

Our Everyday Work

THE VIRTUES OF A GOOD TEACHER IN LASALLIAN SCHOOLS

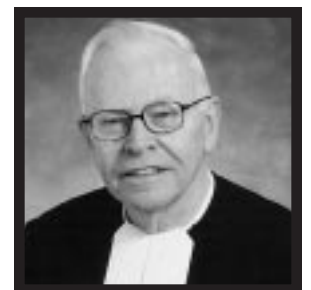
By Brother Brendan Kneale, FSC, Jacqueline Tasch, and Terri Wetter



There is no role that has a more dramatic impact on a student's life than that of the teacher. One way to measure that impact is to see how teachers engage students and, ultimately, help them move from wonder to wisdom. That is to say, academic education is the adventure on which the teacher leads the student to acquire the skills of thought needed in order to become wise – that most human of undertakings. College preparatory schools help youth to gear up for a lifelong intellectual exploration. In stimulating wonder, teachers help motivate students to pursue wisdom. They do so with the tools of logic, language, persuasiveness, sensitivity, quantitative skills, and appreciative insights.

But we do not imagine that schools are the only educators of youth. Family, church, workplace, peer culture, and the media are some of the other major educating agencies. Family and church especially need our support and cooperation – forming character and educating the heart. Still, no other place than the school has as its primary responsibility teaching the intellectual skills needed for life in the modern world, for both its human and Christian dimensions. In every Lasallian school this responsibility, however, is not simply for an education with the added dimension of Christianity; it is rather for Christianity with the added dimension of education.

Throughout the 1999 - 2000 academic year, *Signs of Faith* will provide a closer look at the everyday work that Lasallian educators undertake with their students. In this issue, we visit with teachers from La Salle High School in Milwaukie, Oregon, and Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, California. It becomes clear that these classroom leaders are very much in a tradition that emphasizes the famous “Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher”, a list found at the end of Saint La Salle’s classic text on school administration – seriousness, silence, humility, prudence, wisdom, patience, restraint, gentleness, zeal, watchfulness, piety, and generosity. It is the romance and challenge of Christian teachers’ lives, in their everyday work, to engage students’ minds and hearts and help embed them in the Christian outlook, in fulfillment of the Lasallian goal: to provide a “human and Christian education”.



– Brother Brendan Kneale, FSC