

# Brother Rafael Rodríguez, from the SFNO District, shares his testimony as he celebrates his perpetual vows and says ‘yes’ to God ‘for all his life’

“When the time came to profess Final Vows, I relied on the people around me and prayed for wisdom. In the end, however, **I discovered that the answer was nestled in my heart all along.**”

With these words, **Brother Rafael Sebastián Rodríguez** describes his experience on 1 August, when he made his

Perpetual Profession, accompanied by the Brothers of the San Francisco New Orleans (SFNO) District, family and friends.



## Prayer and dialogue



In reaching the decision to consecrate himself entirely to God, **it was essential to “continually engage in conversations through prayer and with friends, family, and Brothers.”** That is why — he continues — “I was able to say ‘yes’ ‘for my whole life’ because, through those conversations and my prayer life, I

continually return to the countless ‘yes’ that I experienced every day: in my ministry, with my colleagues, in community and in my prayer life”.

Brother Rafael studied at Cathedral High School in Los Angeles, California. **“That was where I first met the Brothers,”** he recalls. He then studied Psychology and American History at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## Missionary and vocational journey

What led him to choose the La Salle way of religious life? Brother Rafael shares candidly that “I never intended to be a Brother, but there came a moment during a service project in Haiti, when I was presented with an invitation – a gentle question by God: **what was I going to do with what I had experienced?**”.



“I discovered that education was a means by which people could rise above their circumstances. **Through education, we can affirm the dignity of their lives and empower them to transcend those circumstances,**” he explains. “Ultimately, it was through this experience that I discovered educational ministry as a vocation.”

“Then came a period of discernment accompanied by many emotions, including fear, but also great joy.” During that time, through dialogue with those around him – such as the University Chaplain, the Brothers, his friends and his family – **he gradually came to understand God’s call for him to embrace consecrated life as a Brother of the Christian Schools.**

## Pastoral and spiritual formation



“I joined the Postulancy in the autumn of 2017 and began working as a teacher in El Paso, Texas. In 2019, I entered the Regional Postulancy in Philadelphia and subsequently entered the Novitiate on 25 July 2020 in Chicago, Illinois. **Before beginning the Novitiate, I completed a Master’s degree in Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago,**” continues Brother Rafael.

After professing his first vows in 2021, he returned to Los Angeles for the next five years, where he worked as a teacher at Cathedral High School, his former

high school.

“I also served for a year as **the school’s Director of Spiritual Life and Mission**,” he explains, sharing his joy at having recently completed a certification program in spiritual formation at Boston College.

“At the end of the 2026 school year, I was appointed **the new Director of Vocations for the San Francisco-New Orleans District**”, and it is there that he currently carries out his mission.

### **The value of community life**

Throughout this unique vocational journey, he has felt God’s presence, particularly in the experience of community: “The whole community of the People of God around me, especially those people I have trusted to walk alongside me, has played a decisive role in my journey,” explains Brother Rafael. “My encounter with the Brothers as a high school student and college student, as well as my experience with them in Haiti, the Philippines, regional formation and, more recently, on my final profession retreat in France, have grounded me in **the true meaning of our shared life.**”

Reflecting on his many experiences of community life, he states that “across our different cultures, ministries and generations, our common commitment to education, to one another as Brothers and to the Lasallian formation of our students and Partners has given us the privilege of working closely with Christ and helping to build God’s kingdom in our world today.”

That is why one of his greatest hopes as a Brother is that “by our association and fraternal example, we might continue the good work of education and formation and, most importantly, **inspire young men to embrace our way of life as a consecrated religious**”, he concludes.



*\* Photos: San Francisco New Orleans District.*