

Inspiration for a Lived Lasallian Spirituality: A Management Faculty Reflection

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When reflecting on why and how Lasallian spirituality inspires and influences the work that I do, deep gratitude and appreciation first come to mind. A genuine care and concern for others that has been gifted to me as a Lasallian educator, a Lasallian family and a Lasallian at heart. Rooted in the teachings and stories of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and exemplified by the many Christian Brothers and fellow Lasallians I have encountered for decades. I wholeheartedly carry this spirituality in my heart and share it through words and actions with a genuine yet intentional spirit.

The Lasallian spirituality that I have come to understand and value immensely provides an ever-present intrinsic motivation for me personally. This awareness of feeling and being motivated by spiritual values serves as continued inspiration reminding me to show care, demonstrate concern and compassion all the while seeing the good seeking joy in my daily interactions and most especially when advising, teaching or just listening to my students.

Throughout my 30 years of being a member of our Lasallian community of teaching and learning, the greatest gift has been embracing an attitude and approach rooted in Lasallian spirituality. For me, this means a continued motivation of caring about and for those who need us most whether in words or actions. Having developed my understanding and personal interpretation of how to live each day with continued inspiration derived and developed by embracing this inherited motivation has enabled me to share this gift with others. For this gift of charisma, I am immensely grateful.

Where have I found inspiration? I find inspiration in the lived mission of the Christian Brothers. They individually and collectively demonstrate Lasallian spirituality in who they are, what they do, and how they work. Their humble ways have had a profound impact on me personally and professionally. It is with great respect and appreciation that I observe, listen to, and engage with our Christian Brothers. It is my responsibility to not only embrace the teachings and lessons but to emulate them in every encounter I have with a student, colleague, or alumni.

The impactful interactions of my Lasallian mentors. My thoughts go first and foremost to my mentors as each semester begins and as we welcome each new class. I hold close in my heart the lessons that go beyond the syllabus and teaching advice. I continue to be influenced and inspired by not what they taught but how they taught. I learned the importance of creating a classroom that fosters teaching and learning together and the importance of creating camaraderie, conversations and collaboration.

The influences of family members, friends, colleagues and alumni who exemplify Lasallian spirituality. I am privileged to be surrounded by several La Salle alumni, each of whom shared in

a learning experience that gifted them with Lasallian spirituality. Humble, impactful, and kindhearted are how I describe my Lasallian family members. The friends, colleagues and alumni are best described as living purposeful and meaningful lives, true examples of Lasallian spirituality.

The inspiration and importance of the mission and core values. Engaging students in lectures and lessons that introduce them to our Lasallian mission and our core values. Helping them discover and understand how they can be influenced by the teachings of Saint John Baptist de La Salle by developing a curiosity and connection to these core values. Projects, reflections, and discussions centered around our understanding and awareness of our Lasallian spirit are a valued aspect of this teaching and learning approach. As a Lasallian educator, our mission and our core values have a common thread woven throughout their definitions and interpretations. Our mission is to create and sustain a sense of community and caring and our core values mean living out our mission by the words we choose in conversation and through our actions. Being mindful of the words we choose, listening with empathy, and making and taking the time to get to know each student is how I have tried to model our mission.

Creating awareness and advocacy for others and putting an action plan in place to help those who need it most is how I have embraced our Lasallian core values. Creating classroom camaraderie that challenges and encourages my students to become more aware of and to embrace our mission and core values continues to be at the forefront of how we, together, establish a positive teaching and learning environment. A core value that I try to embody and exemplify when among my students is that of zeal. Saint John Baptist de La Salle demonstrated zeal through his commitment to his faith and service for the good of others. For me, zeal drives my enthusiasm, passion and commitment when teaching and advising or any time I engage in conversations or connections with students.

My dual roles of administrator/program director and faculty have enabled me to foster the spirit of and appreciation for Lasallian spirituality inside and outside of the classroom. As I often describe my career, my Lasallian vocation, I am blessed. Blessed and humbled to have been a part of something so influential and so universal. I try to teach and counsel by example so that our students can learn through experiencing Lasallian spirituality. The blessings come from being reminded that my own depth of spirituality was inherited by the profound influences of my Lasallian family and our community.

A Lasallian education enlightens not only those we teach, but it inspires a deep understanding of how impactful it is when we live with Lasallian spirituality in our hearts. Living and leading with this spirit, we are all blessed with care, compassion and purpose.

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La Salle's Business Leadership Fellows Program, her responsibilities include recruitment, advisement, marketing and working directly with the Fellows, providing guidance and advising on aspects of career readiness, skill development, networking and personal and professional goals. Kathy was awarded the 2019-2020 De La Salle Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning Presidential Teaching Award for part-time faculty. Kathy earned her B.A. in English/Communication Concentration from Gwynedd-Mercy College and M.A. in Professional Communication from La Salle University.