

A Statement of the Community of the General Council Brothers of the Christian Schools

As we begin our third year
as the Community of the General Council
in the service

*of the Institute,
the Lasallian Family,
and Lasallian Mission,*

it is as though,

in the midst of this ministry of service that has been entrusted to us,

and as a consequence of our visits to the different sectors of the Institute,

*where we have seen firsthand
both growth and diminishment, strength and frailty,
joy and anguish,*

we hear God saying to us what was once said to the people of Israel and its leadership: "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendents may live" (Dt 30:19).

We choose life!

We reaffirm our belief in
and we feel compelled to communicate to you our strong convictions about

the continued relevance in today's world of the Lasallian Mission of human and Christian education, especially for the young and the poor,

the valuable contribution still to be made in today's world of Institutes of consecrated religious living, especially the Brothers of the Christian Schools,

the importance of and significant need for the witness in today's world

- of communities of Brothers,
- of Lasallian educational communities,
- of communities of Associates, and
- of communities of Brothers and Associates living together,

*that offer signs of joyful communion
and sacred spaces of welcome and availability.*

To concretize these convictions,
we recommit our best efforts and our energies
to do all that we can to encourage and to foster

- the **vitality** of our Lasallian Mission
 - by assuring the dynamic renewal of educational and youth care centers,
*strengthening what is good,
re-visioning where necessary,
creating what is still needed;*
 - by endorsing the significant role to be played by our institutions of higher education within the network of Lasallian ministries,
 - by encouraging innovative initiatives in favor of youth at risk and the urgent needs of the poor,
 - by affirming the new and creative educational, pastoral, and faith formation programs emerging in so many places, and
 - by insisting on the quality ongoing formation of Brothers and of all the branches of the Lasallian Family.
- the **vitality** of the movement of Associates within the Lasallian world
 - by effectively integrating Associates within the mission of the Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations,
 - by promoting the emergence of groupings of Associates where structures for such do not already exist, and
 - by supporting the evolution of groups of Associates where such happily are already a reality.
- the **vitality** of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools
 - by enhancing in the Church and in society a greater appreciation of the vocation of Brother,
 - by rallying Brothers and Partners to pray unceasingly for vocations and to be tireless in inviting qualified candidates to consider the vocation of a De La Salle Brother,
 - by helping clarify questions about
*the identity of Brother
and the role of the Brothers community*

*within the Lasallian Family
and in its relationship to Lasallian Mission,*

- by strengthening the joyful communion of Brothers in community, and
- by fostering spiritual aliveness, hospitality, and openness in Brothers' communities,
- the **vitality** of each Region and of each District, Sub-District, and Delegation
 - by accompanying leadership teams,
*maintaining regular contact with them,
and being present at important Regional, District, Sub-District, and Delegation activities, and*
 - by pursuing, as needed, the restructuring of Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations.

These convictions and goals, we trust, are not ours alone.

The heart of every committed Lasallian, we believe, resonates with them.

In fact, it is from you, from the obvious love that you have for your respective vocations, and from the infectious energy and zeal that you bring to the Lasallian Mission

- that we find ourselves inspired with these convictions and fortified in our resolve to serve, together with you, all those who hunger and thirst for "fullness of life" (Jn 10:10), especially the young and the poor.

The life-giving bond of association that we share

*with St. John Baptist de La Salle,
with all those who have gone before us in this mission,
and with each of you*

convinces us that it is together,
drawing on the strength of each other's faith and vitality,
that we will be able to fulfill the mission God has entrusted to us.

Yes, we choose life!

September 2002