



Letter of Superior General

December 31, 1979

CASA GENERALIZIA
dei Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane
Via Aurelia, 476 - C.P. 9099
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Rome, December 31, 1979

Dear Brother,

I have delayed sending you this customary end-of-the-year letter in order to come to you on the very eve of 1980 — the year during which we are undertaking the celebration of the tercentenary of the birth of our Institute. As I have already mentioned on several occasions, although the official opening of the commemorative year is to take place around the time of the feast of the Founder, May 15, I believe it opportune on this the threshold of 1980 to invite you once more to undertake to live this year of commemoration in a deep prayerful manner in order that the period may produce all the potential benefit that we anticipate therefrom.

The sentiments of profound sincerity and deep affection which I bring to this, the expression of my best wishes that the new year be a holy and happy one for you, have a particularly richer meaning for me today, given the proximity of the tercentenary. May 1980 be a period of joy and of fraternal life, of reflection and of examination, of renewal and of interest in the study and assimilation

of those basic values which moved Saint John Baptist de La Salle to form this Community "established and founded solely on Divine Providence" (1). ... and of those fundamental motives which in the admirable plans of this same Providence, still constitute for us the noblest reasons for our own existence.

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Before sharing with you some thoughts on a few issues which I feel to be of much relevancy for the Institute today, I would like to present in summary form and as sort of an introduction several events and accomplishments that have occurred over the course of these past months and which seem to be worthy of note.

a) Concerning the **systematic program of visits of the Superior and of the General Councillors to different regions of the Institute**, in this document I would like to tell you about the visits carried out with Brothers José Cervantes and Pedro Ruedell to the central portion of the American Continent. In the fifteen countries visited (Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and the northern part of Latin America), we were able to meet a large majority of the 950 Brothers who work in these areas, as also visit many of the educational communities which complement and multiply the action and influence of the former. Everywhere we noted a remarkable vitality and youthfulness and we were touched because such demonstrated

(1) "Memoire on the Habit" - Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

an adherence to and an enthusiasm for the legacy and work of De La Salle. Concretely — while still trying to be brief — here follow a few of the more salient characteristics of the situations we encountered:

a.a) An over-all feature of Latin America and one which provides a source of hope — the revitalization of the number of vocations. On the occasion of the meeting of all the Latin American Visitors held at Fusagasuga (Bogota, Colombia), it was noted that as of October (1979) there were 64 novices (2) and 74 postulants preparing themselves for admission to the Institute, amounting to a total of 1390 Brothers. This dramatic increase in the number of candidates to our Lasallian vocation makes for an urgency in the development and the strengthening of the personnel and structures of formation programs, which in several specific instances were notably deficient. In this sphere, as in the case of many other areas to which I can merely allude at this point, some vital decisions were taken during the meeting of the Brothers Visitors.

a.b) We also noted an increased sensitivity to the needs of the underprivileged and the poor. In this development there appears a conscious response to the clear orientations expressed by the CELAM, at Puebla. While there is still much to accomplish in this domain, at least a tangible start has been made. Some specific programs, of various types and importance, are complementing

(2) In December 1978, there had been 35 novices.

one another — e.g., the work on behalf of the peasants and the indigenous tribal groups of Sutatenza, Caldas, of Peru, of Bolivia, of Guatemala, of Mexico, etc. I would like to make special mention here of the efforts of our Brazilian Brothers in the areas of human and community development and evangelization in the forest regions of the Amazon River, at Altamira, Manaus, etc.

a.c) The educational communities of many of our Latin American schools demonstrate features of vitality and enthusiasm that are indeed notable. The collaboration of the lay teachers and staff in the educational activity of the Brothers is especially remarkable. This assistance is particularly expressed in the clearly Lasallian character of their own work. Membership in the "Signum Fidei" continues to grow quietly, but steadily. To the end of fostering vocations to the Institute, the zeal of such persons leads them to form groups such as the Benilde Clubs in Mexico. On a more general level, there is growing concern for the needs of stating more clearly, the objectives and characteristics of those activities and programs bearing the name of La Salle and which are seeking to place themselves under the spiritual protection of the Founder.

a.d) In the field of higher education, the La Salle Universities of Bogota (Colombia), Mexico City, and Monterrey (Mexico) continue to exert a remarkable and very positive influence upon the youth of their respective nations. The pioneering efforts and basic research of the La Salle Foundation for the Natural Sciences (Venezuela) have produced an effect whose value and import are already

considerable and whose potential for contributing to sound regional development is most significant.

a.e) The social and human problems which call forth the creative and dedicated service of our confreres in Latin America are numerous and complex. Organized and shared reflection on how best to have the message and charism of De La Salle contribute to the improvement of these same realities is taking place and developing, in terms of method and content, in many Communities and with many individual Brothers. We hope and fervently wish that such efforts at analysis and reflection do continue and that they become even more frequently the bases for study and for exchange of ideas in our Communities, thus making possible better modes of thought and appropriate corrective action. The socio-political situation that exists in some countries of Central America and the Caribbean is deemed so critical that recourse to routine and outmoded solutions cannot continue.

a.f) The visit to some countries proved of particular interest. Such was my two-day visit to **Cuba**. Opportunely, it coincided with the visit, after some 20 years, of Brother Visitor and several other Brothers. My own visit afforded me an opportunity to evaluate the modest possibilities for collaboration that have been offered to the Institute, which offers we will soon be in a position to accept.

We visited **Nicaragua** a few days after the Sandinista victory. We witnessed the euphoria of the populace following liberation, as well as became aware of the delicate problems which immediately arose and which will continue to arise as the work of national reconstruction goes on. The educational

activity of the Brothers continues as before; however, some specific projects have been incorporated into the national programs to promote literacy and community development that have been set forth by the new government. We trust that this sound cooperation in such broad programs will enable the Brothers to carry on their work, the value of which was frequently attested to during the course of our visit.

b) In **France**, together with Brothers Pedro Ruedell and Vincent Rabemahafaly, I visited the Districts of Midi-Mediterranée and of Atlantique. This particular trip forms part of the series of visits to the Region of France, which visits will be completed during the centenary year. Accompanied by the Regional Superior, Brother Michel Sauvage, and the respective Brothers Visitors, we were provided with an excellent opportunity to again a broader knowledge of the Brothers and their work in France, as also of the conditions that exist in various parts of the country and of the means of best coping with their current needs and exigencies. In our meetings with the Brothers, particular emphasis was placed on the revitalization of community life and on the development of the apostolate among the young and the underprivileged. Such emphasis looked to fostering and consolidating a unity of orientation and of action plans, thus assuring that the necessary and existing pluralism does not result in diffusion of effort and that the effectiveness and authenticity of our witness as religious are not jeopardized.

c) Several discreet visits to our Brothers in various countries of **Eastern Europe** afforded an

occasion to bear witness of our spiritual union with them and to encourage them in their difficult situation. Information about these Brothers must be as prudently guarded as the reference to the visits to which I have made allusion.

d) According to the latest reports received from **Vietnam**, our Brothers there continue to live with bravery and high morale their life of difficulty and need. Generally, they are occupied in various types of employment and occasionally have the possibility for Community contacts which latter greatly assist them in maintaining their fidelity. Those Vietnamese Brothers living in exile have just succeeded in establishing a missionary project, a definite sign of and stimulus to new apostolic commitments. A group of five Vietnamese Brothers will begin working in New Caledonia (Noumea) during the early months of 1980. The choice of this particular place, from among the numerous offers available in the missionary world, was based on the exceptionally favorable conditions and the excellent welcome extended to the Brothers.

e) The Brothers of the Region of Spain have returned to **Equatorial Guinea** in response to the invitation extended them to do so by the new government authorities that replaced the dictator Macias Nguema. A Community has been recently re-opened in this African nation whose newly granted status of independence and development were thwarted early on by a period of ruthless oppression and ruinous economic policies. Volunteer members of the various Spanish Districts have set about re-establishing a school at Daloa, on the Marfil Coast. Return to this country brought the

number of nations where the Institute is currently at work to 82.

f) **Brother Pierre Legendre** was recently appointed to the post of Econome General of the Institute, succeeding Brother René Hamel who carried out this function with exemplary care for the past 13 years. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Brother René for the dedication and competence that he brought to this task over his many years of service. We also wish Brother Legendre much success in his new mission.

g) In the context of our activity here in Rome, I would like to mention the **Meeting of Superiors General** which was held during the month of November and which this year considered the theme "*Confirma fratres tuos,*" i.e., the duties and efforts involved in the responsibility and attention that every superior owes to his brothers to the end of encouraging and aiding them not only to perseverance in their vocation, but of maintaining their moral and psychological health as well. I would also like to tell you about the *two special audiences* that the Holy Father granted earlier this month to the Council of the Union of Superiors General of both men and women religious. In all, we had an opportunity to meet and speak with the Pope for over three hours. The second meeting was carried on through the evening meal, a rather simple and informal dinner, and the affable familiarity and practical interest in the concerns and problems of religious, demonstrated by His Holiness, were indeed noteworthy. Before taking our leave, John Paul II suggested that other such meetings of

exchange and dialogue should be held from time to time.

h) In bringing to a close this panorama of our activities, I would like to say a word about the **preparations for the Tercentenary** that are being methodically tended to, leading us to believe that the celebration will indeed be an appropriate one. Plans for the two international symposia, on Catechetics (April 8-12, 1980) and Mental Prayer (November 9-16, 1980) have been finalized and the participants involved are now going about preparing their work to meet the proposed objectives of these two programs. The material on the Founder (slide collection and photo album) is scheduled for distribution in the early part of the new year. The new edition in French of the life of Saint John Baptist de La Salle by Maillefer has already appeared and we hope that within a few months the new edition, also in French, of the *Explanation of the Method of Mental Prayer* will be ready for publication. The World Congress of Lasallian Associations has received notices of participation from groups around the world; the organizing committee of the "International March of Youth" to Parmenie, France has also already launched its publicity campaign with prospective participating groups.

The official inauguration of the Tercentenary which is to be held in Rome is scheduled for May 15. To the written invitation that I personally presented to him, the Holy Father has graciously answered in a letter dated December 12 saying that "*he was happy to learn of the Lasallian commemorative festivities and that he wished to*

be able to participate." However, the letter continued, *"It is evidently yet too early to take a final decision on the matter."*

We trust that the participation of John Paul II, in union with us all who hold great hope for the potential value of this joyful and proper commemoration of our foundation, will assist us in effectively undertaking with renewed commitment and fidelity the course that we must follow in the years to come.

* * *

We often speak about fidelity, and we find ourselves doing so more frequently as the Tercentenary approaches. To be consistent with the notion of respect for the past which continues to inspire our historical development and which assures a measure of continuity and sense of mission, I would like to present herein several brief reflections on a theme which has become part of our official title and which illustrates the option, at once preferential and longstanding, made with reference to our choice of mission, i.e., **the school**. We are and we call ourselves *"Brothers of the Christian Schools."*

The tangible fact of our insertion in the scholastic world is of necessity called into question nowadays given the difficulties, the conflicting issues, and the changes that the school must confront today. Can we expect or hope to continue our involvement out of sheer inertia, or merely thanks to an attitude, limited to a criticism or a defense, vis-a-vis the school?

On the one hand, the Church continues to look upon us as having a special responsibility for

maintaining on its behalf in the field of education a presence that is appropriate and adequate. We are all familiar with the oft-repeated testimonies of the recent Popes, which testimonies of confidence are further taken up by pastors and authorities, both ecclesial and civil. I will limit myself here to giving as an example what Paul VI said to us on the occasion of an audience toward the end of the 39th General Chapter (June 6, 1966):

"My dear sons, we are pleased to recognize and to proclaim the fact that you are highly qualified specialists — we could even say technical experts — in the area of Christian education. The Church is most grateful for the valuable services that you provide to its members in this domain. However, the high esteem with which you are held by the Church leads her to expect more from you than she does from other groups."

"During this the immediate aftermath of the Council, she counts on your being the first and the most eager to study, to assimilate, and to implement the conciliar Declaration 'Gravissimum educationis momentum,' solemnly promulgated by us on October 28, 1975."

On the other hand, and as I will have occasion to recall to you subsequently, the role and the mode of being and action of the Christian school are seriously questioned by many today.

For the purpose of providing a better response to these challenges, a responsibility based as much on the trust confided in us, as the need to answer the persons who criticize our commitment to the school, the most important point and the one around which our analyses and our reflections must turn, is that Saint John Baptist de La Salle did not seek

to add just another school to the already existing number; but rather to create and to have re-created continually by his spiritual sons, a special type of school — *“the Christian school.”* He conceived of such a school as being an instrument for human growth and development for those lacking the means to live and affirm their dignity as human beings; he saw it as a “training center of Christians” wherein those who frequent it would learn in a very concrete manner how to absorb and to live the “true spirit of Christianity” and to orient their lives according to principles of faith.

The Christian school has not always responded to the responsibility that its name would lead one to expect. Recently, Pope John Paul II said as much while mentioning the diversity of conditions, frequently in conflict one with the other, that the school was experiencing in various regions of the globe:

“In those countries, unfortunately becoming fewer and fewer, where it is possible to provide education in the faith as an integral part of the academic program, it is the Church’s bounden duty to do so as effectively as possible. Obviously, this applies especially in the case of the Catholic school. Would such a school warrant being called such, were its teaching in the secular fields of knowledge to be considered exceptional, but where there would be serious cause for claiming negligence or deviation in the teaching of religion?” (Catechesi Tradendae, § 69).

We do not wish at this point to defend the value of the prerogatives or the qualities that we believe to be part and parcel of our commitment, be it professional or apostolic. Of importance to

us is the answer to the question that a large group of Superiors General of both male and female religious teaching Congregations has just chosen as the topic of study in a series of meetings in Rome: **Is the Catholic School an Instrument of Evangelization?** This is indeed a critical question, one requiring serious analyses and one which we should ask ourselves frequently during the course of the commemorative year of the Tercentenary. Such analyses will aid us in answering the question for ourselves with concrete facts and in a positive fashion, as also permitting us thereby to confirm the confidence of many in our work, as well as to answer the criticism of our efforts by others.

The challenge to the value of the Catholic school.

Its value is challenged *“even by religious educators”* states the Report of Puebla (3), to which report I will have occasion to refer often in the material that follows. Among religious educators, doubts about the value of the Catholic educational institution arise because of the following:

— *“they produce an elitism and protect the interests of the ruling classes;*

— *“they bear few results in the area of education in the faith as well as in that of social changes;*

— *“they involve financial problems, etc.*

“Such issues brought about the abandonment of the school apostolate by many religious, with preference being given instead to pastoral-type

(3) *“Puebla,”* III Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, CELAM, 1979.

activity which was considered to be more direct, more valuable, and more urgent."

(§ 1019 of the cited document)

The changes which in the recent years have come about in the school setting and in our manner of inserting ourselves therein, far from resolving the troublesome issues, have made these all the more arduous and complex, and this to the extent of compromising the true image of the Brother and the efficacy of his mission. A few examples bear out such a situation:

— The positive, liberating, and truly democratic features of a private school system financially supported by civil authorities have easily led to the attitude of a Brother being a "salaried employee" and to the spirit of his being a "civil servant," which attitude and spirit vitiate too much and too often our evangelical liberty and poverty.

— The increase in the number of lay teachers and the corresponding diminution of religious personnel, at times makes for the Brothers being in a very small minority. The variety of types of participation, though recommendable and positive as pedagogical principles, presents some delicate problems and frequently compromises the desired unity of spirit and action that should exist.

— The growing complexity of the problems faced by modern youth and the corresponding diversity of educational endeavors required to work at meeting such problems often produce a diffusion of resources, which proliferation subsequently leads to the deterioration of organizational structures and of the efficacious activity to which we have been

accustomed within a more limited and traditional context.

— The social phenomena which we all are keenly aware of and which preoccupy us very much, e.g., the increasing unemployment within the teaching profession, the decreasing birth rate with its resultant need for fewer classrooms and even for actual closure of schools, the overall insecurity of the labor market arising from existing widespread economic crises, the lack of job opportunities for the graduates of our schools, etc., all of these problem issues tend to compromise the smooth functioning of our educational efforts.

These problematic issues and the questions they cause to arise serve to discourage a number of persons who, in times less troublesome, consecrated themselves to a mission of educational work within the context of the school. The following text from the Declaration still bears its very timely and forceful message: *"Every period of important change in the history of civilization has known similar crises. The solution, however, was never to suppress the school, or abandon it, but rather to emphasize its renewal."* (A Declaration, § 44/5). Permanent renewal, as a basic principle of all pedagogy, has its collateral dimension in the need for an on-going conversion of every attendant Christian and apostolic community. Within the framework of this effort, the genuine search for a true Christian identity ever urges us on. Speaking specifically about the school, Bishop Honoré observes that *"Such an identity is a rather ambiguous notion. It does not bear the same meaning for everyone. It does not fit one particular model, unanimously*

recognized and admitted to be such. Should the model have as its criterion, that wherein the repetitiveness and the permanence of relating the future to the present and the present to the past is the only true measure? Or must that criterion be rather one involving a fidelity that is open to a renewal and which allows, within the context of new circumstances, the maintaining of a Christian orientation of education? In brief, is it a question of speaking of identity in terms of something fixed and unchanging or of a concept that looks to less structured and project-type activity? (4)

In order to assure the permanence of those values that Saint John Baptist de La Salle wished to integrate into his notion of the school, we prefer to choose the concept of the "project" approach. Such an approach is the more dynamic and that which best resolves the dialectical tension that exists between tradition and the inevitable present. We want this overall general approach to education, as it is introduced into each of our institutions, to reflect two values that we find in the aforementioned document from Puebla and that we believe also coincide admirably with De La Salle's fundamental beliefs about the school.

1. A SCHOOL THAT IS TRULY EVANGELIZING IN ITS INFLUENCE

The CELAM document affirms in a clear manner: "*Christian education is a human and*

(4) Bishop Jean Honoré. *Aujourd'hui L'Ecole Catholique*. Le Centurion, Paris, 1979, p. 40.

evangelizing mission. The educational institutions of the Church receive an apostolic mandate from the Hierarchy." (§ 1035/c).

The text also encourages the "development of a Christian educator, particularly among the laity, who takes up his role in the Church and sees himself as an integral part of it, and is conscious of his calling to participate actively in its evangelizing mission in the field of education."

Simply recalling these principles can be interpreted as a lack of awareness or of understanding of the concrete difficulties that hinder the accomplishment of this objective. In bringing them to your attention once more, I do clearly have in mind the broad divergency of situations in which the Brothers are presently carrying out their educational efforts. Neither am I forgetful of the fact that facility has never served as a criterion for determining the opportuneness of a mission. We cannot ever forget the task which is unique for us, as followers of De La Salle, i.e., that of "*announcing the Gospel to the poor,*" and that the evangelizing power of our pedagogical activity is based on two factors fundamental in education in the faith — **catechesis** and a **community-like atmosphere** that is special in character.

1.1. A Catechesis of High Quality and of Relevance.

I remember distinctly these words of John Paul II in the document "*Catechesi Tradendae*" cited above: "*The specific character and the fundamental purpose of the Catholic school ... relate*

to the quality of the religious instruction that forms an integral part of the education given to students."

1.1.1. Providing for such quality of religious instruction is hampered by the type of **pluralism** that we encounter. The Pope alludes to this issue in particular a bit further in the text just quoted. The background of our students, whether it be from the viewpoint of religion, of family status, etc. is often impressive. Nowadays it would be useless to look for the type of homogeneity that once could normally be expected. Such pluralism among the students corresponds to that which exists in today's society, and which we find all around us and which we must bear in mind. This very pluralism can and should enrich the formation we give, rather than serve to neutralize it. However, more often than not, such pluralism tends to reduce religious instruction to a dispensing of superficial information, and the teaching of the mysteries of faith to a proclamation of religious truths very general in nature. There results a mere caricature of catechesis and complementary-type "*occasions*" must be found to provide modern youth with what is but rightfully theirs if they are "*to save themselves and arrive at a knowledge of the truth.*" (Cf. I Tim. 2:4 and Meditation I of the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* of De La Salle, I-1).

1.1.2. For us, Brothers, it is not pluralism which constitutes the biggest obstacle in terms of catechesis in the school. It is rather the **decrease in the number of Brothers involved** in catechetical instruction. That such a diminution is the result of our decreasing numbers as a whole is a fact, but what is more regrettable is that the situation

is much more a case of total or near total abandonment of catechetical activity by a certain number of Brothers. The cause of this situation is not only the inertia or the resistance encountered in this area of instruction, but also a certain complex of inferiority or from a deficiency of preparation in the type of catechesis that the youth of today require. May love for our mission aid us to re-discover adequate possibilities in this particular domain of education, to the end of lending wholesome opposition to this blameworthy condition.

In the face of the progressive lack of catechists, as also the growing necessity to go to the aid of so many disoriented youth and realizing furthermore that more and more Brothers are no longer teaching because of having reached the compulsory age for retirement, even though these same men are still energetic and able to contribute of their talents, I am extending to such confreres an invitation to consider a possible way by which they could involve themselves in some type of catechetical animation, where their activity would not require that they hold a title or official position. This kind of service would indeed provide a striking example of disinterestedness and affection for youth. Cases of such involvement do exist, but I hope that these will not remain as happy exceptions.

1.1.3. The broad collaboration of lay teachers in our educational work also bears some influence, often times negative, in the domain of catechesis. Nevertheless, in the recent papal document and by the last synod that inspired it, the lay staff members are strongly urged to participate integrally and spontaneously in the catechetical mission of the Church.

Ordinarily when we do seek out the cooperation of lay teachers in our work, we do so more for the help that they can provide in the secular disciplines, rather than in the area of catechesis. However, to the extent that we hold as essential the evangelizing influence and character of the classroom activity, the choice of lay colleagues must take into consideration their personal convictions and their capacity for integration, witness, and commitment.

On the other hand, should we not go even further and give attention to improving the programs which have been organized in some of our institutions, which programs are specifically geared to forming teachers in religious pedagogy and to preparing them for better animative and coordinative-type activity in the sphere of education in the faith? I would also like to say that the same should be done about the manner in which parents of our pupils should participate, especially the mothers functioning as catechists. The effective participation of parents in our evangelization efforts is highly desirable, since this function is one of the noblest duties which they as parents can perform.

1.1.4. Another dimension of the issue which certainly does not help to simplify the task of catechesis in the school setting, but which dimension makes such catechesis more realistic and effective concerns the need for *inculturation* — a concept given much attention both by the synod itself and the document “*Catechesi Tradendae*” (§ 53). As the Holy Father himself points out, if the term is really not a new one, the need for realism is also as ancient as the Gospel. As educators, we are no

less aware of the two-fold necessity of integration with the Church and with the local culture, than we are of the necessity of such integration with the subculture of the young. However, what is required here, is to minimize our isolation from the overall pastoral plan of the hierarchy and to assure the coordination of our efforts at evangelization with those of the Christian community and the bishop. It is also important to give sufficient attention to:

— the life, the problems, and the initiatives of the people who live around us, and adapting more carefully our methods to these realities;

— to the life and the experience of the young people, just as we find the former — without over-idealizing or unduly minimizing all those features which could lead to a lack of realism in teaching our faith. (Cf. the address of Paul VI to the Chapter capitulants in 1966);

— to the whole life of modern humanity, a humanity faced with broad problems and needs that will not admit of facile solutions in determining the best way of integrating and developing our educational efforts to providing answers for such problems and needs.

1.2. A Unique Milieu Permeated with Evangelical Values.

This is what De La Salle sought to produce and which he spoke about lucidly and distinctly in all his writings, particularly in his Meditations dealing with education. This type of Christian school was sought by him, “so that from morning until evening the children being in the care of the

masters therein, these same masters would be able to teach them how to live..." (Rule - 1709, Chapter I).

It is a school understood as comprising a *total catechesis*, as being a veritable initiation to a life based on Gospel values. Though it far from limited its mission to the catechetical instruction, a generous amount of time was set aside for this specific purpose. However, the organizational structure of the modern school, that adjusts its time schedules and programs according to the exigencies of the various academic disciplines and with little preoccupation as to what would constitute an harmonious development of the pupil, makes the creation of this type of atmosphere difficult and complicated. Only the establishment of an educational community conscious of its objectives can avoid the dispersion produced in the life of the young student by this unending use of educative agents and can preserve the characteristic features that Saint John Baptist de La Salle wanted for his schools. I will list herein those particular features which in my opinion are among the more remarkable (5):

1. A pedagogical approach centered on the person of the pupil — "*which relies on his autonomy and responsibility as an individual person.*" Such a school seeks the salvation of man, of man in the process of development, of man observed through the prism of Christian anthropology, of man called

(5) For a treatment of the implementation of these aspects of Lasallian pedagogy, see the document published by the Secretariat for Education of the FSC Region of France, and entitled "EDUCATEURS AUJOURD'HUI" (Educators of Today). The Secretariat is located at 78 A, Rue de Sèvres, Paris.

to a higher destiny, but also of a man who frequently suffers from the contradictions he finds within his being. In his inaugural encyclical, John Paul II identified this same man as being the focal point of the mission of the Church.

A pedagogical method that is solicitous for each pupil, that seeks to know and guide each pupil individually (6) without prejudice to the attention provided to others and regardless of the variety of other obligations which occupy the life of a teacher (examinations, scholastic activities, extra-curricular programs, social engagements on and off campus, etc.) and have a tendency to deter him from this his priority as formator.

2. A pedagogical process that is particularly attentive to interpersonal relations. If it is true that such relations give a special tone and a quality to any life situation, the Lasallian schools adds to it a Christian seal of "*freedom and charity*" (Cf. *Declaration on Christian Education*, § 8), which produces a "*maturity of the person ...and which helps the baptized person grow more conscious of the gift of faith which he has received.*" (Ibid. § 2). "*It is precisely the necessity of the Catholic school to assure itself that it will produce this quality in the teacher-student relationship that will now and in the future be one of the guarantees of its unique character.*" (7)

(6) In this context, reference is frequently made to that point of the *Conduct of Schools* which suggested that the teacher make up an individual record or file for each pupil. The examples provided are highly realistic and apt.

(7) Bishop J. Honoré, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

3. A school where, coherent with what has just been said, participation is as broad and genuine as possible. Such a school, open to and receptive of all that surrounds it, is first of all open and receptive to the initiatives and proposals coming from within, beginning with those coming from the pupils themselves.

4. A school which is concerned about education in those values that are presently imperiled, as a result of being forgotten, neglected or corrupted by modern society. Some such values are:

— **discernment** — an ability to establish distinctions and priorities for oneself; ability to resist the influence of fanaticism, of pressures, of superficial fads;

— **interiority** — an ability “to think for one self, and to take more pleasure in being than in having” (8);

— **effort** — as a basis and prerequisite of true freedom;

— **sharing** — as a communion between persons seeking to live their interiority and discernment;

— **gratuitousness** — in the face of a society which would like to think that everything can be bought or sold;

— **responsibility** — ability to observe society critically and to refuse to be a mere parasite or sycophant, incapable of rejecting whatever degrades or debases (9).

(8) ERIC FROMM. *To Have or To Be*. Harper and Row, New York, 1976.

(9) “CHILDREN — THEIR MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN WESTERN SOCIETY,” *Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin*. April 1979, pp. 16-17.

5. **Where do you situate the required attention to professional competence?** Obviously, this point cannot be neglected if we accept the scale of values as presented by De La Salle. Together with his *Meditations on the school* — serving as the backbone, inspiration and ideal of our mission as educators — he made available to his disciples the *Conduct of Schools*, a monumental work of common sense and practicality that guarantees sound instruction. Side by side with spiritual counsels and evangelical reflections, his letters and other writings abound with passages stressing the need for attention to the teacher’s professional responsibilities (Letters 12, 15, 33, 38, 55, 56, 58, 75, etc.). He goes as far as to recommend some priorities that are startling, and, at first sight, even astonishing coming as they are from the pen of a saint. (Cf. Letter 56/5). As Brothers Michel Sauvage and Miguel Campos tell us in **Annoncer l’Evangile aux pauvres**: “*Evangelical inspiration defines in La Salle a realistic effort to adapt the school itself to its temporal objective*” (10).

2. A SCHOOL THOUGHT OUT AND ORGANIZED FOR THE POOR

The “*Christian school*” created by the Founder and confided by him to the creative responsibility of his sons was and is wholly Christian when it adopts as its criterion of admission that which

(10) Cf. p. 271. However, pp. 270-274 are also relevant to our topic.

Christ himself uses in the Gospel (Lk. 4:18), when it shows itself as a real "school," in terms of its adherence to reality, and when it is seen as providing a concrete and generous answer to a felt need that is considered to be urgently important. This type of *raison d'être* and such a criterion must continue to be a characteristic which serves to distinguish it from among all other systems of education, i.e., that of going out to meet the different types of poverty (economic, intellectual, and affective) that encumber youth, and this there where such poverty makes itself most felt.

It involves a school that looks to the poverty of the child who is born and develops in the midst of a consumer society where he is spoiled and disoriented, growing up in a family which bears him little attention, often placing him in nurseries or pre-nurseries at a very early age (11). Though this type of poverty is generally less apparent, it still is responsible for producing disequilibrium and frustration in the juvenile world that we meet.

It looks to a poverty that is more absolute in nature, and which by this very fact is particularly worthy of the concern of the Lasallian school. Such poverty is more commonly found in those countries and areas that are less developed and where the economic, social, and racial marginalization exists. People the world over, as also political and administrative entities, are concerned with broad cultural, moral, and human problems that exist in such countries, but cannot find adequate solutions, and this frequently because

(11) *Pro Mundi Vita Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

there is lack of total sincerity in their efforts. The Church meanwhile continues to proclaim the preferential love that Christ demonstrated for this suffering sector of humanity. Permit me to quote from the Puebla report (12) once more since this document is both timely and significant: "*Give priority, in the field of education, to the numerous poverty-stricken areas of our population, to those that are materially and culturally marginalized. Do this by orienting the educational services of the Church in a preferential manner toward those poor and this in cooperation with the Bishop of the locality.*"

Without wishing to repeat here what I have written in my previous letters of 1978 and 1979, I invite you to read once more and to meditate upon what has already been developed in *Circular 408* (pp. 97-104). The topic discussed there is one of the major themes of the Tercentenary and one which involves for us a responsibility at once insistent and importunate.

My own wish, yet one that is shared widely, is that, in order to be truly Christian, each of our schools be always more:

— a **place of growth** for those who being marginalized, and forgotten, are in greatest need of such a milieu;

— a **place of community development** which is clearly stamped with a communitarian character and which in no way fosters new types of inequalities that will benefit one individual or group to the detriment of others;

(12) Document of CELAM, *op. cit.*, no. 1043.

— a **place of justice** in which “*is proclaimed and expressed a human liberation that is integral,*” (Synod of 1977), and thanks to which will be rectified attitudes and unjust structures that oppress the less endowed people;

— a **place of education to justice** where there is instilled a true Christian sensitivity to anything that perverts social structures and systems, where there is developed a profound knowledge of the true solutions to social problems, and where there is initiated a Christian commitment that shows, via a wholesome anticonformism, that a person has indeed experienced that hunger and thirst for justice that Christ has beatified in the Gospel.

John Paul II paints a vigorous picture of the disequilibrium and of the life of our society that is opposed to “*social love.*” He further adds that these constitute “*a serious problem to which we cannot remain indifferent*” (13). How could we possibly label as being a “*Christian school,*” that institution which would show itself to be inattentive and uncommitted in this area which is an indispensable element in an education at once sound and relevant?

Clearly, we are dealing here with a critical feature of our dynamic fidelity to Saint John Baptist de La Salle and with the keen Christian sensitiveness to the problems of the poor. Numerous conflicts arise today vis-a-vis this particular issue, for there are two different way of looking at it. In imitation of De La Salle, all of us must seek out the

(13) Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, 1976, no. 16.

poor and put at their disposal our resources of education and development, contributing thereby to greater justice among men. If we in effect succeed in producing such development in many of our pupils and in the milieu wherein they live (it is thus that we must measure the “*developmental influence*” of our schools), we ourselves will be the eventual beneficiaries of the improvement of the human and social level of living thus realized.

Nevertheless, others, who are more poor and forgotten, continue to address themselves to our generosity and our disinterestedness, just as, three hundred years ago, these came to the free schools created by De La Salle.

What should we do? Should we remain installed in our “*fiefs*” or break away from our enclaves — an appeal frequently made throughout the history of our faith — to go to the aid of those who have the greatest need of our help? The direction to which God calls us is clear. The manner of doing so is inevitably complex and intricate, given the variety of situations and the protagonists of this type of educational activity. In some instances, polarizations are unavoidable, and, consequently, painful tensions arise which in turn jeopardize the charity and the communitarian dynamism of our dedication. Pierre Deloos, in a recent article dealing with broader problems, foresees an “*evolution, within Church groups, toward a growing polarization between the conservative wing that looks to the past and the groups looking to the future, with the latter faction providing solutions that vary greatly in diversity and in degree of implementation.*” Such pluralism, concludes the author, **is sound to the extent that it favors the**

emergence of islets of Christian hope.” The most profound and most exact meaning of being “*Brothers*” and being called such involves this capacity to understand each other and to adopt attitudes and communal resolutions that are above and beyond priorities and preferences that are purely personal or that merely reflect group thinking.

We can hope for greater success in this matter, if our fraternal union is nourished by a deeper and more profound relationship with him who is our Father and Founder. We feel ourselves to be and we indeed are Christians, brothers in the faith, in the measure that “*we dare to say*” to God, “*Father,*” and to the extent that we enter, day after day, into the mystery of this amazing filiation. Analogously, the degree of our own human and religious maturity helps us to understand each other, to listen to each other, and to help each other meaningfully in the search of the truth and in the exercise of charity, and this all the more so since we are thereby deepening our spiritual filiation vis-a-vis De La Salle. This is clearly one of the major paths along which we should move during the year commemorating the birth of the Institute.

The requisite maturity to which I have just alluded will be possible only via a **more exacting and adequate formation.** The material contained in No. 48 of the Declaration, and more particularly paragraphs 4 and 5, warrant very special attention by those persons responsible for our formation programs:

“4. Those responsible, then, will guard against fearful attitudes and narrow pragmatism in the preparation of the brothers. Not only will they

see to it that all will have the necessary professional and university degrees, but they will strive to have them receive and education as broad as possible, developing the particular talents of each. It is important that the young brothers have the time and the necessary means to acquire this basic education, without which the competence and effectiveness of their work would risk being compromised over the course of time. It is the responsibility of the young brothers to apply themselves wholeheartedly to prepare themselves for a teaching career. Likewise, it is an obligation for superiors to help the brothers in community to continue their education by providing the necessary means, whether by in-service training or periods of intensive study.

“5. The teaching profession requires by its very nature a broad experience with men and society. The training of young teachers must not, then, cut them off from the life of the men of our time, but must help them to participate deeply in it, according to their state and in view of their mission. The professional preparation of the brothers is not reduced simply to academic degrees and an intellectual excellence. It must provide ‘an education in the prevailing manners of contemporary social life, and its characteristic ways of feeling and thinking’ (Perfectae Caritatis - 18, 2).”

A better understanding and a better implementation of these directives will aid in developing among our young Brothers a well-balanced synthesis that will make possible both a unity and diversity in our educational activity.

We are Brothers of the Christian Schools. The responsible fidelity to the Christian school, that the Popes, the Church, and people in general continue to demand of us, calls us, for the purpose of providing better service, to reflect and to examine ourselves concerning the evangelization and development of those who await our assistance.

Following these ideas that I have shared with you, as we find ourselves at the threshold of the Tercentenary year, it might now be appropriate to ask ourselves once again the question that the Superiors General asked themselves here in Rome: **"The Christian school, is it a factor in evangelization?"** There is room for neither abstract nor general answers. Each school is more or less apt to be evangelizing in nature, depending on the degree to which it is committed to and animated for such a role by those responsible for its direction. Our presence in a school, our presence and our work especially in our own schools should provide assurance that the answer to the above question is an affirmative one. If such is not the case, the very *raison d'être* of our Institute itself could be called into question. Thus, the heritage of Saint John Baptist de La Salle would find itself reduced to being nothing but an historical souvenir.

May the assiduous meditation upon the message of our Founder and our recourse to his intercession during this commemorative year bring us closer to him, and thus bringing us closer to each other, as also help bring our schools closer to the model that he himself produced.

With these my sincere wishes on your behalf,

I commend you to the protection of Our Lady, on this the vigil of the feast of her Divine Maternity, and I extend to you once more my fraternal and cordial respects.

Fraternally in De La Salle,



P.S.: 1. For those of you who would wish to write to me personally and subsequently receive a quicker answer, during my forthcoming visits to various Districts, the following dates would be of help:

* January 1 through March 19: Africa;

* March 29 through April 7: England.

During my voyage to Africa, mail can be addressed to:

- January 1 - 15: LOME (Togo) - cf. Memento, p. 51
 - January 15 - 31: AKURE (Nigeria) - cf. Memento, p. 139
 - February 1 - 13: JOHANNESBURG (South Africa)
cf. Memento, p. 73
 - February 13 - 28: ADDIS-ABEBA (Ethiopia)
cf. Memento, p. 80
 - March 1 - 14: CAIRO (Egypt) - cf. Memento, p. 62
- Sufficient time should be allowed for correspondence to reach the destination.

2. As an aid in the analysis of the milieu in which our educational activity is being carried out, I thought it would be useful to include, in appendix form, a series of 67 orientations drawn up and published by the General Secretariat for Catholic Education of France. For purposes of more brevity, I have taken the liberty of condensing them somewhat. I believe that they can appropriately serve for personal and community study and reflection.

APPENDIX

SOME ORIENTATIONS FOR EVALUATING THE AUTHENTICITY OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Toward a School that Contributes to the Promotion of Justice

1. *Reduction of inequalities resulting from social origin or background*
A school does not interest itself only in the more gifted students, but strives to compensate for handicaps, especially those arising from social origin or background.
2. *Consideration of the individual student's family conditions*
In evaluating academic results, members of evaluation groups are careful to take into consideration the student's family situation, e.g., crowded home conditions, lack of parental supervision, etc.
3. *Integration of handicapped children into normal school life*
The Catholic school welcomes and manages to integrate into the normal academic milieu pupils with a physical, sensory, or intellectual handicap. In this way, other students are prepared at a relatively early age to live with situations that they will encounter one day in the future.

Practices Detrimental to the Promotion of Justice

4. *Inequity of recruitment/admission/retention policies*
Is a school promoting justice when in the recruitment/admission of its students it places excessive importance on criteria of social class, intellectual capacity, religion?

when it expels for reasons of discipline and such a sanction is disproportionate to the infraction committed, or when it decides on the expulsion of a whole group? when it refuses to re-admit a student who has done something that public opinion considers to be wrong, without giving the person a second chance? when not in a position to provide opportunities for remedial work, it accepts students indiscriminately?

5. *Offering of financially profitable programs/courses/subjects*
Recourse to a type of program/course/subject offering for purposes of "supporting" the school benefits only the students from families that are financially well-off.
6. *Supplementary teaching hours for the instructional staff*
Such supplementary work runs the risk of affecting the quality of the regular instructional activity of the teachers, and reduces the possibility of making such additional hours available to young instructors.
7. *Encouragement of excessive competition*
Given its involvement in competitive effort beyond that of normal emulation, a school's pre-occupation with maintaining a reputation leads to a situation in social life where dominance by the strongest is uppermost.
8. *Deficiency in the development of social consciousness*
Is the school just when it neglects or limits, through fear of its effects, the development of social awareness in its pupils?

Efforts on behalf of Justice

9. *Community Development*
A school contributes to a climate of justice when, without taking away from the better or more advanced students the specific means for their development, it not only looks to the personal growth of the pupils, but concurrently seeks the collective development of their community.
10. *Recognition of Minorities*
The school encourages the members of immigrant families to value their native language, their culture,

and their religion, and this even in the midst of their adopted milieu.

11. *Minimizing discrimination in levels of academic achievement*
The school discourages the distinction between levels of academic achievement, especially in the case of remedial or advanced classes, thus minimizing the possibility of discrimination.
12. *Emphasis on comprehensive participation*
In the composition of various committees of parents, pupils, etc., the school seeks as broad a participation as possible, deliberately trying to avoid having the same limited few always involved.

Concern for Justice

13. *Sensitivity to inter-dependence*
Is there a question of justice when today a school continues to remain aloof, refusing to admit the inter-dependence that must exist between private Catholic schools?
14. *Sharing of resources*
An institution that is privileged to possess certain resources strives to share these by joining in the development of regional groupings wherein members can benefit reciprocally of such resources.
15. *Differential school fees*
Access to the school by families of various financial means is made possible by the use of a system of differential school fees, i.e., fees are established on a graduated scale that is based on the financial capacity of each family.
16. *Assistance for collective institutional growth*
When in a position to do so, a school takes it upon itself to strengthen or assist an identified weakness or deficiency in a particular area or sector of the Catholic school system.
17. *Interest in universal solidarity*
Can a school which shows no concern for the call for assistance to the developing countries of the Third

World foster among its pupils a sense of justice and universal solidarity?

18. *Voicing interest in current events*
An institution contributes to justice when together with the students it voices interest in the different situations in order that it may not be seen as a silent or indifferent accomplice in the face of patent injustices.

Toward a School that Encourages Freedom of Expression and Education for Such

19. *Positive expression of diversity of opinion*
A school fosters freedom when it permits a person to express himself without an a priori judgment being made; when it opposes domination by numbers or by active and doctrinal minorities; when pluralism becomes a benefit for all.
20. *Rules and regulations for a purpose*
Rules and regulations are not conceived of as a collection of negative prohibitions, but are developed as an expression of sound relations within the scholastic community.
21. *Pedagogy to choice and responsibility*
Freedom is developed when pedagogical practices foster choice and responsibility in students, rather than compulsion or laissez-faire attitudes.
22. *Organizational structures for meaningful student participation*
Meaningful forms of participation and expression by students, within adult forums, are developed to combat mere presence or silent formal attendance.
23. *Education for critical thinking*
Despite the risks involved, censure is eschewed and sound critical thinking encouraged.
24. *Preparation in facing future responsibilities*
Enjoining pupils to reflect upon their future social, civic, and political responsibilities engenders a proper sense of freedom.
25. *Apprenticeship in individual and group responsibility*
Efforts at giving each student an opportunity for direct involvement in various institutional activities

foster confidence and a sense of self and collective responsibility.

26. *Creation of an atmosphere of freedom*

The climate of freedom is jeopardized when the school activities of students are rigidly scheduled and made obligatory, when there is no room for choice, when information is deficient and limited, when the young feel that they are not being taken seriously.

27. *Co-educational environment*

Preparation for a life of freedom is provided when male and female students are not artificially separated within the school, when institutional barriers to co-educational activity are removed, when students of both sexes learn how to live and work together in a normal scholastic setting.

28. *Teacher formation, a condition for freedom*

Freedom of expression is fostered via the provision of teacher development programs that produce professional competence, and encourage innovative methodology.

29. *Value of staff as witness to faith*

The faith witness of the educational staff can be such as to become in the eyes of the pupils a permanent invitation to experience the freedom that faith in Christ can produce.

Toward a School Open to Real Life

30. *Integrative use of mass media*

A school is open to real life outside its walls when, not limiting itself to textbook experience, it exposes its students to the impact of mass media, thus preparing them for the significant influence that the latter are producing on modern society.

31. *Realistic viewing of life at present*

Openness to actual life entails a school taking a view for current situations that is lucid and courageous, and setting aside, when necessary, its more traditional criteria of prestige and notoriety.

32. *Decompartmentalization of academic disciplines*

Encouragement of the academic staff to look to inter-

disciplinary cooperation and integration, as also to appropriate professional updating provides for sound openness to the conditions of actual life.

33. *Sharing of available facilities*

An institution demonstrates a spirit of openness when it is not only willing to share available facilities (classrooms, equipment, etc.), but offers such to other entities, e.g., less endowed schools, para-educational groups, non-profit organizations, etc.

34. *Recognition of and respect for labor union conditions*

Openness involves recognizing and respecting labor union conditions in the institution, and promoting efforts to engage union members in the overall development of the school.

35. *Promotion of non-utilitarian activity*

Within the scope permitted by its professional and instructional obligations, the school seeks to promote student participation in the domain of art, culture, and athletics, thus encouraging involvement in non-utilitarian activity.

36. *Respect for professional contractual agreements*

By showing respect for the exercise of the pedagogical and professional freedoms provided for in contractual agreements, concrete openness to life situations is fostered.

37. *Animation of local social milieu*

Concern for the milieu and region in which it is located, interest in encouraging the study of the local history of this milieu, as also its economic, social, religious, cultural, and political issues and problems, and support for the on-going participation of its teaching staff, parents, and students in animative-type activity — such are tangible signs of being sensitive to the realities of life in a particular locale.

38. *Provision of information and documentation source material*

Convinced of the need of adequate resources of information and documentation as a means of self-education, provision for direct access to such is assured by an institution interested in the development of a well-informed staff and student body.

39. *Availability of field experiences as viable alternative*
When members of the academic staff are disposed to the advantages of such, the institution makes available opportunities for alternative field experiences, to the end of providing a closer link between the world of education and that of the non-academic sphere.
40. *Promotion of local culture*
While seeing itself as an instrument for the preservation of the cultural heritage of the past, a school further seeks to promote new forms of cultural expression adapted to what the local population itself considers to be its customs and traditions.
41. *An adaptive architecture*
As it goes about planning new buildings or the renovation of existing facilities, the institution is sensitive to the possibility of adapting its plans to evolutionary changes in architecture, even though these latter have not as yet been popularized.
42. *Meaningful experience of the present*
In addition to a preparation for the future, students are urged to and assisted in living the present fully and meaningfully.
43. *Program of continuing education*
Conscious of the many positive results stemming from Continuing Education, permanent facilities and programs are made available both for adults and young people.
44. *Utilization of external support resources*
Convinced of their rich background and practical experience, and despite their lack of formal pedagogical training, the school seeks the voluntary services of a parents and former pupils.
45. *Contact with external entities*
Through the development of contacts with various external entities, e.g., other educational institutions, public agencies, industrial firms, etc., cooperation between urban and rural schools is made possible, as also practical work and field experiences with such agencies are opened to students.

46. *Receptivity to ecumenical religious activity*
Confident of the sound faith of its pupils, offers of cooperative ecumenical religious activity are both accepted and initiated.
47. *Dialogue for inter-faith understanding*
Refusing to remain in narrow sectarian isolation, dialogue with other Christian sects is sought, so as to encourage collaboration in pastoral efforts.

Toward a School that Fosters Sound Interpersonal Relations

48. *The school as less dramatic an experience*
More normal relations are developed when there is an effort made to reduce the anxieties of the teaching staff, as also to encourage a climate where laughter, a sense of humor, and a relaxed atmosphere exist.
49. *Group activity*
Activity in groups is fostered and considered as normal as individual effort, whether it be to the end of improving achievement or to favor better personal relations among the pupils.
50. *Program and project implementation*
Initiative on the part of students is preferred to passive assiduity, as also the practical implementation of theory via project studies rather than passive assimilation of ideas.
51. *Tolerance of critical doubt*
The development of a spirit and attitude of critical inquiry in pupils requires trustful tolerance of doubt and the relinquishing of a belief that the teacher possesses all the answers.
52. *Flexibility in the use of time*
Efforts are made to lessen the rigidity in the use of student free time. Facilities are made available where pupils can come together to socialize between classes. Opportunities for group living experiences are organized. Adults and young people are brought together to spend time in conversation and relaxing activity.
53. *Staff affability and accessibility*
The institutional staff contributes to better social

relations when it shows itself affable and accessible vis-a-vis individual students and tries to carry out its duties in a sociable and friendly manner.

54. *Convenient presence of teaching staff*
The availability of teachers outside of actual class hours is such as to encourage the pupils to consult and seek their assistance. The activity schedule of the students is given attention in the establishment of the working routine of the teaching staff.
55. *Service role of institutional groups*
The various entities and organizations of the school (parents, alumni, teachers, administrators, etc.) strive to develop cooperation with each other and avoid working in isolation, mindful of the need for joint participation whenever it is possible.
56. *Appropriate valuation of manual work*
Training in technology is valued as being of equal importance in institutional programming and appropriate recognition is given to pupils preparing themselves for the manual trades. Bias in favor of training in the more traditional professions is actively counteracted.
57. *Fostering of the understanding of youth*
Attempts at bridging the gap of misunderstanding that often exists between adults and the young are actively sought by school authorities and the teachers. Adults involved with the institution are periodically reminded of the need to seek to understand the language, values, expectations, and concerns of the young, as also of the necessity of aiding the young in finding ways to cope with themselves effectively.

Toward a School that Helps Students Find Meaning in Their Lives

58. *A milieu of meaningful exchange*
Students are aided in finding meaning in their lives when the school is seen as a place where they can exchange views and ideas, where they can reflect upon and discuss events of their daily lives, as also the issues of the society wherein they live.

59. *Opportunities for committed involvement*
The generosity of spirit of the students is challenged to committed involvement via a program of concrete activities that will provide opportunities for mature choices and work.
60. *Institutional awareness of purpose*
Positive awareness of its own purpose and role assists the institution in providing a sense of meaning and direction to its pupils, as also furnishing them possible answers to their doubts and questions about themselves and their aspirations.
61. *Sound sense of institutional priorities*
Preparation for examinations, and success in achieving good results are not given undue priority in terms of what the institution considers to be criteria of its success and of its reputation.
62. *Professional success not an end in itself*
The school's emphasis on professional success as an end in itself frequently leads to over-ambition and individualism, thereby distorting the student's notion of the true purpose of academic discipline and achievement.
63. *Institutional courage in meeting objectives*
Students are encouraged to develop determination and courage in their personal lives when they observe the institution's courageous efforts at meeting its avowed objectives and finality.
64. *Sensitivity to wastage and conspicuous consumption*
In reaction to the patent wastage and conspicuous consumption often observed in society, economies in the use of institutional resources are undertaken not only in the name of better management, but also to allow for sharing of such savings with groups, both local and foreign, who are in greater need.
65. *Involvement in non-profitable activities*
The undertaking by the school of various projects that are non-profit in nature demonstrates a proper valuation of the role of non-utilitarian activities in aiding to develop better student appreciation for what is not financially remunerative.

66. *Training to proper non-conformism*

Insistence on uniform conformism of thought and action by the student populace is not conducive to the development of a proper sense of responsible and critical conformity.

67. *Re-discovery of values for our times*

The pressures and constraints of life in modern society have often resulted in a discarding of many values vital to the life of young people, e.g., a sense of the sacred, the importance of prayer and recollection, the significance of personality growth, the import of effort and of perseverance, the need for facing the risks of daily life, the value of love, unselfishness, tolerance, and acceptance of life's restraints, etc. Positive efforts that will foster a re-discovery of such values, within the scholastic setting, shows an institution's concern for instilling a proper appreciation of the meaning of one's life.

Finally, in seeking to strengthen the faith of its pupils, the school looks to being attentive to the diversity of spiritual expectations of persons, to the pre-occupations of the young vis-a-vis their spiritual life. This it strives to achieve as its students go about their daily lives, as they are exposed to religious instruction, as they celebrate the liturgy, as they learn to live the Gospel.

It further contributes to this growth in faith, if the staff itself experiences the institution as a place for personal and communal encounter with Christ.