



Saint Mary's College

Lasallian Student Leadership Conference

6th Annual

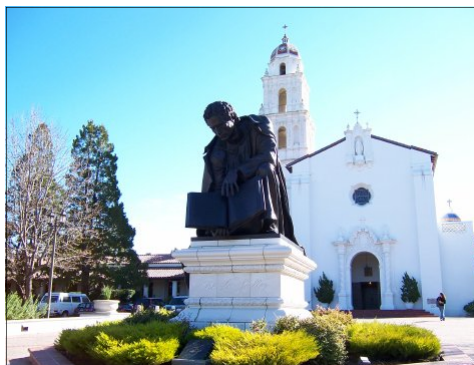
A Gathering of Lasallian Student Leaders

By: Kelsey McNamara, Christian Brothers HS

On the afternoon of July 19, 2009, a select group of student leaders from twelve Lasallian high schools from around the country arrived at St. Mary's College in Moraga, California. Whether members of student council or unelected leaders of our schools, many of us were unsure of what to expect from the upcoming week. Besides the obvious similarities that we all came from Lasallian Catholic high schools, many of us were also not fully aware of just how much we had in common.

After an exhausting first day of icebreakers, introductions, and assemblies, most of us began to see the common bond that all of us student leaders share; a school experience founded on the five core Lasallian principles: *Faith in the Presence of God, Respect*

for All Persons, Inclusive Community, Quality Education, and Concern for the Poor and Social Justice. These principles are not only the foundation of our high schools but also were effectively utilized in our daily



camp activities. From the morning prayer to the student committee meetings to the nightly socials, all of us lived out our faith as one Lasallian community over the course of the week.

Keith Hawkins's mov-

ing speech also helped solidify the relationships between students that had already been forming by encouraging us to talk to each other about both our struggles and successes. The new perspectives we gained from interacting with each other in both a formal and casual setting and the leadership skills that we developed through skills training meetings on facilitation and negotiation are things we can carry back to our schools and also throughout our lives.

In the spirit of the Lasallian motto "Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve," we can all use the knowledge that we have learned at camp to be the voice for our fellow students and serve our communities as influential Lasallian leaders.

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- Candace Ross—De La Salle High School, New Orleans, LA
- Eduardo Alcantar—Cathedral High School, Los Angeles, CA
- Kevin Johnson—De La Salle High School, Concord, CA
- Alex Power—Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA
- Chris Weber—La Salle CCP, Milwaukie, OR
- Alvin Bayani—Christian Brothers High School, Sacramento, CA
- Kelsey McNamara—Christian Brothers High School, Sacramento, CA
- Victoria Hernandez—Mullen High School, Denver, CO
- Andrew McCarthy—St. Mike's High School, Sante Fe, NM
- Brother James Joost, fsc.—La Salle High School, Yakima, WA
- Mrs. Wright—Mullen High School, Denver, CO

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Faith in the Presence of God

By: Alex Power, Justin-Siena HS

God is revealed and found in all religions; but as Catholic Lasallian high-schools, we adhere to the revelation of God found in the tradition and institutions of the Roman Catholic Church. Students and teachers alike are united through their participation in the process of Catholic education, and by common faith in the Gospel. This unity is expressed in daily relationships and through participation in religious activities.

As Lasallians, we see God everywhere and anywhere, in everything and anything, in every noise, in every movement, in every depiction of nature, and in every act of benevolence. When in times of turbulence, we actively seek out God each and every day, as well as recount past experiences in order to unearth the strength and vigor necessary to accomplish the task presented or endure the challenge before us. When surrounded by others, regardless of similarity or diversity, we always recognize that God is found inside every human soul, and is behind all actions and intentions. In addition, we believe that, through faith in the presence

of God, we will depart from every encounter unharmed, prosperous, and inspired.

Faith in the presence of God is found effortlessly in all 12 Lasallian high schools present here at LSL; nevertheless, there are certain instances and special occasions which exemplify that concept of faith. Whether it be **Lasalle Pasadena's** inspiring words of wisdom written by each other, for each other, or, watching the release of white doves on a Wednesday morning liturgy at **Justin-Siena**, with luminous rays of light being dispersed through nothing but an azure sky over the walls of the agricultural Napa Valley from the sun above, faith is an eternal aspect of every school.

At **Lasalle Yakima**, Junior and Senior retreats are optional, yet, every single student who attends participates on both retreats – an outstanding declaration of faith. These are the kind of students who consistently find a place for God in their hearts, and they are the kind of students who set a perfect example of how we should act in the presence of God, as well as clearly illustrating how

to accomplish just that.

Even here at St. Mary's college of California we exemplify an everlasting sense of faith in the community. Regardless of whether we are praying at 9 a.m. or 9 p.m., singing hymns in English, or Swahili, listening to Keith Hawking, or simply traversing the campus from one faith oriented presentation to the next, faith in God is found everywhere. Faith is found in the cross perched upon the peaks of the hills; Faith is found as we share some of our deepest emotions and sympathies with one another – strangers – in complete confidence; Faith is found as we stand mesmerized, capable only of gazing as the fog rolls slowly over the grounds of the campus, encompassing it in its majesty; Finally, faith is found when we join our hands and recite the Lord's prayer in the chapel, then pray for special intentions lying deep in the silence of our hearts, and conclude by saying aloud, united as one extraordinary entity, "Lord, hear our prayer."

"As Lasallians, we see God everywhere and anywhere, in everything and anything."



Respect

By: Kevin Johnson, De La Salle HS

Respect for all Persons is one of the five core principles that serve as a foundation for all Lasallian schools. The Lasallian schools adhere to this core principle by advocating the respect and dignity of all persons. There are a few schools in particular whose projects and programs exemplify this principle.

La Salle Youth Ministry, a program at **De La Salle North Catholic** in Portland, Oregon, focuses on three main points. Those points are service, community, and faith. De La Salle North Catholic students volunteer at the St. Francis Dining Hall located in Portland, Oregon, serve at a community BBQ on Founders Day, and try to get everyone involved in school prayer services and masses. While the La Salle Youth Ministry

also relates to other core principles, this ministry shows respect for all persons by not letting differences in social status hinder the development of community at De La Salle North Catholic.

De La Salle High School in Concord, California, also demonstrates the principle of respect for all persons through their program called SCORE, which stands for "Student Coalition On Respectful Education." This program teaches freshman about respect for all cultures and nationalities, while encouraging them to change the way they think about people and get past various stereotypes of society.

Although each school already has their own unique way of showing respect, coming together at LSL

has helped foster new ways of showing *Respect for all Persons* while also encouraging us to continue to live by the respectful values each of our schools are founded on. We demonstrated respect for one another over the course of the week by simply showing up on time for various events, behaving politely and hospitably, and treating everyone as an equal. The guest speaker Keith Hawkins, in particular, taught us about not only showing respect for those around us, but also for ourselves. Keith emphasized that maturity is an action, not an age, and we can prove we are mature young leaders by living by the Lasallian Core Principle of Respect by valuing the dignity of all people and treating everyone as equals.



Reaching Out to Our Community

By: Candace Ross, De La Salle New Orleans HS

In a Lasallian school, an *Inclusive Community* is not just found inside a classroom, or inside the walls of a school; an inclusive community goes beyond that, and extends to the outside world. When a Lasallian student reaches out to the new kid at school and makes them feel like they have a friend, they have created an inclusive community. When somebody stands up for someone who doesn't feel like they can stand up for themselves, they have created an *Inclusive Community*. With every small action we take, we can strengthen the bond between us as Lasallians, and us as people. We as Lasallians live out this Lasallian core principle today, just as John Baptist De La Salle did 350 years ago.



St. Michael's in Santa Fe, New Mexico has a program called Lasallian Youth, in which they try one event at a time to make their community, inside and outside of the classroom, a more accepting place. Among other things, Lasallian Youth tries to help younger kids in their community to feel like they have a role model or someone older to look up to. The organization sponsors events for a Big Brother/Sister program that pairs up



kids as young as ten with older students. St. Michael's plans these gatherings around holidays such as Halloween and Easter. They even plan an Easter Egg Hunt for the kids to participate in together. By setting up parties and get-togethers like these, St. Michael's helps transform their community into a more inclusive place where a student can feel like they have someone to help them when they are in need, something all Lasallians should provide.

De La Salle North Catholic is one of the many schools that incorporates and

develops a significant diverse identity where they celebrate the meaning of an *Inclusive Community*. The Difference Assembly, held each year, honors the variety of ethnicities that form the multicultural body of North Catholic, which includes African Americans, Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Caucasians, Asians and more. At the assembly dancers, singers, musicians, and speakers show their pride for the things that make them unique. The Difference Assembly is a way opening the eyes of the students at DLS to the diversity of their school community. The school also recognizes African American, Pacific Islander, Mexican American, and Woman's Heritage month. DLS respects and honors the differences that make its students unique.

De La Salle New Orleans has taken many strides to become the *Inclusive Community* that it is today. Being among the first schools to reopen after Hurricane Katrina, DLS opened its doors to all students looking for an education in a time where the city needed the five core principles the most. The school exercised each principle when it allowed people from other public and private schools to experience a Lasallian education. This made the school a place where everybody was accepted and felt that they could be comfortable being an individual at their own school. But even before Katrina, the school took another step towards becoming an *Inclusive Community*, when it became coeducational in 1992. The other Catholic high schools in New Orleans are either all boys or all girls schools, making DLS the only coed Catholic high school in the city. De La Salle gives not only boys, but also girls the chance to be a part of this special *Inclusive Community*.

J.K. Mullen, in Denver, Colorado has a unique tradition which at first may seem embarrassing, but is also a unique way

for freshman at the school to feel like they are a part of the community. During Homecoming Week, all freshmen at Mullen must wear a bright blue and gold beanie with the letter "M" printed on it. The freshman may be a little apprehensive at first, but in the end it is a way for the younger kids to feel like they have been initiated into the school and its traditions. Another highlight of Homecoming Week is when the ninth graders are taught the fight song by the sophomores, juniors, and seniors of Mullen. Then during halftime of the Homecoming football game, the freshmen stand on the football field, sporting their vibrant blue and gold beanies. While standing in the shape of an "M", they begin to sing the fight song. These traditions at Mullen are not meant to embarrass or ridicule the freshmen, but rather show them that they are accepted by the upperclassman, and that they are truly apart of J.K. Mullen's *Inclusive Community*.

We also can see an *Inclusive Community* in the LSL program. Twelve schools have come from all over the nation to celebrate and learn what it means to be a Lasallian Leader. By coming together as fellow Lasallians, we have already made our community much more inclusive. The time that we spend together at SMC shows that John Baptist De La Salle's ideas are still alive and practiced today. When **Cathedral High School** designed their prayer service, the focus of their attention was what it means to be an *Inclusive Community*. We practice the skills we have learned throughout the week to make our community much stronger. As Lasallians, we are connected, and we always will be, and it is our duty to make sure we as Lasallians to build an *Inclusive Community*, just as John Baptist De La Salle did centuries ago.

Transforming Schools Through Total Quality

By: Chris Weber, La Salle CCP

There is an academic tradition in all Lasallian schools brought about by the founder St. John Baptist de La Salle, an innovator of his time. He started his mission opening up schools to help students that could not receive an education within their communities due to financial deprivation. He created schools with working environments that provided an education for a broader range of students to learn the information and skills that they would need to become successful in the future. This innovation has created the thriving Lasallian schools across the world today continuing the mission and work of St. John Baptist de La Salle.

According to the Christian Brothers' website, the Lasallian core principle of a quality education is made known "together through students, staff and faculty thinking critically and examining the world in light of faith." Contributing to this are the many teachers and faculty to work with the students attending the school. Each of the schools prepares its students for college, as well as for the future. They prepare everyone for the independence they will receive after leaving their high school campus.

Each of the schools individually represents this core prin-

ciple throughout their school year. **De La Salle Concord** creates courses designed to teach advanced reading, writing and critical thinking skills. When combined with creative and performing arts classes, they enable students to achieve their educational goals. Graduates become fully equipped to deal with the rigors of universities and opportunities for the students' futures. They have a dedicated and highly skilled faculty who *love to teach and show that throughout their eccentric nature and classroom persona*. All of the faculty and staff are trained in the ideals Saint John Baptist de La Salle making it possible for spiritual and academic success that the students need to receive for their future.

When looking further north, similar to De La Salle Concord's curriculum, at **La Salle Catholic College Preparatory** located in Milwaukie, Oregon, is a high school where students are loved and educated by teachers who are inspired by the life and way of St. John Baptist de La Salle and the Brothers of the Christian Schools. It educates students spiritually, academically and socially through the promotion of a commitment to academic excellence and a wide range of activities. These goals are accom-

plished through the collaboration of involved students, supportive parents and dedicated faculty and staff members.

Based on the belief in the intrinsic value and dignity of each student, the Lasallian Student Leaders workshop at St. Mary's College in California provides an atmosphere that is moral, caring and joyful. Within such a setting, each student is challenged to strive towards excellence through the offered skill workshops that allow students to grow academically and socially. These classes provide the best community to get involved in with knowledgeable instructors as well as people who want to learn these life skills in order to become successful leaders for their high schools, communities, and future vocations. The result is easy to see, especially as the students move on into the next phase of life beyond high school. The students become well-prepared and receive academic, social, spiritual and emotional foundation needed to be successful. The goals available challenge and motivate all in an unambiguously Catholic atmosphere that fosters respect and calls people to live the gospel values.

"Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve"

LA SALLE
CATHOLIC COLLEGE PREPARATORY



 **Mullen High School**
Educating in the Holy Presence of God



Lasallians Helping Lasallians

By: Eduardo Alcantar, Cathedral HS

Cathedral High School is well known for their many ways of providing for the poor. They have so many organizations and clubs that actually take part in assisting in some way. There's a fundraiser referred to as "Spare Your Collar for a Dollar" in which you donate a dollar, but stay in the appropriate dress code and wear your desired attire. This money then donated to their sister school in Kenya. Identifying the needs of Lasallian "Sister Schools" is a major project, but there are those close to home that are struggling additionally. Another productive fundraiser that Cathedral has organized is its annual "Walkathon" in which all students attempt to collect a hundred dollars per student. This fundraiser sponsors those students attending Cathedral to financially stay at Cathedral. It is a brotherly act wherein one student is achieving his goal to keep a fellow student present at this school. Mullen undertakes this similar goal which they refer this event as "Lasallians helping Lasallians."

Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep shows great devotion to bringing the community together as a whole by inviting everyone to

school events. LVY, Lasallian Vincentian Youth, is an organization that plans community events. Every month LVY prepares a variety of sandwiches and lunches which are then given out to the hungry. The group also holds an annual barbeque where the entire surrounding community is invited for a free lunch. Guests from all over San Francisco attend and many of them come from different communities and ethnic groups. Sacred Heart thus follows the core principle of *Concern for the Poor and Social Justice* by helping out the less financially fortunate members of their community.

Christian Brothers is located in the inner-city neighborhood of Oak Park and plays an important role in its surrounding community. The school has a tutoring program for the neighboring elementary school in which participating high school students tutor the elementary school kids. Christian Brothers also has a Big Brothers program where the same elementary school students are invited to CB to play games and other organized activities in the morning before classes start. The Wellspring Club is another program designed to help the less fortunate members of the Oak Park Community. Members of this club wake up early every Friday

morning before school to prepare a warm pancake breakfast for the women and children who live at the Wellspring Women's Center. Christian Brothers is also located near the Sacramento Food Bank, where many students volunteer their time on Sunday Mornings to make lunches for the needy members of the Oak Park Community. Although participation in these programs is not required, many CB students volunteer their time anyways and therefore demonstrate their adherence to the core principle of *Concern for the Poor and Social Justice*.

Although we never directly served the poor during our time at LSL, many of us found different ways to live the core principle of *Concern for the Poor and Social Justice*. We were able to show our concern for social justice by treating everyone as equals and not judging others based on their economic status. The Monday night discussion about the economy got us all thinking about different ways we can help those who are financially struggling in our own schools. The awareness we developed about the current state of the economy created in most of us more of a concern for social justice which we can bring back to our schools.



The Lasallian Core Principles: Together and By Association

By: Alvin Bayani, Christian Brothers HS

The idea of coming to understand each of the Lasallian principles and incorporating them into our lives is a powerful and binding force among the many students who share in this tradition worldwide. However, perhaps more significant is the fact that the individual core principles are not merely intended to serve as five singular guides by themselves, but rather combined and utilized together. In a fashion similar to how the Brothers pool their talent – “together and by association” – the principles work in this way. While there are numerous ways to demonstrate this fact, a quite visible example is the **Ven a Ver** immersion program.

Ven a Ver, meaning “come and see” in Spanish, incorporates each of the principles and encompasses the development and education of the entire person. It developed in the late 1980s when the District of San Francisco had already jointly founded Centro La Salle with the District of Northern Mexico. There, a Brother would coordinate trips for schools to both serve in the Tijuana community as well as learn about the customs and cultures. This eventually resulted in the founding of the **Ven a Ver** program in the early 1990s. Since then, the immersion experiences have expanded to include not only Tijuana, but also Salinas, CA; New Orleans, LA; the Seattle, WA urban area; De La Salle-Black Feet in Montana; and

the Yakama Nation near Yakima, WA. In addition, these first experiences have led to the development of more global outreach programs for Lasallian educators which also take on the title “Come and See,” but in the respective languages of the communities served.

The **Ven a Ver** programs most conspicuously incorporate the principles of *Concern for the Poor and Social Justice*, *Quality Education*, and *Respect for All Persons*. The work conducted by participants, including serving in shelters and building homes, helps illustrate the first principle. Additionally, the participants meet several times prior to the trip which helps them investigate the root causes of injustice, ways of helping relieve the local problems and contributing to the macrocosmic solutions, and the local cultures. Finally, respect is cultivated through the fact that not only is there emphasis on service, but participants are also reminded of the similarities they share with the communities in which they work.

Faith in the Presence of God and Inclusive Community, are also a large part of **Ven a Ver**. One example is that working with those less fortunate helps participants to recognize the face of God in all people. In the book of Matthew, we see Jesus saying “that which was done for the least of [his] people was done for [him].” In this way, serving with the com-



munity emphasizes God’s presence. Moreover, when serving in the **Ven a Ver** communities, the task may often appear daunting. But the realization that assisting others is doing God’s work helps to create an understanding and appreciation for the idea that every small part ultimately affects the larger picture. Finally, the program encourages an inclusive community because participants live in and work with the communities served. This fact brings together both the school group as well as the local people. It is through the service that barriers are broken down and connections among people can be created.

The **Ven a Ver** program fully integrates the Five Lasallian Core Principles. Students working in the various communities develop the entire person cultivating the mind, body, heart, and spirit. It is a powerful experience for those who participate and truly is one of the ways in which St. John Baptist de La Salle’s mission is carried out by Lasallian students and educators in the modern world.

“Come and See”

-God

-Social Justice

-Service

-Community

-Simple Living



Saint John Baptist De La Salle...

Pray For Us!

Live Jesus In Our Hearts...

Forever!