



The District of  
Great Britain and Malta



# The Report of the 2008 District Chapter

DE LA SALLE BROTHERS

**The original notes used in the writing of this report are held in the District archives at Oxford.**

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# 1. THE 2008 DISTRICT CHAPTER OF GREAT BRITAIN & MALTA

St Cassian's Centre, Kintbury  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2008

**President:** Brother Aidan Kilty, Visitor

**Guest:** Brother Jacques d'Huitemau, Councillor General for RELEM

## **Ex Officio Capitulants**

Martin Borg  
Mark Boyle  
Terence Collins  
Benet Conroy <sup>1</sup>  
Michael Curran  
John Deeney  
Benedict Foy  
Laurence Hughes  
Sean Sellors  
Owen Smith

## **Elected Capitulants**

Anthony Brunning  
Thomas Campbell  
James Connolly  
Thomas Cooney  
Anton de Roeper <sup>1</sup>  
Gerald Fogarty  
Saviour Gatt  
Bernard Hayward  
Joseph Hendron  
Terence Kay <sup>1</sup>  
Vincent Kingston  
Livinus Lalor  
Ralph Loftus  
Patrick Maloney  
Joseph O'Keefe  
Anthony Porter  
William Rafferty  
David Robinson  
David Scarpa  
Emmanuel Sciberras  
Philip Smith  
Bernard Westcott

## **Associates** (invited for sessions 2,3 & 4)

Chanel Lally  
John Caherty  
Liz Richardson  
Caroline Price  
Mark Quinn  
John Lux  
Graham Brookes  
Sonia McLean

## **Brothers Attending**

Damian Roe  
Matthew Sasse  
Augustine O'Meara

## **Secretaries**

Allen Geppert  
Michael O'Hara



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<sup>1</sup> Unable to attend

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Rome, September 9, 2008

Dear Brother Visitor, Dear Brothers,  
District of Great Britain - Malta

Your District Chapter was held from May 26<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> this year. The considerations of the capitulants as well as the decisions they took were sent to us for our approval in accordance with article 131 of the Rule.

First of all, here are a few thoughts that came to mind on reading them.

As a result of the Chapter discussions 17 proposals were formulated. Almost all of them were approved unanimously. This reflects your conviction that they really express what God expects of you at the present time in order “*to procure his glory as far as you are able*”.

The resolutions you adopted reveal a number of major concerns which can be formulated as follows:

- to strengthen fraternal bonds, a sign of the Spirit of Jesus at work in us;
- to keep alive and active our concern for young people and our call to them to share our spiritual journey and even our vocation;
- to continue to look for increasingly close forms of collaboration and partnership with the lay people who share our mission and our spirit;
- to allow ourselves to be challenged by the General Chapter.

**To strengthen fraternal bonds**

This is one of the major concerns of your Chapter.

It comes up in a good number of proposals which refer to it from various angles:

- insistence on teamwork: 3; 4; 7
- desire to encourage various kinds of meetings: 8
- importance attached to communication within the District and outside it: 11; 12
- search for a more suitable approach and greater practical awareness of Malta’s inclusion in the District: 2; 16; 17

We are delighted by your desire to strengthen fraternity in the District. The fact we are called “*Brothers*” is a permanent reminder of it. The present-day cultural, social and ecclesial situation underlines the urgent need for it so that the world can believe in the possibility of what Jesus called the “*Kingdom of God*”, even if “*we carry around this treasure in vessels of clay*”. Proposals 11 and 12 touch on this point.

The importance of communication needs to be stressed. Communication consists in both transmitting information and encouraging discussion and reflection. This strengthens the sense of belonging among Brothers and lay Lasallians, and provides an opportunity to express in public convictions and ideas which can contribute to public debate and demonstrate the educational vitality of the Lasallian world.

The world of communication is complex and ever-changing, all the more so as the sections of the public targeted vary so much. This makes it necessary for us to reassess our ideas constantly in order to respond as well as possible to expectations and to varied needs.

The two proposals show that you are aware of this. You will probably need to find people of proven competence to help you.

In addition, the question of the links between Malta and Great Britain is one that needs to be tackled in a spirit of fraternity and truth. The geographical distance between them is both an obstacle and a source of enrichment because it brings with it differences in outlook, history and ways of perceiving the role and the future of the Brothers. All this needs to be borne in mind without, however, making it an obstacle to the establishment of a strong and fruitful bond between the two geographical and national “poles” of the District.

### **Concern for young people and call to share the Lasallian spirit and our vocation**

Two proposals make explicit reference to this: 5 and 6.

There is also proposal 9 regarding District commitment to support St Cassian’s, which hosts groups of young people, offering them a powerful human and spiritual experience.

Proposals 5 and 6 are distinct but linked. To offer young people an opportunity to undertake a human and spiritual journey inspired by the Lasallian spirit and to provide accompaniment is a good way of creating the possibility that one day they will consider dedicating their lives to young people and to God, perhaps as Brothers. The very fact of setting up a Vocations Commission and of seeking to offer support to young people demonstrates both that you have not given up hope of a continued Lasallian presence in Great Britain and Malta despite present difficulties, and the possibility of proposing the Brothers’ vocation as a path to human and spiritual growth. It is clear that the existence of centres such as St Cassian’s is important because they provide young people and adults in the Lasallian network with an opportunity to recharge their batteries, and find discernment and help to deepen their understanding of their own lives.

Proposal 14 stresses the importance of formation tailored to the needs of each candidate. Nowadays it is clearly a question of providing “bespoke” formation. All the same, we should not forget that formation needs to take into account the European framework with which the future of the young Brothers will be bound up, and with which the formation of many Europeans at the present time is bound up also (cf. Erasmus). In this connection, the “universalism” of the English language should not be a reason for refraining from learning another official Institute language. What is at stake here is the chance for young people to open up to other ways of thinking and to develop their ability to communicate.

### **Collaboration and partnership with lay people**

Nowadays, to live out our vocation as Brothers means collaborating, being partners and even “associating” closely with the lay people who share our mission, some of whom wish to live according to the Lasallian charism. It is not easy to move on from a situation in which only Brothers were involved, and in which the Brothers held all the positions of responsibility in their schools, to one in which the Brothers have partners, some of whom occupy important administrative and executive positions.

Your District Chapter was not a MEL Assembly. Consequently, you said little regarding the mission. We note, however, that you affirmed the existence of a MEL Council as an integral part of District structures, and that proposal 10 renews District commitment to the LAMB project which is an original

structure of Lasallian commitment in which Brothers and lay people live out a form of association which can open up new horizons in the future.

### **Absorbing and integrating the General Chapter**

Your District Chapter took place a year after the General Chapter. We are still at the stage of digesting the texts contained in Circular 455. And so we are very pleased that capitulants made a point of integrating in their consideration of community life the recommendations of the General Chapter (proposal 13); and that they decided to organise a colloquium on the interior life within two years (proposal 15). At some point in the future, a check should be made on how much the Brothers know about results of the General Chapter and the extent to which these have been absorbed and integrated.

The Rule states: the District Chapter “*evaluates the life of the District in all its aspects. It takes into account the local situation and it establishes a schedule of precise programmes for renewal, adaptation or growth to be implemented in the near future*” (art. 128). Your Chapter proceedings fulfil this requirement.

We give you our approval for what you have decided. It is now up to you, given the responsibility you have, that you act in such a way that what you discerned to be what God expects of you is translated in a practical form in your life and in that of the District.

Rest assured of our continued interest and support.

Yours fraternally,



Br Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría  
Superior General



Br Jacques d'Huitem  
General Councillor for RELEM



## 3. WELCOME & OPENING OF THE CHAPTER

### Address by Brother Aidan Kilty, Visitor

Having invoked the blessing of the Spirit and the intercession of our Founder, St John Baptist de La Salle, along with all our Lasallian saints, particularly those holy men and women from our part of the world, who devoted their lives to the mission of Jesus confided to us by the Church, and who have created the wonderful heritage on which we now build, I am happy to formally open the District Chapter of 2008. I welcome all of you and thank you for your presence here in response to the trust placed in you by the rest of the District. Unfortunately, not all elected delegates are able to attend. I have received an apology from Br Anton de Roeper who is unavoidably absent as one of the founding members of the Institute's new community in the Sudan and whose presence there is a salutary reminder of our District's generous contribution, both in personnel and financially, to the international Institute over so many years. I have also received apologies from Br Benet Conroy who, as you all know is seriously ill and presently undergoing treatment, and from Br Terence Kay who is recovering from surgery. I commend all our sick Brothers to your prayers during our time together this week.

In a special way, on your behalf, I would like to welcome Br Jacques d'Huitemau, General Councillor for the Lasallian Region of Europe and the Mediterranean whose presence with us reminds us of our solidarity with the rest of the international Institute and, in particular, with Br Alvaro and his General Council in Rome. Br Jacques has extensive experience, particularly in French-speaking parts of the Institute, and I am sure that he will have pastoral and administrative insights that will help us as we grapple, in Chapter and beyond, with local implications of the orientations from the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. We also warmly welcome our confrères representing the Malta Sector of our District, Brs Martin, Saviour and my former Director in Rome, Emmanuel. Brothers, you are most welcome, and we hope that your participation will be fruitful and helpful to the Lasallian mission in Malta. I would also like to welcome and thank Brs Allen Geppert and Michael O'Hara for their willingness to take on the onerous, but essential, responsibility as secretaries



to the Chapter. Finally, I extend a warm welcome to Brs Damian Roe and Matthew Sasse who have responded to the District-wide invitation for non-delegates to attend the Chapter.

The beginning of this Chapter is also an appropriate moment to say thank you, in the first place, to Br Sean (as Visitor), to Brs Terry and Owen (as Auxiliaries) and to the Brothers who have served the District as Councillors over the last four years. We are grateful for your devoted service of leadership, often time-consuming, challenging and unacknowledged, as you endeavoured to guide the District through changing circumstances. In particular, on your behalf, I would like to formally thank Br Sean for his very generous commitment to District leadership over the past twelve years as Visitor and Auxiliary Visitor. Writing in the May edition of the Lasallian

Newsletter, I spoke of Sean's "unfailing good humour and wit, sensitivity, insight and collaborative ability that have enabled him to lead the District through uncharted and difficult waters during that time". Having been in this job now for only two months, and having seen some of the issues that regularly cross the Visitor's desk, that Sean could maintain his equilibrium over that time in the face of those issues and challenges says much for his spirit of faith that so obviously supported him. So, Sean, we thank you and wish you well on your sabbatical. In passing, I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that Br Superior and his Council have approved my request to have Br Terence Collins re-appointed as Auxiliary Visitor. I am obviously very grateful to Terry for his willingness to continue to serve the District in this way and look forward to a fruitful working relationship with him in the interests of the District.

I would also like to address another thank you, this time to the Chapter Steering Committee – Brs Terence, Benedict, Bernard Hayward, David Scarpa and William – who have done sterling work in preparation for our Chapter. With regard to the documentation, you may recall that, at the first session of the Chapter in January, the Steering Committee proposed the issues and content that were adopted by

you as delegates, and our programme for the next few days has been integrated around that. However, the Steering Committee is very mindful that the Chapter, as a sovereign body, has the right to introduce changes to that programme if it so wishes. Br Terence, Chairman of the Steering Committee, will speak to the programme just before we finish our session this evening.

So as we celebrate this opening of our Chapter we might ask “What is its purpose?” Rule 128 tells us that the purpose of the Chapter is to evaluate “*the life of the District in all its aspects. It takes into account the local situation and it establishes a schedule of precise programmes for renewal, adaptation or growth to be implemented in the near future*”. Rule 129 adds that a District Chapter “*must be held following a General Chapter in order to apply its decisions*”. I think that the programme proposed by the Steering Committee offers ample scope to address what I see as the twin objectives that may be deduced from those articles of Rule – i.e. the evaluation of our District life and the formulation of future orientations in the light of the recent 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter.

As we embark on this process I think that it is very important to recognise and celebrate the journey that we have made as a District in the changing circumstances of recent decades. Our District panorama has undergone a major transformation since most of us began our Lasallian ministries many years ago in what we knew as “Brothers’ Schools”. Today the Lasallian educational mission, carried out not in “Brothers’ Schools” but in Lasallian Schools or Centres, is now almost exclusively in the hands of our Lasallian lay colleagues, many of them very competent and extremely committed. For some of us this can be a cause of disillusionment and sadness but looking at it with the eyes of faith we are challenged to take a different perspective. In the words of Isaiah there is “...*No need to recall the past, no need to think about what was done before. See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it?..*” (Is 43:17ff). To be able to take up that challenge, to see the new appearing, requires us to be a certain type of person and, in consequence, it is no surprise that the recent General Chapter presents to us as Brothers, irrespective of age or ministry, the “*interior life*” and “*community*” as key areas for personal, communal and District reflection. In the evocative words of Sister Mary Sujita to the General Chapter capitulants, in our following of Jesus today we are called to “*be more and have less*” which I believe is a profound challenge to our personal and community life.

I hope, as a Chapter, that we will be able to address these key areas of our life as Brothers and at least come up with some realistic orientations that can guide us as a District over the next few years, and which will enable us as Brothers to be credible witnesses to an authentic Lasallian spirituality that will support and inspire those who bear the brunt of the Lasallian mission today. With regard to that mission, my hope is that during the Chapter and beyond we will continue the complicated search for effective strategies and structures that will ensure its continuance in an uncertain future. That, as you know, was a major challenge presented to the Institute by the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter and one which also emerged as a major concern of our Lasallian lay colleagues during the recent Lasallian Assembly held in Kintbury in April. It is a challenge that clearly has implications with regard to, among other things, our own understanding of the theology of communion and the complementarity of vocations, the nature of the formation that we offer to our lay colleagues, the financial resources that we make available to the mission, and the active involvement of our lay colleagues in decision-making about that mission.

During this Chapter I hope that we will be able to explore these and other issues in a fraternal and open way, aware of the different ways in which the Spirit speaks in and through us. Obviously, I hope that we will also be able to do it in an efficient and effective way that is characterised by dialogue and unhampered by legalism. I hope, too, that we can learn from the recent General Chapter which, in a clear break with previous practice, deliberately moved away from an emphasis on propositions to offer the new Institute Administration not a legislative programme but rather guidelines and orientations for future policies. Finally, I hope, too, that we can consciously make room for the Spirit, aware that the Chapter has to be the work of the Lord if it is to give effective responses to the challenges we face today. That this might happen I invite you to join me in making our own the following prayer of the Founder found at the end of his beautiful meditation for the Eve of the Ascension:

*“Since God has given you the grace of calling you to live in (this) community, there is nothing that you should more earnestly ask of him than this union of heart and mind with your Brothers. Only by means of this union will you acquire that peace which ought to be all the joy of your life. Entreat the God of hearts to keep your heart and those of your Brothers one in the heart of Jesus.” (Med 39:3)*

## 4. REPORTS ON DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE 2004 CHAPTER

**The Resolutions of the District Chapter of 2004.** These were noted.

### 1. The Documents of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter.

*Authors: Brs Sean Sellors and David Scarpa*

In their Report, Brs Sean and David drew attention to the invitation of the General Chapter to the District and to individual Brothers to reflect prayerfully on the Chapter's deliberations and to give their own reality to its aspirations and conclusions. Such a response requires the Brothers to let go of certain things from the past and to reclaim a spirit which is rooted in their very foundations. The General Chapter had focused on eight themes: community life, educational service of the poor, association for the educational service of the poor, interior life, identity as Brothers, pastoral ministry and vocations, formation and government, and animation. These themes, together with the messages of the General Chapter, needed to be given priority. Lines of action were proposed as a way of relating General Chapter propositions to our own situation.



Among the issues highlighted were the following: on community life, the commitments proposed by the General Chapter should form part of the Community and Personal Annual Programmes; on the educational service of the poor, the objectives can form the basis for realistic programmes of action; on the interior life, the importance of living a deep spiritual life should be seen as complementary to living an authentic community life; on vocation, continued prayer is needed that young men will come forward to join the Brothers in their mission, but without neglecting the idea that vocation must be broadened to include not only those aspiring to become Brothers, but also those seeking to be partners in the Lasallian ministry; on the future, the challenge now is to find new life and fresh energy to make real what we profess.

### 2. The Visitor's Report on the District of Great Britain and Malta, 2004 - 2008.

*Author: Br Sean Sellors*

Br Sean commented that the propositions of the Chapter of 2004 were mostly measurable and had been implemented by the Visitor along with his Auxiliaries, Owen Smith and Terry Collins, and the District and Economic Councils. The setting up of the LEM Council and Formation Commission in 2004 had provided two further groups to assist the District Mission. Support for the schools had continued through work with the Heads, teachers and other Lasallian groups, and through governorships. On the regional level, ASSEDIL had also been strongly supported. He acknowledged the change of status of Malta (with the need for closer co-operation), and the creation of the new European region of RELEM. He stressed that maintaining and supporting the District's current mission commitments had been a priority. However, with the inevitability that Communities will close in the future due to declining numbers, a priority for all Communities will be to continue to explore their mission.



### 3. The District Council's Report to the Chapter.

*Author: Br Terence Collins*

Br Terence explained that the Report gave an overview of the Council's work since 2004, in particular with respect to the specific tasks given to it by the last District Chapter, namely:

- (i) To implement the change of status for Malta.
- (ii) To establish a Council for the Lasallian Educational Mission.
- (iii) To establish a Commission to plan Lasallian formation for Associates and Brothers.
- (iv) To implement the proposition approved by the Lasallian Assembly relating to the Bristol project.
- (v) To ensure that Justice and Peace issues are given a higher priority in the life and work of the District.

Among the major activities of the Council in response to these tasks were the following:

- Drawing up a set of statutes for the Malta Sector.
- Establishing the LEM Council and the Formation Commission.
- Reviewing the role of the District Bursar prior to the appointment of Br Mark Boyle to replace Br Anthony Brunning in May 2005.
- In November 2007, meeting with Br Jacques d'Huiteau, the General Councillor with responsibility for the newly-formed Region of Europe and the Mediterranean (RELEM).
- In June 2004, seeking approval from the Superior to set up the LAMB Community.
- In November 2004, agreeing to continue an annual donation to Kids Kabin for a further three years, and in July 2005 to continue providing financial support to St Cassian's for two more years.
- Selecting a delegate to represent the District at the International Assembly on the Lasallian Educational Mission and two representatives to participate in the International Congress of Young Lasallians in Rome.
- Considering at some length the formation of potential Lasallian leaders among our Lay Colleagues.
- Giving serious consideration to the topic of Safeguarding (Child Protection), starting in January 2005 with study of the Nolan Report. (In June 2007 an extraordinary meeting of the Council was devoted solely to Child Protection legal questions, with solicitors Stone King advising.)
- From March 2007, commencing preparations for the District Chapter of May 2008.

### 4. The Report of the Malta Sector Co-ordinator.

*Author: Br Martin Borg*



Br Martin presented a comprehensive report which included information about the Malta Sector Council and the Communities, as well as financial statements and a draft Declaration of Trust with a draft Trust Deed. The report also gave details of the Malta Sector Lasallian Education Council, Continuing Formation and special activities, namely '*Moving Forward the Lasallian Heritage Together*' and '*Reflections*' from Br Saviour Gatt which covers the activities of groups that have been entrusted with the task of assisting the work of the Brothers. Prominent among these is 'Signum Fidei', led by the moderator, Br Louis Camilleri.



## 5. The Lasallian Assembly – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

*Author: Br Aidan Kilty*

The main purpose of the Assembly was to enable Lasallian Colleagues to have some direct input into the District Chapter. In his presentation to the Assembly, Br Aidan highlighted the Institute-wide search to find adequate structures to appropriately address the key role of Lasallian partners in mission.

Seven major issues were raised in open forum:

- (i) the need for adequate formation for mission,
- (ii) the prioritising of mission commitments,
- (iii) the continuation of the Lasallian spirit in a changing context,
- (iv) clarity about terminology,
- (v) structures and organisation,
- (vi) the membership of commissions and councils,
- (vii) effective communications.



## 6. The Report on ELANICO: its History and its Plans.

*Author: Br Gerald Fogarty*

Br Gerald outlined the history and present work of ELANICO and explained the relevance of its mission today, namely to provide courses in English, largely but not exclusively to Religious. Over the years, students, male and female, have come from nearly fifty different countries. He emphasised that the service they offer is much appreciated by the students. Moreover, the work is largely self-financing, with income from fees combined with that from pensions normally exceeding expenditure, even though the level of fees is very competitive. Students are accepted only if they are in some way connected to the educational mission of the Church. The present staff are very satisfied with the work they have been appointed to do by the District, knowing that they are supporting Christian education through those whom they are teaching.



## 5. EDUCATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The Capitulants were joined, for this session, by members of the St Cassian's and LAMB communities: from St Cassian's: Chanel Lally, John Caherty, Liz Richardson, Br Gus O'Meara; from LAMB: Graham Brookes, John Lux, Sonia McLean, Caroline Price, Mark Quinn.

### 1. The District's Commitments to our Schools.

*Author: Br Bernard Hayward*

Br Bernard stated that the Report was largely self-explanatory. It included details of the Schools in the De La Salle network, distinguishing those that are in the trusteeship of the Brothers and those where the property is in the ownership of the Brothers. Among the clarifications offered by Capitulants were the following:



- St Helens should be added to the list of schools where land is owned by the Brothers.
- The proceeds of the sale of land of the former St Joseph's Academy (Blackheath) are being included in the funds required to set up the new St Matthew Academy.
- The Schools in Malta should be classified as 'Church Schools', rather than 'Independent Schools'.
- A helpful addition to the Brothers' commitment to our Schools would be to have some indication of the Brothers' involvement in Governing Bodies.
- The annual Lasallian Heads' Conference is also a significant event of the District's commitment to our schools.

### 2. Report Concerning St Cassian's Centre, Kintbury.

*Authors: Br Anthony Porter, Chanel Lally, John Caherty, Liz Richardson, Br Augustine O'Meara*

Chanel Lally said that in the five years since the Centre had passed into the hands of a predominantly lay team, it had continued to function well and to expand. The Team feel that the need for the Centre is unquestioned. The numbers of young people coming to the Centre have increased year on year, and its beneficial effects are obvious and considerable. Aware and appreciative of the substantial annual subsidy that the Brothers provide to maintain the Centre, the Team is making every effort, in conjunction with the Management Committee, to increase the Centre's revenue and, thereby, to secure its future. The aim is to be financially self-sufficient in the longer term. Fund-raising has already begun and there is a proposal to create a conference centre within the existing buildings, which it is hoped will generate a significant amount of income.



In the ensuing wide-ranging discussion, the Capitulants expressed their appreciation for the team and the work of St Cassian's and indicated their desire to see the District continue to support it for a further four years.

### 3. The Lasallian Association for Mission in Bristol.

*Author: Br Owen Smith*

Br Owen explained that the LAMB ministry in schools is mainly one of support for students and teachers, with much of the work devoted to planning and leading liturgies, to assemblies and periods of prayer, and to one-to-one ministry. The Team endeavours to respond to the varying needs of the establishments that it visits. The main focus is the RE departments and chaplaincies, but there is involvement with other academic subjects, notably music, photography, textiles and special needs. Approaches to the team often come from teachers who have had contact with St Cassian's. There are currently four members in the permanent community, though more volunteers would have been enlisted had there been sufficient accommodation. The wider LAMB community includes those from within the schools and others, who support the mission. This larger group is brought together through weekly meetings and family events. Financial support comes from individual schools and from the local Bishop. Br Benet's absence has been a setback, though he continues to be involved where he can. New accommodation is being sought, because the existing residence has to be handed back to the owners in the summer. LAMB is an exemplary model of pastoral ministry and those involved hope that the Chapter will bless its efforts and continue to give it support.



There followed a wide-ranging discussion during which Capitulants expressed their appreciation for the LAMB community and its ministry and indicated their desire to see the District continue to support it for a further four years.

### 4. Report on the Lasallian Developing World Projects.

*Author: Br John Deeney*

Br John explained that the aims of the LDWP are to assist the growth of education in deprived parts of the world, and to raise awareness in Britain of the needs and problems faced by people living in poorer areas. Each summer, groups of young people (some are older) spend five weeks living and working amongst local communities in poorer countries. The numbers involved have risen steadily to around 80. The volunteers cover their own costs and contribute something towards the projects themselves. Work is found in deprived areas where modest buildings can make a big difference. Projects normally cost between £3,000 and £15,000, with anything from four to eight projects being taken on annually. The District provides £14,000 per year to pay administration costs.



The future of the LDWP will depend on several factors, including the availability of personnel to organise the projects and manage the finances, adequate funding, and the continuing support of the District and the Lasallian network. This summer there will be seven projects involving some seventy-nine students, together with one older group on a separate project in Ethiopia.



### 5. A List of the External Ministries in which Brothers of the District are Involved.

*Compiled by Br Benedict Foy*

This list was presented by Br Benedict to the Capitulants to familiarise them with the diversity of ministries presently being undertaken by Brothers in the District.

## 6. DISTRICT STRUCTURES

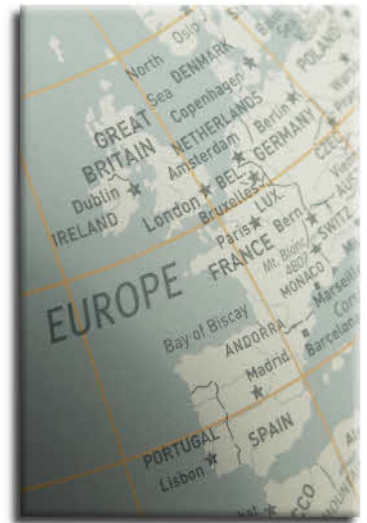
### 1. The Lasallian Region of Europe and the Mediterranean.

*Author: Br Terence Collins*

Br Terence explained that this document summarised the more extensive document entitled '*The Statutes of the Lasallian Region of Europe and the Mediterranean, (RELEM)*'. He drew attention to the Regional structures now in place which include the following elements:

- The conference of European Visitors, which is made up of all the European Visitors;
- The Regional Council, the main executive body of RELEM;
- The Regional Services (Commissions) of which there are five: 'The Life of the Brothers', 'The Lasallian Educational Mission', 'Pastoral Education', 'Finance' and 'Association and Lasallian family'.

Contact between RELEM and Districts is via the Commissions. He suggested that the way forward at District level is to replicate these Commissions. It was noted that 'Pastoral Education' refers to RE teaching, chaplaincy, pastoral care, etc. The Regional Council is due, as a matter of urgency, to meet in Romania shortly. A priority for the Commissions at present is to recruit English-speaking members with a knowledge of other European languages.



Among the comments made in the ensuing discussion were the following:

- RELEM exists to assist the Brothers Visitor; it will seek to promote co-operation between Districts; it will foster exchanges of personnel; it will seek to increase its participation in ASSEDIL.
- RELEM does not replicate the former Commissions and not all Sectors are represented.

Br Jacques d'Huitemau was invited to explain his role as the Regional Councillor for RELEM.

Among the points Jacques made were the following:

- In his first year he is seeking to acquaint himself with the existing situation.
- His aim is to set up structures.
- There is a lack of English speakers for the Commissions.
- He will observe and analyse how 'association' is understood and lived in different places.
- On the basis of his findings, he will propose ideas and lines of action to the Districts.



## 2. The Council for the Lasallian Education Mission: Activities 2005 – 2008.

*Author: Br Terence Collins*

Br Terence stated that the Council had been set up as a result of a vote of the Lasallian Assembly of March 2005 and had its first meeting, with eight members, on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2005. The main purpose of the Council is to provide support both for the Lasallian mission in schools and for other educational activities. The LEM Council has contributed to the organising of the Lasallian assemblies of 2006-2008 and plays its part in setting the agenda for the meetings of Lasallian Headteachers. It met the LAMB Group in September 2007 and has been joined for one of its sessions by a group of young Lasallians. In its brief, the Council was given the area of Lasallian Formation as a priority, in response to which it has set up a Formation Group. From the outset, the importance of communication was recognised. A new kind of Lasallian resource directory is proposed and the setting up of a Lasallian Resource Centre will be considered after a wider consultation within the Lasallian network.



During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- The LEM Council is a 'support group' not an 'authority' – it examines how to promote Lasallian association.
- It is planning further contacts with St Cassian's.
- It has set up a Formation group in response to the need for Lasallian training.
- The issue of the Resource Centre remains unresolved; exactly what form it should take is still being discussed.
- The publication of a Resource Handbook has been delayed, largely due to Br Benet's indisposition.
- The Council for Lasallian Mission was replaced de facto by the Lasallian Assemblies.

## 3. The Formation Group.

*Author: Br Benet Conroy*

In the absence of Br Benet, Br Owen spoke about the Group. He confirmed that it was set up by the Council for Lasallian Educational Mission in Spring 2006. It comprises members of the LEM Council, together with invited Lasallian practitioners from a variety of educational establishments. It has two aims: first to create programmes of training for all those who seek to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Lasallian Charism and, secondly, to consider the implications in terms of personnel and resources.

An ambitious series of programmes targeted mainly at teachers – from newly-qualified to heads – has been identified and will focus on three areas: a three-year INSET programme to develop Lasallian spirituality, a three-year LACE programme based on an understanding of Lasallian spirituality and its application in school, and a programme of induction for newly qualified teachers and those new to Lasallian schools. In March 2007, the Group proposed setting up 'Lasallian Formation Services', which would offer five areas of educational training and formation, namely: induction, on-going formation, INSET, leadership and management, and formation for all Lasallian groups. The Group has already completed a number of assignments, including teacher-training. However, to properly co-ordinate the whole



programme would require someone formally employed, with secretarial help, and would also involve other costs to cover, for example: resources, publicity, travel, location, web-training and licenses for the Australian programme, etc.

#### 4. Report on Safeguarding (previously called 'Child Protection').

*Author: Br Thomas Campbell*

Br Thomas confirmed his title as the 'Safeguarding Co-ordinator', which replaces the former 'Child Protection Officer'. His Report refers to the Cumberlege Report: 'Safeguarding with Confidence – Keeping Children and Vulnerable Adults Safe in the Catholic Church', which was published in 2007. His Report is intended both to inform the District about his work and to raise the profile of safeguarding vulnerable people. There is a detailed job description for the Co-ordinator which includes training and supporting others, processing CRB applications and generally raising awareness of safeguarding issues, as well as dealing with allegations against members.



The number of cases directly involving Brothers has been relatively small and, in some cases, the allegations unfounded, but the exercise has been painful and also very expensive in terms of legal costs. It is recommended that every Diocese and Congregation has access to the services of a Safeguarding Commission. Thomas himself is a member of the North West Safeguarding Commission with responsibility for liaising with a total of eight Religious Congregations. The Catholic Advisory Safeguarding Service is carrying out a 'past cases review' and is working on a policy for 'confidential reporting'. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) will implement a national vetting and barring scheme which will affect all Charities that employ people.

At the end of the discussion that followed, Br Aidan, on behalf of the District, took the opportunity to thank both Br Thomas Campbell and Br Thomas Cooney for their sterling work in this difficult and demanding area.

#### 5. Report on Lasallian Assemblies in Great Britain (2001-2008).

*Author: Br Terence Collins*

The Report comprises a brief history of the Lasallian Assemblies, starting with the first general assembly of former St Cassian's Team members, which took place on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2001, and ending with the Assembly of April 2007. Reference is made to meetings of, amongst others, the Bristol Group, former Brothers and former Kintbury Team Members. Br Terence drew attention to the full reports on each of the Assemblies that have been published in the District magazine. (The most recent Assembly on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008 is reported above in Session 1 of the Chapter.)



## 7. THE LIFE OF THE BROTHERS

### 1. The District Website - [www.delasalle.org.uk](http://www.delasalle.org.uk)

Author: Br Michael Curran



Br Michael explained that the website has four main foci:

- General information about the Institute, De La Salle and Lasallian Spirituality.
- Contact information regarding our District, Schools and Former Students.
- Specific information on individual missions, for example LDWP.
- The latest news and forthcoming events, including articles from the District magazine.

Over a typical twenty-four hour period, chosen at random, 1,193 pages were successfully requested. This year Easyspace.com charged £136.62 to host the site. Other occasional costs involve updating software. During the last eighteen months there have been experiments to determine a suitable web version of the District magazine: since January 2007 only selected articles have been published and a new layout employed, with links to other web pages, websites and email addresses. Modernising of the site by a professional company would cost in the region of £10,000 and has, so far, been rejected in favour of in-house updating. Future developments, currently being explored include:

- Creating a Lasallian Associates page and email exchange.
- The use of video clips to promote understanding of De La Salle and the Brothers' vocation.
- The development of a secure area accessible by password for the distribution of sensitive information, such as Chapter documents.
- The development of an email notification service to inform people of current events.

Amongst the comments made in the ensuing discussion were the following:

- Brothers could make their free internet storage space available to Michael to allow him to include material on the site that would be more accessible, dynamic and under his control.
- The site is already linked to the Malta site and to Br Nicholas' website ([www.prayingeachday.com](http://www.prayingeachday.com)).
- The Calendar could be put on the site. The printed version is expensive to produce. However, printed calendars are very much appreciated by a large variety of people. Many who receive them have no access to the internet.
- Some basic questions need to be considered: Who, in fact, uses the website? Who and what is it for? Are we simply duplicating what is already available through other District Lasallian websites?

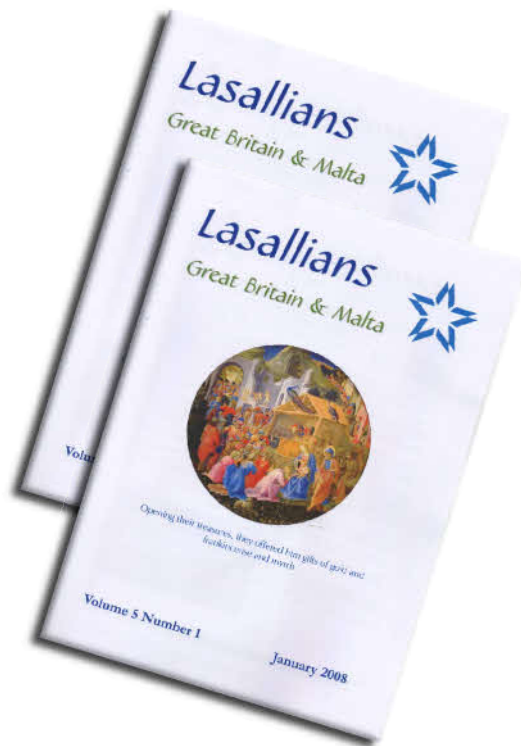


## 2. The Lasallian Newsletter.

*Author: Br David Robinson*

Br David explained that the current newsletter, 'Lasallians' came into existence in 2004. *Lasallians* aims:

- To promote the mission of Christian education.
- To inform Lasallians of relevant developments in the District, Institute and the Church.
- To encourage cohesion among the different groups of Lasallians.
- To communicate the charism of St John Baptist de La Salle.
- To develop the skills of Christian educators, especially those in the early years of the profession.



At present each edition comprises 365 copies which are sent to 303 different addresses in Britain and around the world. The cost of printing and posting is put at approximately £1 per copy (excluding labour), giving an overall annual cost for 10 editions of about £3,650.

Among the issues raised in the ensuing discussion were the following:

- Is the magazine fulfilling its original proposed aims?
- Should these aims be modified?
- Should the magazine continue in its current format and frequency?
- What is the appeal of the magazine to the wider Lasallian family? How can this be broadened?
- Should the magazine be published on the District Website?

## 3. The Report of the Provincial Bursar.

*Author: Br Mark Boyle*

Br. Mark's Report included a financial summary of income and expenditure, with figures taken for the three financial years up to 2007. He drew attention to the annual deficits, which have been increasing since 2003/2004. He confirmed that, following a review by the Economic Council of the performance of our investment managers, Cazenove, the Trustees had decided to transfer our investments to HSBC. The performance of the new investment managers is under constant review. Details of income and expenditure were provided and a full list of investments was appended to his Report.



Br Mark added the following comments to his Report:

- It is essential for the District Bursar to be a member of the District Council.
- The Report concerned only the financial activities of the Trust in Great Britain.
- Malta is setting up its own Trust, separate from the GB Trust, in compliance with European legislation.
- Thanks are due to Br Anthony Brunning for his valuable work as Bursar prior to his retirement in March 2005.

Amongst the comments made in the ensuing discussion were the following:

- Regarding investments, the figures giving details of the proportions of bonds and stocks are available.
- Accountability is required at Community level regarding the use of credit cards. The Community Director has a monitoring role in regard to their use.
- On expenditure, 'overseas donations' refers mainly to the District tax paid to the Mother House.
- In the matter of reducing expenditure, a suggestion was made that the District could dispose of the Rhiw property.

## 8. PRAYER LIFE, VOCATION OF THE BROTHER

### Prayer Life and Interior Life:

As there was no report, Br Sean introduced the topic and invited the Capitulants to comment. Issues raised in a wide-ranging discussion included:

- Some Brothers appreciate the structure of the Daily Office and Mass.
- Sharing our understanding of the Sunday liturgy is helpful.
- The Community meeting provides a powerful means of developing faith-sharing.
- We cannot speak to young people about God if we do not pray.
- We are reminded that the Founder did not differentiate between our work and our spiritual life.
- It should be noted that in 2007 some Brothers attended an inter-congregational retreat at Worth.
- Individually-guided retreats centred on Scripture are important.
- Retreats have been held in Clayton Court and St Helens for the less-mobile.
- Perhaps a Lasallian Assembly could also be a retreat to which Lasallian Associates would be invited.
- The annual retreat is of Rule.
- Lasallian Days, held at Clayton Court and St Helens in Advent and Lent, have provided occasions for Brothers to come together and opportunities for the study of documents and preparation for Chapters.
- In Malta, the Lasallian Days are shared with school staff.
- The publication, 'The Tablet', has spoken of a dearth of spirituality for teachers which Lasallian spirituality might address.
- The quality of our meetings has improved.



## Report on Vocations.

Author Br Benedict Foy

Br Benedict, speaking as District Vocations Director, referred to his Report which details the background – the environment and culture – against which the notion of ‘vocation’ has to be considered today. He was not, he emphasised, ‘the recruiter’ of the old days; in contrast, every Brother, now has, by Rule, a responsibility for vocation promotion. He is involved with other Congregations through a group called “*Brothers’ Communities in the United Kingdom*”, whose aim is to work collectively to promote the Brothers’ vocation and to encourage Brothers in their own vocation. He has spoken in a number of churches and schools about vocation in general and has encouraged prayer for vocations. Literature has been circulated in all Lasallian schools, colleges of further education and university chaplaincies in England, Wales and Scotland. He expressed disappointment at the negative attitude of some Brothers to promoting FSC vocations and emphasised the responsibility of every Brother to be bold, positive and pro-active in sharing a sense of vocation with others and inviting others to share our vocation.



He reminded the Capitulants that he has worked as Vocations Director for eight years. Nowadays it is older rather than younger people who express an interest in the religious life; motivation, rather than age, is the crucial element. The concept of vocation, he finds, is poorly understood.

Among the comments and enquiries made by Capitulants in response to the Report were the following:

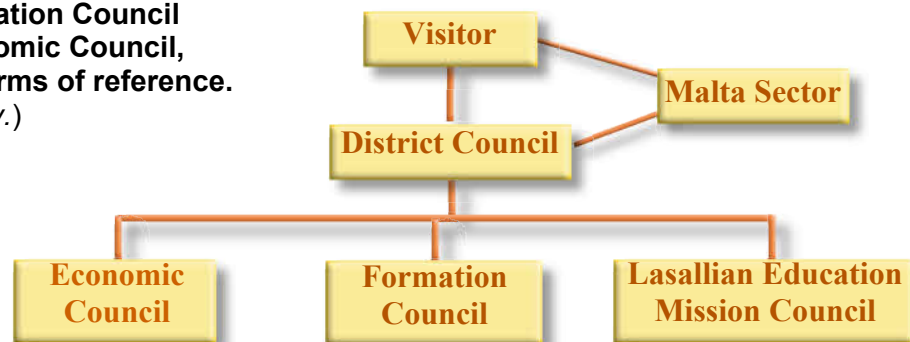
- Speaking to youngsters in schools might be a way of planting the seed for later life.
- Our vocation did not appear to be promoted by the Church, and time has had to be spent raising its profile in Dioceses.
- Br Martin Borg asked what exactly to do if a young man, who wants to join us, is ready to begin his training. It was accepted that there are now few centres which are set up to provide this training. Br Jacques d’Huitemau explained that the response has to be tailored to the individual. The context for formation is now international, and potential recruits have to be prepared to be formed in another language and another culture. It is preferable for the individual, in order to avoid isolation and discouragement, to join a group, even if that means formation abroad. The benefit for the novice is that novitiates are now international and provide opportunities to experience other cultures and learn other languages.
- Br Benedict confirmed that religious congregations do share common formation programmes.
- Br Owen suggested that LAMB would provide a suitable community for a potential recruit to begin his training.
- The novitiate, as well as fulfilling its canonical requirements, could be a place of discernment for all kinds of Lasallians.
- The promotion of vocation in general, for the sake of the Church, should be encouraged.
- The Steering Committee should form a proposition to respond to the suggestions on vocation.





In response to discussions on the reports presented to the Chapter, the following propositions were approved by the Chapter:

1. That the District Chapter elect six members to the District Council.  
*(passed during Session 13.)*
2. That the Visitor, in conjunction with the Sector Co-ordinator, set up a working party to evaluate the relationship of Malta within the District.  
*(Carried unanimously.)*
3. That the Chapter authorise the Visitor to form a full-time District Team of Brothers, including the Auxiliary Visitor, to collaborate with him in the animation of the District.  
*(Carried unanimously.)*
4. That the District Structure include four Councils:
  - (i) the District Council
  - (ii) the LEM Council
  - (iii) the Formation Council
  - (iv) the Economic Council,
 with appropriate terms of reference.  
*(Carried unanimously.)*



5. That a Vocations Commission be established in the District.  
*(Passed: for 28, against 0, abstention 1.)*
6. That a structure be developed to support Young Lasallians in the District.  
*(Passed: for 27, against 0, abstentions: 2.)*
7. That there be a working group to support the District Safeguarding Co-ordinator.  
*(Carried unanimously.)*
8. That the Visitor and his Council consider more frequent Assemblies of shorter duration on a regional basis, which could incorporate the Lasallian Days, and that a District-wide Assembly be held immediately prior to the next District Chapter.  
*(Carried unanimously.)*
9. That the District renew its commitment to maintain the Educational Mission of St Cassian's for a further four years.  
*(Passed: for 27, against 0, abstentions 2.)*
10. That the District renew its commitment to help maintain the Educational Mission of LAMB for a further four years.  
*(Passed: for 25, against 0, abstentions 4.)*

11. That the Chapter authorise the Visitor and his Team to establish a District Resource Centre with a brief to include communications.  
(Carried unanimously.)
12. That there be an ad hoc working party to study the future of the District magazine, in particular its frequency, distribution, content and method of publication.  
(Carried unanimously.)
13. That the Chapter request that each Community, in its next CAP, pay particular attention to the recommendations issued by the General Chapter concerning community life and prayer.  
(Carried unanimously.)
14. That the Chapter endorse the principle that initial formation be arranged according to the strengths and needs of each individual candidate.  
(Carried unanimously.)
15. That the Brother Visitor with his Council, in response to the General Chapter, organise a colloquium/workshop on the interior life, within two years.  
(Carried unanimously.)
16. That this Chapter accept the need for the drafting of District Statutes based on our existing approved practices, and request the District Council to set this process in motion and seek ratification from Rome for the final document.  
(Carried unanimously.)
17. That the name of the District be 'Great Britain and Malta'.  
(Carried unanimously.)



# 10. INTERVENTION TO THE DISTRICT CHAPTER

## Br Jacques d'Huiteau, Regional Councillor for RELEM

Brothers,

I'm sorry, but you and I are going to suffer a terrible ordeal: I will speak in English. If some of you are unable to bear my mispronunciations, my syntax errors, my mistakes in vocabulary, don't worry: do not hesitate to cry for mercy and I will continue in French. I will not be offended because I am aware of my serious shortcomings. Despite the eminent teachers that I had in ELANICO and Oxford, my Basque neurons, which are more French, are struggling to preserve the subtleties of the language of Shakespeare. If, in addition, it is spoken with a Scottish or Welsh accent I lose my Latin, as we say in French.

First, I want to thank you for your very fraternal welcome. I did not have too much to fear in that regard because I had already tested, in Manchester and Oxford, the quality of your fraternal spirit and your open-mindedness. The few days I have spent with you have been very interesting for me. They have allowed me to know a little better the situation of your District. Already in Oxford, Sean had given me information about your communities, your organisation, your concerns in Britain and Malta. But nothing replaces personal contact and discussions in assembly. In addition, the preparatory documents represent a wealth of information that will be very useful for me. I thank those who drafted them and they can be sure that, after returning to Rome, I will not consign their work to the Archives. I will certainly have opportunities for making the most of them.

For a few minutes I want to share with you some reactions at the end of this Chapter. I offer them with a fraternal spirit. Your Chapter allowed you to think about and discuss important issues which did not surprise me because they are found in many Districts:

- How can we live 'association', giving it its full spiritual and apostolic dimensions in education? How can we welcome young people? How does the District function today? The issue of association is difficult because it touches on a fundamental aspect of our life as Brothers. The General Chapter wanted to show this by changing its place in the formula of vows. At the same time the theme of association deeply affects our relation-

ship with the Laity, how we think and live it. I think that, in your District, you live experiments that would be good to read about and to analyse in order to discern the thinking behind them and what would be desirable and possible to reproduce in other places. You know that the General Chapter asked the central government of the Institute to develop a possible model of Lasallian family within two years (i.e. for 2009). The timescale looks to be too tight. Is one model feasible? I'm not sure. But what is certain is that consideration of this matter must take account of experience and how that informs us about the Institute of the future and about the vocation of Brother, as well as the kind of Church that could evolve in line with Vatican II.

- Another question that occurs to me as important, especially in a region like RELEM, is how do we live in fraternity when we belong to different cultures, when we are geographically distant, when the risk of isolation is real? The issue of fraternity is fundamental to me in the divided world in which we live. I am convinced that God is present here for us, that the meaning of our lives and the impact of our witness are at stake. Even if we are considered to be dedicated, conscientious, good administrators, if our communities are not "islands of fraternity" we fail to make known the presence of the spirit of Jesus in the world. Everything that promotes sharing in the District should be encouraged. I think of meetings such as the Lasallian days, the retreats, the gatherings between neighbouring communities. You have adopted a proposal on that and you have to make every effort to implement it.
- The organisation of the District is a concern for you. If I understand correctly, you want to improve it by:
  - leaning on existing structures: the District Council, the LEM Council;
  - inventing forms of meeting where Lay Associates are involved in decisions that affect mission;

- specifying the form of statutes under which you will operate.

Structures are needed. They must bring about more effective government and they must enliven the District. However, they are valuable only if they show and increase fraternal life between the Brothers, and strengthen the sense of association with lay colleagues and between the laity. The Gospel does not ask us to be managers, administrators, officials. It is asking us to make credible the Kingdom of God, the organisation and goals of which are very different from those that men put in place and look for in their organisations. We know enough history of the Church to know that when it behaves like a humane society concerned only to defend its power, it loses its capacity to bear witness, and can bring about the rejection of, not only itself, but also the very mission that it has received to announce the Gospel.

In the structures we put in place, must we first care about power, or are we trying to make people more responsible, to recognise their commitment to the mission, their talents, their vocation to share the charism that comes from John Baptist De La Salle? You have people on your side who are committed and who live their commitment as a service for young people and society, and are a path to meet God. Help them to deepen the meaning of their lives and their ministry by the training that you already offer or want to put in place. I refer, in particular, to young teachers who will not have experienced any companionship with the Brothers, but might find in the Lasallian tradition a source, a well-spring, from which to draw strength, and perhaps even to hear a call to give their lives in the service of youth and the Gospel.

During your deliberations you raised the question of RELEM. What I said about your structures applies to this organisation as it develops. Clearly its structure is not top-down. My job is not that of the Assistants of the past. I have no authority over the Visitors or Districts, except for novitiate issues. My role is to link with the Centre of the Institute, to help, assist, facilitate, co-ordinate and encourage those joint projects and collaborations that are desired, possible, even necessary. I gave you the example of initial formation. I am aware that knowledge of RELEM is not yet very clear. It is my job to change that position. Those who know me, know that I have many flaws. But at least I have what I believe to be a quality: I am tenacious.

To designate the attitude of those who look positively towards the future, French has two words: "espoir" and "espérance". English seems to have only one: "hope". French culture is analytical, English culture is synthetic. In French, "espoir" means the attitude of those who count on their actions, programmes, plans to prepare a better future. "Espérance" is the attitude of those who do not primarily count on their strength, their intelligence, but on the goodwill, friendship, love of the one in whom they trust to help them to gain that better future. Your chapter is an act of "espoir" and "espérance". You mentioned projects, adopted resolutions. But you also requested, submitted to the Lord your expectations, your wishes and your desires.

May your "espoir" continue to show your dynamism to create new members of the Lasallian family. May your "espérance" provide evidence of your confidence in Him who, facing the future, says again to us: "Do not be afraid, my strength is able to triumph in your weakness."

*J. d'Huiteman*

Br Jacques d'Huiteman



# 11. FORMAL CLOSURE OF THE DISTRICT CHAPTER

## Br Aidan Kilty, Visitor

**I would like to formally bring our 2008 Chapter to a close by offering the following words of thanks and appreciation:**

### **1. To all of you -**

- For your active participation in the Chapter.
- For the fraternal spirit that has characterised our discussions in the plenary sessions and in group work.
- For generating the various propositions and, by extension, for accepting the consequences – especially when they impinge on your local reality!
- For your preparation of prayers and liturgies – that has helped to share the organisational burden and introduce some variety into our prayers.
- For the different roles that each of you has assumed in District leadership or animation – in community; in specific missions; with the local Church; and with the wider Institute.

### **2. To Br Jacques -**

- First of all for his fraternal presence with us during these days, which we have much appreciated.
- Secondly, for his very helpful interventions in discussions which have enlightened us in different areas and offered us a very important international perspective.
- We are particularly grateful for his desire to express himself in the language of Shakespeare and encourage him to keep up the excellent work.
- We ask you to bring our greetings and best wishes to Br Superior and the Council and our willingness to work with the international Institute in whatever ways we can.

### **3. To the Steering Committee -**

- Who have navigated us through the programme with flexibility, clarity and efficiency,
- And led us to the adoption of some significant propositions for action in our mission and in the more specific areas of our lives as Brothers.
- A special word of thanks to Br Bernard, our Chapter Secretary, for his excellent, unassuming work both before and during the Chapter, that has contributed in no small measure to the success of the Chapter.
- To our ever-attentive tellers and, especially, to our secretaries, Brs Allen and Michael, who have succeeded in capturing our utterances for posterity. Many thanks for your presence and for your very important, if onerous, secretarial work.

#### 4. To St Cassian's Staff -

- In particular – to Sheila and her staff (Jim, Janet, Br Reg) – who have made sure that we have not wanted for anything with regard to our temporal nourishment, and have looked after us most effectively and efficiently, and always with a smile.
- We ask Br Anthony, Director of the Centre, to pass on our thanks to Chanel and the team for the hospitality offered to us during these days – much appreciated.



#### 5. Finally, a reminder to all of us that the close of the Chapter is a beginning, not an end -

- We leave with propositions about our personal and community life – with clear implications for our PAP and CAP – that hopefully will help us to live more authentically as Brothers, so that we can minister more effectively to those to whom we are sent. I believe that we cannot effectively address questions about mission if we do not address what is at the heart of our mission: our relationship with God and with our Brothers who are the first of *“those confided to our care”*.
- We leave with propositions to support our mission – and these will involve some difficult decisions about resources, to ensure its continuance and about our support of those, especially our lay colleagues, who are most directly concerned with ministering to young people. As I indicated at the beginning of the Chapter, we have some important work to do over the next few years, to devise participatory structures that will more effectively integrate our lay colleagues into decision-making processes with regard to mission.
- We leave with a new District administration in place to implement these orientations and, once again, I thank them on your behalf for their willingness to serve the District in this way. They, like me, will be greatly dependent on your support and encouragement over the next few years, as we seek to implement the orientations that you have given us during the Chapter.
- As we leave, we are challenged in the words of yesterday's Gospel, *“to make our light shine”*. We all have “different wattages” and different ministries but we are all called to be “light-producers” in some way, irrespective of age or ministry, to ensure that the Lasallian mission continues to be delivered to those in need.
- Finally, many thanks for the numerous expressions of fraternal support and encouragement that I have received from a number of you both during the Chapter and in recent weeks, which makes the task of leadership more bearable and less burdensome. I have every confidence that you will extend that support and encouragement to the new District leadership. That support is a reminder that we are in this *“together and by association”*, that we are in it because we have been called to it by the Lord, that we are in it because we are convinced it really is the Lord's work.

*Bro. Aidan Kelly*

Br Aidan, Visitor



