

A TEACHER'S PRAYER

You, O God,
are my strength, my patience,
my light and my counsel.
It is you who make responsive to me
the students confided to my care.
Abandon me not to myself
for one moment.
For my own conduct
and that of my students,
grant me the spirit of wisdom
and understanding,
the spirit of knowledge and piety,
the spirit of holy fear of you,
and an ardent zeal to procure your glory.
I unite my efforts to those
of Jesus Christ, the Master Teacher,
and I beg all the Saints in Heaven
to assist me in the exercise
of my teaching ministry.
Amen.

Resources for this Pamphlet:

www.catholic-forum.com/saints

www.ewtn.com

www.lasalle.org

*“Be driven by the love of God
because Jesus Christ died for
all, that those who live may live
not for themselves but for him,
who died and rose for them.
Above all, let your charity and
zeal show how you love the
Church. Your work is for the
Church, which is the Body of
Christ.”*

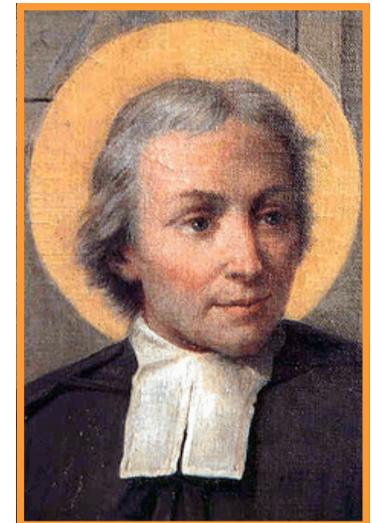
St. John Baptist De La Salle



Rev. Msgr. Richard M. Figliozzi
Secretariat for the New Evangelization
P.O. Box 9023
Rockville Centre, NY 11571
Tel: (516) 678-5800 x309
Fax: (516) 594-0064
email: rfigliozzi@drc.org

**Evangelization and the Lives of the
Saints:
St. John Baptist De La Salle
Vol. I, Issue 8**

Evangelization and the Lives of the Saints: St. John Baptist De La Salle



April 5

**Office of New Evangelization
P.O. Box 9023
Rockville Centre, NY 11571
Tel: (516) 678-5800 x309
Fax: (516) 594-0064
E-mail: rfigliozzi@drc.org**

"Father of Modern Education"

St. John Baptist De La Salle was born in Rheims, France in 1651, the eldest son in a wealthy family. Gifted with a bright mind and good looks, he could have easily been successful in any field; however, even at a young age he showed such a strong sense of faith and charity that it led to his formation from age 11 to the priesthood.

As a young priest, Father De La Salle was assigned to be the Spiritual Director of the Sisters of the Holy Infant who ran an orphanage and a small school for poor girls. Realizing the plight of children who lived in the streets, he was determined to minister to them through education. His great enthusiasm and love attracted other men who had the same ideals, and he organized them, taught them and founded the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (Christian Brothers) in 1681.

One of the most surprising moves of his career came when he sold all his possessions, liquidated his share of the family fortune, but did not use the money to provide for his vision. Instead, after much prayer and discernment, he donated it all to the poor during a famine, and explained to his somewhat perplexed Brothers that they would have to depend upon the providence of God for the continuation of their schools. He lived with them in their poverty and inspired them to fully live out their noble calling as Christian educators.

The schools that he began were among the first to group children according to ability, to teach in the vernacular, and to give the boys and their teachers a strong sense of their dignity as Christians. St. John Baptist De La Salle died on Good Friday in 1719. Today there are Lasallian schools in 80 countries worldwide. Lasallian spirituality includes these points:

- St. John Baptist De La Salle looked upon all children as equal in God's eyes, and wrote for his Brothers to "look below the rags of the poor children whom you teach and see the Christ-child lying in the manger." He very much understood the value and dignity that God bestows on each human being. Today, with so many poor and uneducated people still suffering in this world, can we take more time to pray and sacrifice for others? Our support of organizations such as the Propagation of the Faith and Holy Childhood Association give us the opportunity to care for those in dire need throughout the world. Let us unite as the Body of Christ to care for our brothers and sisters everywhere.
- The fact that St. La Salle gave away his entire fortune proved his total dependence on Christ for the fulfillment of his dreams. Like the poor widow in the Gospels, he gave his last pennies to God and trusted completely in Him. How well do we trust God in our own lives? Do we walk by faith and not by sight? Do we try and discern if our own "dreams" are in line with God's will for our lives? Let us resolve to believe the assurances of Christ and be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in guiding us.

- St. La Salle recognized the responsibility that we all have in allowing our faith to have an impact on others. He wrote: "Your faith should be for you a light which guides you in all things, and a shining light for those whom you instruct, to lead them on the path to heaven." We can, in the little things we do, bring our faith to the forefront of our lives by having patience with others, smiling when we are tired, offering a cheerful hand, and just generally trying to live by the fruits of the Spirit. It is in the practice of living our lives for Christ that others will come to know Him.
- Today the mission statement of the De La Salle Christian Brothers reads: "The purpose of this Institute is to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor, according to the ministry which the Church has entrusted to it." The Brothers serve in our own Diocese in the De La Salle School in Freeport, and have had much success with the formation of Christian young men. To learn more about their work, see their website at: www.cbline.org.

