



# Lasallian Reflections

No. 4

Brothers of the Christian Schools

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## Some Questions for Reflection on “Government and Administration”

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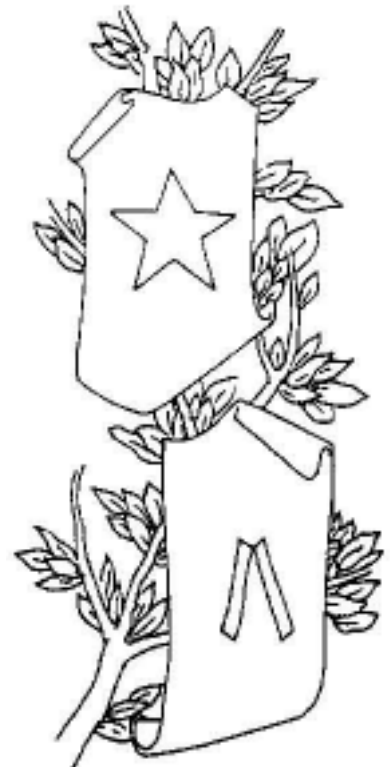
“Government and Administration” is one of the main headings under which the Propositions and Recommendations of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter are grouped in *Circular 447*. So important is this topic that seven Institute Commissions or International Councils are proposed in *Circular 448* to advise and assist Brother Superior and the General Council in this work.

- Communications Commission
- Government Commission
- Management and Solidarity Commission
- International Council on Communications
- International Economic Council
- Administrative Council of *l’Istituto Convitto Jesus Magister* (the hotel services of the Generalate)
- Ad Hoc Committee to Study the *Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (1987)*

Two principles that underlie the related Propositions and Recommendation of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter are the promotion of the **vitality** of the Institute and the fostering of the **solidarity** of those units that compose it. To these ends, the Chapter documents propose: 1) that programs and practices that have proved good and effective in the recent past should be continued; 2) that some flexible reorganization or restructuring should be pursued; and 3) that sound and creative initiatives in the pursuit of these two aims should be welcomed.

The questions that follow are intended to help District Councils and Communities of Brothers or interested individuals to reflect upon the ideas and to help implement the plans proposed in the documents of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter. Furthermore, Brothers and Partners are here invited and encouraged to share in writing any insights or proposals that they might have with the members of one or more of the seven Institute Commissions or International Councils referenced above.

**1. Reorganization and Restructuring:** Proposition 27 suggests the possible need for the merger of some Districts. Proposition 23 and Recommendations 34 & 35 suggest a re-examination of the organization of Regions. Since the General Chapter, Brother Superior and the General Council have been inviting sector leadership to be creative in envisioning a new concept of “District,” which might facilitate merger or re-organization and better respect the “unique giftedness” that each sector brings to the new entity.



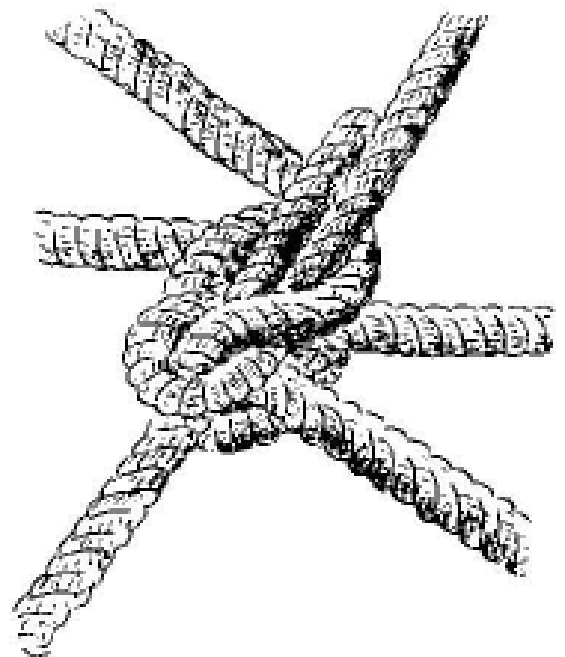
- Is it time for the sector of the Institute to which you belong to consider merger? Why or why not?
- Is the term, the concept, or the structure of “District,” as it is now known in the Institute, outmoded or problematical?
- What do you think a “District” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should look like?
- Should the Region to which you belong consider an organization different from the one that it presently has or consider increased ties with specific other Regions of the Institute? Why or why not?
- Do you have any comments to make concerning the reorganization of other sectors of the Institute about which you are knowledgeable?

**2. Planning and Flexibility:** Proposition 29 and Recommendations 30, 31, 32, & 33 suggest more flexible relationships among sectors of the Institute in view of increased strength and vitality.

- Are you aware of any new and creative initiatives or examples of flexible planning that are already going on in the Institute?
- What kinds of new relationships might enhance the quality of the religious commitment of individual Brothers and of religious community living in the sector of the Institute to which you belong? Why?
- What kind of initiatives might help the sector of the Institute to which you belong to achieve financial stability?
- What kind of initiatives might help the sector of the Institute to which you belong to be more effective in the educational service of the poor and in the promotion of Lasallian vocations (both Brothers and Associates)?

**3. Interdependence:** The annual District contributions to the Institute and its calculation are to be studied (page 65) and contributions to the Sharing Fund for the formation of Brothers need to be increased (page 63). Proposition 34 envisages an appeal to increase the Lasallian Formation Fund, and Proposition 33 envisages the completion of “Twinning” relationships between Districts to ensure a stable endowment for the newer or more fragile sectors of the Institute. Proposition 35 proposes the continuation and a better coordination of the financial aid given from one sector of the Institute to another by means of SECOLI mini-projects.

- In what ways are the communities of the sector of the Institute to which you belong already involved in helping SECOLI?
- Are you able and willing to contribute financially to an increase in the Lasallian Formation Fund? Have you already done something in this regard?
- Is your sector able to contribute (perhaps again) something to the “Twinning” process that ensures a stable endowment for the newer or more fragile sectors of the Institute? Why or why not?
- How might communities in your sector be able to help fund a SECOLI mini-project and so assist economically deprived Lasallian schools or formation programs in economically poorer sectors of the Institute?



4. **District Finances:** The General Chapter was concerned that sufficient financial resources be set aside and maintained to assure the viability and future of sectors. Recommendation 40 concerns safeguarding the permanent endowment of the District; Recommendation 41 concerns the need to identify sufficient funding for the care of elderly and ill Brothers; Recommendation 42 concerns the need for funding to guarantee quality formation programs. Recommendation 43 is concerned with certain basic principles that need to be observed concerning the management of properties and the administration of educational establishments.

- What means are being employed to improve and to assure the excellence of the stewardship of resources in the sector of the Institute to which you belong?
- Does your sector have sufficient funds set aside for the care of elderly and ill Brothers? If not, how might this problem be successfully resolved?
- What is being done in your sector to create a fund to guarantee quality initial and ongoing Lasallian formation programs for Brothers and for Associates?
- Do you have any reservations arising from the perceived use of finances in the sector of the Institute to which you belong or in other sectors of the Institute about which you are knowledgeable?
- Is the principle of a clear distinction between “property owner” and “leaseholder” observed in the management of properties belonging to or administered by the sector of the Institute to which you belong?

5. **Central Government:** Proposition 32 calls for an evaluation of the General Services of the Institute and the functioning of the Generalate House. Proposition 38 concerns a re-examination of the *Rule* in light of recent changes in the Church and in the Institute. Proposition 36 calls for the continued growth of the permanent endowment of the Institute. Proposition 37 invites that consideration is given to setting up a fund-collecting office. Recommendations 44, 45, & 46 are concerned with improved communication; and Recommendations 36, 37, 38, & 39 are concerned with preparations for the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter.

- Do you have any observations to make about the functioning of the General Services of the Institute and of the Generalate House?
- Do you have any suggestions to make or any concerns to share about the financial policies or practices of the central government of the Institute?
- Do you have any suggestions to make about an increased usage of the hotel services of the Generalate House (which could hopefully help reduce the annual District contributions to the Institute)?
- What changes in the *Rule* are, in your opinion, called for by recent changes in the Church and in the Institute?

### For General Reflection

1. *What do you think about the General Chapter’s reflection on and proposals for “government and administration”?*
2. *What does all of this mean for you, for us, for now?*
3. *What do you agree with or disagree with?*
4. *What is missing in the General Chapter’s reflection on “government and administration” for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?*
5. *What new insights do you find here?*
6. *What new wisdom is emerging for you?*