

DATE: **November 17, 2025**

TO: **THE LASALLIAN COMMUNITY**

FROM: **BR. IRWIN ANTHONY CLIMACO FSC**
Community Director De La Salle Brothers - Bacolod

SUBJECT: **Spark Hope this Christmas**

Pastoral Letter # 5 : Pastoral Letter on Welcoming the Advent and Christmas Season with Hope

Dear Lasallian Family,

Greetings of Peace and Hope!

As we celebrate the Dedication of the Church of St. John Baptist de La Salle in Rome, our readings remind us of who we are called to be: ***“living stones... built into a spiritual house”*** (1 Peter 2:5).

This image feels poignant today as our province continues to recover from earthquakes felt across Negros and Bacolod, signs of volcanic activity, and the destruction brought by Typhoon Tino. Many families still navigate loss, displacement, and uncertainty.

Even in these challenging weeks, what has been most visible is not the damage, but the compassion. Our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners have quietly shown up through relief efforts, acts of kindness, and simple presence with those who are hurting.

This is the Church in motion. This is the Lasallian spirit alive. This is what it means to worship ***“in spirit and in truth”*** (John 4:23–24).

In moments like these, we remember that community is not defined by what others say about us, especially from afar or behind screens. It is defined by what we choose to do for one another. While some may focus on finding faults or speaking without seeing the full picture, we remain committed to the work before us, steady, sincere, and rooted in our mission.

Sometimes the quiet work of compassion will not trend or be widely posted, and it may not always be loudly acknowledged.

But it builds lives.

It heals communities.

It speaks for itself.

This is the kind of worship Jesus described, faith expressed not only in words but through actions grounded in truth and love.

Part of this commitment is our shared responsibility for creation. We continue this through small, daily practices: keeping our campus clean and orderly, practicing proper waste segregation, minimizing single-use plastics, and embracing habits that show respect for our common home. These simple actions help form us into responsible and caring stewards.

Today, as we gather for our Christmas Lighting Ceremony, our theme invites us to what our province needs most: **“Spark Hope This Christmas.”**

The lights we kindle tonight shine for those who continue to rebuild, for families seeking stability, and for communities longing for peace and comfort.

They also shine as a gentle reminder of what anchors us as a Lasallian community. Despite challenges, disruptions, and misunderstandings, our mission continues, quietly, faithfully, and steadily.

Hope does not shout. Hope does not seek attention. Hope simply shines and invites others to see the light.

As we enter Advent, may Christ our Cornerstone deepen our courage, strengthen our unity, and keep our hearts open to those in need. May we move forward as a community that sparks hope not only with bright lights tonight but through every act of service and compassion in the days to come.

Live Jesus in our hearts, forever.