



## Prayer in Vocation

**De La Salle and Two Brothers Profess Heroic Vows** (November 21)

### **A School Prayer:**

Today we recall when St. La Salle and two Brothers heroically vowed to keep the work of the schools going even if it meant that they would have to live on bread alone. Loving Creator, we look to the fortitude and integrity you inspire in us to commit ourselves to building community with each other, to serving others, and to deepening faith in You. May we enter heroically into both the big and small decisions of our lives. We pray through your Son, our brother Jesus. Amen.

### **A Classroom Prayer:**

Jesus, you approached the events of your life with the courage and the confidence that God was with and in you. As we enter the time of year in class when much is expected of us, may we be strengthened in your confidence. Help us to show gratitude for what we have come to learn. May we, like St. La Salle, heroically face difficult times by joining with each other in encouragement and support. Amen.

### **A Prayer for Parents** *(could be used in a newsletter):*

At a time of crisis, Saint John Baptist de La Salle and two of the Brothers vowed to keep working at establishing and maintaining the schools. May we, as parents, continue to find within us the confidence and fortitude to meet the challenges of raising our children to be people of faith. When the challenges of parenting seem overwhelming, may we also turn to others for the support that allows us to accept what we know we must do. Amen.

### **The Story:**

In 1691, John Baptist de La Salle, aged forty, took stock of his situation. Ten years had passed since he had first brought the schoolmasters to live with his family. He had little cause for joy. It was true that there were eight charity schools functioning and giving general satisfaction. On the other hand, there had been quite a number of deaths among the Brothers, idealistic young men carried off by the exhausting nature of their work in deplorable conditions. The fact that their deaths had been uniformly edifying did not compensate for the loss of such men. How, John wondered, was he to keep the schools staffed? How was he to meet the requests that came to him to open more? The training establishment for lay teachers had now produced sufficient village schoolmasters for the needs of the rural areas in the vicinity of Rheims and had ceased to operate. Vocations to the Community had almost dried up. It began to look as if the whole enterprise might crumble in the hands of its founder. Understandably John felt the need of support and encouragement and for this he turned to two of the Brothers in whom he had special confidence. Convinced, in spite of everything, that the work of the Christian Schools should go forward, he persuaded these two Brothers to join with him in making a vow that even if everybody else abandoned them they would cling together and try to keep the Institute going, even if it should mean begging for their meals, even if it meant living on bread alone. This heroic vow they pronounced on the feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, 21<sup>st</sup> November 1691. For John Baptist de La Salle it was a key-moment in his journey of faith.