual)
- 29 Regional Finance Committee (RFC) Meeting (Virtual)

MAY 2021

- 28–31 Lasallian Volunteers Debriefing Retreat, Plano, IL

JUNE 2021

- 21–23 Lasallian Education Council (LEC) Meeting (Virtual)
- 21–24 Regional Conference of Christian Brothers (RCCB) Meeting (Virtual)

JULY 2021

- 11–15 Regional Formation Institute (RFI), Romeoville, IL
- 12–16 Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Lasallian Practice (Regional) (Virtual)
- 16–24 Brother Charles Kitson Institute for Formation of Lasallian Volunteers

- 20–22 Lasallian Social Justice Institute (LSJI) (Virtual)

- 23 Novitiate Concludes, Chicago, IL

OCTOBER 2021

- 1–3 International Symposium on Lasallian Research, Minneapolis, MN

- 7–9 Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Lasallian Practice (District of San Francisco New Orleans), Duncans Mills, CA

- 8–11 Brothers in Initial Formation Gathering

- 10–23 International Symposium of Young Lasallians (Virtual)

- 20–21 Regional Conference of Christian Brothers (RCCB) Meeting, Montréal, Québec

- 21–23 Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Lasallian Practice (District of Eastern North America and Midwest District), Shawnee on Delaware, PA

- 29 Regional Vocation Formation Committee (RVFC) Meeting (Virtual)

*Dates and locations are subject to change due to COVID-19 concerns.

We are Lasallian

UNDERSTANDING



PROTECTING



GUIDING



Brother Joel Damian, FSC, founded Christian Brothers Services in 1960 as an alternative to expensive or unattainable insurance coverage for Catholic organizations. Sixty years later, Christian Brothers Services has grown to administer seven Trusts, which serve more than 3,000 Catholic organizations including religious orders, dioceses, colleges and schools. We continue to demonstrate the Lasallian tradition by understanding our members' needs, protecting their human and financial resources, and guiding organizations in finding practical solutions to their business needs.

Catholic School Management • Health Plans • Pension Plans • Retirement Savings • Property/Casualty
Financial Management Consultants • Religious Health • IT and Website Services



cbservices.org • 800.807.0100

Delafalle **TODAY**

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CAPITOL HEIGHTS, MD
PERMIT #4168

Christian Brothers Conference
415 Michigan Avenue NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20017

