

New coordinator for the Service of Research and Resources of the Institute

In different places of the Institute, the Founder and the question about what it means to be Lasallian in the world, continue to be studied and researched. University centers, study groups, summer and winter courses and also a few solitary researchers continue to give life to the history of the Institute and visibility to the transformations in the Lasallian mission in accordance with the new times that are coming up day by day.

That is why Brother Superior General has appointed Brother George Van Grieken to continue the work of Brothers Diego Muñoz, Mario Presciuttini, Jean-Louis Schneider, among others, in this important ministry that has to do with our heritage and the spirit of our Institute.

That is why Lasalle.org presents Brother George to all Lasallians in the world along with some of his ideas of what this important work means for the Institute and for the Church.

Br. George was born and raised in Holland, emigrating to the US at the age of eleven, where he joined the Brothers after high school. He holds a BA in Liberal Arts and Theology, an MA in Theology, and a PhD in religious education from Boston College. He has been a teacher, formator, vocation director, retreat and workshop leader, administrator, international school President/CEO, and member of school boards of trustees.

In 2007, he was asked to oversee the prayer and liturgies for the 44th General Chapter in Rome. Br. George has authored or edited seven books about De La Salle, Lasallian education, and spirituality. In 2011 he initiated and produced an online virtual Lasallian pilgrimage (www.dlsfootsteps.org) and in 2015 began the Lasallian Resource Center and its website (www.lasallianresources.org), providing a central online location for Lasallian resources.

He has now taken on the position of *Secretary Coordinator of Lasallian Research and Resources* in Rome and will also continue as Director of the Lasallian

Resource Center in Napa, CA, splitting his time between Napa and Rome.

1. Overseeing the museum, library, archives in Rome is a new challenge for you, especially since you will be splitting your time between Rome and California. Do you have any new ideas and goals?

I think that two things will be important, collaboration and focus. The people working for the museum, library, and archive in Rome are dedicated and knowledgeable. They are our top resources. Collaboration is critical, because working together always brings better results than working alone. My approach will be to focus on key projects that emerge from collaborative discussions, benefit the real needs of Lasallians worldwide, and foster wider access to both human and archival resources. Today we ride a providential wave of interest in all things Lasallian. The more we can empower one another to look deeply and broadly into our history, pedagogy, and spirituality, the more confident we can be that we are attending to God's presence in our midst. I think that we can make a positive contribution to that process.

2. Which area is more interesting to you, being part of the Generalate or the weight of a new responsibility?

This new responsibility has captured all of my attention. Being in Rome at certain times of the year is very helpful and necessary. But with today's communication technologies, location is not as vital for a position such as this; at least I hope so. The challenge in this responsibility is to support and help coordinate those engaged in the museum, library, and archives in Rome, while also bringing the richness that those resources represent to the larger Lasallian family. We labor for the sake of our living resources - people, programs, activities, etc. - and not simply to preserve the past. The future deserves our best attention.

3. What do you think about working in an international context.

Since I grew up in Holland and in the United States, worked in Singapore, and have given retreats, workshops, and talks in places as diverse as Australia, the Philippines, Ireland, and Pakistan, an international context is not completely unfamiliar to me. In fact, I like it. At the Generalate, four languages dance around my ears all day, and

Lasallians of all ages from around the world regularly participate in various programs or meetings. These are daily reminders of the international character of the Institute and wonderful opportunities for expanding my own knowledge and relationships. The hidden graces of our charism continue to surprise me every day, and I am richly blessed by the experience. I hope to be able to pursue further avenues for bringing what we have and who we are, both in the past and in the present, to the wider Lasallian world, so that others are ever more deeply touched by the abundance in our midst.