

LA SALLE UNIVERSITY

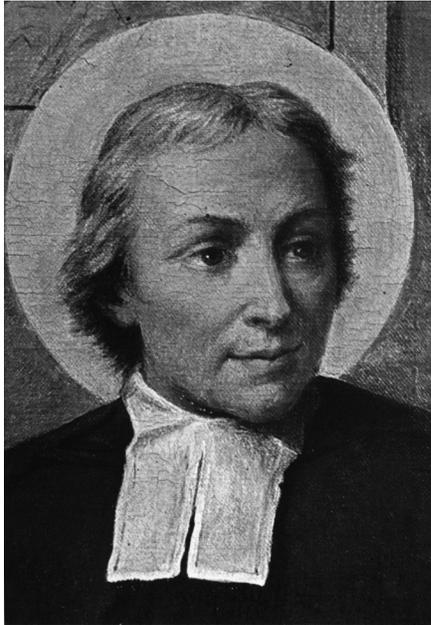
Fourth Edition

LA SALLE UNIVERSITY  
AND ITS  
LASALLIAN  
CATHOLIC MISSION

*Faith,*  
*Service,*  
*Community*

Fourth Edition  
2018

University Office for Mission  
and  
University Ministry and Service



*Saint John Baptist de La Salle*

Patron of Teachers  
Founder, Brothers of the Christian Schools  
Patron and Namesake, La Salle University

**Let us remember...**  
**..we are in the Holy Presence of God.**

Stir up your trust in  
the infinite goodness of God.

Give honor to your Creator  
by leaving the care of your person  
in the hands of God.

Don't be troubled about the present or  
disquieted about the future,  
but be concerned only  
about the moment you must now live.

Do not let anticipation of tomorrow  
be a burden on the day that is passing.

What you lack in the evening,  
the new morning will bring you,  
if you know how to hope in God.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle*

*Fourth Edition  
Dedication to  
the Brothers of the Christian Schools*

*The most important thing is to know if we are contributing to the creation of a world that is more human, starting from Gospel values. What is important is to exploit the dynamism of our founding charism, to know how to take risks while looking ahead. The most important thing is not to know if we have a future. The most important thing is that our present has meaning, that our life is worth the effort, that many, thanks to us, discover the face of God and his maternal tenderness, that the Gospel be proclaimed to the poor, and that young people find in us the support they need.*

*Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, F.S.C.  
Superior General  
Brothers of the Christian Schools*

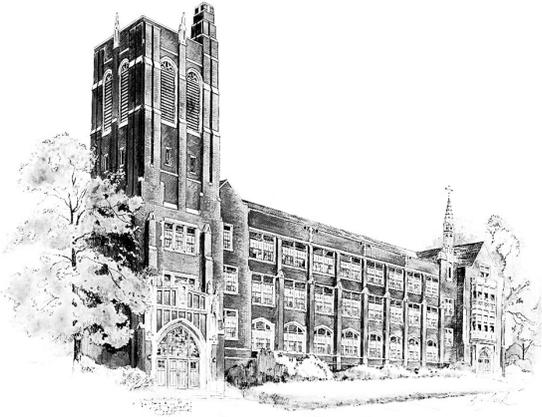
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**The Purpose  
of  
Lasallian Education:**

*to provide a human and Christian  
education to the young,  
especially the poor,  
according to the ministry  
which the Church  
has entrusted to it.*

The *Rule* of the Brothers  
of the Christian Schools

PART I

AN INTRODUCTION TO LA SALLE UNIVERSITY  
AND ITS LASALLIAN CATHOLIC MISSION

*Although we trust this book will be valuable for everyone, it is primarily written with the new undergraduate student in mind. We view this little book as an invitation; an invitation to consider how all of us can contribute to make La Salle University a community of faith and service in which a lifelong concern for the common good is fostered. We begin with the complementary stories of John Baptist de La Salle, founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, commonly called the De La Salle Christian Brothers, and the founding of La Salle College, later to become La Salle University. We share these stories so that you might reflect upon the values that have bound the University together for so many years. Both stories serve as the spiritual force behind our fondest hope: the full participation of all of us in preserving the distinctive Lasallian character of the University.*

*The design of this book is a bit unorthodox. In the first part of this book, you'll find that the left-hand pages tell the stories of St. La Salle and the founding of La Salle University. The right-hand pages contain prayers, inspirational quotations, and ideas that might help to light your way on your journey here and beyond.*

## **Introduction**

The name "La Salle" has been in the vocabulary of Philadelphians for over 150 years. Virtually everyone in Philadelphia and the surrounding region has heard the name at some point. Some know it because they are fans of Big 5 basketball. Others know it because they are employers, politicians, teachers, journalists, neighbors, or friends. Still others have had a more intimate experience as current and former students or benefactors of the University.

History tells us that many, even those in that last group, which compose the inner circle of life of any institution, might not know what the name "La Salle" means, what its roots are, and what the story behind it is. This book is intended to make certain that you, as a new member of the University community, learn this history. You should know what the institution is about, why it was founded, what it stands for, and whose memory its name honors. La Salle also wants you to know what dreams and aspirations it holds for you.

Yesterday is gone,  
tomorrow has not yet come.  
We have only today.  
Let us begin.

*Greeting on the front door of the  
Missionaries of Charity Mother House in Calcutta*

It is not so much what you believe in that matters, as the way  
in which you believe it and proceed to translate that belief  
into action.

*Lin Yutang*

Because you have decided to continue the next phase of your life journey here, it is important to learn something about the community you are entering. The word “community” gets a good deal of attention these days. It has become a handy way to convey the general idea that a group is closely knit with a high degree of cohesion and unity. Colleges and universities, particularly those sponsored by religious congregations, use the word frequently to describe themselves, thinking they are conveying a desirable image of social intimacy that many find appealing.

But using the word liberally and achieving genuine community are two entirely different matters. Not every collection of people inevitably rises to the level of a community. Developing community means building trust, providing opportunities to connect to one another, and eventually arriving at some level of agreement on what is worth living and sacrificing for. All of these tasks take time and work. Open communication and the process of building relationships are ways of actually achieving community for those who desire it. And you will see that both are vitally important for an institution that has the name “La Salle” above its front door. This book, then, is one effort to better understand the University you are entering and help you become an active contributor to its tradition. We hope that it will be a good companion for you.

Let us trust in the Spirit’s power to inspire conversion, to heal every wound, to overcome every division, and to inspire new life and freedom. How much we need these gifts!

*Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, Washington, D.C., 2008*

### What's in a Name?

In Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the title character steps forward to address his army. They are facing very long odds because they are about to march off to fight the French at the Battle of Agincourt, and they are vastly outnumbered. In the play, King Henry makes a rousing speech in which he refers to his army as "we band of brothers," a stirring expression of affection and empathy by a monarch for his troops. The speech serves the king's purpose. The English eventually win the battle.

About 100 years after Shakespeare penned those lines, a French priest by the name of John Baptist de La Salle created his own "band of brothers." In doing so, he invented an entirely new kind of religious congregation of lay men, something the world had never before seen. Together, De La Salle and his brothers also went off to do battle against very long odds. And his words stirred his followers as well: "We need to see in one another and in the young people entrusted to our care, especially the poor, the face of God. And the young need to discover in us the compassionate love of God for them." De La Salle's band of brothers vowed to live together and to endure hardships in order to serve young people, especially the poor, through the ministry of education.

His impact and the impact of his band of brothers were so far reaching that De La Salle eventually was named by the Catholic Church as the patron saint for all those who work in the field of education. For most people, the first surprise about La Salle University is that it is named for this 17th-century French visionary, a man of great faith whose ideas have lived on long after his death, and not for the 17th-century French explorer of the same name.

The confusion about the University's true namesake is understandable. American schoolchildren hear the La Salle name when they study the early explorers of the American continent. There, they come upon Robert De La Salle, who sailed down the Mississippi about the time that John Baptist de La Salle was opening his first school in France. Consequently, the two have been confused. A writer for Baltimore's *Evening Sun* in a 1931 article added to the confusion when he referred to La Salle's football team as the "Explorers." The editor of La Salle's

O LORD, you have searched me  
and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.  
Before a word is on my tongue  
you know it completely, O LORD.  
You hem me in—behind and before;  
you have laid your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.  
Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me,  
your right hand will hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"  
even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.  
For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.  
My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place.  
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,  
your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.

*(continued on page 15)*

student newspaper, *The Collegian*, read the article and used the nickname. The rest is history.

Although the general public has made this mistake, you should know from the beginning whose life the University honors and something of the man himself. You should also know that the University stands in the Catholic tradition and draws basic values from the person and message of Jesus Christ. Beyond that, this University stands in the Lasallian tradition. The word “Lasallian” is both a noun and an adjective, and you will find it used frequently on campus. To understand what it means, you must read the following stories of the founder of the Christian Brothers, the movement he began, and the origins of the University.

*(continued from page 13)*

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!  
Were I to count them,  
they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
When I awake,  
I am still with you.  
If only you would slay the wicked, O God!  
Away from me, you bloodthirsty men!  
They speak of you with evil intent;  
your adversaries misuse your name.  
Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD,  
and abhor those who rise up against you?  
I have nothing but hatred for them;  
I count them my enemies.  
Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

*Psalm 139*

## De La Salle and the Foundational Story

John Baptist de La Salle was born in 1651 in Reims in the Champagne region of northeastern France into a wealthy family that could provide him with the necessary financial resources and social support to pursue his professional and spiritual development. Those advantages virtually assured him of a comfortable, well-respected life in society and in the Church.

At birth, he was surely one of his society's most fortunate souls. When he died at age 68 in 1719, he was associated in society with a relatively unimportant group of men. His entire adult life was consecrated to God for the education of the children of artisans and the poor. Between his first formative years to the last years of his life, there was a radical shift in the way De La Salle positioned himself in his world. At the end of his life, he was no longer in the place of power and respect that he was when he began his life. Instead, he was in a place with a different kind of power: a place in solidarity forever with the poor.

What happened to change De La Salle? What were those transformative moments that led him to side with the poor and to embrace children and youth who were completely adrift, children living a life without hope and without options? The young children he saw in the streets of Reims would never have a chance at life's barest necessities and never approach a full life of human dignity. De La Salle's first biographers described those key moments as crossroads; places in which alternative roads could have led him to different futures, places fraught with choices and risk. To get a sense of this man, his journey, and the reforms he began, we will look at that crossroads imagery more closely. First, we begin with a glimpse of France in his day.

Consult not your fears  
but your hopes and your dreams.  
Think not about your frustrations,  
but about your unfulfilled potential.  
Concern yourself  
not with what you  
tried and failed in,  
but with what it is still possible  
for you to do.

*Saint Pope John XXIII*

Wisdom is bright and does not grow dim. She is readily seen  
by those who love her; found by those who look for her. In  
her company, all good things will come. Quick to anticipate  
those who desire her, she makes herself known to them.

*Wisdom 6:12-14*

## De La Salle's World

Consider the world in which De La Salle lived. Inequality in his time was part of the sharply stratified social fabric of France. In a population of perhaps 20 million, about 1 percent had the advantages that De La Salle had at his birth. The vast majority of the population lived in poverty in the countryside.<sup>1</sup> Many others lived in slums in the cities. Opportunities for education were dictated by the social class into which one was born. The well-to-do provided tutors for their children, who, after receiving private lessons, might then attend a “college” at about age 10, where they would take courses required for a university education. The children of skilled workers, shop keepers, and tradesmen (the bourgeoisie) attended what was called “little schools.” The method of instruction in the “little schools” was also individual tutoring. While a teacher listened to one student at a time recite lessons, other children waited their turn, sometimes under the supervision of an assistant who made use of a leather strap to keep discipline.

This was a time in France when the church and the state were closely aligned. Many basic services that today are viewed as the responsibility of the government—education, for example—were the responsibility of the church in 17th-century France. The parish priest, in addition to his other duties, was responsible for providing schooling for the poor in his parish. Children had to be certified as poor on the parish register in order to attend one of these charity schools. These schools were notoriously bad, staffed by teachers who were barely literate, poorly trained or not trained at all. In all cases—whether under the instruction of private tutors or in the “little schools” or the charity schools—the language of instruction was Latin and the preferred method was heavy memorization and recitation. These methods, combined with a curriculum that had little relevance to the average poor or working class student, made truancy a fact of life.

It is hardly surprising, then, that being born poor or destitute in 17th-century France meant one remained so throughout one's life. There was little hope for a different future. Life was a constant struggle. Even if the poor and the working-class children attended school (most in the countryside did not), they attended sporadically and only briefly (a year

Stands the Cross, still point in the turning world.

*Motto of the Carthusian Order*

Charity is no substitute for justice denied.

*St. Augustine*

or two or three) as compared to our standards today. In Reims, as in other French cities, the children of the poor mainly were left to roam the streets and to fend for themselves. This is the world in which the first pupils in De La Salle's earliest schools lived. Some pupils had the letter "V" branded on their arms ("V" for voleur or thief). Use of the branding iron was a cruel custom that was practiced in France at the time, and, as you can imagine, the appearance of a "V" on the arm of a recipient made him all the more undesirable.

### **From Canon and Priest to Servant to the Poor**

As a young student, De La Salle never entertained the idea of getting involved in the field of education. The College of Bons Enfants, which he entered at age 10, was a conservative institution founded in the 9th century and rooted in the legacy of medieval education. Although the institution was undergoing dramatic changes during his time there, the curriculum De La Salle encountered remained shaped by the study of classic languages, classical literature, and philosophy. All of this was organized around the seven liberal arts: the "trivium," or elementary section, dedicated to grammar, rhetoric, and logic; and the "quadrivium," or intermediate section, dealing with arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Lessons were in Latin. Discipline was strict. Schooling was totally dominated by the clergy. The methods were the medieval methods of memorization, translation and interpretation of classic texts, improvising, and debating. The curriculum left no place for either the examination of contemporary social and political issues or reading contemporary authors.

Basic studies were followed by years of study of philosophy and theology, which De La Salle pursued at the Sorbonne (the University of Paris). By all accounts, De La Salle was a superior student. He was only 15 and not yet a priest when he was named a canon at the Cathedral of Reims, a title that brought important public liturgical responsibilities while gaining for him the financial rewards and prestige that the office carried.

We know that as a seminarian his professional development was greatly

The future is in the hands of God and better than that it could not be.

*Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati*

Blessed be the day and the hour of the birth, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. My God, I give you my heart, grant me the grace to spend this hour and the rest of this day in your holy love and without offending you.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle*

influenced by his mentors at the seminary of St. Sulpice. But neither his professional training nor spiritual development would have naturally led him to pastoral responsibilities (attending to the needs of the people of the church). In his personal life, when he was 20, his parents died within months of each other, and he assumed the role of parent to four younger brothers and two younger sisters. Between the administration of his family's estate and his responsibilities as a canon, he had quite enough to occupy him. To this point, every decision in his life suggested he was heading down the road of a well-regarded churchman and scholar.

How with this beginning did he wind up in such a different place? Why did De La Salle seek knowledge that would give his life a new direction and very different power in his professional journey?

### A Series of Crossroads

By age 28, De La Salle was a young priest whose vocation was founded on a theological vision rooted in the medieval church. That left him totally unprepared to understand the situation faced by the children of artisans and the poor in Reims and the current economic and political crisis between England and France. The legacy of the intellectual tradition he received at the university could easily explain his personal and professional choices to that point. Yet, this very same spiritual and intellectual tradition triggered in him a new line of questioning and a new search for truth, trying to understand what seemed to be a different call. Growing up, De La Salle must have seen poor children in the streets of Reims and Paris. Yet, like so many who might have found themselves in similar circumstances, he did not act until something interceded. A chance encounter turned De La Salle's life in a completely different direction.

In 1679, he met Adrian Nyel, an administrator of the General Hospice (poorhouse) in Rouen, who told him of an idea to establish schools for poor boys. Nyel knew of a potential benefactor, a wealthy widow, who was willing to help, provided the newly ordained Father De La Salle would involve himself in the venture. De La Salle agreed. Increasingly he saw that the condition of the poor was a barrier to their salvation.<sup>2</sup>

If my work does not come from God, I would consent to its ruin. I would join our enemies in destroying it if I thought that it did not have God for its author, or that He did not will its progress. But, if He declares Himself its defender, let us fear nothing. He is the Almighty. No arm can uproot what He has planted; no hand can snatch away what He holds in His. ... So, let us abandon ourselves to His guidance. If He takes our work in hand, He will make use of the very ones who are so determined to destroy it to further its progress. If contradiction is proof that an enterprise comes from God, let us be happy. Our Institute is indeed His creation. The cross which follows it everywhere gives us assurance of this.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle*

Like the disciples in the famous Bible story who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus, De La Salle's eyes—and heart—were opened in a way that profoundly changed him.

In the beginning, he thought he would simply start the project, never dreaming where it would lead. He initially planned to keep it at arm's length, never intending to become actively involved in the venture. However, this chance encounter prompted him to ask questions of himself, his wealth, and God's will for him. This questioning, particularly as it related to God's will, came naturally to him. Catholics call this soul-searching "discernment," a deeper questioning about oneself and about what God is calling one to do.

Little by little, De La Salle was led from one event to another: from indifference toward the plight of the poor to an understanding of the overwhelming need for effective schools; from relationships with canons and other influential people in the church to a life devoted to the powerless; from teachers unskilled and unmotivated and without training to ones with enthusiasm and passion like Gabriel Drolin (age 20) and Nicolas Vuryart (age 21) and a growing congregation of other Brothers.

Soon, he gradually ended relationships with church and government officials who were committed to the status quo and in their place associated himself with pastors and government officials who genuinely sought to respond to the needs of the poor. Thus, the people De La Salle met, a chance event (the kind we all encounter in life), and the assistance of his spiritual directors—all of which he interpreted in light of the Gospel—became clear signs to him that God was calling him to embrace a new vocation, literally to take a different road.

The intellectual tradition he encountered in his education, cast in the light of chance events, new people, and trusted advisers, served as the basis for abandoning his previous life choices. In fact, upon reflection, he came to the conclusion that those choices had already been replaced by more powerful ideas and more compelling reasons to venture down a different road to an uncertain world.

God, who guides all things with wisdom and serenity and whose way it is not to force the inclinations of persons, willed to commit me entirely to the development of the schools. He did this in an imperceptible manner 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.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle*

By his 40s, De La Salle, the theologian, had become a catechist and educational leader. Between 1691 and 1702, members of the fragile congregation of teachers that he formed became formally associated as a community with a clear mission. De La Salle's first teachers, men not aspiring to be priests, were the first ones to call themselves "brothers." Although their numbers were small, the new congregation began to be noticed for the quality of their schools, for the curriculum they developed, and for the way they dressed. These lay men participated in this new educational mission only with the approval of civic or church authorities. Even with that protection, however, they were very vulnerable and subject to harassment and law suits.

The departure of some and the sickness of others (including De La Salle) nearly drove the community to its grave. It was at this new crossroads that in 1691 a strong sense of association emerged among three friends—De La Salle, Vuyart, and Drolin. They vowed to keep together for the sake of the mission even if all others left (now referred to as the Heroic Vow). Together, they would discern what was best for the "Society of the Christian Schools" and what God required of them. Several years later, 12 associates also took the same vow. From that point on, there were new candidates willing to associate themselves in community for this mission.

Remember, De La Salle was not trained as an educator. He was a theologian. His training at the university, however, did teach him to be open to God's will for him. He researched extensively on catechesis and education; he diligently observed what the Brothers were doing in their schools. Together, he and his Brothers chose to use French in the classroom, not Latin (then the language of instruction used in the existing charity and parish schools). Together, they developed a practical curriculum that responded to the needs of students. Together, they developed methods that were based on lived experiences, keeping what worked and discarding what did not. As a result, these creative years of work and research allowed them to invent a new kind of school—literally to create the idea of a classroom where students were to be taught simultaneously—and design an approach to education in schools that were very well run. Some of the books they published have been in use for more than 300 years. In the process, De La Salle, the theologian by





Signatures of John Baptist de La Salle and the two Brothers, Nicolas Vuyart and Gabriel Drolin, from the Heroic Vow of Nov. 21, 1691.

profession, became an educator, a catechist, and a trainer of teachers.

In his 50s (between 1702 and 1712), De La Salle, the educational leader, also became an advocate and a founder of this new Society. He began writing *The Conduct of the Christian Schools*, the first curriculum and method of instruction for elementary schools, a manual that was widely adopted by the 19th century. The manuscript was the product of regular meetings with the Brothers wherein classroom experiences were shared and lessons were planned. It has been reprinted hundreds of times since its first publication in 1706. Throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, it was translated into many languages. De La Salle's ideas were so broadly accepted that, in the 19th century, many other Catholic religious congregations of men and women dedicated to the work of education embraced, adopted, or implemented the theory and practice of *The Conduct* as their own. During this time, an unknown number of new editions appeared that did not always identify De La Salle as the author.

In the midst of success and failure, supported by friends who believed in him and attacked by those who opposed his innovative approaches, De La Salle's position as a superior became vulnerable. Tensions developed within the Brothers' community and in the schools. In the workplace, organized guilds of teachers opposed these new Brothers who would teach in French and use a curriculum that was not approved. In addition, the Brothers did not obey established rules regarding the places where schools could be opened and the students who could be taught. Consequently, De La Salle and the Brothers faced many legal attacks. Some pastors thought that by law, they, not De La Salle, were the immediate administrative superiors of the teaching community in their parishes. Sometimes the Brothers won these cases and sometimes they lost. During the end of this period, the Society was at risk. Once again, De La Salle faced the crisis of a new crossroads with integrity and wisdom. This time, feeling worn and sick, he withdrew from the controversy in the hope that his absence would make the community of Brothers more acceptable to church and civic authorities.

## CONDUITE DES ECOLES CHRETIENNES

DIVISEE EN DEUX PARTIES.

*prenez-garde à vous, & ayez soin d'en-  
seigner les autres; Perseverez dans ces  
exercices, car par ce moyen vous vous  
sauverez vous-mesme, & vous sau-  
verez ceux qui vous ecoutent 1. Epir.  
à Timoth. 4. 16.*



A AVIGNON, !

Chez JOSEPH CHARLES CHASTANIER, Im-  
primeur & Libraire, proche le College des  
R. R. P. P. Jéfuittes.

M. D. CC. XX.

AVEC PERMISSION DES SUPERIEURS

The title page of the first edition of *The Conduct of the Christian Schools*, published in 1720. *The Conduct* was the first curriculum and method of instruction for elementary schools, written by Saint John Baptist de La Salle and the first Christian Brothers.

In his 60s, (1714–1719), De La Salle, the theologian and founder, became a spiritual leader to those who were associated for this new educational mission. This last crossroad was qualitatively very different from the ones he faced in his 30s, 40s, and 50s. Previously, he was at the center of the turmoil. In this final crossroad, the principal Brothers become the main actors. Eventually, they wrote to him (when De La Salle was 63 years old) affirming him in his call by God, acknowledging his talents and gifts, and calling his work “God’s work.” They ordered him to return to take up supervision of their community.

His return required him to face once again the objections directed against him and the congregation of Brothers. Eventually he moved to Rouen, where his journey had begun years before. His position there in the community was in a new role, and one of the Brothers became the religious superior of the community. Yet, these last years were not characterized by inactivity. In spite of serious health problems, De La Salle continued his research and writing and published new editions of “The Rule” (a set of statements for the Brothers about the mission, duties, and practices of the congregation of “The Brothers of the Christian Schools”), as well as pedagogical and spiritual writings for the community.

In his last will and testament, De La Salle emphasized unity among the Brothers. He advised them not to get involved in doctrinal debates of the Church for which they were not prepared. He reminded them of the purpose for which they were founded: to become good news for the poor through the service of education.

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,  
Lead Thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home—  
Lead Thou me on!  
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene, one step enough for me.  
I was not ever thus, nor pray’d that Thou  
Should’st lead me on.  
I loved to choose and see my path; but now  
Lead Thou me on!  
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.  
So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
Will lead me on,  
O’er moor and fen, o’er crag and torrent, till  
The night is gone;  
And with the morn those angel faces smile  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

*Cardinal John Henry Newman*

Frodo feels the pressure and experiences frustration because so much is demanded of him, and he says to Gandalf: “I wish it need not have happened in my time.”  
To which Gandalf replies: “So do I, and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

*Adapted from J.R.R. Tolkien*

### De La Salle's Story: Your Story Too?

The deeper questions about identity that De La Salle faced are similar to questions you will likely face too. La Salle University's catalog gives examples of these questions, the kind we want you to confront as a student here:

“Who am I?

Where does my destiny lie?

How am I to achieve it?”<sup>3</sup>

These questions—perhaps not phrased quite this way—may have already occurred to you, particularly if you are uncertain of a major and the career you want to pursue. But even if you think you are sure about your future, you will inevitably encounter crossroads that are impossible to see now, just as De La Salle did. At those moments, you will ponder these questions again. And at those moments, you will need more than a career counselor to help you choose a road. Your beliefs and values will have to play a pivotal role in the decisions you make. That's why the University is investing in both your spiritual and professional development.

Not all crossroads are similar, and no two lives are exactly the same. De La Salle's story tells us that he heard a call to do something very different compared to the life he imagined in his youth. His education laid a foundation for him so that when an opportunity presented itself, he chose to make the world more just and to build a movement that would eventually reform popular education in France. He could see the plight of poor. The movement he began was a concrete response to what he saw. His education helped liberate him so that he could then respond to the needs of others.

We want your education here to be the means of liberating you as well. The mentors you rely on, the trusted friendships you form, the courses you take, the events you experience, the people you meet, all of these things will shape your life here and influence you far beyond gradua-

Do one thing every day that scares you.

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

The most satisfying thing in life is to have been able to give a large part of one's self to others.

*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

tion. By the time you meet the first challenges of your professional life, you will have a better understanding of your talents and limitations than you have now. Later, in your middle years, the complexities of your commitments may demand a reassessment of who you are and where you want to go. Things that bring you passion now may fade in importance later. Later still, when you are in your 50s and 60s, unexpected barriers and new experiences may again require new decisions—sometimes paradoxical decisions—based on the accumulated wisdom of your life. Spurred by changes in your job or your family life or by the realization that a long-held dream will not be accomplished, you may find yourself in a “mid-life crisis,” a period when adults can be consumed by self-doubt and questioning.

At each of these crossroads, you will consider how you have changed: your sense of self-worth, your ability to forgive, your desire not to disappoint those who depend on you, your concern for what people think of you, your longing to nourish your soul as well as your bank account, your sense of how much you are willing to sacrifice to make someone else’s life better. Along the way, you may also come to understand the place that God has in your life. If you take this approach at each crossroads—if you use those moments as opportunities to assess deeply and discover new dimensions of yourself—you will have a chance to see more clearly the interconnections between your professional and spiritual development. It is in those moments that you will find you have adopted a style of life that can bring you greater fulfillment. In the words of T.S. Eliot:

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.<sup>4</sup>

When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants, and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end they always fall. Think of it—always.

*Mohandas Gandhi*

Was not Jesus an extremist for love: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you.” Was not Amos an extremist for justice: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” Was not Paul an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ: “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Was not Martin Luther an extremist: “Here I stand; I can do none other so help me God.” Was not John Bunyan an extremist: “I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience.” Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist: “This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.” Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” So the question is not whether we will be extremists but what kind of extremist will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice, or will we be extremists for the cause of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary’s hill, three men were crucified. We must not forget that all three were crucified for the same crime—the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thusly fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth, and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment.

*Martin Luther King Jr.*  
“Letter from Birmingham Jail”

## Faith and Salvation

Throughout his life, De La Salle emphasized the development of faith among his students, and this emphasis remains an important part of Lasallian schools to this day. Brother Luke Salm, former professor of theology at Manhattan College, wrote:

In De La Salle's day, the religious instruction in the Christian Schools was geared to inculcate in the youngsters the doctrines and the practices of the Catholic faith. But the intent was something more important, more profound, more universal, and more enduring. De La Salle saw in the schools a chance to widen the horizons of the young lads who came to the schools, most of whom lived in an environment rife with poverty, misery, and crime. In the Christian Schools [the Christian Brothers Schools] they learned that there was more to life than what they saw and experienced on the streets, that they were created by a loving God and endowed with a unique dignity and an eternal destiny, that they could find in the school community a new set of values, new role models, and a new meaning and opportunity for salvation both in this world and the next.<sup>5</sup>

De La Salle designed schools so that they addressed the real-world needs of his students to save them from years of deprivation and to help them achieve a more fulfilling life. Consequently, Lasallian schools to this day invariably develop curricula with a view of preparing students to compete in the world and to become responsible members of society. But they always hold fast to the idea of providing the means for salvation in the next world as well.

I don't know Who, or what, put the question, I don't know when it was put. I don't even remember answering. But at some moment, I did answer Yes to Someone or Something, and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in self-surrender, had a goal.

*Dag Hammarskjold*

The salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies in the world.

*C.S. Lewis*

None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.

*Muhammad*

Br. Luke explains De La Salle's concern with salvation. He writes that De La Salle saw salvation in terms of what we need to be saved *from* and what we need to be saved *for*:

Every human being needs to be saved from failure and disintegration of every kind: the physical failure that goes with disease, catastrophe, suffering and most obviously death. More subtly but no less urgently we come to realize that we also fail precisely as human beings: by ignorance and error, by animal behavior, through betrayal of others and ourselves, by resistance and outrage against God. We also fail as societies by tolerating unjust political structures, unequal distribution of the world's resources, the various forms of discrimination, indifference to the environment, and that ultimate social disaster we call war. These are things we all have to be saved from.

The other side of salvation is what we long to be saved for. If failure in its various forms is the negative side of salvation, surely the positive side comes through fulfillment and reconciliation—human fulfillment first of all: health instead of sickness, knowledge instead of ignorance, happiness instead of grief, relationship instead of loneliness, wholeness in place of fragmentation, justice instead of injustice, peace instead of war, love instead of hate, and life instead of death; then the ultimate fulfillment of eternal life with God.<sup>6</sup>

The spirit of this Institute is first, a spirit of faith, which should induce those who compose it not to look upon anything but with the eyes of faith, not to do anything but in view of God, and to attribute all to God, always entering into these sentiments of Job: “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; as it has pleased the Lord, so it is done,” and into other similar sentiments so often expressed in Holy Scripture and uttered by the Patriarchs of old.

*Chapter 2:  
“De l'esprit de cet Institut”  
Règles communes, 1718*

### Lasallian Spirituality and the Lasallian Mission

Lasallian spirituality and the Lasallian mission are tightly intertwined, as Br. Luke explains:

John Baptist de La Salle discovered and understood his mission in this sense. As the section in the Brothers' Rule on mission describes it, De La Salle experienced in his prayer a double contemplation. On the one hand, he contemplated the goodness and awesome power of the divine will that everyone should be saved; on the other, he contemplated firsthand the situation of the neglected children of the poor, far from salvation, as he perceived them to be. Their poverty and ignorance were a barrier to their salvation as children of God in this world; their street vices a barrier to eternal life with God in the next world.

Out of that double contemplation, De La Salle became aware that he had a mission from God to be a Founder. He knew that it would not be enough to lead the neglected children of the poor to hope for salvation in the next world if something wasn't done to give them some hope of fulfillment in this world.<sup>7</sup>

Taken together, the ideas implemented in De La Salle's schools planted the seeds for change in French society.<sup>8</sup> He was an innovator who never sought to be a social reformer. He never dreamed that his faith, zeal, and ideas would change all of France, let alone the entire world. But by the end of St. La Salle's life in 1719, there were 100 Brothers teaching in 37 educational institutions in France. Sixty years later, at the time of the French Revolution, there were 1,000 Brothers teaching throughout France. By the turn of the 20th century, there were more than 15,000 Brothers serving in ministries throughout the world. Today, the number of Brothers has declined, as has the number of those in all Catholic religious congregations. But the Brothers and their lay partners serving in what are called Lasallian ministries throughout the world number more than 85,000.<sup>9</sup>

People are hungry, especially the young. They are hungry for God and you are here to satisfy that hunger. Be faithful to the great gift that God made you to be teachers, educators, light, His light, in the world among young people. The future of the world depends on what you do.

*Mother Teresa (Talk to the De La Salle Brothers)*

Lay people take their place as full partners with the Brothers and we Brothers gladly associate them with us in mission. We accept that from now on our schools will not be Brothers schools, animated with secondary collaboration with lay teachers, parents and students. They will instead be Lasallian schools animated by Lasallian educative communities of faith within which the apostolic activity of Brothers communities takes place.

*John M. Johnston, F.S.C.  
Brother Superior General, 1986-2000*

## Seeing

De La Salle founded the Brothers of the Christian Schools in response to the needs that he saw. He began what we would now call elementary schools, but he also went on to create teacher training programs, educational opportunities for adults, and schools for delinquents, all because he saw each as a critical need. His ideas served as a foreshadowing of the concept of universal education well before the idea of publicly funded schools for all was adopted, after much debate, in the 19th century.

Since the founding of the Lasallian movement, the Brothers and their Lasallian Partners have continually used De La Salle's formula: see a need in society and develop a response to it. Since beginning its first elementary schools in the 17th century, it expanded into secondary education that became truly international in scope. Eventually, the Brothers founded hundreds of high schools in a Lasallian network that spanned the globe. In the middle of the 19th century, the Christian Brothers began to offer higher education in France and the United States so that young adults could pursue professional careers and achieve leadership positions in their communities. Today, more than 1 million students are educated in more than 900 Lasallian educational communities in 77 countries on six continents from Reims, France, to Nyeri, Kenya, to Colombo in Sri Lanka, to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, to Balgo Hills in Western Australia. These schools—ranging from kindergarten to medical school, to colleges and universities—now operate in more than 80 countries. In the United States alone, there are more than 100 elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and youth and family services programs carrying on the Lasallian mission.

The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them.

*Thomas Merton*

Accept the fact that you have brothers (and sisters) who are different from you, and never treat them as adversaries. Build the Lord's Church with diverse stones, and be content that they are diverse, for the Church they form is much more "catholic." Drive intolerance out of the Church and, to that end, do not nourish it in a corner of your heart. What unites you to your brothers (and sisters) is truer and stronger than what distinguishes you from them.

*Gerard Huyghe*

### La Salle University's Founding Story<sup>10</sup>

The Christian Brothers established their first school in the United States in 1845 in Baltimore. They came to Philadelphia in 1853 where they initially staffed elementary schools. In 1858, they began teaching at St. Michael's parish school in the Lower Kensington section of the city. In 1862 at that location, they added "Christian Brothers Academy" which eventually evolved into "La Salle College High School." In March of 1863, the Brothers began La Salle College, later to become La Salle University. That a group would have the courage to open an institution of higher learning in that time and place is remarkable enough. That the institution has overcome obstacles, made countless sacrifices, and eventually flourished is testimony to the unshakable faith and devotion of the Christian Brothers and their friends. It also speaks to the particular gift of adaptation that always marks a new chapter in the history of the Christian Brothers' congregation and La Salle University itself.

The neighborhood in which La Salle College was founded was an ideal location for a Lasallian educational venture. The Lower Kensington section of Philadelphia was heavily populated by newly arrived Irish immigrants. The waves of Irish who arrived in the 1830-to-1860 period largely settled in American cities. Unlike their countrymen who preceded them, the arrivals during this period were fleeing a devastating famine in Ireland. These Irish were almost entirely Catholic and peasant poor. They fled deplorable conditions in a country that only recently had penal laws forbidding Catholics access to education. Alistair Cooke, a British journalist and broadcaster, wrote of the allure of America to many of the world's poor. His words are apt for today as well:

Why did they come? Why do they still come? For a mesh of reasons and impulses that condition any crucial decision in life. But the most powerful was one common to most of the immigrants from the 1840s on—hard times in the homeland. They chose America because, by the early nineteenth century, Europeans, especially if they were poor, had heard that the Americans had had a revolution that successfully

If, then, a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world. It neither confines its views to particular professions on the one hand, nor creates heroes or inspires genius on the other. Works indeed of genius fall under no art; heroic minds come under no rule; a University is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or the engineer, though such, too, it includes within its scope. But a University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them.

*Cardinal John Henry Newman, Idea of a University*

overthrew the old orders of society... In Ireland in the middle of the 1840s human life had touched bottom. Within five years the potato famine had claimed almost a million Irish lives, over twenty thousand of them dropping in the fields from starvation... Hunger, then, was the spur in Ireland.<sup>11</sup>

The flood of Irish arrivals was met with steadily rising alarm and ridicule by America's ruling majority. Their fears were fueled by the frightening number of unskilled immigrants who created a strain on city services such as public safety and sanitation. All of this translated easily into poisonous anti-Catholic feelings. Nativist groups organized themselves to combat the influence of foreigners, and derision frequently led to violence against people and property. In New York, Irishmen routinely did nightly guard duty to protect Catholic churches.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1840s, anti-immigrant riots broke out in American cities. Philadelphia, which had the largest concentration of Irish immigrants outside of New York City, was no exception. Historian Elizabeth M. Geffen writes: "Many forces coalesced in Philadelphia in the summer of 1844—Protestant clergy and laity, unchurched masses, the popular press, politicians—to produce the worst mob violence that had ever ravaged the city."<sup>13</sup> People's anxieties and resentments fell into a commonly held view that these foreigners were evil and, worse, a threat to American citizens and the country itself.

In May 1844, a rally held by the anti-Catholic Orange Society in the City's Kensington section turned violent. The violence led to three days of bloodshed with fatalities on both sides. Physical violence then convulsed into attacks on Catholic churches. Mobs burned down St. Michael's Church at 2nd and Jefferson streets (the very same St. Michael's that 20 years later would become the first home of La Salle College). After St. Michael's, the mob moved south to center city Philadelphia and burned St. Augustine Church at 4th and Vine streets. During this period, a national nativist party (commonly called Know-Nothings) made political inroads and had candidates elected to Congress. In Philadelphia, a member of the party was elected mayor.

In the decade leading up to the Civil War, the city's population grew

A Christian university must take into account the gospel preference for the poor.

This does not mean that only the poor study at the university. It does not mean that the university should abdicate its mission of academic excellence, excellence needed in order to solve complex social problems. It does mean that the university should be present intellectually where it is needed: to provide science for those who have no science; to provide skills for the unskilled; to be a voice for those who have no voice; to give intellectual support for those who do not possess the academic qualifications to promote and legitimate their rights.

*Ignacio Ellacuria, S.J.*

dramatically. Immigration, industrialization, and consolidation of Philadelphia City with Philadelphia County all were factors. By the 1860 census, Philadelphia ranked as the fourth-largest city in the Western world, behind only London, Paris, and New York.<sup>14</sup> The city was sharply divided along ethnic, religious, class, race, and political lines. Prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, feelings regarding slavery in the city ranged from indifference to abolition to pro-slavery. With the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April of 1861, pro-Union sentiment surged. Philadelphia quickly became a city of war with troop trains arriving and departing, armaments, ships, and uniforms being manufactured in its factories, and military hospitals being established. In general, however, pro-South sympathies continued to run high before and during the war.

It was in this atmosphere in the years leading up to the Civil War that the immigrant population of Kensington first encountered the Christian Brothers. The purpose of opening a school at that location was not simply to provide safety in an unsafe world. Rather, the education that the new La Salle College provided was seen as a means to an end. In the Brothers, students met a group of men who believed that a quality education should be accessible to all, that it was indispensable to social advancement, and that a person's spiritual journey was to be lived out by being a good citizen and a responsible member of society.

When La Salle College opened its doors, it was the city's only Catholic college, since the Jesuits were forced to close St. Joseph's earlier for lack of support.<sup>15</sup> Bishop James Wood, then the Bishop of Philadelphia, recognized the need for a Catholic college in the city if Catholic youth were to compete in the intellectual, commercial, and social life of the city. He prevailed upon Prussian-born Brother Teliow, who was then heading La Salle High School, to establish and staff a college. The new College quickly outgrew its facilities. As it continued to grow, the College had to move twice more.

Finally, in 1929, the Brothers took a large leap of faith. They used all of their combined financial assets to back the purchase of a historic estate on which a permanent home for the high school and college divisions would be constructed.<sup>16</sup> The property in the East Germantown section of Philadelphia at 20th Street and Olney Avenue was considered large

It helps now and then to step back and take a long view.  
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction  
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.  
Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of  
saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us.  
No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession  
brings perfection, no pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one  
day will grow. We water the seeds already planted  
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects  
far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of  
liberation in realizing this.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning,  
a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's  
grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the  
difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not  
messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

*Archbishop Oscar Romero*

What you would not have done to you, do not do to others.

*Hillel, the Elder*

enough (about 20 acres) to handle growth for the foreseeable future.

Brother Elzear Alfred Kelly, FSC, then President, oversaw the campus move just as the Great Depression was beginning. He was also the driving force who put La Salle on a sound academic foundation. He literally made it possible for La Salle to survive during dire economic times. It was during his tenure that the College earned important memberships in a number of prestigious academic organizations and became a fully accredited college. After his term as President, Brother Alfred, inspired by Catholic social teaching and his passion for economic justice, established the La Salle Labor School, providing instruction in the evening and on the weekend for labor leaders and working men. La Salle's Kelly Social Justice Research Center is named for him. The Center supports faculty whose research interests focus on aspects of social injustice, particularly in urban areas.

Over the years, La Salle became a Philadelphia institution whose graduates used their education as a stepping stone for the next phase of their lives. Its more than 60,000 alumni are now spread across the world. For much of its history, it attracted men and, beginning in 1967, women who worked to achieve the American Dream that we read so much about in history books and in the popular press. At La Salle, the pursuit of that dream was not a romantic artifact of American folklore. Rather, it was lived out in the classrooms and offices of an institution with a strong sense of purpose. Most undergraduate students were the first in their families to earn a college degree, and they used a La Salle education to establish themselves in careers in health care, law, education, commerce, the natural and physical sciences, and, for a period in the 1920s, engineering.

In the years since its founding, La Salle has grown from a few classrooms in a parish school on North Second Street to a multi-campus university with locations in outlying counties and a main campus of more than 60 buildings on 140 acres. Today, people consider La Salle, with its 1,400 faculty and staff, as both an anchor and a compass for its northwest Philadelphia neighborhood. La Salle's student body grew dramatically after World War II, fueled initially by returning veterans

Let the working man and the employer make free agreements, and in particular let them agree freely as to the wages; nevertheless, there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice.”

*Pope Leo XIII  
Rerum Novarum*

Brothers exercise an apostolate whenever they truly educate to awaken in students a serious attitude in life and the conviction of the greatness of man's destiny ... to dispose students to use their intelligence and their training in the service of others ... to teach them how to listen and to understand, to trust, and to love; it is apostolic to instill in students a sense of trustworthiness, brotherhood and justice.

*The Brother of the Christian Schools in the World Today:  
A Declaration, no. 41.3*

enrolled in day and evening classes under the G.I. Bill. Significant changes followed. Coeducation began in 1967 and the expansion of graduate programs and graduate student enrollment accelerated in the mid-1970s. La Salle achieved university designation in 1984.

The University has schools of nursing and health sciences, business, and the arts and sciences.

The faculty has expanded many times over the years. Programs have come and gone as needs and circumstances have changed, just as De La Salle's schools did from the first days of the Brothers congregation. Even when the University's enrollment was at its lowest point (during the worst days of World War II it dropped to just 90 students), the Brothers relied on their sense of mission and deep faith to continue. That same faith and optimism are deeply imbedded in the school you are now entering.

Although the University has changed many times, it is steadfast in the way it is present in the church and in the world. It continues to provide an education that is practical, but one that also provides students with the habits and disposition to live a life of purpose. Throughout its history, there has always been a creative tension between our students' desire for career preparation and the University's desire to graduate humanistically trained professionals who will work for the betterment of society. Consequently, in addition to practical career preparation, La Salle students receive an education that prepares them for productive careers as well as one that helps them to begin to discover who they are, what their destiny is, and how they are to achieve it.

The University still defines itself in terms of its Lasallian heritage: an emphasis on good teaching; an informal style of governing itself with a stress on personal relationships; direct service to the poor and a heightened sensitivity to their needs; and opportunities for students to grow in their faith and to confront fundamental human, religious, and ethical questions, in which their obligation to society is understood. It has been an enduring and remarkably successful formula.

Since the first days of La Salle College, generations of Brothers have

Lasallian heritage is rooted in a spirituality of justice and love, expressed through our respect for each person as a fellow traveler who is a member of the Church learning. It is a heritage manifested by undramatic virtues like listening, understanding, and sheer human decency. Its application includes self-examination on how well we practice what we preach about tolerance and social justice. Living in the Lasallian tradition of association entails affirmation of the other person's sense of self-esteem based on compassion and forgiveness.

*Brother Emery Mollenhauer, F.S.C.*

repeatedly taken their place beside their students, meeting their needs and teaching them what they must know to succeed in life. Today, the Brothers gladly share that responsibility with other lay persons.

### The Mission

By now, you have probably given thought to why you are here. It is sometimes difficult for students to put those ideas into words. Some will say they are attracted by features that La Salle has: its location, activities, sports programs, and majors. Others believe that La Salle seems to be a good place to experiment academically and to experience college life. Rarely will students say they are here to find themselves. Yet, most alumni will report that La Salle is the place where they began to understand themselves better. So, between the time you arrive and the moment you graduate, we hope you will become a true explorer, discovering what interests you and where your talents lie.

Institutions have to grapple with why they are here, too. You have read about La Salle University's founding story and the life of John Baptist de La Salle. But, the question remains, "why does La Salle University now exist?" What exactly do we want to achieve? Below you will find La Salle's mission statement. All mission statements explain in general terms why an organization exists. They typically tell what it intends to accomplish and some will explain what its values are. The best mission statements help one to see what an institution stands for, what purpose it serves.

For some institutions, these statements can be words that have little to do with the daily life of the school. For others, they are living expressions that truly guide thinking and action. The difference is not in the words of these statements but the degree to which those ideas are embraced by faculty and staff. Students in schools that are truly driven by their educational mission should be able to experience that sense of mission in a variety of ways. At La Salle, we strive to make the values and ideals of our mission evident in the daily life of our students.

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
enjoying one moment at a time;  
accepting as God did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it.  
Trusting that God will make all things right  
if I surrender to God's will;  
that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with God  
forever in the next.

*Reinhold Niebuhr*

We have always known that heedless self-interest was bad  
morals; we know now that it is bad economics.

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

### La Salle University's Mission Statement

*La Salle is a Lasallian Catholic university committed to the principle that all knowledge is practical and empowering, filled with the capacity to transform lives. Anchored in the living tradition of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and in association with a diverse and inclusive learning community, our mission is to educate the whole person by fostering a rigorous free search for truth. La Salle, in affirming the value of both liberal arts and professional studies, prepares students for the lifelong pursuit and exploration of wisdom, knowledge, and faith that lead to engaged and fulfilling lives marked by a commitment to the common good.*

### La Salle University's Core Values Statement

#### *Teaching and Learning*

Teaching and learning are at the heart of the Lasallian educational mission. At La Salle, we are all students and teachers. Those who accept the challenge of a Lasallian education seek not only to exercise the mind, but to inculcate a love of learning, creativity, a sense of self, and an ability to discern relationships and possibilities where none are obvious. Our love of teaching and learning is manifested in opportunities for students, faculty, administrators, and staff to become reflective, discerning persons. La Salle aspires to fully awaken and ripen our intellectual, spiritual, emotional, ethical, social, and physical capacities.

#### *Spirit of Faith and Zeal*

Central to the Lasallian educational and spiritual heritage is the spirit of faith and zeal, a gospel value that animates La Salle's mission and sustains a community that embraces all its members. Students and educators of all backgrounds and traditions are invited to participate in this dynamic spirit by fostering mutual understanding and dialogue in all aspects of La Salle's institutional life. Striving to live the spirit of faith and zeal joins the University to a long commitment of Lasallian education to provide young people and adults with the learning to identify and develop their particular gifts and strengths that will enable them to live well and do good in life.

Education for justice should not be merely a specific subject area but a common thread that runs through the whole curriculum. This common thread should be reinforced by daily practice within the school. It is important to create a kind of micro-climate which offers an alternative, miniature model that does not support the anti-values which society often presents to us: market worship, corruption, fighting, competition, and consumerism. It is important that within the school there exists an experience of justice in which values, such as solidarity, communion, and participation are top priorities. Otherwise the school runs the risk of duplicating the system and preparing students for a society of privileges, training them in the competitive struggle where there is no solidarity. It is precisely this situation which we have to try to avoid.

*Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, F.S.C.  
Brother Superior General, 2000-2014*

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

*Service Rooted in Solidarity and Justice*

Service rooted in solidarity and justice invites La Salle to embrace new ways of practicing faith-justice in society. The Lasallian educational vision renews its call for us to stand with those impoverished and marginalized, to identify inequity and exclusion created by society, and actively respond not merely with charity, but with courage, creativity, and compassion. This pursuit embodies the Lasallian vision, dispatching its practitioners to go to the roots of poverty and injustice in order to find just solutions that improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

*Association*

Association makes explicit our distinctive Lasallian educational heritage to create an atmosphere of collegiality, mutual respect, and trust within a community of students and educators. This horizontal relationship in which the “schoolmaster” becomes an “older brother or older sister” to students emerges from Lasallian spirituality, connects us to the global Lasallian community, and continuously shapes La Salle’s character and mission. Historically one of the vows of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, living out association is fundamental to provide the hope that a quality education offers to all, especially those marginalized and disadvantaged.

Faith and reason are the two forces that lead us to knowledge.

*St. Augustine*

### Now What?

Hopefully, now that you have read this narrative, you have a better understanding of what it means to be a member of the University family and the larger, international family of Lasallian schools. Regardless of their location or size, these institutions have distinguishing characteristics of a Lasallian world view. Three of those characteristics are faith, service, and community, and in a Lasallian school, they are mutually reinforcing. When you reflect on them, you arrive at several key questions:

**Faith**—What do I believe in? To what or to whom do I give my life? To whom do I belong?

**Service**—Who am I? What is my responsibility to my neighbor? How do I provide for the common good? How is the world a better place because of my presence?

**Community**—Who is my support group? Who gives me strength? Who challenges me to be a better person? Whom do I support and challenge?

Your time at La Salle University is a time to explore these questions in depth. You, like those who have come before you, will not find final answers, but rather you will find answers for today. Many resources on campus will help you along the way. Lasallians continue to find the answers to these questions in the midst of their lives. They embrace the world as a primary sign of who God is. In your own world, in the people who you love or struggle to love, in the communities that you are part of, God becomes present if you are willing to listen and look.

I never look at the masses as my responsibility; I look at the individual. I can only love one person at a time—just one, one, one. So you begin. I began—I picked up one person. Maybe if I didn't pick up that one person, I wouldn't have picked up forty-two thousand. The same thing goes for you, the same thing in our family, the same thing in our church, your community. Just begin—one, one, one.

*Mother Teresa*

Every single person has at least one secret that would break your heart. If we could just remember this, I think there would be a lot more compassion and tolerance in the world.

*Anonymous quote from  
PostSecret by Frank Warren*

## Faith

Faith has to do with what your deepest convictions are and the source of nourishment that replenishes them. In whom do you trust? What gives meaning and direction to your life? In what do you believe? What gives you joy? What are your fondest dreams? These large questions are not easily answered, but you can begin to come to an answer by reflecting on what you truly value and what path in life you want to take. Through discernment, you may find that the answers to these and other questions are rooted in the spiritual tradition to which you are a part.

It is important to realize that even when you think you have arrived at an answer to one of these larger than life questions, the answer will likely change as you grow older. When you were very young, you accept beliefs handed down from others. In childhood, faith is largely a matter of accepting propositions, rituals, and morals from parents and others and having them reinforced by religious communities to which you may be a part. In this way, faith can be seen as “content,” something you have received from those who preceded you. But for most of us, faith changes as we mature. It is shaped by a variety of relationships with others as we journey through the world. Some of these relationships rise to the level of life-turning points, moments that really help to define the person you are becoming. Some of these turning points—the death of a loved one, for example—will inevitably alter how you think about your relationship with God.

At La Salle, the freedom that college brings will also bring the expectation that you will question, critique, reject, doubt, and search. You will discern what is authentic. Consequently, on the immediate road ahead, your faith will change. We hope it will become a “searching faith,” one that can help you to see both the light and the shadows in life. In this sense, faith is not a noun but a verb connoting action. It is constantly developing in us in communion with others.

The search for truth—in us, in others, in society, and in the midst of scientific and secularized culture—can be unsettling. It is not easy to experience this kind of searching faith, and, for that reason, some will retreat and become complacent. However, at La Salle, in connection

The solution of a geometry problem does not in itself constitute a precious gift, but the same law applies to it because it is the image of something precious. Being a little fragment of particular truth it is a pure image of the unique, eternal, and living Truth, the very Truth that once in a human voice declared: “I am the Truth.” Every school exercise thought of in this way is like a sacrament.

In every school exercise there is a special way of waiting upon the truth, setting our heart upon it, yet not allowing ourselves to go out in search of it. There is a way of giving out attention to the data of a problem in geometry without trying to find the solution or to the words of a Latin or Greek text without trying to arrive at the meaning, a way of waiting, when we are writing, for the right word to come of itself at the end of a pen, while we merely reject all inadequate words.

*Simone Weil*

It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear . . . It's like being between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to.

*Marilyn Ferguson, American futurist*

No one can live without joy.

*Thomas Aquinas*

with other men and women who are also struggling to mature, you will find many opportunities to become authentic explorers in your search for new knowledge; to accept new responsibilities; to develop habits of honesty, thoughtfulness, tolerance, and forgiveness; to become a more spiritual person. Some of these opportunities are imbedded in courses; others are experienced in clubs, activities, and service opportunities. In seizing these opportunities, you will not only cultivate important skills and attitudes, but you will also develop a better sense of who you are, and you will discern what God is looking for in you.

As you can see, faith is complex. Explore it through classes offered by the Religion and Philosophy departments. Experience it through University Ministry and Service (UMAS), which publicly celebrates what it means to be Catholic. It provides opportunities for worship and spiritual growth. In UMAS, you can also expand your involvement in the social life of the University by joining the liturgies, Bible study groups, retreats, or discussion groups that are available. Some of the Bible studies and discussion groups are run by students of many different faiths who can help you explore what it means to be Christian. Also, Peer Ministers in the residence halls can talk with you about God and faith and can provide information about where to go for specific religious services or events, including those conducted for other denominations.

### Service

Because we expect La Salle graduates to assume leadership roles in their communities and live lives of purpose (language from our mission statement), we have tried to make certain that the intellectual and social dimensions of your education are value-oriented and complementary. Through the curriculum, public celebrations and events, and community service opportunities, you will encounter questions and ideas that will prompt you to consider and reconsider your own judgment and your place in the world. In terms of service, for example, you may be prompted to think about your responsibilities to your neighbor and to the larger society. Experiences in and outside the classroom may cause you to think more deeply about what you truly believe. Coupled with what you are learning in courses, they may prompt you to think about how you can help build a more humane world, especially for those who

For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with your heart.

*Jeremiah 29:11–13*

He has showed you, O man, what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God. (NIV)

*Micah 6:8*

- Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.
- Blessed are they who mourn: for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill.
- Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
- Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Matthew 5:3–11*

are poor and marginalized.

At La Salle, we believe each member of the community has received gifts that, in turn, can be used to benefit the whole community. For example, some are called to religious ministries and work directly in the service of others (the Christian Brothers, for example). All of us collectively benefit from their gift. The majority of us, however, are called in a different way. We live out our religious values and sense of concern for society in our own space and time through our professional careers and personal lives. Regardless of your career path, an authentic concern for the common good that we want La Salle students to develop should influence not only your thinking (a concern for those less fortunate out of a sense of Christian charity) but also lead to action (steps one consciously takes to make the world a more humane place out of a sense of justice).

Consequently, a faith community does not live exclusively for the purpose of conserving faith, although the doctrinal content is an important element that nourishes a faith that does justice. Catholics believe we grow as the visible body of Christ, incorporating in it those who are far away and alienated from all the covenants. Service, therefore, is an expression of faith alive in the world. By your understanding of the fundamental purpose of service, you are more likely to avoid the pitfall of what economists call “the free rider problem” (enjoying the benefit of a common good like clean air without making a contribution yourself).

The University prides itself on the service dimension of the education it provides and its historical commitment to its neighbors, city, and region. This commitment is so expansive that the Carnegie Foundation classified La Salle as a “community engaged university,” a distinction given to a relatively small number of institutions nationwide. These schools have made community engagement part of their mission and turned that goal into action. La Salle does this in many ways. One important way is the development of courses designated as service-learning courses that require students to apply classroom instruction to real-world situations. This is done by partnering with community groups, companies, and organizations.

Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

In the area of Student Life, all fraternities and sororities offer service opportunities. Many student groups sponsor service events at some point during the year. There are also service projects that are ongoing, meeting weekly or biweekly. If you are a student-athlete, you can find the member of your team who is on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. He or she can tell you about service opportunities through Project Teamwork. If you are interested in some form of regular service, you should stop by the Community Service Office of UMAS, located in the St. Neumann Annex on South Campus. There are groups that provide service on a regular schedule. They vary from direct service such as working with children, the homeless, or elderly neighbors to advocacy groups dealing with relationships between women and men, environmental issues, and social justice issues in general. UMAS also has opportunities to do service nationally and internationally.

But service cannot be simply reduced to an attachment to academic courses or to volunteering. It is an integral part of teaching and the search for new knowledge and deeper understanding. Sometimes the return on service is immediate and straightforward; other times, it is long-term and difficult to see. But either way, it is fundamental to a faith community and the development of a sense of purpose. Through service, you will discover, if you haven't already, that we don't live for ourselves alone.

## Community

If it can be affirmed that faith is not a noun, but rather a verb, we can also say that community is not a noun but a process of common union. When you make an effort to participate in the community, you are using your personal gifts in service for a common purpose. We can be "in community" in many ways: when we work, study, play, worship, or participate in some form of public service. Whatever the setting, genuine community is characterized by openness and trust and a unifying sense of purpose. It is a place where promises are kept. In community, you may feel less inhibited about speaking up and taking risks simply because mutual trust is high and you feel passionate about the basic purposes of the community. La Salle continually strives to be that kind of academic and faith community.

The servant leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions ... The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

*Robert K. Greenleaf*

We have seen how faith and service are connected. At La Salle, they are also connected to the concept of community. Some of these faith communities are quite visible. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, for example, have associated themselves with one another to develop the mission for which they have been called. They have a common vision of faith, language, and set of values. Even though reaching that level of community is very difficult, an important dimension of the Lasallian point of view is the Christian Brothers' conviction that community is a sign of God's presence among us. Consequently, building genuine community is an important element of a La Salle education. One dimension of this is the Brothers' emphasis on the importance of quality teacher-student relationships, an emphasis which runs through the academic and cultural environment of the University.

For La Salle to thrive, all of us must take membership in the community personally and make investments in its welfare. We encourage you to contribute to the fabric of campus life. As you invest, you will grow as a person, but the community gains too. As you participate, you will build self-esteem and develop your own individuality, but by giving something of yourself to others here, the general campus will benefit by your presence. This idea of being an active member of campus can sometimes be difficult to work out. For example, when you are a member of a group, how much of yourself do you sacrifice for the benefit of others? There is no one right answer, but in your time here, you will be given ample opportunities to practice being a "person-in-community" and to contribute to the welfare of the larger group while gaining a personal sense of fulfillment and belonging.

Of course, your college relationships are not limited to those with other students. Our alumni tell us they developed life-long friendships with faculty, staff, and administrators. In their time here, they say these people served as mentors. A mentor—a teacher, coach, or trusted older friend—is a person who believes in you more than you believe in yourself. They recognize your gifts as well as your shortcomings. Mentors are not trying to take over, but to invite, to redirect, to encourage, and to challenge. Explorers in search of truth, when accompanied by mentors, are more likely to persist in their search. You will also have opportunities to explore what it means to be part of the global community by

Fidelity to the Founder is achieved in terms that are relational ... [Fidelity] is lived and realized only in a community effort and in the determination of people to respond to the call of the present needs of our time. Only in this way can we share in the spirit that moved the Founder in his response in his time.

*Brother Miguel Campos, F.S.C.*

Union in a community is a precious gem which is why Our Lord so often recommended it to his apostles before he died. If we lose this, we lose everything. Preserve it with care, therefore, if you want your community to survive.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle*

considering study-abroad options, travel/study courses, or a minor in the Leadership and Global Understanding program.

It might seem strange to ask the question “Who am I?” when reflecting on community. However, who you are as an individual is closely related to the concept of community. For instance, in the movie *The Bucket List*, Morgan Freeman’s character says, “I believe that you measure yourself by the people that measure themselves by you.” One of the ways to find out who you are is through relationships, and La Salle will provide many opportunities for you to develop them—in classes, residence halls, or study groups in your major. All around you will be groupings that are rich with relationships, such as the 120 or more different organizations on campus that you can learn about at the Activities Fair held at the beginning of each semester. If you are a resident student, your resident assistant and resident coordinator are two individuals you might consult. Your adviser, an instructor, or the University Ministers are also individuals you can talk to. Student Health Services and the Counseling Center are places where you can go and talk about anything.

It is true that, inevitably, in your life journey you will encounter men, women, and groups that will contradict your beliefs and challenge your deepest convictions. Some may try to dampen and oppose your hopes and dreams. But it is also true that you will meet many who will confirm the goodness of your personal gifts and will encourage you to grow.

## The Journey

The metaphor of life as a journey is a common device in all forms of writing and in art. If you’ve already read Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, you know that Huck’s journey is about more than just his life with Jim on the Mississippi. As Huck travels, he grows and makes decisions based on what he believes is right. Similarly, in the movie *Star Wars*, Luke Skywalker’s journey is a struggle with his own identity and the choices that he feels compelled to make to confront the forces of good and evil.

Perhaps the most famous “journey” story of all is the one in the Gospel

Don’t call me a saint. I don’t want to be dismissed so easily.

*Dorothy Day*

I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, men other-centered can build up.

*Martin Luther King Jr.  
Nobel Prize acceptance speech*

of St. Luke. There, we read of two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus on the very day of the resurrection. As they walk, they encounter a stranger and invite him to join them. Luke tells us that the stranger is Jesus, but the disciples are prevented from recognizing him. As they walk, they are prompted by Jesus to share the news of what has recently happened in Jerusalem. They respond by telling him the story of a great prophet who has been crucified and the startling news of his empty tomb found that very day. Gradually, the stranger explains the connection between these recent events and prophecies of the Old Testament, in effect helping them to understand the purpose of Jesus' public life. Energized by their conversation, the disciples invite the stranger to share a meal at the end of their journey. It is then, when the stranger breaks the bread during the meal, that their eyes are opened and they come to realize that their companion is Jesus.

This story of transformation has been a source of creativity through the centuries and an inspiration to some of the world's great thinkers and greatest artists. Perhaps its enduring appeal has to do with the fact that its message is universal. All of us can become so busy that we fail to see or hear God in our lives. We can relate to the two disciples on their journey preoccupied with events of recent days. We are all on a road to somewhere else, preoccupied with the seemingly important. Consequently, we frequently give little time over to discovering what is more significant and fulfilling.

Your travels may not be as dramatic as Huck's or Luke's or that of the disciples walking to Emmaus, but the journey metaphor rings true nonetheless. You will encounter unexpected twists and turns and highs and lows as you progress in the next four years and for the rest of your life. Like De La Salle, who was preparing himself to go down one road only to make a conscious decision to go down another, your journey might also change unexpectedly. Over the next few years, you will be preparing yourself for those crossroads that will inevitably occur.

Life for the two disciples was mystifying and tumultuous and at times it can be for us, too. How do you deal with ambiguities? How will you as a college student make difficult choices? At La Salle, you will develop skills that will help you to judge events and opinions critically so that

The Road goes ever on and on  
Down from the door where it began.  
Now far ahead the Road has gone,  
And I must follow, if I can,  
Pursuing it with eager feet,  
Until it joins some larger way  
Where many paths and errands meet.  
And whither then? I cannot say.

*J.R.R. Tolkien*

All people of whatever race, condition or age, in virtue of their dignity as human persons, have an inalienable right to education. This education should be suitable to the particular destiny of the individuals, adapted to their ability, sex and national cultural traditions, and should be conducive to amicable relations with other nations in order to promote true unity and peace in the world. True education aims to give people a formation which is directed towards their final end and the good of that society to which they belong and in which, as adults, they will have their share of duties to perform.

*Pope Paul VI  
(Declaration on Christian Education, 1)  
Austin Flannery translation*

you can make valid choices. You will develop the ability to see the meaning behind numbers and separate facts from opinions. Beyond these skills, though, what beliefs and values will help you on your journey—help you to decide what road to pursue?

In one way or another, the development of that belief system and values is already well along in your life. College is a time when you sharpen those values and question, clarify, and reflect on what you see and hear. The best way to do that—literally, the surest way to grow—is to become involved in the life of the La Salle community. The choice of what you will do after graduation is yours. Remember, though, the story of St. La Salle and how his faith was a real force in his life. Whatever religious tradition you are in, his example can serve you well in navigating your life’s journey. Although your college years can be the best opportunity for you to think about your sense of purpose and about the role faith will play in your life, this contemplation will never really end. Nonetheless, it can be cultivated here and become a compass to give your life direction.

### A Final Thought

We hope the attraction you have for the University will grow into genuine affection and will remain with you throughout your life. Achieving that level of lifelong relationship will rest on your seizing the opportunities for intellectual and spiritual development now. For our part, over the next few years, we will help you confront those essential questions based on the core values of the University: who we are; whose we are; and what that means for how we will be in the next world. We think they will serve as the foundation for an enduring relationship and a satisfying and productive life.

In the preceding pages, you may have realized that this little book is more than a story about a man and a school. It has a larger message, one dealing with questioning and searching for answers, with making life choices buttressed by the ideals of liberal learning, traditional Catholic values, and the distinctive Lasallian spirit. Use your gifts and what you will learn here to begin a successful and satisfying career. Work to achieve greater justice for those less fortunate than yourself. Participate

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days? “What things?” he asked. “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.

And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

*Continued on page 79*

in a faith community. In the words of Brother Edward Sheehy, F.S.C., professor of history at La Salle, live a life of “passion and compassion.”

The LORD bless you and keep you;  
the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;  
the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.

*Numbers 6:24–26*

### Saints of La Salle University

In the first part of this book, you read about who we are as a family. Like all families, we have our story, our family history. There are key figures in our story, and just like your family, they range from the amusing to the profound and serious. Our family portraits can be seen in the series of icons that were created for the De La Salle Chapel, but we are also constantly reminded of them when we talk about the buildings on the main campus.

Since 1953, when the first residence hall was opened, most of the buildings on campus have been named after saints of the Catholic Church. While it may be convenient to remember them alphabetically, we can also look at them chronologically and discover something of who we are as a family.

If we look at them chronologically, we are also looking at the tradition that shapes us both as Catholic and as Lasallian. Tradition, after all, is a way of respecting the wisdom of those who have gone before us. Our faith traditions interpret themselves as stories because they teach us how to embrace hope over fear and love over isolation. In telling these stories, we share with each other what moves us to act—one of the ways that we motivate each other.

Our first set of family members go back to the very beginning of Christianity. They are the individuals on whose shoulders the rest of the story stands. Some of these individuals died for what they believed. They were the first to articulate the faith in language that we know. The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are part of their gift to us.

*Continued from page 77*

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.”

So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and began to give it to them.

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

*Luke 24:13–32*

While the mission that we undertake is demanding and faced with many challenges, it is lightened because it is shared and shouldered by many with whom we are privileged to minister and to serve. Together we are called to incarnate what remains invisible to so many, namely God's grace and compassionate love.

*Brother Dennis Malloy, F.S.C.  
Provincial, District of Eastern North America*

Over the centuries, the Church has always returned to the writings and teachings of these individuals as the touchstones against which later developments were seen and judged.

**St. George:** George lived in the late third and early fourth centuries in Syria. Tradition has it that George was a favorite soldier in the army of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who was a bitter enemy of Christians. George, a devout Christian, scolded Diocletian for his cruelty. He resigned his position, was tortured, and was finally beheaded. So boldly daring and so cheerful was George in declaring his faith that Christians felt courage when they heard the story. Dramatic renderings of St. George usually show him slaying a dragon (the devil) to rescue a beautiful lady (truth). We all have some “dragon” we have to conquer. It might be pride, anger, laziness, greed, or something else. With God’s help, we can fight these “dragons.”

**St. Cassian of Imola:** Cassian lived in the fourth century and is known as the martyr of Imola, a town near modern Ravenna, Italy. He was a former bishop and teacher who was arrested for his Christian beliefs. He was turned over to his students, who hacked him to death when he refused to deny Christ. The poet Prudentius recorded Cassian’s grisly martyrdom, noting that the students could not wield mortal blows, thus prolonging the martyr’s agony.

**St. Denis:** Denis (or Dionysius as he is also called) was born in the third century and raised in Italy. Along with five bishops, he was sent as a missionary to convert Gaul (now France) by Pope Clement. Denis made his base of missionary activity an island in the Seine near what would become Paris. For this reason, he is known as the first bishop of Paris. He was captured by the Parisians along with two companions. After a long imprisonment and several aborted executions, the three were beheaded and their bodies were thrown into the river. Denis’ body was retrieved from the Seine by his followers and buried. The chapel that was built over his tomb grew into the abbey of St. Denis. Denis is the patron saint of France.

**St. Hilary of Poitiers:** Born in France in the beginning of the fourth century, Hilary is considered the first great Christian thinker. He was

Nothing is more practical than finding God,  
that is falling in love  
in a quite absolute, final way.  
What you are in love with,  
what seizes your imagination,  
will affect everything.  
It will decide  
what will get you out of bed in the morning,  
what you will do with your evenings,  
how you will spend your weekends,  
what you read,  
who you know,  
what breaks your heart,  
what amazes you with joy and gratitude.  
Fall in love,  
stay in love,  
and it will decide everything.

*Pedro Arrupe, S.J.  
Superior General, Society of Jesus, 1965-1983*

In the Saints, we can see the Gospel lived out in various circumstances and states in life for thousands of years. Their message isn’t that holiness is unattainable, but that you and I are called to become Saints.

noted as a defender of the faith and a scholar who helped to change the course of religious history in the West. He wrote the first lengthy study of church doctrine in Latin, introduced Eastern theology to the West, and contributed to the development of hymnology. The son of pagan parents, he was received into the church at the age of 30, and later he was named Bishop of Poitiers in central France. He died in 366.

**St. Jerome:** Jerome is the patron saint of librarians. A lawyer in Rome, he later became a priest in Antioch after spending four years in prayer, study, and penance in the Syrian Desert. Often called the Father of Biblical Science, he translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Latin and revised the existing Latin translation of the Christian Scriptures to produce the Vulgate version of the Bible. A revised form of this translation is authorized and used by the Catholic Church. Jerome died in 420.

**St. Basil the Great:** Basil was one of the giants of the early Christian Church. Basil was born in 330 in what is now Turkey. He was one of 10 children of Basil the Elder and Emmelia. His parents as well as several of his brothers and sisters are honored as saints. In 370, he was made bishop of Caesaria in central Turkey. He was a man of vast learning and constant activity, genuine eloquence and immense charity. This earned for him the title of “Great” during his life and Doctor of the Church after his death. Basil fought simony (paying for positions in the Church), aided the victims of drought and famine, strove for a better clergy, insisted on a clerical discipline, and fearlessly denounced evil wherever he detected it. He was learned, a man of great personal holiness, and one of the great orators of Christianity.

The second group of family members whose stories are part of our tradition comes from the Middle Ages. These men and women helped the Church to further define itself. Their writing is part of the intellectual heritage of the Church. In their lives we see that faith is built on reason and thought. They teach us how to integrate knowledge as a basis for true wisdom in the living of our lives.

**St. Edward the Confessor:** Edward the Confessor was the son of King Ethelred III, the Anglo-Saxon King of the English in the 11th century. He was born at Islip, England, and was sent to Normandy with his

Your total ignorance of that which you profess to teach merits the death penalty. I doubt whether you would know that St. Cassian of Imola was stabbed to death by his students with their styli. His death, a martyr’s honorable one, made him a patron saint of teachers.

*Ignatius Reilly, in John Kennedy Toole’s,  
A Confederacy of Dunces*

In God, love is outgoing, ecstatic. Because of it lovers no longer belong to themselves but to those whom they love.

*St. Denis*

St. George he was for England  
And before he killed the dragon  
He drank a pint of English ale  
Out of an English flagon.

*G.K. Chesterton*

Now order the ranks, and fling wide the banners, for our souls  
are God’s and our bodies the king’s, and our swords for Saint  
George and for England!

*Arthur Conan Doyle*

mother, where he remained and was brought up a Norman. In 1042, he was acclaimed King of England. His reign was characterized by his good rule and remission of unfair taxes. Edward became more interested in religious affairs and built St. Peter's Abbey at Westminster, the site of the present Abbey. His piety gained him the surname "the Confessor." He was canonized in 1161 by Pope Alexander III in a ceremony at Westminster Abbey presided over by Thomas Beckett. Prior to St. George, he was considered the patron saint of England.

**St. Bernard of Clairvaux:** Bernard was born of noble parentage in the Burgundy region of France. At an early age, his parents sent him to a college at Chatillon, where he was noticed for his remarkable piety. He embraced the very austere institute of the Cistercian Order. His superior sent him with 12 monks to found a new monastery, which afterward became known as the Abbey of Clairvaux. Bernard was at once appointed Abbot and became the most noteworthy figure in the history of the 12th century. He founded numerous other monasteries and composed a number of works for the honor of God. The reputation of Bernard spread, and popes were governed by his advice. He was commissioned by Pope Eugene III to preach the second Crusade. In obedience he traveled through France and Germany and aroused great enthusiasm for the holy war among the masses. The failure of the Crusade turned people against him.

**St. Albert the Great:** Albert the Great was one of the Church's greatest intellects. He was educated at the University of Padua and entered the Dominican order in the 1220s. Later he taught at Regensburg and Strasbourg in Germany and also taught at the University of Paris, where he earned a doctorate in 1245. He was among the first and greatest of the natural scientists, gaining a reputation for expertise in biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geography, metaphysics, and mathematics. He was also very learned in biblical studies and theology. He and his most famous student, Thomas Aquinas, are credited with incorporating the philosophy of Aristotle into the Christian West.

**St. Katherine of Siena:** Born in 1347, she was the 25th child of a wool dyer in northern Italy. Katherine started having mystical experiences when she was 6. She became a Dominican tertiary when she was 16,

The bread that you store up belongs to the hungry; the coat that lies in your chest belongs to the naked; the gold that you have hidden in the ground belongs to the poor.

*St. Basil the Great*

Not the power to remember, but its very opposite, the power to forget, is a necessary condition for our existence.

*St. Basil the Great*

Keep this piety of my faith undefiled, I beseech you, and let this be the utterance of my convictions even to the last breath of my spirit: that I may always hold fast to that which I profess in the creed of my regeneration when I was baptized in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, namely, that I may adore you, our Father, and your Son together with you, and that I may gain the favor of your Holy Spirit who is from you through the only-begotten. He is a suitable witness for my faith who says: "Father, all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine," my Lord Jesus Christ, who always abides as God in you, from you and with you who is blessed forever and ever. Amen.

*St. Hilary of Poitiers*

Be at peace with your own soul, then heaven and earth will be at peace with you.

*St. Jerome*

and she continued to have visions of Christ, Mary, and the saints. Katherine was one of the most brilliant theological minds of her day, although she never had any formal education. She persuaded the Pope to return to Rome from Avignon in 1377, and when she died she was endeavoring to heal the Great Western Schism (a split in the Catholic Church in the 14th century). St. Katherine's letters and a treatise called "a dialogue" are considered among the most brilliant writings in the history of the Catholic Church. She died when she was only 33.

**St. Francis de Sales:** Francis de Sales authored *The Introduction to the Devout Life* in 1609. He believed the key to love of God was prayer. For busy people of the world, he advised, "Retire at various times into the solitude of your own heart, even while outwardly engaged in discussions or transactions with others and talk to God." The test of prayer was a person's actions: "To be an angel in prayer and a beast in one's relations with people is to go lame on both legs." He died on Dec. 28, 1622, after giving a nun his last word of advice: "Humility." St. Francis developed a sign language in order to teach a deaf man about God. Because of this, he is the patron saint of the deaf. He is also the patron saint of journalists because of the tracts and books he wrote.

**St. Teresa of Avila:** Teresa was born in 1515 in Spain. As a teenager, Teresa cared only about boys and clothes and flirting and rebelling—like other teenagers throughout the ages. When she was 16, her father decided she was out of control and sent her to a convent. At first she hated it, but eventually she began to enjoy it—partly because of her growing love for God, and partly because the convent was a lot less strict than her father. When the time came for her to choose between marriage and religious life, she had a tough time making the decision. When she finally chose religious life, she did so because she thought that it was the only safe place for someone prone to sin. In her books, she analyzed mystical experiences the way a scientist would. She is the founder of the Discalced Carmelites. In 1970 she was declared a Doctor of the Church for her writing and teaching on prayer, one of two women to be honored in this way.

The greater and more persistent your confidence in God, the more abundantly you will receive all that you ask.

*St. Albert the Great*

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, our mother. To you we come, before you we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer.

*St. Bernard*

Blessed Lord, Saint Edward was one of the most popular English kings, because he trusted in You and greatly loved his people. By relying on You, he was able to rule wisely and maintain peace. I ask him to pray for world leaders and for those serving in my nation's governmental offices. Lord, help us to elect Godly men and women and guide our politicians to make wise decisions inspired by the Holy Spirit. Bless the leaders of every country and all religions and fill them with a high sense of values. Raise up new leaders who build peace, protect life, and promote the fair and just treatment of all people. Saint Edward, pray for us. Amen.

*Author Unknown*

The following saint is a man of special significance for Philadelphia Catholics.

**St. John Neumann:** John Neumann served as Bishop of Philadelphia and was gifted with outstanding organizational skills. He was born in Bohemia in what is now the Czech Republic. He immigrated to the United States and served the church in Niagara Falls and Pittsburgh before being appointed the fourth bishop of Philadelphia in 1852. During his tenure, a period when anti-Catholic feeling in the city was high, there was a flood tide of immigration, which brought a sharp increase in the city's Catholic population. In response, Neumann planned and oversaw the construction of new parishes and schools. He encouraged a number of religious orders, including the Christian Brothers, to teach in the city and built more than 80 churches. He pioneered the organization of the parochial school system and wrote a catechism before his death in 1860.

The following three members of the family are especially close. Each is a Christian Brother and so their stories tell us something very special about what it means to be Lasallian. While only two residence halls and one other building on campus are named after Brothers, more than 100 Brothers have been declared blessed or saints in the last 40 years. These individuals, along with all of those we have already named are "a cloud of witnesses" who constantly surround us, support us, and challenge us to be individuals of integrity, working for the common good and seeking to make the world a better place because we have been here.

**St. Brother Miguel:** Francisco Febres Cordero was born into a family prominent in Ecuadorian politics. Disabled from birth, he had to overcome family opposition to realize his vocation to be a lay religious, the first native of Ecuador to be received into the Institute. Brother Miguel was a diligent student and a gifted teacher from the start. When he was not quite 20 years old, he published the first of his many books, a Spanish grammar that soon became a standard text. In time, his research and publications in the field of literature and linguistics put him in touch with scholars all over the world. Despite high academic honors, teaching remained his first priority, especially his classes in religion and

Nada te turbe;  
nada te espante;  
todo se pasa;  
Dios no se muda,  
la paciencia  
todo lo alcanza.  
Quien a Dios tiene,  
nada le falta.  
Solo Dios basta.

May nothing disturb you.  
May nothing astonish you.  
Everything passes.  
God does not go away.  
Patience can attain anything.  
He who has God within,  
does not lack anything.  
God is everything.

*Santa Teresa de Avila*

To a brave man, good and bad luck are like his right and left hand. He uses both.

*St. Katherine of Siena*

Let the truth be your delight ... proclaim it ... but with a certain congeniality.

*St. Katherine of Siena*

Never be in a hurry: do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset.

*St. Francis de Sales*

the preparation of young men making their first communion. His students admired his simplicity, his directness, his concern for them, and the intensity of his devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Virgin Mary.

**St. Brother Benilde:** Pierre Romançon was born in the village of Thuret in south-central France. He was so far ahead of his classmates in elementary school that when he was only 14 years old the Brothers engaged him as a substitute teacher. Despite the objection of his parents, who wanted to keep him at home, and the reluctance of the superiors, who thought he was too short of stature, he was finally admitted to the novitiate. From 1821 to 1841 he taught successfully in the network of elementary schools conducted by the Brothers out of the administrative center at Clermont-Ferrand. In 1841 he was appointed Director of a school that was opening in Saugues, an isolated village on a barren plateau in southern France. For the next 20 years he worked quietly and effectively as teacher and principal to educate the boys in the village and from the neighboring farms, many of whom were in their teens and had never been to school before. In time, the little school became the center of the social and intellectual life of the village, with evening classes for the adults and tutoring for students. Brother Benilde's extraordinary religious sense was evident to everyone. At his beatification, Pope Pius XII stressed that his sanctification was attained by enduring "the terrible daily grind" and by "doing common things in an uncommon way."

**St. Mutien Marie Wiaux:** Born in 1841 in Belgium, he taught elementary classes for two years. He was then assigned to the boarding school at Malonne, where he would spend the next 58 years. He had difficulties at first coping with the demands of both teaching and administration. However, he was given a new assignment in which he did very well, teaching courses in music and art. From then on, Brother Mutien was not only an effective teacher, a vigilant administrator, and a catechist in the nearby parish, but also a tremendous influence on the students by his patience and evident piety.

**St. John Baptist de La Salle:** John Baptist de La Salle was born into a world very different from our own. He was the first son of wealthy parents living in France more than 300 years ago. Born at Reims, John

Our first reaction in dealing with others should always be to find something about them worthy of praise.

*San Miguel*

The heart is rich when it is content, and it is always content when its desires are fixed on God.

*San Miguel*

You may be rich or poor. You may be blind or lame.  
You may be living in another country under another name.  
But you're going to have to serve somebody.  
Yes, you are. You're going to have to serve somebody.  
It may be the devil or it may be the Lord,  
but you're going to have to serve somebody.

*Bob Dylan*

Baptist de La Salle received the tonsure at age 10 (a ceremony in which the hair is cut to symbolize a commitment to the clerical life) and was named Canon of the Reims Cathedral shortly before his 16th birthday. Though he had to assume the administration of family affairs after his parents died, he completed his theological studies and was ordained a priest on April 9, 1678. Two years later he received a doctorate in theology. Meanwhile, he became tentatively involved with a group of rough and barely literate young men in order to establish schools for poor boys.

At that time a few people lived in luxury, but most of the people were extremely poor: peasants in the country, and slum dwellers in the towns. Only a small number could send their children to school; most children had little hope for the future. Moved by the plight of the poor who seemed so “far from salvation” either in this world or the next, he determined to use his own talents and advanced education for the service of the children “often left to themselves and badly brought up.” To be more effective, he abandoned his family home, moved in with the teachers, renounced his position as Canon and his wealth, and so formed the community that became known as the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

His enterprise met opposition from the ecclesiastical authorities, who resisted the creation of a new form of religious life, a community of consecrated laymen to conduct free schools. The educational establishment resented his innovative methods and his insistence on gratuity for all, regardless of whether they could afford to pay. Nevertheless, De La Salle and his Brothers succeeded in creating a network of quality schools throughout France that featured instruction in French, not Latin, students grouped according to ability and achievement, integration of religious instruction with secular subjects, well-prepared teachers with a sense of vocation and mission, and the involvement of parents. In addition, De La Salle pioneered in programs for training lay teachers, established Sunday courses for working young men, and started one of the first institutions in France for the care of delinquents. Worn out by austerities and exhausting labors, he died at Saint Yon near Rouen early in 1719 on Good Friday, only weeks before his 68th birthday.

He lived in the love of God from morning until evening.

*Student of St. Benilde*

Come Holy Spirit!  
Take possession of my heart,  
And so guide my actions  
That I may be able to say that they are the work  
of your hands  
rather than mine;  
and that my whole being in each of its functions, is entirely  
dependent on your good pleasure.  
Blessed will I be when I no longer live or act but by the Spirit  
of God.  
Then will I be able to say,  
“It is no longer I who live, but Jesus Christ and His Holy  
Spirit who live in me.”

*St. John Baptist de La Salle  
Method of Interior Prayer*

God is everything.

*St. Mutien Marie, FSC*

De La Salle was a pioneer in founding training colleges for teachers, reform schools for delinquents, technical schools, and secondary schools for modern languages, arts, and sciences. His work quickly spread through France and, after his death, continued to spread across the globe. In 1900, John Baptist de La Salle was declared a saint. In 1950, because of his life and inspirational writings, he was made patron saint of all those who work in the field of education. John Baptist de La Salle inspired others how to teach and care for young people, how to meet failure and frailty with compassion, how to affirm, strengthen, and heal. At the present time, there are De La Salle schools in 80 countries around the globe. La Salle University is named after St. John Baptist de La Salle.

Every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language, or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent.

*Gaudium et Spes (Joy and Hope)*

*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World  
Vatican II Document*

[Referring to the De La Salle Christian Brothers]  
They are incomparable masters of popular education. They have a way of their own of making a strong, serious, sometimes severe discipline foster the affection of their pupils and their lasting gratitude. They have an art of making the means proportionate to the ends with a craftsman's accuracy, and by looking always at the essentials. From the very start they have understood that as concerns the working classes—that is, as concerns the common man, man in his most general and natural condition—education must equip youth with a genuine and efficient professional training and the means of making a living. And they have understood at the same time that the formation of the soul and of the intellect, the bringing up of man as human, remains the highest and most indispensable aim of education. That integration, for which we are all looking today, of the practical and the theoretical, of vocational preparation and the cultivation of the mind—with the implied general enlightenment, ability to think and judge by oneself, and orientation toward wisdom—that integration is natural for them, and they work it out spontaneously because they are neither idealists despising matter nor technocrats despising disinterested knowledge. They are Christian educators in the most concrete and realist sense of this expression.

*Jacques Maritain*

PART II

PRAYER

## A Lasallian Prayer

*Let us remember...we are in the Holy Presence of God.*

Voicing this little prayer is a tradition that has been followed by graduates of La Salle University and students at other Lasallian schools throughout the world—the traditional prayer of all Lasallians. The prayer frequently used at the beginning of classes taught by the Christian Brothers and their associates is “Let us remember that we are in the Holy Presence of God.” This prayer, or rather this invitation, derives from St. John Baptist de La Salle himself, who prescribed that it be invoked at certain times throughout the school day.

It is significant that in the founder’s time the prayer was used in the school situation as a reminder—usually voiced by a student, to the teachers and students—of the significance of what they were doing in the educational enterprise. Remembering that we are in the holy presence of God during prayer and work can help us accomplish great things. At La Salle University, we too share De La Salle’s enthusiasm for prayer and are constantly aware of the holy presence of God.

How did this tradition begin? How did it lead to our identity at La Salle University? When we say this prayer, we are invited to take a moment to pause and reflect about our God and Creator—the One from whom all good things come.

De La Salle prayed constantly for guidance in his work with the Brothers and the education of his students. In the tradition of “Lasallian” heritage, we too begin many classes with our prayer and use it as a springboard to guide us into our formal prayer. Because prayer was important to De La Salle, its importance will be reflected in this little book. Prayer, as this book hopefully will help you understand, can take on various forms—the type of prayer is up to us.

Let’s take a moment to look at the parts of this prayer. Brother Luke Salm has written about this prayer in these words:

The problem with any formula that is repeated so

often is that it loses its meaning and may become something that cannot be taken lightly or treated as routine. A moment’s thought might open up the implications of what the brief exhortation is asking us to do.

*Let us remember.* The word “remember” presumes that one is not addressing the presence of God for the first time. It implies that we have forgotten something, and of course we have. In the business of running a classroom or a school, in the rush to get to a staff meeting on time, or while preparing to participate in a workshop, God can hardly be at the forefront of our immediate concerns. Time out, then, to remember what and Who is central to the entire enterprise.

*We are in the holy presence.* “We” means each one of us, individually and together as a community. “We” also implies that we are persons and therefore the presence is a personal presence. Personal presence differs from the way we are present to things (the furniture) or even to other people with whom there is no personal relationship (as in a crowd). Our awareness of the presence of God is the sort of person-to-person presence that Martin Buber would call an I-Thou encounter. And the presence is holy, in another word “awesome,” because of the Person to whom we are present is holy and we are made holy by recalling it.

*The holy presence of God.* We, who are limited in space and time, are being asked to grasp in faith and experience as real the presence of God who is outside space and time; God who is present not only to us, but to God’s entire created universe; the God who is absolute mystery and at the same time is at the very ground of our existence; the God whose very self is communicated in grace to us who are God’s rational creatures. To remember the presence of God in that sense puts us in touch with the source of our identity as human persons and with the ultimate goal that is our eternal destiny.

### **The Parable of the Good Shepherd ... Jesus' Word in the Gospel of John 10:11-16**

I am the good shepherd, and the good shepherd gives up his life for his sheep. Hired workers are not like the shepherd. They don't own the sheep, and when they see a wolf coming, they run off and leave the sheep. Then the wolf attacks and scatters the flock. Hired workers run away because they don't care about the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and they know me. Just as the Father knows me, I know the Father, and I give up my life for my sheep. I have other sheep that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them together too, when they hear my voice. Then there will be one flock of sheep and one shepherd.

### **De La Salle's Word on the Parable of the Good Shepherd (Meditation 32)**

It is also necessary, says Jesus Christ, that the sheep know their shepherd in order to be able to follow them. Two qualities are needed by those who lead others and should be particularly evident in them. The first is a high level of virtue in order to be models for others who would not fail to go astray following their guides, if the guides themselves did not walk in the right way.

The second is a great tenderness must be shown by them for those entrusted to their care. They must be very alert to whatever can harm or wound their sheep. This is what leads the sheep to love their shepherds and to delight in their company, for there they find their rest and comfort.

Do you wish your disciples to do what is right? Do it yourself. You will persuade them much more readily through your example of wise and prudent behavior than through all the words you could speak to them.

### **Meditation on the Modern Good Shepherd/Leadership**

Many of us have a mental image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Those images color how we think and why we see God as a benevolent God.

There are several Gospel stories about the good shepherd, one of finding the lost sheep, one guarding the sheep gate, one giving up his life for his sheep. We have merged all of them here into one version of the story of the Good Shepherd. In all of them, Jesus is there to take care of us.

In considering the meaning of the parable, De La Salle takes us to a different place. He asks us to put aside our preconceived views of the Good Shepherd and to see the parable with fresh eyes. De La Salle asks his Brothers—and us—to consider being good shepherds too; consider being good shepherds to those who are lost and need help. De La Salle would have known that the Hebrew Scriptures saw the Kings of Israel as shepherds. They were God's representatives among the people; they were responsible for shepherding the people in God's name, for finding the lost and giving their lives for their people.

De La Salle's vision is like the kings of old. All of us, he says, are shepherds—shepherds to all entrusted to our care. Most of us have no idea what it means to be a shepherd in the modern sense of the word. But instead of the metaphor of the shepherd, think of the concept of leader. The role of a leader in today's world is an image that may be easier for us to see than that of a shepherd.

Each of us has the potential of being a leader. Sometimes that is very clear because of our position: president of a sorority, captain of a team, being an RA. Often it is less clear. We can be leaders when a friend is struggling with a problem and asks for our advice. We are leaders when we challenge someone to stop and think about what he or she is doing. We are leaders when we spend time with someone who is having a tough time.

What is our responsibility to others? Is it superficial? Or do you spend time listening to them when they have something to say? In the parable, the shepherd is willing to give his/her life up for the sheep. Most likely we will not be asked to give our lives for a teammate or for someone we work with or someone we live with on a floor in a dormitory. But are we willing to be inconvenienced, to make a choice that may not be what a friend wants to hear but that clearly is in his or her best

interest? This is a dimension of being a leader (a shepherd) too.

### Reflecting on the Good Shepherd/Leader

Who have been good shepherds in your life? Who have been willing to lay down their lives for you? Who have gone after you to bring you back when you were lost? As a leader, do you see yourself as one who safely shepherds those you have the privilege of leading? Do you lead them by modeling appropriate ways to be in the world, to be at La Salle? What do your friends and colleagues know about you from the way you act? Are you about what is best for yourself at the expense of others or what is best for the common good? As leaders, we have many opportunities to influence a situation around us. We can't help but do that by our very presence.

### Ways to Pray

#### *Prayer of the Heart*

We can pray to God in our hearts in very many different ways, but especially in five ways:

1. We can pray to God through our SILENCE: this is what we do when we simply place ourselves in the presence of God with sentiments of respect and adoration but without expressing anything or asking for anything. This way of praying seems to be what Cassian speaks of in his ninth Conference when he remarks that sometimes in prayer the Spirit hides himself in us in a profound silence.
2. We can also pray by our THOUGHTS without making use of any words. St. Chrysostom speaks of this kind of prayer as perfected by our fervor of spirit.
3. We can pray to God also by our AFFECTIONS when we ask something of him simply by the movement of our hearts. This, according to St. Cyprian is how Anna, the mother of Samuel, prayed.
4. We can pray by our ACTIONS when they are good and

when we have the intention of fulfilling some duty or obtaining some grace.

5. But one of the best ways of praying to God in our hearts is when we pray through our SUFFERINGS. We do this when we patiently support the sorrows sent us by God with our intentions of honoring God or of obtaining some spiritual benefit.

*St. John Baptist de La Salle, Duties of a Christian, Volume I*

O ineffable Creator, the true fountain and highest source of light and wisdom, origin of all being, graciously let a ray of your light penetrate the darkness of my understanding. Pour upon my lips your blessing. Grant me quickness of understanding, subtlety of interpreting, capacity of retaining, exactness in explaining, and abundant grace in expressing myself. Guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to a successful completion. I ask this through Jesus Christ, your son and our brother, Amen.

Based on a student's prayer  
St. Thomas Aquinas

## An Evening Examen

Here is a practice used by many at the end of the day to see what lessons can be learned and how God was present and active through the day. Set aside 15 to 20 minutes at the end of the day for prayer and review of your day. A suggested format is described below:

1. Take a few moments of quiet. Breathe deeply. Ask God to help you see yourself as you truly were during the day.
2. Look back over your day—not to see what you did wrong but to honestly acknowledge what was going on with you and others.
  - \* What happened? What did I do today?
  - \* How did I feel? Why did I feel that way?
  - \* Were my expectations and beliefs reasonable?
3. Affirm the healthy things you recognize.
4. Admit to yourself and God the unhealthy things. Ask God's forgiveness, believe it is yours, then decide if you need to apologize or make amends.
5. Use creative visualization to grow stronger. Honestly acknowledge the troubling situations of the day. See and feel yourself acting honestly and lovingly in these situations. Ask God for the grace to help you act in this new way.
6. Close with simple awareness of the sights and sounds around you, grateful for the good things in your life. This process can be undertaken as a daily journal exercise or by prayerfully reviewing your day in your own mind. The important thing is to do it. It is a discipline, to be sure, but a very important one.

## Morning Prayers

My God, I offer you all my thoughts, words, and actions this day, that they may be wholly consecrated to you and that they may procure for me your holy love, which is all I desire. I offer you the new life, which you have given me by waking me from sleep. Let it, I ask you, be to me a life of grace so that I may henceforth be able to say that it is no longer I who live but that it is Jesus Christ who lives in me.

*Adapted from St. John Baptist de La Salle  
Manual of Piety, p. 4*

Lord Jesus, I give you my hands to do your work. I give you my feet to go your way. I give you my eyes to see as you do. I give you my tongue to speak your words. I give you my mind that you may think in me. I give you my spirit that you may pray in me. Above all, I give you my heart that you may love in me, your Father, and all mankind. I give you my whole self that you may grow in me, so that it is you, Lord Jesus, who lives and works and prays in me.

*Prayer from The Grail*

Lord, help me today to realize  
that you will be speaking to me  
in various ways.  
Give me ears, eyes and heart to perceive you,  
however veiled your presence may be.  
Give me insight to see through what is exterior  
to what is within.  
Give me your spirit of discernment.  
O Lord, you know how busy I must be this day.  
If I forget you, do not forget me.  
Amen.

*Sir Jacob Astley*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior  
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name.  
He has mercy on those who fear him  
in every generation.  
He has shown the strength of his arm,  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.  
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.  
He has come to the help of his servant Israel  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,  
the promise he made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

*Luke 1:46–55*

Lord, help me to remember  
that nothing is going to happen today  
that you and I can't handle together. Amen.

*Author Unknown*

Dear Lord,  
So far I've done all right.  
I haven't gossiped,  
haven't lost my temper,  
haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish,  
or overindulgent.  
I'm really glad about that.  
But in a few minutes, God,  
I'm going to get out of bed.  
And from then on,  
I'm going to need a lot more help.

*Author Unknown*

O God, early in the morning I cry to you.  
Help me to pray  
And to concentrate my thoughts on you:  
I cannot do this alone.  
In me there is darkness,  
But with you there is light;  
I am lonely, but you do not leave me;  
I am feeble in heart, but with you there is help;  
I am restless, but with you there is peace.  
In me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience;  
I do not understand your ways,  
But you know the way for me . . .  
Restore me to liberty,  
And enable me to live now  
That I may answer before you and before me.  
Lord, whatever this day may bring,  
Your name be praised.

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

**Evening Prayers**

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake,  
or watch, or weep tonight,  
and give Your Angels and Saints  
charge over those who sleep.  
Tend Your sick ones, O Lord Christ.  
Rest Your weary ones,  
Bless Your dying ones,  
Soothe Your suffering ones,  
Pity Your afflicted ones,  
Shield Your joyous ones,  
And all for Your love's sake. Amen.

*St. Augustine*

You alone, Father,  
can change the false notions I have of you:  
many thoughts from my own experience  
of which I may now be unaware,  
Reach deep within me and liberate me  
from whatever may distort  
your true likeness.  
Bring me back—time and time again—  
to Jesus, your Son,  
in whose attitude and words and actions  
I can see clearly  
the perfect image of you, O God. Amen!

*Brother Nicholas Hutchinson, F.S.C.*

It is night after a long day.  
What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done;  
let it be.  
The night is dark.  
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and  
of our own lives rest in you.  
The night is quiet.  
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,  
all dear to us,  
and all who have no peace.  
The night heralds the dawn.  
Let us look forward expectantly to a new day,  
new joys,  
new possibilities.  
In your name we pray.  
Amen.

*Author Unknown*

Send me some light—I need it.

*Elvis Presley*

### Daily and Other Prayers

*Our Father*, Who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

*I believe in God*, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven  
and earth;  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin  
Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and  
was buried.  
He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the  
dead;  
He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God,  
the Father almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the  
living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the  
communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection  
of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

*Hail Mary*,  
Full of Grace,  
The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary,  
Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now,  
and at the hour of death. Amen.

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,  
our life, our sweetness and our hope.  
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve;  
to thee do we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.  
Turn then, most gracious advocate,  
thine eyes of mercy toward us;  
and after this our exile,  
show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

*Hermann Contractus*

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace,  
that where there is hatred, I may bring love;  
that where there is wrong,  
I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;  
that where there is discord, I may bring harmony;  
that where there is error, I may bring truth;  
that where there is doubt, I may bring faith;  
that where there is despair, I may bring hope;  
that where there are shadows, I may bring light;  
that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.  
Lord, grant that I may seek rather to  
comfort than to be comforted;  
to understand, than to be understood;  
to love, than to be loved.  
For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.  
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.  
It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.

*St. Francis of Assisi*

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
    he leads me beside quiet waters,  
    he restores my soul.  
He guides me in paths of righteousness  
    for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk  
    through the valley of the shadow of death,  
    I will fear no evil,  
    for you are with me;  
    your rod and your staff,  
You prepare a table before me  
    in the presence of my enemies.  
    You anoint my head with oil;  
    my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and love will follow me  
    all the days of my life,  
    and I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
    forever.

*Psalm 23*

Happy are all who fear the Lord, who walk in the ways of  
God.  
What your hands provide you will enjoy; you will be happy  
and prosper:  
Like a fruitful vine your wife within your home,  
Like olive plants your children around your table.  
Just so will they be blessed who fear the Lord.  
May the Lord bless you from Zion, all the days of your life  
that you may share Jerusalem's joy and live to see your  
children's children.

*Psalm 128:1–6*

### **A Lasallian Daily Offering of Self**

This is a way of praying that St. John Baptist de La Salle  
taught the early Brothers.

#### First Movement

Pause for a few minutes to quiet yourself and to remember  
that God is, even in this very moment, present to you.

*In all of creation, everything around you.  
In your very self, keeping you alive.  
In the midst of those with whom you are praying.  
In the Eucharist and in the Word of God.  
In you by God's Grace at work in your life,  
In the chapel as God's dwelling place.  
In the young and the poor.*

Ask for the graces necessary to understand better what God's  
will is for you and that you might give yourself wholeheart-  
edly to a more conscious accomplishment of this will ... to  
God's plan.

*I consecrate myself entirely to you to procure your  
glory as far as I am able and as you will require of  
me. (De La Salle, 1694)*

#### Second Movement

Contemplate the mystery of God's love at work in the world.

Read today's Gospel a few times slowly. What word or words  
especially catch your attention? Listen to what is being said;  
watch what happens; try to become part of the mystery; lov-  
ingly contemplate Jesus. Reflect on the Mystery of God's love  
at work in your own life.

*Does today's Gospel have any relevance to your life?  
How do you try to share the message of this Gospel with those  
with whom you live and work, with those who have been  
entrusted to your care?  
If you chose to allow this Scripture passage to come alive in you  
now, what would you have to change in your life? What  
are the obstacles to this change?*

### Third Movement

Resolve to be open to the Spirit working in and through you today.

*Where is the Spirit drawing you to sacrifice yourself today  
that others might have a happier, fuller, holier, and  
more love-filled life?*

Take a few minutes now to thank God for this time you have spent in prayer and to reoffer yourself, as far as you are able, to the accomplishment of God's will ... God's plan.

*Directions adapted from De La Salle's "Method of Interior Prayer," by Brother William Mann, F.S.C.*

The Brothers have demonstrated permanency by providing for over three centuries an astonishing array of activities from the most basic literacy learning to the most complicated technological learning for both children and adults ... so that they can be fully integrated in community and society.

*The United Nations (UNESCO Noma Prize)*

### Lasallian Colleges and Universities in the United States

Christian Brothers University, Memphis, Tennessee

La Salle University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lewis University, Romeoville, Illinois

Manhattan College, New York, New York

St. Mary's College of California, Moraga, California

St. Mary's University, Winona, Minnesota

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The France of De La Salle, "Sign of Faith" [Brothers of the Christian Schools, San Francisco District], 2, no. 1 (Fall, 2000), 9.
- <sup>2</sup> Luke Salm, F.S.C., *Lasallian Values in Higher Education*, address given at La Salle University, March, 1993.
- <sup>3</sup> La Salle University Catalogue, 4.
- <sup>4</sup> T.S. Eliot, *Little Gidding*, No. 4 of Four Quartets (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publisher, San Diego, 1968), 59.
- <sup>5</sup> Luke Salm, F. S. C., *Together for Mission*, address given at Lewis University, 1999.
- <sup>6</sup> Salm, *Together for Mission*.
- <sup>7</sup> Salm, *Together for Mission*.
- <sup>8</sup> Voltaire said of De La Salle that "he put pens in the hands of plowmen."
- <sup>9</sup> De La Salle Brothers of the Christian Schools, "Institutions and Activities," <http://www.lasalle.org/English>.
- <sup>10</sup> Portions of the description of the University's founding are taken from a section of the 1985 La Salle University Self Study, vi-vii.
- <sup>11</sup> Alistair Cooke, *Alistair Cooke's America* (Alfred Knopf Publishers, New York, 1973), 274.
- <sup>12</sup> Charles R. Morris, *American Catholic, The Saints and Sinners Who Built America's Most Powerful Church* (Vintage Books, New York, 1997), 60.
- <sup>13</sup> Elizabeth M. Geffen, "Industrial Development and Social Crisis 1841-1854," in *Philadelphia A 300-Year History* (W.W. Norton and Company, New York, 1982), 357.
- <sup>14</sup> Russell F. Weigley, "The Border City in Civil War 1854-1865," in *Philadelphia A 300-Year History* (W.W. Norton and Company, New York, 1982), 363.
- <sup>15</sup> Villanova University was founded in 1842 and St. Joseph's in 1851. However, both were closed at the time of La Salle's founding. [David R. Contosta, *Saint Joseph's: Philadelphia's Jesuit University 150 Years* (St. Joseph's University Press, Philadelphia, 2000), 36, David Contosta, *Villanova University 1842-1992: American, Catholic, Augustinian* (The Pennsylvania University Press, University Park, PA, 1995), 24.]
- <sup>16</sup> Thomas J. Donaghy, F. S. C., *Conceived in Crisis* (Walther Printing House, Philadelphia, 1966), 87.

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