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**official organ
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and of communication
for the
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**ROMA
DIREZIONE GENERALE
OPERE DON BOSCO**

acts

**of the Superior Council
of the Salesian Society
of St John Bosco**

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

Father Egidio VIGANO'

In the ever-growing splendour of the gospel

« IN THE EVERGROWING SPLENDOR OF THE GOSPEL ». - Introduction. - Our overriding choice for Christ. - Unravelling the coils of ambiguity. - The seventies and the announcing of the Gospel: The Council is the basis; Focal points. - Three bases of pastoral renewal: The General Catechetical Directory; Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi"; Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae". - The congregation well attuned to the Church: Evangelisation and catechesis; Salesians evangelisers of the young. - Prospects, pledges and plans: Resplendent harbingers of the Gospel; Responsible efforts in the cultural area; Training competent personnel. - Don Bosco's insistent call to us. - Conclusion.

Rome, 24 February 1980

Dear confreres,

From last October your Rector Major and his councillors have had a heavy schedule of meetings with Provincials and their councils, and these will continue for some time: so far, the Provinces of India, Germany and Holland; and in April, Poland and Jugoslavia; and others are being planned.

The main theme of these meetings has been the broad and practical guidelines and policies for renewal as laid down in the last two General Chapters. Our joint aim was a realistic examination of conscience and a review of life in the Provinces to see how it squared with the Gospel-project of Don Bosco as outlined authoritatively and authentically in the Constitutions. After all, in every Province we Salesians need to ask ourselves whether we are *really and truly evangelizers of the young*.

Announcing the Gospel was a theme much stressed by GC21; that and the Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae" recently

promulgated prompt me to invite you to reflect on this vital matter.

In a way, one could say that this document of Pope John Paul II on catechesis in our time completes the series of pronouncements from the Magisterium on the pastoral renewal in the Church initiated by Vatican II. The documents collate a number of directives that are amazingly in line with our mission among the young; indeed they touch the very nerve-centre of our Preventive System renewal. I propose to treat of the three most important documents:

— *The General Catechetical Directory*, published in 1971 in obedience to a conciliar mandate of the decree "Christus Dominus" (no. 44);

— *The Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi"*, that coordinates and sets forth the ideas of the III General Assembly of the Bishops' Synod of 1974;

— *The Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae"* that treats of the theme of the IV General Assembly of the Bishops' Synod of 1977.

These documents are the three columns that support the launching-pad for a new apostolate of evangelization for today and tomorrow. The next two decades "ring in the third millenium of Christianity" (Paul VI); this is the time to prepare for the "New Advent" of the year 2000 (John Paul II).

We live in an exciting and eventful age. "We must forge ahead, alert and fearless, bravely prepared to start all over again with the *complex and fatiguing mission of evangelization*" (Paul VI).

Our over-riding choice for Christ

We belong to those followers of Christ who have, by their religious profession, made a bid for freedom that is truly unique: we have made the Risen Christ our permanent and radical choice. *Christ is our fundamental option*, and this conditions and orients all our other choices. The Salesians can only traverse the paths of history when they are first enlightened by the Pascal Mystery. Their work among men must be totally Christocentric, a love-inspired marriage

covenant. Only in this spirit does our kind of life make sense. Christ is the reason we belong to the Church and take on work among the young and the working classes; he is the one who inspires our educational project, our activities and the distinctive way we carry them out.

Especially in these days is it important for us to be well aware of this fundamental choice we have made: it must claim our total loyalty and be the inspiring force in all our convictions, all our living and all our dedicated labour.

In my journeying through the various continents I have noted that our Salesian mission wears different cultural cloaks — two in particular: “liberation”, which concerns itself with the poor and oppressed peoples and battles for greater social justice; and “secularization”, that is taken up with the changing face of man and labours for a human development in clearly secular terms. These two polarisations are not mutually exclusive: they can be found together everywhere in varying degrees. In the Third World, for instance, the “liberation” pole is predominant, and people opt for social activities for the poverty-stricken. Frequently such work takes on a socio-political guise. In the more economically progressive nations the materialistic pole is to the fore, and the option veers towards cultural, pedagogical and social operations that are often merely humanistic and horizontal.

The various settings of our work are indeed diverse; and from them issue forth continually the nagging questions: Who are our charges par excellence? What work should we be choosing in our efforts to better society?

Unfortunately the answers to these questions are not always clear-cut. We are aware of the dangers inherent in worldly politicizing and materialistic horizontalism. The most worrying aspect about such dangers is that they gradually destroy genuine evangelization and catechesis; after all, they are making a shameful misuse of Christ himself to further revolutionary or humanistic ends.

We would do well to ponder deeply the vital significance of the choice we made at our religious profession. We opted so fundamentally for Christ that he must be our yardstick for every other choice we make. Our hearts can opt for absolutely nothing that comes before Christ or is cut off from him. He is the “first grace”, the “primary

charisma", the "transcendent afflatus" of all our loving choices and all our enterprises.

If we wish to reply convincingly to the disturbing questions that arise from practical situations regarding particular priorities of work among our charges, we must stand with Don Bosco in his fundamental opting for Jesus Christ. The Salesian of yesteryear, of today, of the future, has opted (as his Founder did) utterly and definitively for Christ and it is only through Christ that he can discern and make further options. We Salesians do not love the young and the working classes first, and then refer this love to the Lord: no — we love God first, and that love makes us give ourselves to the young and needy. Our hearts must be so overflowing with Christ that we love youngsters as he loved them. We look to Christ, friend of the poor and insignificant; through Christ our earnest efforts for the young and the working classes become more intense, more persevering, more genuine, more fruitful. This is the basis on which we make further decisions in following the calling and experience of Don Bosco, open to adaptations to fit in with the needs of the Church and practical situations.

These are the days of identity-questing, personal and collective—*and the first and foremost task is to be absolutely sure of the exact significance of our religious profession* which incorporates us in a community that has made the fundamental choice of Christ our Saviour and Shepherd and friend of the young (v Acts 290 & 295). In the Congregation today we have an urgent need to ponder greatly on this choice. Only a vivid awareness of this basic option will allow us to see clearly through the eyes of the Gospel.

Unravelling the coils of ambiguity

We are in the toils of mighty changes that entammel us and have upset all the methods in use in the apostolate; often enough too they have also corroded some of their valuable contents, blurring the vision of our mission in its present significance, its effectiveness, its identity. Even our ranks number some who have begun to move in these nebulous areas; they no longer have clear-cut notions regarding the historical

significance of our vocation, they reduce the apostolate to mere material improvement in man's lot, they are satisfied with a simplistic and vague spiritual cult, give too much importance to ideological projects, overlook the important evolution in verbal presentation, and see today's humanistic trend as more important than the objective revelation of God.

We are indeed surrounded by perilous doubts, instability and confusion: and the grand ideals of our vocation could be weakened and abandoned. It is therefore necessary to react; we must re-establish the clear and valid principles of our commitment as true announcers of the Gospel. We must grasp the meaning of the unique, clear-cut and specific mission of the Church and avoid the temptation of those who would "reduce this mission to the area of a mere temporal project. They would confine her aims to a man-centred goal; the salvation of which she is the messenger would be reduced to material well-being. Her activities, setting aside all spiritual and religious concern, would become mere initiatives of a political or social order" (EN 32). "As the twentieth century draws to a close, the Church is bidden by God and by events to renew her trust in catechetical activity as a prime aspect of her mission" (CT 15).

The announcing of Christ to the young is the very raison d'être of our Congregation. All our enterprises and training have one single aim in view: evangelization and catechesis. This work is not something added on to our time-table as an extra, or something to attend to in our spare time: it is our all-engrossing mission: "it merits having the apostle consecrate to it all his time and all his energies, and to sacrifice for it, if necessary, his own life". The message of the Gospel of Christ "is necessary. It is unique. It cannot be replaced. It does not permit either indifference, syncretism or accomodation. It is a question of people's salvation" (EN 5).

Let me repeat a thought in my letter on the Preventive System (Acts 290). I referred to the Word of God as "by its very nature revealing and challenging. Strictly speaking, the Word of God is not a book of human wisdom designed to provide solutions to everyday problems: rather is it God's challenging call to us, taking the initiative, his gift to us, his questioning us... indeed the Gospel questions before it answers.

"This aspect of God must claim the total awareness and loyalty of the educator. In his concern to align himself with the youth situation he must never forget or negate his pastoral responsibility as a "prophet" of the Gospel. The two must be harmonized — educator and prophet; each must permeate the other: and this calls for reflection, revision and loyalty.

"Hence, since the Preventive System is based on a fundamental option of pastoral dedication, the Salesian must be constant and loyal in presenting the contents of the faith. His special desire and capacity to be involved in the circumstances surrounding his charges must be always enlightened and guided by Christ who intervenes and calls as the Lord of mankind" (Acts 290).

In other words he must create a living union of those two complementary aspects of the Preventive System that search the depths of its spirit: the principle in the heart of a confrere that directs and characterises his spirituality as a "prophet" — *the pastoral urge*; and *the pedagogical method* that moulds and orients his educational criteria when planning his apostolate, making practical choices, and using particular methods (cf Acts 290).

Worthy of stress is the fact that the *spirituality of the prophet* demands fidelity in passing on the Word of God; the "prophet" cannot select and omit to suit his own whims (CT 30); the young person is called to a fuller and deeper knowledge of the Mystery of God "according to the truth that is in Jesus" (Eph IV 20), and he must not be "refused any part whatsoever of this knowledge" (CT 30); the "prophet" will "not seek to keep directed towards himself and his personal opinions and attitudes the attention and consent of the heart and mind of the person he is catechising. Above all, he will not try to inculcate his personal opinions and options as if they expressed Christ's teaching and the lessons of his life" (CT 6).

He who announces the Gospel must not go looking for proselytes for himself or his pet ideologies: he must exercise himself as the mouthpiece of the Church in forming true disciples of Christ. Christ has said, "All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make all men *my* disciples" (Mt XXVIII 18-19).

The "prophet", furthermore, bases himself on *certainities* and

communicates them to others with conviction. His mission is to transmit "not doubts and uncertainties born of an erudition poorly assimilated, but certainties that are solid because they are anchored to the Word of God" (En 79).

Unfortunately we must recognise the sad fact (and the Holy Father calls our attention to it) that these days there are *abuses* here and there in evangelizing and catechising. Truths regarding the Mystery of Christ are watered down (cf CT 29), certain important points omitted (cf CT 30), ideologies tacked on to the Gospel (cf CT 52), certain incompatible cultural elements imposed on Christ's teachings (cf CT 53), insecurity preached as though we can only seek truth and never be sure of finding it (cf CT 60); and we find unbalanced ecumenical approaches (cf CT 32 33), texts and manuals that omit various important facts and explanations (cf CT 34 49), and so on.

The ministry of the Gospel "prophet" comes directly from Jesus our Master, through the Apostles and the uninterrupted Tradition of the Church ("live transmission"). These are turbulent times and "the Church is living through an important and hazardous period of theological research" (CT 61). We need to couple profound renewal with genuine loyalty: "it is important for the Church to give proof today, as she has done at other periods of her history, of evangelical wisdom, courage and fidelity in seeking out and putting into operation new methods and new prospects for catechetical instruction" (CT 17).

How necessary it is that every Salesian know how to unite the roles of "prophet" and "educator" so as to practise the Preventive System as Don Bosco did: evangelizing through education and educating by evangelization.

The seventies and the announcing of the Gospel

The three recent documents of the Magisterium invite us to a strict examination of conscience regarding our mission to evangelize the young. They will help us to put new life into realising the genuine intentions of the Preventive System.

Let us look briefly at the historical setting.

The Council is the basis

The great event that has marked the present period of the Church is undoubtedly the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. Pope John spoke of it as a new Pentecost. From it there emerged a way of announcing the Gospel that gets to grips with the problems of modern man and is couched in acceptable terms.

Pentecost Sunday was the starting point in time for the spread of the Gospel among diverse peoples of various tongues. From the rich fruitfulness of that event and that period of Church history issued forth all the evangelizing and catechetical activity that has marked the centuries that followed.

Vatican II also enjoyed a Pentecostal fruitfulness. Paul VI looked on it as "the great catechism of modern times" (CT 2). Indeed all the important objectives of the Council could be epitomised as "rendering the Church of the 20th century more and more suitable for announcing the Gospel to mankind" (EN 2). This is truly its mission, what it set out earnestly to achieve. "Lumen Gentium" proclaims that "Christ is the light of humanity; and it is accordingly the heartfelt desire of this Sacred Council, being gathered together in the Holy Spirit, that, by proclaiming his Gospel to every creature, it may bring to all men that light of Christ which shines out visibly from the Church" (LG 1). This first basic emphasis is indispensable for the understanding of both the range and perspective of the renewal of evangelization and catechesis. How important it is not to measure and plan our announcing of the Gospel in terms of the number of enterprises we set afoot: rather the important thing *is to go for quality — in content, method, verbal expression, environment, means, objectives, and purveyors of the Word.*

All the work of the Council was imbued with a powerful urge to renew the announcing of the Word: from "Dei Verbum" (on revelation of the Word of God) and "Lumen Gentium", "Sacrosanctum Concilium", "Gaudium et Spes" (on the Church), to "Ad Gentes", "Dans ces derniers temps", "Presbyterorum Ordinis", "Apostolicam Actuositatem", "Inter Mirifica", "Gravissimum Educationis" (on vigorous and lively faith and evangelization) and "Orientalium Ecclesiarum", "Unitatis

Redintegratio", "Nostra Aetate", "Dignitatis Humanae" (on relations with other beliefs, religions, current thinking and typical experiences of contemporary society).

Focal points

Vatican II gave a bold emphasis to the ministry of the Word and drew up new and thorough guiding principles. It was not a question of vaguely offering a few novel and interesting themes: it presented definite new angles and perspectives by which the themes could be thoroughly explained. These new and all-illuminating guidelines are basically three in number: the Word of God, Man, and the Church.

When we ponder or act out our faith the Church insists that everything must centre round Christ. In Christ is the Word of God manifested and proclaimed; in Christ is the mystery of man clarified and grasped; and the Church, the Bride of Christ, looks to Christ as the Head of the Mystical Body.

The Word of God gives man a penetrating and overall vision of all reality and brings him to an understanding of his calling. It was the Council's wish that the People of God should be vitally attuned and responsive to Sacred Scripture, reading it in their own language and hearing it explained in liturgical celebrations. This was not just the enunciation of a principle: it was the creation of a practice that must inevitably lead to an evangelization and catechesis which the Word of God really does take pride of place. This means that Holy Writ is not used as a "help" or an "example" or an "exposition" or a "quotation" that is added on as something external to an argument based on some other source. On the contrary, the Scriptures must be the privileged source-material for evangelization and catechesis.

Also, today's "*man-orientation*", the "*man-centred interest*" must be treated as a perspective rather than a theme. It means that all must have *reference* to man ("the Church has oriented, not disoriented, herself towards man"); it is to him the Word of God is addressed, since he was loved and created in a form so superior that for him the Mystery of God is not a mere intellectual curiosity, a kind of

conceptual luxury: his very existence clamours for it, it runs right through the history of man, is the only true horizon he can aim for, and is the most indispensable element of his salvation. This centring in on man involves the announcing of the Gospel in problems of approach, idiom, and communication; it points too to the considerable importance of the human sciences as a part of pastoral training.

Finally, *the emphasis put on the Church by the Council* has brought about quite a new situation too. The profound "Mystery of the Church" makes it the great Sacrament of the ages in which men are gathered together and constituted by the Word of God. The ecclesial community is nourished with the bread of Revelation and shares it with one another as brothers. This community is also the sounding board of the truth of salvation; it is the guardian of the "sense of faith", which, under the guidance of its Pastors, becomes clearer and clearer in the light of history rather than by analyses and semantics; so it becomes the servant of humankind as it grows and develops on its journey to perfection.

In the coming two decades of work among youth and the working classes we should have little of worth to say unless we act along these basic lines. Indeed it is not only a matter of *contents*, but a *new specialised formulation* of evangelizing and catechetical activity for modern man that is envisaged — and this is the reason I have dwelt somewhat on these initial perspectives.

The main post-conciliar work of the Church has been to examine this comprehensive vision of Vatican II from a pastoral point of view, endeavouring to understand it better, clarify it and develop it. And we have taken our part in this general effort of practical renewal and much positive good has resulted (for instance, the four General Episcopal Synods, and the Latin American Episcopal Conferences at Medellín and Puebla). There are also many unpublicised cases of good theoretical and practical work done in this pastoral area, and with increased sensitivity regarding man himself. Centres and means of formation for announcing the Gospel have been re-examined and restructured: this includes programming, text-books and pastoral and catechetical institutes.

Such a widespread effort necessarily involves problems of some

complexity. There is a search for new ways and methods, more suitable verbal presentation, integrating faith and practical living, combined researching by personnel from various disciplines, using new pedagogical techniques, etc. Here and there there will be bias, contestation and identity crises in the apostolate; certain doubts and deviations have been noted above and it would be easy enough to cite questionable experiences and instance tensions resulting from rigorism and progressivism, when the new perspectives of evangelization and catechesis have not been grasped.

Three bases of pastoral renewal

This travail in the Church has brought about a number of happenings that have been of interest to the whole Church and of particular significance for pastoral work: the International Catechetical Congress (1971), the III General Assembly of the Episcopal Synod on evangelization (1974), the Holy Year and its particular stress on renewal in announcing the Gospel (1975), various episcopal gatherings throughout the continents on the same theme, and finally the IV General Assembly of the Episcopal Synod on catechesis today.

In the framework of all these ecclesial events of the seventies we have the three great documents of the magisterium, the three bases of pastoral renewal.

The General Catechetical Directory

This document (11-4-71) *marks a decisive moment for present day catechesis*. Pope John Paul II says "it is still the basic document to stimulate and guide catechetical renewal throughout the whole Church" (CT 2). "The intent of this Directory is to provide the basic principles of pastoral theology by which pastoral action in the ministry of the Word can be more fittingly directed and governed. The errors which are not infrequently noted in catechetics today can be avoided only if one starts with the correct way of understanding the nature and purposes of catechesis and also the truths which are

to be taught by it, with due account being taken of those to whom catechesis is directed and of the conditions in which they live" (CT Intr).

The document carefully stresses the fact that the announcing of the Gospel is an act of the living Tradition of the Church. Not only does it communicate the contents of Revelation "completed at the time of the Apostles", but it also helps (with the guidance of the magisterium of the bishops) to see the relationships of the Gospel with the signs of the times, to understand more thoroughly its contents, to apply them to new situations, and to "make authentic judgements on the interpretations of the faith and the explanations the faithful see and offer".

"From this it follows that it is necessary for the ministry of the Word to set forth the divine revelation such as it is taught by the Magisterium and such as it expresses itself, under the watchfulness of the Magisterium, in the living awareness and faith of the People of God. In this way the ministry of the Word is not a mere repetition of ancient doctrine, but rather it is a faithful reproduction of it, with adaptations to new problems and a growing understanding of it" (GCD 13).

The Directory takes the Council's panoramic points and organises them into an harmonious whole suitable for catechising. This then forms the basis for setting the catechetical principles which must serve for compiling national directories and drawing up catechismus to suit the specific situations of different regions. (The main categories will be the actual problems of the moment, the ministry of the Word, the Christian message, methodology, catechesis according to age, and pastoral planning.)

One must add that this thorough catechetical renewal has given rise to a fair amount of discord (and among some Salesians too). There is an obvious discrepancy between those who fall in line with the directory and endeavour to translate it into practice, and those who have not assimilated its principles and have not managed to hurdle successfully the first feelings of insecurity that follow in the wake of change; these latter remain shackled to the old formulas, methods and practices; and the discrepancy is aggravated in some cases by non-

attunement, omissions and perilous inaccuracies (which are possibly inevitable in the running-in stages of a project so vast).

Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi"

This second document (8-12-75) is of prime importance in an age which is seeking to define the role of Christianity in changing the world. It affirms that evangelization "constitutes the essential mission of the Church... her most profound identity" (EN 14), her unique contribution to man through the centuries (cf EN 5 15 51 81).

Evangelization implies a clear understanding of the transcendency of the Mystery of Christ: the Gospel is not to be identified with "the signs of the times", but is essentially a revelation of the *Kingdom of God* announced by Jesus Christ (cf EN 6-12 25-28). However, it involves at the same time a profound sensitivity of "*incarnation*": the Gospel is a message that involves the total life of man and his history; and it is particularly sensitive to the needs of the signs of the times (Gosp. cult. expr: EN 19-20 22 40 50).

The Exhortation dwells on the way evangelization approaches, confronts, distinguishes and makes rapport with the concept and historical movement of human liberation (cf EN 30-38); this clarifies the proper and specific role of announcing the Gospel (already expounded in the previous chapters).

It is worth noting the document's broad and comprehensive conception of evangelization: "No partial and fragmentary definition can attempt to render the reality of evangelization in all its richness, complexity and dynamism... It is impossible to grasp the concept of evangelization unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements" (EN 17). It does not limit itself to announcing the Gospel to those who know it not, but includes "a proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative... Each of these elements must be seen in relationship with the others" (EN 24). Therefore a proper pastoral planning must be comprehensive and not sectional, and the various elements must be drawn together in harmony, not in disarray.

The range of renewal such an idea presents is well understood

when we remember our old idea of evangelization as practically limited to a particular kind of apostolic activity in the foreign missions. Such a concept today would substantially warp every pastoral activity aimed at achieving maturity in true believers.

It is easy to see the reasons that have motivated such a *change of view*: the disintegration of Christianity, the rise of cultural and religious pluralism, the widespread trend in the direction of materialism and away from Christianity, the new awareness of personal rights and socialist ideas, etc. All these circumstances call for a re-assessment of our traditional pastoral practice of announcing the Gospel. To shoulder the task of evangelization requires of us that we accept the challenge of a kind of "open market economy" in which the faith is no longer something taken for granted and accepted by all, but a "prophesying" by convinced persons and communities who really live out their faith. In this light, pastoral activity takes on a totally new evangelization-dimension.

It is important for us to listen to the *call made to Religious*, not only because of their special witness in "poverty and detachment, purity and sincerity and of self-sacrifice in obedience" (EN 69), but also because their apostolate is "marked by a creativity and a brilliance that one has to admire. They are generous: often they are found in the outposts of the mission" (EN 69). In the work of evangelization, therefore, we are invited to man the outposts of the "mission" with a true charismatic afflatus in our life and activity: that is to say, we must boldly reactuate that distinctive character of our Institute (cf MR 11-12) through which we realise in the Church the charism of Don Bosco.

The Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae"

This third document has appeared at the end of the decade (16-10-79). Both in the final message of the 1977 Synod and in the Exhortation itself it is solemnly and explicitly stressed that catechesis is relevant to the lives of the Christian community and to pastoral activity. "In the next ten years catechesis will be throughout the world the natural and most fruitful seedbed for the renewal of the entire

ecclesial community" (Message of the Synod on catechesis). In these closing years of the century God invites the Church "to renew her trust in catechetical activity as a prime aspect of her mission. She is bidden to offer catechesis her best resources" (CT 15). In the sum total of pastoral activities catechesis deserves to take pride of place (cf Synodal message on catechesis, 18; cf CT 15).

There are a number of particular instances to be noted regarding the impetus given to catechetics.

— *The main lines of renewal set out by the Council are reconfirmed*; the progress made is optimistically recorded, though naturally a number of faults need to be righted (and the Synod has some good suggestions along these lines — the result of general experience and the Bishops' own reflections).

— *The complexities of catechetical activity*. Catechesis is not limited to mere teaching: it includes also *word, memory and witness* (cf Synodal message on catechesis, 8-10), and makes an integrated and solid unit of: 1) the knowledge of the Word of God, 2) the use of the Sacraments in full-hearted faith and 3) professing the faith in one's daily living (cf Synodal message on catechesis, 11).

— *The valuable reinstatement of the catechumenate* is considered a basic process of special importance in the present day situation.

The text of Pope John Paul II's Exhortation must be read in the wider context of the Synodal work and the whole development of evangelization and catechesis (which was intensified by the publishing of the General Catholic Directory). The Holy Father, in his "Catechesi Tradendae" has confirmed this Directory as a valuable document and means to give a further fillip to the work of catechesis, "stimulating creativity (with the required vigilance) and helping to spread among the communities the joy of bringing the Mystery of Christ to the world" (CT 4).

The crowning example is the *central focus given to the person and mystery of Christ*. He is the principal subject and object of catechesis. Christ is the *truth* who is transmitted, the *way* that guides us, the *life* we share, the *one and only master* who leads us. This centrality of Christ in man's understanding of himself and in the

working out of his salvation demands the total involvement of evangelizers as united and faithful disciples.

Likewise it is important to have a broad conception of catechesis (CT 25). It is a specific process and distinct from initial evangelization — even though catechesis is in general a part of evangelization, that is to say, a particularly important stage in the growth of the faith (cf CT 18). It is *teaching, educating to the faith, initiation to Christian life*, “maturing the initial faith and educating the true disciple of Christ” (CT 19) and developing the “first announcing”. In its teaching aspect it deepens doctrinal understanding, sets its component parts in order, further harmonises the overall view of Revelation, presents the truths more systematically and harmoniously (cf CT 21, 22, 35), and it is always open to new findings and fresh beginnings.

This Exhortation on catechesis is also (in the spirit of John Paul II’s pontificate) *a call to prudence*, to ecclesial objectivity. It calls on the “prophets of catechism” to view their task with gravity, and insists that they transmit the truth and the whole truth.

The Congregation well-attuned to the Church

The Salesians have not been dragging their feet in this great movement of the Church. Indeed the earnest zeal of our confreres is marked by a considerable number of achievements: a genuine effort to train personnel, the inclusion of catechetical and associated disciplines in formation programmes, concern for increasing the number of lay catechists, setting up catechetical centres for animation and for producing and distributing aids, endeavouring to reach new understandings and revise syllabuses and methods according to different circumstances (with various results), and providing specialised services for certain areas and dioceses (cf Fr. Ricceri’s “Report on the state of the Congregation”, 31-10-77).

The already existing centres for study, formation, application, prospectuses and distribution, etc., must be commended for their zeal in launching so many worthy enterprises.

The last decade has also witnessed fundamental changes in our

Pontifical University. This task has been far from easy but has proceeded apace. The aim has been to channel the research and teaching of the various faculties into a common and overall interest in youth apostolate and catechetics. At last all this hard work has led to a well-planned refounding that we hope will be truly efficient (cf p. 59).

In line with the thinking and general policy of the seventies the Congregation has incapsulated its choices and experiences in two documents that carry the stamp of approval of the two great General Chapters: they are *Evangelization and Catechesis* (SGC) and *Salesians Evangelizers of the Young* (GC21).

Evangelization and Catechesis

This is document 3 of SGC, and its theme was not among the pre-capitular schemes: it was added by request in the early days of the Chapter and is the first of the texts on our apostolic activities (Docs 4, 5, 6, 7) and sets the tone for them. It considers "catechesis of the young as the first and foremost activity of the Salesian apostolate. It therefore calls for a re-assessment and re-organisation of all Salesian works so that they may have as their main purpose the formation of the man of faith" (GC19 & SGC).

Our document, then, was called for by an overall examination of our life and mission and in the light of the Council's behest; and it was developed under the immediate inspiration of the General Directory: so it is in total line with the Church's vision and programming. Such a basic agreement is highlighted by SGC's statement: "The document keeps in mind the human choice in all its aspects, and places the individual, the Word of God, and the community in a permanent and mutual relationship. This means that we can emphasise 'the priority of the Word of God' as the fundamental criterion for renewal, and can assert that the whole process of pastoral development from man to Christ is inspired by Christ right from the start" (SGC 274).

Since we made this option, we must realise the importance of the word "educative", for the document stresses "the educative context

in which catechesis has always been developed in our Congregation” (SGC 274). “To catechise is more than to preach or to teach religion or to give catechism lessons: it is a complete educative process to help the baptised use all the values of his own personality from the point of view of the Gospel” (SGC 307).

Round these three focal points (*Word of God, man, community*) will be grouped all references and suggestions, and from them will flow developments that this short letter has not space to detail — such as listening again to the *Word* (SGC 283-288), announcing the word in the context of *man's* situation (SGC 289-292), witnessing to the Word (SGC 293-296), catechising through genuine *communities* (SGC 318-321), evangelizing in dialogue with a pluralistic world (SGC 293-300).

The whole Province is conceived as a “community at the service of” evangelization. “Its duty is to give a new impetus to catechetics on the part of both communities and the individual confrere, to stir up responsibility in the formation of personnel, to re-organise its works so that there will be even better evangelization, and to set up a Provincial programme for catechesis” (SGC 337).

Integrated education in the faith according to Salesian practice implies the following aims: to lead all to the person of Jesus Christ (Const 21), to form mature Christians and cultivate in them a mental attitude of faith (Const 22), to introduce people to the liturgical and sacramental life (Const 23) and to draw them to a serious commitment (SGC 315).

The seventies began with the SGC offering us broad lines for syllabuses and methods, educative structuring, pastoral guide-lines — and the offerings are still valid if our memories are good and our sensitivities acute.

Salesians evangelizers of the young

This is the first document of GC21. It aims at implementing “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” in regard to youth according to the educative project and apostolate of Don Bosco.

The GC21 takes it for granted that the doctrinal and pastoral

structures and the basic methodology set out in the Catechetical Directory and the SGC are accepted and established. In then gets down to the practicalities of some of the "options". In particular, it fits catechesis neatly into our educative project, proposing again the Preventive System as a unique synthesis of three principles: our attitude as "prophets", our pastoral terms of reference and our evangelizing methodology.

We opt for man. This means in practice that we must be ever aware of the youth situation and study it earnestly; for "evangelization proceeds with ever-increasing necessity by way of an analysis of life-situations that influence the youth personality" (GC21). It also means that evangelizing must be part of a project that aims at the total and integrated development of man, as an individual and in groups" (GC21 81).

We work through communities. We do this according to the inspiration of "Evangelii Nuntiandi" with the Gospel witness of a loving religious community; and this community is at the service of a larger educative and pastoral community, sharing in communion and ideals, in responsibilities and programmes.

We embody the Word, that is to say, we use it not simply in pedagogy or catechesis: we make it part of a project that gathers together the "process of human development, Gospel announcement and deepening of the Christian life" (GC21 80).

The complete process, then, implies that we utilise the elements and events that make up the life of a youngster and raise them to the level of an educative experience (games, instruction, leisure, ideals, group activities). Naturally all this will be from beginning to end inspired by the Word and the presence of Christ; and wisdom will see that the process is a gradual one. Indeed a truly religious and Christian course of action is developed in Salesian educational and pastoral action in continuity with the commitment to develop and promote the more specifically human values" (GC21 91).

In order to introduce evangelization into an educational project, the *cultural aspect* is by no means a secondary matter in catechesis. In fact anyone who tacked on cultural or recreational activities to catechesis, using them just to attract youngsters would show that he had not under-

stood the secret of the Preventive System — for such activities have a real, objective value (albeit subordinate) with a richness and power all their own; and we must know how to draw educational profit from them.

This is truly a realistic way of action, involving as it does the introducing of catechesis into our integrated Salesian project of formation, with all its experiences, contents, relationships, atmosphere and style; and GC21 has helped us emphasise *certain privileged aspects* for our evangelizing and catechetical activities: the enlightenment that comes from teaching and doctrine, the sacramental and liturgical life, devotion to Mary and vocational guidance.

It is the job of every Province now to combine these concepts into an integrated educational project to serve as a practical guide for our post-conciliar conversion.

Prospects, pledges and plans

This has been a rapid presentation of the wealth of pastoral material we have received from the teaching and events of the seventies and its purpose has been to help all to understand and tune in to the concern of the Church and to make an enlightened re-assessment of the duties of our Congregation.

Resplendent harbingers of the Gospel

If we are sensitive to the call of the Church and docile to the last two General Chapters, we simply must make a *decisive option to busy ourselves with evangelizing*. This does not mean taking on extra work so much as subjecting our labours to an overall assessment, making sure that they are a convincing testimony and a valid announcing of the Gospel.

Let us re-read the first document of GC21. It deliberately sets out to put the Congregation into this state of evangelization-awareness. Let us see how we can better the community that is “Gospel-imbued” and “love-inspired”; how we can relaunch the “Salesian educative and pastoral project”; how we can increase the “vocational fruitfulness of

our pastoral activities"; and finally how we can re-envision in a pastoral way the various "settings and ways in which our evangelization takes place".

Our educational work must everywhere and always (even among non-Christians) have Christ as its goal. Indeed GC21 says, "The educational system of Don Bosco proves itself brilliant in its insights and endowed with the most diversified possibilities. Applied with flexibility, gradualness and sincere respect for the human and religious values of the cultures and religions of our charges, it can yield abundant fruits on the educational level, it can create friendship and promote affection from pupils and past pupils, it unleashes great energies for good, and in more than a few cases lays the foundation for an open path of conversion to the Christian faith" (GC21 91).

Every confrere, then, in all his educative work, must find "his inspiration and motivations in the Gospel, the light that illumines him and the goal that ultimately leads him to Christ. The final goal of every Salesian educational action is to make people aware of God as Father, to find his will at all times, and co-operate with Jesus Christ for the coming of his Kingdom" (GC21 91); and our ultimate goal must be the prime mover of our pastoral urge. In our educational project "Christ is the foundation: he reveals and promotes the new meaning of existence and transforms it, empowering man to live in a divine manner, that is to say, to think, to wish and to act according to the Gospel, making the Beatitudes his way of life" (GC21 91).

But then, "*on the Christian and religious level*, Salesian action strives to teach an aware and active faith, to revive hope, optimism (serving the Lord in gladness), and the *life of grace*. It stimulates charity in a full experience of life sustained by a lively catechesis and by practical and relevant preaching. It teaches one to discover and love the Church as an efficient sign of communion and service to God and to our brothers, and to see in the Pope the bond of unity and charity in the Church. It permits one to live the experience of joyful liturgical celebrations with an intense participation in the Eucharist. It promotes a strong devotion to our Blessed Lady the Help of Christians, the Mother of Grace, true model of a successfully faithful life and of serene and victorious purity. It teaches and stimulates a true life of prayer with particular care to use

those forms which are most accessible and close to youthful and popular piety" (GC21 92).

It is absolutely indispensable, then, that our lives and activities be regenerated and illumined ever more and more by the splendour of the Gospel.

Responsible efforts in the cultural area

To announce Christ to the young we must experience the need to participate actively in the shaping of a new culture and to get to know the practicalities of the youth situation in the various cultures in which we work. We Salesians must understand and translate into practice the Chapter's behest "to evangelize by educating and to educate by evangelizing". This is a topic I have put before you a number of times already (Acts 290, 1978; Acts 292, 1979). Our mission to youth and the working classes is set in the arena of a culture in the making, and education has a front seat.

Now the three great documents of the Magisterium lay great stress on the necessary relationships between evangelization and catechesis on the one hand, and cultural values and procedural details on the other. Let it suffice to quote some of the more significant affirmations. The General Catechetical Directory (cf esp. 2-9) reminds us that "the Christian faith *requires explanations and new forms of expression* so that it may take root in all successive cultures. Though the aspirations and basic needs peculiar to human nature and the human condition remain essentially the same, nevertheless men of our era are *posing new questions* about the meaning and importance of life. *Believers of our time are certainly not in all respects like the believers of the past.* This is why it becomes necessary to affirm the permanence of the faith and to *present the message of salvation in renewed ways*" (GCD 2). Hence the urgency to find new pastoral methods to enliven the cultural transition.

The Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi" (cf esp. 19, 20, 40, 50), taking stock of the present "cleavage of culture from Gospel" (EN 20), makes it clear that "it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas or to ever greater

numbers of people, but also of affecting and, as it were, upsetting (through the power of the Gospel) mankind's criteria of judgement, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation" (EN 19). Here we have an explicit and extensive description of how the power of the Gospel should penetrate and enliven the cultural fabric.

Finally, "Catechesi Tradendae", speaking of "acculturation or inculturation", tells us that these neologisms "express very well one factor of the great mystery of the Incarnation. We can say of catechesis, as well as of evangelization in general, that it is called *to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures...* On the one hand the Gospel message... has always been transmitted by means of an apostolic dialogue which inevitably becomes part of a certain dialogue of cultures. On the other hand, the power of the Gospel everywhere transforms and regenerates... Genuine catechists know that catechesis 'takes flesh' in the various cultures and milieux... but they refuse to accept an impoverishment of catechesis through a renunciation or obscuring of its message by adaptations that would endanger the precious deposit of the faith, or by concessions in matters of faith or morals. They are convinced that true catechesis eventually enriches these cultures by helping them to go beyond the defective or even inhuman features in them, and by communicating to their legitimate values the fullness of Christ" (CT 53). In this Exhortation Pope John Paul II gives us practical guidance to overcome certain real dangers some cultures could be to the Gospel. He gives us too a frame of reference as we examine and appraise our practical efforts to establish dialogue between Revelation and Humanism — always safeguarding the Gospel's authority to interpose, its power to transform and regenerate, its understanding support of all that is genuinely human: to the point of confirming with the Fathers of the Church the principle of incarnation as formulated in the famous dictum: "He redeemed only what he assumed".

The three texts of the Magisterium are complementary and emphasise different highlights. The Directory stresses the need to announce the Gospel in a new cultural way; "Evangelii Nuntiandi" insists on

thoroughly understanding the emerging culture; and "Catechesi Tradendae" confirms both these aspects and emphasises what the genuine elements must be when dialoguing with these cultures, indicating the dangers to be eradicated.

Training competent personnel

How shall we answer the call of our Pastors?

First and foremost I believe it would be extremely useful to *make a thorough study of these three documents together* and use them as basic guidelines for renewal in our apostolate. In every Province the documents should deeply influence all Salesian activities and make their mark on the thinking of the confreres and all who collaborate in announcing the Gospel to the young. It should be quite unthinkable that things could be otherwise. To riffle quickly through the texts with considerable time-lapses between them and treat them as independent documents; to be influenced perhaps by biased remarks prompted by ideological preconceptions — this kind of attitude could lead to prejudices and misunderstandings and prevent appreciation of the complementary nature of the three documents. Indeed their interconnection is achieved by the developing use of the Magisterium in them and effects greater significance and completeness in an overall vision that makes for better integration and harmony.

It should be added that the Church's travail in this area is by no means ended: indeed it has only just begun — or rather it is always beginning. At the level of the Episcopal Conferences and the local Churches, for instance, the various catechisms are being prepared. We should be especially interested in these initiatives and *offer competent collaboration*, particularly in regard to catechisms for the young. With our experience and ability our contribution should be considerable and should influence the preparation, revision, presentation and spreading of such texts and the various enterprises for evangelization and catechesis for the young in the local Church. We really ought to accept the challenge of the new horizons opened up by evangelization and catechesis. The three documents, for instance, highlight the effort to adapt and rethink that is required, especially these days, in the matter

of suitable verbal presentation, realistic tackling of the youth situation, the vital and clear effectiveness of the message, the special areas in the various cultures that need Gospel animation. In every nation the Salesians should be able to do their part in the spread of ideas and projects.

We must be generously open to the Pope's explicit call to Religious, especially those who (like us) exist "for the Christian education of the young, especially those who are abandoned" (CT 65).

The effectiveness of our response to the Pope's call will be conditioned by an important and obvious fact, namely, *the responsible effort to form really competent personnel* who will be personally and Salesianly loyal to the Gospel and skilful in communicating it. Training confreres in this area must be paramount in basic formation, specialization, and in updating and ongoing formation. More than ever does SGC's direction obtain: "Every Salesian is always and everywhere a teacher of religion by reason of his vocation and mission. This means that during the time of his formation he must have guides who will help him to weld together the teaching of the sacred sciences and of secular subjects, and likewise his community life with the direct pastoral apostolate. Once he has acquired this art he can place himself enthusiastically at the service of the community for the rest of his life in the all-important work of evangelization and catechetics" (SGC 341).

Don Bosco's insistent call to us

Dear confreres, let us be sure that when we move along these lines we carry on Don Bosco's work and achieve the options he made. I should like to cite some of his thoughts and hope they will provide a few flashes of his afflatus that is still the best contribution to an evangelizing Church today.

It is obvious that his educational project for the salvation of the young is intrinsically and extensively *catechetical*. Just as he considered Religion as the sustaining force for the salvation of society, so did he consider the catechism "in the festive oratories to be the way of salvation for so many poor youngsters in the midst of so much perversion" (MB XIV 541). And as his work took its first steps and began to

develop, it remained true to this principle. Don Bosco recorded that "this Society in its initial stages was a simple catechism" (MB IX 61). This principle had a privileged place too in the Constitutions, where our Founder outlined the purpose and activity of the Salesians. In its older edition the text read: "The first act of charity is to gather together, especially on feastsdays, poor and abandoned young people to interest them in the holy Catholic Religion" (Salesian Central Archives 022). In the light of this practical and all-embracing aim it is understandable that Don Bosco considered it a radical error to study for study's sake or prestige, and abandon the festive oratories and the catechising of the young (cf MB XVII 387). He joyed in communicating the Word of God. It was his special personal talent right from childhood, his relaxation and recreation as a student of philosophy (cf MB I 381), the grace he requested on his ordination day, his practical guideline right from his first dream (when he was told to "set to immediately and instruct the boys"); and finally it was his programme when he met Bartholomew Garelli: "If I taught you catechism privately, would you come?... When do you want to begin?" (MO 126).

These first facts are basic to Don Bosco's work, and they demonstrate how important he considered the announcing of the Gospel in his educational and pastoral activity. It is interesting too to note the three great means he adopted for his evangelising and catechising. First there was *education* and the various cultural initiatives he used in order to attract, gather together and do good to the young. Next came the *printed word* by which he reached out to the working classes and made religion a part of their culture. Thirdly he made use of *centres or places for popular devotion* (the outstanding example being the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians). In these places the worship, the celebrations, the decorations and the initiatives all aimed at teaching the Gospel and practising it.

These three great means built up for Don Bosco a *catechetical style*, and one can examine it in his personal writings and the more characteristic incidents handed down to us by historians. It is a style that comprises fundamentally strict adherence to the contents of the faith as proposed by the Church; use of ordinary language easily understood by the young and working people; a preference for the

historical aspect (Sacred History, Church History, History of the Popes, History of Italy...) and the use of anecdotal and didactic narrative, concentrating on essentials and simplifying abstract notions; the preference and ability to get to the essence of the truths of the faith, eschewing fashionable and out-of-the-way speculations; practicality beginning from the essence of faith and explaining and inspiring attitudes and behaviour.

When Don Bosco announced the Gospel *he was able to weave his "catechism lesson into the fabric of everyday activities"* (SGC 275). The class became an occasion of joy and mutual sharing which is so much a part of youthful natures: and perhaps this is the most original trait in the Saint that makes him so attractive to young people.

Dear confreres, let us take pains to study and apply the documents that point the way to the renewal of our apostolate. Perhaps the best way to end these reflections so apposite to our mission is to listen together to the words spoken to the young nine-year-old John Bosco by the Man of noble bearing in his famous dream: "Not with blows will you win over these friends of yours, but with kindness and charity. Start straight away and *instruct them* on the ugliness of sin and the excellence of virtue". "Where can I learn how to do this? What means shall I use?" "I shall give you one who will teach you. Under her direction you will learn wisdom. Without her all wisdom is foolishness" (MB I 124).

May Mary Help of Christians, Mother of the Church, help us all to evangelise and catechise the young ever more wisely and ever more competently.

Father EGIDIO VIGANÒ
Rector Major

P.S. - The Feast of Mary Help of Christians is now very near. May I recommend that you give special attention to the *Plan for the Salesian Family to increase our devotion to Mary* (p. 53 of this issue).

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT OF THE RECTOR MAJOR'S LETTER

Ecclesial documents

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem (Conciliar Decree 1965)
AG	Ad Gentes (Conciliar Decree (1965)
CD	Christus Dominus (Conciliar Decree 1965)
CT	Catechesi Tradendae (Apostolic Exhortation 1977)
GCD	General Catechetical Directory 1971
DH	Dignitatis Humanae (Declaration 1965)
DV	Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution 1965)
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi (Apostolic Exhortation 1974)
GE	Gravissimum Educationis (Declaration 1965)
GS	Gaudium et Spes (Constitution 1965)
IM	Inter Mirifica (Conciliar Decree 1963)
LG	Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution 1964)
MR	Mutuae Relationes (Document 1978)
NA	Nostra Aetate (Declaration 1965)
OE	Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Conciliar Decree 1964)
PO	Presbyterorum Ordinis (Conciliar Decree 1965)
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution 1963)
UR	Unitatis Redintegratio (Conciliar Decree 1964)

Salesian documents and works

ASC	Acts of the Superior Council
SGC	Special General Chapter 1971-1972
GC21	21st General Chapter 1977-1978
MB	Memorie Biografiche
MO	Memorie dell'Oratorio

2. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Father Juan Edmundo VECCHI

Councillor for Youth Apostolate

Our catechetical responsibility

Following the clarifications of the Rector Major on the subject of catechesis, I append herewith a number of practical points for our Salesian attention, efforts and resources.

1. Centres for catechesis

The documents of the seventies have been an earnest appeal to the local Churches for greater efforts

— in sustaining, co-ordinating and effective in-depth study of catechetical content;

— in storming the world with the Gospel message;

— in training personnel and increasing their numbers; and

— in helping and supporting the workers in the vineyard.

The catechetical centres are working to achieve these four ends. Many have organised long, medium and brief courses for the training of catechists; others are helping with audiovisual and bibliographical aids and reaching the masses with popular catechetical works; others are drawing up specialised programmes and texts; and others again are covering the whole gamut of the above-mentioned catechetical services.

A start was made back in 1941 when the Libreria Dottrina Cristiana was founded to put new life into catechetics; and other centres have been set up during the past decade.

Today with their various aims and spheres of influence they have become the nerve-centres for the life and renewal of catechetical activity in proportion to their consolidation and continuing development to meet the needs of the times. One can notice the considerable difference in the areas that have been influenced by one of these centres and those that have not.

The secret of consolidation rests in the backing of one or more Provinces and not just the support of individual persons; in the gradual building up of more specialised help as need arises; in creative and loyal efforts that do not simply repeat past efforts but meet the new demands with suitable new ideas.

Intelligent co-ordination of the products of these centres has made the difference; there has been no diminished output or waste of personnel by uselessly doubling up or paralleling activities.

This brief survey indicates certain suggestions that will help these "new presences" so that they can continue to increase their points of reference and put teeth into our catechetical activity.

For those places that labour under problems of language or distance, it is desirable that Provinces should co-operate in setting up a *centre* (or developing it if it already exists): this will shed light on and contribute to the Church's reflections and encourage further study by our Salesians and other workers.

The co-responsibility of the Provinces will manifest itself in the first place by providing trained personnel. According to information available there are some catechetical centres that have buildings and capital but no trained experts. This is a precarious situation and has no future. And centres are also below par when they cannot cope with in-depth studies and progress because of personnel problems: a team of workers is essential for diversified tasks, and they need sufficient time and opportunity for study and creative work.

Article 27 of our Constitutions urges us to adapt our work and activities "to changed requirements, and to create new ones which correspond better to the needs of the present day". Article 29 continues in the same vein: "We also carry out our mission in centres for more *specialised* activities".

There is no doubt that the needs of today, with their special

cultural influences, show the unrivalled importance of these centres and their work of expounding and spreading the message. It has been said that these days not only is our local presence important, but the presence must be effective and in the crucial places, that is to say, places from which we can really influence. Hence it should be unthinkable to sacrifice such a place for one that may be older-established but less influential.

The Provinces can also show their solidarity by co-operating in providing for the requisite structures that make for a speedy and normal development of the centres, and in solving, without compromising their aims, the difficulties and problems that may arise.

It goes without saying that the centre must be Salesian in more than name, address or project. It must be inspired by the characteristics of Salesian action and by the present directives of the Congregation, i.e., doctrinal fidelity, suiting language and psychology to the young and the masses, and sensitivity to the human sciences.

The SGC instructed the Congregation to help "support and maintain those organisations engaged in research such as the various *catechetical centres*; to assist those organisations which are trying to spread the word of God through the mass media" (SGC 336).

The Congregation is represented in the various regions by the Provinces, and they must co-operate and forge ahead with this mission and thus render our special Salesian contribution to the Church.

2. Catechesis as part of the pastoral animation of the Province

Article 1 of our Regulations gives us a basic directive: "The Provincial community has for its purpose to inspire, co-ordinate and guide apostolic works to spread the Gospel and the Christian faith. It therefore encourages an unceasing reappraisal of the catechetical work done by the community, and reshapes its activities to produce ever better results; to organise both the formation and the keeping up-to-date of the members, some of whom should be encouraged to specialise in this field; and finally to provide for future requirements by wise programming".

The SGC called on each Province to put structures at the service of the confreres in the particular work of evangelisation. It offered a number of practical suggestions to carry this out, one being that each Province should organise an active *specialised service* for animating catechetical activities (cf SGC 337).

The overall pastoral concept for developing catechetical discussion and action prompted the Department to point out to the Provinces that they should avoid scattered and piecemeal work and gather together the various animation roles into a single team. In this way all the various dimensions of educational pastoral activity will coalesce into a single united project (cf "Past. Anim. of Prov.", Jan. 1979 nos. 5, 3, 2, 3). This will make for a richer and more coherent interchange between catechesis, pedagogy, sociological data and practical action.

It is plain that catechesis remains "fundamental to our mission" (Const. 20), the *raison d'être* of our schools (cf Reg. 8), the tone of our youth centres (cf Reg. 5) and the special characteristic of our parishes (Reg. 24).

We live in an age of language evolution, of changed rapport between culture and Gospel, of catechetical reformulation more suitable to the new mentality and experiences of the young; and it is plainly impossible for the basic dimension of our mission to forge ahead without the *specialised services* recommended by SGC.

This places an obligation on the Province to plan for the training of sufficient confreres (and we should think in terms of maximums rather than minimums); and whilst we have to bear in mind the actual resources of the Province, we should also look wisely to the pastoral requirements of the future.

3. The local community at the service of catechesis

Catechesis is all-important, and article 2 of the Regulations calls on the local community to be enthusiastic in undertaking some catechetical enterprise — a perceptive programme of activities. "In the field of pastoral work the local community will draw up its own programme of religious instruction. It will then periodically review the trend of

its work in this field and it should also prepare teachers of religion and keep them supplied with up-to-date educational aids" (Reg 2).

The SGC, moving from organisational matters to attitudes, maintains that the Salesian community will become evangelising only when it develops "a new mentality and outlook; it must adopt a new community style of thought and action and present itself to the world in a new guise" (SGC 339).

It recommends that it become "a community of listeners", meditating and discussing the Word of God; "a probing community" that is willing to make serious periodical revisions of its apostolic work and the effective role of the confreres in catechetics.

On the other hand, article 193 of the Constitutions requires the Provinces to establish "the distinctive duties and features of those responsible for the principle sectors of the educational and pastoral activities of the community" (cf Const 193).

These rulings focus on two aspects: first, *the whole community* must consider itself involved in catechetical and evangelising activity and not delegate it to two or three members; and secondly, confreres are to be appointed to *special roles* or offices so as to be a reminder to the community of these roles in the midst of its many and varied duties; to make proposals; to help solve problems; to shoulder some of the work without depriving the other confreres of *their* responsibility too.

Some communities have been afraid that this new way of doing things would upset the old order based on specific "portfolios" for specific confreres, and so create a situation where "no one is in charge". Naturally, if we have not begun to do things in the "new community way" we shall have no experience of the efficacy of the proposal made by the Constitutions and the Acts of the General Chapter.

There are a few communities, however, who have interpreted these directions as an abolition of all specific offices for specific confreres: whereas it is actually a change in the exercise and functioning of the offices that is called for. This is fundamental!

Article 2 of the Regulations also mentions the updating of educational aids: surroundings should be suitable, bibliographical information

always current and available, teaching equipment up-to-date. This is an area that needs regular examination: it is a yardstick for measuring how important a place catechesis has in our manifold activities.

4. Increasing personnel and training of catechists

The SGC states that "priority should be given to the preparation of catechists rather than to the erection of buildings..." (SGC 340).

We have just read the Rector Major's letter in these present Acts of the Superior Council. It is an authoritative call to all *Salesians*. I wish to mention a matter here that is germane to this: the training of *lay-catechists*.

There is a recurrent theme that runs through all of the Church's three major documents of the past decade: *the whole Church* must be responsibly involved in catechesis. "Catechesi Tradendae" dedicates an entire chapter to the topic "where and by whom catechetics should be taught", and encourages Christians so engaged (cf CT XII). There we find words of gratitude and optimism for our lay catechists. The Holy Father sees the vigorous revival of these workers as a grace of the Lord and "a challenge to our responsibility as pastors" (cf CT 71).

The formation of these co-workers could be given to the centres; but this is not always possible. In any case the training of catechists takes on a special vitality when it is carried out in the same community with whom they share and offer the word of God.

All Salesian communities are called upon to do everything possible in this area: training their own catechists to true commitment and keeping them up-to-date with ongoing formation. This can be done in various places — the parish, the school, the youth centre or on the missions.

5. Personnel and material means

"Let the communities dedicate as much as possible of what ability and means they have to the specific work of catechesis" (CT 65) is

Pope John Paul II's call to Religious. And the behest of GC21 is similar: "Salesians will intensify their catechetical involvement... being willing to devote all their efforts to catechetical activity and evangelisation" (GC21 95).

So much for personnel. There is also the matter of hard cash — concrete and measurable material means. The Pope asserts that the material help offered by the better-off Churches for catechetical work is the best contribution needy Churches can receive. "What better assistance can one Church give to another than to help it to grow as a Church with its own strength?" (CT 71) And our own SGC tells us that "financial priority" should be given to catechetical needs (cf SGC 340). This is an act of poverty whereby we put the goods we receive at the service of the Word of God.

It is easy to work out how our community stands in this matter by simply "checking the books". Our actual mission is not so much to make economic provision for the next generation (God will provide for them as he has done for us), but to make immediate use of time, personnel and material goods for the spreading of the Word. This is a matter so urgent that it cannot afford to yield to other needs even good in themselves.

6. Inventive zeal

After affirming that "preaching the Gospel and catechising are fundamental to our mission", article 20 of the Constitutions adds, "This service which grows more crucial in our pluralistic society demands from us all an eager and inventive zeal". It would be encouraging here to highlight many of the excellent activities of communities and individual confreres that show how this ruling of the Constitution is being carried out.

The "eager and inventive zeal" has been set against our "pluralistic society". How important it is to know where we can apply our inventive zeal most effectively so that our energies do not go wasted; so that our activities will continue to be efficacious. "Catechesi Tradendae" speaks of a "passion for catechesis that must be roused and

maintained" and made a part of our daily living by using our personnel, our ways and means, in the best way possible (cf CT 63).

The above remarks are taken from documents that point out the catechising and evangelising efforts the Church and the Congregation are making. They are indeed authoritative directions for our guidance and stimulation.

3. RULINGS AND DIRECTIONS

Information regarding period of religious profession

To avoid misunderstandings regarding the period of confreres' religious profession, Provincial Secretaries are asked to limit themselves to stating on the profession form whether the vows made were annual, triennial, up to military service (F.S.M.) or perpetual; all other letters or figures should be omitted.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL

4.1 Plenary session

Agenda for the plenary session 5 November 1979 to 5 January 1980.

a) *Normal administration*: approvals, permissions, dispensations, extensions, ratifications, etc.

b) *General matters*:

— Reports of Rector Major and councillors on their visits to various Provinces August - October 1979.

— Reports on canonical visitations Porto Alegre, Oakleigh, Makati, Ljubljana and Mexico.

— Appointments of new Provincials for Bangkok, Oxford, Asunción, Manaus, and Córdoba (Argentina).

— "Ratio Institutionis" and "Ratio Studiorum": study of these projects.

— Doctrinal and operative clarifications regarding the Salesian Family in the light of SGC and GC21.

— Study and approval of Regulations for the Italian Conference of Salesian Provincials (CISI).

— Plan for an international community for priestly formation at Rome.

— Study of scheme for Rector's Manual.

— Setting up of Salesian Historical Centre.

— Criteria for admission to perpetual profession.

— Report on progress of the "Constitutions and Regulations Commission".

— Report on possible participation in activities of a Radio-TV transmitter.

— Discussion of proposed division of Polish Provinces.

— Salesian welcome for Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae".

— Arrangements for group visits and canonical visitations to be carried out during the period January-May 1980.

4.2 Visits

* Visit by Rector Major.

■ Extraordinary visitations (Reg. 127) usually performed by Regional Councillor.

Δ « Animation » visits — for specific sectors and activities.

* Group visits: Rector Major & certain members of the Superior Council to meet groups of Provincials and Councils for implementation of General Chapter directives.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
AFRICA CENTRALE					★ *
ANTILLE			Δ		
ARGENTINA Buenos Aires		Δ	Δ		
ARGENTINA Bahía Blanca	Δ			Δ	
ARGENTINA Córdoba		Δ			
ARGENTINA La Plata			Δ		
ARGENTINA Rosario					
AUSTRALIA					
AUSTRIA					
BELGIO NORD		★ *			
BELGIO SUD					
BOLIVIA					
BRASILE Belo Horizonte		■	■	■	■
BRASILE Campo Grande					
BRASILE Manaus				■ ₁	■
BRASILE Porto Alegre			Δ		
BRASILE Recife			Δ		
BRASILE São Paulo	Δ	Δ			
CENTRO AMERICA	Δ				
CECOSLOVACCHIA Bratislava.					
CECOSLOVACCHIA Praha					
CILE					Δ
CINA		Δ	Δ Δ		
COLOMBIA Bogotá		■ ₂	■		
COLOMBIA Medellín		■	■		
ECUADOR					Δ
FILIPPINE		Δ ₃			
FRANCIA Lyon	Δ				
FRANCIA Paris	Δ				
GERMANIA Köln	* Δ				
GERMANIA München	★ * Δ				
GIAPPONE		Δ	■ Δ Δ ₃	■ ₄	■
GRAN BRETAGNA	Δ				
INDIA Bombay	Δ	Δ			
INDIA Calcutta		Δ ₃			
INDIA Gauhati		Δ ₃			
INDIA Bangalore		Δ Δ ₃			

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
INDIA Madras		Δ Δ3			
IRLANDA	■5	★ ■ *	■6	■	■
ITALIA Adriatica	Δ				
ITALIA Centrale	Δ				
ITALIA Ligure-Toscana	■7	■	■		
ITALIA Lombardo-Emiliana			Δ		
ITALIA Meridionale					
ITALIA Novarese-Elvetica	Δ				
ITALIA Romano-Sarda				Δ	
ITALIA Sicula	■	■	■	■	
ITALIA Subalpina	Δ				
ITALIA Venezia (V.-Est)	■8	■	■		
ITALIA Verona (V.-Ovest)					
JUGOSLAVIA Ljubljana				*	
JUGOSLAVIA Zagreb				*	
KOREA		Δ3	■4	■	
MEDIO ORIENTE			■		
MESSICO Guadalajara	Δ	■	■		
MESSICO México	Δ				
OLANDA	Δ	★ ■	■		
PARAGUAY					
PERU'				■	■
POLONIA Kraków (Sud)				★ *	
POLONIA Warszawa (Nord)				★ *	
PORTOGALLO		Δ Δ			
Casa Generalizia					
Università-Opera PAS	■9	■	■		
SPAGNA Barcelona	■	■	■ Δ3	Δ	
SPAGNA Bilbao					
SPAGNA Córdoba					
SPAGNA León					Δ
SPAGNA Madrid	Δ	Δ Δ			Δ
SPAGNA Sevilla					
SPAGNA Valencia				■	■
STATI UNITI Est (N.R.)					
STATI UNITI Ovest (S.F.)					
THAILANDIA		Δ3 Δ			
UNGHERIA					
URUGUAY		Δ			
VENEZUELA					
VIETNAM					

1. Visitor: Fr Antonio Mélida
2. Visitors: Fr Sergio Cuevas & Fr Bernard Tohill
3. Visitor: Fr Gaetano Scrivo
4. Japan & Korea
5. Ireland & South Africa

6. South Africa
7. Visitor: Fr Pasquale Liberatore
8. Visitor: Fr Hugo Santucci
9. Visitor: Fr Giovenale Dho

4.3 Activities of the Rector Major

From 13 to 17 January the Rector Major visited Benediktbeuern together with Father Vanseveren, Father Vecchi and Father Raineri to meet the three Provincials and their Councils of the German-speaking nations. In a fine spirit of communion much good work was achieved in examining and planning on the broad lines of GC21. Special attention was paid to community tensions regarding religious commitment and apostolic service; formation matters; the youth apostolate; clarifications regarding the Salesian Family; and the exercise of authority and animation.

The Rector Major then journeyed to Turin for the Feast of Don Bosco in the (restructured) Mother House. There he met the Rectors of the Central and Subalpine Provinces; visited the Crocetta Studentate; and attended a meeting with the Leumann community on matters regarding their catechetical activities.

Next he travelled to Brussels and was there from 14 to 18 February with Father Vanseveren, Father Dho and Father Vecchi, meeting the Provincials and Provincial Councils of Belgium North and Holland. Amongst other items the Dutch Synod was discussed (to which Father Adrian van Luyn, Dutch Provincial, had been appointed by the Pope). The agenda included the youth apostolate, the gradual revival of the

Salesian Family, formation priorities (initial and ongoing), and the importance of the Community aspect in Salesian life.

Then a journey to South Africa where he arrived 22 February. Accompanied by the Regional Councillor, Father Williams, and the Provincial and Vice Provincial (Father Hicks and Father Corcoran), Father Viganò was able to meet Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians belonging to Cape Town and Swaziland. A special meeting was arranged under extraordinary circumstances on the border of Mozambique (in the open-air "no-man's-land" section) with eight Salesian confreres and several FMA Sisters belonging to Mozambique. The final visit was to the Transvaal (Pretoria and Johannesburg). The main interests in these meetings were the various African tribes among whom our confreres work and the mixed races and migrant groups (mainly Portuguese) — among whom we have some very active parishes as well as much good work done by the Salesian Sisters.

Father Viganò arrived back in Rome 3 March and spent the following week attending the plenary session of the Sacred Congregation of Religious. (Their theme was "The contemplative aspect in Religious Life".)

4.4 Councillor for Youth Apostolate

Father Juan Edmundo Vecchi

In January the Department sent to all Provinces a communication seeking an exchange of ideas.

The first section dealt with the options the Department is crystallizing in its proposals and aids. The Provincial teams will thus be able to make a logical and progressive tabulation of all suggestions.

Information will be gathered on what has been achieved, on the next steps to be taken (and the time-limits agreed on) after discussion with those Provinces who have been in touch with the Department.

The second part contains a résumé of the Parish Seminar held at the Pisana 30 November to 3 December 1979. Themes and conclusions are summarised therein.

These communications help to achieve a fruitful dialogue between the Provinces and the Department of the Youth Apostolate (which is most appreciative of any information, reactions or proposals that may be sent to it).

The Department also organised (20-25 January) the Salesian Family Week of Spirituality. From 1973 this has been an annual and rewarding experience. The theme of 1980 was "The Preventive System as a way to Salesian holiness". In 1974 the Preventive System had been treated from a pedagogical and pastoral point

of view: this year it was looked at as a life-experience in God with and for the young, i.e., as a spirituality.

The attendance was gratifying indeed and included Salesians SDB, FMA, DBV, and other branches of the Salesian Family from over thirty nations.

The emphasis was on the connection between the inspiration that creates a particular and profound attitude in a person, and the pedagogical and pastoral method that dictates the distinguishing quality of his Salesian action and presence. Vatican Radio referred to the seminar as "an overwhelming spiritual experience very much embodied in today's reality".

The Councillor for Youth Apostolate also accompanied the Rector Major to Germany, Austria, Holland and Belgium North for meetings with the various Provincial Councils.

4.5 Councillor for the Missions

Father Bernard Tohill

In January Father Tohill attended the Lombardo-Emiliana Provincial Chapter at Como and spoke on the "New African Frontier". He invited all to consider the possibility of being responsible for certain commitments the Congregation intended to give priority to in Africa.

Also in January he made quick visits to various Provincial Mission

Offices in England, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and France.

On 15, 16, 17 February he was present at the fifth meeting of Provincial animators of the Salesian Family in Spain. The meeting was at Majadahonda, Madrid, together with the meeting of mission delegates of the Spanish Conference of Religious.

In March he made the canonical visitation of the Prefecture Apostolic of Ariari in Colombia, while the Regional Councillor did the same for the other foundations in the same Province (Bogotá).

Missionary commitments

The Mission Department continues its work of assessing the innumerable requests for missionaries which keep arriving from Africa. Father Harry Rasmussen, who has been appointed to help in Project Africa's new foundations, spent most of December and all of January in Africa. He discussed matters with several bishops in Liberia, Ghana, The Ivory Coast and the Republic of Central Africa so as to be well briefed on the pastoral and missionary needs of each diocese. He has reported back to the Department and a plan of action is being drawn up.

At the moment we are involved in two new foundations in Liberia, and one of the English-speaking Provinces is ready to take over.

The León Province, Spain, has already sent a number of confreres to Senegal, and more are to follow. After studying the local language, they will assume direction of a mission and a school of arts and trades.

The Province of Madrid, Spain, has already sent seven confreres to Equatorial Guinea and others are to follow. Three foundations are envisaged. This nation claims our interest because of its many recent tragedies.

The first Salesian has already arrived in Kenya. He is learning the language and preparing the place for more confreres who will arrive in the next few months.

The first confrere to go to Sudan is now in Egypt learning Arabic and awaiting a visa to enter Sudan. The five Provinces of India have each chosen three confreres for the new African missions.

Of the 25 confreres from Brazil who volunteered for Portuguese-speaking Angola, six were chosen and are awaiting visas for their two allotted missions.

The Provincial Conference of Argentina and various other Provinces are making a serious study to involve themselves in Project Africa. The Department for the Missions is in touch with them to work out the details.

On 8 December at Manila Cardinal Agnelo Rossi, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, presented missionary

crosses to six confreres of the Philip-pines Province. They will go to New Guinea shortly to look after a school of arts and trades which has just begun. They will also do missionary work among the Papuan natives.

The Brotherly Solidarity Fund has had many generous contributions from the Provinces these last months. From its inception (31-1-69) the gross receipts total well over 900 million Italian lire, as shown in the 31st Report on page 51.

5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS ITEMS

5.1 Letter of the Rector Major to the Provincials and communities of Cracow and Warsaw, Poland

Rome 6 January 1980
Solemnity of the Epiphany

Dear Confreres,

Several times in the past few years your Rector Major and his Council have been consoled by the development of the Salesian vocation situation in Poland. We are indeed witnessing the wonderful fruits of the Venerable Augustus Czarторыski and his many followers, especially Augustus Cardinal Hlond, the seventy seven confreres who suffered in concentration camps, other war heroes, and the innumerable missionaries like the Servant of God, Father Rudolph Komorek. Indeed in conditions far from favourable (nay, of the utmost difficulty) vocations have continued to flourish in your great land.

Congratulations, dear confreres. We should unite in thanking the Giver of all good things. It is a sign of your solid Catholic faith, just as we witness in the fine example of Pope John Paul II.

This consoling state of affairs and the increasing numbers of confreres

now call for a restructuring of Don Bosco's work in Poland so that it can the better flourish and expand.

As far as circumstances permitted a suitable consultation was held with Provincials, Provincial Councils and Rectors. Those consulted have put forward cogent reasons for restructuring. Most of them pointed out that dividing the present Provinces would have the following advantages:

- it would shorten travelling distances and lower the number of confreres in the two Provinces;

- it would increase rapport between the Provincial, communities and confreres, and make it easier for the Provincial in his role of visiting, directing and animating;

- it would help in the renewal of the religious life and concentrate the Salesian forces for closer participation and co-responsibility;

- it would thus stimulate apostolic zeal in actuating the Salesian mission, especially in the care of vocations; and

- it would make for easier and less costly administration.

Hence it was decided to divide each existing Province and so erect two new Provinces.

It goes without saying that this must not be simply a juridical divi-

sion. The new structure will be a clear and stimulating responsibility for all members. In a special way I exhort you

— to deepen the community aspect of our style of religious life and activity;

— to develop the sense of belonging and of co-responsibility in regard to the Province and local community;

— to inculcate an increasing appreciation of the role of the Rector as animator of the community (this was stressed in a special way by GC21).

— to develop co-operation, brotherly communion and Salesian unity between the four Provinces with new enterprises that will involve them in a close unity.

Labour together solidly at the ever-important task of formation, both initial and ongoing. Also work hard to develop the Salesian identity

in your present apostolic mission — especially in the Youth Apostolate, the Preventive System and Catechetics. Make sure too that special importance is accorded to promoting vocations and the missions.

Dear confreres, I wanted to stress these matters on this happy occasion that does honour to the Salesian labours of yourselves and your predecessors. I wish you every blessing for a fruitful Salesian apostolate and for your personal holiness after the example of Venerable Father Augustus Czaratoryski and the Servant of God Father Rudolph Komorek. May Our Lady of Czestochowa, our heavenly help, protect you always and may Don Bosco intercede for you. You are in my daily prayers.

With every good wish,

Affectionately yours in Don Bosco,

Father EGIDIO VIGANÒ
Rector Major



Polish Provinces

KRAKOW - St. Hyacinthus - 1933

WROCLAW - St. John Bosco - 1980

ŁÓDŹ (Warsaw) - St. Stanislaus Kostka
- 1933

PILA - St. Adalbert - 1980

5.2 Appointments

a) *Rector Major to Synod of Bishops*

The Holy Father has ratified the election by the Union of Superiors General of ten Major Superiors to represent the male Religious Institutes at the forthcoming Episcopal Synod in the Autumn. Among them is Father Egidio Viganò, our Rector Major.

b) *Appointments of new Provincials*

The Superior Council has appointed the following Provincials:

- Father Edward GIORDA: Córdoba, Spain.
- Father Walter AZEVEDO: Manaus, Brazil.
- Father Carlos GIACOMUZZI: Paraguay.
- Father Ramón GARCIA SANTOS: Thailand.

c) Following the erection of new ecclesiastical boundaries in Brazil, the Holy Father has made the following appointments (7-12-79):

- John Baptist COSTA (already *in sede*): Bishop of Porto Velho.
- Michael D'AVERSA (already *in sede*): Bishop of Humaitá.

d) The Dutch Association of Priests and Religious has elected as its President Father Adrian van Luyn, Provincial of the Dutch Province.

5.3 Missionary personnel

In 1979 there were 149 requests from confreres asking to go to the missions (77 priests, 1 deacon, 12 brothers, 49 clerics, 12 novices); 107 offered themselves for the African missions.

These facts show an ever-growing mission-mindedness in the Congregation — the number of requests is far higher than the preceding year. Furthermore the volunteers come from all parts of the world (47 from Europe, 52 from Asia, 50 from the Americas and 2 from Australia). This joint worldwide response to the call for Project Africa is something new in the Congregation.

Departures

Obviously many of the 1979 volunteers could not be sent. First of all a number had to complete their studies. Since Project Africa will be mainly concerned with new foundations, these confreres would not be able to have the necessary formation that is their right. Others could not go because of their responsibilities in their present Provinces: their immediate removal would have caused too much upset.

Nevertheless 45 confreres made up the 109th missionary expedition. 33 of these (18 priests, 8 brothers, 7 clerics) had already arrived at their destinations by 31 December 1979. Others are awaiting the necessary

visas, etc., and with some countries this is a slow process.

The new missionaries come from 14 nations: Australia 2, Belgium 1, Chile 1, England 1, India 2, Ireland 4, Italy 9, Japan 1, Philippines 1, Poland 2, Portugal 1, Spain 6, USA 2.

23 Provinces sacrificed confreres for this expedition: Ireland 4, Lombardia 3, Subalpina 3, Madras 2, Valencia 2, Seville 2, Australia 2, and one each from Belgium North, Bilbao, Central Italy, Chile, Córdoba (Argentina), England, Japan, Krakow, Ligure, Lodz, Madrid, New Rochelle, Philippines, Portugal, Romana, San Francisco.

18 missionaries went to Africa (Zaire 5, Rwanda 1, Liberia 3, South Africa 3, Kenya 2, Ethiopia 1, Cre-misan — eventually to go to Africa 3); 9 went to South America (Antilles 1, Bolivia 3, Central America 1, Chile 1, Ecuador 1, Mexico 1, Peru 1); 6 went to Asia and Oceania (Philippines 1, Japan 1, Macao 1, Samoa 3).

5.4 Brotherly Solidarity (31st Report)

a) PROVINCES THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED

AMERICA

Italian Lire

United States (West) 5,000.000

LATIN AMERICA

Argentina: Buenos Aires 9,720.000

EUROPE

North Germany	7,130.000
Anonymous	41,800.000
Italy: Udine	800.000
Spain: León	2,490.000
Spain: Madrid	10,800.000
Spain: Seville	1,000.000
Switzerland: Zurich	1,000.000

<i>Total monies received from</i> <i>27-11-79 to 11-2-80</i>	79,240.000
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<i>Plus cash in hand</i>	37.507
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<i>Amount for distribution as</i> <i>at 11-2-80</i>	79,277.507
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b) DISTRIBUTION OF MONIES RECEIVED

AFRICA

Angola: for the new mission	1,000.000
Benin: for the new mission	1,000.000
Burundi (AFC): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Cape Verde (POR): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Cameroon (FPA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Congo (FPA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Ivory Coast (FPA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Egypt (MOR): Alexandria & Cairo: for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Ethiopia (MOR): Makallé: for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Gabon (FPA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000
Equatorial Guinea (SMA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000

Kenya: for the new mission	1,000.000	Paraguay (Chaco Paraguay): transport costs for material	500.000
Liberia: for the new mission	1,000.000		
Madagascar: for the new mission	1,000.000	ASIA	
Marocco (FPA): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	Australia: for Samoa	1,000.000
Mozambique (POR): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	Burma (Rangoon): for confreres' formation	1,000.000
Rwanda (AFC): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	China (Hong Kong): for refugees from Indochina	1,000.000
Senegal (SLE): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	India (Bangalore): for the needy youth of Andhra Pradesh	1,000.000
South Africa (IRL): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	India (Calcutta): for formation course	4,000.000
Sudan: for the new mission	1,000.000	India (Calcutta, Azimganj): maintenance of boarding quarters for poor youth of the area	775.000
Swaziland (IRL): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	India (New Delhi): help for poor artisans	775.000
Zaire (AFC): for vocations and the poor	1,000.000	India (Gauhati, Golaghat): for needy youth	100.000
		India (Gauhati, Maligaon): for needs of the artisan class	775.000
LATIN AMERICA		India (Gauhati, Shillong): for handicapped youngsters	50.000
Antilles (from Madrid)	10,800.000	India (Gauhati, Tangla): help for boarding quarters for children of impoverished country labourers	775.000
Antilles (for cyclone victims)	1,000.000	India (Madras, Basin-bridge): for the fringe-dwellers	1,000.000
Argentina (Córdoba): for a chapel	1,000.000	India (Madras, Veelaroor): for a chapel	1,000.000
Argentina (La Plata): for a student scholarship	1,000.000	Thailand (Bangkok): for the refugees from Indochina	1,000.000
Brazil (Manaus): for a study grant	1,000.000		
Central America (for Nicaragua)	9,720.000		
Chile (to a priest for the poor)	426.500		
Chile (Punta Arenas): transport of machinery for professional school	1,000.000		
Colombia (Ariari, La Macarena): for artisan class	1,000.000		
Ecuador: for a study grant	1,372.000		

For refugees from Indo-china	872.000
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EUROPE

Great Britain (Oxford, Malta): for the oratory at Luga	2,000.000
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Italy (Ostia): for the needs of an FMA community	300.000
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For Salesian literature in the houses of formation in 29 Provinces	11,000.000
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<i>Total monies disbursed from 27-11-79 to 11-2-80</i>	79,240.600
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<i>Plus cash in hand</i>	36.907
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<i>Total</i>	79,277.507
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GENERAL SUMMATION OF BROTHERLY SOLIDARITY

<i>Monies received as at 11-2-80</i>	906,904.574
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<i>Monies disbursed as at same date</i>	906,867.667
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<i>Cash in hand</i>	36.907
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development and its manner of evangelisation and Christian education of the young.

b) The Rector Major has stated, "Devotion to Mary Help of Christians is an indispensable element of our charisma. It imbues its external lineaments and gives life to its essential components. Without a healthy and vital Marian devotion our spirituality would suffer in its vigour and fruitfulness; whereas a timely effort to reinvigorate our devotion to Mary will give new life to our Salesian vocation" (Acts 289 1978).

c) It follows that the whole Salesian Family, in all its members, needs to make a concerted effort in Marian revival as part of its renewal programme.

d) For this end our Marian planning must be extensive and comprehensive. It must reach out and involve every member of the Salesian Congregation, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Institutes of consecrated persons both religious and secular, the Co-operators, the committed past pupils; and thus through the whole Salesian Family it will also reach the young and all involved in the Salesian apostolate.

Plan of action

According to the Rector Major's directions regarding our Marian revival, there are four areas of activity.

5.5 Devotion to Mary

A plan for furthering Marian devotion in the Salesian Family

Introduction

a) The reports of the Marian Week of Spirituality (22-27 Jan 1979 Rome; cf "La Madonna dei tempi difficili" LAS 1980) have made it abundantly clear that the Salesian Family is deeply Marian in its origins, its

I. Doctrinal formation: enlightening and guidance for the intellect.

II. Marian cult and devotion: change of heart and renewal.

III. The broad horizons of ecclesial involvement: self-conquest and commitment.

IV. Concern for vocations: rousing and actuating love.

I. DOCTRINAL FORMATION

Life is governed by ideas; Christian living is motivated by faith. It is an enlightened doctrine on the salvific mission of Mary that will sustain the fruitful revival of this devotion so important to our educative and pastoral project.

1. We must assimilate Vatican II's teaching on Mary and Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation "Marialis Cultus" and make them the *basis of our Marian renewal* (cf Address of RM to Sal Marian Acad 12-6-78).

Furthermore we should deepen our knowledge of the Marian aspect of our charism in all its richness. There will be no renewal without profound doctrinal deliberation.

2. We must *favour and assist production* of solid doctrinal and scientific treatises on Mary, Marian devotion, the Marian aspect of our Salesian pedagogy and apostolate, etc. There is an urgency for this doctrinal

work in order to combat the indifference and hostility that today's materialistic outlook encourages.

3. A special request is directed to the UPS, Rome, the Salesian Marian Academy, the higher pedagogical Institute of the FMA, and all other Salesian centres of theological, pastoral, pedagogical and catechetical studies: they should see to the production of helpful doctrinal and scientific services for the benefit of all the People of God. *The various centres should collaborate* and offer each other the fruits of their labours in published works and studies (not only Marian-scientific ones, but also simplified works for the masses as desired by the Council).

4. Every member of the Salesian Family should make earnest efforts *to use these aids to the full* so as to update and increase his own knowledge of Mary in accordance with present developments in exegetic, patristic, magisterial, ecumenical, missionary and theological areas; and also to deepen his Salesian insights. He will wisely apply this Marian knowledge to his own work in education, catechesis and preaching.

5. The Salesian Marian Academy at Rome has set up a *Correspondence Course in Mariology* to help confreres in Italy. Some of the FMA Provinces have already made a start, and such a movement could also be imitated

in other places and so help orient and direct the efforts of individual devotees.

6. The various courses of updating and ongoing formation in the different Provinces could also help considerably with contributions from competent masters.

II. MARIAN CULT AND DEVOTION

The second point proposed by the Rector Major: "Marian cult and veneration are at the heart of genuine devotion" (Acts 289).

1. In the first place we have to take an active, creative and competent part in the profound ecclesial renewal of the liturgy. The Rector Major says, "To express our Marian devotion by *a lively and intelligent participation in the liturgical cycle* is the most significant and educative aim of our renewal" (Acts 289). We are still lagging behind in this liturgical area.

2. Marian devotion, then, should be renewed according to the four guidelines of the Apostolic Exhortation "Marialis Cultus": *biblical, liturgical, ecumenical and anthropological*. These will help approach Mary in a renewed way that will prove impressive and actual for the young and the masses. It is a complex task to be tackled in the light of new

and diligent studies in the pedagogical and pastoral field.

3. Our Marian devotion has a *privileged place in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Valdocco, Turin*, the spiritual centre of the Salesian vocation.

a) This centre must be *strengthened and sustained* so that it can handle liturgical functions (celebrating Feasts of Our Lady), pilgrimages and all other activities expected of a national and international *Marian Sanctuary*.

b) It would be very helpful if the Valdocco Sanctuary could publish a suitable *periodical of information* to serve as a link between devotees and pilgrims, list religious functions, and give instruction on Marian devotion and the history of the Sanctuary.

c) The Basilica at Valdocco is the headquarters of the Archconfraternity of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians. This should be revived and renewed according to the teaching of Vatican II and "Marialis Cultus".

4. Liturgical and devotional renewal should be carried out in *every principal Marian church* of every Province (which is considered the decentralised headquarters) and in the chapel or church of every Salesian house, parish and mission. Each of these should be a branch of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians and a centre of Marian devotion for the members of the Salesian Family, for

the young, the faithful, and indeed for everybody.

5. In every Salesian church or chapel an effort should be made to restore celebrations in honour of Mary and the various forms of Marian devotion recommended by the Pope and Pastors in harmony with the wholesome traditions of the local Church — and united to these of course the Marian devotions proper to our Salesian Family.

6. It should be borne in mind too that in Don Bosco's thinking and practice Marian devotion is *essentially sacramental*: it finds its expression in the life of grace; it is especially cultivated through the renewed participation in the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance. Thus every Marian renewal helps on our conversion and apostolate.

7. We should also remember that Christian education and development of our charges must be personal and progressive, proposed and not imposed, patient and understanding, adapted to each one's situation, beginning with the condition we find him in and leading him gently and kindly to what he should be, with his free and cheerful co-operation.

III. THE BROAD HORIZONS OF ECCLESIAL INVOLVEMENT

There are then the broad horizons of ecclesial involvement "seen in the

realities of every local situation according to the requirements of the here and now (with its future in the making)... *This is the area Don Bosco found the best for his inexhaustible labours*" (Acts 289).

1. The Rector Major tells us that it is indispensable that we should become more and more effectively *involved in the local Church*, especially in service to the young and the masses. We must teach them knowledge and love of the mystery of Mary; inspire them with enlightened enthusiasm with that ecclesial realism that belongs to the Marian spirit of Don Bosco. Mary, Mother and Help of the Church, must become an active part of our apostolate among the People of God and our young people (in whom lie the hopes of the Church).

2. Devotion to Our Lady must help us to achieve *a true apostolic transformation*, non only reactivating the educative and pastoral programme of Don Bosco, but opening up avenues of joint pastoral involvement under the guidance of the episcopal conferences and the bishop of the diocese.

3. This involvement in the local Church will be characterised by an earnest evangelising presence in the "urgent cultural requirements of the modern world" (Acts 289). The needs of the times demand that we accept "acculturation" (cf CT 53): there

must be a proper *blending of Gospel and culture, catechesis and human development*, which is an expression of our special Salesian character. Such a responsible undertaking has to be conceived as a humble participation in the motherhood of Mary and the Church in the Incarnation of the Word.

4. At this juncture *youth groups and movements* merit special attention: they make it possible for the young to take a leading part in cultural and pastoral matters. They enrich their ideals and the atmosphere of togetherness by which a renewed Marian aspect ensures their genuine Salesianity and vigorous development.

5. It is also up to us to imbue the temporal order with genuine Marian devotion: we should possess and arouse in others a sensitivity for

- social justice,
- civil sociability and peace,
- just working conditions,
- a healthy family life and suitable community quarters.

In short we are to inculcate a Marian devotion that is integrated and realistic and that will encourage the development of the "good Christian and honest citizen".

IV. CONCERN FOR VOCATIONS

Finally the fourth undertaking: our concerned effort in the field of voca-

tions. It was Mary who gave us The Vocation that has redeemed the world, Jesus Christ. We must intensify our vocation apostolate.

This untiring and creative concern, a vital part of the Preventive System, "was one of the most efficacious expressions of Don Bosco's Marian devotion" (Acts 289). Suffice it to recall the "Opera di Maria Ausiliatrice" for the so-called late vocations.

1. As a filial expression of his devotion to Mary, every Salesian must re-awaken in his heart the lively and infectious awareness of the *beauty and reality of his own vocation*. We have a special responsibility regarding vocation: we need to meditate on this responsibility daily; it should form part of our Eucharistic and Marian devotion, our catechising and preaching, our youth apostolate, spiritual direction and friendly presence among the young. It should make our lives an apologia for the mission of Don Bosco and a powerful attraction towards it.

2. We need to make a close and careful check of our *youth apostolate* and lubricate its moving parts with the oil of vocation-concern. Every young person is an object of God's love and has a specific purpose in life. Mary's "fiat" sheds its light on important and free personal choices and helps in their realisation. The time has come to react against the silence and timidity that harm

the prospects of the young. Mary is our help to stir us to action so that we "commit ourselves in all pastoral activities, especially those on behalf of youth, to include vocation guidance explicitly and systematically as an essential dimension of all our apostolate. In this regard we should not remain on the level of abstract principles but should truly rethink the planning, programming and educational methodology of our schools, activities and groups" (GC 113).

3. In our Marian perspective we must "base our evangelising and vocational endeavours on a deep prayer-conversion which makes it possible to rekindle the many spiritual resources that each community possesses as a gift of the Spirit. This should not be an occasional occurrence but an habitual attitude of an ecclesial community ever in search of the will of God and constantly purifying itself in order to be faithful to its calling, a living witness first and foremost to the words of the Lord, 'Ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest'." (GC21 112). Deep prayerfulness is the basis of every genuine vocation apostolate.

4. *Mary herself will intercede most generously* for increased vocations in the Church — especially vocations for those aims which she herself suggested to Don Bosco and continues to entrust to the various groups of the Salesian Family. Mary too will help strengthen our perseverance in

the vocations we have already assumed and will aid us in taking better care of the problems of formation.

V. OUR ANIMATORS

In all these arenas of activity our animators need special attention and a spirit of enterprise in their task of guiding, suggesting, confirming, directing and relaunching our Marian initiatives. *When there is no authoritative or responsible voice*, silence and inactivity gradually result both in word and deed; or things are left to individuals with the consequent risk of arbitrariness (when the need actually calls for community commitment) in Marian renewal.

1. *Every Rector and Provincial must be an animator* in his own area of competency, for devotion to Mary is an essential element of our Salesian spirit.

2. *Individual members* of the Salesian Family must feel they are supported, inspired and stimulated to an *intelligent participation in the various enterprises*. This will also help avoid dissipation of effort, anachronisms, stagnation and idle lacunae in the renewal of our Marian devotion.

The Rector Major presents us with this programme and appeals to our evangelising courage and pastoral inventiveness so that Marian devotion

will blossom anew in the whole Salesian Family.

This plan we have outlined has been studied by the Salesian Marian Academy and by a group of helpers at the Week of Spirituality held at the Generalate in January 1979. The Rector Major has perused it, touched it up and given it his approval.

24 February 1980.

5.6 Salesian Pontifical University

Letter of Grand Chancellor to the Rector Magnificus

Rome, 24 September 1979

*Very Reverend Father Raffaele Farina
Rector Magnificus
Salesian Pontifical University
Dear Father Rector,*

Two important documents have been recently promulgated: "Sapientia Christiana" (15 April 1979) and "Norms of Application" (19 April 1979 — Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education). These pronouncements are of the greatest importance for the Church's dedicated commitment to university activity and must profoundly affect and direct the way we set about modifying our own Salesian University (which has for some years been for us a matter of deep concern and examination). Indeed we have been expecting direc-

tions of this nature, as GC21 had noted; and the document requires that action be taken within a certain time (SC 88).

1. *Providential moment*

I give thanks to the good Lord for this timely stimulus for forging ahead with the serious task of improving the structure and functioning of the Salesian Pontifical University. The new Constitution calls for forward thinking in formulating a courageous project for the University. It is not a matter of simply touching up the present Statutes: we are expected to make a genuine overall re-examination of the University.

With this in mind, at the last session of the Superior Council (June-July 1979) I initiated an examination, in the light of GC21, of the present situation, so as to establish certain necessary or preferential options in view of "the delicate task of a unified restructuring in the academic field" (GC21, 343); this is the task now assigned to the University to be brought to a successful conclusion.

The Council's authoritative examination tabled a number of dispositions and guidelines, and I include them in this letter: they are to be seen as obligatory directives. Please see to the organising of the necessary co-operation so that a radical revision may be made of the structures and aims within the University.

The results of your findings should be clearly registered in the new Statutes.

2. *Certain premises*

2.1 My first observation is that the Papal document has not used the title "Universities and Faculties of Ecclesiastical Studies; it prefers the name "Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties". Indeed such institutions are different also from Catholic Universities, insofar as the former "are concerned particularly with Christian revelation and questions connected therewith, and which are therefore more closely connected with her mission of evangelisation" (SC Intr III).

It is well to clarify the fact that this perspective holds also for the three faculties of the human sciences (Education, Philosophy and Latin Literature), for there is a functional connection between these and the sacred sciences. "Although they lack a special link with revelation, they can still help considerably in the work of evangelising. They are looked at by the Church precisely under this aspect when they are erected as Ecclesiastical Faculties. They therefore have particular relationship with the Church's hierarchy" (SC Intr III).

Hence this view taken by the Constitution demands that all our Faculties and the whole University

should clarify and look to their truly ecclesial dimension, and be "conscious of their importance in the Church and of their participation in the ministry of the Church" (SC Intr IV).

2.2 Furthermore, SC lays it down that the requirements arising from the present scientific and cultural evolution be given due importance. This involves "the closer connection that is being felt more and more between the various sciences and disciplines" (SC Intr V); and the document insists that "co-operation between the Faculties... of the same university... (be) diligently striven for".

So now is the time and opportunity for the Salesian Pontifical University to implement the restructuring called for by GC21: "The principle of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental organisation should be made effective also on the structural and statutory level. While the Faculties will remain the academic organisms for programming and administration, a more comprehensive control will guarantee the unity of formation" (GC21 360).

This is an urgent and all-embracing task and calls for prudent and sensitive treatment.

2.3 The members of the Superior Council must accept as relevant to

them what the Constitution says of episcopal conferences. Hence it is their duty to follow carefully the life, functioning and progress of the Salesian Pontifical University because of "its special ecclesial importance" and in fidelity to Don Bosco (cf SC 4).

The Superiors of the Congregation have committed themselves to this responsibility for some years now, and have had your fraternal co-operation. It was the SGC's directives that gave the initial fillip for the renewal; and subsequently the Rector Major and Grand Chancellor followed them up with certain dispositions based on the findings of the post-capitular commission.

2.4 Since then a number of important statements have been issued. Among the more significant are the following:

- the letter of the Councillor for Formation to the Grand Chancellor in August 1972;

- the letter of the Grand Chancellor (Father L. Ricceri) to the Rector in January 1977;

- the memorandum of the representatives of the Superior Council in June;

- the report of the Superior Council to the GC21 on restructuring (1972-1977);

- the document of GC21 on "Opera PAS & the Salesian Pontifical University"; and

- the Presentation Address of the

capitular document to the university personnel made by the new Rector Major 3 May 1978.

The last Chapter Document and my address both emphasise that we have to effect a basic restructuring and modernisation. "The pivotal point of the entire work is the organic setting up of a university aimed at a specialised service of our mission to youth and the working classes throughout the world" (GC21 355).

3. *Objectives to be achieved*

To ensure that our restructuring move along the proper lines, I wish to restate certain objectives. They have already been clarified and do not need to be laboured further.

3.1 First of all, we envisage a profound modernisation of our University, not just an internal reform of each Faculty. It will be "an organic renewal of the University as a whole; that is to say, a more unified structure and a more specific character. All divisiveness and stagnation must be avoided; there must be an openness to more dynamic and modern forms of interdisciplinary programming and a concentration on specialised courses and programmes not taught elsewhere. This will ensure that the University will not take on commitments that are disproportionately structured (and too much of a strain on the Congregation) or superfluous (when Institutes are need-

lessly doubling up on courses already existing in Rome)". (Memorandum of Sup Council 9 June 1799)

It is plain therefore that the renewal is to be all-embracing so as to avoid the problems noted in GC21, 35, and to ensure the implementation of the guidelines in GC21, 359-360.

3.2 Furthermore, at the heart of this project to refashion the whole University it is necessary to reconsider and re-define the scientific role of each Faculty and Salesian aspect; the frame of reference for this will be the principle of the concentration of similar disciplines (or chairs) into the Faculty best suited to them by virtue of its scientific nature — care being taken, however, to make such disciplines available to all other Faculties when needed or requested by the various lines of study they are following.

3.3 Finally it is of the utmost importance, and in keeping with our character, to clarify and strengthen the scientific and Salesian aspect of the Faculty of Educational Science (or Pedagogy — cf SC 85), on account of its uniqueness among the ecclesiastical institutions of university status; its strong and specific incidence in the meaning and *raison d'être* of our University; its invaluable capacity to "promote dialogue between Gospel and culture through pedagogy — which so characterises

the Salesian vocation" (Memorandum of Sup Council p 6). Every Faculty is expected to shine in its Salesian and ecclesial aspects, and this is even more necessary for Educational Science, instituted as it is "for the purpose of enhancing and spreading Catholic pedagogical principles" and to deepen and illumine the educational project of Don Bosco (cf GC21 354).

I consider it particularly important to point out that the aim and the very soul of the various disciplines belonging to this Faculty must be clearly oriented towards pedagogy. It is up to Pedagogy to define the options, the content and the range of all its programmes.

The scientific identity of this Faculty obviously does not derive from the sum of its disciplines but from the pedagogical urge, which must be the central motive force of everything — learning, research, cultural initiatives.

Rightly did my predecessor, Father L. Ricceri, insist on the urgency of "drawing up a vigorous and clear-cut programme in history, philosophy and theology" that would assure the Faculty of a valid pedagogical dimension illumined by Christian faith (cf Letter of Fr Ricceri 1977 to Rector, 3.5).

4. *Requirements on the part of the Congregation*

In its plenary session of last July the Superior Council, bearing in mind

that there are five Faculties (cf GC21 346), considered it important to indicate which "profiles" were most relevant to the Salesian mission, in view of an adequate redimensioning of the branches or specialisation to be achieved in the UPS. The following requirements for university formation were decided on.

4.1 Training of qualified men in *youth and catechetical apostolate* for teaching and research and also for animation and apostolic activities in administrative and practical fields with an all-embracing integrated formation.

The range of youth apostolate is indeed vast. Particular attention must be paid to important areas of moral theology, methodology, Christian development and the pressing problems of the youth situation especially in the working class milieu. Hence catechetics is of special incidence in this setting and is the true badge of our mission.

The youth apostolate and catechetics should be the main characteristics of our university interests. The late Pope Paul VI reminded us of this when he raised the Athenaeum to the status of an Ecclesiastical University (24 May 1973). He was pleased to point out in his *Motu Proprio* "Magisterium Vitae" that the UPS "should deepen and spread the knowledge of those disciplines which are of greater use for the apostolate in

view of the widespread and growing urgency to train the young in Christian living. And with these pressing needs in mind it is endeavouring to place this information on a scientific basis so that a fruitful dialogue with the modern world will result".

4.2 Training of professors and suitable personnel in the field of *dogmatic theology positively oriented towards history*.

In the changing culture of modern times it is urgent to have clear and certain ideas about the identity of theology. It is absolutely and specifically different from the other disciplines, and this must be in evidence (cf Theological Formation of Future Priests 18); it is the "science of Christian revelation", integrally linked with the practical lives of the People of God under the guidance and magisterium of the sacred hierarchy.

The positive historical orientation will be bound up with the study of the contents of revelation and the development of dogma in rapport with the history of evangelisation, catechesis and Christian pedagogy, with the possibility of special studies in mariology and missiology.

I must insist on the importance (as already stressed by my predecessor, Father Ricceri) of developing this profile in harmony with the requirements of today's cultural changes (v Letter to Rector 1979 3.2), drawing on the pastoral and pedagog-

ical characteristics of our mission within the Church.

4.3 Training of specialists in *Spirituality* with the accent on Salesianity. This preparation should offer research and teaching facilities for the consecrated life, animation and spiritual direction, direction of formation centres, discernment and care of vocations, methods of growing in grace, diagnosis and treatment of problems of persevering in the faith, in-depth studies of the charism of Don Bosco in the Church, and so on.

All this field of work should aim at training good fashioners of the consecrated life and the priestly ministry; and it is desirable that the basic doctrinal and history content be well integrated with the philosophical, psychopedagogical and methodological elements. In the actual process of transformation the whole Salesian Family feels a pressing need of singular competence in this area.

4.4 Training of qualified personnel who can enrich the practical dimension of *education with a strongly marked tendency to theoretical reflection* in the field of pedagogy - historical, philosophical, theological, scientific and methodological; the object being to achieve, (with teaching and research) further enlightenment in educational practice and the human sciences (especially psychological and sociological), and inviting dialogue with the faith.

This is a delicate area that is real and pressing, and the Salesian Family is expected to make its own special contribution to ecclesial thinking here.

4.5 Training of qualified personnel in pedagogy with special reference to *psychological and sociological aspects in education*.

Teaching and research here will not aim at psychology degrees in therapy or expertise in sociology in the sociopolitical field. The training will be geared to specialised pedagogy with up to date sensitivity and knowledge in the field psychosociology — a psychosociology aimed at knowing and planning integrated training methods for the personality.

4.6 Training of specialists in *cultural communication, especially in schools*, but also in other activities, particularly the mass media. The great structural and cultural changes of today call for a renewed concern in the study of the “school” factor (training Christian leaders, pedagogical and teaching consultants, etc) — with clear and sensitive attention to the present problems of the Catholic school and particularly the professional school.

4.7 Training of qualified personnel and teachers for *philosophy*, for “acquiring a solid and harmonious knowledge of man, the world and God, based on our ever-valid philosophical heritage” (OT 15).

For us, such philosophical com-

petence should be characterised by a special open-mindedness to religious problems linked with a strong humanistic and pedagogical sensitivity. It is important these days to give more substance to philosophical formation also for the reason that the human sciences and the disciplines of the faith are constantly appealing to it. "One could say that philosophy has an unrivalled cultural value; it is the very soul of genuine culture insofar as it poses questions about the meaning of things and human life in a way truly suited to the innermost aspirations of man" (Sacred Congr. for Cath. Educ.: Teaching of Philosophy in Seminaries; Rome 1973).

Also we know from experience that a sound philosophical basis is indispensable for further specialisation in pedagogy, theology, law, the apostolate, etc.

4.8 Training of qualified personnel and teachers in *Canon Law* firmly linked with ecclesiology and with special reference to the juridical aspects of the consecrated life and the Salesian apostolate.

Today after the ecclesiological re-assessment of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and on the threshold of the promulgation of a new Code of Canon Law, it is urgent that we have in all places true specialists in this field.

The juridical disciplines belong to the vast area of the apostolate and

are closely linked to our way of life and our mission in the Church.

4.9 Training competent personnel in *Christian Literature*, with a special knowledge of Latin. Direct access to the sources, to the numerous ecclesiastical documents and to the Christian literary heritage of the early centuries (so dear to the heart of Don Bosco), coupled harmoniously with the pastoral and pedagogical character of our University, will be able to strengthen the enriching and assuring sense of Tradition in these days of ideological pluralism and sociological weakening of genuine faith.

5. Directives

GC21 (further enhanced now by the Apostolic Constitution "Sapientia Christiana") requires that we make a courageous revision of the structures of the University. This means beginning from a number of already established points (cf GC21 359 abc) and solving certain knotty problems. As I have already stated, what we set out to achieve must not be just a solution of restricted and sectional problems, but a re-assessment of everything, re-organising things with a will to actually re-found the University.

Dear Father Rector, there is need to set to work most diligently, in a spirit of sincere dialogue, enthusiastic research and fraternal collaboration

so as to complete the work that has been in progress during these last few years. To this end I append a number of key directives that will guide your efforts.

5.1 Procure the efficient services of a central academic authority to achieve unity of purpose and the good functioning of the University "as a unit" in view of the particular objectives to be attained.

This implies not only the application of the new directives through which "the persons in authority will enjoy that exercise of power which really corresponds to their office (SC 19,1; cf Norms & Appl. 11), but also the urgent need that the Rector (whose task it is "to govern the entire University and to promote its unity, its co-operation and its progress") will have the help of a small group of competent collaborators (they could be the college deans), so that through his activity the life and co-ordination of the University will be managed more efficiently, especially in the application and carrying out of the present directives (cf SC 19.2).

5.2 Define clearly the nature and function of every Faculty, specifying the particular integrated aim of the scientific task that dictates its options, proportions, co-ordinations and limitations of the various disciplines within its ambit.

Here it is important to apply the

criterion (mentioned above) of concentrating similar disciplines (or chairs) in the Faculty that best corresponds to them according to its scientific perspective.

5.3 Specific branches or specialisations are extremely demanding undertakings, and at the present time UPS cannot seriously aspire to offer many. In this matter the redimensioning must be faced radically, having in mind the overall consideration of the University and transcending "the rigid concept of Faculty-autonomy (GC21 531; 1, 3, 4) and aiming for interdisciplinary and inter-departmental organisation (GC 360; 2, 7, 1). Consequently for every Faculty the Statutes should clearly indicate the fundamental specific branch and then the subordinate branches.

For the Faculties of Canon Law, Philosophy and Christian Literature, what was defined above under the heading "Requirements on the part of the Congregation" still stands.

The Faculty of Theology will consider as its fundamental area *Dogmatic Theology with the accent on history* according to the perspectives of the pastoral and pedagogical character of the University. Furthermore, Spirituality will belong to this Faculty in a special way.

The Faculty of Educational Science will consider as basic and primary the Pedagogy branch (theory and methodology) (cf above 4.4). It

could also include the branches of educational psychosociology and cultural communication (cf above 4.5; 4.6).

Furthermore the Faculties of Theology and Educational Science will note the following (5.4).

5.4 Set up an inter-Faculty teaching structure for the unified and organic branch of Youth Apostolate and Catechetics (cf above 4.1). This should be done in such a way that this structure stands as the convergent point of the closest collaboration of the two Faculties of Theology and Educational Science, and interests and stimulates initiatives in the other three Faculties so that it becomes the characteristic centre of the University. It will be a single branch organised and administered by both the above-mentioned two Faculties together, so as to create a blended administrative group, with one single well-articulated programme in which there will be room for further different sub-branches and preferential study programmes.

It is the place of the two Faculties to confer Licentiates and Doctorates; but the Rector, with his small group of collaborators (v 5.1), should guarantee adequate and efficient autonomy to this administrative group, in harmony with the responsibilities of programming and administration proper to the two Faculties (cf GC21 360; 2, 7, 1).

How this arrangement works out may possibly suggest an even more adequate structure for the future; it may also stimulate other similar fields of collaboration.

5.5 In drawing up and carrying out the curricula there should be a systematic collaboration of the various disciplines and Faculties.

The promotion of the various disciplines, and in particular the human sciences "more closely linked with the theological disciplines or the work of evangelisation" (SC 84) should be envisaged in ways that will be useful for the present branches of the unit. Some of these latter indeed need to be updated with a greater "anthropological" sensitivity, especially philosophy, psychology and sociology; therefore their organisation should be such as to afford the proper and indispensable contributions to the various branches.

5.6 The revision of the Statutes required by "Sapientia Christiana" (SC 89, 91; Norms of Applic. 6) must reflect the project of restructuring and modernisation of the UPS as the crowning of all the efforts made from SGC on.

5.7 There remains too the formulation of the ordinances (cf GC21 359; 2, 6, 3) and the presentation of the definitive disposition of offices, bearing in mind the observations of the University Council (6 Decem-

ber 1978) and my directives in this letter.

All this will allow the Superior Council to draw up a better policy regarding the Salesian Pontifical University, especially in regard to choice, training and basis and the provision for a better use of the University for the Congregation and the Salesian Family.

As you see, dear Father Rector the work to be done is still complex and demands courage and solidarity. Time is running out. Everything hinges on the overcoming of divisiveness and building up inter-Faculty collaboration.

The work-commission appointed by you should also take into account the conclusions already partly agreed

on in the travail of these last few years. They must consider the Constitution "Sapientia Christiana" and this letter of mine as a most favourable and authoritative moment and an urgent call to the task of revision and up to date planning in our university commitment for the future.

May Don Bosco obtain for us from God the necessary help for a happy outcome of our resolutions. To you, your close co-workers and all the personnel of the University I express my warmest greetings and my confidence. Please assure everybody of my affection and daily prayers.

Faternally in the Lord,

Father Egidio VIGANÒ

Rector Major and Grand Chancellor

5.7 Houses canonically erected 1979

<i>Province</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Central Africa	Boortmeertbeek: Mission Office (Belgium)
Argentina: Buenos Aires	Isidro Casanova
Brazil: Campo Grande	Dourados
Philippines	Cebu Pasil
	Santa Cruz
France: Paris	Casablanca: Quartier M. Sultan (Marocco)
	Nyamanga: Camaroon
	Ouistreham
	Paris: Résidence Don Bosco
	Paris: Turbigio
	Fougamou (Gabon)

India: Bangalore

Bangalore: Provincial House

Cochin Pallaruthy

Hyderabad

Mangalagiri

Quilon

India: Gauhati

Punnamamai Mao

Italy: Subalpina

Turin, Valdocco: 'Maria Ausiliatrice'

Turin, Valdocco: 'Bl. Michael Rua'

Italy: Venice

Pordonone: Parish of St John Bosco

Mexico

Huipulco: 'St Francis de Sales'

S. Cristóbal de las Casas

Spain: Bilbao

Baracaldo: 'St Joseph'

Spain: Córdoba

Provincial House

Spain: León

Vigo: 'Mary Help of Christians'

Spain: Madrid

Pozuelo de Alarcon

Venezuela

Caracas, Petare

Poland: Lodz

Gdansk

Houses canonically closed

Central Africa

Jette (Belgium)

Austria

Waidhofen

Germany: Cologne

Saarbrücken

France: Paris

Casablanca - Maarif (Morocco)

Langrune-sur-Mer

Le Vésinet

Paris: Saint Fargeau

Sindara (Gabon)

Italy: Lombarda

Bologna: 'St Joseph'

Mexico

Mexico I.U.C.E.

Spain: Seville

Seville - Macarena

USA: New Rochelle

Cedar Lake

5.8 Deceased confreres

Guide for consulting the Necrology

D (Diaconus)	Deacon
E (Episcopus)	Bishop, Prelate
L (Laicus)	Laybrother
P (Presbyter)	Priest
S (Seminarista)	« Cleric »

— Name of confrere is followed by Province abbreviation.

— Line 1 (marked * gives place and date of birth.

— Line 2 gives place and date of first profession.

— Line 3 gives place and date of priestly (possibly only diaconal) ordination.

— A fourth line could carry other titles such as bishop, provincial, etc.

— Final line gives place and date of death.

Abbreviations for Provinces, etc.

AFC	CENTRAL AFRICA
ANT	ANTILLES
ABA	ARGENTINA - Buenos Aires
ABB	ARGENTINA - Bahía Blanca
ACO	ARGENTINA - Córdoba
ALP	ARGENTINA - La Plata
ARO	ARGENTINA - Rosario
AUL	AUSTRALIA
AUS	AUSTRIA
BEN	BELGIUM NORTH
BES	BELGIUM SOUTH
BOL	BOLIVIA
BBH	BRAZIL - Belo Horizonte
BCG	BRAZIL - Campo Grande
BMA	BRAZIL - Manaus
BPA	BRAZIL - Porto Alegre
BRE	BRAZIL - Recife
BSP	BRAZIL - Sao Paulo
CAM	CENTRAL AMERICA
CEB	CZECOSLOVAKIA - Bratisl
CEP	CZECOSLOVAKIA - Praha
CIL	CHILE
CIN	CHINA
COB	COLOMBIA - Bogotá

COM	COLOMBIA - Medellín
ECU	ECUADOR
FIL	PHILIPPINES
FLY	FRANCE - Lyons
FPA	FRANCE - Paris
GEK	GERMANY - Cologne
GEM	GERMANY - Munich
GIA	JAPAN
GBR	GREAT BRITAIN
INB	INDIA - Bombay
INC	INDIA - Calcutta
ING	INDIA - Gauhati
INK	INDIA - Bangalore
INM	INDIA - Madras
IRL	IRELAND
IAD	ITALY - Adriatic
ICE	ITALY - Central
ILT	ITALY - Ligure-Toscana
ILE	ITALY - Lombardo-Emiliana
IME	ITALY - Meridionale
INE	ITALY - Novarese-Elvetica
IRS	ITALY - Romano-Sarda
ISI	ITALY - Sicily
ISU	ITALY - Subalpine

IVE	ITALY - Venice (East Veneto)	RMU	Opera PAS & UPS
IVO	ITALY - Verona (West Veneto)	SBA	SPAIN - Barcelona
JUL	JUGOSLAVIA - Ljubljana	SBI	SPAIN - Bilbao
JUZ	JUGOSLAVIA - Zagreb	SCO	SPAIN - Córdoba
KOR	KOREA	SLE	SPAIN - León
MOR	MIDDLE EAST	SMA	SPAIN - Madrid
MEG	MEXICO - Guadalajara	SSE	SPAIN - Seville
MEM	MEXICO - Mexico	SVA	SPAIN - Valencia
OLA	HOLLAND	SUE	USA East (New Rochelle)
PAR	PARAGUAY	SUO	USA West (San Francisco)
PER	PERU	THA	THAILAND
POK	POLAND - Cracow (S)	UNG	HUNGARY
POW	POLAND - Warsaw (N)	URU	URUGUAY
POR	PORTUGAL	VEN	VENEZUELA
RMG	Generalate	VIE	VIETNAM

Deceased confreres

"We keep alive the memory of all confreres now asleep in the peace of Christ. Their remembrance is for us a stimulus to continue faithful in our mission." (Const. art. 66).

P Adriaensens Camillo (BEN)	* Opdorp - Belgium	10- 9-13
	Bernal - Argentina	28- 1-33
	Córdoba - Argentina	29-11-42
	† Bonheiden - Belgium	7-12-79
L Ardu Vincenzo (IAD)	* Mogoro - Italy	17- 8-07
	Genzano - Rome	16- 9-26
	† Gualdo Tadino - Italy	26-12-79
P Balászkövi Giuseppe (SUO)	* Budapest - Hungary	14- 3-03
	Szentkereszt - Hungary	2- 8-23
	Turin - Italy	5- 7-31
	† Rosemead - USA	18- 1-80

L Barison Michele (BSP)	* Agna - Italy	25- 9-99
	Lavrinhos - Brazil	28- 1-30
	† Lorena - Brazil	20-12-79
P Barreto Sebastiano (URU)	* Santa Isabel - Uruguay	19-12-97
	Montevideo - Uruguay	8- 2-14
	Montevideo - Uruguay	23-12-22
	† Montevideo - Uruguay	19-11-79
L Barron Edward (GBR)	* Leckpatrick - Ireland	5- 8-16
	Beckford - England	31- 8-39
	† Blaisdon - England	16- 1-80
L Benvenuti Vittorio (ILE)	* Montegridolfo - Italy	1- 5-12
	Montodine - Italy	1- 9-36
	† Milan - Italy	24- 1-80
P Borio Armando (ABB)	* Savona - Italy	2-12-04
	Fortin Mercedes - Argentina	26- 1-24
	Turin - Italy	7- 7-35
	† Bahia Blanca - Argentina	6- 1-80
P Bricknell Thomas (GBR)	* Salford - England	4- 3-01
	Cowley-Oxford - England	13- 9-24
	Womersley - England	12- 3-32
	† Blaisdon - England	28-12-79
P Brumec Carlo (JUZ)	* Djurdjevac - Yugoslavia	30- 9-96
	Radna - Yugoslavia	5- 8-16
	Turin - Italy	12- 7-25
	† Zagreb - Yugoslavia	27-12-79
L Cavallaro Pietro (ICE)	* Cona - Italy	11- 1-30
	Villa Moglia - Italy	16- 8-55
	† Turin - Italy	12-10-79
P Cielen Edward (BEN)	* Eigenbilzen - Belgium	15-12-05
	Groot Bijgaarden - Belgium	26- 8-31
	Oud Heverlee - Belgium	31-12-39
	† Hasselt - Belgium	19- 1-80

P Cocco Luigi (ISU)	* Turin - Italy	2- 2-10
	Pinerolo - Italy	15- 9-32
	Turin - Italy	23- 6-40
	† Turin - Italy	11- 2-80
L Cottet Carlo (FPA)	* Bossonens - Switzerland	15- 3-98
	Château d'Aix - France	29- 9-25
	† Attalens - Switzerland	7- 1-80
L Crivellaro Stefano (IRS)	* Breganze - Italy	23- 4-19
	Villa Moglia - Italy	8- 9-39
	† Lecce - Italy	25-12-79
P Del Mistro Natale (MOR)	* Maniago - Italy	25-12-05
	Cremisan - Israel	8-12-23
	Suez - Egypt	10- 4-32
	† Teheran - Iran	1-12-79
P Faraci Luigi (IME)	* Barrafranca - Italy	7- 5-07
	Portici - Italy	8-12-25
	Naples - Italy	22- 4-34
	† Caserta - Italy	19-12-79
P Giunta Cosimo (ISI)	* Gangi - Italy	14-10-07
	San Gregorio - Italy	2-10-26
	Messina - Italy	12- 7-36
	† Palermo - Italy	25- 1-80
P Hernández Guglielmo (SSE)	* Barruecopardo - Spain	16- 3-16
	San José Del Valle - Spain	10- 9-35
	Madrid - Spain	24- 6-45
	† Seville - Spain	15-12-79
L Jones Adalberto (ACO)	* San Juan de Cuyo - Argentina	24- 4-96
	Bernal - Argentina	29- 1-16
	† Mendoza - Argentina	2- 9-79
P Labrada Giuseppe (URU)	* Montevideo - Uruguay	10- 3-02
	Montevideo - Uruguay	18- 3-18
	Turin - Italy	11- 7-26
	† Montevideo - Uruguay	27-10-79

P La Manna Teresio (ICE)	* Savona - Italy	8-10-24
	Villa Moglia - Italy	16- 8-41
	Bollengo - Italy	1- 7-51
	† Turin - Italy	13- 1-80
P La Rocca Antonino (ISI)	* Partama - Italy	30- 1-10
	San Gregorio - Italy	15- 9-28
	Messina - Italy	22- 5-37
	† Palermo - Italy	27-12-79
P Lovisek Agostino (BES)	* Pov. Bystrica - Czechoslovakia	10- 9-22
	Sv. Benedik - Czechoslovakia	16- 8-42
	Bollengo - Italy	1- 7-53
	† Tournai - Belgium	13- 1-80
P Magnussen Ignazio (COB)	* Copenhagen - Denmark	18- 1-08
	Mosquera - Colombia	18- 1-33
	Bogotá - Colombia	23- 8-42
	† Bogotá - Colombia	6- 3-79
P Maltry Francesco (GEM)	* Sünching - Germany	22- 6-02
	Ensdorf - Germany	15- 8-24
	Turin - Italy	7- 7-29
	† Munich - Germany	10-12-79
P Marino Nicola (ABB)	* Roccanova - Italy	7- 2-22
	Fortin Mercedes - Argentina	31- 1-49
	Patagones - Argentina	23-11-57
	† Bahía Blanca - Argentina	19-12-79
P Martínez Adolfo (SCO)	* Pineira de Arcos - Spain	10- 8-99
	San José del Valle - Spain	1- 3-19
	Campello - Spain	17- 6-28
	† Córdoba - Spain	15- 9-79
L Martínez Alfonso (SMA)	* Manzanares - Spain	11- 7-22
	Mohernando - Spain	16- 8-56
	† Madrid - Spain	15-12-79
P Monje Ortensio (SLE)	* Velilla de Valderaduey - Spain	9- 3-20
	Mohernando - Spain	15- 8-41
	Madrid - Spain	29- 6-50
	† León - Spain	8-12-79

P Pena Giuseppe (URU)	* Xauce - Uruguay	18- 9-91
	Montevideo - Uruguay	2- 2-12
	Montevideo - Uruguay	19- 2-21
	† Salto - Uruguay	26-11-79
P Perissinotto Giuseppe (ISU)	* Venice - Italy	28-10-01
	Fogizzo - Italy	13- 9-18
	Casale Monferrato - Italy	28- 6-25
	† Turin - Italy	30-11-79
P Puerto Adolfo (SCO)	* La Alberca - Spain	27- 9-15
	San José Del Valle - Spain	12- 3-33
	Gibraltar	20- 9-52
	† Malaga - Spain	23- 1-80
P Schmitt Nicola (GEK)	* Eidenborn - Germany	23-11-05
	Ensdorf - Germany	29- 7-34
	Dehra Dun - India	30- 1-44
	† Essen-Borbeck - Germany	14-12-79
P Szöke Giorgio (UNG)	* Kecskemet - Hungary	1-11-14
	Szentkereszt - Hungary	9-10-32
	Turin - Italy	23- 6-40
	† Budapest - Hungary	5- 1-80
L Tambascia Nicolino (FIL)	* Castelvetero - Italy	14- 1-16
	Sankiwan - China	8-12-37
	† Cebu City - Philippines	13-11-79
P Torres Luigi (ECU)	* Cayambe - Ecuador	25-11-88
	Sigsig - Ecuador	28- 4-18
	Turin - Italy	11- 7-26
	† Cuenca - Ecuador	15- 1-80
P Vador Giuseppe (ANT)	* Dorog - Hungary	29-10-09
	Szentkereszt - Hungary	3-10-28
	Turin - Italy	5- 7-36
	† Santa Clara - Cuba	8-10-79



