The importance of June 24th in the history of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools

June 24th is an important day in the history of the Institute. First, this is the day when the Church celebrates the birth of John the Baptist, after whom St. John Baptist de La Salle was named.

It was also one of the dates in the calendar year in France when contracts such as house leases were traditionally started or ended, and when houses would naturally be bought and sold. (The other date was December 24th.)

According to the Lasallian chronology and documentary sources, on June 24th there were a number of significant events in Lasallian history because of this contractual practice:

On June 24, 1672, after the death of their parents, the family home on the Rue St. Marguerite was put up for rent. Marie and Jean-Remy went to the home of their grandmother. When De La Salle could not find a new renter, he ended up staying at the house with his other younger brothers, paying a reasonable rent to the family in a 4-year contract.

In subsequent years, on or near this date, the rent for the lodgings or support of his siblings was also provided and recorded.

On June 24, 1680, De La Salle brought the teachers into his own home for meals, which included his own younger brothers.

On June 24, 1681, De La Salle and the teachers moved into a two newly rented houses on Rue Nueve, in Rheims.

On June 28, 1690, De La Salle rented a house for the Brothers near the Rue Princesse in Paris.

In June of 1691, De La Salle rented the house and garden in Vaugirard that was to become such an important retreat and formation center.

On June 24, 1703, when De La Salle had found no buyer for the Grand Maison in Paris, he was able to prolong his occupancy for 6-8 weeks until one could be found.

In June of 1705, De La Salle signed a lease on the house at Saint Yon so that this property could become the novitiate for the Brothers. Later on, he was able to buy that property because of the legacy left to him by the lawyer involved in the Clement affair.

These examples illustrate the practical significance of June 24th and the things that we have been able to learn about his life and the life of the Brothers because of this French legal practice. Whether this practice has any direct connection to the commemoration of the birth of John the Baptist is unknown.

The gospel of Luke contains certain verses that imply that John the Baptist was born six months before the birth the Jesus, and therefore June 24th became the date when John's birth was commemorated.

It is very possible that these two significant calendar dates influenced the legal contractual practices associated with them in 17th century France.

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