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## **The Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle in Rome & Its Windows**

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Around the globe, when a Lasallian proclaims "Saint John Baptist de La Salle" others respond "pray for us." This statement is usually followed by another one, "Live Jesus in our hearts" and the response "forever." The Brothers of the Christian Schools, their Lasallian partners and associates, and over a million students around the world know this ritual exchange. I have even heard of a bumper sticker that reads: "Live Jesus in our hearts . . ." At the core of these exchanges is John Baptist de La Salle, a man who died more than 300 years ago.<sup>3</sup> Who was he, and how can he pray for us? Answers to these questions can be found in Rome, Italy. In the 1930s the Brothers built their new Motherhouse, or Generalate, of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Italy. They set to work on their large complex with a sizeable chapel: the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. The Brothers built it specifically to transfer the Saint's remains to this site. The narrative stained-glass windows within the chapel – *images of which can be found at the conclusion of this paper* – illuminate De La Salle's life and communicate his core mission. They also cast light on Italy in the 1930s, the cult of Roman Catholic saints, and the Lasallian world prior to 1951.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools, more popularly now referred to in the United States as the De La Salle Christian Brothers, and the teachers, students, staff, and all those working in association with the Brothers, can be grouped together as Lasallians. If you were to ask a Lasallian educator where the "holiest site" is for Lasallians in the world, they might simply respond, the classroom, as this is where the miracle of Lasallian education occurs.

In an historical sense, a solid argument could also be made for Rheims, France, the ancient city where French monarchs were crowned in its famed cathedral, the birthplace of De La Salle, and site of his first schools. Others, who perhaps are well acquainted with the Brother's legacy, could make a case for Rouen, France, where the Saint died and was initially interred. It was the home of the largest Lasallian educational center in the eighteenth century. Yet, hidden behind a large wall along a busy thoroughfare in Rome lies the Brothers' Motherhouse. Although rarely visited by many tourists, the Brothers' chapel contains the bodily relics of De La Salle. Surely, the designation of "holiest site" belongs to the site with his earthly remains.

The Brothers conceived of the chapel as a central space for celebrating Mass, as well as the location to house the reliquary containing De La Salle's remains. They worked with an architect and a couple of stained-glass studios to design and adorn the large chapel.<sup>4</sup> Over time the Brothers had twenty-four narrative stained-glass windows created to depict the life, mission, and legacy of their Founder. The De La Salle windows initially included four windows in the apse. Twenty narrative windows were later added along the side aisles. Since the windows were made for a Roman Catholic saint, they also provide a great deal of information on the cult of the saints, spirituality, and the Church.<sup>5</sup> The windows emphasize dedication, sacrifice, and the Founder's role as a Roman Catholic. Completed by 1951, they highlight pivotal moments in the life of the Saint, the Community of Brothers, and De La Salle's legacy.

John Baptist de La Salle (1651-1719) grew up in Rheims, France, on the edge of the Champagne region. The eldest of eleven children – seven of whom survived beyond childhood – of a successful magistrate and a mother with links to what became Moët & Chandon Champagne, De La Salle was tutored in a grand home. At a young age he became a canon at Rheims Cathedral and was eventually ordained a priest. A contemporary of the extravagant King Louis XIV, the Sun King, he lived at a time of high French manners and empire building.

De La Salle chose to follow a path far removed from the excesses of the time. He gave away his wealth to the needy and founded the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. In association with his Brother teachers, they established a number of schools for the poor and the children of artisans. Over his lifetime, De La Salle carried on extensive correspondence, wrote about education and spiritual matters, and displayed superior organizational skills. He revolutionized education in the Kingdom of France, and his educational mission continues to this day.

### **1. The Motherhouse in Rome**

When the De La Salle Christian Brothers began constructing their expansive Generalate in the 1930s, its purpose was to serve as the administrative center for the educational mission of their international network of schools. The De La Salle Christian Brother's decision seems to be related to the Church's revision of the Code of Canon Law in 1917, which clearly defined religious institutes and houses.<sup>6</sup> They built it at the time of Benito Mussolini's fascist government, which came to power in 1922. The government successfully negotiated the Lateran Treaty with the Vatican in 1929. The treaty regularized the political relations between the modern Italian State and the Holy See, relations that had broken down in the late nineteenth century with the creation of the modern Italian State.<sup>7</sup> The De La Salle Christian Brothers secured a large tract of land approximately five kilometers west of the historical center of Rome on the Via Aurelia.

Workers began construction in 1935 and largely completed it in 1936. The Brothers selected as architect Tullio Passarelli (1869-1941), known for his eclectic Roman style, which included arches, buttresses, and bell towers. He designed San Camillo on Via Sallustiana (1906-1910) and Santa Teresa on Corso d'Italia (1906) in Rome.<sup>8</sup> Passarelli engaged Giulio Cesare Giuliani and his stained-glass studio for these churches and later for the first windows for the apse of the De La Salle chapel.

Passarelli's plan for the Generalate included a central chapel surrounded by large buildings. Workers built multi-storied structures, referred to as Blocks A, B, C, and D. As viewed from the Via Aurelia, the buildings present an imposing horizontal façade reflective of administrative buildings of the 1930s. The modernist complex features flat roofs, long horizontal lines, and many windows.<sup>9</sup> Workers initiated their construction project of the complex with the chapel, which the Brothers continued to improve over time with the addition of side chapels and stained-glass windows.<sup>10</sup>

## ***Sacred Remains***

Although most of us think of a burial as permanent, in the case of key religious figures, they are often exhumed, relocated, and reinterred. This has been the case for De La Salle's remains, which are currently placed at the center of the expansive Generalate in Rome. De La Salle died in Rouen in the Kingdom of France on April 7, 1719. The Community of Brothers first interred the body in Saint Sever Church in Rouen. Theologian Brother Luke Salm explains that the Brothers knew this would be a temporary location. They set out to build a chapel at the school and community at Saint Yon with assistance from "inmates of the house of correction," who were educated on the property along with other groups. As Saint Yon was De La Salle's greatest educational legacy, it was an appropriate final resting place. On July 16, 1734, the Brothers moved his remains to the new chapel. The Archbishop of Rouen blessed the chapel and celebrated Mass.<sup>11</sup> However, historical events unfolded that put the safety of the venerated remains in jeopardy.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the French Revolution overthrew the *ancien regime*, and virulent anti-clericalism spread. Revolutionaries stormed the property at Saint Yon, vandalized the chapel, and smashed De La Salle's tomb.<sup>12</sup> Salm relates that the Founder's remains were left intact, and were "buried in a recess in the cellar of the chapel, where they remained hidden for forty-two years."<sup>13</sup>

With the restoration of the monarchy after the fall of Napoleon, the De La Salle Christian Brothers returned to Rouen in 1819. They did not, however, regain ownership of the Saint Yon property, and De La Salle's body remained where they had quickly reburied it. In 1835, the Brothers identified and secured the remains, which they transferred to the chapel of their nearby normal school on Rue Saint Lo. Then in 1875 they relocated them to the Rue Saint Gervais, also in Rouen.<sup>14</sup>

The Roman Catholic Church beatified and then eventually elevated the Founder to sainthood on May 24, 1900, which spread the knowledge of the Founder and his educational mission.<sup>15</sup> In 1904, the French Republic suppressed all religious groups, including the Brothers of the Christian Schools. As a result, the Brothers again hid De La Salle's remains, left France, and relocated their Motherhouse across the border in Belgium. In 1906, they transferred the sacred remains to Lembecq-les-Halles in Belgium.<sup>16</sup> The relics remained in Belgium for the next three decades, but then the Brothers developed plans for their new Generalate in Italy. They ceremoniously processed the reliquary and its contents into the new chapel in Rome on January 26, 1937.<sup>17</sup>

## ***Exploring the Windows***

The De La Salle Christian Brothers and architect Passarelli chose materials and a design for the chapel that fostered continuity with the past. The architect followed the classic church form of a basilica with an apse. As a chapel for a religious figure from France, the stained glass seemed most befitting. The size of the apse windows hearkens back to the Rheims Cathedral, where De La Salle grew up, and recalls Chartres Cathedral with its world-famous windows.<sup>18</sup> Although not as grand or elaborate as those cathedral windows, the windows at the Generalate possess a clear narrative style and artistic distinction.

Passarelli engaged Giulio Cesare Giuliani, whose studio in Rome dates back to the 1900s, to design the initial windows.<sup>19</sup> Although the Giuliani Studio received ecclesiastical commissions, they also produced works for homes, cafés, and even movie houses.<sup>20</sup> His work garnered awards and some acclaim.<sup>21</sup> While some of their production could be considered avant-garde, they produced the apse windows in an unadorned modern style.

The older and more important windows are these four in the apse – windows 1 to 4 – that depict essential moments in De La Salle’s life. The Giuliani Studio designed windows approximately four feet wide by twenty-four feet high.<sup>22</sup> They illustrate the central themes of sacrifice and dedication that animate the contemplative sanctuary. Although viewers may read them from left to right, they are not in any chronological order. The studio chose subdued colors, with few specific details. They provide a suffused light appropriate for the veneration of, and communion with, the Saint’s relics. As originally assembled, the apse included a painted image of De La Salle with Brothers and Christ with the Cross. The artists of the painted image included the Trinity with God the Father at the top and the dove representing the Holy Spirit descending. Upon visiting the chapel, visitors might have perceived a sense of permanence reflective of a space adorned with “eternal” elements such as marble and stained glass.

Yet the Brothers have carried out many major and minor changes to the chapel since the 1930s. Most notably in 1947-1950, they added two large side chapels and commissioned additional stained-glass windows. Then in 1980, they updated the sanctuary to remove the communion railing, modernize the altar, and make other changes in response to the liturgical renewal promoted by the Church’s Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). During this phase of renovation, the Brothers painted over the apse image of the Saint, the Brothers, and the Trinity and replaced it with a sculpture of De La Salle, while leaving the four apse windows.

With the renovations from around 1947-1950, the Brothers commissioned twenty additional windows – windows 5 to 24 – on the life of De La Salle for the side aisles, ten on each exterior wall. Lasallian communities around the world sponsored the windows, and the name of the sponsoring school and its location appears at the bottom of each of the windows. Based on preliminary research, the Saint Luke Art School (SLAS)<sup>23</sup> in Belgium designed and fabricated these windows.<sup>24</sup> The SLAS designs contrast stylistically from the earlier work of the Giuliani Studio in the apse. The newer windows feature brighter colors, floral swag borders, and more narrative details. They also are stylistically in line with the windows – installed between 1947 and 1951 – that adorn the side chapels. In the Chapel of the Martyred Brothers, which originally housed the relics of De La Salle and is to the left of the main sanctuary, the dedication inscribed in marble on the floor recognizes that the Brothers in the United States funded some of this work in honor of the centenary of their foundation (1848-1948).<sup>25</sup>

The Brothers’ community in Rome has listed one of the windows as “De La Salle Patron Saint of Educators,” a title that was proclaimed by the Church on May 15, 1950.<sup>26</sup> Some have said that the Brothers had the work on the chapel completed for the Jubilee Year of 1950 and in anticipation of the celebration of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1951 of the birth of De La Salle.

In all of the windows, the stained-glass artists depict the Saint with a halo, also called a nimbus, a common artistic device. The early windows in the apse have halos that are akin to gold discs, while

the ones in the side aisles are larger and include a thorn-like line. In one of the more famous examples of the halo motif, the artist Giotto and his followers in the fourteenth century employed a nimbus when they painted the fresco cycle of the *Life of Saint Francis* in the San Francesco Basilica in Assisi, Italy. As is also the case with the De La Salle windows, the saints are depicted with halos through the entire cycle of windows. Contemporary viewers might want to have seen the artist introduce the halo at some decisive moment when the figure consciously turns toward God. However, including the halo beginning with the saints' early life may suggest that they always followed the will of God. In any case, as a narrative device, a nimbus has the benefit of clearly identifying a saint in scenes with multiple figures.

Today, there are fifty-nine windows in the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle in Rome. The De La Salle windows in the apse and side aisles make up more than a third of that total. In this chapel, the Brothers demonstrate their heritage and their reverence for the Virgin Mary, their patron Saint Joseph, and the elevated members of the Institute. These include martyred Brothers and those that the Roman Catholic Church has designated as holy, such as Saint Benilde Romançon (1805-1862), Saint Miguel Febres Cordero (1841-1917), Blessed James Miller (1944-1982), and others.

## **2. The Stained-Glass Windows of the Motherhouse**

### ***Windows in the Apse***

The core of the De La Salle stained-glass window cycle in the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle may be found in the apse windows. They include the themes, from left to right:

- De La Salle Teaching (window 1).
- Heroic Vow (window 2).
- De La Salle's Death (window 3).
- Drolin Sent to Rome (window 4).<sup>27</sup>

Typical of basilica churches, pews in the chapel are arranged in the nave facing the altar, which is located in the apse. The Brothers relocated De La Salle's relics in the main sanctuary as part of the post-Second Vatican Council renovation, but they have remained near the altar. The architect originally adorned the apse with an enormous apsidal painting, but this was replaced at the time of the 1980-1981 tercentenary celebration of the foundation of the Institute with a sculpture of the Saint, with two windows on each side that distill his life into four key scenes. Given the curve of the apse, viewers initially see the two windows that flank the sculpture: *Heroic Vow* and *De La Salle's Death*. Given that the Brothers who live in the house are the primary audience and given the presence of the Saint's relics in the sanctuary, the chosen scenes underline sacrifice and shared dedication to the educational mission unto death. The artists set a tone of sacrifice with the image of the resurrected Christ and the cross in the original painting. The Giuliani Studio also set a contemplative tone by employing muted colors in the windows. Since the post-Second Vatican Council renovations, the sculpture of De La Salle ascending, against the lighter background, provides a buoyant tone.

With the apse windows, the Brothers carried forward the tradition of including symbolic representations of the four gospels: Matthew, the winged angel; Mark, the lion; Luke, the ox; and John, the eagle. The artists included these at the top of the windows, and aligned the historical themes with the gospels, given that they appear from left to right in the order of Luke, Matthew, John, and Mark. Finally, each window is adorned with a four-winged cherub at its base, perhaps symbolically protecting the area and marking it as holy.

Reading from left to right, the Giuliani Studio chose as the cornerstone, the window of *De La Salle Teaching* (window 1). The artisans depicted De La Salle as an animated young man with a halo. He is elevated in his teaching chair above three students, who are engaged with books and whose backs are largely to the viewer. Holding a paper in his left hand, the Saint instructs the students. The background includes books on a shelf, a window, and a crucifix directly behind De La Salle.

Above the window of *De La Salle Teaching* is Saint Luke's symbol, the winged ox, with the Latin words taken from early in the Gospel: *Fuit id diebus herodis*. Luke 1:5 begins with "*Fuit in diebus Herodis, regis Iudææ, sacerdos quidam nomine . . .*" This is translated as "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest, by the name of . . ." The quotation seems appropriate for a lesson that establishes the historical setting for the gospel.

The next window (window 2) depicts an event that the Brothers refer to as the Heroic Vow. The early organization of Brother teachers faced many difficulties; and on November 21, 1691, at Vaugirard near Paris, De La Salle met privately with Brother Nicholas Vuyart and Brother Gabriel Drolin. They dedicated themselves to establishing this Society, even if they had to beg in the streets and live on bread alone.<sup>28</sup> The *Heroic Vow* window depicts De La Salle as an older man. He stands at the altar with two Brothers kneeling near him. They all have long candles in their right hands. The Saint has a piece of paper, doubtlessly their vow formula. The episode underlines the faithfulness and dedication of the group. The Brothers' choice of this event is in contrast to the celebratory window of perpetual vows of association made by twelve Brothers on Trinity Sunday, June 6, 1694, which would be added later along the side aisle. The window *Heroic Vow* serves to underline the dedication of the few that would lead to the eventual success of the Institute.

The artists capped this window with the symbol for Saint Matthew, the winged angel, with the Latin inscription "*Christi Gederatio*" from Matthew 1:1: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." For the Brothers, the Heroic Vow connects them to the early days of their association, even before an official *Rule* that set out a particular style of religious life. Just as Christ is linked to Abraham through the line of David, the current Brothers and their associates are connected to the Heroic Vow and the witness of De La Salle, Vuyart, and Drolin.

Window 3 depicts De La Salle's death. Two Brothers on a kneeler pray in the foreground, with perhaps a student with hands folded near the bed. The artists depicted De La Salle with sunken facial features. In his left hand he holds a crucifix and in his right a rosary. In the background of the window *De La Salle's Death*, a Brother, who is holding a book, looks attentively at the Saint. The architecture suggests a small room with a sizable window. In this image, there is an emphasis on the morality and faithfulness of the Founder unto death. De La Salle died on Good Friday, April 7, 1719; and it may be that the scene captures De La Salle uttering his last words: "Yes, I adore

in all things the guidance of God in my regard.”<sup>29</sup> This window connects to one in the aisle that also depicts De La Salle’s death.

Above window 3, the image of the gospel of John is symbolized by the eagle with the words “*In principio erat verbum*” (“In the beginning was the word”) from the opening of John’s gospel. The book of John opens with the most amazing revelation, that God has become man – the Word made flesh. Although the theme of the window can be seen as a moment of deep sadness, it is also uplifting since for Christians death brings the promise of new life through Jesus. The Giuliani Studio signed this window at the bottom, “*S.P. Erolis dis VETRARE D’ARTE GIULIANI.*”

In the final window (window 4), De La Salle blesses and sends Brother Gabriel Drolin to Rome. Although set in a constrained architectural setting, the window *Drolin Sent to Rome* is set outdoors, noting the arch in the background and the tree branch. De La Salle stands on a step above Drolin, who has his traveling bag, walking stick, and hat on the ground to his right. In 1702, De La Salle sent Brothers Gabriel and Gerard Drolin to Rome to set up the first Brothers’ community outside of France. This window stresses that De La Salle did not have his primary allegiance to a French monarch or to a local episcopal cleric. Rather, he chose for his Institute to be recognized by the Pope in Rome. While De La Salle never traveled to Rome as he always had intended to do, the window *Drolin Sent to Rome* emphasizes that he looked to Rome. The window also reinforces the importance of the Brothers’ community in Rome. The scene includes another Brother observing the event. The artisans appear to have used the same models as in the *Heroic Vow* window. Perhaps the Brother looking on could be Brother Nicholas Vuyart, with whom he took the Heroic Vow in 1691, or Gabriel’s actual brother, Gerard Drolin. Brother Gerard Drolin was sent to Rome with Gabriel, but he eventually returned to France and left the Community. Often, artists included both Drolin brothers in depictions of this theme.<sup>30</sup>

The gospel of Mark tops this window with the symbol of the lion. It includes the quote, “*Vox Clamantis in Deserto*” (“A voice calls out in the desert”) from Isaiah 40:3. The words are repeated in the opening verses of Mark’s gospel in relation to John the Baptist preparing the way of the Lord. Given Brother Gabriel Drolin’s commission, it could be interpreted that he was like John the Baptist, announcing the coming of the Brothers to Rome. Or, it could be the role of individuals spreading the Good News of Jesus.

The devastating events of World War II affected the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools soon after its construction began in the 1930s. The building became a hospital in 1941, was placed under the protection of the Holy See in 1943, and was even used as a German hospital in 1944!<sup>31</sup> The Brothers regained possession of the complex in 1945; and in the following year, they held their General Chapter at the site. These events were followed by “the reception of pilgrims for the Holy Year of 1950 and the consecration of the chapel of Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle in 1951.”<sup>32</sup> In preparation for these events, the Brothers undertook a major renovation of the chapel, which included the addition of the twenty stained-glass windows in the side aisles depicting the life of De La Salle.

## *Windows in the Aisle*

As noted earlier, the Saint Luke Art School (SLAS) in Belgium designed and produced the series of twenty De La Salle aisle windows. Strikingly different from the Giuliani Studio's apse windows, these windows framed material in a more traditional way, perhaps drawing inspiration from the nineteenth century. While the windows are generally in chronological order, there are variances to emphasize certain themes.<sup>33</sup>

These windows extend along the nave from just beyond the entry of the chapel down to the side altars, which begin approximately half way to the main altar. The windows are each approximately four feet high and three feet wide. The design team linked pairs of windows – indicated below by even and odd numbering – thematically across the 40-foot wide nave. Upon entering the chapel, the first pair of windows addresses De La Salle's *early religious formation in Rheims*. These two are set off on their own. Then, the architecture sets out the other windows in groups of three on each side of the nave corresponding to the themes of *De La Salle's further religious formation in Rheims*, *De La Salle's life and the development of the Institute of the Brothers*, and the *De La Salle's final days and appreciation*.

- De La Salle Receives His First Communion (window 5)
- De La Salle Venerates Mary (window 6)
  
- De La Salle Asks to Pursue His Vocation (window 7)
- De La Salle Receives the Tonsure (window 8)
- De La Salle Celebrates His First Mass (window 9)
- De La Salle Is Consecrated Canon (window 10)
- De La Salle Teaches in School (window 11)
- De La Salle Gives Away His Wealth (window 12)
  
- De La Salle Visits the Imprisoned (window 13)
- De La Salle Heals a Sick Brother (window 14)
- De La Salle & Brothers Take Vows (window 15)
- De La Salle & Brothers Make a Pilgrimage to Liesse (window 16)
- De La Salle Is Visited by King James II (window 17)
- De La Salle Is Visited by the Bishop of Rouen (window 18)
  
- De La Salle Receives His Last Eucharist (window 19)
- De La Salle Dies (window 20)
- De La Salle's Reliquary Is Transferred (window 21)
- De La Salle Advocates for Education (window 22)
- De La Salle Is Named Patron Saint of Educators (window 23)
- De La Salle Is Canonized (window 24)



### *De La Salle's Religious Formation in Rheims*

In these windows (5 to 12), the artists depict the Saint's religious formation. In the first couple of windows (*De La Salle Receives His First Communion* and *De La Salle Venerates Mary*), his parents, Louis de La Salle and Nicole Moët de Brouillet, are featured; and they depict De La Salle's early religious life. In the next couple of windows (*De La Salle Asks to Pursue His Vocation* and *De La Salle Assists at Mass*), he moves toward a life as a cleric within the Roman Catholic Church. Involving a number of sacred events, this journey toward ordination as a priest culminates with *De La Salle Celebrates Mass* (window 9). Yet, by the last pair of windows in this section (*De La Salle Teaches in School* and *De La Salle Gives Away His Wealth*), the Saint has set off on a distinctive path, signaled by the donning of garb similar to the distinctive robe of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

The studio's artists emphasized De La Salle's early religious formation and his family's wealth as a point of departure in the first two windows. In the first (window 5), the artist depicts De La Salle at the moment he receives the host: the body of Christ. He kneels on a royal purple pillow with gold trim. His head is uplifted in expectation while his parents, hands folded in prayer, stand behind him. The family and clergy are dressed in fine clothing.

*De La Salle Venerates Mary* (window 6) features a statue of Mary with the Child Jesus. De La Salle, now older, places flowers at the base of the statue, which is on a plinth. The family's wealth continues to be on conspicuous display as the Hotel de la Cloche, their home in Rheims, appears in the background, with its distinctive interior staircase featured. De La Salle's parents look on with his mother perhaps encouraging his act of devotion to Mary. One of De La Salle's siblings is also represented reading a book. In the first depictions, De La Salle's parents encourage the Saint's Christian formation and education. These windows, placed at the entrance of the chapel, encourage worshipers to reflect on their own religious development that for Roman Catholics includes attending Mass and receiving Communion. Mary, the mother of Jesus, receives a special place of honor, reflective of her importance in Roman Catholicism.

The following three pairs of windows (7 to 12) are grouped architecturally within an arch. This architectural grouping is repeated twice more in the chapel. In this assemblage, De La Salle transitions from his family-centered to a Church-centered life. He moves into his Community of Brothers. Historically, all of these events occurred in Rheims. The artists continue to underline his religious rise in position and depict his different religious roles with their corresponding changes in clothing. This culminates with the last pairing (*De La Salle Teaches in School* and *De La Salle Gives Away His Wealth*) in which De La Salle is, as noted earlier, clothed similarly to the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In the first pairing within the arch (7 and 8), De La Salle requests permission to pursue a religious life and receives the tonsure while assisting at Mass. Window 7 is set in the family's beautiful library with many bound books. De La Salle, on bended knee, prayerfully makes his request to follow his religious vocation. His father accedes to the request, as his mother prayerfully looks on. He chose to make this decision, and it would alter his life. His religious vocation became central to his life.

In window 8, De La Salle seemingly receives the tonsure while assisting at Mass. During the seventeenth century, the priest said Mass facing the altar; and here the setting features a gothic window with the image, which is rather subtle, of a crowned Mary with the Child Jesus. The Office of Lasallian Research and Resources at the Generalate attributes window 8 as “La Salle receives the tonsure at the age of eleven.”<sup>34</sup> At this ritual event, the archbishop would cut a small portion of the hair of the young man to indicate his intention of pursuing a vocation in the Church. On March 11, 1662, De La Salle received the tonsure in the archbishop’s palace, the Palais du Tau, situated next to the cathedral and near De La Salle’s family home.<sup>35</sup> While many of the windows include key identifying elements, there are no distinguishing elements such as scissors, cut hair, or other features that would indicate the window depicts De La Salle receiving the tonsure. In any case, De La Salle prayerfully attends Mass with his parents kneeling in the background. His parents follow the service in booklets, along with a sibling. De La Salle is featured in the foreground wearing religious clothing appropriate to a liturgical celebration. These windows (7 and 8) underline De La Salle’s decision from a young age to pursue a life within the structure of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the second pairing within the arch (*De La Salle Celebrates His First Mass* and *De La Salle Is Consecrated Canon*), De La Salle is depicted as he transitions to religious life. In window 9, De La Salle celebrates what is perhaps his first Mass. In window 10, De La Salle seems to be consecrated canon of the Rheims Cathedral.<sup>36</sup> This is one example of the paired windows being presented out of chronological order, as De La Salle celebrating Mass (window 9) shows an older Saint than window 10 and he assumed the role of canon prior to his ordination as a priest.

In the depiction of De La Salle saying Mass (window 9), he stands in front of an altar that features Christ in a teaching position. Although his parents had died before he celebrated his first Mass, other members of his family seem to be present in the background. An altar boy prayerfully kneels in the foreground holding items to be used to assist with the Mass, such as the altar bell and a small pitcher of water that will be used for the lavabo, the ritual cleansing of the priest’s hands during the preparation of the Eucharist. De La Salle raises his hands in prayer. De La Salle celebrated his first Mass in the Chapel of Our Lady in the Cathedral of Rheims, on April 10, 1678. He was twenty-six years old.

On January 7, 1667, at the age of sixteen, De La Salle was consecrated a canon of the Rheims Cathedral, a position he held until he was thirty-two years old. The prized religious position came with a stipend; and it had launched others on to positions of Church leadership, including “two became saints, four others Popes, fourteen archbishops, thirty-seven bishops, and twenty-one cardinals.”<sup>37</sup> Window 10 illustrates De La Salle being consecrated a canon at Rheims. In this window, De La Salle kneels before a bishop, and religious individuals surround him.<sup>38</sup> It is the first window in which his family is not present, and it is indicative of the fact that De La Salle has moved from the laity to the ordained. He is now acknowledged as a teacher and worship leader. In the foreground, an altar boy holds a censer, used to burn incense as a symbol for lifting our prayers up to God. It is also used to consecrate De La Salle, making him holy. A religious figure robed in a gold cope and purple stole reads a prayer over De La Salle, who kneels with a white stole draped over his forearms. A number of individuals in attendance are wearing the caps worn by canons of the Cathedral Chapter of Rheims.<sup>39</sup> At the center of the image, a figure holds a processional crucifix. This pairing of windows could be seen as a summation of De La Salle’s early life, but the

next pair (*De La Salle Teaches in School* and *De La Salle Gives Away His Wealth*) mark the pivotal moments of his life.

In these windows (11 and 12), De La Salle turns away from a life focused on his family and the clerical world and toward the world of education and life within the Community of Brothers. He is, again, now portrayed in garb similar to the distinctive robe and rabat collar of the De La Salle Christian Brothers. During the period 1680 to 1684, De La Salle established schools dedicated to the education of the children of the artisans and the poor; and window 11 portrays him teaching children. He sits in a teaching position, echoing the image of Christ before him on the altar in window 9. Elevated on his chair in window 11, De La Salle can see all of the students; and they have a clear view of him. Before him is a young boy with an open book, who is engaged in the lesson with two other nearby students. The artisans who manufactured these windows conspicuously portrayed a statue of Mary with the Child Jesus, a crucifix, and a nearly full bookcase in the background. These details make clear the religious nature of the classroom. In the foreground of the window, a Brother on De La Salle's left is taking notes. In the following windows portraying the Saint's life, a Brother is always in attendance to testify to the events. This theme is included in the aforementioned apse window (window 1), as education was the central focus of De La Salle's life; and the classroom became a place for both education and salvation.

The story in window 12, *De La Salle Gives Away His Wealth*, takes place in the particularly severe winter of 1684 into 1685, which is part of what historians refer to as "the little ice age."<sup>40</sup> It is when De La Salle began to give away his wealth. In one hand, he holds bread; and in the other, he holds a small coin purse. The Rheims Cathedral appears in the background. In the foreground on the left, a small child kneels eating a piece of bread, while a mother with another smaller child kneels on the right. De La Salle distributes bread to a man kneeling in supplication before him. De La Salle responded to those in need in his hometown. Behind him a Brother holds more bread to be distributed, as three figures are already at hand. Just as the blessing of the sacrament is the central part of the Mass, these windows show that teaching and assisting the poor are holy activities. Again, De La Salle and the attending Brothers are dressed in their robes.

### *De La Salle's Life and the Development of the Institute of the Brothers*

In the next set of windows grouped in an arch (13 to 18), De La Salle sets out on a distinctive path that leads this lay Community of teachers toward becoming the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The artists portray the centrality of the Brothers' Community in the Saint's life; and they order events for emphasis rather than placing them in chronological order. De La Salle worked closely with his Brother teachers and even had the Community stay at his family home in Rheims for a time. His concern for the Brothers' Community extended beyond teaching and into their private lives; and these windows reflect De La Salle's care for the Brothers.

In the first pair of windows (13 and 14), De La Salle visits both a former Brother in prison and a Brother who is sick. In 1712, the Saint visited schools founded almost a decade earlier in the south of France. On this trip, he went to see an imprisoned former Brother in Marseille. The young man had become a soldier, but he deserted the army. Later apprehended, he was sentenced to the King's galleys.<sup>41</sup> De La Salle went to the prison and worked to secure his release. In window 13, De La Salle makes his case to an official while an authority, holding a large key, points to the bearded

prisoner. The inmate is one of two men who are on the ground chained in their cell. Straw, perhaps for a simple bed, is on the floor in the foreground. The artist included bread and a cracked piece of pottery. A Brother stands behind De La Salle.

In window 14, set in 1687, De La Salle visits a sick Brother, the director of the school and community at Guise. During a hot day in July, De La Salle, accompanied by another Brother, set out on foot for Guise from Laon. Based on Brother José María Vallalodid's *Lasallian Chronology*, "They pray[ed] much of the time. At 3:00 am, they resume[d] their trip. De La Salle celebrate[d] Mass in Laon for the community. Then he [went] on horseback from Laon to Guise."<sup>42</sup> According to the same source, "as John Baptist [de La Salle] embraced the sick Brother, he was instantly cured. A few days later he [was] back in class."<sup>43</sup> The window captures the moment of De La Salle's embrace. The artist depicts three other Brothers gathered around the sick man's bed. A crucifix and a small water font hang on the wall. De La Salle's actions are two key elements of the Church's seven works of mercy: visiting the sick and those in prison.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, De La Salle is eventually credited with healing people with diseases as part of the case for his canonization.<sup>45</sup>

The next pair of windows (15 and 16) depict sequential events. Window 15 (*De La Salle & Brothers Take Vows*) illustrates the events of Trinity Sunday 1694, when a group of the principal Brothers gathered to make perpetual vows as De La Salle Christian Brothers. In window 16 (*De La Salle & Brothers Make a Pilgrimage to Liesse*), the Brothers are gathered at the foot of the statue of Notre Dame de Liesse (Our Lady of Joy).

In window 15, De La Salle kneels at an altar holding his copy of the vow formula in his left hand. In his right hand, he holds a long candlestick, as do the other twelve Brothers who gather behind De La Salle. The twelve reflect Jesus' twelve disciples. The vows of 1694 are an essential moment in the history of their religious organization. The event, echoing the Heroic Vow of 1691 that was featured in an earlier stained-glass window in the apse (window 2), depicts the dedication of the Brothers to carrying on their educational mission. On the altar in window 15 there is a monstrance, which would hold the consecrated host. The stained-glass artist framed the scene with a gothic window in the background; and in the foreground, there are potted flowers, as this event occurred in late spring.

After making their vows, the twelve Brothers and De La Salle walked approximately thirty-five miles through the night to the famous Marian Shrine of Notre Dame de Liesse to dedicate themselves to Mary and pronounce their vows once again.<sup>46</sup> Tradition holds that they chose Mary as the first Superior of the Institute. In window 16, De La Salle gestures toward the statue of the Virgin Mary while the Brothers kneel before the altar. She is crowned, wearing white clothing; and she is holding the Child Jesus. Flowers have been placed at the foot of her statue. The Brothers of the Christian Schools still renew their vows annually on Trinity Sunday.

With both of these windows (15 and 16), the stained-glass artisans harken back to a couple of earlier windows. *De La Salle & Brothers Take Vows* (window 15) connects back to window 5 (*De La Salle Receives His First Communion* (5)). The *Pilgrimage to Liesse* (window 16) connects back to window 6 (*De La Salle Venerates Mary*). Windows 15 and 16 mark the center point of the groupings of images within the cycle of windows in the center aisle.

The next pair of windows (17 and 18) illustrates the success of the schools of De La Salle and key historical moments. In window 17, King James II of England and Ireland (and VII of Scotland) visits the children of his Irish followers in 1700 at De La Salle's school in Paris.<sup>47</sup> This event reflects political events in Catholic Europe, when the forces of William of Orange and Mary II of England defeated King James II of England at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690. King Louis XIV of France supported the Catholic King James II; and the exiled English King took up residence at Saint Germain-en-Laye, near Versailles. King James II seems to have requested that a school be established for the children of his exiled soldiers. In the depiction, the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris is seen in the background.<sup>48</sup> Next to the window, a crucifix hangs on the wall with a French phrase below it that says, "*Il faut s'appliquer dans l'école a étudier sa leçon,*" or "You have to apply yourself in school to study your lesson." De La Salle wrote this phrase as one of his key points in his school manual, the *Conduct of the Christian Schools*.<sup>49</sup> The artisans of the windows highlight one of De La Salle's better known educational writings. The King is the central figure of the window. He wears a decorative cloak and holds a walking stick in his right hand and gloves in his left. He is accompanied by Archbishop Louis-Antoine de Noailles of Paris, who is depicted perhaps blessing De La Salle. The Saint is presenting three young children, one who is on bended knee in front of the King.<sup>50</sup> A Brother stands witness behind the King.

Window 18 tells the story of the Archbishop of Rouen, Jacques-Nicolas Colbert, visiting the school of Saint Yon. The son of the finance minister to King Louis XIV, Colbert was joined by Nicolas Pierre Camus de Pontcarré, president of the Parliament of Normandy. They visited the then Motherhouse of the Brothers at Saint Yon, just outside of Rouen, which housed a novitiate for the training of Brothers, a boarding school for the children of merchants, and a reformatory for delinquents. It was the most expansive project of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the early eighteenth century, and De La Salle lived and ministered at the site during the last years of his life. In window 18, Pontcarré appears to be walking into the scene. In his right hand is his walking stick; and in his left hand, he holds his hat. De La Salle presents the students to the dignitaries. As always a Brother is in the scene, standing behind De La Salle. In the background, through the arch, is to be seen the spire of the Cathedral of Rouen. In this pair of windows, the artists include the cathedrals of each bishop – Paris and Rouen – in the distance.

A painting by the artist Giovanni Gagliardi from 1905 inspired this window of the Archbishop's visit. In 1900, the Brothers commissioned Gagliardi to paint works, for the Motherhouse, about De La Salle's life in celebration of his canonization. The stained-glass artisans drew on Gagliardi's paintings for other windows in the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, but they had to rework them to fit the narrower width ratio of the windows.<sup>51</sup>

### *De La Salle's Final Days and Appreciation*

The final grouping of windows along the side aisles (19 to 24) depicts De La Salle's death and subsequent recognition by the Roman Catholic Church. Since the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle in Rome houses the remains of their Founder, the Brothers chose to emphasize his final days and the appreciation of his holiness by the Church. The transfer of the reliquary of his earthly remains and the recognition of De La Salle as the patron saint of all educators of youth are included.

Windows 19 (*De La Salle Receives His Last Eucharist*) and 20 (*De La Salle Dies*) focus on De La Salle's final days, when he received the Eucharist for the last time and his death. On April 5, 1719, the last Wednesday of Lent, De La Salle received the Last Rites of the Catholic Church at Saint Yon outside of Rouen. As depicted in window 19, he left his bed; and one Brother supports him, as others witness the sacred moment when he received the Eucharist. De La Salle may be wearing his robes, but they are covered by a chasuble and stole, something that he insisted on doing. A crucifix hangs at the center of the image above the heads of the figures.

This window is paired with the depiction of De La Salle's death in Rouen (window 20) on Good Friday in 1719, just two weeks before his sixty-eighth birthday. De La Salle lies in bed with a Brother holding a book, perhaps for prayer. In the foreground, another Brother covers his face in sorrow; and two students pray with hands folded. On the right side of the image, a priest holds up a crucifix. Once more, a Brother is in attendance at the bedside scene. In the center of the image is a mounted holy water font with a palm, possibly from Palm Sunday which was just a few days before. Outside of the window, the right bell tower of the Rouen Cathedral appears in the distance.

The remaining windows address themes of the twentieth century, and the artists begin to include depictions of individuals with photo-like realism. For example the images of the Popes in the windows are distinctive, as well as those of a few of the Brothers in the windows. Other representations remain generic. Windows 21 and 22 depict the transfer of De La Salle's relics and De La Salle teaching the children of all nations. Window 21 (*De La Salle's Reliquary Is Transferred*) shows the relics of De La Salle as they left Belgium to begin their journey to Rome. This window underlines the historical role of the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, since it was specifically created to house these relics. On January 26, 1937, the Brothers transferred De La Salle's relics from Lembecq-les-Halles to Rome, where they have remained. They are venerated in the chapel of the Motherhouse to this day.<sup>52</sup>

Window 22 depicts De La Salle teaching children of all nations, a metaphorical theme that portrays the subsequent significance of De La Salle's educational influence around the world. The window draws on another of Giovanni Gagliardi's paintings at the Motherhouse from around 1900, when the De La Salle Christian Brothers commissioned the painter to mark the elevation of the Founder to sainthood. The window underlines the importance of De La Salle's advocacy for the mission of education. In the image, De La Salle presents students from all around the world to Christ, who is emerging from the clouds and blessing them. In the background stands the iconic dome of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, the geographical center of the Roman Catholic Church.

For today's audience, the window illustrates the influence of nineteenth century colonialism. A European-looking schoolboy stands by De La Salle, while the other four boys, with representative clothing and skin color from various parts of the world, remain on the ground. In this context, De La Salle and Europe can be seen as bringing "civilization" and Christianity to the world. While the intention of the artists was to depict a positive universal message about the reach of De La Salle's teaching, viewed in the context of decolonization, the image today is challenging.

The final pair of windows (23 and 24) includes two popes. Window 23 features Pope Pius XII (with his distinctive spectacles) blessing De La Salle, who appears in a heavenly realm surrounded by clouds, teaching and gazing at a book. The dome of Saint Peter's Basilica again appears in the

background. The Brothers clearly celebrated the importance of their Founder in this window, which marks his proclamation as Patron Saint of Educators in 1950. They were also able, in this window, to mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth on April 30, 1651. The artist includes a portrait of another significant Brother to the right of the Pope, most likely the then Superior General Brother Athanase-Emile (Louis-Arthur Ritimann) although the identity is not definitively known. The window also contains another true-to-life image of a figure who appears to be his Eminence John Patrick Cardinal Hayes, the Archbishop of New York, an advocate of the Lasallian community.<sup>53</sup> Based on the realistic representation of the subjects, the artist may have created the images of Ritimann and Hayes from photographs.

The Roman Catholic Church has a process for the recognition of holy individuals, who may be recognized as “beatified” (blessed) and perhaps “canonized” as a saint. This often-lengthy process includes a written case that involves the verification of miracles and other details. Window 24 illustrates the canonization of Blessed De La Salle on May 24, 1900. In the image, Pope Leo XIII holds up a printed proclamation in French that reads: “*Canonisation du Bienheureux Jean-Baptiste de La Salle.*” Pope Leo XIII was pope at both the time of De La Salle’s beatification on February 19, 1888, and subsequent canonization. Thus, we have in the window the title “Bienheureux” (Blessed). These final two windows in this series mark the Founder’s elevation as Patron Saint of Educators and coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his canonization. In window 24, De La Salle appears in the heavenly realm with three cherubim. Behind the Pope, the workshop artists included the portrait of an individual whose identity remains as yet unidentified.

As can be seen, the window cycle in the nave takes the viewer through the life of the Saint. De La Salle moves from his religious formation in Rheims through the creation and leadership of a successful educational Institute. His death is depicted, as is the Roman Catholic Church’s appreciation of his life and holiness. This series of windows illustrates De La Salle’s life for the Community of Brothers, lay partners, and Lasallian pilgrims.

### **3. Contemporary Analysis**

#### ***The Windows as an Historical Resource***

These windows of the Sanctuary of Saint John Baptist de La Salle in Rome provide a core understanding of De La Salle and the Brothers’ Community as these were understood prior to 1951. The Brothers selected stories that moved from De La Salle’s formation, to his life as Founder of the Brothers of the Christian School, and to his influence into the twentieth century. They provide a deep insight into the core institutional narrative of what some have called a French community house in Rome. The narrative themes reflect a pre-Second Vatican Council world centered on sacrifice, rituals, and the cult of the saints. Viewed from the post-Second Vatican Council era, it requires effort to reach back to the world of priests celebrating Mass with their backs to the congregation.

As Brother Diego Muñoz pointed out, the Brothers’ narrative for their Institute was built around the biography of the Founder written by Canon Jean-Baptiste Blain,<sup>54</sup> which set out the core narrative of De La Salle’s life. From 1734 through the mid-1950s, the Brothers derived their understanding of the Saint’s life from this biography. Then, Brother Maurice-Auguste Hermans

(1956-1987) served as the inaugural director of the Lasallian Studies Office in Rome. The work he undertook increased original research and led to the eventual reinterpretation of the life and writings of De La Salle. As a result, these windows provide key insight into the earlier core narratives surrounding the Founder and link to the past. These windows, as an historical resource, have been hiding in plain sight.

### *Lay Lasallians and the New Narrative*

In considering the themes of the stained-glass windows, the present-day viewer may be surprised by themes that were not included. One of these themes is the moment that sparked De La Salle's educational mission. On September 24, 2019, Lewis University, the Lasallian institution of higher education in Romeoville, IL, dedicated on its campus the sizable interpretive installation, *The Encounter*.

*The Encounter* is inspired by the moment in March 1679 when twenty-eight-year-old John Baptist de La Salle visited the Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus in Rheims. His purpose was to assist the Sisters with important business matters and to preside at daily Mass. As he approached the doorway, De La Salle encountered Adrien Nyel, a layman and educator who worked in Rouen for many years establishing schools for the poor. He was asked by a wealthy widow, Madame Jeanne Dubois Malillefer, to consider founding a charity school for boys in Rheims. Nyel's first call in town was to seek guidance and support from the Sisters. Once inside the entryway to the Convent, Sister Françoise Duval introduced the two men.<sup>55</sup>

The installation at Lewis University, by artist Alec M. Smith, includes a life-sized statue of De La Salle inviting passersby to enter through an open door as an entreaty to the Lasallian world. This event is appreciated today as a key moment in the life journey of De La Salle.<sup>56</sup> While the meeting is prevalent in today's narratives surrounding De La Salle, it is conspicuously absent in the window cycle under consideration in this paper.<sup>57</sup> In some ways, it is reflective of how a seemingly small interaction may result in a significant change in the larger world. It is also an event that focuses on the roots of the educational mission, and on how providential events unfolded in De La Salle's life.

Another subject absent from the windows is that of Parmenie, a place of retreat that De La Salle visited toward the end of his life in order to pray and to discern God's will. At the time, he faced a number of personal challenges, setbacks, and lawsuits. Today, we might say that De La Salle experienced "burnout." Ultimately, he acceded to his Community's request to return and continue his work. Like the encounter with Adrian Nyel, Parmenie also shows that De La Salle did not make his choices alone. In this case, he was aided by the wise and holy shepherdess Soeur Louise, who helped him discern where God was leading him. The story of Parmenie, however, only became prevalent after the 1950s.<sup>58</sup>

Both the initial encounter with Nyel in Rheims and the later encounter with Soeur [Sister] Louise in Parmenie are not centered around a sacramental or church event. In many ways, they are stories that reflect the post-1960s Lasallian world of partnerships, in which a decline in religious vocations included the precipitous fall in the number of De La Salle Christian Brothers from 16,824 in 1965 to less than 4,000 today.<sup>59</sup> While the number of Brothers is markedly smaller than it was, the



religious community has pivoted away from a scarcity narrative toward one of abundance, declaring that with “1,000 schools and institutions world wide, the Lasallian mission today encompasses some 4,000 Brothers and 90,000 Lasallian Partners who serve over 1,000,000 young people in eighty countries around the world.”<sup>60</sup> These partners and students are featured along with the Brothers on the web sites and glossy publications of Lasallian schools. We see the global face of students and educators, which is made up of religious men and women, lay educators, and people from around the globe.

The Lasallian world has become far more ecumenical and concerned with interfaith partnerships, attracting educators and students that include a range of races, classes, genders, religions, and ethnicities. What has not changed is the core mission, one in which “Lasallian education has the school as its setting, the teacher as its focus, and the salvific potential of education as its inspiration.”<sup>61</sup> Lasallians from around the world visiting the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools today may not see these events in the cycle of windows, but they can still resonate with their core message. John Baptist de La Salle’s sacred remains await those making the pilgrimage to the site. The stained-glass windows provide a bridge to the past, but they also demonstrate that there is much more to learn about the Saint, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and their global community of Lasallians.

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## Endnotes

1. Research for this paper began during the International Session of Lasallian Studies (SIEL 2015) at the Generalate in Rome, Italy. Brother Diego Muñoz led that memorable meeting. I conducted research in the Generalate's archives, and I often visited the chapel for Mass and to study the windows. I presented my preliminary research project to the participants. From 2007 to 2017, Dominic Colonna, PhD, and I led almost annual travel study tours for Lasallian students to Italy; and we increasingly incorporated the chapel and the museum of the Generalate into our lessons. On one occasion, then Vicar General Brother Thomas Johnson led a tour of the chapel that focused on the windows, which sparked my interest in them. I continued my research while at Lewis University. In Spring 2016, I incorporated Lasallian content into my Early Modern Europe course. Phillip Apollo, Jordan Bellos, Alexis Gannon, Sarah Murray, Ryan Reif, and Katlyn Teml enthusiastically participated in the study of De La Salle's life. Steven Zlatic, University Ministry, also presented on De La Salle's life in this class. My colleagues associated with the Exploring Lasallian Mission program under the leadership of Kurt Schackmuth, PhD, further informed my study. I have many individuals to thank for their assistance including Lewis University graduate students Kole Torres, Melissa Fregeau, and Gretchen Patrick, who read and edited parts of this paper. Rebecca A. Cremin, my wife, also provided editorial assistance. Finally, Brother George Van Grieken and Brother Diego Muñoz both read the manuscript. To these and many others, thank you all for your rich spirit of association.

2. Dennis H. Cremin, who is a professor of history at Lewis University, earned his doctoral degree from Loyola University Chicago. He teaches using place-based learning and has led students on travel study courses to Italy, France, and the Holy Land. His scholarship centers on urban history, the analysis of the built environment, and pilgrimage. He wrote *Grant Park: The Evolution of Chicago's Front Yard* (2013), which won the Illinois State Historical Society's Book of the Year Award. The Lasallian Region of North American (RELAN) awarded him the Distinguished Lasallian Educator Award in 2015. As director of the Lewis University History Center, he manages the Adelman Regional History Collection, which focuses on regional history along the Illinois and Michigan Canal. He has taken part in a number of Lasallian formation activities including the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU) Leadership Program in Rome, the International Session of Lasallian Studies (SIEL) in Rome, and the Lasallian Summer Seminar for Professors at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.

3. For those interested in learning more about this topic, the following sources are an excellent place to begin: Christian Brothers Conference, "In the Footsteps of De La Salle: A Vocation

Journey,” <https://www.dlsfootsteps.org/> (accessed May 14, 2020); Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, [Lasalle.org](http://Lasalle.org) (accessed May 14, 2020); George Van Grieken FSC, *The Teacher’s Saint: John Baptist de La Salle, Patron Saint of Teachers* (Washington DC: Christian Brothers Conference, 2019).

4. “Sanctuary of San Giovanni Battista de La Salle: The Stained-Glass Windows Dedicated to His Life.” [https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant\\_vetrare.pdf](https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant_vetrare.pdf) (Accessed June 25, 2020).

5. For more information on the veneration of saints, see: Robert Barti, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?: Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

6. Diego Munoz FSC, former Secretary of Lasallian Research and Resources in Rome, suggested the importance of the Code of Canon Law of 1917 in the decision to relocate the Generalate in Rome, Italy.

7. “Lateran Treaty,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Lateran-Treaty> (accessed 5 September 2016).

8. “Tullio Passarelli,” Treccani Italian Culture, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tullio-passarelli\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/tullio-passarelli_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/) (accessed 6 December 2020).

9. General House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “Mostra 80 anni della traslazione delle Reliquie a Roma,” Flickr album, [Lasalle.org](http://Lasalle.org) albums. [https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle\\_org/albums/72157680834817935/with/33022040831/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle_org/albums/72157680834817935/with/33022040831/) (accessed April 30, 2020).

10. In 2016, the website for the Generalate published photos of the chapel windows to which this paper refers [General House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “Santuario San Giovanni Battista de La Salle”]. Flickr Album [Lasalle.org](http://Lasalle.org) albums. [https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle\\_org/albums/72157662580854480](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle_org/albums/72157662580854480) (accessed April 30, 2020).

11. Luke Salm FSC, *The Work Is Yours: The Life of Saint John Baptist de La Salle* (Romeville, IL: Christian Bros. Publications, 1989), pages 195-196.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., page 196.

14. Ibid., pages 196-197.

15. Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. “Saint John Baptist de La Salle,” [LaSalle.org](http://www.lasalle.org/en/who-are-we/st-john-baptist-de-la-salle/). <http://www.lasalle.org/en/who-are-we/st-john-baptist-de-la-salle/> (accessed 28 April 2020).

16. Salm, *The Work Is Yours*, page 197.

17. Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “Le Casa Generalizia arrive delle Reliquie.” <https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/04arrivoreliquie-731x1024.jpg> (accessed December 16, 2020).

18. Malcolm Miller provides tours of Chartres Cathedral that are legendary. He has the ability to make these complex windows understandable. For more information, see his book: Malcom Miller, *Chartres Cathedral*, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition (New York: Riverside Book Company, 1997).

19. Generalate Archive, Construction et Installation 1935-1937. Contracts no. 9, folder Vetrate Artistiche Ditta Giulianai.

20. Vetrate D’Arte Guiliani, “Our History,” Glass Windows of Giuliani Art. <http://www.vetrategiuliani.com/storia.php> (accessed 17 September 2016).

21. “Giulio Cesare Giuliani.” Treccani Italian Culture, [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giulio-cesare-giuliani\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giulio-cesare-giuliani_(Dizionario-Biografico)/)(accessed 17 September 2016).

22. Work invoice from the Giulio Cesare Giuliani Studio Di Pittura A Fuoco Su Vetro Laboratorio Di Vetrate Artistiche, Signed by Giulio Giuliani, December 31, 1936, no. 9, album 1, Casa Generalizia in Roma Via Aurelia, Rome, Italy.

23. About SLAS in Belgium, see: *That Your School Runs Well: Approach to Lasallian Educational Model* by Pedro María Gil FSC and Diego Muñoz FSC, editors (Rome: Brothers of the Christian Schools, 2013): “The so-called technical training reached very different levels in Lasallian institutions . . . Oftentimes, what had started as a humble workshop evolved to include a technical baccalaureate in a tertiary establishment. What occurred in the ‘Saint Luke’ art school, in Belgium, may serve as an example. It began as a Sunday school for young apprentices from the construction industry. It later added evening classes. Its success caused greater demands; the centers multiplied, specializations differed and its level was heightened to also cover higher level learning; today, it goes as far as issuing diplomas in architecture,” page 233.

24. Diego Muñoz FSC, email message to author, May 7, 2020.

25. Inscription in the De La Salle Chapel on Via Aurelia in Rome, Italy, which reads, “In thanksgiving to God through our beloved Father and Founder on the occasion of their centenary (1848-1948) the Brothers of the United States have contributed to the erection of this chapel.”

26. Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “Saint John Baptist de La Salle,” [lasalle.org. https://www.lasalle.org/en/lasallian-holiness/st-john-baptist-de-la-salle/](http://www.lasalle.org/en/lasallian-holiness/st-john-baptist-de-la-salle/) (accessed May 14, 2020).

27. The windows do not have specific titles. The stained-glass artists did not provide titles for the windows. The titles used in this paper were informed by a pamphlet from [lasalle.org](http://www.lasalle.org): [https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant\\_vetrate.pdf](https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant_vetrate.pdf), and by the authors’ understanding of the main themes.

28. For a broader reading of the meaning of the event, see: Antonio Botana FSC, “Association according to John Baptist de La Salle” in *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 5, no. 2 (Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, 2014), pages 81-91.

29. Salm, *The Work Is Yours*, page 188.

30. For more information on this theme, see: Aurelio Mariani, “The Founder Blessing the Drolin Brothers, Gabriel and Gerard, before Their Departure for Rome in 1702” in *Iconographie – Lasallian Images and Resources Collection* (Rome). <https://lasallianresources.org/product/iconographie-lasallian-images-and-resources-collection-rome/> (accessed August 20, 2020).

31. History and Services of the Generalate. <https://www.lasalle.org/en/history-and-services-of-the-generalate/> (accessed May 18, 2020).

32. Ibid.

33. “Sanctuary of San Giovanni Battista de La Salle: The Stained Glass Windows Dedicated to His Life.” [https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant\\_vetrare.pdf](https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant_vetrare.pdf) (Accessed May 3, 2020).

34. “Santuario de San Giovanni Battista de La Salle: The Stained Glass Windows Dedicated to His Life.”

35. Christian Brothers Conference, “In the Footsteps of De La Salle: A Vocation Journey.”

36. Casa Generalizia dei Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane, “Santuario di San Giovanni Battista de La Salle: The Stained Glass Windows Dedicated to His Life.” [https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant\\_vetrare.pdf](https://www.lasalle.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/depliant_vetrare.pdf) (accessed August 13, 2020).

37. Ibid.

38. The Generalate created a document, “Sanctuaire Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle.” This document identifies many of the window themes under the title of *Vitraux*.

39. For an image of De La Salle holding such a cap as a young canon, see *Cahiers lasalliens 49: Iconographie de Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle* by Joseph-Aurélien Cornet FSC and Emile Rousset FSC (Brothers of the Christian Schools, 1989), pages 30-36 (Le Portrait en Jeune Chanoine).

40. Christian Brothers Conference, “In the Footsteps of De La Salle: A Vocation Journey.”

41. José María Valladolid FSC, *Lasallian Chronology* 31:1994 3/3 (Rome: Brothers of the Christian Schools, 1994), page 193.

42. Valladolid, page 111.

43. For another account of this event see: L. Ayma, *The Life of the Ven. J.B. De La Salle, Founder of the Christian Schools*, translated by Père Garreau SJ (Dublin: William Powell, 1843).

44. The seven corporal works of mercy as enumerated by the Catholic Church include the following: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the prisoners, bury the dead, and give alms to the poor.

45. Lasallian Resource Center, “What Were the Miracles That Helped DLS Become a Saint?” [https://lasallianresources.org/sp\\_faq/what-were-the-miracles-that-helped-dls-become-a-saint/](https://lasallianresources.org/sp_faq/what-were-the-miracles-that-helped-dls-become-a-saint/) (accessed April 30, 2020).

46. Christian Brothers Conference, “In the Footsteps of De La Salle: A Vocation Journey.” <http://www.dlsfootsteps.org/cities/liesse/about.php> (accessed September 18, 2016).

47. James Kenyon, “James II, King of England, Scotland, and Ireland” in *Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/James-II-king-of-England-Scotland-and-Ireland>. (accessed April 9, 2020).

48. Manhattan College, “Illuminations: The Life and Work of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Stained-Glass Window Collection.” Pamphlet. Generalate archive collection.

49. For more information see: <https://lasallian.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Conduct-2007-reprint.pdf> (accessed June 30, 2020).

50. The Brothers of the Christian Schools of the District of Eastern North America, “La Salle Stained Glass at Barrytown,” *fscdena.org*. <https://www.fscdena.org/support/barrytown-stained-glass/> (accessed August 18, 2020).

51. Lasallian Resource Center, *Iconographie – Lasallian Images and Resources Collection* (Rome) (accessed April 30, 2020).

52. LaSalle.org, “Mostra 80 anni della traslazione delle Reliquie a Roma,” [https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle\\_org/albums/72157680834817935](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle_org/albums/72157680834817935) (accessed June 25, 2020).

53. Information taken from Hayes’s obituary reveals his connection with the De La Salle Christian Brothers, although it does not place him at the dedication: Abban Philip FSC, “Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Affiliated Member of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Affiliated 1922” in *The Saint La Salle Auxiliary Bulletin*, September 1938. <http://www.fscdena.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/PatrickCardinalHayes-Sept1938.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2020).

54. Blain’s biography, which was written in the French language, was first published in Rouen in 1733. Cf. *The Life of John Baptist de La Salle, Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools: A Biography in Three Books* by Jean-Baptiste Blain, translated by Richard Arandez FSC, and edited by Luke Salm FSC (Landover, MD: Lasallian Publications, 2000).



55. For more information on this monument located at Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois, see: Lewis University, “The Encounter Dedication Ceremony and Reception,” Program Brochure, 2019. “New Monument Encourages Visitors to Embrace ‘The Encounter’ in Their Own Lives. *Lewis University News Release*, October 7, 2019. <https://www.lewisu.edu/news/Newsarticle.htm?PArticleID=11381#.XzL40RNKiRs> (accessed August 18, 2020).

56. For greater analysis see: Dennis H. Cremin, “Shifting the Narrative: De La Salle at Parmenie” in *AXIS Journal of Lasallian Education* 8, no. 3 (Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, 2017), pages 149-153, <https://axis.smumn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/8.3.4.6-De-La-Salle-at-Parmenie.pdf> (accessed August 18, 2020).

57. Van Grieken, page 34.

58. Cremin, “De La Salle at Parmenie.”

59. Van Grieken, pages 93-95.

60. Ibid., page 95.

61. Ibid., page 98.

# Appendix

Window One



Window Two



Window Three



Window Four



Window Five



Window Six



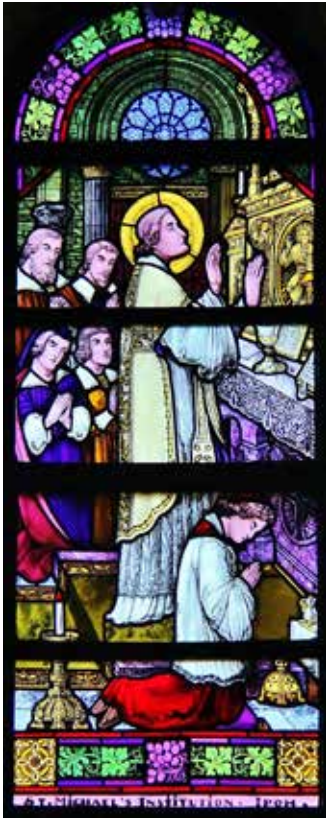
Window Seven



Window Eight



Window Nine



Window Ten



Window Eleven



Window Twelve



Window Thirteen



Window Fourteen



Window Fifteen



Window Sixteen



Window Seventeen



Window Eighteen



Window Nineteen



Window Twenty



Window Twenty-One



Window Twenty-Two



Window Twenty-Three



Window Twenty-Four



Motherhouse Chapel



Lewis University



**Images courtesy of:** The Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “Santuario San Giovanni Battista de La Salle,” [https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle\\_org/albums/72157662580854480/with/23541261034/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lasalle_org/albums/72157662580854480/with/23541261034/) (accessed June 25, 2020).  
And Dr. Dennis H. Cremin, PhD.