

Ruth Henry**Senior at De La Salle North Catholic High School, Portland, Oregon**

Hello, my name is Ruth Henry and I am a senior. I am here to speak about my Lasallian identity. The three principles of being Lasallian are faith, service and community. I connect deeply with these three principles and have explored them through several experiences, including trips with Lasallian high school students from different schools all the way from Yakima, Washington, to New Orleans, Louisiana. The three experiences that have exposed me to the Lasallian family are Lasallian Student Leaders, Lasallian Youth Assembly, and the Called and Chosen vocations retreat.

Lasallian Student Leaders Conference (LSL) is hosted at St. Mary's College of California in Moraga. It's full of community building, dances, socials and leadership workshops. The first night at LSL a teacher was getting our attention and started, as we do all things, "Let us remember." It was so strange to me to be sitting with 200 strangers exclaiming back the response: "that we are in the holy presence of God." I had an automatic connection with high schoolers from all over the country.

My second experience was at the Called and Chosen vocations retreat, also hosted in Moraga. We spent three days talking about our vocations, not as professions or things we do, but how we do them. We talked about not needing to have all the answers, but about being ok with asking questions. Although I cannot personally profess my belief in God or even understand it, this is ok. I am witness to the influence God has on others. We learned to accept our vocations whether they were to religious life, single life or married life.

My third and final experience was Lasallian Youth Assembly. It was time spent with students committed to service. Service took many forms throughout the week. "Enter to learn, leave to serve." We see this phrase every day as we leave the doors of De La Salle, but it was so powerful to put it into action. This motto has influenced what I would like to do in the future beyond college. By speaking about my meaningful experience on these three events I want to encourage all of you to attend them.

It is because I am Lasallian that I have been able to develop my leadership skills, ponder my vocation, and recognize my ability to serve. It is because I am Lasallian that I can't sit by observing injustice. It is because I am Lasallian that I am comfortable with having conversations about faith. I will always recognize the community that the Lasallian family provides, the community of teachers, Brothers, students and volunteers. I recognize the strong influence the Lasallian family has had on me. It is something I cannot leave behind after high school. My Lasallian identity will always exist. Live Jesus in our hearts...forever.

Fevan Beyene**Senior at De La Salle North Catholic High School, Portland, Oregon**

Hi, I'm Fevan, and I'm a senior here at De La Salle. I joined the Lasallian family my sophomore year of high school when I transferred. I transferred from a public high school and had no clue what I was getting myself into. No clue that I was joining a family. To me, being Lasallian means understanding and embracing the Lasallian core principles which are: faith in the presence of God, quality education, concern for the poor and social justice, respect for all persons, and inclusive community. We are reminded of these principles every

day with the banners in the main hall. Inclusive community is the one I connect to the most because I've had an amazing time here at De La Salle North and at the different retreats I was able to attend.

I have participated in three trips with hundreds of students from other Lasallian schools. The three retreats I attended were focused on leadership, service and faith. I have met kids from all over the country with similar values to myself. Kids who know they are going to college even though the odds might be against them, kids who understand that God has a role in our lives even if we don't know it, kids who understand that unless we take action nothing will get done.

After seeing how being Lasallian has influenced our teachers, alumni, Lasallian Volunteers and Brothers, I feel more connected to the teachings. I see the core principals lived out in all of their lives. They are committed to our success. Having all of these people committed to not only our educational success but also our success as individuals is a unique experience. Not all kids have the support that we have, and although it may be hard we need to express our appreciation. We have teachers, volunteers and administration willing to stay after school to meet our needs and better our futures.

After college I plan on spending a year in some sort of volunteer program. Working in a school, or some sort of social service organization. This is because of the Lasallian principals and the examples I have seen. I plan to live out the mission that we are taught about. I want to integrate the posters hanging from the ceiling in the main hall into my daily life.

All of us seniors here have been on Lasallian Youth Assembly, Lasallian Student Leaders, or the Called and Chosen vocations retreat – please see us about these amazing opportunities! I encourage all of you to go on these trips and get to know more of our Lasallian family. Live Jesus in our hearts...forever.