

January 2006

Dear Reader,

Here is the newest issue of the journal, **E-Horizons**, Volume VI, Number 1 [Spring-Summer 2006]. Since this issue of the journal is some thirty-four pages long, you may want to look at only part of it. For those of you who are interested in only certain parts, we offer below *a short descriptive comment about the contents* of each of the articles in this issue to help you select any pages from the attachments that might be of interest.

Pages 1 and 2: Brother Stanislaus' **address at the dedication** of the new diocesan school building in Tucson, Arizona, sponsored by Brothers from both the New Orleans-Santa Fe and San Francisco Districts.

Pages 3 to 6: A **drama-poem** by Edward Sparrow, former director of the Integral Program at St. Mary's College. The verses imagine prayerful soliloquies and conversations between Mary and St. Joseph on the occasion of her evidently and surprisingly "being with child".

Pages 7 to 14: An article on the urgent **problem of identity**. In it the editor discusses a definition of "identity" and applies it to the "identity-crisis" said to exist for many Brothers and other religious in postmodern times. Emphasis is on the distinction between personal and social identity, on charisma, on the vows of stability and association, and on final identity.

Pages 15 to 18: Excerpts from the "Colloquium on School Choice" held at Mont la Salle in the summer of 2005 and organized by Thomas Brady AFSC and John Coons. The on-going **arguments for and against school vouchers** and other ways to achieve school choice were discussed at length by experts in the field.

Pages: 19 to 22: Selections from the address given by Brother Vincent Malham at the **inauguration of Brother Ronald** Gallagher as president at Saint Mary's College, October 2005. It contains wise words on qualities of leadership—a wisdom acquired from many years of personal experience.

Pages: 23 to 34: The stimulating talk that Brother Thomas Johnson, Coordinator for Toronto-U.S. Region, gave by invitation to the Salt Lake **Conference on Mission** last November. He noted that, while we can have vision without structures, we cannot have mission without structure. But present structures seem inadequate, and, unfortunately, we may still be seeking only technical support rather than "adaptive" solutions. It follows that "authenticity" in leadership is the key to the future and that risk-taking is needed.

E - HORIZONS

Volume Six, Number One

Spring-Summer 2006

I N T R O D U C T I O N

E-HORIZONS is published twice a year at Mont La Salle, under the invoked patronage of the Most Blessed Virgin, for the De La Salle Christian Brothers of the District of San Francisco. The journal contains articles, notes, reviews, position papers, and memorials on religious and educational matters, as well as occasional poetry. Copies are sent to Brothers listed in the e-mail address directory found in the District website (www.delasalle.org) as well as to several Affiliated Members, to many Lasallian Partners, to administrators in various Districts, and to other supporters of the work of the Brothers on the West Coast. Also, a few hardcopy versions of this e-mail attachment go to a small number of Brothers and others in missionary work and elsewhere.

Manuscripts submitted for future issues should be sent in a suitable format for circulating to consultants. Manuscripts should be sent to:

Brother Brendan Kneale,

Mont La Salle,

4403 Redwood Road,

Napa CA 94558; or (preferably) to his e-mail address:

bkneale@dlsi.org

The fax number is: 707/252-3731, and the phone number is 707/252-3794

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Page 1** **Remarks at Dedication of New Building**
at San Miguel High School, Tucson, Arizona
Brother Stanislaus Campbell, Visitor
- Page 3** **Joseph's Song**
Edward G. Sparrow
- Page 7** **Identifying Identity Among the Brothers**
Brother Brendan Kneale
- Page 15** **Excerpts from the Colloquium on School Choice**
Held at Mont La Salle, June, 2005
Patrick Brennan, John Coons, et al.
- Page 19** **Excerpts from the Address at the Presidential**
Inauguration of Brother Ronald Gallagher
Brother Vincent Malham
- Page 23** **Giving Form to Vision**
Brother Thomas Johnson

**REMARKS AT DEDICATION OF A NEW BUILDING
AT SAN MIGUEL HIGH SCHOOL, TUCSON
August 30, 2005**

Brother Stanislaus Campbell, FSC, Visitor

Today we celebrate our arrival at another milestone in the development of San Miguel High School. We thank God who by the Holy Spirit's inspiration and guidance has brought us this far. and we thank the many people whose generosity has made this school and this building we dedicate today a reality. Mr. VanderZanden has named a number of these people. There are too many to name in the time allotted, but I would like to name four others: Mr. Gery Short, Director of the Office of Education at De La Salle Institute, who worked with me in the initial stages of planning for the school; Mr. Henry Rillos, project director who directed the initial planning for the school; Mr. Robert Teso, who completed the feasibility study for this school, a study which played a major role in our decision to sponsor San Miguel; and Mr. Robert Hulseman of Chicago and Scottsdale, who provided major funding for the establishment of the school over the last three years.

It was to the invitation of Bishop Moreno to sponsor this school that we Christian Brothers said yes. We said yes thinking that we could sponsor San Miguel because we would prefer to serve students and families such as those in the southern part of Tucson. It would be in keeping with our mission which is "to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to [us]" (*The Rule*, art. 3).

We said yes, thinking we could offer services to faculty and students, but *not* funding to operate the school. We said yes, thinking we could assist in the training or formation of teachers, administrators, trustees, and students, but that we could *not* supply Brothers or Lasallian Partners from beyond the local area.

Well, our thinking, our planning did not result in the reality that San Miguel is today. The services are there as planned, but so is some funding and so are four Brothers and several Lasallian Partners from distant places--not as planned.

All this is in keeping with the life of our founder, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, a priest and canon of the cathedral in Rheims, France in the late 17th century. He undoubtedly thought that he was destined for a distinguished ecclesiastical career. Instead, he found himself little by little called to direct a group of teachers whom he gathered gradually into a religious community and little by little called to found new schools for boys from poor and working class families.

It is indeed with great gratitude to God and to all who have made San Miguel a reality that we pray for continued growth and development of the school--its trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and most important of all its students. May God give increase in the number of students San Miguel serves and in the human and Christian transformation of the lives of all of its students for many years to come.

FAITH AND CULTURE

At the 2003 IRL National Meeting, Cardinal Francis George noted that the intent of the Second Vatican Council was not to change the Church, as some thought, but that the Church was to change the world.

The new evangelization spoken of by Pope John Paul II involves not only persons but whole societies and cultures, “so that the Gospel of Christ will take root in their lives and in their societies and will transform them so that this world will be a little bit more like the kingdom of God,” said His Eminence.

To evangelize the culture, we must make the culture more “Gospel friendly.” We must take whatever is good from the culture, and use its virtues. “I always talk about Christ--the risen Christ--as totally free.... Freedom is a big American virtue.”

Finally, the Cardinal saluted “consecrated persons who by vows have extended their baptismal consecration to the very roots of what we are called to be, who have given up everything for the love of Jesus Christ.” He added that they have given up good values, such as marriage and prosperity, which are enshrined in every culture. “But they [those values] are not the ultimate goods. In the end, all we have is the love of Jesus Christ.”

Reported in “IRL: News Briefs” for 05/19/03

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, when Prefect of the Congregation, liked to quote the saying: Christian dogmas are not walls that block the view but windows open to the Infinite.

Joseph's Song

Edward G. Sparrow

[The following verses adopt an unusual poetic device. They are to be seen as interior prayers and a conversation between Saint Joseph and Mary about and to each other at the revelation of her "being with child." The author, Edward G. Sparrow, is a former director of the Integral Program at Saint Mary's College and former tutor at St. John's College, Maryland. He currently resides in Vermont. Ed.]

I. *Discovery*

You are so beautiful, my love, my Mary, oh so fine.

II. *Despair*

Great God, O God of winds, and floods, and shaking
earth

Great Lord and helper of your people, God
Of lightings, thunder, storm clouds, rain—
O Love and keeper of my heart and hers,
O help me now my Lord—not to see
Or understand how it could happen—let that be.
Just help me breathe, support my heart.
Help me--recall that you, and only you,
Give to us life, and hope, and joy, and strength.

Help me be patient, kind, not speak a word
In anger or reproach. Help me be tender, since she
must
Right now be questioning herself in deepest pain.
And when I look into her eyes, those eyes
silent—now so sad and silent—and those tears
Let your gentle mercy in me kiss them dry.

But where does she belong? And who will want
To take her in? And who will want to feed
And bless, and bring to age the little one
She'll bear—she, she—once my Mary—O still my
Mary—
Mary, Mary -- O my God!

III. *Rediscovery*

Mary, the voice of God...it was an angel...in a dream...

Just told me...O he was so bright, so strong ——
Your child.

I can't...

O blessed, blessed is the Lord! O Joseph,
Joseph, praise his holy name with me.
My prayer is answered! —I could not ask you at the
time
Just what I ought to do ... because when he spoke to
me,
God's angel—was it only three short months ago?—
So flashing bright, so pure, it wasn't right
To interrupt or ask to get your leave.

His message for me was so bold, so sharp.
I was reading, and also just then praying,
Praying that I would be for you and God
Just what you wanted me to be.
And I was thinking too of what we'd read,
And how we'd wondered when he'd come,
Our king, the Son of David and the Son of God,
And who would be his mother, and how good
God was to love us as he did, more than all peoples.

And then he came, and called me blessed, full of
grace,
Told me the Lord was with me, that I mustn't fear.
He said I'd found God's favor and, O Joseph, Joseph,
Said that I'd be—O Joseph—said I'd be
The one to bear his Son, the Son of God.
That he'd inherit the kingdom of King David
And rule our house forever and forever.

And when I asked how this could ever be,
Because of what we had agreed before,
He told me that the Holy Ghost would overshadow
me,
The power of the Highest make him in my womb,
And he then told me that his name would be...
Was it Jesus?
Yes, it was
Jesus.

Did the angel tell you in your dream?

Yes, the same voice that told me you were true,
Told me that I should call your offspring by that
name
He said I should not fear to make you mine
And that your son would save our people from their
sins

And that was why he was to have that name.

When he had told me, Joseph, all these things,
He seemed to want that I should want them too.
And I said yes, that his word should be done.
He is so good, our Lord. Could anybody
Ever tell him no? But then,
After it all happened, I could not tell you
What I'd done. I was afraid.

I went to help Elizabeth, my cousin, in the hills,
And when she saw, the baby in her womb leaped up,
And she then knew me as the mother of her Lord.
When I came back I saw your grief, your wonder.
I saw them mounting higher day by day.
I wanted so to tell you all...

Mary, I was afraid.
My world had come apart. Without you,
My life was joyless, hopeless, yet, with you,
I could see but suspicion, and more sorrow, and more
pain.

I did not want to ask you.
I wanted so to tell you
Everything the angel said and I had done.
And when your patience daily gently kissed my eyes,
I loved you so, and I could read your pain—
But Joseph, could I ever have been sure that when
You told me you believed my words—and I knew
you would—
Even now I can hear you saying it—
You were being absolutely faithful to your mind?
And could you, Joseph, could you in your deepest
heart,
Ever have believed my story? I didn't think....
Did I do wrong, my Joseph? I left it up to God
To find his way to bring the truth to you..

My Mary, mother of the Son of God! And of me,
His father of a kind O Mary, can we bear this load?
So much has changed....and yet not really....
We are the same, and God is still the same.
It's only we'll have charge of his new little one.
We'll see him grow up straight, beneath us and
above,
And guide his footsteps while we can. And we
At least won't have to spank him. But what
Will come of him as he gets older?
And how will he remove the sins from of our people?
Oh Mary, I'm afraid. Do you remember what it says?
We were healed by his stripes, while he was bruised for
our offense?

What does that mean? How can it be?

IV Praise

Great God, great God of all—
Great God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,
O God of Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and Saul,
Of David, Solomon, and Job you will let me,
Your unknown child, become for all who look
At me but do not see, the father of your son,
The holy king who is to come to save us.
You have allowed that I might share my life
With her who is the beauty of your earth,
Her purity of water, the freshness of her air.

You, Father, want that I, like you
With you, for you, in you, should watch
The growth in age and wisdom of your holy child;
See him approach the size and speech of men,
And give to all whom you might draw to him
His mother's peace and joy and love of you.

Great Lord, I love you. Let me praise your name,
Let me sing songs to you that you will hear ...
I put before your feet, my God, my Lord,
O my good Father, father of my child,
My life, my Mary, and my hope—yes, all myself.

IDENTIFYING IDENTITY

AMONG THE BROTHERS

Brother Brendan Kneale

Prior to Vatican II most priests, religious, and adult lay Catholics had no “identity-crisis.” We knew who we were; our place seemed well-defined; and we had no impending threat of change. Our personal identity and our social identity were clear and unthreatened. However, it may have been a blessing that, after the Council, we have had to take a close look at our identity. Perhaps we ought to question the quality of our earlier views. Did we make identity-claims of the sort that Pharisees made in Christ’s time? They, along with the Scribes and Sadducees, were a quite self-assured group. Some of us adults prior to the Council were too—maybe to the point of blind confidence in our pre-Vatican II identity. Among religious, there used to be a saying, “Keep the Rule and the Rule will keep you.” It was, in retrospect, a dangerous motto: today it sounds somewhat Pharisaical. Keeping the Rule is an effect, not a cause, of love—an expression of faith and loyalty, not their source. St. Paul, who had been a strict Pharisee and thus a man whose *identity was tied to observance of the Law*, came to realize the danger of misunderstanding that link.

What *should* have happened after Vatican II was a strengthening and sharpening of our identity. Unfortunately among adults that was not the popular perception of the changes that had been made. Even though the new prescriptions initiated by the Council were intended as clarifications and improvements, we tended to feel, instead, that things were no longer well defined. (For example, shortly after the Council, we are told, there was a Brother whose dress, teaching and behavior led some of his students to express surprise that he was a religious at all or even a Catholic!)

After Vatican II, people asked, “Is this the same Church?” Some religious and priests asked, “Is mine the same apostolate?” Brothers and Sisters asked, “Is my school or hospital still Catholic?” “Is there any longer a place for the consecrated life?” After Vatican II many teachers wondered, “Does the syllabus for my catechetical instruction in the classroom truly represent what I believe?” Or, “Are all the liturgical innovations worshipful?” And religious asked, “Have lay people taken over our role? *Who am I now?*” Even Jesus considered it important to ask, though not for His own benefit, “Who do people say that I am?”

Toward a definition of identity.

It would be refreshing if everyone who talks about “identity” were really sure what he is talking about. Few people have a clear definition of the term. We tend, in various contexts, to confuse identity with “self-image” or “personhood,” or “character,” or perhaps “individuality and uniqueness,” or even with an adopted role or “persona.” Fortunately, there are more careful thinkers available to address the problem of identifying identity.

We are told that Erik Erikson, the psychologist who coined the term "identity-crisis" (a short time after Vatican II significantly), believed that an identity-crisis is "the most important conflict human beings encounter." His *definition* of psychological identity ran as follows: "a subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image." Such a definition has the virtue of pointing squarely at both personal and social identity, that is, both private and public identity.

Lexicographers agree with Erikson that there are *two* chief emphases in the notion of *identity*. Etymologically "identity" (from the Latin *idem*, the *same*) is, *first of all*, an enduring and distinguishing set of characteristics in an individual; and, *second of all*, a social or relational "belonging." That is, people are identifiable by their unique and continuing sameness of self (generally indicated by a permanent name and fixed array of recognizable psychological traits); *and* they are identifiable by what membership they have within a recognized group. Thus, in answer to the question "Who are you?" we will give our name in order to help the questioner to recall our uniqueness, and/or, in response to a question about who we are, we describe [if our uniform does not indicate it] what recognizable place we occupy in a clear social grouping—thus we have a private identity and a public identity. Note that the two emphases *support each other*. In fact, a tribal Africa proverb has it that "I am because we are."

What identity is not.

One valuable way to gain insight into identity is to contrast it with related ideas. We should *try to keep the terminology clear* about what identity is not. It is not "character," which is described as: "a constellation of enduring motivational and other traits that are manifested in the typical ways that we react to various challenges". Thus character may be taken as the *moral* side of one's identity. Nor is it simply "self." "Self is a unified being which is the source of an idiosyncratic consciousness, the agent responsible for the thoughts and actions of an individual to which they are ascribed." Hence self is an abstract or generic term for "personal identity," but it not the same as the very important and complementary "social identity."

Nor is identity one of the following: "Individual," which is mostly a quantitative term—it comes from a root word for indivisible. "Uniqueness" does not have the permanence of true identity. "Person and personality." Person according to Thomas Aquinas is "the individual substance of a rational soul" and does not disappear if one's identity is vague or shifting. But "personality" is something different, a more inclusive term which embraces social as well as personal dimensions. Dictionaries say personality is the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or group; *especially* the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics. Identity is at the core of this "complex of characteristics" (which makes the loss of identity a very serious matter.) "Persona or role:" These two terms

derive from play-acting or drama and, because of their ephemeral nature, are of course the weakest versions of what we mean by identity.

Social identity

In an extended article in *Consecrated Life*, Vol. 24, #2 (Feb, 2003) Fr. Amadeo Cencini has developed the notion of *social* identity by emphasizing the identity which comes from “*belonging*.” He uses “belonging,” because we often identify ourselves, in response to an inquiry about *who we are*, by specifying the career, occupation, group, race, persuasion, etc. to which we *belong*. For those of us who belong to consecrated life we may identify ourselves by specifying that we are members of a named religious institute and where we belong within it. In a sense, this answer makes one’s personal identity derivable from that of the larger group. In fact, our identity is often tied to what we call “our roots” within a social group—whence the African proverb mentioned above.

If it helps to show what “identity” is *not*, it also helps to take a look at what De La Salle Brothers are *not*, e.g., not secular, not clerical, not elitist, not Jansenist, not missionaries primarily, not isolated and individualistic, etc. These negative demarcations help us, by contrast, to clarify who we are positively. We are “apostles of the catechism,” a title ascribed to us by Pope Pius X in 1907 (and as the Superior General recently reminded us and as *Rule 15* makes clear.). We are sometimes urged to change that characterization by moving over into political and even activist endeavors {many of them eminently worthwhile.) These alternate kinds of social service as well as work with non-Christians have watered down, in the eyes of many, the role described in the Brothers’ *Rule*, which says we instruct “primarily” the baptized. Again, if we are *not* clear about our identity, we tend to engage in educational enterprises that fail to include (along with secular education) *specifically religious instruction*. If we have an identity crisis, the message sent to people with potential vocations is confused—as indeed are some of our lay colleagues. It is time to examine, and to emerge from, any past confusion.

Problems

Suppose the social group to which one belongs (say, a religious institute) has *itself* no clear identity? If that group has a corporate identity which is fuzzy or vague, then one of the two main sources of identity (namely, “belonging”) is compromised. A religious institute could have evolved (perhaps calling the change “refounding the order”) into something different from and distinct from what it was. Moreover, even the larger Church, to which the institute *belongs*, could itself also change enough that it confuses the religious order about its own identity. For example, the Church could seem to speak without a clear voice about itself; and an institute of consecrated life could become canonically unsure (for example) about whether lay people are “members.” Or it might interpret certain changes (e.g., emphasis on adult education or diversion to political involvement) as challenges to its identity as teachers of youth. A

teaching institute could wonder if other forms of social service (or even social militancy rather than classroom work) should be what the Church is asking for.

Additional problems may arise from our post-modern mentality. Is identity a fiction which is read differently by different people at different times? Is the attempt to pin it down (or resolve one's "identity crisis"), a futile and time-wasting effort? After all, our social identity changes if, as the *Rule* says, we receive new "calls" as time goes by.

Official Ecclesial Positions

Readers will know that since Vatican II the Church has taken up the problem of identity officially and formally. The Church (following special synods of bishops) has published three clarifying documents, one each for the benefit of priests, of lay people and of religious. The special text in the case of religious, appeared in 1996, and was called *Vita Consecrata*, a document addressing the nature and identity of the Consecrated Life. In particular and depending heavily on the work of its preliminary World Synod of bishops, *Vita Consecrata* devoted section 57 to the role of Sisters and section 60 to Brothers. The document notes that everyone knows what a brother in a family is. That metaphor helps to answer the question of a Brother's identity. A further excerpt is the following:

Religious Brothers

According to the traditional doctrine of the Church, the consecrated life by its nature "is neither lay nor clerical." For this reason the "lay consecration" of both men and women constitutes a state which in its profession of the evangelical counsels is complete in itself. Consequently, both for the individual and for the Church it is a value in itself apart from the sacred ministry.

Following the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, the Synod expressed great esteem for the kind of consecrated life in which religious brothers provide valuable services of various kinds, inside or outside the community, participating in this way in the mission of proclaiming the Gospel and bearing witness to it with charity in everyday life. Indeed, some of these services can be considered "ecclesial ministries," granted by legitimate authority. This requires an appropriate and integral formation: human, spiritual, theological, pastoral and professional.

According to the terminology currently in use, Institutes which by reason of their founders' design or by legitimate tradition have a character and purpose which do not entail the exercise of Holy Orders are called "Lay Institutes." Nonetheless the Synod pointed out that this terminology does not adequately express the particular nature of the vocation of the members of these Religious Institutes. In fact, although they perform many works in common with the lay faithful, these men do so insofar as they are consecrated and thereby express the spirit of total self-giving to Christ and the Church, in accordance with their specific charism.

For this reason the Synod Fathers, in order to avoid ambiguity and confusion with the secular state of the lay faithful proposed the term “Religious Institutes of Brothers.” This proposal is significant, especially when we consider that the term “brother” suggests a rich spirituality. “These Religious are called to be brothers of Christ, deeply united with him, ‘the firstborn among many brothers’ (Rom. 8:29); brothers to one another in mutual love and working together in the Church in the same service of what is good; brothers to everyone in their witness to Christ’s love for all, especially the lowliest, the neediest; brothers for a greater brotherhood in the Church.” By living in a special way this aspect of Christian and consecrated life Brothers are an effective reminder to Religious Priests themselves of the fundamental dimension of brotherhood in Christ, to be lived among themselves and with every man and woman, and they proclaim to all the Lord’s words: “And you are all brothers” (Mt. 23:8).

For the De La Salle Brothers, who take special vows of association and stability, we may find additional keys to identity. The degree of togetherness that our “belonging” entails is one key to identity. In fact, in today’s parlance a popular synonym for association is “communion.” Citing Pope John Paul II, Sister Sandra Schneider writes about this communion, “The strengthening of personal identity is always the fruit of the quality of relationships established with our brothers and sisters in the faith.”

While our present essay is not the venue for reviewing the extensive Lasallian literature on “association,” nevertheless it is to be recognized that internal togetherness and our vow of association are surely essential to the quality of our identity. The same can be said about the importance of our unique vow of stability, our Lasallian spirituality, our charism, our *Rule* and *The Declaration*. For La Salle himself, the expression “spirit of this Institute” was his way of talking about “identity.” If a Brother loses that spirit, “he should consider himself to be a dead member.” La Salle’s words, explaining what he means, are preserved today in the opening pages of the Brothers’ modern *Rule*, followed by Chapter I which is a helpful elaboration.

Emphasis on the two extra vows may require comment. Since all Christians are required to live lives in a Gospel spirit of poverty, chastity and obedience according to their state in life, the corresponding three vows that Religious take may seem not to distinguish us very much, perhaps only in degree but not in kind, from the duties of all Christians. *However*, the Brothers’ two extra vows, one of “stability” and the other of “association,” are unique to the Brothers, and they certainly distinguish us from our Partners and other lay colleagues. The latter have not promised to remain with the Brothers *stably for life*, nor to *associate* with them, say, in the togetherness of community life. Our lay partners may have a distinctive call, often because they are married, to move on in their careers and *no longer be associated* directly with the Brothers *nor to remain stably* in our apostolate. So, we can say indeed that our two special vows contribute emphatically and specifically to our “identity.” And, of course, the rigorous demands of the standard three vows of consecrated life do give us a real identity—as *Vita Consecrata* carefully insists.

On the Institute Website

Brother Antonio Botana, a member of an Institute Generalate commission on this topic, concludes an extended treatment of our topic (available at website lasalle2.org) by writing perceptively:

When another group, like our lay partners, enters into a collective identity traditionally lived by a determined group, like the Brothers, the first tendency is to copy what the first group did, using that group as a model. The second phase expresses more originality in the desire to live out the specific group identity. This is where the tension of two poles begins. [We need to] allow space for diversity and, at the same time, maintain what ought to be the common nucleus essential to the collective identity. To the extent that the new groups of different provenance enrich the composition of the Lasallian family, it becomes increasingly necessary to reinforce the common bond, to facilitate the identification of the diverse members within the cultural and spiritual nucleus of the family. That is why there is so much interest today in being able to express for ourselves clearly what the Lasallian identity essentially is.

Charism

What Brother Antonio says here can well be examined in terms of charism. Having a specific charism certainly makes for identity. When Fr. Amadeo Cencini wrote about the problem of identity, he dwelt on the important role of institute charism—a point also emphasized in *Vita Consecrata*. An obvious way to increase a sense of our belonging (and thereby of our social identity) is by our attachment to our institute charism (provided that the corporate charism is itself clear.) It seems that *Rule #15* is very helpful in this regard, saying that our mission is “unique.” (But *Rule 19* does not seem to harmonize well with it.)

Cencini notes that some individual religious [and, *mutatis mutandis*, our associates and partners] are weakly connected to the charism of their institute, or hold divided loyalties, or, on the other hand, immerse themselves within it in a psychologically unhealthy way. [We can recall in this connection the recommendations of the classic work, *The Future of Religious Orders in the U.S.: Transformation and Commitment*, by Father David Nygren and Sister Miriam Unkeritis.] The proper connection to the charism and the best sense of belonging are to be found, says Cencini, by a deepening of one’s *attachment to the charism in three ways*: by way of prayer and spiritual connection, by ascetically conforming to the lifestyle of the institute norms, and by real engagement in the common apostolate.

Note that “ascetically conforming to the lifestyle” is a “way” that our Lasallian Partners cannot be expected to undertake. But the commitment of “real engagement” is certainly undertaken by many Partners. Their commitment raises an acute question for some consecrated religious, namely, *What identifies us as distinct*

from our thoroughly engaged secular associates and co-workers? If one uses a simply “functional” definition of our state, then the problem is indeed acute. Many of our secular associates, as Gospel Catholics, practice (in accordance with their vocations) a chastity, obedience and poverty which often seem, despite their “grace of state,” more difficult than ours. They sometimes function with more talent, dedication and leadership than their religious colleagues. However, if we consider who we *are*—our identity—and not just look at our function—then we see a radical difference between them and us. If we remain aware of what we are in relation to the evangelical counsels and in relation to our auxiliary vows—of what we are in terms of community life, of what we are in relation to our mobility and to the radicality and scope of our availability and service—then we should not have a problem identifying ourselves as distinct from our lay partners.

Added note: To what Cencini writes about an institute’s common and received charism, we could emphasize also the desirability of our *contributing to the charism* in some innovative way. If we could do that, it seems to me, we would increase our sense of belonging, and even of “ownership.” Each of us should bring to the charism, by conscious effort, an enrichment that stems from our personal talents, from our studies, and from our auxiliary memberships in professional and religious associations (in comparison to which we can see our own identity more clearly). Charism is not static. Individual religious can enrich the charism of their communities, as indeed also our Partners can also enrich the Lasallian mission.

By contrast, there can arise a “disenchantment.” The 2004 presidential address, given in Rome by Brother Álvaro to the Conference of Major Superiors, spoke in terms of one’s “enchantment” or “disenchantment” with the consecrated life. This observation is certainly related to the topic of identity. Enchantment increases with an increase in firmness of involvement and with a deeper rootedness in our Institute membership. Disenchantment comes about if one feels a lack of identity, and vice versa. In that case we have—as St. La Salle said—lost the “spirit of the Institute.” Our social identity becomes lifeless and unclear. This, of course, should not happen. All religious should grow in identity as they realize the “*praestantia*” of the consecrated life. [*Praestantia* is the term used in *Vita Consecrata* for the special excellence of the consecrate life and has been translated also as “perfection” or “superiority.” Etymologically it means “outstandingness.”] Those religious who are full and “enchanted” members of their institutes should have no identity crisis.

Looked at worldwide, differing charisms of various consecrated religious groups illustrate a *principle* that helps clarify corporate identity, namely, the principle of an institutional subsidiarity and “division of labor” *within the Church*. Each institute has its own apostolic charism and thus its own responsibility. It is true that numerous apostolic needs are great and pressing, and occasionally they are overriding (as when, during a plague, some of our early Brothers worked in a hospital), but normally *we keep our corporate identity by doing our own apostolic labor* not that of others, especially if it entails neglect of our basic institutional thrust. The Brothers also

keep our corporate identity by insistence on our two special vows of association and stability, since other institutes do not have those vows.

Final identity

Lastly and importantly, Cencini wants to see our “belonging” to the consecrated life as a metaphor for a more important and higher belonging, namely, the one yielding our “final identity” in the next life. Such an ultimate identity is traceable back to our baptism and to the mysterious origin of our vocation—and looks forward to our predestined glory. We can say that the company of heaven is where we ultimately “belong” and is where we attain our final identity—that is, where we can truly proclaim, **“I am because we are.”**

QUOTES FROM “PASSION FOR CHRIST, PASSION FOR HUMANITY”

In 2005 The International Congress on Consecrated Life published its papers in the presses of the Daughters of St. Paul. Fr. Timothy Radcliffe’s paper is eminently quotable:

“They say that if you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans.”

“The vow of obedience is the clearest sign that we will let God go on surprising us.”

“It is often wondered whether today’s young are capable of such a [permanent] commitment. Perhaps the issue is rather whether we believe that they are and are ready to fight for their vocation.”

Sr. Sandra Schneider also spoke eloquently: “Religious do not simply attempt to live differently in the world, which all Christians must do, but to create a different world that will offer a prophetic witness in, to, and sometimes against the world. ...” [i.e. to create a different world, “a civilization of love,”] She also wrote: “The distinctiveness of religious life as a lifestyle arises from its public, lifelong commitment of the members, as individuals and as communities, to a characteristic approach to material goods, power, and sexuality that creates a particular concrete realization of the Reign of God, on a twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week basis.” She goes on to note that the postmodern world is suspicious of all such unitary projects and “meta-narratives.”

EXCERPTS FROM THE COLLOQUIUM ON SCHOOL CHOICE
HELD AT MONT LA SALLE CONFERENCE CENTER
JUNE 26-30, 2005

[Our last District Chapter endorsed a proposal that we look seriously at national governmental proposals regarding school choice. Under the leadership of Thomas Brady AFSC and Professor John Coons, funding was secured in order to hold a four-day conference of some forty national experts on legal and financial aspects of "vouchers" and other forms of school choice. Mont La Salle Conference Center was made available for this purpose, June 26-30, 2005. Each speaker was asked to submit an abstract of his or her address. A full report on the Colloquium is available from John Gray at De La Salle Institute, Napa. Ed.]

**The De La Salle Christian Brothers, the Poor,
and the American Civic Ideal**

Patrick Brennan

[Patrick Brennan, a former student in the Saint Mary's Residence School, Napa, CA, and now professor at Villanova University School of Law, was one of the speakers. An abstract of his presentation appears below. The full text of Patrick Brennan's address—and those of other speakers—is available from John Gray at De La Salle Institute. Ed..]

"The annual crop of infants is a potential invasion of barbarians, and education may be conceived as the first line of defense," observed Catholic theologian Bernard Lonergan SJ. To agree, as we should, with both of Lonergan's points leaves obscure whether Christians should, in virtue of their Christian baptism, deploy themselves in that first line. After all, Christ did not come to turn back barbarians, but to redeem humankind and inaugurate the final phase of salvation history; those Christ sent into the world he charged with spreading the Good News of salvation, not with extending and entrenching the civilizing influence of the Roman Empire.

The line between evangelizing and civilizing is not, however, as clean as this might suggest. Those who cannot hear or understand cannot receive the Good News; those who are trampled under foot cannot look up and see the dawning of salvation. Evangelizing incorporates civilizing, and this does not happen in the abstract. Christians have always been concerned to spread the Word by building communities in which the Good News can be given what temporal effect it holds within itself. "Faith without works is [notoriously] dead." Where the Good News is at work, the poor are cared for, the naked clothed, the ignorant instructed, bringing men and women into right relations among themselves and with God. The works of faith and mercy that create these relations are the call of every Christian individual capable of them, but in the Catholic tradition especially, such community-building works have gone forward thanks to groups of men and women (orders and

institutes) concerned to build communities that correspond to the particular charisms of their founders.

The Christian Brothers received from their founder, St. La Salle, a mandate to build communities that give effect, in a particular way, to God's will that all come to knowledge of the truth and be saved. (Med. for Time of Retreat, 193.3, citing I Tim. 2:4). It was La Salle's particular insight that no one is to be excluded from basic education because such education can be necessary to people's living consistent with their dignity as redeemed persons. In going to God's little and forgotten ones, the Brothers begin revealing God's love and justice by showing respect and concern. In conducting the Christian Schools, the Brothers stand in for parents and do the work of guardian angels; the hope is that no one be without a worthy guide. There is, then, an urgency to the work of the Christian Schools, for it proceeds from an exigence to do God's justice toward all. That urgency and exigency will prompt those charged with the schools to do all they can, consistent with other valid commitments and duties, to see that the schools are open to those who might otherwise go without the instruction they need, instruction, that is, that mirrors their dignity.

What should Americans committed both to free exercise of religion and the non-establishment of the same make of such schools? What should they make of them, not as a matter of what current constitutional law happens to be, but of the moral norms that should inform our experiment in a democracy of diverse but equal persons and shape the development of the constitutional jurisprudence that sustains the same experiment? The United States is not and should not be a church. "It is," as John Courtney Murray observed in allaying fears that John Kennedy's election would Romanize America, "simply a civil community, whose unity is purely political, consisting in 'general agreement on the good of man at the level of performance without the necessity of agreement on ultimates.'" One good on which we all can agree is effective education for all children, including education for worthy citizenship. In part because the Christian Schools teach the moral value of citizenship, the equality and dignity of all persons by nature and before the law, and the moral importance of critical dialogue among all persons, they represent at the level of performance a good that, other things equal, should be favored and fostered. In part because these schools sometimes do all this better than schools to which poor children are conscripted by virtue of where their parents (can) live, they should be encouraged and abetted. The fact that Lasallian educators have their eye on the child's salvation is not a reason for our political community to disfavor these schools; our civil commitment to free exercise encourages religiously motivated acts that do not run afoul of our ban on religious establishment. Though Catholics and their Christian Schools have their eye on what surpasses this world, what they can offer, often better than other schools, contributes to the success of this experiment in democratic living. "Teaching deprived of conviction," Jacques Maritain warned, "cannot engender conviction." Our civil convictions about the equality of all persons, including before the law, militate in favor of schools that can treat all children as equals and treat them well. This, in my experience, is what the Brothers' schools have done.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS AT THE COLLOQUIUM

Excerpt from address of Joseph Viteritti: “I have always understood the choice debate—especially the voucher component—as a dispute over fundamental values, rather than empirical evidence. The fundamental value at stake is that of equal education opportunity, which, at least since the Brown decision of 1954, has been considered indispensable in the United States. Under the prevailing political-economic arrangement, educational choice is the function of family income—meaning that poor children are prevented from attending schools their parents would prefer and instead are forced to enroll in public schools that most parents would not consider for their own children. ...”

Excerpt from address by Charles Glenn of Boston University. “As Paul Hill has pointed out, under conditions of family choice ‘a school will be stabilized by its commitment ... rather than by the politically bargained preferences of society as a whole. ... In an ongoing study the author has found that students in schools based on a clear set of common premises are more likely than students in less well-defined schools to engage in vigorous discussion of values and social policy.’
....”

Excerpt from address by Paul Dimond. “The school-choice proposition presented above offers a democratic answer: Every family deserves an equal opportunity to choose the publicly supported, tuition-free common school that will best serve their children. ... Where a state has undertaken to provide the opportunity of an education, it should fund publicly supported schools that are open to students regardless of their color, creed, or place of residence and without their parents having to pay tuition or transportation costs or the greater cost of moving to a home in a different neighborhood.”

Excerpt from a footnote in Frank Kemerer’s paper: “For a legal discussion ... see Frank Kemerer, ‘The Legal Issues Involving Educational Privatization and Accountability,’ Occasional Paper No. 6, National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education...

Excerpt from “Dodging Democracy: Educator’s Flight from the Specter of Choice by John E. Coons.

Jerry Paquette ... properly urges us to ponder, then to reject, various hypothetical schemes for school choice whose design might worsen the plight of the poor. Among these devices, his chief bugbear is a largely unregulated form of school vouchers ... private schools being left free to price the poor out with add-on tuition—or simply to exclude them in the first place.

We can all be grateful ...for this warning ... At the same time let us be clear that a far greater service, still waiting to be rendered, ... would be a red alert ... of the very concrete abuse of the poor that is wrought daily by the conscription of their children for the existing school Leviathan. Here is no hypothetical enemy. ... [W]e confront a clear and present danger to the democratic order.Government has artfully empowered the

well off to cloister either by residence or by payment of tuition. ... [F]or ordinary folk the system offers conscriptive assignment to schools where the rich are seldom found. ... Nothing could be more private in fact than the suburban school whose token of admission—its voucher, if you will—is the deed to an expensive home. ...

Those who claim the high ground must at last consider soberly the hows and whys of a genuine system of choice, one that is meant in fact to advance those democratic values they claim to share. ...

Here are a few of the ‘neglected’ arguments that favor democratic school choice. ...

1. School choice is crucial to the integrity and responsibility of the basic family unit. ...
2. School choice would be an investment in social tolerance. ...
3. School choice can be targeted to increase racial integration. ...
4. School choice will maximize voter support for educational spending. ...
5. Systems of school choice will help toward equalization of spending. ...
6. School choice offers several distinctive benefits for teachers. ...
7. Choice solves the bilingual dispute. ...
8. Choice disposes of the bingo curriculum. ...
9. Choice offers hope for the [itinerant] farm worker. ...
10. Choice is a potential instrument of city revitalization. ...
11. Choice rationalizes [teacher] labor relations. ...

No doubt it will take some courage to leave the old foxhole, and all of us might well search for ways to make liberal heroism as painless and possible. But pain in any case will be the price of survival. There will be heroes, or there will be fossils.

Excerpt from the Abstract of Goodwin Liu and William Taylor’s: “School Choice to Achieve Desegregation.”

After many commemorations last year of *Brown*’s fiftieth anniversary, the fact remains that thousands of poor and minority children in America attend racially segregated, high poverty schools ...

The authors propose two desegregative school choice policies. One seeks to encourage racial and socioeconomic diversity in charter schools; the other proposes the targeted use of vouchers to enable disadvantaged urban children to choose not only private schools but also middle class suburban public schools. ... [T]he authors answer three important concerns: whether an expansion of vouchers provided a wedge ultimately replacing public schools ... ; whether ‘creaming’ effects justify skepticism toward choice policies; and whether expanded school choice undermines the role of public schools as a ‘balance wheel’ for our democracy.

EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS BY BROTHER VINCENT MALHAM AT THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION OF BROTHER RONALD GALLAGHER

[Brother Vincent knew Brother Ronald both at Bethlehem University in Israel and at the Generalate in Rome and is President Christian Brothers University, Memphis. His pearls of administrative wisdom excerpted below are worth recording. The occasion for the address took place September 23, 2005, on the campus of St. Mary's College in the presence of many Church civil and educational dignitaries. The full text is available at stmarys-ca.edu Ed.]

....

In a 1963 lecture at Harvard on university life, Clarke Kerr, former Chancellor at University of California, Berkeley, gave this opinion: "The university has become the multiversity and the nature of the presidency has followed that change... The president of the multiversity is leader, educator, wielder of power, pump; he is also officeholder, caretaker, inheritor, consensus seeker, persuader, bottleneck. But he is mostly a mediator." Although some things have changed on college campuses and the nature of the presidency since 1963, one thing hasn't: institutions have become even more multidimensional and the presidency has had to follow suit.

So in view of the preceding remarks, what brilliant insights and precious pearls of wisdom do I share about the presidency with a confrere who already has been on the job for some nine months and fully baptized in the responsibilities, challenges and adventures of being a US college president? With your indulgence, I should like to do the following:

1. Treat briefly some common misconceptions of the role of the presidency
2. Suggest, what I believe, are four key qualities of educational leadership
3. Share my personal ten commandments of leadership style
4. Conclude with a few reflections about the man we honor today

Illusions

Let me begin by first commenting on a few mistaken notions of the presidency which I think idealists might be tempted to entertain.

Illusion No. 1: One of the greatest challenges that the president of an institution of higher learning will face will be that of motivating armies of subordinates.

Reality: I believe that the president faces a much more prosaic day to-day challenge, that of motivating himself through long, tedious and sometimes unrewarding journeys.

Illusion No. 2: That a carefully scripted strategic plan is the panacea for strategic institutional development.

Reality: However well-scripted the plan is - and some are works of art -- and however effective it may be -- and many are quite effective -- the president will have to be a great improviser, using every bit of his innate wits, common sense and accumulated wisdom to move the institution forward.

Illusion No. 3: The school will be transformed through dramatic events, magical moments or sheer genius.

Reality: There are no quick fixes. It is only through the "quotidianum terribile," the daily grind of endless meetings and encounters -- with opportunities to make well-thought-out, subtle and strategic changes -- that healthy institutional development will occur.

Illusion No. 4: The primary source of personal happiness in the job will come from external affirmation.

Reality: I firmly believe that authentic satisfaction and happiness in the job is to be found in a deep personal conviction that one's actions, choices and decisions have lasting value for the institution.

Leadership Qualities

If the expectations and functions of the presidency today include even half of those enumerated by Clarke Kerr, what are the personal qualities and behaviors needed to do the job effectively? Among dozens of desirable qualities, may I suggest four that I believe are the pillars of strong leadership, with just a word about each.

- Honest self-awareness
- Passionate Commitment to an Institution and Its People
- Ability to Adapt and Innovate
- Visionary Heroism

Pillar 1

An insightful educational leader has a realistic understanding of his personal strengths and weaknesses and finds a way to optimize the former and compensate for the latter, especially in the careful choice of personnel.

It is critical that he choose highly competent persons who serve closest to him, colleagues who share his vision and values and who work in unison with him to promote them. In particular, if vice presidents are strong, effective leaders in their own right, and when they oversee their respective areas of responsibility well, the president is free to give himself to his own priorities.

If, however, even one vice president is weak or ineffective in certain areas, the president will expend inordinate time and energy concerned about and doing that person's job. Colleagues can help the president maximize his strengths or they can highlight his weaknesses. A president is not a messiah. However bright, talented and adept he may be, he is only one person collaborating with a lot of other people to promote the institution.

Pillar 2

A servant leader sacrifices self-centered interests and ambitions for the well being of the institution and his colleagues. He tries to follow the example of a well-known clergyman who said: "There are two kinds of men of the cloth: princes of the Church and disciples of Christ. I pray everyday to be the latter."

Pillar 3

An imaginative leader has the ability to confidently and creatively innovate and adapt to a changing world. He can make the tough decisions, take calculated risks, and be persistent, demanding and realistic in goal-setting.

Pillar 4

A dynamic leader energizes himself and others with heroic ambitions and a passion for excellence. He strives to motivate and engage at appropriate levels the college community (faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, governing boards, benefactors), and as a

priority, engages co-workers with a positive, loving attitude that unlocks their potential and empowers them to develop talents. As the eminent Dutch theologian Edward Schillebeeckx so eloquently says: "What we dream alone remains a dream, but what we dream with others can become a reality."

Leadership is not merely getting the job done; it's how it is done: by visioning, mediating, influencing, persevering, energizing, dreaming, innovating, teaching and by serving.

(The ideas about illusions and pillars of leadership have been freely adapted and expanded from "Heroic Leadership" by Chris Lowrey, Loyola Press, 2003.)

....

My Personal Creed

1. To be firmly grounded in a life of faith and prayer and in community life with my Brothers.
2. To be credible. To lead by example and not expect others to do what I am not willing to do myself.
3. To have a vision of what I want to accomplish and to work consistently to accomplish it, convinced, as Scripture says, that "If a leader lacks vision, the people perish."
4. Never to compromise honesty. To remember -- and this requires courage -- that integrity is more important than loyalty.
5. To accept constructive criticism and be willing to acknowledge personal shortcomings and failures.
6. To always be concerned about the people with whom I work -- to communicate with them, listen to them.
 - o Hearing both sides before judging
 - o Defending those who are absent
 - o Being compassionate but decisive, at times a St. Francis of Assisi, at others, a benevolent Benito Mussolini
 - o Facilitating and acknowledging their success, but also challenging appropriately and expecting accountability
7. To be orderly in person and work.
8. To place great importance on strategic and proactive recruiting and selection of personnel, most particularly of faculty members and top-level administrators.
9. To make sure I take care of myself by relaxing, spending time with friends, enjoying favorite pastimes and doing those things that nourish and sustain body, mind and spirit.
10. To work hard every day, enjoy my work, take pride in it and be grateful for the privileged opportunity it affords, always remembering that I have been called, not to a position of entitlement, but rather to serve in a sacred educational ministry.

And as an addendum: when I become impatient to correct things immediately, to recall the advice of the fire chief to his young recruit: "Before you bust through the door with an axe, try the knob" or when my ego begins to swell, to think about what Thomas Jefferson said of President George Washington's leadership: "We are lingering precariously on the misty edges of incompetence."

....

In Conclusion

I should like to conclude my reflections on a personal note by paraphrasing a few selected excerpts from my letter of recommendation for Brother Ronald to the Presidential Search Committee, written about a year ago. These remarks are primarily based on his time at

Bethlehem University. I don't know whether you saw the letter, Ronald, but here are a few of my convictions about you that I wish to make public today:

- Watching you in daily action it was obvious that you communicated effectively and maintained good rapport with university faculty, staff and administrators. I'm sure your colleagues here at St. Mary's appreciate your sense of humor, accessibility and welcoming manner.
- Despite the discouraging situation that existed in Palestine at the time, you managed to keep a very upbeat outlook. You were especially effective and courageous in dealing with the highly inflammatory aftermath of the Hebron massacre, so you are accustomed to working under extreme pressure.
- As I prepared to succeed you as vice chancellor, I sat in on several meetings of the Executive Council that you chaired. In my view, you made well-thought-out and prudent decisions concerning the policies of the University during volatile times.
- You bring an invaluable asset to this position through your extensive travels, linguistic ability and interaction with people from various cultures and traditions. As you mentioned to me last February, your experiences in both Bethlehem and Rome were excellent preparation for St. Mary's.
- I know from seeing you in action (at checkpoints doing battle with Israeli authorities to allow our students to pass through to come to school) that you have the passion, tenacity and courage to deal with the many challenges St. Mary's presently faces, while at the same time to continue to develop it as a premier institution of higher learning in the region.

Ronald, I was confident in recommending you for this privileged position and I am delighted to be a part of your inaugural ceremony. St. Mary's is indeed blessed to have you at the helm at this strategic moment in its history. May you continue to be graced with good health, keen insight, Irish humor and unbounded energy, and may you, with the accompaniment of your loving university family, lead this institution you love so passionately with heroism and distinction for many years to come. Ad multos annos," my brother.

EVOLUTION

Letter to "The Tablet" (July 23, 2005)

It might well happen that a man missed his train, and as a result met the girl who became his wife and the mother of his children. That does not mean that in God's eyes the children are 'accidental.' Their birth occurred within God's providence.

So surely it is with evolution. To our eyes it may appear to be 'blind,' but it occurs within God's providence, which is at work within the process of evolution, just as it was at work within the formation of the earth itself.

Dom Cameron-Brown OSB

GIVING FORM TO VISION Brother Thomas Johnson

[Brother Thomas Johnson, Coordinator for our whole Region of Districts, gave the following invited address November 18, 2005, at the Mission meeting of Partners and Brothers in Salt Lake City. Ed.]

Introduction

I love those cartoons in the New Yorker. I find great delight in paging through the old one's in the dentist office even if the magazine is months out of date. I found one recently that pictured several plump, grey or balding middle aged men standing around at a rather stuffy gathering with drinks in their hands. One of them was talking to two or three others as the caption read: "I'll start thinking outside the box when the box is empty".

We so often hear of that expression "thinking outside the box" that using it is kind of thinking in within the box. That cartoon is for me a metaphor for our situations regarding structure today. Is our box empty or almost empty? Do we need to think differently? Do we need some new expressions of what we do and who we are? Are we like the middle-aged prosperous businessman who likes things as they are and will wait until it becomes absolutely necessary to think differently? I don't believe so because in these days we have been struggling with new thinking in the midst of a great Lasallian history and tradition.

Today we begin to talk about structures. Structures, in my context, are the ways we are organized to carry out our Mission. Schools and ministries have structures to carry out the mission as does the Institute. Structures from our history as Brothers include the International organization of the Institute, Districts and Regions. Recent structures include corporate boards for ministries, Mission Councils, partner consultants at Chapters and District Councils. Today I will suggest the kind of thinking we might need for our discussions and the kind of leadership we might need to face structural challenges today.

So we have a little parable from Anthony De Mello:

The student asked the teacher, "Professor, do fish think?"

"Do fish think?" The professor repeated the question. "Let me see. There is a fish pond in the back of my house. Every evening for three weeks, I threw fish food in the water near the left bank. The fish came and ate. Then one evening I threw fish food into the pond near the right bank. But the fish were still going to the left bank. Then one evening the fish noticed the food was over at the right bank. They swam across the pond. But they were so starved from not eating that they died before they came to the food. Do fish think? Yes, but not fast enough."

I learned a few things from this story, maybe something about the need to move quickly in a rapidly changing society. We naturally form structures and we naturally hold on to

structures long after they serve us. In some cases so long that they can be deadly. So long at times that structures that once sustained us can kill us when realities change and the structures do not.

John Baptist de La Salle was a great creator of structures. The uniqueness of a community of non-ordained men focused on the mission of education was a new structure for its time. The structures of schools and of communities were created to carry on his vision, but he built those structures on his lived experience. The Lasallian historical experience is to build structures, practical structures on lived experience and to move beyond them when needed. Simply, the food may now be at the other side of the pond.

First, structures are important. As professionals, we create structures in our classrooms and in our ministries to carry out our vision and mission. We can have a vision without a structure but not a mission. Our present structures for our Institute are in your folders as a guide to our discussions and I will refer to them later in this presentation

Structures and Leadership

Margaret Wheatley who has written so much about leadership and structures tells us that despite all the evidence that the world is radically changing, we cling to what has worked in the past. We think of organizations in mechanistic terms, as collections of replaceable parts capable of being reengineered. She says we tend to act as if people were machines expecting them to perform to specifications with machine like precision. Often when a Brother Chief Administrator is leaving a position our faculties and public want to know who the next Brother is, as if there were another Brother, thinking that Brothers are like interchangeable parts. When we speak of Lasallian Formation we tend to speak as if it is a pill that will produce a result rather than a process.

I remember the story of a now very senior Brother, who was stationed in Kansas City who was called by the Visitor on a Tuesday night to take over classes of a Brother in Chicago who taught the same subject so that Brother could come to Kansas City and look after his mother who just had a stroke. He left on the train that night, arrived in Chicago and walked into Geometry classes who had the same book and were in same chapter as his classes in Kansas City. This is what I am talking about. This system worked in its day. Again in the past, when a Brother was asked to work in another District the receiving District had to send a replacement. It was like trading baseball players. If Brother Pat Cassidy were asked to work in the San Francisco, someone of his caliber might require two Brothers and a novice to be named later!

We look to organizations to have prediction and control. Our traditional ideas of leadership have supported the metaphor that ideas come from the top and work through structures. Everyone has a job description. Yet, ask yourself how valuable a job description is today. How often the job descriptions keep evolving. What were you hired to do and what do you really do? Amplifying the question: What vision does our Institute structures give to districts and what are they really? In the *Rule*, the Visitor in our

Institute is expected to be responsible for all major aspects of the mission, association, financial stewardship, unity of the District and Brothers life in his District and partner Lasallian Formation and Association. Today for the most part this is not the reality we live because leadership is flourishing all over this Lasallian World not just from those who have titled leadership. Witness the histories of the LSJI, Lasallian Volunteers, and LAMS. None of these programs started with either District or Regional leadership. Those “mechanisms” did not create them.

Culturally, we like flow charts and they have their place and do describe something. Most likely though a flow chart of where ideas and change comes from would be trying to map the internet. Ed Phelan has tried to chart it and I will let him show it to you. It has arrows going in every direction and even little doors that can be opened. It is not mechanistic it is organic. To express the flow of leadership today a flow chart would not be the top to bottom chart but perhaps a web-like chart of influences rather than real lines of authority. So do our present structures actually reflect the reality of what we have? Probably not. Influences are as important as authority lines in an organization.

Our structures must be organic that is full of life as life is now. Bernard Lee, SM once said that we like to think of our Founders as being ahead of their times; actually, he says, they were not ahead of their times; they were radically in tune with their times. A founder’s gift or charism was to create something new to deal with the reality that confronted him or her.

There is also a spiritual challenge in all of this. I would guess that most of you responded to the invitation to be here this week because of a passion in your heart that gives meaning to your work. Like the fish you need to be fed. Your passion needs to be nourished somehow and if the structures do not feed you individually or collectively, you will either abandon them or die within the structure. Is this not some of the crisis the Church is experiencing today? Do our structures nourish the mission and will they nourish it in five years time?

Terry Pierce tells this story in *Leading Out Loud* about a Christmas party the old and great actor Charles Laughton attended in London. The host invited the guests to recite a favorite passage that captured, for them, the Spirit of Christmas. Laughton’s turn came near the end and he recited in his beautifully trained voice, the 23rd Psalm. Everyone applauded his effort. Soon, all had participated except an elderly aunt who had dozed off in the corner of the room. She was particularly loved so they gently woke her, explained what they were doing, and asked her to join in. She thought for a moment and then, in her shaky voice, began “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...” The room hushed as she continued and, when she finished, tears were dripping down every face. As Lord Laughton was leaving for the evening, one of the younger members of the family remarked on the difference between the two recitations. “How do you account for it”, asked the young man. Lord Laughton simply smiled and said, “I know the Psalm... she knows the Shepherd.”

She was authentic. We must be authentic as teachers and as Lasallian leaders. As leaders, we must inspire not only manage. Today real authority comes more from authenticity and less from title or knowledge. If our structures do not allow for authenticity and by that I mean focusing on what really matters in this Lasallian enterprise we are obligated morally to change them. It can indeed be wrong to continue structures that hinder the authenticity and sustainability of our mission in its reality today.

We Lasallians must be authentic and our structures must be authentic for our mission to thrive. If history tells us anything it tells us that inauthentic structures can easily collapse. There is an example from history. In Russia in October, 1917 the Russian Revolution was breaking out. That violent upheaval completely changed Russian society and structure forever. In that same month the bishops of the Russian church were assembled in council in a vehement discussion whether the vestment used in the Divine Liturgy of Lent should be purple or white. We must be radically in tune with the time or we will be as silly as these Russian bishops seem to us today.

Organizationally, structures are designed to deal with the challenges to the vision and the mission. Ronald Heifitz in *Leadership on the Line* tells us that the single most common source of leadership and structure failure in politics, community life, business, or the non-profit sector is that people, especially those in authority, treat adaptive challenges like technical problems.

Distinguishing technical problems from adaptive challenges

	What's the Work?	Who does the work?
Technical Problem	Apply current know-how	Authorities
Adaptive Challenge	Learn new ways	The people with the problem

We like the quick fix, call in an expert, a consultant, a technician. And we should have a quick fix when technical solutions are needed. But when the challenge is adaptive we have to engage people in adjusting their unrealistic expectations of an easy solution, rather than try to satisfy them as if the situation were amenable to a technical remedy. We have to counteract our exaggerated dependency on authority and structure and promote resourcefulness. In our Region's situation, we can no longer unrealistically expect the Brothers' structures to carry the mission as the number of Brothers diminishes. Expecting Districts to continue to supply personnel, support Lasallian formation programs, provide Brother board members, open and support new Miguel schools, create communities for volunteers and even serve as effective rather than nominal sponsors is an unrealistic expectation.

Technical solutions are not trivial, Ronald Heifitz tells us. The medical profession and computer technology attests to it. In these cases the solution relies in the organizations' repertoire. To make adaptive change when a technical solution is required is the proverbial throwing the baby out with the bath water. To apply a technical solution to an

adaptive challenge is like putting a bandage on cancer. Adaptive challenges force the organization itself to change since the organization cannot answer the challenge as it is.

As teachers we sometimes see this even through our plans. As an English teacher I followed a well orchestrated plan. Begin with a quiz on last night's reading, highlight the vocabulary words, review the homework questions and discuss the story. I was once teaching a short story to high school freshman. The story in the freshman anthology was about a man found murdered in his farm house, most likely by his wife. The country sheriff also found a canary crushed to death in its cage. The sheriff's wife noted that the dead farmer's wife had told her that she found only joy in the canary as farmer was known to be a cruel and demanding husband. Obviously the dilemma presented was about this woman striking out against years of abusive behavior.

As the class droned on, I found the discussion lifeless until uncharacteristically, I told the class we were putting the woman trial. We would divide up the class into a jury and defense and prosecution teams. For two days, this process riveted the students and energized my class. I still think it was a smart move on my part. When I look back I learned that I had to jettison my entire plan on the spur of the moment and something made me do that. It was an adaptive change to my little organization.

Organizationally we have to have structures that respond to the needs at hand and know when to change the structures themselves. To do this we need leadership to be flexible, multi-directional, organic and dangerous.

Thinking about Leadership

To analyze our structures, we have to look at how leadership can function in these structures. Ronald Heifetz says leadership often means you have to exceed your authority. This does not mean to become some kind dictator or anarchist, but it means as he says to get on the balcony and take a look at the whole thing going on and see objectively what is happening and listen to what people are saying. We must be creative by distinguishing technical from adaptive challenges; listen to the people especially to the passion in their voices that tell us what they believe. One of the key elements of the Lasallian spirituality for ministers is the call to be authentic. I have found when I worked with new teachers that the secret to success was authenticity not merely methods. "Jesus taught with authority, not like the priests and the Pharisees." To be a good leader today regardless of your position in the structure is to be authentic and passionate.

Managing is not leading and the curriculum of the LLI Program recognizes leaders in the school, the ministry, the District and the Region who do not have managerial roles. Terry Pearce's studies on leadership show that people find their energy in engagement not in instruction and that people are less inclined to be loyal to a leader who provides better information than they can get from someone else. A leader must authentically engage in the issue at hand. Like the old Aunt at Charles Laughton's Christmas party, leadership must come from an inner system of belief. Is that not the core of De La Salle's meditations and spirituality? He knew that the schools would survive unless the Brothers

were men of interior faith. Is this lack of authenticity not part of the crisis of leadership in the Catholic Church today?

To lead is dangerous. Take a look at what happened to Jesus, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Most people including most of us do not like change. Why not? It is because we fear not the change but the loss. Major change means major loss and we question the price we have to pay to make a change. With my freshman class, I worried that I was destroying my plan for the week; we wouldn't get to all our vocabulary words, the kids would get noisy etc. Habits, values, attitudes and loyalty are part of one's identity. They represent loving attachment to community and ideals. These are attachments to my ministry and what I do; they are attachments to my District and the family it creates for me. They are good but they are also great temptations. A major change in habits, values, attitudes and loyalties can be a major change in my identity. To change what we know is a risk. If De La Salle did not take the risk of personal danger and give up doing a good thing as canon of Rheims and heading his family, there would be no Lasallian mission. This is totally counter-cultural in an America that repudiates any kind of risk.

This reminds me of a story about an old Rabbi on his deathbed:

Father: Isaac, My son.

Isaac: Yes, father I am here.

Father: You know that I have always taught you that in the last days there will be two bridges from this world into Paradise.

Isaac: I remember this well.

Father: One bridge will be made from great timbers, steel girders and the strongest concrete. And over this bridge the gentiles will seek to enter Paradise. But when they are all in the middle, it will collapse and let them fall in Sheol.

Isaac: Indeed, Father!

Father: The other bridge will be made of a single hair from the beard of Moses. And over this fragile bridge all good Jews will pass safely to the other side.

Isaac: Yes Father!

The old man paused for a long moment and then squeezing his son's hand continued: When that day comes, my son, take the concrete bridge. Safe is safe!

Like this father and son, even in the face of ultimate realities, we opt for safety. This is not always bad, but we cannot always operate in safety. Just a few weeks ago we heard this again in the Gospel of the Parable of the Talents.

Leadership above all is a relationship of multi-directional strategies calling us to exceed our authority and lead people beyond the notions of safety. It is listening, bringing people into the decision making processes, welcoming a new mix of ideas; it is building a community, friendships and association. Our structures must support that on all levels of the Mission understanding that no one of us can control the outcome. It is not the tidy well-oiled machine that characterized a good organization in 1955. All of this is a mess, a blessed mess, but a mess nevertheless. It is an organic and growing thing.

Being in Tune with the Reality and Trends of our Times.

We have spent a great deal of time on the notion of reality trends and challenges in mission and association and now we look at our structures in the same light. We might ask ourselves do we face technical problems or adaptive challenges. Or both? I want to take a few minutes to share some facts.

[At this part of the address, Brother Thomas displayed some statistics by Power Point.]

Worldwide we have almost a million students with 2300 Brothers and almost 80,000 partners.

In our Region, there are 605 Brothers active in ministry and more than half are beyond age 55. The average age of our Region is 69. Despite a great commitment of Brothers all over especially those past retirement age, this mission and structures cannot depend on the Brothers or their resources much longer. We do not have ten years left of being like we are now. Even in having an Assembly like this. We will not have Brothers to lead schools, to sit on boards, to support assemblies, District gatherings, formation programs etc. The current structure will not hold just as the structure of an all-Brother school could not be a reality today. To attempt to fix it the present structure would be like deciding on vestments on the eve of the Russian Revolution.

As a short primer, let's quickly look at our structures.

A quick review at where we are. The current trends indicate great growth in the spirituality of our Lasallian Mission, creativity in mission for reaching out to those not able to pay, commitment on the part of so many to the mission in terms of formation programs and living authentically.

If not, we must rely on the leadership of all Lasallians whether in managerial roles or not. That leadership must be authentically in tune with the times and be willing to make adaptive changes, changes that can be difficult and maybe dangerous. Let's play this out in our current structures:

Micro Level- Local Ministry

We begin with local ministry where in fact the work of the Institute is really carried out. We have many kinds of local ministries. Some are District owned and sponsored; others are diocesan. In general, the ministries are thriving, young people are learning and growing in faith and the Lasallian spirit is vibrant. All have structures with a majority of Lasallian Partner in leadership. The District owned schools have corporate boards that are indeed structures where Partners have voice and vote in the mission. Often these important boards get little attention when we talk of structure. Districts often have reserved powers that only they can exercise. These Boards are legal in nature but not recognized canonically in Church law. This structure works well as men and women of all kinds of backgrounds guide these local ministries. There are, however, challenges based on our reality.

- Local boards play an increasingly important role. The primary formator of the local board in most Districts is the chief administrator. If the chief administrator is not deeply Lasallian or to paraphrase Peter Steinfeld is a “hollow” Lasallian the board will not have the depth of formation when it makes key decisions about use of resources, funding and tuition all of which impact on the school’s mission. In places where there is no Brother chief administrator it is imperative that the he or she be firm in Lasallian spirituality.
- What is the role of the sponsor in regard to these ministries? What is effective sponsorship? Is it more than approving major building decisions? Can your District continue an effective relationship with your ministry and foster Lasallian Spirituality in five to ten years?
- Does your board require a certain number of Brothers on the board? How will that be possible in five years? Looking at our realities, borrowing from other Districts is not a good option.
- In diocesan ministries, what will happen when the school no longer has any Brothers? We do have some models represented here at the Assembly and we need to listen to those important experiences. How do we convince Bishops of a living Lasallian structure if they see only the Brothers’ structure? What How do we guarantee the Lasallian spirituality that the faculty wants if a Bishop chooses a school leader such as a member of another order or a diocesan priest who has no interest in Lasallian spirituality?
- How successfully are we going to move to the second generation of Lasallian formed leaders? Once Brothers have left the scene, the authentic tradition must be carried on by Lasallians who will have to pass it to the next generation. What do we need in place to guarantee that?
- Without a Brothers structure, how will the relationships between Lasallian schools be continued. The relationships are great and growing but so much depends on local leadership. We cannot have a seamless Lasallian system without local leadership strongly committed to it.

I believe we are faced with adaptive challenges here and there is danger if Lasallian spirituality and networks are not recognized outside of our Lasallian world. To deal with these challenges, we must listen to authority of the spirit coming from all directions, not just the top, to move forward.

Macro Level- District

The challenges at the District level can be summed up as:

District = Brothers = Diminishing Resources

Our Districts have been really creative and collaborative. Think of the growth in the last ten years of Lasallian Formation and Spirituality, social justice and school outreach, the Miguel Schools, support of Volunteers, support of twinning, care of Brothers, vocation ministry. All of this falls on the District supported and maintained by the Brothers.

The Districts are of varying sizes and varying resources. Some have fewer than 100 Brothers, some are well-endowed others are not. Some have Partners as part of the District team who are employed by the District to support the ministries. Some do not have Partners in these positions. All have a majority of men over 65 years old. Some people and not only the Brothers are in denial about this. Here are some of the challenges I see:

- Regardless of finances, how will the District you are in be able to carry on sponsorship of ministries, to provide minimum personnel to even serve on boards, little less be in the ministry, and to hire lay Partners to work for the District in the next five to ten years?
- Who will be the Brother leaders of the District in the next five to ten years?
- Can Districts exist as they are now structured? If so can we have seven of them in ten years? If not, what should a District be? If Districts do change their form how do leaders deal with the real issues of habit, loyalty, values and identity that Districts give to their members and simultaneously form the basis of the fear that resists change in the Brothers' structure?
- The Mission Councils are very young and just beginning to know what they are. They are new structure with limited responsibility since they operate completely in a Brothers' structure. What are the challenges of these Councils and how do they relate with the Boards already in place?
- As we talk about structures at this level we must honestly look at a couple of realities. Canon law is not an enemy; it protects the rights of individuals and religious groups in the Church. Our Rule is not an enemy it gives the Brothers a Guide for our life that is challenging and nourishing. However, Jesus did not write canon law and John Baptist de La Salle did not write the Rule of 1986. Both Jesus and De La Salle pushed the boundaries on the laws and practices of their days because they were in tune with their times and the structures were not. It may be dangerous but we may have risk pushing some boundaries if we are going to move to new structures. We cannot begin our deliberations on structure in the boxes of canon law and the Brothers' Rule. We need to begin with what best will serve the Mission.

Macro Level -The Region

The Region is an amoeba-like organism that is both grass-roots and hierarchical. It offers the key formation programs, carries out all kinds of cooperative things, it adopts grass-roots programs and it cannot be charted in typical flow chart.

The Conference, the administrative arm of the Region, is sort of like a snowball rolling down a hill and getting bigger as it goes. In the 50 years of the Conference, it has grown to pick-up and develop programs that Districts could not run by themselves. From Sangre de Cristo to Christian Brothers Service insurance programs to Lasallian Formation Programs to Publications to Volunteers, LAMS, LACUP and a whole host of other acronyms.

The Region is also the only structure in our Rule that is defined first as a negative. “The Region is not a structure of governance”. It is often clearer what we are not than what we are. The silver lining is that because of our non-governance position we have developed a collaborative collection of committees and boards. The Regional structure, while flexible, is completely a creation of the Districts, so the viability of the Districts affects the Region.

Essentially the formula is the same as that of the Districts: The Region=Districts=Brothers=Diminishing Resources

Some of our challenges for the future are:

- Authority and planning: While the Conference now has authority to direct its programs, it is difficult to plan. For example, this Assembly, carefully chosen, has clearly moral authority and authenticity, but legally its recommendations have now where to go except in a report to International Assembly and to the Visitors if they agree on following up. Nothing said here binds anyone to anything—except by moral force and that might be what real leadership is today. Yet Regional meetings have no authority in themselves.
- Should the Region be able to assume some sponsorship roles that Districts are not able to do? Or, should new models such as the East Coast Confederation, LAMS, and a future High School Chief Administrators group assume new roles of sponsorship?
- With fewer Brothers, how do we fill the roles of Regional leadership? Will Partners take Regional roles for a time? Can spaces be held for them back in their ministries? What kind of financing do we need to do that and to sustain the Region?
- What newer regional formation programs are needed?

Structure and Association

The yearning for Association is like the hunger on a spiritual quest. I think what we experience is a great awakening of the spirit around the Region. The hunger seems insatiable. Lasallian spirituality has given fire, meaning and hope to life of teachers, schools and other workers in ministries. Some Lasallians ask for more, for something else. We spent a day discussing association.

The topic of partner association reminds me of another fish story:

“Excuse me,” said an ocean fish to an older fish. You are older than I so can you tell me where to find this thing they call the ocean?” “The ocean,” said the older fish “is the thing you are in now.” “Oh this? But this is water. What I’m seeking is the ocean,” said the disappointed fish as he swam away to search elsewhere.

It is like Jesus' comment to Phillip. "What do you want?" If you are looking for some form of association, is it already around you waiting to be discovered? Is this the time to begin to move on it?

Like the Marianist Bernard Lee, I do not believe one can share a charism with someone else. Charism is given by the Spirit. Note the epistles of Paul describing the various gifts given. Lee does believe that one can share a deep story, a founding story in such a way that it becomes one's own story. It might resemble that gift that we may have all experienced at times when we could reach a student that no one else could. It is a gift a charism. Some Lasallians may have a charism for belonging to some kind of group of association. There may be a need for a structure that involves a personal commitment, a consistent presence, active participation and rituals that bind a group together. It may be like the Maryknoll Lay Missioners; it may be like a Lasallian District in Brother Antonio's paper; it may be a form of Signum Fidei or something else completely

Lasallians, if you seek association on a formal level, you must self-organize to create it. Perhaps the Brothers could help but it has to be yours. The challenge is adaptive not technical since we are not talking about religious life here. We are not talking about using the Brothers model for the partners. The second challenge is sustaining the structure and what would it mean for ministry. I believe that those serious about this will need a plan to discern it and propose a structure. Leadership is needed here and I think it has to come from our partners if it is desired.

Conclusion

Today during this Assembly, you cannot come up with complicated structures for the future, but as you discern the realities and trends, mediate on the vision, perhaps you can point some directions for our local, District, Regional and Institute Vision.

I think the box in some ways is almost empty, but there is a great growth and creativity among Lasallians. We have to think differently. I know there are canon laws and the *Rule* that seem to bind us now. But we may no longer find what we need in those structures. We must think creatively and dangerously like the Founder did. He gave away all of his supports so that he and his Brothers could be in an authentic association for the young and the poor. It is in that deep story that we will find our path to a new tomorrow.

We are at a crossroads, the present cannot hold for even a few more years. We can be like the Russian Bishops debating vestments as the world ignited around them or we can be like the disciples at Pentecost going forth with the fire of the Spirit no longer afraid of what they were losing but filled with courage about the future of new life in the Risen Lord. All indeed will be well.

Bibliography

Anthony De Mello. The Song of the Bird. New York: Doubleday, 1984.

Ronald A. Heifitz and Marty Linsky. Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

Bernard J. Lee, S.M. The Beating of Great Wings. Mystic, CT: Twenty Third Publications, 2004.

William Muehl, sermon quoted in *Living Pulpit*, Jan/Mar, 1999

Terry Pearce. Leading Out Loud-Inspiring Change through Authentic Communication. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass, 2003.

Joseph C. Rost. Leadership for the Twenty-First Century. New York: Praeger, 1991/

Margaret Wheatley. “Goodbye, Command and Control” *Leader to Leader*5 (Summer 1997): 21-28.

ORAL CONFESSION

Father Rolheiser: “Explicit confession is to the Sacrament of Reconciliation what an explicit apology for harm done is to healing.”

Others have added that oral confession forces us to be honest about our claims of “victimhood.” We tend to excuse ourselves for bad behavior on the grounds that we are victims of childhood trauma, uncontrollable compulsions, societal mistreatment, entrapment, etc,. We use these, in bad conscience, to claim that they diminish or remove our responsibility for such behavior. But to the extent that we are indeed responsible and are freely choosing evil, we need to face up to our moral responsibilities—and confession helps us to do so, an exceedingly healthy exercise.