

- 1 John Baptist De La Salle was declared the Patron Saint of teachers on this day in 1950.
- 2 300 years ago, John Baptist De La Salle encouraged teachers to look upon their students as individuals, rather than as a group. He talked of people needing to “*touch hearts*”.
- 3 “*Touching hearts*” is about acknowledging and relating with people as individuals - helping each person feel that they are noticed and matter, and are significant and special. A personal approach or reaction can make all the difference to an individual, showing that someone is “bothered enough” to care.
- 4 Someone today can be made to feel “worthwhile” if I call them by their name.
- 5 I can show human warmth and concern today if I acknowledge individuals with eye-contact, a nod, a smile, or a word.
- 6 I can “*touch someone’s heart*” if I set out to remember what the person says or does. At another time I can repeat those personal details, showing that someone cares enough about them to remember.
- 7 I can build up people today if I help them to experience success or meaning in their lives, and feel good about themselves.
- 8 I can help raise someone’s self-esteem today if I show that I respect and appreciate that individual and bear in mind their own special circumstances.
- 9 Someone today can feel valued if I invite them to become part of conversation, to become part of what is going on; setting out to make sure people feel **included** rather than **excluded**.
- 10 I can “*touch hearts*” today if I compliment individuals.

11 *Let us pray:*

**Loving Lord, inspire me
to bring out the best in others
and “touch hearts”
by being welcoming and generous
and always positive in attitude,
showing individuals
that they matter and are important.
May those
who are part of my life this day
treat me in the same way
as I treat them. Amen.**



 See also 7 April. For “touching hearts” see also 3 February, 9 June, 10 July.

 *The theologian Martin Buber has written:*
“Individuals wish to be confirmed in their being by another and wish to have a presence in the being of the other... secretly and bashfully watching for a ‘YES’ which allows that person to be - and which can only come from one person to another. It is from one person to another that the heavenly bread of self-being is passed.”

 *John Baptist De La Salle was born in Rheims, France, 30/4/1651. John was the first to dignify teaching as a ministry in itself. He is remembered as having built up communities of Brother-teachers who would be faithful and of support to each other, consecrated by vows; this was a new development in the Church. John is credited as having started a workable teacher-training system some 200 years before it was taken up elsewhere. He is also remembered for composing several inspirational books for teachers, and he advocated that a library should be at the disposal of students. He broke the long-standing practice of teaching members of a class one by one, developing the process of teaching a group of students simultaneously. In other schools pupils were taught first to read in Latin, but John revolutionised education by teaching through the language of the people - Latin being useless to the children of the poor. He is also remembered for having founded the first schools for delinquents, and the first secondary schools for modern languages, arts and the sciences, as well as technical schools which offered agricultural courses and practical workshops. John died on 7/4/1719. He was canonised in 1900 and declared the Patron of Teachers in 1950 by Pope Pius XII. 25 De La Salle Brothers - all educators, and 20 of them martyrs - now join him in being called “Blessed” or “Saint”. Some further details about John’s life and inspiration can be obtained by writing to the author, or locating on the Internet: <http://www.dlsnet.demon.co.uk> or follow “Lasallian” in a web-search.*

 *Could include in the reflection (after paragraph 1):*
“John Baptist De La Salle encouraged people to spend a few quiet seconds every hour of the day, calling to mind that God is with them. Let’s reflect in silence for a moment that we are in God’s Presence, because Jesus said that when two or three gather together in his name then he would be with us...”

 If I am lacking love; O let all who thirst;
We come to you, Lord, teach us how to pray

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org