

# Lasallian Spirituality

F A I T H   ★   C O M M U N I T Y   ★   S E R V I C E



For More Information:  
[www.lasallenetwork.org](http://www.lasallenetwork.org)

"Touching the Hearts of Students"  
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&  
The publications section of  
[www.lasalle.org](http://www.lasalle.org)

## Characteristics of Lasallian Schools

*The Lasallian spirituality of education calls forth ten attributes, qualities, priorities, or what are perhaps best called basic operative commitments that come from the writings of St. John Baptist de La Salle and are evident in the lived experience of Lasallian schools over the past 300+ years.*

**Centered in and Nurtured by the Life of Faith:** De La Salle's overriding concern in all that he did was the life of faith, the reality of God's saving presence in the midst of daily experience. Lasallian teachers readily share their faith life with their students, both in their zeal for education and in their daily personal encounters. God's presence gradually becomes an evermore living and appreciated reality.

**Trusting Providence in Discerning God's Will:** De La Salle confidently rested in a complete and radical trust in God's providential care for him, for the Institute, and for its work of education. Lasallian teachers share this radical trust by recognizing God's face in every school or classroom situation. The work is God's work, first and last.

**With Creativity and Courage:** De La Salle's commitment to the Christian Schools led him to make bold, creative moves in response to God's Will. Lasallian teachers demonstrate the creativity of God's Love through their daily resourcefulness and resilience, imagination and determination, ingenuity and persistence. The continual pursuit of innovative educational programs is the rule, not the exception.

**Through the Agency of the Holy Spirit:** De La Salle often prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance and urged his teachers to do the same. Christ's life is brought into the school by Lasallian teachers who are animated by the Spirit and willing to act accordingly. In a Lasallian School, the challenging, unpredictable, hidden life of the Spirit is given attention and is heeded.

**Incarnating Christian Paradigms and Dynamics:** De La Salle educated the young in order to make God's saving presence a reality in their lives. Teachers seek and reveal God's presence in the minutiae of the exercise of their ministry, seeing Jesus Christ in their students, teaching, and goal. In a Lasallian School, Gospel maxims and Gospel norms provide the basis upon which its organizational and relational structure is built.

**With Practical Orientation:** De La Salle recognized the real needs of youth and taught what they needed to function in society. Lasallian teachers prepare students for their vocation and profession, for their personal life commitments, and for service to society and the Church. Lasallian Schools are realistic in their approach, methodology, and goals. "What do the students need?" is the rule.

**Devoted to Education, Accessible and Comprehensive:** De La Salle provided an education that was available to all who desired it and that comprehensively prepared youth to participate in their society. Lasallian teachers affirm that education consists of more than facts, figures and skills; that true education forms a person towards Christian maturity and responsible character. Lasallian Schools intentionally educate a diverse range of students and provide a wide-ranging, comprehensive curriculum.

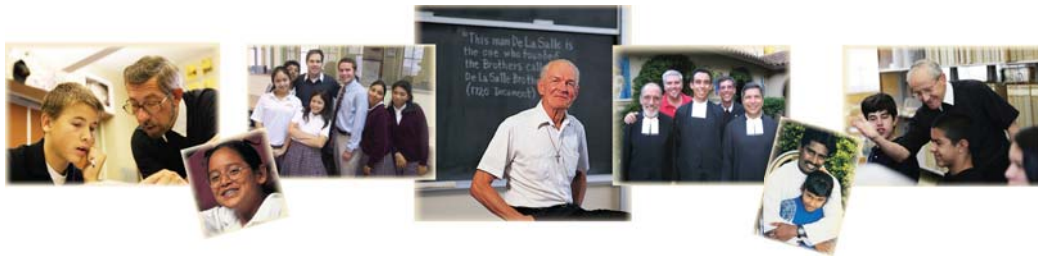
**Committed to the Poor:** De La Salle's concern was for the poor, the neglected and the overlooked. Lasallian teachers give greater attention to the neglected, to the marginalized, and to the less appealing students. Service projects and outreach programs bring the poor's voice into the lives of students. Lasallian Schools are schools where programs that address the educational needs of the poor are an evident, clear priority.

**Working in Association:** De La Salle's efforts with teachers became more and more effective as he united them into a group with a common vision, a shared mission. Lasallian teachers come together as brothers and sisters associated with bonds of mutual respect, cooperation, generosity, patience, humor, and humility. Lasallian Schools are not autonomous schools but operate in collaboration with others to accomplish their ministry of education "together and by association."

**Expressing a Lay Vocation:** De La Salle established a group of teachers who were to be dedicated to teaching as "Brothers" without directly being part of the clerical structures of the Church. Lasallian teachers reach out to their students in companionship, as older brothers and sisters, guiding their developing life of faith and modeling the identity of a lay person in the Church. Lasallian Schools advance the role of the laity in the Church by educating towards responsible, active participation in the life of the Church as a member of the Body of Christ. Brothers share in that lay character and are shaped by it.

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# The Lasallian Educational Network



**St. John Baptist de La Salle (1651 – 1719)** began an educational heritage of more than 300 years that ranges from store-front schools to great universities in over 80 countries. He is the Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (known as the De La Salle Christian Brothers in the United States) and is the inspiration for some 77,000 educators in Lasallian institutions around the world. His writings continue to shape what teachers teach, how teachers teach, and why teachers teach. He is the Patron Saint of All Teachers of Youth in the Catholic Church. [www.lasalle.org](http://www.lasalle.org)

**The Vocation of the Brothers** is a religious commitment to “association for the service of the poor through education.” Brothers are men who dedicate their lives to God in the ministry of education. They are serious about prayer, live a life in common, and are devoted to the lives of young people, especially the poor. The De La Salle Christian Brothers are the largest group of lay religious men in the Catholic Church who are dedicated exclusively to education.

[www.brothersvocation.org](http://www.brothersvocation.org)

**Lasallian Education around the world** includes both formal institutions (64 colleges/universities, 900 primary/secondary schools, etc.) and innovative programs that reach out to those in need (30 vans in France to teach Gypsy children, a youth-crisis phone line in Australia that receives 30,000 calls a week, Catalyst Charter schools in Chicago, etc.). In non-Christian countries, Lasallian schools quietly witness to God’s Presence in all our lives and present Christ’s example in action. We are present in 84 countries around the world. [www.lasalle.org](http://www.lasalle.org)

**Lasallian educational spirituality** arose from the experience of De La Salle and the early Brothers, developed through 300 years of expansion among many cultures, and forms the core of today’s Lasallian schools and agencies. It is a spirituality that has the school as its setting, the teacher as its focus, and the salvific potential of education as its inspiration. Elements include faith in the presence of God, quality education, concern for the poor and social justice, life through Jesus Christ, and a respect for all persons within an inclusive community. [www.lasallenetwork.org](http://www.lasallenetwork.org)

**Lasallian Volunteers** are dedicated, well-trained men and women who provide one or more years of service to schools and agencies of the Brothers whose mission is to serve the poor. Acting out of faith, rooted in the gospel, and sharing community with the Brothers and other Lasallians, the Volunteers empower the poor by personalized service primary through education. Lasallian Volunteers change the world for the better and discover themselves transformed in the process. [www.lasallianvolunteers.org](http://www.lasallianvolunteers.org)

**Lasallian Institutions in the United States** comprise a wide spectrum of institutions and agencies. These include 7 Colleges / Universities, 54 High Schools, 13 Middle Schools, 17 “San Miguel” Schools, 3 Cristo Rey High Schools, and 5 elementary schools. There are also many programs that address special educational needs, such as court-adjudicated youth, after school care, and residential supervision. New schools and educational outreach efforts continue to be established every year. [www.cbconf.org](http://www.cbconf.org)

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“People are hungry, especially the young.  
They are hungry for God and you  
are here to satisfy that hunger.  
Be faithful to the great gift that God made  
you to be teachers, educators, light,  
His light in the world among young people.  
The future of the world depends on what you do.”



Mother Teresa  
(Talk to the De La Salle Christian Brothers)

The Brothers have “demonstrated permanency  
by providing for over three centuries an  
astonishing array of activities from the most basic  
literacy learning to the most complicated  
technological learning for both children and adults . .  
. so that they can be fully integrated  
into community and society.”



United Nations  
(UNESCO Noma Prize)

“Union in a community is a precious gem,  
which is why Our Lord so often  
recommended it to his apostles before he died.  
If we lose this, we lose everything.  
Preserve it with care, therefore, if you want  
your community to survive.”



St. John Baptist de La Salle