

*De La Salle*  
**TODAY**

A magazine for the Lasallian Community in the  
United States and Toronto Region

VOL. VI NO. 1 SPRING 2010

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN  
21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY AMERICA**



- 1 Regional News**
- 4 Jubilarians**
- 5 Faith and Zeal in Our Times**  
*By Bro. Robert Schieler, FSC*
- 9 Toward a Working Lay Model of Catholic Independent Schools**  
*By Dr. Kevin J. Ruth, Ph.D.*
- 12 The Challenges of Catholic Education: Past, Present and Future**  
*By Fr. Joseph McShane, SJ*
- 17 Bearers of Wisdom**  
*By Bro. Brendan Kneale, FSC*
- 20 Developing a Common Identity for the Lasallian Education Network**  
*By Mr. Rex Whisman*
- 23 Growing Up a Brothers' Boy**  
*By Mr. Raymond Ricci, AFSC*
- 27 In Responsibility, Dreams Begin**  
*By Mr. John A. Gray*
- IBC In Memoriam**
- IBC Calendar of Events**

*De La Salle Today* is published three times a year by the Christian Brothers Conference, 3025 Fourth Street, NE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20017, 202.529.0047.

Celine A. Quinio  
*Editor & Designer*

Brother Robert Schieler, FSC  
*Editorial Advisor*

Elizabeth Moor Jodice  
*Editorial Assistant*

Christy Carl  
*Circulation*

Dear Lasallian Reader,

The future of Catholic schools in the United States will depend on their ability to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This issue looks at these challenges and presents ways to overcome them.

How the schools address governance, leadership and Catholicity will determine the extent to which they can successfully continue to attract the Catholic community and families who want their children to be successful in life. In the article, "Toward a Working Lay Model of Catholic Independent Schools," Dr. Kevin J. Ruth examines each of these components and discusses the options for implementing the changes. Fr. Joseph McShane, SJ, offers an excellent overview of the challenges that Catholic education has faced since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present. Within that context, he looks at the future of Catholic education and the conditions under which it will survive and thrive. Bro. Brendan Kneale examines the role of Catholic schools and colleges as "Bearers of Wisdom," providing "sophisticated literacy" as well as sacramental growth. Missing in this issue due to limitations in length is Bro. Louis DeThomasis' keynote address at this year's chief administrators conference. The presentation suggests valuable insights on achieving excellence in Lasallian education. To download a copy from the internet, we invite you to visit [www.lasallian.info/doc/NewOrleansTalk-FINAL.doc](http://www.lasallian.info/doc/NewOrleansTalk-FINAL.doc)

An important component of planning for the future is establishing a distinctive identity for the school. Mr. Rex Whisman leads the branding initiative effort that will define the Lasallian education brand in the US-Toronto Region and ensure its viability and longevity. His article on "Developing a Common Identity for the Lasallian Education Network" explains the goal of the project and what each phase will entail.

Enjoy the issue and have a great summer!

*Live Jesus in our hearts...forever!*

Sincerely,

*Celine*  
*Editor*

*Cover photo: Calvert Hall College High School's new and renovated facilities, its academic programs and cutting edge technology will allow its students to be Men of Faith, Men of Intellect and Men of Integrity for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.*

*Photo by Glenwood Jackson.*

## UN CONVOCATION INSPIRES LASALLIANS TO TAKE ACTION ON CHILDREN RIGHTS



Lasallian students and educators from across the country gathered in New York City for a three-day teach-in on social change. The Lasallian Convocation at the United Nations on the Rights of the Child provided participants with a unique learning experience on the rights of children and advocacy.

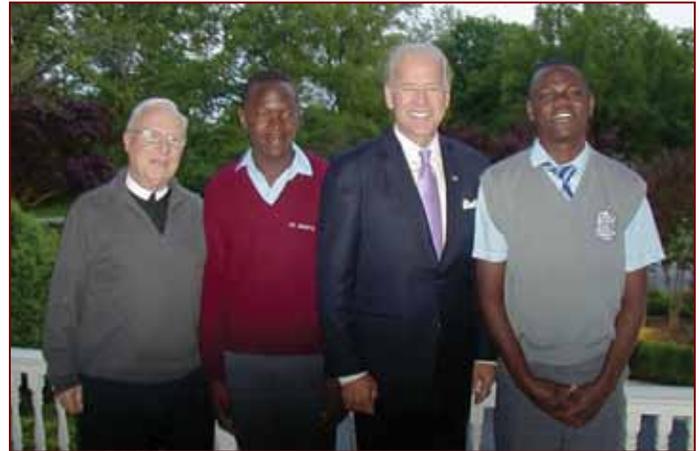
The April 25 to 27 event was part of a worldwide Lasallian effort to establish *a culture of action on behalf of the rights of children*. To this end, the Lasallian educational community in the US-Toronto Region is taking concrete steps to integrate service activities in the schools with justice-oriented advocacy.

“The convocation was inspiring in its call to action,” said Bryan Linehan, a student from Cretin-Derham Hall in St. Paul, MN. “I think we can all draw hope from how we broke this mold at the convocation and united so many young people in a passion for human rights and friendship.”

Keynote speakers at the convocation included the Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, who spoke about how to connect with politicians and policymakers in advocating for change, and human rights activist and former UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Jimmie Briggs, who spoke of the injustices to children which he witnessed first-hand as a reporter.

General Councilor Bro. Robert Schieler called the convocation a huge success that will lead to increased awareness and concrete actions for children in need. The students were eager to take what they learned home and begin the long-term process of advocacy. Plans for an awareness and education campaign on the rights of the child are already being initiated by some groups.

## VISITING STUDENTS FROM KENYA MEET VP BIDEN



(l-r) Bro. Dominic Jordan, Dennis Mwai, VP Biden, and Nelson Gitonga.

Two senior students at St. Mary’s Boys Secondary School in Nyeri, Kenya had an unexpected experience while visiting the United States for two weeks. On April 22, 20-year-old Nelson Gitonga and 17-year-old Dennis Mwai were guests at the home of Vice President and Mrs. Joe Biden.

The surprise invitation came after Mwai and Gitonga met Biden’s granddaughter while visiting the school she attends, who then told her grandparents about them.

Mwai and Gitonga shared their story with the Vice President—including how they spend a majority of their hours studying because they want to succeed.

Biden advised them never to forget their roots and give back to help others get opportunities like they have. Gitonga called the meeting an inspiration.

“It was a great opportunity because we’ve never met our vice president in Kenya,” Gitonga said. “Now having met this great man in this country it was like an achievement.”

“I was impressed in that he treats himself like an ordinary man and not like a special person even though he is in position of power,” said Mwai.

Bro. Dominic Jordan, the financial and development director at St. Mary’s who served as headmaster for 10 years, and Rich McKay, a development volunteer, traveled with the students around the east coast. They also visited some of their twin schools.



Donation drive at Archbishop O'Hara High School.

Once again, Lasallian students have demonstrated their giving spirit by raising a total of \$104,536.86 for victims of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. Thank you for your generous donations.

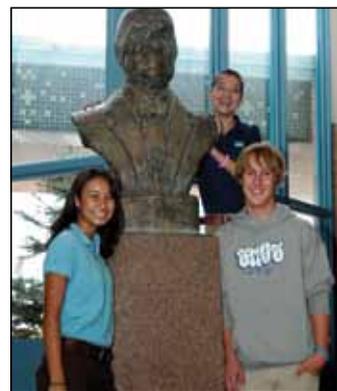
- Archbishop O'Hara High School, Kansas City, MO: \$1,121
- Bishop Kelley High School, Tulsa, OK: \$2,500
- Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School, Brooklyn, NY: \$6,378.20
- Cathedral High School, Los Angeles, CA: \$3,000
- Central Catholic High School, Pittsburgh, PA: \$4,412
- Christian Brothers Academy, Albany, NY: \$1,575
- Christian Brothers Academy, Lincroft, NJ: \$19,500
- Christian Brothers High School, Sacramento, CA: \$3,041.07
- De La Salle High School, Concord, CA: \$2,832.00
- De La Salle Middle School at St. Matthew's, St. Louis, MO: \$280
- La Salle Catholic College Preparatory, Milwaukie, OR: \$6,500
- La Salle College High School, Wyndmoor, PA: \$7,000
- La Salle High School, Pasadena, CA: \$6,300
- La Salle High School, Yakima, WA: \$375
- Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY: \$5,126.78
- Montini Catholic High School, Lombard, IL: \$4,331
- St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute, Buffalo, NY: \$3,370
- St. Mary's College of California, Moraga, CA: \$1,600
- Saint Mary's University of Minnesota: \$2,072
- Saint Patrick High School, Chicago, IL: \$1,500
- St. Raymond High School, Bronx, NY: \$4,000
- San Miguel High School, Tucson, AZ: \$1,642.81
- San Miguel School at Back of the Yards and Gary Comer Campus, Chicago, IL: \$2,000
- San Miguel School, Tulsa, OK: \$580
- Totino-Grace High School, Fridley, MN: \$13,500

St. Michael's High School in Santa Fe, NM, is in the midst of a year-long 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. In 1859, four Christian Brothers from France established El Colegio de San Miguel in a mud hut next to the San Miguel Mission. Over the years, new buildings were added and St. Michael's thrived until a fire in 1926 destroyed parts of the school. According to legend, as the school director, Bro. August, was walking in downtown Santa Fe, he met Miguel Chavez, a 78-year-old alumnus, who inquired about the fire. Bro. August informed him the school was closing and Chavez said, "I will build your school."

Through the years, St. Michael's underwent many changes, including going co-ed, welcoming lay teachers, improving buildings and athletic fields, and adding a prayer garden on the school grounds. Today, St. Michael's is one of Santa Fe's leading private schools. To commemorate the milestone and honor the school's contributions to education, the City of Santa Fe declared October 2-5, 2009 "St. Michael's Sesquicentennial Weekend." For more information about the anniversary celebration, visit [www.stmichaelsf.org](http://www.stmichaelsf.org).



The Miguel Chavez Society at St. Michael's High School was established to honor the legacy of Miguel Chavez, his generosity and support for the school's future.



## NEW FSC AFFILIATES

On February 9, Rev. Joseph LaVoie and Mr. Robert Sweeney were affiliated to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

- Rev. Joseph LaVoie has assisted the Brothers of the Christian Schools in their ministry, particularly in Santa Fe, for more than 40 years.
- Mr. "Coach" Robert Sweeney began working as head basketball coach at St. Michael's College in 1949. He served as Professor of Education, assistant football, track and baseball coach. Bob served at the College of Santa Fe until his retirement in 1992.

## HONORS

### Congratulations to our sports champions!

School	2009/2010 State Championship Title
Cathedral High School, El Paso, TX	2010 TAAPS Tennis State Championship
Christian Brothers Academy, Albany, NY	2010 New York State Public High School Athletic Association Class AA title in basketball
Christian Brothers College High School, St. Louis, MO	2009 State Soccer Champions in the Missouri Large Schools Class 5A Division
De La Salle High School, Concord, CA	2009 California State Football Championship in the Open Division
La Salle College High School, Wyndmoor, PA	2009 Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) Division AAAAA Football, Hockey and Lacrosse Championships
La Salle Catholic College Preparatory, Milwaukie, OR	2009 OSAA 4A State Soccer Championship
Montini Catholic High School, Lombard, IL	2010 TDI State Championship in Poms, 2010 IHSA 3A Girls Basketball State Championship, the 2010 IHSA 2A Wrestling Team State Championship, and the 2009 IHSA 5A Football Team State Championship
St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute, Buffalo, NY	2010 Lightweight Four Title for the New York State Scholastic Rowing Association
The La Salle Academy, Providence, RI, Girls' Teams	2010 championships in the RIIL (Rhode Island Interscholastic League) Division I: soccer, cross country, swimming, indoor track, outdoor track, gymnastics, ice hockey
Totino-Grace High School, Fridley, MN	2009 State Football Championship in the AAAAA (4A) Division



The Totino-Grace Company of Singers in their winning performance at the Genesee Theatre in Chicago, IL, on March 27, 2010.

The Totino-Grace Company of Singers also received trophies for best vocals, best choreography and best band. Senior Katie Hahn won awards for best diction, best show design and best female soloist.

The Cup is a traveling trophy that will be in the possession of the Company for the next year. Totino-Grace is one of only three programs in the history of the national competition to have won more than once. The group received its first title in 1999.

The competition is hosted by FAME Events.

### NEW APPOINTMENTS

- Leslie Shultz-Crist, president of San Miguel High School, Tucson, AZ, effective July 1, 2009.
- Dr. Edward Dana, executive director of Martin de Porres, New York, NY, effective July 1, 2011.
- Sam Govea, principal of St. Michael's High School, Santa Fe, NM, effective July 1, 2010.
- Marcia Sullivan, president of St. Michael's High School, Santa Fe, NM, beginning May 1, 2010.
- Robert A. Regan, president and chief executive officer of J.K. Mullen High School, Denver, CO, effective March 1, 2010.
- Richard Reyes, principal of San Miguel High School, Tucson, AZ, effective July 1, 2010.
- Jeffrey Dempsey, president of Roncalli High School, Omaha, NE, effective July 1, 2010.
- Chad Holtz, principal of Roncalli High School, Omaha, NE, effective July 1, 2010.

### TOTINO-GRACE CHOIR TAKES "THE CUP"

Students at Totino-Grace High School in Fridley, Minnesota, showcased their talents at the National Show Choir Competition in Chicago last March and took home "The Cup" as the Grand Champion. Competing against top performing groups in the country, they received the highest points and first place ranking from each judge.

## JUBILARIANS

### *Congratulations to All Our Brother Jubilarians in 2010*

#### **DISTRICT OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA**

##### **75 YEARS**

Brother James Hogan  
Brother Patrick Phillips

##### **70 YEARS**

Brother Michael O'Neill  
Brother Isaac Perez

##### **65 YEARS**

Brother Hugh Albright  
Brother Thomas Caldwell  
Brother Michael Fitzgibbon  
Brother Anthony Flynn  
Brother Peter Mannion  
Brother Francisco Martin  
Brother Hilary McGovern  
Brother Nicholas Sullivan

##### **60 YEARS**

Brother William Batt  
Brother Timothy Dean  
Brother Brendan Foley  
Brother Brendan Garwood  
Brother Joseph Gerry  
Brother Charles Gresh  
Brother Casimir Gundlach  
Brother Robert Hebert  
Brother Lawrence Hinrichs  
Brother James Kelly  
Brother Aloysius Myers  
Brother Philip Whitman

##### **50 YEARS**

Brother James Bednar

Brother Raymond Blixt  
Brother Phillip DePorter  
Brother Michael Dundin  
Brother William Fealy  
Brother Eric Henderson  
Brother William Johnson  
Brother Richard Kestler  
Brother John J. McGann  
Brother Timothy Murphy  
Brother Vincent O'Donnell  
Brother Vincent Pelletier  
Brother Dominic Smith

##### **40 YEARS**

Brother Lawrence Shine

##### **25 YEARS**

Brother Charles Huber  
Brother Anthony Nguyen  
Brother Joseph Reed  
Brother Leonard Rhoades

#### **MIDWEST DISTRICT**

##### **70 YEARS**

Brother Terence McLaughlin

##### **60 YEARS**

Brother Marvin Becker  
Brother Ignatius Brown  
Brother William Brynda  
Brother Cyril Litecky  
Brother Denis Murphy  
Brother Martin Spellman

##### **50 YEARS**

Brother Christopher Buck  
Brother Kent Connolly  
Brother Kevin Fitzgerald  
Brother James Gaffney  
Brother Richard Paszkiet  
Brother Roderick Robertson  
Brother Edward Staszak  
Brother Daniel Susek  
Brother Robert Thomas

##### **25 YEARS**

Brother Gary Smith

#### **NEW ORLEANS-SANTA FE DISTRICT**

##### **50 YEARS**

Brother Arthur Carroll  
Brother Duane Gregory  
Brother William Hughes  
Brother Alphonse LeBlanc  
Brother Charles Miller

##### **65 YEARS**

Brother Amedy Esquibel  
Brother John Kelly  
Brother Gregory Wright

#### **SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT**

##### **25 YEARS**

Brother Daniel Fenton  
Brother Roch Dufresne

# Faith and Zeal in Our Times

BY BROTHER ROBERT SCHIELER, FSC

The Lasallian mission in the United States and Toronto Region today, like the Institute, is both fragile and vibrant. History teaches us that within this paradox the Holy Spirit is present and active in surprising ways. The challenges the Region faces today are little different than the challenges our predecessors faced in the past. Sometimes, to go forward, it is beneficial to periodically step back to see where we have been and what has transpired and contributed to where we are now. The occasion of the meeting of Bro. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, Superior General, and the General Council with the Brothers Visitor and Auxiliary Visitor last November during the Huether Conference was an opportunity for such a reflection.

## A REQUEST

A letter from Superior General Brother John Johnston to the Visitors of the Region in 1988 is a good starting point to look back. In that letter Brother John requested the Region to assume responsibility for the Lasallian mission in East Africa. He wrote:

The Region is being asked to assume total responsibility for the development and growth of the Institute in East Africa. This

is a commitment that must last until the day when the number and quality of local Brothers will be sufficient to justify the gradual withdrawal of missionary Brothers. It is our hope that the Region will make this commitment its own and give it high priority.

The initial reaction of the Visitors was a very natural and realistic one. While open to the request, they

*"Do not have any anxiety about the future. Leave everything in God's hands for He will take care of you."*

(John Baptist de La Salle, Letter 101 to an unnamed Brother, date unknown)

reminded Brother John that the Brothers in the Region were getting older and fewer. The Region had many needs of its own that had to be addressed. Ultimately, the Visitors of the nine Districts at that time accepted Brother John's challenging request. The developments in the ensuing years, both in East

Africa and our Region, are noteworthy to recall.

## THE FRUIT FROM THE RESPONSE

In the few short years that followed Brother John's request, the New York and Long Island-New England Districts developed a long time mission commitment to East Africa, which became a delegation and, subsequently, the District of St. Charles Lwanga. This coincided with the establishment of new ministries, structures and formation programs in our Region.

In 1993, the first San Miguel School opened in Providence, Rhode Island, initiating a renewed effort in behalf of the inner city immigrant poor across the Region. By 1992, the Lasallian Volunteer movement, which was launched about a decade earlier, became a Regional project, playing an important role in the staffing of the San Miguel schools.

The Buttimer Institute, established in 1986 as a continuing Lasallian formation program for the Brothers, would soon include lay people and lead to the creation of the Lasallian Leadership Institute. New District and Regional structures evolved and new organizations, such as the Lasallian Association of Secondary School Administrators (LASSCA), were created. Through the years, the

*Continued on Page 6*

\* Bro. Robert Schieler is General Councilor of the USAT Region.

## FAITH AND ZEAL

*Continued from Page 5*

Region maintained its school and university ministries and continued to conduct excellent curricular and co-curricular programs. While the number of Catholic schools in the United States declined by 17 percent during this 20-year period, the number of Lasallian schools increased by 12 percent.

## RICHNESS IN DIVERSITY

The diversity of ministries in the Region has enabled us to bring the Lasallian mission to many sectors of the population. More than half of the 100 ministries are secondary schools. While the fastest growing ministries in recent years have been the San Miguel schools, there are vibrant programs for court-adjudicated young people in our child-care agencies in Pennsylvania, New York and Rhode Island, which have increased in numbers and types of services.

The establishment of higher education institutions has been a hallmark of the Region. In addition to the six colleges and universities in the United States, the Region has responsibility for Bethlehem University in Palestine. Jointly established by the Brothers and the Vatican in 1973, Bethlehem University is the only Catholic institution of higher education in the West Bank and serves more than 3,000 Christian and Muslim students.

Our universities and their leadership have played an active role in the creation of the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU) and the establishment of an international formation program for Lasallian university leadership in Rome in 2007. These two new initiatives attest to the increased visibility and impor-

tance of higher education in the worldwide Lasallian Institute. Today there are 71 Lasallian institutions of higher education in the world.

## FORMATION PROGRAMS

The project to translate into English the Institute's research and publications on the Lasallian heritage has produced 10 volumes of the complete works of St. John Baptist de La Salle and several other titles. These resources provide valuable reference material in the continuing formation of the Brothers and the Lasallian Partners at the Buttimer Institute. Hundreds of Lasallian educators throughout the English-speaking world have completed the three-year Buttimer program. The single site and lengthy duration of the program limited the participation of Partners. Many of them could not give up three weeks of their summer or travel to California. Thus, the Lasallian Leadership Institute (LLI) was created to overcome this constraint.

At its origins, the LLI had two goals: to make formation programs more accessible to Lasallian Partners and to create a program that sought to integrate and understand the Lasallian educational and spiritual vision with contemporary understandings of education and lay spirituality. The LLI is offered at three sites across the country, with presenters traveling to each site. Hundreds of Partners and some Brothers have participated in the program's five cohorts.

The Lasallian Social Justice Institute (LSJI) is the newest Regional formation program. This immersion experience promotes the continuing process of conversion to solidarity with persons in poverty and provides an

authentic response to the Gospel and our Lasallian vocation. It is designed to be experiential, educational, creatively practical, and reflective. Generally, it is offered for one week in the summer and sometimes at two locations with two themes, e.g., immigration and gang violence.

## REGIONAL DOCUMENTS

During this 22-year period, the Regional Education Board (REB) produced two seminal documents for a better understanding of the essentials of the Lasallian heritage. It also developed goals for Lasallian ministries.

At the 1985 Huether Conference in Chicago, the document entitled "Characteristics of Lasallian Schools" was adopted. The characteristics included: the teacher as minister of grace, association and the management of schools. This document was followed-up for several years by workshops for Brothers and Partners in each District on the three characteristics as a means to make them more widely known. A doctoral dissertation on evaluating the understanding and importance of these characteristics among school administrators, Brothers and Partners was also written.

Ten years later, participants at the 1995 Huether Conference adopted the document "Shared Mission." This provided a process for Partners to become more knowledgeable, involved and responsible for the Lasallian mission which was being increasingly understood as a mission that is shared. The process included six movements: inviting and welcoming, building a foundation, sharing the challenge, making shared mission

work, growing together in faith, and expanding our horizons. Goals and strategies for each movement were provided. The document concluded with a glossary of Lasallian terms.

In 2005, the REB developed five general goals for all Lasallian ministries:

- We are animated by and foster a spirit of faith and zeal.
- We create and sustain respectful human relationships in community.
- We exercise a preferential option for the poor.
- We instill Gospel values.
- We develop and maintain diverse programs meeting recognized standards of excellence.

Each of these goals is accompanied by a list of objectives.

## BROTHERS' VOCATION AND FORMATION

While the Lasallian mission and educational vision of St. La Salle is being received with enthusiasm by our Partners, vocations to the Brothers' life remain a challenge for the Region. Recently, the Visitors approved the position of the Regional Director for Vocation Ministry. The director, in collaboration with the vocation and formation directors of the four Districts, is charged to develop a vision for vocation ministry in the Region. There are currently 10 young men in the different stages of initial formation. They are accompanied by Brothers who have been professionally trained in accompaniment and spiritual direction. Two Regional workshops for the young Brothers are conducted each year.

A recent innovative program for vocation promotion is the Lasallian Teachers Immersion Program (LTIP) developed by the Midwest District. The program is designed for young men studying to become teachers who might also have an interest in a religious vocation. It has already borne fruit with one young man in the postulancy and a second one considering that step.

## THE WIDER LASALLIAN MISSION

During these decades of fragility and vibrancy the vision and foresight of Brothers from earlier generations has blessed our Region with four programs that serve not only the Lasallian world but the larger Church and society. Saint Mary's Press, Sangre de Cristo Center, Christian Brother Services and Christian Brothers Investment Services are nationally and internationally respected programs benefiting thousands of young people and adults.

## FROM YESTERDAY TO TODAY

From this brief overview we can summarize some of the events that have transpired and contributed to who we are as a Region today.

- The missionary effort in East Africa has blossomed into the District of St. Charles Lwanga with numerous indigenous vocations, local leadership and a strong twinning relationship.
- While the number of Catholic schools continued to decline in this period, 23 new Lasallian educational programs opened, including middle and secondary schools.
- From a new continuing formation program for the Brothers,

the Buttimer Institute became the seed for three Regional formation programs for Partners and Brothers.

- These formation programs and the Huether Conference have enabled Partners and Brothers to appreciate and better understand our Lasallian heritage as well as have a greater sense of belonging to a Region as well as members of their respective Districts.
- The recent innovative recruitment program in the Midwest District for male teachers also promotes the Brothers' vocation and is an encouraging step that is already bearing fruit.
- The regular gatherings of young Brothers across the Region and the recent creation of the position of Regional Director for Vocation Ministry demonstrate the continuing commitment to and importance of the Brothers vocation in the Region.
- The Regionalization of the Lasallian Volunteer Program at the time of the establishment of the San Miguel schools has been mutually beneficial for this important Regional mission initiative.
- With one or more years of lived experience in community with the Brothers, approximately 75 former Lasallian volunteers are now ministering full time in Lasallian schools and agencies, along with hundreds of teachers and staff who have completed either the Buttimer, Lasallian Leadership Institute, or both.
- The establishment of the Lasallian Association of Secondary School Chief Administrators in 2005 is

*Continued on Page 8*

## FAITH AND ZEAL

*Continued from Page 7*

fostering a greater sense of Lasallian identity and regional cooperation.

- The work of the Regional Task Force has offered a possible structure to help ensure the sustainability of the Lasallian mission in our Region into the future.

### TODAY'S INITIATIVES AND CHALLENGES

Our accomplishments in the past 22 years demonstrate how faith, perseverance and creativity have brought us to where we are today as a Region. With the creation of the new District of Eastern North America (DNA) in 2009, the earlier establishment of the Midwest District, the collaboration between the Districts of New Orleans-Santa Fe and San Francisco, and the recommendation from the Regional Task Force for a new regional structure of mission and association, our Region may be on the cusp of a new understanding of who we are and who we might become as a Region.

As we go forward in this new century how do we remain vibrant in the face of our fragility and new challenges? Certainly we will maintain and develop further the formation experiences of the past two decades. It is important to continue to strengthen the Lasallian mission and share the charisma. Some current projects that seek to do that include:

- Implementing the recommendations from the Regional Task Force regarding a new structure for the Lasallian mission in the Region.
- Under the leadership of the secondary school administrators and our colleges and universi-

ties, exploring the creation of a Regional Lasallian brand.

- Expanding the Lasallian Teacher Immersion Program (LTIP) to the other Districts of the Region.
- Supporting emerging local association groups.
- Launching the two-year continuing formation project, Called to Be Brothers, to discern what God is requiring of us today.
- Acting on the outcomes from the convocation at the United

*"The strength of the Holy Spirit is displayed in human weakness..."*

Michel Sauvage, FSC

Nations for Lasallian students and teachers on the Rights of the Child, an Institute priority.

- Further collaboration among the three Regions in the Western Hemisphere, particularly in the area of migration, also a priority of the Institute.
- Hosting the Young Lasallian Assembly at Christian Brothers University in June 2010 to provide additional formation for young people who are the future of the mission in the Region.
- Providing formation for Boards of Trustees who have an important decision-making role for Lasallian ministries.

Even with these initiatives, the challenges today are significant. There is the challenge, for example, to sustain the Lasallian mission and

charisma in the face of the aging and diminishing number of Brothers.

Can the charisma persist without the presence of Brothers? A second serious challenge today is the financing of Catholic education in the face of the growing number of charter schools and continued opposition to vouchers for private education. As costs continue to rise will we be able to maintain all our schools and ministries?

Believing that the Spirit uses our fragility for God's purposes, we are confident that "the strength of the Holy Spirit is displayed in human weakness, and the creative force is seen in shaky, often tentative achievements which are sometimes tainted with ambiguity."\* The cross-pollination of at least four of the current initiatives may contain some of the creative force and tentative achievements to meet today's challenges. The Regional Task Force's proposed new structure for mission, a structure that will be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances in the Region. The national branding effort of the secondary school chief administrators and universities can facilitate greater visibility for Lasallian education. The project Called to Be Brothers offers a Regional forum for Brothers to discern God's will for us in the Region at this time. The promotion of local association groups of Partner and Brother can strengthen the Lasallian charisma for service to youth of this century. These, and the same faith, perseverance, and creativity that marked our predecessors is the hope that carries us forward. ■

---

\* Michel Sauvage, FSC, "Lasallian Spirituality: Our Heritage," in *Spirituality in the Time of John Baptist de La Salle*, edited by Robert C. Berger, FSC, Lasallian Publications (1999), p. 275.

# Toward a Working Lay Model of Catholic Independent Schools

BY DR. KEVIN J. RUTH, PH.D.

Catholic independent schools are undergoing significant changes in leadership, which is no secret to anyone familiar with our schools. Lay leaders have begun to assume the reins at the president and head level and in senior administration, yet we must acknowledge that this process of entrusting operations to lay leaders is far from over. New leaders are faced with enrollment challenges, demographic changes, fundraising for capital improvements, keeping current with educational trends, providing meaningful professional development for faculty and overseeing aging facilities, among other issues.

To be sure, a leader of any independent school faces a similar litany of responsibilities and challenges. Yet there remains one area that lay leaders in Catholic independent schools are charged with overseeing and nurturing, one which our purely independent counterparts do not have to manage—that of Catholic identity. How can lay leaders ensure

the continuity of Catholic identity at a time when religious and priests are moving out of Catholic independent schools? What can lay leaders do to maintain the Catholicity of an institution, and possibly a religious charisma, if the school has been run by a religious order?

The key to successful lay leadership in Catholic independent schools can

*The key to successful lay leadership in Catholic independent schools can be summed up in one word: planning.*

be summed up in one word: planning. A Catholic Identity Plan would be invaluable in helping schools to identify appropriate tipping points, i.e., those areas where, once a focus on Catholic message has been articulated and the right leader is in place, momentum for change is easily seen and felt, and “messages and behaviors spread like viruses do.” (Gladwell,

2000, p. 7).<sup>1</sup> The creation of such a plan takes time, energy and commitment to the institution, and it encompasses a handful of key areas, which are outlined here. One caveat: this list is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it is intended to be the springboard for a discussion that, ideally, will occur in schools as a result of this article.

## GOVERNANCE

The first step in undertaking a Catholic Identity Plan involves a review of the existing governance structure of the school, because the board plays a capital role in articulating an identity plan. Catholic independent schools tend to benefit most from one of two models.

The first is two-tiered, with a corporate board and board of directors. In this model, a board of directors (15-25 people with a variety of professional backgrounds, which may or may not include educators) is charged with general oversight of the school, undertakes strategic planning and sets general policy. Its counterpart, the corporate board, tends to approve (or disallow) mea-

\*Kevin J. Ruth is assistant headmaster for advancement at Saint Edmond's Academy in Wilmington, Delaware. He is also the president of Quo Vadis Group, Inc., a company offering board education and philanthropy services to nonprofit groups.

This article was originally published in *Momentum*, September/October 2009, and reprinted in *De La Salle Today* with permission from the editor.

<sup>1</sup> Gladwell, M. (2000). *The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference*. London: Little Brown.

## LAY MODEL

*Continued from Page 9*

sure that the board of directors has written and its powers are limited (or aggrandized) by the bylaws.

We see this structure most often in schools affiliated with a religious order, in which the corporate board is composed of members of the order, either entirely or predominantly. An oft-heard criticism of this type of governance structure is that the corporate board can have too much authority over the board of directors, effectively rendering the latter impotent. Yet a set of bylaws that limits the powers of the corporate board can eliminate this power struggle and ensure a healthy school.

The second governance model is that of a single entity (i.e., board of trustees). In this model, Catholic independent schools identify a certain percentage of board seats for clergy or members of the religious order, usually around 25 percent, though it may be higher in some schools. Schools run by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) tend to follow this model. This board has full governance over the school, and can respond quickly with policy decisions.

An oft-cited downside to this kind of board is that, if the board is factious to any degree, decisions can leave out entire constituencies, thereby creating dissension and aggression within the overall school community. Distrust of the board is a sure-fire recipe for disaster, whether the pressure valve is found in admissions, development, curriculum or personnel.

Either model can work in Catholic independent schools, so long as it dovetails with school culture, but make no mistake about it—govern-

ance is as important as selecting the right lay person to be the school leader. Governance should be a concern of the local bishop and of all board members. To that end, it would be wise to undergo a governance audit on a fixed schedule, perhaps every five years, to ensure overall health in this vital area of school operations.

## SELECTING THE SCHOOL LEADER

The most important role the board plays is that of selecting the leader of the school. If the school is moving from clerical (or religious) leadership to lay leadership, then the board would do well to engage in succession planning. Proper succession planning is akin to getting one's estate in order.

First, there is general housekeeping: revisiting and, when appropriate, rewriting bylaws; revisiting board structure; engaging a consultant to audit the governance model at the school.

Second, the board should identify potential school leaders, from both external and internal resources. Using a search firm may be of particular value. Candidates worthy of the board's time and energy should be, first and foremost, devout, practicing Catholics. They should be capable of either maintaining an already-strong Catholic presence in the school, or be ready to institute programs that will reinvigorate that presence, following the lead of the board.

Indeed, the head/president is the person to manage the Catholic identity of the school. If it is a question of maintaining a particular religious charism, it may behoove the board to consider an oblate or

third-order (or similar) if the religious order has such a group. With decreases in vocations in so many orders, there may be a silver lining with the growth of oblates or third orders. The Order of Saint Benedict has seen significant oblate growth in the past 25 years. Writing in *The Tablet*, the United Kingdom's Catholic weekly, James Roberts noted that in 2005, the year of the first World Congress of Oblates in Rome, the number of Benedictine oblates worldwide was estimated at 25,000. A second gathering in 2009 is expected to see a significant increase in that figure.

If the school is a single-sex school, it makes sense to look for a leader of that same gender, although strong candidates should not be dismissed because of gender. Sometimes a male leader can run a girls school well, and sometimes a female leader can run a boys school well.

Obviously, the school leader should have experience in education. One could argue that experience in the nonprofit world merits consideration (it does), but an educational "sense," i.e., an acute understanding of how school culture works and where the touchstones of school life are, is like a compass pointing in the right direction.

## CATECHETICAL FORMATION OF PERSONNEL

Once the lay leader has been chosen, that person must then attend to the business of Catholic identity "in the trenches." The school needs to exude Catholicity and, where a religious order has been active, it needs a heightened awareness of the religious charism. That can be challenging in the absence of priests and/or

religious who provided such a valuable outward symbol of the disciplined spiritual life. By giving attention to the following areas, though, a lay leader can have an effective school culture that is supportive of Catholic identity.

A first area of focus for the school leader should be personnel. If the leader is seeking to maintain or reinvigorate a strong sense of Catholic identity, then it stands to reason that the majority of the employee base should be Catholics in good standing who participate regularly in the sacramental life of the church. However, a school may not have that luxury. In either case, it would make good sense to offer a sort of “Formation for the Apostolate” on a yearly basis, using Pope Paul VI’s “Apostolicam Actuositatem” (Apostolate of the Laity, 19\_5) as a guide. There is a golden opportunity here for a communion of cooperation with diocesan schools, in which all schools could gather annually for formation workshops, sharing in the costs. A particular benefit for schools run by religious orders is that they can offer institutes or workshops that focus on the order’s charism, something that has been undertaken already by the Congregation of Holy Cross, the Xaverian Brothers, Augustinians and Jesuits, for example.

### PRAXIS OF MAINTAINING IDENTITY

With a good governance model, a solid leader and an outstanding formation program in place, it is time to consider how schools can maintain their identity in purely pragmatic terms. This process will be different in most schools, yet there are some central focus areas:

- Visual: Display posters, banners and perhaps habits and vestments in high-traffic areas.
- Literature: Include a mention of Catholic identity in every publication, from admissions to development, in parent letters, newsletters and school newspapers.
- Web site: The site should contain visual/symbolic representations of the faith, as well as verbal reinforcement; for example, a video spot where school leaders and students talk about Catholic identity.
- Public Gatherings: Liturgies, family nights, open houses, grandparents’ days and other events should exude Catholicity.
- Professional Development Days: The head/president should allocate time in the day’s schedule to discuss Catholicism. Some points of departure might be Pope Paul VI’s Apostolate of the Laity mentioned previously or any of the encyclicals by Pope John Paul II, or those being generated by Pope Benedict XVI.
- Classrooms: On significant feast days, teachers should be encouraged to highlight the feast by reviewing its importance with each of their classes.

### PITFALLS FOR THE CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

Here is a brief, non-exhaustive list of potential pitfalls for schools that are struggling to maintain or highlight their identity.

1. Not including clergy or religious on boards, preferring instead laity-only. The laity alone cannot—and should not—decide the Catholicity of the institution. The danger

here is that this approach will lead to becoming entirely independent, resulting in obfuscating, then losing, the school’s Catholic identity. Worse, if keeping the Catholic label despite an overt practice of secularism, the school is making a statement to the community that being Catholic means embracing secularism, which, of course, it does not. That is called relativism, and it is one of our greatest struggles today. This potential downward spiral into relativism is precisely why the clergy and religious (including the local bishop, if he is amenable, or his designee) should be invited to sit on the board. In the end, Catholic schools are a tool of Catholic evangelization, as Pope Benedict XVI recently highlighted in his address to Catholic educators at Catholic University in April 2008.

2. Over-emphasizing the religious congregation at the expense of the Church. Do not become over-zealous and end up deifying the founder(s) or significant religious within the order. Do not forget that saints were Catholics dedicated to a mission, and that mission is always God-focused and God-driven. In print and in speech, be sure to cite the larger Church and what is transpiring and then highlight how the charism of your school’s order speaks to these actual events and circumstances. To be sure, there is a balance to be maintained here, as your school’s unique identity is a result of its association with a specific order, and that identity should be celebrated.
3. Allowing your non-Catholic employee base to become the

*Continued on Page 16*

# The Challenges of Catholic Education: Past, Present and Future

By FATHER JOSEPH McSHANE, SJ



De La Salle at Blessed Sacrament in Memphis, TN.

The American Catholic Church created its own school system in response to the felt need to protect itself and its people from the cultural animosity in America. The cultural animosity to which I refer here was strong and was experienced as both religious and ethnic prejudice. Our immigrant ancestors were deeply aware of these prejudices that the culture had against them. They were equally aware of the fact that the culture wanted them to drop those things that marked them as foreigners so that they could assimilate fully into American society. (For our ances-

tors, complete assimilation then meant that they would have to give up both their faith and the languages that they brought with them to America.) The bishops of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were deeply aware of the pressure that the immigrant members of the church felt. Therefore, they sought to insulate them from the pressures of American society in significant ways. One of the most audacious strategies for protecting their people from the hostility of American culture was the creation of the Catholic school system.

The grand architect of the Catholic school system was John Hughes, the first Archbishop of New York, who served the local Church from 1842 to 1864. Hughes took on the Public School Society of New York and demanded that it deal more sensitively with the immigrants and

not force/coerce Catholic children to adopt the regnant religion of American society. He got nowhere. Rebuffed by the authorities, Hughes decided to start a parallel school system, a system in which the faith would be preserved. As he and his episcopal colleagues shouldered the task of building this parallel system, they faced enormous challenges: money, staffing, the diversity of the immigrant church, and nurturing a shared sense of ownership in the schools. The bishops did not shrink from the challenges. Indeed, so urgent did the bishops feel the need was to maintain and pass on the faith that the Councils of Baltimore (most notably the Third Council in 1884) decreed that every parish had to have a school—and that the school should be the first building built in any parish. (This, by the

\* Fr. Joseph McShane, SJ, is president of Fordham University. This address was delivered to the John Carroll Society in Washington, DC, January 2010 and reprinted in *De La Salle Today* with permission from the author.

way, was undertaken at same time that the bishops were involved in the construction of what has been called the Empire of Charity: a network of social and educational institutions that were thought to be necessary to maintain the faith in a hostile cultural environment.)

In spite of the challenges, the bishops succeeded in the erection of the parallel system of education that Hughes envisioned. Staffing was taken care of by the extraordinary number of vocations (especially to religious congregations of sisters) that flooded into convents and novitiates in America, and by a seemingly limitless supply of European missionaries who flocked to America to tend to the immigrant flock. As for dealing with the challenges posed by the ethnic diversity of the Church's membership, it is important to remember that the American Church was never monolithic. Far from it. It was incredibly diverse. In fact, the American Catholic Church was (and is) the only institution in the nation (aside from the nation itself) that mirrors the national motto/aspiration: "Out of many, one." Therefore, the staffing was not monolithic nor were the schools all cookie-cutter schools. Far from it. They reflected the ethnic villages (neighborhoods) in which the Catholic people lived. This was a brilliant strategy: the bishops sought to keep the Church together by catering to the very different needs of their diverse flock. (They sought unity through diversity.) That meant that schools reflected linguistically and culturally the neighborhoods in which they were located.

As for money: it was always short. Yet, it seemed to appear as if out of nowhere from the pockets of the

poor people who sent their children to the schools. This, of course, raises the question: why would the poor (and a few rich benefactors) contribute to the building, maintenance and survival of the schools, especially when the public schools offered free education to all comers? The answer lies in the immigrant experience, the cultural hostility the immigrants experienced around themselves and the shared sense of ownership and purpose that emerged from the col-

*The American Catholic Church is the only institution in the nation (aside from the nation itself) that mirrors the national motto/aspiration: "Out of many, one."*

lision of these two forces. As for the immigrant experience: there were very few things that the immigrants were able to bring with them. Faith was one of those portable treasures that they were able to bring. It took up no room on the passage, but it linked them to both the lands that they had left, and to the system of meaning that allowed them to make sense of their lives. As for the hostility that they encountered: it only served to make them want to hold on to their faith all the more tightly. (There is something to be said for

defiance.) Therefore, you had the creation and evolution of a shared sense of purpose in every immigrant neighborhood: family, parish, school and ethnic networks all believed the same things. The lessons that were taught around the dinner table were reinforced in the pulpit and the classroom and on the streets of the neighborhood. The product was an extraordinary achievement: a school system that was owned by the people and owned in two important ways. It was owned in the sense that the people paid for it voluntarily. It was also owned because the people who paid for its maintenance believed that its central proposition (namely, the passing on of the faith) was important. For the Irish, the faith was central. For other ethnic groups, another central benefit accrued to the communities that built the schools: their language and culture were preserved in the face of a hostile culture. Faith and character were stressed in all that was done in the schools.

But let us be clear on one additional point: the school system was—as it had to be—a way-station on the path to full Americanization. Therefore, although the schools stressed the importance of passing on the faith, they also stressed the need to prepare students to be players in the culture and the world that they would inhabit as they grew older. Since their students were outsiders and suspect, therefore, excellence was stressed in all things. The basics (especially in English) were mastered; and proven accomplishment was acknowledged to be a passport to worldly success.

This model continued to reign in the American Church until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (On

*Continued on Page 14*

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION

*Continued from Page 13*

this point, I would challenge you to look back on your own experience if you are more than 45 years old. If you do so, you will find your memories filled with images of orderly schools presided over by legions of remarkably dedicated religious women. And in those schools, the faith was passed on; character formation was seen as important as the mastery of secular subjects; and you were prepared to take on the world—on the world's terms.)

The Present really begins in the aftermath of World War II. Following the war, one of the great transformations of American life begins with the suburbanization of American culture. Ethnic Americans, and others, left the central cities—where the empire of charity was rooted. Catholics, moreover, began to compete with their counterparts in every sphere of American life. In fact, they began to surpass their counterparts in economic terms. They arrived. And they knew it. The first phase of suburbanization was a dizzying time for Catholics. In the first burst of suburban growth (when they settled in the Levittowns of the country), middle class American Catholics attempted to reproduce the patterns of religious life that they had known in the cities. Therefore, they built new parishes with reckless energy. Following the now age-old pattern dictated by the Third Council of Baltimore, moreover, they poured their money into the construction of schools before churches could be built. As for staffing these new schools, they did not give it a second thought. The explosion of vocations after World War II supplied

enough teachers to cover both the cities and the suburbs. The increasing economic success of Catholics also allowed pastors to believe that parish life and Catholic education would continue as it always had.

The second phase of suburbanization, however, proved to be far more challenging, and somewhat disorienting. The comfortable religious world in which American Catholics had grown up changed dramatically in the 1960s. The year 1960, of course, was a water-

*Parents are willing to invest in Catholic schools because they believe (rightly) that the schools will reinforce the values that they teach their children at home.*

shed year for American Catholics. The election of the first (and so far only) Catholic president seemed to signal that the culture was finally ready to accept Catholics as real Americans—and not just challenges to the nation's professed belief in pluralism. Then, in 1964-65 the Second Vatican Council came to a close. Almost immediately, the American Catholic community was forced to wrestle with a number of questions and challenges that it had never had to face before. Vocations dried up almost overnight. In the 1960s, the lure of religious life seemed simply to disappear because there were new and exciting ways to

find and serve God. Thus, staffing became more challenging because it became more expensive. If that were not enough, the sense of difference that had made the creation of a parallel universe necessary in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries seemed to evaporate in the minds and hearts of American Catholics. This development, in turn, called into question the need for the schools. The shared sense of purpose that had sustained the schools and the compact upon which they were built seemed to disintegrate. With it went the sense of urgency that had rallied the faithful around the schools for more than a century.

At the same time, the schools themselves seemed to take on a new mission. On the home-front, when the immigrants left the ethnic villages (neighborhoods), they were replaced by non-Catholics—many of whom were African-Americans. Interestingly enough, the new inhabitants of the old ethnic neighborhoods were more like the old immigrants than either group at first realized: they were outsiders; they were the victims of cultural hostility; and they were in need of the kind of education that could (and would, as experience proved) make life better and more meaningful. Therefore, the Catholic schools of the ethnic villages became beacons once again. They continued to serve the poor; they continued to stress character formation and the passing on of the faith; and they continued to see themselves as way-stations on the road to full acceptance—and success. And they did it (and do it) better than any other schools for the same reasons that they were able to serve the immigrant populations so well: they were owned by the people in the

neighborhoods and endowed with a shared sense of purpose.

But what of the Catholic community? In the second phase of the present age, Catholic community members almost re-discovered their own schools. In their own lives, they came to believe (as did their ancestors) that the schools had transcendent value—or a number of value propositions attached to them.

With regard to the first: American Catholics have once again discovered that the faith has transcendent value. In fact, they have discovered that the value of the faith for connecting them with transcendence—with God—is so great that it has to be preserved. They have rediscovered that the faith offers a system of meaning that alone makes sense of their lives. Therefore, they have come to value the schools so much that they are willing to pay the high price of sending their children to them. They have also discovered the value of (I hate to say it) the Catholic educational brand. What do I mean by that? Parents are willing to invest in Catholic schools because they believe (rightly) that the schools will reinforce the values that they teach their children at home. They see them, therefore, as resources that they can use or rely on in the work of forming character and of preparing their children for success in life.

Finally, in the context of our past and present, we can contemplate what the future might hold for Catholic education. Let me cast this final part in the form of a series of theses that can serve as jumping-off points for conversations and discussions.

A. *First thesis:* the challenges that Catholic education has faced and overcome in the past 50 years

will pale in comparison to the challenges that it will face in the next 50 years.

1. Reason: the cost of maintaining the system will become more burdensome as the last of the post-World War II generation of religious personnel retires. This will tax the will of the Catholic community as it has never been taxed before.

B. *Second thesis:* the Catholic school system will survive and thrive

*The American Catholic School System will thrive only if it is seen as such a great, transcendent and transforming instrument of both grace and personal enrichment.*

only if the American Church displays the wisdom that it showed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This thesis has several sub-theses:

1. First corollary: the American Catholic School System will survive and thrive only if the Church is clear about and stresses the values that the system offers to its people. That is to say, the schools will only thrive if the Church continues to be successful in con-

vincing its people that the faith has transcendent value in their lives.

2. Second corollary: the American Catholic School System will thrive only if the Church recognizes that it is a community of communities, and that the needs of the various communities that it is called to serve are different. In the future, the Church will be called to recognize and cater to the needs of Latino Catholics, African Catholics, Caribbean Catholics, Anglo Catholics.

3. Third corollary: building on the insight contained in the second corollary, we can say that the American Catholic School System will thrive only if it is responsive to the diverse cultural backgrounds and needs of the Church's people—as it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

C. *Third thesis:* the American Catholic School System will survive and thrive only if it is able to believe in, nurture and build community-based schools in which ownership is shared by the parish community, the school faculty and the parents. (This is what made the schools successful and vibrant in the past. It is what will sustain them into the future.)

D. *Fourth thesis:* we have to recognize, celebrate and capitalize on the fact that grace builds on nature. That is, of course, not an original thought on my part. But, you might wonder, what does it have to do with the future of American Catholic Schools? My friends, it has everything to do with the future of our schools. It is the sneaky

*Continued on Page 16*

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION

*Continued from Page 15*

part of dealing with the future of Catholic schools in America. It is only if we recognize that grace builds on nature that we will regain a foothold or retain the foothold that we already have in the hearts, minds and lives of middle-class and upper-middle-class and upper-class Catholics. What do I mean? Simply this. In the pluralistic and competitive environment in which Catholics live, successful Catholics have a dazzling array of choices for their children. Therefore, Catholic schools—from pre-K to colleges—have to be remarkably successful in the work that they do. If they are, they will be magnets for families who are looking for the brand that will make it possible for their children to be successful in life. And there, my friends, is where the schools can become instruments of evangelization. Students will come in the door expecting one thing (namely, an entree to a successful professional life) and they discover something entirely far richer: they will discover the faith, a treasure beyond all telling, a system of meaning that will enable them to make sense of their lives and that will bring them into contact not only with the wisdom of the past but with the Author of All Wisdom. The brand will bring them in; the success they seek will keep them in the seats; and the wisdom of love will make them whole.

E. *Fifth thesis:* The American Catholic School System will thrive only if it is seen as such

a great, transcendent and transforming instrument of both grace and personal enrichment (and hence a real value) that the Church's people will invest in it.

For my part, after spending nearly 50 years in Catholic education, I believe that the system is of such value that we have to renew the compact that our ancestors made to make sure that they survive. Moreover, as someone who has been called to serve a Catholic university, I want you to know that I sell the brand in season and out of season—to make a place for faith at the American table—whether that table is the dinner table around which you gather each day or the table of American public opinion, for you see, I believe that, as John Robinson said when he sent the Puritans off to Massachusetts Bay, “The Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth out of His Holy Word—for the good of the nation, the Church and the world. ■

## LAY MODEL

*Continued from Page 11*

majority in the school. As Catholics, we are called to lead by example. Therefore, we need Catholic employees, from school leadership to administrative support staff to classroom teachers, to be a guiding presence in the school. With a non-Catholic majority in the employee base, the mission of the school becomes increasingly more difficult to uphold. The end result is a “lone gun” Catholic lay administration in charge of maintaining the school's Catholic identity, but without buy-in from the fac-

ulty and staff. The end result—taking either a few years or perhaps a full generation—will be the loss of Catholic identity. The school may remain Catholic in name, but it will not be Catholic in reality.

4. Putting ongoing formation of the apostolate on the backburner because of other pressing issues at the school. Without continued adult formation, Catholic identity will begin to erode.
5. Ignoring succession planning. If a school is owned by a religious order whose members are of retirement age, to not engage in succession planning is a catastrophe for the board, the school and the civic community. The overarching issue of how the school will be run will not solve itself. Members of the order and board members must be active on this front. Orderly succession planning promotes healthy dialogue around all-school issues, from transitioning to lay leadership to board structure and personnel policies. If the religious order and the board find it difficult to engage in succession planning because of expectations or a by-law structure that gives too much authority to one group over the other, then a consultant should be hired to direct the discussion process. The goal of succession planning in such circumstances is to do what is best for the school community, not what is best for the board or for the order. Mutual understanding of this focal point is necessary for an orderly transition. The school's continued existence should be front and center of any agenda. ■

# Bearers of Wisdom

BY BROTHER BRENDAN KNEALE, FSC

It is flattering to think that educators in American Catholic schools and colleges might deserve the appellation given us by Pope Benedict XVI in the opening sentence of his address to them at the Catholic University of America in April 2008. He called us “bearers of wisdom.” But it would be arrogant to believe that the wisdom exalted in Jewish and in Christian Scripture and tradition, as well as the wisdom of the Greeks and their intellectual legacy, were really all in our possession to impart. Nevertheless, His Holiness went on to speak as if the appellation were valid—recognizing that we are merely bearers, not possessors of that wisdom.

## DIVISION OF LABOR

Fortunately the education of the young is not the responsibility of schools alone. Family, church, peer groups and teams, various media, political parties, the professions, labor unions, and other institutions in society are educational in their own way. Some of them, however, are indispensable in the sense that at least they cannot fully be substituted for by others. And that is certainly true for colleges and universities. Just as the wisdom of home-life cannot be supplied by a school or college, the latter also have their unique role and responsibility for their share wisdom. Those of us in school education are, ideally, bearers of an

irreplaceable wisdom. Recall what Proverbs 3 says: “Happy the person who finds wisdom, the person who gains understanding... None of your choice possessions can compare with her.”

I like to think that a convenient word expressing the special (and intrinsic) task of the school and college is to impart wisdom by way of “literacy”—taking that term in an

*“The liberal arts are the skills by which we work our way from wonder to wisdom.”*

Prof. Theodora Carlile, St. Mary's College of California

extended sense. That sense includes the manifold abilities to read, interpret, and understand the languages of prose, poetry, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, music, history, computers, religion, philosophy and the sciences. In other words, I take “literacy” in a very broad sense—as the set of abilities one should bring to any career, to life itself, and certainly to graduate school. There is, of course, a reason why basic literacy has been at the core of

universal education for several centuries—reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic were what everyone needed by the end of the medieval age. Moreover, the Protestant Reformation made reading even more of a necessity. Certainly the Catholic Church also sponsored widespread elementary education shortly thereafter. As society became more complicated, the illiterate person was marginalized and in danger of being dehumanized. The dehumanized are not, *ceteris paribus*, well prepared for grace and salvation. Thus, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the official Patron Saint of all Teachers, John Baptist de La Salle, helped lay a foundation for ongoing Catholic and vocational education, beginning with elementary literacy. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century UNESCO had bestowed its literacy award on the Institute that he founded—which by then was teaching schools at various levels in 80 countries.

## THE LIBERAL ARTS

Starting in secondary schools and continuing in undergraduate colleges, students acquire a refinement of skills—what I have called above “literacy in an extended sense.” As I have indicated, I think the term “literacy” including the so-called “quadrivium” encapsulate “a liberal arts education.” There exists a neat description of such education,

*Continued on Page 18*

## BEARERS OF WISDOM

*Continued from Page 17*

a description introduced to me by Professor Theodora Carlile, a faculty member at St. Mary's College: "The liberal arts are the skills by which we work our way from wonder to wisdom." The grammar, logic, rhetoric, and other skills needed to negotiate the paths to wisdom are, of course, a large part of the essence of undergraduate education. With them we can continue to learn long after our school days are over, that is to say, if we are "literate" in the languages of drama, poetry, music, history, persuasion, philosophy, theology, mathematics, and the sciences. We may begrudge the time and effort needed, but the time taken to sharpen our tools is not time wasted. As our wisdom increases we learn how to filter and select among the realms opened to us by these arts. It is not that we should become polymaths, but we should strive to be, as it were, poly-literate, so that no important human concern should ever be completely closed to us.

On our "way from wonder to wisdom," the great religious questions automatically come up. It is here that the Catholic school and college have an opportunity and a major responsibility. There is an appetite among students for wisdom about religious matters. I recall a time when I tried in a liberal arts classroom to teach parts of the Bible as a purely literary exercise. The students would not allow it! They persisted in arguing about the specifically religious claims made in the texts. My point is that there is a conjunction of undergraduate instruction and religious education. The meeting takes place not only in literature courses but also in history, econom-

ics, and certainly in philosophy classes. This union is not only theoretical but also a matter of personal values. And, as such, it needs to be recognized and, indeed, exploited.

There are dangers here of course. I am not referring to the fact that Catholic teaching is often a matter of faith (assenting to reasonable dogmas)—though much of Church teaching is actually only the accumulated wisdom of the ages. More dangerously, there is the fact that liberal arts education encour-

*Our Catholic schools  
and colleges can  
provide us with a  
sophisticated literacy  
but also provide us  
with sacramental  
help to make the  
essential truths alive.*

ages a deferring of commitment: one wants to wait to hear all the arguments before giving intellectual assent or taking action. Such a waiting period may become indefinitely and dangerously prolonged, paralyzing one's life. The wisdom at which we aim is certainly not a methodological skepticism. The "diakonia of truth," for which Pope Benedict praises us, is hardly served by such an outcome. It is true that education enlarges the scope of our freedom, but as he insists, "Freedom is not an opting out. It is an opt-

ing in..." The Pope asks that our knowledge be "performative" as well as "informative." And, he adds, our teaching should become for our students "an especially powerful instrument of hope." He observes, too, "...what [students] can know opens up the vast adventure of what they ought to do." Pope John Paul II had noted earlier in *Centesimus Annus* [50], when he wrote:

Indeed, the heritage of values which has been received and handed down is always challenged by the young. To challenge does not necessarily mean to destroy or reject a priori, but above all to put these values to the test in one's own life, and through this existential verification to make them more real, relevant and personal, distinguishing the valid elements in the tradition from false and erroneous ones, or from obsolete forms which can be usefully replaced by others more suited to the times.

Notice that he expects "existential verification" not systematic doubt or indefinite postponements.

### LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS

Thanks to revelation, to faith, and to the Church, the essential truths are not impossibly elusive or dubious. Commitment to them can be made, by the grace of God, with an informed kind of certainty appropriate to limited human abilities. Our Catholic schools and colleges can provide us with a sophisticated literacy but also provide us with sacramental help to make the essential truths alive. A kind of parallel, at the strictly human level, is the life-long commitment that a scientist may make to the scientific method. A practicing scientist, with good rea-

son, believes in his method and in the reliability and perdurance of the truths which the method uncovers. Common sense is certainly on his side in this belief, but nevertheless he is making an act of faith. Christians are in an analogous and parallel situation: there are lots of arguments for what they believe, but, still, the basic claims are held by faith.

The Pope asks Catholic schools and colleges, “Is the faith given expression liturgically, sacramentally...” on our campuses? Is there “communal witness to [God’s] loving truth?” My answer is that most of our institutions accompany the academic life of students with chaplains, church services, campus ministries, and programs of charitable outreach—and do so in an environment rich in religious symbols. Such signs, agencies and activities strike me as comparable to the laboratory requirements, outside the lecture hall, which characterize courses in the physical sciences: laboratories provide hands-on exercises that not only confirm what lectures have been talking about [supply “existential verification”]; they also generate new questions and provoke new appreciations.

Similarly for the faith. Surely the mysterious action of grace is given scope in our liturgical and sacramental and charitable experience. Commitment to the truth becomes much more likely in an atmosphere of good liturgies. And the same is probably true for school activities in the name of social justice.

Once again, however, it seems appropriate to warn about a danger. Schools can go overboard with extracurricular commitments which distract, rather than re-enforce the primary and essential task of our enterprise. Enthusiasm for extra-

curricular service work can easily replace dedication to the mastery of the literacies and “numeracies” at the indispensable and time-consuming core of education in our schools and colleges. There are always other institutions for social action, but there is no substitute for the academic achievement which is at the heart of the school—while, for liturgy and the sacraments, as well as for social action, there are other venues like home, club, and parish.

Nevertheless, we must not forget that the Catholic school is itself a “sacramental,” that is, a sign and, we hope, even an agent of grace. Perhaps that is what Pope Benedict expects—that our schoolwork be itself a form of worship, an example of participation in the liturgy of the Church. To seek wisdom is to seek God under that title, so that to worship wisdom is to worship God. The rituals of our work in education should be considered para-liturgical. St. La Salle certainly appreciated this, and he made real the liturgy’s celebratory nature. He had his students throughout the day call to mind the religious dimension of their work; he filled the school day for the young boys in his classes with prayers, blessings, sacred art, with signs of worship and often indeed with the aid of the full liturgy

itself. He understood the celebratory nature of the liturgy. Nevertheless, his concurrent and major emphasis was on reading, writing and arithmetic—the initial steps to wisdom. He noted that many street children in his day were “far from the means of salvation,” and he was taking “salvation” to include both salvation from a dehumanized illiteracy and salvation from hell (where the former could well lead—in his day and ours—to the latter). Pope John Paul II made the same point implicitly in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (19): “In fact, for the poor, to the lack of material goods has been added a lack of knowledge and training which prevents them from escaping their state of humiliating subjection.”

## ADDENDUM

*Following is a translation of the public address Pope Benedict XVI gave on September 20, 2008, before praying the midday Angelus with the pilgrims gathered at Castel Gandolfo.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today, for the customary Sunday reflection, I will take as my point of departure the passage from the Letter of James that is proposed to us by today’s liturgy (3:16-4:3), and I will pause,

*Continued on Page 22*

### Reasons why new members are attracted to religious life

	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
A desire for prayer and spiritual growth	96%	73%
A sense of call to religious life	95	78
A desire to be of service	93	67
A desire to be part of a community	89	60
A desire to be more committed to the Church	74	44

Based on the study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life by CARA, August 2009.

# Developing a Common Identity for the Lasallian Education Network

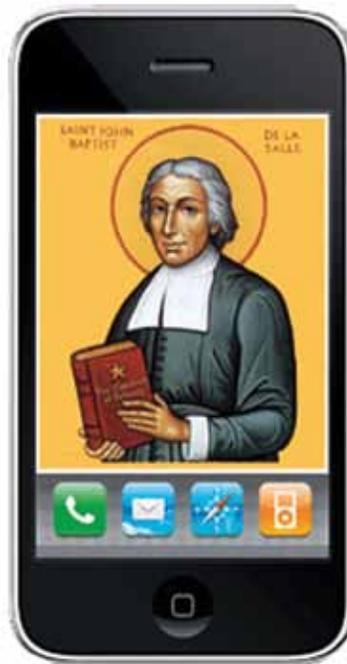
BY MR. REX WHISMAN

In the education marketplace, students and their parents face a confusing array of choices. Public or private? Faith-based or secular? Small and friendly or large and bustling? When it comes time for parents and students to commit to an option, many base their decisions on family traditions, financial limitations (what's affordable?) or gut instincts that point them in a particular direction. Many others base their decisions on brand.

For the education community, that poses a challenge. Traditionally, schools and educators associate brand with consumer products. Nike is a brand. So is Starbucks. But what is an education brand? And how does Lasallian education embody and communicate a brand? Just as important, how does it harness that brand to shape policies, guide new initiatives, inspire students and serve community?

With those questions in mind, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the United States-Toronto Region has turned to Colorado-based BrandED Consultants Group for help spearheading a branding initiative. The goal is to define the Lasallian educa-

tion brand and ensure its viability and longevity. Along the way, the initiative aims to connect the Lasallian education network with a common identity. After all, a Lasallian education is like no other education. It's important that everyone from administrators and educators to parents and students understand how it differs and how it matters.



Why is it important? Frankly, it is not just important, it is essential. In today's crowded and noisy education arena, branding happens. It happens with or without the consent of the branded institution. If Lasallian education does not define and assert its brand, the marketplace will. And the marketplace might bungle the job.

For Lasallian educators and administrators, this initiative could not come at a better time. BrandED's preliminary research indicates that the public is confused about Lasallian education, about its primary characteristics and particularly about how it differs from Jesuit education. In fact, BrandED's early research indicates that the Lasallian story needs to be told with greater clarity and conviction. In other words, it's essential that Lasallian schools and colleges begin to differentiate themselves.

Branding initiatives vary, with many focusing on advertising and public relations campaigns. The BrandED strategy, specifically tailored for educational organizations and shaped by extensive stakeholder engagement, is anchored in what branding experts call "internal branding." That concept is designed to enhance an institution's understanding of and commitment to its core values and mission.

The internal branding approach has already been tested at Philadelphia's La Salle University, where a BrandED-led initiative resulted in increased applications and enrollments. The initiative also helped the institution's diverse and disparate programs focus on a handful of key messages—messages they used to

\* Mr. Rex Whisman is Principal for the BrandED Consultants Group, [www.BrandEDus.net](http://www.BrandEDus.net).



An ideation session at Christian Brothers University, Memphis, TN.

refine their communications materials and their approach to nurturing a campus culture.

According to John Dolan, Vice President, Enrollment Services, La Salle University, “For La Salle University our branding initiative was the outgrowth of our desire for the continuity and sustainability of our Lasallian values. We realized that this continuity can only be achieved if the entire campus community understands and relates to our core values as essential elements of internal and external communications.

“Our internal branding work focused on the hearts and minds of the people who work at the University. Of course, that first included over 500 of the faculty, staff, students and trustees who direct the school. After all this work it now includes our external constituents and encompasses prospective students, guidance counselors, alumni, friends, donors and other University business partners.”

Phase I of the Lasallian Education Brand Initiative for the Region began in winter 2010 with an exten-

sive discovery, engagement and research process. To be conducted over a period of about five months, the research and discovery process involves meetings with Lasallian stakeholders in New York, Denver, New Orleans, Chicago, Memphis, Minneapolis, Washington, DC, and Moraga. Much of this research will incorporate focus groups, one-on-one interviews and “ideation”

sessions in which BrandED learns about how the Lasallian education community thinks of itself.

Another component of Phase I offers a general communications review, in which a sample of marketing materials and outreach practices are analyzed to see how—or if—they communicate values and goals. Do they send consistent messages? Do they reflect and reinforce the institution’s mission? Such reviews often reveal many ways in which organizations undermine their marketing efforts—often because key players fail to understand their own brand. BrandED plans to draw extensively from stakeholder information.

Once Phase I is completed, BrandED distills the findings into a report and offers recommendations for the next phase of the initiative. The research will be used to generate a handful of concepts that capture the essence of the Lasallian story. These concepts will

*Continued on Page 22*



Students from De La Salle High School-New Orleans and Christian Brothers School participate in an ideation session held at De La Salle.

## IDENTITY

*Continued from Page 21*

be reviewed—and refined—by the Lasallian community. This part of the process typically involves some spirited give and take. In turn, that give and take usually leads to a stronger sense of institutional identity.

In Phase II, BrandED will develop a brand strategy that includes several proposed brand platforms. Think of the brand platform as the vehicle that describes the Lasallian brand in a handful of short sentences. The platform also identifies the brand's attributes—its key characteristics—in just a few powerful words. Before a platform can be adopted, BrandED will test it with various stakeholder groups throughout the Region—everyone from senior leadership, trustees and directors to the Brothers, professors, staff, alumni, parents and students. Testing is designed to ensure that the final platform reflects the internal culture and the external reputation.

### For updates on the branding initiative, visit:

- [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) (search LasallianBrand)
- [www.twitter.com/LasallianBrand](http://www.twitter.com/LasallianBrand)
- [www.lasallian.info](http://www.lasallian.info)

Another key component of this effort will include the development—and testing—of a graphic and verbal identity. The standards for deploying key images and words will be outlined in a brand standards manual, a handy reference that will ensure consistent usage in the years to come.

Finally, the brand initiative concludes with an implementation phase. This includes training and development at the local, district and regional levels. Just as important, it includes development of assessment metrics, ensuring that Lasallian institutions can advance their efforts systematically and effectively. Once the Lasallian education brand is defined and articulated,

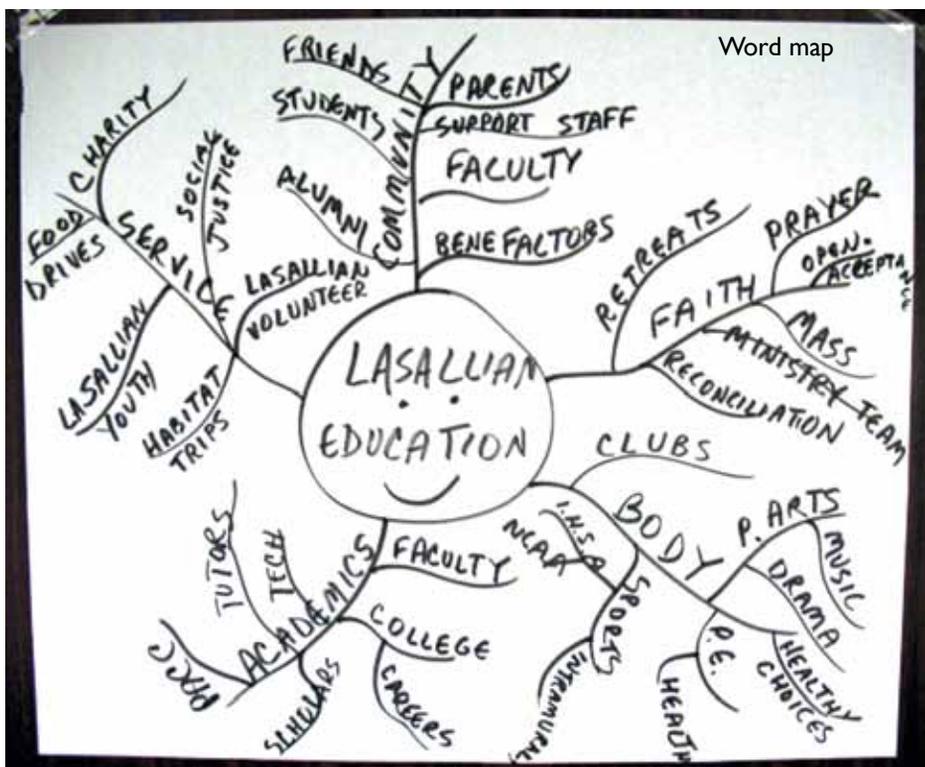
BrandED will help the community devise strategies for “championing” and sustaining the brand. This will involve everything from refining graphic identity to harnessing emerging technologies and social media opportunities. ■

## BEARERS OF WISDOM

*Continued from Page 19*

in particular, on an expression that is striking for its beauty and contemporary relevance. It has to do with the description of true wisdom that the Apostle contrasts with false wisdom. While the latter is “worldly, material and diabolical, and is recognized by the fact that it provokes jealousies, arguments, disorder and every kind of evil deed” (cf. 3:16); on the contrary “[true] wisdom, which comes from above is first of all pure, then peaceful, meek, docile, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere” (3:17)—a list of seven qualities, according to the biblical custom, from which perfection of authentic wisdom comes along with the positive effects that it produces. As first and principal quality, almost the premise for the others, St. James sets down “purity,” that is, sanctity, the transparent reflection—so to say—of God in the human soul. And, like God, from whom it comes, wisdom does not need to impose itself by force, because it has the invincible vigor of truth and love that affirms itself. That is why it is peaceful, meek and docile; it does not need to be partial, nor does it need to lie; it is indulgent and generous, it is recognized by the good fruits that it bears in abundance.

*Note:* the word “docile” is used twice in the above passage—meaning, properly, teachable. Teachers at the secondary and collegiate levels find that “teachability” entails a lot more than a kind of indoctrination (which may be appropriate for very elementary levels only, or to make available lists of mere data at other levels). ■



# Growing Up a Brothers' Boy

BY MR. RAYMOND RICCI, AFSC

## THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS

**M**y first encounter with a Christian Brother was just before my freshman year at West Catholic. Students were required to go to school to pick up their textbooks. I made the trek with my older cousin. He cautioned me to be careful how I addressed the Brothers. "Whatever you do, don't call them Father. They're not priests and they hate being called Father."

That seemed simple enough. But when I reached the counter in the bookstore, the Brother in charge, a large man whom everyone referred to as "Bookstore Martin," took my card, looked at my address and said, "MBS huh?" (referring to my parish). I dutifully responded, "Yes, Father." He rolled his eyes in his head and stared at me. I wanted to crawl under the carpet. So, my first impression was a lasting one: Brothers dressed funny, had funny sounding nicknames, and were noticeably more tolerant of social gaffes as compared with the priest-centered style that I was accustomed to.

In those years, West Catholic was a territorial high school serving parishes

mostly on the southwestern fringe of the city. The West Philadelphia that I knew then was a place that gave clear signs of the economic promise of America of the 1950s. Anything was possible. America stood on the moral high ground. And no one doubted it for a minute.

But, by the time I reached high school, city life was beginning to change. The large migration out of Philadelphia's row house neighbor-

*The Brothers made it clear that students were required to respect themselves by taking school seriously.*

hoods to the suburbs lay just ahead. People soon began moving up and out, a reality that frightened all of us and made those who remained more suspicious of every change.

When I entered high school, the Brothers made it clear that students were required to respect themselves by taking school seriously. Some of us warmed to this idea more than others. There were a few very

bright bulbs. Most, though, were of average wattage who needed daily doses of motivation. I was in the latter group. Some needed a pat on the back; others required a firmer approach. Either way, students eventually developed an emotional attachment to the school. The desire to succeed was high. Considering the working class fabric of the area, I am amazed that so many used West Catholic as a stepping stone to college (landing usually in one of the three local Catholic places).

West drew students largely from one economic class. We were the sons of shop owners, day laborers, factory workers, tradesmen, trolley car conductors, and cops on the beat.

The neighborhood of my youth was filled with second and third generation Americans (the largest bloc by a good margin was Irish) making their way in life. My parents, my sister and I kept alive some of the customs of the old country, most notably in the kitchen. Each evening at the dinner meal, the food on the table was a nightly homage to the world my grandparents left behind.

The parish church had a powerful hold over daily life. The preferred school was the parish school. Social activities—the first dances we attended, the movies we saw, the businesses we frequented—were

*Continued on Page 24*

---

\*Mr. Raymond Ricci is Assistant to the President of La Salle University (Philadelphia), in charge of Mission Integration. This reflection was written by Mr. Ricci in July 2009, prior to receiving the FSC Affiliate title in November 2009.

## GROWING UP

*Continued from Page 23*

influenced by the church. The hospital of choice was the nearby hospital run by the Sisters of Mercy. The old age home a few blocks away was run by the Little Sisters of the Poor. There, daily 5:30 a.m. Mass was the dread of every altar server (then called altar boys). Church attendance was astonishingly high by today's standards. Ten Masses each Sunday were barely adequate to handle the crowds in a church as large as the Cathedral. Virtually everyone received Sunday Eucharist.

In spite of that, my peers and I didn't give much serious thought about the faith. Children knew their catechism; we recited our prayers and participated in the rituals; we memorized Latin to become altar servers; we had the annual May procession that closed the main street. But otherwise, being a good Catholic largely meant you attended Sunday Mass where you dropped an envelope in the collection basket. Few gave serious consideration to a future in the priesthood or the convent. We were Catholic, but not

that kind of Catholic. We wanted the comfort of the flock but none of the duties of the shepherd. I discovered much later in life that that was only half true. It wasn't that we refused the mantle of shepherdhood. Rather, I think we saw ourselves as followers and were largely unable to hear an invitation to participate in the institutional Church.

In high school, we relied on the expertise and devotion of the West Catholic faculty (all but three of whom were Brothers) to tell us what we needed in life. It was an education you could use. College prep, commercial or technical tracks all found what they needed. We did ourselves the great service of listening most of the time.

West was held in very high esteem in part because people saw it as a place that graduated solid kids who lived responsible, if unspectacular, lives. Students did not aspire to sainthood. We all had a general idea of where the line for acceptable behavior was and for the most part we didn't cross it. However, we knew how to have fun even inside the line just short of people

complaining to the Brothers or to our parents. What I see now is that West enjoyed a powerful public persona built on its ability to achieve genuine school community. Amazingly enough, participation in that community was all voluntary. Theoretically at least, we students could have turned our backs to the Brothers. We could be a pretty cynical bunch. But the fact is we didn't. Quite the opposite was true. We were drawn in even though the Brothers expected a good deal from us in return.

What I can now see clearly is that the Brothers (all 60 of them) took the raw material from parish schools and created a distinctive school climate. They seemed to be people just like us only older, more compassionate, and clearly wiser. They spoke our language. It's a cliché, I know, but they taught by example, and we wanted to be like them. Later, with the arrival of Vatican II, one of my friends observed that what we needed was a Church that was more like them too.

School life both in high school and later at La Salle College accepted



Brother Gregory Cavalier with West Catholic High School Class of 1960. Ray Ricci is standing in the second row, fourth from the left.



(l-r) Ray Ricci at his Affiliation Ceremony with Superior General Brother Alvaro Rodriguez Echeverria and Brother Michael J. McGinniss, president of La Salle University.

you and embraced you. Simply said, faculty and staff took an interest in you. The Brothers of my high school years and the faculty that I found at La Salle had one thing in common: they all seemed to know what we were going through and they were all approachable. When they told you, “you have the ability to do this,” you believed them. In college, that feeling of inclusiveness was less the product of the physical presence of Brothers—there were far fewer of them and they were mostly in high places beyond direct contact with students—but the spirit was essentially the same.

### LESSONS LEARNED

What did I take from the Christian Brothers? One lesson was to share the wins and quietly absorb the losses. No matter what you think you’ve achieved in life or what title you happen to carry, if you have succeeded by some measure, you didn’t do it alone. You have a moral obligation to acknowledge the contribution of others. This isn’t an aphorism from a self-help book as much as it is an obligation to be truthful.

A second lesson is to build community and to find your voice. They go

hand-in-hand. In 1974, I was named College Registrar at La Salle. It seemed to me to be a big responsibility at the time, and I was sure I was not ready for it. I knew I could master the technical requirements of the job, but it was the people I worried about, all of whom were older and more experienced than I. How was I to deal with the deans and the faculty, many of whom taught me?

Based on my school experiences, I sensed that I had a model for social interaction that I could use. Without thinking much about it, I began the Registrar’s job by trying to form an ethically bound community. I wanted people to trust each other. Watching how the Brothers worked, I thought it made sense to do things the way they did it. I trusted people until I was proven wrong. Then I practiced forgiveness. (I have not yet mastered the latter, but the former was easy.) I have had numerous jobs, but this disposition has rarely failed me. In each job, I see myself as teacher and student. My approach always is to grow intimacy and understanding.

In the Registrar’s job, I wanted the people who worked for me to be committed for the long-term and not to worry too much about making mistakes of commission. I wanted them to feel that they had a valuable role to play in the real work of the school: changing people’s lives. I wanted the staff to know what our goals were and to have a style so that when people needed us they would feel comfortable approaching us. I wanted teamwork but never once used that word. This may not sound like much now, but then I thought this was a very big deal. When a student opened the office door, it wasn’t

an interruption to our day; it was a chance to help someone.

After nine years of doing this as Registrar, I didn’t have a staff. I had a clan. Like all clans, we had rituals and traditions that the staff and I made up as we went along. The staff had a chance to use their personal judgment. We practiced personal integrity by solving real problems and treating people decently. In every sense, I think we felt we were in “this” together. And, I had one more thing: I found my voice. I used these same ideas later in other jobs. I am the first to say that I did not invent any of this. All of it I saw in the daily work of the Brothers and in my very early years here as a staff member in the Evening Division Office, headed then by a young dean, Bro. Emery Mollenhauer.

### BEING CATHOLIC

How do I “do” Catholic, meaning where on the spectrum do I stand when it comes to practicing the faith? I am decidedly less occupied with doctrine and the teaching authority of the Church. I am, instead, attracted to its social mission, and the affirmation of religious freedom and ecumenism which emerged from Vatican II. Working for peace and social justice are, I believe, the central concerns of living a life as a follower of Jesus Christ. So, recent instances of the magisterium delivering directives on who Catholics must vote for are examples of how removed I am to this style of teaching.

This is an influence of the Brothers culture. In high school and then again at La Salle University, we were asked *to think* about our faith and give evidence that we were

## GROWING UP

*Continued from Page 25*

truly grappling with ambiguities. Sometimes I faked it, but as so often happens in life, I was eventually sucked in. I couldn't help but think about it seriously. It began with Brother Gregory Cavalier, my sophomore religion teacher. He was the first teacher who surprised us with an invitation. In his course, he asked us to respond to his lessons with our own point of view. He said doubt was ok. Imagine how this went over in a high school religion class in 1959. I remember thinking at the time: Do the authorities know what he's doing? Will he be found out? I secretly decided that, if he were discovered, I would lie to protect him.

Because of him, I learned not to give over to someone else a responsibility that was mine. Brother Gregory told us not to have someone else reason for us. Reason *with* us was ok, but *for* us was not. It was our job to learn enough so that we could reason independently. So reasoning out how to live a faith life had to be my responsibility.

In the end, I decided that I wanted to worship in a church that saw justice as its mission. From time to time, I've lost my way and become disillusioned. But, something happens to bring me back, and I've found a home at Sacred Heart Church (Camden). That congregation sees itself as a people called, not unlike a classroom teacher of any faith in a Lasallian school. Sacred Heart is a Christian community "standing on the side of life with the struggling people of Camden and the world. Gathering around God's table each Sunday, we celebrate that Christ is risen and ultimately all is well."

That is the way I "do" Catholic. I see perfect consistency between the work of the Christian Brothers and my presence in the pews of Sacred Heart.

## CONCLUSION

By the time I left college, I knew I wanted to work in a helping profession in a place with a purpose other than making money. I wanted to teach English, find a soul mate, raise a large family and be half the man that my father was. The part about meeting my wonderful wife and having the family worked out. One of my great regrets, though, is I didn't

*I thought of my office as a service to others, one that should always try to make a difference.*

tell my father how much I loved him until he was on his deathbed. Deathbed confessions don't count.

As for teaching English, for a long time I would promise myself that next year I'd change careers. But it never happened. At age 28, I settled on a road that sealed my fate. I was full of dread, positive that I didn't want to stay at La Salle and miss out on the big world. Each year, I groused about it: another year lost. Each year I stayed. But, providentially, my former high school principal, Brother John Owens, was my Assistant Registrar. He helped me to see the road and my place on it. It seems I've always had someone at my elbow who has taught by exam-

ple. The same can be said right now in the Mission Office.

One last story: many years ago, it was the custom of the President (Bro. Dan Burke) and the Academic Vice President (Bro. Emery) to meet annually with deans and directors. In advance of that meeting, we had to submit an annual report. They would visit us individually to review the report and the details of the year. I was flattered by these meetings and by how interested they seemed to be in me and my work. They asked questions that suggested that they not only had read the report but also had reflected on it. It made a powerful impression on me: two important people spending time with one unimportant soul floundering in an ocean of tedium.

It was in one of those meetings, that I heard myself say in response to a direct question from Dan Burke that I thought of my office as a service to others, one that should always try to make a difference. To this day, I don't know where that came from. It was totally spontaneous. I didn't know I was even *capable* of thinking it until I said it. But I do know this: I would not have expressed it—would not have reflected on its meaning many times over the years regardless of my job title—had Dan and Emery not taken the trouble *to ask the question*.

And, that may be the biggest lesson of all that I've taken from the Brothers. When you are in a position of authority, *take the trouble to ask. Develop a genuine concern for those who work with you.* Carrying out the mission is their responsibility too. ■

# In Responsibility, Dreams Begin

BY MR. JOHN A. GRAY

“In dreams begin responsibility.” This line from the poet William Butler Yeats is often quoted as a warning to dreamers. But perhaps we can turn this familiar line around and look at it another way: In responsibility, dreams begin. Certainly David Hoschek’s story suggests that if a young man faces up to responsibility, accepts it honorably, and discharges it faithfully, he may discover within himself resources and abilities that had lain dormant.

In 1993, as an 18-year-old senior at De La Salle High School in Concord, California, David Hoschek took on, unplanned, the biggest responsibility of them all—fatherhood. David’s son, Christian, first announced his existence during David’s senior year at De La Salle. The baby and his mother, a junior in high school at the time, became David’s sole concern. Putting aside thoughts of college, David went to work, starting as a mail clerk in a credit union and working his way into customer service. Wisely, he developed his computer skills and eventually became director of technology for an IT company. Supporting his son and ensuring that his son’s mother got through college and developed her career—these were major accomplishments. But there were more to come.

---

\* Mr. John A. Gray is Director of Information Services at De La Salle High School in Concord, California.

Photos courtesy of David Hoschek.

*DeLaSalle* TODAY, Spring 2010

In 2003, David enrolled in community college then transferred to the University of California (UC) at Davis, where he majored in biology and minored in psychology. In May 2008, David received both his bachelor’s degree and his commission as a second lieutenant in the US Army’s Medical Department. In the fall of 2008, he started medical school with the Army paying his tuition and is now finishing his second year as a medical student and studying for his summer 2010 board exams.

“My son and I had something unique to share in the fall of 2008,” David said with a laugh. “We got to be freshmen together. It was his first year in high school and my first year in med school.”

David speaks proudly of his son, who sounds like he may be as big a dreamer, and achiever, as his father: at age 16 he has a full scholarship to a prestigious high school, does honors geometry projects in acoustical engineering, and plays professional-caliber viola.

But David’s dreams included more than medical school for himself. They included making medical care available to the poor—and he did not want to wait. Midway through his first year in med school he was organizing his classmates and local physicians to open a free health clinic for low-income people, the only one of its kind in the town where his school is located.

So the David Hoschek story is of an erring boy who grew into a well-rounded man, who faces challenges, takes on responsibilities, develops his skills, and puts his talents to the service of others. He credits his De La Salle High School education with helping him in all these areas.

“When I had to begin making a living, I found that De La Salle had given me skills that were important,” David said. “To have good values, to be accountable, to give good service, to be trustworthy—these are things that can make you a valued employee.”

He also credits De La Salle guidance counselor Michael Otterstedt with being an important source of guidance in his difficult situation in senior year. And when it came time for the mature David to get back on an academic track, he was ready.

“I really credit De La Salle for preparing me. I hadn’t been a strong student in high school, though we did have good classes,” said David. “Brother Jack Henderson I remember in particular as a great teacher who really got me interested in science. I was kind of busy going my own way at the time—but I did know what studying was and how to do it.”

While attending UC Davis, David worked at a hospital and got acquainted with a range of medical specialties.

*Continued on Page 28*

## In Responsibility

*Continued from Page 27*

“Orthopedic treatments became my focus,” he said. “And the top orthopedic surgery is being done in the military. The Army Medical Corps is the first responder, on the front lines and in field hospitals, and the techniques and procedures they’ve developed are the best.”

The military, he thought, might be a place where he could not only get professional training but also be of service to his country. To see what the military might be like, he volunteered for the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) at UC Davis in his last year there.

“I wanted to see what kind of people were getting into the military. I found them to be men and women with various motivations and aspirations—but all of whom wanted to take some part in defense of our country and be of service. A great bunch of people,” said David.

So David applied to the US Army Medical Department and was accepted. The Army is subsidizing his medical training in return for a six-year commitment of service after he gets his degree. Lieutenant Hoschek says he is looking forward to fulfilling



David Hoschek Army field training, summer 2009.

this commitment and particularly to the possibility of doing an orthopedic residency in a military setting.

David attends medical school at Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences in Yakima, Washington (PNWU). During his interview for admission, he expressed his dream of establishing a free clinic for underserved residents in the area. While a student at Davis, David had volunteered at The Shifa Clinic, which is staffed by med students and serves a low-income population of Middle Eastern and East Indian people. He knew that the Yakima Valley was an area where many families, especially immigrant families, struggled to make ends meet and medical students could be of help.

“The Yakima Valley is rural with a large, low-income population, many of whom don’t have health insurance, so their options are limited,” he said. “Having a free clinic would alleviate some of that stress. It also seemed to me that there could hardly be a better way for a new medical school such as PNWU to establish itself as a real part of the community.”

Taking his usual creative but methodical approach, David identified a likely site in a disused health clinic at the Union Gospel Mission. He coordinated with the clinic staff and enlisted support from students and administration at PNWU. He resolved technical difficulties such as insurance matters, found local doctors willing to take referrals, and obtained a grant from the Association of American Medical Colleges. Some of the clinic’s initial supplies came out of David’s pocket, as well as his colleagues’.

“I used some money from my Army signing bonus,” David confessed. “The taxpayers are paying my tuition so put-



David Hoschek at the free clinic he helped establish in the Yakima Valley, March 2009.

ting some of that extra money back into the community seems right.”

The clinic is an urgent-care and screening clinic and is open every other weekend. It is well used and is increasingly supported by local doctors.

In 2010, David secured another grant, which allows the clinic to create a series of television ads, to get it better known locally. He has also gotten the new class of first-year students involved in leadership on the clinic and hopes to create a tradition of first-year students running the project.

When the clinic opened in 2009, Yakima’s ABC-TV affiliate reported on it and David was seen telling the TV reporter, “I was amazed at how many people stood up and really wanted to be a part of this.”

But perhaps it is not so amazing. To put it in quasi-medical terms, service to others can prove to be contagious, and it may spread rapidly through a population that has been exposed to a carrier—and David Hoschek is definitely a carrier. It has been a difficult road that he has taken through life, but he has exemplified the De La Salle High School philosophy of service, commitment, and responsibility. ■

## IN MEMORIAM

*"Those who teach others unto justice shall shine like stars for all eternity."* —Book of Daniel, 12:3

- Bro. L. Maurice Anglim (Midwest) passed away on Dec. 29, 2009
- Bro. Eduardo Barros (DENA) passed away on April 26, 2010
- Bro. Robert Daszkiewicz (DENA) passed away on Jan. 20, 2010
- Bro. Virgil Evers (SF) passed away on Nov. 13, 2009
- Bro. Robert Fagan (DENA) passed away on Jan. 13, 2010
- Brother Kevin Hargadon (DENA) passed away on Nov. 19, 2009
- Bro. Christian Jones (DENA) passed away on March 13, 2010
- Bro. Cormac Murphy (SF) passed away on April 27, 2010
- Bro. Cyril F. Pahl (Midwest) passed away on Nov. 27, 2009
- Bro. Matthew Smith (Midwest) passed away on Nov. 11, 2009
- Bro. William Sullivan (DENA) passed away on Dec. 12, 2009
- Bro. Raphael Philip Thez (SF) passed away on Oct. 12, 2009

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JUNE 2010

- 20–26 Young Lasallians Assembly, Memphis, TN
- 27–29 RCCB Meeting Baltimore, MD
- 27–Jul 9 Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, Moraga, CA

### JULY 2010

- 18–23 Lasallian Leadership Institute-Midwest, Romeoville, IL
- 25–30 Lasallian Leadership Institute-East, Bronx, NY

### SEPTEMBER 2010

- 23–24 Regional Education Board Chicago area, IL

### OCTOBER 2010

- 7–9 Lasallian Leadership Institute-East, Mt. Pocono, PA
- 19 Regional Finance Board Meeting, Bolingbrook, IL
- 28–30 Lasallian Leadership Institute-Midwest Bloomington, MN
- 30–Nov 1 Regional Mission Formation Board, Minneapolis, MN

### NOVEMBER 2010

- 1–4 RCCB Meeting Cleveland, OH
- 18–20 Huether Lasallian Conference 2010, Cincinnati, OH
- 21 Regional Education Board Cincinnati, OH

### DECEMBER 2010

- 31–Jan 3 Assembly of Young Brothers of North America

### April 1–30, 2011

Visit of the Superior General to the Midwest and San Francisco Districts

### November 1–30, 2011

Visit of the Superior General to NO-SF and DENA Districts

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS CONFERENCE  
HECKER CENTER, SUITE 300  
3025 FOURTH STREET NE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017-1102

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
COLUMBUS, WI  
PERMIT NO. 73