

# ***Reaching Out, Touching Hearts***

**District of San Francisco**

**Context for Action/Action Plan**

**2003-2007**



# *Reaching Out, Touching Hearts*

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## INTRODUCTION

The first edition of *Reaching Out, Touching Hearts* appeared in 1999 and served as the District Action Plan through 2003. This new edition for 2003 through the first half of 2007, encompasses ongoing actions initiated through the previous Action Plan and incorporates new items coming from the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter of 2000, the Assembly on Mission of 2002, and the Eleventh District Chapter of 2002-03. Many in the District had an opportunity to contribute suggestions about the revised edition throughout its development. The District Council at its meeting on January 20, 2004 approved the final text of both the Context for Action and Action Plan in this new edition of *Reaching Out, Touching Hearts*.

At first sight, the text of both the Context for Action and the Action Plan may look very similar to that of the 1999-2003 edition. While it is true that much of the rationale contained in the Context for Action and many of the action items in the Action Plan itself remain the same, there are some significant differences. I would like to point out what some of these differences are.

In the Context for Action, I call your attention especially to the new material in sections 3.16 through 3.18 regarding the lower economic populations on the West Coast, particularly the Latino/Hispanic populations. The challenge to provide educational service of the poor in our District was already great from 1999 through 2003. The more recent data provided here indicates that it will be even greater as we move forward through 2007.

Section 4.3 in the Context for Action is new, calling attention to the need for the Brothers to renew and strengthen the consecrated dimension of their vocation. Such renewal, of course, must always be undertaken in a way which respects the integration of consecration with community life and the apostolate of Christian education, especially of the poor.

The Context for Action also contains emerging perspectives on vocation ministry. Sections 4.7 through 4.9 need to be read, pondered, and discussed thoroughly as a basis for actions called for in the Action Plan (A 17 through A 22 and B 23 through B 28).

In the Action Plan itself the numerous items summarizing actions called for by the Eleventh District Chapter and the 2002 Assembly on Mission constitute the bulk of new material. These, of course, will receive special attention going forward while those which speak of ongoing, continuing actions will not be neglected.

The challenges of making Christian, Catholic, Lasallian education accessible to all are great. So are those of formation of Brothers and Partners and of understanding and implementing forms of association for them. Structural reorganization both within the District and in relation to the US/Toronto Region as to how best to fulfill the educational mission especially when, at least in 2004, the financial constraints are severe, is still another formidable task for us. Our work, however, must always be undertaken in a spirit of faith. We trust in God's providence for the success of this work because ultimately it is not ours but God's.

Brother Stanislaus Campbell, FSC  
Visitor  
March 1, 2004



## CONTEXT FOR ACTION

### Scriptural, Ecclesial, Institute, District, and Civic Sources

#### A. Faith

- 1.1 We who are Catholic Christians, both Brothers of the Christian Schools and Partners dedicated to the Lasallian mission, and those of us, Partners in the same mission who are Christians of other churches, profess to live by faith as an unbounded trust in God, a striving “to do everything in view of God, and to attribute all to God,” a seeing “in every happening and in every person, especially in the poor, a sign and a call of the Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> Risk, confidence, and endurance characterize people of faith as the Epistle to the Hebrews reminds us:

Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

For yet “in a very little while

The one who is coming will come and will not delay,  
but my righteous one will live by faith.

My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back.”

But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.<sup>2</sup>

- 1.2 Those of us who do not share the Christian faith but who support many of the principles underlying the Lasallian mission of human and Christian education, recognize the essential role of faith in the lives of the Brothers and our Christian Partners. We share with them our own inspiration coming from our particular religious beliefs or humanistic values.

#### B. Responding in Faith to God’s Call in the Events of Our Time

- 2.1 Faith enables us who believe, as it enabled Saint John Baptist de La Salle, to respond to God’s call as this is revealed in the persons and events which create the context of our lives and as these are viewed in the light of God’s Word in the Scriptures and in the living tradition of the Church. Since the 39th General Chapter of 1966-67, we Brothers have been challenged by the words of *The Declaration* recalling our heritage with respect to the spirit of faith, the primary spirit of the Institute, and summoning us to live it anew:

To achieve the adaptation and renewal asked for by the [Second Vatican] Council, it seems important that the Brothers be ready to heed and to discern

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools* (Rome, 1987 and 1993), art. 5. (hereafter cited as *The Rule*).

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 10:35-11:1.

the challenges that the Holy Spirit addresses to them through the mediation of their fellow humans. Since they have chosen to work for the salvation that comes from Christ, they should let themselves be led by the Spirit of God. Sometimes the Spirit stirs up in the Brothers the desire for renewal; sometimes the Spirit inspires the contemporary Church to insist on certain aspects of their teaching ministry; sometimes the Spirit communicates in a mysterious fashion through the events that take place in the world and through the aspirations of the world's peoples.<sup>3</sup>

- 2.2 Led by the Spirit, ensuing General Chapters have insisted on a number of undertakings which mark a faithful response to God's call to us today. As context for action in the District of San Francisco, three of these multifaceted undertakings are singled out here. The first is that we, Brothers and Partners alike, must attend especially to the renewal of our mission "to give a human and Christian education to the young, *especially the poor* according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to[us]."<sup>4</sup> This mission is now *shared* by those of us who are Brothers and by those of us who are Partners in a *communion of life* known historically by us Brothers as "association."<sup>5</sup> If our essential contribution to the mission is not to fail, the second undertaking is that for those of us who are Brothers, *communion in community* must continue to be strengthened, our consecration lived fully, our *vocation ministry* with our Partners intensified, our Brothers in *life transitions* supported and challenged, and our *distinctive identity* clarified.<sup>6</sup> The final undertaking is that the mission today must be one of global *interdependence and solidarity* among Regions, Districts, Brothers, and Partners.<sup>7</sup>

### C. Brothers and Partners Enlivened by Communion for the Mission of the Human and Christian Education of the Young, *Especially the Poor*

- 3.1 The mission of the Institute "is to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it." This mission is carried out in schools "as the preferred field" of our—Brothers' and Partners'—activity as well as in other

<sup>3</sup> *The Brother of the Christian Schools in the World Today: A Declaration*, a new English translation (Lincroft, NJ: La Salle Provincialate, 1997), 8.2 (hereafter cited as *The Declaration*).

<sup>4</sup> *The Rule*, art. 3. Emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> *The Rule*, arts. 17, 146; Brother John Johnston, Superior General, and the members of the General Council, *The Lasallian Mission of Human and Christian Education. A Shared Mission* (Rome: The Generalate, 1997) 3:30-3:33 (hereafter cited as *The Lasallian Mission*).

<sup>6</sup> *The Rule*, arts. 48-52a, 82-85e; *Guide for Formation*, nn. 54-92.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Circular 422, *The 41st General Chapter. Propositions and Messages* (Rome: General Council, 1986) 1:1, pp. 5-8.

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educational works “adapted to the needs of time and place.”<sup>8</sup> While we must “seek to integrate the effort for human advancement with the announcement of God’s word” and “are convinced that any education that respects the human person is a way to open people to God’s grace,” we consider that our “principal function” consists in the work of evangelization and catechesis by which we “contribute to growth in faith of those who have been baptized and to the building up of the ecclesial community.”<sup>9</sup> In this educational mission all of us are called to have a special concern for the poor. Even when we do not directly serve the poor, it is our concern for them “that serves to motivate [our] activities” for those “in a more favorable social environment, urging them to become more sensitive to unjust situations of which the poor are so often the victims.”<sup>10</sup>

- 3.2 Both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures indicate how crucial to a salvific relationship with God and union with God’s people is active concern for the poor. In the Hebrew Scriptures the dictum of *Deuteronomy*, “For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor in the land’” found expression in numerous other commands of the Law which delineated the covenant relationship between God and God’s people. The obligation to pay the day-worker, to forgive debts during the jubilee year, the prohibition to loan money at interest, and the right of the poor to glean vineyards and fields are examples of such commands.<sup>11</sup>
- 3.3 In the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus identifies himself with the poor in a special way: “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”<sup>12</sup> According to Saint Luke, Jesus urged his disciples to that same, risky, faith-filled self-giving which was at the core of his own life in these words: “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”<sup>13</sup> Finally, in the Gospel according to John, he encourages his disciples to enter into his *kenosis*, i.e., self-emptying,

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<sup>8</sup> *The Rule*, art. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *The Rule*, arts. 12 and 15.

<sup>10</sup> *The Rule*, art. 14.

<sup>11</sup> *Deuteronomy* 15:11. Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1994), n. 2449.

<sup>12</sup> *Matthew* 25:40.

<sup>13</sup> *Luke* 12:32-34.

which led him to death on the cross and through that to transformation in glory:

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.<sup>14</sup>

- 3.4 Not only does Jesus call his disciples to give of themselves to those in need and to enter into his paschal mystery of life through death, but he also prays that they will live *united* in him in order that their mission, which is his mission from the Father, may be effective: “As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. . . . I ask. . . that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”<sup>15</sup>
- 3.5 In fulfilling the Church’s mission throughout the centuries, the most dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ have striven for unity among the Church’s members through mutual charity and special concern for the most needy among them so that its effort to bring the Gospel to all, especially the poor, may indeed be effective. Saint Luke, in his idealized portrait of the early Church remarks, “All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. . . . And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”<sup>16</sup> Saint Paul, in exhorting the more prosperous Christians in Greece to support those impoverished in Judea, appeals to the example of Christ: “For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.”<sup>17</sup>
- 3.6 When John Baptist de La Salle founded the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the latter part of the seventeenth century, he was perceived to be directly concerned with providing a human and Christian education for those at the margins of society and with renewing the life of the first Christian communities:

Monsieur de La Salle had the idea of setting up gratuitous schools where the

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<sup>14</sup> *John* 12:23-26.

<sup>15</sup> *John* 17:18, 20-21.

<sup>16</sup> *Acts* 2:44-45, 47

<sup>17</sup> *2 Corinthians* 8:9

children of workmen and the poor would learn reading, writing and arithmetic, and would also receive a Christian education through catechisms and other forms of instruction appropriate for forming good Christians. For this purpose he brought together a group of young unmarried men. He strove to have them live in a way which was consistent with the end of their Institute, and in order to renew the life of the first Christians . . . he composed rules for them.<sup>18</sup>

- 3.7 The importance of the first Brothers' association, of their living and acting as a communion of consecrated persons in exercising their educational mission to underprivileged youngsters is highlighted by the first part of the formula of vows professed by De La Salle and some of the Brothers in 1694:

Most Holy Trinity . . . I consecrate myself entirely to you to procure your glory as far as I am able and as you will require of me. And for this purpose, I, (*name*), promise and vow to unite myself and to live in Society with (*names of all other Brothers*) to keep together and by association gratuitous schools, wherever I may be . . .<sup>19</sup>

- 3.8 In recent years Church authority has highlighted the Church's "preferential option for the poor"—an option which has as a goal the creation of "a true community of persons":

The prime purpose of this special commitment to the poor is to enable them to become active participants in the life of society. It is to enable *all* persons to share in and contribute to the common good. The "option for the poor," therefore, is not an adversarial slogan that pits one group or class against another. Rather it states that the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor wounds the whole community. The extent of their suffering is a measure of how far we are from being a true community of persons. These wounds will be healed only by greater solidarity with the poor and among the poor themselves.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Memoir written in Rouen, 1721.

<sup>19</sup> Formula of Vows, 1694.

<sup>20</sup> Pastoral letter of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (November 13, 1986), n. 88. The Church's particular concern for the poor has been especially evident in papal and episcopal pronouncements since the time of the Second Vatican Council. Pope John XXIII said in a radio address of September 11, 1962: "In dealing with the underdeveloped countries, the church presents herself as she is and wants to be—as the church of all people and especially the poor." The Second Vatican Council declared in *Gaudium et spes* (*The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*) that "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ" (n. 33). Pope Paul VI stated in *Octogesima Adveniens*: "In teaching us charity, the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due the poor and the special situation they have in society: The more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others" (n. 23). Pope John Paul II declared to U.S. Catholics in his homily at Yankee Stadium that they should have "a special sensitivity toward those who are extremely poor, those suffering from all the physical, mental and moral ills that afflict humanity including hunger, neglect, unemployment and despair." It was with the Latin American bishops meeting in Puebla, Mexico, in 1979 that the term "option for the poor" emerged as a significant term. Pope John Paul II described this option as "a call to have a special openness with the small and the weak, those that suffer and weep, those that are humiliated and left on the margin of society, so as to help them win their dignity as human persons and children of God" (Address to Bishops of Brazil, July, 1980). In his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, (1991), the pope acknowledged the poverty of knowledge which prevents many people from taking "their place in an effective and humanly dignified way within a productive system in which work is truly central. They have no possibility of acquiring the basic knowledge which would enable them to express their creativity and develop their potential. They have no way of entering the network of knowledge and intercommunication which would enable them to see their qualities

- 3.9 Rooted in the Gospel and in the Church's contemporary call to be especially attentive to the poor, the body of the contemporary Institute has called all the Brothers and those associated with them in its Church-given mission to "establish a plan for their apostolic works which will make the direct service of the poor more and more their effective priority." Such a plan includes ways to recruit or train replacements and so permits Brothers to be released for such service.<sup>21</sup>
- 3.10 The District of San Francisco, in fidelity to this call of *The Rule*, has enacted District Chapter Act #180 (1995).

The plan called for in this Act found expression in the District Action Plan for 1999-2003. It has now been implemented in most educational works, has been further developed, expanded, and structured in District Chapter Act #187 (1999):

Resolved that the District Council and District Leadership Team collaborate with the Boards of Trustees and administrators of Saint Mary's College and the elementary and secondary schools and other educational works in the District in developing local plans to increase sensitivity to the unmet educational needs of the poor, and put into place policies and programs that make their respective institutions more accessible to the poor, which will include tuition-free enrollment of students that are at or below the federal poverty level, and who possess potential for academic success.

- 3.11 Consequently, the gathering of Brothers and Partners in the first Assembly on Mission (2002) called for the deepening commitment to the educational service of the poor by establishing further direction now incorporated in the Action Plan which follows this section. As a prelude to the statements of action, it is important to review some of the major issues which surround the priority given to the educational service of the poor.
- 3.12 Since the issuance of *The Declaration* in 1967, the question of "Who are

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appreciated and utilized. Thus, if not actually exploited, they are to a great extent marginalized; economic development takes place over their heads, so to speak, when it does not actually reduce the already narrow scope of their old subsistence economies" (n. 33).

The pope further acknowledged forms of poverty other than economic: The preferential option for the poor, he said, "is not limited to material poverty, since it is well known that there are many other forms of poverty, especially in modern society--not only economic but cultural and spiritual poverty as well. The Church's love for the poor, which is essential for her and a part of her constant tradition, impels her to give attention to a world in which poverty is threatening to assume massive proportions in spite of technological and economic progress" (n. 57). The first draft of the U.S. Bishops' pastoral on justice and the U.S. economy (n. 54) noted: "Indeed, the option for the poor is the social and ecclesiological counterpart of the emptying (*kenosis*) of Jesus in the incarnation (Phil. 2:5-11)."

<sup>21</sup> *Rule*, art. 40a. See also statements in the *Declaration* (1967) "that the apostolate with the poor is an integral part of the finality of the Institute" (28.2) and "every level of authority, then, every dialogue and decision in the Institute, must be in harmony with this orientation, so that all our plans and work will show in deed and in truth our 'return to the poor'" (34.4). These statements are presented again in the document of Brother John Johnston and the General Council, *The Lasallian Mission* (April 30, 1997), p. 68. The 1987/1993 *Rule* states that "the Brothers have always in view the promotion of justice in the light of the gospel and either the direct or indirect service of the poor as the preferred aspect of their ministry of education" (art. 40).

the poor?” has continued to be raised. It has been answered with increasing clarity by recent general chapters, documents from the center of the Institute, and by the current *Rule*.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> A description of the poor in *The Declaration* (1967) included those afflicted with various forms of poverty which, nevertheless, are often rooted in economic poverty: “First, we should avoid a rigid interpretation that defines the poor only from an economic point of view. . . . Second, we should avoid a formula so broad that would encourage us to maintain the status quo with an easy conscience. It is certain that poverty of intelligence, of affection, and of faith all call for our attention and our educational service. But it is not less true that material poverty very often lies at the root of these other forms of poverty and that there are many of the poorest who have no family, who are in poor health, or who cannot adjust socially” (n. 29).

- 3.13 Following the 1977 General Chapter, the poor to whom the Institute's mission is especially directed were more succinctly described as those young people whose parents/guardians

are persons having a marginal existence, whose security depends on a menial job, of which the wages are insufficient to provide a minimum standard of living for their family. They are also those who live in subhuman conditions of hunger, violence, and sickness, left at the margins of organized society by a variety of handicaps.<sup>23</sup>

Secondarily, from the point of view of the Institute's mission, the poor are those adults having a marginal existence as described.<sup>24</sup>

- 3.14 The current (1993) *Rule* describes the poor as “the economically deprived, victims of social injustice, delinquents, and those neglected by the rest of society.”<sup>25</sup> In more recent years, Brother John Johnston, former Superior General (1986-2000), has attempted to clarify not only the understanding of who the poor are but also that the “service of the poor through education” to which the Brothers vow themselves is a constitutive element of the Brothers' vocation.<sup>26</sup>
- 3.15 Brother John Johnston has also suggested a very practical way in which each District can gradually and with appropriate planning take seriously this constitutive element of the Brothers' vocation and the call in *The Rule*, art. 40a, to “make the direct service of the poor more and more their effective priority.”

The article does not suggest reckless action. It calls for a developmental plan. For a number of years, I have suggested that districts and all other

<sup>23</sup> *Our Mission. The Institute in the Young Churches*, Circular No. 408 (1978), p. 38. Quoted in *Educational Service of the Poor and the Promotion of Justice*, Circular No. 412 (1979), p. 16.

<sup>24</sup> *The Rule*, art. 3, clearly indicates that the mission of the Institute “is to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor. . . .” Emphasis added. Adult education, however, is not excluded: “When the Brothers work in the area of adult education, they put the same emphasis on the importance of persons, adapting their methods accordingly” (*The Rule*, art. 13).

<sup>25</sup> *Rule*, art. 40.

<sup>26</sup> “The human and Christian education of the poor is a constitutive dimension of our vocation. I am using that expression deliberately rather than the expression ‘service of the poor.’ I think that it is more exact and more precise. I have the impression that the ‘language’ some of us employ fosters dichotomy: education on the one hand, and service of the poor on the other hand; or of schools for the education of young people on the one hand, and of non-school apostolates for the poor on the other hand. This tendency towards ‘dissociation’ or ‘disintegration’ is unfortunate. The explanation of our vow of association for the educational service of the poor is clear:

‘By the vow . . . the Brothers commit themselves, as the Founder did, to conduct schools or other centers of Christian education that are accessible to the poor.’ (*Rule*, 39)” - Brother John Johnston, *Pastoral Letter: Living Authentically in Christ Jesus* (1 January, 1994), 40. See also his other pastoral letters, *Transformation* (1 January, 1993), 27-35; “Irrevocably Committed” to *Follow Christ Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (1 January, 1991), 33-36; *Solidarity* (1 January, 1989), 26-33; *The Destiny of the Institute: Our Responsibility* (1 January, 1988), 28-30.

sectors take at least one or two concrete steps in this direction at every chapter: steps such as releasing a certain number of men for missionary activity; releasing men for collaboration in existing works for the poor; forming a new community for educational service of the poor; creating a new educational work for the poor . . . .<sup>27</sup>

The 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter promoted “the evolution of our educational establishments so that they may be genuinely dedicated to the service of the poor.” The Chapter also called us to a personal conversion and a profound experience of God as a way to draw us closer to the world of the poor. By both reaching out to and entering into the world of the poor we continue to make our centers of learning accessible and welcoming to poor youth and their families. Through a process of awareness and formation, the Chapter encourages us to examine the factors which engender different kinds of poverty so that we bring to light their root causes.<sup>28</sup>

- 3.16 In the United States, and particularly in the District of San Francisco, there is a burgeoning population of first-generation and second-generation immigrant families who are economically poor and whose children have unmet educational needs. Within that population most numerous are Latino/Hispanic people. On the question of Latino population growth, consider the following fact:

Between 2000 and 2020, the number of second-generation Latinos in U.S. schools will double and the number in the U.S. labor force will triple. Nearly one-fourth of labor force growth over the next 20 years will be from children of Latino immigrants.<sup>29</sup>

And on the question of educational needs, some measure of the problem as it already exists may be gained by considering this data from 2002: Of Latino workers in California, 45 percent do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent. As for education beyond high school—45 percent of non-Latino workers have some post-secondary education, but less than 15 percent of Latino workers do.<sup>30</sup>

Poverty among these Hispanic families is a severe problem everywhere in the United States:

<sup>27</sup> Brother John Johnston, FSC, *Pastoral Letter: Solidarity* (1 January 1989), 31.

<sup>28</sup> The Documents of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter (Circular 447, 1 October 2000), 18-20.

<sup>29</sup> *The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth* (The Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C., October 2003), page 2.

<sup>30</sup> Latino Policy and Issue Brief, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, February 2002.

In 2001, 21 percent of Hispanics were below the poverty line. Hispanic children represented 18 percent of all children in the United States but comprised 30 percent of all children in poverty.<sup>31</sup>

Poverty is especially concentrated and growing in the west: Take California, the largest state in our District. According to a Columbia University study of 2002, in the period from 1996 to 2000, Latinos accounted for 61 percent of all poor children in California, whereas during the period from 1979 to 1983 they accounted for only 41 percent of poor children in the state.<sup>32</sup>

The growth of Hispanic population in our District has been rapid and will continue to be vigorous. The U. S. Census Bureau says that the total Hispanic population of California, Oregon, and Washington, which in 1995 was just over 9,600,000, will grow by the year 2015 to over 17,300,000.<sup>33</sup>

In the Census Bureau's ranking of the fifty states in order by Hispanic population, the states in which our District is at work are high on the list (California #1, Arizona #6, Washington #11, and Oregon #18).<sup>34</sup> Of course, this growth in population entails an increased need for educational services for the young:

The number of second-generation Latinos aged 5 to 19 years old is projected to more than double from 2000 to 2020, growing from 4.4 million to 9.0 million people. About one in seven of the new students enrolling in U.S. schools over these years will be a second-generation Latino.<sup>35</sup> The 2000s and 2010s will be transitional decades in which the second generation is on the rise.... The education of native-born Latino young people who are being raised by immigrant parents is likely to emerge as a key policy challenge.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.17 Lasallian and other Catholic educators in the western United States are working hard to meet this educational challenge. Although the total number of Catholic schools (elementary, middle, and secondary) in the

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<sup>31</sup> "Hispanic Population Reaches All-Time High," press release of June 18, 2003, from U. S. Census Bureau, Public Information Office.

<sup>32</sup> "The Changing Face of Child Poverty in California, National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University, August 2002.

<sup>33</sup> "Projected State Populations, by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1995-2025," U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>34</sup> "States Ranked by Hispanic Population, July 1, 1999," U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>35</sup> *The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth* (The Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C., October 2003), page 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, page 6.

nation declined during the past decade (from 8,423 schools to only 8,000 schools nationwide), in the western U.S. during that decade the number of Catholic schools has grown from 1,421 to 1,445.<sup>37</sup> Among that number are four new schools founded or co-founded by the District of San Francisco. It is evident that these schools are answering a genuine need: While Catholic school enrollment has declined in most regions of the country, the number of students enrolled in Catholic schools in the west has climbed from 330,382 in 1993 to 339,437 in 2003.<sup>38</sup>

Education is the form of Catholic ministry in which our District excels and to which it is dedicated. But other forms of sacramental and social ministry will be needed as well. The Catholics of the United States and particularly of the west must be fully aware of the dramatic implications for the Church. According to the Instituto Fe y Vida, “One of the greatest challenges facing our Church is ministry to Hispanic youth and young adults. The population of Hispanic Catholics is increasing rapidly especially among the young; 43% of the Catholics in the 11-29 age group are Hispanic; about 75% in California and over 50% in Texas and several dioceses in the U.S.”<sup>39</sup> In fact, it is predicted that by the year 2050, 86 percent of Catholics in the United States will be Hispanic.<sup>40</sup>

- 3.18 The willingness of Catholic educators to meet the challenge of educating Latino/Hispanic youth is particularly crucial, because faith-based education can provide important “social capital.” A study of Latino students released in 2003<sup>41</sup> observes that “Latinos are well-represented in Catholic schools—in fact, the Catholic school population includes a higher percentage of Latinos (7.4 percent) than the public schools” and that “religious schools provide another pathway in which religion builds school social capital for Latinos by reducing the school-family divide.” The study concludes that “religion plays an important role in educational success” and that “Latino students who actively attend church or who see their religious faith as very important to their lives are achieving higher

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<sup>37</sup> National Catholic Educational Association, Synopsis of the Annual Statistical Report on Schools, Enrollment and Staffing 2002-2003, Exhibit 8.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, Exhibit 15.

<sup>39</sup> Statistics quoted by Fe y Vida are from the National Research and Resource Center for Hispanic and Young Adult Ministry, October 2001. Instituto Fe Y Vida (an Institute for Formation, Evangelization and Leadership of Hispanic youth and Young Adult Ministry) is a publication and ministerial arm of Saint Mary's Press.

<sup>40</sup> “Symposium examines ways Hispanic Ministry can serve all Catholics” Hispanic Affairs Office of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *En Marcha*, Summer 2001.

<sup>41</sup> *Religion Matters: Predicting Schooling Success among Latino Youth*, Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame, January 2003.

grades in school, are staying on track in school, are having less trouble with teachers, other students, and homework, and identify with school more strongly.” Since the majority of the Latino/Hispanic population is Catholic, this educational challenge unquestionably demands our District’s attention even though we may be able to address only a small part of it.

- 3.19 For those of us who are Brothers the constitutive element of “apostolic ministry of education, especially of the poor” cannot, however, be understood or lived authentically unless it is integrated with the other constitutive elements of our vocation—“consecration to God as a lay religious . . . and community life.”<sup>42</sup> Nor is it possible to say in this era of “shared mission *and association*” that these constitutive elements apply only to us Brothers. Faith in and dedication to God and engagement in the apostolic mission of the Institute through a communal association that goes beyond mere collaboration are hallmarks of the Lasallian heritage for *all* believers who would be thoroughly engaged with it. The interpenetration of communion and mission, especially, is highlighted in Brother John Johnston’s and the General Council’s *The Lasallian Mission of Human and Christian Education: A Shared Mission* (April, 1997):

The process of communion within Lasallian educational communities is very important for the mission itself. The following text from *Lay Persons Faithful to Christ* makes the point strongly:

*“Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other; they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.”* (*Cahiers Lasalliens* 32,4)<sup>43</sup>

- 3.20 The Brothers have a special responsibility to further not only the mission of the Institute but also the communion which is its source and fruit. Two articles of *The Rule* are evidence of this:

The Brothers’ community makes known to the rest of the educational community the essential elements of the Lasallian tradition. The Brothers offer to those who desire it, a more intensified sharing of Lasallian spirituality, encouraging such persons to make a more specific apostolic commitment. The Brothers join in the formation of faith communities which are witnessing to the truth of what the Brothers profess.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *The Rule*, art. 10.

<sup>43</sup> p. 100 (3.32).

<sup>44</sup> *The Rule*, art. 17c.

The Brothers' community shares in the animation of the institutions in which it is involved. It develops therein an atmosphere of brotherhood rooted in mutual respect and freedom. Its action to promote the gospel aims to bring into being a community of faith in the midst of the educational community.<sup>45</sup>

- 3.21 The need for vital Brothers' communities is thus evident. But we, Brothers and Partners in the Institute's mission of "the human and Christian education of the young, especially the poor," are called to a communion among ourselves in the exercise of that mission so that it may achieve the same communion among those to whom it is directed. Such is not only a major dimension of the Lasallian heritage but one also of the entire Judaeo-Christian tradition. Indeed, following the most recent synod on consecrated life (1994), Pope John Paul II has endorsed lay persons' close association with religious congregations:

Today, often as a result of new situations, many Institutes have come to the conclusion that ***their charism can be shared with the laity***. The laity are therefore invited to share more intensely in the spirituality and mission of these Institutes. We may say that ***a new chapter***, rich in hope, has begun in the history of relations between consecrated persons and the laity.

These new experiences of communion and cooperation should be encouraged for various reasons. They can in fact give rise to the spread of a fruitful spirituality beyond the confines of the Institute, which will then be in a position to ensure the continuity in the Church of the services typical of the Institute ... The participation of the laity often brings unexpected and rich insights into certain aspects of the charism, leading to a more spiritual interpretation of it and helping to draw from it directions for new activities in the apostolate.<sup>46</sup>

Since the convening of the synod, it has become apparent that:

Whereas in times in the recent past, collaboration came about as a means of supplementing the decline of consecrated persons necessary to carry out activities, now it is growing out of the need to share responsibility not only in the carrying out of the Institute's works, but especially in the hope of sharing specific aspects and moments of the spirituality and mission of the Institute.<sup>47</sup>

- 3.22 Among us Partners and Brothers are a growing number of those who understand the Lasallian mission and are clearly committed to it and those with less understanding and commitment. We, however, both Partners and Brothers, recognize that all people of good will who contribute to the furtherance of this mission in whatever way are in communion with us to

<sup>45</sup> *The Rule*, art. 51a.

<sup>46</sup> *Vita Consecrata*, Pope John Paul II, 1996, #54, 55.

<sup>47</sup> *Starting Afresh from Christ: A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life* Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. #31.

the extent that they can be, are people on whom we depend, and are educators making an essential contribution to the mission whether or not they explicitly espouse *all* that constitutes the mission. In recent years the District has experienced what the Rule declared, “The Institute sees the existence of the various Lasallian movements as a grace from God renewing its own vitality.”<sup>48</sup>

- 3.23 District Chapter Act #178 (1995) recognized a transition taking place in the numbers and roles of Brothers and Partners together in mission. The Act provided for discussions and the adaptation of structures that would bring Brothers and Partners toward a greater collaboration in mission and in a deepening understanding of their respective vocations. The landmark 1998 and 1999 District Convocations were moments of inspiration and opportunities for general formation that helped nurture a sense of identification, for some, and internalization, for others, of a commitment to Lasallian mission.
- 3.24 We have witnessed in this District an increased number of those who have deepened their commitment to the accomplishment of the mission through participation in formation programs such as the Lasallian Leadership Institute, the Buttimer Institute, other District programs, association with Brothers over the years, and assuming increased leadership responsibilities. This has necessitated the adaptation of existing structures of decision-making and the invention of new structures where needed in order to ensure the ongoing participation of Partners.<sup>49</sup>

The first District Assembly on Mission and the subsequent 11<sup>th</sup> District Chapter helped draw into dialogue not only Brothers and Partners committed to mission, but structures committed to the assurance of an ongoing dialogue<sup>50</sup> and further action together on our association for mission. District Chapter Act #196 validated the work of the Assembly and, in effect, the Assembly itself as means by which we all gather to deliberate to better the service of the mission. Chapter Act #204 sets up the establishment of a new structure composed of Brothers and Partners, a Mission Council to advise the Visitor on the mission of the District.

The development of the growing commitment of Partners and new organizational structures has been accompanied by dynamic discussions around the topic of association. The 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter recognized that

<sup>48</sup> *The Rule*, art. 146.

<sup>49</sup> *Circular 447: The Documents of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter* (Rome: General Council, October 1, 2000) pp.13-14.

<sup>50</sup> Chapter Act #200, provides for a colloquium to “study and become informed about the current and emerging understanding(s) of association, so that they can better provide leadership in this area.”

the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is the first form of association desired by Saint John Baptist de La Salle. At the same time the General Chapter stated:

The development of the Lasallian Mission requires the Institute to allow itself to be stimulated by the dynamism apparent among partners and associates, and to encourage and support collaboration among themselves and with the Brothers, so that all can deepen their own understanding of association, in the light of the observations made, the Lasallian charism and the present theology of the Church.

. . . what stands out is, support for the processes of development of Lasallian association, the promotion of new groups and the respectful accompaniment of new forms of association which are arising from the initiatives of the Lasallian partners.<sup>51</sup>

The developments we are experiencing in the District reflect transitions in the relationship of Brothers and Partners to each other throughout the Institute and demonstrate the necessity of formation. The 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter suggests in Recommendation 4 that:

the formation of Brothers and Partners be a priority in the Institute over the next seven years. This formation, before any possible structure, will make a greater contribution to strengthening Association for the educational service of the poor, as a Lasallian response to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>52</sup>

The District is fortunate to reap the benefit of years of quality formation programs for both Brothers and Partners. Our Action Plan sets direction for the continuation of both the formation of individuals and the development of structures that support our Lasallian mission.

- 3.25 Those of us Partners who are lay, Catholic, or otherwise Christian recognize that our participation in the Lasallian educational mission in communion with one another and with the Brothers is a response to an imperative of our baptism to proclaim the Gospel, to be co-responsible in fulfilling the mission of Jesus Christ. Our participation in this educational mission is a necessary and fitting one, for our baptismal vocation requires that we proclaim the Gospel in the secular conditions that are the very fabric of our lives.<sup>53</sup> The *Documents of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter* suggest

<sup>51</sup> Botana, Antonio FSC, *Lasallian Association: The ongoing story, Brothers of the Christian Schools*, MEL Bulletin, (Rome March 2003), p.11.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> "When there is greater awareness of the mystery of the Church as *communion*, as *People of God*, everything in the Church is directed towards ministry, all the members are equal in the dignity conferred on them by baptism and all are co-responsible in the one mission of Jesus Christ. When this is understood, lay persons are equal with all others in the Church, that is, they are not simply people to be evangelized but are rather foremost in sharing the gospel themselves. . . . By reason of their Christian vocation, lay people are called to be in Gospel images *light, salt* and *leaven* in the very heart of family and social life, so that their role and mission are irreplaceable." *The Lasallian Mission*, 3.24 (p. 93).

that “Respectful of the particular identity of each individual and each group, Brothers and Associates must be allowed to live their respective vocations with the support and structures necessary for each group.”<sup>54</sup> All of us are called to deepen our identification with our respective vocations and to share their riches with each other and with those we serve. Together we are called to promote and nurture the distinct and mutually enriching characteristics of the Lasallian vocations of Partner and Brother. We call young men and women to service in the Lasallian ministry of education. Further, we invite some of them to seriously consider the distinctive call of vocation in the Church as a Brother in order to provide us with the unique inspiration and animation necessary for fulfilling the Lasallian mission.

**D. The Brothers: Living in Community, Facing Life Transitions, Responding to Contemporary Unmet Educational Needs, and Embracing Vocation Ministry**

- 4.1 As members of the Lasallian family we, the Brothers, are essential to the continuance of the Lasallian mission of human and Christian education. The goal is for vital Brothers to form vital communities. Focus Area #1 of the District Four-Year Plan for 1995-1999 set forth objectives to enhance and vitalize the personal, communal and apostolic life of the Brothers and these were summarized in Section A of the 1999-2003 Action Plan. Similar goals are evident in Proposition #18 of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter, as well as legislation from the 11<sup>th</sup> District Chapter (Act #201) concerning renewal of community life and the Brother’s accountability to his community for ministry:

The General Chapter requests all District, Sub-Districts and Delegations to devote a year to the renewal of our community life, based on the study of basic elements of the spirituality of Saint John Baptist de la Salle, which will allow us, among other things: -to share the experience of God; -to be better “expert guides in the spiritual life” (*Vita Consecrata* #55) in our mission.<sup>55</sup>

That on an annual basis and prior to the canonical visit, each Brother will examine the activities in which he is engaged for the mission and converse about these activities with his community, with specific reference to the following:

- a) quality of contact with students;
- b) participation in vocation ministry;
- c) contribution to the formation of Lasallian Partners;
- d) support of District and Institute mission initiatives;
- e) involvement in the service of the poor;

<sup>54</sup> Circular 447: *The Documents of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter* (Rome: General Council, October 1, 2000) p. 13.

<sup>55</sup> Proposition 18 of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter.

- f) engagement and cooperation with (Brothers, Partners and others) for the mission;
  - g) participation in ongoing training, education and skill development that supports fuller mission involvement;
  - h) commitment to prayer (personal and communal) and Lasallian spiritual.<sup>56</sup>
- 4.2 The implementation of Chapter Acts #201 and #206 direct us Brothers to appreciate and live our lives more authentically, contribute to the vitality of our communities and assume greater responsibility for inviting and accompanying others who consecrate themselves as Brothers for the mission.
- 4.3 Consecration is one of the three essential constitutive dimensions of the Brothers' life. We Brothers are called to live this dimension as fully as the communal and apostolic dimensions and to integrate the three.<sup>57</sup> Religious consecration unites a Brother in a special way to Jesus Christ and expresses itself in a number of ways:
- Religious consecration establishes an intimate communion between the person of each Brother and that of Jesus Christ. This consecration is expressed in vows of chastity, poverty, obedience, association for the service of the poor through education, and stability in the Institute.<sup>58</sup>
- Such consecration is also expressed and nourished in interior and communal prayer, the sacramental life of the Church, and a life of faith and zeal.<sup>59</sup>
- 4.4 It is evident, however, that each of us Brothers at some moments in our lives move through what the *Guide for Formation* terms “crises”—crises of faith, of vocation, of health, of relationships, of ministry, and of aging.<sup>60</sup> While each crisis in our lives has a personal character calling for a personal response, all of them are opportunities for maturation and deepening of faith.<sup>61</sup>
- 4.5 Some crises or transitions enable Brothers to enter into new apostolic work, different from the former work in which they were engaged and perhaps different from the work in which most Brothers in the District are

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<sup>56</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> District Chapter Act 201.

<sup>57</sup> *Rule*, art. 10.

<sup>58</sup> *Rule*, art. 24.

<sup>59</sup> *Rule*, Chapter 5.

<sup>60</sup> *Guide for Formation*, nn. 295-301. The word “crises” is used here to name situations that present both danger and opportunity. They are risky events from which one can emerge transformed if one meets the challenges of the crises.

<sup>61</sup> *Guide for Formation*, n.302.

engaged, though work that directly reflects the Lasallian mission of human and Christian education. In speaking of the older Brother, for example, the *Guide for Formation* says: “Old age affords opportunities for using personal talents in ways that could not be imagined in previous stages” (n. 292). The 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter emphasizes the continued involvement of the Brother in the mission of the Institute through the latter stages of his life:

The Visitor will discern with Brothers who have reached legal retirement age, or the end of their professional career, the kind of apostolic activity they should undertake (location, duration, courses...). By preference, this should be one that benefits the educational service of the poor, and which responds to requests from the District or the Institute to work in existing establishments or in those still to be created.<sup>62</sup>

- 4.6 Brothers in transition, and especially those who are transitioning into a less active phase of their lives, may be in a good position to offer their gifts and talents to meet evolving, *unmet educational needs*. According to the study, *The Future of Religious Orders in the United States* by Father David Nygren and Sister Miriam Ukeritis, meeting *unmet needs* is a critical key to revitalization of religious life in the United States provided that such an effort is a *corporate* commitment of a religious congregation.<sup>63</sup> New and established works of the District that are developing programs to meet unmet educational needs could benefit greatly from the presence and contribution of Brothers transitioning from one phase of their lives to another.
- 4.7 We Brothers, however, constitute an aging District. Some of us can no longer engage actively in the usual ways of exercising the educational apostolate because of our advanced age or conditions of health. We recognize, however, that “as religious vowed to the ministry of Christian education, the *first apostolate* of the Brothers consists in the witness of

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<sup>62</sup> General Chapter, Proposition 20.

<sup>63</sup> “If religious life is to continue to be a vital force in the church and the world, the Future of Religious Orders in the United States study concludes that dramatic changes must occur in most religious congregations in the United States. Fidelity to the spirit of the founder and responsiveness to *critical and unmet human needs* are basic to the ongoing mission of religious communities. Yet, while individual examples abound, *collectively* religious have acted in only limited ways on behalf of *absolute human needs*, new forms of poverty and demands that seemingly outstrip the capacity of any group to respond.

“Vatican II called religious to a return to the “spirit of the founder.” While most congregations have engaged in much study and devoted great efforts to move in this direction, the absence of *corporate commitment* to embody the group’s response to current *unmet needs* in light of Gospel imperatives stands in contrast to the *collective* vision and action, rooted in God, that marked the birth of most apostolic, monastic or contemplative congregations. Religious life as a social institution in American society is at a crossroads. To achieve a desired future, religious as a group as well as individuals must confront the forces that currently restrain them and reinforce those dynamics that will allow them to in fact be responsive to *absolute human need* in the context of their particular charism. A future marked by significant revitalization will emerge for those congregations that are rooted in their relationship with God and, in a spirit of fidelity to their founding purpose and responsiveness to *absolute human need*, confront the current gap between the Gospel and the culture.” “Research Executive Summary. Future of Religious Orders in the United States,” *Origins* 22:15 (1992), 270. Emphases added.

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their consecrated life.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, we recognize that, even if weakened by age or serious illness, we are not without an apostolate. Brother Álvaro Echeverría, Superior General, has pointed out that in regards to the topic of vocation, “what is most important is not a preoccupation about survival or about not dying. What is fundamental is to respond to the growing needs of the poor and the young and to respond with fidelity to their calls. They are our *raison d’être*. What should inspire us is the building up of the Kingdom. It is love for needy men and women that should inspire us to be **active witnesses**.”<sup>65</sup> The witness to all with whom we come in contact embodies the absoluteness of the reign of God and of personal love for Jesus Christ. This witness, then, assists all of us who have been consecrated by baptism to actualize that love ever more completely in our own lives. We Brothers recognize, too, that for those of us who are advanced in age or who need special health care, we must, in fraternal affection, provide such care as is needed.<sup>66</sup>

- 4.8 To say nothing of our continued participation in current educational works, we Brothers and Partners could not sustain for long new District commitments to evolving unmet educational needs without new Brothers and new Partners. It is incumbent on all of us, then, to assume a more active role in awakening, nurturing and accompanying vocations not only to the Brothers’ way of life but also to that of the Lasallian mission among dedicated men and women, whether lay, clerical, or religious. Many items for action call us, Brothers and Partners, to realize more deeply our own Lasallian formation for mission. Together we further identify our unique and shared contributions to mission and clarify the vocational call in us that allows us to call others.
- 4.9 Strengthened in our understanding and experience of consecration, we Brothers, not just vocation directors and coordinators, have a primary role in vocation ministry with respect to our own way of life. Much of the work of vocation ministry is the work of grace and of the relationships we have with young people. Prayer continues to be the primary activity of the pastoral ministry of vocations, calling on God for the grace to live authentically our vocation and the grace for young people to respond to the will of God unfolding throughout their lives. In our relationships with some of the young men we know well and who have already expressed an openness to our way of life, we are continually called to invite them toward Brotherhood with us. Brother Álvaro, Superior

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<sup>64</sup> *The Rule*, art. 24. Emphasis added.

<sup>65</sup> Br. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, “Letter to the Brothers: The Brother’s Vocation Today” (Rome 2002), p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> *The Rule*, art. 56; *District of San Francisco Christian Brothers Charitable Trust*, p. 5.

General, encourages us to accompany young men by offering “welcome.” “In this context, the pastoral ministry of vocations consists less in knowing what to say than in making time available for the young person who is searching for the right path.” He further calls us to consider the role of community in the accompaniment of vocations:

Young people today are more attuned to life experiences than to the world of ideas. In consequence, a community that questions, challenges and encourages a young person to follow Jesus is a community which is characterized by mutual love and has a special preference for those in need. It is a community where people live simply and happily, sharing their lives, work, and facilities. It is a welcoming community where people are available, pray together and celebrate God's mystery in their lives.<sup>67</sup>

Together and by association, within and through our consecration and community, we are called to welcome in and bring our welcome out to the world as experienced in our ministry.

- 4.10 To say that we Brothers have a *primary* role in the ministry of vocations is to say that we do not have the *exclusive* role. *The Rule* reminds us that the Brothers “invite in a special way the most committed members of the educational community to join with them in the pastoral ministry of vocations.”<sup>68</sup> Such a ministry is not limited to awakening young people to a possible call to religious life. It is part of our catechetical ministry in which we assist young people to discover their vocation in life whether that be as a lay person, a religious, or a priest.<sup>69</sup>

## E. Global Interdependence and Solidarity

- 5.1 In a time of diminishing numbers generally; of increasing numbers of “retired” Brothers and fewer numbers of active, full-time Brothers in the apostolate; of many challenges in the understanding and actualization of the shared mission; of the many educational needs on the West Coast to which we might possibly respond, is it even prudent to consider the further involvement of our District regionally and internationally? From simply a human standpoint, one might say “no.” From the standpoint of faith, one has to say “yes.”
- 5.2 In his closing address to the 41st General Chapter (1986), Brother John Johnston issued this call:

Brothers, we are one. We are an International Religious Institute at the service of the Church. While it is perfectly normal and necessary that we function as Regions, Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations, this Chapter has consistently reminded us that we are one, calling us to association and interdependence, calling us to fight against “provincialism.” Brothers, we

<sup>67</sup> Br. Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, “Letter to the Brothers: The Brother's Vocation Today” (Rome, 2002), p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> *The Rule*, art. 83.

<sup>69</sup> See *The Declaration*, n. 38.2.

have to help our Brothers appreciate the power for God that we possess if we really live and work together and by association as an International Religious Family. This commitment will require us to know one another better and to be disposed to share our personnel, our finances, and even to make ourselves available personally for service in areas with special needs.<sup>70</sup>

- 5.3 God has blessed the District of San Francisco with an abundance of both competent and dedicated personnel and with substantial financial resources. In the spirit of the knowledge that in giving we receive, we seek solidarity with our international Lasallian family by collaboration and mutual assistance with our Brothers and Partners throughout the world for the fulfillment of the Institute's educational mission. We as a District are committed to cooperative relationships with other sectors of the Institute and providing them with financial assistance and personnel.<sup>71</sup>
- 5.4 We move forward, then, in actions which, from a human standpoint only, may seem foolhardy. Viewed before God in Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith, however, these actions can mark us as true disciples of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and as ones whom the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares "are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved."

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<sup>70</sup> Circular 422, *The 41st General Chapter. Propositions and Messages* (Rome: The General Council, 1986), pp. 40-41.

<sup>71</sup> Focus Area #4, *District of San Francisco. Four Year Plan. 1995-99*, pp. 18-19.

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## ACTION PLAN

### A. The Brothers' Personal, Community, and Apostolic Life

CA #158  
CA #173  
CFA 3.21, 4.1-2  
R 22-80c

1. We Brothers live in community and emphasize certain actions to vitalize the consecrated, communal, and apostolic dimensions of our life together. These actions are:
  - acquiring a greater understanding and living out of the consecrated dimension of our lives;
  - becoming more dynamically involved in vocation ministry;
  - developing a better understanding of and engagement in both our traditional and new apostolic roles;
  - better integrating the constitutive elements of our life;
  - engaging in ongoing personal, spiritual, and professional development;
  - being sensitive to the world of the poor and engaging in the educational service of the poor;
  - selecting Directors who exercise effective leadership;
  - effectively animating the institutions with which our communities are associated.

CA #201

2. Annually, in preparation for the canonical visit, each Brother examines the activities in which he is engaged for the mission and converses about these activities with his community, with specific reference to the following:
  - a) quality of contact with students;
  - b) participation in vocation ministry;
  - c) contribution to the formation of Lasallian Partners;
  - d) support of District and Institute mission initiatives;
  - e) involvement in the service of the poor;
  - f) engagement and cooperation with others (Brothers, Partners, and others) for mission;
  - g) participation in ongoing training, education and skill development that supports fuller mission involvement;
  - h) commitment to prayer (personal and communal) and Lasallian spirituality.

Each community will discuss with the Visitor on the occasion of the canonical visit the activities engaged in by the Brothers for the sake of the mission.

CA #192

3. Directors are identified, selected, prepared, and reviewed as stipulated in District Chapter Act #192. The selection process is guided by the "Criteria to be Used for Confirmation of Candidate to the Office of Director" listed in Act #192.

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- CA #199 4. The Directors' Association provides resources to the communities on effective ways of using shared prayer.
- CBCT  
CFA 4.7 5. While accounting for the benefits of the Brother's community life and his medical needs, Brother leadership sees to it that the living arrangements of retired Brothers are met realistically, for example, independent care, assisted care, skilled nursing care. Modern methods of caring for retired Brothers are implemented and include preventive, restorative, and rehabilitative health care. A retired Brother's living situation allows him to experience the development of his potentialities for living out his commitment to Christ, the Church, and the Institute.
- CBCT  
CFA 4.7 6. In addition to providing for the physical, medical, and psychological needs of the Brothers in retirement, the District Leadership actively seeks ways to enhance the quality of life of Brothers who are no longer able to participate full time in active ministry. Funds are provided by the communities in which Brothers live, or when necessary by the District, to address the needs of retired Brothers with respect to continuing formation, recreation, and hobbies. Effort is made by Directors and District Leadership to involve the retired Brothers appropriately in community supported apostolic commitments.
- 43GC, Rec #15 7. Each Brother through the Personal Plan and each community through its Community Plan strengthens fidelity to the vow of association for the service of the poor through education. Each community designs and implements annually a ceremony in which each Brother "renews the vow of association, naming the other members of the community."
- 43GC, Prop #19 8. In 2005, the "Year of Renewal" designated to focus on the vow of association for the service of the poor through education, each community plans and implements a process to foster deeper understanding of the vow. District Leadership provides materials to the communities for promoting this deeper understanding.
- CA #201 9. The Director of Formation encourages Brothers to participate in formation opportunities sponsored by the District and Region, for example, Senior Years Forum, Buttimer Institute, Lasallian Leadership Institute.
- 43GC, Prop #24 10. The Director of Formation, in collaboration with the Director of Education, offers to all Brothers "a personal experience of life and

work in areas that are educationally and economically disadvantaged.” He also takes appropriate means to encourage Brothers to participate in these experiences and ensures that Brothers volunteering to participate are able to live in ways that support the integration of the three constitutive elements of the Brothers’ vocation.

CA #180  
CFA 3.1, and  
19,20  
R 40a

11. Brother Visitor, in collaboration with the Leadership Team and the District Council, continues to consider ways in which the Brothers can provide witness and animation to the various works of the District by establishing Brothers’ communities near as many as possible of the educational institutions and apostolic works of the District, especially those that directly serve the educational needs of the poor. Furthermore, while considering the creation of new communities, attention will be given to the possibility of combining or otherwise restructuring some existing communities to enhance the quality of life and the potential for apostolic witness.

43GC, Prop #22  
CA #198

12. To enable Brothers, especially those younger, “to choose to work in educational service of the poor and to lead a meaningful community life,” District Leadership will 1) “evaluate the present work of the Brothers in the establishments and the governing structures of the District,” 2) “draw up a plan reflecting future changes in the deployment of Brothers in existing establishments and in those still to be created,” and 3) “determine what needs changing in the governing structures of the District.”

CA #180  
CFA 3.9-21  
R40a

13. All of us Brothers actively involved in apostolates prepare for educational apostolates directly serving the poor or engage the poor more directly in our current apostolates.

CA #177  
CA #180  
CFA 3.16-18  
R40a

14. We Brothers who are actively involved in District apostolates are sensitive to the cultural diversity in the District and prepare ourselves to encounter those we serve where they are, culturally and linguistically, with special attention to the growing Hispanic-Latino populations on the West Coast. Hence, those of us not able to converse well in Spanish, take the necessary means to do so.

CFA 3.20  
R17c, 51a

15. The Brothers’ communities animate the broader educational community – administrators, faculty, staff, regents, trustees, parents, alumni, benefactors, and other supporters – by assisting them to understand and exemplify in their lives the underlying spirit, values and principles of the Lasallian educational mission.

CFA 3.21

16. Communities, after prayer and dialogue, and at their discretion,

- invite colleagues who are actively contributing to a Lasallian educational work to live with them and participate in their life for a specific period of time.
- CFA 4.8-10  
CA #194
17. The *Vocation Program for the District of San Francisco* (revised 2001) sets the guidelines for the pastoral ministry of vocations within the District. It is regularly reviewed by the District Council and, when revised, is submitted to the Visitor for approval.
- CA #206  
CFA 4.8-10
18. The Directors of Vocation Ministry will initiate and formulate a comprehensive pastoral plan for vocation ministry. This plan, to be completed by January 2005, will assist “the District Leadership in collaboration with Brothers, Partners, and their religious and educational communities to more intensely promote greater understanding and appreciation of the Brothers’ vocation among themselves and others.”
- CA #194  
CFA 4.8-10
19. Annually, the Brother vocation coordinators formulate for use in all communities, at least one practical activity for each of the categories outlined as responsibilities for the communities as denoted in the Vocation Handbook/District Chapter Act #194.
- CFA 4.7  
42GC, 9  
1999 AP A.9
20. All of us Brothers, committed to living our community life integrally, both individually and in community, intensify our prayer for vocations to our life. Those of us actively engaged in the educational apostolate, in trustful relationships with young people, extend an *explicit* invitation to those young men who seem qualified to be Brothers to consider the possibility that God is calling them to our life and mission.
- CA #194  
CFA 4.10
21. Each Brothers’ community associated with an educational institution establishes ways to support the institution’s efforts in vocation ministry. Their support will include educating members of the institution (e.g., parents, board members, faculty, staff, students) in the vocation of a Brother.
- 43GC, Rec #25
22. Before the next General Chapter Brother Visitor identifies and systematically prepares Brothers to assume responsibilities in initial, continuing, and senior years formation. Brothers already assuming these responsibilities are likewise systematically supported in their ongoing development as formators.
- CA #173  
CFA 4.4-6  
R 54b, 56  
42GC, 13
23. District Leadership and Brothers’ communities continue to supportively challenge those Brothers in life transitions, namely, Brothers whose current apostolic work has become tedious or

uninteresting, Brothers who are beset with health issues or personal crises, or Brothers who are approaching advanced age. District Leadership and their communities continue to assist them to successfully negotiate the challenges of their various transitions and, where appropriate, to prepare to meet evolving unmet educational needs within the District or the International Institute.

CA #203

24. Before January 2004, Brother Visitor, in consultation with the District Council, sees to devising “appropriate appeal, mediation, and reconciliation processes that could be used by Brothers who believe that they have been treated unjustly in matters relating to apostolic assignment and/or life as a Brother.”

## B. The Lasallian Educational Mission

- CFA 3.9-15  
43GC Prop #12,  
Rec #19  
See R 40a*
1. Responding to the call of the International Institute, District Leadership ensures that the direct educational service of the poor is a priority in the fulfillment of the educational mission of the District through the ongoing development of the established apostolates, through the stabilization and development of the recently founded works, and through the opening of new works where feasible.
- 43GC, Prop. #12*
2. By January 2004, District Leadership and the leaders of each apostolate will implement an assessment of the contribution of each work to the educational service of the poor. A summary of these assessments will be forwarded to the Superior General and his Council as required by the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter and used within the District to further develop local and District action plans.
- CFA 3.9-10  
43GC Rec #12*
3. Each educational institution in the District plans and schedules a series of activities aimed at orienting Brothers and Partners in that institution, and groups connected with that institution, in ways to attend to the educational needs of the poor within the institution and its neighborhood.
- CFA 3.9-10  
43GC Rec #12*
4. Each educational institution in the District a) devises at least one specific way in which that institution can be more accessible to the poor, and b) institutes, if it has not done so already, at least one program in direct, educational service of the poor beyond its normal commitments.
- AOM.A.#3*
5. The Secondary School Administrators' Association (SSAA), in collaboration with the District Leadership Team, will establish criteria and methods for evaluating the extent to which each educational work has met the challenge of B.3 and B.4 and will be prepared to recommend measures, if needed, to achieve the spirit of these action items.

By May 2005, a report of each educational institution's response to action items B.3 and B.4 will be submitted to their respective board of trustees and the programs that address these action items will be

- publicized across the District.
- AOM.A.#4  
CFA 3.15  
43GC Rec #12* 6. In order to support these local activities and programs named in B.3 and B.4, Brother Visitor, in collaboration with the District Leadership Team and District Council, will encourage local initiatives that may include a) awarding of grants and/or matching funds for proposed programs and projects, and b) providing Brothers and Partners with time and resources to investigate unmet educational needs in the local community and determine the viability of proposals to meet those needs. Priority is given to proposals that network with existing Lasallian institutions and programs.
- CA #187  
AOM.A #2  
CFA 3.9-15  
42GC, 5* 7. The District Leadership Team, in collaboration with the Boards of Trustees of the District schools, the administrators of Saint Mary's College and the SSAA, works to provide financial assistance for the enrollment of students who possess the potential for academic success and whose family income is at or below the federal poverty level, with minor adjustment.
- CA #187  
AOM.A #7  
CFA 3.9-15  
42GC 5* 8. The individual schools maintain or exceed 5% enrollment of students at or below the federal poverty level, with minor adjustment, while maintaining or exceeding their current financial aid funding.
- CA #187  
CFA 3.15* 9. The District educational institutions and works establish, if needed, appropriate remedial and compensatory programs for students receiving financial assistance described in B.7.
- CA #188  
CFA 3.9-15* 10. The District Leadership Team, in collaboration with the District Council, works with the Boards of Trustees and the administrators of Saint Mary's College and the middle and secondary schools to develop programs that support academically qualified students who are financially unable to continue their education in or among the Lasallian schools of the District.
- CFA 3.1  
See R 14* 11. The District Office of Education will assist each educational work to establish ways in which Brothers and Partners can awaken a sense of social responsibility in all their students, especially the most privileged, help them to develop a greater respect for the poor as children of God, and encourage them to deepen their personal sense of responsibility for the needs of the poor.
- AOM.A #1  
CFA 3.1  
43GC, Rec #11  
See R 14* 12. District Leadership will assist each educational work to understand, adopt, and evaluate effective models of service-learning across the curriculum, and will encourage that these efforts become

- recognized within and outside the District.
- CA #186  
AOM.E #3  
CFA 5.3
13. Saint Mary's College develops cooperative ventures which will increase participation with service to apostolates within the District and the International Institute, especially in service of the economic poor.
- CA #182  
AOM.E #3  
CFA 5.3
14. The District Leadership Team and Saint Mary's College continue to collaborate on the establishment of a program for the continuing education and professional development of Brothers and Partners from developing countries.
- CA #191  
AOM.E #3  
CFA 3.25
15. The School of Education at Saint Mary's College and the District Office of Education collaborate to develop a plan that would provide direct services in the areas of teacher and administrator development and outreach services to the Lasallian educational institutions and programs in the District of San Francisco.
- AOM.E #1
16. The District Office of Education works with local leadership to assure that the Lasallian educational tradition is at the foundation of teacher preparation programs in the School of Education at Saint Mary's College and at all other educational apostolates of the District.
- AOM.E #3
17. Saint Mary's College creates structures for the ongoing enhancement of the Lasallian heritage and mission within the College's existing schools and programs.
- AOM.E #3
18. Saint Mary's College and the District Office of Education develop ongoing assistance to each other in areas such as teacher recruitment, Lasallian formation materials, and liaisons to District mission related activities.
- AOM.A #8, #10,  
#11  
43GC Prop 11,  
Rec 10, 24
19. District Leadership continues to facilitate the development of comprehensive, progressive, and sustainable local and District-wide programs for the initial and continuing Lasallian formation of Brothers and Partners who work in District apostolates. Such programs include:
- formation in social justice, cultural trends that affect modern society, and experiences of immersion into the area of educational service of the poor;
  - appropriate and necessary formation for those responsible for local formation activities;
  - ongoing District-wide forums where Lasallian educators address



*AOM.E #6 & R  
#5*

27. District Leadership continues to assist each educational work in the regular assessment of its Catholic, Lasallian character, as well as the effectiveness of its Lasallian mission. Such assessments include, but are not limited to, the Catholic Lasallian Assessment Process (CLASP).

*CA #206  
43GC, Prop 26*

28. The Directors of Vocation Ministry, in order to assist the District Leadership Team in collaboration with Brothers, Partners, and their religious and educational communities to more intensely promote greater understanding and appreciation among themselves and others of the Brothers' vocation, will initiate and formulate a comprehensive pastoral plan for vocation ministry.

*CA #200  
AOM.R #2  
43GC Prop #1*

29. In order to better provide leadership in the area of association, Brother Visitor and the District Council will convene by July 1, 2004, a colloquium to study and become informed about the current and emerging understanding(s) of association. Membership will include, but not be limited to, the District Leadership Team, the District Council, and the District Office of Education. Results of the colloquium will be shared with the entire District.

### C. Leadership and the Structure of Educational Works

- 43GC Prop #5 & #6  
CA #202,  
CFA 3.22
1. Brother Visitor will convene an Assembly on Mission prior to each Ordinary District Chapter, and furthermore, Brother Visitor and the District Council will appoint a committee by January 2004 to evaluate the previous District Assembly on Mission and plan for the next Assembly on Mission.
- 43GC Prop #5  
CFA 3.22  
CA #204
2. Brother Visitor and the District Council will establish a District Mission Council which will provide advice to the Visitor and District Leadership regarding realization of the educational mission of the District.
- The first Mission Council will be constituted by January 1, 2004, and serve until the next District Assembly on Mission.
- AOM.A #5
3. The District Leadership Team and the District Council work together to assess the effectiveness of the current composition and operating practices of the Lasallian Education Corporation (LEC) and implement any appropriate changes.
- AOM.E #2
4. The Office of Education will provide support for Boards of Trustees of school corporations associated with the LEC through, but not limited to, the following:
- Initial orientation in Lasallian heritage and Policy Governance for prospective trustees;
  - ongoing formation in Lasallian heritage and Policy Governance for current boards of trustees;



**D. Regional and Overseas Apostolates**

The District of San Francisco through the District Leadership Team:

*CFA 5.1*

1. Seeks ways to strengthen its identity in order to further its interdependence with other sectors of the Institute to better serve the District, the Region, and the International Institute.
2. Collaborates with the Superior General and his Council in assisting works and projects in other sectors of the Institute.
3. Will maintain regular contact with the Secretariats at the Generalate in order to insure appropriate collaboration relative to international events/issues.

*CFA 5.1*

4. As a member of the U.S./Toronto Region, continues to support regional activities and programs, for example, Lasallian Volunteers, regional vocation, education, and formation programs, and actively participates in the future shaping of the Region.

*CFA 5.3*

5. Collaborates with the District of New Orleans/Santa Fe in financial, personnel, and management issues.

*CFA 5.3*

6. Continues its association with the Pacific Asia Regional Conference (PARC) by providing consulting services, personnel, and/or financial support to PARC, that is, District of Australia/New Zealand

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- and Papua New Guinea, District of Colombo, District of Philippines, District of Vietnam, Sub-District of Pakistan, Delegation of India.
- CFA 5.3* 7. Continues with the U.S./Toronto Region, and as a District to provide financial support, consulting services, and personnel to the Lwanga District of Africa.
- AOM.E #5* 8. Pursues further opportunities for cooperation among the Region's colleges and universities in order to share resources and to support exchanges among faculty, students, and staff, for example, opportunities for students to study abroad.
- AOM.E #5* 9. Collaborates with educational institutions in the Region to provide education and formation programs via the Internet.
- AOM.E #4* 10. Continues to increase cultural awareness and mutual respect within the District through contact with international institutions and individuals.
- AOM.E #5* 11. Intentionally works with other Lasallian educational centers in the Region to develop national and international recognition of the term "Lasallian" for representing quality institutions dedicated to serving the educational needs of students, especially the poor.

**E. Stewardship**

- CA #160  
CFA 3.1, 11*
1. The District continues to set annual funding for service of the poor at a minimum of 30% of The Benilde Religious International Trust operating budget to assist educational apostolates.
- CA #172  
AOM.A #9  
CFA 3.1, 11*
2. The District continues to adhere to perpetuity as the fundamental principle underlying the investment policies for the De La Salle Institute portfolio and The Benilde Religious International Trust portfolio.
- CA #168  
CFA 4.2-4*
3. The District continues to provide for the retirement and health care needs of the Brothers in accordance with the Extraordinary District Chapter Act #168, approved in 1993.
- CFA 3.1*
4. The District continues to provide support services to its educational apostolates.
- CA #180  
AOM.E #7  
CFA 3.9-3.18*
5. While still adhering to the principle of perpetuity and respecting the percentage of budget allotted to service of the poor in educational apostolates, De La Salle Institute requests the trustees of The Benilde Religious International Trust to provide funding as needed for the establishment and continuance of new educational works

for the poor, and as provided for in this *Action Plan*.

