



WHAT IS CONTRIBUTING AND WHAT COULD ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS CONTRIBUTE TO THE ORDER OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS?

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The importance of the question and the dynamisms that it provokes: to recognize and to give a name/ to thank/ to dream/ to build. And there could be many more. In fact, they are.
2. The points of view from which I want to develop my contribution, looking to complement what has already been shown in this Advisory Council, assuming the content of the contributions made by those who preceded me (from the direction of the Network and from the Fraternity):
 - The consolidation of the new Piarist subject, of a more involved and responsible Pious Schools.
 - The accents that are now a priority in the Order.
 - The impulse of the "Keys of Life" of the Pious Schools.
 - To bet on a renewed "Piarist culture"
3. The goal of my intervention: that we can go deeper into the question, marking new clues or highlighting those that seem essential.

II. ADDING to DEVELOP

10 "Contributions" from ITAKA-Escolapios have been raised to the Order and 10 to the Fraternity. Maybe we don't have to add more, and what we have to do is to keep developing. Some examples, thinking only of those contributed by Javi in relation to the Order. I think they are mutual contributions, and from this point of view we can enhance them much more.

1. Getting money. Achieving that the Order charge the batteries to generate, seriously, teams that can develop and propose projects. For a "structural quadrennium". Priority bet of the SSMM.
2. Helping to organize the mission. Dedicating a year to "diagnose" our organization for the mission and the needs it has.
3. A Piarist network. Living it as a network. The annual campaign is not enough. Attention, for example, to "missionary sendings," something that we can enhance much more. And work thoroughly to ensure all mission projects; none of them should be left without coverage.

4. Volunteering and convocation. Multiplying by X the number of partners, both in people and in institutions. How many partners do we have in the various demarcations? Now we have 772.
5. Strengthening the Fraternity. It is necessary to "complicate" some Fraternities, whose participation in the network is even more affective than real. We have to find ways for Fraternities to grow in that awareness of belonging and stewardship.
6. Strengthening the Province (and the Order). To bet strongly, and in a creative way, for the challenge that ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS contributes significantly to the initial formation of the religious, both in economic resources (it is one of the priority necessities of the Order) as in mentality and spirit of "new subject ". High level theme in the Pious Schools.
7. Legal framework. Guaranteeing the clear legal coverage on all our mission platforms. Support in this task.
8. The current Piarist culture. ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS contributes a lot in this "cultural renovation". I will talk about this issue in a specific way, because I consider it essential.
9. The new subject. Likewise, this point will be specifically looked at later on.
10. To think of new potentialities. I think in a special way to support the expansion of the Order of the Pious schools. Can we make an "expansion agreement"? That is to say, an agreement "above the Demarcations", an "agreement for Dynamisms". And this is one of the great topics.

III. CONSOLIDATING THE BET. Not only we want a "new piarist subject", but we know "how we want it". Towards a new "*Piarist culture*"

The topic of the "new Piarist subject" is something already "quite old". But it is true that it will take time to develop it, and it will be carried on at various speeds. I'm not worried about this. What worries me is that we do not get out of the idea, the imaginary, and we do not move in a concrete way in what this means. I would like to cite some specific "advance tracks" that we should articulate, and in which ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS can also help.

1. To collaborate in the launching of mechanisms of impulse of the PARTICIPATION in those places of the Order in which this "key of life" is less developed or is practically nonexistent.
2. There is no "Piarist subject" if it is not articulated (at least minimally), just as there is no Order without its organizational structure. ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS can help to better locate the Fraternity in the life of the Province, and the Province in the life of the Fraternity.
3. ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS becomes an entity that is summoned, as such, in the processes of the demarcations, especially in the chapter processes.
4. We seek a "Piarist culture" based on stewardship, participation, missionary spirit, passion for the construction of the Pious Schools, etc. In all this, ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS can contribute.
5. How do we want this new Piarist subject? What progress levels can we mark progressively? How to do it in a balanced, sustainable and constant way?

IV. Embodying the accents that emerge with force to change

I believe that this Advisory Council should devote some time to growing in awareness of some dynamism of the Order that are being driven with strength and clarity, and that are called to give a "new tone" to the Pious Schools. Obviously, they are all in the "Calasancian genetic code," but it's good to make us aware of their "force to change."

1. The missionary and the development of the mission. We are committed to growing in mission in all the presences, in the demarcations and in new countries. And we are committed to responding to the dynamics of "periphery" that the Church is proposing with strength: the periphery of the poor, the periphery of education and the periphery of faith.
2. Multiculturality, which is more than just a simple realization that we are different. It is the struggle for the construction of a "multicultural identity".
3. A "Pious Schools going forth", decisively promoting the two previous keys (the missionary and the multicultural), and with an open mind to discover more keys that promote this dynamism of "going forth".
4. Building the network. An Order is a network. But we want a network that works as such. The network has also spiritual and charismatic dynamisms; it's not just a model of organization.
5. Living and working from projects. We need to make a clear move in this dynamic. It remains a "pending subject"
6. The "New Piarist subject ". The question is to strengthen the Order, to strengthen the Fraternity and to strengthen its relationship. There is no other way, and one cannot neglect, nor passively contemplate, any of the three.
7. The Vocational Culture, and especially the commitment to religious vocations. We will analyze it in the "Keys of Life".
8. The dedication to the poor children and young people, treasure of the Order. It's the priority we want to keep above everything.
9. To assume that the work for a renewed culture of Order cannot be left to the hands of "chapter sways". We must work to consolidate the dynamisms.

V. Collaborating with the impulse of the *Keys of Life* of the Order

1. VOCATIONAL AND FORMATIVE CULTURE (VFC).

- I think it would be good to develop a reflection, within the network itself, on how to collaborate in the construction of this VFC.
- The vocation call must be part of all the projects of the network. We have to give it a card of citizenship.
- To clearly include vocational dynamics in all processes of volunteering, working in projects, accompanying people, etc.

2. QUALITY INITIAL FORMATION AND IN COMMUNION

- Search for resources for the construction and operation of the formation houses of the Order.
- Presence of the network in the formation processes of the provinces involved
- Formation of young Piarists in all matters relating to projects, teams, resource generation and new Piarist Subject, among others.

3. COMMUNITY LIFE ENRICHED FROM THE ESSENTIAL

I think it is important to know the community dynamisms that the Order is fighting for, regardless of the nature of the community.

I quote some of them: community soul of the Mission, in which we are all responsible for everything, although there are people in charge of each thing/ communities that enhance their common prayer, surpassing the traditional borders of their usual schedules/ communities that accompany the process of people/ communities looking for ways to concretize their centrality in the Lord/ Communities with project/ communities that work to grow in their mentality of communion with the Order, etc.

4. A PERMANENT FORMATION THAT HELPS TO LIVE IN PROCESSES OF VOCATIONAL GROWTH

To count on the network and on the Fraternity in certain opportunities of permanent formation that the Order organizes.

5. TO DELVE INTO CALASANZ

- We all need it, but so do the people who live and work on a daily basis in ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS.
- Is it possible to collaborate in publications, courses and dissemination?

6. A PIARIST MISSION IN IDENTITY, EDUCATIONAL AND PASTORAL QUALITY, SHARED AND FOR THE POOR.

- It is evident that this is the clearest of all. The potential that this opens and the possibilities of growth are formidable. I quote some of them.
- To bet in depth for the Calasanz Movement
- Formation of educators and collaborators
- The impulse of volunteering, accentuating the aspects that are most necessary
- To consolidate the network itself as a good example of shared mission. Advancing in each place.
- New educational projects for poor children and young people.

7. ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

- It has been said that this is what is seen at first sight. But it has also been said that we are not taking full advantage of it.
- Connection with the General Secretariat of Projects Management and Sustainability

- Collaboration in making the development of "ambitious" projects possible. It's not about "waiting for them to come", but about building them.
- Accompany (and fight to be able to accompany) so that nothing is at risk

8. DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATION

- The network has to think (or to do) in its own growth. And the dynamism of "participation in the Pious Schools" is fundamental in this issue. Collaboration and contact with the General secretariat, offering ideas, suggestions, etc.
- To prepare religious and lay people capable of participating with a new mindset.

9. DECISIVE AND SIMULTANEOUS IMPULSE OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE RESTRUCTURING, CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS.

- The network is, in itself, a new structure. The participation of the network in the Piarists structures, especially through the Piarist presence model, is fundamental. We must be creative in this matter.
- o consolidate is to guarantee the integral sustainability of what we have (not only economic). The expansion is the new mission projects, the new communities and the new foundations.
- To ensure that "awareness of expansion" grows in the Order and on the net. We have to inform efficiently on the news of every year, which are many.
- To have contacts with other Piarist networks and foundations, smaller but active and interesting.

VI- What does the Order bring to Itaka-Escolapios?

1. First of all, it must be clear that ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS is a daughter of the Order, a dear and desired daughter. The Order has brought her to be born, and it has sought, with much vision, for it to have more "fathers-mothers" (the Piarist Fraternity). The Order had clearly seen that for ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS to be what it has to be, it needed a reference greater than the Order itself.
2. The Order provides a charism that is already shared. Historically embodied in the Order for four centuries, today is assumed by the ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS network as its main treasure and as its *raison d'être*.
3. The Order brings new visions of mission and future, through projects, foundations, people, communities, dreams. It brings the sense of the network, today already deeply shared with the Fraternity.
4. The Order provides security, reference, ecclesiality, moral ancestry, values and styles. It brings people, challenges, questions, needs to answer.
5. The Order contributes a determined desire to grow from a style and way of functioning that is already consolidated in the network.
6. The Order "contributes" problems and certain contradictions, so that the network will not fall asleep and will keep moving.

VII- What do we have to change?

I think this is one of the questions that can guide our reflections not only in this Council, but especially in the daily dynamics and in the most significant ones of our work. It is not wrong to ask yourself this question, and it would be good that in our Councils we would be able to give some answers.

VIII- BARNABAS, "the one who brings consolation".

Our patron saint is Saint Joseph Calasanz. He is the patron saint of the ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS network. But I thought that our network could very well use a "co-patron." We do not need to make it official; I simply want to make a reflection – in this time of Easter – about St. Barnabas, "a Levite natural from Cyprus".

Barnabas appears for the first time in the Book of Acts with his true name: Joseph. It is the person, quoted in chapter 4 of the Acts, who sells a land and gives the money to the apostles, so that they could assist the poor. He is the first donor for the cause of the Kingdom that we have constancy. Then they changed him the name, and they gave him "the one who brings consolation".

He is never a very famous character in the task of evangelization. Some say that he was an "excellent cast actor" in the film of the fight for the Kingdom of God. We know Paul, Peter, Mark... but we know little about Barnabas. Even in his own country (Cyprus), he has little fame. But there he is always, giving the best of himself, without anyone seeing him, without appearing on the front page. He's a server. But an essential server.

When Paul became a witness to Jesus, the community did not trust him very much. It was Barnabas who sought him, believed him, and presented him to the apostles. And everything changed. When Mark committed a mistake and Paul became angry with him, Barnabas asked Paul to count on Mark, but Paul did not want to. Then Barnabas bet on Mark, recovered him for the cause, and embarked with him. Mark ended up writing a Gospel. Between Paul and Mark, thanks to Barnabas, half of the New Testament books were written. When the apostles needed to accompany the community of Antioch to help them discern what was really important in the project, they sent Barnabas. And there, after that journey, the name of "Christians" was born. When the Holy Spirit needed (because the Holy Spirit needs) someone to bet on the evangelization of the Gentiles, he chose Barnabas and sent him. And when the Book of Acts speaks of him, it says only (11, 24) that he was a good man, full of Holy Spirit and faith.

Today we would say that Barnabas is the best example of what we call "service leadership." He is the patron of people-and institutions- who do extraordinary things for the Kingdom, but no one knows it and perhaps few appreciate it. But without him, nothing would have worked. He was a simple servant of the churches, a decided comforter of the excluded and an active promoter of the Kingdom. But we do not remember him neither as solemnity nor as a feast; he has just a memory. And few remember the day...

I like to think in that way ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS. As an institution created by Calasanz to make possible his dream, which works from behind the scenes, but carrying out those essential options to carry out the Piarist mission.

I end by giving thanks to ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS, and to all those who make it possible, on behalf of the children, the young people, the poor, and Saint Joseph Calasanz.