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EDITORIAL

Dear Lasallians, Brothers and Sisters, the following articles speak of fraternity and education. Whether we are aware of it or not, I firmly believe that, as educators, whatever our differences in state of life, religious confession, age, responsibility, or language, we are fighting the good fight: that of fraternity.

There is no other way of salvation for our humanity than fraternity. However, it is true, that there is fraternity and fraternity... The fraternity for which we Christians fight on a daily basis, is a miracle, that is to say, a grace of God... This fraternity is a grace and it is already given to us in Christ Jesus. We are part and participants in this miracle through which the salvation of mankind takes place. This grace nurtures in us, if we dispose ourselves to it, a permanent state of conversion.

The life of grace must be nurtured. It requires nourishment, especially through reading and listening to others, with quality food. Maybe some of us no longer take the time to feed ourselves. Others fill themselves with anything. And others feed themselves but do not take time for digestion, that is, through meditation, re-reading and prayer. We are so obsessed with things to do. Look at how the world is going. How can we not think that where it is lived, where it is believed, fraternity is a miracle? Of course, if fraternity is a grace from God, it is not imposed. It calls upon our freedom in all the dimensions of our being: body, mind, will, heart, as well as the family and cultural heritage we have received.

We can, in the form of a caring spirit, introduce it into all our human activities: such as in sports, culture, economics, politics and religion... Everywhere, and at all times, it is indeed in their own hands that human being runs the most serious dangers. It is finally from himself that man needs to be saved. Education, which makes fraternity a common vocation for all, thus contributes to the work of salvation. In our ignorance, our indifference, our envy, our jealousy, our anger, our egoism, our pride, and even in our love and tribal, confessional or national attachments, the other is always in danger. Fraternity can only be established between us by attacking the inequality inscribed in our hearts and in our social relationships. It is a path of liberation for the other in ourselves, and if we allow ourselves to be liberated, it transforms each one into a guardian of the good of the other and of the common good. In this struggle for our liberation, without which there can be no justice and peace among us, the Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Son, speaks to our minds and hearts. Let us listen to his voice.

Bro. Pierre OUATTARA.



Elder Brother's advice to newly professed Brothers

The call to consecrated life is human response to a call that seems to have come from God. In fulfilment of His promise to be with the Church, "Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age," (Mt. 28:20), God continues to call people who dedicate their lives as Priests and Religious Men and Women. Religious Life is witnessing to Jesus Christ, poor, obedient, and chaste. "Life consecrated by profession of the evangelical counsels is a stable form of living by which faithful, following Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, are totally dedicated to God who is loved most of all, so that, having dedicated themselves to His honour, the up building of the Church and the salvation of the world by a new and special title, they strive for the perfection of charity in service to the Kingdom of

God, and having become an outstanding sign in the Church, they may foretell the heavenly glory," (Can. 573).

Though this divine call is open to all the Baptized, it is not everyone that responds to it. And those that respond to it must be trained and prepared adequately so as to test the authenticity of the spirit, and the genuineness of their intention. The right place and channel therefore, to test the authenticity of the spirit and the genuineness of the intention of the candidates for Priesthood, is the Major Seminary either owned by a Diocese, Ecclesial Province or by Religious Congregations. While, for Religious Male or Female, it is the Novitiate.

The Novitiate is the official starting point for the training of Religious Male or Female. “The novitiate, by which life in the Institute begins, is ordered to this:

- ❖ that the Novices better recognize their divine vocation and one which is, moreover, proper to the Institute;
- ❖ that they experience the Institute’s manner of living;
- ❖ that they be formed in mind and heart by its spirit; and
- ❖ that their intention and suitability be tested.” (Can. 646).

Whatever goes on in the novitiate therefore, is geared towards achieving the goal enumerated in this Canon 646.

The De La Salle Brothers of Lwanga District of Africa, comprising of Mozambique, South Africa, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya, celebrate and rejoice with 10 young men as they make their first commitment to Religious Life, through the pronouncement of the evangelical counsels. This journey started over three years ago. In fact, it is a journey that started with the acceptance of Baptism in the Catholic Church. The call to Religious Profession is a continuation of the faith received and professed at Baptism, “Before they are admitted to the novitiate, candidates must show proof of baptism, confirmation and free status” (Can. 645). The Religious dedicate “their entire lives to God’s service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that Baptism and expresses it more fully.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para 5).

These ten young men, having been convinced that their call to Religious Life is a divine call and they willingly respond to that call, to deepen their

relationship with Christ Jesus, started their formation about eighteen months ago. These eighteen months were dedicated to intensive prayers, meditation, spiritual reading, silence, Scripture, Catholic Doctrine, Human Development, community life, life of the Founder, and every aspect of the De La Salle Institute. The Canon Law stipulates that, “In order that the novitiate be valid it must include twelve months spent in the community of the novitiate itself...” (Can. 648); and that the “Novitiate is not to extend beyond two years,” (Can. 648 par.3).

For these ten young men, the pronouncement of the evangelical counsels marks the official beginning of Religious Life. You are now officially members of De La Salle Brothers, a Religious Congregation, present in over 80 countries. You have become part of the story that started in 1680 in a small village of Rheim in France. You are part of the story to “Teach Minds, Touch Hearts and Transform Lives.” With your vows, you are incorporated into the Institute with rights and duties accrue to all members of the congregation, (Can. 654).

Remember, however, beloved Brothers, that “incorporated into the Institute with rights and duties” requires responsibility. You are now bonified and free members of the De La Salle Brothers Congregation. Your freedom can only attain its perfection when it is directed towards God, the author of life (CCC 398). How you use your freedom is the measurement of your level of maturity, as human beings, as Christian, and as Consecrated Religious.

By virtue of your baptism, you share in the universal Priesthood, Prophetic and Kingship of Jesus Christ. Therefore, you are called to a life of holiness. “The Baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the

Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood...” (Lumen Gentium, para 10). The profession of the three evangelical counsels is a call to deeper relationship with Jesus. Just like the rich young man, (Mk. 10:17-22), obeying the commandments is enough to gain eternal life; but living a life of poverty for the sake of the Kingdom is a call to a life of perfection. “The purpose of the religious life is to help the members follow Christ and be united to God through the profession of the evangelical counsels.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para. 2e). The evangelical counsels pronounced by all Consecrated Religious in the Church are: Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience.

Chastity: The vow of chastity for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven (Mt. 19:12), pronounced by Religious is “an outstanding gift of grace.” The vow frees the heart of the Religious to be more inflamed with divine love and love for all human beings. It prefigures the heavenly Kingdom where God’s children will not be giving out in marriage. Chastity is the most “suitable means by which religious dedicate themselves with undivided heart to the service of God and the works of the apostolate.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para12).

Poverty: The vow of poverty invites the religious to be poor both in practice and in spirit, their treasures being in heaven (Mt. 6:20). It is an invitation to work tirelessly to earn their own living, and respect the dignity of labour; and “while they procure what is required for their sustenance and works, they should banish all undue solicitude and trust themselves to the provident care of their Father in heaven.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para 13).

Obedience: The vow of obedience is in the footsteps



of Jesus Christ, who for our sake, assumed the nature of a slave, whose

food was to do the will of the Father, (Phil. 2:7; Jn. 4:34). “In professing obedience, the religious offer the full surrender of their own will as a sacrifice of themselves to God and so are united permanently and securely to God’s salvific will.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para 14). It is in this spirit of doing the will of God in all things and at every situation that Religious are called upon and encouraged in the “spirit of faith and love for the divine will to humbly obey their Superiors according to their rules and constitutions.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para 14).

Besides the three evangelical counsels that are mandatory for all Consecrated Religious in the Church, the De La Salle Brothers take two more vows that are peculiar to the congregation:

a) Association for the educational Service of the Poor: The vow encourages the Brothers to see the educational legacy left by their Founder, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, as a means of salvation that they alone cannot contained. A legacy that has to be shared with others on the mission. “By the vow of association for the educational service of the poor, the Brothers promise to conduct as a community, educational works accessible to the poor.” (Rule 28). The vow of association therefore, “operates as the factor which integrates the various other elements of

the Brothers' identity.”¹ The vow of association invites the Brothers to empty themselves to be able to accommodate others, especially the poor children they are sent to; it invites them to empty themselves so that they can create relationship based on the Gospel values. Because, “we are made in relationship and we can only fulfil ourselves in relationship. This vow expresses clearly the option for a participative existence.”²

b) Stability in the Institute: This vow connects the Brothers with their foundation. It is a continuation of the vow the Founder made with two others to remain united to do everything within their power, to establish the “Society of the Christian Schools”. Through this vow, the Brothers “expressed both their trust in God ... and their desire to build together, with mutual trust, a community that would ensure the continuity of the work of the schools.” (Rule 30).

Dear Brothers, by your consecration, you are set apart to proclaim God's Kingdom. You become sign of contradiction to the world. You become sign of God's Kingdom to all those you meet and those you are sent to teach. It is a call to live solely for God and to do what pleases God. “Members of each Institute should recall first of all that by professing the evangelical counsels they responded to a divine call so that by being not only dead to sin but also renouncing the world they may live for God alone.” (Perfectae Caritatis, para 5).

Your vows are best lived out in the community. The community is the backbone, the foundation, the colon that supports Religious Life of the Brothers,

and indeed, all Religious Life in the Church. “We will not disintegrate if our present apostolic endeavours change radically, but we will more assuredly be putting our future in jeopardy if we do not engage in a continuous process of re-interpreting, re-determining, and re-organizing those basic elements of our life that keep us together as Brothers.”³ Community life is that basic element of our life as Consecrated Men that keeps us together. The unity, peace, love, respect we share in the community must be transferred to the apostolate. This is why Jesus prayed for unity among His followers (Jn. 15:1-10).

Brothers, you must strive to make the community a “Home”, where experience of God is shared and lived, where you get your energy for the mission revitalized and re-energized. “The Community is for the Brothers their home.... young Brothers.” (Rule 49). The community is your source of inspiration (Rule 45). It is indeed the community that differentiates us from our lay collaborators.

Brother Wole Olabanjo FSC

De La Salle International Scholasticate,
Nairobi, Kenya.

¹ Pierre Ouattara, The Vow of Association for the Educational Service of the Poor: The Identity of the Brother of the Christian Schools in the African Context (page 7).

² Ibid, 81.

³ James R. Zullo, Group Life: An Expression of Brotherly Association, in Life Together: A Study of Religious Association, ed. Timothy McCarthy, fsc (Illinois: Christian Brothers Conference, 1978), 42.

Our world, in the 21st century, faces fundamental dilemmas that challenge us through instruction and education. Or, like some, we build barriers to exclude some people and assimilate others. We may also, like others, create a global order where faith in our common humanity is respected and embodied in the structure of our society. The other temptation is to do like some, under the pretext of democracy and human development, and to vote for laws that destroy the family as intended by God. Another way is, in the name of human equilibrium and the preservation of creation and procreation, we safeguard through education the family as willed by God from the beginning of humanity. Indeed, everyone knows that in this very open century, where everything is said everywhere and sometimes in any way, societies are taking more and more account of people and their aspirations. Every day more and more conscious individuals and groups aspire to take their destiny into their own hands and influence the course of events by giving their opinions and taking decisions that concern them. Faced with this unbridled aspiration for more participation, more freedom, more consideration, our mission as Lasallian schools, Lasallian educators and Lasallian parents is to discover without any complexes that today our children and young people pose a challenge to us in terms of education. And if nothing is done, they impose themselves on us as our masters and tomorrow they will stand before us as our judges: if my parents had done this to me or given me this, I would not be what I am today. Or, I have become what I am thanks to my parents. Our young people (students) sometimes want everything and right away without any awareness of the effort involved in their demands. It is a difficult pill to swallow and an observation that is not shared by everyone. It does not matter. Our mission in this cybernetic century is also



to be more and more attentive to what is happening in and around our young people in order to avoid all forms of exclusion and resentment. Our mission invites us to keep our eyes wide open in the face of all the new things that arise with frightening frenzy and impose themselves on our young people. For not all novelty is synonymous with value or with an educational model. In any case, Lasallian educators must remain creative in order to respond through education and formation to the new needs and novelties of which our young people and our students

are sometimes, let us say, the victims. Our mission is to help them to acquire the right scale of values which will give meaning to their human life and encourage in them the development of interiority, of gratuitous love, of generous dedication. This is the reason of state of pastoral services in Lasallian schools. In fact, as Lasallian educational actors, we are called to be pastor-witnesses for our young people, for our students. Finally, our mission is to ensure that our young people integrate in their identities rationality and emotion, feelings

and instincts, willingness and fragility, the balance between need and desire, between the useful and the pleasant, between the dream and the reality. And for this, I believe that we must honestly question ourselves, each at his or her own level as a Lasallian educational actor, on what we really are for our young people today. We should question ourselves on the quality of our educational actions in favour of our young people. Perhaps in a modest way our Educational Projects are a praiseworthy and eloquent response to these questions and challenges.

FOKA STEPHANE

FIRST EDITION OF THE LASALLIAN YOUTH CAMP IN THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL AFRICA.



On the initiative of the two communities of the Brothers in Chad, a first camp for young Lasallians was organised in Bongor, a small town situated on the way between Ndjamená, the capital of the country, and Kélo, another town where the Brothers run a secondary school for general and technical education. This camp took place from 3 to 6 June 2021 and brought together 26 young Lasallians from Ndjamená and Kélo. It was animated by 4 Brothers. The general theme of the camp was "*Young people and Lasallian identity*" with the main objective of encouraging these young people to commit themselves to the great Lasallian family of the District. In fact, everything began with the arrival of the participants on the site in the afternoon of 3rd June. Then we settled in and constituted the camp animation groups. The same day in the evening, at 6pm, all the young people went to the chapel to pray, meditate and give thanks to God for his wonders in the life of each one. After the prayer, we had a welcome dinner for at 7pm. At 8.30 pm, a meeting was held to get familiar with the

instructions that will accompany the activities of this camp, at the same time the programme was read and the animation staff was presented.

The other days were devoted to the presentation of three sub-themes that will furnish the stay of young Lasallians in Bongor. They are:

1. John-Baptist De La Salle and the Brothers of the Christian Schools today
2. Lasallian identity
3. Young people in search of their identity.

These sub-themes were animated by the Brothers in charge of the camp. It has allowed the young people to better understand their identity while remaining attentive to God's call. After each presentation, sufficient time was given to the young people to allow



them to discuss in small groups any aspect subject that they wished to deepen.

Apart from the sub-topics, several other activities were organised, such as physical exercises and

cultural evening such as walking, relaxation, football, cultural performances. All that, for the sake of maintaining a good health during the camp. These activities also contributed to strengthening the knowledge of the young people among themselves and with their animators. In addition, there were times for community prayer and individual meditation, reflection, learning religious songs, not forgetting the moments of conviviality around meals and non-alcoholic drinks. One of the most important points was the morning and evening prayers during which the young Lasallians entrusted themselves to the Lord through the spiritual exercises in the Centre's chapel. It was an ideal place for recollection in silence. Both Christians and non-Christians took part in these exercises. This was something new for most of them.



Church was celebrating the Blessed Sacrament. On the occasion of this Mass, the Brothers in charge of the camp had the opportunity to address the faithful by presenting to them Lasallian vocations in general and that of the Brother of the Christian Schools in particular.

To conclude, it should be noted that the day before their departure for the camp, the young Lasallians of N'Djamena had gone, with hands well filled with basic necessities (rice, foodstuffs, milk, oil, soap...) to visit the orphan children, boarders of the ORPHELINAT DIEU BENI situated in Gassi, one of the remote areas of the city. This was an unexpected gesture that was very much appreciated by the promoters of this social structure, which take in some 70 motherless children between the ages of 0 and 12 years.



The testimonies collected from the young Lasallians suggest that they were very satisfied with the course, the content of the themes treated and the general organisation of the camp. they had been waiting for this camp for a long time after several postponements because of Covid'19. The 18 young people who came from N'Djamena and the 8 from Kélo actively participated in the various activities throughout the camp and are keen to have a second edition.

Before leaving Bongor, on Sunday 6 June, the young Lasallians took part in the Eucharistic celebration at the parish of Saint Joseph of Bongor where the

Brother Guy-Blaise KAMENI,

Director of the Camp

THE LA SALLE SCHOOL OF HOMABAY

La Salle School Homabay, open its doors on 27th of July 2021. The journey to this climax started when the then, Bishop of Homabay, Phillop Anyolo invited Brothers to take over St. Martha Secondary School in



Homabay. Bishop Anyolo has since been transferred to be the Arch Bishop of Kisumu Arch Diocese, and currently we have a New Bishop called Michael Odiwa. It took some two years to prepare all the documentation required and necessary paper work before brothers officially landed in Homabay to start the Project of renovating St. Martha' Secondary School and turn it to La Salle School Homabay. The School is fully owned by the Brothers of the Christian Schools.



Currently the school has admitted 39 students spreading from baby class, Pre-Primary 1 (PP1), Pre-primary 2 (PP2), Grade 1 and Grade 2. Ongoing admissions are still going on and we hope by the end of this academic year the school will have increased in numbers. So far the people of Homabay have welcomed the school very well and the New Bishop is very happy with the new development. The School is located at the heart of Homabay town opposite St. Paul's Hospital next to the Homabay Cathedral

Church. The greater part of the population the school is serving are from the town of Homabay which is the County Headquarter of Homabay county. It is one of the fast developing rural-urban towns along the shores of Lake Victoria. Homabay is one of the six counties bordering Lake Victoria to the West of Kenya. For the success of La Salle School Homabay to take place, I would like to appreciate our Br. Visitor Ghebreyesus Habte for his effortless support both in paper work development and Project approvals to raise funds for renovations. Appreciations goes to Solidarity Team in Rome headed by Br. Amilcare and other Solidarity Staff like Serena and Angela who have worked tirelessly to realize this dream. Kenyan leadership team headed by Sector coordinator Br. Oscar and the entire Sector Council as well as the Brothers in Kenya for their moral support. If it were not for you Brothers, we would not have reached this far. Asanteni sana.

As the academic year progresses, we hope for the best in future.



Bro. Antone Oloo FSC
Director

LASALLIAN COMMUNITY OF FRATERNAL EDUCATION (CLEF) 2021

There is no longer any misunderstanding about the extent of the devastating effect of Covid-19. After a year's interruption due to this pandemic, the Lasallian Community of Fraternal Education, in abbreviated form CLEF, held its 7th edition of summer camp from 10 to 17 July. This extracurricular activity, initiated by the young Brothers of the District of West Africa, is intended to be a framework for the promotion of Lasallian values, beyond the works held by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. It took place in Nouna, Burkina Faso, with cherubic children from 6 to 12 years old, under the theme: *"Let us protect ourselves against*



Covid-19. Let's protect the environment. Let's cultivate peace."

Once the administrative issues had been settled, the training of the monitors had been completed, and the registration closed, the long-awaited day of the participants of the CLEF, "cléfistes" arrived. Saturday 10 July was devoted to the welcoming ceremony and the planning of the camp. The rest of the week was filled with activities, workshops, presentations on different sub-topics, sharing in small groups called "families", a siesta, sports and the evaluation of the day. Oops! One of the popular activities, but not the least, was lunch preceded and followed by snacks. During the workshop hours, the children were busy learning piano, djembe, drawing



and colouring, decorating, wool and beading, each according to their choice. The apotheosis, which took place on 17 July, was magical because

of the great performance made by the children and their animators in front of some authorities of the city and children's parents.

For this edition of the CLEF, we had sixty-seven participants (cléfistes) and twenty-two animators, including about fifteen Brothers (postulants and young Brothers). This team, highly motivated for the educational cause of the children, was led by Brother Josué TRAORE of the Toussiana community and mister Sylvestre TOE, teacher at the primary school of Saint John Baptist de La Salle of Sandogo. All confident, the children and their monitors made an appointment for the 8th edition God willing, in July 2022.

Long life to the Lasallian mission!

Bro. David Frédéric OUEDRAOGO, F.E.C/DAO

DISTRICT GULF OF BENIN (DGB): ANNUAL RETREAT



With the good ending of the school year 2020-2021, there are reasons for the Brothers to draw back to pray and thank the Lord for his blessings. The Brothers participated in this retreat from August 22 to 29, 2021, at the Ascension monastery of the Benedictine monks of Danyi in the village of Dzogbegan. Located between 700 and 1000 meters above sea level, Danyi is known for its cool climate. This condition allows for the association of the contemplation of God with that of the environment. Eighteen Brothers took part



in the retreat with the theme “*All Called to the Brotherhood*”. Brother Toussaint GODONOU, from the Order of Friars Minor was in charge of developing the theme. He made a link with the Encyclical Letter of Pope

Francis, “*Tutti Fratelli*”. Some references from the document “*The Challenge of fraternity: a reflection and a personal testimony*” enabled the preacher to deepen fraternity as a place of communion and sanctification at the service of the Church and humanity. Christ, who was sent to restore us from our sins, gives us the strong sign of brotherhood, which is all about simplicity and love. A successful brotherhood is the one that is first healed of its own wounds. Furthermore, acceptance of oneself and the sacrament of reconciliation are necessary means for the brotherhood. The call to the brotherhood is an invitation to a desire for *universal humanity*. Hence, the need to put our dreams and our voices together. May our faith in God help us to be able to step out of ourselves often and to break down boundaries and borders in order to promote mutual assistances in spontaneous gratuitousness and acceptance.

Brother Guillaume YAME, D.G.B

VOCATIONAL CAMP IN DAO: TOUSSIANA 2021

The District of West Africa, like the other Districts of RELAF, has set up commissions for its smooth running. Among these commissions is that of the pastoral ministry of vocation. This commission contributes to ensuring the sustainability of the Institute in West Africa through various activities. The person in charge of the pastoral ministry of vocation in the District collaborates with the Brothers in charge of



that ministry in the different works and communities in order to promote Lasallian vocations. In this pastoral year 2020-2021, Brother Toua Denis TRAORE is the one who is in charge of this commission at District level. Residing in the Brothers' community of Tounouma (Bobo-Dioulasso), he is visiting different parishes and works promoting the Lasallian vocation among the young people. In order to make the Brothers better known to the young aspirants commonly called "juvénistes" and with a view to helping them in their vocational discernment, a camp called "Camp Juvénistes" is organised each year in the District.

This year, the camp was held in Toussiana at the Collège Moderne Privé from 3 to 17 August. Twenty-seven young people from different parishes and dioceses of Burkina, from year seven to the university level, took part to that camp. Having at heart the desire to become religious Brothers of the Christian Schools, they prepared themselves for a fortnight to

learn about our Institute, to deepen their faith, to be initiated into community life and prayer, but above all to experience fraternity. The animators of the pastoral ministry of vocation wanted to remain in communion with the Institute by placing this camp under the theme: "**I participate in this miracle**".

Intervening according to three sub-themes, the Brothers animating the Camp spoke with the young people during these two weeks.

First sub-theme: *the miracle from yesterday up to today.*

From 5 to 7 August. This theme was animated by the Brothers Epiphane TRAORE and Christian KIENOU, to the young people of year 7 to year 10 (first group). Starting from the definition of the term miracle, the two confreres, referring to the Old Testament, recounted the miracles of God for his people, which will continue in the New Testament.

Ultimately, our whole life is made up of miracles. We are invited to see God's miracles in our daily lives and to participate in them.

The aspirants of year 11 to year 13 (second group) were animated by the Brothers Cyrille KONDOMBO and Yves DRABO. They have started by the definition of the notions, to make the "Juvénistes" know that the first objective of miracles is the salvation of men (Ex 15,22- 26).

Thus they invited

the young people to make their lives a miracle for others, because life is not made up of what we find but of what we bring to it. Aspiring to the vocation of Lasallian educator, the miracle we must work is to



lead ourselves and others from ignorance to knowledge, from hatred to love, from darkness to light, from sadness to joy, from doubt to faith, from death to life....



Second Sub-theme: *The witness of the Christian in times of insecurity.*

This theme was animated from 09 to 11 August by Brother Raoul and David, to the first group. Inspired by the security situation in Burkina Faso, they taught the “juvénistes” the notions of insecurity. Among the most recurrent types of insecurity are the physical threat, the cyber threat and the psychological threat. The two Brothers invited the participants to give a Christian witness in their environment by making prayer their first weapon. The Christian is the one who, even when persecuted, exults because he knows in whom he has put his trust, the one who will never betray. Dear aspirants, be witnesses of hope and charity in your living environments and in spite of the difficulties. You should be joyful as Nathanaël MINOUNGOU, a Burkinabè slam poet, invites us to be when he says: "If they are not afraid to die, you too should not be afraid to live".

To the second group, Brother Paul KABORE emphasised the lives of Christian saints and martyrs who shed their blood for the cause of the Gospel. He invited the aspirants to familiarise themselves with the Word of God which shows us the way of witness leading to holiness.

Third sub-theme: *I discern my vocation.*

Brother Maxence SOMÉ animated the first group. He took inspiration from the Gospel on the transfiguration (Mt 17, 1- 9). Having detailed it clearly, he brought out elements that can help in the discernment of vocation. Vocation is a divine call addressed to a given individual and it is up to that person to respond freely. Brother SOMÉ invited the young people to allow themselves to be shaped by Christ in prayer and to listen to his voice which resounds among many others.

For the 2nd group, the third sub-theme was given as a retreat. They left on the evening of 11 August to the Centre Spirituel Théophile Elola (C.S.T.E). Brother Sylvain CONSIMBO was the preacher of this retreat. He was accompanied by Brother Philippe BAI. With his great experience, he did not take long to immerse the aspirants in the spirit of the retreat. The favourable setting allowed them to integrate the different exhortations and advices. The sessions of personal meditation and adoration allowed them to become more familiar with Christ. In order to better know each other, the commission of the pastoral ministry of vocation integrated into the camp programme meetings between Brothers and young people. It was



a question of each aspirant to go to a Brother to get to know him and to express any concerns he might have about his vocation. The Vocation Promoter requested that by the end of the camp, each juvenile should have

met at least three Brothers. This activity was followed by a choir practice and an initiation to the breviary and liturgy.

In addition to the sub-themes, the camp offers an opportunity for vocational training through diversified workshops such as music, technical drawing, carpentry, computer science, which took place in the afternoons between 3 and 4.30 pm.

The camp is also a moment for fun and relaxation through sports, in which Brothers and the aspirants took part. The socials revealed the artistic talents of some Brothers and “Juvénistes”. The Brothers' community of Bérégadougou, located at around twenty kilometres from Toussiana, welcomed us on 8 August. The Brothers of this community, in charge of the Lasallian Centre of Initiation to the Professions of Agriculture (CLIMA), showed us the different productions unites such as aviculture farming, fish farming, poultry farming cattle breeding, banana and papaya fields.



We all returned amazed. A friendly match opposing the “Juvénistes” and the Brothers on Monday 16 August, ended with a score of 3 goals to 2 in favour of the juvenile team. It must be said that it was in a spirit of brotherhood that we allowed this score. On the morning of 17 August, the camp ended with the departure in convoys for Bobo. Congratulations to the organisers and may it please the Lord of the harvest

to put in the hearts of many young people the desire to serve him in the Lasallian educational mission.

LONG LIFE TO THE “JUVÉNISTES” CAMP!

LONG LIFE TO THE LASALLIAN VOCATION!

LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS. FOREVER!



Brother Kiébè Valère TRAORE

Community of La Salle OUAGA.

WHEN MAKING A VOW MEANS DYING TO ONESELF!

Some people understand and rightly explain that to take the vow of poverty is to enter into the spirit of possessing nothing of one's own as material. This understanding has taken root in the Church and many have developed one of the evangelical counsels, taking as a basis, the need not to be alienated by temporary goods. This is an opportunity to welcome the efforts made so far and to consider, if possible, going beyond this understanding of the vow of poverty. In order to approach this vow, it is necessary to start with the concept of "dying to self".

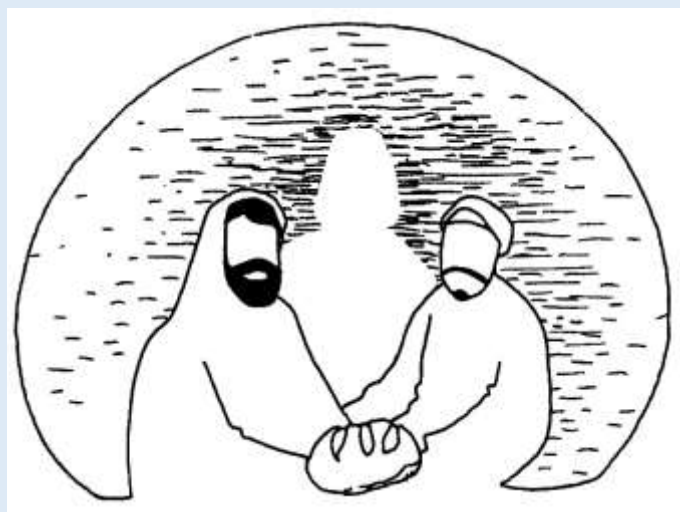
What does it mean to die to oneself when we talk about the vow of poverty?

To die to oneself consists in dispossessing oneself to be the possession of another. In other words, it is the operation that leads to divesting oneself of one's own nature in order to be filled with another nature, which is the nature of God himself. It is a process that leads every lover of religious life to empty himself or herself, to leave the ego that most often imprisons, to enter into the spirit of the beatitudes "blessed are the poor in spirit", which liberates.

Religious poverty based on the non-possession of material things would be the second stage of the operation, the first of which is linked to the very person of the consecrated person. In this sense, the first act of placing in common is the whole being of the religious man or woman. To use other concepts, we place ourselves in common with others in community in complete availability, at the service of the community and of all.

Without the placing of our person in common in community, the placing of our goods in common seems to be watered down. Do we want to live a

watered-down religious life? It is very difficult to think about this, especially since religious life is "a chance for the Church".



We find death to self through the profession of the vow of poverty in the example of Christ, who did not consider it necessary to maintain his rank as equal to God, but emptied himself of his rich and incorruptible divine nature in order to be fully human without ever having ceased to be God. Not being born of Mary by His own will, He will do nothing of Himself: "I have not come to do My own will". It is to this that we are called by the vow of poverty, which implies ipso facto the other vows.

Séverin Namitien, FEC/DGB

RETREAT FOR THE LASALLIAN COLLABORATORS IN THE DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA (DAO)

Place : NOVICIAT FEC BOBO-DIOULASSO
Period: From 2, to 6 August 2021

Each year, the Lasallian collaborators of the District of West Africa meet in a diocese chosen in advance to meditate on a given theme and thus encourage exchanges of experience between educators. This

year, the Archdiocese of Bobo-Dioulasso was chosen by the organisers, the Secretariat for the Lasallian Educational



Mission (SMEL), to hold this retreat which was intended to be another occasion for prayer, reflection and community life.

1. The Theme

Placed under the theme "With Jesus Christ, let us participate in this miracle" and under the direction of Brother Jacques MONTCHEBI (Director of the Novitiate in BOBO), the 2021 retreat was attended by thirty-nine (39) collaborators, including three (03) members of SMEL.

2. Dynamic of animation

The dynamic of animation of this year's retreat was based on the evaluation of the educational and formative action of the past school year (2020-2021). We made it in the form of a rereading of the participation of lay collaborators in the Lasallian Educational Mission as a mission of evangelisation through the works.

This dynamic of animation has been developed in four essential activities:

First Activity:

It was a question of looking at the academic results (the fruits of the work done during the year), giving an appreciation by making a comparison with the results of the previous year and drawing a conclusion

on the performance of each Lasallian work.

Second

activity:

This involved analysing the methods and means

used to achieve the expected results, identifying the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats that contributed negatively or positively to the achievement of the result obtained.

Third activity:

It was all about rediscovering the Mission-Vision together by becoming aware of its potential and opportunities. In fact, it emerges from the Lasallian reflection (RL 6) that the Lasallian vision consists in seeing abundance where others see scarcity, and bringing food where there is none. And the mission nothing but to provide a human and Christian education to the students, especially the poor, according to the ministry that the Church entrusts to us (Rule, 3). In other words, it is not only a matter of a Lasallian school having good academic results in the intellectual field, but of achieving the integral education of the child (intellectual, physical, technical, personality, sociability and spirituality)

Fourth activity:

It dealt with studying together the link between the Lasallian charism (associating oneself for the educational service of the poor), current convictions (potentialities and opportunities) and future perspectives. These future perspectives can be built



by appropriating the concept of Utopia which requires three (03) important attitudes: gratitude, passion and hope. Moreover, the theme proposed by the Institute for the year 2021-2022 is Utopia and Hope, inspired by the testimonies of Simeon and Anna in the Gospel of Luke 2, 21-40.

These four activities were carried out over three days through plenary presentations.

1. Purpose of the retreat

The purpose of the four activities of the animation dynamic was to encourage the awakening and strengthening of the spiritual attitude of Lasallian educators, inheritors of St. John Baptist de La Salle. That is, an attitude of abandonment to Divine Providence for a fruitful participation in its work.

2. The experience of the retreatants

The participants considered the retreat as the experience of a Lasallian educator who meditates on his educational action in the light of the growth, fruitfulness and perfection of the Christian educational ministry (Meditation 194 and 197). Thus,

throughout the presentations, the Formator used the symbol of the educational tree to illustrate this Christian educational ministry. It is presented as follows:

- The roots: they constitute the salvation of youth
- The trunk: it corresponds to Christian education which aims at an integral education (human, spiritual and religious) of the learner as a whole.
- The branches: three (03) in number, they represent the different levels of formation (intellectual, moral and civic, spiritual)
- The fruits: they represent young people who have become young adults who are competent and aware professionals, responsible citizens and convinced believers

Note: in the light of this educational tree, it was possible to discover that man is body, soul and spirit, which differentiates him from the other creatures of God who are only spirit. The spirit is the one that sustains life (the breath of life), while the soul is the engine of life and the body allows the relationship with the physical world. When the spirit, the soul and the body are not in harmony in somebody, he or she locked himself or herself from God and is lost.

In addition, it should be noted that a time of meditation and prayer was observed each day; two meditations divided into three points each were proposed per day; each participant had to direct his meditation on one of the points of a meditation, pick an aspect that marked him and write down on a piece of paper an essential word of the text that he should then share with the others during the group works.

Thus, at the end of each pooling, three words were chosen to express the mission of the day, entrusted to us:



Day 1:

- Words chosen: instrument, instrument and patient.
- Mission: to be instruments of God before the young people in patience.

Day 2:

- Chosen words: Wisdom, guide and educator
- Mission: to be educators and guides who act with wisdom.

Day 3:

- Chosen words: Ambassadors, mission and perfection.
- Mission: to be ambassadors of God before the young people who carry out their mission with perfection.

1. Conclusion

This year's retreat brought together the first class of Lasallian collaborators set up in August 2016 and the second class constituted in this school year 2020-2021. It was a rather interesting experience. In fact, it allowed the different works to be properly represented and thus to foster fruitful exchanges. The participants once again expressed their satisfaction for having taken part in a high quality retreat with a very open mind and a competent Formator. They wished not only for the continuation of these annual

retreats but also for the reinforcement of these formations by the restoration of pedagogical trainings by discipline with a view to reinforcing the integral formation of the Lasallian educator.

Mrs Rose Laetitia NANEMA/DALA

Secretariat Lasallian Educational Mission
of the District of West Africa (SMEL DAO).

GENERAL REPORT OF THE YOUNG LASALLIANS (YL) CAMP BOHICON 2021



Day 1
Monday 02 August: arrival and installation of all participants at the camp.

Day 2

First meeting with the young people of Bohicon followed by the launching of the camp by the Brother Visitor. The theme was "Lasallian instrument of God at the lifting of borders".

The objectives were:

- First of all, to get to know the different members of the YL of the District of the Gulf of Benin (DGB);
- Living together
- Volunteering

In the afternoon, a painting activity was carried out by the Young Lasallians in the Mgr. Steinmetz School and the evening ended with a presentation of the Lomé YL and a board game.

Day 3

We began the day with a brief presentation of the District of the Gulf of Benin. It was done by the

Brother Visitor, who did not fail to speak to us on the theme: "Utopia makes us move forward". A second theme, "self-esteem", was presented by Brother Guillaume. We also talked about the relationship between self-esteem and self-confidence and the difference between self-love and love for oneself. The morning was ended up with a song by Frédéric FRANÇOIS, "Il faut dire: je t'aime".

In the afternoon we played a football match with the youth of Bohicon and then ended the evening with a presentation by YL Kara.



Day 4

At 8am, departure for the discovery of the Lasallian bilingual school followed by a visit to the museum of the kingdom of Abomey. On arrival at the tourist site where the museum is located, we had a presentation of the kingdoms: GELELE, who had 400 wives and 300 children, and GEZO, who reigned from 1818-1858. For their enthronement, the kings needed a set of objects, symbols of their power: a seat, sandals, a loincloth, an umbrella and a sword. The current King SAGBADJOU has 15 wives and 41 children. In this cultural milieu, the belief in reincarnation is prevalent. We had the chance to see the wall covered with blood that served as a place to receive the spirit of the king after his death. We also saw the tomb of the 41 women he had chosen to accompany him on his journey to the afterlife. It is important to remember that in the history of this kingdom there was only one queen, who was a twin, who reigned for three years. It was she who was responsible for the creation of the fearsome warriors called Amazons. In addition, there were 14 patriarchs.

Day 5

We began the day with a reforestation and painting activity at the Lasallian bilingual school, followed by an exchange with Brother Francis GOZE on the theme: "Beyond the borders, Young Lasallians...". He enlightened us on the Lasallian identity. He made us understand that we must pay attention to others, put ourselves at their service, know how to be grateful and say thank you because "humility precedes glory". He did not fail to give us some other advice such as: "the Lasallian mission calls for voluntary work", "respect for our parents is a source of blessings", "it

is also important to be involved in a movement of action..."

In the evening we had a sharing of the Akassato YL which closed the day.

Day 6

During the day we had a little insight into the International Symposium of Young Lasallians and then we had a social. It was on this joyful note that we closed the YL Bohicon 2021 camp.

Day 7

8 am: Departure of all the delegations who came at the camp.

Mr. TIEM Roger

Gulf of Benin District.