

Final Message from the International Young Brothers Assembly

Dasmariñas, Cavite, July 29 – August 7, 2013

***“...I came that they may have life,
and have it in abundance.”***

(John 10”10)

Dear Lasallians,

With these above words of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we recognize that only he can give us abundant life that proceeds from the Father through the Spirit. Our Holy Founder situated the mission of the Brothers in this Trinitarian movement: introduce the children and young people we educate to a life of grace.

Young Brothers from each Region of the Institute, 34 delegates in all, gathered from July 29 through August 7, 2013 at DLSU Dasmariñas, Cavite (Philippines) in an unprecedented assembly carrying out the mandate of the 44th General Chapter that “...one year before the next General Chapter there will be an international gathering of representatives of young Brothers from the different Regions, with the objective of expressing their hope and dreams for the coming year.”

During these ten days all Lasallians from all over the world have been very present both in our hearts and in our work. We especially remembered all the Young Brothers who, in one way or another, have participated in the preparation of the Assembly. We direct these words of hope to all of you.

The mandate of the 44th General Chapter specified the themes to be addressed and oriented the methodology we would follow. We dealt with one theme per day with the help of a facilitator: community life, formation and accompaniment, association for the educational service of the poor, consecrated and spiritual life, and pastoral ministry of vocations. Through personal reflection and dialogue in small groups as well as general assembly, we shared our dreams, concerns, and proposals.

The diversity of languages, culture, and origins (more than 30 countries), has made us aware of the plurality of the Institute and the unity of the Lasallian vocation. We thank God for our call to be De La Salle Brothers, a vocation that fills our lives with meaning. We are saddened by the lack of understanding of the Brother’s vocation in the Church, but we believe that this vocation continues to be necessary. We cannot keep this “treasure” to ourselves; we must make it known. In this sense, we share a common concern for the pastoral ministry of vocations that this ministry needs to be bolstered in all the Regions of the Institute. We all agree to commit and actively involve ourselves in the promotion of vocations.

When we look around us, we discover a rich Lasallian heritage that we must receive, recreate and continue. This heritage is incarnated in our elder Brothers; we live it with a spirituality that moves us to look at all things through the eyes of faith, and it is realized by educational works that respond to the needs of youth. We Young Brothers feel that we are part of this heritage.

As happened with John Baptist de La Salle, we too are challenged by the abandonment of children and young people today. His response to the needs of the poor inspires us and reaffirms that the Institute continues to be “of great need.” We were able to experience this on the day dedicated to apostolic

service. All the delegates dedicated one day during the assembly to get to know works dedicated to the service to the poor rendered by Lasallians in the Philippines. The joyful faces of the children remind us that work in favor of the poor and with the poor is the meaning and strength of our charism.

We also feel a powerful call to be with young people. They need *prophets for new times*, companions who give witness to the value of giving their lives for others. We experienced this during a visit to Manila when we were accompanied by Young Lasallians, including aspirants, from the Philippines who gave us a lesson in hospitality, availability, and love for the Institute. In this regard, we are grateful for the words of support that we received from the International Council of Young Lasallians. We want to work shoulder to shoulder with Young Lasallians for the mission.

Although we are concerned about the survival of the mission in some sectors of the Institute, we welcome with admiration and gratitude the increasing number of those who participate in the mission. Sharing this vocation with lay partners and associates deepens our sense of being Brothers and gives greater efficacy to the mission.

As young people of our time, we run the risk focusing on ourselves too much, our development, well-being, and realization, forgetting that the center of our lives is Christ incarnated in children and young people, especially the poor. For this reason we recognize that we need to make progress in living an integrated spirituality like that of De La Salle. The following of Jesus consists of this type of decentralized spirituality.

Leisure times, animated by each Region, along with informal times of dialogue helped break down language barriers and opened the way to the joy of living together as Brothers. During these days we have discovered even more that we are *Brothers without Borders*. New technologies, so dear to us, will continue to help us close the gap of the distance from one another and allow us to be in greater communion with all Brothers of the Institute.

After seven days of sharing our dreams and concerns, and achieving consensus about our proposals, we spent a day in retreat to listen more attentively to the movement of the Spirit. On this same day, we set aside time to dialogue with the Superior General. This proved to be a rich and hopeful moment. Finally, in an attitude of discernment and fraternal unity we developed a set of commitments that will be part of the assembly report for the 45th General Chapter.

We would like to thank the attentiveness of all Lasallians in the Lasallian East Asia District, especially those in the Philippines. Without their support we could not have lived such a rich experience here. De La Salle University, Dasmariñas welcomed us and made many of their resources available to us. Many students and collaborators accompanied us at all times and we are very grateful to each of them.

We are thankful to God for the opportunity to share in this unique and fraternal experience and hope that its fruits are abundant.

Live Jesus in our hearts.

Dasmariñas, Cavite, 7 August 2013