



A YEAR OF SERVICE, A LIFETIME COMMITMENT

MY JOURNEY FROM LV TO BROTHER

BROTHER ALAN PARHAM, FSC, LV 91-92

My experience as a Lasallian Volunteer made clear to me that I was called to be a Brother of the Christian Schools. My time in community and in the classroom at St. Joseph High School in Greenville, Mississippi, convinced me (and others) of my vocation. As an LV, I was able to try out my wings in the classroom and discover my love for teaching.

Prior to becoming an LV, I had been in another religious order. I was older than most of the LVs yet immediately felt at home being surrounded by other men and women who were committed to the Lasallian charism and mission. While I had spent time discerning my call and felt drawn to the Brothers, I was hesitant to become a postulant. In my conversations with my vocation director he recommended exploring Lasallian Volunteers. He shared with me that as an LV I would receive first-hand experience with the constitutive elements of the Brothers' life—faith, service and community. I applied and was accepted.

As the year progressed, my calling became clearer. It was evident to me and the Brothers that I should formally apply to the Brothers and enter the postulancy. As an LV, I was often associated with the Brothers because of my age and experience in religious life. Some of my students would even call me "Brother," but I would discourage them from doing so because I didn't want the Brothers to think I was jumping the



This is my First Communion class from December 8, 2019, at St. Cecilia, where I teach teenagers in Sacramental preparation. I will continue with the same ones this semester for Confirmation. They are stealing my heart!

gun! My calling was being recognized by others as well, and everyone assumed I would become a postulant when my service year as an LV concluded.

One experience that exposed me to the evangelical and ministerial nature of our educational service was also one of the more difficult experiences I had encountered. A student of mine lost her brother in a

terrible accident. Brother Tom Geraghty and I ministered to the grieving family. The strength of our relationship with the students and families allowed us to truly be present for them in a special way. Amidst this immense pain and suffering the family insisted on converting to Catholicism so they could fully participate in the sacramental life of the Church. My last act of service as an LV in Greenville was to accompany my student's father as his sponsor when he joined the Church and made his profession of faith.

I loved community life and teaching and knew in my heart I would be applying for the postulancy. Near the end of the school year, I was received into the Brothers at a school Mass on Ascension Thursday. Having the opportunity to share this momentous occasion with my students and community was a moment I will never forget—my students were as happy as I!

In 2020, I celebrate my 25th anniversary as a Brother of the Christian Schools—a journey that began and was nourished by my time as an LV.

Brother Alan Parham, FSC, LV 91-92, served as a seventh-grade religion teacher at St. Joseph High School in Greenville, Mississippi. He currently serves as director of vocation promotions for the Midwest District. As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Lasallian Volunteers, this story is one in a series of reflections by LV alums on how the LV experience has impacted their lives. Additional reflections can be found at www.LasallianVolunteers.org.

