

Culinary Reflection on the Five Lasallian Core Principles



Call to Dinner:

- a. Sharing a meal—communion—united in mission
- b. Our Lasallian Mission as expressed in five core principles
- c. Overview of the evening explained—a meal of five courses to correspond with each of the five core principles. (Share the star with five core principles).
- d. Prayer before the meal—a shared blessing: In thanksgiving ...how the mission and ministry of Saint John Baptist de la Salle has touched your life?

Course I: Appetizers—Faith in the Presence of God

The appetizer invites us into the dining experience. The analogy—something/someone invites us to faith in God or invites us to step out in faith. Just like an appetizer is a small morsel of food, so too the invitation for the first step may have seemed a small step, yet it leads to a much richer experience.

Scripture: Mark 1:14 ff. Jesus calls his first disciples

¹⁴After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.¹⁷ "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."¹⁸ At once they left their nets and followed him.

¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.²⁰ Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him

Lasallian Quotation: From the Memoir of the Beginnings, "one commitment leads to another."

It was, because of these two events, the encounter with Monsieur Nyel and the proposal made to me by this lady (Madame de Croyeres), that I began to take care of the school for boys. I had not thought of doing this before, but not because others had not suggested that I do such work. Several friends of Monsieur Roland had tried to inspire me in this direction, but the work had no appeal for me, and I did not feel inclined toward it. And if I had ever thought that the care I took of the school masters, simply out of charity, would impose on me the duty of living with them, I would have stopped doing this. For, naturally, I ranked lower than my valet those whom I was forced to employ in the schools, particularly in the beginning, and the very thought that it would be necessary to live with them would have been insupportable to me...Apparently, then, it was for this reason that God, who directs all things with wisdom and gentleness, and who is not accustomed to force the wills of [persons], but who wanted to lead me to take complete direction of the schools, did this, in a very imperceptible manner, and over a period of time, so that one commitment led me into the next one without my having foreseen this in the beginning.

Conversation Pointers

1. Who/what invited you to faith? Who/what led you to step out in faith?
2. How should a Lasallian school invite students to faith? How should a Lasallian school encourage students to live their faith?

[Live Jesus in our hearts. (No comma).]

Course II: Gumbo—Inclusive Community

Every kind of food has a place in gumbo. The combinations are limitless—seafood, chicken, okra, sausage, etc... Just as varied ingredients enrich a gumbo, a varied student body enriches a Lasallian school. Just as a gumbo would be diminished lacking any particular ingredient, a Lasallian school would be diminished if a student did not understand and appreciate his/her place in the Lasallian family.

Scripture: Romans 12:3-8 ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Lasallian Quotation: Vision Statement from Lasallian Regional Assembly Final Report (2005)

The Lasallian Mission of the 21st century, animated by the Holy Spirit, is part of the “Church’s work in spreading the Gospel” (*The Rule*, Article 11). The Lasallian Mission is carried out by the Lasallian Family who “together and by association” evangelize by making the Gospel a living reality in the lives of young people and their families, especially the poor.

Lasallian ministries are committed and empowered educational faith communities that form their members as educators who provide a quality human and Christian education and who seek out those who are abandoned by society and advocate for justice, leading them to the salvation God has meant for all.

Lasallian ministries are first and foremost relational. They are also life giving and accessible to all—socioeconomically, culturally, geographically, and in schools, academically.

Lasallian ministries include a diverse variety of non-traditional educational outreach programs to help young people receive an education and a place in society.

Conversation Pointers

1. Think of a time when a group or a community affirmed your worth and place among them. Think of a time when you felt as though you belonged and counted.
2. How can a Lasallian school become a place where students of very different backgrounds and abilities each find his/her place?

Course III: Bowl of Rice—Concern for the Poor and Social Justice

Eating rice or bread is an attempt to understand and experience what most of the world experiences as the majority of their diet. In the spirit of De La Salle, we need to respond both in charity and in justice—to help our students see and alleviate both immediate needs and address the underlying causes of poverty and injustice.

Scripture: Matthew 25:34-40

³⁴“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

³⁷"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?' ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Lasallian Quotation:

"I have long advocated that each of our schools be an 'impact center,' that is to say, a center which 'reaches out' to the poor around it and responds creatively and effectively. The possibilities for service are almost unlimited: literacy programs – in the school or in other centers; teams of volunteer teachers and young people to work with street children; night classes for school drop-outs; Lasallian youth groups to respond to the needs of the sick, the aged and neglected, etc. Many of our schools 'reach out' to the poor of other countries by providing financial assistance. Some even send young people, teachers, former students, parents, and friends for service in needy countries during vacation periods."

—From address given by Brother John Johnston at the Second Lasallian European Congress at Stratsbourg (1994)

Conversation Pointer

1. What/who has made you aware of the poor and marginalized in the world?
2. How should a Lasallian school reach out in charity to those in need and educate in social justice?

Course IV: Main Course—Quality Education

Quality Education is the "main course", "the meat," the substance of an education. In a Lasallian school, certainly what are known as "core courses" might be considered the "Main Course" of a strong education. In a Lasallian school, what determines "Quality Education?" Concept of Whole person; in the context of preaching the Gospel (for what? How do we advance the Kingdom of God through our Lasallian school?) Somehow—competency must show up in this section.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:20 - 25

²⁰Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

²²Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom,²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Lasallian Quotation

- Being Lasallian does not mean "watering down." Rather it means meeting the student where he or she is for the optimum amount of new learning.
- As Lasallian educators we don't decide the legitimacy of students' needs, rather, we create ways to best address those given needs.
- Design programs addressing the developmental needs of the whole person.
- 21st century spirituality no longer aims at perfection. Instead, we aim at wholeness. We are not disembodied souls, as humans we are mind, body and spirit. Our educational strategies should reflect concern for the totality of our humanity.

—Brother Armand Alcazar, F.S.C. Vision of Religious Education in a Lasallian School

Christian education has an extremely important role to play in our current reality...a type of education that is human and personal and which plays a critical role that makes possible the creation of a new society...an education that is participatory and fraternal....

—2004 Pastoral Letter, Brother Alvaro Rodriquez Echeverria, FSC

Conversation Pointer

1. What educational experience in your life did you consider a truly “quality education?” What were/are your criteria?
2. What do you want to be the marks (characteristics) of the education of your son or daughter in a Lasallian school?

Course V: Dessert—Respect for All Persons

A good dessert simply completes a meal, brings a wonderful experience to an excruciatingly delicious close. It is in the belt-loosening of the end of a meal that we say, “That meal was simply fabulous.” In a similar way, as we consider this last core principle, we are able to look at our brothers and sisters and say to them—you are simply fabulous, a gift from God, a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

Lasallian Quotation: Recognize Jesus beneath the poor rags of the children whom you have to instruct; adore him in them. Love poverty, and honor the poor, following the example of the Magi, for poverty ought to be dear to you, responsible as you are for the instruction of the poor. May faith lead you to do this with affection and zeal because these children are members of Jesus Christ.¹² In this way this divine Savior will be pleased with you, and you will find him because he always loved the poor and poverty.

Respect is not earned: it is our call and our responsibility to respect students before we even meet them! They are made in the image and likeness of God, and therefore are ALL deserving of our respect.

- This also means that there is nothing they can do to LOSE our respect
- We set the example—it is true that *we* must earn *their* respect, but we set the example of unconditional respect for them—POWERFUL!

—Greg Kopra (presentation on the Five Core Principles)

Conversation Pointer

1. Who has shown you unconditional respect? How has that person done this?
2. How should respect permeate all of the interactions in a Lasallian school?

Other ideas:

- Present the wine served as the spirit which animates the meal/ the Holy Spirit which animates the Lasallian mission.
- Ask participants to re-seat at each course so that all may have an opportunity to speak with each other.
- At the conclusion of the meal, open the floor for reactions/sharing. Also ask participants to fill out a brief written evaluation and/or submit ideas, questions, etc.