

# Election of Brother Vicar General

On May 19, 2022, following the election of the new Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Armin Luistro, the 70 Brothers Capitulants with right to vote, gathered in the Aula Magna of the Generalate, elect Carlos Gabriel Gómez Restrepo as Brother Vicar General.

Brother Carlos Gabriel Gómez Restrepo was born in Colombia in 1960. He joined the Brothers of the Christian Schools of the District of Bogotá in 1979. He did his initial formation at De La Salle University in Bogotá. He obtained his Degree in Education in 1983. His first years as an educator were spent in the deep rural areas of Colombia, as a state teacher in places of violence, state neglect, illicit cultivation and social conflict.

He holds a master's degree in Political Science from the *Pontificia Universidad Javeriana*, where he graduated in 1991 with a thesis on the relationship between education and politics. For five years, he was principal of the *Escuela Tecnológica Instituto Técnico Central* in Bogotá, a public institution of higher education, entrusted to Lasallians.

He then pursued his doctoral studies at *St. Mary's University* in Minnesota, where he received his Doctor of Education degree in 1999. He was honoured in 1998 for his publication 'Who is Who in American Colleges and Universities' on the role of schools and colleges in places of conflict, social unrest and political uncertainty in San Vicente del Caguán, a place of dialogue between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrillas.

In the early 2000s, he served both as Secretary of the Lasallian Latin American Region and as a professor at De La Salle University in Bogotá.

In 2008, he was appointed Rector, a position he held for nine years. During those years, Colombia experienced the negotiation processes for the end of the armed conflict. La Salle University played a leading role in these processes with its educational activities, its presence in various negotiation scenarios and its support for the process. Its commitment to peace was evident through the creation of the 'UTOPIA' project, the only rural university campus, aimed at talented young people with the conviction that peace in Colombia passes through

rural areas and that education is the engine through which inclusion and opportunity are possible. Utopia is considered in Colombia as the best creative experience in rural higher education, where high academic quality, sustainable agriculture, social impact, knowledge transfer and opportunity creation make peace possible.

In 2010 he was awarded an Honorary Doctoral Degree from St. Mary's College of California, the Jesús Maestro Award from the Latin American Confederation of Catholic Education (2016) and in 2019 the Inter-American Award granted by the Inter-American Organisation of Universities. (OIU)

In 2015, he was appointed Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at La Salle University, leading the institution's in-depth self-assessment, rethinking of the educational project, transformation of academic processes, and achievement of high-quality institutional accreditation.

In 2016, he was then appointed Visitor of the Lasallian District of Bogotá and since 2021 he has been President of the Ethiopian Catholic University in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

In his missionary and academic career, Brother Carlos was awarded the Francisco de Paula Santander Civic Medal by the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia - the highest honour for educators in the country - and the National Peace Prize (2014) and the National Solidarity Prize (2016).