# International Gathering of Young Lasallians brings together 350 “Pilgrims of Hope” at the Generalate

The Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was the meeting point for around 350 Young Lasallians, “Pilgrims of Hope,” coming from various Districts and Regions of the Institute, who celebrated the International Gathering of Young Lasallians convened by the Commission on Youth and the Office of Vocations and Volunteer Ministry of the Institute.

From 8:30 a.m. in the main hall of the “Mother House,” there was an atmosphere of fraternity and joy as the numerous delegations of Young Lasallians arrived, accompanied by Brothers, teachers, and collaborators from various ministry worldwide. They are also taking part in the activities of the Jubilee of Youth in Rome.

**Welcome message from the Superior General**

At 9:30 a.m., the Gathering began with a prayer in the Sanctuary where the mortal remains of Saint John Baptist de La Salle rest. There, Brother Armin Luistro, Superior General of the Institute, addressed the young people with a touching welcome message, recalling some recent experiences during his pastoral visits, which were full of meaning and motivation.

“I am here because I need to see you. To ear you. To feel you,” said Brother Armin, stressing that “to serve you, our young people, is the most important reason why this Institute exists, perhaps the only reason why this Lasallian Institute exists (…). Today and in the next few days, my prayer for you is that you will also discover why you are here. Before the mortal remains of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, in this holy place, I renew my personal commitment to be a brother and *hermanito* to each of you.”

Brother Armin also recalled two founding stories. That of Jesus of Nazareth, more than 2,000 years ago, who proclaimed “good news to the poor, liberty for

prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed"; and John Baptist de La Salle, around 345 years ago, who at age 28 "gathered a few young men, your age, to form a community of teachers so they may proclaim the Father's grand dream where children, especially those who are 'far from salvation', can see the Kingdom". "He envisioned inclusive schools that were open to everyone," he continued, "especially the poor who had no way of overcoming the social and economic barriers of their time."

At the end of his message, Brother Armin urged the young people to be dreamers, like Jesus and John Baptist: "The world has always been shaped by dreamers. Their dream took shape not in grand proclamations and extraordinary events but in the small decisive steps and struggles to live in authentic fraternity and committed service to their educational mission." "Why are you here?" he concluded.

After this meaningful encounter, the young people visited various places in the Generalate in groups, where activities were carried out around the identity and mission that unite us as the Lasallian Family: *1 La Salle*.

As the day progressed, the bonds of fraternity grew stronger among the young people from different realities and cultures where the Lasallian charism is present: from Palestine to North America, from Romania to Brazil, from Spain to the Philippines, from Madagascar to Mexico.

**Be the light of the world**

"In order for there to be more hope in the world, we Lasallians must seek God, trust in Him, and be the light of the world," said Manuel Flores, a Lasallian student from La Antigua, Guatemala. César Alvis, from Colegio Juan Luis Londoño in Colombia, added that "we Lasallians must take care of our brothers and sisters, our family, our environment, and our world.

At the end of the day, amid smiles and a festive and colourful atmosphere, an expression of communion in diversity, fraternity and service, the participants in the International Gathering of Young Lasallians took two "family photos", one in the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and another on the steps of the main entrance to the Generalate. "Live Jesus in our hearts… forever," they chanted in English, Spanish and French, in thanksgiving for the experience they had lived.

***More photos →***