

## Key Lasallian Terms: a style guide

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This guide to the spelling and usage of some key Lasallian terms is intended to help us move toward clear and consistent usage in our writing.

This is a work-in-progress and not a final summation.

Items followed by asterisks (\*) are discussed in the End Notes.

**Brothers of the Christian Schools** is the official name of the religious institute founded by Saint John Baptist de La Salle.

The Latin words are **Fratres Scholarum Christianarum** (“Brothers of the Christian Schools”).

After a Brother’s name, these three words are abbreviated as **FSC**, without points. For example,

Brother John Doe, FSC

In official formulations and formal writing, the official name **Brothers of the Christian Schools** can be used on first reference. For example,

Josephine Smith has been recognized for her service to Lasallian education

by being named an Affiliated Member of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In the United States, informal reference has, in the past, habitually been to the **Christian Brothers**. For example,

Brother John Doe, FSC, is a Christian Brother.

OR

The Christian Brothers sponsored the three-day retreat.

**Because other groups have similar names, however, confusion is possible and should be avoided.** To mark unmistakably our Lasallian identity, it is preferable to use, whenever possible, a more distinctive term that incorporates the name of the Founder. In some parts of the world, this is done by referring to the “De La Salle Brothers.” **For the United States, the recommended usage is “De La Salle Christian Brothers.”** \* For example,

Brother John Doe, FSC, and three other De La Salle Christian Brothers attended the conference.

OR

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The Brothers of the Christian Schools – more commonly known as the De La Salle Christian Brothers – have been providing education in the United States continuously since 1837.

## **The Institute**

The Brothers of the Christian Schools are a religious institute. The term “institute” is technically more correct than the traditional terms “congregation” and “order” to describe a canonical group of consecrated religious in the Church.

In formal style, on first reference, we often use this full formulation:

**The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.**

On second reference, we often refer to **the Institute** (with initial capital)

When the context requires it, we often speak of the **the international Institute** – but “international” is not part of the title and is not capitalized. For example:

The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools has its headquarters, or Generalate, in Rome. This international **Institute** is at work now in more than 80 countries.

## **FSC**

This is the initial letters of the three Latin words Fratres Scholarum Christianarum.

It is spelled **FSC, without points**

It is used after a Brother’s full name on first reference; it is preceded by a comma; and if it occurs in mid-sentence it is also followed by a comma. It is not necessary to repeat FSC in second references to the same Brother. For example:

Brother Robert Jones, FSC, was the first speaker. Brother Robert’s remarks were well received.

## **Brother**

In reference to a member of the Institute, always capitalize **Brother**, both for general reference and as the title of a specific Brother. For example:

At the liturgy, three Brothers spoke the prayers of intercession. The first to speak was Brother John Doe.

**Brother** should normally be spelled out in full. But if space is limited – as in the caption to a photograph or in other tight space – it may be abbreviated as **Br.** or **Bro.**

On second reference to a specific Brother, use Brother-plus-first-name, not Brother-plus-surname.\*\* For example:

Brother Frederick Smith, FSC, received the Distinguished Teacher Award from the school’s president. Brother Frederick is a De La Salle Christian Brother with more than three decades of teaching experience. .

“Brother” remains capitalized when referring to a group. For example:

The Brothers were all gathered in the chapel at eight o’clock.

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When writing out a list of Brothers containing three, four, or more names, do what is clearest and least obtrusive according to the style in which you're writing. For example:

- In more formal style:

Among the guests were Brother Frederick Smith, FSC, Brother Joseph Jones, FSC, and Brother Robert Brown, FSC.

- In more informal style:

De La Salle Christian Brothers Frederick Smith, Joseph Jones, and Robert Brown were among the guests.

### **John Baptist de La Salle**

He is the founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In his full name, **only 'de' is not capitalized.**

On second reference, his surname is three words: **De La Salle**. Note that when these three words stand alone, the "De" is always capitalized. For example:

When the Brothers commanded him to return to Paris, De La Salle obeyed.

He is not referred to simply as "La Salle" but always as "De La Salle". This is the way he signed himself. Using "De La Salle" avoids confusion with another man, the explorer of the Great Lakes, Rene-Robert Cavalier, sieur de La Salle, who is often referred to in North American usage as "La Salle."]

Spell all words in their English form: Don't use Jean or Baptiste

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle** is correct and is the preferred term when referring to the Founder as a saint of the Catholic Church. It is generally better to spell out "Saint." But if space is tight or other saints are also listed, "St." may be used.

[**Saint La Salle** is an older term that is still seen sometimes. Avoid, however, using "Saint De La Salle" or "Saint John La Salle".]\*\*\*

When referring to him as a founder in a general way, 'founder' is lower-cased. But when using "Founder" in effect as a title, capitalize "Founder." For example:

The founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is Saint John Baptist de La Salle. The Founder is regarded as a model by all Lasallians. We often pray to De La Salle for guidance.

### **La Salle**

This shorter version of De La Salle's name appears in the title of many Lasallian institutions, such as "Mont La Salle" and "La Salle High School." It is appropriate in such names. But it is to be avoided when referring to the man after whom these institutions are named. He is always "De La Salle."

La Salle is always written as two words and not run together. For example:

**La Salle** High School is correct.

Lasalle High School is incorrect.

LaSalle High School is incorrect.\*\*\*\*

## **Lasallian**

The word “Lasallian” is derived from ‘La Salle’ but is always printed as a single word, not two words.

It is always spelled with no spaces and with only the first letter capitalized:

**Lasallian** is correct

Do not write “LaSallian” or “La Sallian”

The word can be used as an adjective with an expressed noun. For example:

There are four **Lasallian schools** in the city.

It can also stand alone to refer to persons within the Lasallian mission. For example:

Many **Lasallians** from around the world took part in the meeting

## **Lasallian Partner**

This term refers to colleagues, associates, co-workers, and supporters who contribute to the Lasallian educational mission but who are not members of the De La Salle Christian Brothers.

“Partner” is not an official term and does not indicate any formal status. But it is commonly used to refer to persons in that vast group of non-Brothers who work in the mission. The term “Partner” can be used without “Lasallian”. It is generally capitalized as a sign of respect. For example:

Attending the annual conference were twenty-two Christian Brothers and some one hundred fifty **Lasallian Partners**. Of the **Partners** in attendance, about half were women.

## **District**

A District is a geographical entity of the sort that other religious congregations often refer to as a ‘province.’

In the west, the District founded in 1868 is called **the District of San Francisco**.

**On first reference, the full name should be used.**

On second reference, however, in informal usage, it’s acceptable to use **the San Francisco District**.

If the meaning is clear and the context requires repeated references, you can shorten references to use simply **the District** (with a capital “D”).

The term “province” is more familiar to general readers than the Lasallian term “district;” so if an explanation is needed when writing for general readers, the District of San Francisco can be identified as follows:

“the western province of the De La Salle Christian Brothers in the United States”

## **De La Salle Institute (at Mont La Salle in Napa, California)**

De La Salle Institute in Napa is the provincial center of the District of San Francisco and is the legal corporate name of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the District of San Francisco.

De La Salle Institute provides educational and financial support to District apostolates.

On second reference it may be abbreviated to **DLSI**.

### **The United States and Toronto Region**

On first reference, spell it out in full.

On second reference, abbreviate it as follows: **U.S.-Toronto Region\*\*\*\*\***

On subsequent and repeated references, if the context is clear, you may simply say **the Region**.(with a capital “R”).

### **Visitor**

The title of the superior of the Brothers of a District; he is referred to as **Brother Visitor** or **the Visitor**.

For clarity’s sake, and in writing for people outside the Lasallian world, it is often useful to refer to this Brother as the **Provincial**.

### **VENAVER**

VENAVER is an immersion program taking students from Lasallian schools to participate in other Lasallian ministries. It is spelled in **all capital letters as VENAVER**.

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### **END NOTES by J. A. Gray**

\* *De La Salle Christian Brothers*. This formulation is recommended because it combines both the distinctive name of our Founder (“De La Salle”) and the old-style U.S. reference to “Christian Brothers.” The combination makes for a clear, powerful, unique, and pleasant-sounding identifier. I’m informed that a British-derived usage still common in some parts of the world is “De La Salle Brothers.” I don’t recommend that we imitate that in the U.S.

\*\* *Brother-plus-first-name, not Brother-plus-surname*. I’m informed that in the eastern U.S. and particularly in higher-education settings it has been a practice to use Brother-plus-surname on second reference. I suppose that in past decades (and centuries), when Brothers took a new name as religious, the reference was to Brother-plus-religious-name. Our practice now of using Brother-plus-first-name is, perhaps, a replacement for that. To my ear, Brother-plus-first-name sounds more --- brotherly. It does not sound informal to me, as a reference to ‘Father Joe’ does when referring to a priest. I would recommend that we use Brother-plus-first-name as a standard.

\*\*\* *Saint De La Salle*. Some Lasallians express a preference for this form, based on simply adding “Saint” to the Founder’s habitual way of signing himself, but it is not a form that is widely used: for instance, a Google search of “saint de la salle” brings up only 570 results; a Google search of “saint la salle” brings up 8,600 results (mostly from the Philippines.) Perhaps we should consider using “Saint De La Salle” as a standard form for second reference?

First reference

Second reference

Saint John Baptist de La Salle

Saint De La Salle

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\*\*\*\* *La Salle is always written as two words.* There is a high school in Minneapolis that spells its name as “DeLaSalle” – three capital letters and no spaces between words. Such compression of words can be useful as a distinctive naming device or trademark (for example, see the compression of the first two words in the name “NativityMiguel Network of Schools”) but our standard in prose should be that “De La Salle” is three separate words and “La Salle” is two separate words.

\*\*\*\*\* *Abbreviating United States and Toronto Region.* The form “U.S.-Toronto Region” is recommended as the short version because it accurately renders in print the way that most of us actually speak the abbreviated form. That is, we tend to say “Ewe Ess Toronto Region.” This form clearly & accurately indicates that those are the desired sounds. What we print on the page should match what we speak aloud.

Other abbreviations I have seen but do not recommend include

US/Toronto Region;

USA/Toronto Region;

USAT Region;

United States/Toronto Region.