

# ANZPPNG District - We Are La Salle

From the very beginning, the De La Salle Brothers have been dedicated to creating networks of quality schools for the young, especially the poor. St. John Baptist de La Salle and his early community of passionate teachers revolutionized education in France by conducting lessons in the local language and involving parents in their children's education, among other innovations.

Today, the Brothers of the Christian Schools' reach extends far beyond France to Asia and Oceania. Lasallian schools and works are changing the lives of thousands of children—and adults—in Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea.

Just how much of an impact do we, as Lasallians, have in the ANZPPNG District?

**Over 146,000 Lasallians in the ANZPPNG District receive high-quality education and services at Lasallian institutions.**

Pakistan is the most recent sector to join the District, having incorporated in 2012. However, the Lasallian presence in Pakistan goes back decades. There are 4 non-formal works located in Khushpur, Pakistan: The Catechists' Training Centre, the St. Benildus Literacy Centre, the School of Culinary Arts, and the La Salle Sewing School.

In 1960, three De La Salle Brothers from England, France, and Sri Lanka opened a secondary school in Multan for Punjabi Muslim boys with several other institutions following after. Pakistan's Lasallian schools help meet various educational needs, serving rich Muslims and poor Christians in the cities, offering education to poor rural boys, and even providing trade and catechetical training.

Pakistani Lasallian schools gained a reputation for providing excellent education, promoting cooperation across different faiths, and demonstrating respect for indigenous cultures and traditions. In addition, the large number of fee-paying Muslim students in the country's two English-medium secondary schools helps provide scholarships to economically disadvantaged Christian students. It also

supports two Urdu-speaking schools where students can learn in their native tongue.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Lasallian schools in Pakistan have grown to include several supervised schools for marginalized youth, including several sister schools for girls' education. According to the Malala Fund—spearheaded by Malala Yousafzai, a young Pakistani woman shot in the head by the Taliban at age 15 for advocating for girls' education—only 13% of girls in Pakistan are still in school by Grade 9. In Pakistan, nearly 12 million school-aged girls are out of school. A lack of affordable, quality secondary education for Pakistani girls drives families to send their daughters to work or marry them off at a young age. Lasallian schools provide high-quality education to over 2,500 girls across Pakistan.

According to the 2022 statistics provided by our schools and works, nearly two-thirds of Lasallians in the ANZPPNG District are girls: the District boasts 86,548 females and 44,492 males. In addition, Lasallian Institutions serve 54,746 Lasallians aged 1 to 14, 55,154 aged 15 to 18, and 34,260 aged above 18 years.

There are 44 De La Salle Brothers still active in ministry in Lasallian schools in the District, 13 members of other Catholic religious orders, 1,455 male lay staff members, and 2,594 female staff members. In addition, 372 volunteers across the region give their time and gifts to help support the Lasallian education mission in Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea.

The mission of the De La Salle Brothers is to provide a human and Christian education to our young people, especially our poorer young people. In Papua New Guinea, many students living in cities cannot access running water or electricity at home. In addition, the few schools in rural areas usually do not teach above the primary school level and are often miles apart.

Currently, Catholic schools make up 27% of the national education system in Papua New Guinea, and Lasallian institutions play a huge role in that. Jubilee Catholic Secondary School is a co-educational secondary school that serves 1200 students. It is also one of the top-rated academic schools in the nation. La Salle Technical College Hohola also provides career training opportunities for students unable to progress past Grade 9 in a traditional academic setting. The Lasallian institutions and instructors are also helping to train Papua New Guinea's next generation of teachers at Sacred Heart Teachers Colleges and Holy Trinity

Teachers College.

In all of our Lasallian educational works, we strive to center our core values: faith in the presence of God, concern for the poor and social justice, quality education, respect for all persons, and an inclusive community.

Ref.: ANZPPNG District