

**THE EXPERIENCE OF ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION
IN LASALLIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
BY LAY TEACHERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED
THE LASALLIAN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE.**

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The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (De La Salle Christian Brothers) has experienced a significant decrease in its membership in the last fifty or so years. This is an experience shared by most religious orders since Vatican II. It has meant a sharp increase in the number of both lay teachers and lay staff in the schools that they conduct. Responding to this, the De La Salle Christian Brothers recognized the importance of lay teachers and lay staff to the mission of the Institute and recognized that Brothers and lay people can be associated together for the mission. Formation programs were developed to provide a Lasallian foundation for lay colleagues that also included Brothers. Characteristics of what it means to be associated with the Institute for mission were developed. One such program that was developed by the United States/Toronto Region was the Lasallian Leadership Institute (LLI).

This research project is a phenomenological study centering on four lay teachers from Lasallian colleges or universities and Lasallian secondary schools. A thick, rich descriptive narrative was developed for each of the participants focusing on each person's experience of association for mission. The primary information collection was an intensive interview. The researcher also kept logs and reflections after each interview. Transcribed interviews were reviewed and emergent themes were identified. Each research participant reviewed the transcriptions and the final narrative and offered feedback.

The study revealed that the four teachers had a good experience during LLI and they clearly believe that they are associated for mission. However, it also revealed that, although there were some similarities or consistencies, this experience of association is unique to each of them. Two expressed concerns about their experience of community and the mission. The study concludes that each is associated for mission but that follow up with those who completed LLI is suggested to identify and address needs that exist now that they have completed the LLI program.