

FORMATION FOR THE LASALLIAN MISSION

A Common Frame of Reference



La  Salle

Formation for the Lasallian Mission

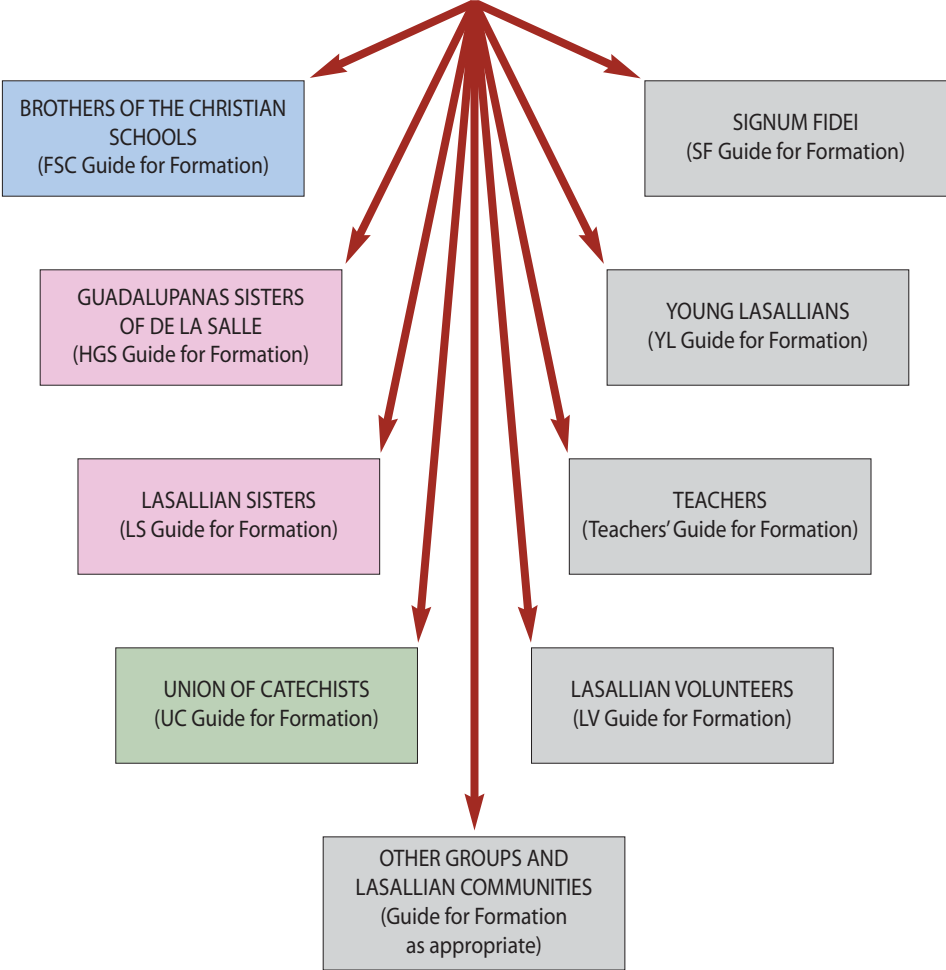
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April 2014

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FORMATION PROGRAMS
(Specific to each group)



FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR THE LASALLIAN MISSION: A basic document to be used for the formation of all Lasallians. It defines the mission, those who work in the mission, the basic constitutive elements for Lasallian Formation and its content.

ITINERARY/JOURNEY/PROGRAM: The description of a way, path, journey, with descriptions of the stops along the way that are followed in order to reach a particular point.

Lasallian formation program: A program adapted to each person or group that establishes a sequential formation process and that allows for the acquisition of needed competency for carrying out the Lasallian mission.

Lasallian vocational journey: The ways in which the Lasallian Mission can be lived out, keeping in mind one's own identity and the plurality of Lasallian vocational options.

GUIDE: A document that specifies the goals and articulates the stages, processes, pro-grams and content of basic formative experiences. This guide is aimed at both formation personnel and those in formation.

Specific Guide for Formation: A document that broadly presents and develops the specific vocational program for each Lasallian Institute, Association, Fraternity, Group. The Guide keeps in mind this Common Frame of Reference for Formation in the Lasallian Mission. It gives guidelines for specific formation plans and programs and it uses the appropriate institutional documents as references.

1

Introduction

The International Assembly 2006

1.1 The Brothers, Sisters, and lay Lasallians who participated in the 2006 International Assembly reflected: “The experience we have lived is like the Pentecost of the first Christian community. We feel compelled to proclaim the Reign of God by means of the Lasallian educational mission. We feel compelled to be lights in the hearts of the young people whom we serve and lights to the world. We feel compelled to educate and form young people in human and Christian values.” Guided by the Spirit, the participants made a proposal of the “first order for all Lasallians,” namely, **initial and ongoing formation and accompaniment**.

Call for a Guide for Formation

1.2 Acknowledging the indelible bond between mission and the formation that prepares and sustains those in the mission, the Assembly asked that the “*International MEL Commission form a Committee to create a Guide that articulates essential elements of Lasallian formation and accompaniment for the Lasallian Family. Based on this guide, diverse members of the Lasallian Family will be responsible for designing programs of joint Lasallian formation and accompaniment for ALL members of the Lasallian Family*” (Report of the International Assembly 2006: “Associated for the Lasallian Educational Mission,” p. 38). The 2013 International Assembly again emphasized the need to provide “formation and accompaniment for members of the educational community to ensure their commitment to the Lasallian Mission” (Report of the 2013 International Assembly, Challenge 1.2, page 27).

The response

1.3 In response to the movement of the Spirit in the Lasallian Family, the 44th General Chapter (2007) of the Brothers of the Christian Schools insisted on the importance of this undertaking (Cf. Circular 455: 2.3.2, p. 27).

These guidelines are the fruit of the collaboration of three Secretariats along with their respective International Councils: Being Brothers Today, Lasallian Family and Association and Lasallian Educational Mission (MEL). This Common Frame of Reference also acknowledges the indelible bond between mission and emerging expressions of association.

The purpose

1.4 We Lasallians also feel compelled by the Spirit to better accompany one another in our personal and communal vocational journey. In that light, we offer these guidelines in this spirit which we hope will

- a) re-assert the priority of an updated formation for all Lasallians;
- b) help Lasallians live their lives as a vocational response;
- c) provide a practical tool for those who are involved in the ministry of formation;
- d) offer common references for the formation programs of each Lasallian Institute, Association, community or group in human, spiritual, professional and Lasallian areas;
- e) help to train persons in creative and progressive change ;
- f) encourage contacts for cooperation and solidarity in the field of formation;
- g) promote unity among the different kinds of Lasallian educational establishments ;
- h) respond better to the challenges of the Lasallian mission and the needs of children, youth, and young adults, especially the poor.

Whom are we addressing?

1.5 This Common Frame of Reference is addressed to all Lasallians but in a special way to those responsible for leadership and formation. Its purpose is to aid in developing formation programs and to encourage and generate different formation strategies appropriate for the full range of Lasallian vocations.

2

The Lasallian Mission

Definition

2.1 The Lasallian mission is to provide human and Christian education for all, with special preference for the poor, according to the ministry that the Church has entrusted to us. This mission is shared today with women and men who carry it out in witness, service and communion. They are concerned first of all with the educational needs of those whose dignity and basic rights are not recognized and who are thus deprived of the opportunity for development. The purpose of the Lasallian mission is to give them the possibility of living with dignity as sons and daughters of God among one another.

Origin and updating

2.2 Saint John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers renewed the school of their time in order to put it within reach of the poor and to offer it to everyone as a sign of the Kingdom and as a means of salvation. Today, the Lasallian mission is continually inculturated in each local situation in order to respond with creative fidelity to particular urgent needs and to be the Good News always and everywhere. The Lasallian mission must constantly be re- discovered.

3

Formation for Mission

Definition

3.1 Formation for Lasallian mission is the process of interiorizing the constitutive elements of Lasallian identity. It involves the accompaniment of persons and it helps them fundamentally in their human and spiritual growth and maturation in order to respond to their vocation and to the needs of the mission.

Formation for Mission

3.2 Formation for mission involves the development of the professional competence that each person needs in order to carry out the mission. From the very beginning up to today, attention to “those who have been entrusted to us” and care that “the school run(s) well” guarantee the continuation of quality, person-centered, educational initiatives, which is achieved only through the appropriate professional preparation of each person involved in the mission.

For the spirit that unites us

3.3 The mission is shared and is carried out “together and by association.” In order to do this, formation sees to it that persons acquire an in-depth spirit that unites them and is manifested in one’s personal ability to work together.

For personal integration

3.4 Formation “*touches the heart*” of each person. At different times in their formative journey, each person is challenged to integrate within themselves the various contents and processes of formation. The process of personal integration is ongoing and leads to transformation and change.

4

Participants in Formation

A common process of formation

4.1 Those who share the Lasallian mission, albeit in different ways, are always invited into a common formation process that helps them to discover the deeper meaning of our life and our vocation. Each of the vocational pathways requires a specific guide for formation while sharing common principles.

Longing for communion

4.2 Today we can affirm that “... *the desire of many colleagues in Lasallian ministries to participate in the charism of the Institute is one of the most significant trends in recent times. This longing for charismatic communion and sharing is fostering a dynamic movement in the Institute*” (Circular 461, 3.11). This dynamic finds expression in the association for mission that requires new and unified approaches to formation.

Different creeds

4.3 While our history finds its origin and roots in the Christian faith, it welcomes believers of other religions in the conviction that the Lasallian charism can exist in harmony with other forms of living out and being committed to faith.

5

Principles of Formation

The 10 principles upon which Lasallian Formation for the Mission are based are:

1. Formation is for Mission.
2. Formation is transformative.
3. Formation promotes Association for Mission.
4. Formation responds to local and global needs.
5. Formation starts with the individual.
6. Formation is integrative.
7. Formation takes place in community.
8. Formation develops a particular spirituality.
9. Formation presents the founding charismatic event as a source of inspiration and discernment.
10. Formation is lifelong.

** This list is open to other relevant principles applied depending on the particular context in which they are used.*

5.1 Formation is for Mission.

Mission orients formation

5.1.1 Any response to challenges in the area of mission is directly related to criteria governing programs, activities and decisions of formation for that mission. Program aims take into account the purpose of the mission – which is none other than the educational service of the poor. For Lasallians, this is the concrete way to “*procure the glory of God.*”

The ideal *locus* for formation

5.1.2 Formation and mission are intrinsically connected in such a way that the ideal locus for formation is actually in the carrying out of the mission.

Joint formation programs

5.1.3 A common formation for all Lasallians should encourage joint formation programs.

The gratuity of formation **5.1.4** Formation is always an enriching gift in itself which is always gratuitous – a “gift” offered and accepted freely, for the service of the mission.

A deeper commitment **5.1.5** Formation orients one toward a deeper commitment to the Mission.

5.2 Formation is transformative.

Personal transformation **5.2.1** The process, the development and the experience of formation moves from information to formation, and from formation to transformation and from transformation to integration. According to the situation and personal history of the individual, it calls for changes of behavior, mentality and attitude on both personal and community levels.

Creativity, research and sharing **5.2.2** Formation forges critical and creative minds. It also promotes research, as well as the sharing of new and best educational practices, both present and past.

Social transformation **5.2.3** By transforming individuals, formation builds community, and along with other factors, it can transform social structures, so that human beings "behave more fraternally among themselves" (Article 1, Human Rights).

5.3 Formation promotes Association for Mission.

Means and results **5.3.1** Formation is a means of promoting association for the educational service of the poor. It is a process of personal integration of values shared by the Lasallian Family. A person internalizes these values when he/she experiences association with, and commitment to, educational projects that respond to situations of poverty.

Association at different levels and with society **5.3.2** Formation fosters association at many levels within the Lasallian Family: Sectors, Districts, Regions ... It also promotes the social fabric by supporting educational projects with persons and organizations interested in the common good.

Special priorities for association **5.3.3** In order to strengthen the sense of association for the educational service of the poor, formation sees the following areas as priorities:

- a) co-responsibility of everyone for the mission;
- b) ability to discern together the needs of the times, the

community responses that emerge, and the joyful acceptance of sacrifices that these entail, given the limited resources available;

- c) greater understanding and appreciation of Lasallian vocations;
- d) promotion of the consecrated life of Brothers and Sisters;
- e) training of leaders for the mission.

5.4 Formation responds to local and global needs.

Responding to needs

5.4.1 Formation for the mission helps the individual to read and discern the signs of the times in order to respond to the calls of the present-day world, and to take up a leading role in the face of mission challenges.

A cry from the poor and a response

5.4.2 Formation encourages a critical reading of history primarily from the conditions of the poor and marginalized. Attention to the new forms of poverty is one of its essential orientations. It also helps each person to discover a call, requiring a personal response that comes through the educational needs of the young.

Programs based on needs

5.4.3 Every formation program for mission, from its planning to its implementation and evaluation, is needs based.

5.5 Formation starts with the individual.

The starting point: the individual

5.5.1 Formation addresses individuals where they are, in their context, with their personal and professional choices, with their relationships and with their spirituality. Formation programs always assume that each person already has previous knowledge, values and life experience.

Responsibility

5.5.2 Formation is an offer which demands not only a response but also availability on the part of a person. Lasallians assume the primary responsibility for their own formation.

Being on a "journey"

5.5.3 Formation engages the person in a dialog. It invites one to undertake a "journey", at one's own pace, together with others, in order to discover one's own vocation to the mission.

Inclusion and multi-cultural contexts **5.5.4** Formation is inclusive of all persons with all their differences, and is open to the wealth of multicultural and multi-religious contexts. It believes that participation in formation should be wide-ranging, inclusive and empowering.

Methodology **5.5.5** Methodology is always inductive, participatory and adapted to the context of each person and group. The language used is understandable and friendly.

5.6 Lasallian Formation is integrative.

Holistic approach **5.6.1** Formation is directed towards the integration of the person in relation to oneself, to the Lasallian community, to the larger society, to nature, and to Transcendence. For this reason, it always promotes opportunities, experiences, and structures, which ensure an integrative approach and the fullest human development of the individual and of groups.

Integration of knowledge and experience **5.6.2** Lasallian formation promotes intellectual empowerment, and personal/group experiences of life and mission. By stressing commitment and reflection, Lasallian Formation seeks to put theoretical knowledge into daily practice, and tries to reflect constantly on one's lived experience.

Involvement in programs **5.6.3** Formation programs foster the commitment of each individual, taking into account each one's vocation and status in life. Programs also help the person seek a balance among his/her many responsibilities.

5.7 Formation takes place in community.

Formation through relationships **5.7.1** Formation is grounded in inter-personal relationships within and outside the educational community. It is these relationships that enable the members of the community to form one another. Dialogue is a fundamental means of formation.

Formation helps to build community **5.7.2** It is in community that persons experience formation and this formation in turn, helps create community.

Accompaniment **5.7.3** Given that this is a process that takes place in a group setting, formation requires: accompaniment, fraternal presence, a liberating concern, understanding,

mercy, discernment and a living out of the Lasallian “journey.” This accompaniment takes place in the form of presence, times for personal and communal reflection, personal interviews, spiritual direction, meetings to share and reflect on life and mission, through exchanges and conflict resolution. There are two levels of accompaniment: personal and communal.

5.8. Formation fosters a particular spirituality.

Spiritual potential

5.8.1 Formation recognizes in each person and group a unique spiritual sensitivity awaiting development.

The search for meaning

5.8.2 Lasallian spirituality fosters a way of looking at reality with love, hope and faith. Because of this, formation is an ongoing process of searching for meaning in one’s own life and in the mission. The Christian discovers this meaning by following Jesus and in the Good News. Lasallian spirituality is fundamentally Trinitarian and it provides paths for other religious expressions that seek the Transcendent.

Presence of God

5.8.3 The Christian Lasallian continuously seeks to discover the presence of God and to be attentive to it in history, in others, in nature and in one’s surroundings.

Spirituality based on the poor

5.8.4 For Lasallians, the educational service of the poor is a privileged locus of encounter and growth in the transcendent dimension of life. Formation thus promotes a spiritual life rooted in the poor, the needy, recognizing the living and present God in history.

Spirituality

5.8.5 Formation continues to be inspired by the spirit of the Founder: *“Make no distinction between the duties of your profession and those that refer to your salvation and perfection.”* The spirit of faith and zeal is present in the actions of all Lasallians.

The Role of Prayer

5.8.6 Prayer, personal and in community, is necessary for personal discernment and integration in order to assume one’s responsibilities regarding oneself, others, and all creation.

5.9 Formation looks upon the founding charismatic event as a source of inspiration and discernment.

Re-interpreting
and discernment

5.9.1 The founding charismatic event is seen, first of all:

- a) in the journey of the Founder and the first Lasallian community;
- b) in the makeup of the original charismatic plan when the Founder and the first Brothers try to respond to the educational needs of the poor, and
- c) in the original expressions of Lasallian spirituality that give meaning to the plan.

Secondly, this charismatic event is also seen:

- a) in the re-foundation of this same event in the living tradition of the Institute;
- b) in the response that the charism impels us to give today;
- c) in the planning and re-creation of this event in the future so that the Lasallian Family continues to respond to the educational needs of the poor.

5.10 Formation is lifelong.

Ongoing

5.10.1 Formation is an ongoing process that is sensitive to new challenges found in mission, to the signs of the times - especially regarding children and young people -, and to the various stages of human development. Contextualized quality formation encourages a constant renewal of our vision of mission.

Progression and
follow-up

5.10.2 Formation must be attentive to the flow of the different itineraries. Itineraries ought to be well-organized according to stages. It must ensure that follow-up and accompaniment are appropriate for each individual.

The mission
continues
beyond
retirement

5.10.3 Formation continues beyond retirement to a new availability for service in the mission. The mission does not end at the age of retirement. Those in charge of formation invite those retiring to continue to share their experience and their witness.

6

The dimensions of Formation

- Unified character **6.1** Because of its holistic nature, formation for the Lasallian mission includes elements proper to human, spiritual and Lasallian dimensions. They are considered here as separate elements for the sake of clarity, even though in reality, they are always seen to be interrelated.
- Human Dimension **6.2** The human dimension, while respecting local culture, makes the transformation of the individual possible, through one's knowledge of self, others and the environment, and through emotional development and the responsible use of freedom. Regarding program content, special emphasis will be placed on tools for analyzing and transforming individuals, groups and the social fabric of society. Professional formation is essential in this dimension and it must meet the needs of training for the mission.
- Spiritual Dimension **6.3** The spiritual dimension helps to deepen one's relationship with oneself, others, creation and God. This content needs to take into account the participant's multi-cultural and multi-religious context. Familiarization with various sacred texts will contribute to a better understanding of many religious traditions and to open dialogue. The explanation of the Christian message will vary according to the culture of the place and choices of the target group. In Christian contexts, Christian formation – theological, Biblical and ecclesial – will be a priority.
- Lasallian Dimension **6.4** The Lasallian dimension finds its inspiration in the life and teaching of John Baptist de La Salle, the first Brothers, the Institute, and the members of the Lasallian Family. Acquiring the charism and spirituality is achieved primarily by a personal and communal re-reading of one's own life, commitment to the mission, joyful celebration of fraternity, and by unity between ministry and spirituality.

6.5 In the formation process, the person must be able to develop formative experiences of the Lasallian identity:

- a) Living association for mission, in communion with concrete persons.
- b) Gratuitous dedication to the poor.
- c) Sharing the experience of and the encounter with God, the sense of being consecrated as an instrument in God's Work, the deep sense of ministry.
- d) Feeling accompanied, based on Association, in the discernment of life in light of the Spirit; in this accompaniment one has the sense of being part of the Lasallian collective story and discovering one's own life within it.

The founding charismatic event

This Annex is structured by considering the **Gospel journey of the Founder** (first column) then the **original charismatic project** or the Founder's response is considered in light of that (second column) and finally there is the **spirituality** that came into being through the charism (third column).

These three elements – the life journey of John Baptist de La Salle and the first Lasallian community, the charismatic project and spirituality – must be presented as interrelated elements. In order to do that, rather than studying them as independent subjects, it would be preferable, in terms of methodology, to see the connection between them around thematic units, following the central experiences of the Lasallian journey.

It is through these three elements where the original structural expressions of the Lasallian charism will be presented, as found especially in the writings of the Founder (fourth column).

THE FOUNDING CHARISMATIC EVENT

1. The gospel journey of the Founder

Introduction:

- Keys for reading John Baptist de La Salle's journey. A man of his time, a man of faith, the Founder.
- The historical context in which John Baptist de La Salle lived.

2. The original charismatic project

Introduction:

- The three great mediators of the project: the teacher, the community, the educational work.
- The dynamics through which the project is carried out.

3. The spirituality that gives meaning to the project

Introducción:

- The Lasallian spirit: a spirit of faith and zeal lived in community.
- The spiritual experience of JBDLS as the basis of Lasallian spirituality.

4. Structured expressions of the charisma and identity

1.1 John Baptist de La Salle, THE BELIEVER

- Salvation history: JBDLS, the believer and seeker of God (1651 – 1689).
- JBDLS' experience of seeking, his openness to the signs of God with an open heart and his attention to God's will.
 - Memoir on the beginnings: "...one commitment led to another."
 - The Founder's and the Brothers' community Exodus experience.
 - The first charismatic options. Seeking and defending the new identity of the Brother in society and in the Church.

2.1 An educational project of Faith

- A fundamental for the teacher: the interior man, the experience of God, in prayer, the retreat, the presence of God.
- The Lasallian community: a sign of the Kingdom among poor youth.
- The educational work: a school tailored to the poor. A free and useful school, integrated education.

3.1 Walking in the presence of God

- The spirit of this Institute. Its effects and its fruit (zeal).
- Two axes: the Word of God and the sense of faith.
- Ministers of God's Word. Keys of the Biblical dimension of Lasallian spirituality. The dynamics of the Word.
- Living in God's presence. A radical attitude. Celebrating God's presence in prayer and in life.

• *Memoir on the Beginnings and the Rules I have imposed on myself.*

• *Memoir on the Habit.*

• *Rule of 1718: Chapter 1.*

• *Selected texts from the Meditations.*

• *Explanation of the Method of Prayer: the central axes of the method, the sense of faith based on the Word of God.*

• *The Conduct of Schools: selected texts.*

1.1 John Baptist de La Salle,

2.2 An educational project

3.2 A process of identification

• *Meditations for the Time of*

THE MINISTER

- JBDS, the disciple of Christ, minister and collaborator in his work of salvation (1690 – 1705)
- An incarnational journey in order to be faithful to God's work. The ministerial community as the main player in the mission because Jesus is in its midst.
- Identified with Christ's saving plan, based on the experience of failure. The awareness of being instruments of God's will.
- Consecration. Committed to this historic project. 1691 and 1694. The prophetic act and its significance.
- De La Salle's creativity in responding to the need of the mission.

of Service

- The teacher: ministerial identity. An integrated view of salvation history.
- The community: associated for mission. A ministerial community.
- The educational work: a project of evangelization.

with Christ

- A journey of conversion and of following Jesus in order to participate in his mission.
- To living the mystery of Christ in ministry and in prayer.
- Lasallian dynamics for following Christ. Motivation.

Retreat and other ministerial meditations.

- *Rule of 1718, Chapter 2. Reading reality from faith, a ministerial reading.*
- *The Rules of Christian Decorum...Preface.*

1.3 John Baptist de La Salle, THE BROTHER

- A process of association, communion for mission.
- JBDS, the community man who builds community. Handing over the spirit, the "passing" of the charisma to the followers.
 - Community, the first fruit of the Lasallian charisma.
 - The crisis of 1712 – 1714. Discernment. The letter from the Brothers. The fruit of association.
 - The founding charisma, its passage to the Brothers.

2.3 A community educational project

- The teacher: a life lived in tension. Method and Spirit.
- The community: a sign with its own strength, a sign lived fully.
- The educational work: human community, fraternal relationships.

3.3 Impelled by the Spirit, we build the ministerial community

- The gift of the Spirit, the main player TODAY in the Mystery of Christ, within our ministry.
- Communion and mission: the tension that gives life to community.
- Love, the strength of the ministry. Mediators in the fabric of relationships of God with the disciples.

• Common Rules, Chapter 16.1

- *Method of Mental Prayer* 24 - 38
- *Meditations on Community:* 39, 65, 73, 74, 113...
- *The Conduct of Schools:* selected texts.
- *Letter from the Brothers to the Founder* (1714).

The content of Formation

This annex provides a basic listing of formation program contents in three areas: human and social sciences, theology, and Lasallian studies.

The first two areas are essential to the general principles for formation. Depending on the specificity of the region however, particular formation programs involving the two areas may be developed accordingly.

The third area is firmly grounded on the first two. The first two are thus essential for the development of specific Lasallian studies, according to particular contexts and realities in the various regions.

This listing is not exhaustive and is to be adapted to the particular context and reality of the particular formation program to be designed.

This annex is meant to complement other program components developed to suit local formation needs and concrete situations.

1. SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES

Anthropology

- “Universal” Understanding of the Human Being
- Biological, psychological, sociological and transcendental dimensions.

Philosophy

- Meaning of Existence
- Metaphysics
- Ethics

Sociology

- Context/Understanding the Reality
 - Globalization, Internationalization
 - New Forms of Poverty
- Group Dynamics
- Leadership
- Social Groupings: family, tribes, associations
- Culture: youth culture, multicultural/multireligious contexts, gender issues

Psychology / Psychosomatic

- Self-Knowledge
- Evolution of Personality, Integration of Personhood
 - Balance/Equilibrium: Affective, etc.
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Gender Issues

Pedagogy/Didactics

- Adult Formation
- Accompaniment
 - Principles and Skills
- Theories of Education/Learning

Communication

- Interpersonal dialogue
- Creative forms of communication in impoverished areas
- Technologies of Information and Communication

2. THEOLOGY

Fundamental Theology

- Religion
- Human Freedom and Responsibility
- Religious traditions/schools of spirituality
- Christian Anthropology
- Vocation: Call and Response
- Biblical theology
- The mystery of the Trinity

Pastoral Theology

- Inter-religious Dialogue
- Youth Ministry
- Catechesis
 - Adult Catechesis
- Evangelization
- Spirituality/Prayer/Discernment/Accompaniment
- The Religious Life (Orders, Congregations)
- Inculturation
- Ecclesiology of Communion

Theology of Education

Moral Theology

- Christian Morality/Ethics
- Social Teachings of the Church
- Education in Justice

3. LASALLIAN STUDIES

Lasallian History

- Founder-Charism-Mission
- The Institute: Bros, LS Family, etc.
- Association/Community
- Founder's Writings

La Salle Today An Ongoing Story/Heritage

- Diversity in the Mission
- Association
- Lasallian Family
- Organizational Structures
 - International (Generalate/Regions)
- Variety of Vocations
- Inculturation/Contextualization
- Local/regional histories of the Mission
- International Resources
- Lasallian Identity Today

Lasallian Pedagogy

- Pedagogy-History
- Core Beliefs and Values

Spirituality

- Faith and Zeal
- Lasallian Discernment
- Characteristics/Traits/Specifics
- Prayer
- Sacred Texts and Religious Traditions

Accompaniment

- Openness, Confidence, Respect in a Relationship
- Affectivity
- Attention to specificity of vocations

LASALLIAN HISTORY

The Founder, his charism and mission

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The Institute, Brothers, Lasallian Family

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April 2014

Brothers of the Christian Schools

Generalate

Via Aurelia 476

00165 Rome, Italy

SECRETARIATS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCILS LA SALLE

Publication:

Communications Service

Design and Lay-out:

Luigi Cerchi

Cover:

Fabio Parente

