



ACTS OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL

OF THE SALESIAN SOCIETY

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I. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

Rome, 6th November 1967

My dear confreres and sons,

I am writing to you from Rome where I am staying on for a few days after the closing of the Synod in which I took part as you know. It was a month of unceasing work, of exchange of experiences, of appraisal of future prospects for the solution of the urgent and serious problems which beset the Church at the present time.

During the Synod I had the pleasure of being able to pay loyal homage to His Holiness Pope Paul who as always spoke with loving fatherliness of our Salesian family which he knows so well. I was also able in the name of you all to exchange greetings with the venerable Patriarch Athenagoras.

In addition I met many bishops and talked to them about problems of mutual interest to them and the Congregation. But, as you will well understand, the most frequent meetings were with the other Superiors General who took part in the Synod with me. A friendly atmosphere of brotherly collaboration developed amongst us, not only in respect of the work of the Synod, but also as regards the many problems which are common nowadays to all Religious Institutes.

Coming back to the Synod, many of the items on the agenda were of immediate application to our own life: think, for instance, of the problems concerning formation and the renewal of the Liturgy; think of the great importance for us that attaches to problems concerning faith and morals.

The whole programme was fully dealt with at great depth. Every aspect was covered; I only need to remind you that on some questions the number of those speaking rose to over a hundred — more than half of those present — with everyone making his contribution in all freedom and with mutual respect, and this is in addition to those submitted to the Secretariate in writing.

The various commissions examined every contribution with great care before putting forward new proposals for the approval of the Synod Fathers.

And all this took place quite calmly; it was indeed edifying to note the general preoccupation about being *constructive* in the light of the realities amongst which the present-day Church has to live, and the experiences of this post-conciliar era in which side by side with many good and fruitful things others have sprung up which are not so good and which indeed must be condemned as harmful.

I think that the great sense of balance and the insistence of the Synod on steering a middle course should bring comfort to our whole family: for we indeed, immediately after the Council and in all we have done since, have tried to move forward but always in a balanced manner and along a middle path, and this policy which the Congregation has followed in the past and will continue to follow in the future has been confirmed by the edifying example of the Synod itself.

In our work of progress and renewal, not destroying the past but building on it and enriching it, the two great events that we shall be celebrating in this coming year will provide us with a yard-stick to measure our efforts, and at the same time a happy incentive.

The *Year of Faith* and the *Centenary of the Basilica of Mary, Help of Christians*, combine well together to provide us with an efficacious reminder in this historic moment for the Church and the Congregation

I should like to take up both these subjects with you, to satisfy a need I feel within myself and also to meet the desires of so many confreres whom I know to be awaiting a word of exhortation and guidance from him who has the prime and heavy responsibility of leading the Congregation at this difficult time.

The historical context of our centenary

Allow me first of all to outline the historical and ecclesial context into which our centenary celebrations have to be inserted, because this seems to be the best way to understand its real meaning.

We are in the period immediately following the Council. The first Synod of Bishops in the Church's history has just come to an end and the Church is poised to plunge into the process of renewal.

Pope Paul VI has proclaimed the « Year of Faith » which should lead us to live our faith and understand it more deeply, so as to commemorate in a fruitful manner the centenary of the martyrdom of the apostles SS. Peter and Paul.

In the sphere of our Salesian family we are jointly and severally engaged in the reshaping desired by the 19th General Chapter, which has to be carried out against a background of calm and constructive dialogue and on the fundamental basis of an interior renewal which must lead every member of the Salesian family to correspond to the implications of his complete consecration to our Lord and the demands of the apostolate proper to the Congregation.

Now the centenary of our greatest sanctuary of the Madonna offers us a happy opportunity of following efficaciously the above trends in the Church and the Congregation and playing a practical role in fulfilling them.

In fact, the postconciliar period, by demanding that we do something effective about the teachings and directives of the Council requires of us also that in our spiritual lives and in our apostolate as priests and educators we practise those solid principles of Marian devotion that the Council has proposed to us when in the light of the divine plan of salvation it shows us our Lady inseparably associated with Christ our Saviour and with the Church in the story of salvation.

The year of faith cannot be lived in all its fullness if our Lady is ignored. Mary most holy is the first of all believers; she deserved to be proclaimed blessed because of her faith in the divine word which revealed the designs that God had in her regard: « Blessed art thou for thy believing; the message that was brought to thee

from the Lord shall have fulfilment ». (Lc. 1,45). Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium* repeatedly emphasizes Mary's faith, and presents her as a model for all believers.

As well as this, Mary is an 'object' of our faith in as much as her mission, prerogatives and privileges have been revealed by God and belong to the deposit of faith.

Mary most holy has a vital place in the whole edifice of our faith: « for in a certain way she unites and mirrors within herself the central truths of the faith », as *Lumen Gentium* states (n. 65). She is bound to the divine Persons by a wonderful relationship. She has a vital place in the story of our redemption for she it was who knowingly and freely through her divine and virginal motherhood gave us our Saviour, who associated her with all the saving work of God the Son, continued in the Church. Her supernatural privileges of freedom from all sin and of fullness of grace remind us of the divine riches and of the sacred obligations we assumed at baptism. Her glorious Assumption speaks to us of our own eternal destiny to which we are directed by the grace of our divine adoption as sons. It is impossible therefore to think about our Lady without being led to an enlightened and industrious life of faith of the kind recommended to us by the Pope in the Year of Faith.

And every enterprise on which our great family has embarked to accomplish the desires of the 19th General Chapter finds the most secure guarantee of efficacious success in true devotion to our heavenly Patroness and Foundress — to use Don Bosco's word — of our Salesian work. It is Mary with her motherly presence and help who strengthens us and enables us to meet all our responsibilities in the best way possible, just as she did with our Father who always went forward with the help of his Madonna.

The centenary year of the consecration of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, must therefore be for us a marian year, marked by a more convinced and active devotion to our blessed Lady considered in the mystery of Christ and the Church as the Second Vatican Council presents her, in the atmosphere of spiritual renewal which comes from the Council and the 19th General Chapter.

The Motto for 1968

To make capital out of these providential signs of the times, this happy coincidence, and to engage our whole family in the task of living the year of Faith and renewing our devotion to our Lady in the manner taught by the Council, I have thought it well to offer you the following motto for 1968:

« Welcoming with filial devotion the exhortation of the Holy Father for the Centenary of Ss. Peter and Paul, I invite the entire Salesian Family to celebrate the Year of Faith with the generous and fervent resolve: To deepen the genuine value of our faith, To revive our consciousness of it and of its efficacy in our lives, To bear witness to it at the present day by being consistent Christians.

May Mary Help of Christians, strong support and defender of the Faith, confirm us in our Pledge in this Centenary Year of the Consecration of her Basilica in Turin ».

As you can see, the motto is based on the two elements which characterise this special year which is just beginning: the Year of Faith, and the centenary of our greatest sanctuary of our Lady; it invites us to make our way securely on the twin paths of practice of the faith, and renewal of our marian devotion.

These are the two great themes that I want to elaborate for you so that, being in tune with the wishes of the Church and the Congregation, and being personally renewed in spirit, you may be channels through which will pass a new influx of spiritual life to the souls confided to your care.

I - How to celebrate the Year of Faith

The year announced by His Holiness Paul VI in the Apostolic Exhortation « *Petrum et Paulum Apostolos* » is linked with the renewal fostered by the Council and with the pastoral programme of the Encyclical « *Ecclesiam Suam* ».

There is no question of an isolated event, but of a well-prepared

effort which will help us to live according to the Council and « sentire cum Ecclesia ». The exhortation for the Year of Faith is aimed at fostering vitality in the Church by making all her members aware of their own mission in the modern world and by spurring her on to that interior and exterior renewal that is needed if she is to take an apostolic place in that world with which dialogue must be established if salvation is to be brought to it.

The Church is the society of believers, and faith is the beginning of justification. And so the Year of Faith makes an efficacious contribution to the renewal of the Church by making it ever more and ever better the « society of believers »; the active and industrious practice of the faith helps on her saving mission. In this way the pastoral plans of the Council and the Encyclical « Ecclesiam suam » are put into effect.

These are the principal intentions of Pope Paul VI in commemorating the centenary of the martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul, as is evident from the text of the Apostolic Exhortation. The Holy Father wants « the commemoration of the centenary of the martyrdom of the holy apostles Peter and Paul first and foremost to take the form of a great act of faith for the whole Church. And we want to see in this anniversary », he goes on, « a happy occasion offered by Divine Providence to the People of God to *acquire again a greater awareness of their own faith, to revive it, to purify it, to reaffirm it, in order to bear witness to it.* » (Exhortation Osservatore Romano, 23 Feb. 1967).

The Pope himself thus pin-points for us objectives of the Year of Faith. They are the same as those I have paraphrased in the motto.

Our obligations are clear, but it may be of assistance to set them out more concretely to make it easier for them to be put into practice in our own lives, and in our apostolate as masters and witnesses of the faith.

a) *To deepen the genuine value of our faith*

Taught by sacred scripture and the Second Vatican Council we must maintain that faith, from the personal aspect, in so far as it

is a theological virtue, is the conscious, convinced and free attitude of man to God, who in the course of the history of salvation reveals and communicates himself in Jesus Christ and in his Spirit. This attitude is expressed in full consent, or in other words in full and complete adherence of mind, heart and action.

Because of this, faith leads on to charity or to full communion with God, to the filial observance of his paternal law, to the sure hope of his help and the fulfilment of his divine promises.

Thus faith gives a new perspective to life and illumines it with divine certainty about God's plan of salvation which is accomplished in human history through the Church.

Through faith we believe in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, or in other words we firmly adhere to the Blessed Trinity working in us, in the Church and in the world; and therefore, supported by grace, we accept with the fullest consent of mind, of will, and in deed, everything that God has revealed and done in the course of the history of salvation, and has been proposed by the Church's magisterium to be believed as an object of divine revelation.

And hence our faith is *theological*, because it unites us with the Blessed Trinity, the infinite fount of life and charity, the supreme object and motive of faith.

Our faith is also *christological*, because Jesus Christ is its author and he it is who brings it to perfection, being the divine word made flesh to communicate to us the treasures of truth and life, coming to us from the father.

And in addition our faith is *ecclesial*, because it is in the Church of Jesus Christ that we receive the faith through baptism by which we are inserted into the mystical body of Christ, to live and bear witness to and proclaim the faith. And so the Church is called by the Second Vatican Council « the community of believers », « the communion of the faithful », « the mistress and witness of faith » (Lumen Gentium, n. 12 seq.).

The genuine worth of our faith is put to us by the Council in these words: « The obedience of faith must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God,

offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals, and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. If this faith is to be shown, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind, and giving joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it. To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation, the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts » (Dei Verbum, n. 5).

We therefore have a very great need to beg insistently from God the gift of faith for ourselves and for the souls entrusted to our care, because faith is a priceless gift of God which he grants to those who ask for it with humble fervour.

b) To revive our consciousness of faith and of its efficacy in our lives

The recognition of the genuine worth of faith leads us to judge our life in the light of faith and to discover its shortcomings and inconsistencies on both an intellectual and practical level. For this reason faith needs to be continually revived and renewed, so that it can always be a rule of life.

We must develop a faith-mentality, combining faith with culture in such a way that faith does not remain something marginal or superficial but lights up and gives direction to all our reality; in this way we can detect the presence of God in the history of the world and in every man, and we can react to it in such a way as not to interfere with the divine plans. In short, faith must become a constant interior attitude by which we involve ourselves to the very limit with God, with Christ, and with his message, accepting all its demands and implications, taking our proper place in the « church » of our own community with a sense of responsibility, and thus working together for the good of the universal Church and of all humanity.

In this way human values are not destroyed but only placed in order amongst themselves and subordinated to faith which has become a kind of mentality, a fundamental attitude of mind which ensures that when a vital and decisive choice has to be made the judgement will always be on a religious level.

And so the religious element is not merely one of intellectual acceptance but something vital which has an influence on life and activity rendering it always christian and in keeping with the principles of faith. There is thus that integration between faith and culture which enables the content of faith to provide a complete and overall solution of all human problems. There is also integration between faith and life in all its manifestations, not only religious, but also cultural, social and professional; from this integration arises the true and complete christian, salt of the earth and light of the world. If we turn our thoughts for a moment to our Father Don Bosco, to so many other men and women who have found a place in the history of the Church, we recognise the fact that they have realised in themselves this integration, the fruitful source of spiritual and apostolic irradiation. But even looking around us today, each one in the sphere of his own particular activity, it is a simple matter to find men and women, lay-folk as well as those consecrated to God, who show forth in their own lives this happy and fruitful integration between faith and culture, faith and life.

Responsibilities and dangers of our apostolate

We, priests in the apostolate, need to keep our eyes on these examples for another reason also: to meet efficaciously the sad plea of souls of our time expressed in these words of Jean Guitton: « Hungering and thirsting as we are for the Absolute, and not being able to find it anywhere in itself, we need to have close to us a man like us but who, despite his mediocrity and wretchedness, embodies the idea of Absolute and shows us by his presence that the Absolute can exist and that it is even nearer than we think » (J. Guitton, *Dialoghi con Paolo VI* p. 295).

Unfortunately it is all too easy for us to become victims of the danger spoken of by St Augustine, that of 'dipsichia' or double mentality: the earthly lay mentality which extends to almost every moment and sector of life, and the religious mentality, with its greatly restricted sphere of influence, which in consequence affects only a

very small part of our activity and for a very short space of time. From this double and contrasting mentality there arises that faith which is merely marginal and superficial, an attitude to religion which is always on the defensive and makes no conquests, one that is not sincerely felt at all but merely imposed from outside.

Faith grows weak like this and can suffer complete shipwreck when faced with life's trials. Many people, and they include priests and religious, have arrived at atheism through this marginal, theoretical superficial faith which makes no vital impact.

The Year of Faith provides us with a good opportunity of reviving our consciousness of faith and of its efficacy in our lives, or in other words of making our faith active, because as we know very well « If good works do not go with it, faith is quite dead » (Jas. 2,17).

The danger of a marginal faith and of a dissociation between faith and life, as I have said already, is not only for the young and for simple christians; it exists also for priests and religious (and we have many sad examples to hand) who by following worldly norms and not those of Jesus Christ run the risk of becoming salt without savour, like those priests whom Jean Guittou describes as 'scarcely consecrated laymen' (ibid.) who lose their office as guides and masters in faith.

How important it is therefore to revive our faith every day through living contact with the Word of God, embodied in sacred scripture and the holy Eucharist, so that we shall be light and heat and thus able to give illumination and warmth to others.

c) To bear witness to faith at the present day by being consistent christians

Jesus Christ gave to his followers the task of being his witnesses. We have the witness of blood provided by the martyrs with the sublime act of a cruel death, but this is not for everyone. But there is the witness given by word, in deed and by life itself and to this we are all obliged if we want Christ to recognise and acknowledge us on the day of judgement.

This is the kind of witness that is specially needed at the present day; to this the Council continually urges us: the witness of a consistently christian life lived not only in church but also in school, in amusements, in work, in family and social life. This is how Christ's incarnation is prolonged in the modern world. This should be the aim of all our religious formation and of our work as christian educators.

It is not difficult, my dear confreres, to become aware of the relevance of these obligations with regard to our life of faith. It is endorsed by the Holy Father himself. In the Exhortation « *Petrum et Paulum Apostolos* » Pope Paul emphasises that the Year of Faith meets an urgent present-day need characterised by some sad phenomena: God is overlooked or denied which leads to a crisis in religious sense and in faith which are the bases of a healthy intellectual, moral and social order; the affirmation of a certain lay, non-religious, rationalistic culture which penetrates even into Catholic spheres, sowing doubts and anxieties about the very fundamental points of dogma.

Confusion of ideas

« Something very strange and regrettable is taking place », said the Pope in a recent address to members of the CEI, « not only amongst those whose mentality is profane, non-religious or anti-religious, but even in christian circles not excluding catholics and often, as though through some unexplained 'spirit of giddiness' (Is. 19,14), even amongst those who study the word of God and know it well; certainty is getting less about objective truth and the ability of the mind to attain it; a false sense is given to the genuine unique one of faith; the most radical inroads are allowed into the sacrosanct truth of our doctrines that have always been believed and professed by christian people; every dogma which is inconvenient and whose acceptance requires the humble submission of the mind is challenged; no heed is paid to the providential and irreplaceable teaching authority of the magisterium but the name of christian

is still retained by such people, even when they have gone so far as to deny all religious content » (*Osservatore Romano*, 8 April 1967).

If we pass from the doctrinal to the practical level we have to face the fact that in the lives of many baptised christians there is no longer any place for God. Their overriding concern is worldly things, chief amongst them their own comfort and amusement, and this leads them to shy away from anything religious, and so committed catholics, priests and educators, find themselves living and working in a realm of religious indifference. These are the wretched consequences of a faith that is superficial and languid and under-nourished, a faith of mechanical habits and external practices which can offer no resistance to the incessant hammer-blows loosed upon it from so many quarters. This is why there is such confusion of ideals; this is why so many people are uneasy at the renewal fostered by the Council; they do not understand what it means, and they do not understand the need; they are victims of a faith which is sterile and riddled with holes.

On the other hand we can detect a growing interest in religious and moral problems, as witness the increased circulation of publications which deal with such matters. But it has to be pointed out that often the public, and even the catholic public, is badly informed and directed because those who write on religious and moral problems or on Church events either lack the necessary competence or are imbued with preconceived anti-religious ideas or with a lay mentality. This fact was well established (and deplored) in the recent Synod.

Our plan of doctrine and work

Consequently our plan concerning doctrine and work for the Year of Faith is a matter of the greatest importance.

Each one, and not only the simple faithful, needs to make a deep study of his own faith so as to adapt it to the needs and cultural level of the modern world. According to Pope Paul the Year of Faith should incite us to study the doctrine contained in the documents of the recent Oecumenical Council so as to provide rules of life

for ourselves, for the faithful, and for the young to whom our apostolate consecrates us, by reviving our knowledge and the efficacy of our faith.

At this point therefore, two years after the end of the Council we need to ask ourselves what has been done in each of our communities to achieve a deep and systematic knowledge of the numerous Council documents. What in practice has been done by the responsible superiors to make it easy for the confreres to acquire this knowledge? We are dealing with an immense store of riches which cannot be ignored or lightly esteemed without serious consequences. Whilst I applaud the efforts of those who have taken a lot of trouble in various ways to spread and deepen a knowledge of the Council documents amongst Salesians, I do especially exhort superiors at different levels to take efficacious steps to see that the confreres are able to draw on this authentic treasure. But in any case it should be the endeavour of every Salesian, as far as his particular conditions allow, to acquire a serious knowledge of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents, and of the relevant commentaries now available everywhere, and particularly of those documents which touch our own life more closely.

I shall be pleased to hear of any projects, at either provincial or local level, designed to implement this request of mine and especially to lead to an adequate knowledge of those documents which bear more closely on our lives as religious, priests and educators.

Catechesis: the precise task of the Congregation

This would seem to be an opportune moment to refer to catechesis which is the ordinary process through which we arrive at faith, revive it in our own life, and nourish it in others. Let us not forget that catechising is one of the specific forms of apostolate left to us by Don Bosco in the Constitutions (Chap 1, art. 8): in this matter we concern ourselves first of all with the young, but our work must extend also to adults and especially to those who are associated with our various activities (Cooperators, Past Pupils, Parish associa-

tions, parents of our boys, the faithful in general, catechumens, etc.).

The General Chapter was forthright and explicit in this regard. « Among the forms of adult apostolate the first place of necessity and for fecundity is taken by the catechizing of adults..... (this) forms part of the mission confided by God to the Congregation through its founder and the Church, and by it readily accepted and put in practice » (Acts 19th Gen. Chap. p. 144).

Amidst the general weakening of the faith of so many people which is the greatest evil of our time, our duty becomes one of compelling urgency.

To reinforce my exhortation on so important a matter I should like to remind you once again of the strict duty we have of preparing ourselves adequately if we are to be efficacious catechists. Here again it is a question of acquiring the proper qualification which is needed nowadays for all apostolic activity. Improvisers, those with only superficial knowledge, the jack-of-all-trades can do more harm in this field than in others; and good intentions are no justification for our work if we are not aware of our precise responsibilities before God and to other people. We cannot let the faith run the risk of harm because of our ignorance or lack of competence.

It has given me great satisfaction to find that as far as catechetics are concerned our Congregation has given rise to some institutions which are prized not only amongst ourselves but in the much wider fields of culture and pastoral theology in the Church at large. I am thinking for instance of the Catechetical Institute of the PAS and of the Catechetical Centre in Turin, but I know that there are also other projects of a like though more restricted kind under way. I offer my hearty congratulations to those provinces which have a good number of students in this particular department of the PAS, and I hope that soon other provinces may be represented there.

I note also that in many places the number of catechetical courses is increasing for our confreres — priests, clerics and coadjutors, for teachers who are not Salesians, for cooperators, etc. — I applaud such activities, and I also want to congratulate those who have been instrumental in producing publications of a high cultural level or

of immediate scholastic interest, which have appeared recently in the field of catechetics.

From all this it is evident that things are being done, and recognition has come from high places; this we see as confirmation that we are on the right lines in our apostolate and as an incentive to do ever more and ever better.

This is one of the sectors in which Don Bosco wanted us to be always amongst the leaders; and when we look at the results that have been achieved in recent years I think we can say without any doubt that the sacrifices, especially of personnel, which were undertaken have been amply repaid.

I say this to encourage those who may still have some doubts about the matter, and also to point out to you the wider possibilities that will be open to us if we are able to unify and coordinate our work on an international level.

A dutiful examination of conscience

The Year of Faith provides us with a good opportunity of making a serious examination of conscience, both individually and as a Congregation, on how much we have to do today in this field, courageously facing up to our defects and deciding on the means to cure them. We can profitably review our past life in this regard. There may be some who too easily exempt themselves from the duty of offering themselves for catechetical work in schools, oratories, associations and groups, and in our other fields of work. There may be confreres who have gained academic degrees and have an excellent humanist and scientific culture but do not feel any need of specific preparation in catechetics. Some of our institutes (colleges, schools, oratories, etc.) pay only scant attention to the christian formation of the boys. Is this perhaps because we are over-concerned with scholastic results, or with sporting activities, or because convenience has been allowed to prevail over the catechetical aim which should have first place? These solemn thoughts were put to me at the Synod by an eminent bishop who knows us well.

Let us not deceive ourselves; all this success that has attended our educative work makes it the more disturbing to discover that not infrequently the faith of our boys disappears, at least from a practising point of view, as soon as they leave us to go to another school, or to work, or to a university, or out into the world. Our opponents have sometimes been able to throw nasty remarks in our face in this connection, as for instance when they say that they are not worried about a catholic school with thousands of pupils because it will take only a few months to get rid of what is only skin-deep.

Please do not misunderstand me. I have no wish to discourage anyone; rather do I want my words to be an invigorating summons to correspond fully with our mission in the Church, a mission which is primarily and essentially catechetical. To this end it must be our policy to make our work harmonise fully with the needs of the modern world, and especially the world of young people which is our special portion. And to complete my line of thought I want to remind you that the business of catechesis, which I have likened to the transmission of life, is not something that can be confined solely to religion classes, no matter how well they may be prepared.

The catechising of the young, which has for its object the formation of the christian of today and still more of tomorrow, takes place also in other classes, in the liturgy, in sacramental life, in groups and organizations, in extra-curricular activities and recreation, in personal contact with a spiritual director, in career guidance. Without this harmonious and integrating action we run the risk in many cases of just beating the air, or rather of giving our boys a veneer of the kind referred to above which will soon disappear.

Courage in making decisions and consistency in our lives

It is true that to achieve what we want we need to study and examine various situations with courageous realism, and then draw the logical conclusions which might imply alterations to our cus-

toms, to our policies and the way we carry out our work. These are all things which can cost us sacrifice in various ways, not least psychologically, but they will be beneficial sacrifices.

It is not difficult to see that all this is nothing more than part of the work of reshaping on which the life and vitality of the Congregation so much depends. It is a question of making a courageous and complete examination of all our work, of what effect it has on the confreres, of what real apostolic effect is made on souls; does it justify the use of the personnel and the means involved? It is a question of finding the remedies, partial or even radical when necessary, which need to be applied to avoid continuing activities which may be physically enervating and even spiritually taxing, but apostolically sterile, or at least with apostolic results out of all proportion to the work involved.

A final thought. Our late lamented Don Quadrio, writing to newly-ordained priests, warns them of a danger: a lacerated faith. I have spoken above about integrating the faith into our lives, and this is precisely the way to avoid the negative effects of a lacerated faith, and this especially in our mission as catechists, as formers of christians.

And so let us see to it that we are properly qualified; let us enrich our theological preparation in the field of catechetics; let us make it our business to follow out the whole of the plan drawn up for the solid christian formation of our boys and the other souls confided to us. This is necessary but before this it is essential that our own faith be integral and solid, shining itself and shedding light on others - in other words a living faith. Only in this way shall we be able to build up the souls for whom we are responsible.

It has been said that catechising does not mean passing on notions and ideas, not even sublime ideas, but it means passing on life. And it is so very true. What we pass on is not what is in our head but what we possess in the depths of our being. Experience shows that this is true. Let each one draw his own conclusions.

II. How to celebrate our own Marian Year

If the centenary of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul is such a favourable occasion for renewing our faith and giving it a new efficacy in our life and apostolate, the centenary of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, so closely bound up with our origin, with our holy founder and father, and with the centre of our Congregation, should give a new vitality to our devotion to Mary Help of Christians in all its shining purity, as our Salesian vocation requires.

Don Bosco was always deeply moved when he recalled what our Lady had done for him during the difficult periods of his life. And we in turn, when we look at what has taken place in the Congregation in the past hundred years, events that were not unaccompanied with difficulties but always productive of good, cannot but experience a similar feeling of grateful emotion on account of all she has done for us.

Even at the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the Basilica Don Albera had remarked that the consecration of the sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians had marked the beginning of a new era in our history; from that moment there was a prodigious increase in vocations, new foundations followed each other at short intervals, little by little the difficulties standing in the way of the congregation's approval began to disappear, the missions began to occupy our thoughts and in fact the first groups of missionaries set out. (Circular Letter of Don Paul Albera to the Salesians, on the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Valdocco, XXIV).

Don Ceria in an interesting chapter dedicated to this event in the first volume of the « Annals of the Salesian Society » says: « The building of the Church of Mary Help of Christians is an item of exceptional importance in the history of the Salesian Society » (p. 87).

What made this moment so extraordinary? It is not difficult to find the answer.

The Basilica: the heart of Valdocco

The building of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians was an act of homage paid by Don Bosco because of the love and gratitude he felt towards her, and because he wanted to do her honour by creating a new and imposing centre of devotion to her on the very spot where with her almost tangible help his work had begun and prospered.

The 'Biographical Memoirs' have preserved some valuable evidence for us in this connection. One evening in 1862 after he had been hearing the boys' confessions until nearly 11 o' clock at night, Don Bosco found himself alone with the cleric Albera and said to him confidentially: « I have heard so many confessions, and to tell you the truth I hardly knew what I was saying and doing I was so distracted by an idea that I could not shake off; it quite carried me away. I thought: our Church is too small; there is not room for all the boys - they are on top of one another. We shall build another, bigger and finer; it will be a magnificent Church. We will call it the 'Church of Mary Help of Christians'. I have not got a cent, and I do not know where the money is going to come from, but that does not matter. If God wants it, it will be done » (M.B., VII, 333 seq.).

Don Bosco was anxious, says Don Ceria in the Annals, that « the Church of Mary Help of Christians should become the real heart of the Oratory. In his mind's eye he could already see many different forms of activity going on amongst a crowd of people in the shadow of its dome; he had a foretaste of the joy he would feel at seeing them all gathered under its roof, singing with one voice the praises of God and his holy Mother and slaking their thirsty souls at the fountain of grace; he could imagine them vieing with one another to celebrate the bigger feast with due splendour and all the magnificence of the liturgy. Through its ever-open doors young and old would pass during the day to pray before the Blessed Sacrament and the picture of our Lady... In a word, once the beautiful house of God was built he could already see the devotion inside it, the joyful admiration outside, peace of mind and cheerfulness all

around, and high above it all on the dome our Lady giving her blessing and saying: I am up here to watch over and give ear to all my children at the Oratory » (Ceria, Annali I, p. 88 seq.).

The Basilica: Alma Mater of the Congregation

But Don Bosco was looking farther afield as well. Our Lady had been his inspiration and help in the early days of his priestly apostolate. Now, with the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians, he was placing her firmly in a central position in the life and history of the Congregation itself. That building would be a permanent reminder that his institute had arisen at her inspiration and through her help. The miracles that took place in such profusion to enable the Church of Mary Help of Christians to be built were in fact the seal placed by our Lady on the Congregation which he was building up with equal care in those years: they were an evident and wonderful proof of its supernatural origin.

The Salesians, as they looked back over the history of their family which had its beginnings in the shadow of the sanctuary at Turin, could not fail to see the Madonna at the beginning of it all and were bound to see that devotion to our blessed Lady was something essential in the life of the Congregation, in their apostolic activity, in their personal devotion and especially in their work of education of the young.

The fact that the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians arose at the Mother House, cheek by jowl with its own buildings and enlivened by all its varied apostolic activity is monumental evidence of the dominant role that the Help of Christians has played and must play in the Congregation. It was like the « Signum magnum » at the beginning of every Salesian house, and over them all.

In 1862 Cardinal Cagliero bore witness to the fact that Don Bosco had told him of his idea to build at Valdocco an imposing Church worthy of our Lady. « The Madonna wants us to honour her under

the title Mary Help of Christians », said Don Bosco; « times are getting so bad that we have great need of her to help us and to preserve and defend the christian faith. And there is another reason; do you know what it is? ».

« I think it must be », said the Cardinal, « that it will be the Mother Church of our future Congregation and the centre from which will emanate all our other works for the young ».

« You have guessed correctly », replied Don Bosco, « Mary most holy is the foundress of all our work, and she will be its support as well » (M.B. VII, 333-4).

Spiritual centre and source of apostolic endeavour

The Sanctuary was to become the depositary of all our spiritual inheritance, and Salesians coming to and fro on pilgrimage would find there an inexhaustible and unadulterated fountain from which to draw the spirit of Don Bosco: the same spirit which in that very place the Madonna had gone out of her way to show him, and which found its immediate expression in the life of the Oratory at Valdocco.

One hundred years' experience proclaims the fact that Don Bosco's purpose has been achieved, and almost every day we witness the joy of so many confreres who in the Basilica feel the continual active presence of the Madonna in the Congregation and find once again the spiritual richness of Salesian tradition in all its shining and penetrating clarity.

All its history, and part of it is still unfolding before our eyes, shows that the Sanctuary in Turin was not only the guardian of our great spiritual resources, but was also the centre from which radiated the expansion of the Congregation. It is significant that from this temple at Valdocco groups of missionaries have gone out each year to spread our work far and wide in the world: so far they number 92.

The Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians therefore is not just a citadel of prayer or a place of miracles or the focus of innumerable

pilgrimages, but more especially the source and centre from which emanates an extraordinary apostolic enterprise, our Congregation.

It is well known how the expansion of our work has been so often explicitly linked with the name of the Madonna, and that the map of Salesian expansion corresponds in large part to the chart of devotion to Mary Help of Christians; they are two things which are indissolubly linked. And it is good to know that the ever increasing number of our confreres scattered as they are throughout the world can always find a meeting place, a true home, a maternal heart, in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

I do not think that by illustrating in this way the place of the Church of Mary Help of Christians in the history of our family I am exaggerating or stretching the truth.

I have lived close to the Sanctuary for many years; looking out from here over the wide Salesian horizons in the world, and at the same time thinking of the personal experiences I have had in far-flung parts of the Congregation, I have had abundant proof of what I have said. I have come across it as I have prayed daily in the Basilica, in the emotion of so many confreres who have given me to understand that their real Salesian life began after a visit to Mary Help of Christians, in the devotion of pilgrims from all parts of the world, in the nostalgia of missionaries who received their crucifixes in this holy place, in the desire of so many Salesians in distant lands to be able to come at least once to Valdocco.

There come to mind, if I may be allowed the reference, the words of the Prophet expressing the yearning of the chosen people to be able to go up to the temple at Jerusalem: « The mountain of the Temple of Yahweh shall tower above the mountains..... All the nations will stream to it, peoples without number will come to it; and they will say: Come, let us go up to the Temple of the God of Jacob that he may teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths..... » (Isaiah, II, 2).

You will therefore understand the significance of our centenary celebrations and will realise what a lofty point of view we must take if we are to appreciate all the implications and meet our obligations.

We turn as loving sons to Mary Help of Christians and tell her of the gratitude which binds us to her as individual Salesians and as a Congregation, but as we commemorate the consecration of the sanctuary we want to relive our past history, we want to rediscover the sacred heritage of our spiritual tradition, we want to increase our trust both now and for the future of our family.

Ecclesial significance of the Centenary

The impact of the Centenary is all the more vivid and emphatic in so far as the Council solemnly and authoritatively confirmed the title under which Don Bosco wanted to honour our Lady in the sanctuary he built.

The title « Mary Help of Christians » emphasises the social character of devotion to the Madonna, considering her not only in relation to each single christian, but also in connection with the fact of the « people of God », i.e. the Church, which is alive and defends mankind and brings to it the message of salvation.

Our celebrations, in the light of the Council, will make us understand something that was not understood by those who were present a hundred years ago at the actual consecration of the Church, but was in fact realised and foretold by Don Bosco.

To honour Mary Help of Christians in a special way today means to rediscover in this period of general renewal that supernatural incentive which was responsible for the Congregation's early steps, and to face up again beneath the banner of the Help of Christians to the mission which the Church again entrusts to us in this present era.

I am sure that you will all concur wholeheartedly in these views and will be ready to join with filial fervour as far as lies in your power in the programme of events to which this occasion has given rise and which are set out in detail elsewhere in these Acts.

But at the same time let me make it quite clear what I have in mind to ensure that the marian year gets off on the right note and

achieves those sure and definite results that our Lady desires of us; allow me to explain more fully the fundamental manner in which I should like our whole family to nourish its spiritual life in this centenary year.

Before all else I am anxious that our work and endeavours be not limited to external manifestations, but directed as far as possible to an interior renewal of authentic Marian devotion, as it is presented to us by the Second Vatican Council in Chapter 8 of the Constitution on the Church, with the sure guarantee of truth that attaches to the supreme teaching authority of the Church in its most solemn and authoritative application.

Let us consider together the broad outlines of this teaching.

Jesus and Mary in the history of salvation

By free and providential divine decree, Mary most holy is indissolubly united with Christ our Saviour over the entire range of the story of man's salvation, from the promise of a saviour in the Garden of Eden, which portended the battle of her and her Son against Satan (Gen. 3,15), right down to the end of the story when Christ will come finally as judge.

God in his wisdom has developed in all the books of sacred scripture a harmonious doctrinal plan for our salvation.

In this divine salvific plan Mary brings to an end the messianic prophecies, accomplishing them by her divine motherhood through her « fiat » which gave « Life to humanity », and being associated through faith and obedience as a « handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son » (Lumen Gentium n. 56).

In the light of sacred scripture the Council next presents Mary to us united with her divine Son in the mystery of his infancy, and especially during his public life: whether at Cana by her efficacious intercession in Jesus' first miracle, which produced the first believers; or during his preaching; or especially on Calvary, beside the Cross of her Son as he sacrificed himself for the salvation of men. The

Council teaches in fact that Mary « loyally persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross. There she stood, in keeping with the divine plan (Jn. 19,25) suffering grievously with her only-begotten Son. There she united herself with a maternal heart to his sacrifice, and lovingly consented to the immolation of his victim which she herself had brought forth. Finally the same Christ Jesus dying on the Cross gave her as a mother to his disciple. This he did when he said: Woman, behold thy son (Jn. 19,26) » (Lumen Gentium, n. 58).

The association of Mary to the work of man's salvation goes on even after the resurrection of her Son. Mary is indeed present in the Cenacle with the Apostles and first followers of Christ and by her prayers begs the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation.

Finally the Immaculate Virgin was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory upon the completion of her earthly sojourn. She was exalted by the Lord as Queen of all, in order that she might be the more thoroughly conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and the conqueror of sin and death (n. 59).

God could not have raised a creature to greater heights. Although he could have done everything by himself, he willed to make use of Mary's motherly assistance in giving us the Saviour who associated his Mother to himself as the new Eve throughout the whole course of his saving mission in heaven and on earth with respect to all the graces of the Redemption.

Mother and Help of the Redeemed

By her divine maternity in giving us Jesus, Mary has also given us supernatural life and has therefore shown in our regard a true spiritual motherhood which surpasses a purely natural motherhood as much as the life of grace surpasses that of nature. She has also exercised a motherly influence on the Church because she is the Mother of Jesus, the head and founder of the Church; she is the first believer and therefore the personification of the Church which is the society of believers.

But even though Mary's earthly mission for the salvation of man and for the Church is so vital she must not be considered as merely a figure from history. Like Jesus, from her throne of glory she continues her universal work of salvation with regard to every saving grace.

For in fact, as « *Lumen Gentium* » declares: « This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross. This maternity will last without interruption until the eternal fulfilment of all the elect. For, taken up to heaven, she did not lay aside this saving role, but by her manifold acts of intercession continues to win for us gifts of eternal salvation. By her maternal charity Mary cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led to their happy fatherland. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix » (n. 62).

Hence it is the Council itself which shows us Mary as the Help of all the Redeemed, for whom « by her motherly intercession she obtains the graces of eternal salvation ». Nothing could therefore be more opportune than the marian doctrine of the Council to lead us to the solid convictions which must guide us in this year of faith to a profitable commemoration of our Marian Centenary.

If Christ Jesus willed not to do without Mary, how could the priest, the religious, the educator in his life and apostolate not make use of the motherly help of her whom God willed to associate with the Redemption itself and with its continuation in every form of apostolic work?

As in the case of all the Church, every Salesian and educator must look to the Blessed Virgin as the Council enjoins; must look to her who gave birth to Christ, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of her precisely so that he could be born and grow in the hearts of the faithful through the medium of the Church. The Virgin Mary in her own life lived an example of that maternal love by which all should be fittingly animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church on behalf of the rebirth of men (n. 65).

Authentic marian devotion

In the light of these fundamental truths coming from divine revelation, the Council lays down sure guiding lines for our marian devotion and gives us criteria to follow in our marian apostolate of the benefit of the faithful, and we might say especially of the young.

Far from playing down marian devotion as some, without any foundation, would seem to think and as has been falsely stated in certain publications, the Council solemnly endorsed the lawfulness and advantages of the cult of our Blessed Lady; in fact it specifically declared that because Mary is the Mother of God «the Church appropriately honours her with special reverence » (n. 66).

The Council then proceeds to set out very clearly the essential elements and manifestations of marian devotion which are still valid for the present day: veneration, love, prayer and imitation.

I shall not go into details about these characteristics, but it is not difficult to understand that such devotion if it is genuine « consists neither in fruitless and passing emotion, nor in a certain vain credulity. Rather it proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and are moved to a filial love towards our mother and to the imitation of her virtues » (n. 67).

To inculcate and foster true marian devotion, priests, apostles and educators are earnestly exhorted by the Council to study sacred scripture, the holy Fathers, the doctors, and liturgies of the Church, under the guidance of the Church's teaching authority. « Let them rightly explain the offices and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which are always related to Christ, the Source of all truth, sanctity and piety ». And the Council concludes: « Let them painstakingly guard against any word or deed which could lead separated brethren or anyone else into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church » (n. 67).

These words are a clear invitation to a marian devotion which is solid and earnest and free of all vain sentimentalism or exaggeration: the Madonna, the handmaid of the Lord, must be the way that leads us to Christ.

And this would certainly be the line that our Father would indicate to us, for if he was a keen and tireless propagator of devotion to our Lady he was equally a devout and docile son of the Church.

I have restricted myself to these fundamental outlines from the Council, but I think that they will be sufficient to convince you that the line they take is not that our Lady is to be forgotten, that her pictures and statues are to be summarily done away with, that her Rosary and other praiseworthy devotional practices guaranteed by christian tradition and approved by the Church shall be allowed to fall into disuse.

The line taken by the Council (and it is not one of « giddiness » to use the expression of Pope Paul), the line we must all follow, is that of « true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and are moved to a filial love towards our mother and to the imitation of her virtues » (n. 67); it is a way which « treasures the practices and exercises of devotion towards her that have been recommended by the teaching authority of the Church in the course of centuries » (n. 67); it is a way on which we must avoid « the falsity of exaggeration on the one hand, and the excess of narrow-mindedness on the other in treating of the unique dignity of the Mother of God » (n. 67).

« In the bodily and spiritual glory which she possesses in heaven, the Mother of Jesus », according to the Council, « continues in this present world as the image and first flowering of the Church as she is to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise, Mary shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, as a sign of sure hope and solace for the pilgrim people of God » (n. 68).

Doctrinal obligations for the Marian Year

From what the Council has said it is not difficult to see what our obligations are for this marian year we are called upon to live.

They fall into three closely linked groups.

On the *doctrinal level*, in the first place, there must be a stepping up of activity in the fields of study, preaching and instruction so

as to make more accessible and familiar to ourselves and others the marian doctrine of the Council, together with its relationship to the history of the Congregation and the thought and example of our holy founder.

To this end are directed the various marian contests which are being organised at different cultural levels amongst our young people and which should be held in every house, every province and every nation. These contests should not be looked upon as so many exhibitions or merely as competitions for prizes, but as an instrument particularly suited to the psychology of the young for putting over one of the most important elements in our work of christian education.

When the victors in the national contests come to Turin for the solemn prize-giving on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1968 I would like them to be a true expression of the extraordinary zeal that has been shown throughout the Congregation to emphasize devotion to our Lady. It will be the finest fruit of the Centenary for ourselves and for our young people.

This invitation which we are extending to the young evidently presupposes an active interest and study on the part of the confreres: through their own doctrinal and spiritual preparation they will have to stir up enthusiasm and must be able to pass on clearly and efficaciously the teaching which will inculcate an exact and fruitful knowledge of marian devotion.

If today there is a certain lack of enthusiasm about devotion to our Lady, this is due to the fact that all too often such devotion is not presented against a background of assured and solid doctrine. Superficiality and false feeling have given rise to a spurious devotion.

Devotional obligations

On a *devotional level* we have all the rich heritage of ecclesiastical and Salesian tradition, making available to us all the resources of the liturgy properly so called, culminating in the divine sacrifice, and also our other pious practices.

We know that the Council has renewed many forms and expressions of christian piety, and we intend to conform to these with complete fidelity as far as marian devotion is concerned: in this way we want to effect a renewal of our own religious life in one of its most characteristic elements.

There may have been practices in the past which were nothing more than mere external celebrations, without heart and devoid of any impact on christian life. We do not bewail the passing of such things and welcome the enlivening breath of the Council in helping us to discover a genuine expression of our faith. For this reason I urge you to be courageous in your support of every effort made by the Church.

But I would not like the lawful demands of renewal to cause us to adopt an attitude of indifference, or worse still of disdain, towards those marian practices which are a necessary complement of the great liturgical actions and food for our fervour. The Council itself declares: « Practices and exercises of devotion towards her must be treasured as recommended by the teaching authority of the Church in the course of centuries » (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 67).

I do not intend to make a list of these practices which are so well known to you, but I would like to say just this: Let us be slow to discard that traditional heritage which has given a characteristically marian flavour to our religious life, our apostolate, and our work of education, and let us never forget that it will be through the fervour of our devotion to our Lady that we are able to preserve the authentic spirit of our Congregation and its capacity for missionary conquests.

And finally I think it opportune to remind you that renewed marian devotion will enable us to carry out what was prescribed by the 19th General Chapter in the document dealing with our religious life and the Madonna: « The Salesian should give the Blessed Virgin her rightful place in his personal life. Thus his affections will have their fruitful supernatural outlet and his purity its proper radiance » (*Acts 19th Gen. Chap.*, p. 85).

The Salesian will also be able to entrust his fidelity to the duties of his state every morning « to her whom the Church calls ‘ Virgin

most faithful ' our model and our strength. She was God's religious *par excellence*, poor, chaste and obedient in carrying out her duties as mother. She is, in consequence, our Help of Christians, the virgin most benign, the mother of true religious virtues » (Acts 19th Gen. Chap., p. 90).

The Rosary - a practice which should flourish

But there is one marian practice that I would like to recommend to you in a special way and with the very heart of Don Bosco: the holy Rosary.

Nothing would justify us in letting it go, neither the teaching of the Church (it is enough to recall the numerous exhortations of Pope Paul in this connection, some of them of recent date), nor our Constitutions and the lessons of Don Bosco, nor the custom of those great souls who have marked out so brilliantly the path of faith in our own time; Pope John XXIII will serve as an example.

I urge you with all my heart to keep alive the recitation of the holy Rosary which during this year should be the means of gathering in unison the voices of everyone in our houses, the confreres and boys, the faithful in our parishes, to honour the Madonna. When one thinks of the spiritual aspirations that so many Salesians have offered through the Rosary and the wonderful effects that this prayer has had for the success of our work, it is a cause of anxiety and dismay to think that it might be neglected.

During this centenary year I would like those reciting the daily Rosary, either in community or alone, to have two special intentions in mind: To thank our Lady for everything she has done for our family during these hundred years, and to obtain a renewal of marian fervour in our confreres and the souls for whom we work.

Our founder and father, in dedicating to our Lady of the Rosary the first humble chapel at the Becchi in his brother Joseph's house, wanted to express in this way his gratitude to the Blessed Virgin for having guided him through his youthful years to the priesthood;

the recital of the Rosary this year will be a renewed expression of the gratitude to the Madonna of the whole Congregation and will give us strength and trust in the great work of renewal on which we have embarked in the wake of the Council.

Apostolic endeavour

On an *apostolic level* too the marian centenary provides us with clear and ample opportunities. The spreading of devotion to our Lady, and more particularly to her under the title of Mary Help of Christians should be felt as a special obligation during our celebrations.

Don Bosco enjoyed from the Madonna an extraordinary predilection and protection, but he earned this privilege by making himself an apostle of devotion to her.

The early Salesians followed his example and received the same heritage, conducting a marian apostolate throughout the world, as is clear from documents reaching Turin from many provinces during these past months.

From the Sanctuary of Valdocco the glory of the Help of Christians has in very truth gone forth into the whole world as was foretold to Don Bosco by our Lady herself.

Following in such glorious footsteps we must work with greater intensity than ever during the centenary year, remembering those words of Don Bosco making a promise that has been realised time without number: « Spread devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians, and you will see what miracles are ». Even the moral miracle of the conversion to christianity and the sanctification of the youth of our time will be possible through the efficacious supernatural power flowing from the twin sources of the Holy Eucharist and devotion to our Lady.

To make our apostolic programme still more definite during the centenary year, I have decided to suggest to you after much prayer three projects which constitute an official and lasting homage from the Congregation to the Blessed Virgin. They take on a special

importance at the present time and in the context of our renewal; and whilst I offer them as a gift to the Madonna I ask her blessing and her help to ensure their successful outcome.

a) Sending out of missionaries

In the first place I want to give effect to the wish expressed by the 19th General Chapter in these words: « The desire of those who request permission to go to the missions should be fostered, to the extent that this is possible and where the necessary qualities are present. The same should be said of those who wish to offer their labour for at least five years, so long as they too are considered suitable » (Acts 19th Gen. Chap. p. 180).

Accordingly, in agreement with the members of the Superior Council, I have decided to organize during 1968 the sending out of the *first group of priests to the missions*, priests who will put themselves at the disposal of the Congregation *for five years work in some of our most needy areas in Latin America*. I appeal to any of you who are willing, to offer yourselves for not more than five years for work in the various forms of priestly ministry (there is no question of teaching in schools) in those parts of Salesian Latin America where the work of priests is most needed.

This project has been prompted by the precarious state of catholicism in South America because of the great lack of clergy, by the heart-rending appeal made to us so often by the Pope and to which we have promised to reply, and by the example of other religious and lay institutes who have preceded us in this missionary endeavour.

I have been informed that one of the biggest religious orders in the Church is taking steps to increase the number of its missionaries from 17% of its total number of members to 33%. This is indeed significant. For my own part, after what I have seen these past few years, I am convinced that what was said by a certain illustrious religious is very true: Congregations flourish to the extent that they are animated by an authentic missionary spirit.

I am confirmed in my conviction by the willingness and generosity of young people of our time to make sacrifices. They shrink from a

routine which makes christian life a comfortable middle-class kind of existence and so degrades it, and still more from a religious life which begins as one of donation but ends with the ideal faded away. It is the young people who spur us on along the way of generous, self-sacrificing, authentic missionary service.

You will have heard of the thirty young men — students, workmen, clerks, members of professions — who in connection with the ' *Populorum progressio* ' movement went out from Italy at their own expense to spend four months in Brasil to provide special help for our mission at Poxoreu. It is a daring enterprise — one of joyous sacrifice, which we are happy not merely to applaud but to welcome; it is a message to us from those to whom we have given an apostolic education.

From our various missions in Brasil, and I might add from almost all the other countries of Latin America, I receive ever more heart-rending appeals. Time and again I read phrases like: «We are always too few; we are old and sick, worn out, and often down-hearted. When one falls out he cannot always be replaced. While the population is increasing, the workers in the vineyard grow less and their numbers go on decreasing. The distances compel us to split up and waste our strength. And at the same time the missionaries of other faiths are continually increasing in number; they are better trained and better equipped. The Congregation must help us before we collapse. For us it is not a question of hunger, but of survival ». How can one remain insensible to such pleas? They express the simple truth as is confirmed not only by our provincials and bishops, but also by the Regional Superiors who little by little have acquired personal experience of the painful situation.

Some may object: « But even in our own province personnel is scarce and we are short of vocations ». I am sure that these people would change their opinion if they had personal knowledge of the situation in which our confreres of those regions are living, and suffering, and dying. There is no comparison, for instance, between circumstances in Europe and in certain provinces of Latin America. If in Europe labourers are short, in some of those areas nearly everything is lacking. On the other hand, if in some province there could be a

reduction in activities which absorb a large number of personnel without producing corresponding results from an apostolic point of view, no great harm would be done, especially if they could be gradually and wisely replaced by lay people with proper qualifications and the desire to take part in apostolic work; but to refuse help to the confreres in Latin America would lead to the loss, and perhaps the irreparable loss, of thousands and thousands of souls for which the Congregation is responsible before the Church, by turning a deaf ear to the pleas of our brothers, of souls, and of the Church itself.

Dear confreres and sons, we have got to face reality; we have got to look beyond the limits of our own house and our own province, and face up to the consequences of what we see: it is a matter of charity, and I would even go so far as to say a matter of justice. The Congregation, as I have said before, is not made up of water-tight compartments.

From this wider view, this greater effective understanding of the problems, our confreres in the different provinces will surely experience a new surge of generosity, of renewed faith, of constructive optimism: the Congregation will demonstrate in all its richness the truth of Christ's words: « Date et dabitur vobis ».

I feel that Don Bosco, who in the last century foresaw the importance of the evangelisation of Latin America, would ask the Congregation to take on this responsibility which is in fact imposed on us also by our position in those republics.

I know that is something new, that sacrifices will be needed and hard decisions, but I place it all under the protection of Mary Help of Christians, and I am sure that she will bless the efforts of this new Salesian era and in due course compensate the provinces for the sacrifices they are called upon to make at the present time.

And in this connection I would like to tell you all, superiors and simple confreres, of something said to me by a great archbishop: « Every time one of my clerics makes a serious request to be allowed to go on the missions I never refuse him permission, even though he be on the eve of his ordination to the priesthood; our Lord has

always repaid me with other excellent vocations and by increasing the fervour of my seminarians. We must be guided in what we do by a lively faith and great charity ».

To get down to practical details, I invite any confrere who would like to respond to my appeal to make his request to me personally. It will give me great joy to receive such offers. It should be kept in mind that the appeal is addressed to priests who are not more than 35 years of age, and is for a period of 5 years.

Because of the difficulty of reconciling many complex factors it may not be possible to accede immediately to every request, but the very fact of making oneself available for such a cause is already an act whose merit will be recognised by the Madonna.

But to the appeal I want to add immediately a clear and fatherly word of warning. Confreres who are chosen will be properly prepared for the mission to which they are assigned, but each one must accept from the outset that the life he is going to is one of sacrifice; this is not an escape route from intolerable situations, for those who are discontented or unstable; it is not a convenient way of seeing new countries and new peoples. They go to America to help our confreres in their priestly ministry, well knowing that this will mean sacrifice and renunciation, not only of the physical and material order but also — and to a greater extent — on the psychological level; it is the price one pays for souls. Don Bosco said as much in his own time to the missionaries setting out for America.

b) Youth Centre

The second work that I should like to see carried out on the occasion of the Centenary is that of a *Youth Centre in every province*, corresponding fully to the ideas of the General Chapter. Here again it is a question of something which was suggested and hoped for when the Chapter decided to broaden the idea of the Oratory so as to enable it to meet the needs of young people of today and to correspond with what the Church rightly expects from our Congregation. (Acts 19th Gen. Chap. pp. 134-135, 103, 137).

We are all convinced of the utility, and even the necessity and

urgency of adapting our apostolate of the young to the needs of our time: we have got to break out of the ring of difficulties which naturally hedges us about in such a task and get it under way.

When on the 8th December 1841 Don Bosco began his work, he must have been faced with difficulties much more complex than ours; and he certainly had similar difficulties in his later undertakings. He said a 'Hail Mary' with Bartholomew Garelli, and felt the urge to begin with our Lady's help. Should not we be willing to make an act of faith and build to the Lord a work which might mark a turning-point in our youth apostolate?

Considerations about reshaping are in progress, and the Youth Centre should have its right and proper place amongst the other works.

This does not need to be a new work; it could be the transformation or substitution or adaptation to the new needs of youth of a work already in existence. I know that in some provinces the Youth Centre is already a flourishing reality, in others it is in an advanced stage of preparation. Go ahead then with trust and courage, and in accordance with the apostolic needs of the present day.

c). *Retreat House*

My final suggestion concerns the *Retreat House*. The 19th General Chapter declared: « Every province should have, where possible, a retreat house for the confreres, for all groups of people under our care (cooperators, past pupils, boys) and for youth in general. (Acts 19th Gen. Chap., p. 169). The desire of the General Chapter has been widely endorsed as to timeliness and urgency by the experiences of the last year or two. Where the spiritual needs of confreres and boys can be cared for through retreats, congresses, meetings etc. in houses properly equipped for the purpose, experience has shown that they have derived great profit for their spiritual and apostolic formation.

I would like to remind you that retreat work, whether on a large or small scale, and not only for the confreres but for the faithful in general, is desired by our Constitutions (Chap. I, art. 8), and it will not be possible to accomplish this in our well developed modern society unless the house is suitably equipped and furnished with

reasonable comfort. This work too should be given due considerations in the reshaping programme. Let us get things moving in our Lady's name. She will guarantee its success.

My dear Confreres and Sons,

As you can see, the three projects I have suggested to you, eminently Salesian, spiritual and apostolic as they are, will extend beyond the Centenary of the Basilica. They will be durable gifts which will bear permanent witness to our fidelity to Don Bosco in his devotion to our Lady made up, as Don Bosco desired, of deeds rather than words, and will at the same time enrich the Congregation in its spirit and its apostolic mission.

Mary Help of Christians, as I love to repeat, will show her pleasure at our filial homage by continuing her motherly protection over us in the future as she has done in the past.

As I come to the end I should like to remind you of two items which are being dealt with directly by the Superior Council. There are two things which, although they meet a general wish, have an almost symbolic aspect: this is why I mention them here in conclusion.

I am speaking of the restoration of the façade of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, and of the permanent Salesian exhibition in the crypt underneath.

As far as the façade is concerned there is no question of any great change, but rather of a bit of retouching: some decorative elements which were added to the original project without regard to purity of style will be eliminated, and parts which have deteriorated through the ravages of time and weather will be repaired. The renewed façade will be solid in construction and architecturally clean in line.

I like to see in this renewal a symbol of our devotion to Mary Help of Christians in this Centenary, made more lucid and solidly based by those principles and forms which the Church proposes to us and which Don Bosco embodied in his salesian spirituality.

And with the refurbishing of the façade, pilgrims coming to Turin will find another novelty: an up to date Salesian exhibition in the crypt of the Basilica.

We want to provide a visible impression of the Congregation; we want to show how the prodigious mission of Don Bosco has developed under our Lady's guidance; the present-day structure and organization of our three-fold family; the apostolic activities on which we are engaged in the Church to meet the needs of the modern world; the spirit which animates us, and the sources from which it takes its rise.

It will be a synthesis of all the great and providential Salesian events dominated by the continual presence of the Madonna, there where the work began and whence it continues to draw its impelling life in the service of the Church.

My dear confreres,

Every day I am at Turin, I kneel down and pray before Mary Help of Christians, and I try not only to present my own intentions and the needs of our family, but to render present there before our Lady all those who are far away.

For some time now my attention has been attracted by a special circumstance which gives direction to my prayer. Inside the altar rails, before the miraculous picture of Mary Help of Christians, there burns the great candle of the Year of Faith. When I look at this scene it seems to me as though during this year all our confreres and boys and other members of the faithful are living spiritually in the Sanctuary of the Help of Christians re-ensembling the torch of faith in union with the whole Church. I am sure that our Congregation will come forth renewed by what I should almost like to call a 'Salesian holy year' to fulfil our task amongst men in this present age. While I was taking part in the Roman Synod I came to understand more clearly the gravity and urgency of this duty, but I also understood much more clearly the greatness of the mission which Don Bosco placed before our Congregation. May Mary Help of Christians guide us and help us to fulfil it with humble and courageous fidelity.

My affectionate greetings to you all. I rely on a fraternal remembrance in your prayers.

Fr Aloysius Ricceri
Rector Major

II. NOTIFICATIONS

The Marian Year

Elsewhere in this issue of the « Acts of the Council » the Rector Major has officially introduced and explained the significance of the Centenary of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

A detailed programme of the celebrations will be sent in due course but in the meantime we give a general outline especially with regard to those items where the emphasis is more of a spiritual nature and which will need greater time for preparation in the provinces and individual houses.

Principal dates concerning the Centenary

— The solemn festivities will begin with the opening of the month of Mary Help of Christians in the afternoon of 23rd April 1968.

— The external demonstrations will reach their peak on 24th May, the feast of Mary Help of Christians. At this period of the year the organisation of pilgrimages presents fewer difficulties.

— The anniversary of the Consecration 9th June, is reserved for celebrations of a religious nature. At this time examinations and other scholastic obligations make other demonstrations impossible.

— Pilgrimages may be made throughout the period of the Centenary even during the summer, to suit the convenience of the individual groups.

— In October and November special 'Marian Days' will be organised to cater for special groups (priests, teachers, parents, children).

— The Centenary Year will be officially closed on the feast of the Immaculate Conception 1968.

Pilgrimages

Pilgrimages to the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin will be a major feature of the Centenary.

Pilgrimages will be of two kinds:

1. Pilgrimages promoted officially by the organising committee

Under this heading come those of the Cooperators (25th April), the past pupils of the Sisters (12th May), the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (14th May), our own past pupils (23rd - 24th May), the Pueri Cantores (end of June), the sick, etc.

For pilgrimages of this kind detailed instructions will be issued to local organisers by National Delegates or those in charge.

2. Pilgrimages promoted privately

This category will include those from individual houses, parishes, Oratories, etc., not joining pilgrimages of Group 1 above.

The Sanctuary at Turin should take precedence over anywhere else as the goal of salesian pilgrimages during 1968. Whilst keeping their own requirements in mind, the organisers should make previous arrangements with the central Committee at Turin concerning dates and programmes to avoid clashes and confusion.

To this end *three committees* have been established, under the responsibility of the Rector of the Basilica:

1. Committee for Accommodation

This will provide information and advice in matters of board and lodging, transport, etc., but the actual arrangements must be made directly between those concerned.

2. Pilgrimage Committee

This will provide advice and guidance on dates and course of events for pilgrimages; it will arrange for them to be met on arrival at the Basilica, and accompanied during the various visits and other events according to a prearranged uniform plan for all groups.

3. Liturgical Committee

This will look after pilgrimages in the Basilica itself and will make the arrangements for all religious functions (sermons, Mass, confessions, etc.) again according to a uniform plan.

All enquiries should be addressed directly to the *Rettore della Basilica di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Don Giovanni Busato, Via Maria Ausiliatrice, 32 - 10152 TORINO (Italy).

In due course posters, advertising material, detailed programmes, etc. will be sent to provincial offices.

The Liturgical Committee is publishing a handbook for the religious functions of the pilgrimages.

The Pilgrimage Committee is preparing a « Pilgrim's wallet » containing a descriptive pamphlet on the Sanctuary, a guide to Valdocco, guide to the other places of salesian interest in Turin, etc.

In addition to the religious functions, individual pilgrimages will be able to organise other demonstrations of a salesian character, e.g. theatre productions, visits to the Becchi, Mondonio, etc. so as to enable the maximum spiritual profit to be derived from this visit to the places which saw the beginnings of the Congregation.

Marian Contest

A Marian Contest is being promoted by the International Centre for the Youth Apostolate amongst the young people attending our Oratories, Institutes and Youth Centres to ensure a more active participation in the centenary celebrations, and to inculcate in this way a more conscious and genuine devotion to our Lady.

The contest is being organised by the « Youth Apostolate »; the regulations and other relevant information will be issued in due course. Some general information is given here.

Contestants will be divided into three groups:

1. Boys and girls from 11 to 14 years.
2. Those of 15 and 16 years.
3. Those from 17 to 19 years.

There are three sections: cultural, artistic and photographic. For each group the cultural section comprises three parts:

1. Our Lady in the Gospel.
2. Our Lady in the Second Vatican Council.
3. Our Lady in the life of Don Bosco. (For children of the youngest group a special booklet has been prepared: « La Madonna di Don Bosco », obtainable from the L.D.C.).

The finals of the National Contest for Italy will take place at Turin on 19th May. The distribution of prizes to the national prize-winners from all parts of the world will take place at Turin on 7th December 1968, at the end of the centenary year.

Exhibition

For the Centenary an exhibition will be organised in the crypt of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians to provide a visible impression of the history, organisation and activity of the Congregation as it tries to meet the needs of the present day.

It will serve to complement the religious functions in showing the pilgrims our mission in the life of the Church.

Faculty of reciting the breviary in the vernacular in community

The Rector Major has sought from the Sacred Congregation of Religious « the faculty that all salesian priests may satisfy the obligation of the divine office by reciting it in the vernacular every time they do so with the whole community ».

On 21st April the Sacred Congregation granted the faculty requested.

Nomination of Provincial

Fr Joseph Henriquez to the Province of Caracas (Venezuela)

III. DOCUMENTS

SACRA CONGREGATIO DE RELIGIOSIS

Prot. N. 12881-67

Most Holy Father,

The Rector Major of the Salesian Society of St John Bosco, prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, humbly begs the faculty that all salesian priests may satisfy the obligation of the divine office by reciting it in the vernacular every time that they do so united to the whole community.

And may God...

Vigore facultatum a Ss.mo Domino Nostro concessarum, Sacra Congregatio Negotiis Religiosorum Sodalium praeposita, attentis expositis a Rev.mo P. Oratore, benigne adnuit pro gratia iuxta preces, servatis ceteris de iure servandis.

Contrariis quibuslibet non obstantibus.

Datum Romae, die 21 aprilis 1967.

(L. + S.)

✠ Paulus Philippe
a Secretis

D. M. Huot

Ad. a St.

IV. DECEASED SALESIANS

Fr. Peter Adamo

* 26.3.1910, † at Catania (Italy) 16.7.1967. 57 yrs. 38 of profession and 29 of priesthood.

He was a noble priestly figure who spread joy and happiness about him. His calm and prudent way of guiding the young oratorians won him the esteem of their parents who willingly sent him their children. His constant serenity seemed to suggest that he had no worries; and so it was because he always saw himself as a man of Christ — a priest.

Coad. Assensio Albizuri

* 27.10.1885, † at Pasajes-Renteria (Spain) 7.4.1967. 81 yrs. 60 of profession.

He was a devout salesian with childlike candour, kind and helpful to everyone, a true Israelite in whom there was no guile. He was fond of games the life and soul of recreation with the boys. Exact in his observance of the Rule — his expression reflected the purity of his soul. A tireless worker of the old school and a dedicated infirmarian. Died in the same peace that had marked his whole life.

Fr. Nuntius Amato

* 20.12.1886, † Messina (Italy) 21.8.1967. 80 yrs. 62 of profession and 54 of priesthood.

He was an exemplary salesian, most faithful to the spirit of Don Bosco, who spent a long life entirely in the service of boys and his confreres. He worked for the past pupils with great devotion and was always ready to guide and help them.

Coad. Paul Bagsik

* 18.11.1884, † at Czerwinski (Poland) 11.8.1967. 82 yrs. 44 of profession.

His was a long life of work for the Congregation. He offered himself for the missions and went to Brasil after his perpetual profession,

but had to return to Poland three years later through ill-health. Worked as procurator in various houses, but he was never happier than when fulfilling the duties of sacristan.

Fr. Ladislaus Barton

*24.6.1906, † at Rzaska (Poland) 1.9.1967. 61 yrs. 41 of profession and 31 of priesthood. Rector for 7 yrs.

His early priesthood was spent in concentration camps. After 1945 he spent some years in Paris before returning to Poland as a parish priest. He foresaw the liturgical renewal, organized a lay institute, cared for the poor in his own house and produced hand-books of apologetics for the young. He was a member of the commission for parish matters in the Krakow archdiocese. As a mark of his devotion to our Lady he built a chapel in her honour in thanksgiving for his safe return from the concentration camps.

Fr. Francis Boat

* 2.8.1901, † at Cape Town (South Africa) 16.10.1967. 66 yrs. 43 of profession and 36 of priesthood.

He worked for many years in South Africa where he has left a lasting impression as an observant and good-natured priest always ready to help anyone in need. A dedicated assistant, but kindly and well liked by the boys. He died suddenly but was well prepared.

Fr. John Bonifacino

* 2.9.1898, † at Montevideo (Uruguay) 7.6.1967 68 yrs. 51 of profession and 43 of priesthood.

Richly endowed with intellectual gifts, he worked tirelessly for the education of others, especially the young, for 25 years. In 1950 he contracted Parkinson's disease which made the rest of his life that of a victim. This he willingly accepted. Death came as a peaceful transition to eternal joy.

Fr. Joseph Brusadelli

*16.7.1884, † at Piosasco (Italy) 13.11.1967 83 yrs. 60 of profession and 48 of priesthood.

He was one of the early Salesians and his health was never good. He worked zealously in Mexico and Brasil and then in various houses

in Italy. For more than twenty years he was attached to the Basilica, hearing confessions. His last years were spent in the infirmary and then in a nursing home.

Fr. Alexander Calder

* 10.12.1901, † at Grange-over-Sands (England) 15.10.1967 65 yrs. 47 of profession and 39 of priesthood.

Nearly all his Salesian life was spent at Bolton. In his later years despite failing health he never spared himself. A very faithful assistant he was always calm and reserved and a deep spiritual life showed itself in his exactness. An enthusiastic drawing teacher, his kindness won him universal esteem and affection.

Fr. John Cattaneo

* 23.2.1881, † at Florence (Italy) 21.7.1967 86 yrs. 68 of profession and 58 of priesthood.

For 45 years he was a curate at the Holy Family where he served the Lord with zeal and punctuality. He was well known for his devotion to the confessional; nothing could prevent him from being there at the appointed time. How many souls there are who profited by his ministry. His life was always that of the priest dispensing the grace of God.

Fr. Eugene Cavallo

* 4.7.1887, † at Genoa-Quarto (Italy) 13.10.1967 80 yrs. 61 of profession and 51 of priesthood. Rector for one year.

Fr. Raphael Cerdà

* 26.1.1893, † at Matarò (Spain) 11.10.1967 74 yrs. 56 of profession and 48 of priesthood. Rector for 4 yrs.

Fr. Andrew Cocco

* 20.5.1890, † at Santulussurgiu (Sardinia-Italy) 20.10.1967 77 yrs. 37 of profession and 34 of priesthood.

He spent his salesian life as a missionary in India and then in the Roman province. He was an exemplary, simple confrere, pleasant with all and devoted to the interests of the community. When ill

health compelled him to give up active priestly work, in which he had laboured so faithfully, he gave himself up to prayer with the same humility and reserve that marked his whole life.

Coad. Michael Cusini

* 7.9.1911, † at Naples (Italy) 27.9.1967 56 yrs. 28 of profession.

Fr. Stanislaus Domino

* 30.4.1907, † at Oswiecim (Poland) 4.9.1967 60 yrs. 43 of profession and 33 of priesthood.

God showed his love for the family by choosing four sons as priests, 3 salesians and 1 secular. He personified 'salesian youthfulness of spirit': He wrote plays and poetry, sang and played music, and painted. He was the life and soul of the community and lived for his boys. He preached willingly and effectively. On his death-bed he said to his provincial: « I offer all my sufferings for the Congregation. I would like it to be great and flourishing throughout the world, but especially in Poland. I love the Congregation so much. Take heart! On with the good work for the boys, especially by teaching them their faith ».

Coad. Joseph Galvis

* 5.5.1900, † at Silvania (Colombia) 24.8.1967 67 yrs. 32 of profession.

He was a late vocation. For many years he was the barber in the provincial house at Bogotá, and also at Mosquera and other places. He had great devotion to Mary Help of Christians and to the Child Jesus. He loved to work for poor children. He was simple devout and attached to his duties, and was likened to the angels because of his innocence.

Fr. John Gasbarri

* 5.11.1886, † at Lima (Peru) 10.10.1967 80 yrs. 59 of profession and 49 of priesthood. Rector for 8 years.

He went to Peru in 1910 but returned to Italy in 1932 and was parish priest of Mary Help of Christians in Rome till 1946, when he returned to S. America once again. He became known as the 'Angel of the prisoners' because of his charity to them; it was an apostolate

in which he showed real heroism, sharing their sufferings, for twenty years. His zeal to bring souls back to God gave him the courage to approach even the most hardened cases. He exemplified the truth of Don Bosco's words: « If you are going to do any good, you need a bit of courage ».

Fr. Henry Guerrier

* 28.11.1921, † at Saintes-Maries de la Mer (France) 18.6.1967 45 yrs. 21 of profession and 17 of priesthood.

He did his aspirantate at Nice after leaving the Major Seminary of Puy. He was Prefect at La Marsa for many years, and then helped Fr. Garnier to edit « Connaitre les Missions », the national missionary review which replaced our own « Jeunesse et Missions ».

« He was a priest, » says Fr. Garnier, « who was always seeking wider horizons in God, in the world, in man, in religion; he was entirely taken up with God — he had to be doing things... ».

Coad. Marcellus Haren

* 11.4.1912, † at Kigali (Rwanda) 19.8.1967 55 yrs. 31 of profession.

He spent nearly all his religious life in the Congo, making himself useful in many ways in the poor and difficult missions. He was a great and generous worker, most exact in his religious duties.

Fr. James Jeronimo

* 23.5.1884, † at Montevideo (Uruguay) 2.5.1967 82 yrs. 64 of profession and 55 of priesthood. Rector for 3 years.

He worked in various houses in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay, where he was attached to the missions of Chaco Paraguayo. His 'curriculum vitae' consisted in humbly ministering to and educating the young. In his last years arterio-sclerosis made any apostolic work impossible except for the recitation of the breviary and the holy rosary. He lived a simple, interior life, wholly dedicated to his salesian vocation.

Fr. Alexander Kotula

* 26.2.1877, † at Oswiecim (Poland) 29.7.1967 90 yrs. 70 of profession and 63 of priesthood.

He was the oldest confrere in Poland. Whilst a boarder at Valsalice (Turin) he set out on the road to the priesthood, and learned to seek only God's glory and the salvation of souls. He was a good salesian, simple, poor and self-sacrificing, caring for others and never for himself. He had a vivid recollection of Don Rua, Don Rinaldi and Don Augustus Czartoryski, all of whom he had known. He was secretary to Don Rua when the latter made his fatherly visit to the first houses in Poland.

For 40 years he worked energetically teaching catechism to the boys at Oswiecim. As a confessor he did great work for confreres, boys and the faithful in general. In his last days he often said: « I offer my life for the Congregation and this province that they may have many good confreres and that they may be united in brotherly love. I have been so happy in the Congregation ».

Fr. Marianus Kubrycht

* 18.9.1901, † at Aleksandrow Kujawski (Poland) 29.9.1967 66 yrs. 43 of profession and 35 of priesthood. Rector for 12 yrs.

He was full of apostolic initiative in his priestly ministry: he edited salesian publications in Polish; he was Rector of the Diocesan Minor Seminary; he founded the inter-parochial religious centre for members of the fire-brigades, and finally began a new form of catechetical apostolate using magnetic tape.

Coad. William Lingg

* 3.2.1885, † at Helenenberg (Germany) 13.9.1967 82 yrs. 42 of profession.

He had a flair for Oratory work, and he was always most diligent and efficient. Before he became a salesian he belonged to the Kolping association at Innsbruck, where he became well known for his spirit of sacrifice.

Coad. Anastasius Martin

* 30.5.1887, † at Barcelona-Tibidabo (Spain) 1.7.1967 80 yrs. 61 of profession.

He used to say that his vocation began when the Venerable Don Rua spoke to him after he had read the address of welcome when Don Rua was visiting the house of Béjar (Salamanca Spain).

He belonged to that glorious generation, now disappearing, of coadjutors trained at Sarrià-Barcelona by the first salesians sent by Don Bosco. Amongst his characteristic virtues were a serene tranquillity that recalled the ' Let nothing disturb you ' of St. Teresa; a solid devotion, of which indications could be seen in his prayer-books, worn out by constant use; and tireless work for hours and hours, despite indifferent health. He led many boys and also many salesians to the love of work and piety. In recent years he was one of the most assiduous adorers at Tibidabo.

Bro. Tullius Marzari

* 9.11.1939, † at Rovereto (Italy) 6.9.1967 27 yrs. 8 of profession.

His most evident characteristics: religious and human consistency, a constant serenity, and love of his neighbour, he found and developed in his own family. This love gave rise to a missionary vocation and after his aspirantate he went to Thailand for his novitiate. In 1965 he began his theological studies at Salerno, where he was well liked by all. The following prayer reveals his genuine passion for Christ: « O Jesus, who read into the depths of my heart, see there how very much I want to love you. O God of my soul, you alone are my sincere friend who loves me so much just as I am. I want my life to be a constant generous offering of myself to you for souls ».

Coad. Joseph Mazzucchelli

* 11.10.1917, † at Milan (Italy) 8.11.1967 50 yrs. 27 of profession.

Coad. Joseph Nones

* 22.6.1919, † at Sangradouro (Brasil) 15.6.1967 48 yrs. 10 of profession.

He was a late vocation from Belluno (Italy). Two years after his profession he went to Brasil as a missionary, and was one of the first to work amongst the Xavantes Indians. He was always an exemplary religious and ready for sacrifice. He was the victim of a motor accident, and died reciting the rosary whilst he was being carried back the house.

Fr. Guy Ravasi

* 3.3.1903, † a Treviglio (Italy) 3.9.1967 64 yrs. 48 of profession and 39 of priesthood.

Fr. Joseph Riba

* 1.4.1901, † at Salta (Argentina) 21.9.1967 66 yrs. 49 of profession, and 41 of priesthood.

He was greatly esteemed as a teacher and catechist, and from the earliest years of his salesian life he was a zealous propagator of devotion to St Dominic Savio. In 1954 he organised the canonisation festivities in Buenos Aires. Because of his administrative ability he was appointed national delegate to treat of scholastic matters with the state authorities.

Fr. Emil Rico

* 15.9.1884, † at Medellin (Colombia) 26.10.1967 83 yrs. 66 of profession, and 54 of priesthood. Rector for 24 yrs.

He was a link with the first salesians in Colombia and was a venerable figure who gave to all a magnificent example of priestly and salesian work. His apostolic labours were intense, first as a teacher, and then as Rector of houses of formation. He founded the houses at Tunja and Tulua. He will always be remembered in the province as a zealous priest and as a salesian who had a great love for the Congregation.

Fr. Joseph Rola

* 11.10.1926, † at Fatumaca (Portuguese Timor) 7.11.1967 41 yrs. 23 of profession and 13 of priesthood. Rector for 3 yrs.

He was a man of deep interior life. He lived for the missionary apostolate, and knew no rest whenever he was away from his field of labour. He was rigorous with himself and most exact in the fulfilment of his duties.

Fr. Aloysius Rosti

* 24.3.1909, † at Fiesco (Italy) 19.9.1967 58 yrs. 39 of profession and 32 of priesthood.

He was a priest who lived his vocation in simplicity and dedication in both school and parish. He spent much of his time studying history and religion, and these were a great comfort to him in this later years of suffering which he accepted with christian resignation, offering them up for the good of the boys to whom he used to minister in confession.

Fr. Charles Ruloph

* 19.8.1938, † at Richmond (USA) 10.9.1967 29 yrs. 10 of profession and 6 months of priesthood.

Fr. Anthony Salsi

* 23.8.1903, † at Parma (Italy) 26.6.1967 63 yrs. 44 of profession and 35 of priesthood.

He worked in the oratories and parishes attached to various houses. Finally he became confessor to the boys and confreres at Parma: this was a task for which he was particularly well suited, for he was a man of simplicity and great goodness, able to understand and give advice. In the last years of his life he was condemned to inactivity through paralysis.

Fr. Gustavus Schiaffini

* 15.11.1887, † at Rome (Italy) 5.7.1967 79 yrs. 58 of profession and 45 of priesthood.

Fr. Edward Swider

* 21.2.1914, † at Przemyśl (Poland) 7.9.1967 53 yrs. 29 of profession and 20 of priesthood.

For 10 years he worked in Palestine and always remembered this period with nostalgia. On returning to Poland, he became parish priest, then a teacher and finally chaplain to a hospital. He was able to draw people into conversation and so acquired many friends. He became so greatly esteemed for his work at the Przemyśl Hospital that the Local Ordinary wanted to say the Requiem Mass himself and take part in the funeral.

Coad. Joseph Vandewal

* 13.3.1888, † at Hechtel (Belgium) 24.10.1967 79 yrs. and 41 of profession.

Born of humble parents, he always cultivated the virtues of moderation and poverty of spirit in his later salesian life. He was at the service of everyone, boys and confreres alike. He found in the holy Eucharist the strength to be a good religious as he made an apostolate of his farming work. He accepted the cross of his final illness with christian resignation.

Fr. Francis Villanueva

* 9.3.10, † at Mérida (Spain) 10.10.1967 57 yrs. 41 of profession and 25 of priesthood

3° Elenco 1967

N.	COGNOME E NOME	DATA DI NASCITA	ISPETTORIA	LOCALITÀ E DATA DI MORTE	ETÀ
82	Sac. ADAMO Pietro	26-3-1910	Sicula	Catania (Italia)	16-7-1967 57
83	Coad. ALBIZURI Asensio	27-10-1885	Bilbao	Pasajes (Spagna)	7-4-1967 81
84	Sac. AMATO Nunzio	20-12-1886	Sicula	Messina (Italia)	21-8-1967 80
85	Coad. BAGSIK Paolo	18-11-1884	Łódź (Pol.)	Czerwinski (Polonia)	11-8-1967 82
86	Sac. BARTON Ladislao	24-6-1906	Kraków (Pol.)	Rzaska (Polonia)	1-9-1967 61
87	Sac. BOAT Francesco	2-8-1901	Inghilterra	Cape Town (S. Africa)	16-10-1967 66
88	Sac. BONIFACINO Giovanni	2-9-1898	Uruguay	Montevideo	7-6-1967 68
89	Sac. BRUSADELLI Gius.	16-7-1884	Centrale	Piossasco (Italia)	13-11-1967 83
90	Sac. CALDER Alessandro	10-12-1901	Inghilterra	Grange-over-Sands (Ingh.)	15-10-1967 65
91	Sac. CATTANEO Giovanni	23-2-1881	Ligure	Firenze (Italia)	21-7-1967 86
92	Sac. CAVALLO Eugenio	4-7-1887	Ligure	Genova-Quarto (Italia)	13-10-1967 80
93	Sac. CERDA Raffaele	26-1-1893	Barcelona	Mataró (Spagna)	11-10-1967 74
94	Sac. COCCO Andrea	20-5-1890	Romana	Santulussurgiu (Italia)	20-10-1967 77
95	Coad. CUSINI Michele	7-9-1911	Madras (India)	Napoli (Italia)	27-9-1967 56
96	Sac. DOMINO Stanislaw	30-4-1907	Kraków (Pol.)	Oswiecim (Polonia)	4-9-1967 60
97	Coad. GALVIS Giuseppe	5-5-1900	Bogotá (Col.)	Silvania (Colombia)	24-8-1967 67
98	Sac. GASBARRI Giovanni	5-11-1886	Perù	Lima (Perù)	10-10-1967 80
99	Sac. GUERRIER Enrico	28-11-1921	Paris (Fr.)	Saintes-Maries de la Mer (Francia)	18-6-1967 45
100	Coad. HAREN Marcello	11-4-1912	Africa Cen.	Kigali (Rwanda)	19-8-1967 55
101	Sac. JERONIMO Giacomo	23-5-1884	Uruguay	Montevideo (Uruguay)	2-5-1967 82
102	Sac. KOTULA Alessandro	26-2-1877	Kraków (Pol.)	Oswiecim (Polonia)	29-7-1967 90
103	Sac. KUBRYCHT Mariano	18-9-1901	Łódź (Pol.)	Aleksandrów Kujawski (Polonia)	29-9-1967 66
104	Coad. LINGG Guglielmo	3-2-1885	Köln (Germ.)	Helenenberg (Germania)	13-9-1967 82
105	Coad. MARTIN Anastasio	30-5-1887	Barcelona	Barcelona (Spagna)	1-7-1967 80
106	Ch. MARZARI Tullio	9-11-1939	Thailandia	Rovereto (Italia)	6-9-1967 27
107	Coad. MAZZUCCHELLI Gius.	11-10-1917	Orientale	Milano (Italia)	8-11-1967 50
108	Coad. NONES Giuseppe	22-6-1919	Campo Grande	Sangradouro (Brasil)	15-6-1967 48
109	Sac. RAVASI Guido	3-3-1903	Lombarda	Treviglio (Italia)	3-9-1967 64
110	Sac. RIBA Giuseppe	1-4-1901	Buenos Aires	Salta (Argentina)	21-9-1967 66
111	Sac. RICO Emilio	15-9-1884	Medellín	Medellín (Colombia)	26-10-1967 83
112	Sac. ROLA Giuseppe	11-10-1926	Portogallo	Fatumaca (Timor Port.)	7-11-1967 41
113	Sac. ROSTI Luigi	24-3-1909	Lombarda	Fiesco (Italia)	19-9-1967 58
114	Sac. RULOPH Carlo	19-8-1938	S. Francisco	Richmond (U.S.A.)	10-9-1967 29
115	Sac. SALSÌ Antonio	23-8-1903	Lombarda	Parma (Italia)	26-6-1967 63
116	Sac. SCHIAFFINI Gustavo	15-11-1887	Romana	Roma	5-7-1967 79
117	Sac. SWIDER Edoardo	21-2-1914	Kraków	Przemyśl (Polonia)	7-9-1967 53
118	Coad. VANDEWAL Giuseppe	13-3-1888	Belgio Nord	Hechtel (Belgio)	24-10-1967 79
119	Sac. VILLANUEVA Fran.	9-3-1910	Sevilla	Mérida (Spagna)	10-10-1967 57