

PACIFIC ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE (PARC)

1. THE REGION

- *When was it set up?*

1967.

- *How has it progressively evolved?*

The Region as a whole has generally made substantial progress since its organization. However, sad to say, some Districts in the Region have been observed in a rapidly declining situation as in the case of Sri Lanka and Pakistan. There are not enough competent Brothers who can handle Formation programs. This situation greatly affects the entire Region in terms of Catechetical Formation. Hence, the establishment and support of the REGIONAL FORMATION CENTER in Singapore is necessary.

- *Which Districts, Sub-Districts and Sectors are included?*

Those within the Asian and Pacific Region.

- *Which countries constitute its area of operations?*

Australia, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Malaysia, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Pakistan, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam.

2. THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR:

Bro. Rafael S. Donato

- *Is he full time?*

No.

- *What other duties does he have?*

Visitor, Philippine District President, La Salle Green Hills Chairman, AMRSP (Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines).

Chairman, South East Asia Major Superiors.

Actively involved in 15 Corporations and organizations related to education and non-government work.

- *What authority has he as Regional Co-ordinator?*

Chairman/Convenor. Liason Officer of the Region.

- *How was he elected?*

He was elected by the majority of the members and representatives of the Asian Districts.



PACIFIC ASIA

592 Brothers

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Hongkong
Japan
N. Caledonia
Penang
Philippines
Saigon
Singapore
Thailand

- *What is the duration of his term?*

2 years.

3. REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Visitors' Conference

– *How regularly are meetings held?*

Annually.

– *What questions have been considered since the 41st General Chapter?*

1. The development of a permanent novitiate in Singapore.

2. The development of a Regional Scholasticate in Manila.

3. The appointment of a Visitor for the Colombo District.

4. Appointment of a President for Thailand.

Secretariats:

— No Secretariat — A Regional Secretary is appointed by PARC through the Chairman for a period of three years. The following are some of his duties:

1) He facilitates communications within the Region, with the General Council, and with other Regions of the Institute. He is a resident at a centrally located place, assisted by up-to-date communications facilities.

2) He works in conjunction with the Standing Commissions of the Region (Catechetical and Formation Commissions).

3) He collects, stores and makes available information regarding theological, catechetical and education courses especially available within the Region.

4) In collaboration with the relevant Standing Commissions he organises programs of continuing education, as well as coordinating the visits of outside speakers from other Regions.

5) He maintains direct contact with the centrally-based specialized activities of the Institute -Secoli, Formation, Lasallian Family, Pastoral works with the Young — and facilitates the flow of information to and from the Center of the Institute.

6) He liaises with the Chairman of the Conference and helps it to meet his various secretarial needs for the smooth running of the Conference.

4. REGIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROJECTS

A. Catechetical

PARC has created a commission called the CATECHETICAL Commission to meet the Catechetical



THAILAND: Brother Joseph Mertz, President of the Delegation, with a group of Khmer children in the refugee camp of Sok Sahn. Much of his time is spent helping refugee families.

needs of the Region. Brother Edgardo Jayme of the Philippine District has been elected Chairman/Convenor to animate the work of the Commission. He is responsible for disseminating information related to Catechesis to the different members of the Commission. As Chairman, he will hold office for three years.

The functions of the Catechetical Commission have been laid down by the Asian Regional Visitors Conference to analyze the Catechetical activities of the Region, to design programmes that will involve the Catechetical Formation and Catechesis in general in the Region, and to organize workshops for the Brothers and teachers.

The members of the Commission are appointed by PARC whose representatives fully participate in the deliberations and activities of the Commission, to keep close contact with the coordinators of various Districts in order to give the necessary support to their task of animating the Catechetical programmes of the respective Districts, Sub-Districts and Delegations.

Some Catechetical Program Proposals.

1. The Conference desires to renew the Catechetical charism of the Founder, St. John Baptist de la Salle, through Christian Education in accordance with the mission of the Church in Asia.

2. There is a need to review the Catechetical Apostolate.

3. A Brother should be assigned to take charge of the Catechetical Renewal and development of each of the Districts and Delegations in Asia.

4. There is a need to set up a system of coordination to facilitate and give support to the renewal and development of catechesis in Asia.

5. The respective Visitors, Auxiliary Visitors and Associate Visitors of the various Asian Districts and Presidents of Delegations appoint a Catechetical Coordinator who will assist in the animation and development of Catechetical programmes in their schools.

6. The Catechetical Coordinator forms a committee which will assist in the animation and development of Catechetical programmes of their respective Districts and Delegations.

7. Each of the District or Delegation Catechetical Coordinators will liaise with a named or appointed member of the Asian Catechetical Commissions.

8. The Asian Catechetical Commission will keep close contact with their respective District Catechetical Coordinator liaison for purpose of animation and support.

9. There is a need to see a clearer and more complete picture of the Asian Catechetical situation.

10. There is a need for everyone to be concerned in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Catechetical programs.

11. The District or Delegation Catechetical Coordinator will conduct an assessment of their respective District/Delegation Catechetical realities and bring the findings to the workshops.

12. The Asian Catechetical Commission will organize workshops to discuss possible means to carry out and solve whatever problems that may arise.

B. Formation

Another Commission created by PARC is the Formation Commission to respond to the Formation needs of the Region. Brother Ray Suplido of the Philippine District was also elected Chairman/Convenor of the Commission. He in consultation with the PARC members will be responsible for the implementation of programs regarding formation. He will be assisted by a Secretary who will communicate and coordinate with the Visitors of the Districts of the Region. He will also be responsible for keeping and compiling minutes and keeping an up-to-date directory of the houses of formation in the various Districts of the Region.

The Commission proposed to PARC the establishment and support of the REGIONAL FORMATION CENTER in Singapore whose purpose is to train personnel, to offer programmes to Brothers undergoing post-novitiate formation, to repond to those Districts, Sub-Districts, Delegations which are unable to offer a novitiate in their own locality at the present time and to improve Regional coordination regarding formation.

Bill Garvey (Oct. 1988-1992), Pat Craine, and Mal-

achy Yates are available in a full-time basis. Bill Garvey could be the Director of the Center. He has received funding for four years. Others possible on a part-time basis are: David Liao, Ray Suplido, Vincent Corkery, Charles O'Leary, Peter Foo, Conleth and other local resource personnel.

Schedule of possible programs

1988: Central Novitiate for those unable to do their novitiate in their own country (Pakistan... and others) (first year).

Formation of formators.

Post-Novitiate Programs (first phase of 2-year cycle).

1989: Central Novitiate (second phase of 2-year cycle).

1990: Central Novitiate (final months of 2nd year).

Formation of formators.

Post-Novitiate Programs (first phase of 2 year cycle).

Districts/Delegations continue with their respective programs. They may request the Centre for assistance in these; or in setting-up and running other programs.

After considering the pro's and con's the Commission recommends Singapore as the most favourable location for the Regional Formation Centre.

At present, funding has been pledged for Bill Garvey for the next four years. With the programs foreseen for the Centre, funding will be asked of the participating members, with good chances of support from Sharing Funds, Secoli, Mission, etc.

Some Recommendations of the Formation Commission.

1. Periodic meeting of formators to share experiences in an atmosphere of prayer and relaxation.

2. Proposed Regional Conference of Formators on December 1-21, 1988 for those in/moving into formation work with its theme: «Becoming More Effective Lasallian formators». The Chairman will request assistance from the PARC through its Chairman regarding the source of funding of this conference. SECOLI has promised to extend assistance. External travel will be taken care of by each District. Brother Ray Suplido and Bro. Malachy Broderick will be the resource persons.

3. Renewal of evangelical commitment and apostolic structure of religious life.

4. A member of the Commission should be present during PARC meeting in order to speak on the program.

5. Secretariat will have to be established.

Some problems encountered in the realization of programs of the Formation Commission.

1. Language barrier and different levels of the aspirants.
2. Difference in culture.
3. Certain districts don't want as a policy to have their novitiate outside their own districts.
4. Others have decided to share common novitiates with districts or sectors which are compatible with their needs.
5. Lack of funds.

Project Proposal:

PARC Project Proposal for holding of an INTERNATIONAL (PACIFIC-ASIAN) Lasallian Youth Congress in the Philippines in 1989.

Project Title: LA SALLE-ASIA 89.

Purpose: La Salle Asia '89, a project of the Pacific Asian Regional Conference (PARC) aims to bring together young people from different countries represented by PARC for the purpose of celebrating the bonds they share as members of the Lasallian Family. More specifically, La Salle-Asia '89 hopes to help participants:

1. to understand and appreciate the diversity of our culture and the different socio-economic milieux of each country represented;
2. to develop an awareness of needs and relevant issues affecting our youth in the Pacific-Asia;
3. to discuss our common Lasallian tradition and how it evolved in each country's history;
4. to understand and value the Lasallian charism and its relevance in the Pacific-Asian context;
5. to encourage and plan initiatives on a local and Pacific-Asian level for the promotion of the Lasallian charism; and
6. to establish a network for cultural collaboration and cooperation in other projects and activities.

At the Congress itself the varied activities will include: group dynamics, input sessions, group discussions, creative workshops, a cultural tour, and an exposure trip. The evenings will be reserved mostly for cultural presentations of a formal or informal nature.

Some activities focussing on Lasallian Family initiatives will be designed for the adults accompanying the delegations.

– What do you perceive as being significant and specific to the Region?

The Asia-Pacific region is vast and multicultural. Travelling is costly and will require voluminous paper work just to get from one country to the other. Visa requirements are stringent.

Religion and belief are as varied as faces and color. One common denominator is most of the countries were at some point in history colonized by European countries including the U.S.A. and Japan.

Promise of economic prosperity is rapidly being realized although there exists in some countries great disparity between the rich and the poor.

The common language is English and this is what PARC uses during meetings and in correspondence among its members.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Brother Edward presents a medal to a school leaver at the Holy Rosary School at Kondiu. The Brothers run 5 schools for the local tribes.



LATIN AMERICA (RELAL)

1. THE REGION

1.1. RELAL came into existence in January 1979 in Lima (Peru) during a first Assembly attended by Brother Jose Cervantes, General Councillor, and three representatives, including the Visitor, from each of the Districts. CLAP (the Latin American Visitors' Conference) had already been meeting annually since 1967 and still continues to do so.

1.2. By comparison with the time when only CLAP existed, the Brothers now take a much more active part, either by electing delegates to the Assemblies held every three years or by implementing common projects scheduled for the following three years. With regard to this last matter, CLAP appoints Brothers to take responsibility for these projects, decides how they should be implemented, and fixes the venue for meetings.

1.3. RELAL includes the following Districts: that of the West Indies (which has communities in Porto Rico, in the Dominican Republic, and hopes soon to have some in Cuba); the Districts of Argentina (including the sub-District of Paraguay), of Bolivia, Caracas (Venezuela), Chile, Ecuador and Peru; the District of Central America (which has communities in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) with the sub-District of Panama (which has communities in Costa Rica, one community in Spain and another in Colombia); the Districts of Mexico (North Mexico and South Mexico), Colombia (Bogota and Medellin) and Brazil (Porto Alegre and Sao Paulo). All this adds up to a total of fourteen Districts and two sub-Districts spread over eighteen Latin American countries.



2. THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

2.1. A Visitor in office is elected President of the Region.

2.2. In accordance with article 127e of the Rule and the directives contained in article 9 of the RELAL statutes, his function is to act simply as a coordinator. He is the official representative of the Region; he calls and presides over meetings of the Regional Assembly and of the Visitors' Conference; he supervises the implementation of programmes.

2.3. He is elected by CLAP.

2.4. His term of office is three years.

LATIN-AMERICA (RELAL)

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Central America
Chile
Ecuador
Medellin
North Mexico
South Mexico
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Porto Alegre
Sao Paulo

3. REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES

3.1. These include the Regional Assembly and the Visitors' Conference (CLAP). CLAP usually meets every year. After the 41st General Chapter, it met in January 1988 to plan for the three year period 1988-1990. The programme for this period includes six projects: in September 1988, a seminar on Educating for Justice and Peace, meant for Brothers working in schools for better-off students; the impending despatch of six Brothers to Cuba and to somewhere in Latin America which will be decided in May 1989; in October 1989, a meeting on the Lasallian Family; in February 1989, a discussion meeting for experts on the education of the lower social classes; in November 1990, a meeting for formation personnel; the establishment of a Lasallian Spiritual Renewal Centre where, over the period of three years, there will be organised four sessions, each lasting two months. During the course of this same meeting, CLAP brought the Regional statutes into line with the requirements of the new Rule.

3.2. The Central Administration Office of RELAL is made up of the President, a vice-President (also a Visitor in office), a full-time Executive Secretary (appointed by CLAP and attached to a community in the District in which the Central Office of RELAL is located). This Office meets as often as the need arises.

3.3. The RELAL Assembly consists of Visitors, auxiliary Visitors with territorial jurisdiction, the Executive Secretary, the heads of the common services, two Brothers from each District elected by all the Brothers of the District, and one Brother from each of the sub-Districts elected by the Brothers of the sub-District. In addition, CLAP can invite Brothers to attend as observers. The Assembly meets every three years to update and approve Regional statutes, to assess the work of the previous three years, to plan for the following period, to consider notes sent by Brothers to the Assembly, and to submit names to CLAP for the post of President and vice-President of RELAL. The six projects mentioned earlier were approved during the January 1988 meeting, and CLAP appointed Brothers to take charge of them, and indicated where and how each should be implemented.

3.4. Each of the common services which have been set up is run by a team whose members make arrangements by corresponding with one another and then meet just before their project is due to start. The number of permanently staffed services has been reduced to a minimum: CEL (Lasallian Spirituality Centre), and now CREL (Lasallian Spiritual Renewal Centre). Up till now, the Regional Secretary has had an office put at his disposal by the District of Bogota for the filing of documents, correspondence and banking facilities.

4. COMPLETED REGIONAL PROJECTS

4.1. Established by CLAP in 1968, CEL has been headed successively by Brothers Victor Bertrand (9 sessions from 1969 to 1972), Eugenio Fossa (9 sessions from 1972 to 1975), and Noe Zevallos (4 sessions from 1978 to 1980). A total of 552 Brothers have taken part. In 1968 also, the Paraguay mission was begun: this has now become a sub-District. In 1969 a meeting of bursars was organised. In 1970 there took place a catechetical meeting which published what is known as the Araruama Letter (Brazil). There have also been two Regional Assemblies: there was one in 1973 on Education, and one in 1974 at which ideas were finalised on formation, education and catechesis, and which were published in a book which was widely distributed in Latin America. A variety of other meetings also took place: one on catechesis (Quito, 1969), one on pastoral care of young people (Medellin, 1974), and one for formation personnel (Lima, 1975). A first SELA (Lasallian Spirituality Seminar) took place in Quito in 1978. In order that as many Brothers as possible could take part, area meetings were organised on formation (in Mexico, Quito and Araruama in 1978) and on education (in Araruama, Managua and Fusagasuga in Colombia).

As soon as RELAL was organised, it organised a second SELA session in 1980 in Araruama, led by Brother Michel Sauvage. CLAP gave its approval to a document entitled "The Charism of De La Salle in Latin America" which was produced as the result of the work of a great many people led by a team of organisers. The Catechetical Commission, established by CLAP in 1978, continued to function up till 1982 and during that time, under the direction of Brother Israel Nery, published six revues. In 1981, there took place in Sasaima (Colombia) a meeting on the Brothers' Mission, led by Brother Enrique Garcia. In 1982, there was a course on Communication for the Teaching Brother, given in Buenos Aires by Brother Telmo Meirone; there was a seminar organised in Colombia by Brother Miguel Dominguez for Vocation Promoters and Youth Movement Assessors; and Brother Fermin Gainza led a retreat in Guadalajara (Mexico) in preparation for final profession. In 1983, there was held in Lima (Peru) a meeting for Brothers responsible for the accompaniment of Brothers with temporary profession. It was led by Brother Jorge Bonilla. During the course of the same year there was a seminar in Conocoto (Ecuador) for Assessors responsible for the training of Lasallian lay people. It was led by Brother Hernando Seba. In 1984, a workshop was organised in Brasilia (Brazil) to train Directors of Communities, led by Brother Ernesto Fedon; and in Chaclacayo (Peru), there was a seminar on the Education of the Masses, led by Brother Noe Zevallos. In 1985, in preparation for the General Chapter, the study of the Ministry of the Brother was organised by Brother Enrique Garcia. In 1986, Brother

Fermin Gainza led a seminar in Caracas on Contemplation in the Life of the Brother. In 1987, seminars for group leaders in charge of young Lasallians were organised in Cordoba (Argentina), in Bucaramanga (Colombia) and in Mexico City (Mexico).

Apart from "El Carisma del Señor de La Salle en America Latina" ("The Charism of De La Salle in Latin America") and "Formacion, Educacion, Catequesis" (Formation, Education, Catechesis"), RELAL published also Brother Michel Sauvage's book "Preach the Gospel to the Poor", translated by Guillermo Dagnino with the help of Brother Bruno Alpago. Its other publications include "De la Manana a la Noche" ("From Morning till night") by Brother Alfredo Morales, and a translation of the Maillefer biography of the Founder. Among the 44 issues of the RELAL bulletin, there are some which are particularly interesting on account of the serious articles they contain: issues No 35 and 42 speak of the Education of the Masses; No 40 is about Contemplation in the life of the Brother; No 41, about Lasallian pastoral care of young people; No 44, about the Gospel Journey of religious life in Latin America, an article which was used as a basis for deciding on RELAL projects for 1988-1990.

4.2. Major difficulties stem from the actual size of the Region which extends from Tijuana (on the

Mexico - US border) to Temuco (the Chilean Community which is the furthest south in the Institute); as well as from the relatively modest financial resources of a Region in which the preferential option in favour of the poor is a matter of conscience for each and everyone.

4.3. The Latin American Hierarchy and the Latin American Conference of Religious insist on the need for an effective implementation of a preferential option for the poor. There has to be a profound conversion on the part of individuals and structures so that it can become possible to live like De La Salle. It will take a long time for us to achieve this aim fully and the results will be profound. It is likely to lead to a great increase in vocations, as has happened in those Latin American seminaries where the following of the poor Christ has been most radical.

4.4. The work of the Region is helped by the fact that there are two Portuguese-speaking Districts, while the rest are Spanish-speaking, and so we have no need of translators during meetings. The position taken by CELAM (Latin American Episcopal Council) at Medellin in 1968 and at Puebla in 1979 has stimulated the renewal of this Region which, as it happens, covers the same area as CELAM.

Brother Enrique Garcia Ahumada
Executive Secretary of RELAL

AREQUIPA (Peru): Brother Superior speaks at an official reception during his tour of the Latin American Region.



«LASALLIAN FAMILY IN LATIN AMERICA»

Opening remarks

1. It is premature to speak about the «Lasallian Family» as such. We are speaking about LASALLIAN GROUPS existing in the Region.

2. In presenting this subject, we shall follow the outline of Circular 423 (October 7, 1987).

Groups existing in the Region

A. In the majority of the Districts:

- Lay Teachers
- Lasallian Youth Movements
- Youth Moderators Group Leaders
- Parent Associations
- Lasallian Associations of Former Students
- Directive Councils of Activities (Brothers and Seculars)
- Student Councils
- Parents and Friends of the Brothers
- Scout Groups
- Affiliated Members and Benefactors of the Institute.

B. In some Districts:

- «Signum Fidei» (or Committed Teachers)
- Groups of Mothers who teach Catechism
- Groups of Students who teach Catechism
- Groups of Students who teach literacy
- «Saint-Benilde» Clubs
- Schools for Adults
- Prayer Groups
- Secular Institute, «Catechists Union».

What recognition do these groups enjoy?

The majority of these are endorsed by the District Councils

- Supported by the District Councils

- Led by some Brother Moderator or some District Committee appointed by the Brother Visitor

- Helped by the Brothers' community in which the Groups exist

- Taken into account by the Brother Visitor in the course of his visit.

Their most outstanding signs of vitality

- Their «Identification» with the Lasallian Community

- Their Lasallian mystique

- Their inspiration rooted in Lasallian spirituality and pedagogy

- Their awareness of participating in a Lasallian inspired movement

- Their willingness to render service and their sensitivity to social issues

- Their manifest desire for the continuing formation they need

- Their periodical meetings, encounters, and assemblies

- Lasallian vocations have resulted from among the students and teachers in these groups.

- Their interest shown in the processes followed by the Congregation since the 41st General Chapter

Apostolic commitment of these groups

Note: The amount of commitment and intensity depends upon the individual groups; but the places they exercise their mission can be pointed out:

- Within the Group itself

- Within the Lasallian school

- In youth groups

- Missions in poor areas, in rural areas and in areas inhabited by natives

- In the Parish Pastoral work

- In catechesis within and outside the school.

The activities of the Brothers with these groups concentrate on:

- helping them to develop

- helping them to run projects

- training them for the service of others

- guiding them in choice of commitments

- helping them in the assessment of their work

- celebrating with them their life and mission

What kind of formation do these groups receive? (How do they come to know the spirituality of the Founder?)

- Lasallian formation courses: modular courses, short courses, seminars, discernment assemblies
- Regular meetings of Lasallian lay teachers

Spiritual retreats for «Signum Fidei» and/or committed lay people

Youth formation meetings

Youth Easter celebration

Meetings for discerning vocations

Courses for preparing catechists

Local and/or national congresses of students, former students, parents, Lasallian associates

Local, District and/or national Congresses, Symposia or days devoted to Lasallian Pedagogy

Through books, magazines, bulletins, and leaflets which deal with the Founder and his spirituality.

Some more advanced members of these groups get copies of the Founder's Meditations, Bro. Saturnino Gallego's Life of the Founder, the «Lasalliana» magazine, and the Bulletins of the Institute, of the World Federation, and of the Signum Fidei.

The Videos on the life of the Founder and the General Chapter

The Message of the 41st General Chapter to the «Lasallian Family»

What does the Latin American Region (RELAL) offer to the Lasallian Family by way of leadership and inspiration?

The creation of CREL (Center of Lasallian Spiritual Renewal) which in the three years, 1988-90, will run four sessions for continuing formation of the Brothers in Lasallian spirituality and which will eventually be of benefit to our Associates.

There will be a Seminar-Workshop, in Quito, November 1989 for Brothers and lay people who work as Moderators and leaders of the Lasallian Family in the various Districts.

The running of a group of Brothers and seculars who make up a team doing research into Lasallian Spirituality. These in turn will spread these Lasallian ideas throughout Latin America.

The cooperation of a group of Brothers in translating from French into Spanish the writings of the Founder and about the Founder, so that they may be used in the continuing formation of Brothers and lay people in the field of Lasallian spirituality.

BOGOTA (Colombia): Brother Superior with a group of Lasallians.



ITALY

★ The Region began to exist officially when its provisional statutes were formally approved by the Superior General, Brother Pablo Basterrechea, on December 14th 1977.

A Regional Assembly is being planned with a view to revising the statutes and bringing them up to date in line with the new Rule, especially with regard to the role of the permanent representative or Regional Co-ordinator.

For the last few years, it has been the Italian Visitors' Conference (CIV) that has administered the Region.

★ Since the setting up of the Visitors' Conference, a certain number of common services have been established to deal with such areas as continuing formation, cooperation between District Commissions, publications, etc. Recently a Regional Secretariat has been established.

★ The Region consists of two Italian Districts: that of Rome and Turin.

★ Its sphere of influence extends to the whole of Italy and to the following two missionary areas: the Delegation of Ethiopia and the Orient District.

THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Up till now, the chairman of the Italian Visitors' Conference has held this position. In practice, the two Italian Visitors have taken turns in alternate years to fill the post.

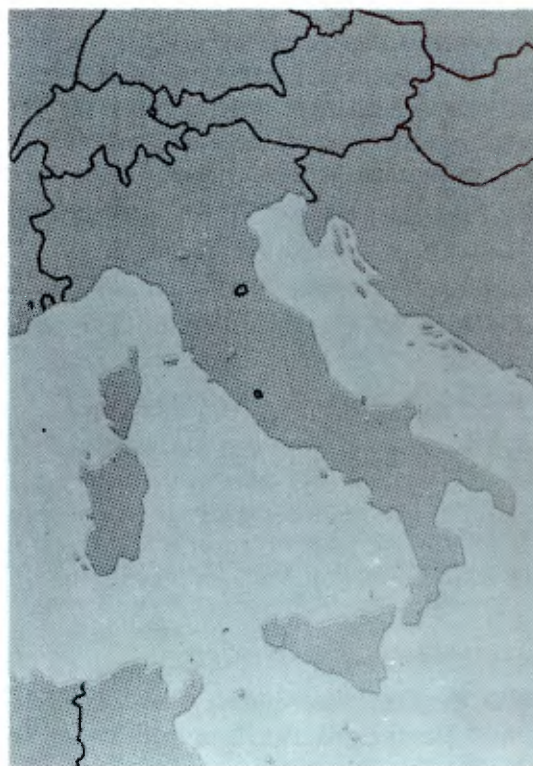
The role of the Regional Co-ordinator is to inspire and to coordinate.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES

a) *The Visitors' Conference*

★ The Italian Visitors' Conference normally meets every four months.

★ Following the 41st General Chapter, the Conference considered a variety of subjects and especially: the revision of the Regional statutes to bring them into line with the requirements of the new Rule; the Italian Lasallian Centre which aims to provide professional and spiritual refresher courses for Brothers and lay people; the missionary work of the Italian Brothers in Palestine; promoting the growth



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of the Lasallian Family (training sessions for leaders, building up Signum Fidei, courses for young Lasallians, etc.).

b) *The Regional Council*

At the present time, the Regional Council and the Italian Visitors' Conference are identical in composition and include the two Visitors and two Brothers from each of the Districts, preferably members of the District Council, appointed by the Visitors.

c) *The Regional Assembly*

★ The Regional Assembly is formed of the two District Councils working together.

★ It meets once a year.

★ During its August 1987 meeting, it considered especially the fears and the hopes of the Brothers faced with the present day situation, and the best way to meet the challenging problems caused by social, cultural and religious changes in Italy which the Brothers experience in their educational and apostolic work.

There are essentially four main areas for discussion and each area has its own priorities and proposals:

- fostering vocations;
- training lay people;
- the renewal of our establishments and their management;
- the formation of the Brothers.

★ At the present time the authority of the Regional Assembly extends only to the study of problems that arise and to the suggestion of possible solutions. It leaves the task of coordination and implementation to the Italian Visitors' Conference.

d) *Secretariats and Commissions*

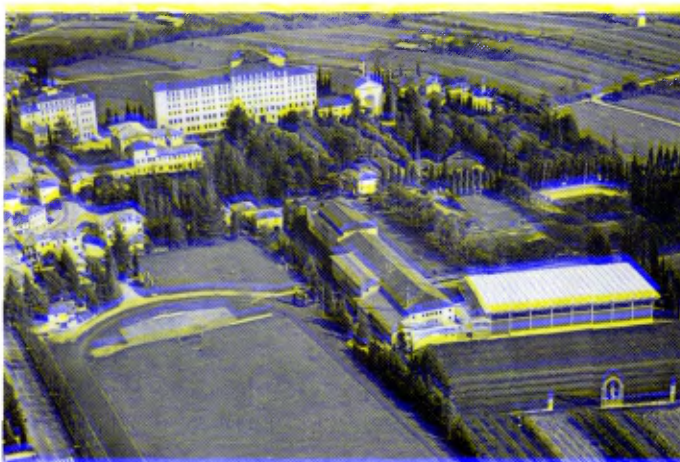
★ The Regional Secretariat was established recently, and Brother Mario Presciuttini was appointed to head it for two years.

Its function at present is to provide a link with the Generalate as well as for the various Regional bodies, and to be a channel of communication.

The specific nature of its work will be worked out in greater detail when the statutes are revised.

★ The work of Regional Commissions is done by District Commissions working closely with each other. Together they study common programmes and implement them.

PADERNO DEL GRAPPA (Italy):
Aerial view of the Istituti Filippin.



COMPLETED REGIONAL PROJECTS AND FUTURE PLANS

★ During the period which followed the 41st General Chapter there was a great deal of uncertainty as to what kind of form and structure the General Council had in mind for the Region. The result of this was a certain amount of stagnation.

The two Italian Districts now feel that they should waste no more time and should take things in hand with renewed energy to create a better defined Region.

★ The areas in which a need is felt for coordinated action and common services on a Regional level are as follows:

- the examination and analysis of new official socio-educational requirements,
- initial and continuing formation,
- educational refresher courses for the Brothers,
- catechesis and the pastoral care of young people,
- the training of lay teachers,
- the Lasallian Family,
- the missions,
- guidelines and future plans for administration and management.

★ The Region has a great advantage in that it shares a common language and culture, and there is a certain similarity in the situations that arise. The great disadvantage it suffers from is the decrease in the number of Brothers.

Brother Mario Presciuttini
Secretary

ROME:
La Salle School, built on a site next to the Generalate.



CANADA

Already, before 1966, the Canadian Assistency included the Districts of Montreal, Longueuil, Ottawa, Quebec, Trois Rivieres, Toronto and the missionary District of Douala (Cameroun). When he was able to do so, the auxiliary Visitor of Japan (a Montreal mission) would take part in Assistency meetings.

Since then, the District of Longueuil has joined that of Montreal; and that of Toronto, especially because of differences in language and educational organisation, has joined the USA Region. As for the District of Douala, it is now part of the Region of Africa.

In those days, there was already close cooperation between Districts in such areas as:

a) *Visitors and Formation personnel meetings.* Time was set aside for reflection, sharing of ideas about schemes, existing establishments; and there were also retreats.

b) *Initial formation.* The postulants, novices and scholastics of the Trois Rivieres District joined those of Quebec; while those of the Longueuil and Ottawa Districts went to Montreal. By about 1963 there was only one novitiate left and that was at Compton, in the Montreal District.

c) *Continuing formation.* The Canadian 100 Days was begun in 1948 and was open to all Canadian Districts of the time. It was headed for a long time by Brother Olympius Georges Tremblay.

d) *Missions.* Several Brothers from Quebec went to Japan to help the Montreal mission there; and several from Montreal went to help out the Quebec mission in Cameroun.

e) *Finance.* Around 1960, there existed a Regional Bursars' Committee. Later, an inter-District agreement made possible the construction and funding of a Canadian Second Novitiate at Ste. Angele. The board and lodging costs of postulants and scholastics at the College Marie Victorin (Montreal) and at the Campus Notre Dame de Foy (Quebec) were shared out equally between all the Canadian Districts.

After 1966, following the General Chapter, all the Canadian Districts joined together to form a Regional Chapter so as to prepare for the implementation of decisions made in Rome, and to study problems arising from local conditions. Several other Regional Chapters were held subsequently.



CANADA

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THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

He is a Visitor chosen by the Visitors' Conference. His first responsibility is to his own District. He is responsible also for communicating relevant information to the Districts of the Region and to the missionary Districts attached to them in one way or another. He keeps in close touch with everything that concerns the religious life, the life of the Institute and the needs of society, so as to be able to stimulate the thinking of his fellow Visitors and the Brothers of their Districts, and so inspire them to take appropriate measures to improve their apostolate in the Region. He is likewise a channel of information and communication between the Centre of the Institute and the Canadian Districts.

His term of office is not specified and depends on his availability. Recently, because of a pressing need in the Region, and in response to a request from the Visitors, he agreed to shoulder an additional responsibility. There followed the appointment of an assistant to help him in the running of the Region.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES

The Visitors' Conference meets 6 or 8 times a year, sometimes for two or three days.

The Bursars' Committee meets 5 or 6 times a year and when an urgent need arises.

With a view to promoting a greater degree of subsidiarity and real efficiency, the Visitors' Conference has set up the Conference of Canadian French-speaking Districts, composed of Visitors, auxiliary Visitors where they exist, and two members from each of the District Councils. This Conference, which has drawn up for itself clear and relevant terms of reference, meets at least twice a year and helps to set up ad hoc committees to deal with specific problems that crop up. This use of ad hoc committees makes it possible for more Brothers to help over a limited period of time. This approach has been very successful.

During the course of years, the Visitors' Conference has revised and improved its organisation with the help of the CCFD. It has set up the Vocations Committee, the Committee for the pastoral care of young people, and a Formation Committee (initial and continuing). New committees are formed as the need arises: after considering the question carefully, they submit to the Visitors the answers they think appropriate.

The Visitors' Conference has an Executive Secretary who keeps in touch with the various bodies that are likely to have to implement the decisions that are taken.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

More than two years ago, the idea of setting up a private school was mooted. A committee was formed and it set about studying its feasibility, the negotiations involved, premises and personnel, the ethos of such a school and whether it could ever get off the ground. The school was opened in 1987. It is a Lasallian school with all that that implies: Brothers working with lay people, a school that is Christian and job-orientated, and which helps those who are worse-off, etc. The Quebec Ministry of Education gave its support to this venture and financed it in part.

There has been collaboration also in the organisation and attendance at District retreats. Brothers from Spain, France and Mexico have been invited to lead joint District retreats.

Many Brothers have taken part in a continuing formation session on the Founder and the first Brothers with a view to renewing their enthusiasm and commitment to working with young people. The session was led by Brother Patrice Marey. The second part of the session lasting four days was given over to an examination of all kinds of new information (biological, psychological, sociological, spiritual) which could have an effect on our commitment to the service of the Church and of society. The fruits of this session are already very much in evidence. Further sessions of a similar kind are planned for 1989.

There was another session, on the Bible this time, led by Brother Theophile Penndu who dealt mostly with the miracles of Jesus. All who took part were impressed by his faith and dynamic approach.

Help for missionary Districts, either financial or in the form of personnel, has increased in spite of our own considerable needs. This has been the case also as regards the Generalate, where there are five Canadian Brothers working, as well as a variety of Districts in the Institute which have needed help.

Ste. Angele de Laval (Canada): Mont Benilde Secondary School.



St. Paul de Varennes College, Canada: pastoral care.



PREACHING THE GOSPEL: PASTORAL CARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

PASTORAL CARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL

There are not many Brothers working in State schools, although there are still a few. One cannot deny their energy or commitment to proclaim the name of the Lord Jesus. However, as far as we are concerned, we do not set much store by these schools as there is hardly any chance at all for a community to exert any kind of influence. In these circumstances, our commitment goes unnoticed.

As far as private schools are concerned, we would say that if all they want is to copy State schools, it is not worth the trouble. Canadian Brothers feel that private schools are a means of enabling them to play a more visible role in the Church and among ordinary people. What is more, we believe that an educational establishment such as this can enable us to be true pastors, so long as the school:

- accepts young people for what they are;
- explicitly preaches the faith;
- involves all its staff;
- is large enough to enable it to carry out its aims;
- is clearly Lasallian;
- offers a challenge to its pupils as well as to its adult staff;
- arouses the interest of the pupils' parents;
- assesses at regular intervals whether it is faithful or not to its educational aims, and sends in regular reports to the District responsible for it;
- shows special concern for pupils who have difficulties;
- does away completely with the narrow and suffocating specialisation typical of the all-in monster schools of Québec;
- promotes religious life among the pupils;
- is also a boarding school with one kind of approach for pupils in form 1,2 and 3 of the secondary school, and another for forms 4 and 5. For these older boys there should be a clear emphasis on vocational training. The boarding department would have a very important part to play in the overall aims of the school;
- makes sure that a vast majority of its teachers and of those concerned with the running of the school are sympathetic with the ideals of the Brothers;

— ensures that there is a follow-up for pupils once they leave school. (See document dealing with priorities).

PASTORAL CARE OUTSIDE OF SCHOOLS

Centres exist where it is possible to teach and offer help with pastoral and social work, and where the need for such involvement is growing. It is important we should be seen among the refuse of society. It is a sign of the Church's interest in the down and outs.

Be that as it may, there are still very few communities in the Districts which are committed to this kind of work. It is primarily individual Brothers who have undertaken it. What has happened, in fact, is that a number of religious communities, male and female, and some lay people have set up projects together; This is the case in:

Le Baluchon, Revedec, L'Escale Notre-Dame, On the other hand Le Transit and Le Tremplin are an exception, as both projects are run by a community of Brothers. One concentrates on pupils playing truant, the other on anybody in urgent need of help.

Other centres have specialised in meeting the spiritual needs of young people. This is the case of the Villa des Jeunes and the Camp Notre-Dame-de-la-Rouge.

Lastly, there are more than 100 young people who get together in what we call Rond-Point Communities. Spiritual life in these revolves around 3 basic notions: Jesus Christ, community and commitment. Not many Brothers get involved with these groups. They are a bit too frightening. Young people and their needs are so much to the fore that adult organisers are not too sure where to put themselves.

That, then, is a general outline of the areas in which Brothers are involved in pastoral care. Their work certainly needs to be examined. In practice, it reaches few young people, and this has been going on for more than 20 years.

One has to admit that the French Canadian Districts belong to the Institute "club" of ageing Districts. In this context, we have to mention, without any attempt at originality, that growing old involves a withdrawal, even if this withdrawal is to a good community life. There are two questions that have to be faced:

★ To make plans is difficult; to carry them out is even more so.

★ *And then there is the question of young people. They are both witnesses and victims of a crisis of faith. They live in a totally secular world in our schools, and in an ambivalent one. The Gospel gets a mention but it has no message. There is belief and yet there isn't. The very words have lost their meaning: Gospel, Church, faith...are no longer new words: they are worn out, trivialised.*

The cultural background has changed, but we have not to any significant extent. This is another question we have to face. Can we in any meaningful way preach the Gospel to the young people who belong to this new culture? Can we invent some new way of making Christ appear attractive to them?

I have no answers to these questions and even less a magic formula. All I can do is to leave you a few thoughts resulting from our first attempts at coming to grips with our situation. We have taken a long time to realise what was happening. Some still hope to be able to turn the clock back.

If we want our work to mean anything at all to the young people around us, we shall have to:

★ *re-educate ourselves so as to be able to offer a new education to our young people. For me, the call to personal conversion takes on its full meaning in this context. Following in the steps of De La Salle who gave up his position as canon, his noble rank, his family, his wealth; who left behind the world he belonged to to live with the poor and the young, we too must take decisions that can wait no longer, and then act upon them.*

★ *Put an end as quickly as possible to doing things piecemeal, draw up an overall plan which will make it possible once again to act "together and by association."*

We feel that we are called to live something different, but the steps we need to take seem difficult. They entail risks that are frightening.

We have to reach a point when we take our courage in both hands, face facts, and think of creative solutions. We need to have the political courage to challenge young people for the right reasons, but, it must be admitted, we find it very difficult to discover what the right reasons are in the society around us.

★ *Finally, it will become possible for us to preach Christ's word to our young people, only if we remember that our first and most important source of inspiration and zeal is the Holy Spirit, prayer, contemplation, conversion to the mystery of Christ Crucified who has been forgotten too long now.*

Well, that is where I think there are signs of hope for a new evangelisation of the young people entrusted to us by God.

PASTORAL CARE - FOSTERING VOCATIONS

This is an aspect of pastoral care we are concerned about. A lot has been done. Some Brothers are involved full-time, others give of their time after a day's work:

- *Summer camps,*
- *small Gospel discussion groups,*
- *week-ends to talk about vocations,*
- *week-ends for assessing vocations,*
- *following up individuals,*
- *houses for students seeking their vocation,*
- *a school (Mont-Bénilde) where the vocation to the religious life is suggested to young people.*

We are still waiting for results!

The question of fostering vocations has, for several Brothers, led to a lot of hard thinking as well as deep frustration: on the one hand, there are the pressing appeals of the Pope, the last General Chapter, the General Council; on the other, the hard facts of life as it is lived around us.

As we examine our situation we realise more and more clearly how few Brothers there are who are able to undertake this work. There is very little common ground between the young people of today and ourselves and the way we face up to the problems they have as a result of this new culture. It is all very well to realise this, but actually to seek conversion and want to come to grips with all the real live details of this new culture is quite another matter. What is really frightening is the prospect of facing up honestly to the kind of life young people lead, trying to understand it, and then working out some new way of presenting as attractive the ideals of a Brother's life.

There is still more thinking to be done, and it must lead us to take action and not produce more documents. There are already too many documents!

Our greatest need is for Brothers who are clearly seen to be such, who will have a clearly defined educational mission, which they will pursue within a community and with great energy and conviction.

We need to form communities able to provide regular unlimited contact with young people, bearing in mind that contact with a community is real only when it is based on this regular coming together, and stems from clearly discernable schemes.

We need to organise, working very closely with young people, who can identify much more closely with the dynamics of a project (the mission) than with the running of an establishment, some means of providing temporary commitment.

Finally, we need to deepen our understanding, through prayer and action, of what we mean by "the evangelisation of culture" and what Christ means for the young person of today.

CONCLUSION

In his letter of May 27th 1988, Brother Genaro, Vicar General gave the following summary of the meeting of Regional Co-ordinators. It can perhaps serve as a conclusion for the material contained in this issue.

In his opening address, Brother Superior stressed that there were three things we needed to do at the outset if we were to make the meeting a success:

1. Clarify our own ideas on what we understood a Region to be.
2. Study thoroughly the potential advantages of regionalisation for our own lives and our mission in the Church.
3. Strengthen our commitment to work for the development of our Regions.

As Brother Superior said in his closing address, we are convinced there was good reason to rejoice

at the close of the meeting because of:

- the high level of participation by each of its members, and the great openness shown during exchanges of views;
- the great wealth of all the Regions, each with its own emphases, which came to light;
- the great potential for development in each of the Regions;
- the real integration of the Institute in society, and the overwhelming importance of its mission in it;
- the transformation and progress noticeable in Districts and Regions;
- the astonishing extent to which lay people shared in our mission;
- the fact that the name of DE LA SALLE is becoming more and more known throughout the Institute and in each Region.

Back cover:

When Pope John Paul visits Madagascar and Reunion in March/April 1989, he will beatify Brother Scubilion (Jean Bernard Rousseau), who worked so tirelessly for the education and freedom of the slaves on the island of Reunion. The painting by Mario Caffaro Rore evokes Brother Scubilion's social and religious contribution to Reunion.

ROME: Aerial view of the Generalate. It is just under two miles from the Vatican as the crow flies. Its premises are made available for General Chapters, spiritual renewal sessions, as well as for a variety of refresher courses and business meetings.



