

RELAF NEWSLETTER N° 27

Brothers of the Christian Schools



Lasallian Region of Africa

La  Salle

June 2018

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EDITORIAL

On June 13, 16 novices made their first vows in the International Novitiate Our Lady of Grace of Bobo Dioulasso. Whether we are like them, in our first steps in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, or whether we already have 25, 30 or 50 years of religious life, who will convey to us the secret of this fire that we have not lit and yet burns in our hearts? The burning heart is at the beginning of the story of every vocation linked to an experience of love, experience of the presence often ignored of an unknown God, still unknown although already revealed in some way... Our own heart remains for ourselves a mystery, the place of a mystery... It is ahead of our intelligence and our eyes, in the knowledge and recognition of God's action...

Like the Blessed Virgin Mary, like Saint John Baptist de La Salle, we are moving forward without knowing where the road of our lives leads to. Our hearts are ahead of our minds through the presence of God... Such was the experience of the disciples of Emmaus. Jesus is with them on the road while they are pondering over their disappointment but their eyes do not recognize him. He listens for a long time and then starts to talk to them; then their heart burns within them. Hope begins to revive.

At the birth of Moses' vocation, we can see in the burning bush the symbol of God's burning heart for the salvation of his people. We usually have a narrow view about God's mercy. Yet *"God's mercy is not an 'answer' to our misery. This is God's goodness preceding everything. (...) If mercy goes hand in hand with misery, (...it is) because He, God, chooses to 'empty himself.'"* Poverty is at the heart of God. It makes mercy the other name of his love. His heart of Father is essentially a heart of poor, poor of himself, who only aspires to communicate, to share everything with his children.

A heart touched by God is called to become a contagious heart, to touch in return other hearts... John Baptist de La Salle questions us in this sense: "Do you have faith that is able to touch the hearts of your students and to inspire them with the Christian spirit? This is the greatest miracle you can perform and the one that God asks of you, for this is the purpose of your work." He adds: "The duty you have of obtaining grace, not only for you but also for others, and of learning how to touch hearts ought to make you devote yourself especially to prayer, which is the exercise designed for you by God to procure his graces." Let us effectively make, as he recommends us, of prayer our first and main daily exercise.

Brother Pierre Ouattara

General Councillor for RELAF

1. Exodus 3

2. Anne ECU, *You have covered my shame*, Paris, Editions du Cerf, 2016. P. 56.

³ MF 139,3

⁴ MF 129, 2.

Zoom: Interview with Brother Pierre Ouattara

After his election on 22 May 2014, Brother Pierre Ouattara willingly accepted an interview during which he declined his mission: *"It seems to me that one of the first and main tasks of a councilor is to listen, to observe"*. His vision for the RELAF: *"The vision for the RELAF, we must build it together with the Brother Visitors."*, and the main lines of action that he envisaged: *"I am here to listen to the expectations of Brothers and lay people sharing closely the mission of education in the service especially of the poorest. My role is to help the Brother Visitors build the unity of the Region, to have strong Districts and enjoying a degree of self-sufficiency. On the same note, we need to take up the challenge of the formation of Brothers and lay people to ensure an enthusiastic animation of works and of communities"*. And with lucidity, Brother Pierre Ouattara added: *"Without the contribution of the Districts, the Region will remain an abstract reality."*

Since then, a lot of things happened. On the occasion of the intercapitular session which was celebrated from March 5 to 17, 2018 in Rome, he willingly accepted again to answer our questions for a retrospective and paving the way for perspectives.

Dear Brother Pierre Ouattara, after three years of leadership in the Region, what are your main satisfaction reasons?

The reasons for satisfaction are many; here are a few.

We had an Assembly of the Region delegate Brothers and lay in January 2016 in Nairobi. During this Assembly, followed by a conference of the Brother Visitors, we revised and adopted the strategic plan accompanied by a communication plan. During the Conference of the Brother Visitors in November 2017 in Bobo Dioulasso, we did an evaluation of this strategic plan before the intercapitular session.

We have had at least one Conference of the Brother Visitors per year and the Brother Superior General has been able to attend at least two of them. In addition, as it can be seen in the Bulletin No. 257, his pastoral visit, closed in April 2017 in Saint Miguel community in Abidjan, went on well.

We have had two regional CILs, with the support of the Center of the Institute. A session on the revised Rule for the Brothers in August 2015 and another in August 2017, bringing together during three weeks Brothers, Sisters and lay men and women, together on the Lasallian Educational Mission, Lasallian vocations, catechesis.

In addition to the many projects supported by the Secretariat Solidarity and Development, working with the Confederation of Associations of the Lasallian network of Africa (CARLA), a new school initiative has been launched in south Sudan.

I must confess that all this has been possible thanks to the valuable work done by the members of our regional team; first the Brothers Anatole, Michel and Gabriel, without forgetting Mr. Javier who came for the establishment of CARLA and now in 2017-2018, the Brothers Ferdinand, Pierre Aymard BAKO, Joan Sala and Mr. Javier and Roland.

What is it that troubles you the most in the RELAF?

We have to further live in unity and in solidarity. Concretely, this means more responsiveness in the communication, the pooling of our resources. We have difficulties finding formators for our common houses of formation: the novitiates and the scholasticates

We will not be able to achieve any self-sufficiency without a professional and transparent management of our works. This calls for a change of mentality, but mainly about the credibility of our religious life. Efforts should be made regarding the consistency with our choice of life of Brothers and Lasallians who want to be at the service of the poor.

We are hit, here or there, by what Pope Francis calls "the worldly spirit" characterized by a superficiality of spiritual life.

Interview...

What do you consider as your main priorities for the next three years?

At the level of the Region I can see six or seven. These are the priorities of the Region in line with its Strategic Plan.

1-The formation of formators and leaders, Brothers and lay partners

2- Professionalism and transparency formation in the management of works.

3-The financial stability of the houses of formation in order to relieve formators of material concerns.

4- The beginning of realization of the project of the Lasallian University of Africa

5- The prospecting with a view to establishing a new initiative in Ghana in order to create a symbolic bridge with the sector of Nigeria.

6- The creation of a stable fund for self-sufficiency and the running of the regional Office

You have written a book to facilitate the understanding of the Lasallian Association. Could you explain, in simple terms, the lasallian association and in particular the Association with the Lay?

Sorry, but if we want to escape superficiality, we need to go beyond the simple terms. Association confronts us with the obligation to think differently, to live differently both the lasallian mission and our identity of Brothers. This is so difficult such that there is a need for conversion of minds but also of hearts.

The advancements in the association, that is to say in the communion among Brothers, are impossible without the efforts of self-disappropriation. We cannot pretend to associate or serve the poor by being filled with one self, "bloated", "sufficient"... We are at the heart of the identity of the Brother. We cannot say we are consecrated without a total gift of self: this brings us back to disappropriation, the pooling of self.

Association first took historically the form of an association among religious lay, the Brothers. It is called upon to expand. We are invited to reinterpret it in the light of the shared mission, or pass it on to the lay in some contexts. It is a matter of integrating partners in the management and decision structures of the lasallian mission.

This sometimes requires unseen canonical arrangements but especially of discernment both the Brothers and of the Lay. The lay can contribute to the lasallian mission with their professionalism but also enrich the lasallian charism through their specific vision of being father or lasallian mother, of young Lasallian... Association presents itself as a human journey but also as a spiritual one whose steps and criteria are yet to be defined, with regards to lay, depending on the contexts. All the lay partners will not enter in a process of association in the mission. They will not do it if there are no formations proposed to them, responsibilities entrusted to them.

Higher education, which is missing in the lasallian educational system in Africa, is listed in the Strategic Plan of the Region.

That is correct. The Conference of the Brother Visitors advocated the establishment of a committee of the Region responsible to reflect on the process of creation of a Lasallian University of Africa. We will have to work it out to make it operational by entrusting it with a job description. A first site has been chosen in Burkina Faso and others should follow in other countries.

We need to link, I think, the development of the lasallian research to higher education. The formation of formators also passes through encouragement for research. Unfortunately, it seems to me that a lot of Brothers do not read. Anyone who wants to be an educator has a kind of duty of culture. With the different currents of ethical, political and religious ideas that are across societies today, one must read and meditate in order to have something enlightening to say to young people.

To talk about the lasallian family is not always easy because of the complexity of its structure in Africa. Could you facilitate for us the understanding of this?

When we are talking about lasallian family, we need firstly, according to me, to value the diversity of the states of life, cultural and religious diversity, present in the framework of the works of the lasallian educational mission and to make it a dynamic movement that can have a positive impact in the lives of its members and in the society.

How, from the hard core of the lasallian identity of an educational work, can we fit in a multicultural and religious diversity in a journey of communion, unity in diversity? The Holy Spirit acts beyond the visible boundaries of the Church through our ministry of education. He teaches us to go beyond the denominational affiliations through our daily ministry of fraternity. The lasallian spirit acts beyond the classroom, the school, the educational community. The lasallian family is nurtured through the culture of a spirit and there is no spirit without relationship with a human and religious tradition. There is a diversity of degrees of maturity of the lasallian spirit, a diversity of degrees of selfless commitment, a diversity of depth of affiliation and all this needs to be materialized by public stages and commitments. We should therefore be able to formally identify who the members of the lasallian family are because they have made commitments.

The Group of Young Lasallians is struggling to take shape in Africa. Would it simply be an additional catholic movement of action? How can we promote this movement and make it more dynamic in our Districts?

The expression "is struggling to take shape" may not be entirely appropriate, for two reasons. The first, do not go and tell the thousands of students, girls and boys, of our institutions, especially not our former students, that they are not lasallians. The Young Lasallians Movement is not something that would be implemented as if it comes from elsewhere but to be stirred up at the local level, within the institutions. For this, there is simply need for initiators, leaders, facilitators.

The second thing is that there are already a lot of examples in the different Districts. At the level of the Regional Office, Br Pierre Aymard BAKO, besides being the Regional Secretary, represents our Region at the level of the International Council of Young Lasallians. He also ensures the coordination of the movement in the Region.

In the District of Gulf of Benin, the Young Lasallians have met with the Superior general during his visit to Lomé. These are former students already at the university who keep in touch with the Brothers and their younger fellows in schools.

The Young Lasallians Movement exists in a variety of forms in the District of Antananarivo. There are choristers, academics dolphins of Blessed Louis Rafiringa. During the pastoral visit of the Superior General, the movement has been officially launched in Congo Kinshasa. The question still remains what is it that we, Brothers, have to propose as inspiration to their movement? Who has time to devote to them? What place do we give them in our pastoral ministry?

The lasallian volunteering in the RELAF is struggling to develop. How do you explain this situation and what solutions to boost the experience of volunteering?

Volunteerism is in my opinion a transitional stage. "Not my will but Thy will..." (Lk 22, 42; Mt 26, 39) As it is said by our founder John Baptist de La Salle, God who leads everything with wisdom and love, has no habit of forcing the human nature. Man begins to be the son of his will and little by little learns to be that of God.

Note however that we have in the Region a unique experience of volunteering which has more than ten years of existence: the Lasallian Volunteers of MBALMAYO in Cameroon. They run the Mutien Marie secondary school and a vocational training center with, even within their property, a possibility of community life. An experience of volunteering has also just started in Togoville, in the Gulf of Benin, with a former student.

What does the expression "Lasallian Vocations refer to"?

The Brothers of the Christian Schools, Guadeloupanas Sisters, Lasallian Sisters of Vietnam, the Signum Fidei, volunteers of Mbalmayo are examples of Lasallian Vocations... but we could think of associates who would like to be Lasallian mothers or lasallian fathers especially in these times of crisis of the family. There could never be children in the schools, if there are no fathers and mothers. The Lasallian charism could be enriched with the contribution of lasallian fathers and mothers. The Founder invites the Brothers to have vis-a-vis their students" the firmness of a father and the tenderness of a mother." How is this happening in the reality of families?

What does the vitality of the mission require in the RELAF?

You are referring to the Institute rather than the mission I guess? Chapter 10 of the 1987 Rule had actually for title "The vitality of the Institute". The 2015 Rule has replaced this title by "Being Brother today".

This is what article 154 of the 2015 Rule says on this matter: **"The life and development of the Institute are first and foremost the mystery and the power of grace. However, through the gift of freedom, the Lord wanted to entrust into the Brothers' hands the destiny of the Institute. In the heart of the Lasallian Family, the Brothers remain a source of inspiration for all Lasallians who are sharing more and more the mission and the charism of the Institute. "**

This is what was said in the 1987 Rule in its article 143: **"The vitality of the Institute depends on the value and the fidelity of each of its members. Each of them develops his talents to put them at the service of this "Work of God" which is their Institute. "**

The pastoral ministry of vocations and lasallian formation: who to contact? How to make it more effective? What policy for the formation in Africa, in particular for the common houses of formation?

There will be a CIL formation session, organized by the Center of the Institute for all Regions, relocated in Nairobi on the theme of the pastoral ministry of vocations. The responsible for the pastoral ministry of the vocation of the different Districts will meet afterwards for discussions. Enriching responses will emerge certainly from these days of formation and discussions. This constitutes a good preparation for 2019 called the year of lasallian vocations and also year of the 300th anniversary of the death of our Founder.

A Regional committee for formation has been recommended by the Conference of the Brother Visitors. We need to make it operational to reflect on the policy of the formation in the Region. We already have Brother Ferdinand, responsible for the formation at the Region level. The existence of common houses of formation has led to harmonize more or less the formation plans of the different Districts.

Brothers consider that communication in the RELAF should integrate the publication in an adapted form of the minutes of the Conference of the Visitors. What is your take on that?

I do not see the need for specific minutes of the Conferences of the Brother Visitors. The information from each conference is ultimately disseminated through different channels.

I remind you that there is an annual letter which gives an overall view of the main activities and events of the Region.

We have the Region website relaf.info, which also provides information.

There is the newsletter which is published regularly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who send articles. This is about what is happening on the ground, in the Districts, schools, which is the most important and which deserves to be shared at the level of the Region and of the Institute.

The Conference of the Brother Visitors is held in principle once a year and lasts for three days. The Visitors subsequently echo the decisions they consider important in the Bulletin of the District or in the minutes of the District Council meetings or in their pastoral letters.

It is not information that is lacking but rather readers. Those who want more information are unfortunately not the more eager to give it.

The issue of financial self-sufficiency: how do you explain the current financial situation of our Districts? The retraction of Brothers when it comes to financial control? What mechanisms to get out of the economic dependency?

The struggle for self-sufficiency, I prefer to talk about self-support, is won first at the mentality levels. It depends, beyond the implementation of tools for a professional management, of the authenticity of our life of religious living in a sober and simple way. We must acknowledge that African Brothers have not been prepared to take up the responsibility and the management of works that are self-supported. Certainly, there must be a beginning in everything.

The accession to financial autonomy requires an investment policy, a well understood centralization of the management of works, solidarity among Districts, among the Brothers and between the brothers and lay partners. The awareness to go in this direction is felt among Visitors and even a few Brothers. However, change of habits and mentalities demands time.

The management of lasallian archives in Africa is struggling. How do you intend to encourage the professional archiving of data in the Region?

It is obvious that the Districts are under pressure of needs apparently more urgent than that of safeguarding and management of archives. It is therefore necessary to be realistic and to set priorities in terms of archiving. In any administration and management, a minimum of archives is required. The use of digital archiving today facilitates storage and conservation of administrative attachments and documents. I relate however the legitimacy of the concern for the archives to the issue of the importance of memory and research. There are many issues: whether it is research in pedagogy, lasallian spirituality or in education, knowledge of the major figures of the lasallian mission, of a better inculturated lasallian identity... Archives must be at the service of knowledge that does not confine us in the past but moving towards the future.

What is your final message to the lasallian family in the RELAF?

May Jesus live in our hearts so that we remain together, lay partners, Sisters, Brothers, and Lasallians builders of Africa that is more inclusively hospitable.

Thank you Brother Raoul for this opportunity to speak on a few aspects of the life of our Lasallian Region of Africa and Madagascar.

Interview conducted in Rome on 19-20 March 2018, by Brother Téfio Raoul TRAORÉ.

Silver Jubilee of CELAF-Institute

Within the general theme "*Educators committed for a new Africa*", the CELAF-Institute opened its silver jubilee activities on Thursday, May 10, 2018, when the universal Church celebrated the Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a happy coincidence! What to say, if not, if you had been there...

The opening of the activities on the Thursday of Ascension with a solemn mass was a sign that everything is received from God and finds in him its full realization. This first commemorative day witnessed the presence of the first actors of CELAF-Institute, including the first Director Brother Hilaire RAHARILALAO, the artist of the building Brother Julio PARADA, one of the first formators of the scholasticate Brother Paul KABORE, the lecturer of Educational Psychology Brother Flavio PAJER. It was also an opportunity to pay tribute to the valiant Brothers who contributed to a great extent in the beginnings of this institution and who rest in peace with the Father: Brothers Manuel PLUMED, Elie RAKOTOMANGA, Marcelin, Jaime C., Francisco MARTINEZ, Anselme RAZAFIMAHERY, and Alphonse SALAVA. Those present expressed their joy of the first moments, and especially the fruits that the CELAF-Institute continues to produce in Africa in general, and in Côte d'Ivoire in a particular way. If the morning of that day was the opportunity to listen with pleasure to the elders, the afternoon was also as much a pleasant moment where the participants had in addition to the priceless joy to enjoy the atmosphere of the two football finals including one female and one male in **Saint Miguel Stadium**, the scholasticate of Abidjan.

This festive atmosphere of pleasant smell set up the tone for the seminar the following day May 11.

Under the presidency of Prof. BAMBA Mathieu, lecturer-researcher at the University Felix Houphouët Boigny, the theme of the seminar was: "*Contribution of education to the meaning of human and otherness in Africa*".

Thus, in his opening speech, Prof. BAMBA noted that everything moves and that the world is changing. In this dynamic of rapid change, "modern times have placed us, he says, in the superficial". The seminar finds its rationale in this sense, that is to say, after realizing the challenges education is facing in Africa, how to rethink a new way to educate that takes into account the "*meaning of the human and the otherness*"? Given the objective of the seminar was to highlight the issues and challenges of education in Africa, the presentations were articulated around three main axes.

The first sociologico-philosophical axis highlighted two communications with Professor Thiémélé BOA, lecturer of philosophy at the University Felix Houphouët Boigny, and Brother Pierre OUATTARA. Articulating his presentation on three points, the needs of education, its new challenges, and education in otherness, Prof. BOA highlighted the situation of Africa between tradition and modernity. As for Brother Pierre, to educate the human being in the hospitality is an imperative and seems to be really one of the best ways to teach the African man to live by living within himself.

The second theological axis was the subject of two communications with professor AKOTIA Benjamin and professor BINI Brice, both professors at the Catholic University of Western Africa of Abidjan (UCAO/UUA). If one of them shows that the African has difficulties living in his milieu after being exposed to Western culture in school, and proposes a return without condition to the sources of our African traditions of hospitality, the other one talked about the need to educate, as stated in the Catholic Church, holistically by highlighting the ethical side of the individual, in order to provide society with actors who transform and promote human life.

The third axis linked to the educational practice also included two communications. Professors OPADOU Kudu and ARCHER Mauritius, both professors at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Abidjan (ENS), tried to bring out what constitutes the difficulties of learning in general among learners, as a way to link didactics with education and better identify the problematic of the teaching/learning process. Without transition, after the seminar day, we went to May 12 where the memorial mass of the 25 years took place, presided over by the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Abidjan, delegate of Cardinal Jean Pierre KUTWA for the circumstance. After the mass, all the participants took part in the feast worthy of the 25th anniversary. The lively atmosphere of this day of apotheosis was such that even in hundreds of pages one could not express everything.

Brother Séverin

Saint Miguel Scholasticate Abidjan



Spirituality: Prayer of a student before school 9

Lord, you are my support, my strength and my hope, the source of my wisdom and my intelligence. It is you who inspires me how to behave and how to conduct myself.

Be with me in my studies so that I grow as a person and contribute to the common good of society. Enlighten my shadows of understanding so that I can understand, maintain and interpret what is taught to me.

Illuminate my parents and educators; may they dedicate the best of themselves for my human and religious formation.

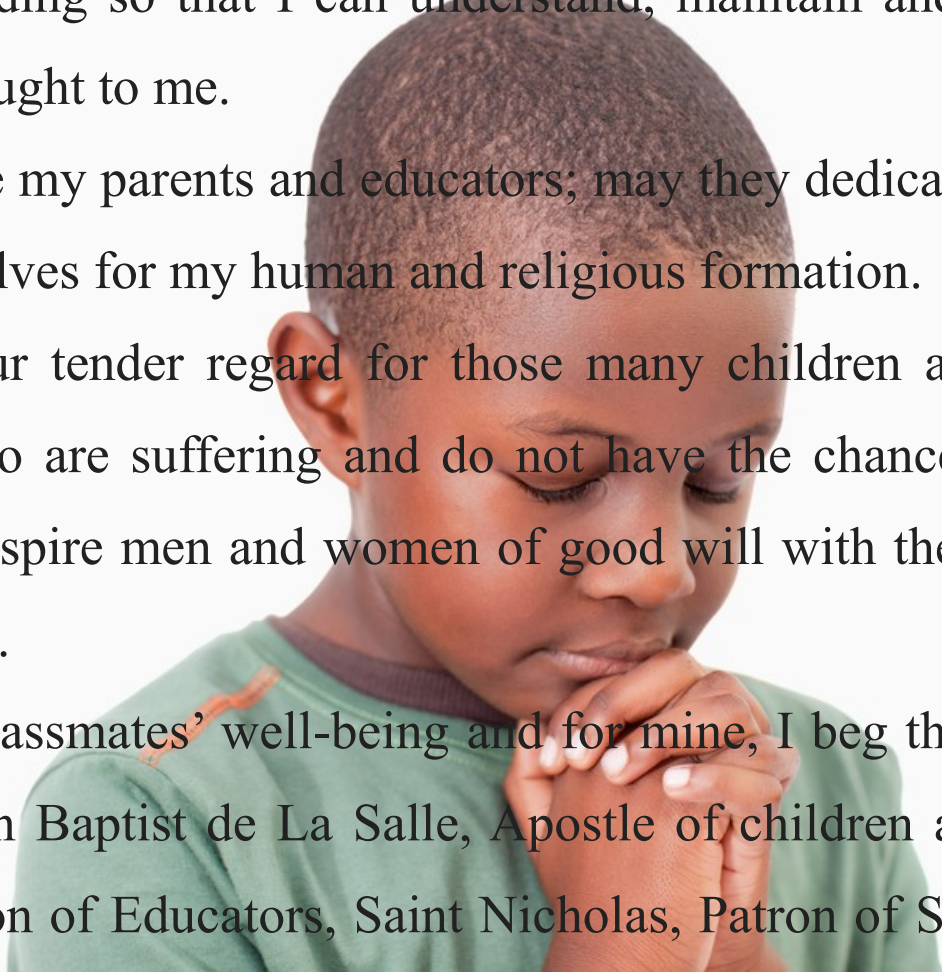
Show your tender regard for those many children around the world who are suffering and do not have the chance to go to school. Inspire men and women of good will with the desire to help them.

For my classmates' well-being and for mine, I beg the favor of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Apostle of children and Heavenly Patron of Educators, Saint Nicholas, Patron of Schoolchildren, and all the Saints of Heaven, to watch over us during this day. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

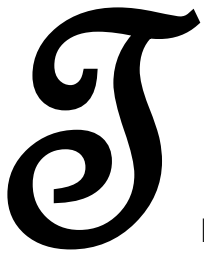
By Brother Pie Nsukula Bavingidi

Auxiliary Visitor of the District of Congo-Kinshasa

Image credit: Google



Ouagadougou: Launching of a lasallian association



The Lasallian Association of Mothers Educators (AMEL) in the city of Ouagadougou - Burkina Faso, is made up of female teachers, female staff members and female parents of students from the three institutions of the Lasallian network in the capital city. They had a training session with the mothers educators from La Salle Sandogo and la Salle Badenya on March 3rd and April 21st.

This session which brought together more than three hundred women was held on the theme: "In the whirlwind of family and professional life, what future prospects to expect?"

Three major points have been addressed:

Self-awareness

Personal Strengths

What life vocation?



After having described woman, having highlighted her capabilities, and having praised her actions, the communicator urged women to invest more in the follow-up of children in order to accompany them easily in their education.

The presentation was followed by discussions around a few concerns.

The first point relates to the concern to bring together women from other lasallian institutions in Burkina (female teachers, staff members, and female parents of students) around the projects of the AMEL.

A second more specific point is relative to the question of early employability of students before the end of their university studies. Due to the crisis in the public universities of the country marked by the sequence of wasted years or the major delays in the starting of academic activities, many students are more and more discouraged and give up as well their academic training in search for a job. This situation is of great concern to the families.

At the end of the two training sessions, the women showed their desire to join this new association.

Mrs Nanema Rose

Headmistress La Salle Badenya Primary School

Reflection: A growing forest makes no noise!

"The essential is invisible to the eyes" said Antoine de Saint-Exupéry to the little prince's fox. It is very hard to accept in our today's societies the image of representation, where our intimate and common lives are spread out and made public through all means of communications and where what is of value and culture are almost neglected. The "android" generation or connected generation, the swag generation tends to unlearn some certain value and wisdom of our ancestors, I quote: ***"a single falling tree makes more noise than a growing forest!"***.

Dear lasallians, each of us must be aware of and must necessarily believe that he is personally this forest that grows and which grows slowly each time he praises God, appreciates nature and the creatures. He grows up gently each time he



travels, reads and seeks to understand, listens to music, writes his history, finds his own way and follows it to the end. He grows up gently, the one who has the passion and who listens to his heart, takes risks with wisdom. He grows gently, the one who uses his own understanding with courage, the one who respects his parents, seniors and his brothers, the one who falls and gets up to move forward in loyalty and honesty. he grows peacefully, the one who welcomes everyone on the account of who they are and not what they have, the one who respects his word, the one who is master of the ICT (Information Technology and Communication), search engines and uses with wisdom the different social media such as Facebook, whatsapp, Messenger, Skype...

If you've chosen not to be a forest that grows slowly, it is not too late to change because, ***"chi will piano will sano e va Lontano"*** that is to say, the one who grows slowly, grows and develops calmly, and this allows him to live longer. Live now and acts immediately, do not allow yourself to die slowly or fall like a single tree which makes too much noise.

*Brother Jean Délar LAVA,
Saint Miguel Scholasticate Abidjan*

Rome: CIAMEL meeting from June 4 to 6, 2018

The International Council of Association and of the Lasallian Educational Mission (CIAMEL), as defined by its statutes, is a deliberative and collaborative body of Brothers and Partners representing the Institute at the global level. It is established to facilitate and lead all current and future educational programs that embody the Lasallian mission.

As foreseen by the Statutes of CIAMEL, the latter had its second meeting of the year 2017-2018 from 4 to 6 June 2018 at the Generalate in Rome. The Council discussed the different points including: the Declaration on the lasallian pedagogy, the formation guide and the lasallian reflection N°5 all in drafting process, as well as the preparation of the International Assembly for the lasallian Educational Mission in 2020.

After lengthy discussions with the drafting committee of the Declaration on lasallian Pedagogy concerning the proposed draft, the Council also received the Secretariat for formation to discuss the draft of the formation Guide, which is also in the drafting process.

Given the importance and the need of the International Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission which will take place in 2020 (AIMEL 2020), this point took much time.



The Council discussed a lot on the different modalities for its success. In particular, the CIAMEL discussed the content and the modalities of the participation of a big number of lasallians. As defined by the strategic goals of the CIAMEL, this is to:

Carry out the priority lines of action proposed by the International Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission (AIMEL 2013), and to assess their impact in particular in the service to the poor and the most vulnerable
Implement the propositions of the 45th General Chapter concerning the mandate of the CIAMEL.

The Council discussed the modalities of the evaluation of the propositions of the 2013 AIMEL and the propositions of the 45th Chapter which relate to the Lasallian Educational Mission. The practical modalities of this participation will be communicated to you once the information is officially given.

We can inform you that the next meeting of the CIAMEL will also take place in Rome from 23 to 25 October 2018

Brother Ferdinand BIZIYAREMYE

CIAMEL member representing the RELAF

Bobo Dioulasso: First vows of the set Saint Salomon Leclercq

Dear lasallian friends, our hearts overflow with joy on this day 13 June 2018, during which the community of the Inter-African Novitiate Our Lady of Grace of Bobo-Dioulasso welcomed in its premises a multitude coming to live and participate in the first vows of our 16 Brothers of the group set Saint Solomon Leclercq, coming from five Districts and the delegation of Rwanda :

District of Central Africa: Brother Boniface DOLLE

District of Antananarivo: Brother François Urbain AN-DRINIRINA, Brother Jean Solo RAZANAKOTO & Brother modest Céciléonce TSILAVIDRAINY

District of West Africa, Brother Wendwaogo Gérard OUEDRAOGO & Brother Judes TRAORE

Delegation of Rwanda: Brother Faustin NGIZWENI-MANA & Brother Jean-Pierre MUNYENGABE

District of Gulf of Benin: Brother

Jean Babonte TOUMA & Brother Jean-Paul Kouméa-Abalo AGBA

District of Congo-Kinshasa: Brother Joël Kanza MAM-BELA, Brother Emile KIUSI MASEVILA, Brother Jean-Luc NSIMBA KISEMBO, Brother Dieu Merci NLANDU KALAMBOTE, Brother Franck MUSA MUSA & Brother Giresse MONSENGWO

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Father Joseph GUIGUEMDE, from the Community of the Beatitudes, with eight concelebrating priests of the archdiocese of Bobo-Dioulasso. The Mass began at 9 am in a celebration mood. Today, these Brothers have said YES to the call of the Lord, they have left everything to follow him with a steady spirit and heart. They desire him only with all their heart. It is unbelievable and inconceivable, said Father Joseph GUIGUEMDE in his thoughtful homily.

After the homily, came the time for the dialogue between the Brother Visitor Julien Diarra and the future professed. At the end of this dialogue, the latter expressed freely and consciously their choice to commit themselves in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The congregation invoked the Holy Spirit on them so that they get strengthened in their commitment.

After saying the vows, the newly professed members signed the register of vows to emphasize their membership to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. These Brothers were applauded by the jubilating congregation.

During the offertory procession two students from the Primary School Saint John Baptist of Kiri (Bobo-Dioulasso) brought a book of catechesis and a terrestrial globe to invite the newly professed to be: "Lasallians without limits" to proclaim the Gospel to the most deprived. "Wow! How beautiful it is to live as Brothers and to be united!"

The Brother Visitor, Julien DIARRA, during his speech introduced three Brothers including: Brother Dieudonné KOLOSNONRE who celebrates 25 years of religious life, Brother Jean-Baptiste COULIBALY who celebrates 30 years of perpetual vows and Brother Michel MESSAN, former Visitor of Gulf of Benin. Brother Jean-Baptiste COULIBALY took the floor on behalf of all the elder Brothers to congratulate all the professed Brothers. During his concrete and practical exhortation, Brother Jean-Baptiste COULIBALY encouraged the professed Brothers for the choice they have made and he encouraged them to move forward and to live their religious life without fear. That was an astonishing exhortation.

Before the Final Blessing, Brother Julien Diarra, Visitor of West Africa took the floor to express his joy and to welcome all the professed Brothers in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. He invited them to follow in the footsteps of Saint Solomon whom they have chosen to be their patron Saint. We wish them successful mission within the Lasallian Family.

Where is your heart, there too is your treasure .

Brother Gilbert MALANDA MAVUNGU

First year Novice



Madagascar : A journey back with Brother Joan on the lasallian pilgrimages of the WYD

At the time of modern mobility, Christians have rediscovered the meaning of pilgrimage and have found the taste of it. You just need to see the crowds travelling to visit holy places, and not just Catholics.

Pope John Paul II had the intuition to propose to the struggling youth exciting moments of community meetings with Christ, the **World Youth Days (WYD)**, through pilgrimages in the diversity of the countries of the world. We know the success and the multicoloured multitudes these WYD bring together at each global celebration every 3 years. The last event was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2015. But each year the local churches celebrate them in their own way.

In Madagascar, the Lasallians have followed the pace and introduced a day of pilgrimage offered to the students from different schools on the theme of Pope's message for each WYD. The usual date for this pilgrimage is May 1. Given that it is a public holiday, this allows voluntary work of pupils and teachers. Given that the date also does not coincide with a major parish event, it allows the priests and our teachers engaged in the Parishes to also participate. In addition to that, the date corresponds to the beginning of the dry season with the nice weather. The Brother who has been the main organizer for many years gives us some insights and anecdotes.



The main objective is the welcoming of Pope's message for the WYD. The texts, well adapted to the young because written for them, are a little bit reduced for the younger ones because the pilgrimage is open to all, from 8 -9 years up to university levels. A few questions help to understand the meaning and the applications in the daily life. The youth are organised in groups with facilitators of the different centres that are involved. Sometimes the senior students become the guides of the younger ones. A walking distance of 2 to 3 km is initiated by a prayer of sending off normally presided over by a priest. During the walk, songs alternate with prayers (rosary) and breaks where we read and deepen the Pope's message.

During the first years when the Organization depended on the Holy Family high school in Antananarivo, the students were organised in small groups and senior students took it very seriously. Each group chose, according to the instructions, a sentence, a prayer, that they offered during the Eucharist, summit of the pilgrimage. Other times, a symbol in relation with the Pope's message expressed the meaning of the pilgrimage.



Continues...

Thus, on a pebble rounded up in the form of a roller was written the names of children expressing that our life was rooted in Christ our ROCK and was deposited near the altar. The shadow of a foot in cardboard, expressed the commitment of the group to follow Christ. The same artwork is duplicated and placed on a wall chart in the school to remind the youth about their commitment. Young people enjoy representations of mimed Gospel scenes. It is entertainment for their eyes and their hearts. And the words of the priest penetrate well.

For the choice of places of pilgrimage, we make sure the greatest number participate. Because of the lack of appropriate sanctuaries we sometimes choose the high places which facilitate the encounter with God. The first chosen for TANA, "AMBOHITRANDRIAMANITRA" (*"the mountain of God"*) 12 km from the city, has for a long time marked the minds because a long time ago at this place the ancestors offered sacrifices to God. Then it became a beautiful grotto of the Holy Family, on the top of a hill, in the middle of the "City of the homeless" of AKAMASOA founded by Father Pedro OPEKA, and which now is a successful example of reintegration. They are now joyful village communities. For Ambositra, 260 km to the south, the place was quite obvious, the place of Marian pilgrimage "SARY MASINA" (The Holy Image) 12 km far. During a pilgrimage there was painted the theme: *"Behold your Mother"* *"Do whatever he tells you"*. In TAMATAVE, the great city of the coast, a small village where there is a statue of Our Lady of the road on the edge of the national road leading to the capital, was quite obvious. That is where we celebrated the pilgrimage of the Great Jubilee of the Redemption in 2000. The words of John Paul II still resonate: *"Young people, do not be afraid to be saints!"*.

To respond to his invitation, the young people carried on their back, along the 3 km distance, a huge cross assembled on the spot. They were invited to "pass through Christ" by passing through a symbolic "door" made of leaves, to enter the Holy Year which was opening. The mimed scene of the prodigal son remained engraved in the minds.

During these days of juvenile pilgrimage, the hand of God was made visible many times. Thus, during the pilgrimage to Tamatave in 2001, a persistent tropical disturbance threatened to prevent the event from happening. For three days, the rain did not stop pouring down. In Tamatave, rain does not scare anyone but enough is enough. From the eve to the next day evening, the teachers kept saying to the Brother Director: "what are we going to do? Do we postpone the pilgrimage?" The answer was: "No, you will see, God will help us". Early in the morning the cars are there, the young people, with their umbrella or their raincoat are arriving for 7 am, the time for gathering, and the rain stopped... and started raining only after we were back to the school at 5 pm, and continued without stopping for several other days. That was a beautiful sign of God perceived by all, showing his abounding love for the youth because not a single drop of rain fell throughout the pilgrimage. It is not surprising that these pilgrimages have been taking place without interruption for more than 25 years in various places of the island despite the permanent political storms. All lasallian schools of the place (Brothers, Sisters and Signum Fidei) are invited to this event as well as the lasallian groups: university students, choirs... parents also join.

After the shared meals, folk festival helps to socialise and allows mingling among these young people from various background in order to feel better as a Church and as a lasallian.

Currently, the organization of this pilgrimage is now the responsibility of the national team for the MEL.

Brother Joan Sala Coll

Regional Bursar



Calendar of the Brother General Councillor 16

Dates	Events
June 2018	
May 27 to June 20	12 th Session of the General Council /Rome
21 June	Rome-Paris
June 21 to June 30	Visite du District de France
July 2018	
1 st	Paris -Valencia
2,3,4	RELEM Conference
5 July	Valencia-Nairobi
5 July – 8 July	Nairobi : Visit to Lwanga District
8 July	Nairobi- Addis-Ababa
July 9 to 14	Formation of RELAF Visitors, Bursars
16 July	Addis Ababa-Juba
July 16 to July 23	Visit Solidarity S.S ; La Salle school Rum-bek
23 July	Juba- Addis Ababa- Abidjan
August 2018	
7 August	Abidjan - Bobo
14 – 18 August	Visit to Wa (Ghana)
19 August	Back to Abidjan
Sept – Oct 2018	
Sept 2 to oct 13	13 th session of the General Council

To visit the web sites of the Regions of the Institute

RELAF: Région Lasallienne Afrique-Madagascar. www.relaf.info

RELEM: Région Lasallienne Europe-Méditerranée. www.relem.org

RELAL: Region Latino Americana Lasallista. www.relal.org.co

RELAN: Région Lasallienne de l'Amérique du Nord. www.lasallian.info

PARC: Pacific Asia Regional Conference. www.lasalle-parc.org