

Message of Br. Robert Schieler FSC

May 15 - Feast of the Holy Founder



Message of Br. Robert Schieler FSCDownload

15 May 2020

Dear Brothers, Partners, Students and all Members of the Lasallian Family,

During the Easter season, our hearts are set on fire as we reflect on the readings from the Acts of the Apostles that we share in our liturgies. The stories are full of energy, adventure, tribulation and wonder. We can feel the Holy Spirit impelling the apostles to joyfully, loudly and fearlessly witness to Jesus Christ.

The irresistible guidance of the Holy Spirit described in the Acts of the Apostles led the first Christians to a profound experience of the risen Christ. Jesus' resurrection transformed the women and men who believed into bearers of the Good News: "I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness" (Jn 10:10).

The glory of God is a human being fully alive (Irenaeus). What does this mean right here and right now as each one of us, and all of us together, come face to face with COVID-19? How are we dealing with our lives that have been turned upside down? How can each one of us and our Brothers' communities and Lasallian educational communities be Spirit-inspired bearers of the Good News to each other, our Brothers, Partners, students, families and friends? Can we, like the apostles, in some way comfort the sick and accompany the grieving?

A description of the first Christian community tells us that "A small group of outsiders experimented with a vision of love and reconciliation in a society which had been put out of joint, suffering from an excess of tensions, pressures and

forms of aggression, in order to renew this society from within". [1]

So many of us feel out of joint right now. The faces of the sick and dying haunt us; some of these faces belong to our Brothers, families, friends and neighbors. Suffering is all around us. In one way or another, we all experience tensions, pressures and forms of aggression. The lockdown is not easy.

The virus has caught us off guard and thrust us into an unanticipated historical moment. Strategic plans, financial outlooks, programmed activities, business and leisure travel all have to be reimagined. Our world is no longer what it was a few months ago. How are we, ambassadors of Jesus Christ, concretely responding to help others live life to the fullest?

Brothers, Partners, students and all members of the Lasallian Family together will search for the way forward for our religious communities and Lasallian ministries. Like the ordinary women and men of the first Christian communities, let us open our hearts, ears and eyes to the Holy Spirit so that our older sisters and brothers can dream dreams and our younger people see visions (Cf Acts 2:17).

On Friday 27 March, Pope Francis addressed the world: "We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other". Let us seize this moment and "together and by association" row together, reorient our lives and accompany each other in responding to our mission to improve the lot of others, especially the poor, through our ministry of human and Christian education.

Our Lasallian Family is blessed with dreamers and visionaries who provide us with an abundance of wisdom, creativity and vision. With their help, we are discovering new ways to give life to our educational communities, support the women and men who tend to the sick and dying and announce the Good News to all whom we encounter. United in heart and mind and guided by the Holy Spirit, let us share our talents, time, joy and energy to discover the way forward (Cf Acts 2:42-47).

Let us plan for the future with energy and wonder, knowing that adventure and tribulation lie ahead. Let us continue to joyfully, loudly and fearlessly witness to Jesus Christ. And let us celebrate the feast of Saint John Baptist de La Salle by

recommitting ourselves to faithfully and zealously care for each other and all of God's creation. Saint Augustine said that God loves each one of us as though there were only one of us to love. And Brother Alois of Taizé added: "Yes, God loves each one of us. It is because God loves us that God speaks to us. Does not God want to say to us: See how much you depend on one another, on people you are close to, but also between countries and populations. See how much you need sister and brotherhood. See how much the care of creation is a must for your future."

Saint John Baptist de La Salle. Pray for us.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever.

Happy feast day!

Brother Robert Schieler, FSC
Brother Superior



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[1] Gerd Theirson as quoted in *Intentional Faith Communities in Catholic Education*, p. 37, St. Paul's Publications, 2017.