



**Brothers of
the Christian
Schools**



“WITH A FATHER’S HEART” Lasallian Year of St. Joseph, Patron of the Institute

I. Motivation:

Our Institute and the entire Lasallian Family have been called together by our Brother Superior, Robert Schieler, to join all the People of God in celebrating the Year dedicated to St. Joseph also as our Patron and Protector.

It also coincides with the fact that the UN has declared 2021 as “International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour”. In this context, the figure of St. Joseph motivates our reflection since “every poor, needy, suffering or dying person (...) is ‘the child’ whom Joseph continues to protect” (Patris corde, 5) and, in the context of COVID-19, we can well remember Joseph as protector of “unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying.” (cf. Patris corde 5) and without forgetting our commitment to “take care to safeguard the rights of children and young people” (R 17,1) especially the poor and the most vulnerable (cf. R. 11).

We also do this in the context of the celebration of the 330th anniversary of the Heroic Vow on 21 November 1691. Some years ago, Br Yves Poutet suggested that we made a great mistake in establishing a tradition, which will not disappear, by calling this commitment the “Heroic Vow”. He felt that we should have called it the “Founding Vow”. Just as, at a time of great instability, the vow of Jean Jacques Olier in his foundation of the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice was foundational, so it was for Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Vuyart and Drolin on 21 November 1691.

From this perspective, we could think of St. Joseph as the spiritual foundation of the Institute. Our Founder writes: “You also have been charged, very much like Saint Joseph, with a holy work, a work that is very similar to his and requires that your piety and your virtue be more than ordinary”. (MF110.1) Our work, like that to which De La Salle and his companions committed themselves, requires a foundation based on the virtues of a father and husband to his family: righteous behaviour, obedience before God, care and tender love.



The Year of St. Joseph becomes an excellent means to continue building pathways that transform lives from the utopia of the Kingdom. We call upon him “as the Patron and Protector of the Society, persuaded that he has great influence with God” (EMO 10,240).

Brother Superior and the General Council will be offering you different materials and invitations which you can find on the Institute’s website. At the same time, please do not hesitate to send us any initiative that could enrich our website, thus becoming a meeting point for all of us in this celebration until December 8th, when we will conclude this celebration.

II. Which are our goals?

- To make known the figure of Saint Joseph and the importance of his patronage for the entire Lasallian Family.
- To provide various materials to the entire Lasallian Family that help to promote Lasallian Spirituality with the figure of St. Joseph as a transversal axis.
- To use the Institute’s usual channels of communication to disseminate what is being done during the Year of St. Joseph.

III. What do Brother Superior and the General Council offer to the entire Lasallian Family?

To open a specific space on the Institute’s website including the different materials approved and other products and information coming from the Districts. Do not hesitate to send us anything you consider appropriate.

Material on the Institute’s website:

1. Documents:

- “Saint Joseph in the tradition of the Institute”. (Br. Carlos Cantalapiedra)
- “Saint Joseph: Precursor of Fraternity” (Br. Diego Muñoz).
- Meditation 110: a contemporary reading. (Br. Jean Louis Schneider)
- Material for a time of retreat around the figure of St. Joseph.

We are always open to include other documents that come to us from the Districts.

2. Testimonies:

Pope Francis states that St Joseph shows us the importance of “ordinary” people who, although far from the centre of attention, they exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this they resemble St Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, an everyday, discreet and hidden presence”, who nevertheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation”. From this perspective:

- Throughout the year, we will present the testimony of Brothers and Lasallians who are “the silent ones” or who may go unnoticed but who are true witnesses of faith, service and community.

All testimonies that you can send to us will be welcomed.

3. Iconography:

- To compile and disseminate the iconography available on Saint Joseph in our ministries and communities (paintings, sculptures...).

The Communications Service will, at the appropriate time, request quality photographs for this action. We ask for your cooperation.

4. Suggestions:

- To share in the space provided on our website suggestions for celebrating the Year of St. Joseph at District and/or local level.
- To offer possible suggestions for living the Year of St. Joseph in communion with the Church and from our personal spirituality.

5. Bibliography:

- To compile a brief bibliography, including a review, on the novelty of the figure and spirituality of Saint Joseph today.

Any book about Saint Joseph that you consider appropriate may be included with a short review and a photograph of the book cover.

6. Other actions:

- Eucharist at the beginning of the Lasallian Year of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Institute, broadcast from Bethlehem University.



The scheduled time will be at 5pm Bethlehem time.

- To make a “virtual journey” through our ministries dedicated to St. Joseph.

Ricky Laguda and Keane Palatino, the specific centres will shortly receive specific instructions from Br. Ricky Laguda and Keane Palatino on how to carry out this journey.

- Offer a written prayer to Saint Joseph based on lasallian spirituality.