

THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

**Lasallian Formation for Mission:
The Pilgrim's Handbook**

GENERALATE - ROME

2019

“... as I understand,
congregations of Brothers
dedicated to teaching, like those
of La Salle, have done a good job
... forming lay people with their
spirituality with good criteria and
wisdom...”

“... the Lasallian Brothers have
done a good job forming their
laity in charism, spirituality, and
mission...”¹

¹ Pope Francis and Fernando Prado, CMF, *The Strength of Vocation: Consecrated Life Today*.
Publicaciones Claretianas, 2018. pp 47 & 95

Introduction

Lord, the Work is Yours

Confronted by the human and spiritual distress of the children of artisans and the poor, John Baptist de La Salle recognized in their situation a call from God. As he responded in faith, he came to see the work of the Institute as a participation in God's work of salvation. The Lasallian response is in this way a participation in the larger movement of the coming of the reign of God, begun with the presence and ministry of Jesus and continuing to unfold in the ministry of the Church. This universal movement towards wholeness and wellbeing for all of creation is God's mission, God's Work.

Lasallians continue to echo the words of the Founder: "Lord, the Work is Yours." Today that educational effort in 80 countries around the world involves over one million students and educators.

Lasallian Formation for Mission

The Lasallian mission is an expression of God's loving concern, oriented particularly towards the wellbeing of the young and the poor, and lived out in association by an educational community. This community becomes a visible sign of the presence of God and gives expression to a variety of vocations in the Church. The model of living religious Brotherhood created by John Baptist de La Salle and his first companions has inspired lay partners to understand and appreciate the Lasallian vocation lived out in diverse ways. These diverse vocations complement one another and bring a fullness and dynamism to the mission that it might otherwise lack.

Lasallian formation for mission promotes the unity present in this diversity; it emphasizes what unites Brothers and other Lasallians in the mission. Although some aspects of formation are particular to Brothers or to lay partners, many can be shared. Experiences of shared formation have proven beneficial for all participants. Therefore, an understanding of formation shared among the entire Lasallian Family is appropriate at this time in history.

Following the mandate of the 45th General Chapter, which asked for an updating of the Brothers' *Formation Guide*, the International Council of Lasallian Association and Educational mission (CIAMEL) requested the General Council to develop a single formation guide for all Lasallians while maintaining those formation elements that apply specifically to the Brothers. That decision led to the creative and innovative response that produced this document.

Primary Target Audience

This present *Handbook* is the result of the reflection and writing of Lasallians – Brothers and Lay Partners – who have attempted to implement the global perspective of the Lasallian Family – all those who consider themselves Lasallian and desire to grow in their

understanding of this identity. Particular attention has been focused on those Brothers and other Lasallians who, either on their own initiative or because of their work, are engaged in forming and accompanying Lasallians throughout the world. In writing the *Handbook*, the guiding question has been:

What should formators and formation teams on the local, District and Regional level know and be sensitive to regarding Lasallian formation for mission in order to plan, implement and evaluate formation experiences that will strengthen participation in the mission, charism and vocation for all Lasallians?

The perspective of this *Handbook* is not merely the present, but also the future needs that are already beginning to emerge. The best strategy for facing the various challenges of the future is formation, for which the most important challenge is developing an inclusive model that can reach everyone.

General Intended Outcomes

The basic ideas of this text are already expressed in Chapter 6 of the Brothers' Rule. The Rule's insights and inspirations regarding the Brothers' formation offer guidance and direction for the formation of all Lasallians. Therefore, this document seeks to:

- Provide an integrative approach to formation for Brothers and lay partners;
- Recognize the formative efforts that for many years, in varied cultural contexts, have been effective in deepening and sharing the Lasallian charism;
- Identify the essential elements of Lasallian formation and accompaniment for the entire Lasallian family;
- Develop for all Lasallians flexible guidelines to implement programs for lifelong formation that respond to current and future needs.

Lasallian Formation as Pilgrimage

This *Handbook* introduces the metaphor of formation as **pilgrimage**, understood as a personal and communal journey of faith that deepens a sense of mission and purpose within individuals and a community. The pilgrim journey of John Baptist de La Salle continues to inspire countless Lasallians today. A pilgrimage takes time; it involves pauses along the way that provide opportunities for insight and renew the pilgrim's motivation to continue. A pilgrimage is not always easy or smooth and will include detours and interruptions. Those times are key opportunities for growth.

Previous formation documents have been instruction manuals and guides. These resources continue to provide helpful reference for formators in the development of quality formation and should be consulted when appropriate.

This *Handbook* is intended to assist the formation process and to be an accompanying presence for formators along the way. Ideally, it will re-frame Lasallian formation for mission for all and provide helpful tools and considerations for the ongoing renewal of formation programs and the vitality of the mission.

Section 1

The Lived Experience of Persons as Starting Points

1.1 The Personal Journey

Since the time of the Founder, formation for mission has been understood as a practical response to prayerful consideration of real-life situations. Formators have tried to avoid abstract reflection which is not grounded in the lived experience of educational ministry. The sharing of formative experiences within a community of educators empowers and challenges each person to continue to grow in their understanding of themselves and of their participation in the mission. This necessarily includes recalling the shared story and learning to participate in the shared spirituality, but formation goes much deeper: it enables all Lasallians to be protagonists in the ongoing story of participation in God's mission.

*"I was then invited to participate in **formation** ... As a wife and mother of three young children, these formation sessions were not always easy to manage but my husband agreed to help, and I began! Those two years were a revelation. **Discovering the charism of John Baptist de La Salle and his journey** allowed me to understand the mission of the Brothers of the Christian Schools but especially to realize how, **in my personal journey**, God called me to be by their side to live this mission of human and Christian education. The flame was growing, a new breath. My job took on meaning and became **ministry, vocation.**"*

*"Accompanied by both Brother and lay mentors, I was introduced to the life and legacy of St. John Baptist De La Salle. As a beginning and grappling formator undergoing an intensive month-long formation, **I was led to discover, understand, and accept my own brokenness and giftedness as a person.** The communal life of studies, prayer, and fellowship made me appreciate who I am in the context of community and inspired me to discover the gifts and potentials I bring to the new role that was entrusted to me. Slowly, **I was guided to understand that responding to the needs of the young is a way of my salvation.** This **purposeful and intentional journey** of being formed and transformed revealed to me the meaning of my encounters with every student, teacher, parent, and staff in the school community. **The God I call to became the God I live with in my day-to-day life.**"*

*"I have been enriched to a large extent by the **witness, knowledge and presence** of many people (Brothers and lay partners) who provide fundamental support in the mission and who have left their 'mark' on me."*

*"In my formative journey, **I became aware of the important place of poor children and young people...** the formation team allowed our group to be close to the children and young people of the District, a primary school and the high school directed by the Brothers. I have discovered the Lasallian charism more and **a deeper sense of my vocation.** From this experience, **I have integrated into my personal life project young people in various situations of human, moral and spiritual distress.**"*

*"In my personal encounter with young people and adults in a diversity of settings, I've experienced the transformative power of the Lasallian charism and mission, which has profoundly shaped my Catholic faith, and my own vocation as husband and father. Beginning with that **first encounter with young***

people, the invitation, encouragement, and accompaniment I received on my journey is now what I, and each of us, are called to offer one another and the young who we walk with to find their place in this world."

"Indeed, if I had ever thought that the care I was taking of the schoolmasters out of pure charity would ever have made it my duty to live with them, I would have dropped the whole project. ... It was undoubtedly for this reason that God, who guides all things with wisdom and serenity, whose way it is not to force the inclinations of persons, willed to commit me entirely to the development of the schools. God did this in an imperceptible way and over a long period of time, so that one commitment led to another in a way that I did not foresee in the beginning." (John Baptist de La Salle, Memoir on the Beginning)

1.2 The Primacy of the Lived Experience in the Formative Process

Across centuries and profound cultural shifts, the story of John Baptist de La Salle continues to be a source of inspiration for persons attracted to the Lasallian mission. As it was for De La Salle, it is, at first, a series of imperceptible choices that eventually lead a person to more deliberate engagement. This frequently occurs through one of three main entry points: Faith, Service, and Community. Some are attracted to the richness and relevance of Lasallian spirituality; others to educational service with the poor; and still others appreciate the joy and disposition of a welcoming community. There is no order or hierarchy among these three pillars of Lasallian Identity. Over time, an interest in any of them tends to draw in the other two to provide a sense of unity, belonging, identity and growth. This happens as a result of integrating one's personal experience through quality formation.

From the charismatic founding event that gave birth to the Lasallian story, dialogue between personal and communal experiences has always been the starting point for the formation pilgrimage. Lasallian identity and spirituality find their origins in the practice of reflecting on daily experiences to recognize God's loving presence and action. This dynamic interaction "touches the hearts" of Lasallians and moves them to become co-workers with God in the mission. Lasallian formation is always an experience of a shared journey, of mutual learning and growth. Formation is thus a lifelong option of deepening the awareness of a shared vocation.

1.3 The Context of the Person and the Community

Because a Lasallian community is 'the context, the recipient, and the agent' of formation, it can be referred to as a formative community. The community supports and challenges each of its members toward growth and integration. A Lasallian formative community acknowledges the unique experience of each person. The community therefore adapts to the members' diverse generations and lifestyles and modifies expectations and goals accordingly.

The witness of an authentic community oriented toward mission is one of the gifts the Lasallian global family offers to the Church and to the world. The great blessing of

pluriformity inherent in the Lasallian mission is reflected in formation which adapts to meet local and regional contexts. Effective formation calls for flexibility and adaptability rather than for a monolithic approach.

The process of planning quality Lasallian formation recognizes the opportunities and challenges of the local contexts and structures.

Examples of the diversity that exists throughout the Lasallian community include:

- Geopolitical and linguistic boundaries within Districts and Regions
- Competing educational systems and bureaucratic requirements
- Canonical and civil relationships regarding ownership and management of institutions
- Availability of financial, human and other resources for formation
- Sustainability of the mission
- Secularization, cultural diversity and religious plurality.

The unique personal context of each Lasallian must always be respected and acknowledged in the formation process. In the coming-together of Lasallians to form educational communities, the significance of shared context and culture becomes obvious and operational.

For Reflection:

Recall your formation journey to this point. Can you identify a formation experience that strongly impacted your growth in Lasallian identity? What elements and experiences contributed to its efficacy?

Similarly, can you identify a formation experience that fostered a positive and effective outcome for you? What elements or experiences were missing or misplaced?

What are the greatest challenges to effective formation in your particular context?

Section 2

The Cultural Context of Formation

2.1 Relationship between the Culture and the Person

Formation considers the culture wherein the person and the community find themselves. Culture can best be understood as the complex set of specific spiritual, material, intellectual, and affective traits that characterize a society or social group. Culture includes not only arts and letters, but also ways of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions, and beliefs. Understanding culture helps a formator to better understand persons and their network of significant relationships, especially regarding schools and communities. Lasallian formation for mission necessarily prioritizes the circumstances and needs of children and youth, particularly those who are poor and marginalized.

2.2 Lasallian Culture in Dialogue with Local Culture

The inclusive character of the global Lasallian community is a source of strength and blessing for every member. In many parts of the world, the Lasallian community is a powerful witness to the potential of authentic dialogue among people from different belief traditions. Contemporary Catholic teaching emphasizes the priority of engaging all people of good will in building authentic community, practicing good works and sharing in dialogue. The Catholic identity of the Lasallian mission drives the community to seek the common good in holistic educational service to young people. Lasallian formation, therefore, welcomes everyone who is interested in and committed to this mission. Formation experiences are enriched through the contributions of the diverse religious experiences and creeds represented within a community. Authentic formation acknowledges differences while building bridges for cooperation and fraternity.

Practically speaking, a Lasallian formator acknowledges the local context as well as the historical development of the mission and of formation planning, and offers best-practice suggestions for each context within those areas, without attempting to be exhaustive.

Within this context, the formator:

	Traditional Catholic / Christian	Catholicism in Transition	Inter- / Multi-Religious	Secularized	Intergenerational
Language & Symbols:	Takes advantage of assumed familiarity with and appreciation of Catholic language and symbols	Explains and offers aids for use of key terms/symbols, e.g. Order of Mass, verbal reminders (symbols as a way to affirm identity) Acknowledges explicitly the Church's brokenness where appropriate	Utilizes languages and texts of other traditions Makes frequent use of synonyms to build points of connection Promotes harmony and dialogue as key concepts Emphasizes connection to nature/creation	Relies on professional and social science language to introduce concepts such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lasallian • Spiritual / Humanist • Christian • Catholic • Vocational Makes use of unifying and Integrative Language	Relies on a variety of approaches required to meet the range of sensibilities likely to be present
Prayer & Faith Formation Experiences	Motivates towards mature and conscious decision for adult discipleship	Uses an invitational tone Recognizes that school often functions as the primary faith community Extends explicit welcome and invitation, without expectation of shared belief or practice Draws on Lasallian spirituality as an opportunity to welcome all	Introduces other's symbols and rituals Fosters shared experiences which strengthen the sense of community Utilizes silence and meditation Emphasizes points of encounter in (shared) language and belief	Utilizes silence and meditation Relies on everyday symbols which evoke a felt response (connect via the affect) Introduces symbols one by one, with explanation (proportionality)	Creates a variety of experiences throughout course of program as appropriate
Becoming Lasallians Beyond Borders	Invites Lasallians to broaden their sense of who can be Lasallian in other contexts	Increases appreciation for the Catholic Christian grounding of Lasallian mission, association, and Spirituality	Builds capacity to explain and appropriate the Catholic Christian elements of Lasallian heritage (e.g. parables, good shepherd, guardian angels, Christ, Christ's role in the world)	Builds appreciation for Lasallian education, leading towards appreciation for Catholic Education, towards appreciation of broader Catholic / Church role in society	<u>Remembers that for older Lasallians:</u> The mission is viable despite the changing role/witness/numbers of Brothers <u>Remembers that for Young Lasallians:</u> Exposure to and appreciation for the Brothers and their

				Increases knowledge of the breadth of works in the Institute	role in the future of the Lasallian Family is important
Formation Content Needs and Goals	<p>Shares tools for explicit and effective evangelization and catechesis</p> <p>Fosters an understanding of the school as pastoral ministry</p>	<p>Offers a refresher on basic tenets of (Catholic) Christianity</p> <p>Utilizes best practices in culturally sensitive dialogue, especially for those engaged in explicit evangelization and catechesis</p>	<p>Includes an introduction to world religions</p> <p>Introduces Inter- / Multi- Religious dialogue and cultural sensitivity</p> <p>Develops capacity for meaningful communication across difference</p>	<p>Assists Lasallians to deepen their commitment to mission and association</p> <p>Features the promotion of the common good</p> <p>Keeps an eye towards fostering comfort with Lasallian spirituality (invitational)</p>	Builds capacity for intergenerational communication and understanding

Although complex, culturally-aware and sensitive formation planning is not an impossible task. Ideally, the above table will assist in the ongoing development of high-quality, experience-driven formation by encouraging reflection and discussion regarding the particular cultural context in which formation occurs.

For Reflection:

How would you locate your Lasallian community within the various cultural contexts described in the table? Why?

How can you attempt to ensure openness to and appreciation of this diversity as you develop, implement and evaluate formation programs?

Section 3

What is Formation?

3.1 The Formative Journey

Everyone, in their unique personal histories and contexts, is engaged in a life-long, formative journey. One's experiences and encounters help to give meaning to life and ministry and facilitate one's ongoing human development. These formative experiences and encounters unfold dynamically, in response to each person's internal and external realities. Self-knowledge and personal acceptance are increasingly significant elements in a formative journey.

Although each person's journey is unique, shared human experience has shown that certain archetypal journeys are common to many people. These shared journeys can be understood as **pilgrimages**, which are proposed by cultures and societies. Each pilgrim undertakes a personal journey while also joining others on a similar path toward a common destination. Giving a pilgrimage lasting significance are those vantage points along the route that invite the pilgrim to stop, contemplate, and be transformed by what is seen and experienced. These pauses are opportunities for integration and growth: **threshold experiences** that precede the next steps.

In reflecting on the formative journey of John Baptist de La Salle, one can observe a step-by-step path of constant growth in faith and understanding. De La Salle's pilgrimage led him from "one commitment to another" through the calls and responses he made in day-to-day experiences and in decisive, threshold moments. In his prayerful reflection on his life, De La Salle perceived this rhythm and responded positively to these invitations. Formation is the process of reflecting on experiences which invite and challenge one to continue the journey toward integral human development.

The Spirit of Faith allows one to see this formative journey as a dialogue with God. Sensitivity to the ongoing experiences of one's pilgrim journey contributes to understanding the current human context and to recognizing the action of the Spirit in the world and in people. De La Salle was aware of and sensitive to the needs of his time, particularly those of poor and working-class children and their families. Today, all Lasallians must cultivate that same awareness. God continues to be visible through love and justice, goodness and mercy, so we must strive to embody love, to practice justice, to work for peace, and to guarantee the integrity of creation. Formation allows this transformative process to begin, assists in its unfolding and offers an orientation towards its destination.

3.2 Proposing a Paradigm of Formation as a Lasallian Pilgrimage

With John Baptist de La Salle as a model, an archetypal Lasallian pilgrimage is available to all who wish to engage in formation. Lasallian formation for mission has developed over centuries as a result of the ongoing reflection of all Lasallians on their personal and communal experiences. “Formation ‘*touches the heart*’ of each person. At different times in their formative journey, each person is challenged to integrate the various contents and processes of formation. The process of personal integration is ongoing and leads to transformation and change.” (MEL 51, 3.4) These opportunities for integration are the common vantage points along the Lasallian pilgrimage.

A strong sense of community and association gives the Lasallian pilgrimage its distinctive character and identity. As a result, some individual Lasallians come to recognize a call to assist and accompany their fellow pilgrims through the service of formation. Accompaniment implies walking with others on the journey, sharing wisdom and insights learned from the Lasallian pilgrimage. Formators also develop and propose experiences which invite persons to encounter threshold moments throughout the pilgrimage.

From the lived experience and wisdom of formation in many contexts and over many years, a common Lasallian frame of reference has emerged. It is clearly articulated in MEL Bulletin 51, section 5, in the form of **10 Principles** upon which Lasallian formation for the mission is based:

1. Formation is for mission.
2. Formation is transformative.
3. Formation promotes association for mission.
4. Formation responds to local and global needs.
5. Formation starts with the individual.
6. Formation is integrative.
7. Formation takes place in community.
8. Formation develops a particular spirituality.
9. Formation presents the founding charismatic event as a source of inspiration and discernment.
10. Formation is lifelong.

These key principles articulate an integrated approach to the activity of the mission, the experience of association, and the process of formation in community. Integrating mission and association through formation assists Lasallians to know and live their vocation. The words of De La Salle, “It is a good rule of life to make no distinction at all between the work

of our vocation in life and the work of our salvation and perfection,” become a key guidepost for all Lasallian pilgrims.

Mission, association and formation are manifestations of the same movement of the Spirit. They are always discerned by individual Lasallians within the community and then directed outwards towards a world in need of this charismatic gift of educational service.

For Reflection:

What aspects of your formative journey have assisted you in integrating mission and association with your personal development and growth?

What insights emerge when you examine your current formative experiences in the context of the metaphor of Lasallian formation as a pilgrimage?

Section 4

Being Lasallians Today

4.1 De La Salle's Formative Journey

"Deeply moved by the human and spiritual distress 'of the children of artisans and of the poor', and in response to the call of God, John Baptist de La Salle and his first Brothers made a lifelong commitment to God ..." Rule, 1

Through his initial encounter with Adrien Nyel, De La Salle began his gradual engagement with the ministry of education. Soon he focused upon the training and formation of the teachers. Eventually, De La Salle realized that to effectively serve the children, a community of teachers united in a shared vocation was the best response. This decision led De La Salle to renounce his wealth and canonry, and to make this his life's work.

Responding to the various crises this new community encountered, De La Salle and some of the early Brothers committed themselves to association for life, solidifying the foundation of the community for the sake of the mission. Over the next decades, De La Salle created a framework and developed resources to support the flourishing of the educational project and the fledgling community. A strong sense of co-responsibility developed among the Brothers, allowing for expansion of the work amidst problems, conflicts and attacks from outside.

Worn down by the multiple crises and difficulties of the work, De La Salle experienced his own personal and vocational doubts. After temporarily withdrawing from the community to discern his response, De La Salle returned as a wisdom figure who moved from a position of authority to one of spiritual guidance and direction.

4.2 The Thresholds of the Lasallian Formative Pilgrimage

In the pilgrimage of John Baptist de La Salle, threshold moments emerged. Lasallians continue to see their own formative journeys reflected in the story of De La Salle and the first Brothers.

Induction ... from outside to inside

From having no contact with to being a participant in a Lasallian ministry

De La Salle moved from not having any contact with poor and working-class children to awareness of their plight and a willingness to respond creatively.

Belonging ... from me to us

From being a participant to identifying oneself as Lasallian

As De La Salle and the teachers form a new type of community, they recognize the significance of their work and shared life, adopting the name of “Brothers” to describe their relationships with each other and the students entrusted to their care.

Commitment ... from career to calling

From a professional commitment to discovering one's life purpose in the mission

By his experiences and prayerful discernment, De La Salle becomes convinced that, to ensure the viability of the mission, he and some of the Brothers are called to commit themselves through the Vow of Association.

Co-responsibility ... from followers to leaders

From being carried by the community to carrying the community

De La Salle and the principal Brothers share the responsibility for developing key resources, such as the *Conduct of Schools*, that reflect their shared experience and insight.

Wisdom ... from positional power to charismatic witness

From institutional authority to the authority of wisdom

De La Salle's time away from the community allows for his eventual transition from Superior to spiritual father to the Brothers.

4.3 The Journey of One Becomes the Pilgrimage of Many

The formative pilgrimage takes place in a constant dialogue between one's personal journey with its unique characteristics and the pilgrimage itinerary proposed by the global Lasallian Family. The local community is the context within which this dialogue takes place. It is also the guarantor that the proposed pilgrimage is carried out.

What follows next are key, non-sequential components or **domains** of the distinctive Lasallian formative pilgrimage. As part of a holistic formation program, these domains, which are interrelated, offer persons engaged in formation a rich way to understand their pilgrimage experience. They reflect De La Salle's emphases: seeing with the eyes of faith, praying with one's experience, growing in personal maturity, and associating with others to form an educational community that works in solidarity with those who are poor.

Seeing with the Eyes of Faith

The object of formation in the domain of seeing with the eyes of faith is to help participants develop the capacity to reflect on their life experiences in the light of the Christian story and vision, to discover what God is inviting or enabling in their present context. This is an initiation to the practice of theological reflection and contemplation for effective ministry, which involves a practice of ongoing discernment.

Prayer and Spiritual Practices

The object of formation in the domain of prayer and spiritual practices is to help persons develop and deepen their relationship with a God who is present in all of life and to acquire a contemplative outlook that searches for God's invitations to love and serve in the needs, duties and challenges of everyday living.

Growth in Freedom

The object of formation in the domain of growth in freedom is to help persons develop the virtues of reason, affectivity, volition and spirituality that enable one to act in ways that promote integral personal development and the flourishing of human communities. The person of Jesus and the example of the Founder give shape to the Christian virtues and serve as paradigms of what it means to be Lasallian in character.

Association and Fraternity

The object of formation in the domain of association and fraternity is to help persons develop the relational attitudes and skills needed to build and sustain genuinely fraternal communities where members support and accompany one another in their various Lasallian vocations. It is important to understand from the beginning that "fraternity" means sisters and brothers who together build familial bonds of mutual love and concern.

Solidarity and Care for the World through Education

The object of formation in the domain of solidarity and care for the world through education is to help persons frame their work and lifestyle within the horizon of care for the common good and effective solidarity with those most in need. It is a question of helping persons develop the attitudes, skills and understandings needed to be effective in the mission. The principles of Catholic social teaching provide a basis for integrating one's work and care for the world.

For De La Salle, these five domains became a charismatic dynamism: in the narrative of his life, we can see how they come together in a living synthesis of faith, service, and communion in mission. This synthesis in turn suggests the vision for constructing a formative pilgrimage creatively faithful to the Founder's spiritual experience and yet adaptable to the different contexts and situations of Lasallians world-wide.

For Reflection:

What key thresholds of the Lasallian formative pilgrimage can you recognize in your own formative journey?

What formation programs might assist Lasallians to cross the indicated thresholds?

Who or what has been most helpful for your growth in the domains described above?

What might assist other Lasallians to grow in each of the domains?

Section 5

Theological Foundations for Formation

The work of formation assumes an understanding of what it means to be human. Formation should not be reduced to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, important as that is. At its most profound level, it is a matter of shaping one's character and sense of purpose, discovering what has ultimate value, and seeking to live a consistent and coherent life.

Lasallian formation for mission draws upon a rich tradition of Christian reflection on these themes. Its content and approaches are grounded in a holistic vision of the human person based on Christian anthropology. Yet, the human being is ever a mystery; not because human persons are unknowable, but because what is known never exhausts the reality of what it means to be human. The fundamental convictions that underlie the philosophy and pedagogy of formation are highlighted in this section.

5.1 Created in Love, in God's Image and Likeness

The Foundation of Human Dignity. God created every human being in love, for love. Anyone who has ever lovingly created something – whether a song, a poem, a painting or a child – will understand something of God's reasons for creating; they are the deep reasons of the heart. God loved humanity first, and God's love for human beings is the fundamental ground of human dignity and the reason why human dignity can never be lost. The dignity of the human person is God's unmerited and irrevocable gift.

Becoming Human Through Self-Gift in Love. Having been created for love flows from humanity's being made "in God's image and likeness." "God is love," says the evangelist (1 Jn 4:8), and to be made in the image and likeness of God is to be made for love. Formation is thus a lifelong process of learning to grow in love, becoming ever more human through the gift of oneself to others.

Created for Friendship with God. Being created in God's image and likeness also highlights the fundamentally Godward orientation of human existence. Of all the creatures, only the human person, endowed with intelligence and freedom, can respond with recognition and appreciation to God's loving overtures and draw near to God as friend. God is the answer, often unrecognized, to the deepest longings of the human heart. "You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." (St. Augustine) This orientation provides the foundation for human spirituality.

Care for the World. Just as friends are united by the dreams and desires which they hold in common, friendship with God leads people to care about what God cares about most deeply: the joy of human beings and the wellbeing of all creation. Friendship with God calls all to

widen the circle of loving concern so that it becomes as inclusive as God's own. God wills that all human beings draw together to form one family and use the goods of the earth to ensure that all live according to the dignity with which God regards them.

Thus, being in God's image is an invitation not just to a loving communion with God and others, but to stewardship of the earthly goods that flow from God's generosity. The goods of the earth are destined for the use of all to ensure that no one goes hungry, or naked, or homeless, uneducated or uncared for. God calls all to be stewards of God's gifts, to ensure the continuing sustenance and wellbeing of humankind and all creation.

5.2 In the Image and Likeness of the Trinity

Created for Communion. The Christian claim is that God has been encountered in three ways: as the Father who creates and sustains all things; in Jesus who embodied God's saving love in the world; and as the Spirit which continues to illuminate, strengthen and guide humanity towards solidarity and communion. From this lived experience, the Church developed its teaching on the Triune God.

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that God is love not only in relationship to human beings and creation, but as God *is*. A helpful analogy is to see the triune God as Lover (Father) and Beloved (Son) united in the power of a reciprocal Love (Holy Spirit). Recognizing that all are made in the image of the Trinity highlights the relational and communal nature of human existence; humans come to the fullness through self-gift and solidarity with others. They become fully human in community, through community, for community.

Creating Unity in a Divided World. Salvation begins with the Spirit's reaching into individual lives, drawing into intimate communion with the Father and the Son, and empowering them to recreate in relationships something of the gracious, mutually self-giving love of the Father and the Son. Thus, every human experience of love is simultaneously an experience of the triune God and a means by which this God draws people beyond narrow self-interest into the fullness of humanity. God saves people not as isolated individuals, but by drawing them into relationships that challenge and expand their hearts so that they might participate in the work of healing and reconciling a broken world. In a world marred by various forms of brokenness and division, the Spirit will not rest until it reconciles humanity in a universal solidarity that honors human dignity, embraces diversity, and promotes the common good. Mission is participation in this healing and reconciling work of God.

Implications for Formation. Formation has a communal dimension. Communal living is a process of being formed in the ways of love. People become fully human as they strive to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in community, as they encounter acceptance or struggle with rejection, as they encounter affirmation or deal with betrayal, as they strive to forgive and seek forgiveness, as they reach out to others in solidarity and service.

5.3 Freedom in the Image and Likeness of Jesus

Jesus and the Challenge of Freedom. What God intends human beings to become is most clearly seen in Jesus – a person fully human, fully loving, and fully at one with God in mind, heart and will. In this union lay his freedom. Jesus was truly free because he sought to live his life in obedience to a merciful God who stands with human beings against all that oppresses them, a God who wills life and love for all. Jesus’ prayer “Thy will be done” expresses the paradox that one is never freer than when one seeks God’s will and acts on it.

The reign of God was the cause for which Jesus lived and died. For Jesus, God does not reign through domination, violence or the suppression of freedom, but by liberating all humankind for a life lived in joy, friendship and solidarity. His ministry is best understood in the light of God’s plan to heal and reconcile all forms of brokenness through the power of the Spirit. It follows that freedom is not morally indifferent – it is directed towards the fulfilment of God’s reign. In the present, it is the capacity to discern what God requires of one here and now and to act on it.

What the life of freedom looks like for Christians is expressed in the Beatitudes. Pope Francis has said: “The Beatitudes are like a Christian's identity card. So, if anyone asks: “What must one do to be a good Christian?”, the answer is clear. We have to do, each in our own way, what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount... In the Beatitudes, we find a portrait of the Master, which we are called to reflect in our daily lives.” (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, 63).

Formation for Freedom. Formation eschews slavish conformity and blind obedience; rather, it aims to cultivate the kind of freedom Pope Francis meant when he said, “Before all else, be free persons! Freedom means knowing how to reflect on what we do, knowing how to evaluate which behaviors make us grow. It means always choosing the good” (Address of Pope Francis to Students of the Jesuit Schools of Italy, June 7, 2013). Such freedom is not given as whole and entire. It is something to work at. Freedom grows. It requires solid formation lest it be diminished or lost.

The most insidious threats to freedom do not come from outside us; they come from the clouded mind incapable of discernment, the divided heart trapped amidst competing desires, and the irresolute will incapable of commitment. Growing into the image of God in Christ is no easy task.

Formation helps persons to grow in freedom by helping them to develop their character, spirituality and capacity for discernment. In the Christian tradition, formation in freedom involves the cultivation of the Christian virtues. Virtues are developed capacities of mind and heart to act in ways that promote genuine freedom and the flourishing of human communities. Growth in virtue requires both grace and human effort. Virtues develop in the context of relationships which challenge persons to live in ways that are responsible, just and loving. They develop as one discerns the good appropriate to a situation and acts on it from good will. Growth in virtue is growth in freedom.

5.4 Christ, the Spirit and Formation

The challenge of formation arises from the wonderful complexity and beauty of the human beings who are engaged in it, both formators and those being formed. All those engaged in this pilgrimage need accompaniment as well as the assistance of God's Spirit. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Cor 3:17) Without these, the freedom and love exemplified by Christ would lie beyond their grasp.

The formator should take heart from the knowledge that Jesus through the Holy Spirit continues to accompany those in the ministry of formation. Even more importantly, the formator must trust that the Spirit is at work in the lives of those in formation, healing and inviting them to grow towards the freedom exemplified by Christ. One of a formator's most important tasks is to invite others into a more personal relationship with Christ.

For Reflection:

How can formators ensure that they honor the dignity and freedom of those they are engaged in forming?

What implications for formation can be drawn from the view that one becomes more human through a free self-gift in love? How might formation for healthy relationships factor into holistic formation programs?

How does the reflection on the Triune God enrich our understanding of association? Of the formative dimension of community living? Of how we deal with diversity and differences in community and mission? Of how we educate and work with the poor?

In your context, what are some of the most effective means to present and unpack these essential theological concepts?

Section 6

Building a Culture of Formation

Formation is not just the work of experts, nor is it merely an adjunct activity of the community, school, District or Region. Fidelity to the Lasallian mission and charism in the educational community is better assured when a community regards the formation of its members as crucial to ensuring that the ministry continues to be genuinely Lasallian.

The culture of a community is a determining factor in the long-term impact of organized formation experiences. An institutional culture manifestly inconsistent or unsupportive of the values and ideals proposed in formation programs can lead to the marginalization of Lasallian ideals from the life of the community and to cynicism towards the mission. Lasallians who participate in ongoing formation programs can better translate the values and orientations of the mission into actual policies, processes and structures that shape the practices and culture of the educational community. All members of the Lasallian community are, therefore, co-responsible for the success or failure of formation efforts. A genuinely Lasallian culture favors the cultivation and nourishment of Lasallian vocations.

Building a Lasallian culture begins with a shared understanding of the Lasallian story, identity, charism and mission and core values. Values are incarnated in daily life and given stability through culture. Examples include the way members of the community relate, the way they work, the stories they tell, the events they celebrate, the behaviors they reward, the exemplars they honor. Culture is a dynamic reality, and building a desired culture requires both strategic planning and the members' intentional commitment to live, each day, the vision of the community they wish to become, together and by association.

Effective formation needs supportive structures and access to resources. Trained personnel must animate the institution so that building a formation culture becomes the shared commitment and responsibility of the entire community. The formation of formators always requires sufficient resources to ensure sustainability. As much as possible, to facilitate a clear formation pilgrimage, the formation experiences should be regular, stable, strategically directed and programmed, practical in their outcomes, appropriate to their audiences, and developmental.

The presence and the essential role of women in the ongoing development of the Lasallian mission is a great gift to the world of education. Women must continue to fully participate in and take leadership roles in the formation of all Lasallians, including Brothers, to ensure that the fullness of God's vision for the world continues to unfold. Authentic Lasallian mission formation can never ignore the perspective or wisdom that women bring to the ministry of education. Lasallian formation must proactively develop content and structures that enable women to take on important roles of leadership in both formation and ministry.

6.1 Building an Inclusive Culture of Vocations

God calls everyone to the human vocation of love and service. The awareness of one's own vocation unfolds as they discover their personal gifts to put at the service of the world. All Lasallian vocations are focused on the human and Christian education of the young, especially those who are poor. For some Lasallians, it is a call to consecration as a Brother of the Christian Schools. Without excluding other options, every Lasallian institution or community should be helping members to find their unifying purpose in the Lasallian mission.

A "culture of vocations" is an environment that supports and facilitates everyone's vocational discernment. Such a culture supports each member of the community in undertaking a journey towards life in its fullness. It is a culture that acknowledges the multitude of options and vocational paths that are present in the society. Hence, the goal within this culture is to accompany all, young and old, in living out their true calling as a response to the mission in service to the reign of God.

6.2 Building a Culture of Accompaniment

Another important feature of an intentionally formative community is a culture of mutual accompaniment. Everyone in the Lasallian community recognizes the need to support other members as they strive to live in fidelity to the Lasallian identity and mission. All of us accompany and are accompanied by others at various times in our lives.

Accompaniment can be planned, but it often occurs through conversation in informal settings. It can involve an individual accompanying a group or a group accompanying an individual. Accompaniment can take place anywhere and, with the assistance of technology, even without physical presence. The Church's long tradition of spiritual friendship is a form of accompaniment. In this relationship friends support one another along their formative journeys. Accompaniment need not be explicitly religious in its focus. Most important is a willingness to walk with another, especially as a compassionate and clarifying presence.

Formal ministries of accompaniment, particularly those with responsibilities for formation, require training and the development of needed skills, e.g., spiritual direction, formative counseling, etc.

The following traits often characterize such ministries of accompaniment.

- Absolute respect for one another's dignity and freedom.
- Caring and nonjudgmental presence. Accompaniment assumes genuine concern and an attentiveness to a person's story and situation while bracketing one's personal views regarding his or her choices.
- Hospitality. Accompaniment involves setting aside one's own agenda and concerns, thereby creating a safe space where the other may feel comfortable sharing their story.

- Compassionate listening, which helps the one being accompanied to articulate and clarify what he or she is undergoing, and thus to discover ways to move forward.
- A preference for relevant questions that invite reflection before offering advice.

6.3 Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

John Baptist de La Salle afforded children a dignity that was beyond the common understanding in that historical context. He and the first Brothers understood that their students were entrusted to them by both parents and the Church. In his formation of the first teachers, the Founder challenged them to treat their students as if they were the children of the King, to see themselves as the students' Guardian Angels, and to both recognize and adore the presence of Jesus in them.

Formation ensures that Lasallians develop the ability to recognize when structures or practices distort or undermine the dignity of children and vulnerable adults. Attention is given to accepted safeguarding practices and training offered in local contexts. When such programs are not available, Lasallian formation should develop the necessary resources that increase awareness and understanding of this important issue. To truly reflect the reign of God, Lasallian communities must be inclusive and safe places for all people.

In keeping with Gospel values and the tradition of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the protection of children and vulnerable adults is an essential component of contemporary formation and ministry in all their aspects and dimensions. This recognition must be present throughout the formation pilgrimage.

For Reflection:

How is coherence between Lasallian values and ideals promoted through formation and the lived reality of your local community?

How does your community support the ongoing vocational needs of all members, including the development of the next generation of leaders, especially women?

What are the signs of effective accompaniment within your community?

Can you identify the elements of best practices regarding child protection and safeguarding policies throughout the formation that is offered in your community?

Section 7

The Lasallian Formation for Mission Matrix

Formation is a process that considers the needs, dispositions, and circumstances of those in formation. Formation should never be reduced to a uniform set of discrete activities and courses in which people participate irrespective of their character and level of maturity.

If formation is a personal, lifelong pilgrimage in vocation and association, the thresholds denote five significant transitions that take place on that journey. The five domains, on the other hand, name the areas of competence needed to negotiate the challenges inherent in living out a Lasallian vocation and participating in a Lasallian ministry.

In this section, we propose a matrix that can be used as a tool for mapping out the formative pilgrimage of those engaged in the Lasallian mission. The matrix herein described allows formators to take a developmental approach to planning formation, an approach which considers the needs of persons at different thresholds while keeping in mind the competencies that formators wish to develop in those participating in formation programs. Attention to the human, Christian and Lasallian dimensions of formation cuts across domains and thresholds.

The matrix is presented both in full and in greater detail by thresholds for ease of navigation and use as a tool for planning.

7.1 The Matrix

In keeping with the desire for a common formation program, the matrix sets out themes and content areas that are relevant to Brothers and partners. Themes that are more particular to Brothers' formation are clearly indicated.

The value of this matrix is that it provides an example of a pedagogical tool for formators who are considering how to plan formation programs which are more responsive to the lived reality of those being formed. The use of thresholds invites formators to be more conscious that formation, to be genuine, must meet people where they are on their inner journey, irrespective of what position they may hold in the institution, or, in the case of Brothers, what formal/canonical stage of formation they may officially be in.

Likewise, the idea of domains focused on competencies should help formators to focus on the purpose of the content being offered. The guiding question should be, "How does this content contribute to the development of one's vocation and effectiveness for the Lasallian mission?" The content and organization of the formation programs must foster the competencies and outcomes particular to each domain, given the person's lived reality at each threshold.

Ideally, the matrix will help formators to strike a balance between the need for creativity and the demand for structure, between attentiveness to the individual and fidelity to the goals of formation.

7.2 The 5 Five Domains: Enabling Lasallian Mission

For Lasallians, the Founder's example offers a paradigm for identifying and integrating the various capacities needed to carry out the Lasallian mission. For this reason, five capacities that formators need to attend to as they move across thresholds are identified.

Seeing with the Eyes of Faith - De La Salle identified the spirit of faith and zeal as the chief characteristic of members of the Institute because he saw the work of the educator as cooperation with a loving God who wants everyone to be saved, especially those who are poor and marginalized.

Across thresholds, this domain involves developing the capacity to interpret reality from a faith perspective and to discern God's invitation to a gospel-inspired response to the needs of others and the demands of fidelity to the mission. Content at each threshold should pave the way for engaging in the kind of reflection that moves from real life situations to engagement with the Christian vision and back to life in the form of concrete responses.

Prayer and Spiritual Practice - For De La Salle, fidelity to God demanded an ever-deepening capacity to surrender to the loving action of God in his life.

Across thresholds, the movement of this domain is from "saying prayers" to developing a relationship with God characterized by growing openness and intimacy; from prayer as a discrete activity towards a contemplative awareness of God's presence in all of life.

Growth in Freedom - Toward the end of his life, the Founder looked back on his own pilgrimage and was able to perceive God's loving accompaniment from one commitment to another enabling his authentic vocational response.

Across thresholds, this domain involves developing capacities for continual conversion in view of living in fidelity to God's call. This requires the cultivation of character through virtue, moral and spiritual discernment, and an appropriate asceticism and detachment towards one's will and personal preferences in order to be able to live one's "yes" to God.

Association and Fraternity - De La Salle saw quality education as an indispensable means for liberating young people to a life lived with purpose and dignity. Because he recognized that such a work could not be done alone, he invited teachers to create a new form of community for the sake of the mission.

Across thresholds, this domain involves acquiring the attitudes and skills needed to relate to others in genuinely humanizing ways, to live and work in fraternal solidarity, and to support and accompany one another on their individual vocational journeys. It also involves

continually pushing the boundaries of one's concern to embrace those who remain at the margins wherever they may be.

Solidarity and Care for the World through Education – As a practical response to his growing awareness of God's call, De La Salle came to see the school as a privileged means to cooperate in God's mission.

Across thresholds, this domain involves developing the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to respond with creative fidelity to the educational needs of the young, the poor, and those searching for deeper meaning and purpose in life. This domain continually challenges all Lasallians to rediscover what a human and Christian education consistent with the gospel and faithful to the reign of God might look like.

7.3 The 5 Thresholds: Attending to People on The Formation Journey

The thresholds are not "stages" of formation. Rather, they help us to understand what might be going on in the life of the person who is negotiating the transition each threshold represents. Knowing what people are experiencing at these thresholds gives the formator a sense of how to make formation more meaningful and relevant to participants.

7.4 Threshold 1: Induction . . . from outside to inside

Coming into the Lasallian family, discovery and dependence go hand in hand. Entering a new community means navigating a new culture, learning its practices, becoming aware of the vision and values that drive the community, and building relationships with and for whom one works. Participants at this threshold require programs which help them through this transition. Unfamiliarity with the Lasallian culture and its expectations can mean that participants might experience a sense of vulnerability. They might feel that they lack the knowledge or skills necessary to exercise their responsibilities effectively. Formators should exert every effort to be supportive and encouraging in order to allow participants to acquire a firm foothold in the Lasallian community.

INDUCTION: Introducing awareness/the concept(s) of ...

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

social awareness - the importance of reading reality

Christian

Christian anthropology - the Christian understanding of the human person
the Catholic Tradition

Lasallian

the founding charismatic event as developed in MEL Bulletin 51
"Eyes of Faith" as developed in the writings of De La Salle

Brothers

Sacred Scripture
the biography of De La Salle
the spiritual journey of De La Salle

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

the interior life

Christian

communal prayer

Lasallian

Lasallian forms of prayer
the Presence of God as developed in Lasallian prayer and spirituality

Brothers

the practice of *Lectio Divina*
the Lasallian saints
the Sacraments
Christian spirituality
the spirituality of the Psalms

GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

character formation
child protection: theory and application
responsible self-care

Christian

the Christian educator

Lasallian

"Make no Distinction" as developed in the writings of De La Salle
the contemporary understanding of salvation as wholeness

Brothers

the multi-dimensional self
human development
the theology of vocation
social media ethics
forgiveness, reconciliation and freedom in community living

ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

healthy relationships
community building
inclusivity

Christian

the vocational journey as an invitation to pilgrimage

Lasallian

"Together and By Association" as developed in the Institute

Brothers

interpersonal and communal dynamics
the Institute today
the history of the District
Association in the Institute today

SOLIDARITY AND CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

new poverties
work in support of the Common Good

human dignity
contemporary education practices

Christian

the ministry and vocation of education

Lasallian

the spirit of faith & zeal

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation

service WITH those who are poor - highlighting the significance of “with”

Brothers

interculturality

Catholic Social Teaching

7.5 Threshold 2: Belonging...from me to us

The focus of this threshold is self-identification as a Lasallian. At this threshold one may still be occupied with fitting in and complying with the expectations of those with authority in the community. Persons at this stage often look for support in peer groups and search for role models to imitate or mentors to guide their progress. One’s sense of efficacy at this stage comes from one’s degree of belonging and one’s ability to fulfill tasks. For this reason, mentoring and capacity-building should be made available. In the area of spirituality, one should be helped to move from cultural religiosity to genuine intimacy with a God present in all of life. The task of formation at this threshold is to build a deeper understanding of the spiritual motivations that support the mission as well as competence and confidence in the fulfilment of responsibilities.

BELONGING: Deepening an Understanding of ...

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

the spiritual God (i.e.: transcendence beyond of dogma)

Christian

the God of Jesus

Lasallian

the God of De La Salle

spiritual influences for De La Salle

images of the educator in *Meditations for the Time of Retreat*

Brothers

fundamental theological concepts

faith formation, evangelization and catechesis

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

mindfulness

Christian

praying one's experience

prayer and self-understanding

Lasallian

"Let us Remember ..." as developed in Lasallian prayer and spirituality

Lasallian metaphors (Good Shepherd, Guardian Angel, Minister ...)

Brothers

Christian discipleship

Catholic liturgy

discernment

prayerful decision-making

the spiritual writings of De La Salle

GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

human development

principles of child protection

Christian

apostolic spirituality

the Gospel message of salvation for all

Christology

Missionary discipleship -

Lasallian

key moments in the life of De La Salle

the Christian Educator

Brothers

the human journey of De La Salle

the Rule

Religious consecration and vows

ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

healthy relationships in community
respectful dialogue

Christian

Gospel-centered relationships
missionary Communion

Lasallian

"Association for mission" as relationship
the ongoing Lasallian story
Circular 466

Brothers

the Declaration
a theology of consecrated life
the history of the Institute
Human bonds in religious communities
Church documents on religious life
key Institute documents on religious consecration

SOLIDARITY AND CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

the historical development of education
best practices in education
contemporary approaches to education

Christian

charism
Catholic Social Teaching

Lasallian

Lasallian pedagogy
contemporary missiology

Brothers

the Declaration (service with those who are poor)
social and environmental ethics
pedagogical writings of De La Salle
Brother as catechist

7.6 Threshold 3: Commitment...from career to calling

At this threshold, the desire for self-advancement gradually gives way to more self-transcendent motivations. Persons at this threshold should be helped to discover the alignment between their personal values and aspirations, the Lasallian vision, and the mission. People at this threshold are less concerned with conformity and social recognition. They require opportunities to exercise initiative, autonomy and creativity in the performance of their tasks. It is important that they be helped to cultivate the gifts needed for their roles in the mission. Often, discovering a calling is about discovering the distinctive contribution one can make to the mission and the community. Spiritual practices and theological input facilitate the transition from seeing work as a "job" to seeing it as a life-giving vocational response. Formation at this stage also aims to help participants discern whether to move to deeper levels of personal ownership of and commitment to the mission.

COMMITMENT: Encouraging the appropriation of ...

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

the practice of reflecting on the signs of the times

Christian

the significance of salvation history

the practice of theological reflection

Lasallian

the Founder's method of "Double Contemplation"

Brothers

pastoral ministry in schools

De La Salle's use of Pauline theology

social consciousness

Jesus' mission as the Reign of God

Lasallian spirituality

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

self-understanding

Christian

the practice of *Lectio Divina*

the use of rituals in community

Lasallian

the Lasallian Method of Interior Prayer
the themes of the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat*

Brothers

prayer and the interior life

GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

emotional wellness
psycho-sexual integration
committing to child protection

Christian

the Christian vision of the human being
human formation
culture of vocations

Lasallian

the practice of Lasallian discernment

Brothers

health care & self-discipline
the ability to give and receive love
anger-, stress-, and time-management skills
Gospel values
creative fidelity to living the vows

ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

community dynamics
conflict management skills
effective communication skills

Christian

the Ecclesiology of Communion
building a culture of accompaniment

Lasallian

the significance of the Gospel Journey of De La Salle
"From Commitment to Commitment" as developed in the writings of De La Salle
the significance of the Heroic Vow of 1691 and the Vows of 1694

Brothers

key Church documents on Catholic education
contemporary ecclesiology
Servant Leadership
Consecrated life lived in community
stability in the Institute
Lasallian accompaniment

SOLIDARITY AND CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

the importance of promoting children's rights

Christian

the principles and spirituality of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation
the spirituality of dialogue as mission

Lasallian

the ongoing association story
the spirit of the Institute Post-Vatican II
the content of Circular 461
the Declaration – chapters 6, 7, 8

Brothers

the principles of professional activity and ministry
ecumenical and interfaith dialogue
catechetical pedagogy
missiology
variety of Lasallian ministries today
the principles of faith formation of youth

7.7 Threshold 4: Co-responsibility ... from followers to leaders

As Lasallians grow in understanding the mission, they are often called to take on greater responsibilities, such as initiating projects and setting institutional goals. This may be a period of recognizing unresolved developmental issues. Spiritual direction, counseling or therapy can facilitate people's achievement of deeper insights into their inner motivations. The challenges of this threshold have less to do with professional competence and more to do with personal integrity and fidelity to God's call. As responsibilities increase, one feels the need to become more reflective about work and commitments. This can be a time of letting go of old certitudes, living with greater ambiguity, and discovering new depths in one's relationship

with God. As one becomes more attentive to the inner life, one acquires a greater capacity to mentor and accompany others.

CO-RESPONSIBILITY: Increasing the capacity for ...

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

project planning and management

Christian

engaging in the See-Judge-Act-Celebrate model

Lasallian

communal discernment

Brothers

encountering the person of Jesus Christ in the Gospels

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

diverse modes of reflection

Christian

contemplative prayer

facilitating reflection, prayer, and liturgy

Lasallian

practice contemporary Lasallian spirituality

understanding the spirituality of the Rule

Brothers

encountering the merciful God

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

project planning and management

Christian

engaging in the See-Judge-Act-Celebrate model

Lasallian

communal discernment

Brothers

encountering the person of Jesus Christ in the Gospels

GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

personal transformation
cultural literacy
sustained emotional wellness

Christian

conversion

Lasallian

promoting Lasallian Vocations

Brothers

sustaining healthy celibacy, affectivity & sexuality through various life stages

ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

mentoring & accompaniment

Christian

spiritual accompaniment
integrating consecration, community, and mission

Lasallian

a deep reading of the letters of De La Salle
a critical engagement with the themes of the Conduct of Schools

Brothers

understanding theology of Communion
seeing the Reign of God - Church - Community dynamic
integrating the constitutive elements of the Brothers' identity
living the Vow of Association to the Institute
living association with all Lasallians
understanding the new dynamism of the Rule

SOLIDARITY AND CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

creativity and innovation
comprehending the phenomenon of globalization

Christian

missionary Discipleship
understanding the ongoing development of Catholic missiology

Lasallian

going beyond borders
an integrative living of the mission

Brothers

living the prophetic dimension of the Brother's vocation
an initiation to inter-congregational experiences

7.8 Threshold 5: Wisdom. . . from positional power to charismatic witness

The experience of this threshold often relates to diminishment (due to age or health issues) or relinquishing institutional power and control. Here, one steps aside, allowing others to take responsibility, and moves from the position of protagonist to a more auxiliary and fraternal role: "He must increase while I must decrease." (Jn 3:30). At this threshold one may be summoned to move from the willfulness resulting from having one's way to the willingness to surrender one's life to God. This openness relies on trust that one's life will bear fruit beyond one's lifetime. This threshold is characterized by a more contemplative way of being present in the world, a way of living all of life in God's loving presence. Mission is tied less to the work one does and more to the quality of one's presence to God and others. This is also a time when one is invited to move beyond regrets and recriminations to the full acceptance of one's journey in the spirit of the Founder's words, "I adore in all things the will of God in my regard."

WISDOM: Appreciating ...

SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

Personal Memoirs
one's narrative identity
the importance of transition planning

Christian

Creative Fidelity to the Reign of God

Lasallian

Creative Fidelity to the Charism and Spirituality
De La Salle's *Memoirs on the Beginnings*

Brothers

the possibility of a reimagined role in mission as senior Brothers

PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

a spirituality of aging

Christian

the Gospels & Letters of St. Paul
Christian and Non-Christian Mysticism

Lasallian

De La Salle's prayer, "Lord, the Work is Yours"

Brothers

a spirituality of suffering and diminishment

GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

aging & human development
overall self-care

Christian

the Paschal Mystery
life transitions

Lasallian

the practice of spiritual abandonment

Brothers

the witness of an integrated life
the ability to ask for and accept help

ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

the need for mentoring skills
intergenerational relationships

Christian

the practices of discernment and spiritual accompaniment

Lasallian

the Gospel Journey of De La Salle's final years

Brothers

fraternal presence

SOLIDARITY AND CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

openness to the world

the value of the ministry of presence

Christian

the practice of spiritual mentoring

Lasallian

the Post-Vatican II Institute

Brothers

the wisdom of aging as a mission

Section 8

Formation Programs

A formation pilgrimage is a lifelong experience proposed by the global Lasallian Family through the Region, the District or the ministry. Formation programs refer to the concrete events that enable such a pilgrimage. A formation program is a proposal limited in time, with a clear beginning and conclusion. It consists of several components that are organized so that a person may integrate their reflection with their experience and enter a transformative threshold.

The formation programs which comprise the Lasallian formative pilgrimage, have particular characteristics. A quality formation program:

- is a process of self-appropriation and of affective, intellectual, moral and religious transformation;
- cannot be reduced to a series of formation courses;

- enables each person to acquire the skills to freely live their experiences and to re-enter their lives with new perspectives;
- is characterized by accompaniment that provides support and challenge for the integration of the experiences;
- is a community-based experience, either through simultaneous experience or through clear support for the person;
- is holistic; it is an experience of Faith, Service, and Community;
- is of an appropriate length to meet the identified needs;
- allows time for action, reflection, learning, sharing and integration, while encouraging ongoing practice of these skills to facilitate personal and institutional conversion.

8.1 Responding to Needs

Formation programs respond to needs which usually are clearer at the local level. Often, the local level requires support to respond to the needs. District formation programs are strategic responses to discerned needs shared by multiple local communities. All effective formation programs are characterized by thoughtful planning, implementation and assessment.

8.2 Developing Formation Programs

When a District or a local ministry is establishing a formation program, it must consider the requirements, goals, recipients, stages, processes, methodologies and contents involved. An intentional and carefully structured process must be designed for specific recipients. Participants must be ready to work in a group setting; analyze their own experience; discern its evangelical value; assess their experience in the light of this discernment; evangelize their experience by making the right decisions; implement decisions (response); return to their daily practice and assess the implementation process. The following considerations are intended to help formators at the local or District level to establish and develop their formation programs.

8.3 Goals

Formation programs should always respond to needs and have clear, concise and compelling goals. Their intended outcomes should ideally be expressed in terms of the thresholds and domains developed in this *Handbook*. Formation programs need to promote human and Christian growth, build community, and foster a better understanding of the Lasallian charism and spirituality.

8.4 Participants

Formation programs need to be designed with their target audience in mind, considering the participants' backgrounds, contexts, and concrete situations. As far as possible, the formator aims to be aware of the participants' previous formation experiences and current needs. Programs should acknowledge, and aim to benefit from, religious, cultural, and generational differences among participants.

8.5 Personal Growth and Development

The processes of formation programs need to lead participants to engage deeply with the content and with their own process of personal integration. For this reason, the formator needs to consider aspects like the duration of the program, the internal logic and flow between components, the pace of delivery, the scaffolding of ideas and experiences, and the balance between personal and group processes. When these internal processes are planned effectively, formation programs can more successfully provide participants with opportunities for personal growth and development.

8.6 Methodologies

Formation programs should include varied methodologies and experiences that support the program's goals and reflect an understanding of the adult learning process. Effective use of various methodologies and dynamics acknowledges the diverse backgrounds, experiences and contexts of participants. This aspect of planning integrates structured and free time to foster community building, meaningful prayer, and mutual accompaniment.

8.7 Content

Formation programs will be organized and adapted to address the needs of persons at specific thresholds. Formators should reflect on what content best promotes the development of the five domains.

8.8 Assessment

Formation programs should include a process of assessment. Participants and formators reflect on how effectively the program achieved its goals. This process is essential in terms of ongoing development of the individual programs, and in identifying the best subsequent formative steps for participants.

8.9 Resources

Effective formation experiences depend on human, material, content and economic resources. Support of formation with adequate and thoughtful use of resources is essential.

8.10 Logistics

The effectiveness of a formation program depends heavily on the conscious consideration of logistical elements like the choice of venue and the arrangement of spaces for meeting, prayer, reflection and leisure. Formation programs should adequately attend to the physical needs (transportation, food, rest, comfort) of participants.

For Reflection:

How frequently is there a comprehensive needs assessment of formation for mission in your context?

How effectively do current formation programs respond to actual needs?

Are the formation programs clearly aligned with the thresholds and domains?

Section 9

Possible Formative Methodologies

Formators should carefully identify and implement the most effective formative experiences for those they are accompanying. Meaningful experiences are possible when the methods used are aligned to movement across the thresholds and domains. The pilgrimage thereby becomes a series of opportunities for growth and transformation.

Formators should also consider cultural context, personal history, and group dynamics to ensure the appropriate use of a particular method. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to mission formation.

Each experience should be:

- **existential** (helpful in making meaning)
- **proportional** (adapted to the situation of each person)
- **integrative** (oriented towards seeing the self holistically)
- **accompanied** (framed within relationship)

9.1 Formation for Mission Experiences

A holistic vision for mission formation values providing experiences across each of the following categories:

Personal

- Personal reading and reflection
- Focused study
- Action research
- Reflection on mission experiences
- Writing one's autobiography
- Developing the Personal Annual Program
- Developing relationships with other Lasallians

Communal

- Community building opportunities
- Direct service with the poor
- Being available for Beyond the Borders programs
- Personal dialogue with other Lasallians
- Small group discussions
- Visiting various Lasallian ministries
- Creating the Community Annual Program

Spiritual

- Retreats
 - Thematic
 - Directed
 - Personal integration
- Faith sharing
- Discernment
- Theological reflection
- Personal and communal prayer
- Leading prayer and short retreats

Accompaniment

- Induction programs
- by a more experienced Lasallian
- by the Visitor or his delegate
- Professional mentoring
- Relationships of mutual accountability

Professional

- Extended experiences of community
- Seminars
- Online courses
- Professional networks
- Workshops
- Webinars
- District annual meetings
- International Lasallian formation programs
- Inter-faith encounters

9.2 Brother Formation Experiences

In addition to the above, the initial formation of Brothers includes:

Personal Accompaniment

- Personal interview
- Mentorship by
 - Community
 - Community Director
 - School Director
 - District Director of Formation
 - Brother Visitor
 - Spiritual Director
- Counseling
- Personal Annual Plan
- Dialogue among peers
- Personal integration

Communal Accompaniment

- Shared recreation
- Community outings
- District gatherings
- Active participation in and leadership of community meetings
- Community tasks
- Fraternal correction
- Integrating Personal Annual Plan with the Community Annual Plan

Spiritual Accompaniment

- Practice of recollection
- Annual retreat
- Desert days
- Retreats
- Spiritual reading
- Faith sharing
- Community prayer and liturgy
- Reconciliation

Mission Accompaniment

- Immersion experiences with those who are poor
- Shared preparation and teaching of catechism
- Shared work with other Lasallians
- Activities of Pastoral Ministry
- Inter-congregational experiences

Professional Accompaniment

- Theological studies
- Spirituality studies
- Teacher preparation

For Reflection:

With what effective formative methodologies for adults are you familiar?

What strategies do you employ to strike the right balance between personal, communal, spiritual, accompaniment and professional elements in formation programs?

How are the above-referenced, five types of accompaniment included in the Brother Formation programs in your District?

Section 10

A Sample Program:

Formation of Lasallian Formators for Mission

The necessity of formation of formators has been highlighted by several Mission Assemblies and General Chapters. The program below develops some of the elements of a formation program addressed to present and future formators. This example uses the domains of the matrix to indicate what a program for the formation of formators, both for mission and for Brothers' formation, might look like.

10.1 Goals and Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to integrate a coherent vision of basic Lasallian formation for mission, including motivation, knowledge, skills, and values, in order to lead others through a holistic formation pilgrimage. The program is structured around the five domains:

<u>Seeing with the Eyes of Faith</u>	To reflect on reality in the light of the Christian faith
<u>Prayer and Spiritual Practices:</u>	To integrate spirituality and life experiences in the context of the Lasallian Charism
<u>Growth in Freedom:</u>	To understand the dynamics of psychological and spiritual growth
<u>Association and Fraternity:</u>	To assist Lasallians to deepen their commitment to community for mission.
<u>Solidarity and Care of the World Through Education:</u>	To challenge Lasallians towards creative fidelity to the reign of God.

10.2 Target Audience

Lasallians who are approaching the threshold of the Co-Responsibility and who have, or will assume, responsibility for the formation of others.

Those who are, or will be, responsible for the formation of Brothers.

10.3 Program Content

Domain 1: SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human

Understanding mission formation
Best practices in mission formation

Assessment of mission formation programs

Christian

Understanding the person of Jesus Christ: his humanity, earthly life, and his mission as the proclamation of the Reign of God

Humanity as God's mission

Hermeneutic reading of the Bible

Christ as formator of the disciples

Lasallian

Saint John Baptist de La Salle: an understanding of his life, the charismatic event, his vision of

association

Brothers

Understanding socio-cultural, religious, economic, and political forces.

Domain 2: PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Human

Spirituality in a secular world

Christian

Religious experience

Experience of God

Lectio Divina

Spirituality, discernment, prayer, and the Liturgy

Lasallian

Lasallian Spirituality: the charism, the spirit of faith and zeal, the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat*

Brothers

Christian spirituality

Methods and practice of discernment

Personal and communal prayer and liturgy

Domain 3: FORMATION IN FREEDOM

Human

Introduction to philosophical and cultural anthropology

Overview of developmental social psychology

Dynamics of personal and communal accompaniment

The person of the formator

Qualities, attitudes and skills for formators

Personal Integration

Christian

Principles of Christian anthropology
Vocational motivations and discernment

Lasallian

Lasallian formation for mission

Brothers

Physiological dimension of the person
Spiritual dimension of the person
Discernment of Christian life choices
Healthy sexuality
Life as a mission
Family, social and cultural dynamics

Domain 4: ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

Group dynamics
Community building skills
Adult education methods
Dynamics of interpersonal relationships and affective bonds

Christian

The Mystery of the Trinity as community of love

Lasallian

Lasallian identity
History of the Institute and its journey in fidelity

Brothers

Lasallian pedagogical principles and values
Assessment of the person in formation

Domain 5: SOLIDARITY & CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH
EDUCATION

Human

Social responsibility: solidarity, peace, justice, integrity of creation

Christian

Soteriology
Principles of Catholic social teaching

Lasallian

Lasallian heritage and mission today
“Together and by Association” as developed in the writings of the Institute

Service with those who are poor

Brothers

The Church and mission

Lasallian pedagogical principles and values

10.4 Formative Methodologies:

- Extended experiences of community
- Personal dialogue with other Lasallians
- Seminars and workshops
- Small group discussions
- Action research
- Professional mentoring
- Personal Accompaniment
- Retreat for personal integration
- Accompaniment by a more experienced Lasallian
- Developing of a “toolbox” useful for all participants
- Group counselling
- Spiritual direction

Section 11

Tools for Formation Planning

Some Questions for Effective Formation Planning

One of the most demanding responsibilities of formators is the continuous development of meaningful and impactful experiences for their Lasallian community. While sometimes helpful, formation templates do not always respond adequately to local realities and needs. Therefore, this chapter offers guiding questions that are intended to help frame the planning process, using the themes developed in the previous chapter. The importance of support from Districts and Regions to local formators cannot be overstated. Local formation programs have proven to be the most effective and sustainable models for the promotion of a lasting Lasallian identity and culture.

11.1 At the Local Level

Culture of Formation

- How is formation provided for in policies and procedures at your ministry?
- How are formation expectations made clear in the hiring-for-mission process?
- What evidence is there of clear Lasallian identity and mission in your ministry?
- Is there ongoing interest in formation programs?
- How are Lasallians encouraged and supported to seek diverse formation experiences?
- What strategies are employed to motivate reluctant members of the community to engage in formation experiences?

Culture of Vocations

- To what extent do members of the educational community see their work as a vocation rather than just a profession?
- What signs and symbols that reflect a Culture of Vocations are present around the ministry? (e.g., notice boards? Vocation Days instead of Career Days?)
- Are the adults open to sharing personal vocational stories with students?
- Who is responsible for encouraging the promotion of vocations?
- How are you working with other groups and organizations in this area?
- What kind of support do the District and the Region provide?

- How are Brothers' communities involved in supporting efforts in this area?

Culture of Accompaniment

- What model of accompaniment exists in the ministry and/or community? Is it the responsibility of a person or a small group, or is it a communal and shared responsibility?
- How are new members of the Lasallian ministry welcomed into the community? How are they encouraged to become more directly involved?
- Who accompanies members of the local community?
- How are all members of the community prepared to accompany others?
- What strategies are employed with Lasallians who feel that they do not need further accompaniment?

11.2 At the District Level

Culture of Formation

- How can ministries be encouraged to provide for formation in their policy and procedures?
- How is formation provided for in all aspects of District planning, including financial?
- What resources are currently offered to ministries and communities?
- How is the sustainability of District efforts to promote formation being ensured?
- How are future formators continuously identified and encouraged to participate in relevant formation programs?
- What opportunities exist for Brothers in initial formation to participate in formation experiences with other Lasallians?

Culture of Vocations

- Does the District have clear expectations for ministries and communities regarding Culture of Vocations?
- What resources for Vocations promotion does the District provide?
- Are there District programs and experiences designed to foster a Culture of Vocations, including providing formation for those responsible for the pastoral ministry of vocations? Are sufficient resources available?
- What assumptions underlie the District's Pastoral Ministry for Vocations? Do they reflect the diversity of Lasallian vocations?
- How are all human resources being utilized (e.g., retired Brothers and other Lasallians) to support and mentor those at the local level?

Culture of Accompaniment

- What models of accompaniment exist in the District? Do they address the diverse local realities within the District?
- Is accompaniment a shared responsibility?
- How is accompaniment provided to those who accompany others at the local level?
- How are the Brothers and others trained in accompaniment?

11.3 At the Regional Level:

- What opportunities exist in the Region to achieve and foster collaboration among those responsible for formation, accompaniment, and vocations in each of the Districts? How regular and worthwhile are those gatherings?
- How does the Region support Districts which lack the expertise and resources in any of these areas?

Leaders and formators at all levels ought to reflect on and foster dialogue about the implicit assumptions and biases in their formation programs. Attention to a lifelong model of formation, to assumptions about vocation, and to an understanding of and commitment to accompaniment will impact the quality of the various programs offered along the Lasallian pilgrimage.

A Sample Formation Planning Template

Program Title:

Goals and Learning Outcomes:

Seeing with the Eyes of Faith:
Prayer and Spiritual Practices:
Growth in Freedom:
Association and Fraternity:
Solidarity and Care for the World through Education:

Target Audience (Identify Threshold):

Program Content

DOMAIN 1: SEEING WITH THE EYES OF FAITH

Human
Christian
Lasallian
Brother

DOMAIN 2: PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES:

Human
Christian
Lasallian

Brother

DOMAIN 3: GROWTH IN FREEDOM

Human

Christian

Lasallian

Brother

DOMAIN 4: ASSOCIATION AND FRATERNITY

Human

Christian

Lasallian

Brother

DOMAIN 5: SOLIDARITY & CARE FOR THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Human

Christian

Lasallian

Brother

Formative Methodologies

Section 12

Considerations for Brother Formation

Much of what occurs in the formation of the Brothers is already established in both the Rule (2015) and Canon Law. Additionally, the Brothers' Guide for Formation published in 1991 remains a valuable resource. Given new realities, what follows are useful considerations for Brother Formation.

12.1 Formation Stages and Thresholds

The stages of formation described in Canon Law and in the Rule are guided by the paradigm presented in this handbook. It should be noted that Brothers' formation stages and thresholds are not necessarily identical. Stages prior to postulancy may be needed in some Districts according to their particular circumstances. The purpose and goals of those stages are to be determined by the District. The unique circumstances and previous experiences of the individual person, however, should be considered. Typically, a postulant will need to cross the threshold of induction. Those responsible for formation should have a general plan that is then adapted to the reality of each group and person.

Typically, by the conclusion of the novitiate, a Brother will have crossed the threshold of belonging, while a Brother who pronounces his perpetual vows ought to have crossed the threshold of commitment. Formators are obliged to plan the necessary experiences, so that each Brother continually advances along his journey at his own pace.

As for all Lasallians, the Brothers' formation programs for leadership, formation, administration and other specific areas will typically be part of the threshold of co-responsibility. The fruit of these programs should challenge each person to cross over this threshold and live the demands of co-responsibility.

Clearly, from the Lasallian Formation for Mission Matrix, as the thresholds are advanced, what is common within the shared formation for the mission of all Lasallians is intensified. The threshold of wisdom can be more enriching the more it is shared with other Lasallians.

12.2 Academic Studies of the Brothers

The academic studies of the Brothers help them to mature as human and Christian persons. At the same time, they provide them with the professional qualifications to effectively and legally exercise their educational duties. Studies in theology and education are essential during initial formation. Studies in philosophy can complement studies in theology if there is already basic training in educational practices. All studies in initial formation, including postulancy, should as far as possible be legally certified, except for studies during the novitiate.

The academic studies of the Brothers should be discerned according to each one's qualities and gifts as well as to the needs of the District and the mission. Specialized studies, such as administration, psychology, and social work should be subordinated to the completion of basic studies in theology and education.

Studies that integrate theological and educational training are sometimes difficult to find. When a District chooses one of these two studies, the formation plan should include formal studies that ensure a balanced preparation. The person in formation should be helped to integrate all relevant areas of study as he pursues the option of religious brotherhood.

12.3 Safeguarding

Formation for mission already contemplates the basic elements that ensure the knowledge, understanding and commitment of the Brother for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. These policies are shared by all Lasallians. Those responsible for formation should be assured that their own practices in the formation of Brothers promote human maturity and that they are role-modelling healthy norms of conduct. The person who provides spiritual accompaniment should ideally be different from the person with canonical responsibility, to guarantee the integrity and confidentiality of the formative process.

Formation systems that are typically characterized by rigid, formal, hierarchical relationships inhibit or, in some cases, preclude healthy psychological and psychosexual development and deprive candidates of opportunities for responsible decision-making. These systems reward compliance and the inhibition of aggression and libidinal energy. Structures such as Aspirancy and the evaluation process for Brothers making temporary and perpetual vows must be studied at the local level to ensure that they truly promote each person's human maturity. The formation of formators in this area is a priority. Formators should also be advised by a highly qualified interdisciplinary team.

12.4 Formative Communities

The community is the "context, the recipient, and the agent" of the formation of the Brothers (Rule, 81). Those responsible for formation strive to ensure that communities assume this responsibility that is described in the Rule, especially the communities that receive younger Brothers. Every Brothers' community is formative when it accompanies and fosters the creative fidelity of its members.

Formation communities, such as the postulancy and novitiate, have a Formation Team that organizes those formation programs according to the needs of those for whom each program is intended. The quality of life within the formation community, particularly their inter-relationships, is of fundamental importance. A basic responsibility of this team is to ensure that each formator takes care of himself.

Useful References in Brother Formation

	Rule	Guide for Formation (1991)	Formation Matrix
District responsibilities on formation of Brothers	81.2, 83.1, 83.2, 87, 88.	128, 129, 144	
Postulancy	91, 91.1, 91.2 and 91.3	173-188	initiation and belonging
Novitiate	92, 93, 93.1, 93.2, 93.3, 93.4, 93.5, 93.6, 93.7	200-207 212-219	belonging
Temporary vows	99, 99.1, 99.2, 99.3, 99.4, 99.5	227, 238-244. 254-261	commitment
Perpetual profession	100, 101, 101.1, 102, 102.1	264-267	commitment
Continuing formation	82.1, 83		co-responsibility and wisdom
Studies	90.2	132-135	
Internationality	27, 81		
Formative communities	81, 81.1, 83.3	112-126, 143, 146	
Team of formators	89	147-148, 154-155	
Self-care for formators		156	

Conclusion

This *Pilgrim's Handbook* is not intended to be the “last word” on Lasallian formation for mission.

Ideally, this document will continue to be collaboratively adapted through processes of implementation, reflection, assessment and feedback at all levels - especially at the local level. Formators may benefit from collaboration with Lasallian tertiary institutions in the process of studying the effectiveness of a holistic formation process.

The Lasallian Formation for Mission Matrix presented in this *Handbook* can assist the Institute to organize its resources and publications to facilitate easy access for formators and others. Ideally, the digital version of the *Handbook* will be continuously developed in this regard.

This *Handbook* attempts to move formation for mission from being understood as a “one-size-fits-all” series of programs towards a developmental, competency-based pilgrimage of persons and communities. It highlights the value of shared formation for all Lasallians.

Lasallian Formation for Mission evokes an awareness that we are companions on a shared pilgrimage that transcends geographical, linguistic, cultural and religious borders in service of a common mission: the reign of God.

Glossary

Accompaniment refers in a general way to all expressions of fraternal care and concern that support a person on his or her formative journey.

Association refers to bonds of unity and mutual solidarity rooted in a shared commitment to the Lasallian mission and charism.

Catholic Social Thought is continuously developing and is rooted in Sacred Scripture and in the teaching of the Catholic Church. It is a systematic tradition which reflects on the ethical principles and on their application to current circumstances. The four “pillars” of Catholic Social Thought are the dignity of the human person, the common good, solidarity, and subsidiarity.

Character refers to the abiding pattern of attitudes, habits and dispositions which shape one’s thoughts, desires, and choices. Excellence of character is attained through the practice of the virtues and virtuous character enables greater freedom.

Charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit given for the purpose of serving God’s reign.

Christian Spirituality refers to a deepening intimacy with God who is present and active in all of life, inviting one to become conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others.

Consecration is a solemn dedication of a person’s life to God for the purpose of mission. Baptism is the primary form of dedication which, for those who are called and respond, is later deepened and specified by religious consecration.

Conversion refers to a person's journey of transformation to live more fully in faith. It is a radical orientation of one’s fundamental direction in life, a shift away from self-preoccupation to self-transcendence, often as a result of a more profound way of understanding God, oneself, and the world.

Contemplation / Contemplative Prayer refers to conscious awareness of and attention to God who is always present and attentive to us. De La Salle’s prayer of simple attention is an example of contemplative prayer.

Culture of Accompaniment refers to an intentional communal environment composed of shared convictions and practices that support one another’s formative journey through the ways they relate and express fraternal care.

Culture of Formation comprises an intentional communal environment in which persons, relationships and structures are supportive of the formation of persons in the values and commitments of the Christian life, or more particularly, in the values and commitments of a Lasallian vocation.

Culture of Vocation refers to a communal environment that supports and facilitates each person's vocational awakening, discernment and journey.

Discernment is a process of knowing and pursuing the will of God for persons, groups and institutions.

Domain refers to an area of human skill or capacity. The holistic development of domains is essential to the formative pilgrimage and enables effective participation in the mission.

Educational Community is a community where persons are united by a shared commitment to the educational service, especially those who are poor and marginalized.

Experience is an event which leaves an impression. The three dimensions in an experience are: the lived dimension, which is the event; the interpretative dimension, which is the articulation of the event in concrete images, concepts and narratives; and the theoretical dimension, which is the framework in which the event and the interpretation occur.

Formative Experience is an event, whether deliberately structured or unplanned, which has formative value and impact on participants.

Formation is the process of helping persons to understand and take responsibility for their integral and ongoing development and accompanying them on that pilgrimage. Lasallian formation for mission does this by offering experiences, knowledge, and skills for growth in the human, Christian, and Lasallian dimensions of life.

Formation Programs are a combination of formative experiences intentionally structured for a particular threshold.

Freedom is the power rooted in reason and will to discern the good and to act on it.

Human and Christian Education promotes the dignity and wellbeing of all, as exemplified by Jesus Christ and developed by John Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers.

Integral Human Development refers to the individual development of each person. Humans are embodied, spiritual, and social beings whose existence is entwined with the rest of creation. An adequate vision of human development must include all these dimensions of human existence in order to promote genuine flourishing.

Interreligious Dialogue comprises all forms of encounter and exchange between persons of different religious traditions, aimed at developing mutual understanding and enrichment of one another's faith.

Journey as a metaphor for one's life, proposes that attaining personal, moral and spiritual maturity is an ongoing process.

Lasallian Charism is the spirit of faith that gives rise personally and communally to a spirit of zeal for salvation of the young, especially those who are poor. This spirit draws people into a community that inspires educators to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor.

Lasallian Culture refers to the values and practices that express the living Lasallian heritage.

Lasallian Family comprises all people, groups and movements that find their inspiration in the educational approach and spirituality of John Baptist de La Salle.

Lasallian mission is the work of human and Christian education understood as a participation in the liberating and reconciling work of God in the world (the reign of God). The Lasallian mission is a particular form of service exercised within and on behalf of the Catholic Church and directed particularly towards the young and those who are poor or marginalized.

Lasallian Ministry refers to a particular work through which individuals and groups contribute to the Lasallian mission.

Lasallian Formative Pilgrimage is an intentionally structured and lifelong process of that is realized through various experiences and programs. The Lasallian formation for mission matrix is an example of a structured pilgrimage.

Lasallian Vocations refers to the various ways of structuring one's life around the Lasallian mission and charism. The vowed life of a consecrated religious used to be the sole model of Lasallian vocation, but now the Lasallian charism is being lived out in a variety of ways in various states of life.

Lasallian Spirituality is that by which persons seek to integrate their lives through cooperation with God in the ministry of human and Christian education, especially with those who are poor, according to the vision of John Baptist de La Salle.

Ministry is service exercised by members of the Church to assist in the fulfillment of its mission.

Mission of God is the work of the Triune God in history. Christ was the first missionary, called and sent by the Father, in the power of the Spirit, to liberate, heal and unite all people in a new solidarity grounded in the experience of the Father's gracious, inclusive, and unconditional love (the Reign of God). The mission of God continues to unfold in history through the power of the Spirit which inspires and enables men and women to continue the liberating and reconciling work of Christ in the world.

Mission of the Church comprises the purpose for which the Church came into being – to proclaim in witness, word, sacrament and service, the Good News of God’s saving love embodied in Christ and made fruitful by the Holy Spirit. The Church exists not for itself, but rather in view of Christ’s mission to serve the reign of God by giving visible form to God’s saving activity in and for the world. In pursuing its mission, the Church contributes to the building up of the universal solidarity that Jesus called the reign of God.

Missionary Discipleship is often used by Pope Francis. In his first apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, he says: “Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are ‘disciples’ and ‘missionaries,’ but rather that we are always ‘missionary disciples.’” (EG, 120)

Reign of God refers to the full realization of God’s loving and salvific intentions for humankind. It is a metaphor for God giving new life, opposing all that destroys and distorts, liberating people from all kinds of oppression, healing the sick, being merciful to all in need and distress, and creating a new solidarity by reconciling all humanity to one another and to God.

Spirituality is a dimension of human existence that can be expressed either within or independently of a religious tradition. It is a person's way of being, thinking, choosing, and acting in the world according to that person's ultimate values.

Thresholds are decisive moments, critical junctures, or experiences of breakthrough in one’s life journey. Moving through a threshold opens the person to new awareness and understanding, to new horizons and priorities. Movement through thresholds depends on personal maturity and readiness.

Virtues comprise the firm and habitual dispositions to act well in ways that contribute to the authentic development of persons and communities. The Catholic theological tradition regards the purpose of life as friendship with God, and all virtues as aspects of one’s love of God and neighbor.

Vocation refers to the way one structures his or her life in response to a personal call to love and service. A vocation embraces all aspects of one’s life and gives it purpose, direction and unity. For Christians, vocation is a response to God, who loved us first. It is a call to deepening intimacy with God, expressed in work for the unity and wellbeing of humankind.