

★ *lasalliana*

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EDITIONS OF THE «DEVOIRS I» BY YEARS AND CITIES

Introduction

● This is not the first time that LASALLIANA dedicates one of its issues to "Duties of a Christian I" which, according to some opinions, is among the best works of St. John Baptist de La Salle. (Cf. LASALLIANA: 03-A-16; 03-A-17 04-A-23; 04-A-24; 06-A-34).

● We present here all the editions which have been personally verified by the author in the following sources: the National Library of Paris, the Archives of Motherhouse of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Municipal Library of Avignon, the Library of the Jesuits of Chantilly, the Municipal Library of Madrid, the National Library of Brussels, the Departamental Archives of Pibrac, the Library of Lyon, Hotel de la Cloche, the Library of the Gregoriana University of Rome...

● We have also received many written communications from libraries of the Christian Brothers, and public, diocesan and seminary libraries of France which have been added to the list of editions of "Duties of a Christian I".

● I am convinced that subsequent investigations will refine some of this data and that other editions will be discovered in the future. The historian, G. Rigault considers this work of De La Salle as "the most important contribution of all Lasallian literature, a masterpiece of its kind and one of the most outstanding books of recent centuries". (G. Rigault, Histoire de l'Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, Vol. I, p. 556).

NOTE: Recently, I consulted lists of the editions of the "Duties of a Christian I" in the Archives of the Motherhouse of the Christian Brothers and found some which are not included here because, for the time being, they need to be confirmed.

EDITIONS OF THE «DEVOIRS I»

1703	Paris	1
1705	Paris	1
1716	Grenoble	1
1727	Rouen	1
1733	Rouen	1
1736	Grenoble	1
1751	Rouen	1
1752	Rouen	1
1767	Rouen	1
1770	Metz	1
1773	Rouen	1
1774	Rouen	1
1777	Nancy	1
1779	Reims - Reims	2
1781	Rouen	1
1782	Saint-Omer	1
1787	Rouen	1
1789	Caen	1
1796	Fribourg - Rouen	2
1802	Avignon	1
1804	Langres	1
1806	Bourges - Rome	2
1809	Lyon	1
1810	Evreux - Toulouse	2
1811	Evreux - Rouen	2
1812	Charleville - Laon - Paris - Rouen - Saint-Omer	5
1814	Tours	1
1815	Amiens	1
1816	Lyon - Toulouse	2
1817	Avignon - Avignon - Evreux - Lille - Lille - Paris - Paris	7
1818	Albi - Amiens - Lille - Metz	4
1819	Avignon - Avignon - Evreux - Paris	4
1820	Avignon - Liège - Lille - Rouen	4
1821	Avignon - Langres - Paris - Toulouse	4
1822	Avignon - Avignon - Dole - Liège - Lille - Lyon	6
1823	Dijon - Paris	2
1824	Avignon - Evreux - Paris - Paris - Reims - Saint-Malo	6
1825	Evreux - Lille - Metz - Metz - Paris - Paris - Saint-Brieuc - Saint-Malo	8
1826	Laon - Metz - Paris - Paris - Saint-Menehould - Sedan - Troyes - Tours	8
1827	Dole - Lyon - Paris - Paris - Paris - Toulouse	6
1828	Avignon - Dijon - Dijon - Evreux - Langres - Lille - Metz - Metz - Paris - Paris	10
1829	Lille - Lille - Lisieux - Paris - Paris	5
1830	Liège - Liège - Lille - Lille - Paris	5
1831	Avignon - Lille - Lyon - Paris	4
1832	Liège - Liège - Lyon - Troyes	4
1833	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Paris - Saint-Brieuc - Toulouse	6
1834	Clermont-Ferrand - Liège - Lille - Limoges - Marseille - Metz - Paris - Tours	8
1835	Limoges - Paris - Paris	3

1836	Bruxelles - Metz - Nancy - Paris	4
1837	Clermont-Ferrand - Paris	2
1838	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Metz - Paris	5
1839	Lille - Noyon - Toulouse	3
1840	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Metz - Namur	4
1841	Lille - Limoges - Lyon - Paris - Paris - Paris - Toulouse - Vannes	7
1842	Clermont-Ferrand - Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Metz - Vannes - Tours	6
1843	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Paris - Vannes - Vannes	6
1844	Clermont-Ferrand - Lyon - Metz - Vannes	4
1845	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Paris - Toulouse - Tours - Vannes	7
1846	Clermont-Ferrand - Lyon - Lyon - Lyon - Vannes	5
1847	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Lyon	4
1848	Rouen - Tours - Vannes - Vannes	4
1849	Lille - Limoges - Lyon - Vannes	4
1850	Clermont-Ferrand - Tours	2
1851	Lille - Limoges - Namur - Vannes	4
1852	Clermont-Ferrand - Clermont-Ferrand - Limoges - Lyon - Lyon - Ploermel - Tours - Vannes	8
1853	Le Mans - Limoges - Vannes	3
1854	Limoges - Lyon	2
1855	Lille - Lyon - Lyon - Paris	4
1856	Lyon - Tours - Tours - Vannes	4
1857	Le Mans - Lille - Limoges - Tours	4
1858	Limoges - Lyon - Lyon - Tours	4
1859	Lille - Tours	2
1860	Aix - Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Limoges - Lyon - Tours	6
1861	Limoges - Limoges - Lyon - Tours	4
1862	Lille - Limoges - Lyon - Tours	4
1863	Clermont-Ferrand - Tours	2
1864	Clermont-Ferrand - Lille - Lyon - Lyon - Tours - Tours	6
1865	Aurillac - Lyon	2
1866	Lille - Lyon	2
1867	Limoges - Limoges - Ploermel - Tours	4
1868	Lyon - Ploermel - Tours	3
1869	Lille - Limoges - Tours	3
1870	Tours	1
1872	Lyon - Tours	2
1873	Limoges - Ploermel	2
1875	Tours - Vannes	2
1876	Lyon - Ploermel	2
1877	Tours	1
1891	Paris	1
1892	Paris	1
No date	Albi - Bruxelles - Liège - Liège - Liège - Liège - Paris - Rodez - Tournai	9

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Conclusions

1. How many copies of editions and further printings of the "duties of a Christian I" would there have been?

- It is not easy to venture even a close approximation of this number. The number of copies of editions and re-printings varies in each case: the edition of 1799 (Rheims) had 12.000 copies; that of 1811 (Rouen) had 2.000; and that of 1812 (Laon) had 6.000...

- Estimating an average of 4.000 or 5.000 copies per edition-reprinting, this would amount to over a million copies which for those times is quite considerable.

2. The "Duties of a Christian I" held an important place in the Christianization of the primary schools of France. According to the former Superior General Nicet Joseph, his mother used this book as a reader while teaching school in his home village.

3. If the cities in which editions-reprintings of this book are pegged on a map of France, some interesting facts come to light.

4. Has the "Duties of a Christian I" received the consideration it should have within the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for its **content** as a theological synthesis of the Founder; or from the point of view of its **diffusion** among the families of our students and in our classrooms; or because of its possibilities for the **christianization** of generations of students?

Brother Manuel F. Magaz