

DATE: **September 2, 2025**

TO: **THE LASALLIAN COMMUNITY (USLS & SJSLS)**

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SUBJECT: **Accompaniment and Hope: Walking with Gen Z in the Age of AI**  
Pastoral Letter on Accompaniment of GenZs in the Age of AI

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Greetings on the Memorial of St. Br. Solomon Leclercq FSC and the Brother Martyrs of Rochefort!

### Listening to the Voices of Gen Z

This past August, I had the privilege of joining the **31st ASEACCU Conference** in Taiwan, where students and educators from across Asia and beyond reflected on the theme: *“Pilgrims of Hope: Spiritual Development and Action of Gen Z.”* In the voices of young people from Indonesia, Macau, Australia, Korea, and Taiwan, I heard the deep longings, struggles, and hopes of a generation that is often described as “digitally connected yet spiritually searching.”<sup>1</sup>

They spoke candidly about anxiety, loneliness, and pressures to succeed; yet they also shared how faith, community, and acts of service give them meaning. They reminded us that while technology can shape their world, it is authentic relationships, belonging, and God’s love that truly sustain them.

### Wisdom Ancient and New

Just recently, the Vatican issued an important reflection titled *Antiqua et Nova (Ancient and New)*<sup>2</sup>, offering guidance on the rise of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. The document highlights a key truth: while AI can simulate aspects of human intelligence, it **cannot think, love, or pray**. Human intelligence is embodied, relational, and spiritual—rooted in the dignity of being created in God’s image.

The Church calls us to welcome AI as a tool but never as a substitute—for teachers, mentors, or spiritual guides. We must safeguard truth, human dignity, and community life in a time when algorithms, misinformation, and digital pressures can easily overwhelm.

### Our Lasallian Call

As Lasallians, entrusted with the mission of education and accompaniment, we are challenged to respond with both courage and compassion. Listening to Gen Z and guided by the Church, I invite us to consider four directions:

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Notes from the ASEACCU Conference ■ ASEACCU DAY 2 - Gen Z’s Future Actions (Student - Centered)

<sup>2</sup> [Antiqua et nova. Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence \(28 January 2025\)](#)

1. **Authentic Accompaniment**

Let us be present to our students in their struggles with mental health, identity, and meaning. No technology can replace a listening ear, a compassionate mentor, or a community that welcomes. This September, as we observe **Suicide Prevention Month**<sup>3</sup>, we are reminded of the sacred duty to notice signs of despair, extend care, and assure our young people that they are never alone.

2. **Wise and Ethical Use of AI**

Let us use AI in ways that support learning, expand access, and serve the common good. *AI can be a friend if we use it well, grounded in our conscience.* This means approaching technology with discernment, ensuring that it helps us grow in wisdom and compassion, not isolation or self-interest. At the same time, we must teach digital literacy—helping students recognize truth, resist harmful influences, and use technology responsibly.

3. **A Culture of Care and Belonging**

Let us build communities where every student feels seen, heard, and valued. For many young people, the pressure to perform and to appear “perfect” online can lead to deep loneliness. Our schools and communities must be places where weakness is met with compassion, and where asking for help is met with love.

4. **Pilgrims of Hope, Inspired by the Saints**

On September 7, the Church will canonize **Blessed Carlo Acutis**, a young man of our own time who loved the Eucharist and used the internet to spread faith. He is a powerful role model for Gen Z. Carlo reminds us that holiness is not beyond the reach of young people today. His joyful witness shows how digital tools, when guided by faith, can connect hearts to Christ rather than isolate them. Blessed Carlo teaches us that technology becomes most powerful when it serves truth, beauty, and love.

## **Moving Forward Together**

In practical terms, we will begin by creating spaces for dialogue on faith, technology, and mental health; integrating digital literacy and ethical reflection into our formation programs; and strengthening peer-to-peer and mentor-student support systems. Let us also encourage initiatives where students use technology creatively for service, justice, and care for creation.

Dear friends, the future may seem uncertain, but we are not alone. Like the young voices at ASEACCU reminded us, even small acts of kindness, presence, and witness can shine as lights of hope. May our Lasallian schools and communities continue to be homes where young people encounter Christ, grow in wisdom, and become agents of compassion in our digital age.

With faith and hope, let us walk together—pilgrims of hope, discerning wisely between what is ancient and new. And with the prayers of St. John Baptist de La Salle and soon-to-be Saint Carlo Acutis, may we guide our Gen Z brothers and sisters with courage, compassion, and joy.

Live Jesus in our hearts, forever!

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<sup>3</sup> How To Save A Life - USLS Basic Education Unit Mental Health Campaign <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ld9Oeq1arA4>