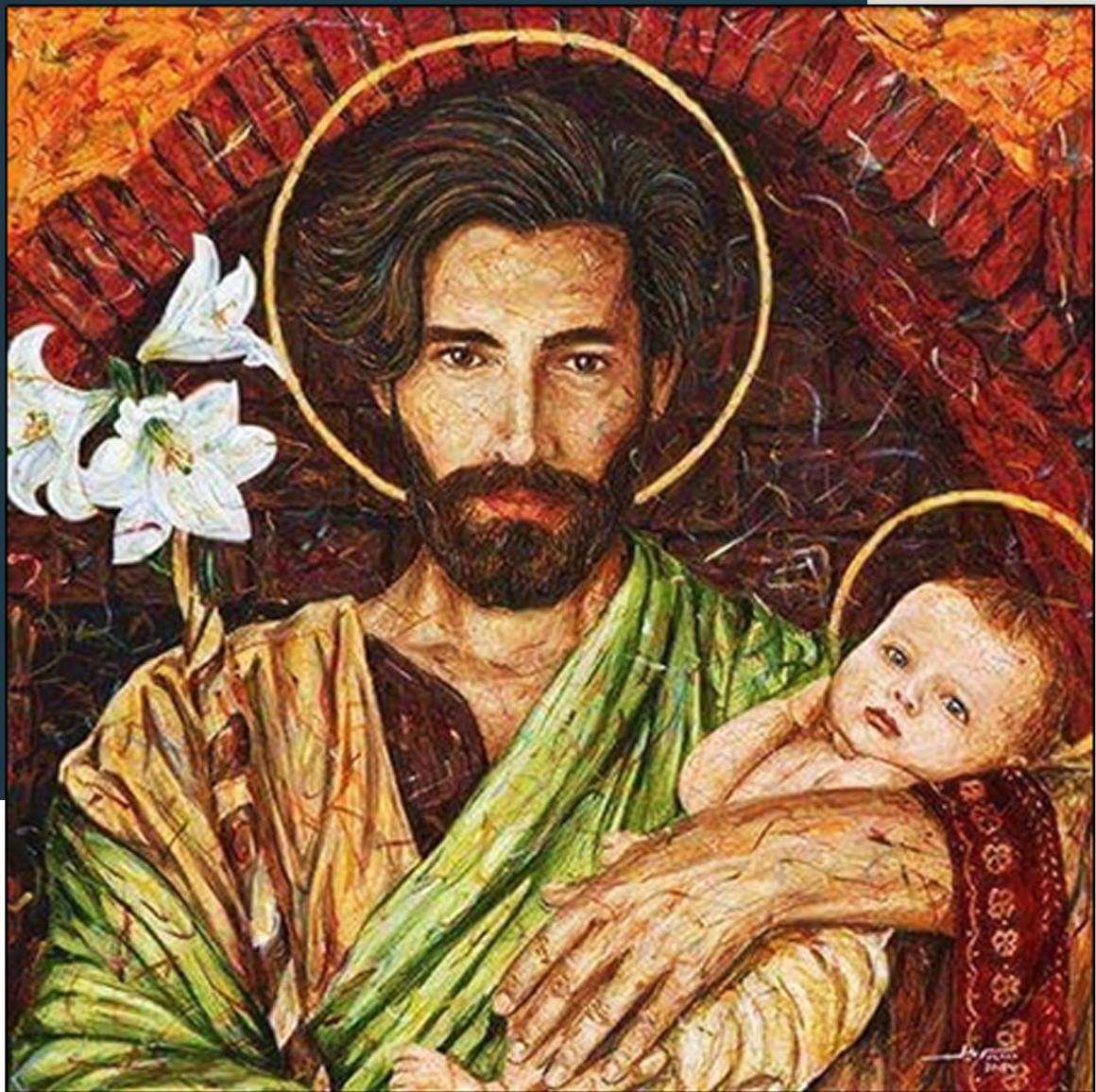




**Brothers of
the Christian
Schools**



Saint Joseph in the tradition of the Institute

Carlos Cantalapiedra, fsc

**“ Take Saint Joseph as your
model, for he is your patron,
and strive to be worthy of your
ministry and to excel in virtue
by following the example
of this great saint ”**

MF 110,1

Introduction



Pope Francis, in the Apostolic Letter “*Patris corde*” (With a Father’s Heart) of 8 December 2020, recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church and, on this occasion, from the promulgation of the Letter until the same day in 2021, a year will be dedicated especially to him. As Institute and as a Lasallian Family, we also pay special honour to him as our Patron and Protector.

This event has led me to suggest the following ideas about St Joseph, which I have compiled from various documents of the Institute.

Perhaps they can help us to reflect and to continue, as De La Salle Brothers and Lasallian Family, to admire the virtues that De La Salle recommends to us and on which the Pope insists in the Letter: “There is a renewed need to appreciate” writes Francis, “the importance of dignified work, (...) which becomes a means of participating in the work of salvation and becomes an opportunity for the fulfilment not only of oneself, but also of that primary cell of society which is the family. Working persons are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us” (PC 6).

Br. Carlos Cantalapiedra Plaza
Palencia, febrero 2021

1. De La Salle and Saint Joseph

Devotion to St Joseph

As in many other areas, France in the 17th century joined the trend originated from the Council of Trent, in particular the Decree on the invocation, veneration, relics of saints and on holy images. The Church proposed to Christians and the clergy models that were closer and more adapted to the times. The figures presented for the veneration and imitation of the faithful were those of great men of the Catholic Reformation, pastors, founders or reformers of religious orders, great religious, zealous missionaries, prayerful and contemplative people, those people who were faithful to the Church, rulers and princes or humble people.

One of the features of the so-called “French School of spirituality”, in which the Founder participated, was the consideration of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Word. Hence, among the favourite saints of the time were those closest to Jesus, such as Saint Joseph.

If we take De La Salle’s writings, we realize that he very often speaks to the saints. Perhaps it was this influence on his life that inclined his devotion to the Holy Patriarch, rooted in the family custom of reading or listening to the reading of the lives of the saints, a common practice in pious families like his.

Discovery of the Saint

Saint Joseph is among the saints whose life and example John Baptist de La Salle learned from. As a canon of the cathedral, he had to attend to recite or sing the office of the saints, according to the “readings” taken from the Fathers of the Church. In this way, he not only came into contact with the devotion and cult of St. Joseph, but he was also imbued with the doctrine that concerned him.

De La Salle knew that he had made a serious commitment to the Church. That is why, in agreement with his parents, he requested to receive minor orders while he was in his first year of Philosophy. It was on 17 March 1668. It was not the subdiaconate but the orders of porter, lector, exorcist and acolyte. Two days later, the feast of St. Joseph must have been celebrated with special devotion at the little hotel of St. Marguerite.

In his second year of seminary in Paris, De La Salle came into closer contact with the parish of Saint-Sulpice by helping with catechesis. Perhaps he also visited the parish schools, at least as a catechist; perhaps to see them in operation during the week.

At the time, there was a certain concern among the clergy for schools and for recruiting Christian teachers for the children. Adrian Bourdoise, founder of the seminary of Saint-Nicolas-du-Charbonnet in Paris, is credited with the creation of a prayer association, under the patronage of Saint Joseph, with this sole aim: to ask God for Christian teachers. Very soon, the priests of Saint-Sulpice joined in this pious initiative that well spread in the surroundings. We could think that De La Salle picked up in Saint-Sulpice the seeds of a vocation that would develop later on.

Manifestations of devotion

In the course of his life, we find several instances in which his devotion to the Saint is particularly evident. Blain in his Biography summarises these: (CL 8, 492):

- That his devotion to the Saint was no less than his devotion to the angels and St. Michael.
- He showed this devotion by placing his Institute *as soon as it was founded under the protection of this great saint*.
- He constantly sought means to honour and make him honoured, in particular by reciting his litanies daily, in order to live to the spirit that had inspired St Joseph, and by making his feast day one of the most solemn in the Institute.
- De La Salle added his own example to his exhortations. In spite of being very ill, he left his sick-bed to celebrate Mass on St Joseph's feast day in 1719, a few weeks before his death.
- That just before his death, he recommended his Brothers to be known for their devotion to St Joseph, *a recommendation he had given them so many times during his lifetime*.

According to Blain's testimony, we know the motives for this special devotion: "*What struck him most in the admirable life of the holy spouse of the Mother of God was his great docility regarding the guidance of divine Providence, his submission to the most disagreeable orders, his prompt obedience to the voice of the Lord, his hidden life, his angelical chastity, and finally his tenderness and love for Jesus and Mary. These were the virtues in which he was determined to imitate this great saint*". (CL 8,492).

The devotion to Saint Joseph matters to De La Salle

The importance of devotion to St Joseph is great. His name is mentioned 120 times in the writings of De La Salle:

- **In the “Common Rules”** where the name of the Saint is mentioned it is essentially to remind the Brothers of the devotion that they were supposed to have to him and of the community practices in his honour. They indicate the importance attached to the fact that St Joseph was patron of the young Institute.

In fact, he specified: "*At one o'clock, the Brothers will gather in the oratory to recite the litanies of St. Joseph, patron and protector of the community, to ask for his spirit and help for the Christian education of children*" (RC 27,22).

- **In the Catechisms**, De La Salle devotes Instruction XVIII of his third work - *On external and public worship* - to the feast of *Saint Joseph, spouse of the Most Blessed Virgin*.

In the form of question and answer, the text deals successively with:

- the identity of the Saint,
- his poor and hidden lifestyle in Nazareth,
- his principal virtues,
- the difficulties he encountered and the special graces he was given,
- the kind of model he is for us.

- In the “**Meditations**” we can focus particularly on the Meditation for the Feast of St. Joseph (Med. 110), which summarises the thinking of the Founder on this saint who, more than any other, is presented as an example for the Brothers.

In the Meditations, when mentioning the saints, De La Salle always has biographical elements to focus on one or some identifying features of the saint under consideration. The same traits he focuses on in his analysis of the lives of the saints are the ones that the Brothers should take as one of the topics of their conversation during the recreations.

De La Salle relates the saints to the Brothers, and points out similarities, contrasts and continuity between the lives of the saints and those of the Brothers. He establishes a parallel between the Brothers’ ministry and that of St Joseph, both ministries equally holy: to be responsible of the children as Joseph was responsible of Jesus. Joseph had all necessary qualities and virtues to fulfil his sacred ministry of watching over the external actions of Jesus Christ. He was just, submissive to God and full of solicitude for the Child Jesus.

De La Salle, using St Joseph’s justice towards God, draws a parallel with the role of the teaching Brother and recommends this Saint as a model. Like many of his contemporaries, De La Salle highlights St Joseph’s educative role regarding the Child Jesus. Do not Brothers have a similar role with regard to children?

The Gospel account of the birth and childhood of Jesus stresses the *complete submission* (of St. Joseph) *to the orders of God*. And he reminds the Brothers of the need and excellence of obedience, of which he says, *is the one most appropriate for you in your state and in your work, and the one which will bring you the most grace*.

Meditation for Sundays and Feast Days (Med. 110) For the feast day of St. Joseph – 19th of March

(First Point)

Because Saint Joseph was made responsible by God for the care and external guidance of Jesus Christ, it was important that he have the qualities and virtues necessary to fulfil worthily so holy and exalted a ministry. The Gospel tells us about three, all very fitting for the responsibility entrusted to him: he was just; he was very submissive to God’s orders,¹ and he had a very special solicitude for the education and the protection of Jesus Christ.

The first quality that the Gospel attributes to Saint Joseph is that he is just. This is also the main virtue he needed in order to be able to provide guidance to Jesus Christ. Because our Lord is God and holy, it would not be fitting that the person in charge of guiding him not be holy and just before God.

It is even entirely proper that Saint Joseph be, after the Most Blessed Virgin, one of the holiest people to be found in the world at that time, so that he might have some conformity with Jesus Christ, who was entrusted to him and confided to his care. The Gospel also says of him that he is just before God, that is, holy in every way. We even have grounds to believe that Saint Joseph, thanks to a special privilege, was entirely exempted from sin.

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. Take Saint Joseph as your model, for he is your patron, and strive to be worthy of your ministry and to excel in virtue by following the example of this great saint.

(Second Point)

The second virtue that the Gospel points out to us in Saint Joseph is his holy and entire submission to God's orders. God instructed him by an angel to remain with the Blessed Virgin when he was questioning whether he ought to leave her; at once he banished the thought of leaving her from his mind.

After the birth of the Child Jesus, God warned Joseph during the night to take the Child to Egypt to save him from the persecution of Herod; at once he arose and de-parted to bring the Child and his virgin mother to Egypt. After Herod's death, God told Joseph to come back to Judea, and he returned there without delay.

Oh, how admirable is this prompt and simple obedience in this great saint! He does not hesitate a single instant to carry out what God desires of him! Do you have as much at heart to do God's will as this saint did?

If you want God to bestow many graces on you, both for you and for the Christian education of the children you have to protect and to guide, you must imitate this saint in his love for and in his fidelity to obedience, which of all the virtues is the one most appropriate for you in your state and in your work and the one that will bring you the most grace. best in your state and employment, and the one that will attract you the most grace.

(Third Point)

The Gospel also makes us admire in Saint Joseph the care he has for the holy Child Jesus, which he showed in the promptness with which he took him to Egypt when God told him to do so; in the precaution he took, on leaving Egypt, not to take him to Judea, for fear of Archelaus, who then occupied the throne of his father, Herod, and in the sorrow he felt at having lost Jesus when they were returning from Jerusalem, as the Most Blessed Virgin testified in these words: Your father and I have been searching for you in great sorrow and in great affliction.

Two things inspired the great solicitude that Saint Joseph felt for Jesus: the commission that the eternal Father had given him and the tender love Saint Joseph had for Jesus.

You must have a similarly great attention and affection for preserving or procuring the innocence of the children entrusted to your guidance and for keeping them away from whatever might interfere with their education or prevent them from acquiring piety, just as Saint Joseph had for all that could contribute to the welfare of the Child Jesus. For you have been made responsible for these children, just as Saint Joseph was made responsible by God for the Saviour of the world. This is also the first care you ought to have in your work if you wish to imitate Saint Joseph, who had nothing more at heart than to provide for the needs of the Child Jesus.

In the Manual of Piety:

In the Manual of Piety, for the Christian Schools, a series of Hymns, Litanies and Prayers dedicated to Saint Joseph were collected. I include some of them as a reminder of those recited by the Brothers on various occasions during the year.

Offerings in honour of the Holy Childhood: Second offering of the Pater aeterne...

Eternal Father, to your honour and glory, and for my eternal salvation, all the hardships that the Most Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph endured on the long and difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and the anguish of their prayers when they could not find a place to receive the Saviour of the world who was to be born. Glory to the Father....

In Morning Prayer: Let us entrust ourselves to St. Joseph, our Patron and Protector:

Fidelis Joseph, quem constituit Dominus suae carnis nutritum, suae Matris solatium, et solum in terris magni consilii coadjutores fidelissimum, impetra ut faciamus voluntatem Patris, ut coferamus in corde nostro quae completa sunt in Filio, et ut, abundante Spiritus Sancti gratia, mundo corde et casto corpore Deo serviamus.

Consecration of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools to Saint Joseph:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Glorious Saint Joseph, virginal Spouse of Mary, foster Father of the Child God, Head of the Holy Family, prostrated at your feet, we come to renew to you this day the consecration made to you by our blessed Father, Saint John Baptist de La Salle, at the beginning of his Institute, placing it under your powerful Patronage. In imitation of him, we consecrate to you, with all the love of which we are capable, our persons, our students, our communities, our houses of formation and our entire Congregation, humbly beseeching you to make it your own and to entrust it to the adorable Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in all its needs and dangers, present and future.

Deign, O glorious Protector of ours, to accept this offering, and, that it may be less unworthy of You, obtain for us the grace to advance more and more each day in all the religious virtues, of which You were such an admirable model: in humility, mortification and detachment; in the love and practice of poverty, of an inviolable chastity, and a prompt, simple and filial obedience. Inspire us for our disciples, the abnegation, vigilance and respect which you practised with the Child God; encourage in our hearts an ever more ardent zeal to work for the Christian education of youth, and especially of poor children.

May God, our glorious Patron, grant that we may procure his glory, as far as possible, and may we foster more and more each day your worship and that of the Child Jesus and of Mary Immaculate; and that, after having consumed our life in procuring that the Holy Family be loved and blessed on earth, we may have the joy of exhaling our final breath pronouncing the sacred Names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and then we may go to sing in heaven the hymn of love and thanksgiving, for all eternity. Amen. (Sancte Joseph, Patrone noster dilectissime, ora pro nobis. Three times.)

Among the main devotions listed in the Manual of Piety.

• Saint Joseph:

“Let us take St. Joseph,” says Gerson, “for the first of our patrons, the most intimate of our friends, and the most powerful of our protectors.” His sublime prerogatives, the glory of having been chosen by the Most Holy Trinity as the spouse of Mary; the honours of which he has been, and still is the object on the part of the Church, of the Angels, and of the Saints; the examples of our holy Founder; the benefits which the distinguished Patriarch has lavished on our Institute;

the personal favours of which we are indebted to him: all this obliges us to profess him singular devotion.

St. Joseph is our special Protector, since the Church has placed our Institute under his patronage, as the Bull of Approbation states. Let us turn to him in all confidence in our spiritual and temporal difficulties; let us implore him to deign to protect our Superiors, our Brothers, our Novices and the many young people in our schools and in our works of perseverance.

St. Joseph is our intercessor close to the Lord: let us present to him our needs, those of our families, of our disciples and of the people we love. St. Joseph is our Model: let us meditate often on his virtues and above all let us strive to practise them. St. Joseph is the Guide of those who aspire to perfection: let us ask him for the grace we need to become men of prayer and sacrifice. St. Joseph is the patron saint of youth: let us ask him to deign to communicate his spirit to us in order to guide our disciples, to teach us to love them as he loved Jesus, and to grant us all the virtues of a good teacher.

Since by so many titles we should love, imitate and venerate St. Joseph, let us not pass a single day without showing our devotion to him. Let us pray to him, honour him, imitate him, and teach our disciples to pay him the same homage. And he, for his part, will bless our works, will raise us to great perfection, will make us worthy sons of St. John Baptist de La Salle, and finally, will bring us to a happy end after a holy life.

Child Jesus: In this devotion we are told in the Prayer to the Child Jesus in the manger:

I adore you, incarnate Word, true Son of God from all eternity, and true son of Mary in the fulness of time. In adoring your divine Person and the humanity to which He is united, I cannot but venerate also the poor manger that welcomed you at your birth and became truly the first throne of your love. If only I could prostrate myself before it with the simplicity of the shepherds, with the faith of Joseph and the charity of Mary!

In the Effective Prayer it is said:

O St. Joseph, Father and Protector of the Virgins, faithful steward to whom God entrusted Jesus, the very innocence, and Mary, Virgin of virgins, I beg and beseech you by Jesus and Mary, by these two recipients which you loved so much, grant that free from all stain of sin, pure in spirit and heart, and chaste in body, I may constantly serve Jesus and Mary in perfect chastity. Amen.

In the “Memorare” of Saint Joseph:

Remember, O most pure spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my great protector, Saint Joseph, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, or implored your aid without obtaining relief. Confiding therefore in your goodness, I come before you. Do not turn down my petitions, foster father of the Redeemer, but graciously receive them. Amen

In the prayer of Saint Bernardine of Siena:

Remember us, O blessed Joseph, and help us with your supplications and your intercession near the One who wanted to be looked upon as your Son. Grant that the Blessed Virgin, your spouse and Mother of the One who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, reigns for ever and ever. Amen

From the Book of Offices of the Brothers of St. Yon:

I salute you, O blessed Joseph, our Patron, the foster Father of Jesus Christ our Lord; by your seven sorrows and joys, remember us, and together with your Spouse, the most chaste Mary, be our help in our needs, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Prayer for the Church (His Holiness Leo XIII):

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

Prayer:

O Joseph, virginal father of Jesus, most pure Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, intercede daily on our behalf near Jesus, Son of God, so that with the help of grace, we may fight victoriously during life, and be crowned by Him at the hour of our death.

Prayer to Saint Joseph (Saint John Baptist de La Salle):

O great St. Joseph, who, though belonging to the royal family of David, wished to devote yourself to a poor, despicable and laborious occupation for love of God, in order to live hidden and unknown to the world; O you who, by your incomparable humility, deserved to be exalted to the honour of being the Spouse of the Mother of God and to be considered the father of the Incarnate Word, I beg you, in union with Mary, your holy Spouse, to deign to ask God to grant me the virtue of... by a constant application to practise it.

Litanies of St. Joseph (prayed after the lunch break):

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

Illustrious son of David, pray for us.

Light of patriarchs, pray for us.

Spouse of the Mother of God, pray for us.

Chaste guardian of the Virgin, pray for us.

Foster father of the Son of God, pray for us.

Watchful defender of Christ, pray for us.

Head of the Holy Family, pray for us.

Joseph most just, pray for us.

Joseph most chaste, pray for us.

Joseph most prudent, pray for us.

Joseph most valiant, pray for us.

Joseph most obedient, pray for us.

Joseph most faithful, pray for us.

Mirror of patience, pray for us.

Lover of poverty, pray for us.

Model of workmen, pray for us.

Glory of home life, pray for us.

Guardian of virgins, pray for us.

Pillar of families, pray for us.

Solace of the afflicted, pray for us.

Hope of the sick, pray for us.

Patron of the dying, pray for us.

Terror of demons, pray for us.

Protector of Holy Church, pray for us.

Prayer to St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church:

O most powerful Patriarch St. Joseph, Patron of the universal Church, which has always invoked you in anxiety and trouble, from the exalted seat of your glory cast a loving glance upon the whole Catholic world.

Let your fatherly heart be touched at the sight of the mystical spouse and the Vicar of Christ overwhelmed with sorrow and persecuted by powerful enemies. By the bitter anguish you suffered on earth, dry the tears of the venerable Pontiff, defend him, liberate him, intercede for him with the Giver of peace and charity, that, all adversity being removed, and all error dissipated, the entire Church may serve God in complete freedom: Ut destructis adversitatibus et erroribus universis, Ecclesia secura Deo serviat libertate. Amen

Archconfraternity of Saint Joseph

This Archconfraternity was canonically erected in the school of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Beauvais (France) by a brief of the Supreme Pontiff Pius IX, dated 24th September 1861, with the right to admit members and to affiliate. There were similar confraternities throughout France and its colonies, and by special authorisation, in all other countries.

Aims:

1. To spread devotion to St. Joseph as far as possible;

2. To obtain his protection for the Sovereign Pontiff, the Catholic States, religious communities and Christian families;
3. To ask for the conversion of the enemies of the Church and the conversion of the countries separated from its unity;
4. To obtain for the members and for all those close to them, God's blessing in their life time and above all the grace of a holy death.

Requirements for membership:

1. To enlist at the centre of the Archconfraternity, in Beauvais, or in one of the affiliated Confraternities;
2. To pray the Angelus every day and say three times the following invocation: St. Joseph, intercede for us.

In accordance with the rescript of 16 July 1864 and the circular of 25 August of the same year, the Brothers apply daily for the intentions of the Archconfraternity this prayer: O glorious Saint Joseph, of the night prayer.

By virtue of a rescript issued on 1 April 1903, all the Brothers of the Institute, regardless of the country to which they belong, can enlist in the Archconfraternity and take advantage of the rich and numerous indulgences granted to it.

(Some of the indulgences granted to the Archconfraternity are listed below in the Manual of Piety...)

Quicumque

(After the Mid-Day recreation, the responsory in honour of St. Joseph, the “famous” Quicumque sanus, was recited... It was noted that after each stanza said by the President, the Brothers repeated the first stanza:

Quicumque... Quicumque sanus vivere, cursumque vital claudere in fine laetus expetit, opem Josephi postulet (Whoever wishes to live healthy in soul, and to end the course of his life with joy, implore Joseph's assistance).

Hic Sponsus almae Virginia, Paterque Jesé creditus, Justus, fidelis, integer, quod poscit, orans impetrat, (He is the spouse of the Virgin Mother, the foster father of Jesus; just, faithful, upright, who obtains what he asks for).

Foeni jacentem parvulum adorat; et post exsulem solatur; inde perditum quaerit dolens, et inventit. (He adores the Child laying in the hay, comforts him in exile, and having lost him, he seeks him in sorrow and finds him).

Mundi supremus Artifex ejes labore pascitur; summi Parentis Filius obedit illi subditus. (The Supreme Maker of the world is sustained by his work; the Son of the Eternal Father obeys him as his subject).

Adesse morti proximus cum Matre Jesum conspicit; et, inter pisos jubilans, dulce sopore solvitur. (At the time of death, he sees Jesus and his Mother beside him; and between them, in radiant joy, he dies in sweet sleep).

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto... Ant. Ecce fidelis servis et prudens, quem constituit Dominus super familiam summa (This is the faithful and wise servant whom the Lord established over his household).

V: Ora pro nobis, beate Joseph...

R/. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi

Oremus: Deus qui ineffabili providential beatum Joseph Sanctissimae Genitricis tuae Sponsum eligere dignatus es, praesta, quae sumus, ut quem protectorem veneramur in terries, intercessorem habere mereamur in caelis. qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(O God, who with ineffable providence deigned to choose as the Spouse of your Blessed Mother the Blessed Saint Joseph, grant that we may merit to have as our intercessor in heaven the one whom we venerate as our protector on earth; You who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen)

We pray to St. Joseph our Patron and Protector

(Prayed in the evening prayer)

Glorious St. Joseph, who were chosen by God to be the nourishing father of the Word made flesh, the consolation of his Blessed Mother, the most faithful and unique collaborator among all men in his greatest plan: obtain for us the grace to fulfil in all things the will of the Father, to meditate with the greatest affection on the mysteries accomplished in the person of the Son; and by the abundance of graces of the Holy Spirit, to persevere pure of heart and chaste of body in the service of God. Amen

Prayer for the dying:

Eternal Father, for your love to St. Joseph, whom you chose from among all men to represent you on earth, have mercy on us and on the dying poor. - Pater, Ave, Gloria.

Eternal Son of God, for the love you had for St. Joseph, your faithful guardian on earth, have mercy on us and on the dying poor.

Holy Spirit, through your love for St. Joseph who so solicitously protected the Blessed Virgin Mary, your most beloved Spouse, have mercy on us and on the dying poor.

There are also in the Manual of Piety, other short prayers to St. Joseph, which repeat what is said in some of the longer prayers. Also, among the main devotions, there is a lengthy hymn to St. Joseph for his feast day: Te, Joseph, ccelebrent agmina caelitum: Te cuncti resonent christiadum chori, qui clarus meritis junctus es incli tae Casto foedere Virgini.

In his Testament (4,0,1), De La Salle recommends to the Brothers, after commanding his soul and the emerging Society to God, that they **“not separate themselves in anything from the Church of Rome”**, and that they **“have great devotion to our Lord, to love very much Holy Communion and the exercise of interior prayer, to cultivate a very special devotion toward the most Blessed Virgin and toward Saint Joseph, the Patron and Protector of their Society”**, to whom he had shown great devotion throughout his life.

Since the foundation of the Institute, the devotion to Saint Joseph among the Brothers has held an important place and has endured over the centuries. In many places, despite the secularisation of recent decades, we find again the maintenance of pious practices with regard to the particular solemnity of his feast, and the placing under his patronage of numerous educational ministries and communities throughout the world. The piety of the Brothers remains linked to Saint Joseph in so far as **“he participated in the work of salvation through the human education of Jesus and was faithful to his humble paternity until death”** (Rule of 1987, No 77).

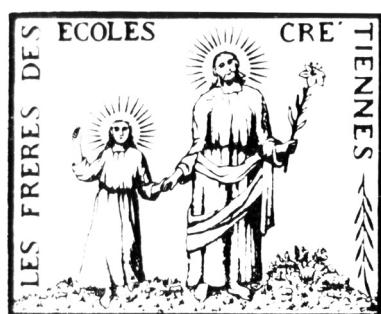
In the 2015 Rule, devotion to the Saint is included in no. 75: «**The Brothers find a model for their life in St Joseph who shared in the work of salvation by the human education of Jesus Christ. They invoke him, remembering that the Founder placed the Institute under his protection**».

[Many of these ideas are a synthesis of the work carried out in volumes 2 and 3 of “Lasallian Themes”, in the articles by Brothers Edgar Hengemüle (“Saints”, volume 2, p. 199) and Michael Buttigieg and Leon Lauraire (“Devotion to Saint Joseph”, volume 3, p. 89), as well as in the work of Brother Saturnino Gallego “Vida y pensamiento de San Juan Bautista de La Salle (in Spanish)”, Volume I]

2. Lasallian curiosities about Saint Joseph

The seal of the Institute:

An interesting and scholarly article on this subject was written by Br. Henry in the “Bulletin of the Institute” (no. 148) of January 1957. The following is a summary of the article.



- The oldest seal of the Institute dates from 1704. It is on a letter, fragmented into two parts, and shows St Joseph with the pilgrim's staff in his left hand, carrying the Child Jesus. The upper part bears the motto “LIVE JESUS”.
- Reproduction of a wax seal used by Saint John Baptist de La Salle to seal three obediences dated 1707, 1708 and 1709. It depicts Saint Joseph and the Child Jesus. It is round and bears the inscription “LES FRÈRES DES ECOLES CHRETIENNES”.
- In a manuscript of 1711, the monogram IHS is found, above which there is a cross with rays, surrounded by the inscription “THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS”.
- The Rules and Constitutions of the Brothers of the Christian Schools approved by Pope Benedict XIII were printed in Rouen in 1726. A rectangular seal appears on one of the last pages. Framing the image of St Joseph, holding a lily in his left hand and carrying the Infant Jesus, is the inscription “THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS”. An oval wax seal of similar design was used by the Superior General in the same year on a document bearing the signatures of seven other Brothers.
- In the minutes of the General Chapter of 1751, it is stated that “in the future the seal of the Institute will be the silver star, on a blue field, with the motto “SIGNUM FIDEI””. In 1784, Br Agathon, 10th Superior General, sent from St Yon a communication in which he used the seal of the Institute. Since then, this has been, with minor variations, the official seal.
- There is a seal used by the Brother Director of Nancy, in February 1791, which is oval, with the image of St Joseph and the Child Jesus and the inscription “LES FRÈRES DES ECOLES CHRETIENNES”.
- By 1924, the seal took its current form, which is easy to identify. The only significant change came in 1952. During the Tercentenary celebrations, the Circular of 6 January 1952 reported that the motto “INDIVISA MANENT” (“Permanently indivisible”) should be added to the seal of the Institute.
- Four years later, the 1956 General Chapter called for “a return to the traditional seal with the single motto: “SIGNUM FIDEI”.

See “Bulletin” no. 125, 1951, p. 164; no. 127, 1951, p. 290; no. 150-151, 1957, pp. 191-198.

Devotion to the Blessed Child Jesus and St. Joseph in the Institute

In the Bull “In Apostolicae dignitatis solio” of Pope Benedict XIII, it is stated that the Institute is “under the patronage of the Most Holy Infant Jesus and Saint Joseph”.

Because of this double patronage, from the beginning of the Institute, a rectangular square was adopted as seal showing Saint Joseph giving his right hand to the Child Jesus holding in his left hand the fleur-de-lis. As a legend: “THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS”. This very simple seal appeared for the first time on the cover page of the “Meditations for the Time of Retreat” published in Rouen in 1730 in the house of Antoine Le Prévot, rue Saint Vivien. Other books published subsequently bore this seal until 1751, when it was replaced by the “SIGNUM FIDEI”.

Circulars of Superiors General on St. Joseph

Throughout the history of our Institute, numerous texts, especially the Circulars of the Superiors General, have dealt with the figure of St. Joseph:

From Brother Frumencio, Vicar General:

- Circ. 2b (Jan-1808), Lyon: Celebration of the feast of St Joseph, patron saint of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, in the church of the Petit Collège de Lyon, on 6 January (Bulletin de Lyon, no. 1).

From Brother Anacleto:

- Circ. 59b (13-Sep-1830), Paris: Circular Letter: Recitation of special prayers indicated by the General Chapter.

From Brother Philip:

- Circ. 134 (20-Feb-1844, Paris): Circular Letter asking for a general novena to St. Joseph.
- Circ. 140 (15-Jan-1845, Paris): Circular Letter inviting to honour St. Joseph even more.
- Circ. 145 (14-Jan-1846), Paris: Circular Letter to ask for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph at the Mother House.
- Circ. 147 (14-Apr-1846), Paris: Circular Letter recommending devotion to St. Joseph.
- Favours. Month of Mary.
- Circ. 230 (Mar 2, 1857, Paris): To intensify devotion to St Joseph, Patron of the Institute, in view of the expansion of the Congregation.
- Circ. 237 (01-Jan-1858), Paris: Circular Letter: Practice of virtues leading to perfection: 15, Through the intercession of St. Joseph, holy death.
- Circ. 239 (25-Feb-1858), Paris: Circular Letter: In the month of March, special devotion to St. Joseph, patron and protector of the Brothers.
- Circ. 260 (18-Jan-1860), Paris: Circular Letter. Invitation to trust in and devotion to St. Joseph.
- Circ. 289 (29 Jul-1862), Paris: Circular Letter: By indult, the feasts of the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Joseph can be celebrated with a double rite of 1st class.
- Circ. 305 (20-Feb-1864), Paris: Circular Letter. Sending of the book of Meditations on St. Joseph.
- Circ. 310 (25-Aug-1864, Paris): Circular Letter concerning the Rescript allowing us to participate 1st in the Archconfraternity of St. Joseph in Beauvais.
- Circ. 320 (20-Oct-1865), Paris: Circular Letter indicating to the Brother Directors that they have no relic of St. Joseph in the chapel.
- Circ. 330bis (12-Feb-1867), Paris: Circular Letter, exhortation before the arrival of the month of March, consecrated to St. Joseph.
- Circ. 335 quat (15-Feb-1868), Paris: Circular Letter: Experience of St Joseph's protection of the Institute.

From Brother Juan Olimpio:

- Circ. 373p (20-May-1875), Paris: Circular letter showing two medallions in paste, 0.30 x 0.17, with the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph.

From Brother Irlide:

- Circ. 5 (07-Apr-1876), Paris. Anniversary of the death of the Founder. Consecration of the Institute to St. Joseph.
- Circ. 5c (Apr-1876): Sending the formula of consecration of the Institute to St. Joseph on the Sunday of his Patronage.

From Brother José:

- Circ. 57c (04-Mar-1891), Paris: Inscription in the Archconfraternities of St. Joseph (Nevers).
- From Brother Gabriel Maria:
- Circ. 110 (02-Feb-1902), Paris: Celebration of the month of St. Joseph.



3. Communities and Educational Ministries after the name of St. Joseph¹

Communities of Brothers named after Saint Joseph:

DISTRICT AFRIQUE CENTRALE

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Guinea Ecuatorial	BATA - LITORAL	01	Comunidad La Salle - de San José

DISTRICT D'ANTANANARIVO

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Madagascar	AMBATONDRAZAKA	02	Communauté de Saint Joseph
Madagascar	AMBOSITRA	03	Communauté de Saint Joseph
Madagascar	ANTANANARIVO	04	Maison de Retraite Saint Joseph
Ambohimangakely		05	Communauté de Saint Joseph
Madagascar	ANTANANARIVO	06	Communauté de Saint Joseph
Andohalo			
Madagascar	TOAMASINA		

DISTRITO ANTILLAS - MÉXICO SUR

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
México	HUASCA DE OCAMPO	07	“Mesón de San José” (Casa de Retiro)

DISTRITO ARGENTINA - PARAGUAY

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Argentina	VILLA DEL ROSARIO	08	Comunidad San José

DISTRITO ARLEP

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
España	BEASAIN	09	Comunidad La Salle - San José
España	CAMBRILS	10	Casa San José
España	TERUEL	11	Comunidad La Salle - José

D. DE BELGIQUE-SUD

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Belgique	CARLSBOURG	12	Résidence St-Joseph

DISTRITO BOGOTA

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Colombia	CÚCUTA	13	Instituto San José De La Salle
Colombia	LAS PALMAS	14	Comunidad San José

DISTRICT OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA (DENA)

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
USA	BUFALO	15	St. Joseph's Collegiate Community
USA	PAWTUCKET	16	St. Joseph's Lasallian Community

1 Conforme al Memento 2020

DISTRITO CENTROAMÉRICA - PANAMA

Country	City	Nº	
Costa Rica	SAN JOSÉ	17	Comunidad La Salle - San José

DISTRICT DE FRANCE

Country	City	Nº	
France	LEVIER	18	Communauté Saint-Joseph

DELEGATION OF INDIA

Country	City	Nº	
India	GENGUARPATTI	19	St. Joseph's Boys' Village

DISTRICT D'ITALIE

Country	City	Nº	
Italie	MILANO	20	Comunità Istituto "San Giuseppe"
Italie	ROMA	21	Comunità Collegio "San Giuseppe" Istituto "De Merode"
Italie	TORINO	22	Comunità Collegio San Giuseppe

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT (LEAD)

Country	City	Nº	
Singapore	SINGAPORE	24	St. Joseph's Community
Hong Kong	HONG KONG	25	St. Joseph's College Brothers' Community

DISTRITO NORANDINO

Country	City	Nº	
Colombia	ANTIOQUIA	26	Comunidad Colegio San José de La Salle
Ecuador	Escobedo GUAYAQUIL	27	Comunidad U. E. San José



Lasallian Educational Ministries after the name of St. Joseph

DISTRICT D'ANTANANARIVO

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Madagascar	AMBATONDRAZAKA	01	Lycée Privé Saint Joseph
Madagascar	ANTANANARIVO	03	Lycée Privé Saint Joseph
Madagascar	TOAMASINA	04	École Saint Joseph

DISTRITO ARGENTINA - PARAGUAY

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Argentina	VILLA DEL ROSARIO	05	Colegio San José

DISTRITO ARLEP

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
España	BEASAIN		La Salle-San José Ikastetxea
España	CHICLANA DE LA F.	06	Colegio La Salle - San José
España	JEREZ DE LA F.	07	Colegio La Salle-San José
España	TERUEL	08	Colegio La Salle – San José

DÉLÉGATION DU BELGIQUE-NORD

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Belgique	SINT-AGATHA-BERCHEM	09	Sint-Jozefsschool (meisjes)
Belgique	GENK-Bokrijk	10	Sint-Jozefinstituut
Belgique	KORTRIJK	11	Basisschool Sint-Jozefinstituut
Belgique	TERNAT	12	Sint-Jozefinstituut

DÉLÉGATION DU BELGIQUE-SUD

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Belgique	BASTOGNE	13	Institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	CARLSBOURG	14	Institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	CHATELET	15	Institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	CINEY	16	Institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	FRAMERIES	17	Institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	LA ROCHE-EN-ARDENNE	18	Institut Saint-Joseph et du Sacré Cœur
Belgique	LIEGE	19	institut Saint-Joseph
Belgique	NAMUR	20	Ecole Saint-Joseph

DISTRITO BOGOTA

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Colombia	BUCARAMANGA	21	Comunidad San José

DISTRITO BOLIVIA – PERÚ

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Perú	CUSCO	22	Centro Educativo Privado San José - La Salle

DISTRITO CENTROAMERICA

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Honduras	S. PEDRO SULA	23	Inst. Experimental San José La Salle

D. COLOMBO

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Sri Lanka	COLOMBO	24	St. Joseph's College
Sri Lanka	COLOMBO	25	St. Joseph's Pre-School

DISTRICT OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA (DENA)

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
USA	BUFALO	26	St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute
USA	PAWTUCKET	27	St. Joseph's Lasallian Community

DISTRICT DE FRANCE

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
France	ARGENTRÉ DU PLESSIS	28	Groupe Scolaire La Salle Saint-Joseph
France	AUXERRE	29	Groupe Scolaire St. Joseph La Salle Ste Thérèse
France	DIJON	30	Groupe Saint Joseph La Salle
France	DIJON	31	École primaire Saint-Joseph
France	JURANÇON	32	École et Collège La Salle Saint-Joseph
France	LA ROCHE BERNARD	33	Collège Saint-Joseph
France	LANDIVISIAU	34	Collège Saint-Joseph-La Salle
France	NANTES	35	Collège et Lycée St-Joseph du Loquidy La Salle
France	PLOUDALMEZEAU	36	Collège Saint-Joseph La Salle
France	PRUIILLÉ LE CHÉTIF	37	Groupe Scolaire Saint-Joseph La Salle
France	QUESTEMBERT	38	Collège Saint-Joseph La Salle
France	RODEZ	39	Ensemble scolaire Saint Joseph La Salle
France	SEMUR-EN-AUXOIS	40	École et Collège Saint-Joseph La Salle
France	TINTENIAC	41	Collège Privé Saint-Joseph
France	TOULOUSE	42	Ensemble Scolaire Saint-Joseph La Salle
France	TROYES	43	Groupe Saint Joseph La Salle
France	WATTRELOS	44	Collège Saint-Joseph La Salle

DELEGATION OF INDIA

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
India	GENGUARPATTI	45	St. Joseph's Boys' Village
India	KEELAMUDIMAN	46	St. Joseph's Higher Secondary School

DISTRICT OF IRELAND / GREAT BRITAIN / MALTA

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Great Britain	LONDON	47	St Joseph's College

DISTRICT D'ITALIE

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Italie	MILANO	48	Istituto "San Giuseppe"
Italie	ROMA	49	Collegio "San Giuseppe" Istituto "De Merode"
Italie	TORINO	50	Collegio San Giuseppe
Italie	TORINO	51	Centro Universitario "Villa San Giuseppe"

LASALLIAN EAST ASIA DISTRICT (LEAD)

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Hong Kong	HONG KONG	52	St. Joseph's Primary School
Malaysia	KUCHING, Sarawak	53	St. Joseph's School
Malaysia	KUCHING	54	St. Joseph's School (Primary)
Philippines	BACOLOD CITY	55	St. Joseph School – La Salle

Singapore	SINGAPORE	56	St. Joseph's Institution
Singapore	SINGAPORE	57	St. Joseph's Institution Junior

DISTRITO NORANDINO

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
Colombia	ANTIOQUIA	58	Colegio San José - La Salle
Ecuador	GUAYAQUIL	59	U. E. San José – La Salle
Ecuador	LATACUNGA	60	U. E. Particular San José La Salle
Ecuador	QUITO	61	U. E. Particular San José La Salle

DISTRITO MEXICO NORTE

<i>Country</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nº</i>	
México	SALTILLO	62	Casa Hogar de los Pequeños “San José”



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