

# Community Prayer Services

## Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies



*Cycle One*

2008

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## Introduction & Explanation

### *Morning Prayers*

The ten morning prayer services that have been prepared for our use during the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies in 2008 are intentionally of a similar format, one that closely parallels **the triple movement of the method of Lasallian interior prayer**. For those who are interested, a brief explanation of this method has been included with these prayer services.

Each prayer service begins with a moment – **the first movement** – in which we spend some time “recalling the presence of God.” We do this either in song, the words of which recall God’s presence, or with a brief sung Lasallian invocation.

Each prayer service then invites us to spend some time “reflecting on our Lasallian identity” – **the second movement**. Normally, two related readings are provided to assist in this reflection; and we recite together an antiphonal response between the two readings. An art image often accompanies one or other of the readings, and a brief pause for quiet reflection is proposed after the second reading.

Each prayer service concludes with some time – **the third movement** – spent “recommitting to Lasallian mission.” This movement begins with intercessory prayer; and here we are invited to share aloud our prayers of praise, thanksgiving, pardon, or petition after the reader invites: “For whom or for what else shall we pray?” Finally, we have the common recitation of a closing prayer; and each of these prayers, which we say together and by association with fellow Lasallians, asks for divine assistance and is an expression of our re-commitment to the Lasallian educational mission. A very slight pause at the end of each line of the prayer would keep the closing prayer from being rushed and add to a more prayerful and reflective conclusion of our time together as a community gathered in the presence of God.

### *Evening Prayers*

The ten evening prayer services that have been prepared for our use during the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies in 2008 are, also, intentionally of a similar format.

Each begins with a **call to worship**; and one of three different Lasallian beginnings or “calls to prayer” has been used for each evening. One focuses on God, who is shepherd and guide; one focuses on Jesus, who is present in our midst; and one focuses on the Spirit of prophetic justice, who enlivens us for mission.

Each invites us to consider one or other aspect of discipleship by centering on a recent deceased personage – **a reflection on a modern icon** – who embodies some aspect of

gospel living. An image of the person accompanies the prayer service, as is a reading from the writings of that person. The reading is focused and not too long.

The prayers, which come at the end of a long day and after an evening spent in study and discussion together, are intentionally kind of reflective and meditative rather than wordy or interactive. Some recorded instrumental music will be played after the reading, and this quiet music will last for about three to five minutes. A question is provided as a possible stimulus to personal reflection during the quiet that follows the reading.

Each concludes with the common recitation of a **closing prayer**; and each of these prayers, which we say together and by association with fellow Lasallians, asks for divine assistance and is an expression of our re-commitment to the Lasallian educational mission. A very slight pause at the end of each line of the prayer would keep the closing prayer from being rushed and add to a more prayerful and reflective conclusion of our time together as a community gathered in the presence of God.

### *Acknowledgements*

These prayer services, which were prepared by Tina Bonacci and Brother William Mann, will hopefully provide you with some usable or adaptable prayer resources when you return to your communities and ministries. Brother Timothy Coldwell, Brother Charles Kitson, Brother Frederick Mueller, Susannah Nelson, and Brother Lawrence Schatz provided invaluable feedback and suggested corrections as the prayers were put together. Brother John Cantwell kindly adapted the Lasallian antiphon of Brother Antonio Botana for our use.

Some of the prayer services are adaptations of prayers that were prepared by others. For example, “Ambassadors and Ministers of Jesus Christ,” “Deeply Human and Deeply Christian,” “Let the Children Come to Me,” and “Seeing and Blessing Young People” are, with minor adaptations, materials prepared by Brother Nicholas Hutchinson and Brother Damian Lundy for *Walk in My Presence: A Book of Prayer Services and Resources, Vol. 2* (Great Britain, 1996).

Please note that the prayer services are a work-in-progress, and some consideration is being given to revise them and to prepare similar prayer services at some time in the future.

# A Life for Others

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

### 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

### 2. Song “Come to the Water” vs. 1 & 4

#### COME TO THE WATER

John Foley, S.J.

1. O let all who thirst, let them come to the  
2. And let all who seek, let them come to the  
3. And let all who toil, let them come to the  
4. And let all the poor, let them come to the

1. wa - ter. And let all who have noth-ing,  
2. wa - ter. And let all who have noth-ing,  
3. wa - ter. And let all who are wea - ry,  
4. wa - ter. Bring the ones who are lad - en,

1. let them come to the Lord: with-out  
2. let them come to the Lord: with-out  
3. let them come to the Lord: all who  
4. bring them all to the Lord: bring the

1. mon-ey, with-out price. Why should you pay the  
2. mon-ey, with-out strife. Why should you spend your  
3. la - bor, with-out rest. How can your soul find  
4. chil-dren with-out might. Eas - y the load and

1. price, ex-cept for the Lord?  
2. life, ex-cept for the Lord?  
3. rest, ex-cept for the Lord?  
4. light: 7 come to the Lord.

Text: Isaiah 55:1,2; Matthew 11:28-30. Text and music © 1978, John B. Foley, S.J. and New Dawn Music.  
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### *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

3. A Reading from the Writings of Archbishop Oscar Romero

“We have continuously to repeat, although it is a voice that cries in the desert, ‘no to violence, yes to peace.’

“My life has been threatened many times. My death will be for the liberation of my people and a testimony of hope for the future. A bishop will die; but the Church of God, which is the people, will never perish. I don’t believe in death without resurrection. They can kill me, but they cannot kill the voice of justice. If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadorian people.

“Christ invites us not to fear persecution because, believe me, brothers and sisters, whoever decides for the poor must endure the same fate as the poor; and in El Salvador we know what the fate of the poor really means – to disappear, to be tortured, to be imprisoned, and to be found dead.”

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response from the Writings of Archbishop Oscar Romero

All: If they kill me,  
I will rise again.

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

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

Side One: We cannot do everything,  
and there is a sense of liberation  
in realizing that.

Side Two: This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete,  
but it is a beginning.

Side One: It is a step along the way,  
an opportunity for God's grace  
to enter and do the rest.

All: If they kill me,  
I will rise again.

6. A Reading of "Ten Hard Years in Vietnam" by Brother Michael Pham, FSC

"The situation in my country turned tragic after the events of 1975. As soon as the communists took over our government, all the private schools were closed ... I was given thirteen years detention, though, in fact, I did only ten. In the first six months, everything went quite well. I was put in a dungeon without light, with handcuffs and shackles around my feet; and as I had nothing else to do, I divided my time between sleep and prayer. After that, I was transferred to several different prison camps; and during the first seven years, I lived in the biggest camp in the south of Vietnam ... There were more than 2,000 prisoners there on hard labor. They included young illiterate criminals. This got me really thinking: could I honestly do nothing to help them? However, study and teaching were strictly forbidden; and a reign of terror ensured that the regulation was not usually broken. But I had to do something; so very much on the quiet, I began to live my Lasallian vocation as a teacher.

"Walls have ears, though; and several times I was found out and put into solitary confinement – first for a month and then for longer periods. My friends ... would say, 'Don't forget that charity begins at home. Stop getting yourself into trouble.' But my Lasallian zeal to teach these young illiterate criminals simply grew under pressure, and I extended my lessons ... It was this Lasallian spirit which gave me the courage to make the effort to live in joy under the most wretched of conditions."

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

8. Our Response

## O Lord, I Adore You

Antonio Botana FSC

Voice

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a voice part. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a series of eighth notes: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. The lyrics 'O Lord, I a - dore you: All of my life you have gui-ded my jour -' are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody with eighth notes: B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and ends with a double bar line. The lyrics 'ney.. O Lord, I a - dore you: all of my life you have gui-ded my jour - ney..' are written below the notes.

O Lord, I a - dore you: All of my life you have gui-ded my jour -

ney.. O Lord, I a - dore you: all of my life you have gui-ded my jour - ney..

## ***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

### **9. Intercessory Prayer**

Reader: That we might have the graces necessary to suffer with  
patience the difficulties we have to endure, we pray...  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we might have the courage to live with Lasallian zeal  
our holy ministry of education, we pray...  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

### **10. Closing Prayer**

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: O good and loving creator God,  
we offer you the whole of this day.  
Let all our prayer, work, joy, and suffering  
join with the lives offered to you  
by the whole People of God  
and especially with Jesus, your son and our brother.

Let your Spirit be with us today,  
in all that we do on behalf of the gospel.  
And we entrust to your loving concern  
our families, our loved ones,  
and all those with whom we live and work. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.



## Brother John Johnston

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Almighty and ever-loving God, our Shepherd and Guide, we are exhorted by St. John Baptist de La Salle, to be shepherds to those “entrusted to our care.” As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of our call to be loving and caring older brothers and sisters to those with whom we work. And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Brother John Johnston, former Superior General, died of cancer in Memphis in October 2007. The following words from a letter he wrote were used in the homily delivered at his funeral.

“Three years ago, I had the privilege of spending four weeks with young Brothers of the Lwanga District ... The novices’ retreat took place in a beautiful center several hours from Nairobi. The feature that most impressed me about the center was the outdoor, life-sized *Way of the Cross*. This *Way of the Cross* ... includes not only the traditional stations, but also an additional eleven or twelve ... representing scenes in the life of Jesus.

“One of the stations in particular moved me profoundly, so much so that I returned to it every afternoon of the retreat. The station commemorates Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before he died. Jesus is on his knees, holding an oversized cup, the cup that represents for him the will of God in his regard, the cup the Father is asking him to drink ... ‘Abba, Father, for you everything is possible. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it...’



“Drinking the cup leads Jesus to the cross. His terror and anguish does not leave him. He shouts, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ We know, however, that Jesus moves beyond that feeling of abandonment and cries out ‘yes’ to what his Father is permitting to happen to him ...

“To be a disciple of Jesus is to live with arms outstretched, in an attitude of ‘yes’ to whatever God wills. It is to stand before the Father as Jesus did and to cry out, ‘My Father, if this cup cannot pass by, but I must drink it, your will be done.’”

- *How am I to live my life intentionally with arms outstretched, in an attitude of “yes” to whatever God wills?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from Brothers Nicholas Hutchinson and Damian Lundy in  
*Walk in My Presence*

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Loving God,  
we ask you to bless us and to bless all to whom you send us.  
Inspire us with your Spirit  
and enable us to live the gospel more authentically  
that we may be credible witnesses of your love  
and ambassadors of Jesus, your Son.  
May your power shine through our weakness,  
since we are earthen vessels.  
In our affliction, let us never be crushed;  
in our doubts, never despair;  
in temptation, never be destroyed.  
May our weaknesses become your opportunities,  
and inspire us always to praise you. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Brother John Johnston, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

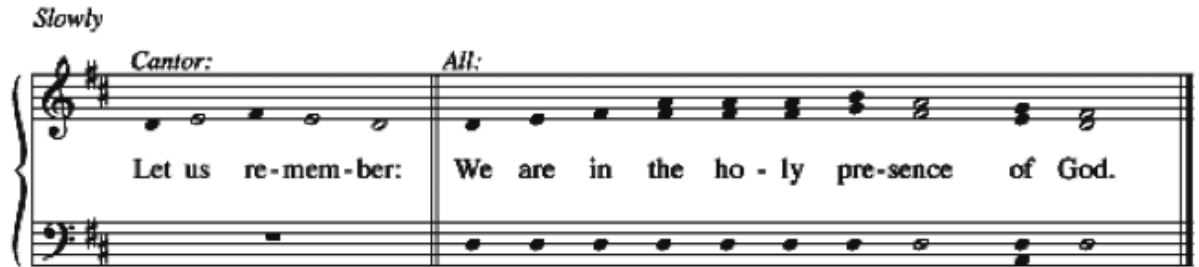
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

## To Say “Yes” to God Changes People

### *Recalling the Presence of God*

1. Sung: “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]



### *Reflecting on our Lasallian Identity*

2. A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38

“In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, ‘Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ But Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?’ And the angel said to her in reply, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.’ Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.’ Then the angel departed from her.”

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
4. Our Response from the Gospel of Luke 1:46-55

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

Reader: My soul glorifies the Lord.  
My spirit rejoices in God, my savior.

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

Reader: He looks on his servant in her nothingness;  
henceforth, all ages will call me blessed.  
The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy is his name!

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

Reader: His mercy is from age to age  
on those who fear him.  
He put forth his arm in strength  
and scatters the proud-hearted.

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

Reader: He casts the mighty from their thrones  
and raises the lowly.  
He fills the starving with good things,  
and sends the rich away empty.

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

Reader: He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy,  
the mercy promised to our ancestors,  
to Abraham, Sarah, and their children forever.

All: Blessed is the Virgin Mary  
who bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

5. An Adapted Reading from *Feminine Spirituality* by Rosemary Haughton

“The coming of God into our lives can happen to any of us; one doesn’t have to be a saint. The attempt to say ‘yes’ to God changes people. God comes into our lives, even if we find this hard to understand. He works there; he becomes available in us to others who are wanting him. This even happens, sometimes, to people who do not believe.

“Think for a moment of Mary, the Mother of God. Her story began with a simple ‘yes.’ This woman said ‘yes’ to something that was going to change her whole life and the lives of others. She didn’t know exactly how or even precisely why. But she said ‘yes,’ and with this ‘yes’ Mary conceived the child whom we recognize as Jesus, our Savior and Lord. We know that something of revolutionary importance and on a cosmic scale happened when Mary said ‘yes’ to God’s messenger. But we can never understand how she felt.



*The Annunciation (or Ecce Ancilla Domini)* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

“This same thing happens to us in many little moments, when God sends messengers into our lives, and their invitation is accepted or rejected. It happens

to a person needing comfort or help, perhaps an irritating person, at a busy moment. Or something beautiful – a flower struggling to grow among city concrete, or a sunset, the turn of a child’s head, a snatch of music, or laughter – something which demands a response to the glory of the Spirit in the world, only we often prefer not to see it for it disturbs our comfortableness. Or perhaps some humiliation comes, we feel neglected, tied to a dull, thankless job, or we lose a friend, or an opportunity, and again the invitation is to let the experience in, let it work and grow. Whatever it is, it asks that we let the experience take us over, changing us, making us living and helping us grow.

“And so, as you surrender to this experience, as you struggle to know what God is doing in you, remember the woman Mary who knew God’s action in a most profound manner. And so, with a sense of extraordinary release, discovery, companionship, find yourself saying: Hail Mary – full of grace, the Lord is with you – and with me, in my way, and so, blessed are we. Pray for me now, because now I’m beginning to know what you knew. Help me to know it more fully, to bring it to birth.”

6. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

### ***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: In thanksgiving for those persons and events that have fostered positive change and growth in our lives and for the encouragement and support to keep saying “yes” to God and to life, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: In thanksgiving for the many ways, both small and great, in which we have been instruments and agents of positive change and growth in the lives of others, especially in the lives of our students and our Lasallian colleagues, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

8. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you.

Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus;  
holy Mary, mother of God,  
pray for us sinners  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Song: "Let the River Flow" by Darrell Evans

Let the poor man say, "I am rich in Him."  
Let the lost man say, "I am found in Him."  
Let the river flow.  
Let the blind man say, "I can see again."  
Let the dead man say, "I am born again."  
Oh let the river flow; oh let the river flow.

Let the river flow; let the river flow;  
Holy Spirit come; move in power.  
Let the river flow; let the river flow.  
Holy Spirit come; move in power.  
Let the river flow; let the river flow;  
Let the river flow.

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Words and Music by Darrell Evans

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Mary, Queen and Mother of Christian Schools,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.

## Blessed Theresa of Calcutta

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Lord Jesus, St. John Baptist de La Salle, reminded us that we could “consider God present in the place where we are” because you promised that “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of your abiding presence in our midst each time that we gather in prayer. And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: For over forty years, Mother Theresa ministered to the poor, sick, orphaned, and dying. The following is an adaptation, in her own words, of a prayer by St. Francis of Assisi.

“Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men [and women] throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love give peace and joy.

“Lord, make me a channel of your 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 in forgetting self that one finds; it is in dying that one awakens to eternal life. Amen.”





- *How might I be an active agent of faith, harmony, joy, hope, and forgiveness in my ministry?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from St. Francis of Assisi

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;  
 where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
 when there is injury, pardon;  
 where there is doubt, faith;  
 where there is despair, hope;  
 where there is darkness, light;  
 and where there is sadness, joy.  
 Grant that I may not so much seek  
 to be consoled as to console;  
 to be understood, as to understand,  
 to be loved as to love;  
 for it is in giving that we receive,  
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
 and it is in dying [to ourselves]  
 that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta, model of gospel living,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

# Let the Children Come to Me

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

### 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

### 2. Song    **Refrain Sung Together**    “Everyday God” by Bernadette Farrell

Earth’s creator, <b>Everyday God</b> Loving Maker, <b>O Jesus,</b> You who shaped us, <b>O Spirit,</b> Recreate us. <b>come be with us.</b>	Hope of all hopes, <b>O Spirit,</b> Light of all lights, <b>come be with us.</b>  In our resting... In our rising... In our hoping... In our waiting...  In our dreaming... In our daring... In our searching... In our sharing... God of laughter... God of sorrow... Home and shelter... Strong and patient...  Way of freedom... Star of morning... Timeless healer...	Flame eternal...  Word of gladness... Word of mercy... Word of friendship... Word of challenge...  Gentle father... Faithful brother... Tender sister... Loving mother...  Our beginning... Our unfolding... Our enduring... Journey's ending...  Alleluia... Now and always... Alleluia... Through all ages
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## *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

### 3. A Reading                      From the Writings of Cardinal Hume

“In Auschwitz I was particularly moved by pictures of old men, women and children huddled together in fear, and naked. The sight of people stripped of their clothes, and thus too of their dignity, haunts me still. There was a kind of blasphemy in what had been done, for the human body is an icon of that beauty which pre-exists in God, and is the prototype of all that we value and admire. As I wandered round those terrible huts, horrified and ashamed at the crimes which had been perpetrated in our time, I was suddenly struck by a picture of young people, boys, and girls, healthy, strong and cheerful. Beneath the picture I read:

‘I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience, morality ... We will train young people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence – imperious, relentless, cruel.’

“It bears the name of Adolf Hitler. It is a quotation which expresses all that is opposed to a religious and caring attitude to life and to our fellow human beings. It calls for violence (the opposite of gentleness and self-restraint), for imperiousness (the opposite of humility and service), for cruelty (the opposite of kindness and human solidarity) ...

“Auschwitz represents the horror of a society from which God and the values of the gospel have been consciously excluded.”

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response From *Walk in My Presence*, #2 (page 460)

Side One: Grant me, O God, the heart of a child,  
pure and transparent as a spring;  
a simple heart which never harbors sorrows;  
a heart glorious in self-serving  
and tender in compassion.

Side Two: Grant me a heart that is faithful and generous,  
which will never forget any good  
or bear a grudge for any evil.

Side One: Make me a heart gentle and humble,  
loving without asking any return,  
large-hearted and undaunted,  
which no ingratitude can sour  
and no indifference can weary;

Side Two: A heart penetrated by the love of Jesus;  
a heart whose desire will only be satisfied in heaven.  
Grant me, O God,  
the mind and heart of your dear Son.

6. Reading From *The Diary of Anne Frank*

“It’s really a wonder that I haven’t dropped all my ideals because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can’t build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness. I hear the ever-approaching

thunder, which will destroy us, too. I can feel the suffering of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty, too, will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again. In the meantime, I must uphold my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry them out.”

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

8. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: Lord Jesus, you have entrusted young people to us; and you yourself stand in our midst. Let us honor that trust and lead these young people to experience your love and care through our ministry with them; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: Help us, Lord, to be good leaders and witnesses for the people and the youngsters in our care; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

9. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer.

All: God, Our Father,  
Lead us to find delight in our lives each day,  
in all the circumstances in which you place us,  
and with the people whom you entrust to us.  
Inspire us to seek first your kingdom,  
to live joyfully in your presence,  
and to grow in your image and likeness.  
Empower us with your Spirit  
that we may transform ordinary lives  
and be credible witnesses of your love. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

## Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Holy Spirit, source of all wisdom and understanding, our world needs the kind of educators who, in the words of St. John Baptist de La Salle, might “shine like stars for all eternity” (Dn 12:3). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), we ask you to light up our world and our hearts with the fire of your prophetic justice; and we take a moment to remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., was put behind bars in Alabama as a result of his continuous crusade for civil rights. While in jail, he was the subject of criticism by some who thought his protests “unwise and untimely.” In response, King wrote his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*.

“... When you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six year old daughter why she can’t go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five year old son who is asking: ‘Daddy, why do white people treat colored people



so mean?'; when you take a cross county drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading 'white' and 'colored'; when your first name becomes 'nigger,' your middle name becomes 'boy' (however old you are) and your last name becomes 'John,' and your wife and mother are never given the respected title 'Mrs.'; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness' – then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait."

- *What is the voice inside of me that says, "Wait! Be wise! Now is not the right time?" Whose voice is that; and why do I listen?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

**Grail Prayer**

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Lord Jesus,  
 we give you our hands – to do your work.  
 We give you our feet – to go your way.  
 We give you our eyes – to see as you do.  
 We give you our tongues – to speak your words.  
 We give you our minds – that you may think in us.  
 We give you our spirits – that you may pray in us.  
 Above all, we give you our hearts – that you may love, in us,  
 your Father and all humankind.  
 We give you our whole selves – that you may grow in us  
 so that it is you, Lord Jesus,  
 who live and work and pray in us. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Martin Luther King Jr., model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

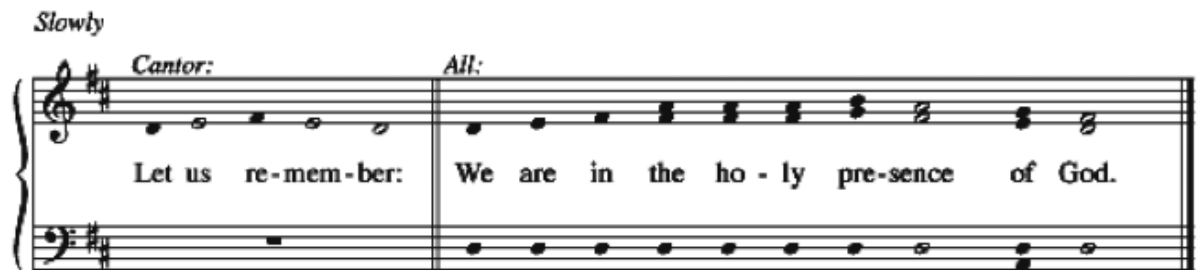
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

## The Holy Presence of God

### *Recalling the Presence of God*

1. Sung: “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]



### *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

2. Reading of a Reflection by Brother William Mann on the painting of Jean-François Millet entitled *L'Angelus du Soir* (1859)

“Jean-François Millet, a French artist of the nineteenth-century, painted peasant scenes and little else. This was life as Millet knew it, for he was himself peasant-born; and his paintings reflect a gentle quality in his depiction of simple, somewhat worn-by-toil fieldworkers.

“For example, look at this couple in the painting. They are simple farmers. How humble and respectful they appear in this scene, as they pause in evening prayer to thank God and the earth for their daily food. If you look carefully, you can see the far-off spire of the church, from which a bell sounds. The day’s work is drawing to a close. The peasant man and woman have been digging potatoes ... the man uncovering them, while his wife has been putting them in the basket. As the tolling of the evening Angelus floats across the fields, they pause and bow their heads in prayer. The man has dropped his pitchfork and uncovered his head, and his wife has clasped her hands devoutly before her. All the air seems still and full of tender sound and color; and we, like Millet, seem ‘to hear the bell.’

“Viewers often identify with the reverence of these two people, and perhaps even feel some of the same elevation and reflection ... a quiet recollection of God’s holy presence. In the here and now of everyday life ... in the midst of daily labor ... with one’s companion ... at the end of a day ..., the couple pauses in grateful remembrance and hopeful expectation.

“This practice of pausing and of remembering is not so different from that proposed by De La Salle to the first Brother-teachers. In his *Letters*, he urged

them to ‘often remind yourself ... that you are in the presence of God ... that God is with you’; and the *Common Rules* and *The Conduct of Schools* exhorted them to pause and to remember ... as they knelt to adore God present in all the parts of the community house ... and ... as they entered the classroom for the first time each morning ... or ... as they accustomed the youngsters to the practice of recalling the presence of God each half hour of the school day.

“Wherever we are ... in each place and in each relationship ... in the midst of our employment and the daily events of life ... here and now ... let us also pause, then, in remembrance and expectation.”

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
  4. Song “I Will Walk in the Presence of God” [text and music  
by Marty Haugen]
- Verse 1: For the love of the one who has heard my cry:  
I will walk in the presence of God.  
God has heard my distress and I shall not die:  
I will walk in the presence of God.



Refrain: I will walk in the presence of God,  
in the land, in the land of the living,  
for the love of the one who has heard my cry:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Verse 2: In the cords of my death I was tangled 'round:  
I will walk in the presence of God.  
Those who seek you in anguish shall not be bound:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Refrain: I will walk in the presence of God,  
in the land, in the land of the living,  
for the love of the one who has heard my cry:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Verse 3: God has raised up my soul from the gates of death:  
I will walk in the presence of God.  
God has dried all my tears and renewed my breath:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Refrain: I will walk in the presence of God,  
in the land, in the land of the living,  
for the love of the one who has heard my cry:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Verse 4: What return can I give for the gifts I claim?  
I will walk in the presence of God.  
Lift the cup of salvation and praise your name:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

Refrain: I will walk in the presence of God,  
in the land, in the land of the living,  
for the love of the one who has heard my cry:  
I will walk in the presence of God.

5. A Reading from the Fourth Letter by Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection in *The Practice of the Presence of God* (1685)

“It is not necessary to be always in church to be with God; we can make a private chapel of our heart where we can retire from time to time to commune with Him, peacefully, humbly, lovingly. Everyone is capable of these intimate conversations with God, some more, others less. He knows what we can do. Let us begin. Perhaps he is only waiting for a single generous resolution from us.”

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 to 3 minutes]

## ***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

### **7. Intercessory Prayer**

Reader: Holy Spirit of God, breathe new life into our hearts so that we may  
be open to the word of God in our lives; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: Spirit of Jesus, guide us in our vocations, so that we may help  
awaken a sense of the divine presence in those to whom we  
minister; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: For whom and for what else shall we pray?

*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

### **8. Closing Prayer**      From Brother Nicholas Hutchinson's *Walk in My Presence* #2, p. vi

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Brother Jesus,  
your presence is interwoven  
throughout each day of our lives.  
As we journey with our fellow pilgrims,  
touch our hearts and open our eyes  
that we may recognize you  
walking beside us.  
Lead us to live in such a way  
that we discover you  
in the quietness and in the spaces,  
as well as in the busyness  
of our lives each day.  
Continue to call us your friends  
and accompany us to that place  
where we shall see our Father, face to face. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

## Pope John Paul II

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Almighty and ever-loving God, our Shepherd and Guide, we are exhorted by St. John Baptist de La Salle, to be shepherds to those “entrusted to our care.” As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of our call to be loving and caring older brothers and sisters to those with whom we work. And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: During World Youth Day 2002, Pope John Paul II addressed the hundreds of thousands of young people gathered with him in Toronto in the following words.

“Dear young people ... the new millennium opened with two contrasting scenarios: one, the sight of multitudes of pilgrims coming to Rome during the Great Jubilee to pass through the Holy Door which is Christ, our Savior and Redeemer; and the other, the terrible terrorist attack on New York City, an image that is a sort of icon of a world in which hostility and hatred seem to prevail.



“The question that arises is dramatic: on what foundations must we build the new historical era that is emerging from the great transformations of the twentieth century? Is it enough to rely on the technological revolution now taking place, which seems to respond only to criteria of productivity and efficiency, without reference to the individual’s spiritual dimension or to any universally shared ethical values? Is it right to be content with provisional answers to the ultimate questions, and to abandon life to the impulses of instinct, to short-lived sensations or passing fads? The question will not go away: on what foundations, on what certainties should we build our lives and the life of the community to which we belong?

“... The aspiration that humanity nurtures, amid countless injustices and sufferings, is the hope of a new civilization marked by freedom and peace. But for such an undertaking, a new generation of builders is needed. Moved not by fear or violence but by the urgency of genuine love, they must learn to build, brick by brick, the city of God within the [human] city.

“Allow me, dear young people, to consign this hope of mine to you: you must be those ‘builders’! You are the men and women of tomorrow. The future is in your hearts and in your hands. God is entrusting to you the task, at once difficult and uplifting, of working with him in the building of the civilization of love.”

- *How ready and willing am I to work with God and with my sister and brother Lasallians in building the civilization of love?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: We adore you, Most Holy Trinity;  
and we thank you  
for the exemplary life of your servant, Pope John Paul II.  
May his strong faith in your loving providence,  
his great love for you,  
and his zeal for the salvation of his neighbor  
remain an inspiration for all people.  
May we be better motivated  
to dedicate our lives and our work  
to your greater honor and glory.  
For to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
is due all glory, honor and worship,  
now and forever. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Pope John Paul II, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

# Ambassadors and Ministers of Jesus Christ

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

### 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

### 2. Opening Song: “Open My Eyes Lord” [text and music by Jesse Manibusan]

**OPEN MY EYES**

Jesse Manibusan

Verses

1. O - pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.  
2. O - pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.  
3. O - pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.  
4. I live with - in you. Deep in your heart, O Rest now in

1. see. 2. hear. 4. me. 3. love.

Bridge

And the first shall be last, and our eyes are o - pened, and we'll hear like nev - er be - fore. And we'll speak in new ways, and we'll see God's face in plac - es we've nev - er known.

Text: Based on Mark 8:22-25. Text and music © 1988, 1998, Jesse Manibusan.  
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## *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

### 3. A Reading from Brother John Johnston’s “Living Authentically in Christ Jesus” (p. 30)

“God has chosen and called us ... to take the place of Jesus the Good Shepherd, and to do his work. It is our vocation to represent Jesus Christ himself. It is no distortion of the Founder’s thought to say that it is our vocation to re-present Jesus Christ, to make him present again: ‘He wants your disciples to see him in you, and receive your teaching as if he were teaching them.’

“Our charism in the Church is to make the loving and saving presence of Jesus Christ a visible and effective reality in the world of education, in the world of the young.”

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response From St. John Baptist de La Salle’s *Meditation* #195.2

Side One: Since you are ambassadors  
and ministers of Jesus Christ  
in the work that you do,  
you must act as representing Jesus Christ himself.

Side Two: He wants your disciples  
to see him in you  
and to receive your teaching  
as if he were teaching them.

Side One: They must be convinced  
that the truth of Jesus Christ comes from your mouth,  
that it is only in his name that you teach,  
and that he has given you authority over them.

Side Two: They are a letter  
which Christ dictates to you,  
which you write each day in their hearts,  
not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God.

Side One: For the Spirit acts in you  
and by you  
through the power of Jesus Christ.

Side Two: He helps you overcome  
all the obstacles to their salvation,  
enlightening them in the person of Jesus  
and helping them to avoid  
all that could be displeasing to him.

Side One: In order to fulfill your responsibility  
with as much perfection and care  
as God requires of you,  
frequently give yourself to the Spirit of our Lord  
to act only under his influence  
and not through any self-seeking.

Side Two: This Holy Spirit, then,  
will fill your students with himself,  
and they will be able to possess fully  
the Christian spirit.

6. A Reading From Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*

“Let us, therefore, preserve our fervor of spirit. Let us preserve the delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing, even when it is in tears that we must sow. May it mean for us – as it did for John the Baptist, for Peter and Paul, for the other Apostles, and for a multitude of splendid evangelizers all through the Church’s history – an interior enthusiasm that nobody and nothing can quench. May it be the great joy of our ... lives. And may the world of our time, which is searching – sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope – be enabled to receive the Good News, not from ministers of the Gospel whose lives are dejected, discouraged, impatient, or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of Christ, and who are willing to risk their lives so that the Kingdom may be proclaimed and the Church established in the midst of the world.”

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

8. Intercessory Prayer Based on the Writings of De La Salle from *Walk in My Presence #2*

Reader: Lord, in your providential care you have called us to this ministry. Help us to put to good use the gifts and talents you have given us; we pray...

All: Lord, we turn to you in confidence and pray that your Spirit may come alive in us and transform us since you have chosen us to do your work.

Reader: Lord, enable us to grow in the spirit of love and prayer, often calling to mind your abiding presence. Inspire us to join prayer to our efforts for, failing this, our actions will have little effect; we pray...

All: Lord, we turn to you in confidence and pray  
that your Spirit may come alive in us and transform us  
since you have chosen us to do your work.

Reader: Lord, enable us to look upon those whom you have  
entrusted to us as your children. May we take much more  
care over their education than if they were the children of  
royalty. May it be evident, by the care we take of them, that  
we have a real love for them, a great tenderness toward  
them. May we show them much kindness and may love  
guide us in all our actions; we pray...

All: Lord, we turn to you in confidence and pray  
that your Spirit may come alive in us and transform us  
since you have chosen us to do your work.

Reader: Father, inspire us to build on the affection the young people  
have for us to lead them to you; we pray...

All: Lord, we turn to you in confidence and pray  
that your Spirit may come alive in us and transform us  
since you have chosen us to do your work.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

## 9. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Lord, come and possess me.  
Take hold of my faculties.  
Immolate my selfishness.  
Shape my life according to your ideals.  
Impress yourself upon my soul.

Work in me; shine though me.  
Make me a light and savior  
In union with all the saints

We ask for your loving concern  
on our families, our loved ones,  
and all those with whom we live and work. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.



## Dorothy Day

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Lord Jesus, St. John Baptist de La Salle, reminded us that we could “consider God present in the place where we are” because you promised that “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of your abiding presence in our midst each time that we gather in prayer. And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

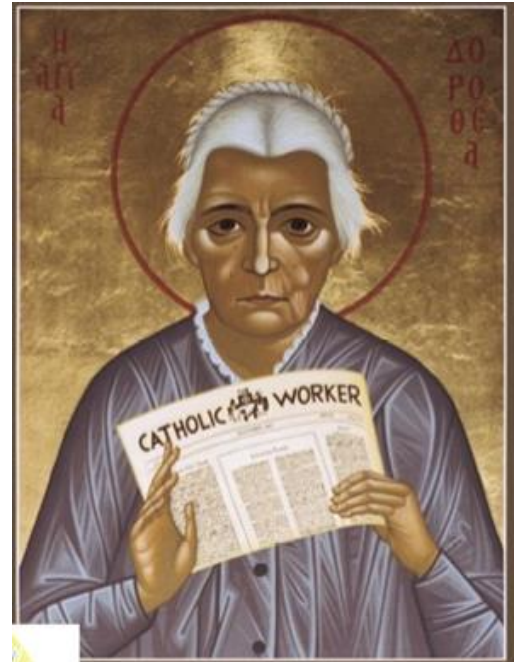
Reader: Dorothy Day is well known for her social justice work and for having helped start the Catholic Worker Movement. She believed that love has the power to change the world.

“We were just sitting there talking when Peter Maurin came in. We were just sitting there talking when lines of people began to form, saying, ‘We need bread.’ We could not say, ‘Go, be thou filled.’ If there were six small loaves and a few fishes, we had to divide them. There was always bread.

“We were just sitting there talking and people moved in on us. Let those who can take it, take it. Some moved out and that made room for more. And somehow the walls expanded ...

“The most significant thing about The Catholic Worker is poverty, some say.

“The most significant thing is community, others say. We are not alone any more. But the final word is love. At times it has been, in the words of Father Zossima, a harsh and dreadful thing, and our very faith in love has been tried through fire.



“We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know Him in the breaking of bread, and we know each other in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone any more. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.

“We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes in community.”

- *How am I called to do more to love those in my ministry and to help build a community that will best serve those entrusted to my care?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from a Catholic Worker Movement Prayer to Dorothy Day

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Friend and partner of the poor,  
guiding spirit for the Catholic worker;  
home always open to the unwanted;  
early, often lonely, witness  
in the cause of peace and conscience;  
eloquent pattern of gospel simplicity –  
Dorothy Day, disciple of the Lord:  
may we continue your gift of self to the needy  
and your untiring work for peace.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Dorothy Day, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

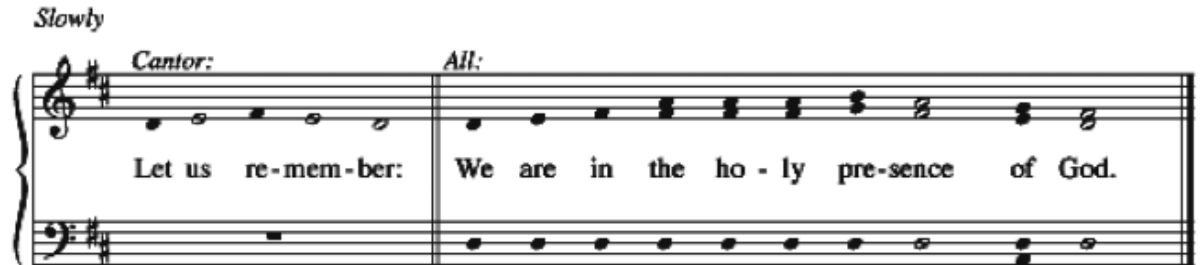
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

# You Are the Ones God Has Chosen

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

1. Sung: “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]



## *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

2. Reading      From “C’est vous qu’il a choisi... C’est *vous* qu’il a choisi”:  
A Reflection Offered by Brother John Johnston (2003)

“John Baptist de La Salle wanted the Brothers to consider these words on the first day of their annual retreat. We find the passage in the first of his *Meditations for the Time of Retreat*, meditations he composed in the last years of his life.

“The words mean literally, ‘It’s you that he (God) has chosen.’ Our contemporary translations render the phrase, ‘You are the ones he has chosen.’

“Chosen for what? Our Founder answers that question with extraordinary clarity and with impeccable logic – a logic grounded, however, in faith. He says that God wants every person to know the truth and to be saved. But it’s clear that De La Salle is not thinking abstractly of all human persons. He’s talking to the Brothers about the young people they have in their classes, kids he describes as ‘poor, abandoned, and far from salvation.’

“... We can imagine John Baptist de La Salle looking directly into the eyes of the Brothers and saying to them, ‘Brothers, God has given *you* such a ministry ... you are the ones he has chosen.’ God is *confiding* to your *care*, God is *entrusting* to you, the children and youth that you have in your schools. ‘Look upon yourselves’ as God’s *ministers, ambassadors, co-workers*. God wants you to *represent* Jesus Christ – to re-present – to make Jesus’ loving and saving presence a visible and effective reality in their lives. He wants you, in Jesus’ name and in his place, to touch their hearts and their minds.

“Lasallians, De La Salle addressed these words first and foremost to the Brothers ... Today, however, Lasallians, without the slightest hesitation, I say that John Baptist de La Salle is addressing these words to each of you, whether you are married, single, member of another Religious Institute, priest, or Brother of the Christian Schools.

“In total accord with your primary life commitment, look upon yourselves as God’s ministers, ambassadors, co-workers. Look upon yourselves as Jesus’ presence in the lives of the youth God is confiding to your care.”

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

4. Song “God Has Chosen Me” [text and music by Bernadette Farrell]

Verse 1: God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring new sight to those searching for light:  
God has chosen me, chosen me:

Refrain: And to tell the world that God’s kingdom is near,  
to remove oppression and breakdown fear,  
yes, God’s time is near, God’s time is near,  
God’s time is near, God’s time is near.

Verse 2: God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to set alight a new fire.  
God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring to birth a new kingdom on earth:  
God has chosen me, chosen me:

Refrain: And to tell the world that God’s kingdom is near,  
to remove oppression and breakdown fear,  
yes, God’s time is near, God’s time is near,  
God’s time is near, God’s time is near.

Verse 3: God is calling me, God is calling me  
in all whose cry is unheard.  
God is calling me, God is calling me  
to raise up the voice with no power or choice:  
God is calling me, calling me:

Refrain: And to tell the world that God’s kingdom is near,  
to remove oppression and breakdown fear,  
yes, God’s time is near, God’s time is near,  
God’s time is near, God’s time is near.

5. Reading From the “Message of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter to the Lasallian Family” (*Circular* 455, Rome 2007, p. 59)

“The field of our shared mission is vast. In addition to the rights of children and respect for life, we have noted in a special way the problems posed by migratory movements, which affect many families, the need for a true solidarity among nations, people yearning for true hope in our world ... We count on you to take up the challenge, each according to your age, state in life, and personal convictions. Do you hear the calls, loud or silent, of those for whom you are directly responsible, with their intellectual, moral, affective, and spiritual needs? We ask you to continue to respond to these calls with us.”

6. Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 to 3 minutes]

## *Recommitting to Lasallian Mission*

- ## 7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: Loving Creator, font of love and generosity, continue to fill us with love and gratitude. Lead us to celebrate your constant goodness to us, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: Heavenly Creator, we bring to you all our talents and gifts, all our successes and failures, all the love we have received and given, and all those to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. May your love and light continue to inspire us and to remind us that we are the people you have chosen, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: For whom and for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

- |                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 8. Closing Prayer | Prayer of the Teacher before School |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: You, my God,  
are my strength, my patience,  
my light, and my counsel;  
it is you who opens the minds and hearts  
of the children confided to my care.  
Abandon me not to myself for a moment.  
For my own conduct and for that of my pupils,  
grant me the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

the spirit of counsel and fortitude,  
the spirit of knowledge and piety,  
the spirit of holy fear of you,  
and an ardent zeal to procure your glory. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.

## Brother James Miller

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Holy Spirit, source of all wisdom and understanding, our world needs the kind of educators who, in the words of St. John Baptist de La Salle, might “shine like stars for all eternity” (Dn 12:3). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), we ask you to light up our world and our hearts with the fire of your prophetic justice; and we take a moment to remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Brother James Miller was assassinated in 1982 for his commitment to poor and indigenous students. Let us reflect on our own commitment to the world's oppressed as we listen to these words from a letter he wrote shortly before his death.

“The level of violence here is reaching appalling proportions (murders, tortures, kidnappings, threats), and the Church is being persecuted because of its option for the poor ... Aware of the many difficulties and risks, we continue to work with faith and hope and trust in God's providence ... I am personally weary of violence, but I continue to feel a strong commitment to the suffering poor of Central America ... God knows why He continued to call me to Guatemala when some friends and relatives encouraged me to pull out for my own comfort and safety. I have been a Christian Brother for nearly twenty years now, and commitment to my vocation grows steadily stronger in my work in Central America. I pray God for the grace and strength to serve Him faithfully among the poor and oppressed of Guatemala. I place my life in His providence; I place my trust in Him.”



- *How ought I to strengthen my level of commitment to the poor and oppressed people of my school, my city, and my world?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from Thomas Merton in *Thoughts in Solitude*

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: My Lord, God, I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end.  
Nor do I really know myself;  
and the fact that I think I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you  
does, in fact, please you.  
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.  
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.  
And, I know that if I do this,  
you will lead me by the right road  
though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore, will I trust you always  
though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.  
I will not fear, for you are ever with me;  
and, you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Brother James Miller, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.



# The Thirst That Dwells Within

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

### 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

### 2. Song "Come to the Water" vs. 1 & 2

## COME TO THE WATER

John Foley, S.J.

1. O let all who thirst, let them come to the  
2. And let all who seek, let them come to the  
3. And let all who toil, let them come to the  
4. And let all the poor, let them come to the

1. wa - ter. And let all who have noth-ing,  
2. wa - ter. And let all who have noth-ing,  
3. wa - ter. And let all who are wea - ry,  
4. wa - ter. Bring the ones who are lad - en,

1. let them come to the Lord: with-out  
2. let them come to the Lord: with-out  
3. let them come to the Lord: all who  
4. bring them all to the Lord: bring the

1. mon-ey, with-out price. Why should you pay the  
2. mon-ey, with-out strife. Why should you spend your  
3. la - bor, with-out rest. How can your soul find  
4. chil-dren with-out might. Eas - y the load and

1. price, ex-cept for the Lord?  
2. life, ex-cept for the Lord?  
3. rest, ex-cept for the Lord?  
4. light: 7 come to the Lord.

Text: Isaiah 55:1,2; Matthew 11:28-30. Text and music © 1978, John B. Foley, S.J. and New Dawn Music.  
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### *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

#### 3. First Reading

John 4:6-14

“Tired from his journey, Jesus sat down by the well; it was about noon. Now a Samaritan woman came to draw water; and Jesus said to her, ‘Give me a drink.’ His disciples had just gone into town to buy some food. The Samaritan woman said to him, ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan and a woman, for a drink?’ (For Jews, in fact, have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus replied, ‘If only you recognized the God’s gift, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked me; and I would have given you living water.’ The woman answered, ‘Sir, you have no bucket, and this well is deep; where is your living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well after he drank from it himself, together with his sons and his cattle?’

“Jesus said to her, ‘Those who drink of this water will be thirsty again; but those who drink of the water that I shall give will never be thirsty; for the water that I shall give will become in them a fountain welling up to provide eternal life.’”



#### 4. Brief Reflective Pause

[about 20 seconds]

#### 5. Our Response

Psalm 63:1-9

Side One: O God, you are my God, it is you I seek;  
for you my body longs and my soul thirsts,  
as a dry and weary land without water.

Side Two: Thus have I gazed upon you in the sanctuary,  
to see your power and your glory.

- Side One:           Your love is better than life,  
my lips will glorify you.  
I will bless you as long as I live,  
lift up my hands and call on your name.
- Side Two:           As with the richest food my soul will feast;  
my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.
- Side One:           When I remember you on my bed  
I think of you all through the night,  
for you have been my help;
- Side Two:           I sing in the shadow of your wings.  
My soul clings to you,  
your right hand upholds me.
- Side One:           Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
- Side Two:           As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be  
world without end. Amen.
6. Reading           From “Seekers of Wells and Roads: Two Icons” by  
Sister Dolores Aleixandra, RSCJ

“Don’t be afraid to acknowledge the thirst that dwells within in you. And don’t deceive yourselves into believing that your life as [Lasallian leaders] exempts you from the uncertainties and vulnerability that throb in the heart of every human being. Change your attitude of being never-ending ‘donors,’ and see yourselves as travelers with those who travel and seekers with those who are seeking. Because only then will you experience the joyful surprise of being evangelized by the very people you want to evangelize. Learn how to listen better, and instead of preaching and directing so much, become experts in asking questions, conversing, and sharing with others that poverty that puts us all in the same boat. Because only if you experience your thirst will you be able to fathom what I learned by the well. The thirsty man who asked me for water turned out to be the one who quenched my thirst, and later made me decide to tell everyone in my town about Him.

“And precisely because I knew I needed salvation, I was able to get across to others that I had met someone who welcomed me without judging or condemning me. Come celebrate that poverty with me, by the ledge of the well. It is a poverty that when recognized and related

to Jesus is not an obstacle to receiving the gift of living water, but the best chance we have to welcome it and let it burst into eternal Life.

“But I caution you, be ready. He may be waiting for you anywhere, anytime of the day, just when you’re engrossed in trivial concerns, petty quarrels, or stale traditions bound up with status or rules. If you stop to listen to Him, you’ll be under His spell forever. At first, He will ask you for something simple (‘Please give me some water,’ ‘Call your husband’...); but in the end, you’ll return home without water, without a jug, and with a thirst you’ve never known before, to attract your whole town to Him.”

7. Pause for Quiet Reflection

[about 2 to 3 minutes]

***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

8. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: For the graces necessary to become experts in asking questions, conversing, and sharing with others as nothing more than fellow-travelers and brothers and sisters on the journey, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the graces necessary to remain ready to meet God anywhere, but especially in the ordinary events of daily living and in the everyday relationships of our lives, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]

9. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Compassionate and merciful God,  
conscious as we are of your goodness  
we are not afraid to acknowledge  
the thirst that dwells within us.

Refresh and renew us, we pray,  
with the gift of living water.

May you be that spring of life welling up within us,  
empowering and strengthening us  
to embrace the poverty we experienced  
with you by the ledge of the well  
and to live out our vocation in the world,  
with a greater simplicity and openness.

May we never tire of sharing with our fellow-travelers  
the marvelous wonders of your goodness to us. Amen.

Leader:	St. John Baptist de La Salle,
All:	pray for us.
Leader:	Live Jesus in our hearts,
All:	forever.

## Archbishop Oscar Romero

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Almighty and ever-loving God, our Shepherd and Guide, we are exhorted by St. John Baptist de La Salle, to be shepherds to those “entrusted to our care.” As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of our call to be loving and caring older brothers and sisters to those with whom we work. And so, let us remember...

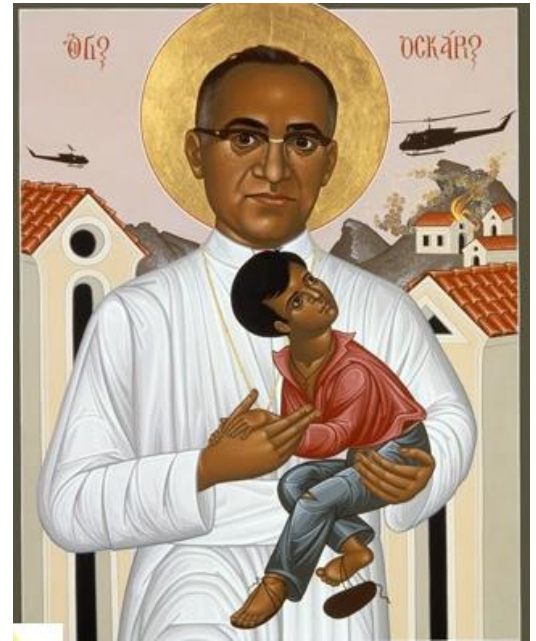
All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Oscar Romero, the Archbishop of El Salvador, served the people through preaching the Gospel by his words and action. He was assassinated in 1980, while he was saying Mass in San Salvador, but his words and his story continue to speak the Gospel to us today.

“A Christian community is evangelized in order to evangelize. A light is lit in order to give light. A candle is not lit to be put under a bushel, said Christ. It is lit and put up high in order to give light. That is what a true community is like. A community is a group of men and women who have found the truth in Christ and in his gospel, and who follow the truth and join together to follow it more strongly. It is not just an individual conversion, but a community conversion. It is a family that believes, a group that accepts God. In the group, each one finds that the brother or sister is a source of strength and that in moments of weakness they help one another and, by loving one another and believing, they give light and example.

“The preacher no longer needs to preach, for there are Christians who preach by their own lives. I said once and I repeat today that if, unhappily, some day they silence our radio and don’t let us write our newspaper, each of you who believe must become a



microphone, a radio station, a loudspeaker, not to talk, but to call for faith. I am not afraid that our faith may depend only on the archbishop's preaching; I don't think I'm that important. I believe that this message, which is only a humble echo of God's word, enters your hearts, not because it is mine, but because it comes from God."

- *How am I called to preach the Gospel through my actions?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

Adaptation of St. John Nepomucene Parish Prayer

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Loving Father,  
we turn to you with grateful hearts  
for what we have,  
and with great anticipation  
for what is yet to be.

Bless us with a sense of unity,  
a spirit of cooperation,  
and generous hearts  
as we embrace the responsibilities and challenges  
that face the Lasallian Family.

Guide us; strengthen us;  
bless us with your presence;  
and help us serve you faithfully  
now and through the ages to come;  
and we ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Oscar Romero, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

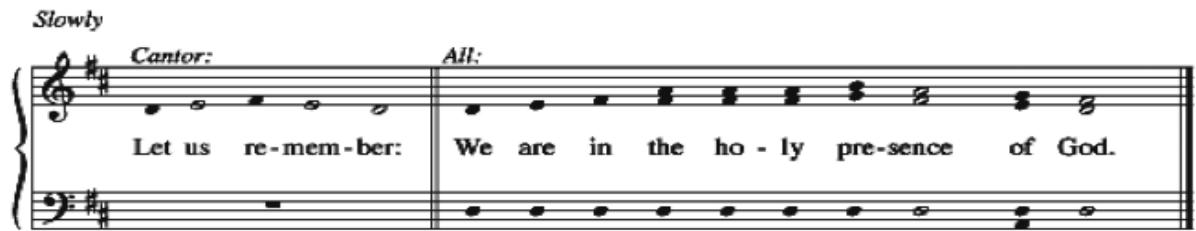
All: forever.

## Deeply Christian and Deeply Human

*“In order to be deeply Christian, one has, first of all, to be deeply human,”  
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

### *Recalling the Presence of God*

1. Sung: “Lasallian Invocation” [arranged by Bro. George Van Grieken, FSC]



### *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

2. Reading From Richard Pring in *The Tablet* (10 October 1992)

“Some years ago, I visited a high school in Boston in the United States. The headmistress was reading poems she had written when, at the age of eleven (in Nazi Germany), she had been forcibly separated from her mother and her twin sister. The students listened attentively to her description of what it felt like to be parted, in the most terrible circumstances, from those she loved.

“With many new teachers each year, this headmistress undertook to inform the new teachers of what the main driving force behind the school should be. She wrote to each this letter:

‘Dear Teacher, I am the victim of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no one should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers; children poisoned by educated physicians; infants killed by trained nurses; women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates. So I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.’

“There is something odd about proclaiming the virtues of education which simply makes those who succeed within it more efficient at that which is evil, or more able to exploit their fellow citizens, or more adept at pursuing their own interest at the expense of others.



“The most important argument for the preservation of church schools is that they have a distinctive and defensible answer to the question: ‘What makes children more human?’”

3. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
4. Our Response “Beatitudes for Teachers” in *Lasalliana* (28-16-C-127)
  - Side One: Blessed are you who are called to teach,  
for you walk in the footsteps of the Master.
  - Side Two: Blessed are you who sow peace  
and harmony in the staffroom:  
yours will be the joy of the Lord.
  - Side One: Blessed are you who plant seeds of hope in youthful hearts,  
for you will inherit the dawn.
  - Side Two: Blessed are you who are sensitive  
to the cries of youth today,  
for they yearn for the coming of my Kingdom.
  - Side One: Blessed are you when you share your faith with others,  
for your name is written in my heart.
  - Side Two: Blessed are you who anguish now  
because your students are difficult,  
for one day they will thank you for your loving concern.
  - Side One: Blessed are you when efficiency is moderated  
by compassion and empathy,  
for the deeper secret of education is yours.
  - Side Two: Blessed are you when you reach out to me in your students,  
for you will surely find me and rejoice.
  - Side One: Blessed are you who lead young people  
in paths of justice and peace,  
for you will shine like stars for all eternity.
5. Reading Abridged from a Passage by Claire Elliott in *The Month* (1991)

“It was my first visit to the marvelous art treasures of Florence in Italy. I was one of a crowd of tourists; but my attention was caught by the sight of a tall, elegant figure, making her way down a narrow, shadowy street. I wondered if she might be going for a dinner appointment, or if she had a very important job in the city.

“My thoughts were disturbed by the noise of a heavy dustcart. And I realized that this beautiful lady – who impressed me with her dignity, in the way she looked and the way she walked – was, in fact, a ‘dustbin lady,’ a street-sweeper, a cleaner. Her care for her appearance revealed a great pride in herself. Her self-esteem and happiness came from within, from her own view of her value.

“And I knew that Jesus would have noticed and approved of my cleaning lady. He had a way of building up each individual. Amidst the splendors of the Temple of Jerusalem, Jesus looked at the generosity and goodness of one poor widow and gave her his full attention; she had offered to others the very best that she had.

“Schools are to help young people develop a true awareness and knowledge of themselves, and a proper appreciation of their own talents and abilities, in whatever field. I did not need to know of the examination results or university successes of the school of this dustbin lady. One glance at her told me that her parents and her teachers had performed their duties well.”

6. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

### ***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

7. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: In the hope that, by our work and by the witness of our lives, we help all of our students to become truly human and truly loving, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: In the hope that, by our work and by the witness of our lives, we help young people develop a true awareness and knowledge of themselves and a proper appreciation of their own talents and abilities, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]

8. Closing Prayer By Julia Esquivel of Guatemala

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Give us, Lord, a vision of our world  
as your love would make it:  
a world where the weak are protected,  
and none go hungry or poor;  
a world where the benefits of civilized life are shared,

and everyone can enjoy them;  
a world where different races, nations, and cultures  
live in tolerance and mutual respect;  
a world where peace is built with justice,  
and justice is guided by love.

Let your kingdom come  
which abolishes all that destroys life in the world,  
your kingdom which eradicates within people  
all that makes them live less than humanly.

Let your kingdom come,  
your kingdom which is freedom and love,  
which is sisterhood and brotherhood,  
which is righteousness and life,  
which is truth and justice.

Give us, Lord, the inspiration and the courage  
to build this kingdom,  
with you and for you,  
through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Song: "Let the River Flow" by Darrell Evans  
Let the poor man say, "I am rich in Him."  
Let the lost man say, "I am found in Him."  
Let the river flow.  
Let the blind man say, "I can see again."  
Let the dead man say, "I am born again."  
Oh let the river flow; oh let the river flow.

Let the river flow; let the river flow;  
Holy Spirit come; move in power.  
Let the river flow; let the river flow.  
Holy Spirit come; move in power.  
Let the river flow; let the river flow;  
Let the river flow.

© 1995 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing  
Words and Music by Darrell Evans

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.

## Helen Keller

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Lord Jesus, St. John Baptist de La Salle, reminded us that we could “consider God present in the place where we are” because you promised that “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of your abiding presence in our midst each time that we gather in prayer. And so, let us remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Having broken through the isolation imposed by a near complete lack of language with the help of a quite remarkable teacher, Helen Keller, the first deaf-blind person to graduate from college, invites the rest of us to open our eyes and minds and hearts to see – to really see – the world around us.

“We differ, blind and seeing, from one another – not in our senses, but in the use we make of them, in the imagination and courage with which we seek wisdom beyond our senses ... I have walked with people whose eyes are full of light, but see nothing in wood, sea or sky, nothing in the city streets, nothing in books. What a witless masquerade is this seeing! It were far better to sail forever in the night of blindness, with a sense and feeling and mind, than to be thus content with the mere act of seeing. They have the sunset, the morning skies, the purple of distant hills – yet their soul’s voyage through this enchanted world with a barren stare.”



- *What is it that life and my ministry are inviting me to see with an open mind and heart?*

### *Pause for Quiet Reflection*

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from Brother Nicholas Hutchinson and Brother Damian  
Lundy in *Walk in My Presence*

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Loving God,  
we ask you to bless us and to bless all to whom you send us.  
Inspire us with your Spirit  
and enable us to live the gospel more authentically  
that we may be credible witnesses of your love  
and ambassadors of Jesus, your Son.  
May your power shine through our weakness,  
since we are earthen vessels.  
In our affliction, let us never be crushed;  
in our doubts, never despair;  
in temptation, never be destroyed.  
May our weaknesses become your opportunities,  
and inspire us always to praise you. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Helen Keller, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

# Being a Living Expression of the Gospel

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

### 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

### 2. Song “Open My Eyes Lord” by Jesse Manibusan

**OPEN MY EYES**

Jesse Manibusan

Verses



1. O - pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.  
2. O - pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.  
3. O - pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.  
4. I live with - in you. Deep in your heart, O

1. face. O - pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.  
2. voice. O - pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.  
3. you. O - pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.  
4. Love. I live with - in you. Rest now in

1, 2, Final 3. love. to Bridge

Bridge

And the first shall be last, and our eyes are o - pened, and we'll  
hear like nev - er be - fore. And we'll speak in new ways, and we'll  
see God's face in plac - es we've nev - er known.

Text: Based on Mark 8:22-25. Text and music © 1988, 1998, Jesse Manibusan.  
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## *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

3. Reading of a Reflection by Brother William Mann on the Painting of Giovanni Gagliardi entitled *De La Salle Distributing Bread to the Poor*

“In the ‘John Paul II Chapel’ in the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome is found a painting by Giovanni Gagliardi entitled *De La Salle Distributing Bread to the Poor*. Over the years, it has come to be a favorite of mine.

“De La Salle is here represented in the midst of what Brother Michael Sauvage has called the moment in which De La Salle ‘let himself be grasped and overcome by the offer of grace to become a Founder ... He was willing from then on to make the gospel not only the starting point of his preaching, but also the rule of his life ... He became capable of radical decisions. He renounced his Canonry ... He used the occasion of a famine to distribute to the needy all of his personal wealth ... It was now their poverty with which he associated himself, their insecurity in which he intended to become a partner.’

“In the considerable time spent in meditation before Gagliardi’s painting, it has drawn me inexorably into a contemplation of what I see as the heart of De La Salle’s teaching on the vocation of a Lasallian educator: ‘Your actions must ... be a lively expression of what is written in the gospel’ (M 84.3). The too often hidden wisdom of the Good News is, in the deeds that accompany the words of the teacher, represented and made accessible to students.



“Take a few minutes to look at this image. Notice the boy to the right of De La Salle. He watches attentively. At the same time that his hunger is satisfied, a lively curiosity is being awakened. Do you see the young girl? She watches from behind a mother who is drawing the attention of the child in her lap to the selflessness of this man. I wonder if the openhanded gentleman at the steps is the father of this family or if the second Brother, the one at the far left of the painting, is concerned about this evening’s meal.

“‘When I was hungry, you gave me food ...’ (Mt 25:35). ‘Where teaching is offered free of charge and entirely for the glory of God’ the misfortune and abandonment of the children of the poor is remedied’ (M 194.3).”

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]

5. Our Response from St. John Baptist de La Salle’s *Meditation* #201.1

All: It is God who has called you,  
who has destined you for this work,  
and who has sent you to work in this vineyard.

Side One: You must not doubt  
that it is a great gift of God,  
this grace you have been given  
to be entrusted with the instruction of children,  
to announce the gospel to them,  
and to bring them up in the spirit of religion.

Side Two: But in calling you to this holy ministry,  
God demands that you fulfill it  
with an ardent zeal for their salvation,  
because this is the work of God  
and one is cursed who does this work carelessly.

Side One: Let it be clear, then,  
in all your conduct  
toward those who are entrusted to you  
that you look upon yourselves  
as ministers of God,  
carrying out your ministry with love

Side Two: And with a sincere and true zeal,  
accepting with much patience  
the difficulties you will have to suffer,  
willing to be despised by others  
and to be persecuted,



even to give your life for Jesus  
in the fulfillment of your ministry.

All: It is God who has called you,  
who has destined you for this work,  
and who has sent you to work in this vineyard.

6. Reading An Adaptation of the *Rule* of the Brothers, #40

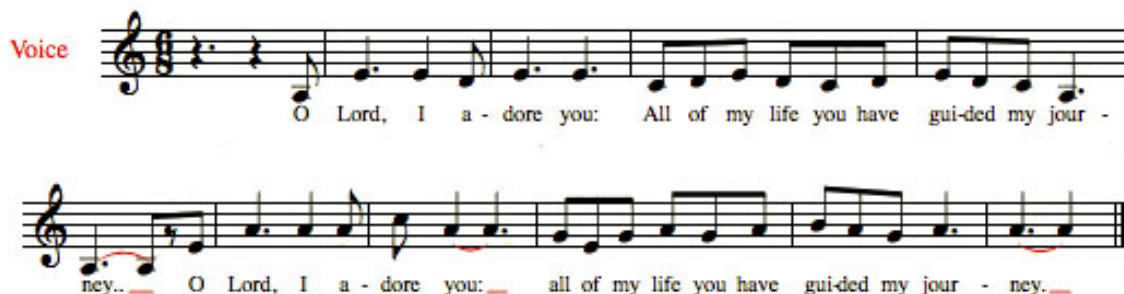
“[Lasallians] have always in view the promotion of justice in the light of the gospel and either the direct or indirect service of the poor as the preferred aspect of their ministry of education. They work directly for the poor by providing an education for the economically deprived, victims of social injustice, delinquents, and those neglected by the rest of society. When [Lasallians] work with students from families that are more or less well off, they teach them their duties and responsibilities with regard to social justice and charity toward everyone. [Lasallians] give special attention to their students who have difficulties at school, at home, or problems adjusting to society.”

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 to 3 minutes]

8. Our Response

## O Lord, I Adore You

Antonio Botana FSC



### *Recommitting to Lasallian Mission*

9. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: Help us, O God of the poor, to challenge ourselves and not  
to be afraid to see the poor, alienated, and oppressed in our  
own backyards and in the world; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: Help us, O brother Jesus, to follow in the footsteps of our  
Founder, who loved you and loved the poor and  
marginalized of his day; we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: For whom and for what else shall we pray?  
*[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]*

#### 10. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Lord, come and possess me.  
Take hold of my faculties.  
Immolate my selfishness.  
Shape my life according to your ideals.  
Impress yourself on my soul.

Work in me; shine through me.  
Make me a light and savior  
in union with all the saints  
for the glory of the Father.

From your generosity,  
Let me learn to keep giving –  
the world to God,  
God to the world,  
and myself to both. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.

## Reverend Henri Nouwen

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Lord Jesus, St. John Baptist de La Salle, reminded us that we could “consider God present in the place where we are” because you promised that “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), may it remind us of your abiding presence in our midst each time that we gather in prayer. And so, let us remember...

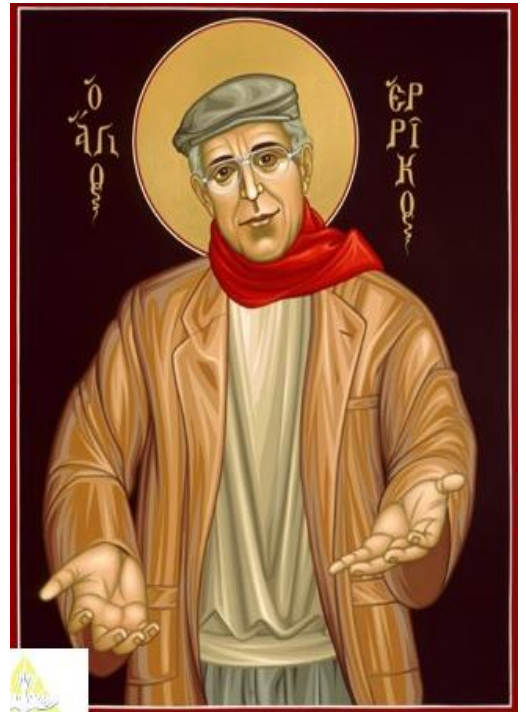
All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Henri Nouwen, a Catholic priest, lived a life dedicated to the spiritual values of communion and community as a member of L’Arche, a community that assists developmentally disabled adults. Let us reflect on own commitment to community as we listen to these words from his book entitled *Can You Drink This Cup?*

“Nothing is sweet or easy about community. Community is a fellowship of people who do not hide their joys and sorrows but make them visible to each other in a gesture of hope. In community we say: ‘Life is full of gains and losses, joys and sorrows, ups and downs’ – but we do not have to live it alone. We want to drink our cup together and thus celebrate the truth that the wounds of our individual lives, which seem intolerable when lived alone, become sources of healing when we live them as part of a fellowship of mutual care.

“Community is like a large mosaic. Each piece seems so insignificant. One piece is bright red, another cold blue or dull green, another warm purple, another sharp yellow, another shining gold. Some look precious, others ordinary. Some look valuable,



others worthless. Some look gaudy, others delicate. As individual stones, we can do little with them except compare them and judge their beauty and value. When, however, all these stones are brought together in one big mosaic portraying the face of Christ, who would ever question the importance of any one of them? If one of them, even the least spectacular one, is missing, the face is incomplete. Together in the one mosaic, each stone is indispensable and makes a unique contribution to the glory of God. That's community, a fellowship of people who together make God visible in the world."

- *What colors do I add to the mosaic of my Lasallian ministry?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

Source Unknown

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: Lord, we thank you for your presence, love,  
and guiding hand in our lives.  
Help us to grow deeper in our relationship with you  
and with one another as a community of faith.  
Help us to learn what it means to follow you and serve you.  
May we represent you in our workplaces  
and in our communities and families.  
May we call on you to continue to give us sight,  
so we may be witnesses of your gospel message.  
We pray this in your name. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Henri Nouwen, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

## Seeing and Blessing Young People

## *Recalling the Presence of God*

## 1. Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us remember...  
All: that we are in the holy presence of God.

2. Song **Refrain Sung Together** “Everyday God” by Bernadette Farrell

Earth's creator, <b>Everyday God</b> Loving Maker, <b>O Jesus,</b> You who shaped us, <b>O Spirit,</b> Recreate us. <b>come be with us.</b>	<b>O Spirit,</b> Light of all lights, <b>come be with us.</b>  In our resting... In our rising... In our hoping... In our waiting...  In our dreaming... In our daring... In our searching... In our sharing...  God of laughter... God of sorrow... Home and shelter... Strong and patient...  Way of freedom... Star of morning... Timeless healer...	Flame eternal...  Word of gladness... Word of mercy... Word of friendship... Word of challenge...  Gentle father... Faithful brother... Tender sister... Loving mother...  Our beginning... Our unfolding... Our enduring... Journey's ending...  Alleluia... Now and always... Alleluia... Through all ages
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### *Reflecting on Our Lasallian Identity*

3. Reading From “An Anthology of the Love of God”  
by Evelyn Underhill

“Christ never criticized any but the ‘respectable’ and ‘pious’: with everyone else his thought went like a shaft of delight straight to something he could admire – the love of the prostitute, the meekness of the publican, the faith of the centurion, the confidence of the penitent thief – all things which irradiate and save humanity. Love looks for those first; and one reason why Christ ‘*gives us rest*’ is that, *in his presence, we are bound to love* – not to criticize.”

4. Brief Reflective Pause [about 20 seconds]
5. Our Response From De La Salle's *Meditations* #101 & #134 and from the Gospel of Luke
- All: Show much kindness and love  
for the young people entrusted to you,  
and build on their affection for you  
to lead them to God.
- Side One: People brought little children to him,  
for him to touch them;  
but when the disciples saw this  
they turned them away.
- Side Two: But Jesus called the children to him and said:  
"Let the children come to me,  
and do not hinder them;  
for it is to such as these  
that the kingdom of God belongs."
- Side One: "I tell you solemnly:  
anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God  
like a little child  
will never enter it."
- Side Two: "Anyone who welcomes this little child  
in my name welcomes me;  
and anyone who welcomes me,  
welcomes the One who sent me.  
For the least among you all  
is the one who is the greatest."
- All: Show much kindness and love  
for the young people entrusted to you,  
and build on their affection for you,  
to lead them to God.
6. Reading From the Writings of Ronald Rolheiser, OMI

"To 'really see' someone, especially someone who looks up to you, is to give that person an important blessing. In a gaze of recognition, of understanding, in an appreciative look, there is deep blessing. Often, it is not so important that we say much to those for whom we are significant, but it is very important that we see them.

“ ... Good kings and queens see their people; good parents see their kids; good teachers see their students; good priests see their parishioners; good coaches see their players; good executives see their employees; and, in really good restaurants, the owner comes around to the tables and sees his or her customers and the customers are, without being able to explain why, grateful that the owner took the time and pain to see them. We are blessed by being seen.

“ ... Today the young are not being seen enough in this way. Our youth are acting out in all kinds of ways as a means of getting our attention. They want to, and they need to, be seen by us – parents, adults, teachers, priests, coaches, leaders. They need our blessing. They need to see, right in our eyes, the radical acceptance of their reality, and they need to read in our eyes the words: ‘You are my beloved child; in you I am well-pleased.’ Young people need our appreciative gaze; mostly they simply need our gaze – period.

“One of the deepest hungers inside young people is the hunger for adult connection, the desire to be recognized, seen, by a significant adult. They desperately need, and badly want, the blessing that comes from our gaze and presence. They need for us to see them. In the end, more than they want our words, they want our gaze....”

7. A Brief Pause for Quiet Reflection [about 2 or 3 minutes]

### ***Recommitting to Lasallian Mission***

8. Intercessory Prayer

Reader: In thanksgiving for the times when others have gazed on us in love and invited us to accept more fully the gifts with which we have been blessed, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: In thanksgiving for the children of this world and in the hope that their innocence and human dignity might be respected and protected, we pray...

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For whom or for what else shall we pray?  
[Response: Lord, hear our prayer.]

9. Closing Prayer

Leader: And in conclusion, let us join together in saying this prayer:

All: Lord our God,

enlighten us so that we may “really see.”  
Inspire us to bless others  
with understanding , appreciation and love.  
Lead us to confirm for your people  
the dignity that arises  
from being made in your image and likeness,  
and from being called to follow Jesus, your Son.  
Pour out on us your Spirit upon us  
that we may better share his vision  
in our world which you love so much. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,  
All: pray for us.  
Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,  
All: forever.



## Reverend Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### *Call to Worship*

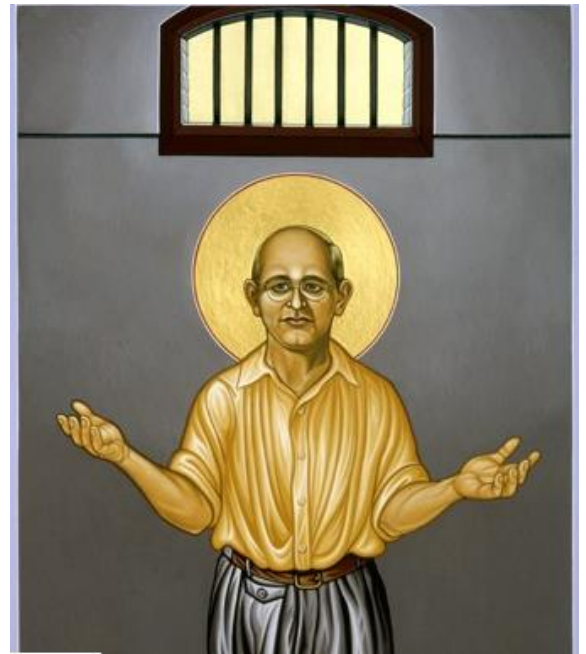
Leader: Holy Spirit, source of all wisdom and understanding, our world needs the kind of educators who, in the words of St. John Baptist de La Salle, might “shine like stars for all eternity” (Dn 12:3). As we light this candle (*someone steps forward to light the candle*), we ask you to light up our world and our hearts with the fire of your prophetic justice; and we take a moment to remember...

All: That we are in the holy presence of God.

### *A Reflection on a Modern Icon*

Reader: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran Pastor, was a participant in the resistance movement against the Nazis. He was arrested, imprisoned, and eventually hanged. The following prayer was written by him while he was awaiting death.

“O God, early in the morning I cry to you. Help me to pray and gather my thoughts to you. I cannot do it alone. In me it is dark, but with you there is light; I am lonely, but you do not desert me; my courage fails me, 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. Father in Heaven, praise and thanks be to you for the night’s rest; praise and thanks be to you for the new day. Praise and thanks be to you for all your loving-kindness and faithfulness in my past life. You have shown me so much goodness; let me also accept what is hard to bear from your hand. You will not lay a heavier burden on me than I can carry. You make all things serve for the best for your children. Lord, whatever this day brings, your name be praised.”



- *Do I have faith enough to know that “God will give the rest”?*

***Pause for Quiet Reflection***

[for 3 to 5 minutes]

Instrumental Music

***Closing Prayer***

from Charles de Foucauld

Leader: As our time of prayer draws to a close, let us be of one mind and one heart as we pray:

All: I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will.  
Whatever you may do, I thank you:  
I am ready for all, I accept all.  
Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures.  
I wish no more than this, O Lord.

Into your hands I commend my soul;  
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,  
for I love you, Lord,  
and so need to give myself,  
to surrender myself into your hands,  
without reserve, and with boundless confidence,  
for you are my Father. Amen.

Leader: St. John Baptist de La Salle,

All: pray for us.

Leader: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, model of gospel living,

All: inspire us.

Leader: Live Jesus in our hearts,

All: forever.

# A Method of Prayer for Teachers

*Brother William Mann<sup>1</sup>*

## *Introduction*

In the *Collection*<sup>2</sup> and also in *The Explanation of the Method of Interior Prayer*,<sup>3</sup> John Baptist de La Salle proposes a method for personal and interior prayer. The method, however, should not be mistaken for the prayer itself. Neither should one mistake personal and interior prayer for the whole of one's relationship with God. De La Salle's method was proposed as a way of entering into conversation with God, the kind of conversation which is capable of illuminating and transforming the whole of one's life. It was for this end that De La Salle developed three series of *Meditations*<sup>4</sup> to help his teacher disciples enter more easily into the daily practice of this conversation.

For De La Salle, there is ultimately no distinction to be made between the quest for closer intimacy with God in prayer, on the one hand, and the duties of one's employment as a Christian educator, on the other. The two are clearly and indissolubly linked in the ministry of Christian education. "Since you are entrusted with the instruction of others, you should endeavor to become competent in the art of speaking to God, about God, and for God; but rest assured that you will never be able to speak to your students in such a way as to win them to God, until you yourself have learned to speak to God and about God."<sup>5</sup>

The kind of personal and interior prayer recommended by De La Salle really requires that one be immersed in the scriptures. "This process involves the kind of dynamic that happens in making friends with anyone. You have to spend time together, talk together, listen to each other, and get to know each other."<sup>6</sup> And the scriptures present us with a privileged opportunity to spend this kind of time with God.

Over and over again in the *Meditations for Sundays* and *Meditations for Feasts*, De La Salle begins with explicit references to gospel texts. The *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* reflect a profound assimilation of the Mystery of God's Love at Work in the World as it can be discovered in the writings of St. Paul. "It is God that we strive to know

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<sup>1</sup> An adaptation by the District of Great Britain [delasalle.org.uk/lace/previous/ARTICLES/prayer.htm] of the introduction of *Ambassadors of Jesus Christ: Prayer Meditations for Christian Educators* by Brother William Mann, Brother Henry Dissanayke, and Brother Isaias Tzegay (Rome, 1995; reprinted in Manila, 1996), pp. 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> De La Salle, *Collection of Various Short Treatises* (Lasallian Publications, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> De La Salle, *The Explanation of the Method of Interior Prayer* (Lasallian Publications, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> De La Salle, *Meditations for Sundays, Feasts, and Retreat* (Lasallian Publications, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> De La Salle, *Meditations*, #64.2.

<sup>6</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (Harper Collins Publishers, 1983, 1993), p. 101.

by spiritual reading and by interior prayer so that we might be better able to make Him known and to make Him loved by all those to whom we have made Him known.”<sup>7</sup>

As De La Salle became aware, by God’s grace, of the human and spiritual needs of the artisans and the poor, he devoted himself to forming educators totally dedicated to teaching and to Christian education. God’s Spirit breathes life into the world. The Holy Spirit, in every generation, continues to confide to teachers a special role in the Christian and human formation of the young and, through them, continues to enable students to welcome Jesus into the deepest aspirations of the human heart as Good News.

Personal and interior prayer is not the privatized activity of an isolated Christian. Prayer is “a time when we can still ourselves enough to begin to feel our natural connectedness to each other and the world.”<sup>8</sup> The acquisition of the habit of personal and interior prayer will be out of the question for anyone who does not try to cultivate compassion for others.<sup>9</sup> In prayer, the Spirit unites the one who prays with the whole of the Church gathered around Jesus in need and prayer. It is, therefore, really prayer with the Church; furthermore, it is, for De La Salle, prayer normally made in a Church.<sup>10</sup>

The method proposed requires about thirty minutes a day. It also requires that you put aside your busy-ness and external clutter for a little while, and that you try to free yourself from some of your inward noise and internal static. It requires some solitude, some silence. For, after all, personal and interior prayer is “a way of entering into silence so deeply that we can hear the whole world’s speech, a way of entering into solitude so deeply that we can feel the whole world’s connections. In prayer we touch that transcendent Spirit from whom all things arise and to whom all things return, who makes all things kindred as they go.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***First Movement: In the Presence of the Living God***

You are invited to begin by entering into a more conscious awareness of the presence of God. We walk in God’s world.

- The Trinity is immanently present. Our God is neither distant nor indifferent. Rather, God, present in the world, desires that all of us come to “the knowledge of God Himself and of all that He has willed to reveal to us through Jesus Christ, through His apostles, and through His Church.”<sup>12</sup> However, there are many other realities in each of our lives that compete for our attention and distract us from awareness of this presence.
- Where is God most present to you? Is it in the quiet of your heart? Is it in your relationships? Is it in ministry? Perhaps God is particularly present to you in the

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<sup>7</sup> De La Salle, *Meditations*, #41.3.

<sup>8</sup> Palmer, p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New Directions Books, 1972), p. 77.

<sup>10</sup> From Brother Jean-Louis Schneider, *Ministre de l’Education Chretienne* (Rome, 1994).

<sup>11</sup> Palmer, p. 124.

<sup>12</sup> De La Salle, *Meditations*, #193.1; cf. 1 Tm 2:4.

beauty of nature or under the rags of the poor who wander in the streets. For some, it is the presence of God in the Eucharist which attracts. Take the time to recall God's presence, and then spend some minutes in its conscious awareness. Spend as much quiet time, as possible, in this way.

- Who am I to be in God's presence? Who is this in whose presence I find myself? "Implore Him: Lord, do not pass me by, do not leave until I am aware that you have come. Lord, keep knocking at my door; knock again and again until I open to you. This is the attitude of an open person. One's whole being is a "yes" to God in silence."<sup>13</sup>
- God wills a union of our mind and heart with that of Jesus who came to do the Father's will. "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly."<sup>14</sup> The wonderful news is that God invites "me to share, as His son [or daughter], in His own care for my brothers [and sisters]."<sup>15</sup>
- Ask God present to you to help you to be more aware of this will, to be more open to it, to be one in mind and heart with what God wants most to do in the world through you. "Doing your will, O God, is delightful!"<sup>16</sup>

And so, in the first movement of the method of personal and interior prayer proposed here, you are invited to spend some time considering the divine will. Remember that "God's will is certainly found in anything that is required of us in order that we may be united with one another in love."<sup>17</sup> Ask God to help you to understand where God is leading you through and in the midst of the concrete experiences of your everyday ministry.

### ***Second Movement: Living the Mystery of Christ***

The second movement of our method of personal and interior prayer is the invitation to contemplate the Mystery of God's Love at Work in the World, and particularly in your own life. This will normally be the main body of your time in prayer, and the Jesus of the gospels will be at the heart of this movement. De La Salle suggests that we contemplate Jesus Christ in the gospels so that, by the example of His life and teachings, we might be gradually transformed to be more like Him.

- How are you participating in the Mystery of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus in your daily efforts to reach and touch the lives of the people with whom you minister? This is, above all, really a matter of identity and re-birth in Christ. "And the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. Of course, I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Quoted from Ladislaus Boros, *On Christian Prayer*, in Brother Alvaro Rodriguez, *Metodo de Oracion, para concersar con Dios, segun San Juan Bautista de La Salle* (Guatemala, 1982), p. 11.

<sup>14</sup> Jn 10:10.

<sup>15</sup> Merton, p. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Ps 40:8.

<sup>17</sup> Merton, p. 76.

<sup>18</sup> Gal 2:20.

- Jesus gives “us an example of how human beings can live transcendently by a love of self-emptying sacrifice on behalf of others. He lives for others. His focus is to bring fullness especially to the poor, the sick, the outcasts of society, the oppressed and the discriminated against, the criminals and the sinners. This is the way we should love. This is how we see the glory of God shining through us. God looks like Jesus! We will be like God if we live like Jesus.”<sup>19</sup>

Do not rush this stage. Spend time with the suggested passages. Read them over a few times. Pay special attention to the words or phrases that catch your attention. Listen to what is being said and to the one who is saying it. Be quiet. Go slowly. Look at your life. See how your life compares with the life of Jesus. Allow God to speak to your heart. Enter into the Mystery of God’s merciful goodness. Contemplate this God of Love at Work in Your Own Life. Be attentive to all that stirs within you.

### ***Third Movement: Empowered by the Spirit***

Finally, we arrive at the third movement, or the conclusion, of the prayer period. This will normally take just a few minutes.

- Quickly remember what has happened during the prayer period. What feelings animated you? What were your principal reflections?
- As you come to the end of your prayer time, you are asked to make a resolution to be more open to the work of the Spirit who is in you and trying to work through you for others. Embrace the graced texture of your own life story. Reflect on where God’s Spirit seems to be breaking into your life and drawing you to sacrifice yourself that others might have a fuller life. What is it that is helping you to live each day with authenticity and holiness? “Follow the Spirit’s lead.”<sup>20</sup> Accept the new life that God is trying to give you today.
- Take the time to express the love and admiration you have for God. Thank the Father, Jesus, and the Spirit for the graces received during the prayer period, as well as for the sentiments and feelings that have been experienced. Offer yourself again to God with Christ, with all the activities and efforts that the day will bring.<sup>21</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

It is hoped that this method will assist you to converse with God about your ministry as a Lasallian educator. Look around our world with the eyes of faith. Listen in hope to the cries of all of those who wait. Respond in love and zeal, humbled by this opportunity

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<sup>19</sup> George A. Maloney, *Entering into the Heart of Jesus: Meditations on the Indwelling Trinity in Saint John’s Gospel* (Alba House, 1988), p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Gal 5:25.

<sup>21</sup> Brother Alvaro Rodriguez.

which is ours to share in the renewal and re-creation of the face of the earth “as the ambassadors and ministers of Jesus Christ.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> De La Salle, *Meditations*, #195.2; cf. 2 Co 5:20.