“We have a responsibility to foster experiences of Lasallian Association”

“Lasallian Association for mission, its development for the future” was the theme of the **Seminar on Lasallian Research 2024**, which was attended by 53 Brothers and lay Lasallians from the five Regions of the Institute who for a week (from 28th October to 1st November) exchanged experiences and learnings in a participative, fraternal atmosphere of Lasallian spirituality.

God calls to mission and Association

Colette Allix, from the La Salle Educational Fraternity of France, states, “**this Seminar enabled me to delve deeper into the concept of Association outside my District (…) and to understand that it could have different meanings for Lasallians** depending on the context, but always meanings related to our personal journey and to the link we have with God, because, ultimately, it’s always He who calls us both to the Mission and to Association”

Similarly, Brother Camilo Andrés Aguilar, from the Lasallian District of Bogotá, confirms that ” it has been a very enriching opportunity to discover the different rhythms, the different experiences, the different places in which the Spirit of God is surely guiding us as a community of Lasallians”. For this reason, **“we have the responsibility to foster experiences of Lasallian Association”**.

An experience of the Spirit

Moreover, the Colombian religious is convinced that ” **Association for the educational service of the poor does not depend on a structure nor is it found in itself; on the contrary, it is an experience of the Spirit,** of fraternal encounter, of community connection, and of response to the needs and the cries that arise in life and to which we Lasallians feel challenged to respond”.

For her part, Mary Catherine Fox, researcher for the Christian Brothers Conference of RELAN, highlights the depth of Brother Pedro Gil’s contributions during his presentations: ” Some things that really stuck with me was his ideas of dimensions and elements. In other words, we can’t just decide that we want

Lasallian spirituality, or Lasallian pedagogy, or social justice. We need to have the whole charism; **we need to be immersed in the whole charism**.”.

Lasallian research today

On balance, Brother Santiago Rodríguez Mancini, Director of the Office of Lasallian Heritage and Research, expressed that “this Seminar on Lasallian Research that we wanted to propose first and foremost, aimed **to break with the idea that only professional researchers do research**. And we wanted to bring together someone who was already committed to research into Lasallian Association at this time, the new Lasallian community as he wants to call it, Brother Pedro Gil, and many people from different domains, from Institute structures, District structures, or simply people who work in the Lasallian world from their educational works”.

“We believe that in reality research is produced when real practice meets with those things that are called theoretical enlightenment, bibliographical research, historical research”, Brother Santiago continues, adding that “the objectives of our Seminar were very simple if you like. The first: that people could come away enriched by the gathering; and the second, that t**ogether we could find orientations for working on Association as an experience and the Association in terms of structures from now on**. And I believe that thanks to the preparation of each of those who came and the intense work that they were able to do, these two objectives have been very well achieved”, he concluded.

We are sharing the LaSalleOrg News broadcast with the testimonies of some of the participants and organisers of the Seminar on Lasallian Research 2024.