



“A Young Lasallian’s Reflection on the International Assembly of 2006”

by Jeb Myers

God has been very good to me. I am grateful for God introducing my family and me to the Lasallian Family. I am grateful for the leaders of my current parish inviting the Lasallian Family to bring a Christian and human education to the Blackfeet Reservation, home of an indigenous people of North America. Helping to start a school in 2001, in an impoverished area, is no easy task. A place where groceries are a 50km drive and the nearest Lasallian School is over 1000km away does not make the task any easier, nor does the fact that 150 years of poor government decisions has robbed the Blackfeet people of hope and confidence. Like the steps of a baby, many times our school community has been successful, while other times our stumbles cause pain. However, as Lasallians, we know our efforts will produce the long term desired success for the people we serve.

After having had the fortune of attending both the Young Lasallians Symposium and the International Assembly for Mission and Association of 2006, I have found that not only is the Lasallian Family alive and well, it is also a family in rebirth. The wonderful people who attended the Young Lasallians Symposium were full of knowledge, love, energy and zeal. I feel the four prevalent sentiments from participants of the Symposium were:

- Young Lasallians are very inspired by the Lasallian Mission and also feel responsible for promoting this mission, especially the focus on serving the poor and marginalized.
- Young Lasallians tend to feel connected beyond borders and cultures of our traditional Districts.
 - Many desire long and short term opportunities to volunteer and work beyond borders.
 - Many desire opportunities of association beyond the borders of traditional Districts.
- Young Lasallians seek more formation opportunities within the Institute.
- Young Lasallians are seeking new structures for staying involved in the Lasallian vocation regardless of a person's vocation.

The Young Lasallians are very committed to promoting the Lasallian charism throughout their lives, although many currently *feel* formation opportunities, association opportunities, and structures are not in place to serve their needs as Lasallians. Young Lasallians represent the future, but also the rebirth in that the Lasallian Family must adapt to meet needs of these Lasallians.

The International Assembly for Mission and Association brought together another group of inspired Lasallians from throughout the world. These 160 delegates and those they represented are a beautiful mix of the many dimensions of the Lasallian Family.

During the second of our four-part meetings, each Region presented on the needs of its society and spoke of the changing needs of the world, especially the realities of the youth. Although the Young Lasallian Symposium was not given a formal time to present, the four sentiments noted above were shared with the delegates of the Assembly throughout the process.

Overall, a lot of attention was given to the world's changing realities and the creative responses by Lasallians. The remaining attention was given to the changing realities in the Lasallian Family including healthy discussions regarding the Lasallian Mission, Association, and Structures. The discussions were healthy because not everyone was in agreement, but there were many opportunities for each to express her or his opinion.

Many more discussions will result and action will be taken regarding our stability and rebirth. I would encourage all to speak to her or his experience. The Lasallian Mission will be promoted. Association will happen in a variety of the many desired forms. Structures may change slightly or dramatically. Like the steps of a baby, many times our Lasallian Family will be successful, while other times our stumbles will cause pain. However, as Lasallians, we know our efforts will produce the long term desired success for the people we serve. God is good to us all.