



Santuario de La Salle and the Nourishment of Lasallian Spirituality in the Digital and Sacred Space

An Offering for the International Year of Lasallian Spirituality

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Introduction: The Santuario as a Spiritual Landmark

The Santuario de La Salle, situated in Biñan, Laguna, Philippines, stands as a beacon of Lasallian spirituality. Consecrated as a sacred space and pilgrimage site, it embodies the mission and charism of St. John Baptist de La Salle. Its history is rooted in a significant milestone—conceptualized in 2011 during the Centennial Celebration of the Lasallian Presence in the Philippines, the Santuario emerged as a vision to honor the enduring legacy of Lasallian education and faith. After years of planning, its cornerstone was laid on January 26, 2019, and it was finally blessed and inaugurated on November 21, 2022.



As the Institute marks the International Year of Lasallian Spirituality, the Santuario offers not only a contemplative sanctuary but also a dynamic platform for evangelization—both in-person and online. In an era defined by digital engagement and spiritual searching, the Santuario bridges the sacred and the contemporary. Through architectural simplicity, Eucharistic-centered liturgy, and digital catechesis, it forms hearts and minds according to the Lasallian vision.

This article explores how the Santuario de La Salle contributes to Lasallian spirituality through sacred space and social media, becoming a living expression of faith in mission—a place where tradition meets innovation, and where the Lasallian heart continues to beat in the rhythms of modern discipleship.

Rooted in Mission: Theological and Spiritual Identity of the Santuario

The theological identity of the Santuario de La Salle is deeply rooted in the spirituality of its patron, St. John Baptist de La Salle—founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and Patron Saint of Teachers. Lasallian spirituality is grounded in the experience of the living presence of God, cultivated through prayer, interiority, and discernment. It embraces a vocation of service through education, especially to the poor and the young, and is lived out in community, where faith is nurtured and mission is shared (Salm, 1996; Brillantes, 2009).

The Santuario gives physical expression to this spiritual vision. It is not only a space for worship but also a space that embodies catechesis through architecture, enabling the faithful to encounter Lasallian values in form and function. Its architectural character—marked by minimalist design, the integration of natural light, and a central Eucharistic focus—offers what could be described as a “theology of simplicity,” reflecting Lasallian values of humility, clarity, and accessibility (Cavanna, 2015).

The sanctified silence of the space, along with its restrained ornamentation, invites deep contemplation. These elements speak to the heart of Lasallian prayer: a spirituality rooted in interior recollection and attentiveness to God’s presence in the ordinary and everyday (La Salle, 1953). The design itself, through its openness and light, suggests a spiritual pedagogy—an environment that teaches not through excess, but through essence.

Moreover, the Santuario’s theological narrative is also reflected in its mission as a site for spiritual formation. It supports Lasallian formation programs, serves as a venue for the sacraments and communal prayer, and functions as a center for mission animation—reminding all who enter of their shared baptismal and vocational calling. As Pope Francis (2022) notes, “Spaces speak. They speak of the community that celebrates there... They speak of our relationship with God” (§44).

A Sacred Space for Encounter and Formation

The Santuario de La Salle serves not merely as a venue for religious observance but as a living space of encounter and formation. Its liturgical life includes daily and Sunday Masses, celebrations of Lasallian feast days, community recollections, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Special gatherings mark significant milestones in the Church and Institute. The celebration of the Tercentenary of the Bull of Approbation of the Institute on January 26, 2025, brought

together Lasallian Brothers, educators, and bishops in a profound gesture of prayerful solidarity. Such events reaffirm the Santuario's role as a spiritual and cultural anchor for the Lasallian family.

At the heart of the Santuario lies the relic of St. John Baptist de La Salle. This sacred presence bridges time and spirit, allowing the faithful to experience an intimate connection with the Founder. As Brillantes (2019) notes, relics in sacred spaces function as catechetical tools, communicating theological truths through presence. They invite contemplation on the attainability of holiness and the embodiment of mission.

The Santuario becomes a "spiritual classroom," where architecture, liturgy, and symbol converge in formative harmony. The sacramental life celebrated within—especially the Eucharist—shapes the community into what Pope Benedict XVI (2007) described as a "Eucharistic people," called to live in self-giving love for others. Through silence, symbol, and sacrament, the Santuario becomes a place where Lasallian hearts are touched and formed (La Salle, 1953).

Digital Presence as Evangelization and Formation

Beyond its physical space, the Santuario's digital platforms serve as active extensions of its evangelizing mission. Through reflections, livestreamed Masses, liturgical guides, and feast-day content, the Santuario offers spiritual nourishment online. This digital outreach was especially vital during the pandemic, where online engagement preserved and even deepened Lasallian identity (Gálvez & Tolentino, 2022).

Using visual catechesis through sacred imagery, storytelling, and symbols, the Santuario echoes the Church's tradition of teaching through beauty and sign (Meyendorff, 1989). In this way, it inhabits what Pope Francis (2014) describes as the "digital continent," a space where people live and form relationships. Evangelization here becomes a "via pulchritudinis"—a way of beauty that leads the faithful to encounter God (Pontifical Council for Culture, 2006).

The Santuario as a School of the Heart: Testimonies, Formation, and Transformative Encounter

The Santuario functions as a "school of the heart"—a place of transformative encounter grounded in the Lasallian pedagogical tradition. Testimonies affirm its impact: a teacher finding renewed vocation in its silence, a student embracing service after a digital retreat, a Brother recognizing communion during a CBCP celebration.

These stories reflect the living pedagogy of the Santuario, where faith is formed through environment, silence, and community. Rooted in the Five Core Principles of Lasallian Education (LEAD, 2020), the sanctuary embodies:

1. Faith in the Presence of God
2. Respect for All Persons
3. Inclusive Community
4. Concern for the Poor and Social Justice
5. Quality Education

In this sacred space, formation is lived and felt. As De La Salle (1934) taught, "The more you devote yourself in prayer, the more you will do well in your work."

The Santuario de La Salle: A Living Shrine and a Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, the Santuario can expand its mission through several initiatives:

- Guided Visual Catechesis Tours using QR codes and mobile apps
- Integration of Student Art and Digital Media to foster engagement
- Formal Recognition as a National Lasallian Pilgrimage Center

These innovations will help deepen the Santuario's formative role as a sacred space and educational environment. As Boff (2007) argues, sacred space invites transformation through beauty and participation.

As Pope Francis (2014) affirms, "The Church is called to be a house with open doors"—a vision realized in the Santuario's blend of sacred tradition and digital accessibility. In this International Year of Lasallian Spirituality, it remains a profound gift to the Church: a spiritual home where modern discipleship finds voice, vision, and vitality.



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