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**Cathy:** *What effect has this District Chapter had on your day-to-day work?*

**Brother Thomas:** Just about every decision I’ve been involved with, in regards to school administration, involves my lay Partners. That’s always been a part of the way I work, part of what I do. This Chapter gave me a real affirmation of our Partners’ commitment that had been taken for granted in the past. It took on much more depth with me than before. At the very end of the process, a resolution was presented which was probably the most touching part of the entire Chapter for me. It was when our Partners spoke about their very strong commitment to, and their belief in, the Brothers and our mission together. It told me just how much we mean to our Partners and how much they mean to us.

**Martin:** The whole District feels that we are in service of the poor; it is more than just a nine-to-five job. It’s an actual part of our lives; it’s a vocation. There is much

more of an understanding that what we are dealing with financially does not always have to make sense. We have two choices: either we abandon the students whom we serve, or we serve them and find the resources. Now, there’s more of a commitment to find the resources, to take the risks.

**Brother George:** *Did this Chapter give you any new insights about how we see ourselves and our future?*

**Brother James:** The experience of this and previous Chapters verifies that we have a vocation, and our vocation takes different forms. As Martin just said: people are not just employees; they’re more than Partners; this is their vocation for their time of life with us. We are going through a great evolution. We’re attracting a broader range of students and keeping the very poor students. Our challenge is to make sure we become more diverse, to make sure we do not fail to serve the students from the oldest, poorest, and most troubled neighborhoods. That’s where we do our best work.

**Cathy:** *It seems that a shift occurred among everyone: where the Partners, and the Brothers’ view of the Partners, went from a feeling of being on the outside of the circle to entering the inside of the circle.*

**Carole:** I agree. It was interesting that on the first day I felt like I was on the outside; then to go from the outside in. It feels powerful because of the renewed commitment the Brothers were making and that we were making with them. I came back feeling strong. I feel I don’t have a choice anymore; I am a part of the Brothers’ work forever. Before, I was happy to be doing the work I was doing. But now I feel a sense of responsibility to spread the Lasallian mission. 🌸