A PRIMER ON LASALLIAN PEDAGOGY

Lasallian = pertaining to John Baptist de La Salle, his life and thought, to the charism of the De La Salle Christian Brothers, and/or to the practices of the Christian Schools.
A PRIMER ON LASALLIAN PEDAGOGY
(KIA)

KNOWLEDGE – of authentic Lasallian principles, values, and techniques.

INTENTIONALITY – to interiorize Lasallian principles, values, and techniques.

ADAPTATION – of those principles, values, and techniques in order to make them relevant for the twenty-first century
“Involvement in response to need: mutual help.
On numerous occasions, when the Conduct of Schools speaks of group exercises in reading, arithmetic, spelling or catechism, it tells the teacher that if, when a pupil is being questioned, he makes a mistake or hesitates, he should call upon other pupils to help him. This was a normal class procedure. The normal Lasallian teaching method proposed by the Conduct of Schools is mutual help. Of course, it would be easier or faster for the teacher himself to intervene directly and help the pupil, but it is more effective and significant, educationally speaking, to call upon the skill or knowledge of other pupils. It serves to maintain the attention of all the pupils, but above all, it helps to develop altruistic attitudes which will be useful to them for the rest of their lives, and which are a part of civility.”

INTENTIONALITY:

“We call the ordinary virtues moral virtues because they regulate our conduct. Heretics and infidels, as well as true Christians, can practice virtues of this sort, at least exteriorly. If these virtues are special to us Christians, it is only insofar as we practice them, accompanied by grace under the movement of God’s Spirit and with a pure intention of pleasing him.” John Baptist de La Salle, *The Duties of a Christian to God*. Trans. Richard Arnandez, FSC, ed. Alexis James Doval, (Landover, MD: Lasallian Publications, 2002), 21.
ADAPTATION: Lasallian Cooperative Responses (LCR)

One of the key characteristics of Lasallian pedagogy, set down in John Baptist de La Salle’s *The Conduct of the Christian Schools* (1706 and many later editions), is the concept of mutual help. Students help each other to learn. Lasallian Cooperative Responses (LCR) are an attempt to make this key Lasallian idea contemporary for our classroom. Here’s how it will work. The instructor will assign a reading for the whole class. He will also assign one student to offer a response to the reading. This response is NOT a summary of the reading. It can be many things. For example, a statement of the thesis of the reading, its most essential point. It can be analytical: it can break down the reading into its most important parts. It can be evaluative and compare the reading to other parts of the book, or to a book or an idea we have already discussed. It can also be critical and offer either a positive or negative judgment of the reading. There are other possibilities.

The student will present her/his Response orally in 5-10 minutes, and will submit a one page written version of her/his Response.

Finally, a second student will be assigned to respond to the Response by agreeing, disagreeing, adding another point, or simply commenting on the reading itself. This second response is informal and does not require any written work or previous knowledge of the Response.

The LCR will be graded on the basis of a check mark ✓ + or – for fair to excellent, or an X for unsatisfactory or inappropriate. (Syllabus, H 365 Early Modern Europe, Fall 2007)