



acts

of the general council

year LXVIII july-september 1987

N. 322

**official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation**

**Roma
Direzione Generale
Opere Don Bosco**

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of the Salesian Society
of St John Bosco

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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THE MARIAN YEAR

Introduction. - Why a Marian Year. - Dynamic ecclesial perspectives. - The mother and son relationship in Christ's testament at Golgotha. - Our Act of Entrustment to Mary. - The three elements in the prayer of entrustment. - The Marian aspect of our Profession. - Special commitment of the Salesian Family. - Conclusion.

Rome, Solemnity of Pentecost, 7 June 1987

My dear confreres,

I am writing this letter on the feast of Pentecost. May the Holy Spirit dwell in your hearts and give you interior growth!

This day, the Solemnity of Pentecost, sees the beginning of the special Marian Year declared by the Holy Father in his encyclical letter "Redemptoris Mater" (RM). The jubilee will continue until the Solemnity of the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven of the year 1988.¹ It is the Pope's wish that the "fullness of grace" of her "the one who has believed" should enlighten and guide the Church's faith as she passes through these last years of the twentieth century.

¹ Cf. RM 49-50

The Holy Spirit dwelt in Mary from the first moment of her conception, and the Blessed Virgin was intimately aware of his presence. She, the Mother of Jesus by the power of the Spirit, lived the experience of Pentecost with the Apostles and saw her motherhood extend to the whole of the Church. With the Spirit and in the Spirit she brings us to Christ, and with Christ and in Christ she leads us to the Father.

This Marian Year will serve to deepen and increase our faith.

For a period of no less than seven months it coincides with our Don Bosco centenary celebrations. In this way it will enable us to emphasize and live more intensely some characteristic and important aspects of Mary's initiatives and presence in the vocation and mission of the Salesian Family.

To this end I now invite you to reflect on the significance this Marian Year can have for us, by recalling and considering some reflections I would like to make on the Act of Entrustment of the whole Congregation to Mary Help of Christians which we made in solemn form on 14 January 1984.

Why a Marian Year

We may wonder in the first place why the Pope has proclaimed this extraordinary jubilee in Mary's honour.

In the encyclical "Redemptoris Mater", of 25 March last, he himself gives us the explanation. As well as recalling two historical and ecclesial events of particular significance, he gives as the fundamental reason the saving fact that even at the present day Mary continues to go before the People of God "as a figure or model"² in its pilgrimage.

² RM 5

The two historical and ecclesial events are:
— "*the twelfth centenary of the Second Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (787)*. Putting an end to the well-known controversy about the cult of sacred images, the Council defined that, according to the teaching of the holy Fathers and the universal tradition of the Church, there could be exposed for the veneration of the faithful, together with the

Cross, also images of the Mother of God, and of the saints";³

³ RM 33

— and "*the Millennium of the Baptism of St Vladimir, Grand Duke of Kiev (988)*. This marked the beginning of Christianity in the territories of what was then called Rus', and subsequently in other territories of Eastern Europe ... as far as the northern territories of the Asian continent".⁴ This recalls with an ecumenical sensitivity of some importance two facts which will move us to intensify our prayer for a growth of faith and christian unity in the Soviet Union.

⁴ RM 50

But the main reason for the proclamation of the Marian Year is the *mystery of the "fullness of time"*.

"The expression 'fullness of time' (says the encyclical in a note) ... means not only the conclusion of a chronological process but also and especially the coming to maturity or completion of a particularly important period, one directed towards the fulfilment of an expectation, a coming to completion which thus takes on an eschatological dimension. According to Gal 4,4 and its context, it is the coming of the Son of God that reveals that time has, so to speak, reached its limit. That is to say, the period marked by the promise made to Abraham and by the Law mediated by Moses has now reached its climax, in the sense that Christ fulfils the divine promise and supersedes the old law".⁵

⁵ RM 1, note 2

We may also add that from the time of that "fullness" onwards time has been enriched by a new dimension, which gives it a permanent capacity for rejuvenation; in fact, into its irresistible horizontal forward movement (as measured by clock and calendar) Christ has inserted the vertical dynamism of the resurrection (or in other words of eter-

nity), which enriches it with eschatological energy. And so in the "time of the Church" the People of God will make their earthly pilgrimage passing from one beginning to another (as the Fathers say) until the final beginning, i.e. through a series of periods of renewed youth until they eventually reach the definitive youth of the final resurrection. In this way "the Church journeys through time towards the consummation of the ages and goes to meet the Lord who comes".⁶

RM 2

The circumstance which moved the Pope to draw attention to this subject "is the prospect of the year 2000, now drawing near, in which the Bimillennial Jubilee of the birth of Jesus Christ at the same time directs our gaze towards his Mother. Mary appeared on the horizon of salvation history before Christ. The fact that she 'preceded' the coming of Christ is reflected every year in the liturgy of Advent. Therefore, if to that ancient historical expectation of the Saviour we compare those years which are bringing us closer to the end of the second Millennium after Christ and to the beginning of the third, it becomes fully comprehensible that in this present period we wish to turn in a special way to her, the one who in the 'night' of the Advent expectation began to shine like a true 'Morning Star'. For just as this star, together with the 'dawn', precedes the rising of the sun, so Mary from the time of her Immaculate Conception preceded the coming of the Saviour, the rising of the 'Sun of Justice' in the history of the human race".⁷

⁷ RM 3

And so the main reason for the proclamation of this Marian Year is that the Holy Father feels *the prophetic need "to emphasize the unique presence of the Mother of Christ in history, especially during these last years leading up to the year 2000"*.⁸

⁸ RM 3

It is a vista of memory and prophecy, of thanksgiving and hope, While in fact we are preparing to commemorate with immense gratitude the bimillennial anniversary of the birth of Christ, we look upon the beginning of the Third Millennium as a time of rejuvenation of the Church's life, one of those new beginnings which exploit the energy of the resurrection definitively inserted in time by Christ. The prediction, stimulus and source of this new beginning is the visit made to the Church by the Holy Spirit in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.

In the Congregation, following on the labours of the General Chapters which have taken place in the postconciliar period, we are now experiencing the auspicious results of the Council. Our sincere efforts at renewal provide the salesian contribution to the rejuvenation of the pilgrim Church.

Dynamic ecclesial perspectives

The Pope tells us in the encyclical that "the Church is called not only to remember ... but also, on her own part, to prepare for the future: for the end of the Second Christian Millennium opens up as a new prospect".⁹

The appeal to look towards the year 2000 is not, as some journalists have implied, an apocalyptic obsession, as though what was in mind was some kind of catastrophe in line with the medieval "a thousand years and the world will come to an end". It is rather an "eschatological view" opening onto new times and how the Church must be rejuvenated so as to evangelize them.

As at the start, so in every new beginning there is the indispensable "maternal cooperation of the

⁹ RM 49

Mother of God".¹⁰ This is an element willed by God in salvation history. It is an objective reality, a way leading to a better future.

¹⁰ RM 49

It is the Pope's wish that this jubilee year shall extend from Pentecost to the Assumption, to indicate the space of time during which Mary accompanied the newborn Church; it was the period during which Our Lady was constantly in prayer with the apostles and disciples, and lived the consummation of her faith as "mother", as the new Eve, following upon the last will and testament of Jesus on the Cross: "Woman, behold your son".¹¹

¹¹ Jn 19,26

The Pope's encyclical is a biblical and theological meditation on Mary's role in salvation history in the light of Chapter 8 of "Lumen gentium".

He has chosen as the key to the understanding of this role Elizabeth's prophetic declaration: "*Blessed is she who believed*".¹²

¹² Lk 1,45; cf. RM 12

The path to be followed on the journey towards God finds its most sublime expression in Mary's pilgrimage of faith. It is not a static kind of faith, as though it had achieved its entire objective on the day of the Annunciation, but a faith in continual growth between obscurity and new lights, open to the discovery of an ever deeper collaboration; not the simple possession of a satisfied mind, but the ardent seeking of a thirsty heart. The starting point is the great "Yes" of the Incarnation, but how many new situations had to be examined and what a long night had to pass until Pentecost and the Assumption! The veil which covered her Son did not become completely transparent until she saw him in heaven. Like the faith of Abraham, that of Mary grew continuously as she hoped against all hope.

"At the Annunciation Mary entrusted herself to God completely, with the 'full submission of intel-

lect and will', manifesting 'the obedience of faith' to him who spoke to her through his messenger. She responded, therefore, with all her human and feminine 'I', and this response of faith included both perfect cooperation with 'the grace of God that precedes and assists' and perfect openness to the action of the Holy Spirit, who 'constantly brings faith to completion by his gifts'".¹³

¹³ RM 13

Her method of cooperation with God's grace gradually became concentrated into collaboration with Christ's work of redemption. Already at the marriage feast at Cana Mary collaborated as a "Woman" (it was by this name that Jesus addressed her on that occasion), as though to indicate in her the second Eve, interceding and helping. At the foot of the Cross, with the New Covenant just beginning, she experienced the indescribable paradox of the obedience of faith: "this is perhaps the deepest 'kenosis' of faith in human history".¹⁴ She is the second Eve who "becomes in a certain sense the counterpoise to the disobedience and disbelief embodied in the sin of our first parents. Thus teach the Fathers of the Church and especially St Irenaeus, quoted by the Constitution 'Lumen Gentium': 'The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, Mary loosened by her faith'".¹⁵

¹⁴ RM 18

And it is precisely in this obscure fullness of faith that Mary attains the summit of "mother of the living". Christ's testament on the Cross reveals the mystery of "Mary's new motherhood", generated by faith through her most intimate and painful sharing in the redemptive love of her Son.

"The words uttered by Jesus from the Cross (says the encyclical) signify that the motherhood of

¹⁵ RM 19

her who bore Christ finds a 'new' continuation in the Church and through the Church, symbolized and represented by John. Thus she remains in the mystery of Christ as the 'woman' spoken of by the Book of Genesis (3,15) at the beginning, and by the Apocalypse (Rev 12,1) at the end of the history of salvation. In accordance with the eternal plan of Providence, Mary's divine motherhood is to be poured out upon the Church ... as a reflection and extension of her motherhood of the Son of God".¹⁶

¹⁶ RM 24

The mother and son relationship in Christ's testament at Golgotha

John Paul II states in the encyclical that "motherhood in the order of grace" preserves the analogy of the mutual relationships between mother and son and applies the principle to Christ's testament on the Cross expressed in the singular to the apostle John as representative: "Behold your son!".

The Pope considers as an essential element of motherhood the fact that a personal relationship is established with every child, a relationship which is mutual, unique and unrepeatable. "Even when the same woman is the mother of many children (he says), her personal relationship with each one of them is of the very essence of motherhood. For each child is generated in a unique and unrepeatable way, and this is true both for the mother and for the child. Each child is surrounded in the same way by that maternal love on which are based the child's development and coming to maturity as a human being".¹⁷

¹⁷ RM 45

And so the spiritual motherhood of Mary, while appearing as a gift which Christ offers personally to every human being in raising Mary to the status of

the "Second Eve", is presented as a christian element of the New Covenant which links the disciple's pilgrimage of faith with the motherly care of the "One who believed", and who has become the co-redemptrix through a cooperation of love sustained by the greatest human faith. In this way the Virgin Mother shares objectively, in a special but subordinated manner, in the universal mediation of the Redeemer, the one and only true Mediator. "Taken up to heaven," says the Constitution 'Lumen Gentium', "she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress and Mediatrix".¹⁸

¹⁸ LG 62; cf. RM 38-41

And this motherly solicitude continues through the centuries until "all things come together under Christ as head".¹⁹

¹⁹ Eph 1,10

John Paul II sees in Christ's testament on the Cross the solemn and public investiture of the motherly mediation of Mary, which in consequence implies a related response of Marian filiation in the life of Christ's disciples. And so their entrustment to Mary as their Mother is a christian fact which had its beginning at Golgotha.

"*At the foot of the Cross*", says the Pope, "*there begins that special entrusting of humanity to the Mother of Christ*, which in the history of the Church has been practised and expressed in different ways ... The Marian dimension of the life of a disciple of Christ is expressed in a special way precisely through this filial entrusting to the Mother of

Christ. *Entrusting* himself to Mary in a filial manner, the Christian, like the Apostle John, welcomes the Mother of Christ 'into his own home' and brings her into everything that makes up his inner life, that is to say into his human and Christian 'I': he 'took her to his own home'. Thus he seeks to enter the sphere of action of her 'maternal charity'".²⁰

²⁰ RM 45

Among the different ways of expressing and practising the entrustment of Christ's disciples to Mary, we recall with particular joy and satisfaction the "*Act of Filiation*" promoted and recommended by Don Bosco in one of his little booklets published in 1869 in the Catholic Readings series, for the clients of Mary Help of Christians. The formula he drew up for making the Act situates the client concerned precisely at the foot of the Cross alongside the apostle John.

In the circular I wrote to you concerning the Entrustment to Mary in preparation for the GC22, I added that "the date and content of this Marian text composed by Don Bosco suggest a natural connection between the act of filiation and the distinctive name he gave to 'his' Sisters, the '*Daughters of Mary Help of Christians*', whom he wished to show an exemplary filial trust in her".²¹ Almost on the eve of the Marian Year they celebrated (9 May 1987) the 150th anniversary of the birth of St Mary Domenica Mazzarello, an auspicious anniversary for the whole Salesian Family.

²¹ AGC 309, p. 10-12

We know that our Father and Founder had an extraordinary Marian sensitivity, which matured through that strong ecclesial sense which led him to look on Our Lady as the "Help of Christian People" and "Mother of the Church".

Our relationships of filiation towards Mary are

deeply ecclesial and dynamic in outlook for an apostolic activity of a youthful and popular kind. We are convinced of Mary's solicitous presence among us,²² of her continual intercession,²³ of her wise guidance as our teacher;²⁴ we look upon her always as the supreme model of the believer;²⁵ she is for us the "star of evangelization":²⁶ "we walk side by side with the young so as to lead them to the risen Lord. The Virgin Mary is present in this process as a mother. We make her known and loved as the one who believed, who helps and who infuses hope".²⁷

²² Cf. C 8²³ Cf. C 84²⁴ Cf. C 20²⁵ Cf. C 92²⁶ EN 82²⁷ C 34

Our Act of Entrustment to Mary

On Saturday 14 January 1984, before the beginning of the GC22 which had to complete the great post-conciliar work of the rewriting of our Rule of Life, all the communities of the Congregation joined in spirit with the Chapter members, and the latter in the name of the provincial communities and as representatives of all the confreres made at Rome in the Generalate Chapel the Act of Entrustment to Mary.

This was done in the awareness that we were on the threshold of the year 2000,²⁸ or in other words at the dawn of a new period in the life of the Congregation in the Church's long pilgrimage.

On the occasion of this Marian Year that has been proclaimed by the Pope, it is very fitting that we should call to mind and consider more deeply the significance of that historic gesture we made.

The new text of the Constitutions has codified its contents: "The Virgin Mary showed Don Bosco his field of labour among the young and was the constant guide and support of his work, especially

²⁸ Cf. AGC 309, p. 8-9

in the foundation of our Society. We believe that Mary is present among us and continues her 'mission as Mother of the Church and Help of Christians'. *We entrust ourselves to her*, the humble servant in whom the Lord has done great things, that we may become witnesses to the young of her Son's boundless love".²⁹

29 C 8

Though we did this three years before the announcement of the present Marian jubilee, we feel ourselves to be in joyful harmony with the fundamental reason for its proclamation, with the content of the encyclical which illustrates it and with the dynamic outlook in which we are invited to prepare for the beginning of the Third Christian Millennium.

I think that the famous "fair copy" of which our Father spoke as he looked into the future development and maturing of the Congregation lies precisely in the post-conciliar adaptation of his charisma "lived, preserved, deepened and constantly developed in harmony with the Body of Christ continually in a process of growth".³⁰

30 MR 11

We must cultivate our faith awareness concerning the powerful and ceaseless intervention of the Lord's Spirit in the story of the life of Don Bosco and in these hundred years of development and apostolic work of his Family.

The Second Vatican Council was certainly an extraordinary visit of the Holy Spirit; we see him in the life of the Church, and we feel his presence ourselves in the renewal of the Congregation, even if it is only at its early stages. We are indeed witnessing the inception of a prophetic new beginning.

Our faith awareness invites us to become conscious of the special responsibility that devolves on us at this point in history, as though we found our-

selves invested with a real but unsought role of re-founding the Congregation, called to do "great things". Let us recall what Don Albera wrote to the confreres at Easter 1918, quoting our great patron St Francis de Sales: "*Entrust yourself to Mary's protection, Let us not be afraid to undertake great enterprises: if we have a burning love for her, she will obtain for us all we desire*".³¹

³¹ Circular
1965, p. 286

Letters,

All the "great things" we have to do to translate into practice our whole plan of renewal we expressed to Our Lady when in January 1984 we entrusted ourselves to her as individuals and as a Congregation. To bring them back clearly to your mind, I invite you to read with me once again the Act of Entrustment.

The three elements in the Prayer of Entrustment to Mary Help of Christians

The prayer expressing our solemn Act of Entrustment to Mary (reproduced as an appendix to this letter) is made up of three complementary elements: the first is one of adoration and praise of the Trinity, the second one of supplication and recalling of the memory of Christ, and the third an expression of filial trust and dedication to Mary Help of Christians.

I think it will be useful if we concentrate our prayerful attention on the formula of this Act of Entrustment. It provides rich matter for meditation: it manifests the very essence of the salesian spirit and is an invitation to follow confidently the path of renewal.

— **First element:** *God as seen in salesian contemplation.*

Praise and adoration of the infinite Love of the Trinity is expressed in sentiments of the heart of Don Bosco himself: a heart burning with apostolic zeal which finds in the contemplation of God its secret foundation and the stimulus that animates all its holiness, the "*da mihi animas*". No one will ever understand Don Bosco unless he is first immersed in the mystery of the Trinity, to marvel at the infinite love of the Father who creates the world, gives everything to man and pardons him; the infinite love of the Son who becomes man in order to be like one of us, solid with us in everything (even suffering and death) and thus setting sinful man free, beginning with the poor and the humble; and finally the infinite love of the Holy Spirit who enters history, knocking on the heart of every individual and guiding the Church for the transformation of man, of society and of the world, and so offering to the Father a Kingdom of justice, peace and joy.

The Father is the God of mercy, the Son the God of liberation, the Holy Spirit the God of sanctification: one only God who is Love, a love wholly addressed to Man.

The contemplation of God seen in this fashion prompts the person who prays to collaborate fully and generously in the saving mission of Christ and of the Church; it gives rise to saints like Don Bosco who live oblivious to themselves in the ecstasy of apostolic activity.

"*We Salesians*", proclaimed the members of the GC22, "*gathered together in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, adore and give thanks with the heart of Don Bosco to the Father*

of infinite Love who so loved the world that he gave his only Son and sent the Holy Spirit for the redemption and sanctification of mankind.

Glory to you, merciful Father, redeeming Son and Sanctifying Spirit, the one and threefold saving Love!"

And in this sublime apostolic vision of praise and adoration the Salesian next turns his gaze to Mary and contemplates her person and role, to admire in her the masterpiece of a Mother and Helper linked with the infinite Love of God inserted in human history.

"We praise you, divine Trinity", the prayer continues, "for having given Mary a part in your saving work of redemption, raising her up to be the Mother of God and our Mother too".

This first "trinitarian element" is the fundamental attitude constantly present in a salesian heart, which gives dynamic energy to its efforts by repeating with Don Bosco in every enterprise: "da mihi animas".

— **Second element:** *Christ's feelings in the salesian heart*

The plea in the second element of our Prayer of Entrustment, which at the same time brings Christ to mind, takes us to Calvary to pronounce that deep "Act of Filiation" which was proposed, as we have seen, by Don Bosco.³² We appeal directly to Jesus on the Cross to renew his legacy in favour of each one of us, when (as the Pope writes) "the Redeemer entrusts his mother to the disciple, and at the same time he gives her to him as his mother. Or in other words "the role of a son was attributed to the disciple in response to the love of the Mother".³³

³² Cf. AGC 309, p. 11-12

³³ RM 45

The power of the Holy Spirit, sent to us by the risen Christ, can renew us too and inculcate in us the same sentiments of Christ.

Jesus is the new Man, the first fruit of the new world, who made his Mother the new Woman, the second Eve, who opens up with him the destinies of the new Humanity. We ask him to help us to be daily aware of this Marian filiation as a new pledge of hope and commitment:

"And you, Lord Jesus, Son of Mary and first fruit of the new creation, give us your Spirit so that he may enkindle in our hearts a share of your love. We beg you to renew for us your wondrous testament uttered on the Cross, when in title and endowment you made the Apostle John the son of your own Mother Mary. Repeat also for each of us those words: 'Woman, behold your son' so that we may always live with Mary in our home!"

In the encyclical the Holy Father notes that "the expression 'took her to his own home' goes beyond the mere acceptance of Mary by the disciple in the sense of material lodging and hospitality in his house; it indicates rather a *communion of life* established between the two as a result of the words of the dying Christ".³⁴ For this reason he goes on to say that "entrusting himself to Mary in a filial manner, the christian, like the apostle John, 'welcomes' the Mother of Christ 'into his own home' and brings her into everything that makes up his inner life, that is to say his human and christian 'I': he 'took her to his own home'. Thus the christian seeks to be taken into that 'maternal charity with which the Redeemer's Mother 'cares for the brethren of her Son'"'.³⁵

³⁴ RM 45, note 130

³⁵ RM 45

Now for the Salesian, the "things of his own home", the great values of his spiritual heritage,

are what is contained in the apostolic consecration by which he is dedicated to pastoral work among the young and the poor, with a sense of Church and with kindness of method, which must now be renewed and intensified in preparation for the great jubilee of the year 2000.

This is why we add in our prayer to Christ:

"May she (Mary) remain with us as our mother; may she take us by the hand and be our inspiration as we bring the gospel message to the 'poor and the little ones'. May she help us to be living stones in the spiritual house of the Church and order our lives and activities in union with the Pope and the Bishops. May she help us to be attentive to God's word, zealous in the apostolate, and true prophets of hope in the coming third millennium of our christian faith. May she teach us creativity in our pastoral concerns, and help us achieve that persuasive kindness and mortification that will make us skilled promoters of dialogue and friendship, especially among the young who are most in need".

And so this second element of supplication to Christ will obtain for us, through Mary, the ability to be more authentically salesian in this pregnant period in our history.

— **Third element:** *Salesian riches entrusted to Mary*

This third element of the prayer manifests an attitude of filial trust and confidence, and the entrustment to Mary of our principal salesian riches means that we give them to her in the joyful certainty that they will thus be given sure protection and will be developed by her solicitous and motherly intercession.

For this reason with Don Bosco we proclaim her our "Teacher and Guide".

Among our own cherished possessions which we entrust to her, the principal ones are:

- our own persons in the first place, both individually and as communities;
- then our renewed Rule of Life to which we intend to bear witness in the different forms of communion in unity;
- commitment to sanctification in the daily liturgy of life;
- the flourishing of vocations and responsibility as regards formation;
- missionary generosity;
- the ability to give animation to the Salesian Family;
- and finally, as a practical synthesis and summit of everything, a burning pastoral love for the young.

The adoration of the Trinity at the beginning and the burning supplication to Christ, Son of Mary, have led our heart, in harmony with the Father's plan and Christ's testament, to respond to their initiative of love with the total and filial entrustment of ourselves and all we have to the Mother and Helper of the Church.

We shall have to return frequently on what is included in this gesture, and consider each of these principal "possessions" of ours which we have placed in Mary's hands so as to live and foster them in communion of life with her.

This is the meaning we give to our prayer:

"O Help of Christians and Mother of the Church, we Salesians of Don Bosco entrust ourselves today to your kindly intercession on our behalf as individuals and as communities. We place

in your care the priceless riches of our Constitutions, our pledge to be faithful and united in our Congregation, the sanctification of all our members, the work by which we worship in intention and in act, the increase of vocations, the heavy responsibility of formation, the courageous and generous labours of our missionaries, the animation of the Salesian Family, and especially our assiduous ministry of predilection for the young.

With joy we proclaim you 'Teacher and Guide of our Congregation'".

Don Bosco has assured us that the Blessed Virgin is the "foundress" of our Congregation and that she will be its "support",³⁶ that only in heaven will we come to know with amazement what she has done for us,³⁷ that she will certainly continue to protect our Congregation if we maintain our trust in her³⁸ and that we will never go astray while she is truly our "Guide".³⁹

We do well too to recall here that the famous dream of the "august personage" wearing a mantle with ten diamonds which presents the model of the true Salesian,⁴⁰ was considered by Don Bosco as a precious gift from Our Lady because it took place at San Benigno Canavese on the feast of the Holy Name of Mary; he chose to relate it on the feast of the Presentation of Our Lady in the Temple,⁴¹ so as to indicate that on Mary's feasts he always expected special lights from heaven.⁴²

Entrustment to Mary, therefore, is a genuine expression of the heart, of a lived experience, and hence of intimate feelings dear to our holy Founder. Let us try to frequently renew our awareness of this fact; it will be an excellent way of moving with the Church towards the Third Millennium.

With Mary we shall not go astray: we shall

³⁶ BM 7, 197

³⁷ BM 10, 585

³⁸ MB 17, 261

³⁹ MB 18, 439

⁴⁰ Cf. AGC 300, April - June 1981

⁴¹ MB 15, 183

⁴² Cf. MB 18, 247

travel the true path of Christ for the building of the Kingdom.

Our prayer began in a descending manner from the Trinity through Christ to Mary, and it is fitting that it should end with the invocations of pilgrims who are moving upwards in the Spirit along the paths of history from Mary to Christ and with Christ to the Father.

In the prayer's conclusion we address ourselves to the Virgin Mother and ask for her help in our upward climb:

"Accept, we beg you, this filial Act of Entrustment and help us to participate ever more zealously in the final wish of your Son on Calvary: through him, with him and in him we resolve to live and labour untiringly to establish the Kingdom of our Father in the hearts of all men.

Mary Help of Christians, pray for us! Amen".

These reflections on the three complementary elements in our Prayer of Entrustment will prompt us to have greater trust and boldness in undertaking the "great things" which the Church, with the poor and the little ones, is expecting from us.

The Marian aspect of our profession

Among "our own special things" which we have entrusted to Mary our salesian Profession stands out as a fundamental reality.

In a certain sense it is the synthesis of all we are and all we have: it sums up the way in which we live as disciples of Christ; it traces out for us the way that leads to Love; it sets the evangelical dimension of our vocation and outlines the ecclesial project of our mission.

Our act of entrustment is meant to signify that

we carry out our profession in communion of life with Mary.

The consecration of the Father, who seals us “through the gift of his Spirit”,⁴³ brings it about also that Mary too “is present among us”⁴⁴ and guides us,⁴⁵ helping us “with her intercession”⁴⁶ “to love as Don Bosco did”,⁴⁷ to welcome and ponder the Word of God as she did so that it will bear fruit,⁴⁸ to grow “to the fullness of our offering”, to have “courage for the service of our brethren”, and to imitate “her faith, her concern for the needy, her fidelity at the hour of the cross and her joy at the wonders wrought by the Father”,⁴⁹ and so with her as Mother and Teacher we gradually become day by day true pastors and educators of the young⁵⁰ in accordance with what we have professed.

In the month of May 1988 (which occurs in both the Marian Year and the centenary year of Don Bosco) there will be a significant date that we want to solemnize with extraordinary spiritual intensity throughout the Congregation: it is that of Saturday, the 14th!

As has been already announced,⁵¹ that will be the “Day of the Salesian Profession”.

While we commemorate the religious profession of Don Bosco and the first 22 young confreres, which they made in 1862, we shall all renew our Profession.

Preparations are in hand in every province. The study and deeper analysis of the new text of the Rule of Life is the first obligation of every community in the urgent vocational task of responding to the challenges of the times. Ongoing formation is indispensable in every era, but it is especially so in this age of rapid changes if we want to ensure our vocational identity in the face of the questions

⁴³ C 3

⁴⁴ C 8

⁴⁵ Cf. C 20

⁴⁶ C 24

⁴⁷ C 84

⁴⁸ C 87

⁴⁹ C 92

⁵⁰ Cf. C 98

⁵¹ AGC 321, p. 42-44

which are continually emerging. The renewed text of the Rule of Life is the identity card of the Salesian of the new times, and for this it is very important to absorb its contents so that the intention to put it into practice may prove to be genuine and efficacious.

Next May 14 we want to relaunch our vocation and mission by renewing, all of us together, our religious Profession “according to the way of the Gospel set out in the salesian Constitutions”.⁵²

⁵² C 24

May Mary Help of Christians assist us and may St Mary Domenica Mazzarello, whose holy death we shall commemorate on that day, intercede for us so that we may be able to repeat with Don Bosco: I offer myself “in sacrifice to the Lord, ready to bear anything for his greater glory and the welfare of souls, particularly the souls of the young”.⁵³

⁵³ BM 7, 102

Special commitment of the Salesian Family

Among the members of the Central Committee for the Marian Year, appointed by the Holy Father on 11 February last, was Mother Marinella Castagno, Superior General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. This is a gesture which gives honour to our Family and imposes a duty on us.

The FMA represent in living and enduring form Don Bosco’s great love for Our Lady. It was his desire that the FMA should be a ‘living monument’ of his gratitude to the Help of Christians, and he asked them to be his ‘thank- you’ throughout all time.⁵⁴ The Sisters know that in our Family they have in a special way the task of deepening and developing the Marian dimension of all the members.

⁵⁴ FMA Const.4

We “collaborate with them in deepening our

⁵⁵ R 37

understanding of Don Bosco's spirituality and pedagogy, and particularly in keeping alive the Marian dimension of the salesian charism".⁵⁵

It will be a good thing, therefore, if during the Marian Year we join the FMA in promoting initiatives prompted by what the Pope offers us in his Encyclical, and brings to the young and to people in general the characteristics of Don Bosco's special Marian devotion.

With Mary, the Salesian Family will grow very much in mutual communion, in apostolic industry and in evangelizing impact.

Our Provincials will try to come to suitable arrangements with their FMA counterparts for studying together this matter with a view to common and opportune initiatives.

Article 74 of the Regulations speaks of our Marian devotion as an element to be taken into consideration also in the Provincial Directory, and adds: "The members, both individually and as a community, should feel the obligation of zealously spreading devotion to Mary Help of Christians". The same article recommends among other things that importance be given in our houses to the recitation of the Rosary: let us all keep it in mind!

The proclamation of this Marian Year to foster the Church's commitment for a new beginning, is therefore something particularly opportune and beneficial for the life of our Congregation and of the whole Salesian Family.

Conclusion

My dear confreres, I would like to bring these Marian reflections to a close by recalling the centenary of the Consecration of the temple of the

Sacred Heart, which took place in Rome on 15 May 1887. On Monday 16th, the day following the solemn consecration of the church, the by then old and ailing Don Bosco went down into the church to celebrate the Eucharist *at the altar of Mary Help of Christians*".

"No fewer than fifteen times during the holy sacrifice", note the Biographical Memoirs, "he stopped, overcome by emotion and shedding tears. Don Viglietti who was assisting him had to recall his attention periodically so that he could continue. (When he was asked afterwards) what had upset him so much, Don Bosco replied: I saw very vividly before my eyes once again the scene I first saw about the age of ten when I dreamed of the Congregation. I saw again my mother and my brothers asking me questions about that dream...

It was then that Our Lady had said to him: 'in due time you will understand everything', Since that time he had lived through sixty-two years of fatigue, sacrifice and struggle, and then a sudden light had revealed to him in the erection of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Rome the crowning of his mission, so mysteriously foreshadowed in the early years of his life".⁵⁶

⁵⁶ MB 18, 341

Not by chance was his biographer Don Giovanni Battista Lemoyne, who knew him intimately, in an effort to understand why our Father was so magnanimous in his initiatives, why he was so daring in his enterprises for the Church and came up against so many problems and grave financial difficulties, led to declare: "Between the Madonna and Don Bosco there must have been an agreement; and we can believe that she frequently appeared to him and showed him what he should do and how to do it".⁵⁷

⁵⁷ BM 10, 72

⁵⁸ Cf. BM 7, 280; BM 18, 338

We are convinced that not only the temple of the Sacred Heart in Rome and every stone in the Basilica at Valdocco proclaim a grace from Our Lady,⁵⁸ but all the Works of Don Bosco, and in particular our Congregation, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and the Association of Salesian Cooperators, owe their inspiration to Mary, the Teacher and Guide who led Don Bosco to found the Salesian Family in the Church.

Mgr Costamagna recalls a phrase of our Father which is a magnificent synthesis of his conviction in this respect: "Mary has done everything!"⁵⁹

⁵⁹ E. Valentini, "Scritti di vita e di spiritualità salesiana" LAS 1979, p. 144

In his mission as Founder our Father showed very clearly that he was not closed in on himself, nor confined to his own environment, time and culture (even though he was naturally incarnated in them), but he felt that he had permanent values to pass on to others, a patrimony and evangelical spirit to diffuse, pedagogical and pastoral criteria that were valid also for the future. He had in fact to convince himself that he was called personally to be a "Founder", to project himself beyond his own times.

A charism is a living experience and it is as something alive that it must be passed on; in other words it is something fluid and capable of further development, always needing a creative intelligence for new incarnations in other times and other cultures, a spiritual legacy from the leader of a new school, enriched with further uninterrupted personal charisms organically incorporated into his own, according to the always consistent plan and call of the Holy Spirit.

A pliant and submissive approach of this kind links his mission as a Founder with the risen Christ and Mary who inject into time the energy of the

resurrection, influencing events through the centuries and thus giving to history a texture of salvation and the innovative human and flexible physiognomy of Christ's Passover.

Such eschatological vitality is perceivable especially at the time of new ecclesial beginnings as is this tail end of the second millennium.

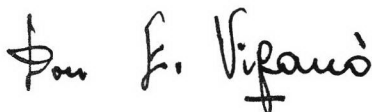
At Rome in May 1887 Don Bosco understood all that Mary had given him as his Teacher and Guide, and through that overall panorama of his seventy-two years of life he had a prophetic intuition (as he had had at other times) of the future of the Charisma he had been given. Like him, let us too put our trust in Mary for the fulfilment of the responsibilities laid upon us at this so significant moment in the history of the Church and the life of the Salesian Family.

At the end of this letter I would like to recall once again the 150th anniversary of the birth of St Mary Domenica Mazzarello, which was commemorated on 9 May last; the date not only recalls the designs of God in the preparation of the holy Co-foundress of the FMA, but reminds us in a living and permanent form of the Marian dimension in the whole Salesian Family, entrusted to the Help of Christians, Mother of the Church.

Let us ask this dear Saint to join Don Bosco, whom she always looked upon as her guiding star, in interceding for us that we may be given greater sensitivity in considering the Madonna as constantly present among us, and to help us to renew and live in a more ecclesial manner our apostolic consecration.

My hearty greetings to all of you in communion of commitment and prayer. May the Holy Spirit abound in our hearts and our communities

Affectionately in Don Bosco,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Don F. Viganò". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'D' and 'F'.

**Prayer for the Solemn Act
of Entrustment of the Salesian Congregation
to Mary Help of Christians**

(14 January 1984)

(Adoration and praise of the Trinity)

We Salesians, gathered together in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, adore and give thanks with the heart of Don Bosco to the Father of infinite Love who so loved the world that he gave his only Son and sent the Holy Spirit for the redemption and sanctification of mankind.

Glory to you, merciful Father, redeeming Son and sanctifying Spirit, the one and threefold saving Love!

We praise you, divine Trinity, for having given Mary a part in your saving work of redemption, raising her up to be the Mother of God and our Mother too.

(Invocation of Christ and the recalling of his memory)

And you, Lord Jesus, Son of Mary and first fruit of the new creation, give us your Spirit so that he may enkindle in our hearts a share of your love. We beg you to renew for us your wondrous testament uttered on the cross, when in title and endowment you made the Apostle John the son of your own Mother Mary.

Repeat also for each of us those words "Woman, behold your son", so that we may always live with Mary in our home!

May she remain with us as our mother; may she take us by the hand and be our inspiration as we bring the gospel message to the poor and the little ones. May she help us to be living stones in the spiritual house of the Church and order our lives and activities in union with the Pope and the bishops. May she help us to be attentive to God's word, zealous in the apostolate, and true prophets of hope in the coming third millennium of our christian faith. May she teach us creativity in our pastoral concern, and help us achieve that persuasive kindness and mortification that will make us skilled promoters of dialogue and friendship, especially among the young who are most in need.

(Confidence in Mary and Entrustment to her)

O Help of Christians and Mother of the Church, *we Salesians of Don Bosco ENTRUST OURSELVES* today to your kindly intercession on our behalf as individuals and as communities. We place in your care the priceless riches of our Constitutions, our pledge to be faithful and united in our Congregation, the sanctification of all our members, the work by which we worship in intention and in act, the increase of vocations, the heavy responsibility of formation, the courageous and generous labours of our missionaries, the animation of the Salesian Family, and especially our assiduous ministry of predilection for the young.

With joy we proclaim you "Teacher and Guide of our Congregation".

Accept, we beg you, this filial Act of Entrustment and help us to participate ever more zealously in the final wish of your Son on Calvary: through him, with him and in him we resolve to live and labour untiringly to establish the Kingdom of our Father in the hearts of all men.

Mary Help of Christians, pray for us. Amen.

2. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

2.1 THE SALESIAN PARISH

Fr Juan E. VECCHI

The Councillor for Youth Pastoral Work

A setting for our mission

The parish comes second only to the school as the pastoral setting in which the Congregation expends most energy. It is also the place where its commitment to the poorer classes (cf. C 29) is expressed most strongly by providing them with an overall pastoral service through our continuous presence.

Consequently we no longer speak of the parish as an exceptional or secondary way of carrying out the salesian mission. The SGC and GC21 after deep study and reflection “ruled out the exceptional nature of the parish apostolate” (cf. SGC, 402; GC21, 136), and recognized this ministry “as a true salesian apostolate in the measure in which we are faithful to our mission and actualize our Founder’s charism” (SGC, 400; GC21, 137).

Both these General Chapters in fact find in parish ministry great possibilities and advantages for carrying out our work among youth, as for instance being able to meet them in their natural environment and in the midst of their real problems in life, being able to follow them through direct contact with their families throughout the whole cycle of their education, being able to help them to become inserted into experience of the Church, living their personal, youthful, family and christian events within the embrace of the parish community (cf. SGC, 401).

The capitular reflections became expressed in article 42 of the Constitutions in which the parishes are included without any special restrictions among “the works ... (through which) we contribute to the spreading of the Gospel and to the advancement of the people”.

It would be pointless therefore to start up once again a discussion on a question which is already settled, or to attribute to our presence in parishes phenomena whose causes are far more complex.

The statement that our service in parishes is a quite normal characteristic leads to two consequences. The first is that a parish administered by the salesians must manifest the Congregation's charisma no less than other works. This is expressed in art.42: "We collaborate in the pastoral programme of the particular Church out of the riches of our specific vocation". The second consequence is that the province has a responsibility for animation and government not only in respect of the religious life of the individuals and community looking after parishes, but also as regards the pastoral and educational activity carried out in the parishes concerned. And this precisely because of the main purpose of the province: to promote the life and mission of the Congregation and to offer a specific service to the particular Church (cf. C 157).

To ensure the realization of these two primary consequences, the articles of the Regulations were drawn up which lay down the basic features of every salesian parish.

It is true that the parish reality does not everywhere exhibit the same characteristics. Some parishes are in missionary areas where the Church is growing and becoming stronger after being "planted" around missionary stations. Others instead are situated in regions where there is widespread adherence to the Church's social teaching and where a strong popular religious feeling calls for evangelization at greater depth. Still others are in places where the faith seems to be in need of reformulation because of the rapid progress of secularization. And finally not a few parishes are in social zones where the Church is not allowed structures, settings, or any other ways of evangelization.

We could spend a lot of time talking about the differences arising from the variety of geographical, social and economic factors. Some of our parishes in fact are in rural areas; others are on the outskirts of the big cities, with their problems of bringing parishioners together, human advancement, and the formation of

stable roots. And there are some too in contexts which enjoy an adequate social and economic structure, even though on a modest scale.

Over and above the differences and relative diversity of pastoral work which they imply, there is a common physiognomy which the documents of recent General Chapters and subsequent aids issued by the Department have grouped around certain nuclei:

- The salesian parish is constructed as a unity of persons, animated by Salesians in accordance with a specific charisma.
- The salesian parish makes a preferential option for the young, and especially the poorer ones among them.
- The salesian parish carries out its pastoral work in a manner which combines evangelization with the education and advancement of the working classes.
- The salesian parish gives rise to relationships, plans and interventions following from a pastoral style based on the preventive system.

There is no need to go into details about each of these nuclei, which are already sufficiently dealt with from a practical point of view in the documents already mentioned. But it will be of interest to add some remarks about three inter-related concerns which are strictly connected with the realization of the salesian mission in parishes: the geographical situation of the parish, the presence in it of a salesian community, and the putting into practice of the youth option.

The location of the parishes

The General Regulations specify certain conditions for the acceptance of parishes. It is clear that such acceptance should not be the result of insistent requests, nor to meet situations which have been created independently of our own will. They should rather be in line with a provincial plan, designed to express in the best possible way the riches of the salesian charism, and which therefore follows a process of pastoral discernment. (cf. C 44).

The first condition posed by the Regulations is that the location of the parish be such that it makes salesian work possible because the area offers us "adequate scope for service to the young and the poor" (R 25). This is an indication to be kept in mind for the taking on of new parochial obligations, but one that must be applied also to those that have been accepted in the past, in accordance with a practical guideline given by the GC21: "Let each province consider the possibility of giving back to the Diocese any parish which, on account of changed conditions, no longer offers opportunity for a typical salesian apostolate ... because it does not allow for priority to youth or because it is not located in a populous area. No new parishes are to be accepted unless they meet the specified requirements" (GC21, 142).

The problem of location conditions everything else. The determining factor for us, as it was for Don Bosco in his own time, is that we go to poor youngsters, to workers and to immigrants. And so as the analysis became deeper, emphasis was laid on preference for poor and populous areas in the big cities (cf. GC21, 141), "big working-class districts" (cf. SGC, 407.411), the "ordinary people" (cf. GC21, 141).

The presence of a community

A second condition for accepting or keeping parishes is the possibility of a community presence. The religious community is responsible for the animation of the province (R 26). "Where the situation allows it, the house serving the parish should itself be canonically erected with the parish priest as its rector" (R 29).

Community for us is not just a matter of religious discipline but a pastoral factor. Not only do we live together but we feel the need of working together (cf. C 49). When it comes to the provision of pastoral services it does not help to reduce the community to a minimum, and still less to leave confreres in isolated situations. Nor does it do any good to take on more parishes than the province can really manage, with the result that their administration is no more

than precarious at the best. As well as doing nothing to solve the pastoral problems of the Church, this is harmful to the quality of our own apostolic work. The religious life is always generous in meeting the Church's urgent needs, but such response cannot be considered satisfactory if it means abandoning something which is more specific to it because intimately linked with its experience in the Spirit. For this reason, even in situations of dire emergency (as frequently occur in missionary areas), the General Regulations require the presence of at least three confreres (R 20).

The presence of a community has a decisive influence on the possibility of developing a pastoral plan which will display all the vitality of the salesian charism.

Over the past thirty years a great deal of thought has been given to adapting the service and witness of the parish to the social and cultural realities it has to face. It concentrates the purposes and expectations of the Church in its commitment to the re-presentation of the Gospel in a human community marked by phenomena which touch deeply on the sense of life and religious experience. Without the support of the "local" christian community, other occasional and indirect interventions of an evangelizing nature will become efficacious only with great difficulty.

Study of the parishes therefore has been continually the order of the day as regards new needs in evangelization. The old institutional image of the parish has been abandoned in favour of emphasis on its community character and the consequent relationships between the individuals involved, and on its organization. From the concept of the parish as a religious service station for a christian population, we have passed to the idea of the "missionary" parish, a centre for the irradiation of a given area by the Gospel, concerned about bringing back the lapsed, interested in religious dialogue at various levels, solid with the human community and present in its social life. From a "clerical" structure we have moved to responsibility of the christian people, with the consequent importance now given to charismata, to the different ministries, groups and associations, to the participation of the laity

in the economical administration of the parish and in the realization of its mission. From the 'monolithic' parish we have passed to an articulated concept of a 'communion of community' spread over a whole area, particularly where the dimensions of the parish or social factors suggest that several different centres be established as meeting places for religious and other functions.

All this places new obligations on the parish clergy; it calls for competences of a new kind and opens up possibilities for new kinds of work which will certainly prove fruitful but will at the same time demand a continual effort at evaluation with a consequent revision of the kind of interventions used.

Against the background of this general responsibility in which the charism is already expressed (think, for instance, of the work of evangelization and catechesis, of education and human advancement, of the liturgy, of the attention to be given to those most in need, etc.), the salesians must infuse life and promote those particular initiatives which will bring about the growth of the Salesian Family and the particular contribution it makes to the spirituality of the local Church. It is in this that the presence of a community which lives Don Bosco's spirit becomes indispensable, more as a point of reference and irradiation than for the quantity of work it manages to get through.

The youth option

"A parish entrusted to the Congregation should be distinguished by its interest in the young, especially those who are poorer" (R 26). This must not be thought of as implying primarily a concentration of pastoral initiatives on the young to the neglect of other categories of persons; but is rather a standpoint from which the whole parish community becomes a place for the human and christian growth of the new generations, sustained by the ability and service of those who are older, and explicitly encouraged by the pastors. No one is asking that the parish be made a "youth institute". The parish embraces without discrimination or

preference all the individuals and groups who together form the christian people and to whom the word of God must be brought in their particular situation of life: children and adults, the elderly and the sick. In the overall context of this community of persons who mutually depend on each other in their human and christian growth, the salesian parish makes its preferential choice for the young, especially the poorer ones among them.

It realizes this option in many different ways, but expresses it in a particular way in a setting which is characteristic and all-embracing: the oratory or youth centre. Among the multiple manifestations, linked with attitudes rather than programmes, we may note the friendliness and trust with which the pastors are able to welcome every youngster so that he feels at home in the parish. We may also include a continually updated knowledge of the youth condition and the competence cultivated by the parish animators in the relevant pastoral problems so as to make a specialized contribution to the particular Church. There is also the support given to the people within the parish who are in contact with the younger element and whose presence and competence should be valued and esteemed, as too should be the settings and structures which bring children and young adults together.

To these may be added also the missionary task of seeking out young people, especially those in most need, in their own settings and wherever they can be found; the active participation of youth in liturgical celebrations, their involvement in parish organizations, the promotion of group activities of different kinds, the sensitization of the whole parish community as regards educational problems, the preparation of adults who can face up to these problems in family, educational and public settings.

If a parish has really made the youth option and continually renews it, it will automatically find a thousand and one ways of giving expression to it.

But there is yet another and very precise indication to which serious consideration must be given when we take on a parish: the salesian parish "should consider the oratory and youth centre an integral part of its pastoral project" (R 26). For this reason the SGC

said that the director of the oratory or youth centre should be the assistant priest in charge of the youth sector of the parish (cf. SGC, 432). This idea is still valid as a suggestion. It brings with it a double advantage: on the one hand it links the parish and oratory in a single plan of action; and on the other it makes of the oratory or youth centre a point from which youth initiatives can radiate into the whole of the parish territory, rather than just a setting for activities on the premises.

This also emphasizes its missionary character and its openness to a much wider area embracing all those youngsters who do not know what parish they belong to.

Perhaps the first goal to be achieved, to prevent the parish being looked upon as a mere appendix to another work considered as more “characteristically salesian”, is precisely that of the realization of an oratory or youth centre with suitable premises, salesian and lay personnel, and meaningful programmes.

Conclusion: The quantity and quality of our commitment in parishes

What has been said above is an invitation to give particular attention to the *salesian* quality of our parochial commitments; and also to consider the question of the number of parishes that each province is able to take on and maintain.

On the one hand every province is called upon to give clear expression, at least in the absence of adverse circumstances, to the distinctive pastoral work of the Congregation, characterized by its preference for youth and education. “It must be remembered that there are priorities to be observed with respect to the different works undertaken, and so ... the first priority in every province must be given to the direct apostolate for the young” (SGC, 402). A good plan for redimensioning and development will aim at putting the greater part of the province’s resources at the service of the needs of youth, which appear nowadays under a wide variety of forms and call for new kinds of intervention.

On the other hand it is not only in the province as a whole but

in each of our works individually that the richness of the salesian mission must be made manifest. And this would suggest that in each category we should take on only those commitments which we can fulfil efficaciously.

In recent years efforts at qualification and updating in pastoral work have not been wanting. Indications of this are provided by the meetings of parish clergy which are held at regular intervals in some regions; the preparation of personnel, even when it has to be done rapidly; the fact that provinces list parishes among settings to be animated in their own right for their specific role; and the provincial projects aimed at giving a salesian slant to the work of the confreres.

It remains to translate into daily practice, with a conviction shared by all concerned, what we have just said about the salesian character of parish work.

2.2 THE «PROVINCIAL'S MANUAL», AN AID FOR THE PROVINCIAL IN THE SERVICE OF HIS MINISTRY.

Fr Paolo NATALI
The Councillor for Formation

Three aids: a «book of government».

The GC21, after studying the question of government and animation in the Congregation, decided that the Rector Major with his Council should undertake the compilation of a «book of salesian government» to provide guidance for the ministry of the rector and the provincial, and for the various roles and organisms which function in the service of the local and provincial communities. (Cf. GC21 61 d).

A few months ago the new edition of the «Rector's Manual» was published (cf. AGC 320, p. 41-46), and is now being followed by two other aids for the service of the provincial's ministry: «The Salesian Provincial, a ministry for the animation and governing of the provincial community», and «Juridical elements and administrative praxis in the government of the province».

The latter, which has been prepared by the General Secretariate, is published separately for the use of provincial secretaries, but for convenience of consultation it is also included as an appendix to the «Provincial's Manual».

The three publications have the same ultimate purpose and are directly linked with one another by a relationship of continuity and complementarity, even though they are addressed to different groups and have different perspectives.

There is an evident connection between the Manuals of the Rector and the Provincial, both of which are concerned with the salesian ministry of animation and government; the provincial has

in addition the duty of seeing that the rector's ministry functions properly, and the rector that of collaborating with the intentions and decisions of the provincial. They cover the same topics, but those dealing with the general view of the ministry of authority are presented at greater length in the «Rector's Manual», where the provincial can find practical references and suggestions more closely related to local situations.

The «Juridical elements» take up from a canonical point of view the many themes already treated from a more explicitly pastoral and spiritual standpoint in the «Provincial's Manual».

Without repeating what is already found in the Presentation and Introduction to the book itself, it may be useful to add some further indications and remarks which will help in the reception and understanding of the «Provincial's Manual».

2. Origin and formulation.

The decision of the GC21 already referred to («as soon as possible the Rector Major and his Council should see to the preparation of a Manual for Provincials and Rectors»: GC21 61d) had its root in the renewal process through which the Congregation has lived at the incentive of Vatican II, and which has had a deep effect on the ministry of authority in its different expressions. Ecclesial guidelines, charismatic criteria, together with urgent practical needs and requirements, have led to a process of rethinking and replanning with a spirit of discernment. This is evident from the documents of the SGC and the text of the new Constitutions, especially in their Fourth Part. It can be said that the basis on which the Manual has been drawn up is found in the Council documents and in the texts that have followed from them: the Code of Canon Law, the Constitutions and Regulations, and the documents of our general chapters.

Provincials and provinces too, like all other roles and structures, have a certain stability combined with a degree of flexibility. It is a laborious but necessary task to keep them

continually relevant to the shifting realities they have continually to serve.

A first draft of the Manual was circulated among the provincials present at the GC22 with a request for suggestions which would make the book more useful and which could be incorporated in a second draft. It should be noted that previously nothing of this kind had existed in salesian circles, even though various reflections, guidelines, norms and regulations had appeared from time to time.

The original draft was rewritten in the light of the definitive text of the Constitutions, the Regulations and the Code of Canon Law, and taking into account the observations and suggestions made on the basis of their competence and experience by those who had examined it. Finally it was revised to meet indications given by members of the General Council.

The starting point for the compilation of the «Juridical elements» was the so-called «Manual of the Provincial Secretary», of which a second edition was published in 1972. The latter has nevertheless been considerably augmented and almost totally renewed in the light of the universal law and the particular law of the Society.

3. Aims and content

Faithful to what was laid down by the GC21, the Manual aims at giving clarity and direction to the provincial's ministry by providing a synthesis between spiritual animation and religious authority while at the same time taking account of the diversity between different situations.

In this way it hopes to meet the need for greater lucidity and depth arising from concrete experiences, and the desire for greater motivation and better information so that the ministry can be fulfilled with greater salesian competence and interior conviction.

In particular, the aid:

— sets out the new idea of the salesian provincial community

and the renewed figure of the provincial; it indicates the characteristic expressions of his service, and deals briefly with the spirit and manner, virtues and means needed for its adequate fulfilment;

- presents in a unified manner the areas of animation and government and outlines the level, points and forms of intervention corresponding to the provincial's specific function;

- aims at fostering collaboration and the sharing of responsibility between confreres; and especially between those who have duties of animation and government at provincial level;

- provides an authoritative reference point, a stimulus and a challenge for every provincial who wants to live his ministry in an enlightened way as a service to the mission and as a path to holiness.

The sequence of thought in the Manual begins from Don Bosco, the founder and model, and then goes on to the history and experience of the Congregation which is the permanent heritage from which it draws its inspiration (First Part). Then on the basis of this charismatic patrimony and the subsequent study made by the Church and the Congregation, both the salesian provincial community and the ministry which governs and animates it are defined and characterized (Second Part). Once this identity has been established, the text goes on to present the different areas of animation and government; this forms the Third Part, which is also the longest one. The arrangement of the constitutional text is the connecting thread which guides the apparently analytical development of a reality which is in fact unified, organic and characteristic. The Appendix provides a supplement which is both useful and practical, as well as being consistent with the Manual's contents which are accurately synthesized in the Analytical Index.

The contents and basic arrangement will be already familiar to those acquainted with the more widely known of our authoritative texts and documents: the Acts of the General Chapters and the General Council, the Commentary on the Constitutions, and the Formation Handbook (FSDB). The Manual both draws on them and refers back to them; to some extent it takes up again some

points already contained in them, but from the specific standpoint of the provincial's ministry, so that the reader may be able to make an immediate reference without the necessity of seeking elsewhere.

4. Some aspects that call for emphasis.

It is not difficult to detect in the text certain lines of thought running through the various parts, which constitute keys to the understanding of a service which is at one and the same time both complex but unified. Without going into them in detail we may indicate two which were already pointed out in the presentation of the «Rector's Manual» and which are characteristic of the originality of the salesian style of government: authority as an expression of fatherliness and the style of animation. (Cf. ASC 306, p. 53-55).

Against the background of this fatherliness and animation, understood in the light of the experience of Don Bosco the father and founder, and lived in a ministry which has much in common with the pastoral ministry of the Bishops, it is useful to keep in mind in reading the text and still more in understanding the role of the provincial, four different dimensions: charismatic, apostolic, community related, unifying and inserting, and the level involved.

4.1 The charismatic dimension.

The provincial is at the service of the charisma in its overall sense. When reference is made to the province, the thought that comes to mind is that of the salesian vocation historically situated and incarnate in all its fundamental completeness of life and mission in a specific territory. The provincial's ministry is therefore defined as a service for the full and concrete realization of the salesian charism in a given historical and ecclesial context. It is a pastoral and charismatic fatherhood which is responsible with regard to the communities and individual members in their works and projects for a distinctive gift considered in its totality.

The successive chapters of the Manual progressively depict this pluriform but unitary prospect, which finds its truest illustration in Don Bosco, entirely unified as regards his gift and purpose of «da mihi animas», even though expressed in initiatives and practical activities that became ever more complex and varied.

4.2 The apostolic dimension.

The provincial is the animator responsible for a mission which has to be realized in practice. The mission gives its concrete tone to the salesian vocation and hence also to the provincial's ministry, which is a pastoral one. The apostolic dimension, the thrust and perspective of the «da mihi animas», are always present and activate the various aspects and corresponding areas. At provincial level the mission is expressed in practice in an apostolic project of salesian identification.

In other words it must be adequate to the prevailing situation and in harmony with the ecclesial reality; it must be constantly renewed so as to open the local communities to an overall panorama and lead them to act in an organic manner in view of the educative and pastoral objectives proper to the salesian mission.

4.3 The community dimension.

The provincial is the animator of a community, which is the subject of the charism and responsible for the project. The very title of the Manual speaks of the provincial community, and the titles of the individual chapters insistently emphasize its different aspects. The provincial's primary and permanent objective is seen to be government and animation with a view to the formation and growth of a community which can «accomplish its apostolic plan in unity and fidelity» (C 44). Communion of spirit, style of relationships, convergence towards «working together», organizational ability and openness to collaboration, together define a provincial community whose «pastoral objectives are achieved through unity and joint brotherly responsibility» (C 44).

4.4 The dimension of unity and insertion.

The provincial is the animator of a community which has a mediating role to play with regard to communion. This mediating function belongs to the province by definition, because it unites the various local communities into a single bigger community and is itself a living part of the world salesian community. At the same time it fosters openness to ecclesial reality, communion with the Salesian Family and insertion into its historical and cultural context. The first General Chapters, which reflected the thought and concern of Don Bosco, emphasized the need for unity between the provincial and the Rector Major and between province and Congregation, and referred to the danger of «provincialization». The provincial has a corresponding duty to be an efficacious sign of communion and the promoter of a plan of life and mission adapted to the local context.

4.5 The dimension of the level involved.

Both the Rector's Manual and the Provincial's Manual refer to the salesian ministry of animation and government, and cover the same areas; but they propose different levels of intervention. In the case of the rector personal and frequent contact is possible, with direct intervention by prompt decisions and subsequent follow-up, the pedagogy of continued presence. The task of the provincial on the other hand is rather the establishing of criteria, the creation of a spirit and style, the formation of an environment, the functioning of roles and structures, attention to the projects of the local communities, an overall view of the contexts and general processes, openness to wider relationships and horizons, future prospects. All this presupposes in the provincial and provincial animators an awareness of their own specific function and the hierarchical arrangement of their roles according to an accepted order of priority.

5. Conclusion.

Experience teaches us that the good running of the provinces depends to no small extent on the spiritual vitality and competent service of those who are called to animate and direct them. The Manual is meant to be a handbook for those living this ministry in availability to the Spirit, in communion with the Superiors and in a relationship of shared responsibility with the confreres. If it is accepted and studied with trust and availability by those desirous of committing themselves ever more authentically and efficaciously because ever more deeply motivated, it will help them to live their mission with the ardour and fertility of the «*da mihi animas*». And that in turn will contribute to the making of a more salesian 1988.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the rector Major

After his return from Brazil at the end of the 'Team Visit' to the six Brazilian Provinces (cf. Chronicle of the R.M. in AGC 321), the Rector Major remained in Rome until 30 April, when once again he left by air for Central America, travelling by way of London (where he had the pleasure of spending a few hours with the provincial and a group of confreres and members of the Salesian Family at Chertsey).

At the rapid rate of one day per country, he was able to visit the Salesians of Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Santo Domingo, Haiti and Puerto Rico. At each stop he met various groups of confreres, the FMA, Apostolic Nuncios, Bishops etc. Of special importance was his meeting with our Cardinal Miguel Obando Bravo at Managua.

His journey next took him to Caracas, where the first three days were spent in meetings with the Salesians of the Venezuela province, followed by a week dedicated to the 'Team Visit' to the provinces of the Pacific-Caribbean Region, which took place at Los Teques. Before his return to Rome he was able to fit in a rapid visit to Puerto Ayacucho on 19 May.

After his return to Italy, he spent 23 May at Valsalice for the inauguration of the restored original tomb of Don Bosco; on 24 May he presided at the concelebration for the centenary celebration of the Sacred Heart Basilica in Rome (cf. 5.1 in this edition of the Acts). Immediately afterwards he presided over the 'Team Visit' to the provinces of Italy and the Middle East, which took place in Rome from 25 to 30 May. On 30 May in addition he took part in a meeting at Villa Cavalletti (Rome) with the Superiors General invited to the coming Bishops' Synod.

From 2 June he presided over the meetings of the plenary session of the General Council. In the period 5-8 June he made a journey to the province of Barcelona in Spain, where he had been invited to Ciudadela on the island of Minorca; there he inaugurated the Marian Year in a place where there has existed a strong devotion to Mary Help of Christians for many centuries. As he passed through Barcelona the Rector Major profited by the possibility of meeting Salesians and members of the Salesian Family.

4.2 Activities of the Councillors

The Councillor for Formation

In addition to his usual commitments in the local area around Rome (with the UPS and formation communities), Fr Paolo Natali took part with the Rector Major and the other Councillors concerned in the various 'Team Visits': in February for the Flemish and German-speaking provinces of Europe; in March at Asuncion for the provinces of the Plata area; in April at Brasilia for the provinces of Brazil, in May at Caracas for those of the Pacific-Caribbean Region, and finally at Rome for those of the Region of Italy and the Middle East.

Other engagements in the intervals between the above 'Team Visits' were:

- meetings with the provincials concerned, and with the members of the «curatorium», formation personnel, teachers and students of theology of the studentate of Bangalore, to consider a desirable restructuring of the Centre which has become too complex and overcrowded. On his way back he spent the feast of Don Bosco, 31 January, with the novices and postnovices of the Province of Bombay, and inaugurated the premises of the new library there;

- a few days of study and discussion in the early part of March, in

the company of the Councillor for the Missions, at Lubumbashi, with the delegates of the African communities, to consider possible formation structures for young French-speaking African salesians; and later at Kansebula with formation personnel and teachers involved in the various phases of formation, to give particular consideration, among other problems, to the organization of the new studentate of theology as a formation community and study centre;

- after the 'Team Visit' at Brasilia, he had meetings in Cordoba (Argentina) concerning the different stages of formation, and in particular a meeting with the provincial council;

- the time that remained after these commitments had been fulfilled was dedicated to the final corrections of the «Provincial's Manual», now going through the press.

He also kept in touch with the work of the two commissions preparing respectively the «Manual of Prayer for the Salesian Community» and the salesian «Proprium».

Within the Department, in addition to ministerial commitments of a certain importance (e.g. retreats in Great Britain and Hong Kong), collaboration has been provided in various courses of ongoing formation; the 'Provincial's Manual' has

been prepared for the press; a suggested «Form for admission to the initial stages of formation» has been compiled and will be sent in the near future to the provinces and formation communities; and progress has been made in work on «Aid 2 - Elements for the study of Don Bosco and his work».

The Councillor for Youth Pastoral Work

During February Fr Juan Vecchi accompanied the Rector Major in the 'Team Visits' to the Flemish and German-speaking provinces, which took place respectively at Leusden and Vienna.

Subsequently he had a meeting at Madrid (El Plantio) on themes of vocational guidance with the eight provinces of Spain and Portugal, represented by the provincials, provincial delegates for youth pastoral work, provincial vocational animators and rectors of aspirantates of all the provinces. The meeting was a large one and the members seriously committed. The three phases of an overall pastoral work for vocations were emphasized: vocational guidance as part of normal youth pastoral work, the following up of youngsters who show signs of being called to a special commitment, and the welcoming community for candidates to the salesian life, together with problems arising

from the present situation. The texts of the conferences and discussions were duplicated for all the confreres and some topics were decided on for further study.

Towards the end of March Fr Vecchi left for Latin America to take part in the 'Team Visits' at Asuncion, Brasilia and Caracas. In the intervals between these he was able to hold with the seven provinces of Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay at Ramos Mejia a meeting on pastoral work for vocations along the lines already described above.

A further meeting was held with those responsible and the animators of the 14 provinces of the same area (8 SDB and 6 FMA) gathered at Cordoba (La Falda) to study practical aspects of the educative community, the ways of participation of the members and the formation of our lay collaborators. With a total of about one hundred participants, it was possible in the course of a week to reflect on eight different topics which ranged from the theological foundations of pastoral work to organizational aspects of the educative community with a view to their application in the various works in the course of the present year.

On the same theme Fr Vecchi was able to speak to lay people engaged in directive roles at Cordoba and Rosario.

He also spent nine days in the

two Mexican provinces at various meetings, especially on the matter of the pastoral animation of the province and the drawing up of the educative project. On 5 May he presided at the concelebration for the Salesian Family at the sanctuary of Guadalupe.

In the last week of May he took part with the Rector Major in the 'Team Visit' to the provinces of Italy and the Middle East, meeting in Rome.

In the meantime other work has been going on in the Department. The 4th collection of material on «The educative community in formation» has been distributed for the formation of lay people working with us. The «Dossier PG2» has also been completed; it presents guidelines and experiences on pastoral animation and initiatives in the sector of youth emargination. Also at the press are the Acts of the three seminars on the same topic, edited by Fr Giancarlo Milanesi, containing eight reports in three languages (Italian, English and Spanish) and the forms showing the experiences studied, classified according to different types, with relative comments for each kind.

Another work successfully concluded, in collaboration with the Centre for Youth Pastoral Work of the FMA, has been the document «The salesian animator of youth groups». This will be distributed at

the beginning of September.

Jointly with the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the UPS and the Formation Department, preparations have been finalized for the seminar on «Salesian pastoral practice and educational sciences» which will take place at the Generalate, Rome, from 21-26 September next.

Finally, and once again in collaboration with the Formation Department, the course was organized for provincial animators of vocational pastoral work and those in charge of prenovitiates.

The Councillor for the Salesian Family and Social Communication

In the period from February to May 1987 Fr Sergio Cuevas was involved in the first place in the animation of the ongoing formation course for Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians which took place between 5 February and 14 April first at Rome and then at Turin for its final stages. Responsibility for the course was shared with the Formation Department, and collaboration was given by the SEI in respect of the final part.

In Rome Fr Cuevas took part in many organizational meetings of the Central Executive Secretariate of the Cooperators (at world level), and of the Confederal Council of the Past Pupils; the latter is deeply involved in promoting the revision of

the Confederal Statutes of the organization and in the preparation of the coming World Congress of the Past Pupils, which will be held jointly with the Past Pupils of the FMA. The same Confederation will also organize an international art exhibition at Rome in the coming months.

Fr Cuevas was also present with the Rector Major and other members of the Council at the various 'Team Visits': at Vienna, 20-22 February; Asuncion (Paraguay), 29 March - 4 April; Brasilia, 5-11 April; Caracas (Venezuela), 12-18 May; Rome, 25-29 May.

In a series of visits and meetings with different groups of the Salesian Family, the Councillor kept himself up to date with regard to the reality of various situations and the programmes and initiatives now obtaining in connection with the formation of their members and their apostolic activities in their own regions where they are working for the good of the Church. For this purpose he was in Chile in the period 19-23 March for the commemoration of the centenary of the arrival of the Salesians in the country; this took place at Concepcion, the first foundation, with representatives of the whole Salesian Family taking part. Fr Cuevas then went on to Santiago for the celebrations to mark Cardinal Raul Silva Henríquez' silver jubilee as a Cardinal; he

also had various meetings for the animation of the Cooperators, the Past Pupils, Don Bosco Volunteers and young people in formation.

Later he met with the Provincial Council of the Cooperators at Buenos Aires.

On his way to Latin America for the 'Team Visits' he spent the period 5-10 May at New Rochelle (USA) with the confreres working in the Don Bosco Multimedia Centre and with the delegates for the Cooperators, Past Pupils and Don Bosco Volunteers. At New York and Miami he also took the opportunity to make contact with Catholic centres of social communication for the area.

In Venezuela too he met with the lay leaders of the Cooperators, Past Pupils and the 'Dame salesiane' of Caracas.

Before returning to Europe, Fr Cuevas presided over a meeting of Canadian Cooperators held at Sherbrooke and had a meeting also with the salesian delegates responsible for their animation. A similar meeting was held with the salesians working in the field of social communication.

Finally after the 'Team Visit' in Rome he went to Malta to take part in the meeting of the groups of the Salesian Family at Sliema and at Gozo. In this way he was able to make contact with many Past Pupils, Cooperators and friends of Don

Bosco who bring a significant influence to bear on the ecclesial, social and cultural commitments in the life of this Mediterranean country.

At the beginning of June he returned to Rome for the summer plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Missions

Among the more important engagements of Fr Luc Van Looy in the period February - May were the Team Visits at: Leusden (Holland) 16-19 February, Vienna (Austria) 19-22 February, Asuncion (Paraguay) 31 March - 4 April, Brasilia (Brazil) 5-7 April and Caracas (Venezuela) 12-18 May.

His other activities included the following:

From 2 - 7 March he was in Africa for the first meeting of the provincial delegates of the various countries with Fr Paolo Natali, to study the question of pastoral work for vocations and programmes for formation in Africa. The delegates went on to consider forms of coordination and planning of Project Africa.

From March 9 to 15 he visited the missionaries in Nigeria to examine the possibility of a catechetical presence in the diocese of Onitscha, and then passed a further two days in the new mission of Lungu in Sierra Leone, where we already adminis-

ter a fine school and have plans for a youth centre and technical workshops. This was followed by a week's visit to a mission in Guinea (Conakry), where with the Archbishop, a delegation from the province of Mexico-Guadalajara and the first two missionaries already at work, concrete plans were made for future salesian work.

In April, after the Team Visit at Brasilia, Fr Van Looy went to Ecuador to carry out the extraordinary visitation of the works in the Mendez Vicariate. He was also able to spend a day at Lima (Peru) and visit the prenovitiate and postnovitiate at Magdalena del Mar. The visitation of the Shuar Missions in Mendez (Ecuador) lasted from 8 to 27 April.

Returning to Europe he held the annual meeting of those in charge of the Mission Offices of Europe and North America at Lyons (France). During an intensive few days of work, consideration was given to better ways of collecting help for the Missions. An afternoon was given over to a pilgrimage to Ars. While still in Europe, Fr Van Looy took part on 3 May in the Youth Festival at La Spezia in the Ligurian province.

After the Team Visit at Caracas (12-18 May) he spent a further day at Lima and Chosica in the aspirantate and novitiate, and then went on to La Paz accompanied by the Bolivian Provincial, Fr Carlo Longo,

for the study-week on pastoral work in the Andes. Before it began he was able to make a rapid visit to the houses of La Paz, El Alto, Escoma and Kami. The study-week itself took place at Cochabamba with the presence of 34 Salesians and Sisters of various congregations from Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Topics considered included aspects of culture, evangelization and salesian approach in the territory of the High Andes. This area is to some extent a new missionary frontier for the Congregation and one that merits our attention and commitment, as was evident from the dedication and enthusiasm shown by those at the meeting. The latter ended on 30 May, after which Fr Van Looy returned immediately to Rome.

The Economist General

Fr Omero Paron held a meeting on 26 January at Leghorn with the economists and parish priests of the Ligurian Province, to consider questions regarding civilly recognized ecclesiastical bodies and the support of the clergy after the revision of the norms in the Concordat between Italy and the Holy See. They also dealt with some points concerning the administration of temporal goods in the Congregation.

On 10 February he was at the Sacred Heart in Rome for a meeting

with the provincial economists of the Italian Provincial Conference, for discussions on norms and guidelines for the economic sector of the Italian provinces, with special reference to parochial administration.

On 12 February he presided at the Generalate over a meeting of the Administrative Superior Council of the UPS, called to approve the annual balance sheet and the extraordinary work to be planned in connection with the premises of «Opera PAS».

At Loreto on 18 March he repeated for the economists of the Adriatic Province the meeting held earlier which dealt with revised norms concerning corporate bodies and ecclesiastical goods in Italy after the revision of the Concordat.

27 March saw Fr Paron once again at Sacro Cuore, Rome, with the provincial economists of Italy, this time to comment on the new dispositions concerning ecclesiastical bodies, and in particular the Regulations putting into effect the law 222/85 concerning corporate bodies and ecclesiastical goods in Italy.

In the period 2-9 April he was able to visit some of the houses and communities in Portugal on the occasion of the meeting of the economists at Lisbon (3-4 April).

At Udine on 25 April he was present at the Provincial Community Day of the East Venice Province

(San Marco), celebrating the appointment of our new bishop, Mgr Tito Solari.

On 28 April at Turin he took part in the ordinary shareholders meeting of the SEI to receive the Report of the Council of Administration and for the approval of the balance-sheet for the financial year ending 31 December 1986. In the Council of Administration he was reconfirmed as Vice-President of the SEI.

From 5 to 28 May Fr Paron was in the Far East for the meeting with the provincial ecomomers of the Asian Region (Tokyo, 11-13 May) and to visit houses and communities in Thailand, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Macau and the Philippines.

The Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region of Latin America

At the end of the plenary session of the General Council in February, Fr Velasco left for Latin America and after a brief stop at the Provincial House of Bogotá arrived in Ecuador for the purpose of making the extraordinary visitation of the Sacred Heart Province.

In two months of incessant work the Visitor covered the Ecuadorian Republic from north to south, passing through all its different geographical zones, from «La Sierra» to «La Costaz». About April 10 he was joined by Fr Luc Van Looy, Councillor for the Missions, who had

come to carry out the canonical visitation of the Vicariate Apostolic of Eastern Ecuador.

At the end of their work the two Visitors met with the organs of animation and government of the province to discuss their findings and make decisions.

After the visitation in Ecuador, Fr Velasco left for Guatemala to accompany the Rector Major in his journey of animation to the provinces of Central America, the Antilles and Venezuela. In Central America particular attention was given to the formation communities and groups of the Salesian Family in Guatemala. In El Salvador it was possible to see at first hand the devastation wrought by the earthquake, which destroyed several salesian works. In Nicaragua it was possible to visit all the salesian works, and also have meetings with groups of the Salesian Family and with young people. In the Antilles the visit concentrated on the Republic of Santo Domingo, with special attention to the capital and to the works at Jarabacoa and Valle del Cibao. At Haiti it was possible to see the salesian work carried out at Cité du Soleil, Enam and Thorland. Finally in Puerto Rico there was a meeting with the salesians and Salesian Family at Aibonito, followed by a rapid visit to Orocovi.

On arrival in Venezuela Fr Velasco accompanied the Rector Ma-

jor on various visits which concentrated on the provincial house at Altamira, and then at San Antonio de los Altos.

There followed from 12-18 May the Team Visit to the provinces of the Pacific-Caribbean Region, which took place at the «Madre Mazzarello» house at Laguretica, close to Los Teques. All the provincials were present together with a large number of members of their provincial councils, to study with the Rector Major and the General Councillors the problems connected with the renewal of salesian life in the Region.

After the Team Visit, Fr Velasco presided over the annual meeting of the provincials of the Region, to make decisions following the Visit and programme the work of ongoing formation for the whole of 1988.

At the end of May he returned to Rome.

**The Councillor for the Atlantic
Region of Latin America**

After the winter plenary session of the Council Fr Carlos Techera began the extraordinary visitation and the consultation for the appointment of the next provincial in the Province of St Francis de Sales of Buenos Aires, a province which has within its territory the most southern part of the Argentine Republic (Tierra del Fuego and the Pro-

vince of Santa Cruz), which was recently made a provincial delegation.

At the end of March he travelled to Paraguay for the Team Visit to the seven provinces which constitute the Plata provincial conference (Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay), and immediately afterwards to Brasilia for the similar visit at which were present all the provincials and members of the provincial councils of the six provinces of Brazil.

On his return to Argentina he preached a quarterly retreat to all the communities of the La Plata Province on the new Regulations of Apostolic Life for Salesian Cooperators and presented every confrere with a copy. At the same time he also made the consultation for the appointment of the next provincial of the same province.

During the extraordinary visit of the Buenos Aires province he was also able to distribute copies of the New Regulations in all the Centres of the Cooperators, and to take part in a day of animation with the young cooperators and in an international meeting of those responsible for the Don Bosco Volunteers and their formation personnel; he also took part in the annual pilgrimage of the Past Pupils of Don Bosco to the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Buenos Aires, and in another of the «Exploradores de Don Bosco» (SDB and FMA).

After ending the visitation with a meeting with the provincial council and the rectors, followed by a con-celebration for the whole of the Salesian Family at Buenos Aires, Fr Techera presided on May 24 at the concelebration and procession in the National Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Villa Colon (Montevideo).

The following day he left for Recife to preside over the meeting of the provincial conference of Brazil and take part in the meeting of SDB and FMA provincials, at which were present also two members of the FMA General Council.

On 29 May he returned to Rome for the plenary session of the Council.

The Regional Councillor for Asia

Fr Thomas Panakezham's first task after leaving Rome on 15 February was to make the consultation for the new provincial of Madras (India). In the space of a week he was able to visit nearly all the communities and speak to the confreres gathered together in each house; those who wished to speak personally with the Regional councillor were also able to do so.

After this he travelled to Calcutta where he presided over a meeting of the Indian provincials called to make plans for the celebrations of '88 at national level, to prepare the manual of prayers, etc.

On 4 March Fr Panakezham began the extraordinary visitation of the Province of St Francis de Sales of Dimapur in the North-East of India. This is a very young province; it was erected only in 1982 by division of the Province of Gauhati and is markedly missionary in character. The roads through the mountains are not designed to give the traveller an easy journey, but the Visitor found it very consoling to observe the generosity, self-sacrifice and dedication of the confreres, who can truly be said to be in the vanguard of the work of evangelization! It is good also to see the big number of vocations that are appearing; it would be difficult to find another postnovitiate where there are so many young salesians. They are about seventy in number and come from many different tribes and states of India.

At the end of the visitation on 27 April, the Regional Councillor made a rapid tour of the formation communities in the Gauhati Province. Each of the two provinces now has its own aspirantate and prenovitiate, and this year the Dimapur province will send some twenty novices to the novitiate.

From 4 to 9 May Fr Panakezham visited our three communities on the Island of Taiwan (Formosa). It is interesting to note the progress that has been made at the «Boys Town» of Chao Chou, where there

are some sixty boys and the work is highly esteemed by the local people. From 11 to 13 May he was at Tokyo for the meeting of the salesian provincial economers of Asia, presided over by the Economer General Fr Omero Paron.

On 16 May the Regional went to Jakarta in Indonesia, where we have a small residence, for the purpose of visiting the communities on the Island of Timor. Timor belongs to the Philippines Province, but when making the recent visitation of that province Fr Panakezham was not able to visit these communities, and so he met them in this period from 18 to 27 May. It is a duty to record the fact that the various civil authorities were very helpful in making this visit possible, something that had not been possible for several years.

The Salesians have done wonderful missionary work in this island, where the great majority of the people are Catholic. Despite great difficulties the confreres there are optimistic and tireless in their work.

The Regional Councillor returned to Rome on 30 May.

The Councillor for the English-speaking Region

From 23 February to mid-May Fr Martin McPake was engaged on the extraordinary visitation of the Pro-

vince of San Francisco (USA), which extends from the house of Edmonton in Canada to that of Laredo in Texas on the Mexican border. The 125 members of this far-flung province work in 5 schools, 7 parishes, 4 Youth Centres, 1 Retreat House for young people, and 2 houses of formation. They share responsibility with the confreres of the province of New Rochelle for the imposing Multimedia Centre at New Rochelle and for the new missionary foundation in Sierra Leone. For reasons of distance the Visitor was not able to see this last work.

Despite a decrease in the number of confreres in this part of the world, Fr McPake found that the spirit of work had in no way fallen off, but had rather intensified in the midst of the ethnic and cultural upheavals being felt along the country's western coastal area because of the large numbers of immigrants constantly flowing in from Mexico and Central America, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

Fr McPake was greatly impressed by the enthusiasm shown everywhere in connection with the centenary of the death of Don Bosco. The SDB, FMA, and our Cooperators and friends are well organized in preparation for '88. He returned to the Generalate with the conviction that the centenary year will prove a sure source of grace in the

northern part of the New World, and hopes that one of the outstanding graces will be an increase in the number of vocations.

The Regional Councillor for Europe and Central Africa

The main work of Fr Dominic Britschu in the period February to May 1987 was the extraordinary visitation of the two provinces of Zagreb (March-April) and Cologne (April-May). Notwithstanding the unrelenting rhythm imposed by the visitation programme, the personal and community contacts of the confreres with their Regional were able to take place in an open and cordial manner.

The surprising result of these two visitations lies particularly in the exceptional harmony that exists between these two provinces and the others of the western world.

Even though their social, economic and political situations are widely different, everywhere the same challenge is faced with the same courage and creativity: to accept and develop among young people the values of a culture the dawn of which is as yet only dimly seen, so as to incarnate in it the message of the Gospel (cf. C 7).

The Regional Councillor for Spain and Portugal

When Fr Rico left Rome in mid-February, he was already aware that he was suffering from some heart trouble. After consulting a specialist in Madrid, he began the extraordinary visitation of the Seville province, and visited twelve communities. He then interrupted the visitation to go to Portugal to launch the consultation for the next provincial of the Lisbon province.

On his return to Madrid on Easter Sunday, 19 April, he once again underwent a medical examination and the doctors decided that a bypass heart operation was necessary and urgent.

He underwent surgery on May 4, and after some weeks of convalescence returned to Rome on 14 June.

The Regional Councillor for Italy and the Middle East

After the winter plenary session of the Council Fr Luigi Bosoni, after a brief visit to the Crocetta at Turin and the novitiate at Pinerolo, took part in the morning of Sunday 15 February in the meeting of those responsible for the Salesian Youth Movements of the Lombardy and Emilia Region, and in the evening of the same day he was at Varese for the ceremony of the conferring of a certificate of merit on the salesian house in recognition of the

educational activity carried out by the salesians in that city.

On Monday, 16 February, he began the extraordinary visitation of the Lombard and Emilian Province with a meeting of the rectors of the province at Milan. It was later to conclude with a meeting with the provincial and provincial council on 21 May.

From 9 to 11 May he took part at Turin in a meeting of the coordinators of youth pastoral work of the SDB and FMA provinces of Italy, a meeting at which was present also Mother Elizabeth Maioli of the FMA General Council.

On 22 May he was at Pinerolo and Turin-Crocetta for a meeting of the «Curatorium» with the presence of all the provincials concerned, and on 23 and 24 May he was at Turin for the solemn celebrations in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

From 25 to 29 May he was with the Rector Major and other members of the General Council at Rome for the Team Visit to the provincials and provincial councils of Italy and the Middle East. In this meeting, after a general introductory report on the life and mission of salesians in the Region, three particular themes were studied, each of them presented by a provincial:

- 1) Towards an ever more meaningful presence of salesians in Italy;
- 2) Lay people and salesians as mis-

sionaries of the young;

- 3) Pastoral work for vocations in the Italian salesian provinces.

On 30 May Fr Bosoni presided over the meeting of the Italian provincial conference which concluded the Team Visit, and June found him back at the Generalate to take part in the summer plenary session of the General Council.

He still had to analyse the returns to the consultation for the appointment of new provincials for Turin (Subalpine province), Milan, Ancona, Catania and Cagliari. He had earlier met with the directors of the five provinces concerned for the organization of the consultations and to emphasize their importance.

The Delegate of the Rector Major for Poland

Fr Augustyn Dziedziel dedicated the greater part of his time and energy to the extraordinary visitation of the Province of St Stanislaus Kostka, centred on Warsaw.

During his stay in Poland from mid-February to the end of May, he also presided over two meetings of the Consulting Group of the Polish Provincial Conference, for the evaluation and programming of salesian activity at national level.

He also carried out various other animation activities among the salesians with, in particular, visits to the formation communities and meetings with groups of the Salesian Fa-

mily. He also had a meeting with the young confreres who are preparing for their departure for the Missions. In 1987 twenty-four confreres are preparing to work in various countries on the missions.

Fr Dziedziel also had meetings of a certain importance with the national and provincial delegates re-

sponsible for the different sectors of the salesian mission. He was present too at the national symposium on the problem of «young people at risk» which was held at Warsaw in April last.

At the beginning of June he returned to Rome for the summer plenary session of the General Council.

5.1 Centenary of the Sacred Heart Basilica in Rome

On 14 May this year occurred the centenary of the consecration of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at Castro Pretorio in Rome, built by our Father Don Bosco as his last great act of gratitude to the Heart of Jesus and of filial adherence to Peter's Successor.

The event was solemnly celebrated in several significant functions spread over a period of time. Among these we may note in particular the public act which took place on the day itself, 14 May, in the Sacred Heart Institute, at which were present together with the Salesian Vicar General (Fr Gaetano Scrivo), the Provincial of the Roman Province and numerous rectors, also the Cardinal Vicar of Rome (Card. Ugo Poletti), the Salesian Cardinals Alfons Stickler and Rosalio Castillo Lara and many representatives of the civil authorities, prominent among whom were the Italian Minister for the Interior (Hon. Oscar Scalfaro) and the Mayor of Rome (Hon. Nicola Signorello). The commemorative address on this occasion was given by Fr Pietro Braidò.

On 16 May, in a moving family celebration, numerous confreres from the houses of Rome and Lazio commemorated the Mass celebrated one hundred years earlier by our Father Don Bosco in the Basilica at the altar of Mary Help of Christians.

Among other pilgrimages which took place around the same period were those of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, who commemorated on 9 May the 150th anniversary of the birth of St Mary Domenica Mazzarello, that of the Salesian Pontifical University, and that of the community of the Salesian Generalate.

On 24 May, the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, the Rector Major presided at a solemn concelebration which was meant to be both a commemoration and a special expression of gratitude for what Don Bosco and the Salesian Family had been able to do in the one hundred years of life of the Basilica and of salesian work in Rome.

We print below the letter sent by the Rector Major to the Rector of the Sacred Heart Institute to mark the great event.

Rome, 24 February 1987

Fr Armando Buttarelli
Istituto Sacro Cuore
Via Marsala, 42
Rome

Dear Father Buttarelli,

My cordial greetings to you, to the confreres of your community and to the whole of the Salesian Family of Rome.

The commemoration of the centenary of the consecration of the Sacred Heart Basilica at Castro Pretorio is for us an event rich in history and prophecy. My association with the celebrations as Successor of Don Bosco is meant to be an indication of heartfelt gratitude for the distinctive kind of holiness which the Spirit of the Lord created and developed so fully in our Father and Founder. It was an operative holiness based on the practical events of each day, open to new times, rooted in a courageous ecclesial sense which was tirelessly concerned about bringing all people, and especially the young and the poorer classes, to a knowledge and understanding of the saving brotherly love of Jesus Christ.

The Church of the Sacred Heart had been wanted by Pius IX, and it became a reality during the pontificate of Leo XIII who entrusted its construction to Don Bosco. Our valiant Father, despite the infirmities of old age and the problems arising

from the distance involved (his place of residence was Turin), undertook the difficult enterprise with his characteristic determination though at the cost of considerable sacrifice. And he did not stop at the church itself, but alongside it he also built a work for the needy youngsters of the area.

This enormous task was in fact his swan song: a monumental hymn of love for Christ, the great Friend of the poor and lowly. It was worth all the trouble in order to bring the whole long practice of his apostolic faith to a climax in this manifestation of heroic dedication to the Heart of his Lord.

The spot where the church was to rise cried out to him for a pastoral work for the young and the poor in an outlying area of the capital city of ill repute and in great need.

He had a great desire to start up a salesian work in Rome for another reason too; he was attracted by the universal horizons associated with the Pope's city and diocese. It enabled him through holy but exhausting enterprises to obtain financial help on an international scale to meet the very heavy building expenses involved. Sitting at table with Don Bosco at the meal on the day of the Consecration were distinguished persons of several countries, with toasts being drunk in Italian, French, Spanish, German and English; and every afternoon

before vespers for five consecutive days, different speakers gave conferences in these five languages.

I think too that our dear Father must have surely rejoiced at being able to perpetuate in this work a patently clear message of his deep and sincere adherence to Peter's Successor. Prompted in fact by his convinced attachment to the Church, he undertook enormous burdens and exertions; but he was always motivated by so great a trust in Providence, manifested in large numbers of incredible initiatives, that he succeeded in completing from nothing enterprises that many others felt unable to face.

But there is also another aspect which at a distance of a hundred years shines out like a synthesis of the Saint's whole vocation and mission. Despite the advice of his doctors who considered his health too precarious for such a journey, Don Bosco was determined at all costs to be present at the church's consecration. And it was precisely there in the Church of the Sacred Heart, when he was celebrating the Eucharist at the altar of Mary Help of Christians, that he was several times seen to stop and weep as he beheld in miraculous fashion the vast panorama of his life encapsulated in the words Our Lady had said to him in his dream at the age of nine: «Do not be afraid; in due time you will understand everything!»

And it was at that moment that «with a feeling of humble gratitude» he sensed the definitive confirmation of his intimate conviction that the whole of his mission and that of his followers among the People of God was a gift that had begun and developed «not as a merely human venture»! This is why the presence of his Successor is meant to be a deeply-felt testimony of the whole Salesian Family and innumerable ranks of young people in praise and adoration of the Lord for the wonderful charisma of our Founder.

Today the Holy Father John Paul II has put the crowning touch to the event by choosing as one of the seven particular churches for the «Year of grace» throughout 1988 this Basilica of the Sacred Heart, a permanent witness to a sanctity fashioned by God for the young.

May the present and future centenary celebrations be a reminder which will lead us to commit ourselves to approach the new challenges of the present day with the Heart of Christ, throwing light on them with the leaven of hope in the enticing perspective of a youthful and popular holiness.

With my best wishes for an efficacious apostolate with ever greater spiritual depth,

Fraternally in the Lord,

Fr Egidio Viganò

5.2 Letter of the Rector Major to Salesian Bishops

The following letter was sent by the Rector Major to all Salesian Bishops with reference to the celebrations of '88 for the centenary of the death of Don Bosco.

Rome, Solemnity of St Joseph
19 March 1987

To our dear confreres who are Bishops,

This is only the second time that I address a letter directly to you.

The first letter I wrote to you from Loreto on 24 November 1984, on the occasion of the centenary of the episcopal consecration of Fr John Cagliero, the first Salesian to become a bishop. From that time we have never lacked the grace and witness to pastoral charity provided by many chosen confreres signed by the charism of the apostolic succession, whose numbers have in fact considerably increased.

This second letter I now write to you from Rome, in preparation for the centenary celebrations of the death of our holy Founder.

The «dies natalis» of Don Bosco is an event which will be of concern to each of you, well-deserving Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, because as you look at him you remember the inspiration of your per-

sonal vocation, and in him too you find a friend and intercessor who is daily at your side in the delicate and demanding work of your ministry.

The Congregation and the whole Salesian Family are preparing to make of '88 a spiritual event which will stir up the souls of all for a greater and better dedication to youth. We want to put forward once again to today's world the figure and work of Don Bosco as a true and prophetic gift of God for our new times: to give greater objective prominence to his stature in history, his distinctive kind of holiness, his charism as a friend of the young and the evangelical bearer of a particular pastoral message which is also both social and pedagogical.

The «Apostolic Brief» for a «Special Year of Grace» for the particular Church of Turin, and the personal presence of the Holy Father (for two days) in the first half of September 1988 (with possibly a beatification ceremony at the same time) are very significant expressions of both the ecclesial dimension of the celebrations and of the love of John Paul II for the young and his liking for Don Bosco and our Family.

The basic theme underlying and animating our dialogue with youth throughout the jubilee year will be that of the great prophetic guidelines of Vatican II: «The Council and youth moving forward together

towards the Third Millennium».

In the light of so many family, ecclesial, cultural and social motives, the Rector Major with the General Council thought that the presence at Turin of our Salesian Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, for the solemn inauguration of the Centenary Year would be not only pleasing to all but also a significant and enriching experience.

And that is the reason why I am writing to you.

This letter is a formal invitation to each one of you, in my own name and that of the General Council, to participate personally in the celebration of the following special events which form part of our extraordinary commemoration:

- *Saturday, 30 January 1988.*
 - afternoon: civil commemoration ceremony in the Teatro Regio of Turin;
- *Sunday, 31 January 1988.*
 - morning: concelebrated eucharist in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians;
 - afternoon: at Turin Palasport, commemoration of the centenary by young people;
- *Monday, 1 February 1988.*
 - morning: pilgrimage, visit and eucharistic concelebration at Colle Don Bosco.

This is the central and most significant part of the whole Centenary.

When Don Bosco died on 31 January he left us his charisma as a sacred legacy. We want to let it be seen that the legacy has not been buried underground, but that it has been made to flourish in every continent.

May I also add, with the practical approach characteristic of a family, that with the invitation comes the assurance that we will be responsible for your expenses. It will be a great pleasure for the Congregation to offer to you, its members who are so hard-working and generously committed, a sign of fraternal solidarity in joyful communion.

And while I am speaking of practical points within the family, I should be grateful for a personal reply before the end of July 1987, so that we can foresee and attend to the various arrangements that must be made. Many thanks!

You are always in the Congregation's prayers, and we think especially of those of you in the front lines on the missions and in situations calling for heroic commitment to the Church's service.

We ourselves find stimulation and encouragement from the witness of such great sacrifice, and we ask Mary Help of Christians and her hard-working and providential spouse St Joseph to obtain for all of you the courage and fortitude of Peter in confirming your brethren.

I take the opportunity to offer you our heartfelt Easter greetings,

while in this period of Lent we turn our gaze to the Cross and its opening to the definitive victory of the Risen Lord.

Good wishes to you also from all the confreres, and in a special way from the General Council and myself.

We look forward to seeing you again!

With esteem and gratitude in Don Bosco,

Fr Egidio Viganò

5.3 Norms for the salesian liturgical calendar.

The following is an English translation of the Rescript of the Congregation for Divine Worship, establishing some norms for our salesian liturgical calendar.

Congregation for Divine Worship
Prot. 388/87

Following the request of the Reverend Fr Luigi Fiora, Procurator General of the Society of St Francis de Sales, made in a letter of 2 February 1987, we gladly grant in virtue of the faculties given to this Congregation by the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II that:

– the celebration of Blessed Luigi Versiglia, Bishop and martyr, and

Blessed Callistus Caravario, priest and martyr, be made each year with the rank of obligatory memorial;

– the celebration of St Leonard Murialdo be inserted in the proper calendar of the same Society, to be made each year on 19 May with the rank of an optional memorial.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the office of the Congregation for Divine Worship on 19 March 1987.

Paul Augustine Card. MAYER
Prefect

Virgilio Noè
Secretary

5.4 Indulgences for the holy places of Colle Don Bosco.

The following is an English translation of the Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, granting indulgences to the faithful who visit the holy places at Colle Don Bosco.

Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary
Prot. 25/87/I

Most Holy Father,

Fr Luigi Fiora, Procurator General of the Society of St Francis de Sales, SDB, describes how the faithful, moved by devotion to the Bles-

sed Virgin Mary Help of Christians and to St John Bosco, travel to the birthplace of the said Saint, now called the «Colle di Castelnuovo Don Bosco» for the purpose of visiting there the holy sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin and the Temple built in honour of St John Bosco, and states that their number is increasing day by day. That the christian faithful may derive richer spiritual benefits from their visit, the above-mentioned Procurator General asks for them from Your Holiness the favour of a plenary indulgence.

On this 12th day of February 1987 this SACRED PENITENTIARY, with the authority of the Apostolic See, willingly grants a plenary indulgence to be gained by Christ's faithful under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, eucharistic communion and prayers for the Holy Father's intentions):

1) on the solemnities, or feasts, of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the same Virgin Mother of God under the title of Help of Christians, of St John Bosco and of St Dominic Savio, if they visit one or other of the above holy places and there recite the Lord's Prayer and the Creed;

2) once a year on a day chosen freely by each one if they devoutly make the visit and recite the same prayers;

3) every time they form part of a group pilgrimage to the same sanctuary and church and pray as above;

4) on the occasion of any particular retreat or gathering, if during it they take part in some sacred rite.

This concession is valid for seven years.

Luigi Card. DADAGLIO
Penitentiary

5.5 An aid for the «Don Bosco '88» celebrations from the Historical Institute

In view of the Don Bosco centenary in 1988, the Salesian Historical Institute has produced a book, now about to be published, which will serve as a source for a better knowledge of the great and saintly educator, and will serve as a means for making him better known. It is a collection of brief texts, which are however of particular value because they are presented in a critical edition. For the members of the Salesian Family in particular the book will be an instrument for promoting a historical and pedagogical sensitivity that will bring them closer to our Founder and Father.

The volume bears the title: *John Bosco, PEDAGOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL WRITINGS*, and represents the combined work of J. Borrego, P. Braido, A. Ferreira da Silva, F. Motto, and J.M. Prellezo.

The book's contents are as follows:

- I. THE BEGINNINGS: Fragments and documents (1845-1859)
- II. FIRST SYNTHESSES
 - Conversation with Urban Rattazzi (1854)
 - Confidential memoranda to rectors (1863-1886)
 - The dialogue between Don Bosco and Francis Bodrato (1864)
- III. THE PERIOD OF MATURITY:
 - Written programmes and norms (1875-1883)
 - Souvenir for the missionaries (1875)
 - The application of the preventive system among youth at risk (1878)
 - Punishments to be inflicted in salesian houses (1883)
- IV. ADVICE AND SOUVENIRS (1884-1885)
 - Two letters from Rome of 10 May 1884
 - Memoirs of the Oratory from 1841 to 1884-6 (Spiritual Testament)
 - Three letters to salesians in America (August 1885)

5.6 New Salesian Bishop

On 11 June 1987 the Holy Father appointed our confrere Fr *Leo DRONA* Bishop of the Diocese of San José in the Philippines; he is the first Filipino confrere to be raised to the episcopacy.

Born at Pangil in the Province of Laguna, Philippines, on 18 October 1941, Mgr Drona made his first salesian profession in June 1958 and was consecrated perpetually to God in the Salesian Congregation in July 1964. He was sent to Rome for theological studies and was ordained priest there on 22 July 1967.

After obtaining the Licentiate in Philosophy and Theology he returned to his own country where in 1971 he was called to be a member of the provincial council and in 1974 was appointed rector of the studentate of philosophy at Canlubang. This service he carried out until 1981 when he became vice-provincial and rector of the provincial house at Parañaque. He was a member of the GC22 in 1984.

5.7 Our dead confreres (1987 – 2° list)

"Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with our brothers who rest in Christ's peace... Their remembrance is an incentive to continue faithfully in our mission." (C 94).

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV
L ALBARRACIN Roberto	Rodeo del Medio	14-05-87	60	ACO
P AVILES Placido	Ramos Mejia	01-05-87	69	ABA
L BAGGIO Annibale	Genova	06-04-87	51	ICE
P BEDNARZ Jan	Plock	18-03-87	76	PLE
P BEHR Jorge	Trelew	21-05-87	85	ABB
E BINI Walter	Lins	17-06-87	57	
<i>Fu Ispettore per 1 anno, per 6 a. Consigliere del C.G. e per 3 a. Vescovo di Lins (Brasile)</i>				
P BOCCO Luis	Córdoba	28-03-87	79	ACO
P CARISSIMO Nicolau	Ponte Nova	02-03-87	58	BBH
P CARUSO Salvatore	Palermo	14-04-87	78	ISI
L CASTIGLIA Santo	Catania	14-04-87	71	ISI
P CERUTTI Adelmiro	Torino	13-05-87	78	ISU
P CHAVEZ CONTRERAS Gabriel	Tonalá Chiapas	20-04-87	31	MEM
P COLOMBARA Vincenzo	Genova	04-06-87	90	ILT
<i>Fu Ispettore per 4 anni</i>				
P CONNOLLY Adam	West Haverstraw	10-05-87	82	SUE
P CRENNNA Antonio	München	11-05-87	80	GEM
P DAL SANTO Cesare	Torino	12-06-87	66	ANT
P DALLA NORA Geremia	Conegliano Veneto	26-05-87	72	IAD
L DALY Bartholomew	Navan	21-04-87	73	IRL
L DI BITONTO Antonio	Gualdo Tadino	18-04-87	86	IAD
P FERNÁNDEZ PRIETO Antonio	Bahía Blanca	04-04-87	96	ABB
P FIÓ Domingo Mauricio	Rosario	20-03-87	63	ARO
P GIOCO Giovanni Battista	Arese	04-05-87	87	ILE
P GONZÁLEZ BELLVER Francisco	Madrid	23-04-87	86	SMA
P GORETTI Benedetto	Frascati	01-06-87	76	IRO
P GRASSO Ermes	Buenos Aires	28-05-87	64	ABB
L GRILLO Lorenzo	San Benigno Canavese	26-03-87	69	ISU
P HALL Thomas William	Chertsey	08-04-87	85	GBR
<i>Fu Ispettore per 12 anni</i>				
L KALUZNY José	Campinas	26-04-87	89	BSP
P LEMAITRE André	Tournai (Belgio)	09-03-87	56	AFC
P LUPANO Luigi	Torino	04-06-87	87	INE
P MARCOLA Francisco	Cartago (Costa Rica)	15-09-86	75	CAM

P MASOERO Bernardo	Torino	19-04-87	84	ISU
L MATUSIEWICZ Marian	Kielce	25-03-87	88	PLS
P MENDONCA José Carvalho de	Lajedo (PE)	28-05-87	90	BRE
P NORRY Emilio	Tucumán	25-04-87	71	ACO
P ORMINSKY Stanisław	Rumia	06-06-87	75	PLN
P PERRA Aldo	Torino	16-05-87	72	ISU
P PRIETO Blas	Rosario	14-05-87	85	ARO
P RAAIJMAKERS Jan	's-Gravenhage	23-05-87	57	OLA
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P SALEMI Sebastiano	Varazze	28-03-87	79	ILT
P SCHAAD Theodorus	Ubach-Worms	09-02-87	79	OLA
L SCHINETTI Angelo	Torino	21-03-87	87	ICE
L SCHUTZ Josef	Wien	06-03-87	72	AUS
P SCHWEITZER Zeno Antonio	Joinville	06-04-87	65	BPA
P SILVA Remo	La Spezia	23-03-87	76	ILT
P SIMCIC Joze	Cleveland	28-04-87	78	JUL
P TEDESCHI Bartolomeo	Maroggia (Svizzera)	02-06-87	88	INE
L TOCCACELI Davide	S. Marino	09-04-87	65	ICE
P VECCHI Luigi	Perugia	09-05-87	59	IAD
P VERFAILLE Barthélemy	Wavre (Belgio)	07-03-87	69	AFC
P VIETTO Petro	Torino	17-04-87	70	ISU
P VIGNA Giovanni	Guayaquil	28-04-87	86	ECU
P WALOSZEK Ferdynand	Sroda Slaska	02-04-87	76	PLO
P ZANETTI Divino	Lima	31-03-87	74	PER



