

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS CONFERENCE  
BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS  
UNITED STATES-TORONTO REGION



3025 Fourth Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20017  
202.529.0047

NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

Contact Information: Celine A. Quinio  
202.529.0047  
cquinio@cbconf.org

**Lasallians Respond to the Call for Social Transformation**  
*Establishing a Culture of Action on Behalf of the Rights of Children*

Who will speak for those who do not have a voice?

Students and faculty of Lasallian schools and colleges in the United States and Toronto, Canada, will assemble from April 25-27 at the United Nations in New York City for the Lasallian Convocation on the Rights of the Child. Participants in this unique **teach-in** event will learn about why and how we can establish a world fit for children. Lasallians will join thousands of other Americans in their call for universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Since the adoption of the CRC in 1989, the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, who administer about 1,000 Lasallian educational ministries throughout the world, has advocated for the human rights and guiding principles enshrined in the treaty, which provides legal and moral standards for the rights of children. The Convention emphasizes the rights of children to survival; to develop to their full potential; to protection from abuse, neglect, discrimination, and exploitation; and to participate in family, cultural, and social life. This complements the Institute's mission of providing human and Christian education to the young, especially those who are poor and marginalized.

The Convention was largely negotiated during the Reagan administration. During the 10 years of negotiations, the US influenced nearly every substantive provision and proposed more articles on freedom of speech, association, assembly, and privacy than all other governments combined. Today, the United States and Somalia remain the only UN member-states who have not ratified the treaty.

According to some critics, the CRC is "anti-family" and will undermine the rights of parents. The Convention, however, repeatedly refers to the importance of the family and states that governments **are to** respect the rights, responsibilities, and duties of parents to raise their children. (Article 3)

The Lasallian Convocation at the UN is part of a global effort to achieve *a culture of action on behalf of the rights of children* within the Lasallian world. The three-day event

is packed with activities and presentations that are designed to inform, educate and inspire the way Lasallians think, judge, decide, and act as individuals within the community. The Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN has endorsed this gathering and will deliver an address to the assembly.

In the US-Toronto Region, the Lasallian community includes 100 Lasallian educational ministries with more than 67,000 students, 800 Brothers and 9,000 partners. The Convocation marks the beginning of a concrete effort by the Lasallian educational community to wed service activities with justice-oriented advocacy reflective of Lasallian education as it moves forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Together, 140 Lasallians gathered in the United Nations will send a clear message for our country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Lasallian Convocation at the United Nations on the Rights of the Child is facilitated by the US-Toronto Region of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in partnership with the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Inc. (FAF; [www.faf.org](http://www.faf.org)), formally associated with the UN Department of Public Information and an NGO in Operational Relations with UNESCO.

*The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is a Roman Catholic religious order of laymen whose mission is to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially those who are poor and marginalized. Founded by St. John Baptist de La Salle in 17<sup>th</sup> century France, the Institute has 5,000 members in 80 countries. Together with over 70,000 partners, the Institute serves in almost 1,000 educational ministries throughout the world. For more information, please contact Christian Brothers Conference, Communications Office, 3025 Fourth Street NE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20017, 202.529.0047 or visit our website at [www.lasallian.info](http://www.lasallian.info).*