



Lasallian Family magazine

# intercom

La Salle La Salle

COMMERCIALIZATION





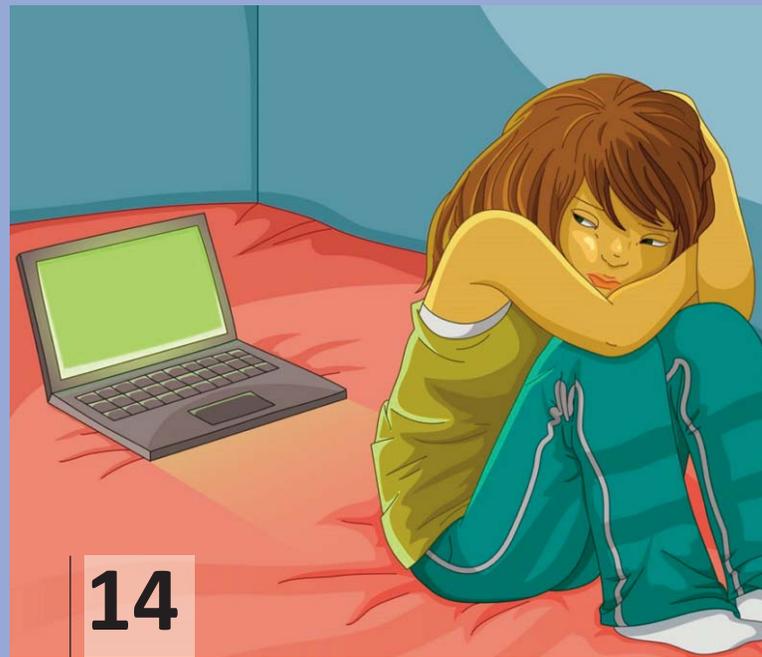
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# Commodification

The Gospel icon of the Good Samaritan was used as a starting point for the Lasallian Reflection for 2015-2016: "A Gospel Adventure: Confronting new poverties and the culture of commodification". The whole reflection draws upon the icon of the Good Samaritan and calls on Lasallians to re-read the this parable with new eyes to help us respond to the poor in our midst.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a simple Gospel adventure. There is a man going from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robbers attack, strip, and beat him. They leave him on the side of the road half-dead. A priest and a Levite pass by without helping him. But a Samaritan stops and cares for him, taking him to an inn where he pays for his care.

In the Lasallian reflection, it mentions how commodification of the migrants, the urban poor, and the youth have upset the social order and challenges us to reflect what it means to be more human in today's world. More often than not, the current political, economic, and social arrangements

according to self-interests and commercial purposes have become ends in themselves without concern for the common good. The question posed in the parable "who is my neighbor" is more relevant than ever in our various situations, contexts and ministries. Who is our neighbor today? How can we bring the mercy and compassion of the Samaritan to the migrants, the poor, and the young who suffer the demoralizing effects of commodification and poverty? As Lasallian communities, how do we respond to this urgent need?

Commodification, according to Merriam-Webster, is to treat (something that cannot be owned or that everyone has a right to) like a product that can be bought and sold. Any person or object or thing can have a monetary value and turn into commercial relations in everyday use. We have seen and heard how migrants are being treated unfairly, and at worst can be victims of slavery or cross-border exchanges. We have seen and heard how the poor can be subjected to human



trafficking, and excluded from any kind of community planning and development. We have seen and heard how the youth can be a huge market for commercialization and branding for any product that you can think of.

However, simply criticizing the commodification of the migrants, the poor, and the youth, while helpful, is not enough. Stirring denunciations of what a market society does to these sectors do not go far enough. What is equally necessary is a) promoting a curriculum that engages Lasallians to select on what is right and just when social relationships are being disrupted; b) developing public spaces and social movements that help migrants, the poor, and the young people develop healthy notions of self, identities, and visions of their future no longer defined - more accurately, defiled - by market values and mentalities.

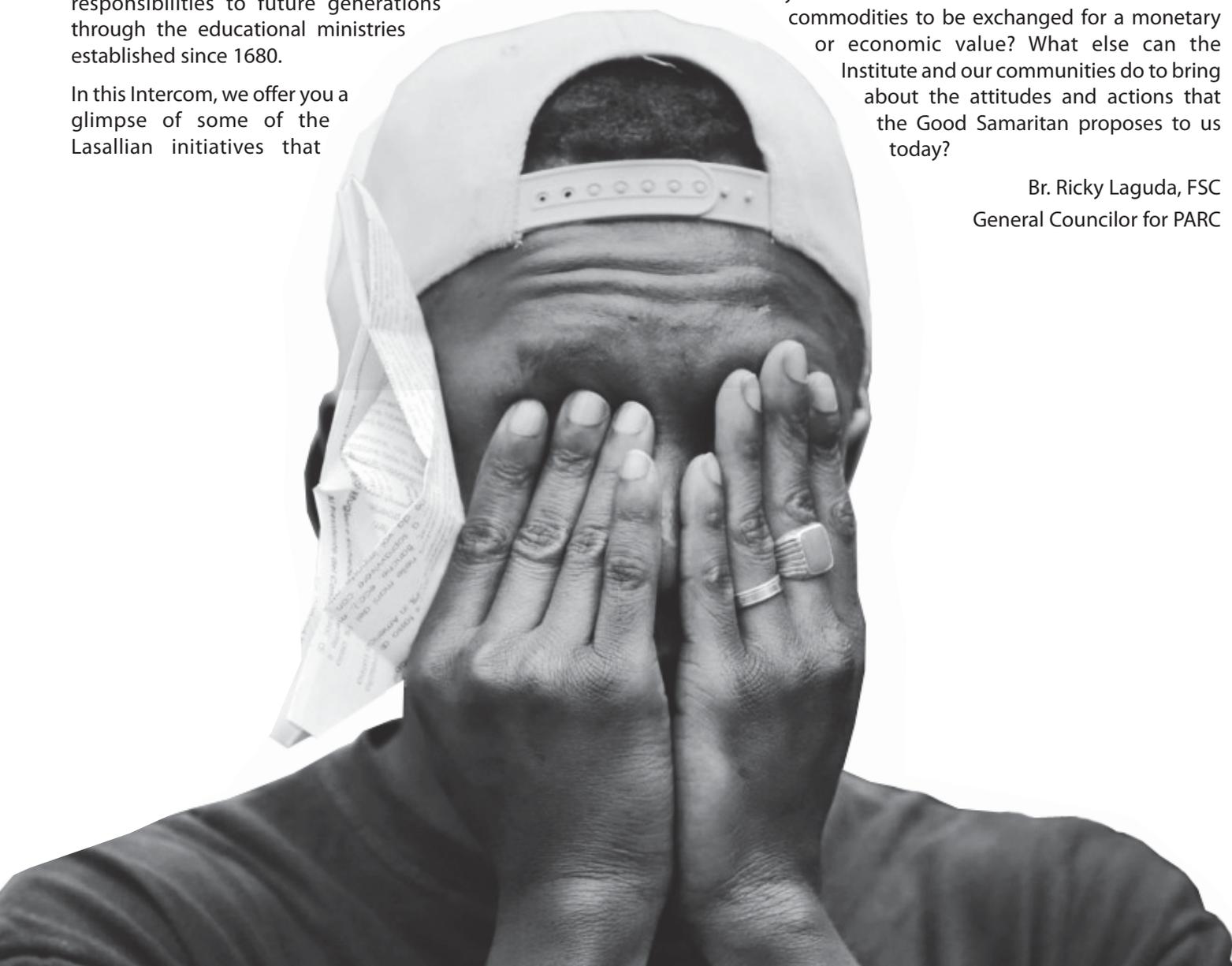
As Lasallians, our founder Saint John Baptist De La Salle aligns himself with a vision that is on the side of migrants, the poor, and the youth, particularly those at risk. In his time, Saint La Salle with the help of the first Brothers and benefactors enabled the conditions for the youth to learn, to grow, as engaged citizens and Christians, more alive to their responsibilities to future generations through the educational ministries established since 1680.

In this Intercom, we offer you a glimpse of some of the Lasallian initiatives that

have contributed to spreading the Good News that Lasallians can be the Good Samaritan. Many of these educational ministries have constructed an alternative reality to confront new poverties and the culture of commodification. These Lasallians have been animated by the Founder's vision and the Gospel values of mutuality, reciprocity and compassion as expressed by the Good Samaritan. In short, Lasallians today must reject a society whose essence is currently refracted in the faces of migrants, the poor, and the youth compelled to confront a future that as yet offers very little hope of happiness, or even survival. Lasallians today offer a radical welcome, like the Good Samaritan, the oil of mercy, compassion, and inclusion to those who are in the peripheries, or on the side of the road half-dead. This publication is just a simple way of communicating to the Lasallian world how the joy of our mission is lived in various parts of the Institute.

Moreover, we also hope that this publication will stir the hearts of Lasallians and respond to the following questions: Where do you see commodification of human beings in your context? What have you done to raise awareness or to fight any attitudes and actions that treat humans as commodities to be exchanged for a monetary or economic value? What else can the Institute and our communities do to bring about the attitudes and actions that the Good Samaritan proposes to us today?

Br. Ricky Laguda, FSC  
General Councilor for PARC



## Alternative Learning System (ALS)



When we think of basic education, we generally envision 12-year formal schooling. But sometimes, due to economic, social, and psychological factors, there are students who just can't cope with its rigors. These "push outs" of society – as they are presently called – drop out of school and lose the opportunities for a better life.

Education is the solution to break that vicious cycle of poverty. Honoring the Lasallian mission of providing quality education to the poor and marginalized, La Salle Green Hills (LSGH) adapted the Alternative Learning System (ALS) of the Philippine government's Department of Education (DepEd). This system adjusts to the needs of the learners by providing them with learning modules and instructional managers that accompanies them based on their learning pace. At the end of the 10-month program, they take DepEd's

Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Exam that earns them a diploma upon successful completion.

Since its conception around 20 years ago, LSGH-ALS has evolved from initially catering to street children, to accepting out-of-school youth, to taking in adult learners – those who didn't finish their basic education. They are not push-outs anymore, but lifelong learners. Aside from what is required from DepEd, LSGH-ALS integrates Lasallian formation to the program and ensured the holistic development of the learners through recollections/retreats, outreaches, educational tours, on-the-job trainings, family days, and legal aid. More than just providing the learners with education and skills, we give them hope and uplift their dignity.

Br. Michael S. Cua, FSC

## Blue Sky Home



The La Salle Children's Home is part of the Bamboo school project in Thailand. The Brothers decided to build this home for girls who have problems in their families and have no place to belong. We are thankful to Saint Bede's College, Melbourne, Australia, for donating and helping to build the house. This home is the place where the girls feel love and care. They share common goal of becoming a good citizen of their society.

The La Salle Children Home is a residential care facility that provides both long and short term services to children 6 to 18 years of age who have experienced abuse, neglect, violence, abandonment, and/or are in need of supervised care. Located within the Parmenie campus of La Salle School Sangklaburi, it provides services to children of every race, creed, color, and

religion. We provide an environment where children feel secure, loved and have a sense of belonging.

The Home's programs and activities provide an opportunity for the children to attend La Salle school and develop self-esteem, and experience trusting relationships with peers and adults. Our programs focus on enhancing each child's ability to function successfully in society with attention to accountability and community safety.

We provide a substitute home for dependent and neglected children, and to restore the broken lives of children from broken families.

La Salle Children's Home provides residential and community services to children who experience disruption in their lives. By utilizing its human, physical, behavioral, and financial resources, La Salle Children's Home builds on the strengths of those served to promote long-term well-being and success. We never turn a needy child away.

Br. John Pongpat, FSC

## Ferdie

It was a hot and humid afternoon when I chanced upon Ferdie, a deaf student, helping a potential enrollee accomplish a form. Despite his incapacities, Ferdie was able to communicate with a hearing applicant what needed to be done to be admitted to La Salle Green Hills' Adult Night High School.

Ferdie graduated this year, after five grueling years of formal high school. Like all the other hearing and deaf students in the ANHS, Ferdie refuses to be disheartened by either poverty or by his disability. He considers these stepping stones to make both his and his family's lives better.

He graduated with a high school diploma last March, plus a government certification for a competency course in computer. He can now work and study, and provide for his family.

Stories like Ferdie's inspire us and help us to fulfill our mission. These success stories give people like the Alumni, the parents, even the students of the day schools opportunities to help. They change the face of society. They help transform lives. They help us say "thank you". Every. Single. Day.



Ferdie with his classmates on a reach out

Agnes C. Alonzoana - Adult Night High School  
La Salle Green Hills - Philippines

## HopeHouse - An oasis of hope



HopeHouse residents with Bro Collin in a group counseling session.

In May of this year, I will be my 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary in running this House.

In a very competitive environment like Singapore, the family unit faces many challenges and the youth are especially vulnerable to the ills of the society, some of which include alcohol abuse, violence, aggression, theft, bullying, abandonment, and unhealthy living conditions.

HopeHouse was set up to help male youths, regardless of racial and religious backgrounds, who have succumbed to these challenges. With shelter in a conducive environment, care and counseling, we offer these youth a new beginning to overcome their challenges and help them grow to their full potential.

I feel that the work we do at HopeHouse is secular in nature and yet it is a natural extension of the Lasallian spirituality of teaching minds, touching hearts and transforming lives of the last, lost and the least. In the journey to providing a formative influence on the lives of the residents, we put into action what we believe and with compassion we accompany the people in the real world while being aware of the realities and constraints which we all live by.

As Lasallians, we are called to demonstrate human politeness in our relationships and claim the self worth and confidence which each of us is given when we were born.

Br. Colin Wee, FSC - HopeHouse, Singapore

## The culture of the Human Reification



Since 2013 District of Brazil-Chile has participated in a process of basic guidance in a micro-region in the northeastern area of Brazil, called Baixada Maranhense.

Despite the abundance of natural resources, the municipality is confronted with problems such as lack of roads, public policies, especially concerning health, education, housing, agriculture, leisure and culture.

A local study was done by Prof. Maria Conceição dos S. Arrais between 2006 and 2012 on the exodus of youth from Saint Vincent Ferrer. The study deals with the theme of young people leaving the area to go to the plantations in search of better living conditions but instead they end up in slavery in camps under sub-human conditions. "These are young people who cherish the desire of

having a piece of land to grow as life in their father's region does not offer a promising horizon."

"The work of the sugar cane cutting seems a real possibility but their youthful insertion in this world limits their lives, especially their hands, to the use of the machete instead of using them with pencils, pens, books and school supplies. The use of the machete causes a change in their routine, their discipline, a loss of freedom, lack of free time and the loss of certain forms of leisure."

The Lasallian action in these lands has been to motivate policies for a new education aiming the culture of rights, true citizenship as well as looking for better conditions for their lives.

Br. Deonizio R. Bruxel, FSC and Maria Conceição dos S. Arrais



## Young People in *Kuchuj* – A School for Cooperation in Guatemala



What kind of young people does the Guatemalan educational system produce? Seven out of ten of them have no chance of going to a secondary school, and only three in a hundred go to a university. Those who manage to do so find themselves drawn into the competitive mentality which reduces life to material objects. Faced with this situation, the PRODESSA project of education, run by the De La Salle Brothers in Santiago, Guatemala, makes its contribution to a form of education which is liberating and self-financing, and which aims to turn out young people committed to transforming the inequality of society.



The *Kuchuj* Programme (from the Maya word *K'iche'* meaning mutual help in the community) supports young people from isolated and marginalised indigenous communities by helping them do university studies with a view to various careers. In addition to the academic education they receive in the State university, they experience a human and political education which aims to ensure they retain their ancestral values of mutual help and cooperation.

The young people have their residence in the PRODESSA buildings and go to the State university for their studies and activities. This enables them to compare their «modern» academic education with their traditional customs.



We are convinced that these young people are developing the ability to stand up to the individualist mentality and that they return to their communities with an education which is professional and human, combining what is best in traditional knowledge and modern science so as to bring that science to their lives in a cooperative community.

This educational provision seeks to open their eyes and make them more critical with regard to theoretical discussions which deconstruct their customs. We work in the hope that this new generation will become capable and fully aware, and that they will be the seed for a different kind of Guatemala.

Federico Roncal  
Prodeessa, Guademaal

# In the frenzied fury of the French Revolution: Brother Solomon

Illustrations by **Carla Pollastri**

Text by **Mario Chiarapini, FSC**



Nicholas Leclercq, Brother Solomon to be, is born in the city of Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, in 1745, to a well-to-do merchant family trading wines, spirits, salt and timber.



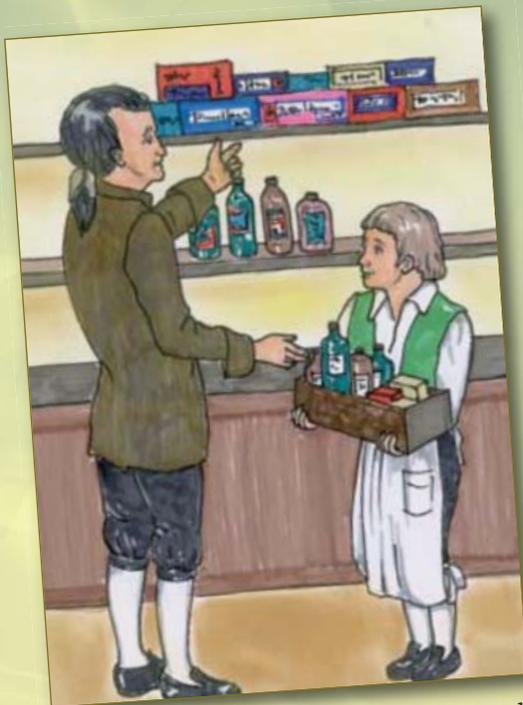
His deeply religious parents impart solid Christian values to their son; familiarize him with daily prayer, knowledge of God's Word and devotion to the Blessed Virgin.



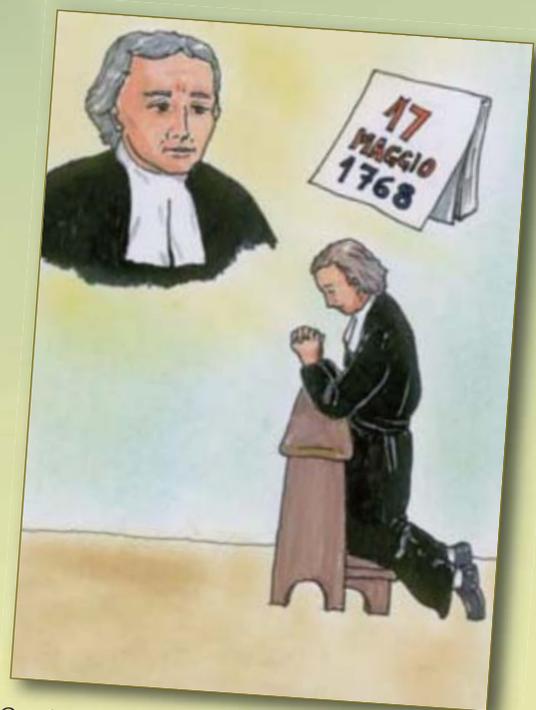
The spiritual atmosphere of the family influences Nicholas' choice of consecrating himself to God. Later, he will write regarding his mother: "She fostered in me the desire to serve God and to secure my eternal salvation."



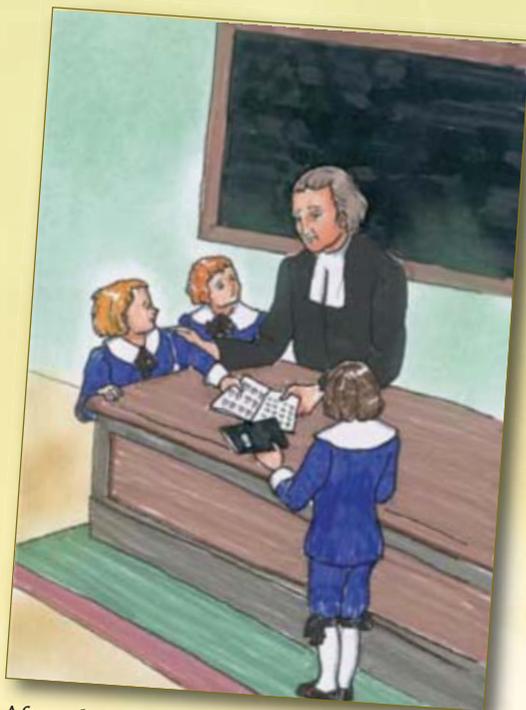
Nicholas attends the school of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Boulogne, visited by de La Salle in 1716. In 1757, Nicholas makes his First Communion in this school while the Seven Years War between France and England is being waged.



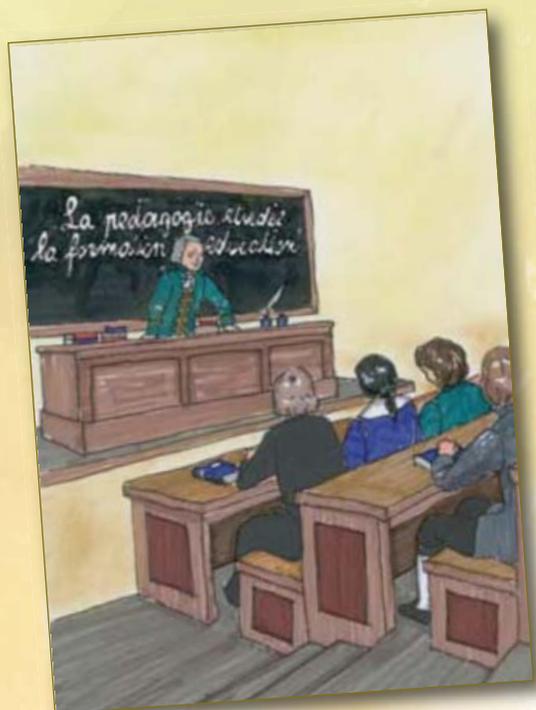
Though Nicholas discerns a call to the religious life when he finishes his studies, he must wait until he is 22 years old to answer as he is obliged to work in the family business because of the war and the economic situation.



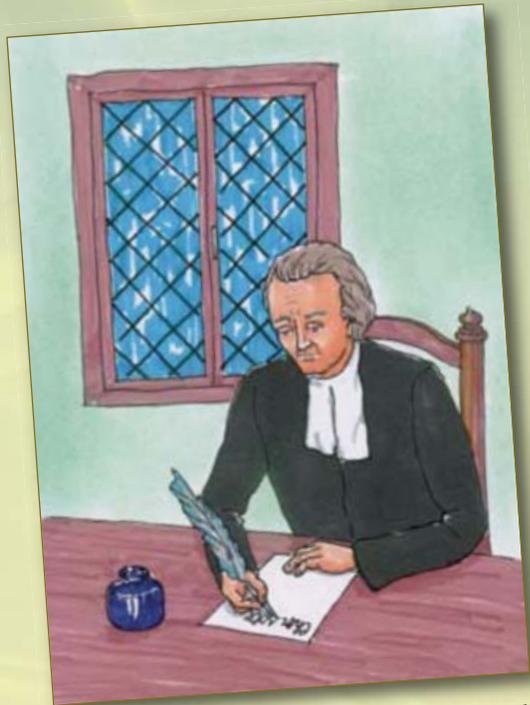
On the feast of the Ascension, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1768, Nicholas receives the habit of the Brothers and takes the name of Brother Solomon. On that occasion the newly professed Brother promises to remain faithful to his vocation until death.



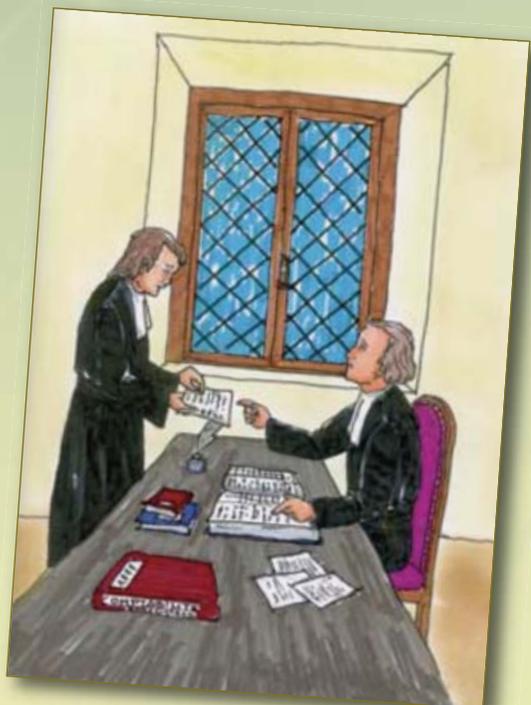
After the Novitiate year, Brother Solomon receives the task of teaching the youngest children. He does this for nine years as day by day he becomes a very experienced teacher. His class has 130 students!



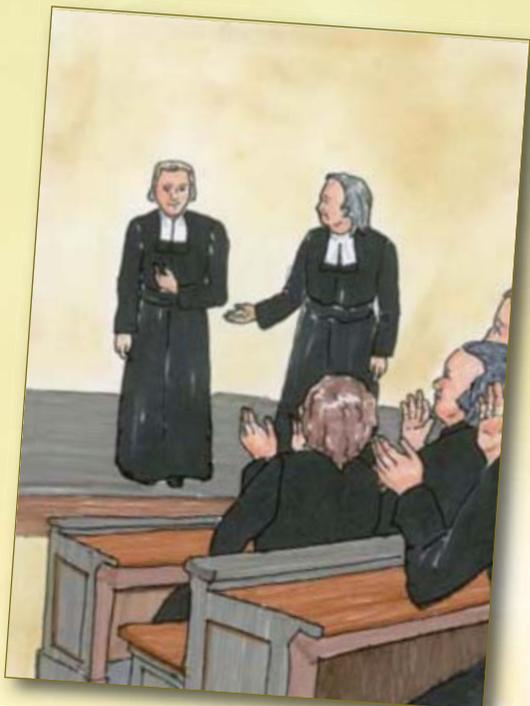
Between 1769 and 1770 he spends a year at Rouen taking courses in pedagogy in an effort to develop his teaching skills.



He is named Sub-Director of the Maréville Novitiate in 1772 and Director the following year. He writes a letter to his sister asking her to pray that the Lord grant him the necessary understanding to guide the novices on the way to perfection.



In June 1777, Brother Solomon is appointed Procurator of Maréville as a result of his studies in business and accounting. He has to think about practical matters ranging from food for his Brothers to maintenance of the house and the properties of the institution. He obeys although he would have preferred to devote himself to the spiritual life.



In 1787 Brother Solomon becomes Secretary of the General Chapter and then of Brother Agathon, the Superior General.



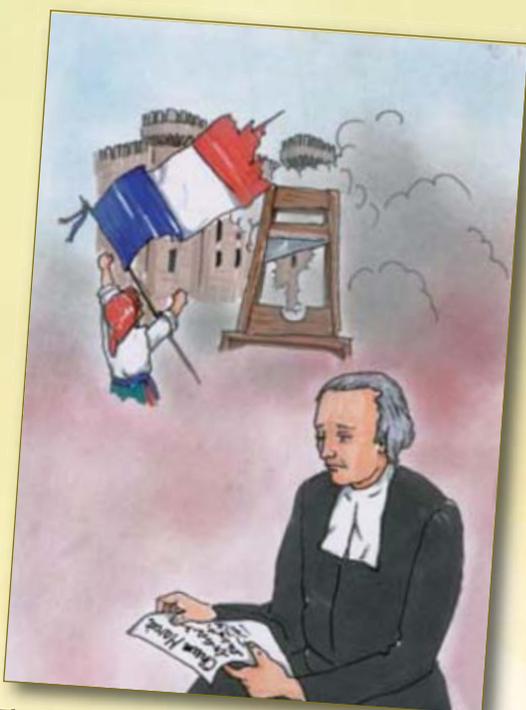
The French Revolution erupts with the fall of the Bastille on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1789. The anger of the revolutionaries also focuses on priests and religious who are forced to take an oath to support the Civil Constitution. Whoever refuses is imprisoned.



Between August 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, even King Louis XVI is imprisoned and locked up in the Temple Prison. He will be guillotined on the morning of January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1793.



On the night between August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, about fifty "revolutionaries" break into the Brothers' house on the Rue Neuve. They take Brother Solomon prisoner and lead him to the Carmelite prison.



The day before he had written a lengthy letter to his sister Marie, where among other things one reads: *"We suffer gratefully and happily the crosses and afflictions that God will send us."*



On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1792, Brother Solomon is killed by sword blows in the monastery garden. He was only 46 years old.

## Inauguration of the Notre-Dame de la Rouge Centre



On May 7, 2016, the official inauguration of the central building took place. It is named after Brother André-Gauthier, one of the former Directors who made a very big impression on the minds and hearts of all those who attended the Centre.

The large-scale renovation of the infrastructures was the result of a 4-year programme of detailed planning and works. The challenge has been to ensure that the cycle of demolition and construction and furnishing should be managed in such a way that it did not interrupt the harmonious running of the Centre's activities. This was achieved with great success.

The work of the Notre-Dame de la Rouge Centre consists in creating life experiences by which young people can

flourish in every aspect of their being. Today, there are few environments which favour the holistic development of individuals, especially of young people. This is what the Centre aims to do, and so it places the child at the heart of its mission.

Every year, around 4,000 young people come from various schools, parishes and local communities in both Ontario and Quebec, and they experience a warm welcome together with the creative pedagogy of the leaders, which is something legendary.

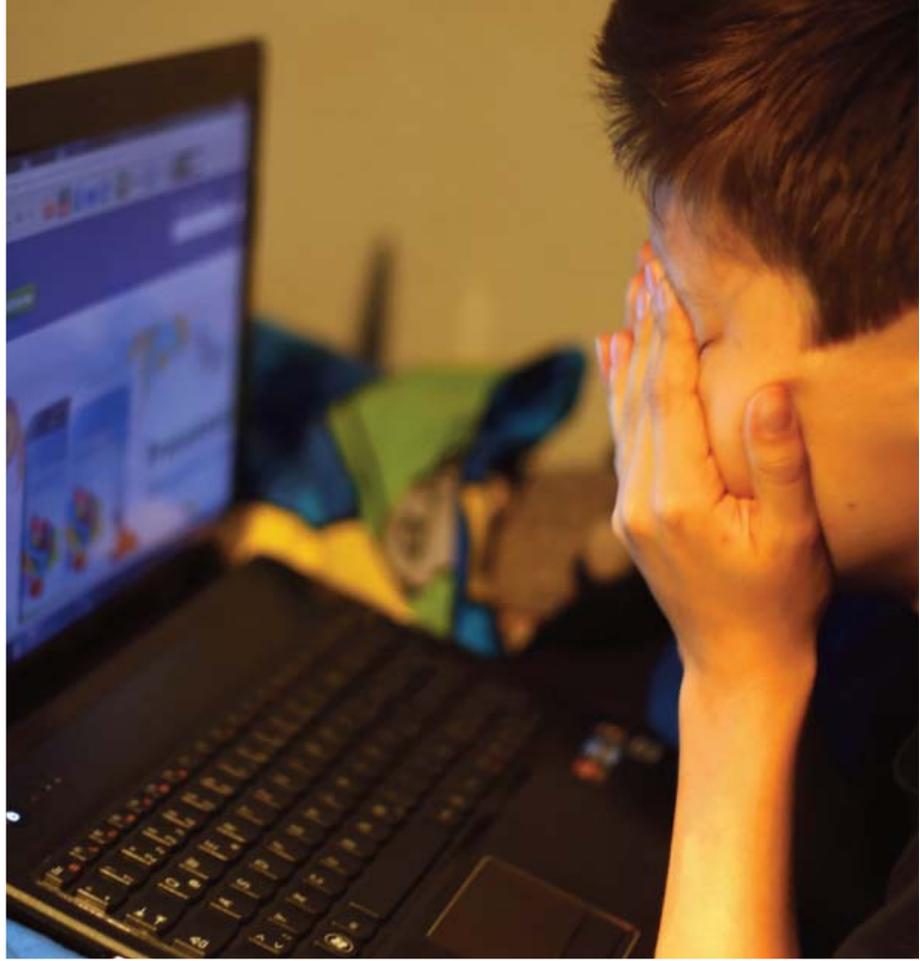
Thanks to the courageous commitment of the Brothers of French-speaking Canada and the renovation of the facilities, the Notre-Dame de la Rouge Centre is now better able to respond to the ever-growing needs of children, adolescents and young adults. In all, more than 3 million dollars have been invested in this work, which has a reputation that is envied by many.

The buildings and infrastructures of the Centre have had a complete make-over in recent years. The new reception building is more conveniently located and offers room for more games activities. The sanitary installations are of the highest technological quality so as to ensure a respectful use of the environment. New dormitories have been created which can house a hundred people in comfort. There is also a new activities building which is both rustic and modern, and it has an incomparable view over the rivers Outaouais and La Rouge, which promotes a reflective contact with nature at a deep level.

The Notre-Dame de la Rouge Centre is proud of the overall results of these renovations, and it will face the new season of summer camps with enthusiasm! The gates opened on May 22, 2016, at 1.30 p.m. For further information, consult [Facebook/Centre Notre-Dame de La Rouge](https://www.facebook.com/Centre-Notre-Dame-de-La-Rouge) et [www.camplarouge.qc.ca](http://www.camplarouge.qc.ca)

Cindy Lajeunesse, animator





## RELAN Fights Commodification, Tears

### Program Focuses on Human Trafficking

The Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) is addressing the issue of human trafficking through this summer's Lasallian Social Justice Institute (LSJI). The Regional formation program will take place July 17-21 with the theme "Human Trafficking in our Communities." LSJI participants will explore the issue of sex and labor trafficking locally, nationally and globally. Representatives from various professions such as law enforcement and social services will share their knowledge, insights and perspectives on human trafficking and how it is impacting our communities.

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota will host the program at its Twin Cities campus in St. Paul-Minneapolis. The agenda will include presentations, open circle discussions and reflections, along with evening prayer. Topics will include an overview of human trafficking, a discussion of the issues associated with labor trafficking, a discussion of how educational technology products can raise awareness of the issue and enable young people to take steps to ensure their safety, presentations on the demand for human trafficking, and a look at various initiatives in place to raise awareness and help victims. A human trafficking survivor will provide a personal voice on the issue.

LSJI is a Lasallian formation program of Christian Brothers Conference, the RELAN office, which centers on the Gospel call to peace and justice and our Lasallian invitation to "association for the educational service of the young, especially the poor."

### School Leaders Focus on Social Media

As social media takes such a prominent focus on the lives of so many young people, presidents, principals and other leaders of secondary schools in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) spent time learning how to handle the issue at the 2016 Lasallian Association of Secondary School Chief Administrators Conference in San Antonio, Texas.

Christian Brothers Services in Romeoville, Illinois, sponsored a breakout session focusing on the legal implications of limiting or monitoring student and employee use of social media. An attorney from Kopon Airdo, national coordinating counsel for Christian Brothers Services, discussed the types of policies, best practices and procedures that schools should have in place and how to take disciplinary action when needed.

Among the topics, leaders received tips on how to protect students, faculty and others, along with how to identify and react to online bullying and threats. They also focused on how to teach students to use social media responsibly, ethically and safely instead of restricting access. Additionally, the leaders learned about how to draft policies for students and faculty on responsible use of social media based on Church teaching, Lasallian values, school tradition and school mission statement.



## ches Responsible Use of Technology

### Digital Citizenship at San Miguel, Rhode Island

Among the stack of papers sent home as students begin each year at the San Miguel School of Providence, Rhode Island, is a sheet entitled Digital Citizenship Policy. In this document, the school, which is in the District of Eastern North America (DENA) in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), outlines its expectations not only for how students should behave while using technology as members of the Lasallian school but also how they are expected to behave as they interact with their community as a whole. Digital Citizenship is a constant theme interwoven through all technology instruction at the school. San Miguel strives to help students learn to use technology in a moral, ethical and legal way.

As lessons are taught about conducting research, focus is given to respecting the copyrights of the author. Discussions turn to social networks and issues such as choosing appropriate passwords and screen names. Closely monitoring the amount of personal information that one shares online is important along with understanding the threat of cyberbullying.

Students today have access to more information than ever before. But while students increasingly are connected electronically, they can be disconnected socially and the results can be harmful. As educators, it is our responsibility to help them to understand these challenges while helping them to reap benefits that are possible.

### Our Lasallian Mission in an Age of Access

In this changing world of digital technology and immediate gratification, a growing lack of empathy and mercy has become a form of affective poverty. At Christian Brothers High School (CBHS) in Sacramento, California, in the District of San Francisco New Orleans in the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN), the faculty and staff took a day to consider what Lasallian pedagogy looks like in this digital age as the commodification of youth becomes more prevalent.

As electronic communication takes the place of face-to-face contact in our world, young people have lost a sense of empathy and an appreciation for solitude. These two gifts are essential to experiencing the world as Lasallians. The faculty and staff spent a day of professional development discovering how students view technology, discussing the need for deep attention and quiet in this busy world, and determining ways to deliberately practice Lasallian values with each other and the students entrusted to our care.

By deliberately abandoning technology during each session, and taking the time to reflect individually and communally, the faculty and staff at CBHS recognized the need to be present to each other and to serve as examples of God's presence in each other's lives in order to likewise serve our students. The hope is to intentionally continue the conversation in the future as CBHS considers Lasallian professional development and formation.

## SOPRO of HOPE



They are the volunteers of School Supplies Bank (Vitor, Sara, Bruna e Nuno) and the other photo is of our scholarship project in Mozambique.

The Barcelos área (Portugal) has developed several projects, among them: voluntary work in close territory; school supply bank and SOPRO Feminino, a project dedicated to gender equality and non-gender violence.

Internationally, SOPRO's work is focused in Mozambique, in Beira region and in Sofala's catholic missions (ESMABAMA – Estaquinha, Mangunde, Barada and Machanga), where SOPRO's staff works as volunteer for short and long periods. The intervention's goal in Mozambique is to make possible universal access to education. The Mozambican children, that otherwise would not have access to education, are supported by several adoption programs: Um Euro faz Sorrir (One Euro Makes Smile), Apadrinhamento (Be a Godfather to a Child), and Voluntariado Internacional (International Voluntary Work) and other donations.

Within the national and international environment, SOPRO interventions can be found in education, health, humanitarian aid as well as in both civic and Christian formation. Through this, our volunteers utilize their capabilities to teach using knowledge as a base for education; learning then occurs with happiness and there is great interest by others in acquiring fully the understandings they provide.

At this perspective, the work of SOPRO in partnership with the College La Salle has benefited children and risk youth. It has been very important in education for solidarity and citizenship, preventing and avoiding the problem of commodification in society.

Miguel Novais  
President of the Directive Board



## The Ram Kapur Scholars Program

Most typically when one thinks of slavery, we envision an individual exerting power over the freedom of a subservient person. While this often the case, sometimes *systems* can be the oppressor instead of *individuals*.

Such is the case in India today where the caste system, albeit formally denounced by the government, informally and pervasively is present in almost all corners of Indian society. At the bottom of that social caste ladder are the Dalits who have extremely little opportunity for upward mobility.

Through the beneficence of Mr. Ram Kapur, a program has been established which enables Dalit children to achieve professional positions in society which otherwise would not be available to them. Capable but socially disadvantaged children who are part of the *Reaching the Unreached (RTU)* organization in Tamil Nadu (G. Kallupatti), have their educational and professional training financed through a Ram Kapur Trust. This program will fund approximately 180 students from 2013-2118.

With appropriate counselling, the students are free to select whatever professional career path best suits their interests and skill set: engineering, general nursing, midwifery, polytechnic engineering, teacher training, industrial training or medical doctor.

The scholarship provides full living expenses (room, board, clothing) as well as educational expenses (books and tuition) for Ram Kapur Scholars. Through this program, children who typically come to *RTU* at a young age and lack family support, can be educated through to the highest level of professional achievement. In doing so, the program breaks the societal chains which would have otherwise enslaved them, enabling them to use their talents and skills to better society as professional women and men. The Ram Kapur Scholar Program empowers them to be self-reliant, professional contributors to society.

Fr. Antony Paulsamy, OFM  
Secretary, *Reaching the Unreached*



## The Story of Abinaya

I am Abinaya. My gratitude to *Reaching the Unreached* and those who supported my growth and career through the Ram Kapur Scholars Program is both sincere and heartfelt. Now that I am 20 years old, I have successfully completed my Diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery at the Claudine School of Nursing, Batlagundu in 2016 — but only with the help of *RTU* through the RamKapur Scholar Program. Currently I am working as a Staff Nurse in Leonard Hospital, Batlagundu which is on the same campus where I studied and I am now earning Rs. 6000 per month.

Before I came to *RTU*, I was living with my family in Kodaikanal. My father was a drunkard. He was always creating problems with my mother and he was assaulting us every day. Finally, after a fight with my mother, he deserted our family. That pushed all of us into a difficult situation. My mother faced a lot of problems in taking care of three little daughters. In order to obtain some relief from this difficult situation, my mother asked for help in a remote women's home at Madurai called Arulagam. They referred us to *RTU* and my mother found a job in the Holy Cross Convent as a cook.

My two younger sisters and I arrived at *RTU* in the year 2006. Now my sister Santhiyahas successfully has completed two years of a Medical Lab Technician program in Christian Fellowship Hospital, Oddanchatram. Like me, she was offered employment at the same hospital in which she was trained. She is earning Rs. 5000 per month. My other sister, Ramya, is living in *RTU*'s Pushparani Girls Hostel and she is studying 9<sup>th</sup> standard in *RTU* St. Peter's School.

It is only because of *RTU* and the Ram Kapur Scholars program that I settled well and now I am leading a decent life. I am very grateful to *RTU* and Mr. Ram Kapur for having supported me and enabling me to complete my professional career. My dreams have become true.



Abinaya at time of admission - 2006



Abinaya in 2016 after completing GNM Nursing Program

## The Story of M. Dhanalakshmi

I am Dhanalakshmi, 21 years old. I successfully completed 3½ years of General Nursing and Midwifery at the C.S.I. School of Nursing, Madurai during the 2013-2016 years. I have recently graduated, thanks to the help of a Ram Kapur Scholarship through *RTU*.

I come from a very pathetic and poor family background as my father died due to HIV infections long time ago and our relatives totally discriminated against our family. Due to my family's poverty, my elder brothers stopped going to school and became day laborers obtaining whatever work was available. My mother approached Sr. Anastasiato get support for my school studies. She helped us to get admission into *RTU's* Miriam Children's Village in 2004. I entered 4<sup>th</sup> standard in St. Peter's Higher Secondary school and completed my 12<sup>th</sup> standard successfully. I scored 845 marks in my 12<sup>th</sup> public examination. Since my ambition was to become a nurse, I selected the nursing program and, by God's grace, I got the opportunity to study hard and become a nurse. After completing my nursing course, I completed my apprenticeship in the C.S.I. hospital. Now I am working as a Staff Nurse in the same hospital and I am earning a good salary. With this income, I am able to help my mother who continues to struggle with poor health which makes her unable to work.

I am proud to say I am a *RTU* student who has reached her ambition of becoming a nurse after. I am very thankful to *RTU* and the Ram Kapur Scholarship for having supported me while I complete my professional studies. That compassionate support really brought greater joy and happiness in me than I could ever imagine. I am forever grateful.



Dhanalakshmi time of Admission in 2004



Dhanalakshmi in 2016 after Graduation

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