

- both however are different forms of discipleship. The latter are centrifugal (go, He sent them), the former are centre-seeking (come, they remained with Him). The call to become a member of the small group has as its objective to symbolise how the whole People is accepted into the Kingdom, by means of communion with Jesus. The intense experience of the Kingdom, as a great treasure, by the small group, involves their life so much, that they leave everything (nets, father, family, career, property); they go to a place lacking comfort, far from the security of this world, a place in creation without ordinary means, remote from everywhere (Hb 13,12-13); a place of the cross, which is the ultimate reward for the service of others. The answer to this call is given when fear is conquered, when one renounces every worldly preoccupation and security, and has complete trust. Now it is within the group which has made this choice and which represents in itself the totality of the people, that consecrated life, and not only the ordained ministry, has found its fundamental inspiration, so that it is understood as the apostolic life. In this sense ordained ministers and *christifideles laici religiosi* feel themselves called to a common life style: the *apostolic life*. This explains why from practically the very origins of institutionalised monastic life, and throughout the whole history of consecrated life, groups of presbyters have joined and continue to join it.

#### **Imbalance in defining the identity of the forms of life in the church**

25. The emergence of the minority charism of consecrated life in each of its principal forms, forced Church thinkers to classify the remaining ecclesial group in relation to it. Thus for example the early Fathers related it to monasticism (John Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine), the great medieval theologians to monasticism and the mendicant orders (Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure), and the renaissance theologians to all forms of religious life, including those emerging at the time (Francisco Suárez, Bellarmine). When it came to defining the distinctive characteristics of consecrated life, they did not always strike an adequate balance. When secular lay life was understood and approached as a deficient form of Christian existence, consecrated life was considered as the best and most perfect form of life. The rediscovery of the greatness of the special vocation and mission of the secular laity in the Church and of the forms of secular life - following on Vatican II - implied the need for a theological re-definition of consecrated life; or better, a new re-definition of both, within their *mutua relatio*. It is unjust and even offensive to explain the identity of the different forms of ecclesial life by means of comparisons, in which consecrated life always remains above the others, more perfect, following Christ more closely, giving oneself totally... It is only in the adequate assessment of every form of ecclesial life and their correlation, that it is possible adequately to explain the identity of any of them. The synod on consecrated life acquires meaning within this perspective; it is approaching consecrated life after the three previous synods have been devoted to the ministerial priesthood, (16) the laity (17) and formation for the ordained ministry. (18) The emergence of this new awareness of the secular lay vocation and its spiritual and missionary possibilities, forces us also to modify our theological understanding of consecrated life. This means that the definition of the identity of the consecrated life becomes correlative to the identity of

common secular Christian life and to all its forms, and yet at the same time, becomes independent of them all. What in fact each form of life is existentially, will result in a re-definition of all the others. The forms of Christian existence are being progressively identified as they are related to one another, dialectically and through dialogue. Therefore each form of life is correlative to the others, and, with that relation in mind, it is defined.

#### **Full secularity and reduced secularity**

26. Consecrated life belongs to those forms of Christian life which exist in the Church. These are the special forms in which, under the action of the Spirit and the guidance of the Church, each person individualises his fundamental vocation as *christifidelis*. It is God the Father who makes a special call, a vocation, to each one; and the Spirit gives to each believer a charism, with the gifts needed to follow it: He endows each person with a special way of being and acting.

27. *Secularity*, which characterises the vocation and charism of the secular lay life, is proper to all members of the human community, and therefore also to the members of institutes of consecrated life. The concept of secularity is determined by the process of secularisation, proper to modern existence. This became powerful at the Renaissance and continued its predominance during the Enlightenment. The process of secularisation proclaims the emancipation and autonomy of culture, science, economics, politics, art, and society from the influence of religion, tradition and dogma. This emancipation has had as its objective to make indefinite progress, basing itself on limitless confidence in the ability of experimental reason and on the disappearance of the control over science, thought and the organisation of society, which clerics and religious used to monopolise. The result of all this has been a de-clericalisation, de-confessionalism, de-sacralisation and de-axiologisation of society and the building of a road without barriers leading to progress. Vatican Council II recognised the fundamental validity of the process of secularisation found in modern existence, when it referred to a process of liberty-liberation. Therefore, it accepted this form of Christian existence in secularity and this form of exercising Christian mission itself in security, without the direction of clerics and the overall supervision of religion.

28. Nevertheless, the process of secularisation in modern times clashes with quite a number of philosophies showing a desire on the part of many for a post-modern existence. Secularity, understood within the context of modernity, has deprived the world of too much of its imagery (emptying it of the religious content gained from human experience), of its concept of time (taking away from history its protology, eschatology and utopias), and has given the automaton a privileged place over the human person and over nature (ruining ecology, and making the human person only second in the processes of production). Today a dynamic post-modern secularity, open to transcendence, is being sought. A secularity which requires religions: a secularity based on faith in God, and which has important spiritual and moral consequences: it leads to a rejection of the values that form part of the normal and usual human development. It is above all a secularity which yearns for Christianity.

29. Christian secularity considers itself as autonomous, but not independent of God. It is a secularity based above all on faith in Jesus Christ. It is a secularity of those who have made an alliance with Him by means of the faith sealed in Baptism. It is the secularity of his followers and of those consecrated by his Spirit. It is affected by conscience and the reality of Redemption. This is to say, it is not naive with respect to the possibilities of nature and history, for it realises that infection exists, which sin has produced and which needs redemption.

30. This secularity belongs to all believers. It is the atmosphere in which the existence of each of us evolves, whether we be lay seculars, consecrated or ordained ministers. However, it is seculars who live a full secularity, with the proviso that they do not make the process of secularisation absolute or think that modernity eliminates the idea of transcendence. This full secularity shows that the radical following of Christ is not at odds with a vital commitment to culture, science, economics, politics, art, work, society; it indicates that the Gospel of the Kingdom is not in opposition to the idea of being active in a dynamic and creative modernism. On the contrary, the Gospel of the Kingdom encourages believers to find in the process of humanisation the route to peace, justice, love, truth, defence of life, and human dignity, fraternity, protection of nature. Jesus does not ask his followers to renounce property, marriage, liberty. On the contrary he asks them to find in these things the original plan of God the Father: In the beginning it was not so... Security is a state of life in constant movement. It demands that decisions be constantly made in the family, economic and professional setting.

31. Whilst the different forms of secular Christian life incarnate the normal creative forms of the historical way of living the faith, the forms of consecrated life, such as those seen especially in its monastic origins, try to be a reminder of the original plan of God, as expressed in the first pages of Genesis, and to be a prophetic voice announcing the fulfilment of eschatology. Since the integrity and cosmic unity in which God planned the human person has been upset and hindered by sin, consecrated life, moved by the Spirit, feels called to represent, as Jesus did, in this fallen world, those aspects of the original plan of God which sin has obscured. It therefore renounces those goods which are not essential. Virginal celibacy, poverty and the service of obedience are thus transformed into prophetic reminders of a creative and eschatological plan, so often contradicted, and still being contradicted in human history. In this way, the prophetic forms of consecrated life attempt to draw the balance between the historical existence of secular believers and the memory of their origin and purpose.

32. The charism of consecrated life is characterised by its being a charism which consecrates and absorbs all the existence of the one who has received it, and places him in a position of social abnormality in a life of evangelical mission, through celibacy, poverty, obedience, community. This charism places the christifidelis in a reduced form of secularity. The Church itself protects and demands it, so that this charism can thus exercise its prophetic and symbolic function in the Church.



Chapter dais during a serious discussion.  
Right: Brother Aldhelm Heumann, electrical installations technician, checking his control panel.

### An existential parable among the People of God

33. In the life and mission of the Church, consecrated life exercises a function of symbol, as the Council recognised (LG 44): a symbol within a Church which is itself a symbol in its relations with the world. This form of life becomes more necessary where Christian existence is most affected by the disintegration and corruption produced by sin, where there are serious deviations from the following of Jesus. Some of the early Fathers understood monastic life as a holy bypass which reminds the Church to join the straight road to God. Consecrated life has meaning where exaggerated signs of the original order or of the eschatological order are necessary. It is only on account of sin that celibate virginity, poverty and obedience acquired characteristics of renunciation.

34. Consecrated life emerges as an existential parable, told by the Holy Spirit in the Church cycle. By means of this parable, the Spirit reminds us of existential actions of Jesus (his mercy towards sinners, how He went out to the poor and marginalised, his continuous prayer, his evangelising activity, his miracles for the sick, the possessed), it recalls some of his teaching (charity, hospitality, pardon), it represents some of the mysteries of his existence (his birth, life at Nazareth, Passion, Death, Resurrection). Each institute of consecrated life brings out, exaggerates charismatically, some aspect of the Mystery of Our Lord, and becomes a living memorial of Our Lord in the Church. In a special manner, all forms of consecrated life re-enact the celibacy of Jesus for the Kingdom, his option for the poor, his absolute dependence on the will of God the Father, his style of community. Therefore the members of consecrated life are symbols and memorials of Our Lord, more by their style of life than by their activities or undertakings. Nevertheless, the activities and institutions of the consecrated life also come under the heading of symbol. They also must have meaning. They are activities and institutions, through which small miracles of the Kingdom are

worked; they are transforming and significant actions. Consecrated life must not renounce its efficacy; but its efficacy is symbolic.

35. The symbolic function of consecrated life does not presuppose a special privilege, nor is it transformed into a superior status. It is rather a question of a distinct function for a minority and a subsidiarity. The Church does not exist for consecrated life, but the latter exists for the former. Just as the telling of parables and miracles is secondary and subordinate in the text of the Gospel, so is consecrated life in the text of the Church.

### Brothers, as *christifideles laici consecrati*

36. You Brothers, as lay and consecrated *christifideles*, form a minute minority in comparison with the *christifideles laici saeculares*. Obviously you are called to the same mission as they (for in the Church there is unity of mission, AA,2), but not to the same form of mission. The laici are present in the mission of the Kingdom and of the Church under the form of incarnation shown in its human values; you in a prophetic, contrasting and abnormal form. Your vocation is lay-Christian, but not fully secular. Lay religious life cannot therefore be placed in the setting of full secularity. But, what does that statement imply?

37. You Brothers form in the Church a liminal group, which means an alternative group, separated by style of life and ministry from the normal structures of society. You form a liminal group in your style of life: a style of life lived in a celibate community, in option for the poor and in permanent discernment in the search for the will of God. When life is lived in this way, in all its radicalism, it is distinct and somewhat distant from society. This is our prophetic role as religious. It is our way of being a symbol of the Kingdom. To be and remain a liminal group, it is necessary to have great personal and community spirituality.

38. Consecrated life functions as such only if it is sustained by a special kind of spirituality. This spirituality is the charismatic dynamism of its origins, which takes hold of the whole being and actions of the members of the Institute. The charismatic figure of the Founder becomes present in the person of the Brothers, who in addition to being profoundly identified with him, embody the way of making his charism real in the present moment and in the places where it should take root. It is necessary to bring the charism up to date. To achieve that, a new prophecy is necessary; at times a new foundation (which does not mean re-creating the institute out of nothing, but giving birth to it in a new context).

39. Your reason for existence is not the putting into operation of the instrumentality of the Church, nor of supplementing all the *christifideles saeculares* in all that they give to secularity. Yours is a restricted secularity, one marked down for a utopia which has not yet come about. The Brothers of the Christian Schools were not founded to solve educational problems, but for something more. You did not originate as an effective instrument for that purpose, but as a symbol to inspire and encourage society and the Church to solve its own educational problems, with the view to the Kingdom of God. The verbs which characterise the mission of *christifideles*

*consecrati* are not so much verbs of instrumentality (to do, to educate, to cure) as symbolic verbs (to mean, to inspire, to allude, to manifest, to stimulate, to transcend). To have a symbolic function among the People of God and society, in the setting of education, is a fascinating task. It is relatively easy for those who have received the charism.

40. To exercise a symbolic function in the present world, with all its lack of balance, conflicts and perspectives, is a complex task which requires discernment and boldness. Discernment in order to know where, when and how. Boldness to overcome the historical conditioning which we all carry around like a deadweight, in our persons and in our institutions. To exercise a symbolic function is not a question of numbers, but of quality. At the same time, religious institutions recognise that the sign of the Kingdom of God is mostly seen where there is poverty, marginalisation and de-humanisation. The option for the poorest, to the least, makes the function of consecrated life significant.

## CONCLUSION

Brothers Capitulants, your Superior General has reminded you of the words of Paul in Romans 12,1-2: Do not take on the ways of this world; on the contrary, be TRANSFORMED. You are taking part in an admirable process of *transformation*. The secular experience of your Institute and the highly qualified number of Brothers coming from so many countries of the world, and who form your Institute, means that many people in the Church are watching your General Chapter very closely. Be pioneers in the process of transformation which the lay consecrated life of men and women so much needs. We are witnessing a remarkable cultural change. The Reign of God is arriving with a different appearance. Let us know how to enter that Kingdom through the door which the future is opening for us. I thank you very much for your invitation. May the Spirit accompany you to the end.

## NOTES

1. John Johnston, *Transformation; Reflections on our future*, Jan. 1, 1993, p. 8.
2. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
3. "Perhaps never before in our history have Brothers manifested towards St. John Baptist de La Salle the degree of interest, respect, and love that we manifest today". Brother John Johnston, *Transformation*, p. 8.
4. Since Vatican Council II, the post-council magisterium, especially of John Paul II, has pointed out the privileged theological category of consecration, as an explicit category of religious life (a term which "consecrated life" has replaced). This category appears in the most decisive sections of LG and PC. (LG 44, 46; PC 1.5.11). In LG 44.1 and PC 5.1 consecration is placed in immediate relationship with the consecration of baptism. The passive formulation of LG 44.1 (*et divino obsequio intimius consecratur*) means –according to the clarification given by the council's theological commission– that here, passive consecration is meant as "an action of God".

On the other hand, in PC 5.1 the "consecratio" means the giving of himself by the religious to God. It is debated however whether this consecration is added to baptismal consecration. A. de Bonhome (*Esne consecratio per consilia nova consecratio? Sententiae et argumenta*, in PRMCL 67 (1978), 373-390) has emphasised that LG 44.1 and PC 5.1 are inspired probably by the discourse *Magno gaudio* of Paul VI (23.5.1964) where we find: "ita fit, ut professio votorum evangelicorum adiugatur consecratione, quae propria est baptismatis, et hanc, quasi quaedam consecratio peculiaris complectitur, eo quod Christifidelis se Deo penitus committit ac devovet, totam vitam suam efficiens eius unius famularum" (AAS 56 (1964), 567). The council did not want to say whether there was question of a new consecration; but the apostolic exhortation of John Paul II, *Redemptionis donum*, n. 7, does so, but here "consecratio" is not understood as an act of God, but as a giving of oneself to God; the action of God is called vocation (RD 3-6) or election or choosing (RD, 8). According to the document of SCRIS "essential elements" the category of "consecratio religiosa" becomes a central element.

5. John Johnston, op. cit., p. 19.

6. The new code of Canon Law, in book II, on the People of God argues as follows: it first speaks of all the "fideles" (cc. 208-223), then it speaks of "fideles laici" (cc. 224-231) and finally of the "fideles clerici" or "ministri sacri" (cc. 232-293).

7. Cf. LG, 10-11.

8. Cf. K. Delahaye, *Ecclesia Mater* in the writings of the Fathers of the first three centuries, Du Cerf, Paris, 1964.

9. The word "carisma" which appeared in the draft of the New Canon Law (cc. 580, 590 § 3, 631 § 1, 708, 716 § 1, 717 § 3, 722 § 1-2) was left out in the revised draft of 1982. Nevertheless in the Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges* with which the Pope promulgated the Code, he said: "It appears quite clear that the Code does not in any way contain as its finality or objective, to take the place of faith, grace, charisms and especially charity, in the life of the Church or of Faithful Christians. On the contrary, its end is rather to create such order in ecclesial society that, by giving primacy to faith, grace and charisms, it will facilitate at the same time its organic evolution in life and ecclesial society, as well as of each one of the persons who belong to it... Even though it is impossible to translate exactly into canonical language, the image given of the Church as seen in the doctrine of the Council, nevertheless the code must always find its principal point of reference in this image, whose outlines it must reflect in itself as far as possible, according to its own nature." *Code of Canon Law*, Madrid edition, BAC, 1983.

10. Melchor Cano had this to say: "Spiritum veritatis ad corpus primum Ecclesiae referimus" *De Locis Theologicis*, Padua, 1734, p. 121A.

11. Cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 129.

12. Hippolytus of Rome: *La tradition apostolique*, ed. B. Botte, Paris, 1946, p. 26-27. According to Cyprian of Carthage, the bishop was elected *plebe praesente*, by the vote of the whole assembly (*universae fraternitatis suffragio*) and after hearing the opinion of the bishops there present (*de episcoporum iudicio*). The fraternal assembly of the people and of the clergy (*fraternitas*) judged the qualities of the elected person, then a vote was taken. The bishops decided and consecrated. *Letter 67*, 5, ed. G. Hartel, in CSEL 2, p. 739.

13. J. A. Estrada Díaz, *The Identity of the Laity*, Ecclesiological Essay, Pauline Press, Madrid, 1990, p. 8.

14. In prehistoric societies there were wise men and holy persons who had an important role in the spiritual life of the people. Among them were the shamans, numinous, religious personae among tribal peoples, in contact with the sacred and having powers of healing. Evident in Hinduism from its origins is a strong orientation towards monasticism, which is crystallised in the figure of the *Sannyasi* (a monk living either alone, or in community -ashram-, or in a monastery -matha-). There were also ascetic women known as *sannayasini*. Buddhism arose as a monastic religion. Buddha was a monk, and he handed down to his followers a monastic system, taken fundamentally from Hindu *Sannyasi*. The three great virtues of the Buddhism monk were non-violence, chastity and poverty. A little after the rise of Islam there appeared *suffism*, in the 8th Century, which acted as a counter-cultural force. Later, fraternities were organised, today called orders (*tariqahs*: followers of the road). We also know of the presence of the monastic movement in Judaism, the Therapeutics ("healers") and the Essenes, the Righteous (recabites) and the Nazarenes. In the "new religions" of our time, there are groups who are in opposition to this world, like the ISKON (The Krishna conscience), others who are all in favour of the world, like the scientologists, and those who fit in with the world, like the pentecostals and charismatics. Many of these groups take on a monastic/consecrated religious orientation.

15. *Liminality* is an anthropomorphic concept which is much in vogue these days. The anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep coined the term "liminality" to designate the periodical separation of a person from his family, such as happens for example in the rites of passage. It has recently been used by Edith Turner, and has given rise to a completely new meaning to describe the characteristics of small groups and communities in their relationship and interactions with the great mass of society. "Liminality may be described as an ambiguous, sacred, social state in which a person or group of persons is separated for a time from the normal structure of society. ..." Diarmuid Ó Murchu, *Religious Life: a Prophetic Vision*, Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1991, p. 36.

16. *De sacerdotio ministeriali et de Iustitia in mundo*, 1971.

17. *Christifideles laici*.

18. *Pastores dabo vobis*.

## INTERNAL ORGANISATION AND UNFOLDING OF THE CHAPTER

### 9. CHAPTER CHRONICLE

#### 1. The Capitulants arrive.

Four delegates arrived as early as the 1st April, then as the opening date approached the trickle became a stream: 7 arrived on the 2nd, 39 on the 3rd and 51 on the 4th April, and were quickly housed in the CIL and Lasallianum blocks. They seemed pleased to be so amply briefed by the documentation they found in their rooms, including information on how to get around Rome.

Five delegates could not arrive on time, some were delayed a little, others had more lengthy battles with bureaucracy.

#### 2. 5th to 11th April: phase one.

##### ● First day.

##### – Official opening of the Chapter.

The official opening of the 42nd General Chapter took place at 16.00 on Monday 5th April 1993.

There were present in the Aula Magna (the Great Hall) 127 Capitulants. The Superior General from 1956 to 1966, Brother Nicet Joseph (Pierre Loubet), now 95 years old, asked to be excused attendance.

Brother Superior General, John Johnston, intoned the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, then having read in French the official statement, the Chapter had definitely begun.

As the Secretary read out their names, each Capitulant came forward to sign the register.

On the suggestion of Brother Superior, Brother Edgard Hengemüle took over as provisional moderator, and Brother Benet Conroy, as provisional secretary.

Next, the President of the Preparatory Commission, Brother Paul Grass, read his report, after which the work scheme proposed by the commission for the first phase was accepted, as was the presence next week of lay consultants for a fortnight.

The two years' work of the Preparatory Commission was much appreciated by the assembly and they showed it by their applause.

Brother Superior then read a letter from Brother Maurice Trieu, Visitor of Vietnam, who was gravely ill: he offered his sufferings for the Chapter.

A Hail Mary ended the proceedings.

##### – The Chapter's opening Mass.

The opening Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Martínez Somalo, Prefect of the Congregation of Religious Institutes and Societies of Consecrated Life, and whom the Pope the previous day had named "Cardinal Camerlengo".

The entry procession, beginning in the foyer, was led by the Councillors carrying the Mass offerings. In his homily, repro-

Brother Superior General  
with Brother Maurice Lapointe, Chapter Coordinator.





Generalate, Rome, setting for the 42nd General Chapter.

duced in these pages, the Cardinal spoke of the mission God had given us; he especially mentioned the Shared Mission.

– **Buffet supper for everyone in the Generalate.**

This walk-about supper was to allow the Capitulants to get to know the Brothers of the Generalate staff and vice versa, and it ended the simple yet solemn proceedings of the first day.

● **Talks to the Capitulants.**

Talks by two experts were given on Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, 6th and 7th April; they were followed by group discussion and feedback.

On the 6th, Father Michael Amaladoss, an SJ General Councillor from India, gave a talk on "The World and the Church of today and tomorrow; setting for our our educational and evangelising Mission".

Next day's speaker was Father Cristo Rey García Paredes, a Spanish Claretian, Director of the Institute for Religious Life, Madrid. His subject was: "Mission of the Religious Apostle in the Church and in the World of today: Lay Religious Institutes for Men".

Two groups for each of the three languages, with chairman and reporter, then discussed the talks.

On Wednesday afternoon, 7th April, in a plenary session there were reports back on the talks from the groups, with illuminating comments by the speakers.

● **Brother Superior General's Report.**

Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday were given over to the Superior's Report.

The text was already in the hands of the Capitulants when at 09.00 on Wednesday, 8th April, the Superior presented his report. The second part of the morning was spent on personal study of the report, then in the afternoon Regions discussed it together and prepared questions on it.

Good Friday, 9th April, was a day of reflection and prayer, the Capitulants having available the 619 notes sent to the Chapter, all translated into the other two languages from Spanish, French and English. They were grouped thus:

1. Community Life.
2. Formation.
3. Mission by Association.
4. Priesthood.
5. Life of prayer and Consecration.
6. Youth ministry.
7. Pastoral ministry of Vocations.
8. The Rule.
9. Interdependence and Government of the Institute.
10. Other subjects.

Holy Saturday, 10th April, a plenary session took place at which the General Councillors answered the 120 questions posed on the Superior's report:

The task of answering was divided as follows:

1. Brother Genaro Sáenz de Ugarte: Vision of the Institute (present situation, conversion, identity, the Institute and the future)
2. Brother Gerard Rummery: Government and animation of the Institute.
3. Brother Pierre Josse: Community life, Directors; older Brothers; Life of prayer.
4. Brother Martin Corral: Shared Mission as Ministry.
5. Brother Vincent Rabemahafaly: Missionary commitment; Secoli; Sharing Fund, etc.
6. Brother Genaro Sáenz de Ugarte: Lasallian Family.
7. Brother Joseph Hendron: Formation; CIL; Guide for Formation; Care of young brothers; specific vows.

The Councillors were then each in turn invited to share their thoughts on their work and the difficulties and joys encountered in it.

These reflections as well as the Superior's report received long applause.

On Saturday afternoon language groups gathered to suggest names for officers of the second phase of the Chapter.

The 11th April was Easter Sunday, a holiday, by which time several of the consultants were in Rome, ready to start work the following Monday.

**3. Phase Two of the Chapter (12th - 14th April)**

● **Election of officers for the Chapter.**

The election of officers planned for the Chapter took place on Monday, 12th April. Posts were needed as follows:

- 4 scrutators.
- 6 Brothers for the liturgical committee.
- 1 coordinator of the Chapter.
- 3 secretaries.
- 3 moderators.
- 6 delegates from language groups.
- 1 chronicler.
- 6 press officers, plus 1 in charge of publications.



Two aspects of the Chapter Hall, smiles or seriousness, but all intent on work.

The Chapter first thanked the provisional moderator and secretary.

Then the Central Commission began preparing suggestions on the Commissions.

In the afternoon, the Rules of Procedure of the General Chapter and the general scheme of work for the various phases were approved.

The afternoon's work was to organise the commissions of Capitulants and Consultants on Shared Mission, for the next phase. Criteria for setting up Commissions on Tuesday, 13th April, were adopted.

#### 4. Phase Three (15th to 21st April) and Phase Four (22nd to 24 April).

##### ● Setting up of commissions for phases 3 and 4.

These two phases included the Consultants; the 3rd consisting of commission work, the 4th of study and voting on propositions concerning the Mission.

The six commissions were:

1. Association, Brothers and collaborators.
2. Formation for the shared mission.
3. Communities associated for the mission.
4. Goals and objectives of the shared mission.
5. Inculturation of the shared mission.
6. Lasallian Family.

In each commission there were Brothers and lay people of different languages and Regions.

##### ● Reporting on work of the commissions.

In phases 3 and 4 group meetings and plenary sessions took place. By 19th April the reports were ready for General Assembly and were therefore read:

- commission 1: Reporter Br. Fernand Bécrot.
- commission 6: Reporter Br. René Bosson.
- commission 5: Reporter Br. Marc Hofer.

The following reports were presented on 20th April:

- commission 2: Reporter Br. Nicolas Capelle.
- commission 3: Reporter Br. Francisco López Gil.
- commission 4: Reporter Miss Lourdes María Fernández Guzmán.

The last reporter was the first woman ever to address a General Assembly. Historians please note.

A reporting session proceeded like this: full report by representative; clarifications; debate. Then the commission concerned took note of remarks, etc., to be incorporated into a new report worked out in commission and then re-presented to the Assembly.

Previous to the above, it had been decided, after some debate, that one commission would be set up to work on all the material accumulated on the Shared Mission in the phase at which Consultants had been present.

The reports of the first six commissions on Shared Mission were used by this new single commission as the basis for a final report with recommendations and propositions about the Shared Mission.

##### Solemn Mass.

Thursday, 22nd April, Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Pironio, President of the Pontifical Congregation for Lay-people. His homily is found elsewhere in this Bulletin. Before the Mass he met the lay Consultants of the Chapter.

##### ● Last session with Lay Consultants.

This was on Friday, 23rd April. The afternoon's plenary assembly consisted of the following:

1. Pierre Girard, spokesman for the Consultants, read the message to the Brothers found elsewhere in this Bulletin.
2. Capitulants asked Consultants questions.
3. Mr. John McDermott gave the Consultants' final few words.
4. Other "interventions".
5. Final words of Brother Superior to Consultants (cf elsewhere in this Bulletin).

presence.

## 5. Phase Five of the Chapter (26th April to 2nd May and 6th May to 8th May).

The first six commissions had all dealt with aspects of the same question: Shared Mission. Commission 7 carried on that work, now without the Consultants of course, so the list of the commissions which started as from now were:

Commission 7.	Shared Mission.
Commission 8.	The Government of the Institute.
Commission 9.	Policies and practices of financial management.
Commission 10.	Community: sign of hope, source of life.
Commission 11.	Awakening and accompanying the vocation of the Brother today.
Commission 12.	Brothers in later years.
Commission 13.	The Institute, a community of Brothers associated for the educational service of the poor in a world and Church changing.

The first commission to present propositions was N° 8, Government, because of forthcoming elections. After the first reading to the Assembly, work continued on incorporating suggestions. Here are some of the propositions:

- That for the election of the Superior, there be two "straw" ballots or sounding votes.
- That for the first vote, everyone put down three names without repeating any and without priority.
- That for the second vote two separate names be put down without preferential order.
- That the number of Councillors elected be six.
- That the election of Councillors be made one by one.
- Dates: straw votes: 30th April and 3rd May.

So the afternoon of the 30th, after the Veni Creator Spiritus, there was the first sounding vote.

### A raised-hand vote.

In this case the proposition seems to be having a hard time to get through.



his visa, arrived from Vietnam. Ergo, whilst the scrutators were counting the above votes, Lucien gave an account of what was going on in Vietnam, much appreciated by the Capitulants. He then handed to the Superior a lacquer portrait of our Founder painted in Eastern style. By which time the sounding vote count was ready for the Capitulants, which of course they kept to themselves.

## 6. Phase Six: Elections. (3rd to 5th May).

Once more the Veni Creator, then the second sounding vote, which on the hand-outs was called "straw vote". That day, 3rd May, commissions 7 and 10 presented reports to the General Assembly.

### ● Election of the Superior General.

The night before 4th May, election day, there was a night vigil for prayer.

The election session began at 09.00, with the Coordinator giving a few words of explanation, then the Veni Creator was sung. Language groups read the set formula, all non-Capitulants withdrew and voting began. By half past nine, the Brothers guessed by the loud applause coming from the Hall that the election was over; 66 votes necessary for the absolute majority having been reached by the someone; however, counting continued to the end.

The Coordinator having asked Brother John Johnston whether he accepted the office of Superior and having received an affirmative answer, the Secretary General handed him the seal of the Institute; this was followed by an embrace by all Capitulants.

Brother John gave a short speech which can be found in this Bulletin.

All the Capitulants next processed to chapel, alternating the hymn "Ecce quam bonum" with "Sancte Johannes Baptista de La Salle." The other Brothers of the Generalate joined in the procession in the foyer, Brothers Coordinator and Secretary General flanked Brother Superior as the chapel was approached, where the Te Deum was intoned and the Superior prayed before the relics of the Founder, after which the non-Capitulants embraced the Superior.

The General Secretariate immediately faxed the news of the election to the Vatican, the FSC Districts, the numerous ecclesiastical authorities and the media. In a couple of minutes, the news was round the world.



### ● Election of General Councillors.

Brother Superior had asked Regions to present names of candidates as Councillor. Twelve of the 22 Brothers proposed asked for their candidature to be withdrawn.

Friday, 7th May, in the first afternoon session, Councillors were elected as follows:

- Brother Alvaro Rodríguez, Central America.
- Brother Dominique Samné, Burkina Faso, non-Capitulants.
- Brother Raymundo Suplido, Philippines.
- Brother Pierre Josse, France.
- Brother Gerard Rummery, Australia.
- Brother Martin Corral, Spain.

After each election, Brother Superior asked the elected Councillor if he accepted.

The second session saw the election of Brother Alvaro Rodríguez as Vicar General.

## 7. Phase Seven. (10th to 12th May).

---

In Phases 5 and 6, some sessions were already spent on reporting, clarifying, debating and voting on the reports of Commissions 7 and 13. Some reports were sent back for modification.

- 3rd May: Report of Commissions 7 and 10.
- 4th and 5th May: Commission 9.
- 5th May: Commission 13.
- 6th May: Commission 11 and next part of Commission 8.
- 7th May: Study of propositions of Commissions 8 and part of 13.
- 10th May: Further discussion of reports from Commissions 9, 7, 8 and 13. From this date, there was concentrated discussion of all propositions waiting approval.

Three Brothers had been deputed to draw up the Message to the Brothers: this was then lengthily debated and modified in General Assembly.

It was realised that the Chapter would end on the date decided, and the four remaining days would give enough time, so phase 7 naturally evolved into phase 8.

## 8. Phase eight (13th to 15th May).

---

General Assemblies dealt with accepting propositions, the message of the Chapter, some partial reports, suggestions on

the year 2000 Chapter. A Chapter evaluation questionnaire was also distributed to Capitulants.

Two significant events then occurred: the Audience with the Pope and the Official Closure of the Chapter.

### ● Audience with Pope John Paul II.

Friday, 14th May, was the date fixed for our audience, in a tiring week for the Pope, who had just returned from Sicily.

Brothers other than Capitulants were invited to the audience, which took place in the Consistorial Hall.

The Pope first said a prayer, which was followed by Brother Superior John Johnston's speech in French, which the Pope answered in French. Then everyone was able to greet the Pope personally and have his photo taken so doing; in the next hall there was a group photo with the Pope, who had just handed a Rosary to each Brother.

### ● Closure of the Chapter.

The closure began at 09.00 on Saturday, 15th May, feast of St. John Baptist de La Salle, all the Brothers of the House also being invited.

After a thoughtful prayer for the Institute and its different Regions said by Brother Superior, came thanks from Brothers Coordinator and Secretary General.

Next the Superior read his concluding speech, found in this Bulletin, and the Chapter was closed.

Capitulants ended by signing the closure document.

The final Mass took place at 11.00, said by priests who had helped the language groups and priests of the Generalate: Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. The Mass began in the foyer, and, at the offertory, symbols of aspects of the Chapter were brought to the altar and shown to all. At the prayer of the Faithful the whole Institute was represented by several different languages.

A preprandial get-together preceded lunch, which because of large numbers, was served in different dining rooms.

Quite a number of Brothers left Rome that very day, with cases full of documents and hearts full of determination to enthuse all the Brothers with what had been achieved in the six weeks of the Chapter.

## 10. OFFICERS AND ASSISTANTS OF THE CHAPTER

Provisional Moderator: **Bro. Edgar Hengemüle**  
 Provisional Secretary: **Bro. Benet Conroy**

### Language Groups.

**1° Spanish:**

President: **Bro. José Arcadio Bolívar Rodríguez**  
 Reporter: **Bro. Víctor Corral Gómez**

**2° English:**

President: **Bro. Mark Murphy**  
 Reporter: **Bro. Thomas Campbell**

**2° Spanish:**

President: **Bro. Pascual Muñoz Cantos**  
 Reporter: **Bro. Raúl Valadez García**

**1° French:**

President: **Bro. Marcellin Rakotofiringa**  
 Reporter: **Bro. André Vauquier**

**1° English:**

President: **Bro. Michael McKenery**  
 Reporter: **Bro. Kevin Moloney**

**2° French:**

President: **Bro. Sylvain Consimbo**  
 Reporter: **Bro. Fernand Bécet**

### Chapter Officials:

**Coordinator of the Chapter:**

Br. Maurice Lapointe

**Delegates of the Language groups:**

Bro. André Jacq  
 Bro. Hilaire Raharilalao  
 Bro. Pedro Acevedo  
 Bro. Luis Timón González  
 Bro. Michel McKenery  
 Bro. Raymundo Suplido

**Moderators:**

Bro. Jacques-Yves D'Huitemau  
 Bro. Ramón Farrés  
 Bro. Mark Murphy

**Scrutators:**

Bro. Marek Mika  
 Bro. José Olimpio García  
 Bro. Sylvain Consimbo  
 Bro. José Díez de Medina

**Commission for Liturgy:**

Bro. Marc Hofer  
 Bro. Francis Ricousse  
 Bro. Israel José Nery  
 Bro. José Antolínez  
 Bro. Benedict Hanlon  
 Bro. Timothy Wentworth

**Chronicler:**

Bro. Léonard Leduc

**Secretaries:**

Bro. Alain Houry  
 Bro. Martín José Lasa  
 Bro. Benet Conroy

**Press Officers:**

Bro. Nicolas Capelle  
 Bro. Vittorino Ratti  
 Bro. Telmo Meirone  
 Bro. Donald Mouton  
 Bro. William Firman  
 Bro. Juan José Brunet  
 Bro. José María Valladolid  
 (Institute Publications)

## CENTRAL COMMISSION

**Coordinator:** Bro. Maurice Lapointe  
**Moderators:** Bro. Jacques D'Huitem  
Bro. Ramón Farrés  
Bro. Mark Murphy  
**Secretary:** Bro. Paul Grass

### Delegates of Commissions:

7. Bro. José Pereda
8. Bro. André Jacq
9. Bro. Luke Roney
10. Bro. Sylvain Consimbo
11. Bro. Luis Timón González
12. Bro. Frederic Gay i Illa
13. Bro. Nicolas Capelle

### COMMISSIONS ON MISSION

1. *Association, Brothers and colleagues.*  
(25 members).  
President: Bro. Gilles Baudet  
Secretary and reporter: Bro. Ismael Beltrán  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Marcos Corbellini
2. *Formation for the shared mission.*  
(26 members).  
President: Bro. Nicolas Capelle  
Secretary and reporter: Bro. Edgar Hengemüle  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Nicolas Capelle
3. *Communities associated for the Mission.*  
(33 members).  
President: Bro. Arcadio J. Bolívar  
Secretary and reporter: Bro. Francisco López Gil  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Arcadio J. Bolívar
4. *Goals and objectives of the Shared Mission.*  
(29 members).  
President: Bro. Donald Mouton  
Secretary: Bro. José Pereda Núñez  
Reporter: Lourdes M. Fernández  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Telmo Meirone
5. *Inculturation of the Shared Mission.*  
(22 members).  
President: Bro. Hilaire Raharilalao  
Secretary and reporter: Bro. Marc Hofer  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Pedro Acevedo
6. *Lasallian Family*  
(16 members).  
President: Bro. Léonard Leduc  
Secretary and reporter: Bro. René Bosson  
Delegate to the C. C.: Bro. Israel José Nery

### COMMISSIONS OF PHASES 5 TO 8

- Comission 7. Shared Mission**  
(21 members).  
President: Bro. Luke Salm  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. José Pereda Núñez  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Pierre Mourier
- Comission 9. Government of the Institute**  
(19 members).  
President: Bro. Armand Garneau  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. André Jacq  
Secretary: Bro. Robert Frings
- Comission 9. Policies and practices of financial management** (14 members).  
President: Bro. Jordi Oller i Madí  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. Luke Roney  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Gérard Oustric
- Comission 10. Community: sign of hope, source of life.**  
(22 members).  
President: Bro. Michael McKenery  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. Sylvain Consimbo  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Alvaro Rodríguez
- Comission 11. Awakening and accompanying the vocation of the Brother today.** (24 members).  
President: Bro. William Mann  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. Luis Timón G.  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Gilles Baudet
- Comission 12. Brothers in later years.**  
(9 members).  
President: Bro. Israel José Nery  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. Frederic Gay i Illa  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Jean Favre
- Comission 13. The Insitute, a Community of Brothers associated for the educational service of the poor in a changing world and Church** (20 members).  
President: Bro. Donald Mouton  
Delegate to the C.C.: Bro. Nicolas Capelle  
Secretary / reporter: Bro. Didier François Albo

## Translators and Secretaries for the 42° General Chapter

	<b>Simultaneous Translation</b>	<b>Translation of texts</b>
French – English	<b>Bro. James Connolly</b> (Great Britain) <b>Bro. Paul McAuley</b> (Great Britain)	<b>Bro. Thomas O'Donoghue</b> (Ireland)
French – Spanish	<b>Bro. Jorge Bonilla</b> (Mexico North)	<b>Bro. Manuel Gil</b> (Catalonia)
English – French	<b>Bro. Joseph Le Bars</b> (France)	<b>Bro. Jean-Louis Schneider</b> (France)
English – Spanish	<b>Bro. Michael French</b> (Chicago)	<b>Bro. Antxon Andueza</b> (Bilbao) <b>Bro. José Luis Rodríguez</b> (Valencia)
Spanish – French	<b>Bro. François Balagué</b> (France)	<b>Bro. Constant De Wenckstern</b> (Belg. S.)
Spanish – English	<b>Bro. Michael French</b> (Chicago) <b>Bro. Paul McAuley</b> (Great Britain)	<b>Bro. Aidan Kilty</b> (Great Britain)
SECRETARIATE	<b>Bro. Raymond Lamy</b> (French-speaking Canada) <b>Bro. Jean Beaudoin</b> (France) <b>Bro. Raymond Beeckmans</b> (Belgium North))	<b>Bro. Gabriel Dubé</b> (French-speaking Canada) <b>Bro. José Luis Rodríguez</b> (Valencia) <b>Bro. Lionel Poitras</b> (French-speaking Canada)
Liaison Persons	Block C: <b>Bro. Jean Beaudoin</b> (France)	Block B: <b>Bro. José Luis Rodríguez</b> (Valencia)
Equipment in the Chapter Hall		<b>Bro. Aldhelm Heumann</b>
Recording of plenary sessions.		<b>Bro. André Rocher</b>

## 11. FACTS AND FIGURES OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

The Chronicler can describe the principal events of the internal development of the Chapter or the minor happenings and interests that accompanied it. The latter are easier to read perhaps, because we all like a bit of amusing news from time to time; but no one doubts that the real thing about an Assembly like ours is what happened on the factory floor; let us deal with that later in the Bulletin, but now for some snippets or side issues.

\*\*\*

### The average age of the Capitulants.

On 5th April, 1993, the average age of the 131 Capitulants was 55 years 122 days, about a year more than for the 1986 Chapter. That would be the equivalent of someone born on the 3rd December 1937. The Brothers born nearest to that date were Jordi Oller, born on 15th October 1937, and Ange Michel, born on 20th February 1938.

The oldest Capitulant was Brother Vincent Gottwald from Delegation of Slovakia, who was born on 3rd October 1916. The youngest delegate was Brother Marek Mika, Auxiliary Visitor of Poland, born on the 6th November 1957.

### Brothers who attended earlier Chapters.

Of the 131 Capitulants, 88 were present for the first time in 1993; 37 for the second time, 4 for the third time, one for the fourth time: Brother Luke Salm, of New York; one for the fifth time: Brother José Pablo Basterrechea, Bilbao, former Superior General, who had been present at the 1956 Chapter at the age of 39, a year before the birth of the youngest 1993 capitulant, Marek.

### Countries or Regions.

Places which had the highest proportional "repeaters" of delegates are: Italy 2 out of 3 of its delegates, and France 6 out of 16 of its delegates. Places with the highest proportional number of new delegates were: Asia, with no "repeater", Africa with one out of 9; Latin America: 4 on 9; Spain 4 on 16 and the United States with 3 out of its 15 delegates.

### Video Team.

The Technical and Engineering School for Telecommunications run by the Brothers in Barcelona undertook to video-record the General Chapter. The video team left Barcelona for Rome on four different occasions: first for the opening ceremony, second for the meetings with the Consultants, third for election of Brother Superior General and fourth for the closure. Whilst here, they recorded various sessions and discussions in the Chapter room, Chapel ceremonies and other events. They also recorded interviews with Capitulants and Consultants. The Institute is, and its History will be, very grateful for this service.

### Getting together with the Brothers of the Generalate.

The various General Chapters of other congregations taking place in our Generalate usually forge ahead almost without our noticing them. So extensive are our Generalate buildings, that the same thing could have happened to a lesser extent for our own General Chapter. However to make sure that Capitulants and community members got to know one another, the Preparatory Commission had a buffet supper prepared for everyone after evening Mass on the opening day. Several adjoining dining-rooms were used and thus the danger of seeing strange faces in the corridors once the Chapter began in earnest, was averted.

### Photos.

The usual photographers from the Osservatore Romano and Felici came on several occasions. This gave Capitulants the chance of buying mementos of the Opening Session, of the Mass celebrated by Cardinal Martínez Somalo, of the election of Brother Superior General and of the audience with the Pope in the Vatican.

### Exhibition in the corridors.

The corridor linking the chapel with the dining-rooms has a permanent exhibition of the missionary projects supported by SECOLI. Other exhibition cases contain books written by Brothers, which are replaced by new publications every so often. In this same corridor- a rather long one incidentally- various Regions exhibited throughout the Chapter written works, photos of their establishments and information for Capitulants.

May 4, 1993, 9.00 am session:  
Capitulants vote to elect  
the Brother Superior General.



### **Folders for reports.**

We must thank "Editorial Bruño" of Madrid for presenting each delegate with a folder for the Economic Report. The same goes for "Christian Brothers Investment Services" (CBIS), of the United States, which donated the folders for the General Council's report.

### **Holy Week Liturgy.**

The first week of the Chapter was Holy Week, when Capitulants and community gathered together in the Chapel for the ceremonies.

Some preferred to go to St. Peter's or St. John Lateran, when the Pope was presiding. An even greater number went to St. Peter's Square for Easter Sunday morning's blessing "Urbi et Orbi".

Throughout the Chapter the Central Community held its services in the John Paul II room, otherwise known as the "Winter Chapel", so that the main Chapel could be used by the Capitulants.

There was adoration up to midnight on Holy Thursday in the Central Community Chapel.

### **Birthdays.**

It can hardly be surprising that during their six weeks' stay in Rome, several of the 131 Capitulants had birthdays. They were prayed for, blew out countless candles on their birthday cakes and listened patiently as we sang the inevitable "Happy Birthday to you", varied for once in their life by the multiplicity of its language versions.

### **Sport.**

The hard work of the Chapter was an incentive to use free time playing games, tennis and volleyball topping the list; walking and gymnastics coming poor second. Accidents occurred, with resultant plaster casts being seen around the house. Brother Martin Spellman of Kenya was the most seriously injured. Brothers David Liao of Penang and Clement Maheu of Japan had to be satisfied with third and second places respectively on the injury scale. By the end of the Chapter they all seemed back to normal again.

### **Lasallian Emblem.**

In the early days of the Chapter the Region of France presented the Capitulants and the Brothers of the community with a Lasallian pin for their lapel.

### **Tour of Rome.**

On Saturday morning, 17th April, the Capitulants had a tour of Rome. The long Roman experience of Brother Felix del Hoyo made him the perfect guide to the historical sites and commentator on the works of art which pop up in the most unexpected places in the Eternal City.

### **Visit to the Community of San Egidio.**

San Egidio Community, which now has off-shoots in various parts of the world, has long had links with our Superiors and the Generalate. During the Chapter the directors of the community invited the Brothers to meet them, the headquarters of the Community in Trastevere, on the evening of 20th April, being the meeting place. There were small group discussions with members of the community, followed by evening prayer and supper. Before the meeting, the Capitulants had been briefed on the characteristics and work of the San Egidio Community.

### **Bicentenary of Angelo Braschi School.**

In the relatively-speaking recent history of schools, very few of the latter can boast of 200 years existence; yet our school of Angelo Braschi can do just that. It was founded by Pope Pius VI Braschi and handed to the Brothers from the beginning. Until fairly recently it was located in Piazza San Salvatore in Lauro, though it is now in Grottaferrata, on the outskirts of Rome. To celebrate the bicentenary, there was Mass on 27th April in the Generalate Chapel; then, on Sunday 9th May, Capitulants and community were all invited to a concert in the Brother's school of Villa Flaminia, which lent their large chapel to Grottaferrata for the occasion. Everyone was impressed by the choir and the other superb musicians, many of them former students of Angelo Braschi. The meal provided afterwards was equally impressive.

### **Informal meetings.**

When the capitulants were in Rome, they were able to meet members of their Regions resident in the Mother House and to have the occasional get-together for a meal and entertainment, including singing, all of which made an enjoyable break from the work of the Chapter.

### **News Bulletins.**

A weekly Bulletin came out during the Chapter to keep all the Brothers in the Generalate informed of the latest news and special programmes, all expertly produced by Brother Lionel Poitras, of French-speaking Canada.

### **Infirmary.**

In addition to his job of ensuring the efficiency of the simultaneous translation equipment in the Chapter hall, Brother Aldhelm had more patients than usual in the medical room, which is one of Brother Aldhelm's normal Generalate posts. In fact more than half the Capitulants went to see him at one time or another. Some consultations, like those of Brothers injured at sport, were more than trifling matters. One or two others also had more difficult conditions to be treated, among them being Brother Nicholas Printezis of Greece, André Vauquier of South Belgium. A nasty problem was that of translator Brother Paul McAuley, who had to go to hospital with hepatitis. The most serious case of all was Brother Vittorino Ratti's, of Turin, who unfortunately, on the morning of 14th May, suffered a stroke. As these notes are being written, 17th June 1993, he is still in a Roman hospital, but is slowly recovering, so he will soon we hope be able to return to his District for complete recuperation.

### **Video shows.**

Video shows took place in free time at the end of the day, when Brothers were able to demonstrate work done in their various Districts. PARC (Region of Asia) for example showed a recording of their work for the poor in that vast continent; Vietnam, Malaysia and Australia also showed Videos.

### **Press service.**

The following newspapers were available to capitulants: FRENCH: La Croix, Le Monde, Le Figaro. SPANISH: ABC, El Pais. ENGLISH: The Times, The Independent, The Guardian, The Herald Tribune, USA Today. ITALIAN: Il Messagero. We think that other papers too managed to find a place in the sitting rooms.

### **Key rings.**

Key rings with the emblem of the Chapter, designed by Brother Roberto Roberti of De La Salle School, (attached to the Generalate), were to be available, provided a sufficient number were ordered: in fact 2,400, well above the minimum to make their production viable, were commissioned: a tastefully designed and produced souvenir.

### **First woman ever to speak at a Chapter General Assembly.**

One of our lay consultants, Miss Lourdes Fernandez Guzman, had the distinction of being the first woman to speak at a general assembly. This she did as reporter for one of the Commissions on the Shared Mission, and to reward her for this historic record, she received loud applause from the assembled, mostly male, gathering.

### **Organ Recital.**

We are lucky to have a distinguished organist in the Generalate, whose name is Brother Georges Ley, long resident in Rome, but originally of the South Belgium District. The chance could not be missed to hear the maestro at his trade, so a recital was arranged for 20.30 on 20th April, the quality of which could be judged by the prolonged clapping and demand for encores from the discriminating audience.

### **Theatre at Colegio San Giuseppe.**

"My Fair Lady" was staged on Saturday 24th April for the Capitulants; another break from the labours of the Chapter room, much appreciated by the many that went to the show at the Brothers' San Giuseppe College.

### **Excursions.**

Brothers of different Regions got together at weekends and visited well-known places like Naples, Pompei, Villa d'Este, Subiaco, Rieti, Palestrina, Franciscan shrines. Some less fortunate Capitulants had work to do most week-ends!



Twenty to ten in the morning, as you can see from the clock. The election is over, and the members on the dais are congratulating Brother John Johnston on being re-elected Superior General.

## **Two Cardinals with us.**

---

As mentioned in the chronicle, two cardinals visited us during the Chapter. The 5th April, Cardinal Martínez Somalo, Prefect of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, said Mass; and on 22nd April, whilst the Consultants were with us, Cardinal Pironio, Pontifical Commission for Lay People, celebrated for us.

## **Official Photo.**

---

On 22nd April, official photos were taken of Capitulants and Consultants; the presence of photographers gave a chance to Regions and Districts also to have good photos taken, to compensate for the many amateur snaps so far sent home.

## **Lasallian Sisters and Union of Catechists.**

---

The Guadalupe Sisters of De La Salle and the Union of Catechists of Jesus Crucified and Mary Immaculate profited by the Chapter to distribute information on their Institutes. They expanded on the general information during commission meetings.

## **Baptism remembered during the Chapter.**

---

Whilst Consultant Mr. Sylvestre Erans Anipuna Aweh, from Burkina Faso, was here, one of his sons was baptised back home, so Sylvestre missed a happy family occasion. However, to help Sylvestre in his home-sickness, the Visitor of Burkino Faso, Brother Sylvain Consimbo, had a collection made among the Capitulants and was able to present Sylvestre with a crucifix to take to his son.

## **Opening of "Lasalle Olympic Games".**

---

On 24th April, the 14th Lasalle Olympic Games opened in De La Salle College Rome (next to the Generalate). Capitulants joined the large number of parents to watch the march past of teams from Italy, Belgium, France and Malta. The Games closed on Wednesday 28th April.

## **Chapter cartoonist.**

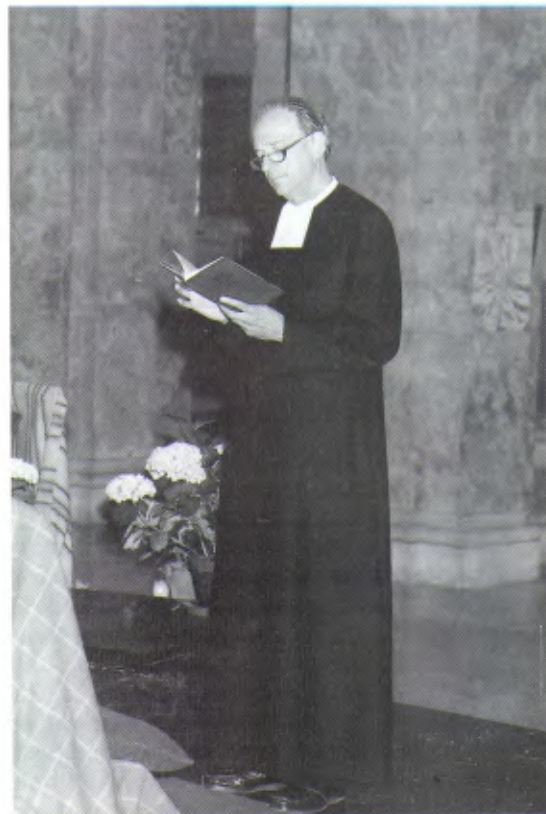
---

Brother Robert Frings turned out to be the cartoonist of the Chapter. His line drawings of events of the day, with fairly recognisable caricatures of Capitulants, confronted those leaving the Lasallianum block after the traumas of hammering out the niceties of some document or other, and gave them fresh vigour for the next session.

## **Spring Marathon.**

---

Sunday, May 9th, the traditional Rome Marathon for Catholic Schools took place. Brother Giuseppe of Villa Flaminia began this tradition nine years ago, and is still in charge. Capitulants went to see the start, but none, we think, joined the many nuns, who with their students and parents raced, at varying speeds towards the finishing tape at the "Galopatoio" in Villa Borghese.



**Brother Superior General presiding over a prayer of thanksgiving in the Generalate Chapel.**

## **Thank you to Brothers Councillors.**

---

The English-speaking Capitulants (Britain, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, Asia,) organised on Saturday, 8th May, a thank-you and good-bye party for the Councillors ending their term of office. A few songs, sung sweetly or hoarsely according to the amount of Chapter work each Brother had had that week, graced the occasion attended by Capitulants of other language groups, who made their contribution with songs from their various countries. Piano-playing by Brothers Timothy Wentworth and Vincent Malham of the USA, accompanied the budding or declining tenori and bassi.

Thank you Brothers Genaro Saenz de Ugarte, (Vicar 1986-93), Vincent Rabemahafaly, (Councillor 1976-93) and Joseph Hendron, (Councillor 1986-93) for your work for our Institute.

## **Arrival of Brothers from Vietnam.**

---

On 29th April, Brother Quang Lucien Hoang was able finally to take his place, temporarily filled by Brother Bonaventure, at the Chapter. This was the first time since 1967 that Vietnamese Brothers had been at a Chapter. Lucien's delay was due to months of negotiations to obtain an exit visa and to come to Rome. Both these Vietnamese Brothers soon made themselves liked, especially when they had had a chance to describe the Lasallian situation in their country.



### **Books for the delegates.**

Presents of books were as follows:

To Spanish-speaking Capitulants from the Region of Spain: translation of Cahier Lasallien n 52: Explanation of the Method of Mental Prayer.

To English-speakers from the Region of USA-Toronto: Translation of the Founder's "Collection".

To everyone from the Region of France: The late Brother Patrice Marey's "Une Mission des Partenaires; la relation entre Frères et Laïcs Lasalliens".

For the use of all, from the District of Great Britain: 50 copies of series 2 and 3 of "Songs of the Spirit" edited, and in some cases composed by Brother Damian Lundy, of Great Britain.

### **The over-worked FAX.**

1,841 Fax messages were received by delegates during the Chapter and 1500-plus were sent out by them. That means one Fax every fifteen minutes during the six weeks; perhaps not an extraordinary number compared with those of modern business firms.

### **Institute publications for the Capitulants.**

A special edition of Intercom (number 76) on the Spanish martyrs of Almeria was given to Capitulants in their final week in Rome. Number 27 of Lasallianum and n° 238 of the Bulletin of the Institute (on Africa) was also given to them. All of course were fresh off the press.

### **Santa Sabina Concert.**

Italians begin their concerts late by some standards, so the one on 14th May began at 21.00 at Santa Sabina's church on the Aventine. Santa Sabina's is a wonderful setting for anything, but was especially favourable for the singing of the Pueri Cantores of the Collegio di Villa Flaminia and of the "Canticorum Jubilo" choir of Istituto Pio IX. The late night proved worth the effort.

### **Photocopying and Printing.**

Sheets of photocopied or off-set papers produced by the staff specially called to Rome to help in the Chapter, amounted to 409,856; but then you must add those done by Abramo, our resident printer: keep your eye open for the final count.

### **Brother Maurice Lapointe and Paul Grass.**

Two people had essential roles in ensuring the smooth running of the Chapter: Brothers Maurice of Canada and Paul of USA, the former being Coordinator-in-chief, the latter Secretary to the Chapter. The "management" of the Bulletin would like to add our share to the thanks those two men received when the Chapter closed and which could be witnessed by the hearty applause.

\*\*\*

The General Chapter and every one of the Delegates express their heartfelt gratitude for the hospitality and service rendered by all of the Brothers of the Generalate as well as by all of the other persons who work in the house.

In particular we mention Brother Director Angel Cirera, Brother Bursar Pasquale Sorge, Brother Guest-master Emmanuel Sciberras and the community of Guadalupe Sisters, all of whom assured our lodging and meals.

To them and to one and all who live in the Generalate, the Delegates of the General Chapter enthusiastically express their thanks.



Brother Superior General in front of the relics of the Holy Founder.

## CONSULTANTS AT THE GENERAL CHAPTER

### 12. THE CONSULTANTS

Rome, October 26th 1992.

Dear Brothers,

Acting on what we announced in Circular 433 (pp. 10-12), we have proceeded to choose 17 lay persons (men and women) who will be invited to attend the next General Chapter as consultants. You will find their names on the enclosed list.

In all, 27 candidates were proposed by Districts or Delegations, and it was a difficult task for us to make choices from among all these competent and committed persons who share in our mission of education and evangelisation. We limited their number to about fifteen, following in this the indications of the Circular and the Chapter budget. We tried our best to make our choices reflect the diversity of Lasallian lay people, their geographical origins, culture, etc.

We will present these names to the Chapter for its formal approval, and these lay people will be with us in Rome for two weeks to take part in the phase of the Chapter especially concerned with our mission under all its aspects: education, catechesis, pastoral ministry to youth, educational service of the poor, promotion of justice, missionary commitment, Lasallian groups, etc. They will be able to take part in discussions in commissions or general assemblies, but without the right to vote in the general assembly.

There is no doubt that the presence of these lay consultants (as also of representatives from each of the two Institutes of Lasallian Sisters, and of one representative from the secular institute, *Unione Catechisti del SS. Crocifisso e Maria SS. Immacolata*) will be one of the features of the 42nd General Chapter. It is a natural consequence of the stress laid on the shared mission by the preceding Chapter, and of its increasing importance in the life of the Institute today.

I ask you to make known the contents of this letter as well as the enclosed list to the Brothers of your District and to all the lay people who are close to us in one way or another.

Yours fraternally in De La Salle,

**Brother John Johnston, FSC, Superior General**

Name	City / Country	District	Function
Claudio <b>Andreoli</b>	Padua, Italy	Rome - Turin	President, Lasallian Family of Italy
Etienne <b>Arquillère</b>	Lyon, France	France	Executive Secretary, The La Salle Association, Paris
Sylvester Erans Anipuna <b>Aweh</b>	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	West Africa	Teacher, Collège De La Salle
Robert <b>Carlier</b>	Casteau, Belgium	South Belgium	Member, Signum Fidei; Lasallian leader, Inst. Saint-Ferdinand
Antonio <b>Damián Basurto</b>	Naucalpan de Juarez, Mexico	Mexico-South	National Coordinator, Lasallian Family of Mexico
Marlina <b>Fagela</b>	Manila, Philippines	Philippines	National Coordinator, Signum Fidei; Directress, Lasallian Fam.
Lourdes María <b>Fernández Guzmán</b>	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	Central America	Leader of the Lasallian Family (Signum Fidei, Teachers, Former Students, and Youth Groups)
Vicente <b>Fortunato Tallada</b>	Barcelona, Spain	Catalonia	President, Signum Fidei, Barcelona; Administrator, Col. La Salle
Jorge <b>García Antuña</b>	Ciaño-Langreo, Spain	Valladolid	Coordinating Committee, Lasallian Family; Director, Colegio San Antonio-La Salle, Ciaño (Asturias)
Pierre <b>Girard</b>	Trois-Rivières-Ouest, Quebec	French-speaking Canada	Teacher, Animator, Mont-Bénéide Secondary School, Sainte-Angèle-de-Laval
David <b>Hotek</b>	Westchester, Illinois, USA	Chi/SL/SPM/Tor	Lasallian Family Coordinator for four Districts
Michel Choukri <b>Lawandy</b>	Cairo, Egypt	Delegation of Egypt	Director, St. Joseph's School, Khoronfish, Cairo
John <b>McDermott</b>	Salford, England	Great Britain	Principal, De La Salle College, Pendleton
Loiva María <b>Rossi</b>	Caxias do Sul, Brazil	Porto Alegre	Member, Commission on the Lasallian Family; Consultant, Commission on Education-School
Gery <b>Short</b>	Sonoma, California, USA	San Francisco	Coordinator, Lasallian Schools Program, District of San Francisco
Gustavo Walter <b>Solana</b>	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Argentina-Paraguay	Member, Secretariat on Mission; Director of the Project on Basic Education; Member, Group of Directors General; Director, Escuela Santo Tomás de Aquino
Patrick <b>Ward</b>	Belfast, Northern Ireland	Ireland	President, Lasallian Family of Ireland; Teacher, La Salle Boys' School, Belfast

#### Representatives of Congregations of Women and Secular Institutes:

Sister Elia **Hernandez Cardenas**, Mexico City, Mexico, Secretary of the Guadalupe Sisters of De La Salle.

Sister Mary La-ied **Sasirikul**, Bangkok, Thailand, representative of the Lasallian Sisters of Vietnam.

Dr. Domenico **Conti**, Turin, Italy, President of the Union of Catechists of Jesus Crucified and Mary Immaculate.

## CONSULTANTS



**CLAUDIO ANDREOLI**  
Président-Coordonateur,  
Fédération Lasallienne  
d'Italie.  
Padova, Italia



**ETIENNE ARQUILLERE**  
Secrétaire général,  
Association La Salle  
(Tutelle des Etablissements  
Lasalliens de France).  
Lyon, France



**SYLVESTRE ERANS  
ANPUNA AWEH**  
Professeur, Délégué des  
Professeurs, Collège  
De La Salle.  
Ouagadougou,  
Burkina Faso



**ROBERT CARLIER**  
Professeur, membre  
*Signum Fidei*, membre  
équipe d'animation  
lasallienne, Institut Saint-  
Ferdinand.  
Casteau, Belgique



**DOMENICO CONTI**  
Presidente Generale  
dell'Unione Catechisti  
del SS. Crocifisso e  
di Maria SS. Immacolata.  
Torino, Italia



**ANTONIO  
DAMIAN BASURTO**  
Coordinador Nacional de la  
Familia Lasallista Mexicana.  
Naucalpan, México



**MARLINA FAGELA**  
Director, Lasallian Family  
Office; member, *Signum  
Fidei*.  
Manila, Philippines



**LOURDES MARIA  
FERNANDEZ GUZMAN**  
Encargada de la Pastoral  
del Instituto en Honduras;  
miembro del Equipo de  
Pastoral del Distrito de C.A.  
San Pedro Sula, Honduras



**VICENTE  
FORTUNATO TALLADA**  
Director Formac, Profesional  
La Salle Barceloneta;  
Responsable del Movimiento  
*Signum Fidei*, Catalunya,  
Barcelona, España



**JORGE GARCIA ANTUNA**  
Profesor, miembro del  
Equipo de Pastoral del  
Colegio San Antonio-La  
Salle; Coordinador, Centro  
del Programa CELAS.  
Ciaño-Langreo, España



**PIERRE GIRARD**  
Professeur, animateur;  
responsable du pensionnat  
de l'école secondaire Mont-  
Bénilde, Sainte-Angèle-de-  
Laval.  
Ville de Bécancour, Québec



**Hna. ELIA  
HERNANDEZ GARDENAS**  
Secretaria General de la  
Congregación Hermanas  
Guadalupanas De La Salle,  
México, D.F.



**DAVID HOTEK**  
Coordinator of Lasallian  
Family Program, Districts  
of Chicago, St. Louis, St.  
Paul-Mpls. and Toronto.  
Westchester, Illinois, USA



**MICHEL CHOUKRY  
LAWANDY**  
Directeur, Collège St.  
Joseph, Khoronfish; Cadre  
Centre Lasalien du Caire.  
Sohafeyyin-Guiza, Egypte



**JOHN McDERMOTT**  
Principal, De La Salle  
College, Pendleton;  
President, Association  
Européenne des Chefs  
d'Etablissements Lasalliens.  
Salford, Great Britain



**LOIVA MARIA ROSSI**  
Vice-Diretora do Colégio  
Nossa Senhora do Carmo;  
membro da Comissão da  
Familia Lassalista; membro  
executivo, Plano de Forma-  
ção do Leigo Las.no (P. A.).  
Caxias do Sul/RS, Brasil



**GERY SHORT**  
Coordinator, Lasallian  
School Programs, District  
of San Francisco.  
Sonoma, California, USA



**GUSTAVO WALTER  
SOLANA**  
Miembro del Secretariado  
para la Misión a cargo del  
proyecto de educ. popular;  
Director, Escuela Santo  
Tomás de Aquino.  
Buenos Aires, Argentina



**Sr. MARY LA-IED  
SOSIRIKUL**  
Representing the Lasallian  
Sisters of Vietnam; Director  
of the Kindergarten Section,  
La Salle College.  
Bangkok, Thailand



**PATRICK WARD**  
President, Lasallian Family  
of Ireland; Senior Teacher,  
La Salle Boys' School,  
Belfast; District of Ireland

## CONSULTORES

## 13. WELCOME TO THE CONSULTANTS

Brother John Johnston, Superior General

13 April 1993

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you as consultants to the 42nd General Chapter. I welcome you in the name of the Capitulants; in the name of the members of the General Council - who are here with us this morning; in the name of the Brothers of the Generalate; and indeed in the name of all our Brothers and of all those men and women who participate today - "together and by association" - in the Lasallian mission.

I welcome you also in the name of the Church. Cardinal Martinez Somalo, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life, included in his homily last Monday night words of warm welcome to all of you. When he learned that you had not yet arrived, he welcomed you publicly "in anticipation" and asked me to greet you in his name. Your presence has been publicized in the *Osservatore Romano*, the newspaper of the Holy See, as well as on Vatican Radio. Furthermore, Cardinal Pironio, President of the Pontifical Council of the Laity, will celebrate the Eucharist with us next week.

The expression "historic event" is overused today. But I think that your participation as consultants is truly an historic event. While I have not researched the question, I am not aware of any other international religious institute that has taken a similar step. I think that we should all feel encouraged and grateful that the initiative has been very favorably received throughout our Institute, was approved unanimously by the Capitulants, and has been appreciated by the Holy See.

We have invited the two Institutes of Lasallian Sisters as well as the Union of Catechists of Jesus Crucified and of Mary Immaculate to name representatives. The rest of you were proposed by the Visitors as persons strongly committed to the Lasallian mission and have been chosen by the Superior and General Council. You are participating in the Lasallian mission in different ways. You have varied and interesting experiences to share with one another and with all the Capitulants.

What is the work that we must do together during this week? We shall all receive today or tomorrow directives and orientations from the newly elected Central Commission.

Nevertheless, I would like to share with you my own hopes and expectations of these two weeks.

### 1. The Lasallian Mission.

We Capitulants and Consultants must share our lived experience of Lasallian mission, evaluate that experience in the light of the **Rule**, establish priorities and objectives for the next seven years, and determine strategies for realizing those objectives.

When we first spoke of your participation, some thought that we were inviting you to the Chapter to study with us questions concerning relationships between the Brothers and those associated with them. But that interpretation is too narrow. We have invited you to study with us the Lasallian mission as such. That mission today is in fact a shared mission. We need and want your help in the process of evaluating the quality of our service in the Church and in planning for a more authentic and more significant service in the next seven years.

For this purpose we have to reflect together on our experience of the mission of the Institute. That mission is the human and Christian education of youth, especially poor youth. The "privileged instrument" in the exercise of that mission is the Christian school, a school which is "a sign of the Kingdom and a means of salvation", a school which is dynamic and creative, a school which is accessible to the poor. The Institute is also open to other forms of teaching and education adapted to the needs of time and place.

As Capitulants and as Consultants we have to examine our experience of Lasallian mission in the spirit of article 103 of the **Rule**, which states that the General Chapter is to evaluate the life of the Institute, provide for its continuing adaptation and renewal, and determine guidelines for future action.

Our Lasallian mission today is at the service of children, adolescents, young adults, and adults. Economically, they are rich, average, and poor. Intellectually, they are superior, average, and poor. Our mission is also at the service of youth with severe learning disabilities, youngsters with behavioral



Brother John Johnston with a group of Lay Consultants in front of the statue of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

problems, handicapped children and adults, nomads ... Whatever the situation, we are trying to help "those confided to our care" to develop their God-given gifts and talents to the best of their ability and to experience the joy of success.

When we recall that we exercise our Lasallian mission in eighty-one countries, we realize that we are working in geographical areas which correspond generally to the three "situations" mentioned by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*: 1) non-Christian areas, 2) areas where large numbers of Christians live their Christian faith seriously; 3) areas where large numbers of baptized Christians have lost a living sense of their faith or no longer consider themselves members of the Church. But, of course, these three "situations" can and do exist within the same geographical area. There are many Lasallian schools in which there are young people who are non-Christian, others who are living their Christian faith, and others who are non-practicing and indifferent, if not hostile, to "religion".

In most of our Lasallian schools there are Brothers working in close collaboration with lay men and women. Some of these schools have headmasters who are Brothers, while others have headmasters who are lay. But we also have an increasing number of Lasallian schools without any Brothers at all.

It is in the light of this complex and fascinating reality that we have to evaluate all aspects of our mission: the Christian dimension of our schools, the program of religious instruction, the pastoral programs; the quality and effectiveness of our curricula and pedagogy in responding to the particular needs of our pupils; the availability of our schools to the poor; our social justice programs. We have to evaluate also the

relationship of our educational communities to the civic and religious community of which they are a part. We have to ask whether our schools are really centers of educational activity, centers in contact with and at the service of the people who surround the school, through, for example, evening classes in literacy and basic education for adults, programs for the formation of catechists and pastoral ministers of youth, etc.

We need also to look at the implications of the commitment of the Institute to make, progressively, the direct service of the poor - at home and abroad - the effective priority of the Brothers themselves.

## 2. Structures of education, animation, and accountability

Article 17c of the **Rule** obliges the Brothers to make known to the rest of the educational community the essential elements of the Lasallian tradition. I think that we should give a broad interpretation to "educational community". We need to involve not only the teachers, but members of staff, former students and their associations, parents and their associations, members of boards and councils, friends and benefactors. You are well aware of what has been accomplished and what has not been accomplished in your geographical areas in the development of effective programs. There have been many excellent initiatives taken in a number of sectors of the Institute during recent years. These days provide you the opportunity to share information and experiences and to make recommendations for programs on the local, provincial, regional, and, perhaps even, international levels.

But structures of education in the Lasallian tradition - as important as they are - are not sufficient. We also need structures to assure "animation" and accountability. Directors, whether Brother or lay, together with their educational communities, must be accountable to appropriate "boards of governors" and ultimately to the District. The District for its part must organize programs of supervision and animation of all the Lasallian schools within its "network" of schools. I think that the Chapter should speak to this need.

### 3. Lasallian "Associations"

---

The **Rule** also encourages the Brothers to offer to those members of the educational community who desire it a more intensified sharing of Lasallian spirituality, encouraging such persons to make a more specific apostolic commitment. The Brothers are likewise encouraged to participate with them in the creation of communities of faith.

The Brothers recognize that the "spiritual gifts which the Church has received in St. John Baptist de La Salle go beyond the confines of the Institute which he founded". The Institute welcomes those lay people who want to live their faith according to the spirit of the Institute and by participating in its mission. "The Institute helps them achieve their proper autonomy. At the same time it creates appropriate ties with them and evaluates the authenticity of their Lasallian character." (article 146)

A number of you are active members of Lasallian associations and groups, the most common of which is *Signum Fidei*. But there are other structures such as the Third Order in France, the Lasallian Association in Canada, the Lasallian Volunteer Movement in the United States, and additional programs that are currently under study in several countries. During these days we need to share information, evaluate our experiences, and formulate recommendations for the next seven years.

### 4. Vocabulary and Structures

---

The material on vocabulary that you have received from Brothers Genaro and Hernando illustrates the need we have to resolve certain ambiguities and inconsistencies in the language we employ to describe collaboration among the Brothers and the men and women who share in Lasallian spirituality and mission. It is our hope that we can make good progress during these days in arriving at a common accord in our use of language.

But we should also engage in an exercise of "brainstorming" concerning provincial, regional, and even international structures, in which Brothers and lay men and women would collaborate in the organization and promotion of our shared mission. Several of you are currently involved full-time on national, interdistrict, and district levels. You have much to offer the Chapter. While it is perhaps premature to think in terms of definitive structures, particularly on the international level, the Chapter could possibly decide to put in operation a provisional plan for the next seven years.

\*\*\*

In these words of welcome I have touched briefly a number of important areas, but my remarks have been neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. I simply wanted to welcome you very sincerely and to bring to your consideration some thoughts I consider to be very pertinent to the experience we are beginning today. You have come because you, like the Brothers, want to see our Lasallian mission lived with greater authenticity and effectiveness. Thank you for accepting our invitation. Let's ask the Lord to help us.

## 14. MESSAGE OF THE CONSULTANTS TO THE BROTHERS CAPITULANTS

23 April 1993

### A WORD OF THANKS

Brother Superior General, members of the General Council, Brothers Capitulants of the 42nd General Chapter of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools:

To have taken part in the 42nd General Chapter signifies for us the Brothers' acceptance of the challenge to share the mission and our undertaking an explicit commitment of fidelity to the work of the Institute and to the charism of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

In this way we are listening together to the call of the Holy Spirit in order to respond to the world of today with a radical message and with evangelical hope.

We acknowledge that the invitation which we received is, in itself, a message to all our colleagues and, at the same time, a most significant indication of the commitment of the Institute to those with whom the Brothers work.

We appreciate and value this invitation as a historic event in the evolution of the Institute and we applaud the courage of this decision.

We want you to know that among our colleagues with whom we work daily there is a great respect and affection for the Brothers.

At this time we would like to express our gratitude for all that we have indicated above but especially for making us feel that we are your brothers and sisters.

**BROTHERS:**            **THANK YOU FOR YOUR FRATERNAL WELCOME.  
THANK YOU FOR THE AUTHENTIC NATURE OF YOUR FRIENDSHIP.  
THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR PRAYER AND EUCHARIST.  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SIMPLICITY.**

**... AND THANK YOU ABOVE ALL FOR PROVIDING US WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST AND OF DE LA SALLE, WHOSE EXAMPLE AND CHARISM MORE THAN EVER TODAY GIVE SENSE TO OUR LIVES AS LASALLIAN EDUCATORS.**

### HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE CONSULTANTS

Because of the present needs for Lasallian education in the world today, shared mission, as expressed in the Institute today, is a grace to all of us. We recognise that there is much work to be done but we are full of hope and we relish the challenges ahead.

Our hopes and aspirations of the General Chapter with regard to shared mission are the following:

1. that the spiritual and professional formation of all Lasallian educators will become a priority that will help us to persevere as ministers for the human and Christian education of the young, especially, the poor;
2. that these educators will be involved in the lasting, shared educational mission as equal partners bearing in mind the distinctive yet complementary characteristics of the partners;
3. that we want to encourage the Brothers to continue to be an authentic witness of the Lasallian charism which is a source of inspiration to us as we ourselves understand and embrace the mission and its consequences personally and communally;
4. that the Chapter and the Districts will provide a plan for the further implementation of the shared mission which will include appropriate structures, resources and programmes.

We are confident that this work can be done. We pledge our support to you.

So together, and with the help of God and of our Founder, let us face the challenge of our mission together.

**42nd General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.  
The Consultants.**

## 15. EXCERPTS FROM THE PERSONAL STATEMENTS OF THE CONSULTANTS



**Mr. Vicente Fortunato**  
Catalonia

*...My life became enlightened once I entered the classrooms of Colegio La Salle, which at the time belonged to the Brothers. Those excellent Brothers opened up for me a world of peace, service, welcome and dignity to which I was greatly attracted. More than once I almost decided to join the consecrated life of my masters, but there was always one particular obstacle, which was rather incomprehensible to myself, but which the superiors of that time considered insuperable, the fact that I was an only child.*

*God's plans sometimes mean the closing of one door in order to open another, that is how I became involved in the Lasallian Shared Mission. From then on, my life centred on the Lasallian Charism...*

*...My teaching career began in the school where I had been a student, La Salle Condal. My first experience there was intense but brief. Next came La Salle Barceloneta, right next to the first school, where I gladly accepted a post. The nature of the school, in a working class suburb, and for the poor, enthused my dedication from the start. I have now been there for 30 uninterrupted years, mostly as a teacher, but occasionally adding secretarial work to my tasks; for the past 10 years, I have been headmaster of the professional training school.*

*My style of life has aimed at sharing the mission with generosity. I have never omitted from my teaching programme some religion lessons each year. I organised and helped in extra-curricular religion lessons, including some for poor students, during a period of ten years; and for twelve years, I organised camps with the single objective of teaching religion during them.*

*...Thirteen years ago, we began meetings of Brothers and Teachers on how to live out together a common teaching policy and common spirituality. Throughout those years I have been faithful for the most part to the three annual meetings and the three-day retreat of the Lasallian Family.*

*...My relationship with Signum Fidei started when the Confraternity began. I have taken every step in this movement, in agreement and together with my wife, who has always shared my ideals and work.*

*...I shall always thank Our Lord for arranging for me to meet a certain De La Salle Brother, who one day asked if I would replace one of the teachers. It was through that event that I got to know St. John Baptist de La Salle.*

*I began my work with the Brothers when I was 19; that was the first time I had seen the inside of a Catholic school. In St. John Baptist de La Salle, I found a life model, whom I consider God's gift to education; De La Salle has helped me to see everything with the eyes of faith.*

*With St. John Baptist de La Salle, I have learnt not to make any difference between the duties of my state and my own holiness. I feel sure that my mission as a Christian can be achieved through education; by performing my ordinary work as a minister I can help to build up the Kingdom of God.*

*A few years ago, I intended getting married, but a few months before the date, having prayed a lot and having weighed up whether I could continue what I was doing as a committed educator and be married as well, I realised that teaching was my primary concern. Some people call me mad and tell me that marriage would give me security; I don't doubt that that is true for a lot of women, but in my case, it is Jesus who gives security; that is why I have decided to work for God, in St. John Baptist de La Salle's way, sharing with the Brothers their work for children and young people.*

*I believe in the Shared Mission. Let me tell you another story to illustrate what I mean by Shared Mission. There once lived a man who sold balloons for a living; these balloons were as pretty as any you can find. One day a boy approached him to watch the man letting go of the balloons, which then floated up into the sky. He let go of all the balloons but one. Now it happened that the balloon which remained behind was a black one. "Does that balloon stay down here because it is black?" asked the boy. In answer, the man let the black balloon go too, with the remark: "It isn't colour, but what is inside that counts".*

*A lot of us Lay People live close to the Brothers, and also have the spirit of faith and zeal. We also want to live as a Lasallian community as the founder advises. I thank you Brothers for allowing me to share with you my love of Jesus and St. John Baptist de La Salle.*



**Miss Lourdes Maria  
Fernández**  
Central America





**Miss Marlina L. Fagela**  
Philippines

*My journey with the Brothers covers a span of two decades - as an educational minister and as Signum Fidei.*

*As I look back in the journey, there were rich experiences of growing and becoming as a Lasallian, as a Christian.*

*The journey is also characterized by confusing crises and creative, critical challenges, not only in the institution that I served but also in the whole District. (My school and the Provinciate are in one compound.)*

*The lay participation is quite strong in our District. The Brothers, especially those in the top positions, are open and encouraging.*

*...I expect the following:*

*1. Lay collaborators and Brothers to work hand in hand in the shared mission. A radical shift of thinking from "we, Brothers and you, lay" to "we are in this mission together", "you accompany us and we accompany you", "we will walk side by side". No amount of structure will affect the shared mission unless we first effect a change in our thinking, our attitude, our perspective.*

*2. A re-writing of the Letter to the Lasallian Family considering the shared mission perspective.*

*3. A more collegial management in the Institute, District, and institutions for all groups as concrete expression of the shared mission.*

*4. An intentional building of communities of men and women of faith. Both lay collaborators and Brothers as animators.*

*5. More cooperation and collaboration in all levels among Lasallian groups and movements.*

*...I joined a college of the Brothers in an Asturian mining valley, where I began Lasallian work. From the beginning, I joined an educational community and made my own, the educational and pastoral principles that inspire the Brothers. I gradually discovered the meaning of the mission of Christian educator as builder of the Kingdom and of my own part in sharing it with my students. I began to strengthen my attitude and actions by basing them on the important aspects emphasised by St John Baptist de La Salle, namely Faith and Zeal.*

*The share in the educational project then increased by my discovery of the new term for it, the word "mission". I began to look on myself as the servant of the young and as a sign of God and of the Church in the work of Christian Education. Once I realised this, I determined to continue with my specific engagements and to discover new ones also. Since the road to the Shared Mission should be undertaken with deep reflection, and with God as its foundation, I looked for support in a community which would allow me to share these experiences of God and to base my life on them. At first it was the Brothers' community itself which enriched my life of prayer and commitment. Later it was with the group of my fellow teachers that I shared my faith.*

*This long journey in search of my personal identity convinced me that it would be in the school that I would be the prophetic sign required, for that is where I had developed it. This led me to take on the commitments expected in a Lasallian School...*



**Mr. Jorge García**  
**Antuña**  
Valladolid



**Mr. Gustavo Walter**  
**Solana**  
Argentina

*...God did not wait; he caught me in a trap of his own, through the determination of a true friend, who is now a De La Salle Brother and who invited me to join his youth group.*

*When I had had a taste of community in that group, with its prayers, life together, helping children with their catechism, visiting a reformatory school and helping out in a home for handicapped, who are God's special friends, I realised that to live for them was really worthwhile. Now, as you see all this happened just "by chance"...*

*...Shortly afterwards, I passed my teaching certificate and began work in various state schools in the suburbs. Some time after that, when I had married my wife Liliana, we both went down south to a region where the Passionists ran a mission. However, Liliana and I kept looking around for some permanent community. Then God, again "by chance", gave Mr. and Mrs. Solana a different answer. It was St. John Baptist de La Salle who now entered our life....going to the La Salle Foundation of González Catán, right in the middle of a deprived area of the Buenos Aires province, was to all appearances the most far-fetched, and yet, again...*

*...Today, Liliana, teacher of seventh grade (13-year-olds), with Diego, 9, Eliana, 6, Eliana, 2, and yours truly, Gustavo, headmaster of the primary section, the whole family opted for the Lasallian Educational Mission, with preference for the poor. This is our challenge to fidelity, which commits us and gives meaning to our personal and family life...*



**Miss Loiva Maria Rossi**  
Porto Alegre

*"The most beautiful thing we can offer to a human person is that he or she be a more human person". This Chapter has allowed me to grow as a person because of certain discoveries I have made during it:*

*1. I have received a completely overall view of Lasallian Educational work, its aim of spreading the Gospel and of liberating people in the places where the Brothers work. I can now see that we are a group of Brothers, Sisters and Lay People making up one big family, which follows Christ, in the footsteps of De La Salle.*

*2. I have now begun to realise how willing the Brothers are to share their mission with Lay People. It was a bold step on your part to ask Lay Consultants to your Chapter and even more so to listen to them and to take note of what we Consultants had to say. This is excellent, Brothers; however, it is going to need a change of heart from many Brothers. It is a challenge which you will have to face, and we hope that none of us will be disappointed.*

*3. The way we have been welcomed has been tremendous; we have shared friendships, prayers and meals together.*

*4. Expansion is in the air for the great Lasallian Family, so that more can feel the joy of joining in the Brothers' work: young people and children can also join in, especially when it means helping the poor.*

*...We feel we are sincerely involved in the mission of DLS - we have grasped his vision and we seek to understand more of his spirit and wisdom.*

*What we expect from you is a share in the mission of the Church which you Brothers have ministered in for the past 300+ years. We wish to share this ministry as equal partners, that is to share the same mission in all of its aspects.*

*We want to share the same mission not the same state (way) of life. We do not wish to be Brothers nor do we wish you to be like us (laity). We need both, in all their richness, to work together. We must also be authentic - that is, Brothers you must be authentic in your vocation and we in ours. We must be equal partners in association, complementing each other, assisting each other, supporting each other - for the same mission - the education of youth, especially the poor and disadvantaged.*

*I would like to say to you, Brothers, please do not be threatened by our presence in the mission. We are not here to replace you!!! We need each other for the success of the mission - for the youth of today...*



**Mr. David Hotek**  
United States



**Mr. Gery Short**  
San Francisco

*...We spent a lot of time over the last two weeks discussing shared mission, a great deal of time talking about the first part of this phrase - the sharing - and if I missed one thing, it is that we didn't spend enough time talking about the second part of the phrase-mission.*

*...I wish we could have had more time to discuss the primacy of direct service to the poor and interdependence. It is unfortunate that we have not had the opportunity to talk with one another from other countries more about the mission...*

*...I realize that by addressing these questions of mission we are talking about a radical re-orientation of not only our educational work, but also our lives. And I realize that this re-orientation affects our lifestyles, and I include my family, my wife and children...*

*...During these days, I have enjoyed once more your openness and your usual 100% Lasallian characteristics of Brotherhood and Service, based on Faith. Faith in God who loves us and gathers us together, Faith in the Common Father who guides us, namely St. John Baptist de La Salle, and Faith in those who surround us. You must have lots of Faith, Brothers, to have done what you did in inviting us Consultants.*

*What do we hope for?*

*1. That we will be given our place as consecrated women in this big Lasallian Family.*

*2. We know from the words of Brother Superior General Athanase Emile, spoken on his visit in 1948 in our Mother House, as well as from the document of 15th May 1950, that we are your Sisters. And yet there are Brothers who do not know these facts, so we want the Chapter to tell the Brothers about us in clear terms.*

*3. I hope that there will be greater communication and links between our Institutes, so that we can welcome and give a good formation to young people called by God in different parts of the world, and that they will consecrate their life to the educational mission, according to the charism of St. John Baptist de La Salle.*



**Sister Elia Hernández Cárdenas**  
Guadalupanas  
Sisters of De La Salle



**Mr. Robert Carlier**  
South Belgium

*...During those days in the Mother House, I often had the opportunity to mention where I came from. But I found it much more difficult to say where I was going. The day after my arrival, in speaking about my experiences (the most significant ones) of the shared mission, I told the French speaking group that I was very impressed by the slogan of the meeting: "The adventure continues" and that I made this slogan my own.*

*There are two kinds of adventures: one consists of forging ahead, often alone and unsure and unclear about the destination - this is not my way. The other kind clearly defines the objective, looks for like-minded fellow travellers and sets off without indulging in great expectations: that is my way. Today, I have become more aware of what needs to be done and the contribution I can make. The new adventure for me will consist in reducing the distance between the two.*

*...I am a past pupil of St. Joseph's, Khoronfish, Cairo, and at present the Headmaster of the College. The school is situated in a working class area and the fees paid by the students are low.*

*In 1968, I applied for a teaching post in the school and taught in the primary section. I only had the baccalaureate certificate and I had to work to earn my livelihood... I received support and help from the Brothers in charge who arranged for me to continue teaching while I studied at the University...*

*...In 1972-73, the Brothers handed over positions of responsibility in the school to lay staff members. They were motivated by the need to make the school "Egyptian" and to help lay teachers to assume their responsibilities in the school apostolate... At this time, a Board of Administrators was set up: Brother Director and lay members.*

*...In 1979 and 1980, an education project was drawn up for the school : at the outset, between the Brothers and some lay members, and later all the staff members were invited to participate.*

*1978 and 1979 saw the setting up of another project : A Project of Association With An Egyptian Organization - (Association of Upper Egypt).*

*...There were many meetings between the Brothers and this Association. Later on, lay teachers in posts of responsibility in the school contributed, offering suggestions. The partners of the Association were astonished to see these members playing such an important role in the debates. ...In 1983... was the setting up of a self-financing project for the school : the erection of a building in which 50 workshops would be housed.*

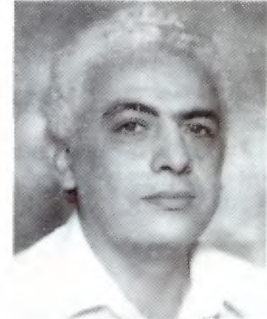
*...From 1984 on, the lay Headmaster of Lasallian schools held regular meetings... In 1988, the Brothers who were Headmasters joined them.*

*...In 1987, one of the results of these meetings was the setting up of a Lasallian Center, at the request of the Headmasters.*

*That same year, I was appointed Headmaster of St. Joseph's at Khoronfish...*

*...In 1989, I was invited to come to the Council of the Delegation of the Brothers to discuss the urgent problems caused by the dilapidated condition of the school buildings at Khoronfish.... The school must be demolished and rebuilt... Today, the school has been entirely rebuilt.*

*In April 1993, here I am in Rome, at the Mother House, with other lay people for the first in the history of the General Chapters of the Brothers. And the Shared Mission goes on...*



**Mr. Michel Shoukry  
Lawandy**  
Egypt



**Mr. Etienne Arquillère**  
France

Discoveries and points that attracted our attention:

- The richness and diversity of cultures.
- The various degrees of development of the shared mission, depending on the Districts.
- BUT: A certain number of points, attitudes, and concerns.
- A sharing of Lasallian spirituality.
- Among the Brothers: in general, a post-council attitude/spirit vis-à-vis the laity.
- Among the laity: a common enthusiasm in participating in the educational mission (not only the work).
- General experience of accompanying young people in difficult situations.
- Concrete concern to respond to needs of the new poor.
- The desire that the ENTIRE INSTITUTE place itself in the situation of the shared mission, through projects in the Districts, and for the future, the creation of various organizations (while there is still time).
- The common concern about the pastoral ministry and the problem of vocations (in the widest sense of the term: educators, religious).
- The desire to associate our senior students in our educational projects.
- The concern about the necessity - in certain countries - to recognize more fully our collaborators and colleagues (management, work contract...).
- The desire expressed in the formation of educators to facilitate the transition from "worker" to collaborator in the mission.
- The concern for periodic evaluation of works undertaken.
- An increased awareness of the present means of social communication, as well as the need to explain our work and to share it more with the families of the young who are entrusted to our care.
- The preoccupation concerning the positive contribution of the Lasallian family.
- The concern to maintain contacts between different countries.

## 16. CONCLUDING REMARKS TO CONSULTANTS

Brother John Johnston, Superior General

23 April 1993

Brothers and Consultants - in this final session together I want to express a few thoughts that have occurred to me in the course of the very rich discussions of these two weeks.

### **1. We members of the Lasallian Family have to keep in focus "for whom" we are called**

I opened the session today with a reading from the **Meditations for the Time of Retreat** (MTR 1.3). On the title page of the first publication of this work in 1730, we read that the meditations are intended "for the use of all persons who are engaged in the education of youth, and particularly for the retreat which the Brothers of the Christian Schools make during vacation".

It seems clear that St. De La Salle wrote the meditations, certainly primarily, for the Brothers. Nevertheless, they are very useful for all persons engaged in the education of youth, and particularly useful, I would say necessary even, for all members of the Lasallian Family.

The first meditation has a special importance for us - Capitulants and Consultants. It is a forceful and convincing reminder that our point of departure must always be young people and their needs, particularly young people who are poor, young people whom God wants to come to knowledge of the truth and be saved. God wants young people to develop their potential as human persons and to be liberated from all that is inhuman and from all that is dehumanizing. But for this purpose they need teachers - since God operates ordinarily through human ministers. Therefore, God, in his Providence, that is to say, in his love and concern for youth, kindles a light in the hearts of certain persons, calling them to respond to the need young people have for teachers and guides. In uncompromising language, the Founder told his Brothers on the first day of their annual retreat that they were such persons. I believe that in like manner all members of the Lasallian Family are called by God to exercise, in one way or another, the ministry of human and Christian education.

It is essential, I think, that we never lose sight of this perspective. Our starting point must always be young people. It is for them, for their human and Christian education, that we have been called to communion as members of the Lasallian Family. That communion is essentially oriented to mission. It is a communion which is "missionary", in the broad sense of that word, in its very nature.

Forms, structures, definitions are important. So are the means we use for the exercise of our ministry. But their importance is relative. We must never become so distracted by secondary questions that we fail to keep sufficiently in focus the "for whom" we exist. Our structures have to be clear, but flexible enough to permit the adaptations that socio-political and religious realities demand of us. Pope John Paul has said that we often have to be content with doing what we can do. Twice in *Redemptoris Missio* he says that sometimes the only thing we can do is "give witness", but, he insists, witness is in itself authentic "evangelization".

Certainly during these days we have all become more aware of the variety of complex situations in which the Lasallian Shared Mission is exercised and of our efforts to do, with realism and creativity, as much as we can and as well as we can.

I make these remarks, Brothers and Consultants, because I think that a tendency in our Institute to give priority to the means rather than to the end seriously handicapped in the past and even blocked our creative adaptation in countries where political difficulties made impossible or very difficult the operation of Christian schools. It is, I think, that same misplaced priority that makes it very difficult for us today to take at face value article 11, for example, which calls upon the Institute to establish, renew, and diversify its works in response to the concrete needs of youth today, particularly of poor youth.

God wants all young people to come to knowledge of the truth and be saved. We are called to dedicate ourselves to that end by committing ourselves wholeheartedly and creatively to the ministry of human and Christian education.

## 2. We are called to Communion, a Communion which generates communion

A number of you, our Consultants, have remarked that during these days you have become much more knowledgeable of and sensitive to the international character of our Lasallian Family. You have said that you now feel more a part of this great family of perhaps 60,000 men and women (we don't yet have reliable figures) - men and women like us - at the service of some 850,000 young people in 81 countries. You realize now, more than ever before, that you are a part of something that is having a tremendous impact in the world of education today and has the potential of having an even greater impact.

We are a communion of persons. We are first and foremost in communion with God, with the Trinity. It is the Father who wants all young people to come to knowledge of the truth and be saved. It is the Father who has kindled a light in our hearts, calling us to this special ministry of human and Christian education, a ministry which is nothing less than making the loving and saving presence of his Son, Jesus Christ, a visible and effective reality among the young. We exercise this ministry with the help of the Spirit which the Father gives us through the Son. The heart of our communion, therefore, is communion with the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

We are in communion with one another - an international family of persons of different races, cultures, nationalities, ethnic heritages, languages. We sense a profound unity because we have something very particular in common. We have all decided to live our baptismal consecration inspired by the example and teachings of John Baptist de La Salle and the three hundred year history of the Institute he founded.

We say that we are Lasallians and that we are striving to create Lasallian schools. That language is appropriate.

Nevertheless, some caution is needed. I have sometimes remarked, not totally in jest, that every time I use the expression "Lasallian School" I have the sensation that St. De La Salle is frowning at me. I hear him saying: "I founded the Brothers of the Christian Schools, not Brothers of the Lasallian schools." We do have to remember that a Lasallian school is not something parallel to Christian or Catholic schools. A Lasallian school is a Christian school, a Christian school which manifests certain characteristics. But the fact is that other Catholic educators and religious institutes share in various degrees a commitment to most, if not all, of those characteristics. But I am not personally concerned that our schools be different, at least necessarily, from other Catholic schools. What is essential is that we be authentic, true to ourselves. In other words we shouldn't define ourselves in terms of who we are not, but in terms of who we are.

But after acknowledging that we have much in common with others engaged in Catholic education, we can say that we are "different" in that we are a family which has been given form, and which receives inspiration and direction even today, from the fascinating story of the young French priest who had the faith and courage required to set off on a journey, not knowing where that journey would take him.

Our international family is called to be a "communion" which lives in interrelationship with all the communities, groups, and movements which constitute the great Communion which is the Church. For this reason we must never work in isolation from the local Church. We must never work in parallel with the local Church. We must do everything possible to see that our apostolic works, whatever their nature, are integrated in the plan of the particular Church. But, of course, we must be aware of our rights and defend those rights. We must have the faith, hope, love, and courage required to be men and women of dialogue, even when dialogue is difficult. We must participate actively in diocesan organizations and with other religious institutes, particularly those which have a similar end.



A Chapter session.  
The moderator  
gives permission to speak  
whilst the secretaries  
attentively take notes  
for the minutes.

We must also be in communion with men and women of other religious faiths. The Pope is going to Albania on Sunday. In his remarks to the Albanian ambassador yesterday, he reiterated his consistent position that men and women of all religious faiths - Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, traditional - whatever their differences - can and must work together for justice and peace, which, he says, are for us Catholics "gospel values".

The educative communities of our schools must be in relationship with the civic community which surrounds them, responsive to particular needs. We have to be willing to place our resources and facilities at the service of the local people for basic and/or continuing education, for meetings, for sports and recreation, etc.

In short the Lasallian Family must be a communion in relationship with other communions. It must be a communion which, in the words of **Christifideles Laici**, generates communion. That is a beautiful image, I think, of our mission as members of the Lasallian Family. We are a communion committed to generating other communions through our efforts for the human and Christian education of youth, particularly poor youth.

\*\*\*

Consultants - I thank you for your presence during these two weeks. You have made an extraordinary contribution.

Because of who you are, what you have done, what you are doing, and what you are committing yourselves to do, you have touched our lives profoundly. You have truly evangelized us during these two weeks - and we are grateful. I thank your families also for agreeing to your absence, and I express our regret for any inconvenience they have suffered. Thank you for reminding us how important it is that we never forget that your first responsibility is to your family.

You came to Rome not knowing what to expect. I suspect that you are returning to your countries not knowing what to expect. You are probably wrestling with the question of how to communicate to others the experience you have lived and how to implement the orientations that have evolved. We Brothers understand your feelings in this regard because we share them. We shall all face the challenge of helping the Lasallian Family put into practice what we have decided. It will be important to maintain communication with the Capitulants of your Districts and, if possible, with other Consultants. We all have to do the best we can. I am sure that it is exactly what you will do.

I now ask Brother Maurice to call each one of you to come forward. It is my pleasure to present you with a medallion which I hope will serve to remind you of the experience we have lived together during these two weeks. On one side is the image of St. De La Salle, on the other the image of the Casa Generalizia, which, I hope, has been "home" for you during these days and which, I assure you, will always be home for you should you have the opportunity to return to Rome on some future occasion.

## 17. HOMILY OF CARDINAL EDUARDO PIRONIO

Thursday 22th April 1993.

**MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,  
members of the large, loved and effective  
Lasallian Family.**

"**The Father loves the Son!**" (Jn 3:35). I have always been impressed by the awareness which Jesus has of the Father's love for him. It is this awareness which leads him to speak so passionately of the Father, to witness to the Father in his person, his actions and in his works. It is the love of the Father which leads him to give his life for the redemption of all people. "**The Father loves the Son!**" (Jn 3:35).

I believe, my dear Brothers and Sisters, that in a General Chapter, and particularly in a General Chapter such as this when, for the first time, Lay and Religious Consultants are participating, the first thing that one must experience is a new awareness of the profound love of the Father who invites anew to personal and community renewal and sends forth anew to the educational and evangelical mission for the purpose of building a new world; it is to experience the love of the Father in this historic moment. This love of the Father inspires joy in this proclamation as well as courage, valour and audacity in making appropriate decisions.

In the first reading we listened to this phrase of the Apostles before the Sanhedrin: "**One must obey God before men**" (Acts 5:29). The General Chapter and, I repeat, a General Chapter such as this, is a school for listening to the Word of God and for accepting the strength of the Spirit. As to-day's Gospel tells us, "**God gives his Spirit without reserve**" (Jn 3:34). You need to be aware that you are living in a great historic moment in which the challenges of the Church and of the world confront the Institute as challenges of communion and mission. It is the Spirit who has to speak and to act and it is the Word of God which must be accepted.

This is a moment, providentially important for you, in which the challenges are very great but also, as the Pope says, a dramatic moment, given the world-wide crisis which we are experiencing, which is full of hope. The Pope also speaks to us of this hope in the Encyclical, "**Redemptoris Missio**", on the missionary inspiration. Jesus wished to profoundly experience this love of the Father and it is Jesus who now invites us to a profound renewal of the awareness of being children of the Father,

to fruitfulness in communion, to missionary hope and to profound contemplation.

I am particularly struck throughout this Easter period by the Apostles' oft-repeated expression which appears in the liturgical readings: "**And we are witnesses**" (Acts 2:32). In to-day's reading we have heard these expressions - "**and of all this we are witnesses**" and "**the Holy Spirit was given to us**". In the Gospel we read that they witness to what they have seen and heard. In other words, the mission must be an expression of an experience and a proclamation of the Word of God. The mission is at the service of the construction of a new world of love, truth, justice, reconciliation and peace. All of this is dependent on a deep and contemplative inner-life. I would like to make this appeal to you to live from the experience of God who loves us, to deeply live that contemplation which is not something strange but rather is the capacity to daily accept the Word of God, to savour it and, from this inner-experience, to put it into practice. In itself, this attitude leads to living a particular type of communion, in faith and in hope, which you have deepened together in these days.

We are attempting to build the future of the Institute in the spirit of deep communion which is an expression of the intimate communion of the Father with the Son in the Holy Spirit. It is a communion of the Bishops with the rest of the People of God. It is a very close communion within Lasallian life - each person with a particular role and with a particular spirit, inspired by the same charism and strengthened by the same spirituality, fraternally contributing to the mission which is the mission to educate and to evangelise according to the particular charism of St. John Baptist De La Salle. It is to stimulate the missionary inspiration from within a contemplative community and through fruitful communion. This missionary inspiration enables us to perceive the signs of the times, the new challenges, which have to be faced in community and in communion with Christ and with the Church. We are helped by Holy Mary to honestly respond to the historical challenge which is characterized by a particular outpouring of holiness, of communion and of missionary spirit.

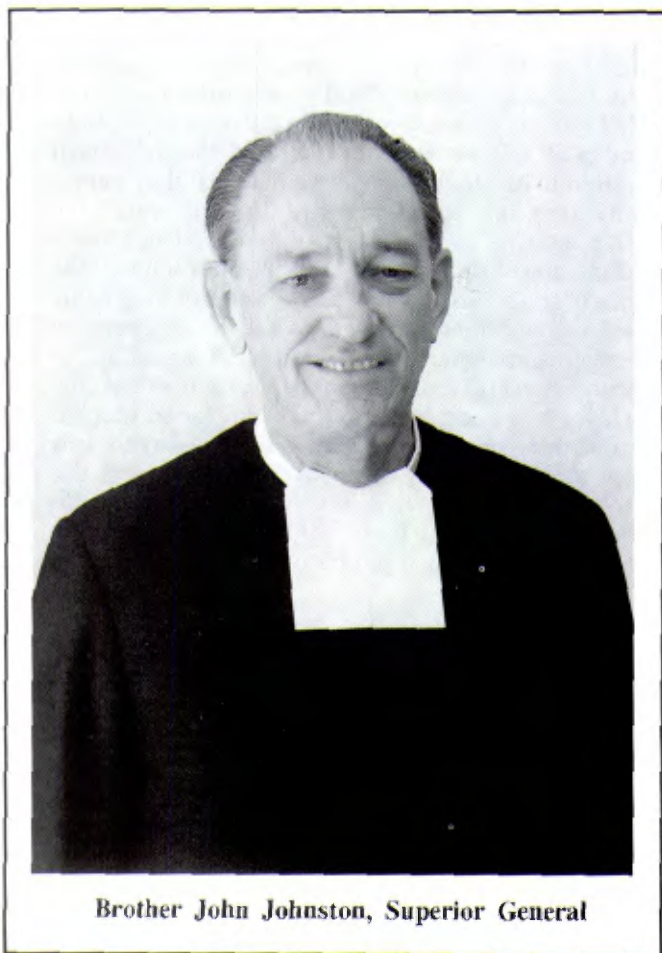
May St. John Baptist De La Salle help you on this journey.

These are my wishes for you!

## ELECTION OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL AND HIS COUNCIL

### 18. ELECTION OF THE BROTHER SUPERIOR GENERAL

4th May 1993



Brother John Johnston, Superior General

The 42nd General Chapter of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, convened since April 5th at the Generalate in Rome, has reelected Brother John Johnston to a second seven-year term as the 22nd Superior General of the Brothers.

Brother John Johnston, 59, was born on November 10, 1933, in Memphis, Tennessee, U.S.A. After completing elementary school at St. Therese (Little Flower) parish and secondary school with honors at Christian Brothers High School in Memphis, he entered the novitiate in Glencoe, Missouri, where he made his first vows on August 31, 1952. He pronounced his perpetual vows on June 26, 1958, in Winona, Minnesota. After several years of secondary school teaching, he was assigned to the staff of the juniorate and novitiate in Glencoe. He was appointed director of student Brothers in 1961. In 1963-64, he made the Second Novitiate at the order's Generalate in Rome, after which he was named principal of Costa High School in Galesburg, Illinois. In 1968, he resumed the post of Director of student Brothers, a position he held until he was named Provincial of the St. Louis District in 1971. He was elected Vicar General in 1976 and was chosen as Superior General in 1986. In addition to his many responsibilities related to the worldwide Institute, Brother John has served as vice president of the Union of Superiors General in Rome since 1988.

Brother John received the Bachelor of Arts degree cum laude in 1956 and the Master's degree in education in 1960, both from Saint Mary's College of Minnesota. He has undertaken advanced studies in counselling at Loyola University (Chicago) and in theology at St. Louis University. He also earned the Choirmaster's Certificate from the Gregorian Institute in Toledo, Ohio. He has been awarded the honorary doctorate of Humanities by Christian Brothers University (Memphis, Tennessee), Lewis University (Romeoville, Illinois), Manhattan College (New York) and Saint Mary's College of Minnesota (Winona).



## REMARKS FOLLOWING ELECTION

### Brother John Johnston

*Brothers, I thank you for the confidence you have manifested in me. And I thank God that this is the last time that I shall have to endure one of these election procedures.*

*The election indicates, I suppose, a recognition of certain gifts which I have received from the Lord - gifts which a majority of you apparently consider useful for the life and mission of the Institute today.*

*I know, however, that all of you - those who voted for me and those who did not - are aware of my faults and limitations. I am personally keenly aware of my spiritual, intellectual, and emotional limitations. I have always found great consolation in Paul's sensitivity to his defects and his conviction in faith that God's grace is sufficient and that God's power is mysteriously manifested in our human weakness.*

*I have been told that a number of you think that ten years as Vicar and seven as Superior is enough and that a change would be in the best interests of the Institute. I understand very well that line of thought. Twenty-four years is indeed a long time. Especially twenty-four years in Rome.*

*The situation in which I find myself - which I accept as God's will in my regard - is ironic. You probably don't know that between 1955, the year I left the scholasticate, and 1976 - a period of 21 years - I was assigned to 13 different locations - including the second novitiate and CIL - I was Director of five different communities, Headmaster of a school, Director of Formation, and Visitor.*

*Then 1976 arrived - and since then my vow of stability has taken on a new meaning.*

*Brothers, I am certainly aware of the dangers that could result from being in the Central Government for such a long period. Arrogance is one of those dangers. I am impatient by temperament - and I know that I will have to be very sensitive to that tendency. Another danger is that of mental stagnation. I don't think that I am growing stagnant. I continue to ask questions, to read, to listen, to participate very actively in the Union of Superiors General. I hope and pray that I can continue to grow and stay alive intellectually and spiritually.*

*Physical illness or fatigue could, of course, be a danger. I was forty-two years of age when I was elected Vicar General. But I shall be sixty years of age in November of this year. Thanks be to God, however, my physical health is good. But I know that I shall have to be sensitive also to my emotional health. No Brother is more aware than I of the magnitude of the challenge the Institute faces. I know that it is my duty to be a source of hope and strength for the Brothers. I shall do everything I can to maintain good emotional, as well as physical, health. In keeping with the advice I have received from a number of Brothers, I shall try to be more faithful to vacations and periodic days off.*

*Brothers, if I have focused on negative aspects in my remarks so far, it is because I have been told that a number of you have such preoccupations - as well as, of course, other concerns.*

*Let me say in a very positive way that I have confidence in God, confidence in myself, and confidence in the Brothers. I believe that God in his Providence has placed me in this position. I accept it. I accept it with joy and enthusiasm. Some Brothers have expressed to me their sympathy at my having to spend twenty-four years of my life in Rome. But, honestly, living here is no problem for me. I like Rome, I like Italy. I find the work personally satisfying - most days! Not every day of course! I enjoy particularly the international dimension of our mission. In difficult moments - and there have been many - I have been strengthened by the marvelous support I have received from the Council, the Generalate staff, the Visitors, and the Brothers everywhere.*

*I said at this particular time seven years ago that there would not be any miracles - and there haven't been any. And I don't expect any miracles in the next seven years. I hope and pray that the Lord and my Brothers will keep reminding me that this work is His, not mine. I think that what the Lord wants from me is my best effort. I promise to do my best. Whether or not you voted for me, I ask for your help and your support, and, above all, for your prayers.*

## 19. ELECTION OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

May 7th 1993

*The 42nd General Chapter, on May 7th, 1993, elected Brother Alvaro Rodríguez Echeverría as Vicar General of the Institute. The Chapter also elected five other Brothers who, with the Vicar General, form the General Council of the Superior. The five include three from the previous Council: Brothers Martín Corral, Pierre Josse and Gerard Rummy. The new Councillors are Brothers Dominique Samne and Raymundo Suplido.*



**Brother Alvaro Rodríguez Echeverría.**

He was born July 8th, 1942, in San José, Costa Rica. He entered the juniorate in Panamá in 1955, received the habit in 1959 at Bordighera and made his first vows in 1961. He attended the scholasticate in Salamanca and made final vows in 1968. He completed the Licentiate in Philosophy in 1972. He attended the 1979 CIL, and then worked in the Residencia Universitaria in Guatemala. He became Auxiliary Visitor of Central America in 1983 and was Visitor from 1985 to 1992. He was a Delegate to the General Chapters of 1986 and 1993.



**Brother Martín Corral Alcalde.**

He was born on November 11th, 1942, in Belorado (Burgos), Spain. He entered the junior novitiate in Bujedo in 1954 and received the habit in 1958 at Arcas Reales. Appointed to the juniorate staff at Barcelos in 1963, he became sub-Director in 1966. He made his perpetual profession in Valladolid in 1967. He earned the Licentiate in Philosophy in Portugal in 1972. From 1973 he was Director of the school of Braga (Portugal). He participated in the 1979 CIL. He became Visitor of Valladolid in 1982. A Delegate to the General Chapter of 1986, he was elected General Councillor by that Chapter.