



## DAY TWO: FOR OUR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

**Most Holy Family -  
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph  
- we call on you today on  
behalf of our students**

**and their families. We ask you to bless their homes with the love and grace which characterized and nurtured your holy family. Many of the young people entrusted to our care have experienced loneliness and fear, the divorce or death of parents, and so many dangerous attractions of immediate and transitory happiness. Inspire us to care for them with the vigilance of guardian angels and the affection of parents so that we may touch their hearts, as You expect us to do. Move us to hear and respond to our young disciples, whenever they call.**

As I read this prayer for the 2nd day of our Vocation Novena, I'm struck by a few things. In February 2004, I wrote each of you asking you to consider some thoughts on this prayer. As time goes on new thoughts or insights come to light and I would like to share a few of these with you. **"In St. La Salle's time, as it is today, the prime responsibility for the education of the child belongs by natural right to**

**the parents. In a Lasallian school this responsibility finds expression in a close collaboration between teachers and parents. The role of the children, the link between these two groups, cannot be ignored because, while they can make their different teachers aware of the wishes and examples of their parents, it is also the role of these students to bring to the attention of their parents the knowledge and good habits which they learn in school. Parents were asked to cooperate with the teachers by not listening to complaints, but by checking with the teachers as to the actual state of affairs."** [Lasallian Pedagogy by Bro. Yves Poutet] How are we, the teacher, guidance counselor, and principal, cooperating with parents today in the care of their children? Are you available to help your students get through their loneliness, and fears? Do you have a way to communicate with their parents? Can your students see in you great compassion?

The second thing that got my attention was the last sentence and the word vigilance. St. La Salle was in a way sharing his personal experiences with the early Brothers and through them with their disciples when he wrote his work the Conduct. Remember this was a work that went through many editions and the principal brothers had a lot of input into its publication. His great care and concern for the students through the virtue of vigilance is extraordinary. Notice how he compares our vigilance with that of guardian angels. Brother Agathon, Superior General @1785 when expanding on the 12 virtues of a good teacher, gives a lengthy explanation of this virtue. I'll give a brief summary here: **"VIGILANCE obliges a teacher to be watchful in regard to all his/her actions, all his/her words, and never to be unaware of what his/her pupils are doing. In other words, the Lasallian teacher is the guard-**

ian angel of his/her pupils. He/she is the watch person who prevents accidents much more than an 'overseer' on the lookout to punish. Vigilance avoids having to inflict punishment. It finds opportunities to encourage, to praise, to reward, to stimulate even to invent." [Lasallian Pedagogy by Bro. Yves Poutet] St. La Salle on several occasions wrote to the Brothers about his concern that they, the Brothers, and indirectly to us, of the vigilance we must have for our students. He shares this insight with us today. **"Because Guardian Angels, being very enlightened and knowing the good as it really is, God makes known this true good and the secrets of his holy will to those whom he has predestined to be his adopted children of Jesus Christ, by whom he has called them to be his heirs. [Eph 1:5,9,11] By the light these angels share with those who are called, they teach them the good that ought to be practiced, and what they ought to do to become heirs. This was symbolized by the ladder which Jacob saw in a dream when he was going to Mesopotamia. Angels were going up and coming down the ladder. [Gn 28:12] They were going up to God to make known to him the needs of those for whom he had made them responsible and to receive orders for them. You must do the same thing for the children entrusted to your care. It is your duty to go up to God every day by prayer to learn from him all that you must teach your children, and then come down to them by accommodating yourself to their level in order to instruct them about what God has communicated to you for them in your prayer as well as in the Holy Scripture."** [MTR 198.1] St. La Salle is telling each Brother how to fulfill this mission. Every Lasallian teacher

must be a person of prayer. Prayer is how we learn the will of God. **"Prayer is a dialogue and it cannot be any other way. It is a loving dialogue with God in which God takes the initiative."** [Bro. Alvaro, Letter 2002 p.25] Each and every Lasallian must find time each day to be quiet and listen to the voice of God. You recall that in my comments on "Day One of our Vocation Prayer," I mentioned that each of us has a vocation. Because of the demands put upon each of us, St. La Salle had to keep reminding each of the Brothers and ourselves of the importance our vocation **of teaching minds and touching hearts.**

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