



acts

of the general council

year LXXI october-december 1990

N. 334

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

**Roma
Direzione Generale
Opere Don Bosco**

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

- Introduction - Neither the latest fashion nor a continual harping on the same point, but a genuinely new requirement. - An indispensable source of energy for the journey of faith. - A daunting reality. - We are anchored in the might of the Holy Spirit. - In the great channel of "salesian" spirituality. - Following Don Bosco. - We form evangelizing communities. - Under the guidance of the Help of Christians, Lodestar of the new evangelization. - A positive omen.

Rome, 15 August 1990
Solemnity of the Assumption

My dear confreres,

Greetings from myself and the members of the new General Council. Very soon we shall be meeting together to make a deeper study of the guidelines of the GC23 and to draft a programme of animation and government for the purpose of rendering incisive and efficacious our service to the Provinces in the coming six years. You already have to hand the Chapter Documents and are studying their contents.

I would like to help you in this vital task by some reflections which I think are important.

There are two basic facts underlying the overall significance of our GC23: first it aims at setting us firmly within the ecclesial movement of the "New Evangelization"; and then there is the recognition

and conviction that our journey in faith is simply impossible without the energizing force of "Spirituality."

I have already spoken to you about the new evangelization:¹ I am now inviting you to reflect on our "Spirituality", which is presented in the Chapter documents as the secret of success in the education of the young to the faith.

¹ AGC 331, 1989

The new evangelization calls for many qualities and abilities. But while spirituality can make up to some extent for the lack of other qualities, no other capacity or aptitude can make up for a lack of spirituality.

It will be useful therefore to seek out together some of the reasons why we are asked to give such importance to this argument and to assign it a real priority in the formation programme.

Meanwhile I ask you to pray with particular intensity for the success of the 19th General Chapter of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. The theme of their work is: "Educating girls and young women: the contribution of the FMA to a new evangelization in different social and cultural contexts". Such a theme, as was pointed out by the Mother General in her letter convoking the Chapter, homes in on the aspect that defines their mission: "to be in the Church and society at the service of the education of girls and young women according to the Preventive System of Don Bosco". Like ourselves, they have an urgent need for their communities to face up with hearts aflame to the more pressing educational requirements of the present day, after being renewed by an authentic salesian spirituality.

Neither the latest fashion nor a continual harping on the same point, but a genuinely new requirement.

It may be asked why the GC23 put spirituality at the centre of its concerns. Is this not in fact a harking back to a theme that is easy to talk about but largely irrelevant to the present day, thus providing an easy way of dodging difficulties? Or is it not an invitation to imitate some of these fashionable modern groups who have a tendency to shy away from the challenges of the new cultures? Or in other words, is it not a theme of little practical importance?

The chapter document quite definitely reflects another perspective. The spirituality it refers to is neither a passing fad nor the hackneyed replaying of an old record; for us it implies nothing less than genuine fidelity to the preventive system, as a practical *sine qua non* for the new evangelization and a requirement of modern times.

Don Bosco never liked evading reality, and he gives us this same message through his person and his pedagogical method.²

By the term "spirituality" the GC23 intended an experience of God, implying the practice of the theological life of "faith, hope and charity" which is the fruit of the indwelling in us of the Holy Spirit. When the text speaks of "faith" the intention is to bring about a vital union of the three theological virtues in a single practical style of convinced and dynamic christian life.

St Catherine of Siena used to say that when the practice of the theological virtues is only half-hearted, the Church's countenance becomes pale. Without a living and vibrant faith no education to faith is possible!

² cf. *Don Bosco's interior life*, Strenna 1981, commentary of RM

The soul of the chapter document is an experience of life and activity anchored in God, a driving force without which we are compelled to wonder whether we are still capable of continuing the journey till we reach the goal.

This is the starting point for spirituality: the road to be followed is a new one; only recently has the path been marked out, in fact it is still in process of construction without as yet an asphalted surface and subject to previously unknown perspectives which will call for a rethinking of the christian identity and the way of living it. The cultural context of the faith has changed, and there is an urgent need to be able to manifest in ourselves and in young people the new countenance of the believer, with modern motivation and practical applications in life-style. This is where the breath of the Spirit is blowing, bringing out the present-day guise of the faith!

On the other hand the GC23 has brought home to us the fact that a growing demand for spirituality is becoming evident specifically in youth groups.

We are aware that Vatican II has been considered a real discovery of the Holy Spirit as the leading teacher of the faith in this last part of the second millennium. The Council documents show a clear perspective of the Holy Spirit in considering the Church and her mission; specifically the decree "Perfectae caritatis" reminds members of Institutes of consecrated life that "before all else, religious life is ordered to the following of Christ by its members...; hence even the best-contrived adaptations to the needs of our time will be of no avail unless they are animated by a *spiritual renewal*, which must always be assigned primary importance even in the active ministry".³

Paul VI noted with wonder and hope that "we

³ PC 2c

are living in the Church at a privileged moment of the Spirit... People are gathering about him; they want to let themselves be led by him... *It is in the Church's evangelical mission that he is most active*: it is not by chance that the great inauguration of evangelization took place on the morning of Pentecost, under the inspiration of the Spirit".⁴

⁴ EN 75

The ecclesial movements that have sprouted in recent decades have been comprehensively considered officially as the expression of a new period of spirituality, the fruit of the "richness and versatility of resources that the Holy Spirit nourishes in the ecclesial community".⁵

⁵ CL 29

All our own renewal too, under the guidance of the valuable work of the General Chapters that have followed Vatican II, is considered in the chapter document as an involvement of us Salesians in the present ecclesial commitment to the new evangelization. Read carefully the "Introduction" to the document: it draws its inspiration from God's pedagogical activity in history and looks at our recent General Chapters from a theological point of view. You will see how the Congregation is situated at the heart of the Church, precisely at the service of the new evangelization. Its progress towards this end is marked by various stages of research and analysis: it started from the "mission" (SGC 20); this was found to be a task taken up by the "community through a specific plan (GC21), through the strengthening of our "apostolic consecration" (GC22), so as to respond to the many and pressing challenges of today's youth (GC23).⁶

⁶ cf. *Educating young people to the faith: Capital Documents*, Ed. SDB, Rome 1990 (hereafter GC23), 1-14

The word "spirituality" embodies a vital synthesis of the demands of our renewal at this time, and their acceptance by both individuals and communities.

— *The Holy Father* has repeatedly reminded us of this: first, in his letter for the 1988 Centenary: "The originality and boldness of the plan for a 'youthful holiness' is intrinsic to the educational art of this great Saint, who can be rightly called the 'master of youth spirituality'."⁷ Then in his message to the GC23: "an aspect that calls for your careful study is 'youth spirituality'... it is not sufficient to rely on the simple rationality of a human ethic... We must stir up deep personal convictions which will lead to a life commitment inspired by the perennial values of the Gospel".⁸ And again during his visit to the Chapter: "What a great need there is in the Church at the present day for young people to be educated ... to a practical 'spirituality'".⁹

7 IP 16

8 GC23, 313

9 GC23, 334

— *The Rector Major*, for his part, had already insisted (in connection with the GC23) on this point with confreres and communities with a view to producing a real spirituality among young people. Commenting on the Strenna for 1990, he emphasizes the importance of the community's witness: "The preventive system requires spirituality; the journey 'from faith to faith' needs educators who are full of spirituality. It is not a source of energy limited to chosen souls".¹⁰ In his address at the opening of the Chapter he presented the preventive system as the fruit and source of salesian spirituality: "The great challenge put to us by the Chapter's theme is that of the 'evangelizing and missionary spirituality' in our communities. We are educators because we are shepherds in Christ's Church. Its pastoral quality is the soul of our pedagogical competence, just as 'da mihi animas' is the secret that enlivens our spirit from within".¹¹ Concluding his Report on the State of the Congregation (1984-1990) he points to spirituality as the great secret for

10 Strenna 1990, commentary of RM

11 GC23, 326

the success of our apostolic renewal: "the basic factor most urgently needed in our salesian activity can be expressed in a word which implies for us a special plea: 'spirituality'!".¹² And in his closing address to the Chapter he gave some examples of tensions in our life,¹³ before going on to insist that the necessary unifying force stems unfailingly from an intense spirituality: "A living synthesis of the two poles in each case is made possible by a force from on high... which binds inseparably together union with God and staying with the young... The inherent strength of our salesian spirituality (is) a dynamic daily expression of the grace of unity".¹⁴

- Finally, the *'Radiograph' of the Provincial Chapters* and the subsequent *Precapitular working document* dwell on the positive aspects of the lived experience in several provinces, suggesting plans for the deeper study and specific development of a practical youth spirituality. In this sense they list many positive facts, constituent elements, ways and means of growth, critical aspects and difficulties, connections with the promoting of vocations, and they also suggest fundamental nuclei for a salesian youth spirituality. "The proposal to do further research in SYS", one reads, "is intended to meet a felt need: we want to go more deeply in the circumstances of the present day, into those principles of christian life that Don Bosco strove to instil into his boys. It is not a question of a historical study but of gleaning the legacy of Don Bosco's spirit, of going back once again to his typical spiritual and educational experiences, of rediscovering the educative force of the ideal of holiness to which he urged his youngsters".¹⁵

Rightly therefore does the entire chapter document concentrate its guidelines and proposals on a

¹² Report of RM to GC23, p. 272

¹³ cf. GC23, 348

¹⁴ GC23, 349

¹⁵ *Schemi precapitolari* 536; radiography of prov. chaps. 213-244

journey of faith which has spirituality as its driving force, and this at two levels: that of the spirituality of the confreres and that of the spirituality of the young, in distinct and separate ways that are none the less complementary and organically united.

Let us not forget that it is the Holy Spirit alone, as Paul VI said, "who stirs up the new creation, the new humanity of which evangelization is to be the result, with that unity in variety which evangelization wishes to achieve within the christian community. Through the Holy Spirit the Gospel penetrates to the heart of the world, for it is he who causes people to discern the signs of the times, signs willed by God, which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history".¹⁶

¹⁶ EN 75

An indispensable source of energy for the journey of faith.

The spirituality spoken of in the chapter document is tied in with the concept of "journey" or "itinerary". A journey, in the Bible, generally begins from a crisis situation and moves towards its objective through a particular force which acts as a spur; think, for instance, of Abraham and Moses.

For us, in the journey indicated by the GC23, the particular driving force is precisely spirituality. This is not something that offers ready-made solutions to the many challenges we face; it is not a kit of formulas. The present crisis, in fact, calls on us for a response not only to classical difficulties and happenings: the challenges to which it gives rise appear rather as "indications of a 'change of epoch' that we must learn to assess in the light of faith".¹⁷

¹⁷ GC23, 91

Spirituality helps in the discernment and tackling of problems and provokes a desire to reach the goal: it is a source of enthusiasm. It consists in a typical way of living the Gospel "on the spot"; it is therefore essentially creative, always in dialogue with practical life, and also courageous and enterprising.

Any spirituality, and especially 'salesian' spirituality because of its linkage with reality, must not only be constantly proposed over and over again, but must also be continually made incarnate and revitalized if it is to grow and act always in harmony with the prevailing situation. It will certainly remain faithful to the vital values of its origins and of living tradition, but of its nature it is also called upon to be fertile and get down to brass tacks if it is to become a gift of life, an appropriate response and also a gospel challenge.

It embodies an intrinsic transforming force because it is the expression of a faith conceived as a motive force in history. A faith (which includes also hope and charity) not simply linked with a doctrine which enlightens the intelligence, but a personal attitude as a progressive experience of God which becomes in each individual a vital force of synthesis in his freedom and convictions, and hence in his behaviour. Nowadays such an attitude is characterized by a strong social dimension, as the Holy Father has repeatedly reminded us and as is stated explicitly in the Apostolic Exhortation "Christifideles laici": young people "ought to be encouraged to be active on behalf of the Church as leading characters in evangelization and participants in the renewal of society".¹⁸

In commenting on the Strenna for 1990 I told you that faith does not exist on its own; it is the believing individual who exists and acts: spirituality however is the attitude proper to committed be-

¹⁸ CL 46

lievers! To be able to cultivate in communities a real spiritual innovation and bring about gradually in our works a youth spirituality means giving new life to the faith so as to shoot it like an arrow into families, local areas, society, and shape their futures so that they will be more in line with the Creator's plan.

At the present day we are observing a decline in various ideologies; this is a striking fact that makes us think. Some of these ideologies claimed to take the place and role of faith among young people. And unfortunately it seemed that formation to the faith was often unable to produce believers capable of evangelizing the signs of the times: Vatican II admitted as much.¹⁹ That is the point. Yesterday's rise and progress of the ideologies lead one to think that there was a period of weakness in formation to the faith, the lack of an adequate pastoral and pedagogical presentation of the Lord's Passover as the central point of history.

¹⁹ cf. GS 19

The faith we commit ourselves to developing in the young, says the chapter document, "is not something disjoined from or merely closely associated with what is human, historical, temporal or secular, but is rather a generating force within all these; it gives them enlightenment and new meaning and also transcends them, broadening our horizons beyond the confines of history".²⁰

²⁰ GC23, 117

Not a spiritualism of flight therefore, but a front-line spirituality, one of research, of initiative and of courage; in a word a spirituality of realism. This does not diminish the problems; but instead of dodging them, it acknowledges their existence, analyzes them and tackles them.

You need only think of the importance given by the chapter document to the first element in the

journey (“towards human maturity”), considered not as a separate sector but as a dimension of every stage of the journey, totally concerned (together with the contributions of the educational sciences) with the search for meaning, with the perception of life as a gift and task to be carried out, to a diagnosis of the emptiness of the impending idols. The spirituality of educators proclaims in fact “faith calls life to mind, and that when life is seen in its true light it feels in a certain sense the need of faith. Because of grace there is no break between creation and redemption but continuity”.²¹

²¹ GC23, 120

A daunting reality.

The historical era in which we are living is a complex one, and is dense with future prospects for both good and evil. The secularization process is accompanied by both positive and negative values. Unfortunately the development of society tends often to what is negative. The most dangerous of the threatened losses is that of giving no consideration at all to the faith.

This became evident in practical terms during the preparation of the GC23 and in the Chapter itself. One need only recall the work done in the provinces and in the chapter assembly to identify the difficulties we are meeting at the present day in our educational commitment. The Bible shows us that the awareness of being in a crisis situation is the starting condition for equipping the base camp for the journey to overcome it; recall the Exodus and the parable of the Prodigal Son.

For this reason the Chapter tried in the first place to look at the various contexts from a pastoral standpoint: from consumerism to the different

kinds of poverty, from decolonized peoples to the exodus from totalitarian regimes now going on, from big States to ethnic minorities, from the Catholic outlook to the very many other christian denominations, from atheism to the great religions. In these contexts educational institutions (family, school, group activity, social communication, entry into the world of work) are in the delicate situation of seeking their proper role. Young people appear dissatisfied, looking for values and asking for new relationships. If you observe their attitude to the faith, you find many of them at a distance or even totally estranged from it, quite a number are indifferent, and others open to religious discussion, but with widely differing approaches; fortunately there are also some young practising christians, but sometimes without any higher ideals; and finally there are those committed ones who find in the faith a practical guide for life and who become a leaven among others ("Young people for the young"!).

From this overall view and from the lively discussions that took place in the assembly it was possible to identify some of the more urgent challenges of a universal nature. "They are matters which on the one hand seem to be provocations to our mission of educators to the faith; and on the other appear as real opportunities rich in possibilities. They are new occasions that call for creativity and courage".²²

²² GC23, 75

Five of them are indicated:

- The challenge of those "far away or outside" the world of faith.
- The challenge of "poverty" which debilitates and depresses the environment and destroys its human dignity.

- The challenge of the “irrelevance of the faith in life and culture”: underlying this is a subtly harmful mentality which needs a deep reassignment of values and an adequate cultural level in presenting the events of salvation.
- The challenge of “other religions”; this is met with very commonly in Asia and Africa, but is found to some extent everywhere with the inter-continental movement of peoples. Every single one of these religions, despite the positive values they have, present special difficulties for evangelization because of the strong place they have in local culture.
- Finally, the challenge of “life” itself: this is “a synthesis of all the others and permeates them all”.²³ The intensity and vibrations of anxieties, desires, quests, sensitivities, ideals, disappointments, bitter experiences, involve in one way or another the whole of human existence, and easily breed in young people insecurity, relativism, inconstancy and unprofitable doubts.

²³ GC23, 87

All these challenges and so many other problems besides can inculcate a sense of paralysis which makes us wonder whether the goal can be reached at all.

And to the above we have also to add the internal difficulties we find in making an objective evaluation of the forces we have in the Congregation at the present time (as more than one member of the Chapter pointed out): and this may lead to temptations to consternation and dismay. When you hear talk about the ageing process in various provinces, of the falling-off of vocations, of the slow pace of renewal, poor pastoral quality, lack of understanding in discerning the signs of the times, spiritual superficiality or genericism, etc., a terrible doubt

arises: do not all these challenges and problems add up to a dead weight so heavy that the process can never get off the ground at all?

And if we go on to think about the world-wide challenge that is shaking up the whole Church because of the seriously equivocal ideas inherent in the emerging cultures: science and faith, nature and grace, culture and the Gospel, technical developments and ethics, theology and the teaching role, etc., we can see the clouds looming ever larger along the route.

And yet the Lord is calling us and sending us for the new evangelization. And we journey on, with the humility to recognize that our task is not unlimited, and that today more than in the past it must rely more on the quality of individuals and communities than on their number.

We must be able to look at the challenges, problems and difficulties, not to lose heart but to make an objective assessment of where to make a courageous commitment.

Meanwhile we shall try not to overlook the results we have already achieved; we recall Project Africa, the General Chapters of renewal, the educative and pastoral plans, the efforts at ongoing formation, the flourishing of initiatives of an oratory kind, the volunteer movement, groups of animators, the revival of the Cooperators and Past-Pupils, collaboration in the Salesian Family, etc.; we think back to the waves of grace that accompanied the Centenary of 1988, we look at Don Bosco and our origins, we think of the young people who have reached holiness in our company, and those involved in groups which already constitute a youth spirituality movement.

History teaches us that there is no implanting of

the Gospel without problems and difficulties. The Apostles set about evangelizing the world in conditions much more unfavourable than ours; the Saints, the Founders, Don Bosco, the great missionaries did not turn back in the face of difficulties; on the contrary they faced up to the needs, convinced about the indispensability of the mystery of Christ, and sure of the intervention of the power of his Spirit.

The new evangelization involves us in a time which is witnessing the full development of the changing of an era which is on a par with anything in human history; we are called to be able to live in this dense hour of hope. It would be ingenuous to take refuge in nostalgia for situations to which return is impossible. The Lord has consecrated us for the future of the young; he has sent us to carry out a fascinating task, and he himself is constantly at our side in its development; he wants us to be leaders in a renewed period of christian faith which must be the historical leaven for the beginning of the third millennium.

And so no faltering, but trust and confidence!

We are anchored in the might of the Holy Spirit.

Without courageous interior convictions we shall never set out on the journey at all; and on the other hand we shall be successful in our complex enterprise if we have "spirituality".

Our analysis of the challenges has brought home to us the fact that there is an urgent need to communicate to every young person an updated and original plan of christian life according to which he "learns a new way of being a believer in

the world, and arranges his life around certain perceptions of faith, choices of values and gospel attitudes: he lives a spirituality".²⁴

²⁴ GC23, 158

In the first two parts of the chapter document the accent is directly on the spirituality which must be developed in the young; but the whole process is animated by the educative spirituality of the confreres. Then in the third part, the indispensability of such spirituality in the salesian community is specifically emphasized.

In fact in the process of evangelization the salesian community feels itself once again called by God; it rethinks the mission it has received; it is convinced that God works in history, it knows that Don Bosco's experience was prophetic and valid always,²⁵ and it rediscovers that our tradition has always seen the preventive system as a spirituality project.²⁶ It feels that it must proceed "from faith to faith", from its own communal spirituality to that of the young.

²⁵ GC23, 89-93

²⁶ GC23, 158

The response to the challenges begins in confreres deeply animated by an apostolic mystique, aimed at the gradual inculcation of a youth spirituality. In the light of the serious nature of the challenges we must willingly accept the urgent need to be "spiritual men" in the sense proclaimed by the Apostle Paul. No faltering, we said, but trust and confidence.

At first sight it would seem impossible for us to attain the goal, but in reality we can do so because, as St Paul says,²⁷ we no longer live in our own weakness but are strengthened by the Spirit. Those who allow themselves to be guided by the Spirit are concerned about the things of the Spirit, while those who let themselves be guided by their own weakness seek to satisfy their own selfish desires. It

²⁷ cf. Rom 8, 4-5

would be a good thing if every confrere read over again the whole of chap.8 of St Paul's epistle to the Romans.

The spirituality spoken of by the GC23 is a living experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit, which became more intense after the Pentecostal experience of Vatican II. It is a matter of the individual and communal discovery of a God inserted in History and in one's own life. Rightly has a famous convert and author entitled one of his books: "God exists, I have met him".²⁸ Each one of us should be able to say the same thing. In a secularized environment in which God would seem to be permanently eclipsed, there is emerging the awareness of the need to experience his presence and to proclaim it in our daily living. One of the great theologians of our century, Karl Rahner, thinks that the "pious" person of tomorrow will either be a "spiritual man", i.e. one who has had personal experience of God, or he will simply cease to be "pious".

Today the People of God has a greater need than ever before of those elements of spirituality which – as has been stated by one scholar – take account of human responsibility, which give value to daily existence, to the social dimension, to problems of work, to the world of technology, and to history in general.

We are convinced that our own spirituality must be seen in this perspective; indeed we consider such a perspective as one of the great characteristics which denote its originality and its present-day relevance.

The foundation of all true spirituality for the future is first of all the rediscovery of the Holy Spirit and the rooting of one's own life in the strength of his unifying love. The Pope himself, in his address

²⁸ ANDRE FROSSARD, *Dieu existe, je L'ai rencontré* - Fayard, Paris 1969

to the Chapter members, said as much: "Spirituality means a living participation in the power of the Holy Spirit... From it proceeds the strength of personal synthesis between faith and life".²⁹

²⁹ GC23, 334

Revelation offers us a dynamic concept of the Holy Spirit who bursts personally into history and acts constantly throughout the Church's life. To understand his mission and efficacy, says St Gregory Nazianzen, we must be able to think in the manner of the fishermen (the Apostles), and not like Aristotle" (This without prejudice to the great values of science). One student of christianity rightly observed: "When we speak of 'spirit', when we say that God is 'spirit', what do we mean? Do we have the Greek or Hebrew tongue in mind? If Greek, then we are saying he is immaterial, but if Hebrew then we are saying God is a hurricane, a violent storm, an irresistible power. Here lies the source of so much ambiguity when we speak of spirituality. Does spirituality mean becoming immaterial or in being animated by the Holy Spirit?"³⁰

³⁰ J. DANIELOU, quoted in CONGAR, *Credo nello Spirito Santo*, I, p. 18, Queriniana 1981

True spirituality is always accompanied by courage and enthusiasm because it is conscious of this constant animation of the Spirit.

We know that he is accustomed to manifest his power not in a "strong wind", nor in an "earthquake", nor in "fire", but paradoxically in a "still small voice", as the prophet Elijah discovered;³¹ but his power remains always irresistible. The Holy Spirit presents himself not so much as "absolute power" but rather as "infinite Love"; he touches the heart in an efficacious manner, he strengthens the "interior man"; he is present in an almost hidden way. The "spiritual man" is his masterpiece, the fruit of the energy of his gift of charity.

³¹ 1 Kings 19, 11-14

This gentle presence is therefore efficacious

through the power of Love. And the power of love is the strength of unity: a unity which does not suppress distinction but which excludes separation; it is like a reflection of the mystery of God. The unity found in the Trinity is not something previous to the Persons, but depends on their distinction: it proceeds from the supreme ecstasy of love of the mutual and total donation of the individual Persons; it is a dynamic unity, the fruit of the reciprocal self-donation of the Three; in the Holy Spirit it has the unifying explosion of the whole strength of divine love. Certainly, the Trinity is a "mystery", but if God were not three he would not be "Love; and we would know nothing of his Spirit and we would never understand the "grace of unity" which he pours into our heart with pastoral charity!

"In fact the Holy Spirit is God's extreme manifestation of himself outside the Trinity, in human history: through the "mystery of union in Christ", through the "strength of communion" in the Church, through the "grace of unity" in the person, through the "power that draws all things together" in the unfolding history of humanity and in the whole of creation; all this in so far as it is the power of love that carries the universe along in view of the recapitulation of all things in Christ."

The launching pad of spirituality is to be found in our putting ourselves in harmony with the Spirit so as to be guided by his strength. With him is rendered possible a real synthesis between faith and life: unity in distinction and distinction in unity, or in other words a living bond, coordination, completion and sublimation. It ensures that the christian identity is an expression of a unified personality, endowed with social and apostolic creativity for its task in the world.

There is much more to be said about spirituality, but the first step requiring attention is precisely this being rooted in the Spirit. This is something outside all fashions and utopias. "Both the narrowly conservative and the wildly progressive are usually unable to discern the authentic presence of the Holy Spirit: the former because he often expresses himself outside the ways so dear to them, and the latter because they lose their bearings when events do not turn out according to their expectations.

Fortunately this spiritual rooting process has long been the object of our concern in the Congregation. The whole process of our post-conciliar renewal has been directed in this sense; one need only refer back to the reflections we have frequently made on our "interior apostolic convictions" (in commenting on art. 3 of the Constitutions).

What appears urgent however is the task of intensifying the spiritual atmosphere in every community and in every confrere: to bear witness together to the presence of the Holy Spirit through a pastoral charity which enables us to live each day the "da mihi animas" which enables us to repeat with the Psalmist: "With God we shall do bravely and he will trample down our foes"³², and so drive away all discouragement or attitude of resignation.

³² Ps 107,14

In the great channel of "salesian" spirituality.

To our kind of spirituality we give the name "salesian".

The term refers back to St Francis de Sales, one of the greatest figures in christian spirituality. The first one to use this word was Don Bosco himself.

When he persuaded his first group of boys to stay with him to practise the pastoral charity characteristic of his mission of education, the name he gave them was "Salesians".³³ It was also his wish that the religious institute he founded be known officially as the "Society of St Francis de Sales". He wanted his followers to look to St Francis de Sales as a "zealous pastor and doctor of charity", the phrase used in the Constitutions,³⁴ which specify also that in this way he intended to draw his inspiration from the Saint's "goodness and zeal",³⁵ giving priority to attitudes of loving kindness, joy, dialogue, community life, friendship and constant patience, following the rich "humanism"³⁶ that characterized the life and activity of the tireless Bishop of Geneva.

It may be of interest to recognize that Don Bosco's attraction to St Francis de Sales goes back to the years of his formation and further pastoral training: "the charity and kindness of St Francis de Sales", he wrote in the fourth of the resolutions made at his first Mass, "will be my guide in everything".³⁷ This attraction never weakened in his later life, as is clear from what he did and caused to be done in honour of his Patron.³⁸

In adopting and applying the term "salesian" also to the spirituality of youth, the capitular document does not intend to put it forward as "the distinctive mark of a certain group; it indicates, rather the charismatic source"³⁹ which, through Don Bosco, is linked with the broad spiritual current of St Francis de Sales, totally dedicated to the following of Christ drawn by the loving kindness of the heart of the Saviour.

This name was not chosen therefore for competitive reasons, savouring of self-love, as if it were

³³ cf. BM 5, 8

³⁴ C 9

³⁵ C 4

³⁶ C 17

³⁷ *Spiritual writings of St John Bosco*

³⁸ GC23, cf. BM Analytical Index

³⁹ GC23, 158

a question of naming a sporting team to compete with others: no, here it is case of evangelical identification within a wide context of spiritual choice that is highly praised by the Church and particularly relevant because of its harmony with conciliar directives: one need only recall that the recent Apostolic Exhortation "Christifideles laici" concludes its 4th chapter, dealing with the variety of workers in the Lord's vineyard, by quoting from a page of a particularly significant work on spirituality by St Francis de Sales.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ cf. CL 56

For us too I think it important to emphasize this broad and ecclesial aspect of the adjective "salesian", so as to restore St Francis de Sales to a more fitting and influential place in our spirituality; he is, in fact, the doctor of that kind of pastoral charity which is the summation and centre of our apostolic spirit.⁴¹

⁴¹ cf. C 10

In a circular of 1921 Fr Paul Albera, Don Bosco's second successor, exhorted the confreres to celebrate worthily the third centenary of the death of St Francis de Sales (28 December of the following year 1922): "We, who must take from him not only his name but also his spirit," he wrote, "have a duty to surpass all others in celebrating the event worthily". He said that the decision to choose "Salesians" as our name had been providential ("wisely and splendidly in line with God's designs"); and he added: "It makes Don Bosco's mission at the present day seem like a reflection, or better a continuation, of that initiative of Francis himself three hundred years ago. For this reason... the third centenary of the death of our Patron should prompt us primarily to a deeper and more intimate study of his life and writings in relation to our own work, known already by association of name as "salesian

work", and for that very reason destined to spread and popularize by every means his spirit and teaching, already perfectly assimilated by Don Bosco and genially inserted into his system of education".⁴²

St Francis de Sales, together with other great people like St Teresa, St John of the Cross, St Ignatius of Loyola, etc., is one of those who started up a spiritual movement of strong renewal.

He made attractive the living of the Gospel in the world for people of every condition and state of life; he brought interior piety into harmony with external activity; he gave importance to life's daily occupations; he struggled against the rigorism which was to characterize Jansenism; he insisted on the need of a practical spirituality for all. He called this spiritual renewal "devotion", a name that many do not like at the present day because it smacks of a simple adherence to religious practices without any underlying depth of life; but for him it meant the new spirituality, i.e. a level of charity "which makes us work diligently, frequently and readily"; "it is a kind of nimble spiritual agility": "to be 'devout'," he wrote, "in addition to charity you need a lively willingness in all you do"; this makes charity ready, active and diligent".⁴³ And he further declares that "the 'devout life' is agreeable, easy and congenial", "it is the perfection of charity".⁴⁴ "Devotion" can be adapted to every vocation and profession, it does no harm to anything, in fact it makes everything better"; "to try to eliminate the 'devout life' from the soldier's barracks, from the workshop of the tradesman, from the court of royalty, from the bridal chamber, is a mistake – even more than that, it is a heresy".⁴⁵

His "Introduction to the Devout Life" ("Philothea") launched a true message of spirituality for

⁴² *Lettere Circolari* - Don Albera pp. 552-553

⁴³ *Oeuvres de Saint Francois de Sales. Edition complete*, Vol III (1893), *Introduction a la Vie Devote*, Part I, Chap I, p. 13-16 passim

⁴⁴ *ibid.* Chap II, p. 16-19 passim

⁴⁵ *ibid.* Chap III, p. 19-20

everyone, reestablishing the importance of the laity and of human work. It achieved the success it deserved: more than 1,300 editions! a treasure which not even the mentality of today has discarded. "If there exists in the world", wrote a recent biographer of the Saint, "a revolutionary book, this is it: the inclusion of all human existence in 'devotion', the inserting in God of all we desire, everything we think and do and love, all we hope for and all we achieve".⁴⁶

Don Bosco, after choosing St Francis de Sales as his Patron, and his motto 'da mihi animas' as a synthesis of his own spirituality, showed (as I have just pointed out) a deep affinity for this vision and found it so congenial as to apply it in creative fashion to youthful perspectives in his preventive system, and in the involvement of so many forces in what we now know as the "Salesian" Family.⁴⁷

But the missionary heart of St Francis de Sales, as well as feeling the pressing need to launch a spiritual renewal for everyone, realized that this would require doctrinal enlightenment concerning the love of charity, at least for those more committed. For this reason he drew up his "Treatise on the love of God", thought out and written in the midst of his many pastoral activities; it was a book born of reflection on his apostolic experience and aimed at the fomenting of evangelizing activity. A book of life, almost an autobiography: the effort to make constant progress in spiritual growth, not along monastic lines but in an apostolic life plan. Today we would describe it as the work of a committed author, a "vade mecum" for the disciple who wants to live in the world as a believer. Spirituality should permeate life itself, all the unforeseen vicissitudes of daily life, with its joys and sufferings,

⁴⁶ GIORGIO PAPASOGLI, *Come piace a Dio*, Città Nuova Ed. 1981, p. 366

⁴⁷ cf. J. PICCA and J. STRUS, *San Francesco di Sales e i Salesiani di Don Bosco* - LAS Rome 1986

friendships and separations, difficulties and consolations. From this point of view it goes more deeply, in particular, to the spiritual value of the "ecstasy of action", involving every christian in being a true disciple of Christ in the midst of the responsibilities and concerns associated with his existence: a living between faith and practice.

One of his succinct intuitions is well known: "man is the perfection of the universe; the spirit is the perfection of man; love is the perfection of the spirit, and charity is the perfection of love".⁴⁸

It is an apostolic spirituality to which Don Bosco felt an attraction. It is not therefore without significance that our Founder, in his last days, entrusted Fr Giulio Barberis, who was novice-master, with the task of making St Francis de Sales better known by writing a life of him "suited to the young and embodying the christian life".⁴⁹

In his turn Fr Philip Rinaldi, as Rector Major, asked Fr Eugene Ceria to make a deeper study of the works of St Francis and his doctrine, and make them better known in the Congregation.

John Paul II has said of Don Bosco that he was a "genius of the heart"; in St Francis de Sales the heart found not only one of the most genial interpreters of its human riches made perfect by charity, but also a keen and contemplative thinker able to discern its beating even to the highest level of the gift of itself in apostolic activity.

Many in the Church find themselves attracted by the Bishop of Geneva's brand of spirituality. Pope John XXIII, for instance, called him "my Francis de Sales"; and as long ago as 29 January 1903 wrote of him in his "Journal of a Soul": "What a fine figure of a man, of a priest, of a bishop! If I could be like him nothing would upset me,

⁴⁸ *Oeuvres... o.c.* Vol V (1894), *Traite de l'Amour de Dieu*, Vol II, Book X, chap. I, p. 165

⁴⁹ G. BARBERIS, *Vita di S. Francesco di Sales; libri quattro proposti alla gioventu*, I, 5 - Turin, Libreria Salesiana, 1902

not even if they made me Pope".⁵⁰

⁵⁰ JOHN XXIII, *Journal of a Soul*

And so when we speak of "salesian" spirituality we feel ourselves to be going ahead with Don Bosco in a broad spiritual current, on which St Francis de Sales has impressed in a dynamic and incarnate form the supreme seal of the particular love of apostolic charity.

This is an appellation therefore for relaunching among youth a taste for God, the festivity that is life, commitment for history, responsibility for all created things and a willing and generous sharing in ecclesial responsibility.

Following Don Bosco.

We are called "Salesians of Don Bosco.

Our "salesian" spirituality has been left to us by the Founder as a legacy; it refers, says the chapter document, to "our spiritual experience as Don Bosco's followers";⁵¹ it is linked with the devout humanism of St Francis de Sales "*reinterpreted*" by Don Bosco in the experience of the Oratory".⁵²

⁵¹ GC23, 92

⁵² GC23, 158

We have to ask ourselves in what this "reinterpretation" consists. The response would take us far afield, but the main line to follow is, I think, happily found in something Fr Philip Rinaldi said, and which can be found quoted in a Salesian Bulletin: "St Francis de Sales is the Master of a spiritual doctrine which emerges in a living form from his immortal writings; Don Bosco, on the other hand, has expressed his spirituality not on paper but by impressing it on the Society he created... The doctrine was there already; God called Don Bosco to make it effective by bringing it to life in the Family he had founded for the salvation of the young".⁵³

⁵³ *Bollettino Salesiano*, "Don Bosco alla scuola di S. Francesco di Sales", August 1967, 1-4

Our salesian spirituality therefore is shaped and deeply enriched by the doctrine of St Francis de Sales, but it has its own characteristics with a strong pedagogical dimension, for the young and the poor, impressed on it by Don Bosco; in an original way they indicate Don Bosco's features.

The legacy of a Founder is not something static, but "is transmitted to his followers to be lived by them, to be preserved, deepened and constantly developed in harmony with the Body of Christ continually in a process of growth".⁵⁴

The Pope specifically reminded us of this, speaking of the educational practice of our Father: "His educational message needs to be studied at still greater depth, to be adapted and renewed with intelligence and courage, precisely because of changed social, cultural, ecclesial and pastoral contexts".⁵⁵

Our spirituality and that of the young are in a certain sense distinct, but they are strictly and mutually connected in such a way that they can never be separated. We recall, for example, how the confreres used to pray with their pupils, and that the "Companion of Youth" was in practice a common book of prayer for all.⁵⁶ Justly has it been said that Don Caviglia's commentary on the "Life of Dominic Savio" (written by Don Bosco), while going deeply into the subject of youth spirituality, is also a valid study of the spirituality of the holy educator himself.

The Constitutions, on the other hand, assure us that the spirituality we live and to which we bear witness through our plan of salesian life "is the most precious gift we can offer to the young".⁵⁷

What then is the kind of spirituality that defines us?

⁵⁴ MR 11

⁵⁵ IP 13

⁵⁶ The "Companion of Youth" was published by Don Albera only in 1916.

⁵⁷ C 25

It is well known that being rooted in the Holy Spirit is one and only, but it can take many forms. He gives rise to a marvellous multiplicity of spiritual attitudes, with an inexhaustible fertility and continuous creativity.

Without going into all the delicate and complex problems, what we want to do here is gather together some of the characteristic traits of the specific spirituality of Don Bosco, so as to have a snapshot of our spiritual physiognomy, because it is on that that we must concentrate our efforts of renewal. The Holy Spirit himself has helped us to take this snapshot in the General Chapters of the post-Vatican II period, and in this way we have been able to present to the Church our "identity card" through the renewed text of the Constitutions.

The document of the GC23 provides us with an opportunity of emphasizing in this research an interesting new approach: that of rethinking the elements that specify our spirituality⁵⁸ starting from the standpoint of the youth spirituality we have experienced in recent years.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Cf. C 1-3, 10-21

⁵⁹ GC23, 158-180

The spirituality of the young is of a "starting" kind; it conforms to the law of gradualism and is subject to development with time and the high and low points associated with youth instability. It must be adaptable to circumstances and help the young on the basis of their actual state and situation at the moment.

From the earliest years of his priesthood, Don Bosco perceived intuitively the possibility of accompanying the young to the fullness of christian life, in proportion to their age, with a kind of youth spirituality organized around some key-ideas open to the faith, due in some measure to the usage of his time but prophetic none the less, and promoted

with enthusiasm and a genial educational thrust. The GC23 has taken a new look at these key-ideas and invites them to organize the life of young people around them, and emphasize them through choice of values and gospel attitudes.⁶⁰

The text of the document refers to them as “fundamental nuclei”, and without pretending to be exclusive suggests the following:

- *a basis of practical realism centered on “daily life”;*

(Don Bosco used to speak of a “religious sense of duty” at the different moments of the day;

- *an attitude of hope permeated by “joy”, linked with the values associated with youthful growth;*
(Don Bosco had already written in the “Companion of Youth”: “I want to teach you a christian method that will make you happy and content even now: let us serve the Lord in holy joy”);

- *a strong and personal friendship with “Christ”, known and frequented in prayer, the Eucharist and the Gospel;*

(Don Bosco considered eucharistic pedagogy as the culminating point of his educational practice);

- *an ever more responsible and courageous sense of membership of the “Church”, both particular and universal;*⁶¹

(Don Bosco inculcated in the young a great love for the Church, the Pope and the Bishops);

- *a practical and industrious “commitment” of service, according to one’s own social responsibilities and the material and spiritual needs of others;*⁶²

(Don Bosco took care to involve the best of his youngsters in practical apostolic activity);

- and, as a family atmosphere for growth, a

⁶⁰ GC23, 158

⁶¹ GC23, 171-172

⁶² cf. GC23, 161

Marian dimension which implied entrustment with simplicity and confidence to the Motherly help of our Blessed Lady;⁶³

⁶³ GC23, 157, 177

(Don Bosco saw devotion to Mary as the support for growth in faith in the young).

These key-points or fundamental nuclei, combined with the consideration of the *four dimensions of the journey of faith* (the human person, Christ, Church, Kingdom),⁶⁴ prompt us to rethink the preventive system as the living expression and pedagogical practice of our specific spirituality, or in other words "as a way of living and of handing on the gospel message".⁶⁵ From this angle of the journey of faith of the young we can look again at the principal elements that characterize our spiritual countenance as Salesians of Don Bosco.

⁶⁴ cf. GC23, 120-156

⁶⁵ C 20; cf. GC23, 326, 350

Here it is only a matter of pointing them out, because each of them has already been considered and developed in these years following the Council, even though one may hope to see eventually a deeper and more organic overall study of them.

To recall them, starting from the standpoint of the education of youth to the faith, will be able to contribute to the programming of ongoing formation, so much recommended by the Chapter, and make it more practical. Here are the main ones:

— *In the first place internal apostolic conviction*:⁶⁶ this is our basic spiritual driving force; together with the grace of unity that comes from pastoral charity, it places us on the road to the spirituality of the active life, combining "consecration" and "mission" internally in a synthesis of life that is radiantly apostolic: "a spontaneous expression of love", say the Constitutions, "inspired by the love of a God who provides in advance for all his creatures, is ever present at their side, and freely gives

⁶⁶ GC23, 221

⁶⁷ C 20

his life to save them".⁶⁷ This particular and fundamental "internal apostolic conviction" implies for us that "spiritual and pastoral renewal are two aspects which are mutually compenetrated and inter-dependent".⁶⁸

⁶⁸ GC23, 217

Between these two aspects there is, for us, a mutual immanence and true reciprocity; but they have their causal source in the personal life of union with God.

⁶⁹ GC23, 103, 112, 113, 118, 130, 131, 132, and *passim*

— *Then, the testimony provided by the central position of Christ, the Good Shepherd:*⁶⁹ he is the living and existential centre of our consecrated life (practice of the evangelical counsels). All consecrated persons are centred on Christ, but our specific witness is characterized by the pedagogical and pastoral standpoint from which we see Christ as the "Good Shepherd", who created man and loves his attributes, who redeemed him and pardons his sins, and who makes him a new creature through his Spirit. This central position of Christ, the Good Shepherd, must shine like the sun in our environments through a new eucharistic enthusiasm and a host of initiatives expressing a daily manner of living and educating which "permeates our approach to God, our personal relationships, and our manner of living in community through the exercise of a charity that knows how to make itself loved".⁷⁰ The emphasis on Christ as the Good Shepherd certainly implies dedication to the young even to the cross, but also points to the attitude that conquers "by gentleness and self-giving",⁷¹ by gentleness, loving kindness and friendship, developing the whole spiritual ascesis of "make yourself loved" which is characteristic of the oratorian heart.⁷²

⁷⁰ C 20⁷¹ C 11⁷² cf. AGC 326

The chapter document insists on the elimination of distance between us and the young people: "the

first thing we have to do is to remove this gap between us, approach them and get close to them”,⁷³ be able to give “due value to the patrimony every youngster has in himself”,⁷⁴ and offer him a setting that is full of life and presents so many opportunities”.⁷⁵

⁷³ GC23, 97

⁷⁴ GC23, 99

⁷⁵ GC23, 100

This first step for beginning the journey together is called “presence”, and is a value we need to salvage! Not just any kind of presence but a pastoral presence or, if you wish, a ministerial or even sacramental presence, because it must be one that brings Christ with it; attentive, by all means, to the feelings and aspirations of the young, but bearing in itself clear evangelical messages and a clearly evident love of charity.

— And then, *educational commitment as our “mission”*:⁷⁶ our way of following Christ is marked “by a special gift of God: predilection for the young... For their welfare we give generously of our time, talents and health”.⁷⁷ Our mission in the Church is specifically characterized by the practice of education: “Don Bosco has taught us to recognize God’s operative presence in our work of education, and to experience it as life and love”.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ GC23, 94, 95, 102, 104, 106, 108 etc.

⁷⁷ C 14

⁷⁸ GC23, 94

We know that “our mission sets the tenor of our whole life; it specifies the task we have in the Church and our place among other religious families”.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ C 3

In this way, for our spirituality our work of education becomes the preeminent context in which we meet God”.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ GC23, 95

Because it is “educational”, this spirituality will always be attentive to the world context and to the challenges of youth: it will call for flexibility, creativity and balance,⁸¹ and will seek seriously the appropriate pedagogical qualifications. The same sa-

⁸¹ Cf. C 19

lesian consecration which inwardly “thirsts for souls” assumes the pedagogical values and lives them as a concrete expression of spirituality.

In the context of the mission, I think it will be helpful to emphasize also the influence exercised on our spirituality in concrete ways by the presence of the young and the poor among those Don Bosco left us as the priority group among our beneficiaries! The original ascesis of “make yourself loved” is an evangelical response to so many things these youngsters lack; it reminds us too that contact with poor youth did not arouse in Don Bosco even a shadow of ideological reaction, but rather a pedagogical intensification of pastoral charity to reawaken in him and in his followers the fatherly and motherly love of the mission of education.

— *the need to be practical in ecclesial matters*:⁸² an authentic sense of Church should be present both in the life of the community and in educational and pastoral activities. Salesian life and work is a concrete experience of Church: we consider ourselves situated “at the heart of the Church”,⁸³ “we feel ourselves a living part of her, and we cultivate in ourselves and in our communities a renewed ecclesial awareness. This we express in an attitude of filial loyalty to Peter’s successor and to his teaching, and in our efforts to live in communion and collaboration with the bishops, clergy, religious and laity”.⁸⁴

The third “dimension of the journey of faith” proposed in the chapter document deals precisely with the steps to be taken and the attitudes to be cultivated for “an intense ecclesial membership”; and the fourth of the fundamental nuclei of youth spirituality insists in turn on the formation of ecclesial communion, in its concrete expressions of local

⁸² GC23, 140 ff, 169 ff, 222, 226

⁸³ C 6

⁸⁴ C 13

structures and universal institution with an “explicit love of the Pope and a convinced adherence to his teaching”.⁸⁵ This kind of attention to ecclesial communion enlivens also the whole field of vocational activity.

⁸⁵ GC23, 172

This is a spirituality, therefore, which makes us feel it and see it objectively as a real “gift” of the Spirit to the Church to intensify communion in it and collaborate in its mission: The needs of the young and of working-class areas, the desire to work with the Church and in her name, inspire and shape our concrete pastoral activity so as to bring about a more just world and one of greater brotherhood in Christ”.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ C 7

— Another characteristic element is *joy in hard work*.⁸⁷ this is an aspect inherent in the whole of the oratory style and in a psychology that looks to the future of the adolescent heart. We were born on the “Hill of the Youth Beatitudes”, and we spread its evangelical riches throughout the world. We live a spirituality of family joy, shared in an atmosphere of mutual trust and daily forgiveness,⁸⁸ completely permeated by a hope that “radiates joy and is able to educate to a christian and festive way of life”,⁸⁹ because we practise a pedagogy that “believes in man’s natural and supernatural resources, without losing sight of his weakness”.⁹⁰ This atmosphere of joy and optimism is neither ingenuity nor superficiality, but the fruit of true theological hope and well thought out pedagogical harmony with so many positive values placed by the Creator in the heart of the young.

⁸⁷ GC23, 152, 165, 166

⁸⁸ C 16

⁸⁹ C 17

⁹⁰ C 17

Precisely because it is the fruit of hope, it is a joy lived in an intense activity – made up of “work and temperance”, or in other words in an ascetic

commitment constantly present in the realization of the mission.⁹¹

⁹¹ cf. C 18

— And finally, *the Marian dimension*:⁹² our educational mission is a participation in Mary's ecclesial motherhood. This is a dimension that merits a special comment, and we shall give it later on.

⁹² GC23, 157, 177

Here we merely add that Don Bosco's salesian spirituality, reconsidered from the standpoint of the journey of faith of today's youth, becomes for us the soul of the new evangelization, "new", as the Pope said, "in its enthusiasm, in its method, in its expressions", or in other words animated by enthusiasm and adapted to the times which implies a vast and delicate change of mentality.⁹³ The GC23 was clearly aware of this; it declared in fact that "its context is new, as also are the general objectives towards which it tends: it is a matter of renewing the human texture of society, by accepting as the primary task the renewal of evangelical spirit in ecclesial communities".⁹⁴

⁹³ cf. AGC 331

⁹⁴ GC23, 4

We have therefore a quite specific salesian spirituality with concrete aspects on which we must concentrate the programming of ongoing formation in the provinces and houses, as we seek also to study more deeply the heart of Don Bosco.

We form evangelizing communities.

I said to you in the Presentation of the Acts of the GC23 that the first subject to whom the chapter document is addressed, the guiding principle that binds together the various parts of the text, is our community of consecrated persons: this is the principle recipient of the document; to this belongs the

responsibility and commitment of realizing the journey of faith for the young. Every community therefore will have to concern itself with salesian spirituality at two levels: that of bringing about its gradual growth in their young people, and that of bearing witness to it in their own daily life.

There are three complementary aspects proposed to our care and attention: the community as a "*sign of faith*",⁹⁵ as a "*school of faith*",⁹⁶ and as a "*centre of communion and participation*".⁹⁷

⁹⁵ GC23, 216⁹⁶ GC23, 217⁹⁷ GC23, 218

The community's primary animators, the Provincial and the Rector, must be able to apply the post-chapter programme to this objective: "Ongoing formation therefore, which qualifies the Salesian for his mission as educator and pastor, must become an unalterable constant in his life".⁹⁸ We must become aware of the urgent need to give rise in the environment to a salesian youth spirituality, and consequently to put the community in a state of spiritual fertility, leading it (as the text says) "to rethink and renew itself in the light of the Gospel and of our Rule of life:⁹⁹ or in other words to go ahead seriously with the process of renewal that has been already indicated for years past. The provincial and local communities therefore will have to take their task seriously, drawing up programmes, making assessments, and constantly reviewing what has been laid down in this connection in the deliberations of the Chapter.

⁹⁸ GC23, 220⁹⁹ GC23, 215

Let us look at the three aspects indicated in the text:

— *The community as a "sign of faith"* calls for a serious rethinking of the authenticity of its own evangelical witness. The fundamental condition consists in this: to live and work together as a group of believers in the salesian manner, pro-

claiming existentially the mystery of Christ the Good Shepherd by living Don Bosco's Rule. The community itself becomes the "faith-sign" in so far as its members express in their daily life with joy and constancy the values of salesian spirituality totally directed to the young.

The text insists particularly on attention to the "internal apostolic conviction".¹⁰⁰ On more than one occasion we have devoted space to the consideration of vital elements that constitute the same. Very recently we noted that Don Rinaldi seemed the "authoritative interpreter of our apostolic interiority".¹⁰¹ It would be a good thing to read that message again. There we shall find that salesian spirituality has as its source and supreme value union with God; "creative and dynamic apostolic commitment springs constantly from the ardour of the love of God: thence proceeds the famous "grace of unity" of our pastoral charity!

Let us recall the three elements indicated there: "thirst for souls (the fine commentary on *da mihi animas*), tireless apostolic work, and fidelity to daily prayer".¹⁰² These are elements that must find a place in the content of programmes of ongoing formation in response to the challenges, if we want to become "signs and bearers of the love of God for young people, especially those who are poor".¹⁰³ In this way we shall become "spiritual men" and communities, able to raise up and animate a practical salesian youth spirituality in the circumstances of the present day.

— *The community as a "school of faith"* is what "makes the mission the reason for its existence and work".¹⁰⁴ Here comes into play the pedagogical dimension of community activity. If we are to be valid educators, our internal apostolic convic-

¹⁰⁰ GC23, 221

¹⁰¹ AGC 332, p. 38 ff.

¹⁰² *ibid.* p. 39 ff.

¹⁰³ C 2

¹⁰⁴ GC23, 217

tion must include a greater knowledge of the world of the young and our presence in it; this is a characteristic aspect of all our activity, which must be simultaneously spiritual, pastoral and educational.

"A truly qualitative leap is needed, a return among youth with renewed pastoral sensitivity and a more marked educational ability".¹⁰⁵ To define and give efficacious guidance to its effort in this sense, the community must draw up, apply, revise and carefully update its "educational and pastoral plan", keeping in mind the journey of faith proposed by the GC23, and translating it into concrete processes suited to the kind of young people and the context of the work.

¹⁰⁵ GC23, 225

To be a "school of faith" today it is indispensable to combine "being signs" with "being friends", to have fire in the heart and sacrifice in self-giving, to practise at one and the same time union with God and the cultivation of direct experience of the youth world, by "listening to their questions and aspirations, acquiring their culture and their language, and willingness to share experiences and projects worked out not only for them, but also and more especially with them".¹⁰⁶ It is not a matter of weakening the "sign", but of making it educationally meaningful. If our presence has no pastoral and educational significance in the locality and in the Church, it cannot be considered a "school of faith".

¹⁰⁶ GC23, 225

But it is also indispensable for this purpose that the community become a living experience of Church, and concretely of the local Church (parish, diocese, episcopal conference); and so "it must be clearly inserted in the plans and projects of the local Church for pastoral work in the youth sector. It must learn to receive incentives from it, but also to

¹⁰⁷ GC23, 226

communicate experiences".¹⁰⁷

For this reason the chapter deliberations remind both provincial and local communities of various responsibilities they have. Only in a community that is a "school of faith" can flourish an education that will be a "pedagogy of holiness".

— *The community as a "centre of communion and participation"* refers equally to the wider educative community and to the various Groups of the Salesian Family.

¹⁰⁸ GC23, 218

"The community", says the text, "by virtue of its consecrated life, becomes a centre of communion and participation, capable of gathering together and stimulating those whom the Spirit calls to work with youth".¹⁰⁸

This is a perspective that was launched by earlier General Chapters, but it has urgent need of realization with greater common purpose and greater efficacy and dedication. The present chapter deliberations are clear and compelling. Failure to put them into effect would be a sign of inability, or of lack of attention, or of convenience; in other words it reduces to a lack of salesian spirituality. It would be a sad thing if we had to watch the decline of some of our works because of the lack of enthusiasm in the hearts of the confreres. The "spiritual men" can be found in all ages and conditions of life; the "oratorian heart" is a salesian *sine qua non* from first profession to the last breath.

According to the chapter document, the central point of this third community commitment is the *involvement of the laity*. The term 'laity' is a broad one and is not applied in the same way to all. In our experience we distinguish different groups: that of the "Cooperators" (for living the christian vocation to the full), that of the "Past-pupils" (linked

more with the cultural and educational aspect), that of the "Collaborators" (which also includes people from the previous two groups, but can be much wider), and that of "Members of the educative community" (including especially the parents of the young people for whom we work, as well as all those who work with us for youth).

The involvement and utilization of the laity demands in the confreres the ability to establish with them relationships of mature sharing of responsibility, according to the nature of the group. This is not an easy thing to do; it involves a deep change of mentality and adequate treatment and relationships. But above all it calls for the ability to undertake with them "a process of formation. Experiences realized so far guarantee satisfactory results, even though with some difficulties".¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ GC23, 233

There, then, you have a very practical field for new kinds of commitment to salesian spirituality, and one that is open and in harmony with all lay conditions. And so among the priorities in our programming there will be the formation of lay people!

Further on, the Chapter recalls the importance of organization in our work, the urgency of vocational commitment, the claims of social communication, and goes on to provide some practical guidelines for particular situations. They are all very practical indications so that the community may become a leading factor in the new evangelization among youth. The great secret for getting everything going is always salesian spirituality, witnessed to by the community as a "sign of faith", as a "school of faith" and as a "centre of communion and participation".

Dear Provincials, dear Rectors, and dear Con-

freres all, let us get down with great good will to do something more, and at once.

Under the guidance of the Help of Christians, Lodestar of the new evangelization.

Before concluding I think it would be very useful, and for us particularly gratifying, to add one further reflection: concerning the Marian dimension of our spirituality. This, as I said earlier, is referred to in various parts of the chapter document.

Salesian spirituality is strongly Marian, as for that matter is every spirituality.

The Pope expressed the hope that Mary Help of Christians would be for our Family "the Star of the new evangelization".¹¹⁰ Let us look therefore at this Star, and let us allow ourselves to be led by her as our "Teacher and Guide".

We have seen that the fundamental and enlivening element in any spirituality is that it is rooted in the Holy Spirit.

Now, after Christ Mary is the most lofty expression of the work of the Holy Spirit in the history of salvation: she is the Spirit's masterpiece. The more you look at Mary the more you can understand and participate very much better in the enlivening presence of the Holy Spirit.

From Vatican II onwards efforts have been made to delve more deeply into the relationship between Mary and the Holy Spirit. Pope Paul VI in "Marialis cultus" emphasized the fruitfulness of so doing: "Such a study", he said, "will bring out in particular the hidden relationship between the Spirit of God and the Virgin of Nazareth, and show the influence they exert on the Church".¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ GC23, 335

¹¹¹ MC 27

It is not difficult to observe that Mary's entire existence is marked by the Holy Spirit to such an extent that she may be considered his "Icon" or, as "Lumen gentium" puts it, the "temple" (Latin: "sacrarium") of the Holy Spirit,¹¹² i.e. the central part, secret and reserved, of the temple; from there she is the bearer of the Holy Spirit for all. This is indicated also by the titles the Council used in her regard: "Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediator"¹¹³, all of which proclaim in her a special and significant harmony with the vitalizing work of the "other Paraclete". Mary is the masterpiece, the image and bearer of the Holy Spirit because by him she was "fashioned and formed as a new creature":¹¹⁴

112 LG 53

113 LG 62

114 LG 56

- in her Conception she is "Immaculate": the beginning of the new creation, full of grace;
- in the Annunciation she is the "Virgin Mother": the living Ark of the new Covenant;
- at Christmas she is the "Fulfilment of the Promise": the Mother of Christ the Messiah;
- at the Visitation she is "Prophetic wisdom": the Believer who reads the book of history;
- on Calvary she is the "Mother of all men": the new Eve of redeemed humanity;
- at Pentecost she is the "Queen of Apostles": the great Intercessor on behalf of the Church;
- in her Assumption she is the "Helper of all": who pleads for our final salvation.

Such greatness and excellence in her is the work of the Holy Spirit; she is situated at the meeting-point of the Old and New Testaments; she is the "Daughter of Sion". the "Icon of the Mystery" and the Model of the Church, linked to the Holy Spirit to such an extent that she is inseparably linked with his plan of salvation, imploring his presence for all,

and accompanying his gifts in motherly fashion (think, for instance, of the history of our own charisma); for this reason she shines brightly through the centuries as the Star of evangelization.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ cf. EN 82

In her we find the prototype of all spirituality; in fact, said the Council, Mary, “committing herself wholeheartedly to God’s saving will and impeded by no sin, devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under and with him serving the mystery of redemption, by the grace of Almighty God”.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ LG 56

We can gather something of this unique spirituality of hers from the prophetic canticle of the “Magnificat”.¹¹⁷ in which Mary proclaims that she is full of joy, above every weakness, convinced of God’s merciful strength, that he loves us and looks to us for great things, thus giving continual proof of his power, overcoming difficulties and providing a response to challenges; he is always faithful with his People and carries them, as he promised, to final victory.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Lk 1, 46-55

The Magnificat is indeed the hymn of christian spirituality for every new evangelization; it is an expression of enthusiasm, because it embodies a keen glance of faith, a sure plan of hope, and the immortal hymn of saving love.

Finally, a positive omen.

Allow me, dear confreres, to repeat here in conclusion what I suggested to the members at the end of the GC23: “Our Congregation was solemnly entrusted to Mary on 14 January 1984, at the beginning of the GC22. The Constitutions say that this entrustment helps us to ‘become witnesses to the

young of her Son's boundless love'.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ C 8

To her we entrust our intention to proceed on the journey of faith, intensifying our attention to the salesian spirituality of Don Bosco and our deeper understanding of it. We ask her to help us to share with the young that magnificent "spiritual patrimony" proper to the christian humanism of St Francis de Sales and used successfully and in masterly fashion by our Father for the benefit of youngsters of the poorer classes. Mary herself guided our Founder in this educative experience and taught him how to lead young people to holiness. As a motherly response to our entrustment to her we await, through Mary's intercession, the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which will ensure for us truly oratorian hearts so as to be in the world valid educators of youth to the faith.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ GC23, 357

Rooted in the power of the Spirit, and overcoming every mistrust that might arise from difficult circumstances or from our own limitations, let us live with joy the salesian spirituality for the new evangelization, and proclaim to the world by our deeds the reasons for our hope and trust.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ cf. 1 Pet 3, 15

My best wishes to all of you, individuals and communities, for a successful application of the GC23; it will be our best way of preparing for the coming third millennium.

Affectionately in Don Bosco,

Don F. Viganò

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

With the General Chapter concluded, the Rector Major spent the month of May presiding over a plenary session of the new General Council. There was a pause, 12-14 May, for important meetings at Genoa and Alassio. The session ended with a pilgrimage (23-25 May) which took him and the Councillors to Colle Don Bosco, Valdocco and Mornese.

From 5 to 7 June he was at the Vatican, on the invitation of the Holy Father, at a meeting with the Presidents of the European Bishops Conferences to prepare for the European Synod of 1991.

On the 10th of the same month he was with the Don Bosco Volunteers at a meeting in Rome.

On 2 July he left for Turin, and then went on to Thonon in Savoy for a solemn "Salesian Family Day" organized by the Lyons Province for the so-called "baptism" of the Province under its new Patron: St Francis de Sales.

August 15 found him at Castelgandolfo with the Holy Father, and on various occasions he met with groups of confreres in different provinces to present the Acts of the GC23.

From 1 to 3 September he was away from the Generalate again to journey to Turin and to Lu Monferato, the town of Don Rinaldi,

where on 2 September he took part in solemn commemorations and festivities in honour of the new Beatus, while at Turin he had meetings with various groups of confreres.

On 8 September he was at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Rome to receive the first profession of 13 young confreres who had made their novitiate at Lanuvio.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

The new General Council, elected by the GC23 in the period 7-11 April 1990, immediately got down to its work in the service of the Congregation. Already in two meetings during the Chapter itself, in addition to dealing with certain matters concerning provinces, they had decided on an outline programme for a first "plenary" session which it seemed urgent to hold.

In point of fact, as soon as the Chapter ended on Saturday, 5 May, the Council met for an intense session that began on the 8th and finished on the Feast of Mary Help of Christians.

On the agenda for the numerous sittings (15 in all) figured numerous practical questions concerning the animation and ordinary government of the provinces, together with the examination of requests

and problems of individual confreres.

But the principal task occupying the attention of the Council in this period was the discernment for the appointment of a considerable number of provincials, rendered necessary by the number of those finishing their mandate. As always, the process of discernment involved a careful consideration of the results of consultations carried out in the provinces concerned, together with the needs and expectations of the provinces themselves, so as to detect the confrere best fitted to carry out the service of authority. In this way the General Council gave its consent for the appointment of the following 17 Provincials: Jean-Pierre Tafunga for Central Africa, Josef Keler (for a second term) for Austria, Albert Van Hecke for North Belgium, Fernand Nihoul for South Belgium, Joao Bosco Maciel for Brazil-Campo Grande, Georg Demming for North Germany, Joseph Thelekkatt for India-Guwahati, Giovanni Mazzali for Italy-Genoa, Luigi Testa for South-Italy, Gianantonio Bonato for Italy-Verona, Alfredo Picchioni (for a second term) for the Middle East, Francisco Javier Altamirano for Mexico-Mexico, Eusebio Munoz for Spain-Cordoba, Pedro Lopez for Spain-Madrid, Candido Orduna for Spain-Valencia, Amilcare Visintini for Uruguay, and Jose Angelo Divasson for Venezuela.

Also appointed was Fr Paolo Natali as Superior of the UPS Vice-Province. (At n. 5.3 of the present issue of the Acts will be found some information on the new Provincials.)

In these initial sittings, time was also found for a first general view of a programme for the coming six years, to be considered in detail in the following plenary session, called for the second half of September.

The session concluded with a pilgrimage of the entire Council to the places of our salesian origins, to unite in prayer at the beginning of the six-year mandate and draw inspiration from the spirit of the Founder. They were three days of intense spirituality: 23 May with a visit and celebration at Colle Don Bosco, 24 May participating in the Feast of Mary Help of Christians at Valdocco, and 25 May with a visit to Mornese and a celebration in honour of St Mary Mazzarello.

4.3 Activities of the Councillors

The Councillor for Formation

Fr Giuseppe Nicolussi, after passing some ten days in Chile and a few weeks in England, spent two months in Latin America, and took the opportunity to be present at

three meetings of Provincials and those in charge of formation, which had already been programmed earlier.

In Ecuador (Quito-Cumbaya) from 22 to 28 July he had a meeting with the Provincials, Delegates for Youth Pastoral Work, and formation guides of the Pacific-Caribbean Region on "The incidence of the values of 'insercion' in salesian formation". Between July 17 and 22, still in Ecuador, he took part in the annual meeting of the Provincials of the Region, visited the Salesian Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation, and updated his knowledge of the situation of formation in the Province of Quito.

From 31 July to 22 August he visited the six Brazilian provinces to take stock of the formation situation through contact with Provincials, their councils and formation commissions, and the communities for initial formation.

From 23 August to 2 September he was in the provinces of Buenos Aires, La Plata and Rosario in Argentina to note the state of formation, and to meet a group of confreres taking part in the 11th course of ongoing formation organized by the La Plata provincial conference.

From 2 to 5 September at Rosario, Argentina, he was present at a meeting of the provincials and formation personnel of the La Plata conference, which had as its theme

"The formation of the salesian brother".

Again in Brazil, from 7 to 9 September he was present at the meeting of provincials and formation guides of the provincial conference who were studying the topic: "The immediate preparation for priestly ordination".

On September 11 he returned to Rome.

The Councillor for Youth Pastoral Work

Fr Luc Van Looy made contact with various provinces, and especially with their youth pastoral teams.

After taking part (30-31 May) in a meeting of the delegates for the youth apostolate in the Italian provinces and being present at the National Council for youth pastoral work at Madrid from 1-4 June, he went on immediately to meet the consulting group on youth pastoral work at Montevideo from 6-10 June.

From there he went on to Chile and between 10 and 12 June made contact with those in charge of the province; at Santiago he was able to visit the course for the study of missionary projects, organized by the Missions Office of New Rochelle.

From 12 to 15 June he had a meeting with the delegates for youth pastoral work of the six pro-

vinces of Brazil, and then spent a further three days in the Province of Recife.

After a brief parenthesis at Rome, he took part in the conference of German-speaking provincials at Vienna from 22-24 June, and on that occasion was able to make contact with the delegates for youth pastoral work of the Austrian Province and that of Munich, and also with the Youth Pastoral Centre at Benediktbeuern in the South German Province. He got back to Rome in time to take part in the concluding part of the meeting of the Provincials of Italy at the Generalate on 13-14 July.

The period from 23-27 July he dedicated to the annual course of ongoing formation at San Tarcisio, Rome, and from 29 July to 5 August preached the retreat for the FMA novices at Castelgandolfo.

In August in company with Fr Britschu and 35 Hungarian confreres, he took part in a retreat first at Balassagyarmat in Hungary, and then in the Bratislava Province of Czechoslovakia, where the new novitiate was inaugurated at Poprad on 12 August. On 16 August he was in the Prague Province where for the first time in 40 years Salesians and members of the Salesian Family were gathered to witness and celebrate the profession of a large number of confreres.

Later in the same month (17-20)

he was in the Zagreb Province of Yugoslavia to make contact with the confreres in charge of the youth apostolate.

After returning to Rome for a few days, he spent the period from 25 August to 7 September in making contact with the Provinces of Holland, North Belgium and North Germany.

The Councillor for the Salesian Family and Social Communication

Fr Antonio Martinelli used the period between June and September for certain meetings and especially to get acquainted with the two sectors of his Department in the Regions and Provinces. Commitments in the Naples Province at the end of his service there as Provincial occupied a good deal of the time of the new Councillor.

In the sector of the Salesian Family he was at present at various meetings and encounters with various branches of the Family. The more significant of these were:

- A meeting with the Confederal Council of the Past-Pupils (28 April).
- A festive meeting with the Cooperators of Italy and others from other parts of the world who came to Rome for the beatification (29 April).
- A meeting with the National

Council of the Italian Past-pupils (8 June).

- A large gathering of the DBV, on 10 June, to celebrate the Beatification of Don Rinaldi.
- A meeting with the Executive Group of the World Council of the Cooperators (14 September).
- A meeting with the SDB and FMA Past-Pupils of the four provinces (SDB and FMA) of Turin (16 September).
- In the run-up to the FMA General Chapter he had a meeting with the World Presidency of the FMA Past-Pupils, to agree on certain plans for work and common commitment.

In the Social Communication sector there were some events that fostered a better knowledge of the prevailing reality.

In the last week of June Fr Martinelli had a meeting in New York with Fr Carlos Garulo, who is to be the Central Delegate for Social Communication in the Department.

He used the same occasion to visit the Don Bosco Multimedia Centre, which is at present endeavouring to reorganize its working structure and mode of insertion into the field in which it is working.

On his return to Rome he was engaged in completing two projects that had been begun earlier: the volume of Fr Marco Bongioanni on "Don Bosco, the Communicator", and the new number of the review

"Flash".

Lines of contact were established with other organisms working in Social Communication, and in particular with ISCOS at the UPS.

Provision was also made for the substitution of the Director of the Salesian Bulletin, Fr Giuseppe Costa, who is leaving the office after 9 years work. To him go our thanks for what he has done and for the development he has carried out in the Bulletin. He is succeeded by Fr Umberto De Vanna, who directed the ANS in the year 1989-1990, to whom go our best wishes for further progress.

Finally, the Councillor made a rapid visit to the two publishing centres, SEI and LDC, to meet the confreres and lay people working in them.

The Councillor for the Missions

After the plenary session of the General Council, Fr Luciano Odo-rico spent some days in Nairobi, from where he had set out for the General Chapter, to hand over the direction of the Salesian Theologate (where he had been Rector) and to greet the confreres of the neighbouring houses, and especially the novices.

He then spent the month of June in Paris at the Provincial House, for an intensive course in French, a lan-

guage which will be very useful to him in many countries, especially of Africa. While he was in France he took the opportunity to meet missionary confreres passing through Paris, and to visit the salesian houses of Paris and Lyons.

In mid-June he made a brief return to Rome to preside at a two-day meeting with the Italian provincial delegates for missionary activity, to consider the preparation of mission camps for lay volunteers.

Early in July Fr Odorico left for a journey in Africa that was to last for the two months of July and August and the first part of September (with a single interruption in August for a meeting with the members of his Department for planning purposes). The fundamental intention was to visit the countries of the western part of Africa to make a first contact with the confreres and people, and to get to know something of our works. Many were the countries he visited, and rich the experience gained of the various salesian realities; his journey was made in the following order: Senegal, Guinea-Conakry, Ivory Coast, Mali, Togo, Benin, Cameroons, Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, Congo and Gabon. He came back to Rome through Nairobi and Ethiopia.

Finally, in the second half of September (17-21) he presided at the annual meeting of the representa-

tives of the Salesian Mission Offices, that took place at Vienna.

The Economist General

From 15-21 July Fr Omero Paron visited the provinces of Hungary and of Czechoslovakia-Bratislava. The purpose of the visit was to see the property confiscated by the State in 1950, take note of the present situation, and assess the possibility of regaining possession.

For a similar purpose he visited the Jugoslavia Province of Ljubljana from 20 to 25 August. As well as the houses of Slovenia he also visited our work in the south at Montenegro and Kossovo.

The Councillor for the Atlantic Region of Latin America

After the General Council's pilgrimage to the places of our salesian origins, Fr Carlos Techera left immediately for Montevideo where he took part in a big procession in honour of Mary Help of Christians, with Archbishop Jose Gottardi SDB presiding. After the concelebration the structural alterations to the National Sanctuary of Our Lady were officially inaugurated, marking an intensification of the pastoral work based on the Sanctuary which attracts pilgrims from all over the country and serves as the "Valdocco" of Uruguay. This was the

first salesian house founded by Bishop Lasagna in 1876, and is now the centre from which radiates devotion to the Help of Christians.

Shortly afterwards he presided at a meeting of the Consulting Body of the Youth Pastoral Council for the drawing up of a plan for work in the youth pastoral sector for the next six years, in line with the GC23. Fr Luc Van Looy, Councillor General for the same sector, was also present.

The Regional Councillor then went on to make the consultation for the appointment of new provincials for the Provinces of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte in Brazil.

On 21 July he reached Quito, in the company of a delegate from Brazil and one from Argentina, for the meeting organized by the Pacific-Caribbean Region on the value of "insercion" in salesian formation.

On the 31st of the same month he left for Angola, where the Salesians with the local Church are preparing to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the first evangelization (1991); at the same time they are carrying out a serious work of verification and programming to commemorate ten years of work on this missionary frontier, for which the provinces of the Atlantic Region accepted joint responsibility. The building of the house of formation is going ahead, and it is hoped that it can be inaugurated by the Rector Major when

he makes his first visit to Angola. Fr Techera also visited the site of the next foundation, which will be in the new diocese of N'Dalatando. The Government has allotted us two pieces of territory, and a third has been placed at our disposal by the Cardinal to build three schools for the training of those who will work in Luanda. This will be an important contribution to the overall formation of poor youngsters, who are very numerous. There is no doubt that through these developments and the work of the FMA, who are about to start a third foundation at Kalulo, the charism of Don Bosco is spreading. There are now both SDB and FMA aspirants and an Angolan prenovice, as well as groups of Salesian Cooperators, all working in happy unity in the Salesian Family.

On his return from Angola, Fr Techera took part in the centenary celebrations of the Don Bosco College in the city of Bahia Blanca, and then went on to visit other communities in the same province and in that of Rosario, to carry out the consultation in view of the appointment of new provincials for the two provinces.

He also had a meeting with those taking part in the ongoing formation course of the Plata Conference and visited the Plata interprovincial novitiate, where he opened a meeting of formation personnel with the provincials and Fr Giuseppe Nico-

lussi. A similar meeting took place also in Brazil. These two meetings were followed by a meeting of the Provincial Conference in each case, during which a basic programme was drawn up for the six years that lie ahead, in line with the decisions of the GC23.

On 12 September Fr Techera returned to Rome.

The Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region of Latin America

Between June and September, Fr Guillermo Garcia Montano made a first tour to get to know his Region, with a double objective in view: 1. To form a practical idea of the reality of the situation in each of the provinces, so as to understand the concrete situation in which we are trying to implement Don Bosco's plan; and 2. to introduce himself to the confreres, so as to begin with them a friendly and fruitful dialogue to foster the animation of salesian life and mission.

Thanks to all the collaboration he was given, especially by the Provincials, in the space of three and a half months he was able to visit all 11 provinces and the 18 countries of the Region, except for Curacao; there was only one hitch: at Puerto Rico and Panama the plane arrived late, and it was not possible to meet the confreres as had been arranged.

In September Fr Garcia was able

to visit Guinea also, where he remained for 10 days, speaking with each of the confreres and getting to know our work at Conakry, Kankan-Dabadougou, Siguiiri and Saint Alexis.

In the Regional's opinion the results of the journey were very positive.

1. He had significant meetings with the Provincials. Prominent among them was the annual meeting at Quito, where an assessment was made of the work of the last six years and priorities were identified for the period lying ahead. Programmes were drawn up for the post-Chapter work, the courses to be given at the Regional Centre for ongoing formation, and the next meeting of the Provincials to be held at Cochabamba (Bolivia) in 1991. Also discussed were the topics of a Manual of Prayers for the Region, our missionary presence in Guinea, etc.

2. As well as getting to know almost 70% of the confreres of the Region, Fr Garcia had meetings with:

- Bishop Oscar Rodriguez SDB, Secretary of CELAM;
- the Archbishops of Lima (Peru) and Havana (Cuba), to examine the situation in their respective countries and the prospects for salesian pastoral work in their dioceses;
- Bishops Gurruchaga and Delgado in Peru, the Bishop of Camag in

Cuba, and the Archbishop of Conakry (Mgr Robert Sarah) for the same purpose.

3. Fr Garcia was happy to be able to preside at the installation of the new Provincials for Mexico-Mexico and Venezuela. He was also able to meet confreres gathered in provincial assemblies on 2 occasions, meetings of Rectors (7), of zones (23) and of missionaries (3). Of particular interest was a meeting with Brothers at Lima, Peru).

4. He made the consultations for the three provinces of Chile, Antilles, and Colombia-Medellin.

5. Fr. Garcia also made contact with the various groups of the Salesian Family and their leaders. In particular he met Pedro Monsalve (member of the Cooperators World Council) at Caracas, and the Central Council of the "Dame Salesiane" in their own central office.

6. The document of the GC23 had already been received by the confreres, (translated and printed in Spanish), together with further material drawn up in Spain to make easier the assimilation and application of the Chapter directives. It had been well accepted and methods of putting it into practice were being studied; to this end several provinces had drawn up aides and were organizing special meetings to make the contents known.

Throughout his visits Fr Garcia received a cordial welcome, and ob-

served the excellent dispositions of openness and trust on the part of the confreres, and their desire to receive guidance and indications from the Rector Major and his Council.

The Councillor for the English-speaking Region

Apart from a rapid visit to France to take part in the celebrations in honour of St Francis de Sales, the new titular of the Lyons Province, and a short stay in Madrid to learn a little Castilian (on account of the growing importance of this language in some parts of the USA), Fr Martin McPake dedicated these past months especially to visits to the two Vice-Provinces of the Region, Southern Africa and Eastern Canada, and the two Provinces of the United States.

The purpose of the visits to the Vice-Provinces was to renew contacts with the confreres, look once again at some new or key works, and give encouragement in general.

The impressions he received in both Vice-Provinces were very gratifying. Despite the uncertainty of the political situation in Southern Africa, our confreres are going ahead with faith and salesian enterprise. The Regional noted with pleasure the new work for street-boys in Cape Town and the new Catechetical Centre at Johannesburg, both of which promise well

for the future. Excellent too is the new Novitiate house at Maputsoe in Lesotho. Unfortunately time did not permit Fr McPake to visit our works in Swaziland.

In Eastern Canada he was able to meet all the confreres, who were gathered for their retreat. He found interesting the fact that in alternate years the retreat is made in French and in English: a good example of unity in a country where at present French and English-speakers find it difficult to agree. Despite its small size numerically, the Regional was of the opinion that this Vice-Province shows good signs of vitality.

Fr McPake's visit to the two USA Provinces did not allow him to stay for any length of time in any house. He had to carry out the consultation for the appointment of the new provincials, which implied a brief stay in those communities where the confreres of different zones had gathered in groups. In this way he was able to make at least a brief contact with all the members of the two provinces. It was at a time when the new scholastic year (1990-1991) was just beginning and the confreres (slightly down in numbers as compared with last year) were preparing to set out with the young on the journey of faith.

The consultations were concluded by 14 September, and on the following day Fr McPake returned to Rome.

The Councillor for the Asian Region

Leaving Rome on 8 July, Fr Thomas Panakezham first made a brief visit to the four communities in Sri Lanka. Despite the serious political situation there and the civil war that is in progress, the confreres are well and able to carry out their mission without serious problems.

On 13 July he went on to India to the Provinces of Bangalore and Calcutta, where he visited the majority of the communities to present the consultation in view of the appointment of the new provincials.

Subsequently he visited several communities of the Provinces of Madras, Dimapur and Guwahati. It should be noted that in recent years the political situation in North-East India has not been such as to allow the confreres to move freely from place to place, but the missionary work goes ahead nevertheless with a certain assurance. On 8 December next the centenary will be celebrated of the arrival of the first seven Salvatorian missionaries in this part of the Indian subcontinent. The Salesians took over the work from them in 1922.

While in the Province of Guwahati, the Regional took part in a meeting organized at national level by the Indian National Council for Pastoral Work at Shillong, which studied lines of action for the implementation of the deliberations of

the GC23.

Immediately afterwards, Fr Panakezham presided over a meeting of the Indian Provincial Conference which continued the study of professional and technical schools they had begun at an earlier meeting; they also made an assessment of the team for youth pastoral work at national level.

From 15 August to 9 September Fr Thomas made a rapid tour of several communities in the provinces of Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan. In Korea and Japan in particular he carried out the consultation for the appointment of new provincials. In Japan, at Yamanaka, he presided over a meeting of the Provincials of the Far East. They exchanged ideas on the inculturation of Don Bosco's charism in that area; in addition a programme was drawn up for a meeting of perpetually professed Brothers at Hua Hin, Thailand, and one of Rectors of the Far East at Hong Kong.

In the Philippines the Regional was able to see for himself some of the damage caused to our salesian works by the recent earthquake, especially to the house of Tarlac and in the Diocese of San Jose which has Mgr Leo Drona SDB as its Bishop.

One may note in conclusion that in all the countries of the Asian Region where the Salesians are work-

ing there is a discreet number of novices and each number a significant number of deacons are ordained priests. We are now present in Sikkim, at the foot of the Himalayas.

On 10 September Fr Panakezham returned to Rome.

The Regional Councillor for Central Europe and Central Africa

Prompted by recent events that have profoundly altered the political structure of Central Europe. Fr Dominic Britschu dedicated a large part of the summer months to the Provinces of Prague and Budapest. Unlike during his previous visits, it was possible this time to hold meetings with the confreres in a climate of openness and cordiality.

Now that there is no longer any need to maintain the covert secrecy of the past, the Salesians of Czechoslovakia are responding with creative generosity to the pressing requests of the local Bishops. Their industry is matched by the corresponding active affection of a great part of the population, and in particular of the Cooperators and numerous young people. The fruit of this intense activity is reflected in the consistent number of novices each year in both provinces: they have been about ten each year, but this year they have risen to close on 40.

In his contacts with other provin-

ces (Austria, Belgium, France and Germany) the Regional, while giving due attention to local problems and hopes, made himself also the interpreter of the expectations of the Eastern European Provinces. Not only this, but wherever he went he used the recent "baptism" of the Lyons province to promote the inescapable rediscovery of the spiritual figure of St Francis de Sales, with a view to the effective evangelization of Europe.

The Councillor for the Region of Spain and Portugal

After celebrating the Feast of Mary Help of Christians at Valdocco with the Rector Major and the General Council, Fr Antonio Rodriguez Tallon travelled to his Region with the intention of making a first contact with each of the provinces.

He began on 26 May in Barcelona, where he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and, in addition to meeting the community of the Provincial House, visited the houses of Tibidabo, Sarria, Horta, Sant Jordi, Mataro, Marti-Codolar, La Mina and Ciudad Meridiana. He was able to take part also in the reception for the new Archbishop of Barcelona, Mgr Carles.

In the evening of 30 May he left for Madrid, where he began as before with a meeting with the Provin-

cial Council, took part in the work of the National Delegation for Youth Pastoral Work, and presented the new national delegate for the past-pupils, Fr Celestino Rivera, on the occasion of the meeting of the National Council of the Spanish Past-Pupils Federation. He visited the following houses: the community of the theologians, the Missions Procure, Alcala di Henares, Moherando, Guadalajara, Carabanchel and Burgos, the latter belonging to the Province of Bilbao as an inter-provincial postnovitiate.

On June 6 he reached Cordoba where, on the 9th, he presented the new Provincial and received the promises of a good number of young Cooperators.

On 14 June he had a short meeting with the Provincial Council of Seville and visited the community of the students of theology.

On the 17th he presented the new National Delegate for the Cooperators, during one of the working sessions of the meeting of their national council.

From 18-24 June he visited all the houses of Portugal and spent a working session with the Provincial Council.

In the following week he went on to the Province of Valencia, where on the 29th (the Feastday of the Province) the new Provincial took office. He visited the houses of Valencia, Cartagena and Alicante.

His next stop was the Province of Leon from 9 to 14 July, where he called at all the houses and some of the summer camps that were in full activity. He was also able to meet with a group of confreres making their retreat at Lugo.

On 21 July he was present at Madrid for the installation of the new Provincial.

After this he made a rapid visit to the salesian houses of the Republic of Togo in Africa where, on 16 August, he received the first profession of nine African confreres belonging to six different countries.

Back in Spain again with the Provincial of Madrid, he made the presentation of the rectors of the inter-provincial houses: the Salesian Catechetical Centre and the Missions Procure.

Finally, the Regional was able to visit the Province of Bilbao in early September, and pass rapidly through all the houses and get a first idea of the province and greet the confreres before carrying out the extraordinary visitation, which will take place next March.

The Councillor for Italy and the Middle East

Although until September he had to attend to the needs of the Verona (San Zeno) province, Fr Giovanni Fedrigotti was able to make a progressive entry into his Region.

His main concern was to communicate the spirit and directives of the GC23, and he has the opportunity to speak of them to the novices at Pinerolo and the young salesian priests of Italy gathered at Triuggio; he was able to speak to the teaching confreres of the San Marco Province at Pordenone, to members of the Salesian Family at Bolzano and at Colcumano where they were engaged in a salesian updating course, and to the Rectors of the Genoa Province gathered in that city around their new Provincial.

In the name of the Rector Major and of the General Council he presided at the installation of the new Italian Provincials in their respective provinces: Fr Gianni Mazzali, at Genoa-Sampierdarena, on September 1; Fr Luigi Testa at Don Bosco Naples, on September 5; and Fr Gianantonio Bonato, at Don Bosco Verona on September 9.

He presided at a combined meeting of the SDB and FMA Provincial Councils of the Venice area to make preparations for the Feast of the Rector Major, which will take place in mid-December and be divided between Mestre and Padua.

In mid-July he was at the Generalate for the annual meeting of the CISI, and on September 8 in accordance with tradition received the religious profession of 21 novices at Pinerolo, and welcomed with joy the 25 novices replacing them. On

the same day another 13 novices made their profession in the hands of the Rector Major at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Rome, while 21 young men took their place at the novitiate of Lanuvio.

The Rector Major's Delegate for Poland

Fr Augustyn Dziedziel left on May 26 for Warsaw where he presided at a meeting of the Provincials of Poland, and immediately afterwards in June carried out the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial for the Warsaw Province, visiting all the communities of the Province concerned. He also visited 10 formation communities, and was present at the priestly ordinations at Lad. He also had meetings with various groups of the Salesian Family.

He dedicated the entire month of July to visits of animation in the USSR (Byelorussia, Russia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine), meeting with confreres, members of the Salesian Family, and ecclesiastical authorities.

In early August he took part in a meeting organized by the FMA Superior General, Mother Marinella Castagno, who in the course of her visit to Poland had gathered together representatives of the FMA from several countries of Eastern Europe including: Bohemia, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, and the

two FMA provinces of Poland; he also presided at the celebration in Czestochowa and the profession functions in various places.

After a brief stopover in Rome he was in Africa from mid-August to mid-September, visiting the countries of Zambia, Kenya and Uganda where confreres belonging to the Province of Warsaw are working or studying; there too he made the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial.

During this period he was able to visit all 11 salesian presences in Zambia; he took part in the retreat and received the professions; he was also present at the ceremony at which the office of Provincial Delegate in Zambia passed from Fr Kazimierz Cichecki to Fr Piotr Boryczka. In addition he visited the Apostolic Pronunzio and some of the Bishops.

In Kenya he visited the formation community of the students of theology to meet, among others, the missionary students from Uganda and Zambia. He made contact with Fr Thayil, Superior of the Vice-Province, and with other confreres.

In Uganda, finally, he had a meeting with the five confreres of the Bombo Mission, inaugurated two years ago, and studied with them the overall plan for salesian work in Uganda.

On 16 September Fr Dziedziel returned to Rome.

5.1 Decree on the miracle for the beatification of Fr Philip Rinaldi

We give an English translation of the decree «Super dubio» of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints for the approval of the miracle attributed to the intercession of the Ven. Philip Rinaldi, in view of his beatification.

Philip Rinaldi was born on 28 May 1856 at Lu Monferrato in the diocese of Casale. He entered the Salesian Society and made the sacred vows in the hands of the Founder of the same Society. After being ordained priest he was given various assignments, until in 1922 he was elected Rector Major of the Society, which he guided with prudence and saw it increase in the number of houses and members. He was considered by all to be the living image of St John Bosco. He died at Turin on 5 December 1931 in the odour of sanctity. On 3 January 1987, John Paul II declared that he had practised the christian virtues to a heroic degree.

Now, in order to be able to proceed lawfully to the solemn beatification of the Venerable Philip Ri-

naldi, the promoters of the Cause have presented to the Apostolic See a cure which was considered prodigious, and obtained from God through the intercession of the said person.

The prodigious cure was of Sister Carla De Noni, aged 35 years, belonging to the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ; she had been, at that time, a nurse and assistant to the girls in the parish of Villanova di Mondovì.

The extraordinary event was described as follows: While the above-mentioned religious, on 20 April 1945 (i.e. in the final days of the last world war) was travelling from Villanova to Mondovì by train, the latter was violently struck by a hail of bullets fired from a machine-gun, and she was wounded, even though not fatally, in her shoulder and arm. One of the bullets, however, passed through the Sister's cheek, destroying the lower teeth and carrying away the chin-bone. She was immediately given first-aid in the «Bosio» clinic, where she remained from 20 to 26 April; there she was given treatment only of a general kind, because her death seemed immi-

ment. She was taken back to her religious house at Villanova di Mondovì but made no improvement, with every treatment applied by the local doctor proving of no avail; the doctor stated in fact, that all the functions of her mouth were obstructed, so that she could neither speak, eat, nor swallow; her tongue was hanging down and she could not move it, and the lower lip had fallen because it was no longer supported by the chin-bone.

With matters in this state, while the Sister appeared to be on the point of death, on 27 April (i.e. the day after she was sent home by the clinic), a relic of the Venerable Philip Rinaldi was applied to the breast of the sick woman, and from that moment a rapid healing process began, leading to the restoration of all the functions of the mouth.

To investigate the extraordinary cure a double process was instituted in the diocesan curia of Mondovì: an ordinary process (in the years 1948-49), and the other in 1980 to recognize officially the results of the first after the lapse of time; on the juridical validity of both processes a Decree was issued by this Congregation on 18 July 1986. At the request of the Very Rev. Fr Luigi Fiora, Postulator General of the Salesian Society, the acts of these juridical enquiries were submitted to the judgement of a panel of medical experts which examined the matter

in a manner deeper and more searching than usual. They met three times for this purpose, first on 13 January 1988, again on 9 November 1988, and finally for a third time on 7 June 1989, after which they issued a declaration that the cure could not be explained by the laws of modern medical science.

After this the theological discussion took place in the course of the ordinary meetings of this Congregation, first on 13 October 1989 in a Congress of the theological Consultors, under the presidency of the Very Rev. Antonio Petti, Promoter General of the Faith; and then on 19 December of the same year in the ordinary sitting of the Cardinals belonging to this same Congregation, meeting in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, with His Eminence Card. Alfons Stickler as the exponent. On both occasions the reply to the question: Is there certainty about a miracle? was affirmative.

The Supreme Pontiff, John Paul II, was duly informed of all these things by the undersigned Cardinal Prefect; he accepted and ratified the voting of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and ordered that the decree should be drawn up according to the usual norms in respect of the extraordinary cure.

All this having been done, today in the presence of the Cardinal Prefect, the Cardinal Exponent, the Secretary, and others whom it is

customary to call together on such occasions, the Holy Father affirmed that there is certainty of the miracle granted by God through the intercession of the Venerable Philip Rinaldi, i.e. of the rapid and enduring cure of Sister Carla De Noni from wounds inflicted by gunfire in which a bullet penetrated the right labial area. The bullet exited in the lower left part of the chin, shattering and carrying away part of the jawbone in the process. This resulted in subsequent trauma of the flesh around and beneath the jawbone, in a subject suffering from multiple shock due to gunfire wounds that had damaged the left side of the chest, leaving the internal organs intact.

His Holiness desired that this Decree be published and inserted in the Acts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Given at Rome, 3 March 1990.

✠ ANGELO Card. FELICI,

Prefect

✠ Traiano Crisan, Archbishop,

Secretary.

5.2 The new General Council

The GC23 in the period 7-11 April 1990 elected the members of the new General Council for the period 1990-1996.

For purposes of record the composition of the new Council is as follows:

Fr Egidio VIGANÒ

Rector Major

Fr Juan VECCHI

Vicar General

Fr Giuseppe NICOLUSSI

Councillor for Formation

Fr Luc VAN LOOY

Councillor for Youth Pastoral Work

Fr Antonio MARTINELLI

Councillor for Salesian Family and Social Communication

Fr Luciano ODORICO

Councillor for the Missions

Fr Omero PARON

Economer General

Fr Domenico BRITSCHU

Councillor for the Region of Central Europe and Central Africa

Fr Giovanni FEDRIGOTTI

Councillor for Italy and the Middle East

Fr Guillermo GARCIA MONTANO

Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region

Fr Martin McPAKE

Councillor for the English-speaking Region

Fr Thomas PANAKEZHAM

Councillor for the Asian Region

Fr Antonio RODRIGUEZ TALLON

Councillor for the Iberian Region

Fr Carlos TECHERA

Councillor for the Atlantic Region

Fr Francesco MARACCANI remains Secretary General.

In addition, during the plenary session of May, the Rector Major con-

firmed Fr Augustyn Dziedziel as his Delegate for the Polish Provinces.

The following are some details of the members entering the Council for the first time.

— *Fr Giuseppe NICOLUSSI, Councillor for Formation.*

Giuseppe Nicolussi was born at Bolzano, Italy, on 19 October 1938, and entered the salesian aspirantate at Trento, where his vocation matured. After making his novitiate at Albarè (Verona) and his first profession on 16 August 1955, he left while still a cleric for Chile, where he did his practical training, studied theology, and was ordained priest at Santiago on 28 August 1965.

He took his doctorate in theology at Louvain, and then taught and eventually became Rector in the community of the students of theology at Santiago-Macul (1973), before becoming Vice-Provincial and Rector of the Provincial House (1976). In 1978 he was appointed Provincial of the Chilean Province.

In 1984, after the GC22 and his term of office as Provincial, he remained at the Generalate in Rome as a collaborator of the Councillor for Formation. Returning to Chile in 1988 he was called to direct the studentate of theology at Santiago La Florida. Now the GC23 has elected him to the General Council.

— *Fr Antonio MARTINELLI, Councillor for the Salesian Family and Social Communication.*

Born at Soverato in the province of Catanzaro on 22 May 1934, Antonio Martinelli was still a boy when he entered the salesian college in his home town; in due course he was admitted to the novitiate at Portici (Naples) and concluded it with his first profession on 16 August 1950. After practical training he was sent to the Crocetta (Turin) for theological studies and was ordained priest in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians on 11 February 1960.

With the licentiate in theology, Fr Martinelli returned to his province as a teacher and animator, first at Torre Annunziata, and then in the theological studentate of Castellammare di Stabia. There in 1968 he became Rector, and a few years later became a provincial councillor.

After participating in the SGC, he was appointed in 1972 Provincial of the Verona Province. At the end of his term of office he returned to Castellammare, but a year later was called to take on the direction of the National Centre for Youth Pastoral Work. From 1980 he was also Secretary of the Italian Provincial Conference (CISI).

In 1987 he was appointed Provincial of the Naples Province and still held this office when the GC23 elected him to the General Council.

— *Fr Luciano ODORICO, Councillor for the Missions*

Luciano Odorico was born on 13 December 1938 at Sesto al Reghena (Pordenone, Italy). He was a pupil at the salesian colleges at Turin-Rebaudengo and Bagnolo - Piemonte, and while still very young left for Venezuela, where he made his novitiate and first profession (15 September 1956).

After his practical training he was sent to Italy for theological studies, which he carried out at the PAS, first at Turin and later in Rome, at the conclusion of his theology he was ordained priest on 22 December 1966.

Returning to Venezuela he held various posts of responsibility: Rector at Caracas-Boleita from 1974, then provincial councillor, and then in 1978 he was appointed Provincial. After his term of office and membership of the GC22 he was sent to Africa as Rector of the international studentate at Nairobi in Kenya. When East Africa became a Vice-Province he was appointed Vicar to the Superior.

Now the GC23 has elected him Councillor for the Missions.

— *Fr Giovanni FEDRIGOTTI, Councillor for Italy and the Middle East.*

Born at Tiarno, in the province of Trento, on 26 February 1944, he en-

tered the Congregation at the age of 17, making his first profession at Albarè (Verona) on 16 August 1961. After studying philosophy and theology at the PAS he was ordained priest at Trento on 9 April 1972. With the licentiate in theology and the doctorate in philosophy he was sent to teach at the Don Bosco Institute, Verona, where soon afterwards he became Rector. He was also greatly esteemed as an animator of the province as a provincial councillor. At the end of his mandate as Rector, he continued to teach, not only at Don Bosco, Verona, but also in the postnovitiate of Nave, affiliated to the UPS.

After taking part in the GC22 in 1984 he was appointed Rector of the «Rainerum» Institute of Bolzano; but a few months later was chosen as Provincial of the «San Zeno» Province of Verona, an office which he still held at the time he was elected by the GC23 as Regional Councillor for Italy and the Middle East.

— *Fr Guillermo GARCIA MONTANO, Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region.*

Born at Zamorra, Mexico, on 26 April 1937, Guillermo Garcia made his novitiate at Coacalco, concluded by his first profession on 16 August 1954. He was ordained priest at Mexico in 1964 and, after obtaining the licence for teaching in High Schools, he also took a pastoral

course organized by the CELAM in Medellin (Colombia). Returning to his own province he was called to direct the salesian house at Mexico-Santa Julia, and then that at Mexico-Arista, and subsequently the College at Arenal (Rio Manso). He was a delegate of the province to the GC22 (1984), and after serving for a year as Vice-Provincial he was appointed in 1986 Provincial of the Mexico Province of Mexico.

He was fulfilling this mandate when he was elected by the GC23 to the General Council as Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region.

— *Fr Antonio RODRIGUEZ TALLON, Councillor for the Iberian Region.*

A native of Santa Fe near Granada, Spain, where he was born on 4 July 1940, Antonio Rodriguez T. made his profession in the Salesian Society on 16 August 1956. A priest since 1966, and with diplomas in theology and technical engineering, he became Provincial of Cordoba in 1984, after experience as Rector at Santa Cruz (Tenerife) and at Cordoba itself. In 1978 he had become Vice-Provincial and in 1984 took part in the GC22.

Now, at the end of his mandate as Provincial, the GC23 has elected him Regional Councillor.

5.3 New Provincials

We give below some biographical details of the new Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council during the plenary session of May 1990.

1. *Fr Francisco Javier ALTAMIRANO, in the Province of MEXICO (Mexico).*

Fr Altamirano Alvarez has been called to succeed Fr Guillermo Garcia Montano, the new Regional Councillor for the Pacific-Caribbean Region of Latin America.

He was born at Guadalajara (Mexico), 1 January 1943. As a boy he frequented the salesian college in Guadalajara and went on to the novitiate of Coacalco, where he became a Salesian, making his first profession 16 August 1960.

After practical training and theological studies he was ordained priest at Guadalajara, 27 December 1969.

He had various years of educational experience, and in 1977 was appointed Rector of the school of Queretaro. He became a Provincial Councillor in 1983 and in 1986 was appointed Vice-Provincial and given charge of youth pastoral work.

He was the delegate of the province at the GC23.

2. *Fr Gianantonio BONATO, in the Province of VERONA (Italy).*

Fr Gianantonio Bonato was born 9 November 1943 at Schio (Vicența), where he was a pupil of the flourishing salesian oratory and the elementary school alongside. He felt the attraction to stay with Don Bosco, made his novitiate at Albare, and there made his first profession 16 August 1960.

After practical training he studied at the PAS and obtained the licentiate in theology. He was ordained priest at Este 17 April 1974. Subsequently he obtained a doctorate in letters and studied at the Paris International Catechetical Institute, where he received the diploma in pastoral catechetics.

After some years teaching he dedicated himself full-time to catechetics, working in the house of Rovereto in the Diocese of Trento, where he was Rector of the community. At the same time he saw to the publication of various catechetical works.

In 1986 he was sent as Rector to the oratory and youth centre at Schio, and here too, together with the confreres, he became an animator of catechesis in the surrounding area. He was also a Provincial Councillor for six years.

As Provincial he succeeds Fr Giovanni Fedrigotti who was elected by the GC23 as Regional Councillor for Italy and the Middle East.

3. *Fr Georg DEMMING, in the Province of NORTH GERMANY.*

Fr Georg Demming was born at Sudlohn in Westphalia, 16 December 1938, and became a pupil at the salesian school of Essen-Borbeck from where he went on to the novitiate at Junkerath and made his first profession on 25 March 1959. After practical training and the study of theology he was ordained priest at Benediktbeuern, 30 June 1968.

Soon afterwards he was appointed to offices of responsibility: in 1971 he became Rector of the parish and youth centre of Hanover, but his greatest commitment and gifts as a salesian educator became evident when he assumed the duties of Novice Master of the two German provinces at Junkerath in 1981. He remained in this office until his appointment as Provincial.

4. *Fr Jose Angel DIVASSON, in the Province of VENEZUELA.*

Born at Artajona, in the province of Pamplona (Spain), 21 April 1939, he entered at the age of 12 the salesian college at Astudillo. Attracted by the salesian ideal, he then went on to the novitiate at Mohernando where he made his first profession, 16 August 1955.

Following a call he felt to the missions, he left while still young for Venezuela where he completed his practical training and made his per-

petual profession at Los Teques in 1961.

He was sent to the Crocetta (Turin) for the study of theology and was ordained priest 11 February 1965. He obtained the Licentiate in theology, and also took courses in group dynamics.

On his return to Venezuela he soon found himself in positions of responsibility: in 1972 he was appointed Rector of the house of Caracas-Sarria and became at the same time a Provincial Councillor. Since 1985 he had been Rector of the house of Valera. He was a member of the CG20, GC21 and GC23.

5. *Fr Pedro LOPEZ, in the Province of MADRID (Spain).*

He was born at Madrid 31 March 1936, and became a pupil at the salesian school of Madrid-Estrecho. After his vocation matured he entered the novitiate at Mohernando, and there made his first profession 16 August 1954. After practical training he studied theology at Salamanca, and was ordained priest there 1 March 1964.

He obtained a doctorate in chemical science at Madrid and for some years taught science. In 1972 he was appointed Rector of the house of Bejar and in the following year of that of "Maria Auxiliadora" at Salamanca. From 1982 to 1988 he was Vice-Provincial and Rector of the Provincial House at Madrid.

In 1988 he was appointed Rector of the big scholastic complex of Madrid-Estrecho.

6. *Fr Joao Bosco MACIEL, in the Province of CAMPO GRANDE (Brazil).*

He was born at Livramento in Mato Grosso, 25 April 1942, and was a pupil at the salesian college of Cuiaba before going on to the novitiate in Campo Grande where he made his first profession, 31 January 1963. He was ordained priest at Cuiaba 8 December 1973.

He obtained the licentiate in letters and studied catechetics at the UPS in Rome. Because of the broad salesian experience he had gained he was appointed Vice-Provincial in 1983. In the following year he was also appointed Rector of the aspirantate "Sao Vicente" at Campo Grande, and went on in 1987 to be Rector of the "Paolo VI" studentate in the same city.

7. *Fr Giovanni MAZZALI, in the Province of GENOA (Italy).*

Born at Turin 1 February 1947, Giovanni Mazzali entered the aspirantate at Ivrea at the age of 11, and in due course went on to the novitiate of Villa Moglia at Chieri, where on 16 August 1964 he made his first profession. After the practical training period he studied theology at Maynooth in Ireland and was or-

dained priest at Cumiana, 7 December 1974.

After obtaining the licentiate in theology and a degree in languages together with a teaching qualification, he spent some years in teaching and educating. Transferring then to the Genoa Province he was at Alassio, first as a teacher and then as Rector from 1987.

8. *Fr Eusebio MUNOZ, in the Province of CORDOBA (Spain).*

He was born at Pozoblanco, in the province of Cordoba, 26 December 1944, and made his novitiate at San Jose del Valle where, on 16 August 1962, he made his first religious profession. Practical training followed, and then theological studies at Granada and at Cordoba before his priestly ordination on 22 July 1972.

He took a degree in economics and also a teacher's qualification, after which he worked for some years as a teacher and educator.

In 1977 he was appointed Rector of the house of Ronda, and two years later went on to be Rector of the college and vocational guidance centre at Montilla. In 1983 this centre was transferred to Cordoba, and Fr Munoz went with it as Rector. In the following year he became Master of Novices at Sanlucar la Mayor. He remained in this office for only one year, because in 1985 he was recalled to his own province to work in the area of vocational

guidance, and formed part of the team at the prenovitiate.

He had been a member of the Provincial Council from 1979 to 1985, and from 1987 was Vice-Provincial and delegate for youth pastoral work. He was a member of the GC23 as delegate of his province.

9. *Fr Paolo NATALI, Superior of the Vice-Province of the UPS.*

The new animator and guide of the Vice-Province of the UPS is Fr Paolo Natali, who in April 1990 finished his mandate as Councillor General for Formation.

Born at Arezzo on 24 March 1925, Paolo Natali made his first contacts with salesian life in the aspirantate of Strada Casentino; he then went on to the novitiate of Vazzze, and on 16 August 1941 made his first profession.

After his period of practical training he studied theology first at the Crocetta (Turin) and then in the studentate of Bollengo; he was ordained priest on 1 July 1951.

After obtaining his doctorate in philosophy, he taught for some years at Alassio. In 1972 he was appointed Vice-Provincial of the Genoa Province, and played an active part in the SGC and the GC21. The GC21 elected him, in fact, as Regional Councillor for Italy and the Middle East. In 1980, however, on the death of Fr Giovenale Dho, the

Rector Major called him to become Councillor for Formation, an office in which he was confirmed by the GC22, and which he fulfilled with great devotion until the recent GC23.

10. *Fr Fernand NIHOUL, in the Province of South Belgium.*

Fernand Nihoul was born 2 March 1932 at Landenne in the province of Liege, and while still a boy entered the salesian college in the same city, where his salesian vocation matured. He made his novitiate at Blandain and his first profession on 31 August 1953.

With the practical training period completed, he was sent to the Crocetta (Turin) for theological studies; there he obtained his licentiate in theology and was ordained priest on 11 February 1963.

After an intense educational and apostolic experience he was appointed in 1977 as Master of Novices, an office he held for 12 years. From 1979 he was also Vice-Provincial for 9 years. He played an active part in the GC21 and GC22.

11. *Fr Candido ORDUNA, in the Province of VALENCIA (Spain).*

Candido Orduna Abadia was born at Urries, in the province of Zaragoza, 31 March 1936. He studied at the salesian college of Gerona and made his novitiate at Ibi, making

his first profession on 16 August 1961.

After his practical training, he studied theology at Barcelona, and was ordained priest in his native town on 29 June 1971. Subsequently he obtained the licentiate in catechetical sciences, and the title of "National Master".

In 1983 he was appointed Rector of the "Don Bosco" college of Alicante. He was a member of the Provincial Council from 1986, and in 1989 became Vice-Provincial and Rector of the Provincial House of Valencia.

He took part in the GC23 as delegate of the province.

12. *Fr Jean-Pierre TAFUNGA, in the Province of CENTRAL AFRICA.*

Born in Zaire in the province of Katanga, 13 August 1942, he entered the Salesian Congregation, making his novitiate in the house of Kansebula, and making his first profession on 28 August 1965. After practical training and theological studies, he was ordained priest on 16 September 1972.

He specialized in electro-technology at Liege in Belgium, and was appointed Rector of the technical school at Goma in 1981. He then went to the UPS in Rome for further theological studies, and in 1989 was called to guide the formation community at Kansebula.

He took part in the GC23 as delegate of his province.

13. *Fr Luigi TESTA, in the SOUTH-ERN Province of Italy.*

To succeed Fr Antonio Martinelli, elected by the GC23 to the General Council as Councillor for the Salesian Family and Social Communication, has been appointed Fr Luigi Testa.

He was born on 24 May 1940 at Murazzo (Cuneo), and after feeling a call to the salesian life and spending a period in the house of Chieri, he entered the novitiate of Pinerolo, where he made his first profession on 16 August 1960.

After completing his theological studies at the Crocetta (Turin), he was ordained priest on 3 April 1971. He took his licentiate in theology and teacher's qualification for Middle Schools.

He was soon entrusted with positions of responsibility: in 1974 he was appointed Rector of the house of formation at Chieri; and from there went on in 1978 to direct the technical agricultural institute of Lombriasco. In 1981 the Superiors entrusted him with the animation and guidance of the Subalpine Province as Provincial.

14. *Fr Joseph THELEKKATT, Provincial in GUWAHATI (India).*

Born on 12 October 1945 at Kadukutty (in Kerala), he frequented

the salesian school at Bandel, and then entered the novitiate in Shillong where he made his first profession on 7 April 1966.

He gained his first salesian apostolic experience in Assam, before going on to the studentate at Bangalore for theological studies. On 30 December 1934 he was ordained priest at Kadukutty in his native Kerala.

In 1980 he was called to direct the "St Paul" house of formation in Shillong, and in 1984 was appointed Novice Master in the novitiate of Shillong-Sunnyside.

From 1986 he has been Vice-Provincial and in 1990 was present at the GC23 as delegate of the province.

15. *Fr Albert VAN HECKE, in the Province of North Belgium.*

Born 1 September 1941 at Sleidinge (Belgium), he was a pupil at the salesian school of St.Denijs-Westrem, from where he went on to the novitiate of Groot-Bijgaarden, where he made his first profession on 25 August 1962. After his first religious experiences, his formative process led him to priestly ordination at Oud-Heverlee, 12 September 1970.

After obtaining the licentiate in moral and religious sciences from Louvain in 1972, he dedicated himself to the mission of an educator. In 1986 he was appointed Rector of

the salesian school at Hechtel, and in 1989 of the technical school of St. Denijs-Westrem. Since 1984 he was a member of the Provincial Council.

16. *Fr Amilcare VISENTINI, in the Province of URUGUAY.*

Amilcare Visintini was born at Pozzuolo de Friuli (Udine), 28 September 1941. At the age of 12 he entered the salesian aspirantate at Trento and later went on to the novitiate at Albare; he made his first profession on 18 August 1959.

He was attracted by the missionary ideal and left for Uruguay, where he did his practical training and theological studies. He was ordained priest at Manga-Monteideo on 13 September 1969.

Soon afterwards the Superiors began to entrust him with responsibilities of animation and government; in 1973 he was appointed Rector of the big professional school "Talleres Don Bosco" at Montevideo; from there he went on in 1981 to be Master of Novices and subsequently Rector. For three years he was also Vice-Provincial.

In 1989, after spending 9 years at the novitiate, he was sent once again to direct the house of "Talleres Don Bosco" in Montevideo.

As well as the Provincials referred to above, the General Council confirmed in office for a second period

of six years the following two Provincials"

17. *Fr Josef KELER, in the Province of Austria.*

18. *Fr Alfredo PICCHIONI, in the Province of the MIDDLE EAST.*

For their biographical data, cf. AGC 312, p.88-89.

5.4 New Salesian Bishops

We give below some details of three of our salesian confreres who have been appointed Bishops in recent months.

1. *Mgr. Tarcisius RESTO, Auxiliary Bishop of Shillong.*

The Osservatore Romano of 29 June 1990 carried the announcement that the Holy Father had appointed the salesian priest Tarcisius Resto to be Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Shillong, in Assam (India).

He is a native of Assam, being born at Tyrna in the province of Shillong on 16 October 1928. He felt an attraction to the salesian life while a young student in the college of Shillong, and after his novitiate at Kotagiri he made his first religious profession on 24 May 1950.

His first apostolic experiences

were gained at Shillong, and after studies of philosophy and theology he was ordained priest on 26 June 1960. His priestly apostolate has been essentially that of a missionary in the style of Don Bosco. He worked in Assam and other parts of North-East India and was a Provincial Councillor until 1976 when he was appointed Vicar General of the Archdiocese.

Now, with the fullness of the episcopal order, he will be able to collaborate still more closely with his salesian Archbishop, Mgr. Hubert D'Rosario.

2. *Mgr. Miguel Jose ASURMENDI, Bishop of TARAZONA (Spain).*

The appointment of Mgr. Miguel Jose Asurmendi as Bishop of the Diocese of Tarazona was announced in the 28 July 1990 edition of the *Osservatore Romano*. The news was received with satisfaction by the Salesians of Spain, and especially by the confreres of the Province of Valencia where the Bishop-elect had just completed a seven-year term of office as Provincial.

Born at Pamplona in Navarre on 6 March 1940, Miguel Asurmendi had felt the call to stay with Don Bosco for the service of the young when he was a boy in the salesian college at Pamplona. He was only 17 when he made his first profession at Arbos, where he had made his novitiate.

After the apostolic experiences of the practical training period and the study of theology, he was ordained priest at Barcelona on 5 March 1967, and was soon called upon to occupy offices of responsibility. From 1972 to 1978 he was Rector of the big house of Zaragoza, and then Rector at Valencia "St Vincent Ferrer"; at the same time he was a Provincial Councillor until his appointment as Provincial in 1983.

In the Diocese of Tarazona, a small diocese of Aragon, to which he goes as Pastor, he will be able to continue the exercise of the pastoral charity he learned and lived at the school of Don Bosco.

3. *Mgr. Charles MAUNG BO, Bishop of LASHIO (Burma).*

On 14 August 1990 the *Osservatore Romano* once again carried news of great interest to our Congregation. The Holy Father had raised to the status of a Diocese the former Prefecture Apostolic of Lashio in Burma, and had appointed as its first Bishop Fr Charles Maung Bo, who had been Prefect Apostolic of the territory since 1986.

Charles Maung Bo is a Burmese Salesian, born at Monhla in the Diocese of Mandalay on 29 October 1948. He entered the house of Don Bosco in Anisakan as an aspirantate and was in due course professed as a Salesian on 24 May 1970. After an intensely apostolic period of practi-

cal training and the study of theology, he was ordained priest at Lashio on 9 April 1976.

His apostolate among the young and his own people was immediately greatly esteemed; for this reason the Apostolic See appointed him at a comparatively early age to

be the first Prefect Apostolic of Lashio, and now its first Bishop. Because of the well known difficult social and political situation in the area, the new Bishop knows that he can count on the prayers and solidarity of his salesian confreres.

5.5 Our dead confreres (1990 – 1rd 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.
P ALBERTI Innocente	Torino	21-12-89	88	ISU
P ALQUIER Antoine	Toulon	19-04-90	69	FLY
L ANCARANI Giuseppe	Bologna	22-04-90	87	ILE
L ANDREJASIC Oscar	Paterson	03-03-90	75	SUE
P ARANTES PEIXOTO Sebastião	Campo Grande	16-07-90	67	BCG
L ARCARO Antonio	Soverato	06-01-90	76	IME
L BACIS Secondo	Cremisan	23-08-90	84	MOR
P BÁNHIDAI János	Budapest	03-08-90	77	UNG
P BARANOWSKI Ferdynand	Czestochowa	14-02-90	54	PLO
P BARONI Emilio	Bangkok	31-07-90	80	THA
P BARTOLONE Santi	Trapani	24-12-89	91	ISI
P BARWA Dominic	Dibrugarh	29-08-90	67	IND
P BENOT RODRIGUEZ Eduardo	Alcalá de Guadaira	09-02-90	59	SSE
P BERNARDI Angelo (Reginato)	Shindenbaru-Nakatsu	26-09-90	82	GIA
L BERRA Francesco	Torino	21-12-89	87	ICE
P BLODERER Josef	Alkoven	25-06-90	57	AUS
P BODAY Lajos	Székesfehérvár	21-12-89	78	UNG
P BONGIOANNI Marco	Roma	04-02-90	69	RMG
L BOTTA Héctor	Mar del Plata	20-04-90	88	ALP
P BOTTER Richard	Rijswijk	19-01-90	66	OLA
L BOŽIČ Janko	Ljubljana	19-12-89	83	JUL
P BRADEN Federico	Bogotá	13-11-89	78	COB
P BRIVIO Giovanni	Arese	28-07-90	79	ILE
L BRUSASCO Ettore	Cuenca	01-09-90	73	ECU
P BUSQUETS Francisco	Bernal	26-06-90	82	ALP
P CARAVIELLO Pasquale	Napoli	30-12-89	59	IME
L CARRASCO MORENO Francisco	Burgos	07-03-90	56	SLE
P CASTELLARO BRUVERA Vicente	Concepción del Uruguay	13-03-90	75	ARO
L CASTILLO ARAYA Luis	Santiago de Chile	11-02-90	80	CIL
P CHESI Bernardino	Quito	22-05-90	74	ECU
P CHINELLATO Primo	Gorizia	23-09-90	85	IVE
P CHU Elias	Hong Kong	29-05-90	65	CIN
P CLAUS Erwin	Klagenfurt	19-05-90	90	AUS
P COCCHI Alighieri Dante	Ortona	30-01-90	76	IAD
P CODELLO Angelo	Tirupattur	23-03-90	77	INM

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P CORDERO D. Francisco Javier	Madrid	25-05-90	53	SMA
P CREPELLIERE Louis	Paris	21-06-90	70	FPA
P CROCE Roberto	Rosario	03-03-90	70	ARO
L CUNHA Domingos Geraldo	Pará de Minas	21-12-89	75	BBH
P DEL AMO PRIETO José Luis	Blanes	29-04-90	54	SMA
P DI COLA Angelo	Roma	13-02-90	68	IRO
P DONČEVIĆ Rikard-Zvonko	Krapinske Toplice	14-07-90	74	JUZ
P DONINI Enrico	Manta	21-06-90	73	ECU
P DONNO Leonardo	Casarano	25-07-90	72	IME
P ENNING Fernand	São João del Rei	27-06-90	87	BBH
L FACCIN Clemente	Guadalajara	24-02-90	81	MEG
P FILIPPELLI Pasquale	São Paulo	26-03-90	69	BSP
P FRANCO Salvatore	Palermo	17-04-90	84	ISI
L GAMBA Romildo	Torino	27-06-90	77	ISU
P GARECKI Stanisław	Kraków	30-04-90	82	PLS
P GIARDINA Girolamo	Modica	08-06-90	81	ISI
P GILI Luigi Pasquale	Varazze	20-01-90	74	ILT
P GIUA Stefano	Roma	22-07-90	82	IRO
P GOMEZ GIL Luis	Puebla	21-04-90	76	MEM
L GONZALEZ CORRAL Ubaldo	Sevilla	06-05-90	79	SSE
P GRECO Ugo	São Paulo	22-06-90	77	BSP
P GRZEBIEN Medardo	Santiago de Chile	18-01-90	90	CIL
P GUIDORENI Giuseppe	São Paulo	02-03-90	73	BSP
L HANLY Thomas	São Gabriel da Cachoeira	20-09-90	55	BMA
P HARO JACOME Julio	Riobamba	13-03-90	94	ECU
P ILENČIK Rodolphe	Montpellier	02-04-90	75	FLY
L INAREJOS RUIZ Adolfo	Jerez de la Frontera	30-12-89	82	SSE
P JAKOB Avgustin	Veržej	05-03-90	78	JUL
<i>Fu Ispettore per 10 a.</i>				
E JARAMILLO Héctor	Sincelejo (Colombia)	16-09-90	66	
<i>Fu per 8 anni Prefetto Apostolico dell'Ariari e per 9 anni Vescovo di Sincelejo (Colombia).</i>				
P JENNINGS Thomas	Lourdes (Francia)	22-06-90	83	GBR
P JUARISTI BADIOLA Benjamín	Roma	15-05-90	61	SVA
P KELLY John	Manchester	12-02-90	89	GBR
L KRUMKAMP Alfred	Essen	02-06-90	83	GEK
L LA MALFA Antonino	Caltanissetta	26-12-89	79	ISI
P LE BORGNE Marcel	Caen	26-05-90	53	FPA
P LE QUELLEC Marcel	Lille	18-09-89	69	FPA
L LE RU Jean-Marie	Grentheville	26-07-90	93	FPA
L LESCANO GALLEGO Carlos	Córdoba	24-02-90	70	ACO

NAME	PLACE DATE	AGE	PROV.
P LOMAGNO John	West Haverstraw	24-07-90	83 SUE
L LYONS Hubert	Farnborough	12-04-90	80 GBR
P MAGNI Mario	Roma	16-05-90	86 IRO
P MAK Kun-kim Joseph	Hong Kong	20-04-90	57 CIN
L MAMMONE Francesco	São Paulo	07-07-90	96 BSP
P MARTANO Angelo	Torino	02-04-90	85 ISU
P MARTIN GÓMEZ Antonio	La Coruña	04-02-90	78 SLE
P MATEOS CABRERA Francisco	Puebla	20-08-90	91 MEM
P MATYSIK Paweł	Ruda Slaska	23-04-90	74 PLS
L MIEMIEC Wilhelm	Oświęcim	07-03-90	77 PLS
P MOBILI Antonio	Campinas	12-01-90	60 BSP
L MOCCHETTI Paolo	Frascati	12-01-90	79 IRO
P MORENO MARQUEZ Rafael	Córdoba	19-02-90	62 SCO
P MUTHAMTHOTIL Anthony	Madras	23-01-90	63 INM
L NAGY Giuseppe	Miyazaki	16-02-90	81 GIA
L NAYLON William	Melbourne	31-01-90	84 AUL
P NEUBAUER Rudolf	Jünkerath	08-07-90	78 GEK
P O'BRIEN John Barry Dennis	Bootle	20-01-90	74 GBR
P O'HARA James	Los Angeles	11-04-90	82 SUO
E OBELAR COLMAN Alejo	Concepción (Paraguay)	30-12-89	74
<i>Fu Vicario Apostolico del Chaco Paraguayo per 17 a.</i>			
P OTTONELLO Juan Bautista	Mar del Plata	24-12-89	77 ALP
P PAELINCK Petrus	Gent	04-06-90	77 BEN
P PEFFER Heribert	Sannerz	27-08-90	78 GEK
P PEGORARO Pietro	Bahía Blanca	02-01-90	78 ABB
P PEISCH István	Budapest	20-01-90	78 UNG
P PENTECOSTE Alessandro	Caserta	01-01-90	91 IME
P PERNA Francesco	S. Giovanni Rotondo	14-03-90	79 IME
P PICARDI Rafael	Neuquén	06-09-90	64 ABB
P PLESS Jan	Oświęcim	22-05-90	67 PLS
P REDZIOCH Władysław	Wrocław	06-01-90	58 PLO
P RENSON Jean	Liège	07-08-90	73 BES
P RIBOTTA Marcelino	Bahía Blanca	21-10-89	78 ABB
P ROCCARO Luigi	Valdivia	21-02-90	80 CIL
P RODRIGUEZ GONZALEZ José	Sevilla	26-07-90	64 SCO
P RODRIGUEZ VARONA Adolfo	La Almunia de Doña Godina	15-07-90	66 SVA
P ROSSETTO Mario	Torino	27-12-89	50 MOR
P RUSSI Walter	Mogliano Veneto	28-05-90	65 IVE
P RYBICKI Wacław	Łódź	04-02-90	82 PLE
P SAENZ RIMON Juan	Montevideo	11-03-90	92 URU
L SANTANA Jesús Antonio	Bogotá	16-01-90	62 COB

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
S SAURBIER Lothar	Hamm	03-06-90	28	GEK
P SCHRIJVER Bernard	Gent	19-02-90	82	BEN
P SCRAZZOLO Virginio	Alassio	19-12-89	80	ILT
L ŠEBO Filip	Hronské Kľacany	02-07-90	76	CEB
L SEQUEIRA Kenneth	Bombay	20-07-90	67	INB
P SOLIS HERNANDEZ Francisco	Guadalajara	10-03-90	55	MEG
L SUŠNIK Franc	Trstenik	17-01-90	69	JUL
P SYLLA Josef	Schwandorf	12-03-90	83	GEM
P TANDOI Alberto	Vico Equense	20-04-90	76	IME
P TANEL Giuseppe	Treviso	14-11-89	76	IVE
L TARINAS ARENAS Francisco	Gerona	19-05-90	87	SBA
P TEOFILO PIMENTA José Ivan	Abreu e Lima	24-02-90	50	BRE
P TKALEC John	Los Angeles	26-12-89	81	SUO
P UGARTE GOMEZ Raúl	Lima	31-12-89	51	PER
P VALENZUELA DIAZ Oscar	Santiago de Chile	02-05-90	86	CIL
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 a..</i>				
P VAN HAGENS Bernard	Roma	25-09-90	76	UPS
P VAN OOTEGHEN L. Fernando	Rondonopolis	13-03-90	79	BCG
P VANDIK Josef	Karlovy Vary	03-01-90	79	CEP
P VENTURINI Giuseppe	Verona	16-04-89	80	IVO
P VENTURUZZO Osvaldo	Guiratinga	14-09-90	82	BCG
P VERNET Juan	Caracas	05-05-90	92	VEN
P VICENTE BODEGAS Juan	Córdoba	29-12-89	83	SCO
L WAGNER Franz	Bendorf	24-09-90	91	GEK
P WHYTE George	Belfast	19-07-90	75	IRL
P WINTERS Piet	Neerpelt	27-03-90	81	BEN
L ZANOTELLI Eugenio	Pordenone	02-03-90	89	IVE
P ZANOTELLI José	Ascurra	30-03-90	82	BPA
L ZAVATTERI Giovanni	Torino	08-03-90	73	ISU
L ŻURAWSKI Paweł	Kraków	05-07-90	75	PLS
P ZWENG Lorenz	Linz	01-05-90	36	AUS

Note: Some of the names included in the above list are of confreres who died in 1989. They are included now either because they were omitted in error, or because the information reached the Secretary General with considerable delay.





