



**PLENARY
Assembly**

2024

7 • 14 July
Generalate, Rome

NEWSLETTER No. 5
09 AUGUST 2024

★ **Plenum**

LaSalle

Plenum. The Plenary Assembly was a gathering of Lasallians, leaders by designation and by right of office as executives of the Institute. At decisive stages in the life of this Institute, Saint John Baptist de La Salle brought together the principal Brothers to discern together the way forward, but above all **to renew and strengthen the bond of fraternity on which the future of this educational project depends.**

Plenum. In Latin, it denotes a space completely filled in contradistinction with vacuum which is empty space. If we filled this hall with egoistic ambitions or spiritualized dreams to gain prominence in the Church or to push our institutional reputation among the ranks of top-tiered schools, we would be a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.



Br. Armin Luistro FSC
Superior General

One of the intended outcomes of this Plenary Assembly was “to keep alive the fire of the *Leavening Movement* and spread it in every corner of the Lasallian geography”. It seems to me, then, that the real task incumbent upon everyone is to personally commit to **be the living memories and credible guarantors that the vision of ‘One La Salle’ is achievable through the path of the *Leavening Movement*.**

Our effectiveness as champions and ambassadors is not dependent on whether we feel our hearts burning within while still here in Rome, but on whether we can keep our hearts ablaze when we return to our respective home bases. Following the same visual imagery of yeast, I would like to highlight **the obscure action of mixing the almost invisible yeast with the dough resulting in its transformation.** This can happen only when the elements are well-blended and there is sufficient time given for the dough to rise until everything is leavened. The action of mixing brings about the transformation; we may have all the ingredients, but until these are brought together and blended, the small does not become big, the shaggy mass does not rise into a fluffy mound [...].

The experience of the Plenary Assembly has been our first attempt to **widen the tent of the executive team of the central government of the Institute so we could engage everyone more fully and in an even more collaborative way.** [...]. Each one of us must be fully convinced that the future of this Institute is in your hands.

(Excerpts from the closing remarks of the Plenary Assembly 2024)

★ **Testimonies on the Plenary Assembly**

Following the first Plenary Assembly which brought together a group of Brothers of the Christian Schools and lay Lasallians at the Generalate last July, **some participants shared their insights, by way of testimony,** of this experience of gathering, discernment and the search for consensus from a Lasallian synodal perspective.

Br Ambrose Payne, President of the International Economic Council, underlined that “**the Plenary Assembly has given us the opportunity to experience synodality** in the sense that, although there are levels of governance present here in the Institute, everyone’s opinion is treated as equal. It has been wonderful to see how people’s ideas and attitudes have changed as a result of the exchanges.



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Similarly, **Brother Francisco Flores**, Visitor of the District of Antilles - Mexico South, emphasised that the Assembly has been “an experience of fraternity, of synodality, but also of learning. Surely, after this Assembly we will be able to evaluate what is working well and **what is not working so well, and we will have to rethink it as an Institute**”.

For his part, the Visitor of the District of Lwanga, **Brother Betre Fisseha**, emphasised that “the most important thing in this Assembly was the reunion, meeting new people, new Visitors, new Commissions, new Offices. **That is the key part, when we are together in person, to journey together, and to advocate that ‘One La Salle’ together**”

In the same perspective, **Brother Benedict Hanlon**, Visitor of the District of Ireland-Great Britain-Malta is optimistic, noting that “it was a really good experience that has moved us on significantly in terms of the new experiences ahead of us, particularly where we are **in association with a much wider group of people than just simply the Brothers, when there are more people willing to take on the mission**, willing to work for it, willing to be guided by God in this wonderful task. So, I thank God for this Assembly that we have had.

Likewise, from the perspective of **Jean-Marie Ballenghien**, a Lay Lasallian who is part of the International Council for Association and the Lasallian Educational Mission (CIAMEL), “the most important thing for me in this kind of assembly is to experience the diversity of people, the cultural, linguistic diversity, and also diversity of commitments. In particular, I **think the notion of the charismatic family interested me a lot: how lay people can deepen their vocation as lay people, women or men, baptised, committed to the mission and how the Brothers themselves can deepen their vocation as religious consecrated to education**. And so, this type of meeting, well, I think that everyone is invited to take another step in their own commitment, whatever it may be, to serve the Lasallian mission”.

Finally, **Brother Eduardo Rivera**, a member of the Standing Committee of Young Brothers, concluded that “the most important thing about this Assembly has been to recognise the mission that we Lasallians have in different parts of the world, and to realise that we are like leaven: small actions, different projects that are building the Reign of God. And **from this diversity, a single mission which inspires us all**”.

THESE AND OTHER TESTIMONIES, AS WELL AS NEWS SUMMARIES OF EACH DAY OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY, ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR [YOUTUBE CHANNEL](#).



TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

All the information about the Plenary Assembly, including the photo gallery and videos of each day, is available on the website: **<https://www.lasalle.org/en/plenary-assembly/>**

The conclusions and consensus of the Plenary Assembly will subsequently be sent by the Brother Superior General and the Brothers of the General Council to the Lasallian Family.