Celebration of the opening of the working year at the Generalate

“We are happy to gather to celebrate together the beginning of the working year”. With these words Brother Santiago Rodríguez, Director of the Generalate, on Friday 20th of September, greeted the Brothers and lay collaborators who serve the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools from the ‘Mother House’.



The gathering, which was also attended by Brother Armin Luistro, Superior General, Brother Carlos Gómez, Vicar General and most of the Brothers of the General Council and of the Generalate Community, was a precious opportunity for **fraternal sharing around the tercentenary of the civil and ecclesiastical approval of the Institute**, the theme of the conference delivered by Brother José Antonio Villalabeitia, who, in the form of inaugural lecture, spoke about the context and importance of this event for the Lasallian Family.



“What does it mean to work together and by association”, asked Brother

José Antonio, evoking the research of Brother Michel Sauvage (1923 – 2001): "working together refers to the small local communities which animate a school (…). Working by association refers to the vast apostolic network which is the Institute as such".

From this observation, the Spanish religious recalled various moments in the life of the Institute, 300 years ago, after the death of the Founder, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, when the development of the educational mission at the service of the poorest of the nascent lay society was jeopardized by external factors – many of them of a clericalist nature.

Brother José Antonio affirmed, "**The procurement of the Royal Patent and the Papal Bull was a way of defending the model of mission that the Brothers had decided on, 'together and by association'**, because at that time the network of schools led by the Brothers was in danger".

On 28 September 1724 the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools received the Letters Patent granted by Louis XV and on 26 January 1725 Pope Benedict XIII initialled the Papal Bull of approval of the Institute.



After Brother José Antonio's address in the Aula Magna of the Generalate, the celebration of the Eucharist in the chapel of the Holy Trinity was a moment of grace to place in God's hands the 'journey of the new working year, recalling the symbol of the boat guided by Jesus.

The event concluded with a fraternal lunch offered by the Generalate to all the Brothers and lay collaborators who work there.

More photos here >>>