

RELAF NEWSLETTER N°42

Brothers of the Christian Schools



Lasallian Region of Africa



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EDITORIAL

Dear Lasallian educators' men and women,

The articles in this 42nd issue bear witness to our common passion for education. We are convinced with Pope Francis of the educational urgency of transmitting the faith. So "*Transmitting the faith requires forming habits of behaviour; one must create the proper conditions for young people to receive the values that will prepare them, and enable these habits to grow (...)* Were we to transmit the faith by content alone, its reception would be merely superficial or ideological..."¹. There is an educational urgency because in education " *dwells the seed of hope: hope for peace and justice, hope for beauty and goodness; hope for social harmony*"²."

The more powerful man becomes, the more formidable he becomes to his fellow men and to himself. Faced with his bulimia of power and his thirst for domination, everyone can measure the extent to which man needs to convert himself to his own humanity, to convert himself to what really makes him great. He shows his greatness, that is, his dignity, only by responding to the call to overcome his appetite for domination. This call is present in what is fragile and vulnerable. As human beings, we have no choice, but to educate to care for vulnerability or perish otherwise.

We each have a tendency to project out of ourselves all that we equate with the inhuman. However, we remain alienated from our true being as long as we behave like a miser who places all his wealth outside himself. The miser is never satisfied with his possession, which he equates with his being, and of which he is extremely jealous. Possessed by what he has, he thinks that he is great when others are smaller than he is. In reality, one is great when one raises, or relieves, the smaller ones. This is the secret of the passion for education.

The dignity of a human being consists in responding to the call of the vulnerable. Attention to the most vulnerable is no different from charity. Without this attention, our humanity is nothing but barbarism. Simone Weil³ attributes to our humanity this common weakness: "*for the barbarity that is drenching the world in blood we all seek causes outside the society in which we live, (...)*. I should like to propose considering barbarity a permanent and universal feature of human nature..."⁴. She adds " save at the price of an effort of generosity as rare as genius, one is always barbaric towards the weak..."⁵" This means that the educator, if he wants to escape this law of nature, must learn to put his strength in his own weakness. Who teaches us this, if not Christ?

Brother Pierre Ouattara.

¹ Zenit.org 10 March 2014.

² Place Saint Peter 15 December 2021

³ Cf. Simone Weil, *Désarroi de notre temps et autres fragments*, Editions Peuple Libre, Lyon, 2018. *Réflexions sur la barbarie* ; p. 37.

⁴ Simone Weil, *Désarroi de notre temps et autres fragments*, Editions Peuple Libre, Lyon, 2018. *Réflexions sur la barbarie* ; p. 37.

⁵ *Ibidem* P.38

THERE IS NO STOPPING "PROGRESS"!!!



(image web)

As we know, scientific and technological research is developing on two parallel but distinct levels.

On the one hand, it tends to increase our knowledge of natural phenomena without worrying about making any profit from them. This is the aim of the pure and disinterested sciences, and no one can deny their greatness and nobility. These sciences are at the service of the "subtle progress".

On the other hand, scientific and technological research is also developing in terms of practical applications. These sciences and technologies are at the service of the "triumphant progress".

In fact, having become more and more aware of the laws governing phenomena, having learned to discover new ones every day thanks to the perfection of experimental technique, human being has found himself more and more in control of acting on nature.

However, does this ever-increasing power of man over nature not entail dangers? How can we not ask ourselves questions about the times we live in? As you can see, any increase of our power to act is bound to increase our power to cause harm. The more we have the means to help and relieve (the triumph of the useful), the more we also have the means to spread suffering and destruction (the triumph of perversion). Chemistry has enabled the development of useful industries (pharmaceuticals, food, etc.); but it also enables the manufacture of poisons and explosives. Robotics and computers increase production in unheard-of quantities, but at the same time, they lead to a growing number of patent unemployed.

However, these fears do not matter! We have embarked on a great adventure, like a fruit that falls from its tree, and we can no longer stop. However, Jesus says "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." (Lk 21:6). These

words of Jesus are at the antipodes of this "culture of triumphant progress of humanity" or rather of some techno-scientific and politico-military brains of the human species, of another kind.

How far will this kind of "progress" go? No one can know that. See, the curiosity of the "Garden of Eden" continues in another way in the name of "scientific progress and freedoms", which is akin to a negation of God through the negation of the natural order.

Let us illustrate that. On the one hand, in some societies, we accept the following assumption since 18 November 2016. *"any person of legal age or emancipated minor who demonstrates by a sufficient number of facts that the mention of his or her sex in the civil status records does not correspond to the sex in which he or she presents himself or herself and in which he or she is known, may obtain the modification of that sex..."*

On the other hand, in another society, it is accepted that, *"without having to undergo surgery, children and adolescents from the age of 14 can have the mention of their sex, male or female, appearing on their birth certificate changed"*.

This can then augur the definitive change of sex, through the "triumphant progress" of surgery. For the transsexual male, in the ablation of the testicles and in the construction of female genital organs (vagina, clitoris, lips and breast implants). For the transsexual female, in the removal of the ovaries and the uterus and the construction of a penis.

We cannot illustrate everything. Each of us knows more. Here are cases of triumphant progress in which man defies the order of nature.

Here, progress is opposed to all claims of ethics. It distorts its purpose, intention and values. To attribute ethical thought to it is a sham in the sense of the postures of humanising transcendence, respect and sacredness. This imposture couples with a denial of the idea of reintegrating progress into ethical and Christian logic. For the Christian that I am, the action of God (of Wisdom) "the Master of the nature and of the natural order" made progress in Man. Seen from this other side, it is a subtle progress, both cyclical and initiatory, embodying human progress and ordered to the natural order.

What then should we do with this limitless triumphant progress? We need to rethink and rework on them, to give them a human and ethical meaning. Perhaps, we should leave aside this hysterical race for "triumphant progress" and think of alternative ways of life that are fairer to man and the environment. *"We must finally succeed in reversing the predominance of the useful over the subtle and in finding a balance between these two faces of progress"*. This may be a senseless and hopeless struggle, given the strength of the advocates of this new kind of progress. Nevertheless, with the weapons of "Wisdom" everything is possible.

As in the work of techno science, man has shown the strength of his intelligence, if he wants to survive his own triumphs, he must now show the "Wisdom" of his will. The apparent triumph of certain progresses invites us more than ever to revisit the book of the Apocalypse of Saint John and more particularly chapter 13, verses 1-17. Fruitful meditation.

FOKA Stéphane

CAMEROON: LASALLIAN VOLUNTEERS ON MISSION

As part of their spiritual retreat, the Lasallian Volunteers of Cameroon (VLC) organised a formation session in Mbalmayo, from 25th to 28th November 2021, which mobilised students, aspirants and volunteer sympathisers, Lasallian Volunteers, Brothers and external guests, around the theme: "the Lasallian mission: a call to serve". Brother Mathieu and Vitalis NDIKUM (Lasallian Formator in the Martin Porres group in New York and at Catalyst Charter School in Chicago (USA)) animated jointly the session.

The session began on the evening of 25 November with a presentation on "the importance of community life", led by Vitalis.

During the day of 26 November, Brother Mathieu instructed the assembly on "the mission of the Brothers of the Christian Schools". The essential terms used were, among others: evangelisation, Christian and quality education, community life, support for the poor... Vitalis demonstrated that the Volunteer is a layperson with the same mission as the FSC. At the end of the day, there we had testimonies, vocational history sharing and spiritual meditations.

The day of the 27th, baptized "Vocation Day", opened with a presentation made by Brother Mathieu on "the vocation of the Brothers". He insisted on the

vows of poverty, obedience, chastity, stability and association. He also spoke about the stages that lead to becoming an FSC: aspirancy, postulancy, novitiate, scholasticate and perpetual vows. He ended his talk with an invitation to analyse and meditate on the faith of Abraham. Vitalis insisted on the vocation of the Lasallian Volunteer, which he summarised as



disinterestedness. He explained the process of becoming a Lasallian Volunteer: aspirant, sympathiser, member, honorary member.

We dedicated the 28th for Mass, the evaluation of the session and the planning for the next session.

The success of this session was due to the benevolent organisation of: Davy TENEFOGNE (VLC spiritual leader and vice-coordinator), Quentin TAGO (VLC operations office manager) and many others.

Happy mission to the VLC and may Jesus live forever in our hearts!

Doris BEUTCHOU

MEL/DAC Coordinator

BURKINA FASO: COMPETITION ON CIVIC-MINDEDNESS AND CITIZENSHIP

Since 2014, the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Promotion of Burkina Faso has been organising competitions on civic-mindedness and citizenship, on the national week dedicated to these themes. We conducted these competitions through radio broadcasts and debates. In the school environment, they especially concern pupils in Year 9 throughout the country. This academic year 2021-2022, the “Collège Pierre Kula” (CPK) in Diébougou presented candidates to these competitions that the South-West Region organised in the Bougouriba Province.



At the end of the tests, the three best winners of the South-West Region were, in order of merit, SOMDA Lucien Angelain, AYORO Deborah and OUOBA Axel, all from the “Collège Pierre Kula”. In addition, like every year, the three best regional winners plus

the three best national winners went to Ouagadougou, the capital city, where the authorities of the Ministry, who awarded them during a ceremony, received them. This year, I had the honour of accompanying our winners from 4 to 6 November 2021 to Ouagadougou to receive their awards. The Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals, Promotion of Human Rights and Civil Law during a gala banquet, received us on Thursday evening. She took the opportunity to congratulate the laureates and give them advices more especially encouraging them in their studies. The authorities received us on Friday 5th at Kossyam, the presidential palace, where we took part in the closing ceremony of the national week of civic-mindedness and citizenship.

During this ceremony presided over by His Excellency Roch Marc Christian KABORE, President of Burkina Faso and assisted by his Prime Minister, several Ministers and the President of the National Assembly awarded the 39 laureates from the 13 Regions and the 03 national laureates and made them ambassadors of civic-mindedness and citizenship to their fellow students in their respective Regions. The “Collège Pierre Kula” is proud to have represented the Lasallian world and the South-West Region of Burkina Faso at this great national event. Thank you very much to all of you dear Lasallians for your prayers.

Brother Rodrigue YACORO

CAMEROON: GRADUATION CEREMONY AT CFPC LA SALLE (DOUALA)



On Sunday 23 January 2022, through a ceremony to award diplomas, the “Centre de Formation Professionnelle et Continue” (CFPC) La Salle put a series of 214 learners on the employment and entrepreneurship market. They are sufficiently equipped in various specialities, and ready to respond to meet the need of companies. The administrative team of the La Salle complex, the regional and departmental delegations of employment and vocational training, partners and business promoters, families, friends and acquaintances of the graduating students attended the ceremony was.

The ceremony began at 9.30am with a mass that by Father Ulrich (from the Xaverian Fathers congregation) presided over in the gymnasium of the “Collège De La Salle”. Drawing spiritual nourishment from Nehemiah 8:1-10, Psalms 18:8, 9-10, 15, Corinthians 12:12-27 and the Gospel according to St. Luke 1:1-21, Father Ulrich fed the audience on the subject of life transformation through the Word of God, hence his invitation to read the Bible all the time. He urged the laureates of the day

to make sparing use of the moral and professional training they had received and above all, to make

generosity and gratuitousness the basis of their success.

After the mass, three speeches were given: that of the Director General, the first of the first classes (a student who had braved distinction with an average of 17.41/20), and the regional delegate for employment and vocational training. From these

different speeches, the following highlights emerged: the quality of the training, favoured by an adequate

work place, with state-of-the-art equipment; a Christian ethic and a professionalism centred on knowledge, know-how, interpersonal skills and life skills. We did not fail to make an appeal to the companies’ managers for the employment and well keeping of the competent young people who could only bring them satisfaction.

The event ended with the presentation of awards to the various first classes of the 16 subjects of studies and the awarding of diplomas by field. Happiness, joy and satisfaction were apparent on the faces of the day's elected officials. This activity ended at 12.40 p.m., thus giving way to conviviality.

Doris BEUTCHOU

MEL/DAC Coordinator

TOGO: RENEWAL OF CONSECRATION

On Sunday 09 January 2022, the solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord, the 4th renewal of Mrs. Edith TOUVI, Signum Fidei, took place in the chapel of the Provincial House in Lomé.



The ceremony began at 11.30 a.m. in the presence of the members of the Signum Fidei Fraternity ending their initial formation, the Brothers of the Provincial House, namely Brother Paulin, Visitor of the District of the Gulf of Benin, Brothers

Cyprian and Séverin and Mrs. Nadège LAMBONI, in charge of communication.

Brother Séverin said the welcoming word, wishing everyone a happy new year and then invoked the Spirit of God on the Assembly so that everything would go well.

After the proclamation of the Gospel of the day from Luke 3:15-16. 21-22, the Brother Visitor, in the person of Paulin DEGBE gave an address in which he exhorted the assembly to remember the commitment, made by each one at his or her baptism, to follow Christ. On a journey he says, let us not forget the presence of the Holy Spirit who rests on us and leads us in our apostolates with young people. Let us make sure that we are ambassadors of Jesus Christ to children and young people.

The ceremony continued with the renewal of the consecration itself. After the dialogue between the candidate and the Brother Visitor, she went to the altar to read the formula of consecration with a candle in hand, followed by the signing of the register.

She received congratulations, encouragement and promises of prayer from the assembly gathered for the occasion. The ceremony ended with a song of thanksgiving and Edith's word of thanks. In her words, she underlined the grace that the Lord never ceases to grant her in her educational mission with young people and prayed that the Lord would assist her along her journey.

The ceremony ended with a fraternal meal in the garden of the Provincial House.

Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!

Edith TOUVI

“COMPLEXE LA SALLE” IN DOUALA: 56th EDITION OF THE YOUTH FESTIVAL

To commemorate the sacrifices made when the English-speaking zone joined the French-speaking zone after the referendum of 11 February 1961, President Ahmadou Ahidjo chose this date for the Youth Day. We dedicated this day to involving the nation's youth in constructive activities, instilling in them the spirit of leadership and encouraging them to participate in culture and engage in society. Like every year since 1966, Youth Week is a time for young people to display their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

On this 56th edition, the students of the “Complexe La Salle” did not deviate from this requirement. This edition runs from February 8 to 10, 2022, with the theme: "Youth and voluntary participation in the great challenges of Cameroon".

As a prelude to this week, a tournament called "the Director's Cup" was organised by the student committee. The disciplines involved were football, handball, basketball and sprinting. Teams from the different streams as well as from the teachers took part in the competitions.

The 8th of February, the day of bilingualism and multiculturalism, we were to make use of English and French in the speeches. The same was true for the different performances of the students, according to cultural areas. It was a moment of sharing cultural wealth in traditional dress with the slogan "NO TO TRIBALISM AND YES TO LIVING TOGETHER".

The day of 9 February was dedicated to a conference-debate on the theme (slogan) raised, followed by a film forum. For the occasion, Mrs. Inès MAYAGUI,

promoter of Mim's drink, Mr. KOM Arnold, promoter of the Start-up Bottle Furniture Sarl, Mr. SIMON WILLIAM KUM, Cameroonian film producer and director, were invited. Following the debate, sufficiently instructive and oriented towards entrepreneurship, the students also benefited from the film "NSANGOUNA", projected on the big screen for their moral and cultural construction.

February 10: the cultural day. Various performances were in the program: choir, playback, humour, intellectual competitions (Know-it-all game) and beauty competitions (Miss and Mister Contest), dance, conference and debate of the newspaper club. In addition, there were performances by the guest musician Aveiro Djess, who showed off his singing and dancing skills to the delight of all. The day ended with the awarding of prizes to the winners of the various competitions. We are eagerly waiting for the 57th edition with the hope of experiencing the same emotions.

Doris BEUTCHOU

“COLLÈGE SAINT MUTIEN MARIE” IN MBALMAYO: PATRONAL FEAST



THEME: << Youth, look towards a better horizon with integrity, and in the footsteps of Brother Saint Mutien Marie>>

As every 30th of January, the “Collège Saint Mutien Marie” in Mbalmayo celebrates the feast of Saint John Baptist De La Salle, those of the Saints and Blessed Brothers of the Christian Schools (FSC) and more particularly, that of Brother Saint Mutien Marie.

This year, the school did not miss this famous occasion. It took place from Wednesday 05 January to 30 January 2022 and centred on several activities such as the conference-debate oriented on the theme of the celebration, the inter-school competitions, the socio-cultural activities, and the Mutien Marie cup.

➤ The conference-debate

The Principal of the “Collège Saint Mutien Marie”, Mr. NKAM Yannick animated this conference-debate. He centred the conference on the life of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Saint Mutien Marie and the Lasallian Volunteers. It was all about:

- Enlightening the students on the life of Saint John Baptist De La Salle,
- Presenting the fundamental principles of a Lasallian school,
- Exposing on the Brothers of the Christian



Schools: who are they? What is their mission; how to become a Brother?

- Presenting the Lasallian Volunteers of Cameroon,

- Presenting the life of Saint Mutien Marie,
- Presenting the history of the “Collège Saint Mutien Marie”.

Questions and exchanges followed the presentation, allowing precise answers to the pupils' questions.

➤ The inter-school competitions



These concerned the three different course of study at the “Collège Saint Mutien Marie”, namely: industrial and technical education, commercial technical education, and the mainstream education.

Several competitions were proposed. We had for example: the know-it-all game, those of dancing, dictation, singing, drawing, tug-of-war and the sugar game competition. These competitions resulted in a victory for the school of commercial education.

➤ Socio-cultural activities



Students from each class had to participate in the classroom decoration competition and the culinary arts competition.

This culminated in the sharing of a meal among pupils and friends; the class that was awarded the trophy was the “3^{ème} esp” (Year 10).

➤ The Saint Mutien Marie Cup

This cup is awarding the best team after a football competition, which began on 5 January 2022, with the different classes competing against each other in the first phase. In a second phase, the best team of the tournament was to meet the teachers' team in the final.



This championship saw the magnificent victory of the teachers by the score of 5 goals to 2.

Long live to our patron saint's day 2022, see you in 2023!

NKAM Yannick

BURKINA FASO: PROYDE OFFERS A NEW BUILDING



Bolibana", which means "end of the race" in Dioula, which is a national language, is the name of an outlying neighbourhood in the north of the city of Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso. It is there that, for more than twenty years, the Brothers of the Christian Schools of the District of West Africa have initiated a project to create a school for the benefit of this neglected portion of the population. In 2015, we have erected the first building with the first three classrooms of the primary school. Since the start of the 2020 school year, the school has had six classrooms for the primary school and eight classrooms for the secondary school.

Today, thanks to the NGO PROYDE (Spain), the school got a new building of four classrooms in order to begin the duplication of classrooms in the secondary school.

We had held on 17 January 2022, the official acceptance of that building.

From the number of the guest, we can



mention Brother Julien DIARRA, Visitor of the District of West Africa. In addition, there were Mr. Herrero Mateo Juan BAUTISTA, representative of

PROYDE Spain, Brother Raoul TRAORE from the Secretariat of Development and Solidarity, Brother Hermann KABORE, Director of the "Collège Saint Jean-Baptiste De La Salle" in Ouagadougou and architect of the work, Brothers Jacques MONTCHEBI and Melchiade of the Inter-African Novitiate "Notre Dame de Graces" in Bobo-Dioulasso. Some novice Brothers accompanied the latter were. Brothers Wenceslas SOME and Louis ALVARES from the community of Tounouma, Father Toussaint SANOU, parish priest of Saint



Maurice in Sakabi, and Mr. Adolphe BAMOGO, the building contractor have honoured us by their presence.

The educational team, the pupils and their parents' representatives welcomed these guests.

The ceremony took place in 3 phases: speeches, cutting of the ribbon and blessing of the building and finally the planting of trees.

At 8.30 am, we have welcomed guests by a receiving line and the offering of the welcome water. Then, we had the opening prayer. It was Chantal SAWADOGO, a postulant of the Guadalupana

Sisters of De La Salle, acting as the master of the ceremony, who introduced the guests before giving the floor to the various speakers.

First, Mr. BAMOGO and Brother Hermann presented the characteristics of the building and the progress of the construction work. Then the student's representative, SANOU Antoine, thanked the Brothers and their partners for all that they do for them. He committed himself on behalf of all his fellows, to take good care of this infrastructure and to work well in class. The second speaker was Mrs. TOURE, president of the Association of Mothers Educators (AME) and representing the parents of the pupils. She also thanked the Brothers and their partners for the efforts made for the quality education of their children.



Brother Mathurin OUEDRAOGO, Director of the school from his part, thanked PROYDE while encouraging the NGO to continue to mobilise financial

resources in order to accompany them in the Lasallian educational mission.

The Brother Visitor expressed his gratitude to all the partners involved in the promotion of the Lasallian spirit in the work, and the development of the infrastructures of the “Complexe scolaire Saint Jean-Baptiste De La Salle”.

After the Brother Visitor, Mr. Herrero Mateo Juan BAUTISTA representing PROYDE-Spain took the floor. He expressed his satisfaction with the efficiency of the management of the funds and the quality of the work carried out. He expressed the availability of PROYDE to continue to accompany

the “Complexe scolaire Saint Jean-Baptiste De La Salle” in this noble mission.

The pupils made some choreographic performances to punctuate this first part of the.

In the second part, Father Toussaint SANOU proceeded to the blessing of the building. It was during the blessing rite that we cut the ribbon.



The Brother Visitor took the opportunity to present gifts of recognition to the primary school teachers for the academic results achieved by the first promotion of the primary school in the national examinations. Mr. Herrero Mateo Juan BAUTISTA also received a gift as a souvenir of his visit to La Salle Bolibana.

Such an event could not end without a tree planting.



At this third and final part of the ceremony, we invited each guest to make a gesture of planting a tree. For

it is said, “he who plants a tree has not lived in vain”. The ceremony ended at around 10.11 a.m. with a small snack.

Confident in Saint Joseph their patron saint, the educational team and the pupils have no doubt that he will provide for the needs of the “Complexe scolaire Saint Jean-Baptiste De La Salle” in Bolibana, their jewel. So they invoked during the ceremony. "If you find education expensive, try ignorance," said Robert ORBEN. Together, we will defeat ignorance, which is fatal to the soul.

Chantal SAWADOGO, Postulant

“SELF-KNOWLEDGE” TEST FOR AN HARMONIOUS LIVING TOGETHER

In order to make the work place a friendly and exciting environment for its staff, and promoting understanding, mutual respect and collaboration that guarantee the development of each and every one, the General Manager of the La Salle Complex in Douala organised a psychological test focused on self-knowledge. This test took place from 16 to 17 December 2021 and concerned all permanent staff.

Two entities compose the La Salle Complex in Douala: the CFPC (Centre for Professional and Continuing Education) and the EST (Higher Technical School). The Director General, Brother Emmanuel MBOUA is managing both of them. These entities have more than 70 permanent workers, coming from different backgrounds and cultures. This heterogeneity predisposes the personnel to conflicts of many forms.

This is why, based on the principle that self-knowledge allows for better management of the living together and integration into one's professional and social environment, the Director General requested the services of experts from Professor NTJAM's "Centre for Clinical Psychology and Psycho-education". On this occasion, we used two types of tests to compare information: the egogram test and the "big five" test.

The first stage consisted of explaining the merits of the methods used through a speech in plenary session, and responding to the concerns of the audience, before proceeding with the psychometric evaluation. This activity consisted of answering a questionnaire for each test.

We have conducted the second stage behind closed doors; it was devoted to reporting the results of the first stage. In the end, the results, analysed and interpreted, allowed the experts to draw a psychological portrait of each person by exposing their different personalities. The explanation of these facets given to the client helped him to detect the origins of his problems in order to give him appropriate advices. The last stage, ten days later, was the reporting of the results. These results were individual and given to each person in a sealed envelope.

The discovery of the results was a moment of ecstasy, astonishment, surprise, self-discovery and above all, engagement of remediation. The results were convincing. From now on, the atmosphere in the complex is peaceful, friendly and conducive to work. We have planned for an evaluation of the impact of these tests on staff performance for later dates.

In conclusion, there are personalities in each individual that he or she is unaware of or does not control, because they escape the control of the conscience and surface to harm interpersonal and group cohesion. Knowledge of these personalities is already a step towards their mastery and management in order to safeguard social harmony.

Doris BEUTCHOU

MEL/DAC Coordinator

THE ORANGE SCARF: A DISTINCTIVE SIGN OF THE STUDENTS REPRESENTATIVES

The ceremony of presentation, installation and sending on mission of the class representatives and the students' committee took place at the



sixteenth hour of the thirty-first day of the first month of the year 2022. It was in the “Complexe scolaire Saint Jean-Baptiste De La Salle” in Bolibana, Burkina Faso.

The ceremony began with a word of welcoming from Pascaline SAWADOGO, a postulant of the Guadalupana Sisters of De La Salle. Then, Mrs TRAORE Sabine led a prayer to entrust the meeting to the Lord.

Mr DOUTI called and installed the student's representatives, each by his or her name. Afterwards, Brother Director Mathurin OUEDRAOGO took the floor. We can summarise his speech in three words: congratulations, encouragement and confidence.

A dialogue then took place between the student's representatives and Mr LARE, their sponsor. This dialogue led to their commitment in these terms:

“I ..., thank my comrades and our educators for the trust placed in me. I am proud to represent my comrades. I commit myself to carry out this mission with humility, at the service of the good of all my comrades and at the promotion of the spirit of the

Lasallian family, respecting the code of good conduct, the instructions of the educators and the Brother Director. I count on the support of you all and the protection of Saint

John Baptist De La Salle and Saint Joseph”.

After their commitment, they each received a scarf from the hands of the parents and teachers present, who said to them, *“Receive this scarf, a sign of the authority that you represent. You must wear it with dignity, and carry out your mission with charity and in the fear of GOD”.* The Brother Director closed this phase by a prayer and sending the student's representatives on mission.

The chairperson of the student's representatives, SANOU Antoine from Year 12, spoke on behalf of all his comrades, expressing their feelings and asking for the support of everyone to carry out their mission well.

The ceremony ended at 5.10 p.m. with the hymn to Saint John Baptist De La Salle and the "Live Jesus in our hearts, forever"

Pascaline SAWADOGO, Postulant

COME AND SEE



Vocation is a journey that leads us to respond to God's call. Respond to God's call means to seek God in my opinion.

Dear brothers and sisters, it is this journey of seeking God that led us to this place of internship for us. That is, the community of Akassato in Benin. The internship experience began on 5 January with a journey from Burkina Faso to Benin. We did it by the land transport company named "TCV". The two-month internship experience ended on 5 March 2022 with the homeward journey. We were two novice Brothers, Alain from Congo Kinshasa and myself from Burkina Faso. I am going to give you a personal reviewing of this beautiful adventure in three points: the journey, the community life and the apostolate.

For me, the journey is that path that leads us to God. God-seekers are always ready to go beyond borders. Our noviciate formation is taking place in Burkina Faso. It took us a three-day journey to join Cotonou. Our internship aims to be as the first experience of community apostolic life according to the Brothers' formation guide.

Community life began with our arrival in the community on 7 January. We had our official welcome ceremony on Saturday 8 January during a fraternal meal, with these words from the Brother Director of the community: "Welcome and feel at your ease". A good and friendly atmosphere reigns in this community of 5 Brothers: Guillaume, Marius, Joseph, Louis and Denis, especially at meal, prayers

and social times. This experience allowed Brother Alain and me to understand more about community life, its demands and benefits for religious life in the following of Christ. It stimulated us to an ardent zeal as of our holy Founder. Who am I that the Lord should come to me for such a call? This beautiful experience was an answer to this question. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ come and see how possible the miracle is.

As for the apostolate, I would say that the harvest is abundant but the workers are few in number. Let us therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest to send many holy workers into his harvest. The “Complexe Scolaire Catholique De La Salle” in Akassato has an impressive number of students (up to 1563) and more than 91 staff members from all social classes. The school has only been in existence for 10 years and has already made the headlines in Beninese educational system in terms of results. In this school, we have carried out some activities such as learning the use of the Competency-based education (CBE) approach, songs, drawings, dance, how to read and write at primary school level, especially Year 3 and Year 4. We have also taught religious awakening courses at the secondary school level. All these activities have enabled us to have a permanent presence in the school, tirelessly in our work! Let us mention that we had to take time to adapt to this school system, which was new for us. Finally, I would like to underline one aspect of the internal organisation of the school. There is the kindergarten with 5 classes and a director, Sister Lanto. The primary school has 14 classes, under the direction of Mrs. Ines H. The secondary school has 8 classes and finally the high school has 9 proactive

classes and is managed by the Censor and the Supervisor. All these subdivisions are under the control of the Director General (Brother Marius). This is the richness of this school.

Finally, here are some ways to discern God's call:

- ★ The sacramental life
- ★ Living the Eucharist celebration every day
- ★ The sacrament of forgiveness
- ★ Personal prayer
- ★ Spiritual guidance
- ★ Spiritual reading
- ★ Living a coherent life
- ★ Joining other seekers of God
- ★ Asking for the assistance of Mary, model of vocations.

In short, this is what has nourished my spirit throughout this beautiful adventure of following Christ in the footsteps of Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

Novice Brother Arry Placide KIÉNOU

TWO BROTHER VISITORS, ...ONE VISION

It was in the occasion of the restructuring of the Districts of West Africa (DAO) and that of the Gulf of Benin (DGB). Despite their tight agendas, the Lasallian pilgrims that are Brothers Julien DIARRA and Paulin DEGBE, respectively Visitors of the District of West Africa and that of the District of the Gulf of Benin, set foot together on Benin soil on 2 February 2022. They came to visit the Lasallian works, in Bohicon. This trip, far from being tourism, is precisely a response to the call of God who consecrates and sends for the mission. It is therefore part of the perspective of discovering the realities of the Lasallian educational mission in Benin/Bohicon. It aims also to exchange and encourage not only the Lasallian students and the educational personnel but also the Brothers of the Christian Schools of the said educational community who carry out this noble mission on two sites, following in the footsteps of Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

In fact, we dedicated the morning of Thursday, February 3rd to a fervent welcome, as soon as the two Brother Visitors arrived in the community. Thanks to a fantastic planning, the entire educational community, headed by Brother Paco FALLADO SALVADOR, was ready to welcome our two guests.

The resounding siren gave the signal for the gathering at the flagpole! This is the place and the opportunity for this educational community to meet and exchange with the Brothers Visitors. Without further delay, the person in charge of the work, after an introductory prayer, addressed his words of welcome to the provincials followed by a brief history and a brilliant presentation of the said school, from its creation to the present day. Taking the opportunity

the two Provincials, after having expressed their good wishes for the New Year to all, explained in details the objective of their visit as above mentioned. They wished that this Lasallian mission would bear more fruit for the success of each one. Following the example of our Holy Founder, they encouraged the teachers to live their profession of educator as a vocation. They did not fail to give wise advice to the students.

In the chapter on information, they announced a major event of the Institute that of the forthcoming merging of the two Districts so that together and by association, the mission may grow and "goes well". The morning's activities ended in an atmosphere of joy and bread sharing.

In the evening and with the same dynamism as in the morning, there was no rest for these two tireless apostles of the children. From now on, the «La Salle International Catholic School of Lissèzoun» will welcome the Brother Provincials. The students performed melodious songs to welcome them in that bilingual school.

There, the faces of the students and educational personnel were shining with joy after getting the information on the reasons for the arrival of these brave missionaries in their school. These reasons were encouraging and reassuring for the continuation of this mission. A meeting with the teaching and administrative staff ended the day.

Furthermore, this visit was also an opportunity for Brother Julien DIARRA to present to the members of the community of Bohicon, the District of West Africa and the evolution of the process of reunification of the 2 Districts. It was done

during a community meeting held for this purpose. The two Brothers Visitors also took part in the ceremony of awarding a retirement certificate to the cook of the Brothers' community of Bohicon, Mr Julien AYAHOUNDE, in the presence of his son Valère.

The following day, Friday 04 February 2022, was the end of this visit and the departure of the Brothers Visitors, continuing their pilgrimage and mission this time towards Lomé. There, they will take part in the funeral of Mr Jérôme LAWSON PLACA, the father of Brother Norbert LAWSON PLACA.

We express our thanks to our two Brothers Visitors for their daily efforts to ensure that the restructuring takes place.

Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!

Guy LALEYE, postulant

BROTHER GENERAL COUNCILLOR'S CALENDAR

March	
03 March	Abidjan- Rome
26 March	DGB/DAO Constituent Assembly
27 March - 01 April	AIMEL
May	
1 st May - 22 May	46 th General Chapter