



Brothers of
the Christian
Schools



ALL IS
connected:

The Community of Creation
and Universal Fraternity

La  Salle



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the Christian
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Lasallian Reflection No. 11 ★

All is Connected:

The Community of Creation and Universal Fraternity

Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools

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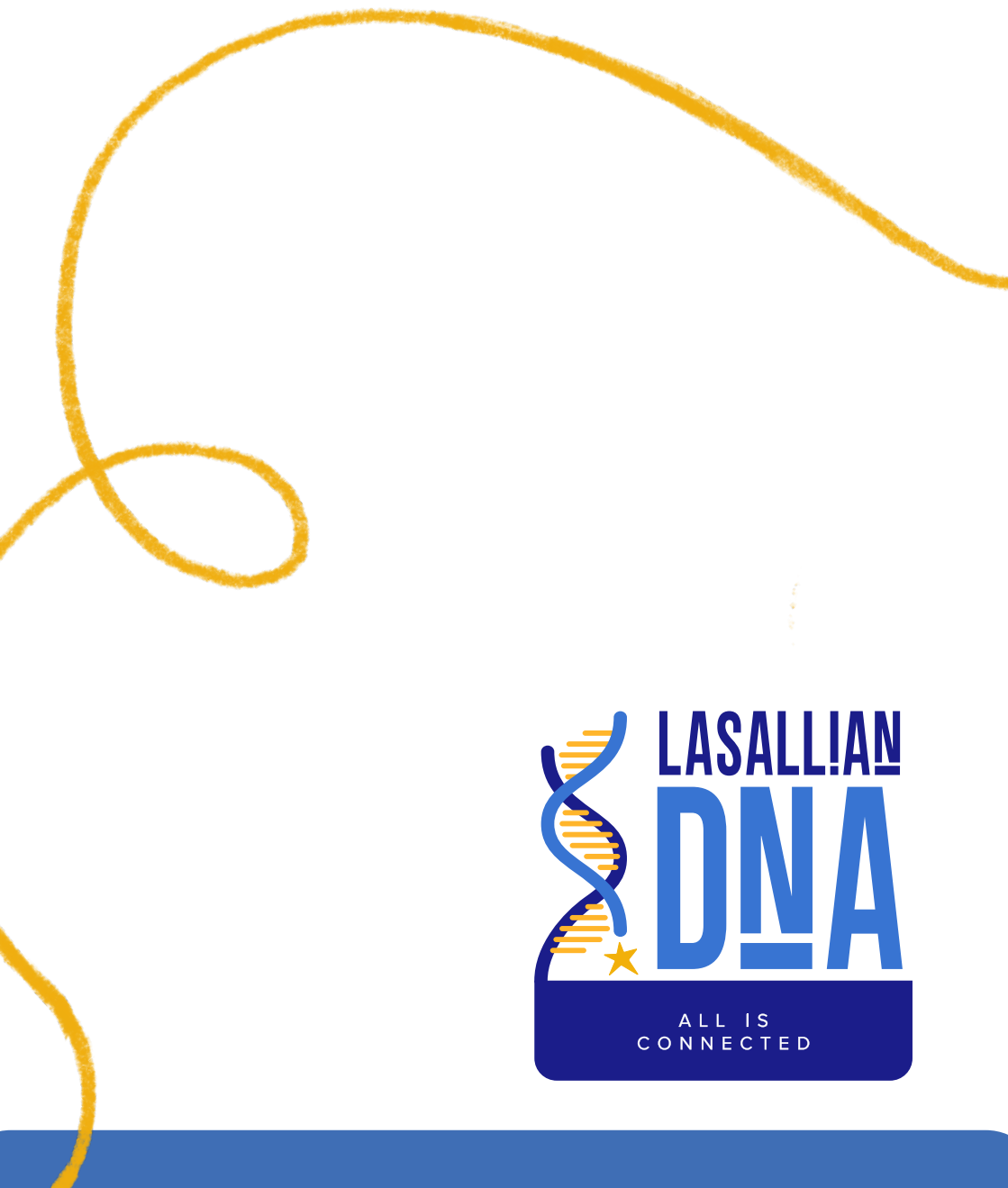
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ALL IS CONNECTED:

The Community of Creation and Universal Fraternity

A note to the reader

Continuing the tradition of the annual Lasallian Reflection by the Superior General and his Council, this year's theme "*All is Connected*" focuses on more deeply understanding the call to integral ecological conversion and universal fraternity. We see this as further inviting the Lasallian Family

to reflect on how we are responding to the commitments made by the 46th General Chapter, especially through the invitations made by the Leavening Movement and building upon the recently celebrated Year of Lasallian Spirituality.

As you read the reflection, we wish to point out a unique element where beyond the traditional inspirational text you are invited to pause and enter into conversation with two Lasallians as they discuss more concretely certain concepts and specific implications.

In an age of AI, social media clips (i.e. TikTok, reels, etc.), and the often-rapid pace of social interactions, we hope this allows you to slow down and through your own thoughts and questioning making your own observations as part of the dialogue. Because dialogue, as Pope Leo XIV has emphasized in the early days of his pontificate, is a pathway to bridge-building; to recognize that **“Christ goes before us, and the world needs his light. Humanity needs him like a bridge to reach God and his love... to [help us] build bridges with dialogue and encounter so we can all be one people always in peace,”**¹ always connected.

1 Leo XIV. *First greeting and blessing “Urbi et Orbi”*, May 8, 2025.



n the Beginning...

“In the beginning...”. These familiar words ground us in the Genesis narrative of creation. Throughout centuries and millennia, we hearken back to these narratives as a reminder of that perfect union between creation and the Creator. While we can discuss theological truths that take this perfect union as its root, we are being asked today to urgently embrace that, from the beginning, *all is connected*. That each of us has a responsibility for rebuilding and fostering the community of creation.² Amid environmental and societal crises, we are called to (re)discover the deep significance that from the beginning *all is connected*.

This is not just poetic language—it is the foundational lens through which we must view our world, our relationships, and our shared future. The Church’s recent calls through the encyclicals *Laudato si’* and *Fratelli tutti* urge not only a response from the Catholic faithful but to see their



underlying messages, integral care for the common home and the challenge of universal fraternity, as unifying calls for all of humanity. To reframe how we see ourselves—not as masters of creation, but as part of a living community of creation. No one can excuse themselves from the cry of the poor which cannot be separated from the cry of the earth. *All is connected.*

And to rediscover that *all is connected* is to recognize that the Gospel vision continues to be our first and principal rule. It is to return often to the words of Jesus making them not only our prayer but constant testimony: I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance (John 10:10).

2 As articulated by Richard Bauckham in his book *The Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, this concept is used to describe the belief that “all God’s creatures are first and foremost creatures, ourselves included. All earthly creatures share the same Earth; and all participate in an interrelated and interdependent community, orientated above all to God our common Creator. It is a community of hugely diverse members whose mutual relationships are therefore enormously rich and diverse”.

Let's pause for a Lasallian Conversation

ALL IS **connected:**

The Principle of Integral Ecology

Emily:

"All is connected"...

Seems pretty obvious, doesn't it?



Peter:

Yes—and no

While the effects of pollution on our health or drought on communities may seem self-explanatory, *Laudato si'* insists that this is more than environmental degradation. It is a socio-environmental crisis rooted in inequality, consumerism, and an unchecked technocratic paradigm.

Emily:

Oh, I see! So, when we talk about drought, it's not just a problem of nature, it's also a human problem, for the people who depend on this water. And what are the symptoms of this crisis, according to *Laudato si'*?



Peter:

The text analyzes several manifestations of this interconnected crisis. There is, of course, pollution and climate change, the crucial issue of water, and the alarming loss of biodiversity. But it also adds deterioration in the quality of human life, social degradation and what it calls “planetary inequality”.



Emily:

Global inequality...

Is it linked to the fact that some countries pollute a lot and others, poorer countries, suffer the consequences?

Peter:

Exactly. And the text doesn't stop at the symptoms. It also explores the "human roots" of this crisis. *Laudato si'* identifies as a root cause the "dominant technocratic paradigm" which leads us to believe that technology can solve everything without limits, a "deviated anthropocentrism" where man sees himself as the absolute master of nature instead of its guardian, and a vision of nature as a mere resource to be exploited.

Integral ecology, then, is not merely about recycling or carbon footprints. It recognizes the ties that bind environmental care to social justice, cultural respect, spiritual wisdom, and economic equity. **It is a holistic approach that demands a transformation of systems—and of hearts.**

The Educational Mission:

A LASALLIAN RESPONSE

As Lasallians, our mission has always been to accompany the human person holistically. Education is our field of encounter, our laboratory of life. But how deeply have we embraced the call to educate for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation? Are we transforming our curricula to reflect the realities of climate change, displacement, and inequality?

At a time when nationalism, unchecked capitalism, isolationism, the continued treatment of migrants and refugees “as pawns on the chessboard of humanity”,³ a persistent educational crisis where there is poor education for the poor, and the abuse of natural resources all seem to be more and more accepted as socio-political strategies, we must ask ourselves: how is our educational mission being called upon to disrupt these patterns?

To live *1La Salle* is to live the conviction that “*all is connected*”. The commitments of the 46th General Chapter call us to prophetic audacity that disrupts systemic injustices, to hear the cry of the earth and the poor, and to respond with justice, compassion, and humility.

3 Francis, *Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees*, 2014.

Continuing the Conversation

Emily:

What may this transformation mean for our universities? I imagine they'd have to think about their research topics in this global perspective too?



Peter:

Yes, higher education has an essential role to play. We can think about number of avenues of research to be encouraged in the spirit of *Laudato si'*: interdisciplinary research for integrated solutions, technological innovation at the service of life, critical analysis of production and consumption systems, engineering ethics, valorization of local knowledge, development of integrated evaluation indicators, and research on education itself.

“It’s not just a question of training technical experts, but professionals capable of putting their skills at the service of the common good”. If universities are to prepare students lucidly for the job market as it is, they also need to train them in critical thinking, systems intelligence and transferable skills. The idea is to integrate integral ecology into all disciplines, to dialogue with companies to help them evolve, and to train “transformation levers” from within. And companies themselves are becoming sensitive to these dimensions when recruiting.

Emily: “If all is connected and the crisis is so deep, what can we do?”.



Peter:

The answer begins with what *Laudato si'* calls “ecological conversion.” This is not just individual action—it is communal and institutional transformation. It is about more than symbolic gestures. It is rethinking governance, reimagining development, and measuring real impact. It calls for authenticity over greenwashing, for systemic coherence, and for courage in the face of discomfort.

Conversion and Responsibility:

LIVING THE VISION

This vision aligns with the Lasallian commitment to accompany each person in their search for meaning and for God.⁴ The Year of Lasallian Spirituality (2025) reminds us

⁴ Ref. *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, 16.

that essentially ours is an incarnational spirituality where the salvific nature of our mission is a gift extended to all. In this way, we carry out the call to accompany each person in their search for meaning and for God. And we must do so with the vision of *Laudato si'* that calls us "to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*" (*Laudato si'*, 49).

The Leavening Movement which the Institute continues to offer as the primary methodology for responding to the calls of the 46th General Chapter, the commitments of the III AIMEL, and the Global Compact for Education is an invitation to encounter the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor in the peripheries where these cries are often heard more clearly and provoke encounters that disrupt our own complacency allowing us to be transformed and deepen our Gospel commitment.

Today, we have courageous individuals and Lasallian communities who have directly responded to the leavening invitation and find themselves working with their sisters and brothers in the Costa Rican indigenous territories, agricultural education in the Colombian rural lands, educating for peace in South Sudan, transforming school curricula in educational institutions, and volunteering in small villages in Upper Egypt. We need to persist in responding to these calls whether in the peripheries of our own realities and traditional ministries or through an experience beyond our native geographical context that moves us beyond our own comfort zones.

In this way, we can become living bridges that contribute to re-connecting elements in our fragmented societies and world. Living instruments that build up the community of creation by deepening solidarity with one another and creation. To find ourselves encountering Christ in the least, lost, and forgotten.

Let's say more

Emily:

On the anniversary of *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis published this other encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*. **How does it relate to our subject?**



Peter:

Fratelli tutti deepens and broadens the vision of *Laudato si'*. While *Laudato si'* masterfully introduced integral ecology by linking the environmental and social crises, *Fratelli tutti* places greater emphasis on “universal fraternity and social friendship” as the indispensable foundation for realizing integral ecology.

Emily:

So *Fratelli tutti* focuses more on **human relations and solidarity?**



Peter:

Yes, it places greater emphasis on the need for “better politics” in the service of the common good, on the role of global governance, and denounces individualism and nationalism as obstacles to solving global problems. It also stresses the importance of dialogue and the culture of encounter. Ecological conversion also requires a transformation of hearts and minds, which translates into a commitment to the most vulnerable.

Emily:

So we can't have a **true ecology** without having a more fraternal and united humanity?



Peter:

That's the conclusion of the text. **Safeguarding our common home is inseparable from building a human community founded on love and solidarity.** *Fratelli tutti*, while universal in its appeal, also draws on the Christian roots of fraternity and human dignity.

Fraternity and Solidarity:

BECOMING MORE BY HAVING LESS

Fratelli tutti reinforces that our ecological conversion must be grounded in universal fraternity. To be in right relationship with creation means recognizing our interdependence with all people and with nature. It invites us to embrace simplicity—not as deprivation, but as liberation. To be more by having less. To prioritize community over consumption, connection over isolation because to rediscover the community of creation is also to recognize that our patterns of living and consumerism impact the rest of creation.

There are many practices today that keep us ecologically aware. However, we need to keep this connected with the personal and communal transformation that allows us to be more with less. That is, to prioritize human relationships and care for our common home as ways to become more and more aware of the suffering of others and the impact of our consumption. As Pierre Rahbi said “We must respond to our true calling, which is not to produce and consume until the end of our lives, but to love, admire, and care for life in all its forms. What is destroying the planet is the endless pursuit of excess and superfluous”.⁵

Being more by having less begins at the heart because recognizing that *all is connected* is really to confront ourselves with the questions: do I want to be connected

with mother earth, with my sister, with my brother, and, yes, even with those whom we may find difficult to love or understand? It begs from us union of hearts and deep human connection.

The American ethics professor, Marcus Mescher, speaks to this from a theological perspective writing, “a theological view of solidarity provides a divine perspective on the integral human family as ontologically related creatures sharing the same source and destiny. This shared nature is the grounds for solidarity that promotes equality, friendship, social charity, and justice”. He adds, “Solidarity thus operates on interpersonal and systemic levels, as a fruit of shared love and as part of a commitment to the just distribution of goods and reform of vicious social, economic, and political structures”.⁶

This awareness and deep connection is then about being able to recognize whatever blinds and prevents us from integral relationships with humanity and all of creation. This is the *Fratelli tutti* invitation to universal fraternity whereby we allow ourselves, like the Good Samaritan, to be seen by the stranger on the road and are shaken to our human connection with the other by the suffering Christ. Solidarity in action!

5 Pierre Rahbi: “*Vers la sobriété heureuse*”.

6 Mescher, Marcus. *The Ethics of Encounter: Christian Neighbor Love as a Practice of Solidarity*, 74.

Continuing the Conversation

Emily:

Does this message have any real impact in the political world? **Are things changing?**

Peter:

It must be acknowledged that *Laudato si'* has had an undeniable influence on political awareness and discourse, providing an important moral voice. The encyclical has been cited as having contributed to the momentum that preceded the *Paris Climate Agreement* in 2015.



Emily:

That's great news!

Peter:

Yes, but this impact needs to be qualified. Recent political developments also show a certain disinterest in, or even opposition to, the *Laudato si'* approach. The rise of nationalism is undermining global cooperation, the dominant economic model based on growth and short-term profit persists, and we have seen the fragility of environmental commitments in the face of other crises such as the pandemic, and resistance from lobbies.

Emily:

Ah ... so the message is there, it inspires,
but the political and economic realities are hard to change.



Peter:

Exactly. We can give concrete illustrations: the gap between climate objectives and reality, the inequalities that continue to grow, and the difficulties of a just energy transition. *Laudato si'* remains a prophetic appeal, but translating it into ambitious global policies remains a major challenge. Managing the “common home” is not yet a universally implemented priority.



Emily:

**That sounds
a bit daunting.**

But if we go back to more local scales, how can we avoid just “greenwashing”, i.e. **giving the impression of making some ecological efforts without really changing?**

Peter:

**That’s a very
pertinent point!**

The important thing is to go beyond symbolic gestures and aim for a “profound transformation” of the institution’s structures, practices and culture.



Conclusion:

A SHARED JOURNEY OF HOPE


Interconnectedness is not just part of the crisis, but also a source of solidarity and strength. This is the hope at the heart of both *Laudato si'* and *Fratelli tutti*, that despite the enormity of the challenges before us, we are never alone. We are part of a community of creation, bound by love, responsibility, and the dream of a more just and sustainable world.

The Institute and Lasallian Family today are carrying out the mandate of the 46th General Chapter with a *1La Salle* conviction. *1La Salle*. Is it not a Lasallian way of saying, *all is connected*? Have we deeply reflected, individually and collectively, on what this calls out of me, my ministry, my local Lasallian community, my District?

To live *1La Salle* as a testimony to our conviction that *all is connected* requires that we deepen the associative dimension of our mission. Recalling the recently celebrated anniversary of the Papal Bull of Approbation, it is to renew within us that first Lasallian conviction: that the mission is carried out together and by association. This is understood as together with one another wherever we find ourselves carrying out the mission but always doing so in association with the larger Lasallian Family. And to do so mindful of our unifying call to be “ministers of fraternity ... ministers

(servants and mediators) of the love of God ... becoming 'good news' for the poor [and] living the gospel among them". This then situates us in the ministry of the Church with "the key idea that being a believer and being evangelised consists in discovering the love of God, experiencing it and sharing it with others".⁷

Let us walk together—Lasallians, educators, believers and seekers alike—aware that every act of care, every lesson in justice, every choice for simplicity, contributes to the healing of our common home and the necessary witness that universal fraternity is possible.



⁷ Lauraire, Leon, FSC, *The Challenge of Fraternity a Reflection and a Personal Testimony*, MEL Bulletin 56.

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