



commissioned by the Lasallian Mission Council, ANZPPNG,
to develop formation programs for all Lasallians

23 April 2019

A program in response to a request

In November this year the Gerard Rummery Institute will initiate a new formation program, *Together for Mission*.

The program has been designed in response to a request.

For some years now, people from our District, including the three of us, have been able to participate in the Buttimer Institute program in the United States. To be part of an extended and intensive course with people from many other Lasallian works has been a very significant experience, personally and professionally..

For obvious reasons, including cost and time away, many people who would enjoy such an experience are unable to travel to the United States in the northern summer vacation. Hence the request: could the Gerard Rummery Institute design a program to be run within the District, and which would provide a similar experience, while attuned to local needs and realities?

Together for Mission is our response to that request.

In a number of ways, as suggested by Principals among others, *Together for Mission* will be different from the Buttimer program. While Buttimer is a three-year set of two-week summer courses, TFM will run over four semesters, with one four-day working block per semester. The Lasallian component will integrate the ongoing story, pedagogy and spirituality throughout the program, rather than dealing with them discretely.

We believe that TFM accords very well with what our Institute has long understood as being genuine formation for mission, to be elaborated in the revised handbook for formation due for publication in June this year.

A focus on young people and our capacity to work with them

We want to stress that the aim of the TFM program is not primarily to do with the Lasallian 'brand', however proud of it we are. The aim is to develop our capacity to work effectively with young people.

Many of us have also been enriched by immersion in the charisms of other congregations, and we continue to draw on what we have learned from them – as De La Salle himself did from those who came before him, and as other teaching congregations have done since. They, too, will be honoured within our exploration of the story. It is, after all, *God's* mission, and ours only by an invitation to which many individuals and communities have responded over the centuries.

So our *aim* relates not to ourselves, but to our young people:

“Together, to enhance our personal and collective capacity to work effectively for the wellbeing and education of young people, especially the most vulnerable.”

We will do this by drawing on three major sources of expertise and wisdom:

- the personal and professional experience of those participating
- the best of contemporary educational and social research
- our 340 years of adapting to the differing needs and contexts of young people

From reflection to action

Individually and together, participants will have a basis on which critically to reflect on their present work with young people, affirming what continues to be valuable, and deciding on practical means of implementing desirable change.

Over the four semesters and in consultation with their Principal/CEO *yourtown*, participants will accordingly work on a practical project of value within their workplace, whether for themselves personally, or for some or all of their colleagues.

We see this program as an opportunity for us to collaborate with each participating school and *yourtown* in developing an ongoing plan for in-house staff formation. We would be very happy to engage in discussion with Principals/CEO *yourtown*, and participants, before and after each block of the program, in determining the formation needs within individual workplaces and planning how best to address them.

Residential rather than online

Experience both in Australia, with the very successful ‘online’ program some years ago, and with the Buttimer program in the United States, indicates that there is no substitute for interpersonal encounter. Our own online program involved a full face-to-face weekend every semester for two years. It was on the basis of that experience that the request for *Together for Mission* included an insistence that it be residential. It will, of course, make full use of the online resources that have been developed in our District and elsewhere.

Structure

The program will be organised in four blocks of four working days, over four semesters. For the first block, and we expect for subsequent blocks, participants will travel on the Sunday, meeting in the early evening. Monday to Thursday will be working days. Friday will be a travel day. We are open to the possibility of running some blocks during school holidays (*Block 2: 19-24 April 2020*).

Conscious of cost

We recognise that travel, accommodation and time out of school represent a major cost to our schools and to *yourtown*. We have tried to keep the cost of the program as low as possible without compromising its quality. So as not to impact too heavily on formation budgets, we have deliberately excluded other residential programs from the 2019 calendar, except where requested by our works themselves.

The curriculum

The curriculum will be arranged so as to allow reflection and action arising out of the three sources of wisdom indicated above: participants’ own personal and professional experience, the best of contemporary educational and social research, and the stimulus of our 340-year experience of addressing the needs of young people in many different contexts.

Our heritage includes, of course, De La Salle’s substantial collected works, including *The Conduct of the Christian Schools*, itself the product of educators working ‘together for mission’, and so often seen as relevant in many ways to working with young people today.

Contemporary educational research will include such areas as visible learning, and the development of capabilities and competencies for learning and for life as they relate to participants’ own work.

Contemporary social research will include data gathered and analyzed by *yourtown* in regard to the clients within the wide range of services *yourtown* offers throughout Australia, including Kids Helpline. It will also include reflection on statistical and other data available regarding our varied cultural and religious contexts.

In brief, the first block (November 2019) will begin with a focus on the varied experiences and needs of the young people we serve, and on the ways in which our various works are striving to understand and address them. This is what De La Salle and the early Brothers had to do, and in the words of the Brothers’ recently revised Rule, they were ‘deeply moved’ by what they saw. We will explore the implications of the current understanding of ‘mission’. A comparison of ‘together and by association’

from our heritage, and 'collective efficacy' in contemporary educational writing will further help us understand 'together for mission'. Seeing *The Conduct of the Christian Schools* as an outcome of sustained reflection on effective practice even in the very different parts of France during De La Salle's lifetime will encourage us to explore our own capacity to adapt to the needs of different young people in different contexts.

We are committed throughout the program to reflecting on the significant role that women have exercised, and continue to exercise, within the Lasallian story and family – and on the implications for leadership within our works and their governance.

Facilitators

Facilitators will include:

Ms Tracy Adams - CEO, *yourtown*; extensive experience within and beyond the global Lasallian Family; keynote speaker at international events including the 2019 World Congress of Lasallian Education in Mexico City; Board Director of Lasallian Mission Council ANZPPNG; Affiliated Member of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Mr Wayne Bull - Chair, Lasallian Mission Council ANZPPNG; Team Leader School Improvement, Catholic Education Western Australia; former Principal, La Salle College, Middle Swan; experienced presenter on the Lasallian charism in Australia and overseas; graduate of Lasallian Education Services Leadership course; Affiliated Member of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Mr John Dagleish - Head of Strategy and Research, *yourtown*, which generates new knowledge about issues impacting young people, and how to respond effectively; experience in leading government and not for profit teams in such areas as child protection and juvenile justice; member of the Social Impact Measurement Network Australia; a Partner Investigator in several projects funded by the Australian Research Council.

Dr Jill Gowdie - Teacher (primary to university); leader of Identity, Mission and Religious Education Services Team of Brisbane Catholic Education; author of *Stirring the Soul of Catholic Education* (2017); Board Director of Lasallian Mission Council ANZPPNG; faculty member, BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education.

Br Gerard Rummery - internationally-recognised Lasallian scholar, author, translator and lecturer; former Director of the International Lasallian Centre, Rome; former General Councillor of the Institute; Founding Patron of the Gerard Rummery Institute, named in his honour.

Mr John Foley - Principal of St Michael's College, Adelaide; graduate of the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian studies; post-graduate qualifications in educational leadership, and a particular interest in aligning the best of contemporary educational research with relevant aspects of Lasallian pedagogy.

Mr Kane Raukura - Faculty Head of Science, and Lasallian facilitator at De La Salle College, Mangere East (NZ); Chair of NZ Sector Mission Council; graduate of the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian studies; lecturer in the Brother John Johnston Institute of Contemporary Lasallian Practice; Affiliated Member of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Ms Amanda Proulx - Director (Young Lasallians) and Adult Formation facilitator, Lasallian Mission Services; graduate of the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian studies; faculty member, BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education.

Br John Cantwell - Director (Formation), Lasallian Mission Services; lecturer (2018-2019), Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies; faculty member, BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education.

Venue and future venues

The first block will be held at Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre, Ormiston (Brisbane) from the evening of Sunday 10 November 2019 (travel day) to the morning of Friday 15 November (travel day). Santa Teresa is a very pleasant facility that we have used for some years, with individual ensuite rooms and excellent catering. It is an ideal setting for such a program. Depending on availability, we will also use other venues in the future. Blocks 2-4 will be timed to best suit the workplaces of participants, taking account, also, of the availability of suitable venues.

Participants

For the sake of a valuable sharing of experience, we wish to engage people in significant positions of leadership: Principals, Managers, Board Directors, Assistant/Deputy Principals and leaders of particular areas within workplaces. We will also especially welcome people looking towards future leadership opportunities, who may see the program as an advantageous step in that direction.

Academic Credit

It will be possible to complete at least one unit of a post-graduate qualification (e.g. Grad Cert, Masters) through BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education. This can be done through a generic unit called an Independent Directed Study, in which the content and assignment work can be determined by consultation between ourselves and the BBI course coordinator. Jill Gowdie, Amanda Proulx and John Cantwell are members of the BBI-TAITE faculty. BBI-TAITE accepts single-unit enrolments, and offers the possibility of cross-institutional credit with other tertiary bodies such as Australian Catholic University. We will be very happy to work with participants undertaking an Independent Directed Study.

Cost

The cost for the first block will be \$1990, to cover accommodation for five nights, meals from Sunday evening to Friday morning, drinks on Sunday evening, conference room hire, program costs over four days, and resource materials including a published biography of John Baptist De La Salle.

Application and selection process

Numbers will be limited to 24 participants, the limit being determined by the number of individual rooms available at the venue. We will attempt to make places available to people from a wide range of works within the District of ANZPPNG, and there is already interest from people beyond the District.

The expectation is that participants would enrol for the full program of four blocks/semesters.

The program will be available to a second cohort in 2020.

Invitations to enrol in the first cohort will be on the basis of an initial expression of interest and an appropriate spread of participants. Following consideration of expressions of interest, application forms will be sent to those to be invited to join the first cohort.

Expressions of interest are being received now, and **until Friday May 10**. The final date for reception of application forms from invited participants will be Friday 31 May, and notifications will be finalised by Friday 28 June.

Please send expressions of interest to johncantwell@delasalle.org.au, including:

- Name of person interested
- Role
- Experience
- Likely benefit to the person and the workplace
- Previous Lasallian and other formation
- Supporting comments by Principal/CEO *yourtown*

Further information

There will be a short presentation regarding the program at APLEC (14-16 April).

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the *Together for Mission* program with Principals/CEO *yourtown* and other leaders, and with prospective participants.

We will shortly be contacting Principals/CEO *yourtown* regarding the possibility, where practicable, of discussing the program with them, as well as the associated opportunity for helping to plan and present in-house formation involving participants from their workplaces.

Merv McCormack, Executive Director, Lasallian Mission Council
Amanda Proulx, Director (Young Lasallians), Lasallian Mission Services
John Cantwell fsc, Director (Formation), Lasallian Mission Services