



acts

of the general council

year LXXVI april-june 1995

N. 352

**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

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READING THE FOUNDER'S CHARISM AGAIN AT THE PRESENT DAY

Introduction - A lived experience - Two fundamental convictions - The paths to be followed - The redrafting of the Constitutions - The spirit of the Founder - From the 'mission' to the rediscovery of the 'charism' - The duration of the reinterpretation and those involved - Sensitive points in the process of discernment - The urgent need of a practical methodology - Animation and government - A visit of the Holy Spirit - We have a valid and updated 'identity card'

Rome, 8 February 1995
Introduction at Valdocco of the cause
for beatification and canonization of
Mamma Margaret

My dear confreres,

Today finally in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin, there took place the solemn opening of the official process for the beatification and canonization of Mamma Margaret; and it happened precisely there at Valdocco, where for ten years she bore what we may call heroic witness by her generous collaboration with her son John in starting up the providential salesian charismatic work of the oratories. Our Father and Founder knows how much it cost his mother and how great was her contribution to the success, the style, the family environment, and the spirit of kindness and sacrifice, which still continue to characterize all

Don Bosco's institutions at the present day. Let us thank God and pray that the cause may proceed rapidly and with positive results.

And so, on a date of such great significance, I offer you a reflection on a theme I was requested to deal with for the 20th Congress of the Institute of Theology of the Religious Life, organized by the "Claretianum" here in Rome on 16 December 1994. I was assigned the delicate and important theme "*The foundational rereading carried out by the Salesians*". The theme was not developed with ourselves directly in mind, but in a certain sense it can prove more useful to consider it in the context of other consecrated persons too.

In offering you the contents of what I said on that occasion, my intention is to invite you to give careful consideration to a historical and charismatic synthesis which will serve to illustrate from a salesian point of view the processes of renewal in which we are engaged after Vatican II.

A lived experience

The style of my address is substantially that of a critical review of chronological events. The theme "reading again at the present day the Founder's charism" I intend to develop, not so much as an indication of how it must be done, as to recall what in fact has been done in my own Institute. It is an experience I have lived personally from Vatican II to the present day.

A lived experience is not a thesis to be defended but a reality of life, strengthened by decades of experimentation, which can provide suggestions, some of them already tested, for a better interpretation of one's own spiritual origins.

Two fundamental convictions

The reinterpretation of our Founder's charism has kept us busy for the last thirty years, and in our task we have been helped by two great beacons of light: the first is the *Second Vatican Council*, and the second the *epoch-making acceleration* of history at the present time.

We began from the conviction that *the Council* was a historic visit of the Holy Spirit to Christ's Church for a new era of its mission in the world: the greatest event of the twentieth century, with a view to its authentic renewal. It was possible to draw from it also lights and guidelines for renewal of Religious Life as well. It was a question of homing in on certain strategic points in the great conciliar message, studying them more deeply, adopting them and applying them to the reinterpretation of our charism.

In particular, in the light of what is said in *Lumen gentium*, we tried to do the Council's bidding in the decree *Perfectae caritatis* at n. 2: the "up-to-date renewal" with its two components, the "return to the sources" and the "adaptation to the changed conditions of our time".

The complementary nature of the two criteria ensure the avoidance on the one hand of the danger of rigidity, sclerosis and formalism, and on the other of a break with the origins.

The application, however, of these two criteria, so clear and simple in their expression, turned out to be much more complicated in practice.

The epoch-making change, already described with keen perception and perspective in the conciliar Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, was forcefully presented, especially in some western areas where

our Institute is operating with many foundations. A growing problem was being met with from cultural innovations which had a powerful influence on the specific mission of the Institute and also, to some extent, on the style of religious life. At the same time there were signs of pressure for changes of doubtful authenticity which could have led astray a healthy process of renewal or destroyed it altogether.

The cultural innovations could neither be excluded or ignored, but they had to be seen in the light of the evangelical innovations inherent in any true charisma, and this opened up a field of work that was both vast and delicate. It was then that the famous expression was coined: "With Don Bosco and the times, and not with the times of Don Bosco!".

The clear awareness of this unavoidable challenge led those responsible for the Institute to give extraordinary importance to the Special General Chapter desired by the Apostolic See. They set about its preparation with a seriousness never seen before, and one which involved all Provinces and all confreres. Teams of specialists were organized to prepare detailed analyses of the vital themes that must be tackled and a draft of a possible re-elaboration of the Constitutions was prepared. No fewer than twenty small booklets were carefully prepared for the use of the capitulars. All were conscious of a great responsibility, almost of a re-founding: what Don Bosco had done 'personally' had now to be rethought and redrafted 'communally', in a certain sense, in relationship with the demands of the changed epoch and in complete fidelity to the origins.

We were helped to a great extent not only by

historical studies but also by a serious analysis, albeit synthetical, of the challenges of the cultural changes (secularization, socialization, personalization, liberation, inculturation, the acceleration of history, the advancement of women, etc.).

Never before had we attempted a work so vast and realistic.

The paths to be followed

The foundational reinterpretation could not be a simple and more or less scientific study of the sources; it had to be a spiritual discernment made by committed disciples from within the same vocational experience. It had to be a consideration by those able to grasp the soul of their own Institute, what it stands for, its dynamism, its manner of following Christ and of working in the Church, and of loving the young people in the world in the state in which they are at present found. The return to the sources could not be an archeological voyage of discovery through ancient documents but a revisiting of moments in the foundation process and of the heart of the Founder in his original experience as a disciple of Christ. It had to be an organic and dynamic reevaluation implying personal communion with the Founder through the experience of a whole Institute which had shared his spirit and mission through the years. The ability was needed to harmonize in appropriate degrees historical events, theological principles and special moments of grace.

To undertake such an enterprise it is necessary to follow complementary and interdependent paths, seeking a specific contribution from each of

them. The principal paths followed were:

a. *The historical path*: the charism is a lived experience and not an abstract theory. Consequently a serious study was made of sources referring to the person of the Founder and to the foundation itself: the prevailing cultural and social context and its influence on the Founder; his life and works; the people who influenced him and with whom he had special contacts; his writings etc.

b. *The path of experience*: in the foundational reevaluation an important and concrete part is played by the lived experience of the vast community of the Founder's followers and the values they have embodied, beginning from the awareness of and responsibility for the vocation itself. The faithful journey constitutes a kind of a congregational 'sensus fidelium'. If a faithful and persevering experience of this kind were lacking in the followers, there is the risk:

— of being subject to continual changes in identity, in trying to bring about a forced modernization of the charism to fit the current trend, confusing what is transitory with what is essential;

— of setting the Founder aside on the pretext that his aims and objectives are no longer relevant.

c. *The path of the signs of the times*: The 'historical' path and that of 'experience' help us also to approach with greater sensitivity and tranquility the contribution of the signs of the times. To ignore these, as I have said already, would be to condemn the charism to enclosure in a museum – an unnatural fate. If on the one hand the signs of the times call for deep study and adaptation on the part of the Institute, on the other they make possible a

new and very relevant understanding of the Spirit's gift. They help towards a perception of how far the Lord is pushing his Church and its charisms.

d. *The spiritual path*: this is a path which does not exclude any of the preceding ones but unifies them and embodies them as regards fundamental attitude and aspects: the discernment of God's will and obedience to his calls in the course of history. Only 'spiritual' persons, i.e. those who cultivate a special docility to the Spirit, can follow this path. It enables one to get beyond the social and cultural context of the life of the Founder, so as to draw out against the background of the present day his evangelical intentions and foundational intuitions, so as to be able to realize them in the modern context of new times, and transform them in the culture of today.

The redrafting of the Constitutions

In our foundational reinterpretation an important role of practical guidance was played by the effort to produce a fundamental redrafting of the text of the Constitutions. At the outset this was resisted for various reasons; and even at a later stage, when the work had already been started, there were some who still thought that it would have been sufficient to touch up the previous Constitutions here and there. The result was a wise and bold decision to embark on a complete rethinking and redrafting of the whole text in fidelity to the original.

This delicate work was, of course, put in hand in line with the new conciliar guidelines.¹ The objective was to produce a "Basic Code" with an authentic description of the identity, evangelical va-

¹ cf. *Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* II, 12, 1966

lues, specific characteristics, ecclesial dimension, healthy traditions, and also the indispensable juridical norms for ensuring the character, ends and means of the Institute.

A change from the previous norm desired by *Ecclesiae Sanctae* was that the renewed Constitutions should be rich in evangelical, theological and ecclesial principles, not indeed as an artificial conglomeration introduced from outside and at a theoretical level, but rather as perceptions and declarations emanating from the life lived by the Founder and from within his plan of life. They had to contain an integral synthesis of an original plan of consecrated life and indicate the substantial principles with which the Founder wanted his followers to be disciples of Christ with a specific ecclesial sense.

In them a harmonious integration had to be achieved between gospel inspiration, apostolic criteriology and structural practicality, going beyond the institutional requirements to make clear the historical experience of the Holy Spirit lived by the Founder and by him passed on to the Institute.

Don Bosco, our Founder, did his utmost to instil his own personal experience into the Constitutions (as far as was possible at the time) so as to leave a 'living testament' which would be like a mirror reflecting the characteristic features of his spiritual and apostolic countenance. Rightly was he able to declare that "to love Don Bosco is to love the Constitutions"; and when he handed a copy to Don Cagliero, who was leaving for Patagonia at the head of the first missionary expedition, he said with winning emotion: "Here is Don Bosco going with you".

Naturally, in the redrafting of the Constitutions the effort was made to refer back as much as possi-

ble to the spirituality of the Founder, to his more charismatic writings, to his well proven experience, as a model from which to derive the genuine aspect and indispensable key for the foundational reinterpretation.

The work was not easy; it went on for more than ten years, but it constitutes in fact the clearest and most authoritative synthesis of the enterprise. It was subsequently enriched by an official commentary, article by article, as a valid help for the correct interpretation of the Constitutions. In addition a manual of government was prepared in two volumes – one for Provincials and the other for local Superiors – in view of the renewal of the exercise of authority. It was also possible to draw up an appropriate “*Ratio institutionis*” for the initial and ongoing formation of the confreres.

The spirit of the Founder

In the redrafting of the Constitutions particular importance was given to their organic structure in a global and unified presentation. A plan of life cannot tolerate a fragmentation which conceals or does harm to the implications of a scheme which is in itself vitally organic. But to be able to do this we had first to be clear about two concepts which lie at the basis of everything: that of ‘consecration’ and that of ‘mission’ and their mutual relationships. We may say in fact that on this point there developed a veritable battle in the Chapter; it was not easily resolved, as we shall see, but in its solution we finally found the key to the organic unity.

Meanwhile, as a separate and basic element (at least for the work we had in hand), we wanted to

be sure that we had the correct description of the most significant traits of the Founder's spiritual countenance. Within the great gospel values common to all the Institutes of consecrated life we had to single out the daily style of life, the personal and communal attitudes, and the manner of living and working, or in other words the climate and atmosphere of life which constitutes our particular physiognomy; certainly in this too it was necessary to establish a hierarchy among the components, because it was a matter of a deep reinterpretation with a central motive force, which could not be allowed to become a mere logical theory but had to remain a typological description.

In the important first part of the new text of the Constitutions there is a completely new chapter of 12 articles (from 10 to 21), which are a condensation of what is considered to be the substance of the 'spirit of Don Bosco'.

Vatican II, as we have already said, had asked religious to concentrate their attention on the figure of the Founder as an original expression of the many forms of holiness and evangelical life in the Church. Every Founder is born of the Church and lives for the Church.

Paul VI reminded everyone: "The Council rightly insists on the obligation of religious to be faithful *to the spirit of their Founders*, to their evangelical intentions and to the example of their sanctity. In this it finds *one of the principles for the present renewal and one of the most secure criteria* for judging what each Institute should undertake. For while the call of God renews itself and expresses itself in different ways according to changing circumstances of place and time, it nevertheless requires a certain constancy of orientation".²

² ET 11-12, Rome 1971

We have spoken of 'spirit' rather than of 'spirituality' so as to remain more faithful to the facts of history and to the life of the Founder as a 'kairós' become model; 'spirituality', on the other hand, customarily refers to more abstract concepts.

The work that was done certainly constitutes today one of the meritorious elements of our foundational reinterpretation; we are convinced that it would have pleased Don Bosco himself who, speaking with humility of the constitutional text he had drawn up according to the norms then prevailing, said that it could be considered a 'rough copy' of what he really desired, but that the 'fair copy' would be written later by his sons.

Concentrating attention on the spirit of the Founder meant giving priority to interior matters and attitudes of the heart, having the same sentiments with which he copied those of Christ.

This enables us also to understand the qualitative leap forward desired by the Council as regards the concept of the Constitutions: from a text that was rather normative and juridical, to a pleasing and stimulating synthesis of the evangelical experience of the leader of a new movement in holiness and the apostolate.

The spirit of the Founder is certainly bound up also with the culture of his time; it is manifested in it but transcends it, so that it is able to constitute an ensemble of spiritual traits that can be embodied in other cultures. This, therefore, is due to the transcendence and adaptability of the charism, though its transmission is not brought about by words alone but by a continuous tradition of life linked, in fact, with a long and delicate process of sound inculturation.

From the 'mission' to the rediscovery of the 'charism'

I have already referred to the capitular discussion on the fundamental notions of 'consecration' and 'mission'. A deeper understanding of the mutual relationship between these two vital aspects was central to our reinterpretation and at the foundation of the final synthesis. A sound interpretation of the Council led us to a convinced and dynamic convergence.

When the Special General Chapter began its work, among the commissions set up was one dedicated specifically to the charism of the Founder. It ran into great difficulties, and after a certain space of time was dissolved. Why?

The basic reasons were of two kinds, at odds with each other. Some did not want a study of the charism to be made at all, because it would have left the future open to arbitrary experiments; others did not want it because it would have rendered sacred what were only fleeting cultural elements of the last century. Both groups were eventually able to agree on one thing only: there was not yet a sufficiently enlightened mentality on the point.

It is useful also to recall that in the documents of the Council the expression "charism" of the Founder is never used, even though characteristic elements of its specific nature are indicated. The first official use of the expression "charism" of the Founder is found in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelica testificatio* of Paul VI in 1971.³ An authoritative and more specific clarification, and a more detailed description is found in the document *Mutuae relationes* of 1978.⁴

³ cf. ET 11

⁴ MR 11

On the other hand there was a general conviction that, in a period of rapid change, the aspect felt to be the more challenging was that of the 'mission'. And so the mission became the central point in the concerns of reinterpretation.

But in what did the mission consist. It was all too easy to forget its theological nature and restrict it to the practical theatre of activities. And so an 'essentialist' kind of mentality maintained the ontological primacy of the kind of 'consecration' which many thought must precede and guide the whole project.

A far from easy problem, and one rendered still more difficult among the capitulars by reductive and imprecise ideas of the concept of 'consecration' and of 'mission'.

The path which opened up to us the authentic sense of the reinterpretation of the charism was the realization of the meaning attached by the Fathers of the Council to the famous verb "*consecratur*" in *Lumen gentium* n. 44. A long work of discussion was needed to change the mentality concerning the concept of religious 'consecration'.

First it was being identified with the more typical interior human aspects (prayer, vows), and with the individual religious as its agent ("I consecrate myself"). This led to a prescinding from the true concept of charism and gave a secondary place to the 'mission' with its requirements, as if it pertained only to activity and works and was not theologically inherent in the consecration itself. All this evidently had an influence on the structuring of the Constitutions. A deeply felt discussion was necessary to overcome the dualism between 'consecration' and 'mission' which went to the very root of the identity of our apostolic vocation.

We were greatly helped by what the Council asserts in n. 8 of the Decree *Perfectae caritatis*, and especially by the consideration that God is the active agent in both consecration and mission. This led to a rethinking of the significance of Profession, and the formula was redrafted.

In particular the inseparable theological nexus between 'consecration' and 'mission' was examined at greater depth, and this gave a renewed sense to the whole project of the specific character, and opened up the possibility of rethinking the constitutional structure. This vision of our apostolic consecration is summed up in an article of the Constitutions which says: "We live as disciples of the Lord by the grace of the Father, who *consecrates us* through the gift of his Spirit and *sends us out* to be apostles of the young. Through our religious profession *we offer ourselves to God* in order to follow Christ and work with him in building up the Kingdom. *Our apostolic mission, our fraternal community and the practice of the evangelical counsels are the inseparable elements* of our consecration which we live in a single movement of love towards God and towards our brothers.

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".⁵

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It is a matter, therefore, of living a Christian existence which is simultaneously consecrated and apostolic, rather than being apostolic because it is consecrated. The gift of the Spirit to the professed religious involves in him a '*grace of unity*' which makes him capable of a vital synthesis between the fullness of consecration and the authenticity of apostolic labour. "This type of life – declared the Special General Chapter – is not something fixed

and prefabricated, but is a project in permanent construction. Its unity is not static, but is a unity in tension and in continual need of balance or revision, of conversion and adaptation".⁶

⁶ SGC 127

This grace of unity, the result of pastoral charity, has recently been described also by the Holy Father in the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores do vobis*.⁷ And the same John Paul II in an address to the members of our 23rd General Chapter on 1 May 1990 said: "First of all I want to emphasize as a fundamental point the *strength of a unifying synthesis* that stems from pastoral charity. It is the fruit of the power of the Holy Spirit which ensures the *vital inseparability* between union with God and dedication to one's neighbour, between depth of interior evangelical meditation and apostolic activity, between a praying heart and busy hands. Those two great Saints, Francis de Sales and John Bosco, have borne witness to this wonderful 'grace of unity' and brought it to fruition in the Church. Any deterioration on this point opens up a dangerous path to activism or intinism, both of which are insidious temptations for Institutes of Apostolic Life".⁸

⁷ cf. PDV 23 and 24

⁸ GC22, n. 80

In this vision of vital synthesis we found the spark of our identity, the one that flashes at zero hour where everything begins, where friendship explodes and the covenant is ratified, where pulsates the grace of unity. It is the meeting of two loves, of two freedoms which fuse together: that of the "Father who consecrates us" and "sends us out", and that of ourselves who "offer ourselves" totally to him in accepting to be "sent". In this mutual fusion of friendship the initiative and very possibility of the apostolic covenant come from God, but are confirmed by our free response: he it

is who has called us, who has sent us and has helped us to respond, but we are the ones who give ourselves and become 'missionaries'

For us the term 'consecration' emphasized especially the initiative on God's part: He is the one who consecrates! We were well aware too that the same term 'consecration' – with respect to its contents – is not in itself free from ambiguity; in fact it changes its meaning in line with various levels of ecclesial life. We did not enter immediately into a consideration of such differences, leaving to the elaboration of the Constitutions what the concrete significance was for ourselves.

What we were concerned about in the first place was highlighting the qualitative leap stemming from the recognition of God's initiative: "consecratur a Deo"! This it was that opened up horizons for us.

From this standpoint of apostolic consecration we were led also to contemplate the Founder: God, who chose him and guided him, made of his existence in mission an experience of the Holy Spirit, to be continued and fostered in the Church in the future.

And so in this way we reach a theological vision of the "charism of the Founder": "*an experience of the Spirit transmitted to their 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... with a distinctive character which also involves a particular style of sanctification and apostolate*".⁹

⁹ MR 11

The dynamic element which has brought about the maturing of this theological category of *charism* has been precisely the recognition of the divine initiative in the *consecration* as a specific ac-

tion by God. This, in fact, was a true conciliar reversion which brought about a rethinking of the significance of the Profession and the specific work of the Founder. It also served to give the name of *consecrated* life to Institutes which had been previously known as "states of perfection".

'Apostolic consecration' and 'charism' have become for us two theological categories which are superimposed on each other and mutually interchange. We are dealing, in fact, with an exclusive initiative of God, which does not lose its force in a faceless genericism but consists in an original intervention which establishes a particular mission and a gospel plan of life to give to the Institute a concrete physiognomy ("style of sanctification and apostolate").

We may say that the conciliar vision of 'consecration' implies a viewpoint of an initiative of the Holy Spirit which, when applied to the painful historical work of foundation, manifests the substance of the charism given to both the Founder and the Institute, which has as the permanent source of its continuity the religious profession of the individual members.

And so in our foundational reinterpretation, although we began by temporarily excluding the category of 'charism' we have been forcibly led back to it through the providential deeper analysis of the event of 'consecration' as envisaged by the Council.

The duration of the reinterpretation and those involved

We can consider in general terms four stages through which our work of reinterpretation pas-

sed: the Special General Chapter and the three General Chapters that followed it; in practice they were two decades of intense work, from 1970 to beyond 1990.

— *The GC20* (from 10 June 1971 to 5 January 1972: seven months, no less!) was the “special” Chapter desired by the *Motu proprio Ecclesiae sanctae*. It was the longest and most laborious stage of rethinking and reelaboration of the elements of our identity; it remains the fundamental Chapter of all the work done.

— *The GC21* (from 31 October 1977 to 12 February 1978) was a further period of revision and consolidation. It completed some particular aspects of our identity (e.g. the Preventive System, the role of the Rector, the figure of the Salesian Brother) in harmony with the doctrine and guidelines of Vatican II, and prolonged for a further six years the experiment of the renewed Constitutions.

— *The GC22* (from 14 January to 12 May 1984) represents the final contribution and the goal which concluded the experimental period of the previous twelve years, and gave to the Congregation the Constitutions and Regulations in a renewed and organic form.

— *The GC23* (from 4 March to 5 May 1990) differed from the three previous General Chapters precisely because it was an ‘ordinary’ Chapter. The previous three Chapters belong in a certain sense to the category of the ‘Special’ General Chapter, because of their overall concern with the identity of the charism and the consideration of various related matters. The GC23, on the other hand, dealt with a single concrete argument, chosen to inten-

sify the process of renewal. It is interesting to note that whereas the three 'Special' Chapters led to an identity now clearly described in the Constitutions, the GC23 applied the charismatic identity in a sector of accelerated evolution *for a practical application in the mission*; and this reminds us that the reinterpretation of the identity does not close the door *on the search* for fresh commitments in the new evangelization, but rather opens us to them with greater courage. Hence, the reinterpretation serves also for a more fruitful research for the benefit of the mission.

It is interesting also to observe that the four stages constitute, we may say, a *single continuous and complementary process*. This means that the redrafted text transcends not only the labours of the restricted groups of particular confreres but also the four individual General Chapters. In each of them, with a distance of six years between one and the next, there was a turnover of a good part of the members, with new lived experiences and reflections each time, and in each subsequent Chapter it was possible to reduce the possible influence of earlier elements resulting from circumstantial considerations of the moment; a deeper and more prolonged reflection enabled ambiguities and lack of precision to be corrected. Time allowed the deeper understanding of delicate aspects to mature, while the accelerated rate of change enabled clearer distinctions to be made between permanent and transient values, between what pertained to the identity and what was linked only with culture, thus increasing the awareness of the ecclesial and worldwide dimension of the evangelical project of Don Bosco.

Sensitive points in the process of discernment

In the conciliar view of *Ecclesiae sanctae* the Constitutions had to provide an authoritative presentation of an evangelical plan of life; they had to indicate the fundamental principles of the following of Christ, the ecclesial dimension, the charismatic originality, the healthy traditions and adequate service structures.

They present, in fact, a harmonic integration between gospel inspiration and a concrete structural nature. They are the fundamental document of the Congregation's particular law. More than laying down a priori detailed norms to be followed, they describe mainly a spiritual and apostolic manner of bearing witness according to the spirit of the Beatitudes. They help in rereading the mystery of Christ from the standpoint of the Founder, which is for us the salesian standpoint of Don Bosco. Their general structure has been rethought with a style and arrangement which induce a prayerful reading and prompt a commitment of life. A person meditating on them in faith, i.e. with 'new eyes', will draw from them both life and strength.

Guiding criteria, shared by all (sometimes indeed after long and deeply-felt discussions), were followed and can be considered sensitive points in the process of discernment. In addition to the living sense of the Founder, of which I have already spoken, I would list the following:

— The significance of the religious profession

The reinterpretation of the charism has reawakened especially the awareness of a new starting point for consecrated life with an overall commit-

ment to a new beginning to really relaunch the Founder's plan. This sensitivity as regards a relaunching has brought with it the rediscovery of the vital significance of religious profession.

We have come to realize that religious profession cannot be reduced to the simple making of the three vows, as though they were identical in all Institutes of consecration. It was not a matter of writing into the Constitutions a kind of general treatise on consecrated life, but of providing a description of what the Council called the "particular character" of the evangelical project that was being professed. We needed to describe the spiritual traits and existential attitudes which would distinguish and characterize us among the People of God. These aspects, of course, presuppose and require the constitutive elements of all Christian and consecrated life, which we necessarily have in common with other religious and members of the faithful.

The particular character is brought about by existential aspects and nuances described and specified in the text of the Constitutions and explicitly assumed in the act of profession as practices for the following of Christ: something, in fact, which is by no means insignificant and which cannot be set aside by the professed. For us the manner of being disciples and living our Baptism is that of practising our "Rule of life". To become true Christians we must live as good Salesians. "There are not two levels", our Special General Chapter told us: "that of religious life which is a little higher, and that of Christian life which is a little lower. For the religious, testifying to the spirit of the Beatitudes with the profession of the vows is his only manner of living out baptism and of being a disciple of the Lord".

In religious profession we discover the full living and overall significance of our special Covenant with God.

— *The oratory criterion*

This refers to the question of what groups we work for: a crucial point in the Special General Chapter. In Don Bosco's heart the priority was for the work of the Oratories for those to whom he felt he had been specially sent. In our reinterpretation of the charism the first Oratory at Valdocco was taken as an apostolic point of reference. As a model this is not identified with a particular structure or institution, but rather with a specific pastoral standpoint for assessing our present works or those to be taken up in future.

At the centre of this 'oratorian heart' there is a predilection for the young, especially those who are poorer, and for the working classes; before and above the works themselves there are the people, the young people; the disciple of Don Bosco must feel himself a *missionary of the young*.

The inspiration of this criterion throws light on the ecclesial commitments Don Bosco wanted for the Congregation. They are: the evangelization of the young, especially poor youngsters and young workers; the fostering of vocations; apostolic initiative in densely populated working-class areas, especially through the means of social communication; and the missions.

For a faithful understanding of the reach of this criterion it is well to have in mind some constitutional requirements at three different and complementary levels:

- the preferential choice of those for whom we work: poor youth and, at the same time, those who show signs of a vocation;
- the spiritual and educative experience of the preventive system;
- the ability to recruit numerous collaborators, chosen from among the laity and the youngsters themselves, to share with us responsibility for the work.

It is a question, therefore, of a complex but concrete criterion which leads us to transcend the material character of the works and enter into Don Bosco's heart to make judgements and plans in line with the specific style of his pastoral charity.

In point of fact, this criterion has led among other things to a courageous *Project Africa* which, after 15 years, now sees more than 800 salesian missionaries working in 36 countries of that continent.

— *The community dimension*

Another sensitive point in the reinterpretation was that of the community dimension, which is intrinsic to the religious life, albeit – in our own case – with a particular style all its own.

It was not, however, just a matter of intensifying a genuine 'family spirit' among the confreres – something that had been emphasized from the origins, but of insisting on the special communion or sharing of responsibility in the mission: this is entrusted in the first place to the community, which is the subject responsible.

Hence the particular manner of exercising authority; hence the community aspect of the educative and pastoral plan; hence the commitment to

formulate it, realize it, and revise it together; hence the stimulus to offer personal contributions to the exclusion of all individualism and arbitrary independence. The community is called to a continual pastoral discernment so as to remain united and faithful in the apostolic realization of the charism.

This sensitive point has had a great influence throughout the long process of renewal.

— *The “form” of the Institute*

The form of the Institute (i.e. whether it is “clerical”, “lay”, “mixed”, “indifferent”, etc.) implies constitutive traits which express and ensure, even from a juridical point of view, the particular character and characteristics of the charism. It has, in fact, a theological and spiritual importance in the growth and vitality of the charism: “According to our tradition,” reads the text of the Constitutions, “communities are guided by a member who is a priest, and who by the grace of his priestly ministry and pastoral experience sustains and directs the spirit and activity of his brothers”.¹⁰

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The mission, which determines the tenor of the whole life of the Institute, is *pastoral of its nature* and the whole spirit of the Founder emanates from the pastoral charity of his priestly heart.

Our Institute is not strictly ‘priestly’, nor is it simply ‘lay’, and neither is it ‘indifferent’ properly so-called. The members are clerical and lay. “Our Society is made up of clerics and laymen who complement each other as brothers living out the same vocation”; each one is aware that he shares responsibility for the whole before considering himself cleric or lay. “The priestly and lay components of

the Society do not imply the extrinsic summation of two dimensions, each belonging to groups of confreres, distinct from each other, running on parallel lines and eventually putting together the efforts of each group, but rather a single community which is the true recipient of the one salesian mission. This requires *a particular formation of the personality of each member*, so that in the heart of each clerical Salesian there is an intimate feeling of being linked to and coinvolved with the lay dimension of the community, and in the heart of each lay Salesian in turn, there is the same feeling in respect of the community's priestly dimension".¹¹ This is a single characteristic bound up with the specific 'secular dimension' of the Institute. For this reason it is of the greatest importance for us to promote simultaneously an awareness and harmonious growth of clerical and lay members in the spirit of the salesian tradition.

And so the service of authority in the Congregation is linked with this originality of 'form'. It exerts a delicate function of identity in the spirit and unity of apostolic action. Its specific role is that of promoting and giving direction to the 'pastoral charity' which is the centre and synthesis of the salesian spirit and the soul of all our activity. The grace of priestly ordination (which is the sacrament of pastoral charity) enriches and confirms the potential for service, and ensures that a genuine pastoral criterion lies behind all our participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church, including also human advancement and an incisive effect on culture.

It is a contribution useful to all members because it is intimately connected with the oratorian criterion.

¹¹ GC22, n. 80

— *Decentralization*

We were convinced of the urgent need to indicate and embody through flexible methods the common identity in different local cultures. This is an arduous task; it demands a clear idea of the identity in the process of formation, and an acute sensitivity and intelligent discernment in respect of cultural differences.

We felt ourselves in full agreement with Fr Voillaume: "There is a tendency nowadays to place in doubt the unity of a Congregation on the pretext of developing the regional or national characteristics of the foundations. Such a tendency is ambiguous. It is lawful to the extent that it is a reaction against a uniform commitment to a univocal expression of religious life too much dependent on a single mentality, but nonetheless it throws doubt on one of the characteristics of the Kingdom of God which is above every culture, in the fraternal unity of the People of God which should know neither race nor culture".¹²

A charism which is not open and adaptable to cultural values becomes institutionalized and cuts itself off from the future; but a culture which is closed to the signs of the times, to mutual exchange with other cultures and to the transcendence of the mystery of Christ and his Spirit, risks becoming a museum piece from the past or a reductive interpretation of universality.

From this one can see how delicate and crucial formation has become in the Institute at the present day, and at the same time one comes to realize the importance of an adequately decentralized authority to ensure in the Provinces and groups of homogeneous Provinces a practical possibility of inculturation.

¹² R. VOILLAUME, *La vita religiosa: conversazioni di Béni-Abbès*, ed. Città Nuova 1973, p. 95

— *The Salesian Family*

Convinced that the Founder has launched his spirit and mission over a wider range than our own Institute, and that he has bequeathed to us special responsibilities for the animation and coordination of many apostolic forces, we considered anew one of the great paths of our renewal to be the development of what is called the “Salesian Family”.

It is made up of various groups (both Institutes of consecrated life and lay Associations and movements), which share – in different ways – Don Bosco’s spirit and mission. This has become a vast and fertile field which provides at the present day special possibilities for the committed laity. We are already following this line in a decisive fashion, following in the footsteps of the Founder, and we intend to intensify and perfect this option in the coming 24th General Chapter of 1996, with its theme: “Salesians and Lay people: communion and sharing in the spirit and mission of Don Bosco”.

Urgent need of a practical methodology

The process of functional reinterpretation has been in itself an intensive and far from easy research into our charismatic identity. We are satisfied with what has been done, and we thank the Lord for it. But we must add that the lengthy process *has not ended the period of research*; quite the opposite. It has, indeed, opened up a kind of exploration still more accelerated and intense. It is as though the foundational reinterpretation has loosed all available energy in view of a greater significance and apostolic creativity.

It is not, therefore, a matter of a work already concluded, but a kind of prophecy which re-launches the process of renewal starting off on a double new track: that of the assimilation by all the confreres of a *personal renewal* of individuals and communities, and that of *practical involvement* in facing the challenges of the new evangelization.

Knowing more clearly *who* we are in the Church (through our foundational reinterpretation), we feel ourselves challenged as bearers of a charism relevant to the present day. And this requires a special methodological capacity in planning and action. The process from the charismatic identity to the actualization of the mission at the present day (from orthodoxy to orthopraxis) is quite complex. Here is concentrated all the great pastoral problem of the Church, "a new enthusiasm, a new methodology, new expressions", the capacity for planning, the serious element of revision.

The clearer our identity as consecrated persons, the more demanding is the search for a dynamic updating of the charism.

This is why our first 'ordinary' General Chapter of 1990 (GC23) after the reinterpretation of our identity, was concerned to give new life to Don Bosco's mission today for the "education of young people to the faith".

We know that the road ahead is a long one with innumerable unknown elements, and constant progress along this pastoral path will be the best proof of the authenticity of our foundational reinterpretation.

We feel the urgent need to promote a whole sector of theological reflection which will go beyond the fundamental and classical disciplines of the faith. It is a question of a kind of pastoral theol-

ogy which is in contact with real life and enters also into dialogue with the human sciences (history, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, politics, etc.), keeping firmly in mind the official guidelines of the Church's magisterium which accompany an ecclesial praxis animated by the Lord's Spirit; such a practice essentially precedes scientific reflection. A pastoral mentality needs many contributions: together with theological reflection of a biblical, historical, dogmatic and liturgical character, it must be disposed to develop an appropriate manner of intervention. This in turn will be the result of a pedagogical and methodological reflection which involves strategy in activity, the study and the planning of times, modes, processes and means – in other words the elaboration of projects for passing from a challenging situation to a positive solution as the sought-for goal.

Anyone living in apostolic mission always feels the urgent need to improve his pastoral mentality; he keeps an attentive eye on the rise of centres of serious pastoral theology: a particular theology which does not pretend to set up a unique interpretation of everything but throws light on praxis. It "is inserted in the vast area of theology as a vital and important part, but not one that covers everything or is a unique criterion valid for everything. Pastoral applications do not seek to change the formal nature of theology; especially must they not change it when it turns its attention and reflection to something concrete and urgently vital. If the urgent aspect of reflection is precisely theological, i.e. polarized by the light and revelation of the mystery of Christ through the guidance of the Magisterium, it would be a serious mistake to deprive it (as unfortunately has sometimes happened) of this na-

tural polarization, and replace it by a horizontalistic approach which would pretend to manipulate the interpretation of Christianity to suit itself".¹³

And so our foundational reinterpretation has brought us to revise and renew the academic structure of our Pontifical University as well, so that it may have a greater pastoral influence and effect, while always ensuring a serious theological reflection, because it is precisely in an ambit of a certain so-called pastoral enthusiasm which also runs the risk of setting out on mistaken paths and so disjoining itself little by little from the authenticity of the charism.

¹³ cf. E. VIGANÒ, *Per una teologia della vita consacrata*, LDC Turin, 1986, p. 21-22

Animation and government

A concrete methodology in view of updated and more incisive apostolic activity has brought to the fore the indispensability of a commitment to ongoing formation for all confreres: to take up clearly the foundational reinterpretation and to stimulate every community to the ability to make practical plans for the new evangelization.

Such a wide-ranging commitment has changed the style of the exercise of authority in government, and the secret underlying this exercise is competence in animation. How many initiatives have been launched in this connection! It is neither a simple nor a short-term work, but is nonetheless indispensable; without it the foundational reinterpretation will end up only on library shelves.

It has been found that in a period of deep change the concept of formation has its fundamental and primary significance ("princeps analogatum") in *ongoing formation*, in which every reli-

gious house becomes a centre of formation, and initial formation is directed to ongoing formation to prepare the 'formandi' to be capable subjects committed to facing the pressing and widely varying challenges of the ecclesial and cultural future.

The epoch-making changes call on all religious to feel themselves undergoing in a certain sense a second novitiate in order to renew their own religious profession in line with the postconciliar reinterpretation.

Together with fidelity in the spirit, stimulation is also given to creativity in the mission with sensitivity as regards the variety of situations which prompt government to adopt a kind of structure and mode of action in view of pluralism in unity and unity in pluralism.

A visit of the Holy Spirit

We were and remain convinced – as I have already said – that Vatican II was a visit of the Lord's Spirit to his Church; it produced a qualitative leap in the whole of the pastoral area, starting from the identity of the Church's mystery, its relationships with the world, and its presence as leaven in history.

We set about making our foundational reinterpretation in this climate of Pentecost. There were certainly periods when things moved slowly, when preconconciliar residues were evident; there were fears and instances of shortsightedness which prolonged our work; here and there may still be found some obscure areas still to be clarified in harmony with the whole; but with simple faith we think that all the work that has been done cannot be explained with-

out the light, the creativity, and the intuition about the future, which can have come only from a special presence of the Holy Spirit. When we look back and read over the new Constitutions once again, when we note the development of the life of the Institute, its transformations and its vitality in every continent, we believe that the Holy Spirit, through the motherly intervention of Mary, has given us appropriate and clear lenses to enable us to read our origins once again and make a decisive leap forward.

In this way we feel ourselves called by the Spirit to collaborate in the People of God, through our specific mission, in the laborious ecclesial pilgrimage towards the third millennium.

We have a valid and updated 'identity card'

Dear confreres, let us be grateful and rejoice. The Holy Spirit has enlightened and accompanied us; he has shown us the highway we must follow; he has enriched us with a treasure of life; he has taken from us the distress of insecurity and deviations, and has ensured our identity among the People of God; but on this very account he has opened for us an immense field of work, where we have to search and labour, create and predict that spirit of initiative and originality which characterized the apostolic origins of our mission. May Mary be our guide through all our foundational reinterpretation, that we may be able to relaunch Don Bosco's charisma towards the immense hopes and possibilities of the third millennium.

With Mamma Margaret let us look to the future
with intuition and maternal fertility.

With every blessing on your work,

Cordially in Don Bosco,

Don F. Viganò

2.1 THE VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT AND THE SALESIAN MISSION

Fr Luc VAN LOOY

Councillor General for Youth Pastoral Work

The life of the Congregation has already known for some time the experience of the Volunteer Movement as a lay expression of the charism. In the area of service – whether it be of an educational, social, missionary or developmental kind – many Provinces have already some wonderful experience behind them. In recent years the Salesian Youth Movement has sensitized many young people towards a common commitment with the Salesians, and this frequently finds an outlet in availability for service through the volunteer movement in its various forms in the Province or the nation, or in developing countries or missionary areas.

Reference had already been made to the volunteer movement in the GC21; the GC22 insisted that salesian youth volunteers should be fostered, while the GC23 spoke of the movement as a “gratuitous service among the very poor”, creating group experiences with a clear vocational purpose. (GC23, 252).

It is an effective expression of the Salesian Family, giving to young lay people the possibility of collaborating with the Salesians in the common mission received from Don Bosco.

The genesis of an aid-document

The General Council has examined the phenomenon, with collaboration being given particularly by the Departments for the

Salesian Family, the Missions, and Youth Pastoral Work. The study passed through various stages: initially a memorandum was drawn up, followed by a survey among the Provinces to see what experiences were so far available. The results of this showed that 27 Provinces had active volunteers in their own territory, 16 sent volunteers to areas outside their own territory and a further 27 sent them to developing countries and/or the missions. It became clear from the responses that the volunteer movement was very much alive and that a precise orientation was expected. The results of the survey were therefore made known to the Provinces, and at the same time a meeting was called of a certain number of Salesians and lay people, all with experience of the movement, for a seminar on the matter at the Generalate. This seminar drew up guidelines to be incorporated in a document.

The Rector Major with his Council made an assessment of the experiences so far known, so as to base any guidelines on the existing reality rather than on theoretical considerations. Because of the growing importance of the phenomenon in the Congregation, this deeper analysis was necessary in order to bring the movement into harmony with the integral reality of salesian life in its various environments. The study indicated that the phenomenon does indeed correspond with the intuition of Don Bosco, who wanted young people themselves to take part in the formative process of their peers. This was a way of living and practising youthful protagonism together with the Salesians.

A glance at the document

The document is the result of a common effort by three departments; and so, as is said in the first chapter, it must be approached from the angles of youth pastoral work, salesian family, and missionary activity and mentality. To the Salesian Family the volunteer movement offers a means for involving people in the salesian charism and mission, while the missionary commitment 'ad gentes' provides models for living the lay dimension in solidarity

with more urgent human needs, and opens up possibilities for direct involvement on the evangelization frontier.

After a second chapter which considers the identity of the salesian volunteer, the third chapter is dedicated to the "Volunteer's mission", assigning to it within salesian activities a place of an educational, cultural, social and evangelizing kind, and calling attention to its communal, educational, cohesive and evangelizing style which is proper to the charism.

The relationship with the community (chapter four) is a delicate aspect. The volunteer frequently wants to participate in the life of the community as he participates in the mission, but we are aware that it is not always easy to create harmony between religious and laity. The document therefore distinguishes between two ways of living in common: the integrated model and the distinct one. The first endeavours to insert the volunteers to the maximum in the life of the community, while leaving the necessary area of privacy to both components, whereas in the second the volunteers have a rhythm of life distinct from that of the salesian community.

The chapter on formation is perhaps the nucleus of the whole document because of its importance. It contains indications for the content, place and environment of formation, both initial and ongoing. "The volunteer movement", says the text, "is like the flourishing of a plant which has been long and methodically cultivated", to indicate that the success of any process of service must be accompanied by a careful and profound preparation.

The last chapter of the document deals with some strategies for animation and government, to clarify tasks and responsibilities in Province and houses within the practice of pastoral coordination. The document emphasizes that the volunteer process is something that must be shared between the confreres of the Province and those of the work concerned. In its organization it must have a clear place within the pastoral team, of which those responsible for the provincial services of youth pastoral work, salesian family, missions, etc. are all members. It is urged once again that the volunteer movement be found an explicit place in the pastoral and

educative plan of the Province, because it is sure to develop better when it is the result of a decision shared by the confreres and backed by the Provincial Council. It is not fitting, therefore, to delegate the matter to a small group or to a single confrere so as to avoid the development of a parallel sector in the Province.

Some aspects which make the volunteer movement valuable

In the life of communities and provinces the volunteer movement has already produced various effects of renewal and commitment. When we say it is a 'sign of the times', we mean also that it corresponds to the needs of the communities to renew themselves. The GC23 insisted on a reduction of the distances between Salesians, lay collaborators and young people. The volunteer movement is a praxis of common commitment for the same mission among youngsters, adults and Salesians, involving all of them in one and the same project from its first elaboration to its verification.

The elements which make it so valuable could be expressed as follows:

- it renews a youthful spirit in the community, thanks to the shared responsibility between young people and adults;
- it makes the community aware of the urgent need of service and commits the entire salesian agents to service in frontier positions of the Church;
- it opens the community's horizons to new forms of poverty, to non-institutionalized situations, to the search for new responses and new challenges;
- it calls upon the community to shoulder its responsibility for the formation of these young adults which it accepts and to commit itself to communicating to them the specific values of the charism;
- it unites the Province around a common project for the formation of future volunteers, and for inserting their service

afterwards in the various activities of the houses, drawing profit from their experiences;

- it opens the eyes of Salesians to a constant discernment of the work and services, the educational effect, and the life prospects of the volunteers, with particular attention to their possible vocational future;
- it brings, and if necessary brings back, to the community a style of generosity, and in many cases probably also of simplicity and poverty.

The lifestyle of the volunteers and their work in situations of poverty frequently compel us to wonder about our own style of life, and to remodel it to the extent that is needed for witness in the new environments of poverty.

In this sense the volunteer movement can also make us rethink many habits and practices of our communities and the way we manage our works. It is not a matter of indifference that every year we receive new strengths to introduce into our system of life and work. It creates the problem of the continuity of the work undertaken, of the adopting of a different style, of adaptation to different characters, etc.; but at the same time it brings us to the genuine kind of teamwork and flexibility that is typical of our presence among young people.

The great benefit brought to us by young volunteers is their youthful enthusiasm and the creativity of their response to the challenges that confront us.

Some organizational indications suggested in the document

It may be useful at this point to indicate, for the information of all confreres, some of the lines of commitment which are scattered through the document. To give life to the volunteer movement in the Provinces a study of the complete document will be necessary, because it provides the foundations and motivations which underlie these indications. I limit myself here to a listing of the points that emerge, but I would urge you once again to take in hand the full

document – of some thirty pages – to obtain a sound understanding of what the volunteer movement implies.

Here then are the basic indications:

Be careful not to introduce the movement as a separate sector. On the contrary, it must be integrated *into the educative project of the Province and of the educative community*, involving in particular the youth pastoral, salesian family, and mission sectors (cf. n. 2.3.1).

The movement should be a clear expression of the salesian style of animation and of the preventive system (2.2).

Prior attention must be given to the formation of the volunteer, as regards the cultivation of human, christian and salesian maturity.

* *The volunteer:*

Shares the option of the Church and Don Bosco for the poor (3.1.a).

Should not work individually or in isolation, but at the service of the project and of the community in which he is working (3.3).

Should be able to accompany young people in formative processes, in a manner drawing its inspiration from the preventive system, and respectful of their sensitivities (3.3).

Should feel himself sent by the Father to live and bear witness to the new commandment of solidarity (3.3).

* *The community:*

Receives the volunteer and inserts him into its project, respecting his lay identity (4.3).

Fosters the insertion of the volunteer into the community life (5.5.3).

Tries to pass on the richness of the salesian spirit and the style of the mission to youth (4.3).

Is responsible for the formation of the volunteers and for their follow-up (4.3).

Takes responsibility for inserting the volunteer into the educative and pastoral community (4.3).

The educative community makes use of the volunteer's services, provides him with space for participation and opens areas for the purpose (4.3).

* *The formation:*

This is carried out in association with youth pastoral work, and is the concern in the first place of the local community sending the volunteer (5.1).

It is not limited to courses or group meetings, but needs personal accompaniment (5.3).

The receiving community guarantees that there will be a person responsible for the follow-up of the volunteer, and will see to it that he has explicit time for prayer and reflection (5.6.2).

* *Organization*

– *at local level:*

The Rector is called upon to be open to the volunteer movement and to involve also the salesian community and the educative and pastoral community (6.1).

A particular individual should be given the task of animating and coordinating the fostering and formation of the young volunteers (6.1).

– *at provincial level:*

The volunteer movement should figure explicitly in the Provincial Pastoral and Educative Project (6.2.1). The Provincial should appoint, from among the team for youth pastoral work, a confrere responsible for the movement at provincial level (6.2.1).

The Provincial Council should be kept informed, promote reflection, and foster the availability of personnel and financial support (6.2.1).

The pastoral team should create a convergence around the volunteer movement (6.2.1).

– *at world level:*

The Councillor for Youth Pastoral Work will be the central reference point for the movement, and will coordinate communication and interventions with the Councillors for the Missions and for the Salesian Family. He will appoint a person to follow the activities of the movement.

Conclusion

Don Bosco was always attentive to the realities of his time and accepted positive phenomena for the benefit of poor and abandoned youth and for the ordinary people. In the same way the Congregation wants to commit itself to the volunteer movement as an expression of its mission. What has been done so far has enabled many young adults to become enriched by the experience of freely given service, and has brought to the works and Provinces a new and excellent quality. In a period of deep reflection on the common mission of Salesians and lay people, in preparation for the GC24, this form of educational and social commitment shows us that the Congregation has the ability to integrate lay people into the mission and the community.

The document which the General Council places in the hands of the confreres has the purpose of animating all Provinces and all communities in the taking up of forms of voluntary service in the realization of the mission. It will soon be followed by a dossier, prepared by the Department for Youth Pastoral Work, of experiences of the volunteer movement in the Congregation concerning practical possibilities in the movement, for the information in particular of those responsible.

There are possibilities of various kinds, as is clear from the experience of Provinces which have already taken up the volunteer movement:

— the foundation of new communities, with Salesians willing to accept volunteers;

- the drawing up of a plan for the movement in works replanned for the purpose;
- the preparation of candidates to be sent abroad, or to commit themselves in their own country;
- the accepting of volunteers and their follow-up in line with a provincial plan;
- the organization of summer or short-term experiences, in view of passing gradually to more serious commitments and initiatives (cf. 6.2.1).

John Paul II, speaking to young people at Turin in 1988, laid emphasis on the need of commitment to the volunteer movement: “I dare to say that a young person of your age who does not give, in one form or another, a prolonged period of service for others cannot call himself a Christian, such are the demands that arise from the brothers and sisters who surround us”.

2.2 EDUCATION TO THE MISSIONARY DIMENSION

Fr Luciano ODORICO
Councillor General for the Missions

Introduction

In line with the continuity of proposals and guidelines concerning the missionary dimension of the Congregation, I am glad to present to you some reflections on the theme: "*Education to the missionary dimension*".

It is a matter of taking a brief glance at the contents of an aid for the formation of young people in our works towards the task of a more valid missionary animation.

Clearly the indications of this aid, which has the precise title: "*EDUCATION TO THE MISSIONARY DIMENSION*" are addressed in the first place to Provincials and Provincial Delegates for missionary animation. They in fact carry the primary responsibility for involving Salesians and lay people in this so essential sector of the salesian mission.

The present brief article and guidelines complete, in this period preceding the General Chapter, the other topics proposed in recent years, i.e.:

1. *Candidates for the salesian missions*, in AGC 337 (1991) 54-58.
2. *The African Synod and Project Africa*, in AGC 341 (1992) 32-38.
3. *Cooperation in missionary activity*, in AGC 343 (1993) 35-41.
4. *Ongoing formation for salesian missionaries*, in AGC 348 (1994) 39-44.

The aid referred to has already been sent to all the Provinces; it is possible however for further copies to be requested to meet eventual new needs. The text is published in five languages to meet

the desires of the different geographical areas of the Congregation which is becoming ever more internationalized, and also to provide a convenient handbook for users in their own country and in others of a different language where animators and volunteers might wish to gain missionary experience. We hope that our intuition in this respect corresponds to the real need.

This contribution by the Councillor for the Missions comes almost at the end of the six-year period following the GC23 and on the eve of the GC24; I think the coincidence may be providential, because the volume concerned is a rereading and reinterpretation of the journeys of faith and salesian youth spirituality in the missionary perspective, and offers contents for the education to a missionary mentality of lay people committed according to the salesian spirit in line with the theme of the coming General Chapter.

1. Origin and objectives

The present publication is the result of two years of research and work, coordinated by the Missions Dept. through its collaborators, in response to an explicit request for an aid for missionary animation for the growth of groups with a missionary orientation.

There were some key points at the root of the planning and development of the work; 1. *the International Seminar of 5-17 February 1993*, and 2. *the Congress of Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation of Europe and North America of 13-16 May 1994* (cf. op. cit. p. 3, Eng. section)

After these meetings there was a further work of synthesis and stylistic revision. Nevertheless I think I must point out that this is not a finished document but rather a theoretical and practical aid for those already mentioned. I thank in anticipation any who send in suggestions for possible improvements and point out corrections that may be necessary, especially after a first experimental period.

The main contents are four in number:

1. Features of missionary work and mentality.
2. A missionary reading of the process of education to the faith.
3. A missionary reading of Salesian Youth Spirituality.
4. Key organizational points in promoting a missionary spirit.

These contents aim at pursuing four principal objectives:

1. To reexamine the missionary dimension within certain features of missionary work and mentality directly linked with this dimension.
2. To emphasize the specifically missionary dimension within the unified process of the education of young people to the faith along the lines indicated by the G23, 112-157.
3. To highlight the missionary dimension within the five nuclei of Salesian Youth Spirituality (GC23 161-180): the intention is to stress the reciprocal dynamic linkage existing between the specific aspect of Salesian Youth Spirituality and the missionary aspect which renders it "more genuine" (cf. E. Viganò, AGC 336, 38).
4. To urge Provincial Delegates for missionary animation to involve young people as animators of the missionary group movement, and valid leaders in the Church's mission.

We hope that the attainment of these objectives, even if only to a partial extent, may help to endow all decisions and animating activity of the Province with a missionary sense. Fr Viganò has written, in fact: "*If our Congregation is missionary, it means that all its members share the responsibility for this – not only those who have a role of animation and guidance but also local communities and every single confrere*" (AGC 336, 40; cf. o.c. p.7).

2. Presentation of the four blocks of missionary approach

As already stated the text comes in four blocks. They should be seen as a substantial whole, but for mainly pedagogical reasons they are presented as separate themes, almost as complete in

themselves. This has the advantage from a pedagogical point of view of facilitating the formation of missionary animators, but also the disadvantage that it leads to a certain amount of repetition. It was a question of a choice of methodology that had to be made.

2.1 Features of missionary work and mentality

The first chapter provides a brief pedagogical approach to the main features of missionary mentality and work; it is meant to give a general overall view of items that come later concerning the itinerary of the missionary life of faith and of missionary spirituality.

I would like to point out what I consider to be the key or starting point for understanding these features, which is "EVANGELIZATION"; it is in fact the proclamation of the Good News of Christ which transforms individuals and society, word and witness, experience of life and sharing, and a message addressed to all people of every context the world over.

In the light of evangelization the content of the following have to be reinterpreted as indicated:

* *Worldwide aspect*, as:

- christian citizenship of the whole world,
- positive and joyful overcoming of barriers and frontiers,
- courageous acceptance of unity in variety,
- understanding of interdependence of world problems and of their solutions.

* *Inculturation*, as:

- immersion of the christian message of Jesus in different cultural contexts,
- joyful acceptance of the interaction between the christian message and cultural demands,
- recognition of the necessary correction and transformation of culture in the new situation brought about by Christ,

- recognition of the enrichment gained by christianity through the contribution of this new cultural immersion.

* *Development, as*

- prior concern for peoples not yet evangelized, the first object of the evangelizing effort of the Salesians of Don Bosco (cf. C 30),
- integral vision of evangelization as the explicit proclamation of Christ, education, culture and human advancement, through various services characteristic of salesian missionary activity (cf. *ibid*),
- preference given to the young, the poor and the outcasts, following the example of Don Bosco and his parting advice to the first missionaries (cf. *Souvenir to the missionaries*, n. 5),
- special devotion to Mary Help of Christians as protagonist and helper in the work of building the Kingdom of God.

I think that on the basis of the preceding reflections it is reasonable to choose evangelization as the key to the understanding of the other features of missionary work and mentality, and the hub around which they rotate.

2.2 A missionary reading of the process of education to the faith

For the second chapter also, I would like to suggest a *christocentric vision* as the key to the understanding of the four blocks of the journey of faith seen in a missionary perspective.

The “*MEETING WITH CHRIST*” means as an overall objective: “Opening oneself to a meeting with Christ, missionary of the Father, to accept his command to be his witnesses in all the world” (cf. Jn 17,18; Acts 1,8).

This overall objective evolves through four stages connected with each other in a logical process of growth until maturity is reached in Christ, the first missionary:

- *Phase 1*: a personal meeting with Christ, missionary of the Father and the master who calls,

- *Phase 2*: acceptance of his invitation to go out to all the world,
- *Phase 3*: availability to be “sent” so as to give one’s whole life through love,
- *Phase 4*: joyful narration of this experience.

From the “Meeting with Christ” we reinterpret:

* *Human maturity*, as:

- understanding of the human person as open to human and divine growth,
- acceptance of new traits in others, and of others as an invitation to reciprocal communion,
- openness to Jesus, wonderful symbiosis of human and divine realization, and goal of all human achievement.

* *Ecclesial membership*, understood as:

- joyful acceptance of the Church as the visible and historical personification of Christ;
- insertion in an evangelized christian community, and in a constant process of evangelization of other newly-founded Churches and areas which are strictly missionary;
- participation in a particular local Church, in communion with all the particular Churches of the world, to profit by the riches of the universal Church.

* *Commitment for the world*, understood as:

- personal and communal commitment for the spreading of the Kingdom of God in one’s own area and in all the world,
- joyful acceptance of the presence of the Kingdom of God which has already come in Jesus Christ, and of the urgent need for personal missionary commitment so that the Kingdom may become a confirmed reality in space and time, open to eschatology,
- acceptance of the peremptory need to respond positively to a personal call for the Kingdom.

2.3 A missionary reading of Salesian Youth Spirituality

The standpoint of spirituality in general, and hence also of salesian and missionary spirituality, is that of emphasizing the knowledge of the faith as a style of life, as an interior conviction, as a space for asceticism, and as an ineffable experience of contemplation.

In the third chapter, in which we meet the five blocks of Salesian Youth Spirituality, I would like to emphasize the central role of "*SPIRITUALITY OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THE LORD JESUS*", as the hub of the other four.

This *christocentric insistence* has some very important consequences at the level of salesian missionary spirituality. In Jesus, in fact, we meet:

- the ultimate foundation of the salesian spirit, understood as pastoral charity characterized by youthful dynamism (cf. C 10);
- the sources and model of this pastoral thrust, i.e. Jesus as the Good Shepherd, apostle and missionary of the Father;
- inspiration for the attitude of filial gratitude to the Father, in intimacy with the Father in constant and joyful contemplation;
- predilection for the poor and little ones, solicitude for preaching, healing and saving under the urgency of the Kingdom, all this as a consequence of intimacy with the Father (cf. C 11).

Hence Jesus the Good Shepherd is the source and model of youth spirituality and especially of salesian youthful missionary spirituality. In the light of this christocentric approach we understand:

* *spirituality of daily life*, as:

- today's point in history already achieved in salvific form by Jesus who in this way gives meaning to daily life now and always;
- perception of the necessary involvement, even at the level of empathy, because it is a matter of a spirituality lived in the daily local vicissitudes, with human and pastoral interest in

other countries and other peoples;

- the conviction that daily life is the setting in time and space of the call to holiness of every young person, and especially of those with a missionary sensitivity.

* *Spirituality of optimism and joy, as:*

- joy at the growth of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of so many young people, and at the growth of new ecclesial and salesian presences in the world,
- an attitude of gratitude for the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit who gives a new missionary freshness to the Church and the Congregation,
- a feeling of joyful humility at having been chosen by the Spirit as an instrument for the dissemination of the Good News,
- a sharing of the simplicity, joy and optimism of the poor in mission territories, as a result of the presence of the Lord Jesus among them.

* *Spirituality of ecclesial communion, as:*

- a sentiment of contemplation of the miraculous missionary expansion of the Church in the world,
- recognition and participation in the Church as communion with so many other Churches in the one Mystical Body of Jesus Christ,
- the development of an interior conviction of ecclesial and universal brotherhood, and of the charismatic event of the Salesian Family.

* *Spirituality of responsible service, as:*

- the ability to discern the voice of the Spirit in many young and generous hearts, especially calling to missionary service,
- the experience of personal and communal prayer as a special moment for vocational decisions,
- an attitude of joy, readiness and perseverance, in following the

voice of the Spirit towards commitment to and responsible service in spreading the Kingdom of God.

I conclude these reflections on the third chapter with a phrase from the Rector Major: “*There is something about the word ‘missionary’ that takes us to the very roots of the faith and makes us understand more explicitly the true significance of our salesian vocation*” (AGC 336, 4).

2.4 Key organizational points in promoting a missionary spirit

The theme of missionary animation, in the sense of “*all activity intended to create, develop and keep alive the missionary awareness of young people and communities*” (o.c. p. 45) in our Congregation and in the Salesian Family, has been dealt with several times by the Department for the Salesian Missions on different occasions.

The previous Councillor General for the Missions, Fr Luc Van Looy, had already given to all the Congregation in the previous six-year period substantially complete guidelines on the content and methodological organization of missionary animation. I refer you therefore to his article: “*Missionary animation*”, (AGC 323, 38-53).

Here I would just like to emphasize briefly three points in the fourth chapter of our document:

1. *The missionary dimension as an element traversing the whole of the salesian mission.*

In the context of the salesian mission, addressed especially to the young and among the latter to the poorest of them, the Salesians are called to be “missionaries of youth”. This means above all:

- enthusiasm for evangelization,
- special concern for the outcasts and those farthest away,
- a missionary style of going after those we work for and reaching them in their own context,
- an austere and self-sacrificing lifestyle,

— a deep theological and ascetical conviction of being missionaries sent by Christ to proclaim the new life.

These descriptive elements are those which identify the salesian missionary and the young missionary animator. Hence their concern that the content and missionary style be present across the whole range of pastoral services of salesian life.

Just as a Church without a deep missionary dimension is inconceivable, so is it equally true that one cannot imagine the salesian charism failing to foster missionary animation in every sector.

In the period between the GC21 of 1978 and the present day, the Salesian Congregation has experienced a notable growth of missionary animation in the different Provinces. This is due especially to the entrustment of many missionary territories to Mother-provinces (cf. *Project Africa, Missionary Project of South Asia and Oceania, Eastern European Project*).

This historical situation has brought about a positive missionary reciprocal relationship, which has enriched both the mother-province and the offspring. With the progressive and irreversible growth of juridical Circumscriptions in missionary territories, there is the danger that this reciprocal partnership may weaken, though everything possible is being done through precise agreements to ensure that this will not happen. This new circumstance prompts us to consider more deeply the need and significance of missionary animation.

2. The contribution of missionary animation to vocational orientation

Salesian pastoral work is especially directed to youth, since young people are the primary objectives of our activities and the point of reference for work in working-class districts and in the missions.

This chapter gives particular emphasis to the intimate connection between salesian missionary service and the aspect of salesian youth pastoral work in the promoting of vocations.

There are in fact elements common to both, e.g. the urgency of

the Kingdom, contemplation, freely given service to others, solidarity, in commitment, the transparency of reality according to gospel values, the logic of the seed of the Gospel, the radical nature of the following of Christ, etc.

The Congregation's hundred years of experience, as well as that of recent years, indicates that for young candidates to vocational commitment in the salesian charism, the call of the missionary option is strong and deeply felt. Hence the need for organic work between those responsible respectively for these two sectors of animation.

3. *Suggestions and guidelines for missionary animation*

The guidelines suggested in this last chapter endorse in more precise terms those given in recent years in various meetings:

- * ANIMACION MISIONERA SALESIANA – *Primer encuentro de Delegados inspectoriales de América Latina*, Lima, Peru, 9-10 February 1991;
- * LETTURA MISSIONARIA di “Educare i giovani alla fede. CG23” – *Incontro di Procuratori e Delegati Ispettoriali dell'Europa*, Groot-Bijgaarden, 11-15 April 1991;
- * MISSIONARY ANIMATION – *First Meeting of the Provincial Delegates of Missionary Animation for Asia and Australia*, Bangalore, India, 7-11 October 1992.
- * EDUCARE ALLA DIMENSIONE MISSIONARIA – *Seminario internazionale del 5-17 febbraio e Convegno dei Delegati ispettoriali di Animazione Missionaria dell'Europa e del Nord America del 13-16 maggio 1994* (cf. o.c. p. 3, Eng. edtn.).

I would like to insist on only one aspect: *the involvement of young lay animators at all levels of missionary animation.*

This is an experience that has been already well tried in different Provinces with decisively positive results. The young people, to whom missionary animation is first addressed, become themselves progressively animators of a missionary mentality and activity in their own locality and environment. I therefore recommend:

- an increasing involvement of young lay animators in local, provincial and interprovincial commissions,
- that special care be given to their ongoing formation, directed specifically to the content and methods of missionary activity,
- a progressive involvement in direct missionary experiences, even though of brief duration.
- adequate spiritual direction to accompany the animators in their vocational development.

Conclusion

It only remains for me to express the hope that all of you may draw personal and pastoral profit from the reading of this aid "*EDUCATION TO THE MISSIONARY DIMENSION*". May the missionary horizons of your Provinces, both at home and abroad, contribute ever more to the exhilaration of an authentic salesian life.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

During January and until Friday, 3 February, the Rector Major was occupied in presiding over the meetings of the plenary winter session of the General Council (cf. 4.2 'Chronicle of the General Council').

A special period of animation was the Spirituality Week of the Salesian Family between 25 and 29 January, during which Fr Viganò gave the inaugural address and also the final conference, in which he gave a commentary on the Strenna and emphasized the main points that had surfaced during the Week.

Worthy of note during January was the large number of Salesian Bishops in Rome for their 'ad limina' visits, who came also to see the Rector Major. They included Mgrs. Alejandro Buccolini, Marcello Melani, Giuseppe Pozzi, Augustin Radrizzani, Pietro Ronchino, all from Argentina, and Mgr. Jesus Suarez from Bolivia. Another visitor to Fr Viganò was Mgr. Tarcisio Bertone.

For the feast of Don Bosco the Rector Major went to Turin for two official engagements: to preside at the Eucharist for young people in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, and to inaugurate the new community chapel of the LDC (Leu-

mann). On the occasion of the Eucharist at Valdocco Fr Viganò met numerous young people and others invited for the feast, and after the blessing of the LDC chapel, he remained for some time with the community.

Two private appointments should also be recalled: prayer and a Eucharist at the altar of Blessed Don Rua for the recovery to health of Fr Martin McPake, and a visit to the 'Andrea Beltrami' community at Valsalice. As he said later in an interview he gave to ANS: "I was limping and walking with a stick, but I wanted to express in this way my solidarity and closeness to the sick and aging confreres".

During all this period the Rector Major had to undergo, not without much sacrifice, therapeutic treatment of various kinds. On 23 February he was admitted to hospital for further tests and treatment.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

The tenth plenary session of the present six-year period took place from 1 December 1994 to 3 February 1995, with a total of 30 full meetings, in addition to the work of groups and committees.

Introducing the session, the Rector Major set the work against the background of the recent Synod on the Consecrated Life of October '94, and in the perspective of the coming General Chapter, in the preparation for which the General Council is at present engaged, together with all the Provinces

As in every plenary session a lot of time was given over to 'ordinary' business of the Provinces; appointment of Provincial Councillors, approval of Rectors, the opening and canonical erection of houses (12 new foundations, 9 canonical erections), economic and administrative matters, and the solution of particular problems involving confreres.

The greater part of the work, however, was directed to the appointment of several new Provincials, and the reports on extraordinary visitations made in the preceding months, together with the study of some important themes for the animation of the Congregation.

Below, synthetically and in order, are the main points of the work of the session:

1. *Appointment of Provincials.* This took place following the usual procedure in each case: examination of the consultation made in the province concerned, discernment in the General Council, accompanied by prayer, in choosing the person

judged most suitable for the guidance and animation of the province. The following five Provincials, in alphabetical order, were chosen in the course of the session: Fr Isaac Diez de la Iglesia, for the Province of Bilbao, Spain; Fr Wim Flapper for Holland; Fr Salvador Flores Reveles for Guadalajara, Mexico; Fr Peter Ho Kwong-Ling for Hong Kong; and Fr Natale Vitali for the Province of Chile. At n. 5.3 of the present issue of the Acts will be found some biographical data of those appointed.

2. *Reports on extraordinary visitations.* Following on the visitations made between August and November 1994, the Councillors concerned made their reports, which the Council discussed and then singled out lines of animation to be suggested to the Rector Major for his concluding letter. The provinces concerned were Argentina, La Plata; Austria; Chile; Hungary; India, Bangalore; Paraguay, and Uruguay.

3. *Reports of the Departments.* The Councillors in charge of the various sectors of activity presented to the Council a report on the work done by them and their Departments in the preceding months. After the Council's reflections, certain indications and/or problems were decided on for further and deeper examination.

4. *24th General Chapter.* Also in this session the commitment of the General Council to the preparation of the General Chapter continued.

In the first place, at the request of the Moderator, certain elements were examined that concern the mechanism of the Chapter, for the guidance of the Moderator-himself. They included, in particular:

a. The proposal for a "*Survey on 'Salesians and laity' in view of the GC24*". The Council examined and gave the go-ahead for a survey-questionnaire as an instrument for the coming Chapter, but which could also prove useful for animation even after the Chapter. Its organization has been entrusted to the experts of our Salesian University.

b. Some particular points in preparation for the Chapter, on which the Council has made suggestions valid for the Council itself or for the Precapitular Commission for a better functioning of the Chapter. The main points dealt with were:

- the manner of discussing the *Report of the Rector Major* in the Chapter (which will obviously have repercussions on the preparation of the Report itself);
- how to arrange the *precapitular document* (the synthesis of the Provincial Chapters and the 'instrumentum laboris');
- suggestions useful for the preparation and carrying out of the *election of the Rector Major and*

members of the General Council, during the Chapter.

c. Consideration was also given to the prescriptions of art. 124 of the Regulations concerning *information during the General Chapter* and the service that can be provided by ANS. The Council decided that while the Capitular Commission concerned retains responsibility for all the news of the Chapter (according to Reg. 124), ANS (with its personnel and technical set-up) can be a valuable technical instrument for the work of the Commission itself.

d. Finally some indications were decided on for the selection of the members of the "Precapitular Commission" (Reg. 113).

But in addition to suggestions on these points, including technical items, dealing with preparations for the General Chapter (which have been consigned to the Moderator), the Council has begun a deep study on possible *contributions* which *the Council itself can offer to the capitulars*, especially concerning themes and problems which regard the government of the Congregation, and which may involve constitutional changes. Among the themes the Council has begun to study are the following two in particular:

1. Proposals of the General Council on structure and roles of central government;

2. Possible restructuring of the Regions.

These are two important themes on which the Council has already made a first reflection; it will be continued in the next plenary session.

5. *Other themes studied.* The Council considered also other themes which emerged during the visits to the provinces or were suggested by questions and expectations of the provinces themselves for the animation of the salesian mission and vocation. The main topics dealt with were the following:

5.1 *The salesian volunteer movement.* Already in the summer session of 1993 (cf. AGC 346, p.55) the Council had made a first study of "*elements of salesian voluntary service*", on the basis of a working document prepared by the Departments for Youth Pastoral Work, the Salesian Family and the Missions. From that first reflection there emerged the proposal for a study-seminar on the volunteer movement, with Salesians and laity taking part, to prepare some concrete guidelines on the topic. The seminar took place in July 1994 and the General Council has now examined the resulting proposals, and has traced out some lines of animation for the Congregation. In the section "*Guidelines and Policies*" in the present issue of the AGC the Councilor for Youth Pastoral Work presents the resulting document (cf. n. 2.1).

5.2 *Significant presence of Brothers (Coadjutors) at world level.* With reference to art. 169 of the General Regulations, which calls for the expression at various levels of the complementary relationship between lay and clerical members through the significant presence of both components of the salesian vocation, the General Council has made an assessment of the situation and, while acknowledging that concrete steps have been taken in the Congregation, has examined ways for the still better realization of the spirit of art. 169, in particular with the presence of Salesian Brothers at world level.

5.3 *The launching of a reflection on the question of those who leave us.* Starting from the annual statistics of the Congregation, and referring to the fact of those who abandon their vocation, especially those temporarily professed, the Council has started up a first analysis, with a view to understanding the motivations for leaving, and identifying ways to bring about a growth in perseverance. The conclusion was reached that a deeper and more systematic investigation was needed on the point, with the help also of experts, to obtain indications that would be useful also for the curriculum of formation.

5.4 "Facing accusations of sexual abuse and molestation".

The General Council has tackled this delicate problem, prompted by the growing preoccupation of the Church - especially in certain regions - concerning things that have happened (albeit on a limited scale), and also by requests coming from superiors and formation personnel of some provinces for enlightenment concerning problems of this kind whenever they have to be met. (It was pointed out among other things that in certain zones the concept of 'sexual abuse and molestation' has been enlarged to a quite anomalous degree).

Through an investigation carried out through a study group and then in a common reflection, the General Council considered some experiences (especially with references to documents issued by some Episcopal Conferences) with a view to emphasizing some practical elements stemming from our own salesian traditions, and indicating particularly points to be kept in mind both in vocational discernment and in the formative phases, points already emphasized in our 'Ratio institutionis'.

5.5 During the session the General Council also examined the first draft of a *practical aid for the formation of Salesians to communication*, prepared jointly by the Departments of Formation and of So-

cial Communication. It is put forward as an 'aid' within the 'Ratio' during the phases of formation of young Salesians. The draft, suitably integrated, will be examined again in the next session.

The General Council also expressed an opinion concerning the dissemination of the *Identity Card of the Salesian Family*, put together with contributions by those responsible for the various groups of the Salesian Family. It also expressed its opinion and gave suggestions on the project of the Constitutions of the "*Male Don Bosco Volunteers*": obviously it belongs to the Volunteers themselves to formulate the definitive text of their own Constitutions.

As in the preceding plenary sessions, so in this one too there was a *combined meeting of the FMA and SDB General Councils*. It took place at the Salesian Generalate in the afternoon of 12 January '95. The theme of the meeting was: "*The process of ongoing formation of local communities in the light of two guidelines of the Synod*". The two indications on which dialogue developed, first in groups and then in the full assembly, were: 1. The 'prophetic' dimension of the communities (*Message of the Synod*, VI): the testimony of evangelical values rejected or unknown, the inculturation of the Gospel through christian values and the exploitation of the 'Semina Verbi', poverty, missionary work and mentality; 2. Charism and

its insertion in the particular Church (*Message of the Synod, V*).

During the session there were also special moments of prayer (two retreat days, one at Rome on 6 December, the other on 10 January at Loreto, animated by Mgr Francesco

Tarcisio Carboni, Bishop of Macerata, on the occasion of the centenary of the Holy House); there was also the meeting of new provincials which took place at the Generalate from 13 to 23 December 1994.

5.1 Two new Servants of God: Mamma Margaret and Attilio Giordani

The tree of salesian holiness has been enriched in recent months with two new "Servants of God": Margaret Occhiena, Don Bosco's mother, and Attilio Giordani, a Salesian Cooperator. For both of them, in fact, the cause for canonization has been introduced.

For *Mamma Margaret* the process began on 8 February 1995 at Turin in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, which was packed to the doors for the occasion. After a solemn concelebration at which the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Giovanni Saldarini presided, with the participation of the Auxiliary Bishop of Turin, Mgr Piergiorgio Michiardi, of the retired Bishop of Susa, Mgr Giuseppe Garneri, and 120 priests, the diocesan tribunal convened for the process of the beatification and canonization of five Servants of God who had lived in the Diocese of Turin. Don Bosco's mother was one of them. For the Salesian Congregation numerous confreres were present, led by the Regional Councillor Fr Giovanni Fedrigotti, the Secretary General Fr Francesco Maraccani, the Superior

of the Piedmont Circumscription Fr Luigi Testa, the Postulator General Fr Pasquale Liberatore, and the Vice-Postulator Fr Angelo Viganò, who at the time for the taking of the oath presented a brief profile of Mamma Margaret.

Recalling in particular the years she spent at Valdocco at the side of her son John, Fr Viganò said: "Here for ten years her life was one with that of her son and with the beginnings of salesian work; she was the first and principal Cooperator of Don Bosco; with practical kindness she became the motherly element of the *preventive system*. Without knowing it, she was the 'co-founder' of the Salesian Family which produced people of the holiness of Dominic Savio and Don Rua. She could not read or write but was full of the *wisdom that comes from above*, and was the helper of many poor street-lads without homes or parents; she placed God before all else and spent herself for him in a life of poverty, prayer and sacrifice".

8 February was a great and long awaited day for the Salesian Family. The Rector Major, Fr Egidio Viganò, together with his Council, acceding to the wish and testimony of

many people, had started up the first phases of study and research, and had eventually reached the stage of asking the Turin Archdiocese to launch the canonical process.

Some two months earlier, on 21 November 1994, the process of canonization had been begun at Milan of another Servant of God of our Family: the layman *Attilio Giordani*, father of a family, Salesian Cooperator, herculean oratory animator, who died in Mato Grosso, Brazil, where his missionary zeal had taken him.

The sitting of the Diocesan Tribunal for the beginning of the process took place in the auditorium of the Salesian Oratory of Milan. The Archbishop of Milan, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, presided and among those present (in addition to the members of the ecclesiastical tribunal) were the Postulator General Fr Pasquale Liberatore, the Vice-postulator Fr Rino Germani, the Secretary General Fr Francesco Maraccani, the Provincial of Milan with all the members of the Provincial Chapter - a significant element was that the date coincided with that for the opening of the Chapter - and numerous other persons (about a thousand in all). Among the latter were Attilio's wife and three children, his salesian brother Fr Camillo, and others who had known him and admired his virtues.

Cardinal Martini described the figure of Attilio Giordani within the Salesian Family: "The Spirit of God", he said, "raised up in the Church Don Bosco, father and teacher of the young; his charism is a gift for the Salesian Family and for the whole Church. Attilio Giordani drew on that spirit, becoming a layman inspired by the salesian charism, a *layman with the spirit of Don Bosco*". Going on to emphasize in particular Attilio's activity as an animator of the oratory, the Cardinal pointed to charity as the gift he leaves us: "The duty of charity, which is the concrete commitment to every one of our fellow men to free them from every evil, is a pledge of salvation".

Fr Angelo Viganò, who knew and lived with Attilio Giordani in salesian work at Milan outlined the figure of the christian educator. "Those who knew him well", he said among other things, "speak of him as an educator in the style of Don Bosco, as an animator of boys and young men, as an organizer of oratorian events for the young, as an active member of Catholic Action, and the bearer of a very relevant kind of spirituality among youth and working-class people". His final choice, to join his son Piergiorgio who had gone to work among the poor in the 'Operation Mato Grosso', "was the logical consequence of a project of life that was always missionary".

5.2 18th Week of Spirituality of the Salesian Family

From 25 to 29 January 1995 the Salesianum, Rome, was the venue for the 18th Week of Spirituality of the Salesian Family, promoted by the Rector Major through the Department of the Salesian Family with the collaboration of teachers from the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the Salesian Pontifical University.

As is customary, the theme of the Week was the Strenna of the Rector Major for the year 1995, recently begun: "*Since we are all called to be free (Gal 5,13), let us draw once more on the preventive system by educating young people to live by true values*". The theme was centered around the preventive system, which was recalled in its original intuitions with the help of experts, so as to apply it to the present day as a response to the challenges of education in the culture and society in which contemporary youth is living. Obviously biblical and sapiential aspects had to be included, since the Strenna made direct reference to freedom as a christian value directly proposed by the word of God.

The relevance of the theme can be judged by the large number of participants, over 100 in all, representing 13 groups of the Salesian Family. They gave valid contribu-

tions in the animation of moments of prayer and fellowship, and especially in the group work, which had the task of drawing practical conclusions from the work of the Week. This was directed by Fr Antonio Martinelli, Councillor for the Salesian Family, aided by Fr Giovanni Battista Bosco who acted as Moderator of the assemblies.

Among those present were the Rector Major Fr Egidio Viganò, at least for some of the sessions, and the FMA Vicar General Mother Rosalba Perotti.

Here are some news items concerning the progress of the work.

The "Week" started in the evening of Wednesday, 25 January, with the welcoming reception and a first exchange of views among the participants.

The real work began on the following day with the greetings and opening address of the Rector Major, followed by an introductory statement by the Councillor for the Salesian Family on the significance and objectives of the Week.

Then came the first paper by Fr Carlo Nanni of the UPS on the theme: *The culture of education today: a frame of reference*. The speaker first offered an overview of the education context at the present day, as a concrete frame of reference into which the preventive system could be placed as the work developed on subsequent days.

After immediate reactions in the assembly, group-work followed with the object of reaching practical proposals after further study. Among questions raised were the following: what challenges are made to the preventive system by today's culture: as regards its theoretical statements; its practice; at world level and in particular local situations? How can we respond, as the Salesian Family and in line with our social and educational traditions, to the social requirements of solidarity with the new forms of poverty, with the world of the outcasts, and in particular with youthful apprehension and malaise?

In the afternoon of the first day the various constituent groups of the Family presented what their own documents say about the preventive system: official texts, studies carried out, lived experiences, supportive structures.

The second day, Friday 27 January, was given over almost entirely to group work, to continue the study begun the previous day and to read the documents of the preventive system in today's context, through an appropriate aid.

Another significant item on this second day was a 'round table' on: "*Living the preventive system between reflection and emerging requirements*". Three practical settings were considered: the school, the oratory and the family, with

interventions from Fr Luigi Baraccu SDB, Sister Maria Lucia Piva FMA and Ms Ida Rinaldini respectively.

The third day, Saturday 28 January, was particularly crowded as regards work, with three important papers which helped to consider the Strenna and the values of the preventive system from three main aspects: the sapiential and biblical foundation, the historical and charismatic origins, and the actualization today.

The first aspect was dealt with by Fr Guido Gatti, professor of moral theology at the UPS, in a paper entitled: *A sapiential reading of evangelical freedom*. "The moral and christian message", he said, "is essentially an announcement of liberation; christian morality either leads to a proclamation of freedom or it is not truly christian at all". Don Bosco's educational method is rooted in this fundamental evangelical value, which it aims to develop and mature in the concrete existence of each youngster.

Fr Peter Braido, well known for his competence in everything connected with the preventive system, especially as regards its historical and charismatic origins, and for his pedagogical experience, dealt with the historical aspect in a paper entitled: *The practice of Don Bosco and the preventive system*. It was a rich synthesis of all the preventive

system meant in the life and activity of Don Bosco, and what it has to say for our educational practice today.

It was then the turn of Sister Piera Caviglià, lecturer at the FMA Faculty of Educational Sciences (Auxilium), to offer some indications for the application of the preventive system in some concrete circumstances of the context and culture of young people of our time. Her paper had the significant title: *Revamp or renew the preventive system?* and aimed at identifying some "prophetic values for the present day", starting from the fundamental coordinates of the system itself.

The intense day of work was brought to a conclusion with another round-table on: *The preventive system within some modern cultures: problems and perspectives.*

The final day, Sunday 29 January, led to the conclusions of the Week.

It began with a forthright development by the Vicar General, Fr Juan Edmundo Vecchi, of the theme: *The preventive system as an experience of spirituality.* His purpose, as regards the present day and the Strenna, he said, was to consider "under what conditions between freedom and values an educative praxis can become a spiritual experience, and vice versa under what conditions a spiritual experience of life in the Spirit can be

proposed as educative to freedom and lead to its values".

Later in the morning came the second address of the Rector Major, in which he gave his commentary on the Strenna. Starting from a reflection on the "dynamic nucleus of freedom" (and hence with a reference to the christian understanding of freedom and the challenges posed by freedom in modern culture to the task of education) he went on to focus attention on the response to such challenges given by the preventive system. A "new preventive system", he said, in harmony with the "new evangelization" and "the new education": that is what will launch the charisma of Don Bosco into the third millennium!

In the afternoon the different groups of the Salesian Family worked on their own study documents, and applied to them what they had heard during the four days of study; they then drew up their conclusions, with indications and suggestions, which will be illustrated in the Acts of the Week.

In the evening after the communications from the groups to the full assembly, the Councillor for the Salesian Family closed the meeting, which was characterized throughout by an intense climate of prayer and great salesian fellowship, expressed in informal encounters each evening which were much appreciated.

5.3 New Provincials

We list some information about the new Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council during the winter plenary session December '94 - January '95.

1. *Fr Isaac DIEZ de la IGLESIA, in the Province of BILBAO, Spain.*

Fr Isaac Diez del la Iglesia succeeds Fr Ricardo Arias Gomez at the end of the latter's term of office.

He was born at Nidáguila, in the province of Burgos, Spain, 12 November 1949, frequented the salesian college of Zuazo, and made his novitiate at Urnieta, where he also made his first profession on 16 August 1957.

After philosophy and practical training, he studied theology at Salamanca and was ordained priest there on 18 April 1976. At the end of his theology he gained the Licentiate in Biblical Theology.

Between 1979 and 1987 he worked at Santander with the prenovices as animator and guide, and was Rector there from 1987 to 1993. He then spent a year at Bilbao-Deusto, again in charge of the prenovices, and in 1994 was appointed Rector at Baracaldo-Colegio, where he received the news of his appointment as Provincial.

2. *Fr Wim FLAPPER, in the Province of HOLLAND.*

Succeeding Fr André Asma in the guidance of the Province of Holland is Fr Wim (Wilhelmus) Flapper.

He was born at Sneek, in the province of Friesland in the Low Countries 6 March 1946. As a pupil at the salesian college of Ugchelen he felt the call to the salesian life and entered the novitiate at Assel, where he also made his first profession on 16 August 1966.

Subsequently he studied philosophy and pedagogy and completed his practical training. He then went to Nimega for theology and was ordained in his hometown of Sneek on 2 June 1974.

He then engaged in pastoral work in various houses of the province and at the same time completed the study of pastoral theology. In 1980 he was appointed parish priest and Rector at Schiedam where he remained for six years. In 1986 he was appointed Vice-provincial. From 1990 he had been Delegate for the Salesian Family and from 1992 also Rector of the house of Leusden-Don Bosco.

3. *Fr Salvador FLORES REVELES, in the Province of GUADALAJARA, Mexico.*

Fr Salvador Flores Reveles succeeds Fr Pascual Chavez as Provincial of Guadalajara.

Born at San Luis de Potosi, Mexico, 8 January 1953, he was a pupil at the salesian college in the same town and went on to the novitiate at Jalostotlán, where he made his first profession on 16 August 1969.

He studied philosophy at the salesian studentate of Zapopan, and did his practical training at Guadalajara. Theological studies followed at Tlaquepaque, and he was ordained priest on 6 January 1978.

After obtaining the Licentiate in Theology he was engaged in tasks of pastoral animation and teaching. In 1987 he became Vice-provincial for the following six years, and in 1990 became also Rector of the provincial house. In 1993 he became Rector of the theological studentate of Tlaquepaque, a post he held at the time of his appointment as Provincial.

4. *Fr Peter HO (Kwong-Ling), in the Province of HONG KONG.*

Fr Peter Ho succeeds Fr John Baptist Zen in the guidance of the Chinese Province, with headquarters in Hong Kong.

He was born at Macau on 23 February 1929, and after frequenting the aspirantate there was admitted to the novitiate at Hong Kong where he made his first profession on 16 August 1949.

After philosophy at Hong Kong and practical training, he came to

Italy and studied theology at Messina, where he was ordained priest on 29 June 1959.

After ordination he began his educative and pastoral work with the aspirants and novices in Hong Kong, and in 1964 became Director of Novices, a task he held until 1968, (interrupted by a year in Rome at the UPS). From 1971 to 1974 he was Rector at Macau, and from 1975 to 1985 parish priest at Hong Kong. From 1986 he was Provincial Delegate for the Cooperators, and from 1989 Vice-provincial.

5. *Fr Natale VITALI, in the Province of CHILE.*

The Rector Major with his Council has called Fr Natale Vitali to take over the guidance of the Province of Chile. He succeeds Fr Alfredo Videla, who had to leave the office for reasons of health.

Fr Vitali was born at Montapone, province of Ascoli Piceno, Italy. He was an aspirant at Roma-Mandrione, and went on from there to the novitiate of Vico Equense, where he made his first profession on 12 September 1969.

After the study of philosophy and pedagogy, he left for Chile during his practical training period, and became fully inserted into that Province. There he made his perpetual profession and studied theology in the studentate of Santiago. He was

ordained priest by Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez on 31 July 1982. After ordination he became fully immersed in educative and pastoral work. In 1986 he was appointed Rector of Talca 'El Salvador' and in 1990 became a member of the Provincial Council. From 1991 he was Rector at 'La Gritud Nacional' at Santiago. From 1993 he had been Vice-provincial and Rector of the provincial house.

5.4 New Bishops

The following are biographical details of new salesian bishops appointed in recent months.

1. *Mgr Joseph AIND, Bishop of Dibrugarh, India.*

On 23 December 1994 the Osservatore Romano carried the news that the Holy Father had appointed the salesian priest *Joseph Aind* Bishop of the Diocese of Dibrugarh in India.

He was born on 5 November 1945 at Nahorabi, in the Diocese of Dibrugarh, and made his novitiate at Shillong and his first profession on 24 May 1968.

After the study of philosophy and practical training, he did his theological studies at Shillong, and was ordained priest at Dibrugarh on 27 November 1976.

In 1981 he was appointed Rector

of the house of Shillong - 'St. Paul', and was a provincial councillor from 1982 to 1988, and again from 1990 to 1993. In 1983 he was appointed Rector at Tangla, and subsequently Rector of the Shillong Juniorate from 1986 to 1992. From 1992 he had been parish priest of the salesian parish of Dimakuchi.

2. *Mgr Giovanni ZERBINI, Bishop of Guarapuava, Brazil.*

It was announced on 12 January 1995 that the Holy Father had appointed as Bishop of the Diocese of Guarapuava, Brazil, the salesian priest *Giovanni Zerbini*.

He was born at Chiari, in the diocese of Brescia, Italy, on 29 December 1927, frequented the salesian aspirantate of 'San Bernardino' at Chiari, went on to the novitiate of Montodine and made his first profession on 16 August 1946.

He was at Nave, Brescia for the study of philosophy and made his practical training at Ferrara and Modena before going to Monteortone for theology. At Monteortone he was ordained priest on 29 June 1956, and subsequently obtained the Licentiate in Pedagogy.

After ordination he was for a short time at the Salesian Institute of Modena, and then left for the Province of Campo Grande in Brazil, where he carried out an intense ministry in posts of responsibility. He was Rector at Campo Grande-

'Sao Vicente' (1966-72), then at Araçatuba (1972-75), and in 1975 was appointed Provincial Economist, an office he held until 1983. Subsequently he was Rector at Campo Grande 'São José', then at Cuiabá 'Sao Gonzalo' and at Corumbá 'Don Bosco'. He was a Delegate to the GC22.

After a brief return to Italy for medical reasons, he was appointed on his return to Brazil Rector of the postnovitiate at Campo Grande, where in due course the news reached him of his appointment as bishop. He was ordained Bishop in his home town of Chiari by the Bishop of Brescia in the presence of the Archbishop of Curitiba and many Bishops from the Episcopal Conference of Paraná who were in Italy for their visit 'ad limina'.

3. *Mgr Carlos Maria COLLAZZI, Bishop of Mercedes, Uruguay.*

On 14 February 1995 the Osservatore Romano announced that our confrere Fr *Carlos Maria Collazzi Irazabal* had been appointed by the Holy Father Bishop of Mercedes in Uruguay in succession to Mgr. Andrés Rubio Garcia SDB.

Carlos Maria Collazzi was born at Rosario, Uruguay, on 20 September 1947, and has been a Salesian since 1974, having made his first profession on 31 January of that year after his novitiate at Montevideo-Manga. After the study of philosophy and

practical training he followed the course of theology at Montevideo and was ordained priest in his native Rosario on 4 October 1980. He then completed his studies at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, gaining the Licentiate in Theology.

Returning to Uruguay he engaged in an intense salesian pastoral ministry. For some years he worked in the field of formation in the novitiate and postnovitiate of Montevideo, and also taught moral theology. In 1992 he became parish priest of the big parish of 'Mary, Mother of the Church' at Villa Colón.

5.5 Publication of Vol.I of the "Bibliografia generale di Don Bosco" by the Salesian Historical Institute.

LAS (Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, Rome) has published for the Salesian Historical Institute the first volume of the *BIBLIOGRAFIA GENERALE DI DON BOSCO*, edited by Fr Saverio Gianotti SDB. It covers the Italian Bibliography from 1844 to 1992.

The publication crowns a long period of work, and has been eagerly awaited.

The volume, the first of a series, lists the printed works of Don Bosco, and all the publications in Italian dealing with him. A second

volume will in due course list publications in other languages.

An introduction explains the criteria adopted in the division and cataloguing of the texts, while two analytical indexes (by Author and by topic) provide an overall view. Over 3,000 titles are catalogued in chronological order, which enables the user to find his bearings and illustrates the progressive develop-

ment.

The work is not only valuable for students and researchers, for whom it will provide an essential instrument for their work, but will certainly prove very useful in libraries (salesian libraries in the first place) where it will provide a point of reference for everything concerning publications of and concerning our Founder.

5.6 S.D.B. Statistics at 31 December 1994

Isp.	Tot. 1993	Professi temporanei				Professi perpetui				Tot. Professi	Novizi	Tot. 1994
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
AFC	235	13	39	0	0	28	10	0	131	221	12	233
AFE	89	1	14	0	0	17	13	0	67	112	13	125
AFM	62	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	51	59	2	61
ANT	159	3	36	0	0	14	8	0	93	154	11	165
ABA	202	2	16	0	0	13	8	0	147	186	4	190
ABB	148	0	7	0	1	16	9	0	111	144	1	145
ACO	169	3	22	0	0	11	7	0	111	154	4	158
ALP	105	8	5	0	0	10	6	0	74	103	6	109
ARO	150	4	22	0	0	17	14	0	89	146	5	151
AUL	125	2	13	0	0	22	1	0	85	123	1	124
AUS	136	2	10	0	0	12	1	1	103	129	3	132
BEN	217	1	7	0	0	22	7	0	174	211	3	214
BES	105	4	2	0	0	9	1	0	85	101	1	102
BOL	158	12	40	0	0	15	8	0	74	149	14	163
BBH	162	3	9	0	0	23	5	0	116	156	3	159
BCG	160	3	23	0	0	24	6	0	100	156	3	159
BMA	132	5	28	0	0	19	8	0	70	130	2	132
BPA	110	0	13	0	0	10	6	0	80	109	3	112
BRE	94	4	14	0	1	13	3	0	56	91	4	95
BSP	217	0	23	0	0	34	10	0	142	209	10	219
CAM	258	13	37	0	0	25	16	0	151	242	10	252
CAN	32	0	1	0	0	5	1	0	33	40	0	40
CEP	216	7	42	0	1	7	9	1	141	208	0	208
CIL	259	6	45	0	0	20	17	0	160	248	13	261
CIN	143	1	4	0	0	36	6	0	90	137	2	139
COB	199	1	28	0	0	34	6	0	117	186	7	193
COM	166	4	32	0	0	19	7	0	98	160	8	168
CRO	90	0	7	0	0	6	4	0	65	82	7	89
ECU	243	3	28	0	0	24	5	0	170	230	8	238
EST	87	0	28	0	1	1	2	0	56	88	12	100
FIN	215	9	42	0	0	20	11	0	122	204	12	216
FIS	185	18	75	0	0	13	3	1	67	177	17	194
FLY	161	0	4	0	0	32	3	0	118	157	0	157
FPA	233	5	10	0	0	32	2	0	170	219	5	224
GBR	144	0	7	0	0	16	3	0	113	139	1	140
GEK	175	4	12	0	0	38	3	0	116	173	2	175
GEM	285	6	15	0	0	62	7	1	185	276	5	281
GIA	150	2	30	0	0	19	4	0	94	149	4	153
HAI	53	2	20	0	0	1	3	0	27	53	8	61
INB	279	6	78	0	0	20	21	0	139	264	4	268
INC	334	4	72	0	0	37	22	0	181	316	20	336
IND	193	4	52	0	0	6	16	0	113	191	9	200
ING	306	2	82	0	0	25	24	0	165	298	19	317
INH	129	4	46	0	0	3	16	0	60	129	10	139
INK	237	4	67	0	0	8	23	0	128	230	24	254
INM	429	4	129	0	0	30	59	0	195	417	29	446
IRL	134	5	8	0	0	9	2	0	100	124	0	124
IAD	166	1	12	0	0	29	2	0	118	162	2	164
ICP	897	11	41	0	0	220	13	1	561	847	8	855
ILE	452	7	38	0	0	65	12	0	315	437	8	445
ILT	210	1	10	0	0	37	5	1	155	209	7	216
IME	326	1	23	0	0	47	7	0	238	316	5	321

Isp.	Tot. 1993	Professi temporanei				Professi perpetui				Tot. Professi	Novizi	Tot. 1994
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
IRO	327	1	13	0	0	70	4	2	227	317	3	320
ISA	81	1	3	0	0	7	2	0	64	77	0	77
ISI	327	1	14	0	0	31	4	0	264	314	2	316
IVE	289	2	25	0	0	53	8	1	192	281	6	287
IVO	237	2	10	0	0	48	4	0	168	232	2	234
KOR	79	7	27	0	0	12	4	0	27	77	7	84
MDG	56	0	19	0	0	8	4	0	27	58	3	61
MEG	221	11	54	0	0	10	11	0	136	222	11	233
MEM	221	12	57	0	0	13	13	0	110	205	6	211
MOR	171	6	21	0	1	25	6	0	97	156	6	162
OLA	83	0	3	0	0	23	0	1	56	83	0	83
PAR	102	1	21	0	0	8	4	0	63	97	6	103
PER	170	9	31	0	0	13	9	0	104	166	12	178
PLE	407	5	90	0	0	19	26	0	184	324	22	346
PLN	340	1	83	0	0	12	27	0	193	316	15	331
PLO	245	3	30	0	0	3	24	0	180	240	2	242
PLS	256	0	64	0	0	11	20	0	156	251	12	263
POR	200	5	19	0	0	51	6	1	115	197	4	201
SLK	231	4	75	0	1	12	5	0	124	221	13	234
SLO	140	2	13	0	0	15	7	0	100	137	2	139
SBA	256	0	16	0	0	40	9	0	183	248	7	255
SBI	263	6	22	0	0	56	24	0	148	256	4	260
SCO	145	4	18	0	0	8	4	2	105	141	6	147
SLE	268	8	13	0	1	69	14	0	154	259	3	262
SMA	415	10	32	0	0	100	17	0	245	404	5	409
SSE	188	2	17	0	0	32	5	0	125	181	4	185
SVA	211	4	19	0	0	33	12	0	138	206	3	209
SUE	236	2	10	0	0	47	3	0	167	229	3	232
SUO	123	3	10	0	0	25	1	0	77	116	3	119
THA	106	4	13	0	0	12	3	0	72	104	7	111
UNG	80	1	12	0	2	4	0	0	53	72	3	75
URU	146	1	20	0	0	7	3	0	108	139	2	141
VEN	248	7	33	0	0	18	11	1	165	235	14	249
VIE	114	7	28	0	0	13	31	0	34	113	8	121
ZMB	0	1	10	0	0	3	4	0	36	54	5	59
UPS	128	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	112	126	0	126
RMG	88	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	67	85	0	85
Tot.	17.519	338	2.416	0	9	2.223	794	14	11.096	16.890	582	17.472
Vesc.	91									89		89
Tot	17.610	338	2.416	0	9	2.223	794	14	11.096	16.979	582	17.561

NB - Nel 1994 hanno avuto inizio due nuove Circoscrizioni: ZMB (prima Delegazione di PLE) ed EST (prima legata direttamente al Rettor Maggiore tramite il Delegato per la Polonia). Inoltre sono passate ad AFE le case ICP in Kenya e la casa in Uganda (appartenente prima a PLE); anche la casa di Edmonton (SUO) è passata al Canada (CAN). Tutto ciò spiega certi spostamenti di personale.

- I dati di HAI e VIE non sono totalmente sicuri.

5.7 Our dead confreres (1995 - 1st 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 ALESSI Antonio <i>Fu Ispettore per 14 anni</i>	Bombay	18.01.95	88	INB
P ARAMENDIA ARTETA Mario	México	02.03.95	86	MEM
P ARGUELLO ORTIZ Sandalio	Concepción	18.01.95	74	PAR
P ARMELLES José Miguel	Cabezo de Torres	29.12.94	93	SVL
P BAGAVANTHA Raju Anthony	Madras	31.01.95	82	INM
L BENAZZATO Luigi	Negrar (Verona)	25.02.95	81	IVO
P BERNAERT Georges	Herent	07.02.95	78	BEN
P BIANCHI Antonio	Roma	27.12.94	90	IRO
P BLOŃSKI Marian	Zloczew	15.12.94	76	PLE
P BROWN Thomas	Tampa	11.02.95	56	SUE
P CABIALE Giovanni	Buenos Aires	16.02.95	79	ABB
P CAPPELLI Azelio	Indápolis	09.02.95	81	BCG
P CAVALLETTI Pietro	Castellammare di Stabia	14.02.95	86	IME
P CHESSA Antonio	Bessude (Sassari)	10.02.95	66	ISA
P CONTI Ettore	Frascati	27.01.95	71	IRO
P de SOUSA José Pinto	Porto	06.02.95	66	POR
L dos ANJOS Francisco Gomes	Recife	21.12.94	70	BRE
P dos SANTOS Manuel Joaquim	Macau	24.12.94	59	POR
P DOSSI Renato	Arese	10.01.95	90	ILE
P ESPINOSA LEON Rafael Antonio	Sutatenza	08.01.95	79	COM
P FIVAZ Philémon	La Crau-La Navarre	25.11.94	86	FLY
P FRITZ Emil	Mühldorf	19.12.94	80	GEM
P GARCIA ALFARO Agustín	Santa Tecla	21.12.94	86	CAM
P GEMMELLARO Giuseppe	Roma	23.10.94	83	UPS
P GHIGO Francisco	San Luis	13.01.95	73	ACO
P GIMENO ALONSO Clemente	Barcelona	06.02.95	78	SBA
P GIUA Piero	Cagliari	29.01.95	78	ISA
P GOMEZ Herald Manuel	Campodónico (Bs. As.)	28.12.94	68	ALP
L GOMEZ ZAMBRANO Angel	Coveñas (Sucre)	04.01.95	80	COM
P GRISETTI Arturo	San Francisco	07.01.95	81	SUO
P GUMMERSBACH Henrich	Velbert	21.01.95	87	GEK
P JEGANATHAN Chinnappa	Madras	22.12.94	68	INM
L JORDANA RAMONEDA Antonio	Pamplona	01.01.95	85	SBI
P KIZHAKKEYIL Jacob	Aluva	20.12.94	64	INK
P KNAPP Otto	Graz	13.09.94	46	AUS
P LANG Jan	Lizski	15.12.94	73	PLS
P MACÁK Ludovit	Bratislava	19.12.94	73	SLK
P MANENTI Emanuele	Cipolletti	13.09.94	75	ABB
P MASOERO Luigi (Cavalli)	Bellflower	15.02.95	88	SUO

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P MAZZARELLO Luigi	Santiago de Chile	26.12.94	80	CIL
P MERLINO Alfredo	Salto	25.12.94	76	URU
L MONDE Felix	Nimega	05.01.95	77	OLA
L MONTANA Francesco	Catania	18.01.95	79	ISI
P NANNI Italo	Roma	28.01.95	80	IRO
L NARDIN Carlo	Macerata	29.11.94	83	IAD
P NYERS János	Graz	12.02.95	74	AUS
P PAULY Herman	Boortmeerbeek	22.02.95	78	AFC
P POŁACARZ Józef	Oświęcim	05.02.95	68	PLS
L PORRAS BENITEZ Enrique	Sevilla	22.02.95	79	SSE
L PRIETO BAEZ Fermin Angel	Bilbao	21.11.94	88	SBI
P RAIMONDI Giuseppe	Varazze	23.12.94	75	ILT
L ROBAKOWSKI Józef	Łódź	18.12.94	80	PLE
P ROMANO Vincenzo	Castellammare di Stabia	09.02.95	79	IME
P RUIZ Mateo José	Buenos Aires	16.07.94	87	ABA
L SALAMEH Issa	Betlemme	03.03.95	80	MOR
P SEAU François	Caen	09.12.94	78	FPA
P SEROT Emile	Caen	22.01.95	79	FPA
P SILVA Manoel Leonardo	Londrina	11.02.94	72	BSP
L SIMONDI Piero	Châtillon	14.02.95	76	ICP
L SQUIZZATO Augusto	Puebla	07.01.95	84	MEM
P STANEK Jan	Szczecinek	10.01.95	86	PLN
P ŚWIDA Andrzej	Warszawa	19.02.95	89	PLE
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P TAVERNA Paolo	Calcutta	26.01.95	80	INC
P TIBILETTI Carlo	Macerata	04.02.95	81	IAD
P TONELLO Pietro	Guwahati	20.01.95	91	ING
L van den BROM Jordan	Rijswijk	24.12.94	68	OLA
S VILLAGRA CORONADO Jorge Eduardo	Granada	18.12.94	32	CAM

Nota: In questo primo elenco del 1995 sono inclusi anche i confratelli morti nel 1994, la cui segnalazione giunse a fine anno (o per errore non furono inseriti negli elenchi precedenti).



