

BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS – BETHLEHEM, JERUSALEM, JAFFA

22 GIUGNO 2025

To our dear Religious Sisters and Brothers, fellow Lasallians, Bishops, clergy, and all people of good will, “Ask God for the grace to touch hearts. This is the greatest miracle you can perform.”

(Saint John Baptist de La Salle, Meditation)



As Brothers of the Christian Schools serving in the Holy Land, we write to you from Bethlehem University—an institution entrusted to our Congregation and co-founded with the Vatican fifty-one years ago; from College de Freres, Bethlehem founded in 1893; from Ecoles de Freres, Jerusalem, founded in 1876; and from Saint Joseph’s School, Jaffa, founded in 1900. Our University and school communities are living through one of the darkest and most painful periods in our history. The suffering of the Palestinian people, and especially of our students and their families, weighs heavily upon us.

Yet even in these days of war, displacement, and heartbreak, our sacred educational mission endures - thanks to God’s grace.

We are deeply grateful for the courageous and prayerful support that continues to arrive from Lasallians and people of good will across the globe. Your messages, prayers, and acts of solidarity remind us that we are not alone. You nourish our hope and affirm the sacred value of our shared Lasallian Catholic educational mission.

At Bethlehem University and in our schools, we educate for peace, we accompany the young, and we form women and men of justice, competence and compassion. This mission, grounded in the Gospel and the vision of Saint

John Baptist de La Salle, Patron Saint of Teachers, is more vital than ever. We are witnesses to both devastation and resilience. And in the face of despair, we see our faculty and staff colleagues courageously accompanying the students entrusted to their care, and we see our students choose life, learning, and community. We affirm, with our Founder's conviction, that:

"You are ministers of God's compassion. You are helping the poor to recognize and develop the gifts that God has given them." (Meditation 195.2)

We write to invite you to remain close to the Lasallian Catholic educational mission in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and Jaffa.

Keep our students and their families in your daily prayers.

Speak publicly for justice and peace rooted in truth and dignity.

Support institutions—like Bethlehem University, Colleges de Freres, Ecole de Freres, and Saint Joseph's- that offer dignity, education, and hope amid occupation and violence. In the footsteps of Christ the Teacher, and in union with our global Lasallian family, we recommit ourselves to our fellow faculty, staff, and administrator colleagues, to our graduates, and especially to the students entrusted to us, all who are made in the image and likeness of God. May the voices of those who suffer awaken compassion, and may we respond with faith, courage, and action.

"Let diplomacy silence the weapons! Let nations shape their future with works of peace, not through violence and bloody conflicts!" (22 June 2025 Angelus address, Pope Leo XIV)

We thank you for walking with us.

In fraternal solidarity and Lasallian hope,

Brother Mark McKeon, FSC District of Australia

Brother Daoud Kassabry, FSC, District of Proche de Orient

Brother Peter Iorlano, FSC, District of Eastern North America

Brother Alejandro Cerna, FSC, District of Mexico North

Brother Patcho, FSC, District of ARLEP

Brother Jack Curran, FSC, District of Eastern North America

Brother Hernán Santos, FSC, District of Argentina-Paraguay

Brother Jean Manuel, FSC, District of Proche Orient

Brother Anthony, FSC, District of Eastern North America

Brother Joseph, FSC, District of San Francisco New Orleans

Brother Albert, FSC, District of Proche Orient