



acts

of the general council

year LXXVIII

april-june 1997

N. 359

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma

acts

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

YEAR LXXVIII **N. 359**
april-june 1997

1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR	1.1 Fr Juan E. VECCHI <i>"He had compassion on them"</i> (Mk 6,34) New forms of poverty, salesian mission, effectiveness	3
2. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES	2.1 Don Luc VAN LOOY The process of consultation	38
3. RULINGS AND DIRECTIVES	(none in this issue)	
4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL	4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major 4.2 Chronicle of the General Council	46 52
5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS ITEMS	5.1 XIX Spirituality Meeting of Salesian Family 5.2 Statute of the Generalate House 5.3 New Provincials 5.4 Publications of Salesian Historical Institute. Approval of ACSSA. 5.5 SDB Statistics 5.6 Deceased confreres	58 60 61 67 70 72

Editrice S.D.B.
Edizione extra commerciale
Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco
Via della Pisana, 1111
Casella Postale 18333
00163 Roma

Tipografia: Istituto Salesiano Pio XI - Via Umbertide, 11 - 00181 Roma - Tel. 78.27.819
Finito di stampare: Aprile 1997

HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM (Mk 6,34)

New forms of poverty, salesian mission, effectiveness.

The new scenario of our educative commitment. - An option of the Church. - Our process of reflection. - Practical initiatives.

Looking to the future. - A Christian reading of the present reality. - Deepening inspirations. - The poverty of the salesian educator. - Opting for the young who are poor. - Our concern: to educate. - Promoting a new culture. - Evangelizing starting from those most in need. - Conclusion.

Rome, 30 March 1997
Easter Sunday

My dear confreres,

I am writing to you with my mind on the Resurrection. This year the solemnity provides us with a singular opportunity for fixing our gaze on Jesus Christ, in accordance with the line proposed by the Church for the run-up to the Jubilee of the year 2000.

In the light emanating from his figure I thought I would dwell with you on a particular point of our program: to seek a greater effectiveness as we put ourselves more decisively at the service of young people who are poor.

The fourth chapter of the Constitutions begins with a quotation from Mark's Gospel: "He saw a great throng and had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things".

In the Gospel it is the prelude and motivation for the multi-

plication of the loaves. In the Constitutions it introduces the chapter concerning those to whom our mission is directed.

The biblical scenario provides an eloquent icon: the crowd hungry and somewhat bemused, the disquiet of Jesus at seeing them, the challenge to the apostles to meet the situation, their declaration that they could do nothing, the miraculous multiplication of the bread which appeared initially as quite insufficient.

For us it is a key to the pastoral reading of the present youth reality and of the mission to be realized in connection with it.

Linked with the image of the Good Shepherd, taken from the prophet Ezechiel and placed at the heading of the first chapter of the Constitutions, it reminds us that "reading the Gospel we become more aware of certain aspects of the figure of the Lord; predilection for the little ones and the poor; zeal in preaching, healing and saving because of the urgency of the coming of the Kingdom; the preoccupation of the Good Shepherd who wins hearts by gentleness and self-giving".¹

And so the individual touches acquire a very real significance. At the present day there is a multitude of adults and young people who are lacking the fundamental needs of life, who are wandering aimlessly and waiting for some sign of solidarity. To them is extended Christ's compassion which goes far beyond human sentiment. It is an expression of God's merciful heart, his will for the life and happiness of every human being.

For this reason he passes the problem to his disciples. They have to think it over, overcome their sense of inadequacy at the dimensions of the phenomenon, seek out the available resources and then leave it to the power of love to do the rest.

The gospel story has some interesting indications about the attitude Christ's disciples must have in the face of human, spiritual or material needs and about the ways to meet them: enlighten the conscience with God's word and build solidarity.

¹ C 11

There is also a basic logic in the calculation and use of the resources. They are multiplied to an infinite extent when the relationship between persons and things are rebuilt in the light of the Eucharist.

The new scenario of our educative commitment.

The contexts in which we work are changing before our very eyes. Economic, social and cultural factors are bringing about a new configuration of societies. Hence the priorities of our mission are also changing, at least to some extent: the subjects to whom we give preference, the gospel messages to be disseminated and the educational programs to be set in motion.

The scenario is characterized by a particular phenomenon: poverty. This is not just the condition of a certain number, but the drama of the whole of humanity, a drama which is spiritual before it is material. At world level it manifests tragic dimensions and its effects on individuals and whole peoples are devastating. Rightly has it been repeatedly denounced by the highest scientific and religious authorities.

Scenes of such poverty enter our own houses from time to time through television, giving rise to sentiments of compassion and raising salutary questions. One need think only of hunger, "a scandal which has endured for too long", "which puts at risk both the present and future of a people" and "destroys life", in the words of the latest document offered by the Pontifical Council "*Cor Unum*";² or the exodus of thousands of refugees, victims of racial conflict, religious discrimination and rivalry which has become an art; or again the process of precarious urbanization without even a minimal guarantee of work, accommodation, services and civil participation, which are the hallmarks of social emargination.

² cf. "Hunger in the world"

If we also add immigration or work by juveniles, slavery of various kinds, the situation of women in many contexts, the exploitation of the weak, we have a bleak picture of human sufferings, but one which is still incomplete.

Poverty appears today in many forms, far more numerous than in the past. Aptly do we speak of 'poverties' in the plural, classifying them as old and new. It highlights the fact that some of them have come into being and extended only recently. They are linked in fact with the present conditions of life; they appear therefore as being less known in their causes and more exposed to moralistic judgements and facile allotment of blame.

To the lack of economic means indispensable for life, which has always been considered the main form of deprivation, are now added other manifestations in which this is not the main or originating factor: shortcomings in the family environment, failure in education, unemployment, dependencies of various kinds, delinquency, homelessness. Nor should be underestimated lack of motivation for living, the absence of human and spiritual prospects which lead to phenomena of compensation and evasion.

In more advanced and complex societies the poor include also those who are compelled to remain on the margin of the growing demand for cultural and technical formation, or who find it impossible to satisfy deeply felt needs: personal identity, a normal place in society, meaningful personal communication, free time, the need for formation, participation in wide-ranging projects.

This multiplicity of forms makes poverty a universal fact. Even wealthy societies and those with advanced technologies nurse them inwardly, not only because of immigration, but as a residue of their own system. Walk through the streets of a city and you cannot fail to be struck by its manifestations.

There is an inter-relationship between some forms of poverty and our style of life. The world has become interdependent in good and evil. From a system of economics and pro-

duction which has many good points, but does not include placing the person at the centre nor of considering the minimum standard of well-being indispensable for all, depends the present unemployment situation, the impoverishment of many, and the consequent falling off in educational possibilities. From the economic and cultural policies of part of the world arise new tragedies which afflict other large groups of the planet almost anonymously. Think of the national debt of some countries, about which the Church too has had something to say.

There are many examples easy enough to find which confirm such interdependence. The prolongation of borderline situations is due without any doubt to the absence of social solidarity, to delay in defining and implementing mutual rights and duties between peoples in a unified world, to tardiness in drawing up possible development plans with resources which are certainly available but are allowed to go to waste.

In the opinion of all observers, and it is confirmed by statistics, the forms of poverty in the world are not getting any less but are rather increasing, especially in depressed areas. 1996 was the year dedicated to the elimination of want, but it concluded with a bitter discovery. Deprivation increases in the same degree that efforts are made to resolve it through interventions in the sectors of finance and assistance.

Centesimus Annus refers to this very point: "In spite of technical and economic progress, in the countries of the West different forms of poverty are being experienced by groups which live on the margins of society, by the elderly and the sick, by the victims of consumerism, and even more immediately by so many refugees and migrants. In the developing countries tragic crises loom on the horizon unless internationally coordinated measures are taken before it is too late".³

All forms of deprivation obstruct and can even destroy the

³ CA 57

educative reserves of the person. We are affected in a particular way by those which compromise the possibility of growth among young people, even though we recognize that they are not isolated and autonomous phenomena and cannot be treated as such.

The kinds of youthful poverty that we find ourselves up against every day have as their cause financial need, educative and cultural shortcomings, family instability, sordid exploitation by third parties, racial discrimination, sweated labour, lack of work-training, dependencies of various kinds, closed horizons which suffocate life, deviancy, and affective loneliness. We have to look carefully at these things as the field of commitment we have been assigned by the Lord.

But what impresses us most is the dissemination of a basic difficulty which is spreading among young people and driving them to forms of marginalization and rejection of growth. The risk affects all of us, to such an extent that the GC23 points to poverty as one of the main challenges to our mission, precisely in respect of the education of young people to the faith. "The social condition of 'poverty' is a challenge to every person of good will. The impossibility or great practical difficulty of self-realization as individuals, in the absence of the minimum requirements for adequate development, pose serious questions"⁴. "Those who, as disciples of Christ, see and understand these realities and ponder them in their heart, are called upon to show sympathy with those in such situations and be united with them in their sufferings"⁵. "When we look at the social condition of poverty with the eyes of Don Bosco, and see how it destroys so many young people whose horizons do not extend beyond their immediate needs for survival or an ideal devoid of sense, we feel challenged to make our salesian presence among the poor more consistent and effective".⁶

⁴ GC23 78

⁵ ib. 79

⁶ ib. 80

The Church's option

The love of the Church for the poor forms part of its constant tradition⁷. The figures of men and women saints, religious works and institutes, all show this to be the case. Numerous lay people too have committed their lives to the same objective either publicly or privately.

In contexts of greater privation, charismatic persons have arisen in the Christian community who have tackled widespread social evils with opportune initiatives. Between them they managed to attend to almost all the kinds of poverty of their time: indigence, illiteracy, abandonment, slavery, imprisonment.

Several of them founded communities with spiritual and practical objectives for meeting the needs of the poor with wide-ranging projects. They have gone down in history as outstanding witnesses to the Gospel and are amongst its most eloquent heralds.

When the social question first arose, a more critical vision of society highlighted the mechanisms which gave rise to want and indigence. At that time the Church denounced the models of economic, social and political organization which undervalued the worth of the individual, deprived him of the right to the goods necessary for a fully human life, and extended destitution and emargination.

The social teaching of the Church became more continuous after the Council, not only because of the dimensions being taken on by poverty and the perception of its causes which were taken for granted, but also because of the greater awareness that was growing in the Church concerning the latter's testimony and mission.

There are five Encyclicals which, in association with the problems of labour and relationships between nations, deal with the more serious problems of underdevelopment:

⁷ cf CA 57

Populorum progressio (1967), *Octogesima adveniens* (1971), *Laborem exercens* (1981), *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (1987), and *Centesimus annus* (1991). To them must be added the declarations of the Synod of Bishops on justice (1971) and those of the important continental Synods.

In the context of this general sensitization the expression "preferential option" for the poor began to gather strength. It was not only a recommendation for individual charity, but a criterion for the pastoral activity of the Church.

The Council had proposed it with many indications addressed to Bishops, priests and all Christians. I quote just one extract which provoked an ample response. In the decree concerning priestly ministry, we read: "Although priests owe service to everybody, the poor and the weaker ones have been committed to their care in a special way. It was with these that the Lord himself associated, and the preaching of the Gospel to them is given as a sign of his messianic mission"⁸.

It was the Third Latin-American Conference of Puebla which coined the expression "fundamental option", specifying the significance and pastoral applications. After an evangelical reading of the realities of the continent and a discernment of the role of the Church in such a situation as the bearer of the good news, the Conference declared: "We affirm the need for conversion on the part of the whole Church to a preferential option for the poor, an option aimed at their integral liberation"⁹.

From that time the option for the poor and the words which express it have spread through all the continents. In one of the most recent documents of the Italian Bishops' Conference we read, in line with the preceding: "The preferential love for the poor is revealed as a necessary dimension of our spirituality.

⁸ PO 6

⁹ Puebla n.1134 - cf. nn. 1134-1165

With the lowly and the emarginated we can all retrieve a new kind of life”¹⁰.

We find it too in many recent writings of the universal Church. A typical example is found in n.42 of *Sollicitudo rei socialis*: “The option or love of preference for the poor is an option or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. (...) Today, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care and, above all, those without hope of a better future”¹¹.

It is something particularly recommended to religious. They in fact, because of the radical nature of the ‘sequela Christi’, represent in a more immediate manner the love of the Church and of Christ for the poor, and to their credit they have a rich tradition of initiatives: “The option for the poor is inherent in the very structure of love lived in Christ. For each Institute, according to its charism, this involves adopting a simple and austere way of life, both as individuals and as a community. Strengthened by this living witness and in ways consistent with their choice of life, and maintaining their independence with respect to political ideologies, consecrated persons will be able to denounce the injustices committed against so many sons and daughters of God and commit themselves to the promotion of justice in the society where they work”¹².

With the opening of the phase of the new evangelization the option for the poor becomes endorsed in many different ways. Emphasis is placed on the fact that it opens the way for the

¹⁰ “Con il dono della carita” Nota della CEI nn. 34-35

¹¹ SRS 42

¹² VC 82

proclamation of the Gospel, makes concrete its sense, and by it is illumined.

The heart of the new evangelization is the Gospel of charity which takes up the human problems and situations which have need of the transforming force of love. It is a charity which is expressed in the immediate circumstances, but above all is decisively involved in a wide-ranging and enduring social and cultural project, in which the individual is always considered in the light of his vocation and dignity, according to what has been revealed in Christ.

And even at the risk of labouring the point, I feel I must recall how the option for the poor forms an integral part of the Church's program for the Jubilee of the year 2000: "From this point of view, if we recall that Jesus came to 'preach the good news to the poor' (Mt 11,5; Lk 7,22), how can we fail to lay greater emphasis on the Church's preferential option for the poor and the outcast? Indeed it has to be said that a commitment to justice and peace in a world like ours, marked by so many conflicts and intolerable social and economic inequalities, is a necessary condition for the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee. Thus, in the spirit of the Book of Leviticus (25,8-12), Christians will have to raise their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world"¹³.

The long process of reflection has also had the effect of clarifying the sense of the preferential option for the poor. It does not imply any exclusion whatever, nor lack of attention to anyone, but expresses the involvement of the whole Church at this historic moment in time through which the world is living. It is not parallel with or juxtaposed to evangelization, which will always remain the first and most original task of the Church; but it is to be understood within the proclamation of Christ in line with the explanation of Paul VI in *Evangelii nuntiandi*.¹⁴

¹³ TMA 51

¹⁴ cf. EN32

It is not the task of only certain people, but is taken up by the Church as such. It is not to be realized through polarizations, but in communion; it is not to be achieved through the protagonism of certain persons or groups, but through the complementary qualities of talents, services and projects.

Our process of reflection

The Congregation has not remained indifferent in the face of the new manifestations of poverty in general, and in particular with regard to the signs of youthful hardship. It has always in mind the image of Don Bosco who, like Jesus, could also feel deep emotion at the sight of youthful privation.

It cannot forget the words in which Don Bosco expressed his reactions with regard to the youngsters in prison: "I saw large numbers of young lads, aged from 12 to 18, fine healthy youngsters, alert of mind; but seeing them idle there, infested with lice, lacking food for body and soul, horrified me".¹⁵

From that experience there began to emerge a new figure of a priest for the young, a new kind of educative work was born, a new kind of educational atmosphere. Processes of growth were envisaged tailored to the condition of the youngsters, to a point at which today the name of Don Bosco is linked with certain models of work and a certain style of education, even though he had not always been the first to think of them¹⁶.

He seems to say as much himself when he comments: "It was on that occasion that I found out why many of them were brought back to that place; it was because they were abandoned to their own resources. Who knows — I thought to myself — if these youngsters had a friend outside who would take care of them, help them, teach them religion on feast days...

¹⁵ *"Memoirs of the Oratory"*, p.182

¹⁶ cf. STELLA P. *"Don Bosco nella storia"*. Vol I pp.106-112

Who knows but they could be steered away from ruin, or at least the number of those who return to prison could be reduced? I talked this idea over with Fr Cafasso, and with his encouragement and inspiration I began to work out in my mind how to put the idea into practice”¹⁷

From that time the choice of prevention was clear in his mind, and in its more complete form the choice of a style of education based on preventive criteria, i.e. careful to develop the energies which enable the individual to emerge from the conditioning which life can impose, able to anticipate gravely negative experiences which would compromise his personal resources, or at least to escape from which would involve a useless and painful expenditure of energy.

The problem of the young, after he had sought them out and approached them, has gone down in the oral and institutional tradition of the Congregation, and has recently been studied with the rigour proper to professional historians. The conclusions are convergent and can help to throw light on human situations of the present day and the decisions they call for¹⁸.

The broad field of youth is always Don Bosco's fundamental option. Preference for the poor, the abandoned and destitute, those in need or in moral danger, gradually took on a greater variety as Don Bosco progressively came to grips with new needs.

At the moment of the greater development of his work he approached a fringe group of ordinary youngsters, with unspoiled human resources, in financial need if anything for a suitable human and Christian development; a group of middle-class youngsters “of good character and religious dispositions”, suitable candidates for an ecclesiastical career or likely to provide an exemplary basis for his institutions; and a small margin of mischievous boys of various kinds for whom preventive intervention seemed desirable.

¹⁷ “*Memoirs*”, p.182

¹⁸ cf. BRAIDO P in “*Annali di storia dell’educazione*” 1996, vol 3. p.185

In a youthful environment of an educational and positive kind, permeated by reason, faith and loving kindness, a work of re-education and recovery is possible to some extent. He would not accept houses of correction as they were conceived and managed in those days. He had always thought rather that the work of recovery and re-education should be carried out through the combined elements of the preventive system: reason, religion and kindness.¹⁹

Don Bosco presents his system of education as the most adequate for the reclaiming of boys affected by delinquency or otherwise outcasts from society. This is reflected in his words and in his letters to cooperators, to public authorities, and to past-pupils, when inviting them to collaborate with him in the education of the young, especially those who are poor and abandoned, so as to rescue such children from the material and moral ruin of the prisons, from corrupt habits, and from losing their faith.²⁰

Recently have come to light the dimensions and extensive social value of Don Bosco's interventions which are not confined to educative environments too narrowly defined. And this not only because he had in mind the regeneration and well-being of all civil society, and because in the work of education and advancement of the young should be involved every kind of element linked with social and political life, but also because educative programs themselves should not be limited to hidebound prototypes but be freely open to innovations in broad social environments. Think, for instance, of relationship with the world of work, the drawing up of contracts, the use of free time, and the promotion of popular culture and instruction.

Don Bosco promoted or at least dreamed up vast social projects for prevention or for social assistance

The Constitutions, which guide our behaviour as individ-

¹⁹ cf. BRAIDO P. ib. p.190

²⁰ cf. BRAIDO P. ib. pp.183-236

uals, and to an even greater extent our communal project, have reproduced these convictions of Don Bosco in the chapter on those to whom our mission is directed. They present successively: the young, and especially those who are poorer; youngsters about to enter the work-force, and those who give signs of a vocation. Those who are poorer are described as the first and foremost to whom our mission is directed, and for this reason "we work especially in areas of greatest poverty"²¹.

It is clear that the poor youngsters who are indicated as the main ones for whom we work, are not there in the Constitutions as just one of the categories listed, but they are at the centre, bestowing a significance in the light of which can be understood the other elements of the field to which we feel called. Similarly the reference to the young is not to be placed on the same level as our commitment to adults of the working classes, but rather as a motivation for the latter.

The salesian mission therefore has a unified definition, and is not just an undifferentiated list of possibilities. It moves from an option which manifests the kind and intensity of pastoral charity which is demanded of us, and which extends to other wider circles with the same spirit.

Later, and in view of the new reality, in the general Regulations are listed the different kinds of poverty to which we want to respond through our service of education: "in the first place for youngsters who because of economic, social and cultural poverty, sometimes of an extreme nature, have no possibility of success in life; for those who are poor at an affective, moral and spiritual level, and are therefore exposed to indifference, atheism and delinquency; and for those who live on the fringe of society and of the Church"²². In this way we recognize the extension of the kinds of poverty in complex societies, in which it frequently happens that the different forms mutually develop

²¹ C.26

²² R 1

and condition each other, creating situations which are strongly dehumanizing.

Also suggested is a flexibility of approach and educative structures in line with the needs of those for whom we are working. The permanent point of reference is the 'oratorian'²³ model as a receptive environment, attentive to personal relationships, open to all activities and forms of expression suited to the situation of the youngsters, organized "according to a plan for the total well-being of man directed to Christ, the perfect Man"²⁴.

Practical initiatives

Recent years have meant for us a slow but constant evolution in many senses concerning the choice of those who are poorer. Emargination and youthful deprivation are better known and followed up with greater concern; their manifestations are better understood and more attention is given to their causes.

To the dissemination of knowledge of this kind have contributed the recommendations of General Chapters, the custom of planning, the spreading of the results of specific research projects and initiatives, such as the organized observation of the youth condition, courses of social pedagogy, meetings on the theme of privation, and various short or long term surveys we have made.

The validity, degrees and complementary forms of prevention have been clarified, as also the salesian sense of prevention, which does not exclude the salvaging of those already suffering the consequences of marginalization and deprivation, but rather is proposed as an excellent way for reawakening their still healthy resources and prevent a definitive deterioration.

²³ cf. C 41

²⁴ C 31

This was confirmed by the Rector Major at the end of the GC22: "The pastoral charity lived by Don Bosco prompts us to go to the most needy of young people, to those in special danger, whether in the third world or in the consumer society. Don Bosco teaches us that the educative strength becomes evident also in its capacity for rescuing boys who have been abandoned but who still preserve some seeds of goodness, and for preventing further deterioration in those who have already started on the downward slope"²⁵.

The General Chapters have continually prompted greater enterprise and boldness of initiative in expressing our solidarity with the various forms of poverty. After the proposal of new presences in environments of marginalization expressed by the SGC²⁶, and endorsed by the GC21²⁷, a practical guideline of the GC22²⁸ asked the provinces "to return to young people, to their world, their needs, their poverty, by giving them true priority expressed in a renewed educational, spiritual and affective presence among them, relocating our works if necessary in the places where poverty is greatest"²⁹.

The request for a more decisive insertion among the very poor is emphasized again by the GC23. After presenting poverty as one of the arguments which challenges the communities more directly because of its gravity, urgency and dimensions, the Chapter asked every province to identify new and urgent fronts for commitment, mainly among young people in greater difficulty, setting up for them some new work as a sign that we are moving towards young people who are farthest away³⁰.

To the clarification of the concepts of prevention and preventiveness, to the greater knowledge of youthful deprivation,

²⁵ GC22 72

²⁶ SGC 39-44. 181. 515. 619

²⁷ cf. GC21 158-159

²⁸ cf. GC22 6

²⁹ ib. 6

³⁰ cf. GC23 230

to the insistent prompting of General Chapters, must be added a further fact. In the provinces we are witnessing a certain movement towards the very poor. Everywhere a creative response is being given to a possible plan for relocation. According to the context such plans are aiming at reaching youngsters who live on the streets, at setting up a presence in urban areas of generalized privation, at solving the problems of school drop-outs by alternative educational processes, at helping young prisoners, at working among young drug-addicts with forms of prevention, reception and follow-up during a recovery process.

The overall number of these initiatives remains consistently high, and they have in fact increased in number over the past six years.

Some of them provide a new model from a pedagogical and salesian standpoint, professionally sustained as they are and resolutely continued. In this way we too have been able to make, through our modest initiatives, our contribution of pedagogical and social reflection based on the preventive system, with regard to certain forms of delinquency.

The influence should not be underestimated that these initiatives exert on other sectors of education in the province and on the greater knowledge of youth deprivation, and consequently the incidence they have on the social context and public opinion.

The GC24 noted their capacity for bringing in and involving lay people. "Reflection in common, a shared project and relationship with the laity are positive experiences, especially in the so-called new presences, as a prompt response to the problems raised by youth unease, emargination, etc. It is in such settings as these that are being developed the best forms of lay participation and volunteer work"³¹.

It should be added that to the various forms of emargina-

³¹ GC24 20

tion and hardship partial responses are given also in our other educational foundations. One has only to visit some of our oratories and centres for professional training to be convinced of this. In them not only is an effective first prevention possible, but young and older boys who are already at risk of going astray find welcome, interlocutors and suggestions.

With the polemics, which at one time opposed the different kinds of work to each other, brought to nothing almost everywhere, and with the excessive individualism overcome which led to some of these works being considered the private concern of individual confreres who were responsible for their foundation, there is now evident everywhere a more decisive assumption of them on the part of the provinces, and hence a greater integration of initiatives and of confreres working together in the provincial project.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A Christian reading of the present reality

Seeing the crowd, the disciples came to Jesus and said to him: *"This is a lonely place and the hour is now late; send them away to go into the country and villages round about and buy themselves something to eat"*. It was an observation born of the common sense of ordinary people, and at the same time a way of not having to take on the problem themselves.

Jesus replies: *"You give them something to eat"*³². With that he is saying that the problem is their concern too; and the disciples are surprised at what he tells them to do. They think over what he says, but immediately conclude that they cannot do it. The crowd is too big and they have no resources. This is often our own feeling and our own conclusion.

³² Mk 6,37

They do not understand what Jesus has in mind. They think of the many in need and their own lack of means. Jesus on the other hand counts on the little they do have available. For him the solution does not depend on the initial quantity of food.

The extension of poverty in fact has deep roots. Some of them are certainly personal. They belong to the one who suffers distress and emargination and to those who are more closely linked with his life and growth.

Even in well-to-do contexts favourable conditions for development are set at nought when personal dispositions are lacking. On the other hand, if personal resources are strengthened these manage to make an opening in even strongly conditioned environments, and to bring about in them significant transformations in the order of relationships, sociality and sharing. To count on persons and their motivations is therefore an indication which is always valid.

But it is true that personal development can be fostered or made difficult, even to the point of bordering on the practically impossible, by cultural causes, i.e. those linked with the predominant mentality of the environment, and which determine behaviour, judgements, and manner of life and relationships.

In recent times therefore there has been insistence on the urgency of working for a culture which recognizes the dignity of every individual, strengthens solidarity in all its forms and settings, ensures the right and benefit of education for all, does not give way to prejudice or to summary easy evaluations, and does not fall into the trap of selfishness or consumerism. Only in this way can the social texture be repaired and made more human.

The same insistence is found throughout the ethical and social teaching of the Church. For us this is very stimulating, because it links the commitment to human advancement, which we fulfil through education and evangelization, to a wider scenario where there are other possible initiatives. This coincides

with what we have inherited from Don Bosco and is suggested to us by the Constitutions, when they refer to our presence among the working classes and our activity in social communication.

But to the radical causes in individuals and in the common mentality must be added structural causes, which should perhaps be placed first because of their weight.

They act simultaneously on many persons in extensive environments and with powerful mechanisms. They have therefore an unparalleled capacity for imposing situations, modes of thought and styles of life, regenerating or prolonging the emargination that goes with them. Phenomena like those of hunger, deprivation, prolonged conflicts, exploitation of labour, devastation of natural resources, are sufficient to give some idea of this.

Reflection should serve not so much to lead us to the usual denunciations, but to the correct formulation (even in small matters) of educative and evangelizing activity. We cannot educate, in fact, unless we are aware of the world in which we live.

For some years now it has been frequently said that we are facing a phenomenon of impoverishment rather than one of simple poverty. It is not a transitory phase, one that will pass, a consequence of the past; but the result of present economic, social and political structures, though there are other causes too which influence the extension of poverty³³.

The scenario is also worn down through the prevalence of a single universal economic model. The logic it imposes is that the production of goods is dictated by profit, and is not regulated by the need for a just social development which includes everyone.

Among its most serious effects is the slowing down and even the decomposition of social solidarity, and the reduction of the individual to nothing more than a being who can possess, produce and acquire.

³³ Puebla, n.30

The human model is centred in fact more on having than on being. This is why consumerism makes such strides: work to have, have to acquire, acquire to consume.

Deepening inspirations

The web or network described above shows that any solution is precarious and insufficient if it is not based on the human heart: on our own hearts as disciples called to make our own the compassion and logic of Christ; on the hearts of the young to whom we want to draw close; on the hearts of those who relate to Christ as his followers and admirers; on the hearts of those who have materials, intelligence or competence; on the hearts of those who must give social and political guidance.

This is what Christ's gesture suggests. The quantity will come and will be more than sufficient to meet the need if there are those willing to put their loaves and fishes at the Lord's disposal.

The same message reaches us from the elements of our own charism.

Our charisma was born at Becchi with the vocation of Don Bosco. The house of his infancy reflects the icon of the multiplication when on it is superimposed the map of the salesian works now distributed all over the world. There, in surroundings of real though dignified poverty, Don Bosco gave to God all he had to give: his life.

He experienced financial hardship for the realization of his studies and his dreams. He worked for an employer. At the same time he felt the solidarity of the human and Christian community and especially the support of the priests. With their encouragement and modest financial help they brought to Jesus the boy of the loaves and fishes which have now become a huge number.

Our work is the result of grace and geniality, but also of humble and almost anonymous solidarity.

The spiritual home of the mission is the oratory, begun without any fixed base, lodged at first in a shed and subsequently developed into what is now Valdocco. Of it Don Bosco wrote: "As a rule the Oratory boys included stone-cutters, bricklayers, plasterers, road pavers and others who came from distant villages. They were not churchgoers and had few friends, so they were exposed to the dangers of perversion, especially on feast days"³⁴. His words are a constant reminder of our origins and of our Father's preference when we think about the present state of youth deprivation.

From our contact with poor youngsters was born our pedagogy, with its characteristic content and methods, with the figure of an educator who goes beyond his institutional role and is for his boys both a friend and father. Fr Caviglia calls it a "pedagogy for poor youngsters".

The situation of poor youngsters prompted initiatives and programs which permeate our history: the oratory, trade schools, family hostels. Don Bosco repeats this when presenting the story of the Congregation in the *Memoirs of the Oratory* and in his spiritual Testament. It seems the natural place from which to start a renewal.

The source of our inspiration is always the pastoral charity diffused by the Spirit in baptism and in the call to the salesian life: but the seeking out, contact with and the sharing of the life of the poor youngsters are the "providential circumstances", the indispensable mediation in the beginning and practical development of our mission; it is the experience of freely given love which is accepted and given back in return, of a salvation lived out in daily life, of a return to life itself.

In his contact with poor boys, Don Bosco discovered interior riches, an innate potency and dignity both felt and desired. Each boy bore in his person the signs of God's love in his desire for life, in his intelligence and heart. The poverty which pre-

³⁴ "Memorie" p.197

vented them from developing as individuals and children of God was an appeal and a challenge to restore to them the awareness of their personal worth and bring out the gifts with which God had enriched them.

Don Bosco therefore conceived his priestly service as a work of education to make hidden resources flourish, to bring out traits which seemed to have been negated, so as to bring the youngsters to a satisfactory level of human and Christian life, and even to holiness. He showed them God's face in Jesus, a God who cares for the flowers of the field and the birds of the air, whose will it is that not even one of the most lowly be lost, who does not wait for the lost sheep to return but goes in search of it; who experiences deep compassion in the face of every painful human situation and reawakens hope.

For Don Bosco this constituted an authentic experience of God, discovered with admiration and recounted with joy in his paternal providence; it is the experience of Jesus when he noted with surprise that the Father had concealed the wonders of the Kingdom from the wise and prudent and had revealed them to children³⁵ — something which helps us to understand and assert the value of every child, no matter what his appearance, because "their angels are in the presence of the Father".

Poor youngsters therefore were, and still are, a gift for the Salesians. Returning to them will enable us to recover the central element of our spirituality and our pedagogical practice: the friendly rapport which creates correspondence and the desire for growth.

Today we must go again beyond the established structures, beyond the normal things we give; we must go out, make a mental and pedagogical exodus towards relationships and shared presence.

This is the fundamental attitude through which the preventive system realizes in educational terms the following of

³⁵ Lk 10,21

Christ, who set up his dwelling among us, who came to seek what was lost, who mixed with publicans and sat at table with sinners, who drew near to the poor and the sick and made of these gestures the sign of his mission of salvation.

The Kingdom of God is manifested, grows and reaches realization among the poor, because it consists entirely in a gratuitous relationship which Jesus establishes and renews with those who think they are without merit in the eyes of society or the eyes of God.

Sometimes we are too concerned about what we can give, or what we lack which stops us doing something, even to the extent of becoming unable to discover the riches which are present in the young and which could be rendered fruitful, and with which we ourselves can become enriched. The preventive system compels us to empty ourselves and accept the gifts the Lord offers us, especially through those most in need and apparently less worthy.

Poverty of the salesian educator

What we have said so far leads us to reflect on the *poverty* of the salesian educator. Before being concerned with norms regulating the use of money and material things, this refers to the good things in which we place our hope and happiness. Blessed are the poor!

It is a gift of the Spirit which makes us capable of communion. It consists in a deep need for God and our fellow men. It stems from the experience of the love of God and of our response to him in our openness to others. In its light material goods are seen to be functional and secondary. If a person has found in love the sense of life, he has no need to attach himself to things to be happy, even though he may make free use of them.

The God of Jesus, himself sufficient for happiness, makes himself poor so as to enrich us. He is a God who chooses those

who are aware of their own insufficiency and fills them with good things, because it is of his very essence to freely give. He is the first to desire, and much more strongly than we do, that the poor have life, and he comes to meet us in needy youngsters to offer us the gift of his presence and a share in his love.

In the awareness that all we are is a gift and that others, even though they be poor, are able to enrich us, we look on them and draw near to them with gratitude and expectation; we foster their self-expression, we provide opportunities for their participation, even though it be limited and imperfect; we do not consider ourselves free of human distress, but collaborate with a sense of humility in the growth of their life; we rejoice at the energies they are developing and the goals they are reaching, especially in the case of the lowly and the outcasts. We know that what we receive from them and from God is much more than we ourselves are able to give.

This vision characterizes our *prayer*, which in this way becomes simple, trusting and creative³⁶; centered in thanksgiving for what God has freely given us, and for the life of the young; a prayer which disposes us to share with them in giving and receiving³⁷; which expresses and develops in us the need for God without whom we can do nothing³⁸, and leads us to the discovery of the Kingdom which grows among those who welcome God, whether they have an abundance of material goods or not.

Convinced that what we do for them we do for Christ, we commit ourselves to work in *professional* fashion, freely drawing on whatever is made available to us by science and technology. We undertake a continual formation to provide an adequate response to new situations of poverty; we courageously set up new forms of group activity, and look for resources for the service of the poor and try to manage their organization more effectively.

³⁶ C 86

³⁷ C 95

³⁸ C 12

At the same time we maintain a *style of life* which is *simple* and even austere, without giving way to the desire for unlimited possessions or convenience. This was the advice Don Bosco gave his first missionaries: "Let the world know that you are poor in clothing, food and abode, and you will be rich in the sight of God and will win the hearts of men". Even in our activity we put our trust in the poor means of friendship and rapport, rather than defend ourselves behind organization.

This spirituality will help us to live another characteristic attitude of our Father: *trust in Providence*. Don Bosco's poverty was serene and undisturbed, attentive to the Kingdom of God and his justice, but it was also industrious at the service of the young. He was able to begin with little, motivate collaboration, and direct the use of money to educative ends. He asked, and he awaited God's response, but he did not get entangled in the seeking of financial means.

In a culture characterized by excessive concern for one's own security, especially material, we have to be signs of evangelical freedom, concerning ourselves first and foremost with persons and the Gospel, in the certainty that God will help us to find the resources we need. This is how all our works began, and the great enterprises of the Congregation started in the same way.

Opting for the young who are poor

The new forms of poverty must find the Salesians sensitive, able to appreciate the negative effect they have on young people, and be ready to intervene as was Don Bosco with the poverty of his own time.

A positive response is already a reality in many places, but for all of us Christ's question repeats the "charismatic challenge" in a direct and simple manner. How many loaves and fishes can you and will you make available?

The GC23 recognized that our works directly addressed to young people in difficulties have a strongly multiplying effect: they are points of reference for the promotion of solidarity, they win general approval and bring about collaboration of many kinds; they create a solid mentality among people, and gain the support of society³⁹.

How can we further extend this solidarity?

Let us begin with the *confreres* and the *communities*. Facts must be more widely known, sensitivity must be sharpened and refined, trust and courage must be inculcated, and the charismatic originality reawakened.

It is no small matter if in a province or local community all the members succeed in grasping the implication, the depth and modern manifestations of youth deprivations in their particular context as a risk threatening all youngsters and adolescents, and exploding at times among groups which are weaker and more exposed.

Neither is it a small matter if they are able to overcome the tendency to put all the blame on the young, denouncing juvenile delinquency, and renew their confidence in the resources of young people and in their desire to renew themselves. Loving kindness, reason and religion can still triumph when we succeed in making ourselves efficacious mediators.

In this way the Salesian can relive the style of Don Bosco, destroying barriers of diffidence, helping to overcome prejudice and providing opportunities for fruitful contacts. This will enable us to insert ourselves spiritually and physically in the real world of the young.

I will not delay to spell out what such insertion calls for and the transformations it brings about: daily contact with these youngsters and their situations of hardship will produce in the communities new stimuli for a faith lived out as a saving reality which can transform history. It will move them to live

³⁹ cf. GC23 290

their educative service with greater simplicity and creativity.

Without this spiritual and physical movement towards poverty, it becomes difficult to provide a coherent response to the challenge of youthful emargination. Knowledge and close contact lead to the sharing of what we have by grace, of what the young are suffering, of what they want to attain, of the path they hope to follow. What this implies in personal denial and the assuming of the sentiments of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, can be described only by those who have experienced it.

Then there is another step that must be taken, one that is both complementary and demanding: the elaboration of a *provincial project* for juvenile emargination which involves the communities. The reality of youthful deprivation and the risk of emargination must be taken into consideration in all our foundations. They should lead to the specifying of contents and educative methods for a more careful and updated prevention; for the animation of the locality in view of shared responsibility on the part of institutions and families; for the quality of relationships and life.

They could lead also to giving priority in the various foundations to the *acceptance of a greater number of boys and young persons who are at risk*, who can be kept away from delinquency by suitable programs and an educative and supportive environment.

They will in any case keep the educators more alert to initial latent symptoms of distress and the first manifestations of yielding to emargination.

In addition to this general attention, there is need to create *some initiatives and set some groups apart* for working directly in the environment of emargination among those already affected by it.

Once any opposition or sense of the unusual has been overcome, work of this kind will help all the communities in the knowledge and treatment of distress and keep alive the style of the preventive system.

Our concern: to educate

Poverty and emargination are not a phenomenon which is purely economic in nature, but a reality which touches individual consciences and challenges the mentality of society. Education is therefore a fundamental element for their prevention and suppression, and is also a more specific and original contribution which we, as Salesians, can provide.

To educate means to welcome, to converse and to understand. It means helping the individual to find himself again; to accompany him patiently in a process of recovery of values and self-confidence. It means rebuilding reasons for living.

Systematic teaching is an important way for preventing and overcoming poverty and distress, but only if it leads to contact with the individual as a whole; institutional anonymity or simple knowledge of a pupil's name will not realize the ends of education.

Education at the present day demands of us a new capacity for dialogue, but also for putting forward suggestions. You have to get down to the individual and to what is really bothering him or challenging his life; you have to get him involved in experiences which help him to get the sense of daily effort, get him concentrating on something rich in interest and linked with what is fundamental and which, while providing him with the means of earning his livelihood, makes him capable of acting as a responsible subject in all circumstances.

In education certain points of greater urgency stand out. The GC23 indicated the group: life - love - conscience - solidarity, as a challenge to our work, even of evangelization⁴⁰.

The Chapter considered these as one of the aspects to be given attention in all our educative programs and indicated their main objectives: through relationships, convictions and experiences, to get well rooted the *value of the individual* and his inviolability, above any material goods and every organizational

⁴⁰ cf. nn. 182-214

structure, so as to enable him to make autonomous options in the face of the powerful manipulation mechanisms and to correctly assess inhuman situations; to guide young people to an *adequate knowledge of the complex cultural, social and political reality*, beginning with the daily and local situation, so as to reach eventually social and economic institutions and models which have a determining influence on the common good; to *involve* young people from both poor and well-to-do backgrounds in initiatives which call for solidarity, so that they can learn to take on the sufferings of others and collaborate in overcoming them.

The program set out constitutes an efficacious means of prevention against dependence and negative influences; it offers indications for a process of recovery and at the same time requires the involvement of those youngsters who have managed to stay free from or have overcome the risks of the different kinds of poverty. It is up to us to translate all this into daily practices.

Promoting a new culture

These forms of poverty are born and spread in a world which is intercommunicating and interdependent. The assessments made of them, the hopes that may be awakened of overcoming them, the practical ways of becoming involved, are linked with the ways of thinking and reacting of individuals, of groups and of society as a whole.

This is seen whenever there is discussion on the use of goods, on the rapport between individuals and between peoples, on the harmonization of different standpoints, on the way to deal with deviations and transgressions.

Efforts against emargination are the more efficacious the more they penetrate or transform the sum total of perceptions and feelings which mould the thought and conduct of a society or among the members of active groups. A commitment of help and assistance to individuals is therefore insufficient,

even though it may be important.

What is wanted is a work of *social animation*, which will give rise to changes of vision and criteria through gestures and actions. Such steps and operations create new forms of relationships and models of conduct which embody values far different from those which control many of our habits, like selfish possession, the satisfying of personal interests, the condemnation of those who suffer dependence, and the abandonment of the weakest.

It is a matter of promoting a culture of one's neighbour, of sobriety of life and consumption, of availability and free sharing, of justice understood as attention to everyone's right to a dignified life and, more directly, to the involvement of persons and institutions in a work of broad prevention, and of acceptance and support for those who have need of it.

Our educative environments can be *centres for elaboration and points of radiation* for this kind of culture towards the family, groups, the local neighbourhood, local circles and institutions and, through social communication, to society in general.

There are some movements and initiatives without major support which nevertheless exert a powerful influence because they express new relationships and anticipate new criteria of solidarity: private associations for sound business dealings, family movements in which the members undertake to live with the minimum necessary and to avoid superfluous extras, and the volunteer movement.

These are just some models of life promoted by Christian circles in the context of the new social culture, which undertake to live according to the Gospel and not according to the promptings of consumerism. Other initiatives and aggregations of a similar kind can be created in the same sense.

They end up by functioning as a network and appear as interlocutors who are materially weak but morally strong in the face of political and economic organisms and institutions. More important still they succeed in multiplying aid projects and presences of sharing and solidarity.

This is a field in which we Salesians, with our international organization, multiple resources and rich spiritual patrimony, have great possibilities, and at the same time an important responsibility. We must make an effort of collective pedagogy to become involved and to offer practical means and projects to many people who are disposed, as a humble evangelical avant-garde, to adopt a solid and generous style of life.

Evangelizing starting from those most in need

Salesian activity, in whatever environment it be carried out, always includes the proclamation of Christ, and solicitude for the eternal salvation of the individual. In every initiative of prevention, formation and rescue, this is always the main intention and objective, even though it may be necessary to spell it out gradually as the subjects become able to receive it. We want them to be aware of God the Father, that they know Jesus Christ; and we believe too that by faith in him they will find unsuspected energy for the building of personality and all-round development.

The GC23, in presenting the characteristics of the journey of faith which we Salesians make with young people, says that we must give priority to the most lowly and begin from them as a condition for reaching all the others. "The option for the poor and lowly is something that determines not only the beginning of the journey but also every further stage until the conclusion is reached", because a person who has already travelled part of the way can always be "invited to support by his witness those just starting"⁴¹.

This is once again an authoritative indication of where we should take our place: among the lowliest, as judged by human criteria.

⁴¹ cf. ib 105

The proclamation of salvation to the poor is the sign par excellence of the Kingdom, and in consequence is the most profound dimension of our educative mission. Personal knowledge of and relationship with Jesus Christ is not a privilege for those of the young who are more committed or protected, but a gift offered to all from the outset. If Christ wants to give himself to the poor and needy, and this he has made clear during his earthly existence, we must not delay the discovery of his gift.

Evangelization certainly begins with a *contact*, the ability to assume the suffering and hope of the young person, to support him in his desire to begin again, to draw closer to the signs of God and the Church. Salvation is proclaimed and realized when a situation is created in which the youngster is set free from whatever was conditioning negatively the best part of his life; when in contact with other people who show him a disinterested love he discovers life's value and possibilities.

Daily contact with adults capable of creating a family atmosphere, a friendly relationship which portrays interest for the young and leaves space for their responsibility, kindness and firmness, demand and understanding, become a testimony which can produce wonders and bring to light the best of what lies hidden below the surface. In this way questions arise which provide an opportunity for explanations tailored to the understanding of the individual youngster.

The first glimmer of light on the journey of faith *must be fostered and developed* with patience and perseverance, concentrating always on what is positive in the youngster and on the interior strength of conscience, profiting by the experience of the group and the environment, sure of the energy for revival that comes from prayer and the sacraments. In this connection it would be well to read and put into practice what Don Bosco felt about the value of faith and conscience in the process of salvaging the young.

In the Church there is frequent reference to the new evangelization, and it is emphasized that the "newness" lies in the witness of charity, in the proclamation of Christ in the heart of

present-day life and culture, and in the movement to those who remain at a distance.

Our own contribution can consist precisely in trying to set up processes of evangelization in youthful situations of particular difficulty.

Conclusion

Jesus asked them: “How many loaves have you? Go and see’. When they had found out, they told him ‘Five and two fishes’. Then he told them all to sit down in companies on the grass; and they took their places in rows, by hundreds and fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looked up to heaven; and he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to set before them, dividing the fishes too among them all. All of them ate and had enough, and when they took up the broken pieces and what was left of the fishes, they filled twelve baskets with them”⁴².

The presence of the Lord becomes a miracle of solidarity so that the people can have bread in abundance. He prompts his disciples to seek out the resources that are available. He creates a true fellowship which leads to participation and then to communion. In this way a dynamism which began with a feeling of compassion becomes transformed into actions which fill with life those in need with the Word which enlightens and the Bread which sustains. What was very little turns out to be sufficient for all, and there is even some to spare.

Here lies our task and our hope: positing signs which will multiply. For this reason, in our programming for the present six-year period we have placed effectiveness at the centre of our attention⁴³. It emerges from the places, the spirit and style in

⁴² Mk 6, 38. 43

⁴³ cf. AGC 358, pp.52-53

which we realize our mission and provide our witness. And so we have taken as our main criterion of reference relocation and the redistribution of resources.

The elements which give rise to effectiveness are: the unconditioned manifestation of evangelical charity, the ability to "save" those whom men abandon to their fate, the desire to give life and hope, efficacy in the proposal of faith, the gregarious strength which leads persons of good will to unite so as to do good, the ability to bring mentalities and rapport to maturity in the light of the Kingdom.

Many initiatives are 'good', but not all of them speak with the same eloquence, realism and truth. Many works can be useful in various ways, but not all of them express the Gospel, the love of God sown in the hearts of believers, with the same immediacy and depth. Many interventions appear as acceptable and functional in the society in which we live; some of them are strongly 'evangelizing' in nature, and prophetic. One of these is our presence among youngsters most in need. We know how much individual provinces are doing in this regard, and how much they would like to do if they had available the necessary personnel.

May the contemplation and reminder of the multiplication of the loaves serve as an inspiration and criterion for a decisive movement towards poor youngsters, even when resources are in short supply.

And may Mary, who at the Annunciation placed herself entirely at the Lord's disposal, help us too to be ready for the work of salvation which stems from the merciful heart of God.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Juan Trecchi". The signature is written in a cursive style, with a large, sweeping initial "J" that extends downwards and to the left, forming a triangular shape. The name "Juan Trecchi" follows the initial in a fluid, connected script.

2.1 THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION **valuable information for purposes of discernment**

Fr Luc VAN LOOY
Vicar General

These notes, based on our Constitutions, are a reminder of a right of the confreres and the way to render it practical in our community life. They are prompted by the experience of the General Council, where it becomes evident that the value of the consultations and the manner of making them are not always clearly understood in every province and community.

Both the common law of the Church and our own particular law require consultations before decisions are made at provincial and general levels, for the purpose of obtaining clear and sufficient information for the making of a serious and accurate discernment. It is a matter of finding individuals on whom the Congregation wishes to bestow the responsibility for some service, or of making other significant decisions. For this reason the information asked for and given is of the greatest importance.

One sometimes gets the impression that among some confreres the opinion is spreading that consultations are of no great significance and carry little weight. The daily experience of the Congregation, on the other hand, shows that decisions are made at every level after careful study and an effective consideration of proposals made by the confreres. In this connection thanks are due to the confreres for their frank expression of

motives and the names of persons whom they see as fit and prepared to take on the task of provincial, provincial councillor, or rector of a community.

The confreres are also formally asked for their opinions on certain other occasions, such as the division of provinces and the formation of new circumscriptions, or when a province is facing important decisions as in the case of new foundations or reshaping of present works.

Moreover the confreres have the right and possibility of expressing their personal opinions when preparations are being made for Provincial and General Chapters. When local councillors are being appointed the provincial must hear the opinion of the local community. At local level the rector is invited to listen frequently to the assembly of the confreres.

And so there are differing circumstances in which Superiors are called upon to hear the opinions of confreres through the process of consultation, but in this contribution I shall limit myself to the three main cases or levels, which establish a relationship between provincials and confreres and between the provinces and the Rector Major with his Council. I am referring specifically to the appointment of provincials, provincial councillors and local rectors. The Constitutions themselves provide us with the necessary steps to be followed, but it may be well to recall them.

The provincial is appointed by the Rector Major with the consent of his Council after a wide consultation launched by the Rector Major (cf.C 162) and normally carried out by the regional councillor.

Provincial councillors (cf.C 167) are appointed by the Rector Major with the consent of his Council on the proposal of the

provincial. The provincial finds candidates by means of a wide consultation guided and examined by himself personally.

The rector is appointed by the provincial with the consent of his council, and the appointment is ratified by the Rector Major. To find candidates for the office of rector the provincial sets up an opportune consultation among the confreres of the province.

The principle of participation and shared responsibility

Article 123 of the Constitutions says that shared responsibility, on the basis of the common vocation of the members of the Society, requires "the participation of the confreres in the choice of those responsible for government at the different levels and in the working out of their more important decisions". Consultations are precisely one way among others for obtaining adequate and systematic information.

As is well known, personal and communal co-responsibility, in the structures of government and the selection of superiors, is one of the rich principles of renewal emphasized by the Vatican Council. It is a principle codified at universal level in canon law (CIC 625, 633) which states that if other superiors are appointed by a higher Superior "the appointment is to be preceded by suitable consultation" (can.625). Can.633 urges all members to take part and to practise discretion.

As far as we Salesians are concerned, it must be said that we have always had a strong sense of Congregation. Even if this has been expressed in different ways in different periods of history, we are accustomed to form a "family of brothers around their father" (cf. BM 8, 355). To be able therefore to participate in important decisions in the life of the province and houses is something we have much at heart.

The consultation for choosing superiors is an important element of the exercise of authority in the Congregation, a way of handling the shared responsibility of all; for this purpose there are three means:

- adequate information: this is the purpose of the consultation, to be able to involve the confreres in the reflection and discernment;
- personal dialogue, which is indispensable if each confrere is to be considered a “responsible member”;
- communal reflection, or the common search for the will of God (cf. *The Project of Life of the Salesians of Don Bosco*, p.891).

The appointment of the provincial (C 162; R 142)

In view of the appointment of the provincial, the Rector Major launches the consultation by inviting all the confreres of the province to express their opinion on two aspects:

1. The state of the province with its needs and history, and consequently the profile of the provincial needed for this particular province at this point in its history;
2. An indication of the names of three Salesians in order of preference, considered suitable for guiding the province, with motives and limitations.

The regional councillor gathers together the responses, analyzes and synthesizes the results with the judgements expressed, which he then presents to the Rector Major and his Council for a calm and detailed study spread over several sittings during the plenary session of the Council. At the end of the discernment there is a straw vote on the names which have emerged from the consultation, and on the basis of this survey is made the final vote which enables the Rector Major to dialogue with the person chosen and proceed to the formal appointment.

The Council has prepared a printed form which is used for the consultations. The process is normally guided in the name of the Rector Major by the regional councillor, who visits the various communities of the province when possible, or calls together several communities, or addresses a meeting of all the rectors, to explain the method of procedure and solicit a responsible collaboration; only in exceptional circumstances is the form sent by post.

- Hence the consultation for the appointment of a provincial
- is addressed to all the confreres of the province;
 - is set in motion by the Rector Major;
 - and the results are sent directly to the Rector Major or to the regional councillor, who guides the consultation in the Rector Major's name.

(For further details cf. n.9 of the "Elementi giuridici e prassi amministrativa del governo dell'ispettoria", pp.26-27).

The appointment of provincial councillors (C 167; R 154)

This consultation too belongs to the Rector Major and his Council, since they are the competent authority for the appointment (C 167); this is because of the important role of the provincial councillors who must work alongside the provincial in laying down lines of action and making the more important decisions concerning the province.

The provincial guides the consultation among all the confreres, but in the manner prescribed by the Rector Major. It is also the provincial, and he alone, who collects and analyzes the results and, on the basis of the suggestions made, proposes to the Rector Major for appointment the names of the candidates he considers most suitable for the task of service to the province.

As regards the manner of making the consultation and the evaluation of the results, I recall the essential elements:

- the consultation is to be made at least every three years;
- all the confreres are to be consulted;
- each confrere indicates on the personal form provided three names in order of preference with motivations; there is a separate form for the vice-provincial, the provincial economist, and each councillor finishing his mandate;
- the proposals are sent to the Rector Major, normally in such time that they can be examined during the plenary sessions of the General Council in the months of June-July or November-December;
- the provincial himself does the examination of the results, and fills in the forms prepared for the purpose by the Secretary General, with an indication of the preferences and judgements expressed. The results therefore are not matter for discussion in the provincial council. The provincial may nevertheless with due discretion consult trustworthy persons to clarify points that have emerged in the consultation.

The provincial then sends the forms (there are two separate ones) accurately compiled to the Rector Major: he indicates the precise figures resulting from the consultation and summarizes what the confreres have said regarding the candidates proposed. He also explains clearly the motives for his own proposal.

These forms are valuable because they offer information to the Rector Major and his Council for discernment and the appointment of the provincial councillor concerned.

(For further details cf. nn.15, 16, 17 of the "Elementi giuridici e prassi amministrativa del governo dell'ispettoria", pp.29-31).

The appointment of the rector (C 177; R 156)

Article 177 of the Constitutions says that it belongs to the provincial to appoint rectors with the consent of his council and the approval of the Rector Major, after a consultation carried out among the members of the province. Hence it is the provincial in this case who makes the consultation among all the confreres in a manner to be decided with his council (and “in the light of any indications made by the provincial chapter” R 170).

The provincial himself sees to the analysis of the returns and presents the results to his council. In accordance with C 165.2, for the appointment of a rector the provincial needs the consent of his council. Once the person has been decided, he will ask for the Rector Major’s approval, using the form provided by the general secretariat.

In compiling this form the provincial or his secretary will take particular care to be precise and complete with regard to information concerning the consultation and on the voting in the provincial council. An indication is asked for of the number of those consulted, the number of preferences received and the number of positive and negative votes cast in the provincial council; the provincial will add the evaluation made by the confreres during the consultation and that of the provincial councillors in the meeting for the discernment and voting, and will add also his own personal opinion. A space is provided on the form for each of these points. All of them are necessary for an accurate discernment to be made by the Rector Major and the General Council.

Finally it must be kept in mind that these practices, the consultation and the sending in of the forms for the discernment of the Rector Major, must take place in good time. Too often they arrive by fax at the last moment, with the request

for an urgent reply also by fax. The ability to govern includes also providing in due time for decisions that have to be made. In cases of real urgency, when applications by fax are unavoidable, it must be remembered (and this applies to all practices: appointments of various kinds, dispensations from vows, authorizations for buying and selling, etc.) that the original documents must reach the Rector Major or the Secretary General in due course.

Conclusion

As I said at the beginning, these indications are prompted by the desire of the Rector Major and his Council to recall the value of consultations at various levels as a means of participation, and the need to respect the methods laid down which provide all the information useful for discernment. The confreres have the right, and also the obligation, to give their opinion with shared responsibility. On the part of the others concerned, the information received from the confreres must be communicated accurately, completely and in good time.

These notes could seem like a reproach, but they are meant to be no more than a reminder of an important obligation which permits the efficient implementation of the service of authority and is an expression of confidence in the confreres. Who better than the confreres themselves know the persons capable of bearing the weight of responsibility of a rector, provincial councillor or provincial?

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

On 17 and 18 December the Rector Major took part in the celebrations in honour of Mgr Belo at the Generalate and at the UPS. Speaking to those present at both places he emphasized the pastoral character and salesian significance of the recognition given to Mgr Belo as well as his personal merits. At the Generalate were present the Bishop of the local diocese, Mgr Antonio Buoncrisiani, the Salesian Cardinals and Bishops: Stickler, Castillo Lara, Javierre, Bertone, Savio and Prata, together with the FMA Superior General, Mother Antonia Colombo, and leading representatives of the various branches of the Salesian Family. There was a prayer celebration for peace followed by a fraternal meal in honour of Mgr Belo.

On 31 December the Rector Major was at the FMA Generalate to present the Strenna for 1997. Present were the Superior General and her Council, and many Sisters from the Roman houses.

From 17 to 19 January the

'Days of Spirituality' of the Salesian Family were observed at the Generalate. On the 18th Fr Vecchi gave a commentary on the Strenna to the participants, and on the following day went to our Parish of Our Lady of Hope to meet the Holy Father who was visiting the parish on that day.

Between 30 January and 11 February the Rector Major was present at various functions in the United States of America marking the beginnings of the celebrations of the centenary of the salesian presence in that country.

From 30 January to 6 February he was in California, where he met many representative groups of young people: at Richmond (Salesian High School), at Bellflower (St John Bosco High School), at Rosemead (Don Bosco Technical School) and at East Los Angeles (Salesian High School). He also took part in all the events marking the centenary, and found time for a visit to Cardinal Mahoney of Los Angeles and for a

meeting with the provincial council of San Francisco, at which were present also provincial councillors from New Rochelle and the Superior of the Canadian vice-province. He was also able to visit the Novitiate at Rosemead, celebrate Vespers with the novices, and give a conference to the Salesians. In the Good-Night he spoke of the great impression he had received from his visit to the province which he had found well directed, optimistically open to the future, and able to cooperate with lay people. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing the Salesians working for the young and the poor, a sign of God's blessing, and remarked on the readiness of the pupils in our schools to listen to Don Bosco's teaching. He urged all present to live an ever more authentic salesian life, to be open to evangelization (especially of the very poor) and to show a great zeal in accompanying the young in their journey of faith.

On 6 February Fr Vecchi left California to fly to Miami, where we have a parish consisting largely of Spanish-speakers from Cuba, the Antilles and Central America. He celebrated an evening Mass for the Salesian Family, and later had a meeting with Frs Schafer,

Ploch, Angelucci, Pasqual Chavez, and Angel Soto to discuss collaboration between the Provinces of North, Central and South America.

The following day found the Rector Major at Tampa for a meeting of the Salesian North American Conference ("SNAC"), which brings together the SDB and FMA Provincials and their Councils from East and West USA and Canada. There were some 40 participants to discuss the theme: "Salesian spirituality and formation of the Laity". The first conference dealt with salesian spirituality; the second was concerned with the combined formation of Salesians and Laity; and the third was a commentary by Fr Vecchi on the Strenna for '97.

On 9 February the Rector Major celebrated Mass in the Church of Mary Help of Christians in the presence of Salesians, civic authorities and a large number of Cooperators. At the end of the Mass the representative of the Town Council, in the light of the centenary of the salesian presence in the USA, the highly appreciated work done by the Salesians in Florida and especially in Tampa, and the presence of Fr Juan E. Vecchi - eighth Successor of Don Bosco - declared 9 February to be:

"Salesians Day in Tampa - 100 years young".

After Mass the Rector Major had lunch with the members of the Salesian Family in the school hall. Later he had separate meetings with the provincial councils of the three provinces of North America before leaving to return to Rome.

From 14 to 18 February Fr Vecchi was in Egypt for the centenary of the salesian work at Alexandria. On his arrival he was welcomed by the young people, the majority of them Moslems, with a display of dancing and gymnastics by members of all sections of the school. He was also present at a similar manifestation of dancing at the school of the FMA which was greeted with prolonged applause. At the end Fr Vecchi spoke to thank the participants and repeated Don Bosco's wish that they be happy now and always.

He then went on to meet those who collaborate with us in the school and representatives of the Salesian Family. Each group and sector gave its own address of greetings, described its own situation and expressed its desires. This was followed by a meeting

with the combined SDB and FMA provincial councils of the Middle East to examine the work being done in Egypt and to agree on ever more constructive collaboration.

He spoke with the confreres of the institute and explained the guidelines drawn up by the General Council for the period 1996-2002, following the text published in the AGC. He dwelt at length on the main points and answered any questions.

On the 16th he celebrated Sunday Mass for a large group of men and women religious and of the faithful in general, in the presence of Mgr Egidio Sampietri. In his homily he congratulated all those who had brought the work to its present state and thanked everyone, religious and laity alike, who had sustained the work by their solidarity and collaboration. He said that the salesian spirit and style of education was the secret of the work's success.

A grandiose academy was organized in his honour. Speaking during it, Fr Vecchi recalled that Don Bosco used to say that every one of his houses was a home, a playground, a theatre, in which young people were able to express their vitality, a school in which they could learn how to make

their living, and a temple where they could express their faith. In its hundred years of life the institute had conformed to this "model" of Don Bosco, and it was fitting that the celebration should conclude with singing and a theatrical presentation by youngsters.

On Monday 17, the Rector Major went to the Institute in Cairo, situated in the Rod el Farek area. There he met the Italian and Egyptian authorities and took part in the prize-giving ceremony for the students who were graduating. He thanked the Italian authorities for the financial support they provided, and the Egyptian authorities for the freedom with which they allowed us to work, and for their recognition of what we were doing. He hoped this freedom would endure so that the Salesians could continue offering their contribution in the field of education. To those who were leaving the school he said that they were now ambassadors of the Salesians in the world outside. People would get to know the educative quality of the school through the responsibility they would show in their places of employment.

In the evening after the cele-

bration of Vespers, the Rector Major had a meeting with the members of the community and of the FMA communities of Cairo, and with others who had come to share the event. He explained to them the state of the Congregation in its numerical statistics, and especially from the standpoint of vocations. He spoke of the present reality of the situation, referring to the long-established provinces, solidly rooted in salesian life, and the new frontiers where we are pushing optimistically ahead despite the difficulties which must always be faced: Africa, Eastern Europe, South-East Asia and China.

The Rector Major's next journey was to Albania from 21-24 February, for the inauguration of buildings in the two centres of Tirana and Scutari. At Tirana, after a welcoming ceremony in the playground by about a hundred boys and girls, he met Fr Ferdinando Colombo of the VIS Organization of Italy and seven VIS volunteers who are working in the salesian centre at Tirana.

In a meeting with the Salesians and FMA Fr Vecchi emphasized that in a context like that of Albania, characterized by a variety

of cultures and of religions and social circumstances, we must be missionaries in respect of the characteristic traits of individuals. Even the proclamation of Christ, which it is not possible to make explicitly, must be realized by communicating the values of our own Christian experience and thus promoting peaceful living together, and mutual respect through the witness of our lives. Speaking of collaboration between the various groups contributing to the work, Fr Vecchi emphasized that this does not imply unity of management or direction, but rather working together in the same project and in the same territory, but safeguarding the identity and autonomy of each group.

The Rector Major inaugurated the youth centre, and blessed and laid the foundation stone of the salesian community residence in the presence of some eminent personages: the Minister of Work, Arlinda Kek; the Deputy Mayor of Tirana, Kaceli Buron; the Vice-President of the Albanian Parliament, Margherita Cirko; the Prefect of the city of Tirana, Regep Karapizi; the Italian Consul, Giuseppe Manzo; and the engineer responsible for the project. He also paid courtesy visits to the Pres-

ident of Parliament, Arbënorë Pieter, and the President of the Republic, Sali Berisha. The meeting was a cordial one; the President expressed his thanks for the work the Salesians are doing and emphasized the importance in Albania of training for work. The Rector Major in reply spoke of his esteem and appreciation for the collaboration with which the Albanian authorities had enabled us to realize what we have done so far.

At Scutari on Sunday 23 February the Rector Major took part in the concelebration at which Mgr. Frano Illja, Metropolitan Archbishop of Scutari, presided and four other bishops concelebrated. Present too were many other religious priests who concelebrated, and many women religious. The church was packed to overflowing with some 2,000 people.

At the end of the Mass Fr Vecchi inaugurated the building operations which will cover the oratory, the national catechetical centre and the vocational community. He blessed the site and inspected it in the company of the bishops and the faithful.

In the afternoon he had a meeting with several confreres from the Balkan area. Among those

present with confreres from Tirana and Scutari were Fr Mirtek Lanez of Pordgorica and Fr Gjalaj Nosh of Pristina, places in Montenegro where many Albanians live.

The Rector Major began the meeting by noting the progress already made: in Albania there were already fifteen confreres, five prenovices and ten aspirants - a growth in personnel which provides good hopes for the salesian future of the region. He reminded all present of some urgent needs: to mature in the missionary spirit as a broad response to the needs of the local people, to continue with the vocational work, to clarify in every new foundation the underlying animating spirit. He suggested a system of coordination for an overall planning for all the apostolic work, including the lesser everyday services. There followed questions from the confreres concerning the present situation in Albania in general: prospects for the future, possible new buildings, the possibility of parish churches and where to put them, collaboration with the FMA, the problem of inculturation which begins fundamentally with learning the local language, and other things.

From 2 to 8 March Fr Vecchi was at Assisi to preach a retreat to the Rectors of the Southern province of Italy and the FMA Superiors of their Southern and Naples provinces. On the 9th he went on to Milan for the Exhibition of Religious Books, at which he presented the text of Fr Domenico Ricca: "Ripartire dalla strada".

In the period 14-16 March the Rector Major was at Caserta for the celebration of the centenary of salesian work there. He was received in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall by the Mayor and Councillors, the Bishop of Caserta, and civil and military authorities, and was accorded honorary citizenship of the city. On Saturday 15, after celebrating Mass he had a meeting with the Bishop, Mgr. Nogaro, and the Priests' Council; he discussed with them the reality of the local youth situation and stressed the need for cooperation between all the forces working in this sector.

In the afternoon on the hill of Garzano Fr Vecchi took part in the commemoration of the massacre of four confreres, two families and a soldier, who were killed on 28 September 1943. Fr Nannola, who was Rector at Caserta at the time, recalled the event.

In the Institute itself, after unveiling a plaque given by the Province to commemorate the centenary, the Rector Major gave the formal commemorative address. As the secret of the results of the past hundred years, he pointed to love for the young, the preventive system, the oratorian manner of our presence, and openness to the neighbourhood. He foresaw for the future the development of a great educative movement made up of Salesians and Laity, with the spirituality of Don Bosco at its centre.

In the evening he had a meeting with the Educative and Pastoral Community (CEP), and reminded them that the CEP is the driving force behind all the educative work, called to direct the activity in such a way as to involve everyone in an active participation which means that they all share the responsibility for achieving the end in view.

On Sunday, 16 March, the Rector Major presided at the Mass for the Salesian Family; in the homily he emphasized the need to be mediators to the faith for the young people whom God placed on our path, and took up some other points concerning the

Strenna of 1997. At the end of the Mass he unveiled a group statue showing Don Bosco in the act of asking Michael Rua to 'go halves' with him, and inaugurated a photographic exhibition covering the one hundred years of salesian presence at Caserta.

In the afternoon he had a meeting with the young people of the Salesian Youth Movement and of the Diocese, at which the Bishop was present. Fr Vecchi replied to questions relating to youth problems in today's world. The visit concluded with a theatrical presentation provided by the youngsters of the school and the oratory, with the title "Youth and the World".

4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

The winter plenary session of the General Council began on 5 November 1996 and kept the Councillors occupied until 10 January 1977. Many of the members were returning after a first direct contact with the Regions. There were 33 full sittings with extra meetings of groups and committees for the study of various spe-

cific themes. During the session there also took place from 17 to 27 November the meeting of the new provincials with the Rector Major and his Council. The councillors also gave a contribution of animation to various other groups meeting at the Generalate, e.g. the meetings of the Rectors of Italy.

Together with the study of the more important themes and problems concerning the animation and guidance of the Congregation, the necessary time was given as always to the ordinary practices relating to the provinces, e.g. the appointment of provincial councillors, the approval of appointments of rectors, the opening and canonical erection of houses and other activities, matters regarding individual confreres, and financial and administrative business.

The following is a list of the more significant topics dealt with.

1. *Appointment of Provincials.*

In this session, as in the preceding one, it was necessary to appoint new Superiors for the provinces where the mandate of the previous Provincial was end-

ing. The General Council made the necessary provisions on the basis of a careful discernment of the results of the consultations carried out in the provinces concerned. The following new Provincials were appointed during the course of the session: Francis Alencherry for Calcutta, India; Patrick Angelucci for New Rochelle, USA; Herbert Bihlmayer for Munich, Germany; Stefano Fujikawa Nagaki for Japan; Joseph Kezhakkekara for the new province of New Delhi, India; Václav Klement for the vice-province of Korea; Joaquín López for Bahía Blanca, Argentina; Mathew Maruvathrail for Bangalore, India; Nicholas Reina for San Francisco, USA; Tarcisio Scaramussa for Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Angel Soto for the Antilles; and Józef Strus for Warsaw, Poland.

Of the new provincials some details are given at n.5.3 of the present edition of the AGC.

2. *Reports by the individual Councillors*

As already stated many of the Councillors were returning from a first direct contact with the Regions or Provinces, while those in charge of the various Departments had spent the months August-October

tober on a first organization of the work of the Department concerned. On all this work the respective Councillors made a report to the General Council. As well as providing a shared knowledge of the various situations, these reports revealed some particular questions or problems which were or will be considered at greater depth by the Council itself.

3. *Drafting of the program for the six-year period.*

Continuing the work already begun in the plenary session of June-July 1996 (cf. AGC 357, pp.45-46), to which further consideration had been given in a reduced Council meeting at the beginning of October, the elaboration was completed of the **program of the Rector Major and General Council for the six-year period 1996-2002**, in its three parts:

- 1 - the *general program* concerning the priorities of animation and government of the Rector Major and his Council for the whole Congregation: this serves as the point of reference and convergence for the Departmental and Regional programs;

- 2 - the *program of the individual sectors* in which the priorities and objectives of the general program are applied to the areas of animation of each of the departments, with their respective and specific competence;
- 3 - the *regional program*, or the program for the *animation of each Region*, in which the indications and proposals of both the general program and that of each sector are applied and adapted to the regional or zonal realities; to each of these is added whatever is proper to the Region concerned as regards its structure or composition, and its religious and cultural situation.

The overall program, and specifically its general part, was presented by the Rector Major himself in AGC 358 (cf. pp.44-56). The whole program in all three of its parts and articulations has been published in a special number of the AGC as a supplement to n.358.

4. *Erection of a new province in India.*

Among the various acts of government we may note in particular the decision taken by the Rector

Major and his Council to erect a new province in India with headquarters at New Delhi, by subdivision of the province of Calcutta. The decision followed careful study, begun by the preceding Council, and after a consultation of the confreres by the Rector Major.

The decree of erection of the new province, with the title of "Jesus, the Good Shepherd", setting out the details of composition and membership of the new province was published in AGC 358 (p.95).

5. *Other topics studied.*

Among other matters studied by the General Council during this session, the following are of particular significance.

5.1 *Political and cultural policy for the qualification of personnel.*

The Council reflected on this theme as part of its consideration of the priorities laid down in the program, precisely to concentrate the attention and responsibility of the Council itself on this important aspect of government, establishing certain concrete and convergent guidelines for the animation of the Congregation. The Rector Major pointed to this as-

pect as one of the elements of thrust and renewal in the program for the six years.

After considering the reasons underlying such a reflection (the need for a 'qualitative leap' prompted by the global changes taking place, the new social and cultural situations and the new ecclesial awareness which represent new horizons and challenges for our mission), time was given especially to a consideration of some practical and significant points concerning investment in cultural quality; conclusions were reached for the action of animation and government by the General Council. The Rector Major intends to pass on some of these reflections to the whole Congregation in due course.

5.2 *The functioning of the structures of government.*

By means of an ad hoc study group within the Council, a first consideration of this topic has been launched in response to the request of the GC24 (n.191 of the Acts of the Chapter). This asked the Rector Major with his Council to make a detailed study of the functioning of the Council itself, in the interaction of departmental and regional councillors, so as

to reach a more complete overview of the structures of central government; in this the provincial chapters would also be involved with a view to the GC25.

This first phase was limited to the collection of data and other elements useful for the study, and an examination of possible ways of procedure which will be taken up and analyzed in subsequent sessions.

5.3 Administration and management of the financial resources of headquarters' operations.

Referring to one of the indications contained in the program of the Economist General's Department, the Council decided to examine at greater depth this point which touches the central government by giving a fundamental response to the question: "What practical criteria are to be applied for guiding the management and distribution of funds available to the central administration, and what powers belong to the Economist's Department and the other Departments concerned?"

On the basis of the constitutional principles (concerning unity of government and administrative management, together with

unity of solidarity and functions of control at various levels), some practical lines of action for the administration and distribution of resources were considered, specifying convergence and competence in the procedure of those responsible.

From the reflection emerged some clear guidelines for ordinary and extraordinary administration, and for the procedure for the allotment of funds in the power of the General Council. Particular importance was given to the study of a 'solidarity fund' at the level of the Congregation.

5.4 Statute and Directory for the Generalate.

Taking up again a study begun by the previous Council in response to some indications which had emerged in the Extraordinary Assembly ("ASTRA") in preparation for the GC24, the General Council examined the Statute and Directory of the Generalate House, which is a circumscription dependent directly on the Rector Major. The Council approved certain proposed modifications, which were given effect.

At n.5.2 of the present Acts is reproduced the new text of the

Statute with the modifications that were approved. It replaces the previous text, approved on 12 December 1983.

In concluding these brief items of chronicle we may emphasize what the Rector Major said at the end of the session; he spoke of the atmosphere of fraternity and collaboration which had marked their period of work and common

life, together with their times of prayer. A significant moment, already referred to in the preceding number of the AGC (p.94-95), was the act of family homage in which the Rector Major and Council joined the community of the Generalate and the Salesian Family of Rome in honouring the Salesian Bishop Mgr. Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, who had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

5.1 XIX Spirituality Meeting of the Salesian Family

From 17 to 19 January 1997 the *Salesianum* in Rome was the venue for the *XIX Spirituality Meeting of the Salesian Family*. 15 of the 17 recognized groups forming the Family were represented with a total of 150 participants from all over the world. A pleasant surprise for all taking part was that they had in their hands from the outset the 'Acts', i.e. the book with the text of all the contributions in their original language and in an Italian translation.

The theme, in line with the Strenna for 1997 and with the commitment of the Church for this first of the three years of immediate preparation for the third millennium, was *Jesus Christ*.

The encounter was given an original aspect by the fact that each of the fifteen groups had previously made a careful analysis of the person and mystery of Christ in their respective Constitutions,

Regulations, or Statutes. From the reflections emerged not only the specific traits of each group, but also and above all what all the groups have in common in so far as they are disciples of Christ. Jesus the Good Shepherd as a model; the formation processes centered on the person of Jesus; the choice of the young and lowly, the poor and suffering, as the nucleus of the apostolic mission, the commitment to the application of the preventive system as a pedagogy, spirituality and a methodical and apostolic commitment in the social field; the central place of the Eucharist in daily life; the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation; fidelity to the Church – all these are just some of the traits lived in common by the different groups of the Salesian Family, and are equally aspects to be developed more deeply in the course of the year.

Other themes which emerged and which call for personal and

communal reflection are the following: a re-reading of the SDB Constitutions with Jesus Christ as the starting-point, a historical and thematic study on Jesus Christ in the FMA Constitutions, the cardinal points of the figure of Christ in the Regulations of Apostolic Life of the Cooperators, Christ the model of consecrated secularity for the DBV; and still further, the theme "disciple of Christ because disciple of Don Bosco", the urgent need to proclaim Jesus and his Gospel by word and life, Christ the foundation of the plan of life, the merciful Jesus, Jesus the master, servant and good shepherd, Christ the missionary, Christ the universal sacrament of salvation, Jesus the "Son of her whom your mother taught you to greet three times a day".

The interesting work of the groups was synthesized in five thematic conferences. The Bishop of Antwerp, *Mgr. Paul Van den Berghe*, spoke of faith in Jesus Christ through biblical reflection, and highlighted the more problematic questions raised by people at the present day. *Fr Francesco Motto* dealt with the historical aspect through a study indicating the presence of Jesus the Saviour

in the culture and religious practice of the nineteenth century and the experience of Don Bosco; he provided an anthology of texts of Don Bosco characteristic for their familiar style and simplicity of language. *Jean-Paul Muller*, a German Salesian Brother from the Cologne Province, reposed the preventive system from the standpoint of its relationship with Christ and with attention directed to young people of today and their numerous problems. Sister *Marcella Farina* FMA put forward some reflections on the Eucharist in the salesian apostolic mystique, with some anthropological emphases which greatly interested those present. *Alvaro Ginel* provided an interesting lesson of catechetical methodology: 'Dear young people, I present Jesus to you'.

The 1997 Strenna for the Salesian Family: *With our eyes fixed on Jesus, the firstborn of many brethren, let us help the young to welcome him in faith* was presented and commented by the Rector Major, *Fr Juan Edmundo Vecchi*, who pointed out to all the groups a common frame of reference, in the need ever more clearly recognized to start from the Gospel in proclaiming Jesus as

Saviour and to help young people to welcome him in faith. Fr Vecchi emphasized that the various groups of the Salesian Family must become bearers of "salesian icons" of Jesus to the extent that they "inspire our spirituality and mould our pedagogy". The Rector Major proposed images which are present in various ways in all projects of apostolic life of the Salesian Family: Jesus the Good Shepherd, Jesus friend of the young, Jesus the new Man. To eliminate the distance which often exists between educators and the young Fr Vecchi, with a singular image, invites the members of the Family to "join their bandwagon, as did the deacon Philip".

If on the one hand the great quantity of material for reflection contained in the acts of this XIX Spirituality Meeting of the Salesian Family can be of help to the different groups in responding to the question of Jesus: "Whom do you say that I am?", on the other hand it will lead every member of the Family to be more committed to the following of Christ to the extent that each one can affirm with the apostle Peter a personal faith in Jesus. In this we have an example in Attilio Giordani, a Salesian Cooperator, whose spiri-

tual profile was outlined by Fr Pasquale Liberatore as being founded on the educative charisma which Don Bosco passed on to his sons and daughters.

5.2 Statute of the Generalate House

The following is the text of the Statute of the Generalate, approved by the Rector Major, with the modifications introduced after the study made by the General Council during the winter plenary session (cf. Chronicle of the Council, n.4.2).

Prot. n. 021/97

1. The Major Superior of the Generalate is the Rector Major who, by that very fact, assumes directly all the tasks, rights and faculties of a Provincial with regard to a salesian house dependent on him.
2. For the ordinary exercise of these tasks, rights and faculties, the Rector Major gives a special mandate to the Vicar General.
3. The "Blessed Michael Rua

community" has a rector who exercises authority in it in accordance with the Constitutions. He is appointed by the Rector Major, due regard being paid to the indications given by an opportune consultation.

4. In the animation and government of the community the rector is assisted by a Council made up in line with the Constitutions (art.178).

Members of the Council are:

- the vice-rector and economer;
- a confrere of the house designated by the Rector Major;
- three members elected annually by the assembly of the confreres.

5. The confreres juridically attached to the Generalate cease to be part of their province of origin for all the period of their attachment, but retain their radical membership of the province from which they come.

6. The extraordinary assembly (Astra) is the representative assembly of the confreres of the "Blessed Michael Rua" community. It is called together by the Rector Major in view of the General Chapter and is normally presided over by the Vicar General. Its purposes

are: the election of the Delegate to the General Chapter, the study of themes and formulations of proposals to be sent to the General Chapter, as well as of problems inherent in the life and activity of the community.

Those who take part in the Astra are the rector, the members of the local Council and a number of confreres juridically belonging to the community, and elected in the proportion of 1 to every 6 or part of 6 members.

7. Other extraordinary assemblies can be called by the Rector Major for precise purposes.

Rome, 31 January 1997

Fr Juan E. Vecchi
Rector Major

Fr Francesco Maraccani
Secretary General

5.3 New Provincials

The following are the principal data concerning the new Provincials appointed by the Rector Major and his Council during the plenary session of November-December 1996.

1. *Fr Francis ALENCHERRY,
for CALCUTTA, India.*

Succeeding Fr Thomas Polackal in guiding the Province of Calcutta is *Fr Francis Alencherry*.

He was born on 29 August 1950 at Thuruthy, Kottayam (Kerala), frequented the aspirantate of Bandel, and went on to the Novitiate at Shillong where he made his first profession 24 May 1969.

After the practical training which followed studies of philosophy and pedagogy he followed the theology course at Bangalore, and was ordained priest in his native Thuruthy 18 December 1978. Subsequently he was sent to Rome where he obtained his Licentiate and later the Doctorate in Biblical Theology from the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

On his return to India he taught in the theological studentate of Shillong for several years, and later became its rector. From 1995 he had been working in the Auxilium Parish of Calcutta.

2. *Fr Patrick ANGELUCCI,
for NEW ROCHELLE,
(Eastern USA).*

Fr Patrick Angelucci will succeed Fr Timothy Ploch at the end of the latter's mandate as Provin-

cial of the Eastern Province of the USA with headquarters at New Rochelle.

Born in the Bronx (New York) 15 September 1946, he made his novitiate at Newton and first profession there on 16 August 1966. This was followed by philosophy and pedagogy, and by practical training. Later he went to Columbus for theological studies and gained an M.A. in Theology from the Pontifical College "Josephinum", and was ordained priest on 24 April 1976 at Westerville, Ohio.

After ordination he was fully engaged in educative and pastoral work; in 1982 he was appointed rector of the house of Marrero and in 1988 of that of West Haverstraw. In 1991 he moved to the school at Miami where he worked until 1995.

The year 1995-96 he spent in Rome for a year's specialization at our Salesian Pontifical University, and on returning to the USA became rector of the house of Patterson. There he received the news of his appointment as Provincial.

3. *Fr Herbert BIHLMAYER,
for MUNICH, Germany*

Fr Herbert Bihlmayer has been confirmed for a second six-year

period in the Province of 'Mary Help of Christians' with headquarters at Munich. He was first appointed on 5 December 1990, and now after six years of intensive work has been reappointed on the basis of the consultation carried out among the confreres. (For biographical details, cf. AGC 335, p.73).

4. *Fr Stefano FUJIKAWA*
Nagaki, for JAPAN.

Fr Francesco Mizobe Osamu is succeeded by *Fr Stefano Fujikawa Nagaki* as Provincial of Tokyo.

Born at Osaka Nishinariiku 9 August 1944, he was a pupil at the salesian school of Tokyo-Suginami, from where he went on to the novitiate of Tokyo-Chofu and made his first profession a year later on 25 March 1965.

After the study of philosophy and pedagogy and practical training he followed the theological course at Tokyo and obtained the Licentiate in theology. He was ordained priest on 12 October 1974, and became engaged in educative and apostolic work in various houses of the province.

In 1987, after a period of preparation in Rome at the UPS he was appointed Director of Novices at Chofu. In 1991 he became a

member of the provincial council and in 1994, after six years as novice-director, he became provincial secretary and rector of the provincial house. In 1995 he returned once more to the house of Chofu, this time as rector.

5. *Fr Joseph KEZHAKKARA,*
for NEW DELHI, India

As Provincial of the new Province 'Jesus the Good Shepherd' of New Delhi, canonically erected in December 1996, the Rector Major with his Council has appointed *Fr Joseph Kezhakkara*.

He was born at Kizhathadyoor, Kerala, 1 October 1936; he frequented the aspirantate of Bandal, made his novitiate at Yercaud where he also made his first profession on 24 May 1966.

After the usual initial studies and practical training, he studied theology at Shillong and was ordained priest on 17 April 1996.

He was soon called to posts of greater responsibility: provincial councillor in 1970, vice-provincial in 1974 and at the same time rector of the house of Calcutta-Tengra. In 1978 the Superiors appointed him Provincial of Calcutta.

After his six-year mandate he spent five years in the community

of New Delhi Alaknanda, and was subsequently at Bangalore at the national centre for youth pastoral work. In 1996 he was sent once again to New Delhi as rector of the house of Okhla. Here he received the news of his appointment as provincial of the new province.

6. *Fr Václav KLEMENT*
for KOREA

The new Superior of the Vice-province of Korea is *Fr Václav Klement*; he succeeds *Fr Marc Cuvelier*, who has guided the circumscription for the past twelve years.

He was born 7 October 1958 at Brno, in what was then Czechoslovakia and is now the Czech Republic. He has been a Salesian since 4 September 1982, when he made his first profession in the difficult times when everything had to be done in a clandestine manner.

Subsequently he was able to get to Rome where he did his philosophical and pedagogical studies, and later also those of theology. He was ordained priest in Rome on 25 May 1986.

Immediately after his ordination, in a response to a call to the missions, he left for Korea where he

learned the language and became fully inserted in the salesian life and mission. In 1994 he was appointed rector of the house of Seoul - Dae Rim Dong. Now the Superiors have laid on him the heavy task of the animation and government of the whole vice-province.

7. *Fr Joaquin LOPEZ*, for
BAHIA BLANCA, Argentina.

Fr Joaquin Lopez Pedrosa succeeds *Fr Ruben Hipperdinger* as Provincial of the 'St Francis Xavier' Province of Bahia Blanca.

He was born in Spain at Guadix, Granada, on 15 July 1942, and made his novitiate at San Jose del Valle and his first profession on 16 August 1959.

While still a young cleric he left for the Patagonian Province of Argentina, where he did his practical training and subsequently made his perpetual profession.

For theology he was sent to the Salesian University in Rome, where he obtained the Licentiate in Theology and was ordained priest on 17 May 1970.

Returning to Argentina he was immediately immersed in educational and pastoral work. In 1979 he was appointed rector of the 'Don Zatti' house at Bahia Blanca, and three years later in 1982

he became a provincial councillor. Rector of the house of Bahia Blanca 'Don Bosco' in 1996, he was appointed vice-provincial in the following year, and in 1990 rector of the provincial house. Now he has been entrusted with the animation of the provincial community.

8. *Fr Mathew MARUVATHRAIL, for BANGALORE, India.*

Fr Thomas Myladoor is succeeded at the end of his mandate as Provincial of the 'Sacred Heart' Province of Bangalore by *Fr Mathew Maruvathrail*.

He was born at Kavalam, Kerala, on 28 November 1929, was an aspirant at Tirupattur, made his novitiate at Kotagiri and his first profession there on 24 May 1951.

After the normal initial studies and practical training he studied theology at Turin-Crocetta and obtained first the Licentiate and then the Doctorate in Theology. He was ordained priest at Turin on 11 February 1962.

Returning to India the chief task entrusted to him by the Superiors was that of teaching and formation in the "Kristu Jyoti College" theological studentate of Bangalore, where he was also rector for six years from 1975 to 1981. In the same period he was

also a member of the provincial council.

Now the Superiors have given him the responsibility of guiding the province.

9. *Fr Nicholas REINA, for SAN FRANCISCO, Western USA.*

Fr Nicholas Reina succeeds Fr William Schafer as Provincial of the Western USA Province of San Francisco.

He was born in New York on 7 April 1948 and was a pupil at the salesian school of Los Angeles, where his vocation matured. He made his novitiate at Newton, and his first profession on 15 August 1967. After the practical training period which followed the study of philosophy and pedagogy, he studied theology at Berkeley in California and was ordained priest at Los Angeles on 8 April 1978. He concluded his studies by gaining the Ph.D. in Theology.

After ordination he was a teacher, educator and animator in various communities: Bellflower, Berkeley and for a long period at Rosemead in the Don Bosco Technical Institute where he was successively vice-rector and then rector. From 1991 he was a member of the provincial council.

10. *Fr Tarcisio SCARAMUSSA,*
for Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

Fr Alfredo Carrara is succeeded as Provincial of Belo Horizonte by *Fr Tarcisio Scaramussa*.

He was born on 19 September 1950 at Prosperidade, in the state of Espiritu Santo, Brazil. He was a pupil at the salesian school of Jaciguá from where he went on to the novitiate at Jaboatao, and made his first profession on 31 January 1969.

After initial studies and practical training he studied theology at Belo Horizonte, and was ordained priest on 11 December 1977 in his hometown of Prosperidade. He gained the Licentiate in Philosophy and Pedagogy and also in Theology.

After ordination he was engaged in teaching and in educational and pastoral animation; in 1985 he became rector of the house of Jaciguá (now Vargem Alta), and in 1988 a provincial councillor. In 1989 he was transferred as rector to the parish of 'Cristo Luz dos Povos' at Belo Horizonte, and in the following year vice-provincial, an office he still held at the time of his appointment as provincial.

11. *Fr Angel SOTO,*
for the ANTILLES.

Fr Angel Rogelio Soto Cruz is the new Provincial of the Antilles. He succeeds Fr Juan Linares at the end of the latter's six-year mandate.

He was born at Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic 27 November 1942 and was a pupil at the aspirantate of Jarabacoa. From there he went on to the novitiate of Arroyo Narranjo, where he made his first profession on 16 August 1959.

After the usual preliminary studies and practical training he went to the studentate of Guatemala for theology and was ordained at Santo Domingo on 4 October 1969. Subsequently he obtained the Licentiate in Educational Sciences at Turin-Crocetta in 1974.

He was soon given responsibilities for animation and government. In 1974 he became rector of the 'Sacred Heart' community in Santo Domingo and two years later a provincial councillor. He was Vice-provincial from 1978 to 1984, when he became Provincial. At the end of his six-year mandate he returned as rector to the aspirantate of Jarabacoa. Now the Rector Major with his Council have entrusted him once again

with the leadership of the province.

12. *Fr Józef STRUS,*
for WARSAW, Poland

Fr Zbigniew Malinowski is succeeded in the guidance of the Warsaw Province of Poland by *Fr Józef Strus*

He was born at Czore, in the diocese of Krisevci, Poland, on 9 April 1941 and made his first profession at the novitiate of Czwewinsk on 2 August 1960.

After the usual preliminary studies and experience he followed the course of theology in the salesian studentate of Lad and was ordained priest on 3 June 1969. He was then sent to Rome to complete his studies and gained the Doctorate in Spirituality at the UPS.

At the request of the Superiors he continued at the same University as a teacher in the department of spirituality, and at the same time filled certain roles of animation and government: rector of the 'Bl. Michael Rua' community from 1983 to 1992, when he became Vicar of the Superior of the UPS Vice-province and at the same time rector of the 'Gesù Maestro' community.

In 1996 he returned to Poland

to the Warsaw Province and was appointed rector of the theological formation community of Lodz. Here he received news of his appointment as Provincial.

5.4 Two publications of the Salesian Historical Institute. Approval of the ACSSA.

Five years after the publication of the of the first volume of the critical edition of the *Collected Letters of Don Bosco* (December 1991), the LAS Publishers of Rome in the series *Sources* of the Salesian Historical Institute (First Series, n.8), has published in October 1996 the *second volume* of Letters, edited by the director if the Institute, Fr Francesco Motto.

The text is published in the same format as the previous volume (larger than normal) and includes 537 letters, of which a third part had not previously been published. They cover the years 1864-1868, i.e. the period of the construction of the Church of Mary Help of Christians, and of the foundation of the Congregation. They are no longer addressed almost in their entirety to

persons in Turin and Piedmont but to individuals residing in various regions of Italy (Liguria, Lombardy, Venice, Emilio Romagna, Lazio, etc.), and even in other countries. An extensive appendix provides indications of dozens of other letters which have not been found; the critical apparatus for the variations, and the historical and explanatory notes to each letter make of the collection a unique and indispensable instrument for anyone wanting to know Don Bosco more closely in his daily life without interpretative filtrations. The two volumes now published, with their total of 1,430 pages and 1,263 letters, integrate and to some extent replace the first volume of the edition edited by Fr Eugene Ceria in 1955, mainly on the basis of the texts published in the "Memorie Biografiche". The complete work is planned to cover a total of eight volumes, and will certainly be a valuable addition to every salesian library.

* * *

The same LAS Publishers in the Series *Studies* (n.9) of the Salesian Historical Institute published in September 1996 the Acts of the II Congress on the history

of Salesian Work, held at Rome in November 1995. It is entitled *Insedimenti e iniziative salesiane dopo Don Bosco*, edited by FMotto (595 pages). The volume includes two interventions of a methodological nature ("How to keep track of history in scholastic institutes run by religious" and "How to do research in the Vatican Archives") and 17 communications on individual salesian works, individual provinces, and provinces belonging to the same country. There are some items concerning the FMA: the preparation of teachers in Italy, the FMA foundations in Spain, the first experiences in Tunisia. The texts are published in the language of the authors, Italian, French, English, Castillian and Portuguese to foster reading in all five continents. There is a preface by the Rector Major, Fr Juan E. Vecchi. The volume is recommended particularly to those in the various provinces who work in the field of salesian history (Salesians, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, members of the Salesian Family, and lay people in general).

* * *

On 9 October 1996 the Rector

Major approved for a period of five years the Statute of the ACSSA (Cultural Association for Salesian History), elaborated in the course of two congresses on the history of salesian work (Rome, January 1993 and November 1995). The aim of the Association is "to promote the study of salesian history, by fostering research, updating and collaboration between the members, by animating the Salesian Family from a historiographical standpoint by spreading knowledge of Don Bosco and the movements to which he gave rise, in dialogue with similar civil and religious in-

stitutions" (art.1). Members are those who, qualified in historical sciences or otherwise engaged in research at various levels, ask to be admitted to membership and are accepted by the Presidency (art.6).

The "constituent" assembly elected Fr Ramon Alberdi of Barcelona as its first president, and Fr Aldo Grande of Turin as Secretary. The headquarters of the ACSSA are at the Generalate in Rome, to which those requiring further information can apply. The Statute will be published in *Ricerche Storiche Salesiane* n.30 (January - June, 1997).

5.5 SDB Statistics at 31 December 1996

Isp.	Tot. 1995	Professi temporanei				Professi perpetui				Tot. Professi	Novizi	Tot. 1996
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
AFC*	241	14	42	0	0	30	9	0	112	207	17	224
AFE	140	4	32	0	0	17	7	0	77	137	8	145
AFM	65	0	7	0	0	7	0	0	52	66	0	66
ANT	174	3	40	0	0	14	9	0	100	166	10	176
ABA	181	3	7	0	0	14	7	0	139	170	2	172
ABB	146	1	8	0	0	16	7	0	105	137	4	141
ACO	149	2	22	0	0	11	8	0	103	146	5	151
ALP	104	6	9	0	0	11	5	0	72	103	7	110
ARO	144	4	22	0	0	16	6	0	90	138	5	143
AUL	125	2	12	0	0	22	2	0	85	123	6	129
AUS	130	0	7	0	0	13	3	1	101	125	2	127
BEN*	212	1	13	0	0	24	3	0	191	232	0	232
BES	104	5	6	0	0	9	0	0	80	100	0	100
BOL	172	13	49	0	0	12	8	0	77	159	11	170
BBH	161	3	14	0	0	23	3	0	111	154	4	158
BCG	156	6	17	0	0	23	4	0	97	147	3	150
BMA	137	4	23	0	0	18	7	0	76	128	4	132
BPA	112	1	15	0	0	8	6	0	78	108	3	111
BRE	89	3	14	0	0	13	2	0	56	88	5	93
BSP	229	2	32	0	0	32	8	0	144	218	6	224
CAM	261	17	33	0	0	28	10	0	158	246	11	257
CAN	39	0	2	0	0	5	1	0	33	41	0	41
CEP	205	7	29	0	0	8	5	1	147	197	3	200
CIL	257	8	40	0	0	18	22	0	159	247	5	252
CIN	136	0	4	0	0	36	3	1	90	134	0	134
COB	188	4	22	0	0	26	4	0	114	170	0	170
COM	161	4	27	0	0	18	7	0	97	153	9	162
CRO	88	0	9	0	0	5	3	0	65	82	4	86
ECU	246	3	34	0	0	23	10	0	167	237	5	242
EST	115	0	49	0	1	1	2	0	68	121	14	135
FIN	205	5	33	0	0	18	6	0	131	193	8	201
FIS	196	12	74	0	0	16	13	1	72	188	18	206
FLY	151	0	5	0	0	31	2	0	111	149	1	150
FPA	224	0	12	0	0	34	4	0	171	221	3	224
GBR	140	1	6	0	0	15	3	0	110	135	1	136
GEK	178	5	9	0	0	37	5	0	118	174	4	178
GEM	276	7	8	0	0	62	6	0	189	272	1	273
GIA	151	1	28	0	0	20	6	0	95	150	3	153
HAI	69	2	26	0	0	1	4	0	28	61	6	67
INB	261	4	59	0	0	22	23	0	146	254	8	262
INC	341	5	85	0	0	36	13	0	188	327	21	348
IND	205	6	58	0	0	5	9	0	118	196	11	207
ING	331	4	89	0	0	24	27	0	170	314	20	334
INH	148	3	59	0	0	3	8	0	70	143	6	149
INK	277	6	73	0	0	6	20	0	145	250	28	278
INM	446	7	117	0	0	28	55	0	215	422	28	450
IRL	114	4	5	0	0	7	2	0	98	116	1	117
IAD	162	0	18	0	0	28	1	0	114	161	1	162
ICP	835	9	40	0	0	211	6	1	530	797	13	810
ILE	446	8	43	0	0	65	12	0	311	439	13	452
ILT	215	3	14	0	1	34	2	1	152	207	1	208
IME	312	1	20	0	0	41	9	0	235	306	3	309

Isp.	Tot. 1995	Professi temporanei				Professi perpetui				Tot. Professi	Novizi	Tot. 1996
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
IRO	310	1	13	0	0	68	9	2	216	309	0	309
ISA	73	1	3	0	0	7	0	0	61	72	0	72
ISI	308	2	6	0	0	28	6	1	261	304	2	306
IVE	287	3	29	0	0	50	6	1	188	277	6	283
IVO	229	2	8	0	1	48	3	0	163	225	1	226
KOR	89	7	31	0	0	13	3	0	34	88	5	93
MDG	62	1	17	0	0	7	4	0	31	60	6	66
MEG	223	8	48	0	0	9	14	0	134	213	16	229
MEM	207	6	44	0	0	13	13	0	107	183	17	200
MOR	164	5	24	0	1	23	4	0	103	160	12	172
OLA	78	1	2	0	0	21	0	1	54	79	0	79
PAR	102	4	17	0	0	6	5	0	64	96	5	101
PER	188	9	38	0	0	13	17	0	102	179	18	197
PLE	362	8	94	0	0	17	17	0	203	339	26	365
PLN	325	2	72	0	0	11	18	0	207	310	21	331
PLO	236	2	24	0	0	3	13	0	188	230	10	240
PLS	262	1	47	0	0	10	25	0	160	243	10	253
POR	195	3	18	0	0	49	10	1	114	195	2	197
SLK	247	10	83	0	1	9	4	0	131	238	13	251
SLO	137	2	8	0	0	14	10	0	103	137	8	145
SBA	248	0	12	0	0	38	10	1	177	238	0	238
SBI	265	2	23	0	0	57	25	0	146	253	2	255
SCO	144	4	18	0	0	7	4	2	106	141	8	149
SLE	256	4	10	0	1	71	9	0	155	250	2	252
SMA	409	7	32	0	0	103	16	0	247	405	4	409
SSE	191	3	26	0	0	28	3	0	124	184	6	190
SVA	204	3	17	0	0	32	8	0	139	199	6	205
SUE	224	2	9	0	0	43	3	0	155	212	2	214
SUO	113	5	10	0	0	24	0	0	71	110	6	116
THA	112	3	16	0	0	14	1	0	69	103	0	103
UNG	72	3	12	0	1	4	0	0	48	68	7	75
URU	139	0	19	0	0	7	4	0	102	132	5	137
VEN	253	8	36	0	1	18	9	1	168	241	11	252
VIE	137	10	38	0	0	14	25	0	45	132	11	143
ZMB	60	0	15	0	0	5	4	0	38	62	2	64
UPS	129	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	115	128	0	128
RMG	76	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	57	73	0	73
Tot.	17.466	345	2.440	0	8	2.158	709	16	11.147	16.823	602	17.425
Vesc.	90									96		96
Tot	17.556	345	2.440	0	8	2.158	709	16	11.147	16.919	602	17.521

* NB - Le variazioni di AFC e BEN sono dovute anche al trasferimento dei confratelli della casa di Boortmeerbeek da AFC a BEN.

5.6 Our dead confreres (1997 - 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" (*Cost.* 94).

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P BABULIK Vojtech	Pezinok	02.03.97	87	SLK
L BIAN François	Pjougastel-Daoulas	21.01.97	80	FPA
P BOSCH BENEJAM José	Saint Vicenç deis Horts	02.01.97	56	SBA
P BREVINI Giovanni	Torino	16.01.97	87	ICP
P CADIZ SEPULVEDA José del Carmen	Punta Arenas	20.03.97	100	CIL
P CERON Roberto	Salto	12.02.97	70	URU
P CLEVA Mario	Tolmezzo	12.01.97	61	PAR
P COLOSIO Giovanni	Tavernola Bergamasca	04.01.97	88	ISI
P COLUSSI Guido	Ranchi (Kokar)	24.02.97	85	INN
P COMOGLIO Francesco	Torino	31.01.97	90	ICP
L CONTI Lino	Venezia-Mestre	03.01.97	71	IVE
P CZERWIEC Władisław	San Isidro (B. Aires)	10.01.97	89	ABA
P FERRERO Prospero	Torino	08.01.97	89	ICP
P FESENMEIER Viktor	Würzburg	03.02.97	66	GEM
P FOTI Orazio	Catania	28.01.97	85	ISI
P FRASSY Enrico	Boko	22.01.97	76	ING
L GHEZZI Battista	Torino	27.03.97	71	ICP
P GLIELMI Fortunato	Napoli	28.02.97	89	IME
P GRIGGIO Alceste	La Spezia	19.06.96	69	ILT
P GUTIERREZ José	Barcelona	28.01.96	83	SBA
P HERNANDEZ Bernardo	S. Isidro de Pérez Zeledon	13.12.96	62	CAM
P HERNANDEZ Nelson	Las Piedras	19.02.97	66	URU
P HORÁČEK František	Sumperk	26.01.97	77	CEP
P HORVAT Aleksander	Santiago de Chile	17.02.97	82	CIL
P JOOSTEN Albert	Kortrijk	24.02.97	80	BEN
P KERVELLA Joseph	Guingamp	13.02.97	80	FPA
P LO POPOLO Sabino	Piedimonte Matese	17.01.97	85	IME
P MARTINEZ Tomás	Santafé de Bogotá	17.12.96	85	COB
P MORELLI Michele	Castellammare di Stabia	02.03.97	82	IME
L NATUREL Pierre	Caen	22.01.97	87	FPA
P O'DONOVAN Daniel	West Haverstraw	03.02.97	87	SUE
P OELLIBRANDT Adolf	Wilrijk	19.03.97	76	BEN
P PADRÃO António	Mogofores	04.01.97	82	POR
P PETIT Maurice	Sherbrooke	01.03.97	67	CAN

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
E PICCHI Mario	San Isidro (B. Aires)	29.03.97	82	—
<i>Fu per 3 anni Vescovo di Comodoro Rivadavia, Amministratore apostolico nella stessa sede per 1 anno, Vescovo Ausiliare di La Plata per 3 anni e Vescovo di Venado Tuerto per 11 anni</i>				
P PIÉRART Jean-Pierre	Tournai (Blandain)	15.02.97	58	BES
P PRETTO Luigi	Negrar (Verona)	18.03.97	76	IVO
P RIGHINI Manlio	Torino	01.01.97	80	ICP
P RIPAMONTI Paolo	Varese	13.02.97	82	ILE
L ROSSI Sergio	Rivoli-Torino	13.02.97	65	ICP
P SANTECCHIA Benito	Buenos Aires	10.03.97	65	ABA
P SCOGNAMIGLIO Salvatore	Napoli-Vomero	14.03.97	80	IME
P SÖLL Georg	Benediktbeuern	15.02.97	83	GEM
P SPALLA Giuseppe	Santiago de Chile	05.02.97	82	CIL
P SZKRÓBKA Hilary	Roma	21.01.97	83	IRO
P VALTORTA Giuliano	Brescia	27.02.97	63	ILE
P VAN BASTELAER Gerard	Zwijndrecht	13.01.97	85	BEN
P VANDERSTEEGEN Gerard	Wilrijk	14.02.97	76	BEN
L VAZ Eulálio	Fatorda Margão (Goa)	03.02.97	65	INB
L VICENTE MILANÉS Julián	Ronda (Málaga)	19.03.97	89	SCO
P WALASZEK Leon	Kutno-Wozniaków	02.10.96	81	PLE

