



The
Christian
Brothers

TRIO

The Brothers are everywhere. We are present in every continent and in almost every country of the world. We do many things. We mostly run schools, but we have all different kinds of schools and are engaged in all different kinds of work.

The Brothers are totally present in Europe. We are behind the Iron Curtain in Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia; we are in France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Germany and Holland; we are in England, Ireland, Scotland and Malta, and we are in Morocco, Turkey, and Monaco. We are all over Africa, in Egypt, Algeria, and Eritrea; in Ethiopia, Madagascar, the Isle of Reunion, the Congo, Tunisia, Togoland, Nigeria, Mali, and the Isle of Mauritius, in Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa. In the Americas we are in Canada, Mexico, Aruba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Nicaragua, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Colombia, Peru, Chili, Venezuela, and Ecuador, in the Antilles, in Honduras, in Santo Domingo and the United States. In Asia we are Thais, Vietnamese, Pakistani, Filipinos, Malaysians, Lebanese, Jordanians, Israeli, Japanese, Ceylonese and Burmese, and in Oceania, we are Papuans, Australians, and New Zealanders.

In short the Brothers are quite a crowd in some eighty different countries representing every known culture and background. Mostly we run good schools and we are very serious about quality education. We are a no-nonsense group of men who want to help kids and the parents of our kids. We want our students to be successful in life; but mainly we want them to be good people, successful about living.

The Brothers are engaged in all sorts of work to achieve this end. We run schools for college-bound students and work-bound-technical students; we teach seminarians but we also teach prisoners and take care of delinquents; under the sea we teach marine biology and on land agriculture; we conduct Hacienda schools for the workmen of landowners and we teach the sons of the rich who own the land; we treat drug addicts and alcoholics, psychotics and neurotics; we run boarding schools for the rich who need us and half-way houses and schools for the emotionally disturbed child from the ghetto; we teach English as a second language to Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Blacks and Indians; but we also teach college students how to read blue-prints and write up sophisticated reports; we are in poor neighborhoods harnessing the energies of the very poor, organizing the College, the Prison, the Parish, the Neighborhood; we teach the PhD Candidate and the drop-out from grade and high school; we run adult classes in the parish and in school; we teach the parents of our students; we are on diocesan boards, and in some cases we are superintendents of schools; we are in politics organizing the people; we teach sons of prisoners; the halt, and the blind.

The Brothers are intelligent, well-educated, compassionate, unselfish and full of faith. We are all things to all men. Like any crowd, we have the poor amongst us, but we are all the richer because of them. We have some two hundred and seventy-five young men in the American Assistancy who want to follow in our footsteps. These young men are harbingers of a new spring for our Institute.

The man who was the founder of Our Crowd, who planted the seed which grew into such a large tree was John Baptist De La Salle. The Institute is John's Place in the world.

He is our father because both by his life and word he gave us life, a life which makes us Brothers of the Christian Schools. Our Founder applied the spirit of the Gospel to a continued need in history, to the poor and to those in need of the gospel message.

The poor we will always have with us and the poor in heart, those who have lost courage in the face of life's ambiguities, are with us more than ever before. People in the time of De La Salle lived in an atmosphere of faith; we live in an age of unbelief; people in the time of De La Salle lived in a relatively uncomplicated culture; we live in a very complicated, sophisticated, secularized, technological society whose forms and values change each day with the speed of lightning.

People who say that there is no longer any need for our Institute, for a group of faith-filled, unselfish, loving men who lay down their lives for those in need, men who are witnesses to the transcendental and champions for quality education, must be living on another planet. That is why both Church and Institute in Council and Chapter took a great leap into the 20th century in order that we might respond more adequately to this need.

An important aspect of "Our Crowd" is that it is not really a crowd. In a crowd a man very easily loses his identity. In our fellowship a man becomes more himself and discovers himself precisely because of the people with whom and for whom he lives and works. The man entering our Society receives life and gives life, creates and is created. In fact, Our Crowd was never more needed in all of history.