

Brothers of the Christian Schools

RELA F NEWSLETTER





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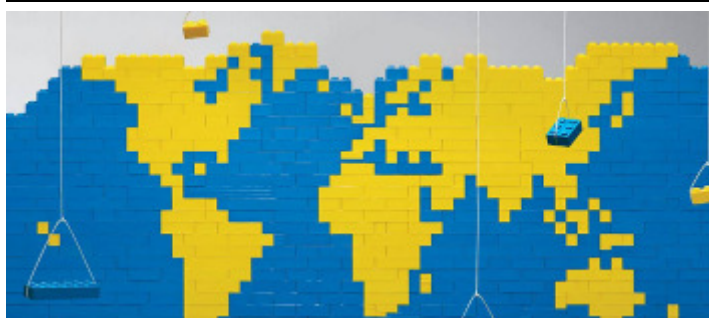
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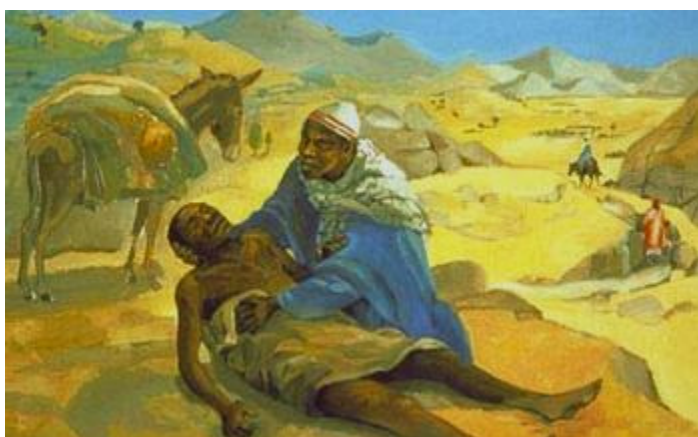


Editorial

Dear Brothers and Lasallians...

How I envy you right now! You have already experienced or will experience the joy of meeting with friends and colleagues on the occasion of «*back to school*». It is also an opportunity to discover new faces, opportunity for new friendships, new discoveries ... Meanwhile, there are also those that have changed: they grew up and sometimes bigger or thinner...

In your way, you live in that way the joy of the Gospel in school. You are engaged in an adventure: that of education. Our Lasallian way of conceiving it is to see an adventure of humanity and brotherhood. The annual theme of our Lasallian Family is "*an evangelical adventure*" ... The parable of the Good Samaritan is the proposed inspiring Gospel passage for this theme. The Superior General Robert Schieler encourages us to read it again. As for me, I read a testimony of humanity, brotherhood and that, independently from religious, confessional and ethnic belonging considerations...



There is no human adventure without some risks. To live fraternity, we must actually take the risks of the encounter. The encounter, Professor situation facing students or with colleagues, the students among them, are challenges that involve risks. The proof, sometimes one gets hurt by words or actions; knowing this, we avoid, we protect from the encounter in all kinds of ways ...

It also happens that one closes himself, is isolated from the other, making it difficult if not impossible to meet. Then we allow ourselves to imagine inner wounds that we certainly do not want to expose. To meet presupposes the courage to expose oneself to one another, to speak the language of truth. There can only be a real encounter if everyone allows himself to meet.

To meet means in our ordinary language to come together, to talk, to confront ... In the encounter, there is not only a challenge, there is also a promise of truth, a promise to give time, to last together. We all know how time is precious; if only as temporary, we are paid per hour. Such that, to take the time to listen to a student, colleague, sometimes is a sacrifice. There is there a testimony of gratuitousness ...

Meeting ourselves sometimes leads to stormy confrontations. The Evangelical brotherhood is also that. It would be wrong to see in it the culture of a kind of consensus at any price even at the cost of truth. Of course, we need to know to be careful ... Not because truth is not good to say, but because we are not always strong enough to accept certain truths about ourselves. The educational community is a learning space of mercy.

It is in brotherhood that we form ourselves to brotherhood. This does not appear in the parable of the Good Samaritan, it is precisely this spirit that the Lasallian community is invited to cultivate and maintain by Jean-Baptiste de la Salle. Amid fraternal open relations to all without exclusion, I wish you all and each one to discover, through particular attention to the most vulnerable and the poorest, the joy of friendship.

Have a nice school and academic year
Your Brother, Pierre OUATTARA

From 10th to 28th of August 2015, the session of the first CIL of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools organized on African soil was held at Saint Miguel Scholasticate in Abidjan - Ivory Coast and was mostly animated by African Brothers for the benefit of African Brothers. Its theme was: **Being Brothers today in Africa with the Revised Rule.** But for the repatriation of four (4) Rwandese Brothers and the sole Mozambican Brother by the Customs at Abidjan airport for want of visa, this CIL would have recorded the presence of 46 Brothers across the continent of Africa.

Eventually, the activities of the first day of the CIL, organized around the theme of mutual acquaintance, under the leadership of Brother Valere Adonsou, show that all age groups are represented in the CIL. This "age" criterion helps to diversely appreciate the shock of social changes on our identity and its definition. However, it is certain that these changes are somehow capsizing for our institute and oblige us to redefine our identity and to make it clearer and more visible for our time. This is therefore a reason for the revision of our Rule and one of the keys to reading it. It is this conviction that Brother Pierre Ouattara, General Councillor, shared with the participants during the second day on the topic "the relevance of the revision of the Rule regarding changes African that society goes through". In his speech, Brother Pierre noted that our societies have changed and continue to change.

Reflecting on the changes they have gone through is not solely enough to justify the revision of the Rule. Moreover, it is to understand the vow of association and to deepen the understanding of the special and original nature of the community of consecrated people we are.

In other words, changes in our societies require us to remind ourselves once again what the meaning of our vocation is. They lead us to reread and to reinterpret our identity of Brother. And the biggest paradigm shift in the society is the shift from statute to contract, that is to say, prescribed relations, imposed and represented by the laws, which formerly presided over the social relations recede more and more for the benefit of agreed and contracted relationships. In such a social environment where autonomy is given prominence over heteronomy, what does it mean for us to make the vow of association?

To make the vow of association for the educational service of youth, especially the poor, beyond giving one's word bears witness of an open heart, open to God's love and open to others. Therefore, facing the challenge of the changes of this world, our authentic experience of God must be translated into a transformative experience of community life, and the mission is the place where we are given the transformation and conversion. The mission, according to Pope Francis, is not a part of my life or a moment of my existence.



Regional CIL participants with scholastic Brothers after renewing their vows



"I have a mission on earth and for that I am in this world." It is with the mission in this sense that **the educator in the soul** appears; one who decided within himself to be with the others and for the others.

It would be wrong to believe that these changes are marginal and limited to a given geographical location. These are changes which overturn not only all social and political visions but also the being- to-the world of the Church and of the Institute. This is a revolution that has taken place in these last days. And to identify the scope of this revolution, we must fit it within the history. We understand why Brother Romain focused his presentation on the changes in the Church and in the Institute between the 1987-2014 intervals. If these two ends seem proper to the Institute in that they describe the itiner-ary process of the revision of the rule initiated by the 41st General Chapter (1987) and endorsed by the 45th (2014), it is not futile to remind that the activities of the Second Vatican Council remain the ecclesial reference of endogenous mutations.

From these activities and documents that ensued, we should know that they invite us to go from the jolt of surprise to the adaptation of novelty, finding a new way to evangelize in order to reach today's human being. A key to reading and interpreting these documents is "listening to others" in a ternary relation which has its source in the Wholly-Other, a Wholly-Other to discover and to rediscover in his Word.

This is the aggiornamento of the Church behind the drafting process (1966-1987) and the revision process (1987-2014) of the Rule. It is this process that gave birth to the revised Rule which rediscovered the centrality of the vow of association in the foundation of the Institute. The centrality of this vow is not only related to the mission. It forces us to found again in depth our community life with the appearance of new concepts.

Indeed, the Revised Rule, by introducing the noun phrase of "ministerial community" wants to bring the Brothers to reflect on the relationship of community-mission. This new expression in the Lasallian vocabulary is explained by Brother Jean-Luc in his presentation on Chapter 4 of the revised Rule. We learn that communion begets mission and is essentially a missionary communion.



Communion and mission are profoundly linked, they mutually interpenetrate and involve each other to the extent that communion represents the source and at the same time the fruit of the mission: "Communion is missionary and the mission is for the communion" as explained in the words of the encyclical *Christifideles Laici*. In Lasallian terms, we would say that the Brothers associate themselves for the mission and the mission gives meaning to the association. The goal of the association is the educational service of the poor according to the charism which La Salle was inspired. But this association for the mission can be only effective in a shared fraternity.

[To be continued...]



Encouragement:

The Brothers of Africa gathered at the Regional CIL on the Revised Rule in Abidjan from August 8 to 28, 2015:

1. Congratulates the Region for the organization of the CIL which was a moment of fraternal meeting, sharing experiences and spiritual renewal among African Brothers.
2. Encourages the Region to continue its efforts to build a community Region where sharing experiences for mutual enrichment consolidate our association for the educational service of the poor
3. Encourages the Region to move forward without fear in the context of shared mission and Lasallian spirituality with lay partners as this is an enrichment for our Region.
4. Encourages the Region in its communication efforts that each brother may feel concerned by the vision and objectives of the Region.

Reflections:

A united Region is a strong Region capable of overcoming the challenge of self-sufficiency of the Districts and the Region, responding in an innovative way to the educational mission of the poor and making shine the Lasallian spirit and charisma.

We observe that in the Region, the initial formation is very well organized. This can be seen by the quality of the Brothers we have in each of our Districts. But we also find that ongoing formation is not often taken into account in the journey of each Brother. Would it not be possible for the Region to put the means to ensure proper ongoing formation for the Brothers?

The Regional Assembly will reflect on the possibility of organizing other Regional CIL, to determine the frequency and the venue as well as the opportunity and feasibility for creating a Regional university.



Propositions:

1. We propose that the Region has a vision and a common regional project for the formation of Brothers in line with promoting bilingualism (send French Speakers to English Speaking zone and vice versa), interculturalism and communion. Include in the plan of ongoing formation sessions on community life, spiritual life and leadership.
2. We propose that in addition to initial formation structures (novitiate and scholasticate) the Region has a Regional educational work. We propose that the Regional CIL method be adopted for financial and economic, MEL, vocations and youth ministry reasons.
3. Develop a Lasallian formation program in order to have Ressource persons in Africa and if possible open that program to our Lay partners.
4. That the Assembly of the Region include in its program a discussion on the important parts of the revised Rule.
Create at the Regional Office an office for archives.

The Formation Team in Saint Miguel Scholasticate of Abidjan has seen some changes in its composition for the year 2015-2016.

Brother Anaclet Makanzu, Director since 2011 has completed his term and has been called for a new responsibility in his home District, Congo Kinshasa. Brother Bruno Mellet, a member of the team, after a year of service is currently in CLIMA community (Burkina Faso), District of West Africa.

In replacement of these two Brothers, Br. Julien Ratsimbazafy from Antananarivo District, and Br. Eloi Luheho District of Congo Kinshasa have joined the formation team at the Scholasticate Saint Miguel.

Through this Newsletter issue, we express our gratitude to Brother Anaclet and Brother Bruno Mellet for the service rendered in our Region. We wish a fruitful mission to the Brother Julien and Brother Eloi in the service to the Region .



Br. Rodrigue Toeppen



Br. Anaclet Makanzu



Br. Eloi Luheho



Br. Julien Ratsimbazafy



Br. Bruno Mellet

The 13 postulants (« future novices ») of the Brothers of the Christian Schools) who will form the group of 2015—2017 have arrived to the Novitiate. They are the fruit of pastoral conducted by Brothers in charge of vocation promotion in their respective Districts. Like every year, they will make their retreat entry to the the first year of Novitiate in early October. These future novices come from all the Districts and the Delegation of French Speaking Africa:

Six from Antananarivo District: Jean Éric RINKAN, Patrick Jean-not ANDRIANSTIFERANTSOA, Jean Prosper RANDRIANIHASINA, Bruno Andry RAMAMONJIANRINANDRASANA, Jean Augustin RATSIMBAZAFY et Julien Émile RAFENOMANANA ; two from Rwanda Delegation: Albert TURATSINZE et Julien NIMUSABIMANIZATWUMVA ; Brice ETOUKA LEMBA from the District of Central Africa, Michel PANZU MAVUNDA from Congo-Kinshasa District, and three from Gulf of Benin District : Éli Koukou ATIKPO, Christophe Têko EKOUE et Élisée POKANÄM LARE.

It should be noted that while the acclimatization time to the physical environment, particularly in the novitiate, continues for them, their arrival has given more life to our community! The second-year novices gradually orient and lead them to take the rythm of life in their new home. Brother Formators, on their part, also pay particular attention to them.

In short, this year 2015 - 2016, our novitiate community has 25 members: 3 Formators, 9 novices in second year and 13 in first year. *"Welcome to all the novices ... And have a nice novitiate to each of you! "*

Parfait FADANKA
Second Year Novice

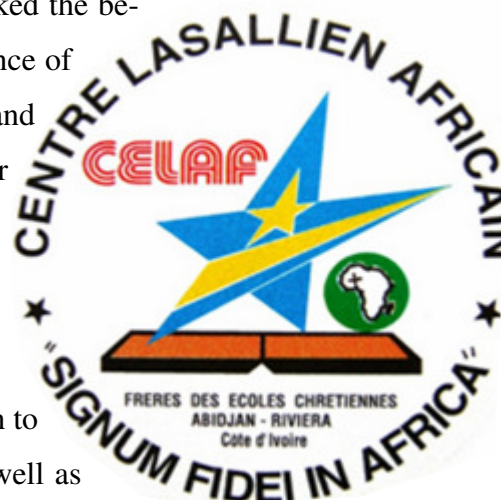


On Thursday 17th septembre 2015, CELAF Institute marked the beginning of the new academic year 2015-2016 in the presence of all students enrolled, all administrative Staff members and other invited guests including the President of the Major Superiors' Conference of the Archdiocese in Abidjan and the Superiors of Religious communities whose members study in CELAF.

The beginning of new academic year was also the occasion to present all administrative entities in CELAF Institute as well as new responsibilities. Brother Joseph Kubwimana is the new Director General of CELAF succeeding Brother Emmanuel Mboua, who assumed this responsibility from September 2011 to July 2015. We congratulate Brother Emmanuel for his competence and quality service during these years and our best wishes to the new Director, Brother Joseph.

Like every year, an inaugural lecture marks the beginning of a new academic year. It was on the last encyclical of Pope Francis "*Laudate Si*", presented by Father Domba Mathieu, PhD in Moral Theology and Lecturer at the ICTJ and CERAP-Inades. The speaker presented the encyclical using VEGA (See - Judge - Act) method, which according to him, is the approach used by the Pope to write it. After his presentation, the assembly had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the content of the encyclical.

The ceremony ended with a collation reserved for guests while students shared the joy of meeting one another again, safe and sound.



Gulf of Benin District : Formation on Children's Right and Protection

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The third MEL formation session 2015 took place from September 6 to 11 at the Monastery St. Clair Aképé, 25 km in Lomé. Sunday evening, September 6, was dedicated to the arrival and installation of the delegations from Bishop Steinmetz Bohicon School, NDL / CSA Togoville, Akassato La Salle, La Salle and St. Athanase Dapaong. There were 49 participants including 41 Lay people (4 women), 3 De La Salle Guadalupana Sisters and 5 Brothers.

The activities started on Monday, September 7, with the opening prayer, a welcome note from Brother Romain SODEY, coordinator of the Lasallian Educational Mission. Brother Visitor, Paulin DEGBE in his opening remarks asked the participants to "*ensure the protection of sensitive beings*" and reminded them that this formation in the dynamics of the 45th General Chapter in its 14th proposal . [...]

The first presentation on this first day was that of Brother Jean EZIN about "*General information on the child*", a theme that was deepened in the afternoon on the formulation "*social framework of the child*" , led by Edouard Da COSTA, responsible for Social Psychology, who passed

his message thanks to the dynamic method based on symbolism and role play.

The Judge Armand GOUNON was the third speaker whose presentation develops "*The intervention of the law in Child protection*" and "*the limits of the law in Child protection.*" Through these various presentations, it becomes clear to all participants that we have the duty to protect and especially prevention in relation to anything that may cause a potential or actual danger to the children entrusted to us.

The evaluation opened the floor to participants who identified the strengths and limitations of the session and presented their wishes that can help for the next sessions. Congratulations of all sorts were expressed for the organization, for the moments of fraternity and above all for the learning experience.

The presentation of certificates to participants and Brother Visitor's closing remarks delighted everyone. On Friday 11th September, the group had the opportunity to visit Lomé city and for a fraternal meal at the « *restaurant du grand marché* », everyone enjoyed the meal in the same way the "socials" that were organized twice during the session. It is with complete satisfaction that participants went back to their respective home on Saturday 12th September, 2015.

Brother Pierre Claver MENSAH
Gulf of Benin District



From September 21 to October 21 are celebrated every year the International Lasallian Days for Peace. The theme for this year is taken from the Gospel of Matthew: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." Brother Superior General, Robert Schieler addresses this message to all Young Lasallians:

Dear Young Lasallians,

As the International Council of Young Lasallians launches its annual initiative on September 21st for its International Lasallian Days for Peace enjoining the worldwide Lasallian community to pray for peace in our world and peace in our hearts, peace continues to elude our fragile planet.

The war in Syria, terrorism, and the strife of civil conflicts in various countries around the world has created today's migration crisis causing untold suffering to millions of our brothers and sisters. These must be the focus of our prayer and the focus of our action this year. A Gospel Adventure is the theme for our global Lasallian Family in 2015 – 2016. The Gospel passage inspiring our theme is the parable of the Good Samaritan. A man going from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked by robbers who strip him and beat him. A priest and a Levite pass by without helping him. But a Samaritan, a foreigner, stops and cares for him, taking him to an Inn where the Samaritan pays for his care.

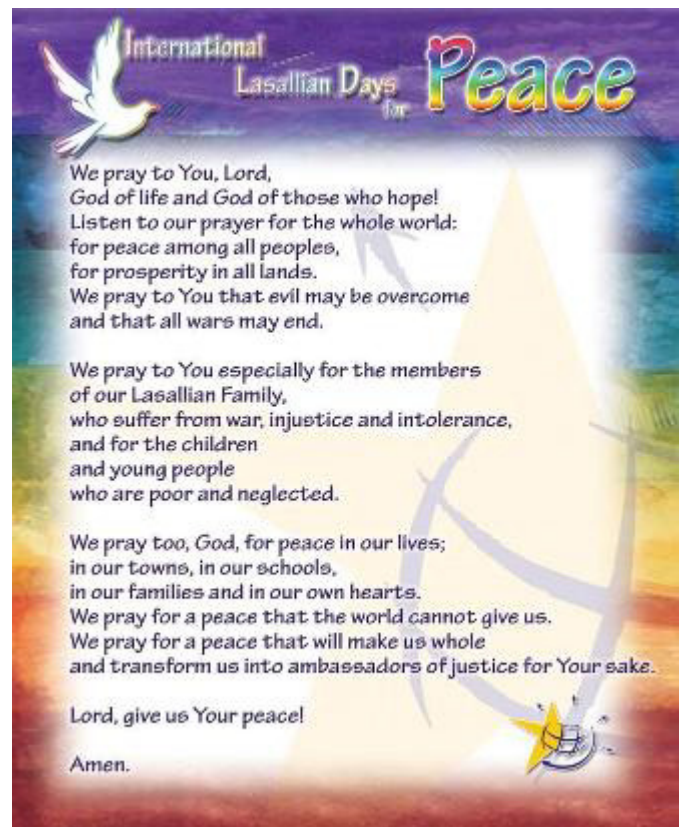
The General Council and I invite all Lasallians to re-read this parable in the light of our personal and collective responsibility to respond to the poor in our midst and the migrants on our borders. This is a journey that requires us to embrace their condition with mercy and compassion. This is a journey of understanding of what it means to be human amidst a world that is increasingly indifferent at best and hostile at worst to the poor, the widow, the orphan and the stranger in our midst.

Locally, Lasallians, including you young Lasallians, are responding with mercy and compassion. I encourage you to become familiar with and support any initiatives in your District. Create your own as well. Above all, align yourself with groups advocating for peace and for support of migrants. Challenge the political leaders of our nations to treat all people with dignity and build instruments of peace, not war.

As Pope Francis quotes in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, "Let our time be remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life."

Sincerely in Saint La Salle,

Brother Robert Schieler, FSC
Superior General



Lasallian Volunteers of Cameroon celebrating ILDP 2015

District and Delegation Animators commonly called Visitors, Delegates and President were invited to Rome by the Superior General and his Council for meeting called meeting of new Brother Visitors. From the start of the meeting, the Superior General set the tone in his opening remarks, I quote: *"The General Council and myself were looking forward to hold this meeting with you. It is my hope that this time we started to spend together will benefit all of us, while we learn something new and will support each other during these days of ongoing formation."* Ongoing formation is the word, because that is what it is all about.

Visitors, Delegate and President, twenty three in number, met from September 14 to 23 around the Superior General and his Council to learn the baba of their ministry. Article 142 of the Revised Rule clarifies this ministry to which the Brother Visitors are called : *"The Brother Visitor is at the service of his Brothers, ready to listen to them and remaining in contact with them. He cares about their vocation and tries to promote close cooperation between them, to help them carry out their mission more effectively in all their apostolic works."*

And Brother Superior asks: *"all of us - leaders of Districts and Delegation, General Councillors and myself - was called to lead our Districts today. What, in our personal itineraries, led us here?"* It is an invitation for Visitors to reflect on how God works in their lives. Also, does our Rule not tell us of our vocation not as a series of successive calls from God to go out of ourselves and put ourselves in the service of others? It is clear that each participant must reflect on how his successive commitments were a response to the call of God in his life: *"As Brothers, how do we read the events of our lives as evangelical pilgrimages, as De La Salle could read his?- asked the Superior General.* This time is dedicated to formation, but it is also dedicated to prayer and reflection on ones' journey, as the Superior General said: *"Your Brothers saw in you the qualities you do not know maybe ! "[...]*

The General Councilors took turns to present one or the other theme, including: leadership challenge, accompaniment, authentic answers on the future of religious life, standards of child protection ... Presentations interspersed with group work, case studies and personal time for reflections. All the themes and activities were planned carefully and executed appropriately with great intelligence of the central services and secretariats held by the Brothers of the Central community and by those of the CIL staff. [...]

At the conclusion of the unique experience of these few days - like at the beginning- the Superior General, in his closing words thanked Brother Visitors for their willingness and commitment as a leader to serve their Brothers and the Institute at this time in our history while ensuring them his continual prayers and those of the Brothers of the General Council and their availability to help and support them. The last important event is that of the closing ceremony celebrated at the Shrine of St. John Baptist De La Salle where everyone received a sending sign around his neck, a cross from the hands of the Superior General Brother and the Vicar General accompanied by a very warm hug.

*Brother Anatole DIRETENDJI
Delegate of the Superior General to Rwanda*



Date	Venue	Events
September 1 — October 10	Rome	4 th session for the General Council CIAMEL, formation for New Brother Visitors...
Octobre 12 — Novembre 12	Abidjan	Preparation of Br. Superior General's Pastoral Visit Preparation of Regional Assembly and Conference 2016
November 14 — December 5		Visit to the District of Central Africa
December 9 — 11	Rome	Meeting of Administration Council for South Sudan Project
December 14 — 18	Abidjan	Regional Office
December 21, 22, 23	Lomé	District Chapter: Gulf of Benin District
December 26, 27, 28	Toussiana	District Chapter: District of West Africa
December 31	Abidjan	Abidjan – Nairobi trip

