



**Project of Life
for the members
of the LASA group**

PREMISE

This project was born in the Congregation, during the Nineties (1996), with the beginning of the canonization process of Carlo and Giulia of Barolo and with the deepening of our charismatic sources. At that particular time, it was strongly felt to involve the laity in the **charism, spirituality and mission** of the Sisters of St. Ann (SSA).

This dream went on growing, and became increasingly clear during the XXXI General Chapter in 2002. The Sisters of the Chapter, representatives of the entire Congregation, concluded: *"The life of our Founders, Carlo and Giulia, is not a text-book to be read together with the laity through some interesting initiatives, but it is above all an experience of shared faith, as a response to the quest for meaning of the Christians of our time."*

This process was guided by the Church, after the Synod on Consecrated Life (1994), with the publication of the Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (25 March 1996) by the Holy Father John Paul II which affirms: *"Today, often as a result of new situations, many Institutes have come to the conclusion that their charism can be shared with the laity. The laity are therefore invited to share more intensely in the spirituality and mission of these Institutes..."* (VC 54).

In 2004, in the various Latin American countries, the laity was invited by the Sisters to get to know and live the charism they had received as a legacy from the Founders Carlo and Giulia. Gradually they were introduced to a planned formative journey according to the possibilities of each reality, where they could get in touch with the history and the Christian experience of the Founders. Encouraged by the testimony of this married couple, they accepted the proposal to form a group that would try to live, together with the Sisters, the

charism of the Institute, witnessing the love of the Triune God, provident and merciful, in their families, in the ecclesial community and in the society.

In 2006, the Bicentennial of the marriage of Carlo and Giulia of Barolo, the Superior General Mother Franceschina Milanese along with her Council, felt the need to outline the essential elements of the charismatic identity of a Lay Friend of Saint Ann: spiritual life, lifestyle, dimension of service and formative dimension.

Today, following the path of the Congregation that wants to integrate the laity in the charism and spirituality of the Sisters of Saint Ann, we see it reflected in the light of our Constitutions in art. 30:

In continuity with the Founders

*Our Institute accepts with gratitude the gift of the Spirit,
lived in an exemplary manner by Carlo Tancredi and Giulia,
who were faithful to the baptismal vocation as lay persons.
They shared their material and spiritual goods,
according to the spirit of the Beatitudes.
They were an evangelical leaven in the society,
directing everything to the Reign of God.
Following their footsteps, we, Sisters of St. Ann,
invite the laity to participate in our mission,
in mutual and enriching collaboration.*

I. Name

The **LASA**¹ Family is a group made up of lay people, baptized men and women, of any social, economic and cultural

¹ **LASA** is the acronym that corresponds to the following designations:
Italian: LAICI AMICI DI SANT'ANNA

category, who share the spirituality, charism and mission of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Ann, forming with it one big family.

II. Logo

After the first Latin American meeting, the **LASA LOGO**, which was born from it, is intended to represent all. It is basically our banner. Each group shared the distinct image that characterizes the transmission of a message of love of the family, as the core of their work as lay persons and the leaven of love that must be sown.



- The **LASA** logo represents the unity of the family, through **human figures** placed at the center, indicating the importance of the person, every person in the human family and the great family of God's children.
- These human figures embrace the **globe** which they want to evangelize, bringing the message of God to the little ones and the poor, as instruments of Providence, witnesses of His mercy and signs of hope. Similarly it indicates the unity of the whole LASA family, that is present throughout the world.
- The **heart** represents the true and chaste married love, the love that should exist in the family. Love that must reign in the whole LASA group. The love that comes from God, through reconciliation of sentiments, of reason and will, like a support

English: LAY ASSOCIATES OF ST. ANN
Spanish: LAICOS AMIGOS DE SANTA ANA
Portuguese: LEIGOS AMIGOS DE SANTA ANA
French: LAÏCS AMIS DE SAINTE ANNE

to the unity of the family that guarantees the integral development of each of its members.

- The **house** symbolizes the confidence, unity and security that characterizes family life.
- The presence of the **anchor** symbolizes hope; the theological virtue that expresses firmness, consistency and fidelity which prevents spiritual decadence.
- On the anchor we see a **cross**. Putting Christ at the center of family life, His presence indicates that we want to unite our will to God's will, even when it means embracing the cross; knowing that this is the source of all graces.
- The words "**In Spe**" is the motto of our Founders. In it is contained the gift of the Spirit which Carlo and Giulia received to contribute to man's salvation and to walk along the path of holiness, giving back to persons their true dignity and making them walk always in hope.
- **SSA**: These are the initials of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann. It is meant to indicate that the LASA group is part of the great family of this Congregation with which it shares the same spirituality and the same charism inherited from our Founders.
- The letters in red, of the name **LAY FRIENDS OF SAINT ANN**, form the acronym LASA, which means that they are guided by the members of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Ann, who accompany them along the path of faith, love and service outlined by the Founders, thus forming an integral part of this beautiful mission.

III. Biblical, Ecclesial and Congregational Foundations

- ❖ As **biblical foundation**, we propose the following texts of Sacred Scripture:

Mt 5: 13-14: *"You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet. You are light for the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden".*

Jn 3: 16: *"For this is how God loved the world: he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life".*

Cor 12: 12-13: *"For as with the human body which is a unity although it has many parts -- all the parts of the body, though many, still making up one single body -- so it is with Christ. We were baptised into one body in a single Spirit, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as free men, and we were all given the same Spirit to drink".*

Mt 20: 1ff: Parable of the labourers of the vineyard: *"Now the kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, 'You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage'. ...The men who came last have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat. He answered one of them and said, 'My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why should you be envious because I am generous?' Thus the last will be first, and the first, last".*

Lk 15: 11-32: *"Then he said, There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, let me have*

the share of the estate that will come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery. When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch; so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled himself with the husks the pigs were eating but no one would let him have them. Then he came to his senses and said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have all the food they want and more, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired men.’ So he left the place and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we will celebrate by having a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. The servant told him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the calf we had been fattening because he has got him back safe and sound.’ He was angry then and refused to go in,

and his father came out and began to urge him to come in; but he retorted to his father, 'All these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed any orders of yours, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property -- he and his loose women -- you kill the calf we had been fattening.' The father said, 'My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found'".

Lk 10: 25-37 *"And now a lawyer stood up and, to test him, asked, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? What is your reading of it?' He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.' Jesus said to him, 'You have answered right, do this and life is yours.' But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' In answer Jesus said, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of bandits; they stripped him, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came on him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him onto his own mount and took him to an inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper and said, 'Look after him, and*

on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have.' Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the bandits' hands?' He replied, 'The one who showed pity towards him. Jesus said to him, 'Go, and do the same yourself.'"

❖ As **Ecclesial foundation** we propose the following documents of the Church's Magisterium:

Apostolicam Actuositatem n. 4: *"...Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well".*

Christifideles Laici n. 15: *"[...] The lay faithful, in fact, are called by God so that they, led by the spirit of the Gospel, might contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. Thus, especially in this way of life, resplendent in faith, hope and charity [...]. The images taken from the gospel of salt, light and leaven, although indiscriminately applicable to all Jesus' disciples, are specifically applied to the lay faithful. They are particularly meaningful images because they speak not only of the deep involvement and the full participation of the lay faithful in the affairs of the earth, the world and the human community, but also and above all, they tell of the radical newness and unique character of an involvement and participation which has as its purpose the spreading of the Gospel that brings salvation."*

Aparecida n. 209: *"The laity are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God. They are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic,*

and kingly functions of Christ, and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world. They are “human beings of the Church in the midst of the world, and human beings of the world living within the Church”.

Aparecida n. 437: *In order to protect and support the family, actions such as the following may be undertaken by the family ministry:*

- *Promote dialogue with governments and society, policies and laws on behalf of life, marriage, and the family.*
- *Foster and promote integral education of family members, especially those family members who are in difficult situations.*

Aparecida n. 505: *“It is the lay people of our continent who, conscious of their call to holiness by virtue of their baptismal vocation, have to act as leaven in the dough to build a temporal city in keeping with God’s project”.*

Familiaris Consortium n. 47: *“The social role that belongs to every family pertains by a new and original right to the Christian family, which is based on the sacrament of marriage. By taking up the human reality of the love between husband and wife in all its implications, the sacrament gives to Christian couples and parents a power and a commitment to live their vocation as lay people and therefore to ‘seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God.’ The social and political role is included in the kingly mission of service in which Christian couples share by virtue of the sacrament of marriage, and they receive both a command which they cannot ignore and a grace which sustains and stimulates them. The Christian family is thus called upon to offer*

everyone a witness of generous and disinterested dedication to social matters through a "preferential option" for the poor and disadvantaged. Therefore, advancing in its following of the Lord by special love for all the poor, it must have special concern for the hungry, the poor, the old, the sick, drug victims and those who have no family.

EG 66: *“The family is experiencing a profound cultural crisis, as are all communities and social bonds. In the case of the family, the weakening of these bonds is particularly serious because the family is the fundamental cell of society, where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another; it is also the place where parents pass on the faith to their children. Marriage now tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will. But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society transcends the feelings and momentary needs of the couple. As the French bishops have taught, it is not born «of loving sentiment, ephemeral by definition, but from the depth of the obligation assumed by the spouses who accept to enter a total communion of life».”*

❖ As **Congregational foundation**, we highlight article no. 1 of the Constitutions:

In the light of God's Providence

In the history of the civil-ecclesial community of their times, Carlo Tancredi and Giulia di Barolo, interpreted their personal and conjugal experience in the light of God who is Providence. They acknowledged in their lives the plan of God who created man and woman in His image, wanted them to be happy and called them to communion with Himself.

Article 10 of our Directory:

In Communion with the Laity

We involve the laity in our mission

and follow up their formation with care.

*We share with them the values of our Charism,
our spirituality, the manner and method of our mission,
respecting the lay character of their service.*

*We devote ourselves to forming lay groups
which we encourage and accompany with commitment.*

IV. Identity of the Laity of Saint Ann

Essential elements of the identity of a member of LASA:

❖ **Spiritual Life:** The Laity of Saint Ann are men and women who try to live the Trinitarian mystery in their lives: they contemplate the merciful and providential love of the Father who, through the Incarnation of the Word, offers His own Son to rebuild the disfigured face of the human person. They are led by the Spirit to live the confident and filial abandonment in the hands of the Father, and become, according to their vocation, instruments of Providence and Mercy to the little ones and the poor.

❖ **Lifestyle:**

- The Laity of Saint Ann lead a simple life style, sober and exemplary, recognizing that poverty and simplicity are the characteristic virtues of Carlo and Giulia di Barolo who have always considered goods as a free gift of Divine Providence.
- They are called to build their rapport through dialogue and sharing, in imitation of our Founders who nourished their

sharing in conjugal unity. Convinced of these values they transmit them to their families.

❖ **The dimension of service:** The Laity of Saint Ann guided by the Pedagogy of the heart, must be instruments of Providence, at the service of their brothers' happiness and are committed to:

- Promote and defend the dignity of the person, with particular attention to the little ones and the poor;
- Live with responsibility and love their commitments of the lay vocation in the family, in the ecclesial community, in the workplace, in the social and political life, etc.;
- Be men and women of hope that promote in the different contexts of social life, the values of life, of family and of solidarity.

❖ **Formative Dimension:** The Laity of Saint Ann feel themselves constantly in a process of growth, therefore they are disposed to be formed constantly:

- Receiving the formative proposals of the group;
- Giving priority to constant contact with the Word of God and the writings of the Founders, and Church documents. This experience allows them to read the events of their life in the light of God's providential plan.

V. The Purpose of the LASA group is to share the life, the spirituality and the charism of Carlo and Giulia of Barolo:

- Involving men and women in the mission to welcome and to integrally educate the little ones and the poor;
- Leading them to a greater commitment and determination of their baptismal experience as salt of the earth and light of the world, in the reality in which they live;

- Being signs of Providence and Hope for the little ones and the poor.

VI. Members – Commitments - Promise

❖ MEMBERS:

- The members of the LASA group are baptized men and women, of whatever status, of any social, economic and cultural condition, who decide to live the Christian life in the light of the Servants of God, Carlo and Giulia of Barolo.
- Persons who identify themselves or wish to identify themselves with the charism, spirituality, and mission of the Sisters of St. Ann;
- Committed persons who want to live in the community the contents of their own faith.

❖ COMMITMENTS:

- To live with responsibility and coherence the commitments made at Baptism (family, parish, work), under the proposed Project of Life.
- To participate in the charismatic, spiritual formation.
- To know, to practice and to spread the devotions of the Sisters of St. Ann.
- To participate in the particular celebrations of the Sisters of Saint Ann.
- To pray for the vocations and the fidelity of the Sisters of St. Ann.
- To collaborate in and share the mission of our Congregation.
- To live the lay vocation being inserted in the Local Church.
- To value the commitment with our Religious family.

❖ **PROMISE:**

- The members of the LASA group, as a sign of their belongingness, will make their promise for the first time after a period of formation, according to the personal journey and the reality of the group to which they belong. This promise will be made after a spiritual retreat.

- The formula to be used will be common for all the groups. **See Attachment.**

- The date in which the promise will be pronounced is determined on the basis of each reality and the calendar of activities.

VI. Initial and Ongoing Formation

❖ **INITIAL FORMATION:**

- Knowledge of the history of the Congregation and the particular devotions of the Sisters of St. Ann.

- Knowledge of the Biography and writings of the Founders and Blessed Mother Enrichetta.

- Introduction to Sacred Scripture and Lectio Divina.

- Study of the documents concerning the Lay Mission in the Church.

- Knowledge of the Project of Life of the group.

- Participation in the Feasts and Celebrations of the Sisters of Saint Ann.

❖ **ON-GOING FORMATION**

- Deepening of the charism through the writings of the Founders.

- Adaptation of issues relating to the manner of formation in the Congregation.

- Study and deepening of the Church documents that speak of the place and the task of the Laity in the Church.

VII. Organization and Coordination

LOCAL: Each community must have a Sister-in-charge together with a lay coordinator.

REGIONAL: A Sister responsible for the region, who is the Provincial or the Delegate.

INTERNATIONAL: Mother General and one General Councilor, as a reference point.

IX. National Assembly

X. International Assembly: every three years in different countries.

XI. Patrimony

Attachment 1

FORMULA OF THE PROMISE

Before the Community of the Sisters of Saint Ann

I

I PROFESS to BELIEVE

In You, Triune God, Provident and Merciful Father; in You, God the Son, our brother, who reveals to us the meaning of our humanity; in You, Holy Spirit, source of life and consolation.

I PROMISE

For a year, to live and witness the Gospel according to the charism left to the Church by Carlo and Giulia, and thus realizing my baptismal consecration, knowing that you, my God loves me in a provident and merciful way and does not want to lose the work of your hands.

I PLEDGE

To actively belong to the community of the Lay Friends of Saint Ann, to listen, dialogue, accept, live and grow in your will.

I PLEDGE

To follow the apostolic choice of Carlo and Giulia in favor of the poorest and most needy children, adolescents and young people: to be for everyone, a sign of hope and an instrument of your mercy.

May Our Lady of Consolation, St. Ann, Blessed Mother Enrichetta, the Servants of God Carlo and Giulia help me to live this promise with awareness and fidelity. Amen.

(Place and date)

Signature