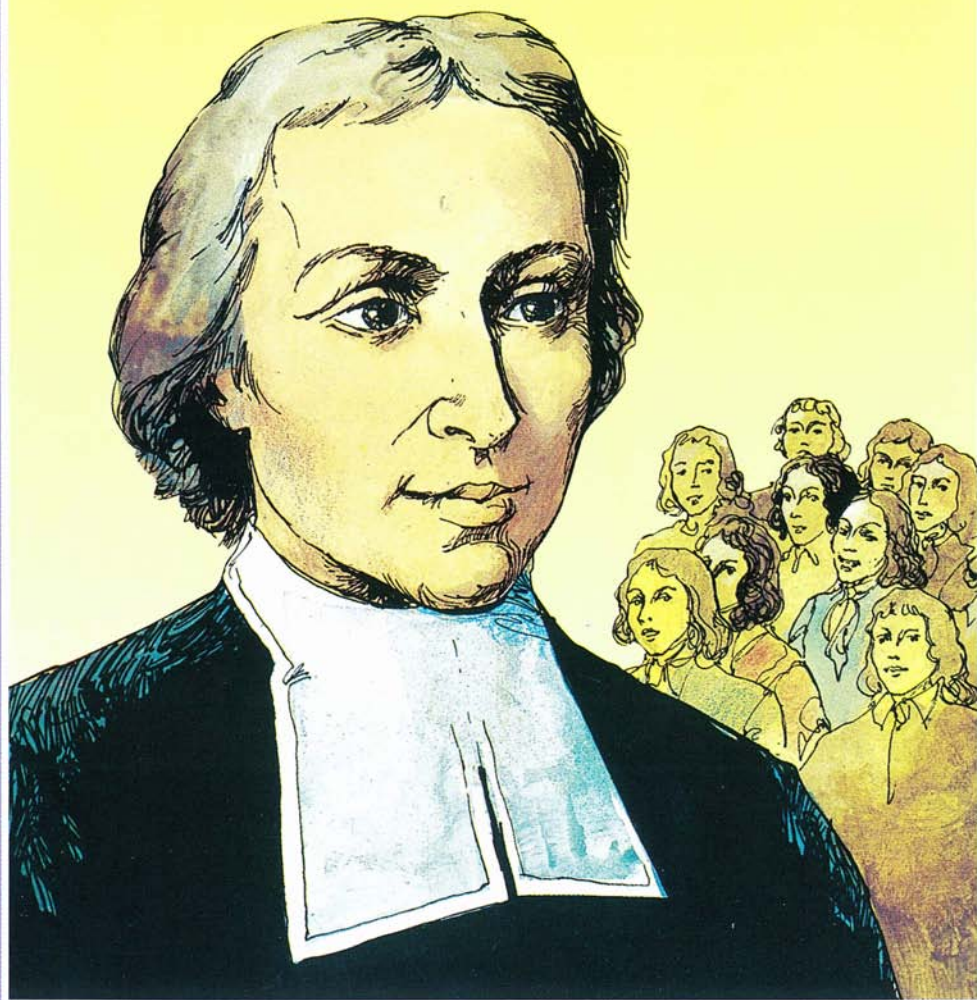


John-Baptist de La Salle



John-Baptist de La Salle





IN THOSE DAYS, ALL MEMBERS OF WELL-TO-DO FAMILIES LEARNED TO PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.



WITH POOR UNDERSTANDING OF HEALTH CARE, SOME BABIES WOULD DIE AT BIRTH, OR IN THEIR FIRST FEW YEARS. THESE WERE WORRYING TIMES FOR ALL FAMILIES.*



* THE DE LA SALLE FAMILY HAD ELEVEN CHILDREN, SEVEN OF WHOM SURVIVED.

JOHN HAD A HOME TUTOR FOR HIS FIRST FEW YEARS. ONLY AFTER HE HAD BEEN TAUGHT TO READ AND WRITE IN LATIN, WOULD HE BE TAUGHT IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.

I LIKE READING STORIES.

FOR FAMILIES LIKE OURS, JOHN, SCHOOL STARTS FOR A BOY WHEN HE IS NINE. I WONDER WHAT YOU'LL BE LIKE IN A FEW YEARS?

FOR A LONG TIME I HAVE THOUGHT THAT GOD WANTS HIM TO BECOME A PRIEST.

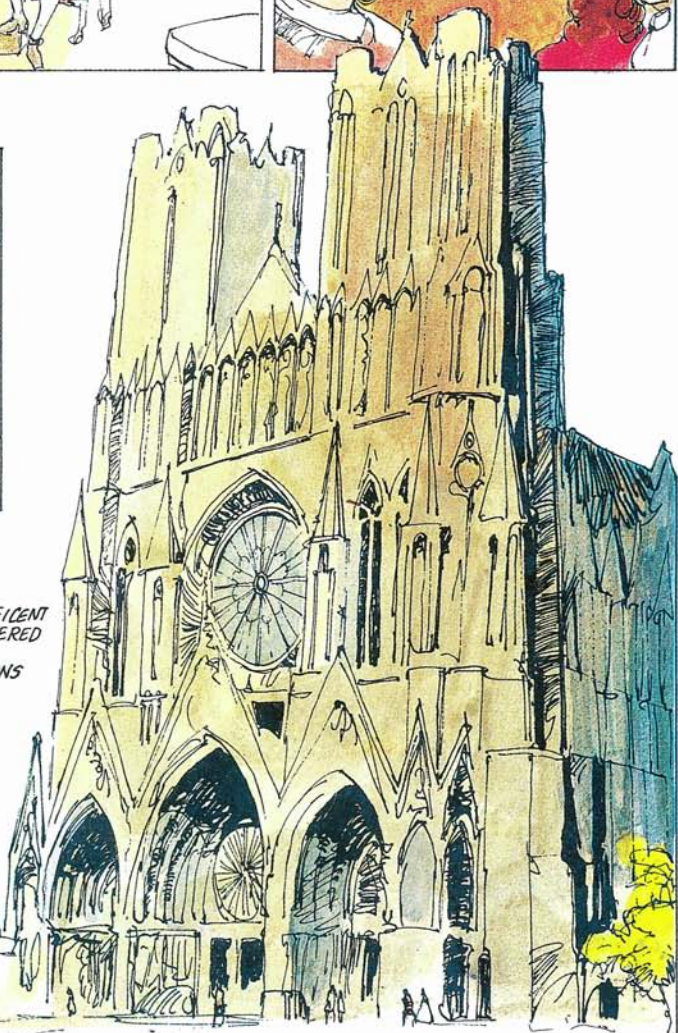
WE'LL GIVE HIM EVERY SUPPORT WE CAN. HE IS A FINE YOUNG MAN AND HE'D MAKE A GOOD PRIEST.

JOHN STARTED ON THE LONG PATH WHICH WOULD LEAD TO HIM BECOMING A PRIEST.

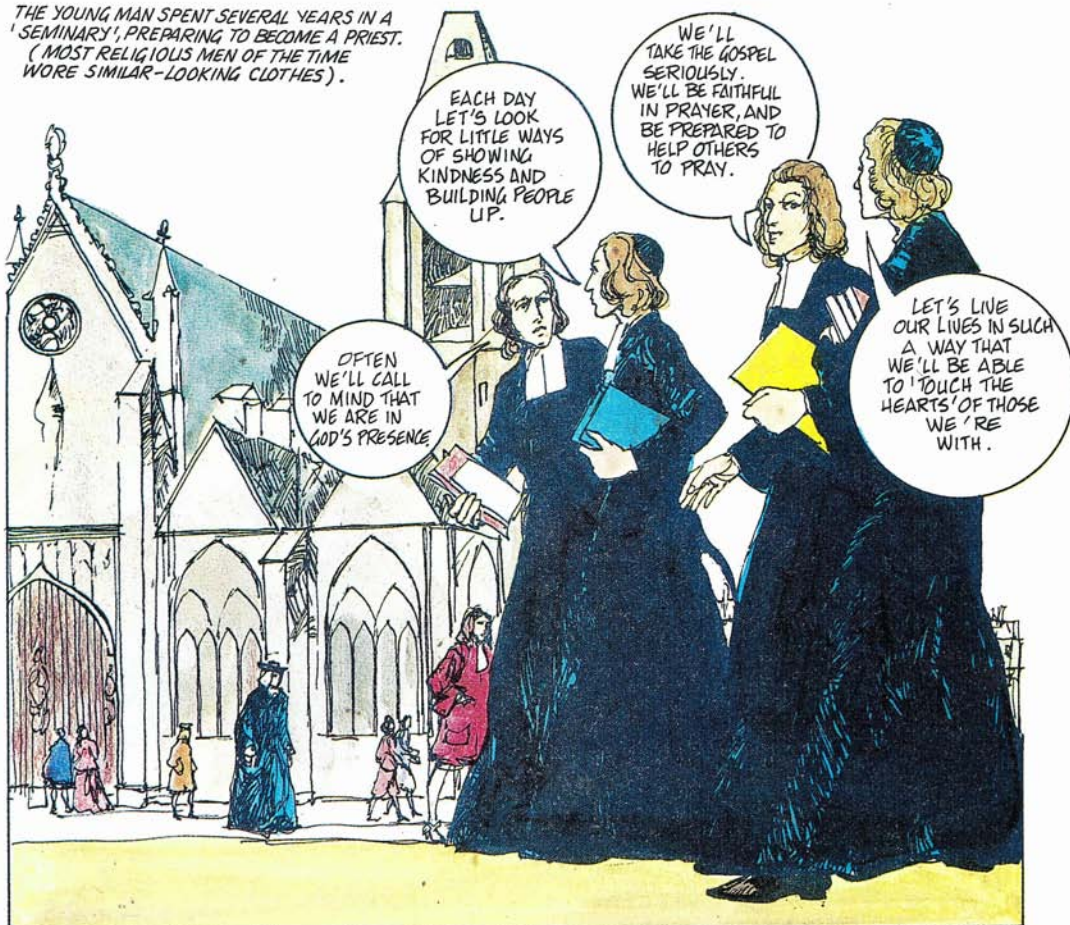
THIS 'TONSURE' IS A SIGN OF YOUR SERVICE IN THE CHURCH.

JOHN BECAME A CANON OF THE MAGNIFICENT CATHEDRAL OF REIMS. THE CANONS GATHERED TOGETHER EACH DAY TO PRAY. IT WAS A SPECIAL POSITION, AND SEVERAL CANONS LATER BECAME BISHOPS.

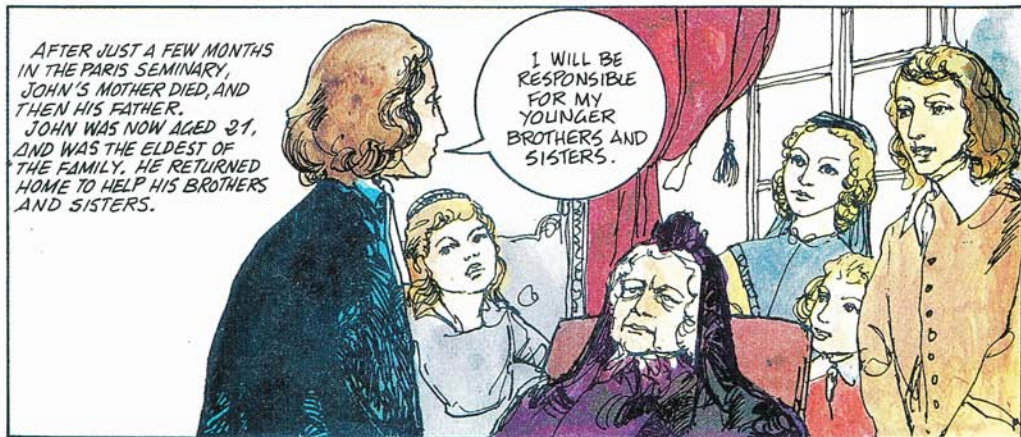
YOU WERE ONLY AGED THREE, JOHN, WHEN KING LOUIS XIV WAS CROWNED IN OUR CATHEDRAL.

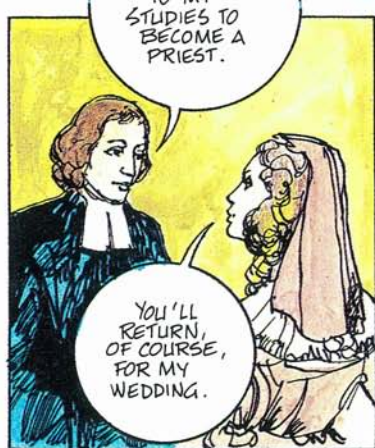


THE YOUNG MAN SPENT SEVERAL YEARS IN A 'SEMINARY', PREPARING TO BECOME A PRIEST. (MOST RELIGIOUS MEN OF THE TIME WORE SIMILAR-LOOKING CLOTHES).



AFTER JUST A FEW MONTHS IN THE PARIS SEMINARY, JOHN'S MOTHER DIED, AND THEN HIS FATHER. JOHN WAS NOW AGED 31, AND WAS THE ELDEST OF THE FAMILY. HE RETURNED HOME TO HELP HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS.





* FROM PSALM 103: ONE OF THE PRAYERS THE CANONS WOULD SAY TOGETHER.



I HEAR YOU'VE STARTED SOME SCHOOLS, NICHOLAS, FOR POOR GIRLS?

LIKE THIS STATUE OF 'THE SMILING ANGEL', THOSE WHO TEACH MUST BE 'ANGELS', 'MESSENGERS OF GOD'.

BUT JOHN SAW NO REASON - AT THAT TIME - TO GET INVOLVED IN TEACHING.

WHEN HE WAS AGED 27, HE WAS ORDAINED A PRIEST IN REIMS CATHEDRAL:



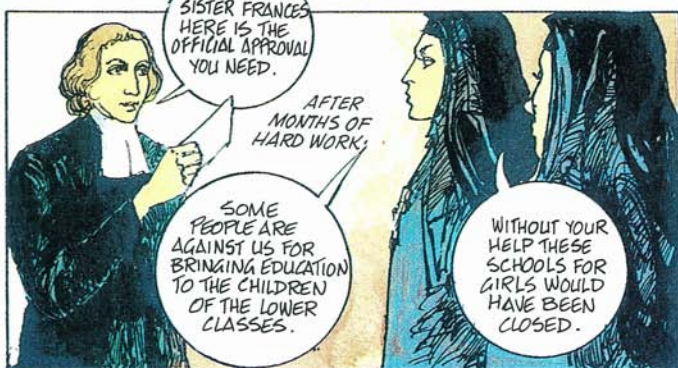
EVERY DAY, JOHN, LIVE THE GOSPEL AND DEEPEN YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS.

JOHN HAD LOOKED UP TO NICHOLAS ROLAND, A FELLOW-CANON OF REIMS CATHEDRAL. HE HAD BEEN JOHN'S SPIRITUAL GUIDE, AND A GOOD FRIEND.



I GIVE YOU THE LORD'S BLESSING.

I AM GOING TO DIE. THE SISTERS NEED THE KING'S PERMISSION FOR THEIR SCHOOLS TO CONTINUE. WILL YOU HELP THEM GET IT?



AT LAST, SISTER FRANCES HERE IS THE OFFICIAL APPROVAL YOU NEED.

AFTER MONTHS OF HARD WORK,

SOME PEOPLE ARE AGAINST US FOR BRINGING EDUCATION TO THE CHILDREN OF THE LOWER CLASSES.

WITHOUT YOUR HELP THESE SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS WOULD HAVE BEEN CLOSED.

FOR POOR PEOPLE THERE WAS LITTLE MONEY FOR FOOD, AND NONE TO PAY FOR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE ADRIAN NYEL. HE HAS SOMETHING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT. I HOPE YOU'LL BE INTERESTED.

IN THE CITY OF ROUEN I HAVE OPENED SOME SCHOOLS FOR BOYS FROM POOR FAMILIES. I HAVE COME TO REIMS TO DO THE SAME.

IT'S A GOOD IDEA, BUT YOU'LL CERTAINLY HAVE SOME PEOPLE WHO WILL DO A LOT TO TRY AND STOP YOU.

WILL YOU HELP ME, SO THAT THESE CHILDREN CAN MAKE SOMETHING SPECIAL OF THEIR LIVES?

YOU MUST GO ABOUT THIS VERY CAREFULLY. I KNOW A FEW PEOPLE WHO MIGHT HELP US. YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY AT MY HOUSE.

ADRIAN NYEL SOON OPENED MORE SCHOOLS. JOHN DE LA SALLE FOUND HIMSELF GETTING MORE INVOLVED AS ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER.

WILL YOU LISTEN TO WHAT I'M SAYING?

AND YOU AT THE BACK-STOP FIGHTING!

YOU REALLY NEED TO GIVE THE TEACHERS AN IDEA OF HOW TO TEACH. THEY ARE LEFT TO THEMSELVES AND HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH SUPPORT.

THE CHILDREN ARE TROUBLE.

I CAN'T HANDLE THEM, AND I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THEM.

WELL, YOU HAVE YET TO GAIN EXPERIENCE...

IF I START THINGS, FATHER JOHN, COULD I ASK YOU TO SHOW THE TEACHERS JUST WHAT TO DO?

JOHN KNEW THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO THINK ABOUT THIS VERY CAREFULLY.

IN 1680, AFTER PRAYING AND TAKING ADVICE, HE GATHERED THESE TEACHERS IN A RENTED HOUSE. HE TRIED TO IMPROVE THEIR MANNERS, AS WELL AS THEIR ATTITUDES. A LITTLE LATER HE INVITED THEM TO HAVE THEIR MEALS IN HIS OWN HOME, ALONGSIDE SOME OF HIS WELL-TO-DO FAMILY.

WE MUST ALL TAKE PRIDE IN WHO WE ARE, AND IN WHAT WE ARE CALLED TO DO.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ANYONE HAS EVER SERVED ME AT A MEAL! HOW DO I EAT IT?

HOW CAN HE INVITE THESE 'TEACHERS' TO EAT WITH US?

THESE ILL-MANNERED MEN WON'T BE ABLE TO EDUCATE ANYBODY!

JOHN IS BEING VERY GENEROUS. I THINK HE HAS A GOOD IDEA.

WELL, I'M NOT USED TO SUCH MANNERS, MYSELF!

I AM YOUR FAMILY SERVANT, SIR, BUT I JUST CAN'T SERVE THOSE TEACHERS OF YOURS.

JOHN INVITED THE TEACHERS TO MOVE INTO THE FAMILY HOME. WHEN THE OLDER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE VERY ANGRY.

I THOUGHT ABOUT THIS CAREFULLY BEFORE INVITING THEM TO MOVE IN. I DO BELIEVE THAT GOD WANTS ME TO BE CLOSER TO THE TEACHERS.

THOSE 'TEACHERS', AS YOU CALL THEM, ARE IN THIS FOR WHAT THEY CAN GET.

WE HAVE DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS. WE WON'T ALLOW YOU TO BE IN CHARGE OF YOUR YOUNGER BROTHERS ANYMORE. WE ARE GOING TO ENTRUST THEM TO PROPER EDUCATORS.

WHAT KIND OF EXAMPLE DO YOUR 'TEACHERS' GIVE TO YOUR THREE YOUNGER BROTHERS IN THE SAME HOUSE?

JOHN HAD GREAT LOVE FOR HIS FAMILY BUT, IN JUNE 1682, HE MOVED WITH THE TEACHERS INTO A HOUSE HE HAD RENTED. HE WAS CUTTING HIMSELF OFF FROM HIS FORMER EASY LIFE.

YOU'LL FIND LIVING HERE TO BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM YOUR OWN SPLENDID HOUSE FATHER JOHN.

WHEN I AM TEACHING ONE PUPIL AT A TIME, THE OTHERS BECOME RESTLESS.

GROUP TOGETHER PUPILS WHO ARE AT THE SAME LEVEL. THEY'LL BE BUSIER THAT WAY AND LEARN MORE.

SHOW MUCH KINDNESS TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE GOD ENTRUSTS TO YOU. LET LOVE GUIDE YOU IN ALL THAT YOU DO. PRAY FOR THE GIFT OF TOUCHING HEARTS.

ADRIAN NYEL OPENED SOME MORE SCHOOLS, BUT THE TEACHERS WERE BECOMING DISCOURAGED. SOME OF THE FIRST TEACHERS DECIDED TO LEAVE.

THE WORK IS TOO HARD, AND WE GET NOTHING IN RETURN. I'VE HAD ENOUGH.

THE REGULATIONS ARE TOO STRICT. WE NEVER SEEM TO HAVE ANY TIME OFF. GOODBYE.

WE DON'T CHARGE THE CHILDREN, BUT WE'RE GIVEN HARDLY ANYTHING TO LIVE ON BY THE PARISH PRIEST.

IT'S ALL RIGHT FOR YOU, FATHER JOHN.

YOU HAVE LOTS OF MONEY OF YOUR OWN TO FALL BACK ON, IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG.

THEY'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. IF I AM TO DEPEND ON GOD, I CAN'T HAVE ALL THIS FAMILY MONEY TO PROTECT ME.

LORD, YOU ARE ASKING A LOT OF ME, BUT I'LL DO AS I BELIEVE YOU WANT.

SO JOHN WROTE TO A PRIEST-FRIEND FOR ADVICE.

...to follow Jesus and depend only on him. Are you going to trust riches or him?

JOHN FELT THAT HE MUST NOW GIVE UP THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY HE HAD BEEN GIVEN IN THE CATHEDRAL-OF BEING A CANON. AND SO HE WENT TO SEE HIS BISHOP.

I MUST GIVE UP BEING A CANON, AND JOIN FULLY WITH THE LIFE OF THE TEACHERS, SPENDING MUCH MORE TIME WITH THEM.

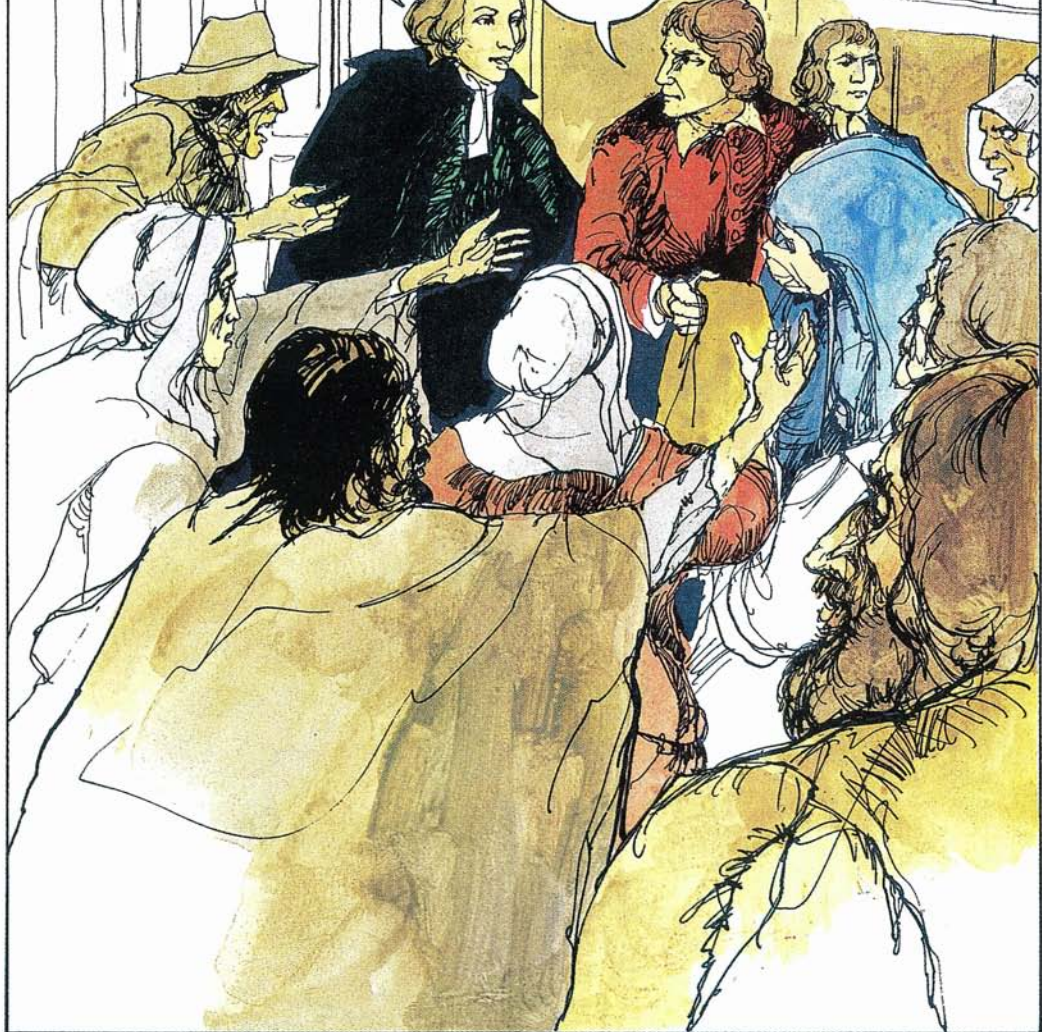
I THINK YOU ARE MAKING A MISTAKE, FATHER DE LA SALLE, BUT I KNOW YOU ARE DETERMINED ABOUT THIS...

JOHN MAKES A BREAK WITH THE COMFORTABLE LIFE HIS WEALTH AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS COULD HAVE BROUGHT HIM.

DE LA SALLE COULD HAVE SPENT HIS MONEY ON THE SCHOOLS, BUT HE FELT IT WAS GOD'S WILL TO GIVE IT AWAY DURING A TIME OF COLD, FAMINE, AND SICKNESS, IN THE WINTER OF 1683 - 84...

GIVE
EVERYTHING
AWAY.

EVERYTHING?



AND SO FATHER DE LA SALLE DISTRIBUTED TO THE NEEDY THE SHARE OF THE FAMILY WEALTH THAT HE HAD INHERITED. HIS SPIRITUAL GUIDE INSTRUCTED HIM TO KEEP BACK ONLY JUST ENOUGH TO SUPPORT HIMSELF.

IN JUNE 1686:

LORD, I'M TIED DOWN TO NOTHING, NOW, AND I'VE NO WAY OF ESCAPING TO AN EASIER LIFE I AM IN YOUR HANDS.



WE'RE COMMITTED TO GOD, TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE, AND TO EACH OTHER.

LET'S TRY AND DISCOVER WHAT GOD REALLY WANTS US TO DO.

LET'S CALL OURSELVES "BROTHERS"...

... TO BE BROTHERS TO OUR STUDENTS, AND TO EACH OTHER. *

LET'S NOT GO TOO QUICKLY! WE'LL MAKE VOWS OR PROMISES TO GOD FOR JUST ONE YEAR AT THE MOMENT.

* ONLY TWO OF THE ORIGINAL GROUP OF TEACHERS BECAME BROTHERS.

AND SO THE FIRST BROTHERS MADE THIS VOW (OR PROMISE:): "WE WILL CARE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UNTIL WE DIE, EVEN IF WE HAVE TO BEG, AND LIVE ON BREAD ALONE." THEY WOULD LIVE AS A COMMUNITY. NO BROTHERS WOULD BECOME PRIESTS.

I'M SORRY, BUT YOUR VILLAGE PARISH IS TOO SMALL TO SUPPORT TWO BROTHERS IN A SCHOOL, AND WE INSIST ON AT LEAST TWO FOR EACH COMMUNITY.

COULD YOU PERHAPS TRAIN ONE YOUNG MAN TO BE A TEACHER - SOMEONE WHO IS NOT INTERESTED IN BECOMING A BROTHER?

THAT SOUNDS A GOOD IDEA.



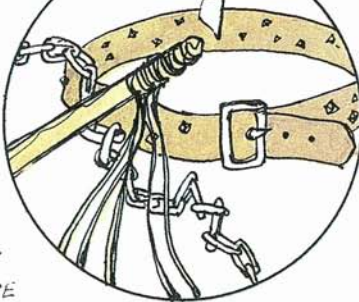
FATHER DE LA SALLE BECAME THE FIRST TO START A TRAINING-CENTRE FOR TEACHERS. BEFORE OPENING A SCHOOL, JOHN ALWAYS MADE AN AGREEMENT THAT FUNDS WOULD BE RAISED BY THE PARISH PRIEST AND SOME LOCAL WEALTHY PEOPLE. THE SCHOOLS WOULD BE FREE OF CHARGE.

JOHN GROUPED CHILDREN TOGETHER ACCORDING TO A BILITY, AND TAUGHT A WHOLE GROUP AT A TIME. NO LONGER WERE CHILDREN BEING TAUGHT INDIVIDUALLY.

WELL, THEY'RE KEEPING ALL THOSE CHILDREN OFF THE STREETS, AND THEIR SCHOOLS HAVE GOOD DISCIPLINE!

THEY'RE BEING TAUGHT IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE, INSTEAD OF SPEAKING AND READING EVERYTHING IN LATIN.

WITH THE HARD WORK IN THE SCHOOLS AND THE DEMANDING LIFE THEY LED, SOME BROTHERS SOON BECAME ILL. THEY WERE EXHAUSTED, AND MANY DIED YOUNG FROM DISEASES PICKED UP IN THE DECAYING SLUMS. THEY ALSO PRACTISED SEVERE PENANCES ON THEMSELVES.

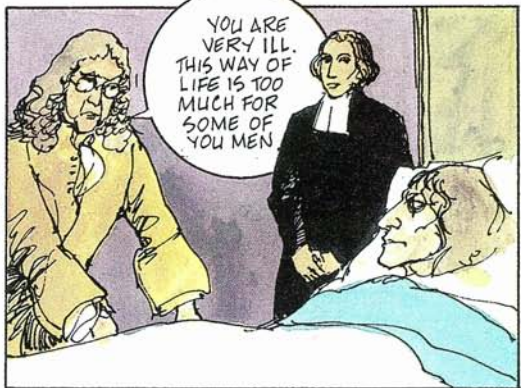


AN INSIDE POCKET WOULD HOLD THE NEW TESTAMENT "CLOSE TO THE HEART". JOHN ASKED THE BROTHERS TO READ THE WORD OF GOD EACH DAY, SO AS TO BE INSPIRED.

HA! HA!

THEY DO LOOK FUNNY!

THEY TRY TO SET UP A LENDING-LIBRARY IN THEIR SCHOOLS.

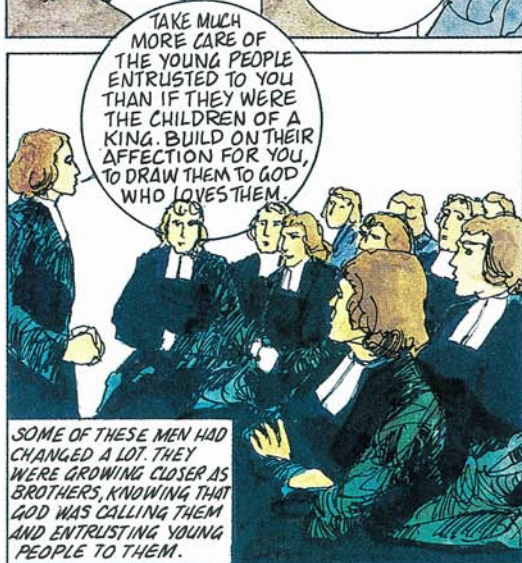




THE PEOPLE OF REIMS DID NOT ALWAYS APPROVE.

MY LAD'S NOT GOING TO YOU ANY MORE. I NEED HIM FOR WORK.

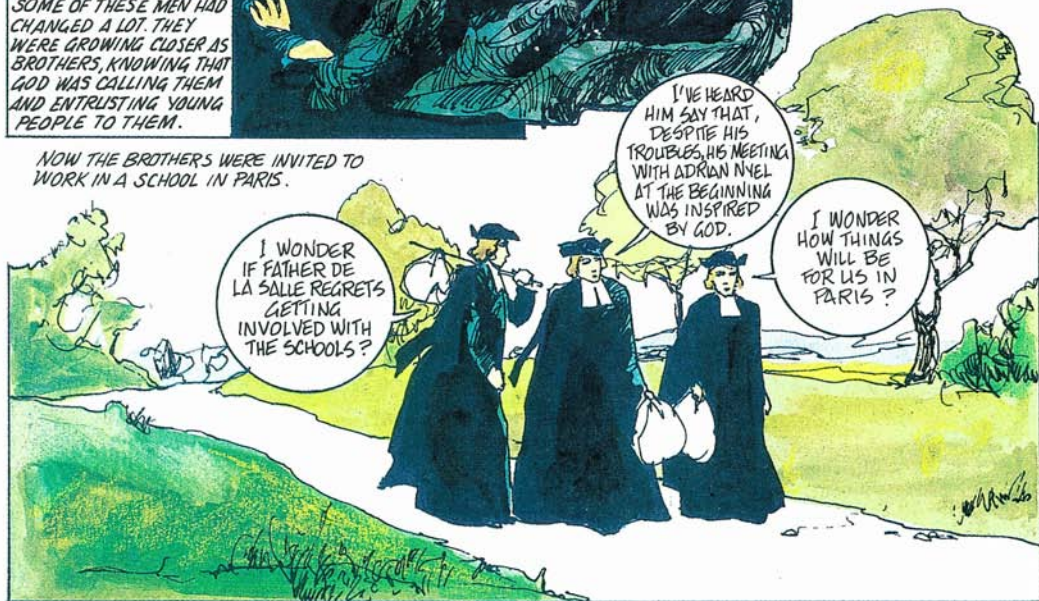
YOU LOOK AFTER BOYS, BUT WHAT ABOUT MY DAUGHTER?



TAKE MUCH MORE CARE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE ENTRUSTED TO YOU THAN IF THEY WERE THE CHILDREN OF A KING. BUILD ON THEIR AFFECTION FOR YOU, TO DRAW THEM TO GOD WHO LOVES THEM.

SOME OF THESE MEN HAD CHANGED A LOT. THEY WERE GROWING CLOSER AS BROTHERS, KNOWING THAT GOD WAS CALLING THEM AND ENTRUSTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO THEM.

NOW THE BROTHERS WERE INVITED TO WORK IN A SCHOOL IN PARIS.



I WONDER IF FATHER DE LA SALLE REGRETS GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE SCHOOLS?

I'VE HEARD HIM SAY THAT, DESPITE HIS TROUBLES, HIS MEETING WITH ADRIAN NIEL AT THE BEGINNING WAS INSPIRED BY GOD.

I WONDER HOW THINGS WILL BE FOR US IN PARIS?

LORD, MAY WE STAY UNITED. INSPIRE US TO DO EVERYTHING IN A SPIRIT OF FAITH AND LOVE, BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR WORK.

EVERY HOUR IN CLASS A PUPIL WOULD RING THE BELL. THIS WAS A TIME FOR THE BROTHERS AND PUPILS TO REMIND THEMSELVES THAT THEY WERE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. THE MORE THEY REALISED THAT THEY WERE IN GOD'S PRESENCE, THE MORE LIKELY THEY WOULD BE TO SAY AND DO THINGS IN THE WAY OF JESUS.

CHRIS, I'D LIKE YOU TO READ THE FIRST PASSAGE OUT LOUD. I WANT EVERYONE TO FOLLOW CAREFULLY, AS HE IS READING.

JESUS PREACHED GOOD NEWS ABOUT GOD'S FORGIVENESS. HE PREACHED TO THE POOR.

IT'S EASIER TO LEARN, NOW THAT NO-ONE IS ALLOWED TO MESS ABOUT!

RICHARD, DID YOU WANT TO SAY SOMETHING?

AT THE START OF CLASS THE BROTHERS
WOULD GIVE A REFLECTION—A
SHORT STORY OR LESSON
WITH A MESSAGE.

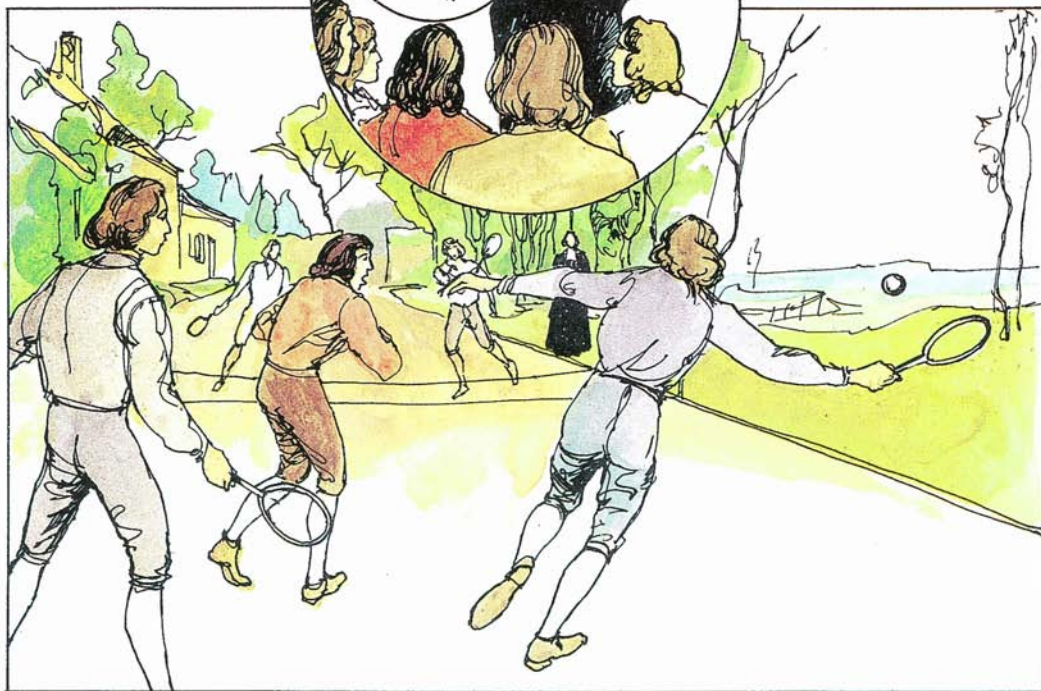
I AM CONCERNED
ABOUT YOUNG
APPRENTICES LIKE
THESE.
THEY HAD NO EDUCATION
WHEN THEY WERE YOUNGER,
AND HAVE A POOR
RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND.

THE BROTHERS
SET UP A VOCATIONAL
SCHOOL FOR APPRENTICES
UP TO THE AGE OF 20.

FOR 3 HOURS ON
SUNDAYS THE SCHOOL
GAVE THEM A GOOD BASIC
EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS
TEACHING, AND ALSO
SERVED AS A YOUTH CLUB.
NUMBERS SOON ROSE
TO 200.

* CIRCUMFERENCE = $2\pi r$
= 440 UNITS.

THE RADIUS
OF A BUILDING'S
DOME IS 70 UNITS.
WHAT LENGTH OF
GLASSING WOULD
YOU NEED FOR ITS
CIRCUMFERENCE?
*



COULD JOHN HELP INDIVIDUALS -
NOT BROTHERS - TO GO
OUT TO TEACH,
ONE-BY-ONE,
IN SMALL
VILLAGES
NEAR FAIRIS?

BROTHER VUYART,
WE ARE GOING
TO TRAIN TEACHERS
FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE.
I WOULD LIKE TO
ENTRUST THIS
TO YOU.

THE BROTHERS WERE INVITED TO
OPEN SCHOOLS IN MORE
TOWNS.

GET TO KNOW YOUR
PUPILS INDIVIDUALLY.
REMEMBER THAT
GOD GIVES YOU THE
POWER TO PERFORM
MIRACLES BY TOUCHING
THE HEARTS OF
OTHERS.

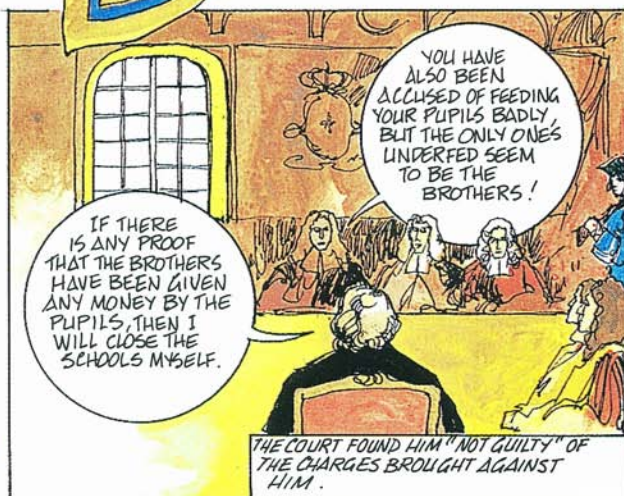
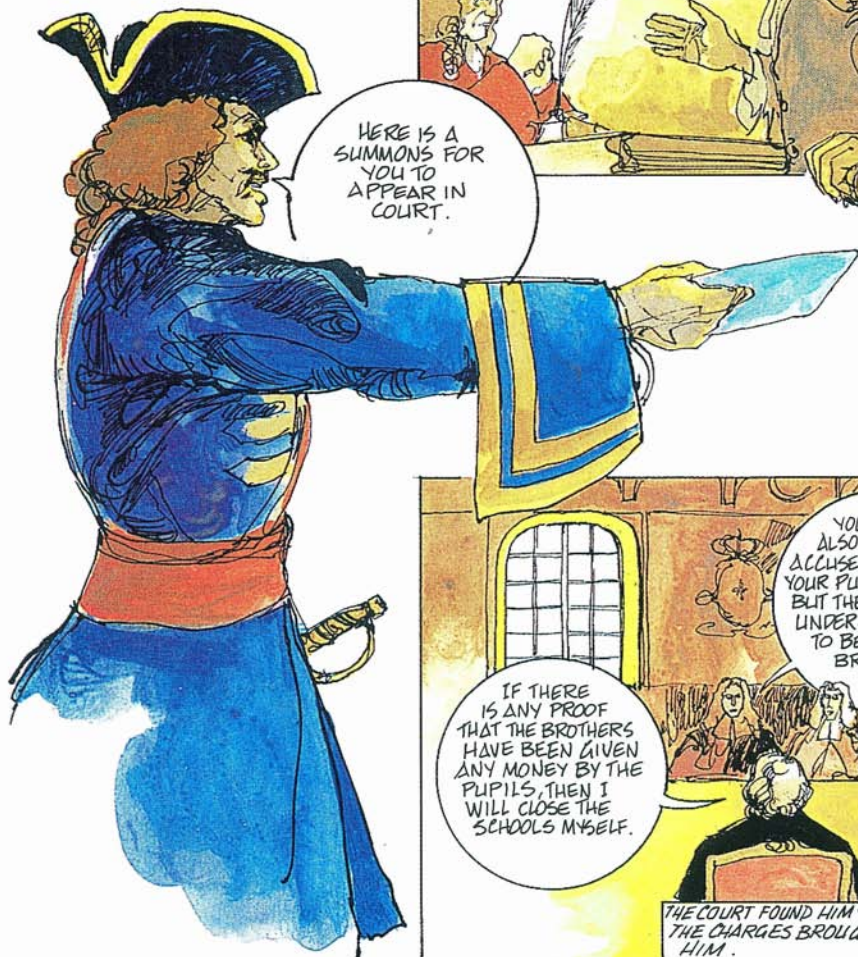
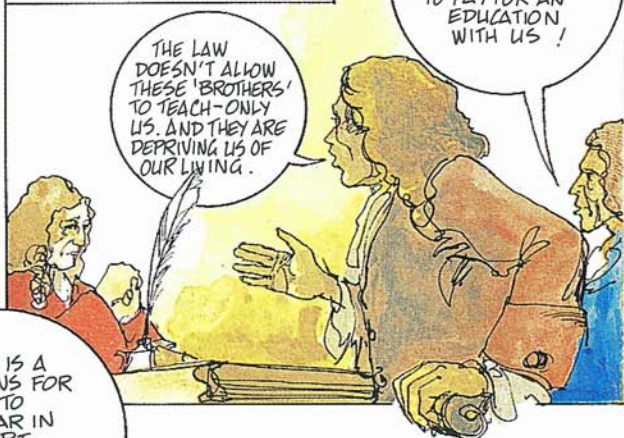
I AM VERY
PLEASED,
FATHER DE LA SALLE,
WITH
EVERYTHING
I SEE.

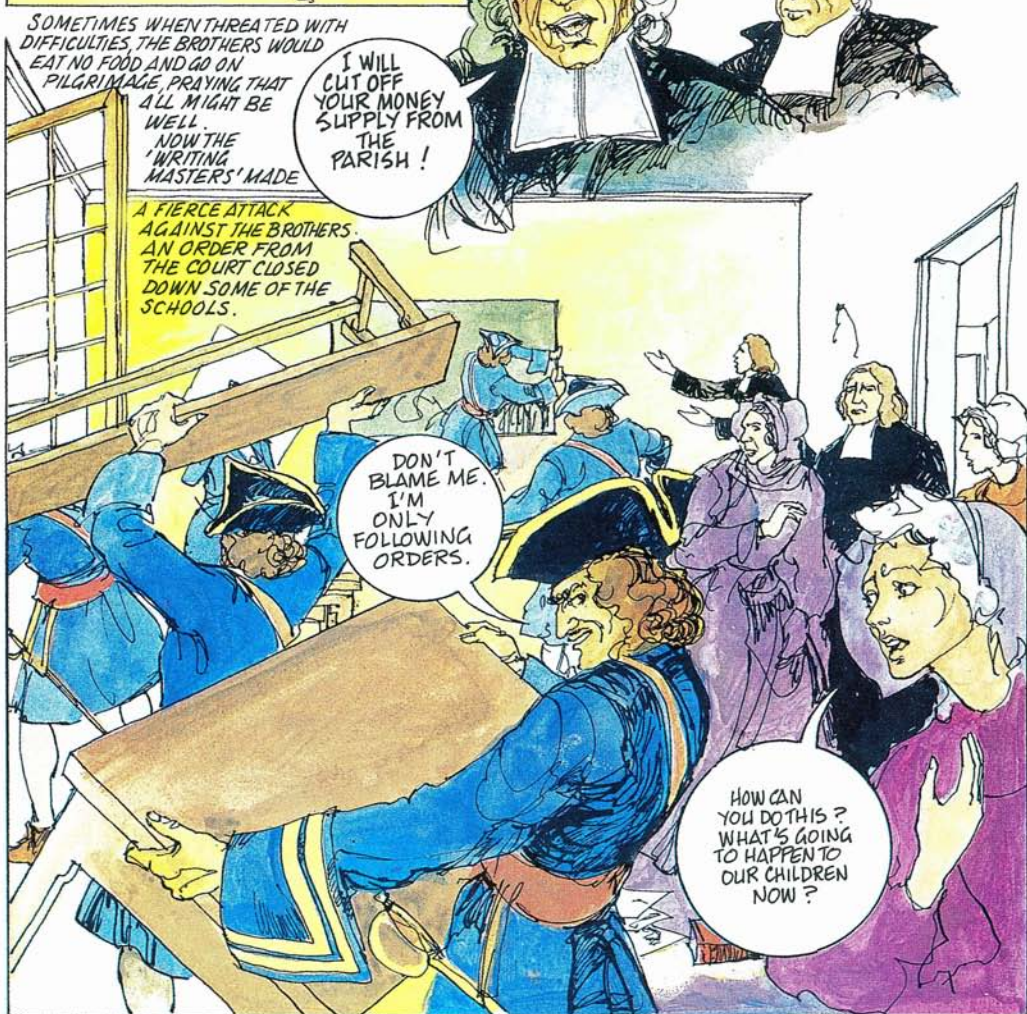
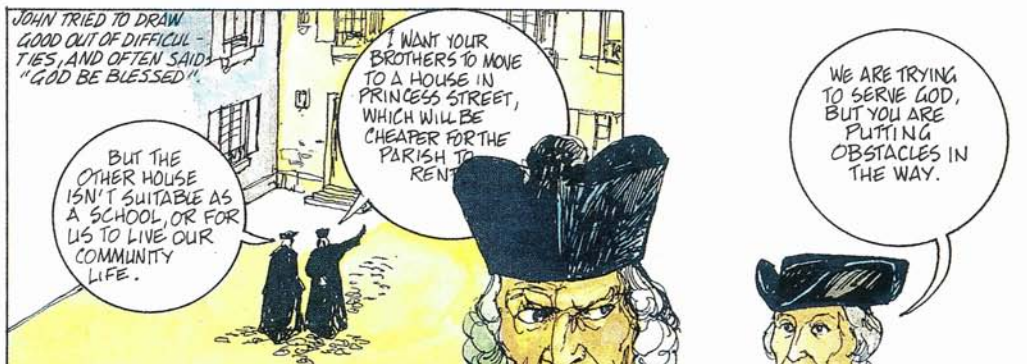
THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT
HAD REMOVED KING JAMES II
FROM THE THRONE IN 1688 (AND
REPLACED HIM WITH WILLIAM AND
MARY). SOME IRISH NOBLEMEN
FOLLOWED JAMES TO EXILE IN FRANCE.
DE LA SALLE WAS ASKED TO OPEN A
SCHOOL FOR THEIR SONS, AND KING
JAMES VISITED THE SCHOOL.

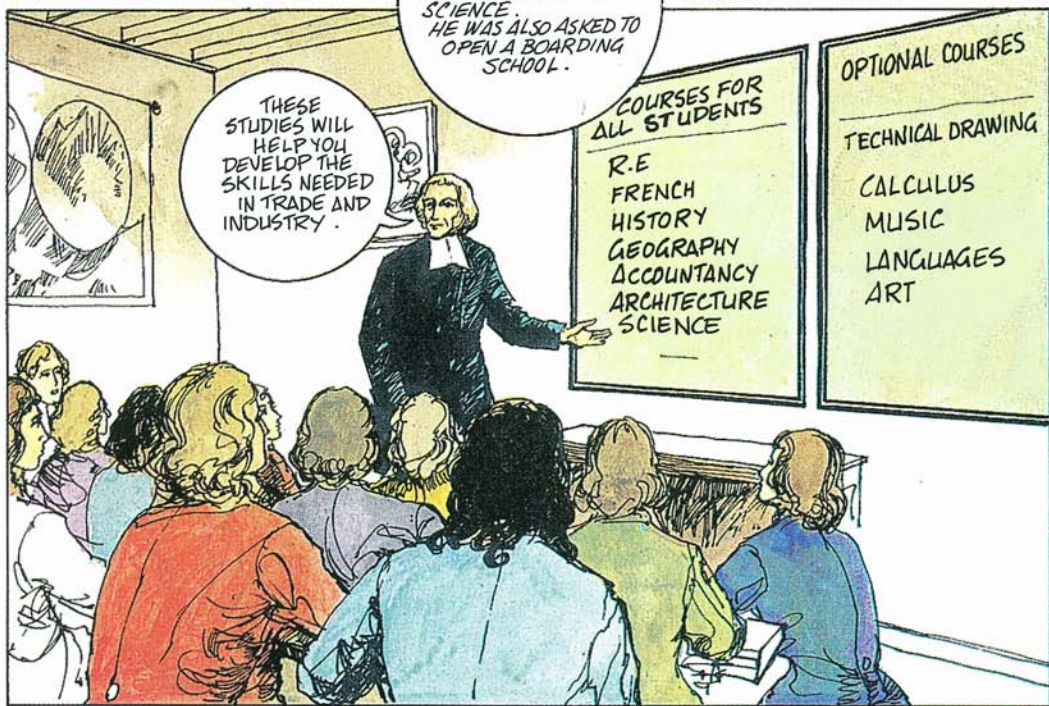
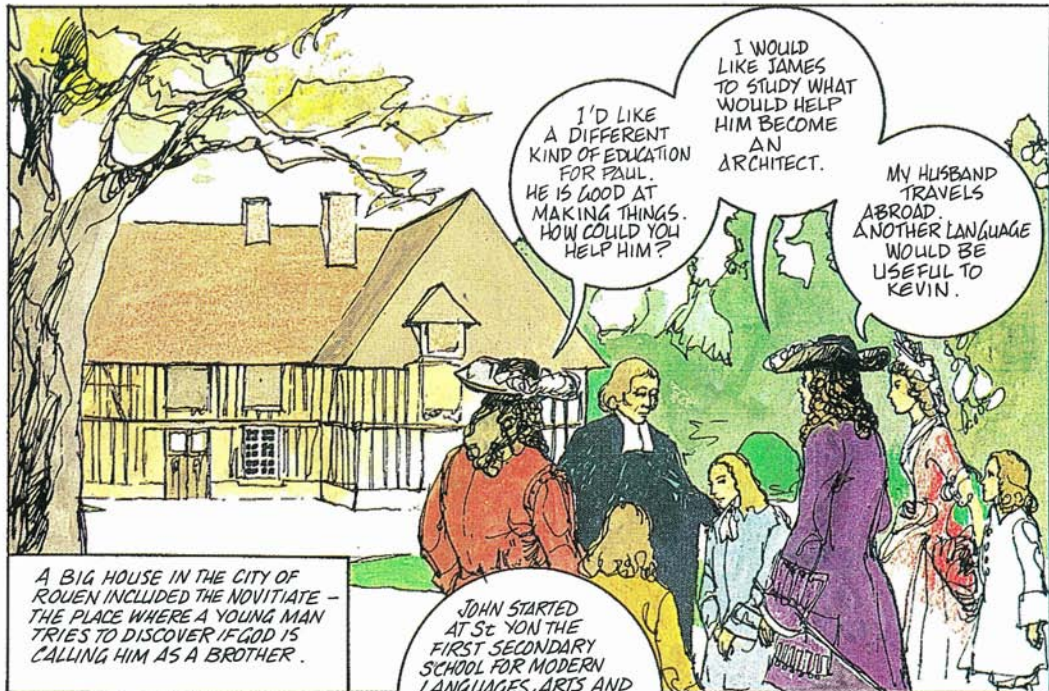


MANY PUPILS OF THE 'WRITING MASTERS' WERE LEAVING THEM TO GO TO THE 'FREE SCHOOLS' OF THE BROTHERS.

THE 'WRITING MASTERS' THOUGHT OF WAYS THEY MIGHT ACCUSE JOHN IN COURT, SO AS TO GET THE SCHOOLS CLOSED DOWN.







JOHN TOLD THE BROTHERS THAT THEY WERE "AMBASSADORS" OF JESUS. THEY WERE TO HELP THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO PRAY. THEY WERE TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO RECOGNISE GOD'S PRESENCE IN THEMSELVES AND IN OTHERS. IN THIS WAY THEIR LIVES - AND THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND THEM - WOULD BE ENRICHED.

SIX YEARS AGO I PUT VUIYART IN CHARGE OF THE TEACHER-TRAINING CENTRE. NOW YOU TELL ME THAT HE HAS LEFT THE BROTHERS AND KEPT THE PLACE FOR HIMSELF?

I AM SORRY TO BE THE ONE TO TELL YOU. I KNOW THAT YOU PUT GREAT TRUST IN HIM.

LORD, HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED? HE WAS ONE OF MY MOST TRUSTED COMPANIONS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. LORD, YOU KNEW YOURSELF WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO BE BETRAYED AND LET DOWN BY CLOSE FRIENDS.

FATHER CLEMENT, YOU ARE A YOUNG MAN. WILL TRUST YOU AND LEND YOU SOME MONEY I HAVE JUST BEEN GIVEN.

IN A SHORT TIME I WILL RECEIVE SOME MONEY THAT IS DUE TO ME. I WILL RETURN YOUR LOAN THEM.

WITH THIS MONEY, FR CLEMENT (A PRIEST WHO WANTED TO HELP) BOUGHT A PROPERTY WHICH WOULD BE USED BY THE BROTHERS AS ANOTHER TEACHER-TRAINING CENTRE.

BUT THE MONEY WAS NEVER PAID BACK, AND CLEMENT THEN ACCUSED DE LA SALLE OF STEALING FROM HIM!

JOHN HAD WITNESSES ON HIS SIDE, BUT THEY TURNED AGAINST HIM. CLEMENT'S FATHER HAD A LOT OF INFLUENCE.

I DON'T HAVE A CHANCE OF WINNING IN THE COURT CASE, EVEN THOUGH I'M TOTALLY INNOCENT.

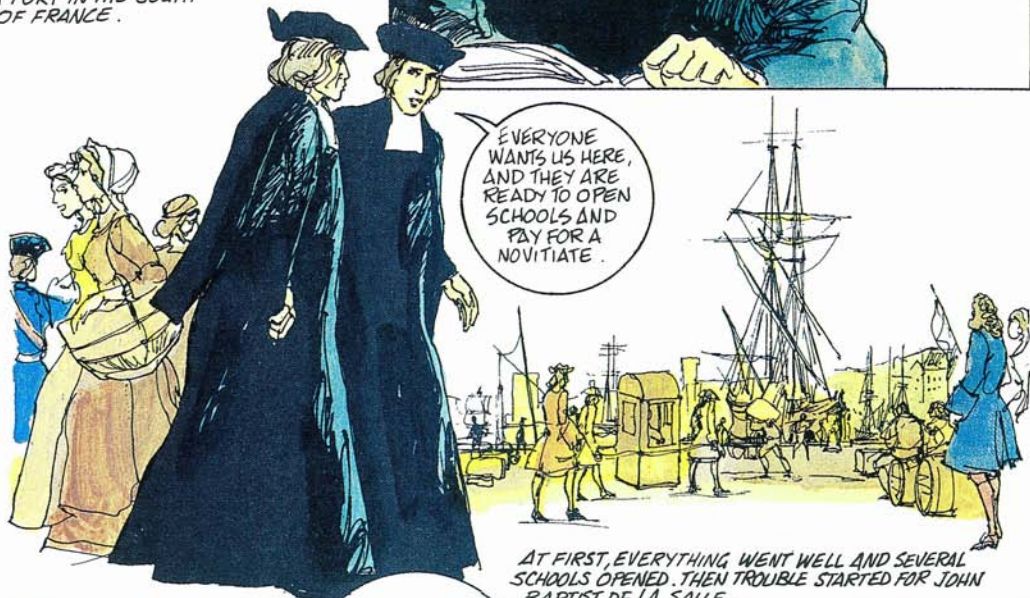
SIR, I TOOK NO MONEY FROM YOUR SON. HE BORROWED MONEY FROM ME.

MY SON WAS BELOW THE LEGAL AGE FOR SIGNING DOCUMENTS. YOU TRICKED HIM INTO THIS FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT.

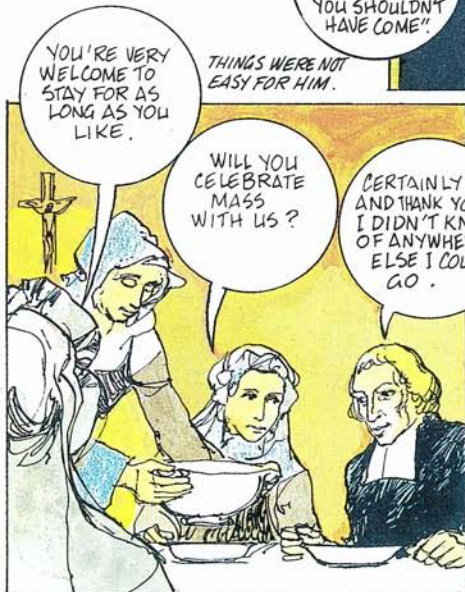
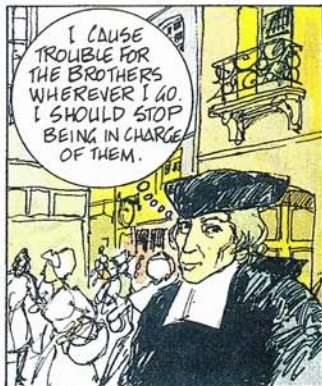
JOHN KNEW HOW DANGEROUS IT WAS FOR HIM IN PARIS, AND SO HE LEFT FOR THE SOUTH OF FRANCE. BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW WAS TO REMAIN IN CHARGE IN THE NORTH. IN HIS ABSENCE THE COURT CONDEMNED AND FINED DE LA SALLE, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT GUILTY OF ANYTHING.



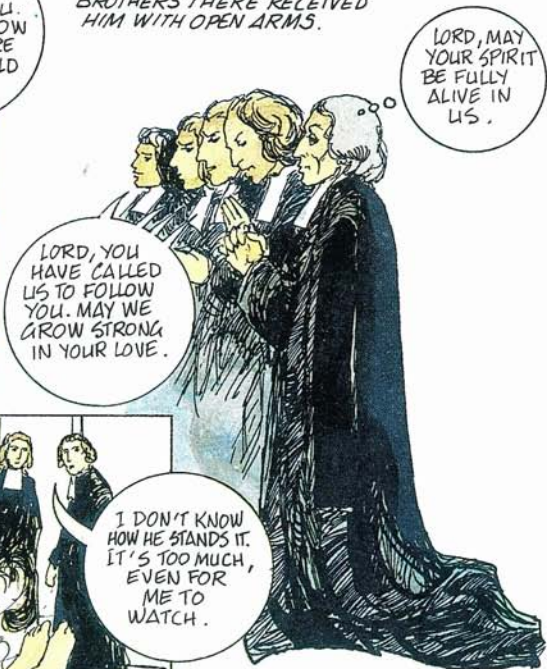
JOHN ARRIVED IN MARSEILLES, A PORT IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.



JOHN OPPOSED THE 'JANSENISTS'. THEY BELIEVED THAT GOD WAS HARSH AND THAT WE HAD TO TRY TO 'EARN' HIS LOVE. THEY SAID THAT, BECAUSE WE'RE NOT WORTHY, WE SHOULDN'T RECEIVE COMMUNION VERY OFTEN. BUT JOHN TAUGHT WHAT JESUS SHOWS US IN THE GOSPEL: THAT GOD IS LOVE, AND HE WELCOMES AND FORGIVES. IT IS BECAUSE GOD WANTS US TO BECOME MORE LIKE HIM, THAT WE ARE INVITED TO RECEIVE COMMUNION OFTEN.



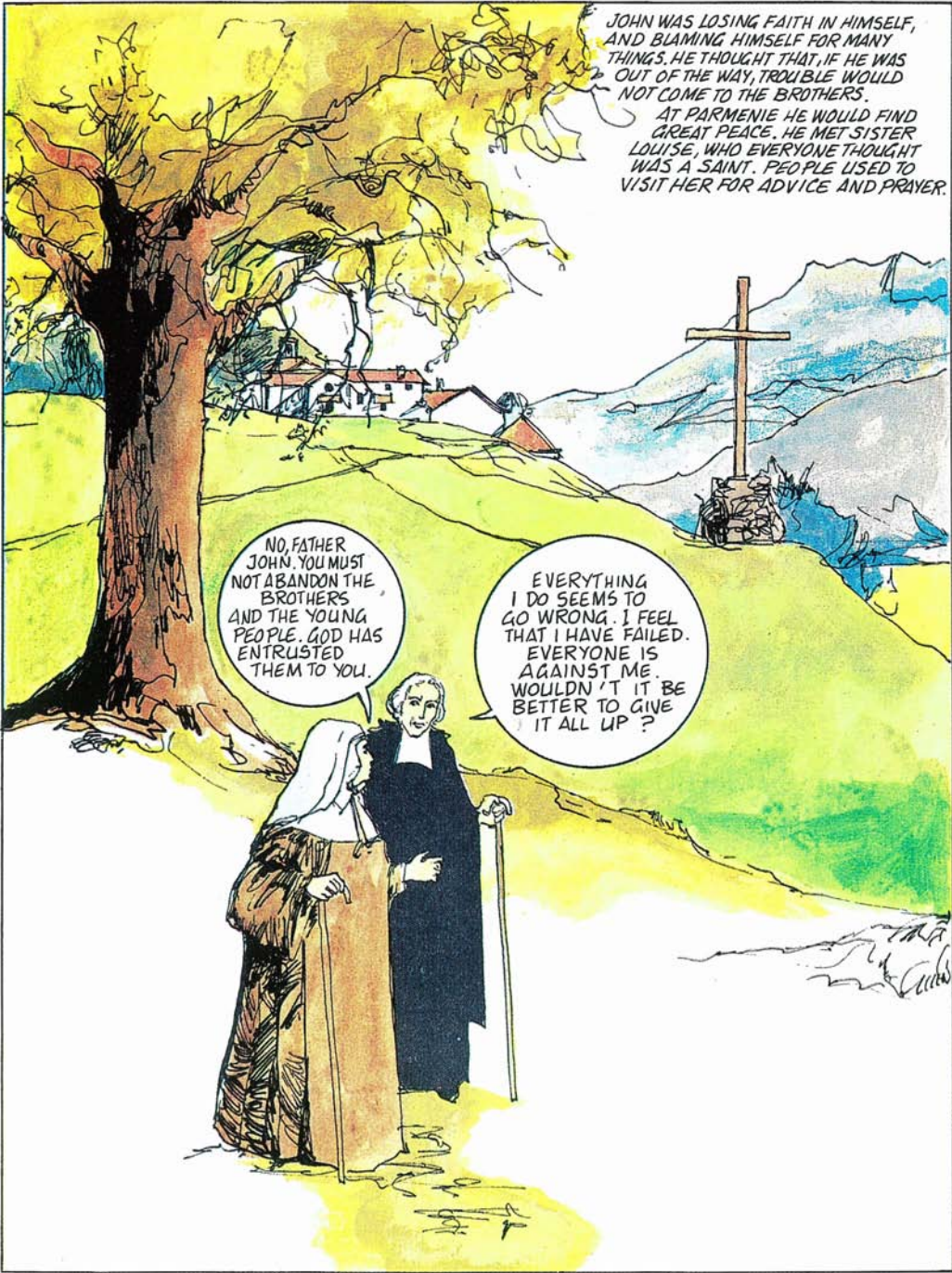
A LITTLE LATER HE LEFT FOR THE TOWN OF GRENOBLE. HE WAS DELIGHTED THAT THE BROTHERS THERE RECEIVED HIM WITH OPEN ARMS.



JOHN WAS ILL AND IN PAIN FOR MANY YEARS. THE DOCTOR'S TREATMENT FOR HIS RHEUMATISM WAS TO LIE ON A GRID OVER A LOW FIRE.



HE DECIDED TO GO TO A NEARBY PLACE OF RETREAT: PARMENIE, A PEACEFUL PLACE AT THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN, WITH VIEWS INTO THE VALLEYS BELOW. GOOD AIR WOULD ALSO HELP HIS ASTHMA.



JOHN WAS LOSING FAITH IN HIMSELF, AND BLAMING HIMSELF FOR MANY THINGS. HE THOUGHT THAT, IF HE WAS OUT OF THE WAY, TROUBLE WOULD NOT COME TO THE BROTHERS.

AT PARMENIE HE WOULD FIND GREAT PEACE. HE MET SISTER LOUISE, WHO EVERYONE THOUGHT WAS A SAINT. PEOPLE USED TO VISIT HER FOR ADVICE AND PRAYER.

NO, FATHER JOHN. YOU MUST NOT ABANDON THE BROTHERS AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE. GOD HAS ENTRUSTED THEM TO YOU.

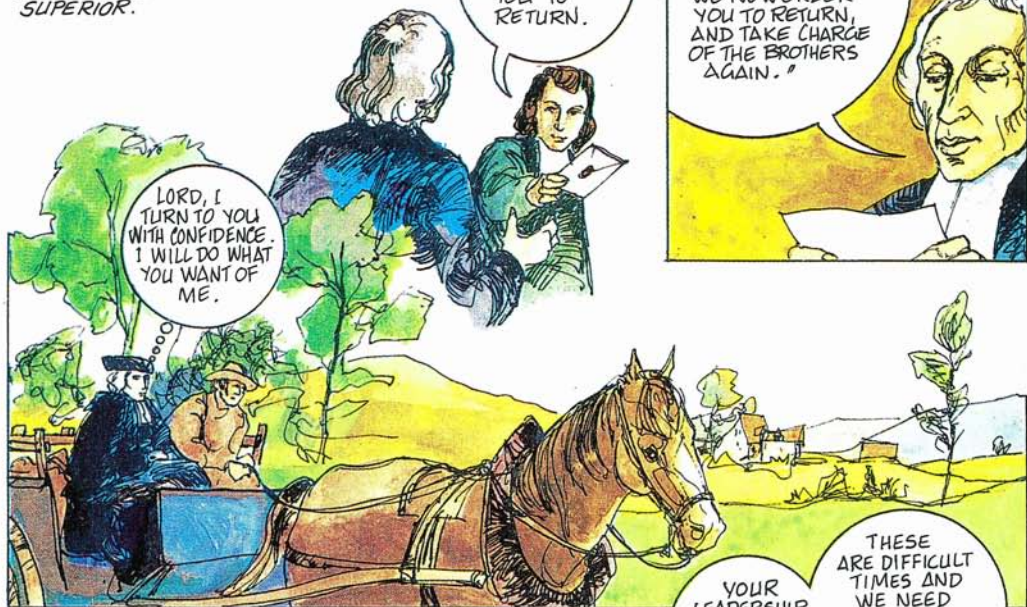
EVERYTHING I DO SEEMS TO GO WRONG. I FEEL THAT I HAVE FAILED. EVERYONE IS AGAINST ME. WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO GIVE IT ALL UP?

ONE OF THE BISHOPS WANTED THE NEXT SUPERIOR OF THE BROTHERS TO BE A PRIEST (AND NOT ONE OF THE BROTHERS THEMSELVES), AND SO THE BROTHERS WROTE A LETTER TO JOHN, ASKING HIM TO RETURN AS SUPERIOR.

THE BROTHERS SEND YOU WARM GREETINGS, AND ASK YOU TO RETURN.

"YOU REMEMBER THAT WE MADE A VOW OF OBEDIENCE TOGETHER. IN LOVE, WE NOW ORDER YOU TO RETURN, AND TAKE CHARGE OF THE BROTHERS AGAIN."

LORD, I TURN TO YOU WITH CONFIDENCE. I WILL DO WHAT YOU WANT OF ME.



ON 10 AUGUST, 1714:

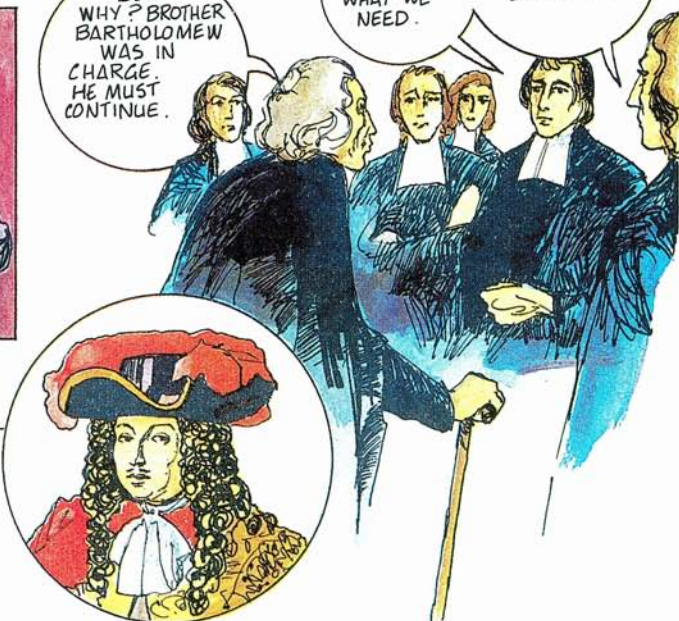
AT LAST! FOR TWO YEARS WE HAVE FELT LIKE ORPHANS!



BUT WHY? BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW WAS IN CHARGE. HE MUST CONTINUE.

YOUR LEADERSHIP IS WHAT WE NEED.

THESE ARE DIFFICULT TIMES AND WE NEED YOU TO LEAD US.

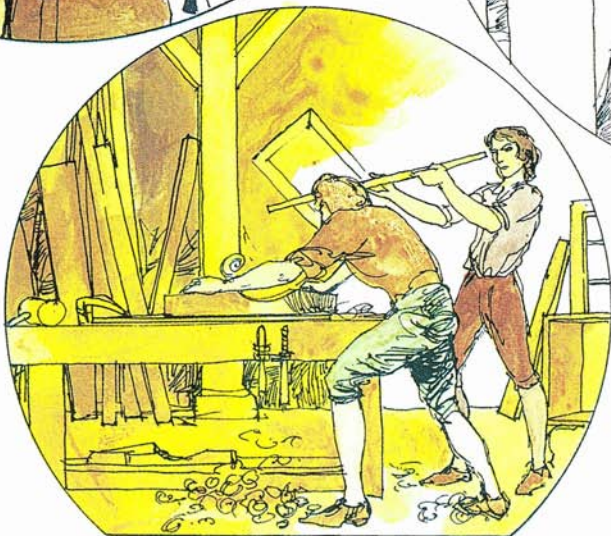


FOR 61 YEARS LOUIS XIV - THE 'SUN KING' - HAD BEEN ONE OF THE GREATEST KINGS OF FRANCE. IN 1715 HE DIED.



ANOTHER NEW IDEA WAS THE SETTING UP OF A KIND OF 'REFORMATORY', WHERE BOYS WERE SENT WHO HAD BEEN IN TROUBLE. THERE THEY WERE TAUGHT A TRADE.

WITH PATIENCE AND CARE THEY WERE LED TO BE BETTER CITIZENS, AND SOME THEN JOINED THE ORDINARY BOARDING SCHOOL, ALSO IN ST YON.



JOHN INSPIRED THE TEACHERS TO GIVE A GOOD EDUCATION IN ALL THE SCHOOLS, AND PREPARE STUDENTS FOR LIFE IN SOCIETY: TO BE RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS AS WELL AS GOOD CHRISTIANS.

WHEN THE FOUNDER OF THE BROTHERS VISITED SOME SCHOOLS, THE LOCAL PEOPLE WANTED TO HONOUR HIM.

I DON'T DESERVE THIS!

EVERYONE IN OUR TOWN WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT YOU WITH THIS SMALL GIFT, TO THANK YOU FOR CARING ENOUGH TO HELP.

WHY IS THERE A MAN BEHIND THAT CURTAIN?

WE'VE ASKED HIM TO PAINT YOUR PORTRAIT.

I'M NOT AT ALL HAPPY WITH THIS!

BROTHER BARTHOLOMEW IS ELECTED SUPERIOR, BY THE MAJORITY OF VOTES.

GOOD! HE'S BEEN DOING MUCH OF THE JOB FOR A LONG TIME!

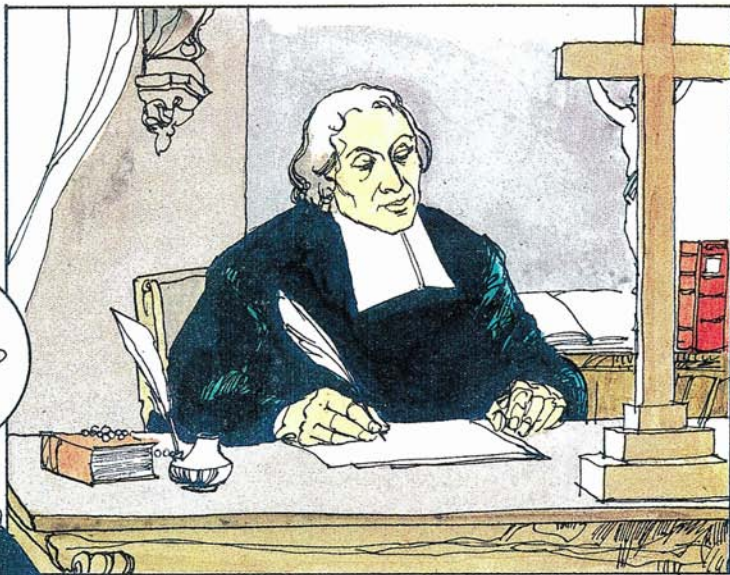
HE DIDN'T ACCEPT ANY MORE INVITATIONS TO DINNER! JOHN'S CONCERN NOW WAS TO CONVINCE THE BROTHERS THAT THEY NEEDED TO CHOOSE A NEW SUPERIOR: ONE OF THEMSELVES.

DURING HIS LIFETIME JOHN WROTE SEVERAL BOOKS FOR TEACHERS AND FOR PUPILS. EACH MONTH HE WROTE TO EVERY BROTHER. IN GREATER PEACE HE NOW HAD THE TIME TO WRITE PRAYERFUL MEDITATIONS FOR TEACHERS. HE PUT THE FINAL TOUCHES TO THE BROTHERS' "RULE", ABOUT THEIR WAY OF LIFE.

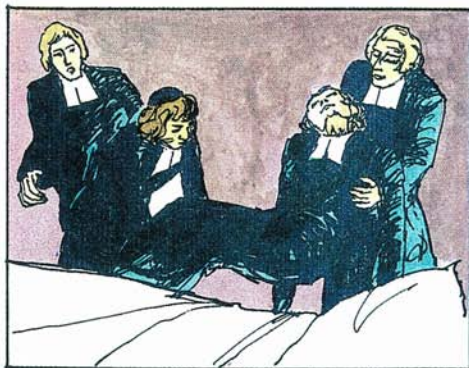
NOW THAT HE WASN'T THE SUPERIOR ANY LONGER, JOHN THOUGHT OF HIMSELF AS THE LEAST IMPORTANT OF ALL THE BROTHERS.

FATHER JOHN, WE ALL OWE YOU SO MUCH. I SHOULD BE KNEELING BEFORE YOU.

WILL YOU GIVE ME PERMISSION TO WRITE TO BROTHER GABRIEL IN ROME?



FOR A SICK AND ELDERLY MAN, BAD ACCIDENTS CAN BE VERY SERIOUS.



ON GOOD FRIDAY, 7th APRIL 1719 JOHN DIED, AGED 67. EVEN AS JOHN LAY DYING, THE ARCHBISHOP (WHO HAD BEEN GIVEN WRONG INFORMATION ABOUT JOHN) SENT HIM A MESSAGE: HE WAS NO LONGER TO BE ALLOWED TO HEAR ANYONE'S CONFESSION.



HE HAS HAD A LARGE SHARE OF THE CROSS IN LIFE. NOW HE LIVES WITH THE RISEN LORD!

IN HIS LAST YEARS, JOHN OFTEN VISITED SCHOOL WHEN THE PUPILS WERE OUT OF CLASS.

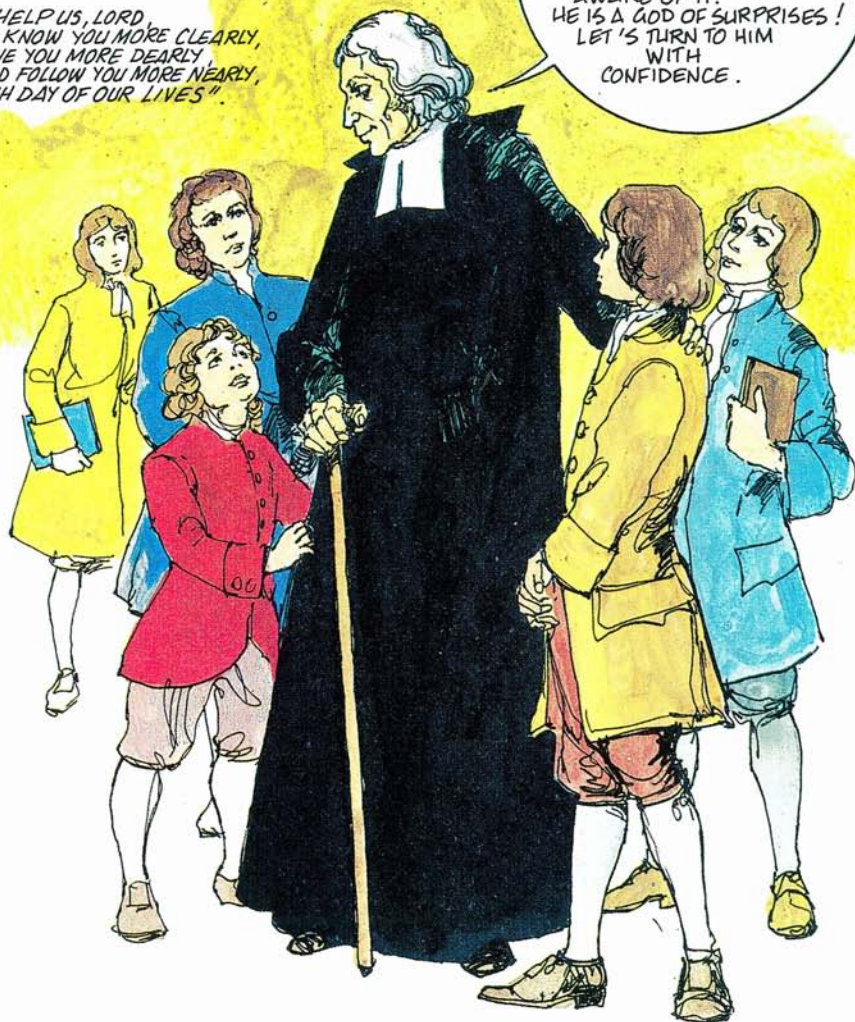
SOME 300 YEARS LATER, JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE WAS DECLARED A SAINT. IN 1950 HE WAS MADE THE PATRON SAINT OF TEACHERS. THERE ARE NOW 35 BROTHERS WHO JOIN HIM IN BEING CALLED "SAINT" OR "BLESSED": FROM BELGIUM, ECUADOR, FRANCE, REUNION, AND SPAIN.

WE, TOO, ARE CALLED TO BE 'SAINTS' - TO BE 'FULLY ALIVE', TO GO ABOUT OUR ORDINARY LIVES IN AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY.

"HELP US, LORD,
TO KNOW YOU MORE CLEARLY,
LOVE YOU MORE DEARLY,
AND FOLLOW YOU MORE NEARLY,
EACH DAY OF OUR LIVES".

TO GET INVOLVED
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
WAS NEVER MY OWN PLAN.

LOOKING BACK, I NOW SEE THAT
GOD WAS LEADING ME SLOWLY
AND WISELY FROM ONE THING
TO ANOTHER, WITHOUT FORCING
ME, AND WITHOUT MY BEING
AWARE OF IT.
HE IS A GOD OF SURPRISES!
LET'S TURN TO HIM
WITH
CONFIDENCE.



**If you would like to know more about the
De La Salle Christian Brothers, please see
the following websites:**

**www.brothersvocation.org
www.lasalle.org**



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