

Together and By Association

The first-ever District Assembly on Mission convenes at Saint Mary's College of California, Summer 2002.

Writer: Jeanne Gray Loughman

Guest writers: Limarys Caraballo, Brother Norman Cook, FSC,
Brother Lawrence Haley, FSC, Bill Krueger

Photography: Susan Spann, Brother James Joost, FSC, Jeanne Gray Loughman

Brothers and their lay and religious colleagues complement each other and associate together in the accomplishment of the mission. Together, they are increasingly growing into "a better understanding and an effective living of that complementarity and communion in fulfilling the mission, through processes... discussion... and provisional structures to facilitate the sharing of the Lasallian mission" (District Chapter Act #187, 1999).



In Rome, Italy, in June 2000, the Brothers' 43rd General Chapter decreed that "in Districts, Sub-Districts, and Delegations, the Brothers and their Associates create a structure—or improve an existing structure—responsible for the Lasallian educational mission, in which all participate with a deliberative vote" (Proposition 5). In response to this decree, and to further strengthen and expand Lasallian Partnership between the Brothers and their lay and religious colleagues, the District of

“DESPITE OUR DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES, WE CAME AWAY UNITED AND FOCUSED; GRATEFUL FOR THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR LASALLIAN HERITAGE. THE ASSEMBLY WAS AN EMPHATIC STATEMENT OF THE BROTHERS’ COURAGE TO LOOK AT THE FUTURE, TO SHARE THAT VISION, AND THUS TO EXPAND AND ADVANCE THE HERITAGE THROUGH SHARED DELIBERATION.”

— *Greg VanderZanden, La Salle High School, Milwaukie*

San Francisco held an historic District Assembly on Mission at Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga from July 28 through August 2, 2002. The assembly was the first such gathering of many expected to take place throughout the Lasallian world, and was an event unprecedented in the centuries-old history of the Brothers' International



Ted Tsukahara, bottom left, professor at Saint Mary's College, and Annie Johnston, top right, faculty member at La Salle High School, Pasadena, in committee discussions during the Assembly.



Institute. The extraordinary meeting provided the Brothers' colleagues an opportunity to take a more active role, with voice and vote, in the Brothers' deliberative bodies. Recommendations adopted by the assembly were forwarded to the Brothers' Eleventh District Chapter for review. Together, the work of the assembly this past summer and the work of the Chapter in October and December 2002 will set the direction for the educational mission in the District and the means for fulfilling it through the next four years, 2003-2007.

To Support One Another in a Common Mission

In the District of San Francisco and in the Institute globally, Brothers made up 5 percent of the teaching and administrative personnel in Lasallian schools in 2001, and lay persons and other religious made up the other 95 percent. The District Assembly provided the



Pictured (l-r): Gery Short (Director of Education, De La Salle Institute), Brothers Claude Reinhardt (General Councilor), William Mann (Vicar General), David Brennan (Visitor, San Francisco District), Thomas Johnson (Regional Manager of Christian Brothers Conference), David Hawke (Visitor of the Australia / New Zealand / Papua-New Guinea District), and Stanislaus Campbell (Auxiliary Visitor of the San Francisco District). Gery Short and Brother Stanislaus served as Co-Chairs of the Assembly on Mission.

kind of structure called for by the General Chapter that would create a process to more formally facilitate increased sharing of the Lasallian mission between Brothers and their colleagues. Months of planning by the ten-member Preparatory Committee, miles of travel by participants from all parts of the West Coast, reams of copy paper for reports and materials, all came together on a beautiful summer afternoon on the Saint Mary's College campus as the assembly convened. It was fitting that the event be held there, for it was the invitation to take over Saint Mary's that first brought the Brothers to California in 1868.

As the assembly opened on Sunday evening, July 28, Brother David Brennan, Visitor, welcomed the delegates as leaders of the District—Brother Directors, teachers, administrators, board members, counselors,

staff members, and coaches. “The future of the Lasallian mission in the District,” he encouraged, “has been, and will continue to be, in your hands for years to come.”

Assembly delegates, appointed and elected, numbered nearly 140 men and women, lay and religious, all actively engaged in the work of education in the San Francisco District. Brother William Mann, FSC, Vicar General, and Brother Claude Reinhardt, FSC, member of the Brother Superior's General Council, traveled from Rome to attend as assembly consultants and shared their reflections, hopes, and expectations concerning the District of San Francisco. The two provided delegates with a needed international perspective of the Institute, and witnessed the District Assembly on Mission as the first of its kind in the history of the Institute.

Dorm Rooms, Long Hours, and Lasallian Fellowship

Delegates lived in campus residences and maintained a full schedule that included long hours of work in ten separate committees, general assembly meetings, liturgies, and socials. The official work of the assembly got underway on Monday, July 29, as each of the seven members of the Dis

REMEMBER THAT YOUR LEADERS AREN'T GOING ANYWHERE IF YOU'RE NOT GOING WITH THEM. MY GUESS IS THAT IN FOUR YEARS YOU'LL BE SOMEWHERE TOGETHER, NOT SOMEWHERE ALONE. AND I BELIEVE THAT IN FOUR YEARS YOU WILL BE MUCH CLOSER TO THE POOR WITHOUT ABANDONING THE PEOPLE YOU PRESENTLY SERVE.

—Brother William Mann, FSC
Vicar General, Rome

trict Leadership Team gave a presentation on his responsibilities in the District administration, as well as a report on achievements over the past several years in response to the directives of the 1999 District Action Plan.

At the thirteen general assembly sessions held during the week, Rules of Procedure, based on those used by the Brothers at their District Chapters every four years, provided a cohesive meeting structure, with a good dose of humor frequently offsetting the formality. A panel of three moderators assured that discussion and debate on committee reports and propositions moved along. Votes were taken by voice and by

placards, and the tireless General Secretary and Secretariat staff kept copious records of the proceedings. By the final general assembly session on Friday, August 2, the last day of the event,

30 propositions and 15 reports had been debated and voted on. All reflected a desire on the part of delegates to continue a strong, District-wide commitment to formation of Brothers and Partners in the Lasallian heritage, and to academic excellence, service of the poor, strong religious studies curricula and campus ministry programs, improved governance structures at the District and local levels, and continued outreach by all District works to the less fortunate in their communities. The majority of the propositions and reports brought for a vote were approved, and these were forwarded to the District Chapter for ratification. Others, after much thoughtful discussion and respectful debate on the assembly floor, failed to win approval.

“WHAT STRUCK ME MOST WAS HOW NATURALLY EVERYONE WORKED TOGETHER, AS IF WE HAD BEEN DOING SUCH ASSEMBLIES FOR YEARS. IT WAS A TRUE SIGN THAT THE COMMON WORK AND VOCATION OF LASALLIAN TEACHING HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR A LONG TIME ALREADY. THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS BEEN AT WORK AND WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT!”

—*Brother Charles Hilken, FSC*
Saint Mary's College



“The bread of life and the cup of salvation”: Brother Edmund Dolan, FSC, and Professor Carole Swain share communion in the College chapel. Behind them are Brother Celestine Cormier, FSC, (center) and Brother Charles Hilken, FSC (right).

A closing liturgy on Friday evening was followed by a banquet that culminated in rounds of applause for the success of the assembly, and a rousing chorus of the hymn to De La Salle, “Honneur à Toi,” by the Brothers.

Brother David’s closing remarks echoed the sentiments of all gathered in the room: “Through your Spirit we pray that you continue to bless us, our communities and families, our students and colleagues, especially as we strive to fulfill the educational mission which is your work. Give us safe travel home, and place us, finally, at your heavenly banquet.” ■

A group photo of the District Assembly Delegates is on the inside back cover of the magazine. For a complete report on the Assembly on Mission, visit the District of San Francisco Web site at www.delasalle.org.



“THE PARTNER PROPOSITION”

WHEREAS, THE BROTHERS OF THE DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN THE SAVING MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ON THE WEST COAST SINCE 1868, AND

WHEREAS, THE BROTHERS WILLINGLY AND ACTIVELY SHARE THIS MINISTRY WITH PARTNERS, AND

WHEREAS, THE BROTHERS HAVE INCLUDED THE PARTNERS IN EVER-INCREASING LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING ROLES, AND

WHEREAS, THE BROTHERS AND PARTNERS HAVE COLLABORATED IN SETTING DIRECTION FOR THE DISTRICT IN THIS HISTORIC ASSEMBLY,

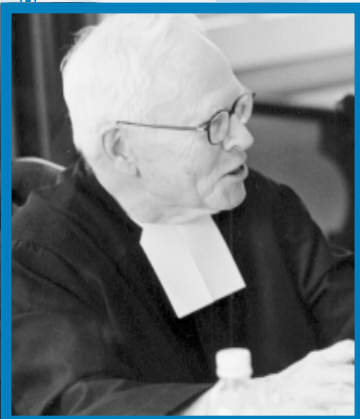
BE IT RESOLVED THAT WE, THE PARTNERS OF THE BROTHERS OF THE DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO, EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO THE BROTHERS IN SHARING THIS MINISTRY WITH US, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT WE, THE PARTNERS, FURTHER EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO THE BROTHERS FOR INCLUDING US IN THIS HISTORIC ASSEMBLY, AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT WE, THE PARTNERS, COMMIT TO WORKING WITH THE BROTHERS, TOGETHER AND BY ASSOCIATION AS LASALLIANS, IN THIS SAVING MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

Approved unanimously via voice vote.

*Underlay: the Assembly
in general session*



Clockwise from top left: Brian Stanley, Brother Dominic Berardelli, FSC, Tina Bonacci, Brother Brendan Kneale, FSC

Reflections on the District

Brother Lawrence Haley, FSC
Former Director, Blessed Solomon Community, Sunnyside, Washington



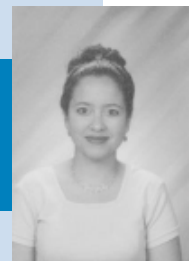
The assembly was a turning point in the history of the District of San Francisco. Without the grace of hindsight, I cannot say for certain where it all will lead, which makes me a bit nervous, but I am certain of one thing: we are in the process of becoming something unlike what we were just a few years ago. Like the Founder's Gospel journey that took a lifetime, we who carry on his work on the West Coast are also on a journey.

At the assembly, we Brothers quite graciously let go of any sort of monopoly on the mission. With a median age of over 60, this had to be done. The 42nd General Chapter described us as “the heart, the memory, and the guarantors of the Lasallian charism.” There are many Lasallian Educators who are not Brothers—I want to avoid the use of the term “partners”—but who have demonstrated they can (and do) fulfill at least some aspects of this not-so-indispensable function. If we Brothers don't want to become irrelevant, we will have to work hard at authentically living our lives according to the constitutive elements of our vocation: community, consecration, and apostolate.

The Lasallian Educators who are not Brothers now have a stake in the mission that they did not have before the assembly. We passed a number of propositions that will almost inevitably be approved by the District Chapter—work that has until now been exclusively done by the Brothers and only at the Chapter. I suspect that the “new blood” has brought new perspectives to the deliberations. I don't think we are ready yet for a formal association of lay educators, but, insofar as the Spirit may be calling for such a level of commitment, we may have to respond to it and to the reality of schools without Brothers.

Brother William Mann spoke of a positive energy unleashed by the assembly. He suggested we jettison the image of the bus for the airplane, one ready to take off. It may not really matter who's in the driver's seat (isn't God supposed to do that, anyway?); what matters is that we are on the move. ■

Limarys Caraballo
Faculty Member, Saint Mary's College High School



In a video presentation at the 1998 District Convocation, Greg Kopra remarked that while many religious orders were closing ministries due to lack of vocations, the Brothers were in fact expanding and bringing in lay partners to share in their Mission. The trust and faith implicit in the forward movement of the Lasallian community impressed me greatly. I can pinpoint that moment as the first time I felt wholeheartedly drawn to the Lasallian charism. Since then, I have been blessed by one wonderful experience after another: continuing to teach at Saint Mary's in Berkeley, participating in the Lasallian Leadership Institute, working at St. Joseph Boys' Village in South India. This summer, as a delegate to the District Assembly on Mission, I witnessed the most concrete manifestation of the generosity, faith, trust, and true feeling of association underlying all my previous experiences in the Lasallian community.

Although at first some of us may have been somewhat intimidated by the formality of the proceedings, we were inspired and encouraged by the extent to which the lay partners were included in every aspect of the assembly, even in the preparatory stages. In all the opening sessions, from Brother David's remarks to the presentations of the District Leadership Team, the delegates were entrusted with knowledge about the District and International Institute necessary to make recommendations about the future of the Lasallian mission as carried out in its apostolates. In our various committees, we worked as passionate, innovative, and committed Brothers and lay partners. We were all clearly invested in the Work. During the general sessions, the very air in the Moraga Room was charged with the promise of growth and spirit of faith.

I still marvel at the courage of the Institute in taking on such risks and challenges—but I am grateful for it—because it has yielded this ultimate expression of the trust that the Brothers have in the lay partners. The District Assembly on Mission is, I believe, the embodiment of Shared Mission. ■

Assembly on Mission

Bill Krueger

Faculty Member, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory



Let us remember... There is so much to remember from summer 2002. I spent the vast majority of the summer at Saint Mary's College, attending both the Buttimer Institute and the District Assembly.

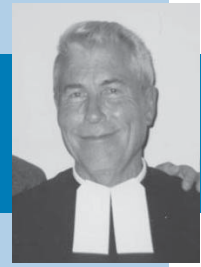
On our drive from Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep out to the College for the assembly, Brother Donald Johanson and I spoke about high hopes but realistic expectations. I related my tremendous excitement about attending the historic assembly. Yet, I did not believe that monumental progress would take place. The mission was set. It was our task to focus on that mission in relation to present realities. This gathering was yet another step in the growing relationship between the Brothers and Partners. We have encountered each other in many situations, but this would be the first in this formal, policy-making circumstance. For me and many lay colleagues I spoke with, there was a wonderful spirit as the assembly approached. I wondered, though, what the Brothers were saying to one another.

What a gathering of people! That first evening was a wonderful mix of seeing old friends and meeting new ones. It was a most impressive display of educators: folks committed to the mission of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. It was very energizing. The next morning, we walked into the assembly hall for the first time. It was a dazzling array of tables all laid out with reports and placards and such. As a history teacher, I thought back to many significant assemblies in history. This felt like such a moment. Over the next few days, we worked at getting comfortable with the process. After some initial awkwardness, we gathered momentum as the week progressed. It was a fascinating thing to watch as the various committees became cohesive, working units, as well as part of a whole that took on a personality of its own.

While the impact of the assembly propositions remains to be seen, I believe that tremendous strides were made in the relationship between the Brothers and Partners. Commitment to our students was enhanced by the experience. And we will be able to continue that commitment, together and by association. ■

Brother Norman Cook, FSC

Associate Director of Vocation Ministry, and former Visitor



The assembly was definitely a most timely gathering, as Brothers and lay Lasallian associates were eager and ready to be together to encourage and support one another in a common mission. How to do best what needs to be done was the challenge that the assembly handled well. Finding money to pay the bills continues to be a priority, but the assembly delegates were not intimidated by the financial challenge. They determined to be more creative in achieving funding goals while remaining calm, sensible, realistic, and faithful to God's providential plan—a truly Lasallian stance.

The Brothers seemed eager to embrace the expertise, talents, and limitations of their lay colleagues, who in turn showed tremendous respect and admiration for the Brothers' vocation, and were grateful for the opportunity to be part of the mission with the Brothers, rather than despite them. It was a moment of privileged grace for both groups. A respect and reverence for Saint John Baptist de La Salle was obvious, for his determination to do what is right and just for young people. A love for the Founder and for the roots and traditions of the Institute created a bond among the delegates as people determined to make a difference! This bond will be further enhanced by the District Chapter, at which Brother delegates are taking into serious account all the assembly resolutions and position papers.

The presence of so many from the College had a positive impact on the high school delegates. The College has much to offer the District in leadership and services, and seems more than willing to do this. Brother David's remarks throughout the assembly were filled with hope, challenge, and humor. He invited us to dream together, to face the future "together and by association", and to be serious about education of the poor, so that hypocrisy is not our legacy. He (somewhat uncharacteristically!) led us in cheers at the closing banquet, capturing the euphoria of the group for the assembly's success! A nice beginning for what is yet to come! ■