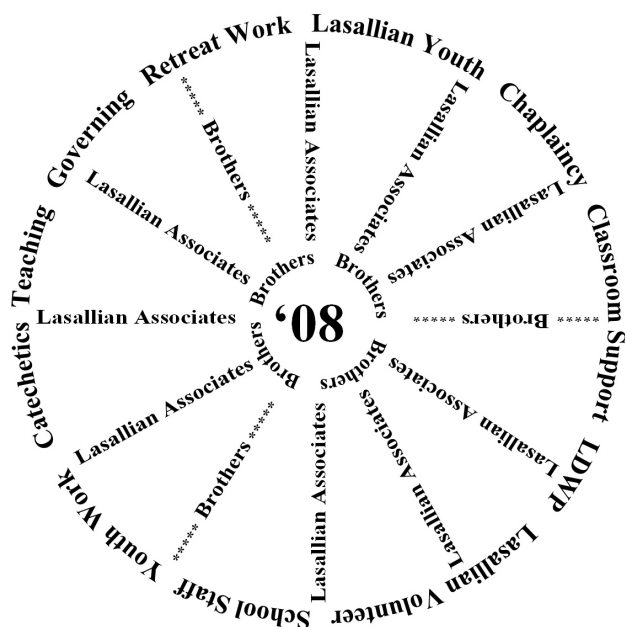


The Mission of the Brothers in G.B.- part 2

[Bro. Michael Curran](#)

My last article in the April Lasallian Magazine predicted that if the trend over the last eight years continues, then in twelve years time there will be only twenty-eight Brothers left in GB, all over sixty-five; the decline being terminal by 2040. Despite the future possibility, I believe that God has called me to life and not death. Therefore I ask myself, 'What choices am I making for 'today and tomorrow'[1] that will promote the Lasallian Mission here in GB?' To help me to make an informed choice, I've created for myself the following model of our present Lasallian Mission in this country. (N.B. the individual spokes are in no specific position.)



I've chosen a wheel to represent our Lasallian Mission because all the parts of the wheel are different and at the same time each part is essential for the wheel to exist. Although some parts are small and others flimsy, 'together and by association' they form a powerful object that has become an intrinsic part of our society. Likewise, the Lasallian Family, together and by association, forms a powerful spiritual force that has its part to play in the Catholic education of our country.

The above model is for 2008, but as time goes on we know that the Brother spokes will diminish whilst the Lasallian Association spokes will remain. However the spokes representing the Lasallian Associates can only remain in place if the Brothers remain at the hub. Even the term 'Lasallian Associates' presupposes the active presence of the Brothers, for the Brothers are 'the memory and guarantee'[2] of the Lasallian herit-

age and as such play an essential role at the 'heart'[2] of the Lasallian Family. In other words, the Lasallian Family can only exist whilst Brothers remain an active part of it.

When in the future the Brothers become withdrawn to the hub, they must not take up an 'enclosure position', hermetically sealing themselves behind the Community door, for that will result in the Lasallian Mission ceasing in this country. The hub must remain the dynamic centre of the Lasallian Network, full of 'creativity, enthusiasm, joy and pride'[1] that will not only cultivate the Lasallian Family, but expand and fortify it.

Good communication has always been essential for any organisation, and we are no different. (Here I am using the term 'communication' in its broadest term incorporating education and formation.) In our present day society we have a plethora of communications that are vying for our attention. For example, our Community room is awash with the printed word, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and open letters. We cannot possibly read everything, so we become very selective, only looking at what interests us. Likewise, any communication from us, whether it be written, spoken or video, has to compete for attention. In order to be pertinent to educators we need to be very active in making our message apposite and presented in an appealing and convenient way. This is not easy and requires skill, energy and a considerable amount of time spent listening and planning.

Although my model is simple, I find it useful for me, and I hope it will be of use for the forthcoming District Chapter where choices will have to be made in order to safeguard the future of the Lasallian Mission in this country. This model shows very clearly that our focus as Brothers needs to be on those who actively wish to be associated with us in forming a strong vibrant Lasallian Family.

In 1998, John Johnston, in a talk to the District of New York Assembly, said, "What we decide to do and what we fail to decide to do *today* will inevitably affect the lives of Lasallians *tomorrow*"; ten years on his words are still true.

[1] [Lasallian Mission Today & Tomorrow](#), Brother John Johnston, 1998. A copy of this excellent talk can be downloaded from the 'Publications' page on our District Website.

[2] Institute Bulletin No. 250, *Associated for the Lasallian Educational Mission*, page 13.