

## ACU celebrates the Feast Day of St John Baptist De La Salle

From humble beginnings in France, the De La Salle Brothers this year celebrate a tercentenary of educating young people around the world, especially the poor and marginalised.

To celebrate the Institutional Feast Day of St John Baptist de La Salle, Archbishop of Brisbane Mark Coleridge and Australian Catholic University's (ACU's) Campus Chaplain, Father Harry Chan presided over a Mass at ACU's Holy Spirit Chapel.

Today, St John Baptist de La Salle is the universal Patron Saint of all teachers, and ACU's Patron Saint of the School of Education.

Guests at ACU's celebratory Mass included local De La Salle Brothers, Br Benildus, Br Gabriel, Br Phillip, Br Patrick and Br Bill.

In addressing those gathered on this significant occasion, Br Benildus noted John Baptist de La Salle's mission for the congregation, "You are for your students the ambassadors of Jesus Christ".

"De La Salle was a pioneer in founding training colleges for teachers, reform schools for delinquents, technical schools, and secondary schools for modern languages, arts, and sciences," said Br Benildus.

"His work spread quickly through France and, after his death, continued to spread across the globe. In 1900 John Baptist De La Salle was declared a Saint. In 1950, because of his life and inspirational writings, he was made Patron Saint of all those who work in the field of education – any education."

"John Baptist De La Salle inspired others how to teach and care for young people, how to meet failure and frailty with compassion, how to affirm, strengthen and heal."

Today, over 5,000 Brothers and many thousands of lay partners continue in the De La Salle tradition.

They minister to more than 900,000 students in universities, schools and other educational and welfare institutions in over 80 countries around the world.

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