



FORMATION IN LASALLIAN ETHOS AND HERITAGE

(v3)

2018

Context

In order to have a proper understanding of this text, it is essential to link it with the reflection carried out on Lasallian identity in our educational works.

The starting point is to be aware of the many institutional texts on formation that obviates the necessity of a broad reflection on formation since this has already been done. The MEL Bulletin 51 is a magnificent reference for this reflection.

In order to properly contextualize the theme, it needs to be viewed on three different levels:

- At Institute level
- At Regional level
- In terms of the future

We underline the word “our” to emphasize the need to understand the Region and each of its Districts¹ as something that concerns all of us and for which we should all feel co-responsible.

At Institute Level

This is the highest expression of our understanding of collaborative/community work offered in AIMEL and in the General Chapter. We make use of material from both of these meetings to indicate the challenges before us.

II AIMEL 2013

- The effectiveness of Lasallian institutions depends on the commitment of the members of the educational communities. This commitment is strengthened by effective formation and accompaniment in the Lasallian Mission.
- At present, quality formation and accompaniment are not accessible to all Lasallians.
- One of the challenges is to provide a formation plan and accompaniment that will reach more members of the educational community and guarantee their commitment to the Lasallian Mission.
- For this, it will be necessary, among other things, to develop the formation of formators.
- Each District will ensure the necessary personnel, structures and processes.
- There is a need to develop a Regional formation service.

45th GENERAL CHAPTER and the subsequent CIRCULAR 470

Goals for 2021

- On-going and life-long formation for all Lasallians in order to respond to our common vocation as disciples-apostles.
- Lasallian and pedagogical formation as priorities.
- This requires the development of a “culture of accompaniment”, particularly among the directors of institutions and communities.
- To promote in the Districts, for Brothers and Partners, the creation and strengthening of programs for the formation of formators and for those involved in accompaniment for the Lasallian Mission.

¹ When the term “District” is used it is understood that this also applies to the Delegation of Belgium North

With these clear references from the global Lasallian community in mind, we can turn our attention to the reality of our Region.

At Regional level

Based on the contributions from different Districts/Delegations we note:

- The diversity in ownership, contractual relationship with teachers, decision-making capacity in management, formation culture, vision of formation...
- Heterogeneity in the development of formation programmes - from comprehensive plans in time and depth to specific or ad hoc sessions.
- The richness of formation plans in some Districts that can be shared.
- Attempts to implement formation plans at a Regional level, including the formation of formators.
- The urgent need to have formative plans for educators, and especially for leaders, that guarantee commitment and fidelity to the Lasallian charism.
- The urgent need to establish formation plans for formators.
- The urgent need for sustainability in the identity of our educational works.

We realised that we couldn't postpone the response to these challenges because it would be too late. We recognise that this is the reality from which we move forward, each person from their own reality, without paralyzing comparisons of "better" or "worse".

The commitment of District leaders for the approved proposals is necessary. Only in this way will it be possible to realise our vision, our dream, of having educators identified and committed to the mission.

Justification

1. Purpose

As an essential element in its commitment to those engaged in its educational works, the Lasallian network offers to its educators² *formation processes* that promote:

- The acquisition of a sense of belonging
- Knowledge of the key elements in the Lasallian educational project
- And competence in the development of the different and successive functions required by the Lasallian institution
- Human and spiritual growth and experience of community

2. The starting point is daily experience

Formation begins with the reflection by the educator and the educational community on the daily experience in the mission in order to give a new and effective response to the needs that they discover in those to whom they minister.

3. On-going and shared

Formation must be an on-going process. It becomes particularly fruitful when it is shared with other educators and facilitates group work.

² By "educators" we mean all persons who participate in the educational project: for example: those involved in direction/leadership, teachers, those involved in administration, pastoral animators, monitors, young people, families, etc.

4. It is essential for the vitality of the educational works

The vitality of the educational works depends largely on the quality and the extent of the formation offered to educators and on how they embrace this offer.

5. Pathways for growth

An *Integrated Initial and On-going Formation Plan* emerges from an analysis of, among other things, the identified formation needs of the educational community resulting from the on-going evaluation process of our institutions. This plan develops processes that facilitate:

- Formation to enable a person to be an educator in today's world and in our society, to be able to offer a model of the person based on human, Christian, and Lasallian values.
- The understanding of a globalized, diverse, intercultural and interreligious world.
- Formation that promotes dialogue between faith and culture in our world and in our schools.
- To promote Lasallian identity and a sense of belonging in order to foster involvement in the Christian and Lasallian educational project, situating the Lasallian spiritual family in communion with the Church as the people of God.
- The encouragement to propose commitments in line with personal aspirations and convictions.
- The awakening of an attitude that is open to continual updating, open to change and adaptation (commitment to life-long learning)
- Different formation opportunities in function of the needs of those entrusted to our care

6. Specific Lasallian formation

In the *Integrated Initial and On-going Formation Plan*, there is a specific role for formation related to the Lasallian Institute (knowledge of our Founder, John Baptist de La Salle, our history, charism, pedagogy). This is offered in different ways and in different depths whether in sessions dedicated to those themes or integrated with other subjects. The presence of the Brothers in these formative processes is valued as positive.

7. Levels of personal competence

This formation plan also seeks to develop levels of personal competence for those involved in the programme in relation to the various functions required in an educational centre, including Directors/Principals. It seeks to support those who are assuming particular functions already assigned, or those who may be assigned in the future, in order to develop and update the Lasallian mission.

8. Through significant experiences

The formation offered needs to be significant, with the provision of particular experiences; for example - in groups, opening to the transcendent, celebratory, reaching out to the reality of the poor. It also offers experiences that allow collaborative learning, in relation with people who have significant experience in the educational centre, as well as with others from other educational contexts. Experiences will be meaningful to the extent that they are reflected on.

9. It is a commitment

In integrating oneself in the educational work or accepting the different responsibilities that are offered, the educator assumes the commitment to undertake the initial and on-going formation that is offered as part of the involvement in the centre. The institution uses the appropriate structures to track the competencies acquired by educators in training activities.



10. Formation that is accompanied and evaluated

It is necessary that each person who undergoes a formation experience has the possibility to communicate that experience, to feel accompanied during the experience, and has the opportunity to evaluate the level of satisfaction, the effectiveness of the experience, and the level of personal involvement.

11. Accredited and academic quality

To the extent that it is possible, formation will have a recognised level of accredited academic quality, both in terms of content and methodology. Our higher education institutions can contribute to this task.

Propositions

In the light of the above, here are a number of propositions to be implemented in RELEM before the next Assembly:

PROPOSITION 1

Each District³ must have a formation plan which indicates all its programmes (e.g. levels, to whom they are directed...) These plans must include initial and on-going formation of educators and administrators both in terms of Lasallian identity and the development of competences.

PROPOSITION 2

The Regional Team, taking note of Institute proposals⁴, will provide a framework that can help in the development of this plan. As a means of support, it will also provide for the Districts an indication of the best practices that have emerged in other Districts.

PROPOSITION 3

The Regional Team will monitor the implementation of the formation plan of each District and facilitate the sharing of resources in RELEM for their implementation. (e.g. taking advantage of current formation centres in the Districts).

PROPOSITION 4

Each District ensures that Lasallian formation is supervised and that their educational centres are committed to this formation.

PROPOSITION 5

In the course of the academic year 2019-2020 the Regional Team will implement the plan for formation of Lasallian formators.

³ District refers to the current districts and the Northern Belgium delegation

⁴ Cf MEL No. 51 + text in preparation to be published in spring 2019

PROPOSITION 6

The Region will offer proposals for interdistrict/international formation making use of those sessions already in place and incorporating new initiatives in cooperation with other groups in the Region: e.g. Directors, Young Lasallians...

PROPOSITION 7

To promote the plans of formation in the Region (District or Regional), the Regional Team will create synergies to support Districts: e.g. between Districts, institutions, Universities...

PROPOSITION 8

To facilitate interchanges, those responsible for formation in each District will include language learning in the formation plan of their District. The Regional Team will provide information and other resources with regard to language courses available in the Region.

PROPOSITION 9

All plans of Lasallian formation will include significant experiences with a community dimension (e.g. service, interreligious, volunteer...)