In the wake of the earthquake in Panama, a gesture of solidarity that reflects the true Lasallian spirit

Following the 7.5-magnitude earthquake on 9 October, which also affected the facilities of the *Colegio San José La Salle de Colón* – particularly the primary school building – the final-year students demonstrated that Lasallian solidarity and commitment to others are most evident during the most difficult times.

Looking beyond the situation experienced by our own educational community, the Lasallians joined forces as 'One La Salle' to organise, on their own initiative and on a voluntary basis, a collection of tinned and dry food, water, medicines, clothing and toys to support families affected by the earthquake.

Solidarity with those most in need

Consequently, on 14 and 15 October, the graduating students carried out this courageous act of solidarity at the *Colegio San José La Salle de Colón.* "These were two days of hard work, dedication and generosity, during which they devoted their time and efforts to receiving, organising and collecting donations for those most in need," says the Office of the Lasallian Educational Mission and Association.

"Amidst the difficulties that our school was also facing, these young people decided to look beyond their own concerns and lend a helping hand to other families. Their initiative reminds us that, even in the most difficult times, there is always room for hope, fraternity and service".

"This gesture fills us with pride and confirms that Lasallian education goes far beyond the classroom", remarks Brother Francisco Dionisio Pérez, Coordinator of the Lasallian Educational Mission and Association.

Lasallians beyond the classroom

“Our mission is not only to educate academically willing students, but also to nurture sensitive, caring human beings who are committed to the reality of their community,” adds Brother Francisco as he expresses his gratitude to the graduating students “for showing us, through actions and not just words, that the values they have learnt over these years have taken root in their hearts”.

“Their generosity, sensitivity and willingness to help are among the most beautiful legacies you can leave for future generations at our school,” concludes Brother Francisco. Being a Lasallian is precisely that: recognising a brother and a sister in the other, sharing what we have and being there when someone else needs us.

* *Article produced by the Central America–Panama District. Photos: Central America–Panama District.*