Economics and the Lasallian Mission: Towards Sustainable Administration

One of the greatest challenges facing the Lasallian Educational Mission is to adopt “a vision of sustainable administration that goes beyond a purely financial perspective and promotes **transparent, prudent decisions oriented towards the good of the institution, the religious mission and the future sustainability of the institutions**”. This is stated by Brother Sergio Leal, Bursar General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, in a recent article published in *CLAR Magazine No. 3 of 2026,* produced by the Latin American and Caribbean Confederation of Religious Men and Women, which is dedicated to assets, administration and the vow of poverty in religious life.

Indeed, the mission of the Catholic Church’s religious organisations and, in our case, the Lasallian Educational Mission, is currently feeling **the impact of a reduction in donations, a decline in enrolment at educational institutions**, as well as “the increase in costs associated with the upkeep, maintenance and conservation of religious houses, educational institutions and other assets”, as Brother Sergio details, to which must be added “the consequences arising from armed and trade conflicts, migration, inflation and other macroeconomic factors that directly affect the financial stability of religious institutions”.

Creating the conditions for sustainability

In light of this, it is clear that “it is no longer enough to speak solely of financial support; the challenge lies in moving towards a model of self-sufficiency and institutional sustainability”, as the Bursar General states. Moreover, it is not merely a question of “ensuring the development of the mission in the present, but also of creating the necessary conditions so **that viable apostolic works are economically sustainable**”. Furthermore, in the case of those which, due to their pastoral or social nature, cannot achieve this status, “financial mechanisms must be put in place to guarantee their continued existence in the future”.

In addressing this complex issue in the light of certain fundamental principles set

out by the Church, Brother Sergio recalls that **“the economy must be at the service of the charism and the mission”** and “assets must be managed with responsibility and a long-term vision”, based on a necessary assessment of the sustainability of the works. In this regard, “financial management requires training and competent professionals”, but also a perspective of “responsibility and solidarity”.

In search of alternatives

Among the financial alternatives for sustainable administration, Brother Sergio highlights five:

1. *Grants*, that is, “funds awarded by organisations, institutions, foundations or other bodies which, under the established conditions, do not need to be repaid by the beneficiary”.
2. *Recoverable grants* which, unlike traditional grants, “may be repaid if the project generates revenue”, meaning that “the funds can be reused for future projects”.
3. *Guarantees*, which “involve a third party undertaking to cover part of the losses or financial obligation” in the event that a loan cannot be repaid, thereby “reducing the risk borne by the lender and facilitating access to resources”.
4. *Diversification of income* from property (sales, rents), productive and pastoral activities, through partnerships and agreements, and other sources such as investments and financial assets.
5. *Establishment of endowment funds* earmarked for specific purposes, such as the mission, solidarity or the support of retired members of the religious congregation.

However, Brother Sergio Leal points out that “decision-making must take into account factors such as the availability of resources, risks, existing obligations, the time horizon, institutional needs and, in particular, **the consistency of the chosen option with the mission**”.

Read the full article published by CLAR Magazine **HERE**.