Building bridges of solidarity: first International Gathering of Lasallian non-profit Organisations



With the participation of 34 Lasallian non-profit organisations and under the leadership of the La Salle Foundation, ***'Bridging the Gap'*** – as this first international gathering of these organisations has been named – has marked a milestone in strengthening the Lasallian solidarity network worldwide.

For almost a week, from 23 to 26 March, more than 50 representatives and leaders of foundations, associations and development agencies from various Regions of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools gathered at the Generalate in Rome to **share experiences, learnings and strategies for strengthening social impact**.

"This week we have come together as a global network to think and act together, **recognising the potential that exists to collectively face challenges and respond to the needs of the mission as *1La Salle***", observed Br. Chris Patiño, General Councillor and President of the La Salle Foundation.

For a sustainable future



"We have sought to address how to work together for a sustainable future, whilst taking into account the autonomy of each entity and its legal parameters", continued Brother Chris, emphasising the need to embrace "the call to the peripheries", which implies that **"the mission must remain open to responding to new unmet needs**". "Together, we must seek out the resources and causes that will enable us to have the greatest impact on those in vulnerable situations, especially

young people", concluded the President of the La Salle Foundation.

Among the guest speakers and the topics tackled throughout the conference, Juan Esteban Belderrain, from Porticus, explored **synodal cooperation**, whilst Kara Wentworth and Roshawnda Washington, from The Nonprofit Center at La Salle University in Philadelphia, led a session focused on **strategic planning**.

Likewise, John Moffett, CEO of *Misean Cara*, spoke on **impact measurement**; Oscar Merante Boschin and Giulia Micheletti, from Medici con l'Africa Cuamm, discussed **the diversification of fundraising**; and Fr. Gabriele Pipinato, in turn, addressed **the new guidelines for international cooperation for the Italian Episcopal Conference**.

The final day was led by Lorna Pearcey and Rosie Bishop of Caplor Horizons, focusing on **strengthening the network**.



Bridging the Gap marks not only the beginning of a space for encounter, but also the promotion of a shared vision to move forward together in the Lasallian educational and social mission at a global level. In the words of Angela Matulli, Executive Director of the La Salle Foundation, "**this event is not a point of arrival, but a point of departure; a point of departure to continue working together, as a community of practice**".