



acts

of the general council

year LXXXIV

april-june 2003

N. 381

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

**Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma**

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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**“WHETHER I AM NEAR YOU OR FAR AWAY,
I AM ALWAYS THINKING OF YOU”**

1. A hymn of praise – 2. The first months of work in the General Council – 3. The activity of doctrinal guidance – 4. Visits to the Provinces – 4.1 Italy – 4.2 France – 4.3 Poland – 4.4 Argentina – 4.5 Philippines and Thailand – Reasons for the journeys – The visit to the Philippines – The visit to Thailand – 5. Conclusion.

Rome, 25 March 2003

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

My dear confreres,

“Whether I am near you or far away, I am always thinking of you”.¹ I begin this letter by making my own these words of our dear Father Don Bosco, primarily because I share with him the same sentiments in your regard, and then because of the particular nature of this letter. As you will see, it is less doctrinal and more familiar. It speaks of the life of the Congregation as I have been finding it in my visits to the Provinces, and offers some reflections prompted by the reality of today’s provocations and challenges.

In this way I want also to respond to a request of the GC25 which, in connection with circular Letters of the Rector Major, said: “To make them better used and appreciated in the various communities it is suggested that they be written in a simple and discursive style and that those with a wealth of content on challenging themes alternate with others more familiar and informal about the life of the Congregation” (GC25, 101). I shall try to be faithful to this request so as to

¹ Letter from Rome Constitutions and Regulations, Eng. Edition. p. 255.

foster the development of the sense of Congregation and stimulate reflection on the charism, two points equally necessary to ensure unity in diversity, one of the most important tasks laid upon me. In this way communications from the Rector Major will be at the service of animation and government, starting from what has been (or is being) done in the Congregation, and from the relevant needs and challenges.

After the Letter on Holiness, which was seen and received as a programme and has prompted in many confreres and communities the determination to work more seriously for our fundamental vocation, we have published the "Project of animation and government of the Rector Major and his Council for the six-year period 2002-2008". All the Councillors are now presenting it in the different Provinces, in an effort to harmonize it with the great basic priorities. The moment has come therefore for me to share with you my impressions and assessment of this first year of my service. On my return from various journeys I have already spoken of this in "Good nights" at the Generalate and in my meeting with the confreres of the UPS Vice-province in the first week of December 2002; but I think it worthwhile to collect them together now in a more systematic form and make them known to all the Congregation.

1. A hymn of praise

The first thought I must express is that of **heartfelt gratitude to God** for the growth of the charism of Don Bosco at the service of young people in the most widely varying contexts and conditions. We find ourselves in fact in settings of well-being, affluent society and advanced technology, and at the same time in others of extreme poverty, under-de-

velopment, and backward technology; in contexts of established democracy in which nearly everything is possible in the way of missionary work, and in others where totalitarian regimes make only the bare minimum possible; contexts in which the majority of the population is Christian and Catholic, and others in which Catholics are less than one per cent, but where our educative work is very significant from a cultural standpoint, after the manner of leaven fermenting the country's culture. We have works rich in salesian tradition, and others where one feels a greater distance from the Congregation's origins.

My gratitude extends also to the missionary confreres, those of the early years sent by Don Bosco and their successors through the years, sent by his successors. They have always played an indispensable role, that of implanting the salesian charism, which is essentially educative and pastoral for the benefit of the young, and especially those who are poorest, abandoned and psychosocially at risk. From this standpoint we need to recall that we are the heirs and transmitters of a charism and spirit, of a spirituality and a mission; we are not simply diocesan personnel or social workers, even though we may be heavily committed in the building of the local Church and human advancement. Such a statement does not mean that we Salesians form a closed group – far from it! As religious we are men of the Church. As apostles we are deeply inserted in human history. But our kind of apostolate aims at giving to the Church and to society Don Bosco's specific contribution. Evidence that the charism is being successful is provided by the increasing number of our foundations, where possible, as the result of an internal dynamism that leads to expansion, the increase in quality and quantity of vocations, the development of the Salesian Family, social ecclesial and evangelical relevance, and the life of

holiness that can be detected here and there, thanks be to God. Missionaries and the missionary spirit are therefore two essential elements of the charism that must be fostered in every Province.

I am naturally grateful to all of you, dear confreres, for having given your life to the Lord in the house and school of Don Bosco. The greatest riches of the Congregation do not consist in buildings, great and imposing though they may seem, but in its members. It is important that we involve collaborators in the management of our works, that we promote the growth of the Salesian Family, that we look for people ever more identified with our educative and pastoral method; but nevertheless the most precious thing possessed by the Congregation is the life of each individual confrere, be he engaged in animation or government or working in less obvious services, be he young and full of energy, or elderly and even in poor health. We owe a great debt of gratitude to all our confreres. Without them the Congregation could have many friends of Don Bosco, but not Salesians. This makes us give thought to the fostering of vocations, but also to the following up of every professed member. The confrere is not someone who shares house and work with me, but "one who is part of me", "God's gift to me" (NMI 43), with whom to create communion and community. "God calls us to live in community and entrusts us with brothers to love" (C 50). In this connection the GC25 and this year's Strenna become an incentive and a programme, and I am sure that the Provinces will make good use of them for the renewal of communities.

This hymn of praise takes my thoughts in particular to our central point of reference, Don Bosco, who is always to be studied and imitated as is suggested to us by art. 21 of our Rule of Life. It is a matter of having a deep knowledge of his life and history, of his apostolic project as it appears from the

Constitutions and the development of the Congregation through the General Chapters, especially those of the last thirty years. It is a question of following the same rhythm of life, sharing the same concerns and choices even though in widely differing circumstances. As I have visited the Provinces I have become aware that those which have made the effort to give effect to the General Chapters and the major proposals of the Rector Major and his Council in the fields of formation, youth pastoral work, the Salesian Family, social communication, the missions and the field of economy, feel themselves more deeply inserted in the movement of the Congregation. One need think only of the efforts of some Provinces to translate the more important documents of the Congregation so as to make them accessible to every confrere. There is, unfortunately, an occasional case of resistance to change, as though it were a matter of free choice, with the risk of leaving individual confreres and even the whole Province in a state of isolation. In this regard I consider that one of the tasks that superiors of juridical circumscriptions (Provinces, Vice-provinces, Delegations) cannot delegate to others is that of guaranteeing our identity and creating a sense of Congregation. I am aware that those nearer the centre have greater possibilities, and even greater means, and that it is often those farthest away who experience the greatest difficulties. For this reason I am very appreciative of what is being done in this matter, and I am grateful for it.

2. The first months of work of the General Council

As I was saying earlier, eleven months have already gone by since I was elected Rector Major. You may like to know what I have done in this period. Let me begin by saying that

in these first months the heaviest work has been at the level of the General Council, as is normal, not least because from the outset I have chosen to work in a more collegial manner. This means that with themes that had not usually been examined or studied closely at Council level – because that was considered the best way at the time – I wanted to have each Councillor much more involved.

- An example of this involvement is provided by the reflection on the relationship of the Rector Major and the General Council with the **UPS**. In this connection we made a preliminary study at both institutional and operational levels. We kept always in mind three leading elements: the identity of the UPS and its specific character; the organic project of our University, with a serious commitment to the finding of personnel for the different faculties; and finally the rebuilding programme, already partly realized, with new residences for the student communities, the new library, the renovation of some other areas, and all to be eventually accomplished with new premises for the Faculty of the Sciences of Social Communication, and the provision of the necessary safety measures.

We have also set in motion an institutional verification of the University, beginning from the Faculty of Christian and Classical Literature, and we have fulfilled one of the guidelines suggested at the last Team Visit to combine the offices of Economist of the Vice-province and Treasurer of the University in the same person. Precisely because the UPS is the University of the Congregation, I take this opportunity to thank the University and the Vice-province for the praiseworthy service they have given through all these years, and similarly I want to thank all the professors who have con-

tributed through their intellectual and professional work to the formation of leaders of Provinces and Dioceses and have given to our University the place it now occupies among Pontifical Institutions. I would like our University to be seen and felt as something that belongs to all of us, and so I ask for great generosity in collaboration for the provision of personnel. Until recent years, Rector Majors knew that such personnel could easily be found in the Italian Provinces, which in this specific area (as in others) were always very generous in their solidarity. But the time has now come in which the pluricultural character of the Congregation and of the University itself, quite apart from the lack of personnel in Italy, compels all of us to share the responsibility for continuing our University with competence and quality. Commitment to its renewal demands also the involvement of the Congregation in showing appreciation for this well-deserving institution of ours by sending confreres from all regions of the Congregation for their qualification there.

- In addition to ordinary administration, special attention has been given in the Council in this period to the **appointment of Provincials**, of whom we have appointed nearly thirty new ones. You know that there are 95 Provincials in the Congregation, and so we have appointed practically a third of them. Perhaps the appointment of so large a number in so brief a space of time is due to some extent to the illness of Fr Vecchi at the end of the preceding year. In fact, the consultation for a new Provincial had already taken place in various Provinces, but the former General Council had thought it well to postpone appointments until there was a new Rector Major, being well aware that this was a very specific task of the Rector Major himself. The appointment of a Provincial creates a very particular relationship between

the Rector Major and the Provincial to whom is entrusted a Province or Vice-province.

- Nevertheless the most demanding – and I would say also the most important – enterprise in this period has been the drawing up of the **Project of animation and government** of the Rector Major and his Council. It needed several months of work: it involved in fact the various Departments within the Generalate, and the Regions and Provinces at the level of the Congregation. It was a very profitable experience. I will not repeat here what I have already written in my presentation of the Project on its publication in AGC 380. Rather I invite you to read it again and acquire a sound knowledge of the Congregation's Project for the present six-year period. It is well – and even necessary! – to know where we are going, with what priorities, with what objectives, with what strategies to be applied and what kind of interventions. I congratulate those Provinces that have already drawn up their own programme in the light of the Documents of the GC25 and our own special Project. I hope that the Provinces that have not yet done so will feel moved to follow their example.

- There have been other themes too that have called for our attention and our time. In addition to what I have already said about the UPS, we have launched a study to assess the situation of **Cremisan**. We have considered its present circumstances and immediate future, leaving to a later and more favourable moment the long-term prospects as Fr Vecchi had seen them. We are all well aware of the precarious nature of the political situation in the Holy Land. Our intention is to strengthen the Formation Community and Study Centre of Cremisan, making it ever more international. Cremisan is a formative proposal for all eight Regions of the Congrega-

tion, as is the Community for Theology Students of “Gerini” in Rome. In a pluricultural and globalized world we recognize the importance attaching to international and intercultural experiences from the time of theological studies. It is our intention to introduce in the coming years the use of English.

- We have concluded and approved the documents on the identity of the **IUS**, Salesian University Institutes, and on the policy of the Congregation in their regard. This brings to an end an unusual period, with a personal delegation depending directly on the Rector Major, which had the purpose of gathering together all the data on our Universities and Institutes of Higher Education; the period proved to be very enriching because it enabled us to acquire a better knowledge of a reality existing in the Congregation, and because an exemplary level was reached of coordination and synergy. A new and more institutional phase is now beginning with the insertion of this sector in the Department of Youth Pastoral Work with a well defined project and programme, for the purpose of better ensuring the conditions that make these works significant and of making greater use of their contribution. The Congregation is not expecting every Province to have its own University, but wants to accept responsibility for these institutions where they exist, clearly establishing their identity and defining the criteria that make them possible. These will provide a frame of reference if there should be the request for the erection of any new University.

- We have also studied and defined our **administrative and financial policy**, since this is an important element not only for the sound functioning of the economy but also for its adaptation to salesian criteria and principles. In addition to the budget for 2003, approved by the Rector Major and his

Council, the final balance for the year 2001 was studied. In this connection many Provinces are following the same procedures at both provincial and local level. Others however have still some way to go to overcome the far from unreal risk of a management that is neither professional nor salesian.

- Along the same lines, though the point more frequently refers to the Missions Department, we have defined the criteria for the **distribution of funds**, keeping in mind that year by year the Congregation distributes, through the Mission Offices, a considerable sum of money to enable the Provinces to continue the work being done in various contexts, especially those in greatest need of support and solidarity. The Provincials have received a communication, to be made known to the confreres, regarding both requests for help and for the providing of financial reports. Greater responsibility in the use of money and in the rendering of accounts is a moral duty we have before our benefactors and the directors of the major Mission Offices – Bonn, Madrid, New Rochelle and Turin – who will thus be in a position to pass on information to the benefactors themselves.

- Moreover we have broached the question of the **verification of the General Chapter**, asked for by the GC25 (n. 136). The Chapter assembly felt the need to review the model used for recent General Chapters from the GC23 to the GC25. These continued to use a model that had proved valid for the extraordinary General Chapters 19, 20, 21 and 22, which had as their objective the redefinition of the identity of the Congregation, which was considered concluded with the approval of the present text of the Constitutions. The Chapters that followed have each had a specific theme on which to reflect. The capitulars felt the need to take as the first point

of reference the Report which is presented to each Chapter on the state of the Congregation, so as to identify the main choices to be made and the areas to be given priority, leaving subsequently to the Rector Major and his Council the task of giving them practical effect in a project of animation and government. The reflection will continue in the General Council, so that the results of the verification and eventual proposals can be communicated to the Provinces; such proposals must clearly be made not later than midway through the six-year period.

- **Other study themes** concerned the main *internet website* of the Congregation, in an effort to make it more complete, interactive and more user-friendly; guides for various projects *called for by the GC25*: the organic provincial project, the personal life-plan and the project of community life; the *Don Bosco International* (DBI), an office founded years ago with the role of presenting the civil countenance of the Congregation before the institutions of the European Community for everything concerning young people, and the *Don Bosco Network*, which is the network of the Mission Offices working under the umbrella of the DBI; attention to the *cultural heritage* of the Congregation, on account of which it may be well to promote coordination between several Departments to ensure the proper care of libraries, museums, archives, works of art, products of social communication; an updating of the *Vademecum of the General Council*, which gathers together whatever is codified in the Constitutions and Regulations regarding the various duties of the Rector Major and the Council, together with items suggested by experience; a survey throughout the Congregation on the desirability of a *common logo*; and finally the theme of the *community of the Generalate*.

As you see, we have dedicated a large part of the Council's work to study. And this is an element that must not be undervalued, primarily because it tells us that the animation and government of the Congregation, of a Province or of a Community, has need of reflection, but also because study is indispensable for determining the policies of government and for defining the criteria of identity and verification. It is by no means a waste of time. Quite the opposite! I think, in fact, that it is a task that produces long-term results because, in addition to kindness and concern for individuals, common projects are the main factors that help to create communion and unity.

3. The activity of doctrinal guidance

The second large area of my work during this period has been without any doubt that of **doctrinal guidance** – at a spiritual, community and pastoral level – which must be ever more understood as an element of government and not as simple animation.

With regard to this particular aspect I want to take up again an element on which Fr Juan Vecchi laid great emphasis, as indeed did Fr Egidio Viganò before him. When his letters became available, he used to say explicitly that they had not been written merely for use as spiritual reading, but to be studied so that they became part of salesian culture, not from a purely notional aspect but rather from the standpoint of *Gaudium et Spes*, that is the salesian manner of being, of reacting, of confronting reality, and of mutual relationships.

In this period I have written only one circular letter, the one on Holiness; in addition I wrote the presentation of the document of the GC25; I did the written commentary on the

Strenna and its video presentation; I provided the introduction to the project of animation and government of the Rector Major and his Council, that appeared in the preceding number of the Acts of the General Council. And obviously there have been many other contributions: conferences, greetings, messages, including those for the Salesian Bulletin, for the Salesian Family and for the Salesian Youth Movement, interviews for the press, radio and television, all of which require a lot of time and preparation. I now have a better first-hand knowledge of the rhythm of life and programme of work of Don Bosco and of my predecessors, and the insistence of one of them who used to say that the Rector Major must dedicate a large part of his time to study if he is to offer solid doctrine to others, so that the letters he writes may be enlightening and constructive, and not merely formal statements with little resulting impact.

I see, however, that salesian documents do not always reach all the Provinces (or at least all the communities) in good time, thus creating a rather anomalous situation: what is happening in fact is that while one document has not yet been read, the Rector Major is already writing another. The solution is certainly not to stop writing, because a superior who fulfils this service does not write for his own glory, but to guide and accompany the course of human, ecclesial and salesian life. One could certainly pause and not write, but that will not make history stand still, nor will problems be faced, nor will light be shed on life.

I think that in this connection all of us, beginning from headquarters personnel, are called upon to make a special effort to facilitate immediate access to the various communications. We are trying to put the texts on our web-site so that they can be downloaded directly from the *Internet*. Naturally it is up to the Provinces to see to their distribution, study and

also their verification, in an ongoing effort to make them known and assimilated. In this regard, one good confrere of the Generalate community suggested to me not to write another letter until a verification had been made of the manner in which the letter on holiness had been received and made a programme of life. Even though I eventually decided not to accept the suggestion, the concern of the confrere remains valid.

For the moment I can tell you in advance that it is my intention to direct letters and other important communications during the six-year period to the objectives of the Project of animation and government in the light of the GC25. It will be one way of going more deeply into the Project and of throwing light on its practice.

4. Visits to the Provinces

So far I have been able to visit only a few of the Provinces. I say "so far", because when I look at the list of my future engagements I find it rather frightening. On the one hand I know that presence in the Provinces becomes a special means of animation, especially when the visits have been well prepared; and on the other I am conscious of the fact that I cannot remain for too long away from the Generalate because there are other responsibilities that need my attention. I place myself at your disposal and ask for your understanding if the Rector Major cannot always visit every Province. It must be said too that the Vicar General plays this role in many cases; and in the Council there is concern that all the Provinces have the possibility of a visit from the various Departmental Councillors as well as the Regionals.

In Europe I have visited some of the Italian Provinces: the *Milan Province*, very briefly at the beginning of my mandate,

on the occasion of the feast of Blessed Artemides Zatti at Boretto, for which I shall have to return once more; *Piedmont* and the *Valle d'Aosta*, a Province I visit frequently because it includes the Mother House and the places of our origins; the *Genoa Province*; *Sardinia*; the *Roman Province*, where I have taken part in many events; and that of *Venice*. I have visited *France*, *Spain* (in particular for the conferring of the honorary citizenship of Salamanca where I had studied at the University), *Poland* and *Albania*. In *America* I have been in *Mexico*, *Argentina*, and the Brazilian Province of *Recife*. In *Asia* I have visited the *Philippines* and *Thailand*. I have not yet been in any country of Africa or Oceania.

With regard to these visits I want to share with you some experiences, but also some thoughts that have come to me on coming into contact with some of these Provinces and getting to know them. Obviously I cannot speak individually of each one of them.

4.1 – In Italy

I begin with a reflection on my visit to the Italian Provinces. They have the privilege of having been direct heirs of Don Bosco's charism. And indeed they knew how to fully accept it and pass it on. In brief, I could say that the organization and personal and community life in these Provinces always tries to be faithful to the salesian criteria found in the Constitutions.

When one looks at the Congregation as a whole, present as it is in some 130 countries of the world, when one has the opportunity for example to participate in an experience like that of the GC25 in which its worldwide character is truly displayed, one becomes aware of a basic identity within the cultural diversity of our salesian Congregation. To a great extent this must be attributed primarily to the ability to trans-

mit the charism faithfully, to its implantation and taking root, and to its capacity for spreading in the various countries and contexts in which the Congregation has developed. It must be said that governmental policy has been wise in not concentrating all the Italian Salesians in the same country and in not endlessly multiplying the Italian Provinces, but in fostering the missionary mentality in Italy and so also the worldwide nature of the Congregation.

From this standpoint, the far-sighted action of Don Bosco in 1875 when he sent out the first missionary expedition, appears as dynamic, courageous and well chosen. And this same thrust has continued every year, with sometimes two missionary expeditions in the same year. This missionary mentality can explain not only our worldwide diffusion but also the present configuration of the Congregation with its work spread more or less evenly over all five continents. It is true that nowadays vocations are few in Italy, or at least that they are not as numerous as in the past; it is true also that salesian work in countries of the old Christian tradition of Europe needs reshaping, but it is equally true that the Congregation continues to grow not only in India but in the whole of Asia and in Africa; while in Latin America numbers remain more or less constant.

This presence of the Congregation throughout the world is due especially, even though not exclusively, to the Salesians of Italy. From my first "good night" as Rector Major I have been thanking the Italian Salesians for the faithful and dynamic transmission of our charism. In my closing address to the GC25 I pointed out how this task has now passed on to all Salesians, primarily because the Congregation is no longer or not only Italian but truly worldwide and so the responsibility must now pass to all the Provinces in their various contexts.

The missionary mentality underlying salesian work in

Italy, that continues to be very strong, has played an important role also in the inculturation of the charism. You will find Italian missionaries in some of the most successful inculturation experiences of the Congregation, because they have studied the local applications of anthropology: they have tried to become immersed in the culture of the people, they have learned local languages, written grammars and dictionaries, promoted and followed up local projects and processes. It would be very short-sighted not to recognize what Italian salesian work has given to the Congregation: among other things a very strong Congregational sense and practical examples of inculturation.

But what precisely is meant by saying that the duty of passing on the charism must now pass on to all the Provinces? It means that every Province must develop and foster these same elements, and especially a deep knowledge of Don Bosco. Don Bosco must be known! We cannot live only on well known stories and anecdotes, without ever discovering where the criteria and laws of salesian life are to be found. Don Bosco must be studied! Without any doubt a vital transmission is taking place of the charism, of the spirit, of the spirituality and mission. It is a kind of existential hermeneutics of what it means to be a Salesian at the present day. But this experience must be codified and needs a frame of reference. And in view of this work which is so fundamental, here in Italy there has been a consistent investment of personnel in the field of *history*, as regards both biography and critical historiography, in the field of *pedagogy and the educational sciences*, and in that of *spirituality*. These are three elements essential for a deep knowledge of the charism and for its faithful transmission. And so the passing to all the Provinces of the world of the responsibility for the transmission of the charism cannot remain just an empty slogan; it implies certain consequences. And these

consequences need to be explicitly spelled out, precisely because it must be verified that the Provinces are truly capable of bearing the necessary witness.

There is another very important element: *sanctity*, or *holiness*. If the transmission of the charism is to be done faithfully a witness is needed – that of holiness. I think we are all aware that we belong to a family of saints: confreres, educators, members of the Salesian Family, who have reached a high level of spiritual life. It is wonderful to be able to visit Provinces and discover these models, close to us all in their reality, so that we are able to say: see how well these confreres or these youngsters have succeeded; we are surely called to be like them.

4.2 – In France

Let me say first of all that my primary reason for going to France was to learn a bit of French, not to make a formal visit. As things turned out, however, the main purpose became integrated with a programme of visits to the communities of Alsace, Brittany and Normandy. It was a very pleasant experience, both interesting and enriching.

Three elements impressed me in particular. First among them was the great love for Don Bosco. We know that our Founder went to France to seek funds for the building of the Church of the Sacred Heart, and on this point he was quite clear. But the strange thing was that in addition to collecting the help he needed, he became a magnet for the people of France who fell in love with him, so to speak. If you read some of the documents relating to events of his first visit, and the account of what he said in the churches, you can see how he managed to stir up a great wonder and admiration among the French people.

Secondly, I was struck by the high level of the professional training centres and agricultural schools, some of them with big numbers of boarders. I had not thought to find this kind of work in a country which is one of the most highly developed of Europe. The technical and industrial schools, like their agricultural counterparts, as well as following a typically salesian line, enable us to educate and follow up working-class and rural youngsters, even in rich and well-to-do areas; and this is a matter of no little importance despite the imbalance between the available human resources and the tasks to be realized. I think I came across a great sense of responsibility in the field of the salesian mission.

The third interesting initiative that impressed me was the building at Lyons of a centre of salesian formation for lay people, which is due to be inaugurated within the coming year. It is a sign of that salesian identity which is verified in the mission, of the love of Don Bosco of which I spoke earlier, of the ability to believe in his charism and the obligation of sharing it with others in line with Don Bosco's own practice and in fidelity to the guidelines of recent General Chapters – in particular, in the case of the Lyons initiative, the GC24.

4.3 – In Poland

In Poland I visited all the four Provinces of Cracow, Piła, Warsaw and Breslau. In each Province the visit had been carefully prepared and went very well, despite language difficulties.

- ***Contact with the origins***

First, the *visit to Cracow*. Perhaps the experience that struck me most was the visit to Oświęcim, the first salesian work in Poland and a point from which the salesian charism

spread throughout the country, and even to the remainder of Eastern Europe, so successfully that we now have more than 1,000 Salesians in Poland alone. Oświęcim becomes important because of its very location. It is no more than 5 km. from the concentration camp of Auschwitz, the world's biggest cemetery in the years 40-45! It is stimulating to think that close to that enormous graveyard, the most tragic expression of an anticulture of death, there was a work where life, though no more than a seed, was growing at the same time and giving rise to the development of hope.

It is surprising to see the extent to which vocations flourished in the past and still continue to do so, the deep religious sense of the people, their tenacity in preserving their identity. The Salesians are aware that the entry of Poland into the European Community will bring about together with certain welfare benefits, a significant cultural change; they are ready to face it effectively.

- ***Dynamism of the Salesian Family and of the Salesian Youth Movement***

At *Breslau* the main event was a great and solemn celebration in the renowned Sanctuary of Our Lady of Czestochowa. This is the spiritual heart of Poland, and the place where one can sense its religious depth and intensity. For me personally it was a most moving experience. Nevertheless, from the aspect of animation, the most interesting moment was the meeting with all the Salesian Family, at which were also present some young members of the oratory of Poznan. The latter showed the first part of the film they are making about the five young martyrs of their oratory. It was a pleasure to hear their story, and the way in which they feel identified with the Poznan martyrs. They know themselves to be the true heirs of a spiritual treasure they have a duty to pass

on to others. I do not think it will be any exaggeration to say that, after Valdocco, the most renowned oratory the whole world over is that of Poznan, where sanctity flourished not only through martyrdom but through the quality of salesian life. The beatification of the young martyrs has revealed the personality traits they developed at the oratory; and the youngsters who presented the film were aware of this when they said: "We are the custodians of a treasure we must communicate to the young people of the world". As the youngsters presented their message and witness, I thought to myself: what more can I add? We have heard what is needed for the founding of a salesian oratory: the creation of strong personalities that will remain so in a time of crisis; young people who have truly met Christ, who have learned to be of service to others; young people of great hope who can conquer evil by good. History has proved them right. Hardly three years after their sacrifice Nazism was overthrown, as happened many years later also to the communist ideology; and this means that in those oratorians we have an example of mature youthful sanctity.

• ***A "new" field of the salesian mission***

At Pila. We had an amazing celebration with so many participants that the large church could not accommodate all of them, but the event that impressed me most was the meeting I had with the whole educative community of the Aleksandrów Kujawski school, because it showed me the new set-up of the Salesians in Poland with regard to schools, which has proved very successful. The Minister of Culture, in fact, came to thank me in the name of the Polish government for the work the Salesians are doing in Poland for the development of the educational field. Hardly ten years have passed since the confreres returned to school work, and those ten years

have witnessed a deep improvement with regard to the future. This is an important fact, because the young Salesians had no experience in the field of formal education, and have discovered it to be a very promising setting in which a great deal can be done for the young.

• ***Formation houses and Study centres***

The visit to *Warsaw* was concentrated into a day spent at Czerwińsk, with the possibility of meeting the greater part of the confreres, but it also gave me the opportunity of forming a more accurate idea of the Polish houses of formation and of appreciating their work: the novitiates of Kopiec (PLO) and of Czerwińsk, and the study centres of Cracow, Łódź, and Łąd (PLN).

This latter house was celebrating the golden jubilee of salesian work. After the solemn religious and academic celebrations, which coincided with the inauguration of the new scholastic year, I had a meeting with a group of the teachers working in our study centres and in the university world. After noting the number and quality of the services they provided, I was able to see for myself that the Provinces have succeeded in preparing personnel in times which have been very difficult, and now have highly qualified confreres, thus adding to the relevance of our salesian and ecclesial work in the university sector.

4.4 – In Argentina

My journey to Argentina included visits to the five Provinces in the following order: Buenos Aires, Bahía Blanca, La Plata, Córdoba, Rosario.

There were two reasons that led me to accept the invitation made to me during the GC25, even though I had origi-

nally adopted the criterion to give priority as regards visits to those Provinces that had not been visited by either Fr Vecchi or Fr Viganò (in his second period) precisely on account of their illnesses.

The first reason was the homage that the confreres and members of the Salesian Family of Bahia Blanca wanted to render to Fr Vecchi, to whom they had dedicated a school at Viedma and a museum at Fortin Mercedes, and to Bro. Zatti who had become the titular of another school, also at Viedma.

The second reason was my desire to be close to the confreres of Argentina in the difficult economic situation through which the country is passing.

Without going into details about the visit, I found that the Congregation has a very significant presence in the country, not only because of the number of Provinces, even though some of them are numerically small at present, but especially for a fact recognized by all – civil and ecclesial authorities, entrepreneurs and the intellectual world, local people and outsiders – that is, the ability to have created culture in Patagonia. It is the same judgement I heard years ago from the Jesuits when I made a visit to Punta Arenas. It is difficult for anyone who has not visited Patagonia to form an idea of the contribution made by our confreres in the area of civilization and culture; I felt proud of them!

Also in this part of the world the charism has been faithfully implanted and has flourished. This is evident from the vocational development that has taken place in the past and the Argentine missionaries working in several parts of the world. Remember that it was Argentina that gave to the Congregation the first Rector Major born outside Italy. Moreover it has produced fruits of holiness, which is the real proof of the inculturation of a charism: *the holiness of Laura Vicuña*, the girl from Chile who matured and died in this country and

whose mortal remains are preserved at Bahia Blanca, and also the holiness of *Zefferino Namuncurá*, who constitutes a social and religious phenomenon much greater than we can possibly imagine, as is evident from the wall at Fortin Mercedes covered by messages of gratitude for graces received through his intercession; and evidently the sanctity of *Bro. Artemides Zatti*.

4.5 – In the Philippines and Thailand

The reasons for the journey

The primary reason was linked with the golden jubilee of the beginning of salesian work in the Philippines, which occurred two years ago. Fr Vecchi had accepted an invitation to be present for this important occasion, but his illness ruled out the celebration on the exact dates.

It must also be said that the first two confreres to arrive in the country had come from Mexico many years earlier. They were Fr William Piani, who went there as Apostolic Delegate and subsequently returned to Mexico as Apostolic Nuncio, and Fr Luis Laravoire Morrow, a Mexican priest who had been born in Texas but lived in the city of Puebla (Mexico) and who later became Bishop of the Krishnagar Diocese in India. Officially the Salesians entered the Philippines in 1950. My presence however celebrated the actual 50th anniversary of the *Don Bosco Technological Centre* at Mandaluyong.

In Thailand, on the other hand, they were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the beginning of salesian work. The first missionaries to arrive there were confreres expelled from China. And this is an interesting fact worthy of more historical reflection: China, providentially, is beginning to appear as the mother-province of various other provinces in Asia, since on

being expelled from China the confreres moved to other countries. The exodus from China has led to the implanting of the charism in other countries, thus developing salesian work in Asia. A historical research project being carried out by a confrere in preparation for the centenary of the salesian presence in China will probably provide further elements on these pages of salesian history. The theme certainly merits serious research.

A final reason, last but not least, for my journey to the Far East was an invitation to preach a retreat to the Provincials and Delegates of the two Asian Regions. This is an invitation I consider very important from the point of view of animation, because of the extended effect such a contribution can have.

The visit to the Philippines

The most important item of the days I spent in the *Manila Province* was certainly the visit I was able to make to nearly all the works. I think I met every confrere, Rectors and communities, formation guides and the young Salesians in formation, the sick and the members of the Salesian Family.

In my opinion the most outstanding of our works in this Province are the *Technological Training Centres* run by the confreres in both town and rural areas, aimed by preference at caring for youngsters who have dropped out from systematic and institutional education. There is a firm commitment to give effect to a decision made in the last Provincial Chapter to strengthen the rural professional formation centres, in view of the fact that the Philippines continues to be fundamentally an agricultural country, with 75% of its young people living outside the towns. I found that we are working consistently for street-children, with three significant foundations. In particular I would point to the work at Tondo, a re-

al slum, one of the poorest and most densely populated parts of Manila where the Salesians are a sign of hope and life. I must confess that I was deeply moved at seeing the determination of these people to live, and their ability to believe in their own future, in the knowledge that they are loved and accompanied by the Salesians and the Salesian Sisters.

In the *Cebu Province* I began my visit at Victorias on the island of Negros, the first salesian house to be established in the Philippines; it is very close to the diocese of which the former Provincial, Fr Patrick Buzon, has recently become Bishop. He was consecrated on 19 February of this year.

In this Province too, our work in favour of street-children and abandoned people is very significant.

Visiting the oratory of Pasil, in one of the poorest parts of Cebu, I noticed how fruitful is the work done by our confreres among the youngsters, and how well developed is the religious sense among the people, even though there is still need for much to be done in the way of social advancement. The work is very similar to that at Tondo. Seeing our confreres working in such places and what they do for young people reminds us of our humble origins and ensures the success which is the fruit of fidelity. I can tell you that being among them made me feel proud to be a Salesian!

Some considerations

On the one hand, you cannot fail to be impressed by the immense popular religious mentality of the Filipino people; in a certain sense it is an inculturated expression of the faith, which nonetheless still has need of evangelization to bring about a greater unity between faith and life. On the other hand it is striking to find among young people a certain

loss of cultural identity. It seemed to me that among the Filipinos there are rich cultural roots, but at the same time they have been conditioned to a great extent by the model of western life.

The massive presence of youngsters in our works and their openness to suggestions of a religious nature is gratifying from one aspect, but it makes you wonder why vocations are so scarce at present. This year there are only five novices between China and the Philippines: Manila has 1, Cebu 2, and China 2. I think this should make us think very deeply. The first consideration that comes spontaneously to mind is that there is perhaps the lack of a more competent and productive follow-up of the numerous groups of young people that we look after in our environments with a true spirit of sacrifice, or that we are not putting proposals to them in a clear, decisive and convincing manner. What is needed is not only presence among youngsters but also credibility and witness, an educative environment that breathes salesianity, a professional approach to management but even more so to the mystique and spirituality of "Da mihi animas"; in other words communities are needed whose members love the young and are signs of Christ's love for them. A vocation implies a calling, a proposal, but it will be the fruit of an attractive presence that is spiritually intense and apostolically committed. All this comes under the heading of what we would call *high quality youth work*, and is applicable obviously to every Province and every community.

We must not forget that the Philippines and East Timor are the only Catholic countries in the whole of Asia. This is a circumstance that gives to the Filipino Church a great responsibility in history, which must be translated not only, and not even mainly, into an effort to convert to Christianity the other countries of the continent, but rather into being an ex-

ample and model of what it means to be a Catholic country, rich in Christian values.

The visit to Thailand

The first two days in the Thai Province were characterized by the large-scale celebrations for the jubilee of salesian work. They were expertly organized at both a civil and religious level and – without any exaggeration – thousands of young people took part in them. Among the religious events was a Mass on the Feast of St Francis de Sales at which Cardinal Michael Michai Kitbunchu presided, and the leading civil function took place in the huge covered stadium of Bangkok with the participation of more than 8,000 children representing 22 schools in the capital managed by various groups of the Salesian Family: Salesians, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (founded by Bishop Peter Carretto), and Daughters of the Queenship of Mary (founded by Fr Carlo Della Torre).

I want to emphasize in a special way this testimony to the collaboration and synergy of the whole Salesian Family, in which an outstanding part is played by Past-pupils, both Catholic and Buddhist with the latter in the majority. The former President of the Past-pupils Association is a Buddhist who was with us throughout the visit. He is a person who knows and loves Don Bosco very much and was a pupil not only in Thailand but also in Australia to which country he emigrated and found the Salesians once again.

In his address of greeting, the Deputy Prime Minister, another past-pupil and Buddhist, gave extraordinary praise to Don Bosco – and his words are the more significant as coming from a non-Catholic – and to the contribution made by the Salesians in a broad sense to the development of Thai society.

But it was the last day of the visit that gave me a more effective and complete picture of the story of the Salesians in Thailand, of their influence in the Church and society, and of their significance. It was a day that began early in the morning and ended late at night at the airport when I left for Rome. We went from one house to another, and I was able to get a better understanding of the stature and relevance of two great men, Bishop Cajetan Pasotti and Bishop Peter Carretto, both of them Salesians with remarkable foresight. Immediately after their arrival by river, they became installed in a village called Bangnökkuek, the present site of the Cathedral, and from there salesian work spread to other towns in the country. In effect however, and many years later, Bishop Carretto saw that the place offered little possibilities for expansion, not least because of the limitations of travelling by river, and decided to transfer the centre of the diocese to Ratburi, where he built a big church dedicated to Don Bosco and a school that today has 10,000 pupils. Perhaps the most interesting thing is that diocesan priests have learned from Bishop Carretto to become involved in the field of education. I must admit in all sincerity that if I had not seen with my own eyes the origins of our salesian work in Thailand, and the evolution that has followed the decision to move to cities like Bangkok, Banpong, Sampram and Hua Hin, I would not have known at sufficient depth our work in a country where we have foundations of great significance in the field of education. This time I was unfortunately unable to visit the confreres who are working so zealously in Cambodia.

Some considerations

In Thailand I was greatly impressed by the social and economic development of a country that hardly thirty years ago

was very poor and has now reached an economic level higher than that of many countries of Latin America. It helps us to understand how economic (and also theological) interests have changed from Latin America to Asia.

The great educative foundations with schools like the *Technological Training Centres*, that I saw in the Philippines, together with two works for the blind, one managed by the FMAs and the other by the SDBs, are of great significance. The percentage of Catholics in the country is quite low: they number hardly 400,000; i.e. 0.5% of the population which is largely Buddhist. But what is of great importance is the way in which Catholics in general and the Salesians in particular are inserted in the fabric of society, especially by means of education.

In these circumstances I think that as Salesians we are facing a great threefold challenge which we must accept: in the first place that of our charismatic identity, which we must foster with an ever greater and deeper knowledge of Don Bosco; the care of those who are poorest, as an element that can make us ever more effective in a Buddhist context; and vocations, on which always depends the vitality and future of the Provinces.

This first experience in the salesian world of the East has led me to an understanding of two points in particular. The first is the growing interest in Asia in economic, social, religious and theological matters; and then secondly the urgent question of the inculturation of our charism, which must be ever stronger and effective; it implies on the one hand a strong cultural identity, and on the other an equally strong salesian identity. It is a process in absolute need of enlightened follow-up. I intend in fact to write a circular letter on this theme.

5. Conclusion

I end my letter, hoping that I have satisfied your expectations about what is happening in the Congregation. None of these things should leave us indifferent. The Rector Major has a charismatic and institutional task to fulfil, and it is important that the confreres be informed as to how he is setting about it. The visit to the communities represents an approach to the life of the Congregation, which is always richer than even the best report can convey. The reflections I have made are not meant to be a formal judgement, but are intended as a salesian reading of our present reality, to enlighten and encourage not only individual Provinces but the whole of the Congregation.

As the six-year period proceeds, I hope to present in these familiar letters requested by the GC25, each of the eight Regions, because I think it of great importance that all Salesians should have a broad vision of the Congregation.

It is my earnest hope that this sharing may result in a growth of the sense of Congregation and of the responsibility for it that we all share. These communications help, in fact, to strengthen our affective and effective communion, our charismatic membership and family spirit; this is precisely why I think that this kind of communication should be realized at all levels, including provincial and local.

I began this letter with Don Bosco's words "*Whether I am near you or far away, I am always thinking of you*". I want to end it by assuring you of a constant remembrance in my affections and in the daily Eucharist.

Even as I write, the winds of war are blowing strongly, and I cannot fail to tell you of a message sent to me by the young people of Baghdad, who dream of a world of peace where they too can develop all their potentialities and reach the fullness

of life. During this year we are praying the Rosary for peace in the world: Let us ask of Mary, the Madonna of the Annunciation, the grace of bringing us the good news of peace. This is a gift and task which is a permanent commitment – as the Holy Father told us in his Message for this year's World Day of Peace – for creating the best conditions for growth in communion and fraternity. "Let us make of every family and community a house and school of communion".

Fascual Cháñez V.

2.1 THE ORGANIC PROVINCIAL PLAN

Fr. Antonio DOMENECH

General Councillor for Youth Ministry

In its reflection on the salesian community the GC25 wanted to indicate also some organizational and structural conditions that would make possible and significant the “living and working together” that the Constitutions present as “a fundamental requirement of our vocation” (C. 49). Among these conditions is to be found the Organic Provincial Plan (OPP) (GC25, 82)

In the previous six year period the Rector Major, Fr. Vecchi, had already insisted that every province should consider and plan its possibilities of development to ensure the quality and the significance of community life and the apostolic activity of all the communities individually and collectively.

The General Council has reflected on the directive of the GC25 and wants to offer the provinces a practical means to help them in the next three years to produce the Organic Provincial Plan (GC25, 82-84)

Description of the OPP

“The Organic Provincial Plan will set out the *fundamental options* guiding the development of the province, ensuring *continuity and coherence* in decisions.” (GC25, 82).

It is the strategic plan for the animation and government of the province, which takes an *overall view of its life and mission* and presents the *fundamental choices* that ought to guide its organization.

The OPP is *the point of reference for all the projects* and the planning of the agencies for animation and government, of the communities and of the works of the province.

Subject of the OPP

The GC25 indicates first of all the subject of the OPP: "In the next three years the provincial community through its various organisms will study, draw up and evaluate the Organic Provincial Plan." (GC25, 82).

In concrete "The Provincial and his Council, with the help of a working team," (GC25 84) guides and directs the process of study, of drawing up and of evaluation of the OPP, involving the communities and in a special way the Rectors.

In the light of C. 171, 1.2 and of R. 167, 3 it is appropriate that the Provincial Chapter studies and approves the general lines and the basic choices of the OPP.

Objectives of the OPP

The GC25 also describes the objectives to be set through the drawing up of the OPP. In fact it states clearly:

- "The Organic Provincial Plan must pursue the following objectives:
- the strengthening in every confrere and in every community of the sense of the common mission and shared responsibility for it;
- the reshaping and restructuring in view of the areas of commitment and development in the province;
- the overcoming of situations of community fragmentation, dispersion and numerical inadequacy;
- the real priority of the more effective and prophetic works and a more authentic expression of the salesian mission in the area." (GC25, 83)

Contents of the OPP

At this point it is not intended to provide a rigid scheme to follow, but only to bring together the basic elements that the OPP should consider.

In recent years many Provinces have already drawn up in deliberations of Provincial Chapters, in Provincial Educative-Pastoral Projects, and in Formation Projects or other provincial documents quite a number of guidelines on some of these points. Now it is a question of bringing them together and organizing them into an organic and coherent whole.

The proposed scheme follows that used by the GC25, but each province will be able to adapt it to its own situation and requirements. At the same time it is not a question of a lengthy or complicated document, but one that is short and to the point, containing the basic options of government without too many reasons or explanations.

1. God's Call

Bearing in mind the requirements of the Congregation and of the Church, especially those of the GC25 and the Project of animation and government of the Rector Major with his Council, the Province asks itself what God is calling it to be and to do in the current situation and in the places where it is present, in order to ensure the effectiveness of its life and activity.

2. Situation of the Province

In the light of God's call the Province intends to take a brief look at its situation and at the possibilities for its development. Considering what the Province would like to be, it asks itself:

- *Regarding its life and activity*
 - What are the positive aspects and the resources we already have?
 - What aspects need improving, and what difficulties do we experience?

- *Regarding the urgent needs in our area especially of the young and the poor.*
- *Regarding the basic challenges this situation presents for the future of the Province.*

3. Fundamental options

The GC25 suggests some issues to be considered in the OPP in order to identify the fundamental options.

In general it *“covers the priority fields of action for the years ahead, practical criteria for the different plans and projects, the works to which attention must be given, the general lines for the preparation of personnel and for economic and structural development, responding to today’s urgent requirements and future prospects emerging from analysis of the locality.”* (GC25, 82)

In particular the fundamental options converge on the topics mentioned here; it is a question of:

- Choosing *“priority fields of action”* (GC25, 82), the main areas or aspects on which to concentrate attention and forces for the next few years.
- After having evaluated *“the effectiveness of the mission of the individual works with reference to the criteria”* that the GC25 proposes (GC25, 84), defining:
 - the priority of the more effective and prophetic works (Cf. GC25, 83);
 - the criteria to guide a significant growth for the developing provinces;
 - the criteria for the reshaping and restructuring in view of the areas of commitment and development in the province (Cf. GC25, 83).
- Identifying the conditions to *“ensure the qualitative and quantitative consistency of each salesian community”* (GC25 75-77), so as to ensure *“the overcoming of situations of community fragmentation, dispersion and numerical inadequacy”* (GC25, 83).

- Re-defining for each presence a relationship between the community and the work that makes it possible for every salesian community “*to live and work together and be a point of charismatic reference in the animating nucleus of the EPC*” (GC25, 78-81).
- Indicating “*the general lines for the preparation of personnel*” (GC25, 82), both SDB and lay collaborators.
- Proposing the “*the general lines for economic and structural development*” (GC25, 82) of the province, also bearing in mind solidarity.

Some suggestions regarding method

The GC25 asks that “*in the next three years the provincial community, through its various organisms will study, draw up and evaluate the Organic Provincial Plan*” (GC25, 82). This requires that the Provincial and his Council, with the help of a working party, take on the guidance and animation of the whole process of drawing up the OPP; in this process they should involve the Rectors and foster the participation of all the communities in the province.

In general one can think of these steps:

- The Provincial with his Council *gathers together the expectations and the needs of the communities* in order to define “God’s call” for the Province today. In this regard it would be possible, for example, to use the reflections of the Provincial Chapter in preparation for the GC25. The Provincial with his Council *draws up an account of the situation of the province*, in the face of this call. For this it could be useful to take into account the report of the Provincial and the discussion of it at the last Provincial Chapter. With the help of the communities, *can be chosen the main challenges* that this situation presents for the vitality of the province.

- The Provincial with his Council, in the light of the previous steps, *proposes the fundamental options* for the future of the Province and *presents them for their study* to the communities and provincial animation groups (Rectors, provincial commissions, etc...).
- The text revised by the Provincial with his Council is *presented to the next Provincial Chapter* which studies it and approves the fundamental options.
- The Provincial with his Council finish the *definitive version* of the OPP.

Relationship of the OPP to other projects of the Province

(Cf. the diagram)

The OPP guides all the projects of the province. It is therefore important to check the connection with the various projects.

- *Relationship with the Formation and Pastoral Projects*

The Provincial Formation Project and the Provincial Educative-Pastoral Project propose the *objectives* to be reached and verified, the *processes or stages* to be implemented and the *interventions* to be carried out in regard to formation and the mission, according to the fundamental options of the OPP.

The provincial SEPP refers to the whole salesian mission and therefore ought also to guide social communication, missionary animation and commitment, animation of the Salesian Family.

- *Relationship with the annual budget and balance sheet*

The annual budget and balance sheet of the Province *ensure and regulate the economic resources* necessary for the implementation of the various projects, according to the options of the OPP.

– ***Relationship with the Directory***

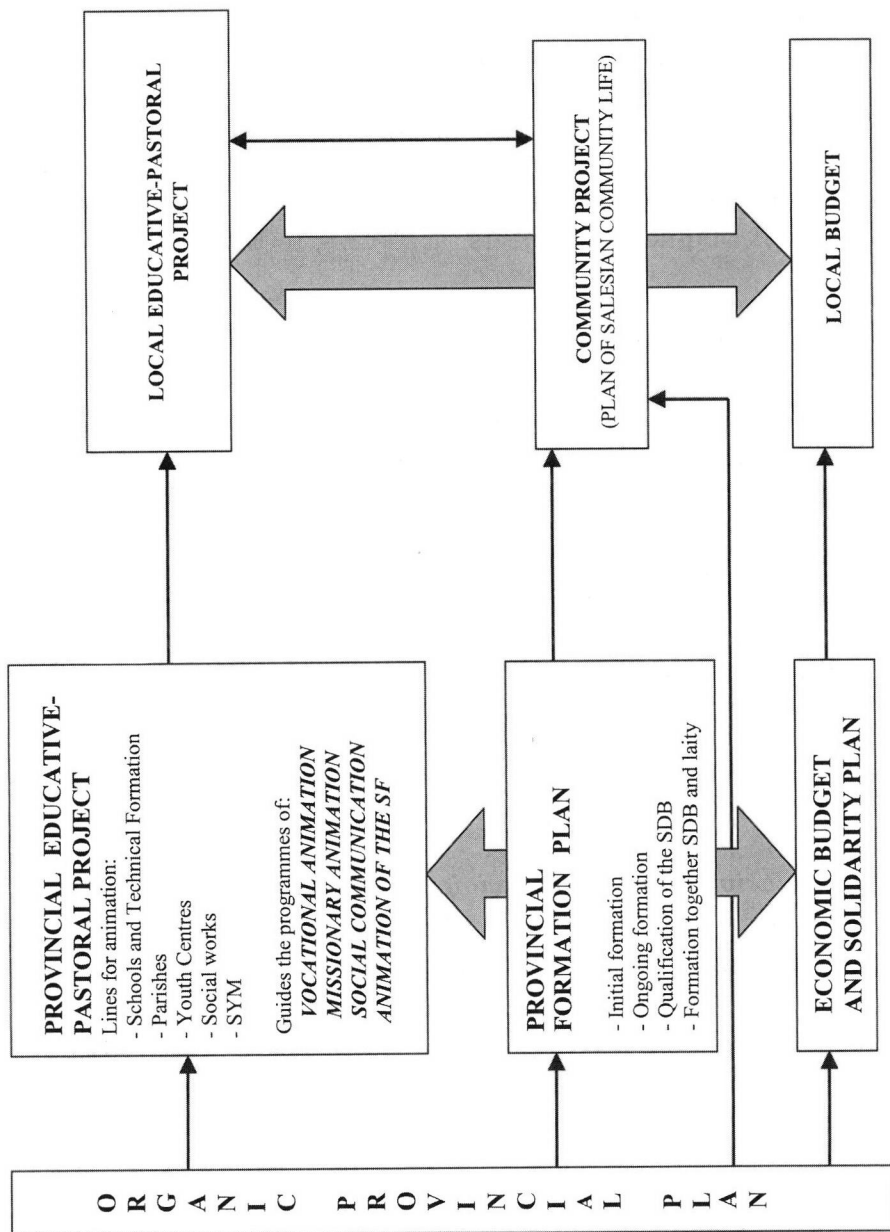
The Directory is the *normative text* of proper law which contains the particular norms which are the practical application of the general law, in the special cases, as required at provincial level. (AGC 315, 34ss). The particular norms in the Directory regulate the carrying out of the life and mission of the province which is planned in projects, according to the options of the OPP.

– ***Relationship with the community project and the local educative-pastoral project***

Through the community project each local community “gives consistency to living and working together” (GC25,72). It strengthens the sense of belonging and the family spirit; develops among the confreres a common and shared vision of the life of the community; fosters communication and a sharing of values, expectations and experiences; it promotes unity and convergence of criteria and the direction of life and educative and pastoral action in the community (Cf. GC25,73). For this reason it is necessary to ensure that the community project is consistent with the guidelines of the OPP and with the options of the SEPP of every EPC that the local community animates (Cf. GC25, 78).

– ***Relationship with the choices of the General Chapter and of the Project of the RM and his Council***

Normally the OPP should be revised and updated after every General Chapter to take up and apply in the province its guidelines and the priorities chosen in the Project of animation and government of the RM and his Council.



2.2 SOLIDARITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AT THE SERVICE OF OUR MISSION

Fr. Giovanni MAZZALI
Economer General

Fr. Francis ALENCHERRY
General Councillor for the Salesian Missions

From the start of his work Don Bosco looked for friends and benefactors to support his efforts for the education of poor and abandoned boys. As with Don Bosco, Divine Providence has sustained our works in a marvellous way, and continues to help us in a visible manner. We are convinced that as long as we are at the service of the poor and of youngsters in need Providence will not fail to support us.

The generosity of Providence in our regard is an encouragement to us to share these gifts with those who are in greater need than we are, at the same time accepting the sacrifices that such solidarity might involve.

The Solidarity Fund

To encourage this sharing, for several years the Congregation has fostered a process of solidarity among the Provinces, many of which have generously responded to the appeal launched by the Rector Major. And thanks to the contributions that have come in, it has been possible to give help in situations of real and at times urgent need.

In continuity with what has been done previously we intend to propose this programme once again to the Congregation, for

the next six year period, while being fully aware that at present we are facing difficult economic times.

The ***Solidarity Fund*** therefore is made up of the contributions sent by the Provinces and individual communities in response to the Rector Major's appeal to promote solidarity among the Provinces of the Congregation. This Fund is used by the Rector Major, through the Economer General to help Provinces in difficulties. Any Province that is in need may request help from this Fund. Individual communities may do so with the agreement of the Provincial.

Requests are made directly to the Rector Major, and, with the assistance of the Economer General, he will assess them and provide such help as the resources of the Fund itself are able to sustain. At regular intervals information is provided about the contributions received by the Fund and the destination of the assistance distributed.

We hope that the Fund will continue to be an expression of the great sense of solidarity that is characteristic of our Congregation.

A praiseworthy aspect of solidarity on behalf of the missions is the commitment of various Provinces which provide economic assistance either for single projects for human development and evangelization or for the ordinary running costs of some missions. Sometimes this is done through the activities of provincial mission offices.

The Mission Fund

Another substantial expression of solidarity is represented by the readiness shown by many benefactors to provide financial assistance for the strictly so-called missionary activity of the Congregation. These resources are collected by the Mission Offices in Madrid, New Rochelle and Turin, set up by the Rector Major according to article 24 of the Regulations. This soli-

clarity is available to the provinces and communities in the "missions", that apply directly to the Rector Major, with the support of the provincial. The Rector Major, in his turn, avails of the experience and the opinion of the General Councillors in distributing the available resources.

It is evident that the resources of this Fund are limited. However, the needs are so great and so complex that it is difficult to satisfy the needs of everyone, even when everything is done to enable the confreres to carry out fully the missionary commitment of the Congregation.

It should be possible to obtain more substantial funding by presenting projects to the NGOs promoted by the Congregation. The requests sent to the Rector Major therefore, should, in general, be for smaller sums or in the case of not being able to turn to other sources. It is important that the provinces make an effort to be, as far as possible, economically self sufficient, having recourse to the Rector Major only in cases of real necessity.

All the provinces and individual communities in "the missions" can draw on the Fund. Requests should always be made through the Provincial.

The available resources are distributed twice a year: in June and December. The requests should be addressed to the Rector Major and should arrive before 15 May or 15 November; if they are later than this they will be considered for the next distribution. All the requests are considered by a Committee set up by the Rector Major under the presidency of the Councillor for the Missions. In making the final decisions the Rector Major seeks the collective opinion of the General Council which examines and assesses the recommendations of the Committee. It is the responsibility of the Councillor for the Missions to inform those receiving the funds allocated and to see to the transfer of the money involved. All communications are addressed to the Provincial and the way in which the money is to be sent is agreed with the Provincial Office.

In the allocation of funds the following procedure is followed:

Only those requests accompanied by a recommendation from the Provincial are considered. It would be well in the case of substantial requests for the Provincial to consult his council before giving his approval. *For every request it is necessary to complete a form giving the important details.*

For those matters which according to the Constitutions art. 188 and 189 the authorization of the Rector Major is required (opening new presences, buildings, acquisition of property etc.) such permission is an indispensable condition for the approval of financial assistance.

In general, priority is given to requests that have as their object the development and formation of people and the building of the community of the faithful. The allocation of funds, however, follows these criteria:

A. *For 'evangelization and catechesis:*

Promoting the training of and providing help for "catechists" and other pastoral workers to reinforce activities of evangelization and the building up of new Christian communities.

Supporting mini-projects of missionary awareness.

Assisting in the construction of chapels and multipurpose buildings especially in mission stations.

Supporting initiatives for the updating and ongoing formation of missionaries.

B. *For the education of the poorest*

Promoting the education of boys and poor young people.

Supporting new presences among the poor.

Fostering professional (technical) instruction especially for poor youngsters.

Promoting educational activities and structures in general.

Supporting human development activities for the poorest peoples and in particular for refugees.

B. *For various needs*

Responding to cases of emergency and natural disasters.

Encouraging formation in general and ongoing formation in particular for personnel both Salesian and lay, above all in countries and situations of poverty

Supporting initiatives in the area of the media, such as for example, religious and educational publications, updating libraries, especially in the houses of formation.

Promoting development offices in provinces where these are necessary, in the context of the Organic Provincial Plan, for the furtherance of the salesian mission.

Assisting in the construction of infrastructures and the expenses in setting up the activities of the new Delegations, Vice Provinces and Provinces.

To provide the Mission Offices with the necessary information they need regarding the efficient use of the money that is received, the beneficiaries should send in good time a report of the way the money sent for the purpose requested has been used. A copy of this report should be sent to the Councillor for the Missions.

The Bursary Fund for Study

In addition to the above mentioned funds, it is possible to obtain from the Rector Major bursaries for studies for confreres in formation belonging to the Provinces, Vice Provinces and Delegations. The bursary fund for studies is resourced from individual donations and by the Missions Offices.

Requests for bursaries should be sent personally by the Provincial to the Rector Major who will then hear the opinion

of the General Council. It is important that these be sent in before the end of May each year so that the necessary assessment can be made.

The grant is sent directly to the Institutions where the students are resident or is credited to the Provincial Account in the Office of the Economist General, when the bill is presented. Each bursary is for the sum of 7000 Euro a year. Preference is given to students sent for specialist studies in Salesian Study Centres outside their own province.

Thanking God for the presence of his Providence in such a tangible way, we feel the responsibility to use to the very best the good things put at our disposal, in respecting the wishes of the donors on behalf of our mission of human development and evangelization especially of the poorest young people without means. We pray that the network of solidarity in the Congregation may become ever stronger both within each province and among all the provinces in the world. We recall the Lord's words: "Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6, 38).

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

For the greater part of **September 2002** the Rector Major remained at Headquarters, engaged in office work, and the reception of numerous salesian missionaries and other confreres, including many salesian Bishops who had come to Rome for various reasons.

Sunday, 8 September, a.m. Fr Chávez went to the Church of the Sacred Heart in Rome to receive the first profession of the novices of Genzano. In his homily he spoke to the newly professed and explained their salesian vocation in the light of the word of God, the mystery of the Eucharist they were celebrating and the Birthday of Mary, recalling that behind our vocation there is the loving design of God who has chosen us, loved us and called us, and wants to be able to depend on us to make his love present to the young, and to encourage them to “launch out into the deep”.

On the following day, he visited Fr Achilles Triacca, seriously ill in the UPS Infirmary, and in the afternoon received in his office two

journalists of the Review “30 Days”, who had come to interview him.

Sunday, 15 September. Fr Chávez had lunch in the residence of Cardinal Antonio Javierre with the Apostolic Nuncio of Argentina and the Superior General of the “Operarios Diocesanos”.

18 January. The Rector Major presided at the Mass of the Holy Spirit at the FMA Generalate for the opening of the 21st General Chapter. During the homily he spoke of the chapter theme *In the renewed Covenant our commitment to an evangelical citizenship*, taking as a foundation the text of the Beatitudes. Later at the official opening of the Chapter he addressed the assembly and commented on a study of the Working Document and its reflection of the salesian charism.

19 September. Fr Chávez gave a conference to the Generalate community at their monthly retreat on “*The community of the GC25*”, pointing out its new and original aspects, even as compared with the GC23 and GC24. On the same

evening after supper he had a friendly meeting with the group of confreres beginning their final course of preparation before leaving for the missions.

20 – 22 September. Fr Chávez visited the Sardinian Vice-province and had a series of meetings and celebrations with the confreres, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and other groups of the Salesian Family, and with young people of Cagliari, Selargius, Arborea, and Nuoro, where he blessed the foundation stone of the new Oratory. He was also able to see and admire some of the archeological culture of the island by visiting the more famous sites.

The most important event took place at Lanusei, where the Rector Major was met outside the city boundary by the civil authorities and accompanied into the city to the residence of the Bishop, Mgr. Antiocco Piseddu, where he was received with great kindness and cordiality. Later he went on to the big playground of the salesian college where he was welcomed by the Mayor. The two of them then presided at a Round Table in which five salesian past-pupils of Lanusei, all of them politically involved in the regional government, spoke of their experience in

line with the theme of the gathering which was "the identity and commitment of the Don Bosco Past-pupil in the social and political sector". The Rector Major gave a brief address illustrating this identity and consequent obligations, deriving from being an "upright citizen and good Christian" as a result of the salesian education received.

22 September. In the playground of the salesian college, in the presence of the President of the province of Nuoro, the Mayor of Lanusei, leading representatives of the regional government, Salesians, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and members of the Salesian Family from all the salesian foundations in Sardinia, the official commemoration took place of the centenary of Don Rua's visit to Lanusei, the golden jubilee of the building of the Temple and the naming of the new square after Don Rua, which had not yet taken place but was announced by the Mayor to those present.

At 11.00 a.m. in the presence of the Bishop, the Rector Major presided at a celebration of the Eucharist. In his homily he commented on the parable of the workers in the vineyard and pointed to God's will in inviting

everyone to collaborate with him in the building of his Kingdom.

In the evening he returned to Rome.

23 – 27 September. Fr Chávez visited the four Provinces of **Poland**.

The program for the first day (24) was intense. The visit to the Cracow Province included a meeting with the clerics in formation and their teachers in the salesian studentate, a meeting with the young people and civil authorities in the salesian school of Świętochłowice, and in the afternoon a meeting with the Salesian Family at Oświęcim, the salesian mother-house in Poland. Fr Chávez presided at a Mass in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians.

The meeting in the studentate was followed by a brief visit to the parish church of St Stanislaus Kostka in the area where Karol Wojtyła lived during the Second World War. Fr Chávez prayed at length before the picture of the Help of Christians where John Paul II had prayed and where he had celebrated his first Mass.

At Swietochlowice more than 600 young people were present from all the houses of the Province. They presented some folk-

lore items of southern Poland in honour of the ninth successor of Don Bosco, and listened to what he had to say to them.

In the afternoon, before the meeting with the Salesian Family at Oświęcim, Fr Chávez paid a visit to the Bishop of Katowice, in whose diocese there are two salesian foundations, a parish and a centre of studies.

The Rector Major was accompanied in the evening by the Provincial of Breslau to the provincial house of that Province where he spent the night before visiting the Salesians and Salesian Family of the Province. In the morning he paid a visit to Mgr. Adam Smigiel-ski, the salesian Bishop of Sosnowiec, and then went on to Czestochowa for a meeting with the Salesian Family, whose members thronged the theatre of the salesian college.

Representatives of the various groups greeted Fr Chávez with gifts and songs typical of the region. Electronic means were used to present the work of the Province and its mission among the people of Southern Poland. Also shown were some clips from a film depicting the life and sacrifice of the five young martyred oratorians of Poznan, beatified by John Paul II. The Rector Major

thanked all present for the reception he had been given, and urged them to strive for sanctity, after the example of the five young martyrs who had shown their fidelity to Christ, to the Church and to Don Bosco, even to the shedding of their blood. Immediately afterwards Fr Chávez went to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Czestochowa to preside at the Eucharist. In the afternoon he went to the interprovincial novitiate of Kopiec, and then left for Warsaw, for the third day of his visit.

On his arrival at the capital in the evening of 25 September, he was warmly received by the Salesians and representative of the Salesian Family of the city and the communities of Lutomiersk and Zgierz. Present also were the young Salesians in formation of the communities of the post-novices and the students of theology.

26 September, a.m. The Rector Major reached the novitiate of Czerwensk, 60 km. north-east of the Polish capital. There the provincial feast-day was celebrated with the participation of all groups of the Salesian Family. Taking part too were some members of the Michelites, a religious congregation founded by a Polish Salesian, and there was a massive repre-

sentation of young people from the schools and oratories of the Warsaw area. During the event Fr Chávez spoke of the situation of the Salesian Family at the present day from the perspectives of the salesian charism, of communion and of mission.

At midday Fr Chávez presided at a votive Mass of Don Bosco, and the festivities continued in the early afternoon with greetings and gifts by the different groups, and later there was a meeting of the Rector Major with the Warsaw community. The day ended with prayers and the *Good Night* in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

In the morning of the 27th, before leaving Warsaw, the Rector Major had a meeting with the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Glemp, and visited the Michelites at their Generalate at Marki, a town near Warsaw. He then visited the two salesian communities at Aleksandrów Kujawski, where there is the oldest salesian work of the Province, founded in 1919. There he had a meeting with the three schools managed by the Salesians, together with their parents and teachers, past-pupils, and the local civil and ecclesial authorities. He blessed the monument to Don Bosco erected in the square in

front of the school.

In the late afternoon the Rector Major presided at the Eucharist celebrated at the headquarters of the Pila Province, with representatives of all the groups of the Salesian Family (SDB, FMA, DBV, ADMA. Cooperators and Past-pupils), together with friends and benefactors of Don Bosco's work. About one thousand people were present in all. In his homily Fr Chávez pointed to Mary as the example for all Christian people at the present day.

After the Mass Fr Chávez received the homage of representatives of the young people and other groups, and brought the event to a close with the traditional *Good Night*. Later in the evening he had a meeting with the Provincial Council in the new premises of the salesian school at Pila.

In the morning of 28 September, Fr Chávez went to the studentate of theology at Lad, stopping at Gniezno on the way to visit the Cathedral where are preserved the remains of Saint Adalberto, Patron of the Province. The Institute of Theology of Lad was celebrating the golden jubilee of its foundation and, in addition to the Rector Major, two Bishops were present with also representatives of the local civil authori-

ties, other salesian communities and groups of the Salesian Family. Fr Chávez presided at the Eucharist and inaugurated the new academic year, with a conference on: "The challenges of salesian formation at the present day. Charismatic identity and vocational identification".

In the afternoon the Rector Major left once again for Warsaw, accompanied by the Provincial, Fr. Józef Strus, making a brief stop at Kawnice to visit the Marian Sanctuary of the Consolata and greet the confreres. About 6 p.m. he reached Kutno-Wozniaków where, after visiting the cemetery to pray for the confreres buried there, he had supper with the community and afterwards gave the *Good Night*. At 9 p.m. he returned to Warsaw and had an informal meeting with the confreres of the provincial house.

Sunday, 29 September. Early in the morning the Rector Major left Poland to fly to Milan-Malpensa, where the Provincial of the Piedmont Circumscription was waiting to take him by car to Valdocco. There, after a photograph with the departing missionaries, he had lunch with all the Valdocco confreres.

In the afternoon Fr Chávez presided at the solemn Eucharist

in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, during which he gave the missionary mandate and crucifix to 15 Salesians and 15 volunteers who were leaving for the missions. In his homily he presented the missionary expedition as a continuation of the great dream of Don Bosco, who wanted his Salesians to be missionaries of young people wherever they might be found.

After the Mass the Rector Major remained for a long time chatting with all who wanted to speak to him. He celebrated evening prayer with the Valdocco community, passing on his first impressions and reflections of his journey to Poland.

On Monday, 30 September, Fr Chávez returned to Rome.

In **October** the Rector Major made visits to various Provinces with intervening periods at headquarters for ordinary office work and to be available for the numerous visitors who wanted to see and speak with him.

1 October. In the afternoon he presided at the Eucharist for the St. Thomas Aquinas community at the UPS and had supper with them. In his homily he emphasized the significance in the prevailing social and ecclesial context

of the final year of formation in preparation for priestly ordination

3 October. He was back once more at the UPS, where Fr Achilles Triacca, one of our outstanding professors of liturgy, was dying. Fr Chávez greeted the confreres and prayed with them and with the relatives of Fr Triacca, to whom he spoke words of gratitude and comfort.

7 October. Once again at the UPS he presided at the Eucharist for the opening of the academic year 2002-3 of the Salesian Pontifical University. Among those present, together with authorities, professors and students of the University, were Cardinal Alfons Stickler and Bishop Fisichella, Rector of the Lateran University, with the Ambassadors of various countries to the Holy See.

After the Eucharist the formal act of inauguration took place at which Fr Chávez presided as Grand Chancellor. He presented the UPS medal to four long-serving teachers and prizes to students with outstanding performances, prior to proclaiming the Academic Year officially open.

9 – 17 October. The Rector Major visited the Provinces of **Argentina**.

He was met at the airport of Buenos Aires by all the members of the Southern Cone Provincial Conference, with the Regional (Fr Helvecio Baruffi) at their head. With them too was the Local Ordinary, Bishop Radrizzani SDB. Fr Chávez was given a rousing reception at the provincial house where a hundred young people sang for him. He thanked them and urged them to work for the benefit of their peers. Present also were many Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of the area. He then went to meet about a hundred representatives of the salesian schools of Buenos Aires and southern Patagonia, to whom he spoke on the importance of education for the building of a new society. After lunch he had a meeting with the members of the Provincial Council to discuss the situation of the Province.

In the afternoon he had a conversation with 40 young confreres in formation from the Provinces of Buenos Aires and La Plata for an exchange of reflections and experiences on this initial stage of their salesian lives.

The Rector Major then gave a press conference, replying to questions from some 50 journalists from the different branches of the mass media, and their

trainees. The item giving rise to most questions was the message of the GC25, that had been sent out to international organizations concerned with the youth situation and to political and economic authorities throughout the world.

Finally on this first day of his visit Fr Chávez had a meeting with the animators of the Salesian Youth Movement in the San Giusto College to the west of Buenos Aires. More than 200 young people joined with the Successor of Don Bosco in an intense moment of prayer and reflection on the Word of God, enriched by songs and the recounting of experiences. Fr Chávez put to the young people a series of proposals of salesian youthful spirituality for living the Gospel at the present day. It was a true festive experience of youth, animated by musical groups from the Don Bosco Scouts and the Youth Band of the "La Boca" area.

11 October opened with a visit of Fr Chávez to the *Mater Misericordiae* church, which has a deep significance for Salesians because it is the place of arrival of the first missionary expedition, sent out by Don Bosco himself. He was received by the scholastic authorities and pupils of the *Don Bosco College* that flanks the church,

and went on to bless the premises for the new *Salesian Central Museum* of Buenos Aires.

After this ceremony the Rector Major went to the *St John the Evangelist* house in the *La Boca* district; this was the first salesian parish outside Italy, and the Salesians have been working there for 125 years. There he met with a large number of youngsters to whom he spoke of the need of living with hope.

Returning to the provincial house Fr Chávez had a meeting with the Rectors of the houses of the Province, with whom he also had a fraternal meal characterized by Argentine music. In the early afternoon he received a visit from the Salesian Delegation – lay people responsible for schools and youth associations in Southern Patagonia – to whom he spoke of the importance and significance of this region of Southern Argentina for the Salesian Congregation.

This meeting was followed by a festive celebration with the confreres of the Province who were celebrating the jubilees of religious profession and priestly ordination of 20 Salesians. In the early evening Fr Chávez presided at the Eucharist in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, in the pres-

ence of the Salesian Bishops Radrizzani, Peyrou, Meinvielle and Boghossian. Also taking part was the national Director of Catholic Religion of the Republic of Argentina. After the Mass the Rector Major greeted the Councils of the various groups of the Salesian Family who were present (FMA, Cooperators, DBV, VCDB, Past-pupils, ASMA and ADS).

The day concluded with a supper with the confreres of the *Almagro* district, the Salesian Bishops, and the Apostolic Nuncio to Argentina with his council.

The second stage of the Rector Major's visit to Argentina began in the Province of Bahia Blanca where he arrived in the morning of 11 October. He was received at the airport by a small group of Salesians with the Provincial, Fr Joaquín López, at their head. In the airport itself he gave an interview to a local newspaper. The motorcade bearing him to Viedma, birthplace of Blessed Laura Vicuña and Artemides Zatti, and of the 8th successor of Don Bosco, Fr Juan Edmondo Vecchi, stopped at the large space where highways 5 and 31 meet, the place where last August a monument was inaugurated to Mary Help of Christians "Patroness of Argentine Agriculture", and the spot from

which the Pope, 15 years ago, had blessed the zone of Bahia Blanca.

At Viedma Fr Chávez was received by the civil and religious authorities; among the latter were the Diocesan Administrator and the Salesian Bishops Pozzi and Mellani. Many Salesians were also present with those responsible for their schools, and also the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of Viedma and Patagonia. At Viedma also Fr Chávez met youngsters from the different colleges and oratories of the Province, and was honoured by the presence of the Rio Negro Police Band. The local Mayor had invited all the citizens to come and meet the visitor, who on the same occasion was made an honorary citizen and presented with the keys of the town.

In the afternoon the Rector Major visited and blessed the new structures of the college named after his predecessor, Fr Juan Vecchi, whose life story he recalled. Later he had a meeting with the Committee of the Past-pupils that directs the "Zatti" and "Vecchi" colleges in the Viedma zone. He emphasized to them the need to work to restore the fundamental commitment to education to the value of the family, the school and society.

In the evening, at the College of St Francis de Sales, there was an academic function in honour of Artemides Zatti, with the presentation by the boys of the College of some scenes from his life, which gave great pleasure to the Rector Major. The celebration of the Eucharist followed.

In the morning of the following day, Fr Chávez called at Carmen de Patagones, the first house opened in Patagonia in 1888, and the first salesian novitiate in mission territory. In the parish office he was shown the baptismal record of the Venerable Zefferino Namuncurá.

Continuing his journey he reached Fortín Mercedes, where he was warmly received by the Salesian Family; he arrived in a horse and carriage typical of the kind used by the early Salesians. After praying in the sanctuary before the picture of Mary Help of Christians sent by Don Bosco himself, and venerating the tomb of Zefferino Namuncurá, Fr Chávez had a meeting with the scholastic directors and coordinators of pastoral work in the SDB and FMA schools, to whom he spoke of the need to form solid educative communities so as to give greater thrust to education in the salesian manner. After lunch he

met with the members of the Salesian Youth Movement, whom he urged to be "the salt of the earth and the light of the world". Later in the afternoon he was present at the official renaming of the *Regional Missionary Museum* as the *Juan Edmundo Vecchi Museum*.

In the evening Fr Chávez returned to Bahia Blanca, where he received the greetings of the Administrator Apostolic, Mgr. Néstor Navarro. In the same place he also planted a tree to commemorate his visit. A Eucharist in the college of Mary Help of Christians, where the mortal remains of Blessed Laura Vicuña are preserved, brought the two-day visit to the Province to an end.

Sunday, 13 October. The Rector Major, accompanied by the Provincial of the Province of La Plata, travelled by car from Bahia Blanca to La Plata, a distance of some 600 km. After a brief rest he was given a cordial and enthusiastic reception in the salesian house of Bernal. There were more than 500 people present and Fr Chávez spoke to them about the salesian charism, insisting on the need for Salesians and lay people to share in communion the spirit and mission of Don Bosco. This was followed by a joyfully animat-

ed youth Eucharist in the Sanctuary of the *Virgen de la Guardia*.

The day closed with numerous folklore presentations by the various communities.

Monday 14. There was a meeting exclusively for salesian confreres in the Retreat Centre of *Zefferino Namuncurá*. Some 70 Salesians heard Fr Chávez speak about "The salesian community according to the GC25". They also concelebrated the Eucharist and lunched together. Later the same day he presented commemorative medals to Fr Vincent Burcheri, who is this year celebrating his priestly golden jubilee, and to Bro. Ignacio Kosinsk, the oldest Brother of the Province, wishing to symbolize in them his affection and gratitude for every member of the Province.

The visit to the Province ended with an hour's meeting with the Provincial Council.

From the evening of Monday 14th to Wednesday 16th, the Rector Major visited the Córdoba Province. He was received at the airport by the Provincial Fr Walter Jara, accompanied by the Regional Councillor Fr Helvecio Baruffi, and was taken to the Provincial House to be welcomed by a big gathering and the band of the *Don Bosco Scouts*, who

wanted to make sure "he felt at home".

Tuesday 15. Fr Chávez had a meeting with the Provincial Council for an overview of the Province. This was followed by a visit to the *Dominic Savio* aspirantate and pre-novitiate where, after a welcome in the name of all the Salesians of the Province, a video was shown illustrating the various aspects of the salesian work. At the end Fr Chávez spoke of his predecessor, Fr Juan Vecchi, emphasizing three elements that constituted his "vertebral column": his extraordinary human charity, his great life of faith, and his immense love for Don Bosco, the Congregation and young people.

In the afternoon the Rector Major had a meeting with the Salesian Family. Some 260 persons were present in all. Fr Chávez gave them some suggestions which, he said, Don Bosco would have given them today: to increase in numbers and in charismatic identity, to be united, and to work together in particular settings.

Subsequently Fr Chávez was interviewed by *Radio Cadena 3*, of Córdoba, for one of its programs. In it he spoke of the youth situation, education at a global level,

and the presence of Don Bosco in the world.

After this he went on to the *Saints John Bosco and Dominic Savio* Parish, where 650 youngsters had gathered from the different works of the Province to give him an enthusiastic welcome in the parish hall. His encounter with them embraced three interesting aspects: the sharing of the personal vocational history of Fr Chávez himself, the fatherliness of Don Bosco, and some challenges for the Salesians and young people of the present day. A Eucharistic celebration followed with about a thousand participants. In the homily the Rector Major urged educators to make the first approach in educating the young, and to do so in simplicity, poverty and humility.

Wednesday 15 October. In the morning Fr Chávez had a meeting with the formation communities. After a celebration of the Eucharist in the theologate, the staff assembled in the conference hall of the Provincial House to hear the Rector Major speak about charismatic identity and vocational identification, emphasizing the need to be 'in love with Christ' (mystical element) and to model oneself ever more on him (ascetical element). He pointed out that

commitment to formation is a response to the vocational call. After the conference Fr Chávez gave an interview by telephone to *Radio Maria*, in which he made it clear that the challenge facing the Congregation is how to give greater depth to our spiritual life and make it ever more meaningful for young people.

After the interview he paid a courtesy call on the Archbishop of Córdoba at his residence, went on to visit the Temple of Mary Help of Christians, and finally visited the *Artemides Zatti* hospital to greet the sick and aging Salesians.

This concluded his visit to the Córdoba Province, and he left by car for the Province of Rosario, the last stage of his visit to Argentina.

Fr Chávez arrived at Manucho in the early evening of 16 October to be welcomed immediately in a provincial assembly of the confreres. On the following morning he gave a conference in which he analyzed the prevailing situation and future prospects of the Congregation at world level, and its internal and external effects on society and the Church. He referred to the influence of secularism and the risk of the loss of the sense of the transcendent. He recalled the efforts at renewal that

have been made in the Congregation at the levels of structures, pastoral work, formation and community life. He also spoke of the challenge of the spiritual renewal of the Salesian. After a pause he answered questions on a variety of points: the figure of the Brother; what attention to the spiritual life of the Salesian really means; the salesian Universities; the identity of consecrated life in Latin America; poverty and injustice; the popular reading of the Bible, etc. The morning concluded with a concelebrated Eucharist, and the distribution of the translated document of the GC25.

From Manucho the Rector Major left for Santa Fe. On the way he visited the *Hogar Miguel Magone*, a reception centre for juveniles at risk, managed by a civil association of persons associated with salesian work in Santa Fe, many of them salesian Cooperators. After a short visit to the *Jardín de Infantes*, he reached the salesian work of Santa Fe itself, where some 1,500 persons were awaiting him in the sports stadium: pupils and other young people, parents, members of the different groups of the Salesian Family etc. There was also a sizable group from the salesian work at Paraná and delegations from

salesian foundations in Concepción (Uruguay), Colonia Vignaud and Rosario. The function lasted for an enthusiastic two hours with the Rector Major replying to questions on various points of interest, interspersed with presentations and music by Scout-Bands from Paraná and Santa Fe and culminating with a performance by the popular and well-known musical group *Los Mariachis*.

In the evening Fr Chávez left Santa Fe to fly to the airport of Buenos Aires, and on the following morning (18 October) flew on to **Recife**, where he was received by the Provincial Fr Richard Sobrinho, the salesian Bishop Valerio Breda, and a group of Salesians and lay people.

On arrival in Brazil the Rector Major presided at a solemn Mass in the Sanctuary of the Sacred Heart in Recife. In the evening he took part in the 7th Youth Festival of the North-East which brought together at the Institute *Sagrado Coração* 540 young people for the "Youth and Art" contest. At the Mass were present the Provincials of São Paulo, Manaus, Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, together with the Salesian Bishop Valerio Breda, the National Coordinators of the Cooperators and of

the Past-pupils, the Vice-provincial of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and numerous representatives of religious Institutes of the city. Present also was the Vice-President of Brazil. In his homily Fr Chávez invited all to "become like children" and organize their own lives in such a way as to give pride of place to the needs of the young. After Mass Fr Chávez, accompanied by the band of Matriz de Camaragibe, inaugurated the monument to St John Bosco erected in front of the Provincial House.

Subsequently the Rector Major had a meeting with the Rectors and parish priests of the Province, to whom he explained the project of the renewal of the salesian community promoted by the GC25, emphasizing the need to give importance to persons rather than things and to the drawing up of provincial and local projects. The evening was given over to the celebration of the Youth Festival in the gymnasium of the Institute of the Sacred Heart.

Sunday 19. Fr Chávez took part in the 59th Pilgrimage of the Salesian Family to the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Jaboatão, where is situated the large house for meetings, retreats and the novitiate. He was re-

ceived to the tones of “Giù dai Colli”, played by the band of the Don Bosco house of Maceió, a work for street-children. Among those present were the salesian Abp. Edvaldo Amaral and Bishop Breda SDB, who concelebrated together with the Provincials of Recife and of Verona (Italy) and numerous priests, at the Eucharist which took place in the open air because of the large number of pilgrims (more than 2,500). In his homily the Rector Major outlined a spiritual pilgrimage based on the life of Mary, “She who has done everything”: sharing daily life with others, learning to be concerned about one’s neighbour, meeting Jesus Christ, and embracing the faith as a true disciple of Jesus.

Monday 21 October. Fr Chávez celebrated Mass in the provincial house of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and then made an official visit to the Archbishop of Olinda and Recife. In a very cordial meeting the Archbishop emphasized the importance of the Salesians in the social, cultural and ecclesial context of North-eastern Brazil. Fr Chávez went on before lunch to make a rapid visit to the workshops of the *Don Bosco School of Arts and Trades* at Bongi, and

pointed out Don Bosco to the boys as the saint who had made young people the friends of Christ. He also managed a visit to the Institute of Philosophy where he met all the Province’s young people in formation. They included 4 external and 15 internal aspirants, 12 pre-novices, 5 novices, 13 post-novices, 9 young confreres in practical training and a representative of 8 students of philosophy. To all of them he spoke of a vocation as a great gift to be welcomed and cultivated seriously in the period of initial formation.

After lunch with all the Salesians in formation, Fr Chávez returned to the Provincial House to prepare for his return to Italy. He reached Rome in the late evening of Tuesday 22 October.

In the morning of October 24 the Rector Major went to the Generalate of the FMA to celebrate the Mass of the Holy Spirit as a preparation for the election of the Mother General, and stayed for the election itself. Mother Antonia Colombo was re-elected, whereupon Fr Chávez returned to the Capitular Assembly to greet her and express his best wishes. He presented her with a small statue of Mary Help of Christians by Lladrò before leaving.

With the month of **November** began the winter plenary session of the General Council. In consequence the greater part of the month found the Rector Major committed in the work of the Council. But there were frequent meetings with confreres and the members of the Salesian Family, and particular events in which he was able to take part.

1 November. Fr Chávez celebrated the Eucharist of the Solemnity of All Saints for the FMA community of the house of Teresa Valsè, and on the following day presided at the Mass at our own Generalate for the commemoration of all the Faithful Departed.

8 November. He accompanied the Mother General and all the members of the FMA General Chapter to the Vatican for the audience with the Pope.

In the morning of the 16th he presided at a Eucharist for the SDBs and FMAs working in the schools sector in Italy. The same afternoon he went with the members of his Council to the FMA Generalate to preside at the closing Mass of the GC21.

Sunday 17. In the morning he received the members of the *Don Bosco Choral Group* of Porto Re-

canati, who had come to greet him. At midday he visited the salesian Poliglotta community at the Vatican, and in the evening had a meeting with a group of SDBs, FMAs and laity from Spain, who work in the field of professional formation.

From Monday 18th to Wednesday 27th the course for new Provincials took place at the Generalate. The Rector Major took part in it from time to time and spoke with each one.

During the same period there was a formation course for a first group of Rectors from Italy and the Middle East: Fr Chávez celebrated the Eucharist with them and explained to them the main points of the project of animation and government of the Rector Major and his Council for the six-year period 2002-2008.

21 November. He preached a day's retreat to the Testaccio community on the theme of the salesian community according to the GC25.

23 November. He gave the *Good night* to the PGS Delegates who were gathered at the Salesianum.

25 November. Fr Chávez presided at the funeral Mass in the Generalate chapel for Fr Modesto Della Sala of the Generalate community. On the following day he

took part in a visit to the "Redemptoris Mater" Chapel in the Vatican with the new Provincials and the members of the General Council.

27 November. The Rector Major was at the Capitol, Rome, as a member of a round table for the presentation of the book *Il Borgo e la Borgata. I ragazzi di Don Bosco e l'altra Roma del dopoguerra*. In his intervention he spoke of the new forms of poverty, of the situation of juveniles at the present day, and of the urgent need to intervene in the field of education.

From Wednesday 27th to Saturday 30th the Salesianum was the venue for the annual meeting of the Union of Superiors General (USG), which the Rector Major attended accompanied by Fr Antonio Domenech, Councillor for youth ministry.

In the afternoon of the 29th Fr Chávez left for Turin on the way to Alba, where he had been invited by the *Ferrero Foundation* to present the theme "The school and the present challenges. Towards the school as a communicator of culture". The following day he returned to Rome and presided at a retreat Mass for the Don Bosco student community at the UPS.

The same evening he left for Mogliano Veneto, where on 1 **December** he had a intense program of events for the celebration of 120 years of salesian work in that city. The first item was a visit to the City Hall, where he was received by the Mayor and City Council and had *honorary citizenship* conferred on him in recognition of the importance of salesian work. In expressing his thanks, the Rector Major attributed to the honour a significance extending beyond himself personally, to the past and present Salesians who have worked and are still working in the Venetian city in the education field and especially that of the school for the past 120 years.

Later the Rector Major met with the Past-pupils and all the educative community in the Salesian Centre in a festive gathering to celebrate more than a century of Don Bosco's charism and its future there and in all the world. He then presented their diplomas to the young people who had won them in the scholastic year 2001-2, thus proving their mature status in the local ecclesial and civil society. Fr Chávez spoke of salesian education. The morning ended with a solemn concelebration.

In the afternoon he went to

Mestre to take part in the *Don Bosco Family Forum*, and on his return received a visit from the Bishop of Treviso. He joined the community for evening prayer and concluded the day with a meeting with the confreres and young people of the discernment community.

Monday, 2 December. Fr Chávez had a further two meetings with the students, first with those of the High School and then those of the Middle School. As always he replied to their interesting questions. Before lunch he also found time for a press conference with journalists of the local mass media.

Returning to Rome, he continued through December the work with the General Council and the reception of numerous confreres and other people. Among others these included the second group of Rectors from Italy and the Middle East who had come to the Generalate for the formation course.

Wednesday, 4 December. The Rector Major presided in the afternoon at a meeting of the Academic Senate of the UPS, and on the following Saturday had a meeting with the salesian missionaries who had just finished their course in missiology. Two

days later he was back again at the UPS to exchange Christmas greetings with the confreres of the six communities. On this occasion he gave a lively summary of the visits he had made to various Provinces in his first months in office: in Latin America, France, Spain and Poland; he emphasized the commitment of salesian work in the world, the continuity of the spirit of Don Bosco and its adaptation to different cultures, as he shared reflections with his hearers.

In the afternoon of 5 December, Fr Chávez went to the Pius XI Institute in Rome, to meet the sick confreres in the infirmary there, make a rapid visit to the various works, recite evening prayer with the confreres involved in pastoral work and have supper with them. He gave a *Good Night* before leaving.

Thursday 12. The Rector Major and his Council joined all the confreres of the Generalate at a special lunch for Fr Peter Brocardo on his 90th birthday.

19 December. Fr Chávez presided in the chapel of the Generalate at the funeral Mass for Bro. Lamberto Lama, a well deserving confrere who had worked for very many years in the service of the Superiors.

In the second part of December, Fr Chávez and the Councillors visited some of the formation communities in the Rome area (San Tarcisio, Testaccio, Genzano). In addition the Rector Major had a further series of meetings with various groups of the Salesian Family or communities who came to bring him Christmas greetings.

On Christmas eve he presided at the solemn Christmas celebration with the community of the Generalate. Then, from the 27th to the morning of the 31st, he spent a few days of rest in the Dolomites with flying visits to the salesian community at Trento and the FMA community of Ziano di Fiemme.

Returning to headquarters he gave on the 31st a video presentation of the Strenna for the year 2003 first at the Generalate of the FMA and subsequently to the confreres of our own Generalate.

The Rector Major began the month of **January 2003** with a Eucharistic celebration in the FMA *Auxilium* community, and the next day went to the FMA novitiate at Castelgandolfo and had a meeting with the communities of the novitiate and pre-novitiate, which concluded with the

Eucharist, followed by lunch.

In the next few days he received many Provincials and other confreres who came with good wishes for the New Year, and on Sunday 5th said Mass for a group of Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians who were at the Salesianum for a course on the school. In the same afternoon he received the Junior Sisters of the FMA and spoke to them on the experience of God.

On Monday 6 January, accompanied by some of the Councillors, he took part in the Episcopal ordination of Mgr. Angelo Amato and Mgr Calogero La Piana, conferred by the Holy Father during the Mass of the Epiphany.

In the evening of the 7th, he received Mother Antonia Colombo who came, with two of her Councillors, to speak to the Generalate community on the event and documents of their recent GC21. This was to some extent a "historic" event, because it was the first of its kind ever to have taken place. It was followed by supper, after which the Fr Chávez gave a Good Night, stressing the significance of the event.

Friday, 10 January. At the wish of the Rector Major, the whole Generalate community came together for a lunch to which he had

invited the Salesian Archbishops Tarcisio Bertone, who had been appointed to the archdiocese of Genoa, and Angelo Amato, the new Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. After lunch he spoke of the joy of the Congregation at the two appointments, and wished the two Bishops success in the new missions entrusted to them.

In the morning of 14 January, Fr Chávez went to the Sacred Heart, Rome, to preside at a meeting of SDBs, FMAs and lay people of the Federation SCS/CNOS who work in the sector for marginalization, and youth distress. He explained his thoughts to them on these matters, their place in the salesian network, and the commitment of the Salesians in this regard. He pointed out the innovations of the last General Chapter in this connection, and the six-year plan for animation and government, which gives particular attention to it.

After this meeting Fr Chávez went directly to the airport to leave for a visit to the Provinces of the **Philippines**.

The Rector Major reached **Manila** in the early afternoon of Wednesday 15 January, and began a four-day visit to the Manila

Province during which he met with numerous young people, animators of the SYM, visited communities, spoke with Rectors and confreres, particularly those in formation and the formation personnel, members of educative and pastoral communities, members of the Salesian Family, and gave messages to all the youngsters for whom we are working.

On the 17th he was received in the City Hall by the Mayor of Manila, who showed his gratitude for the work done by the Salesians in the poorest parts by presenting the Rector Major with the keys of the city; in return Fr Chávez gave him a special medal of Don Bosco. Fr Chávez then went on to the Archbishop's residence at the invitation of Cardinal Sin for a meeting with the Apostolic Nuncio, one of the auxiliary Bishops, the Provincial of the Northern Philippines (Fr Francis Gustilo) and the Provincial of the Southern Philippines (Fr Patrick Buzon) who had been recently appointed a Bishop and was awaiting ordination. In the evening, with the three salesian Bishops Drona, Cantillas and Buzon, the Rector Major presided at a solemn Eucharist in honour of Don Bosco, as an act of thanksgiving on the occasion of the gold-

en jubilee of the work of the Technical School at Mandaluyong. Attending the ceremony were about a hundred Salesians (who have something like two thousands boys in their care), with many adults, teachers, relatives of the boys, past-pupils and civil and religious authorities. The celebration ended with an open-air supper in the grounds of the old Augustinian convent which is at the centre of the salesian work. In a brief *Good Night* Fr Chávez expressed his joy at being present, emphasized the quality of education provided by the school and cited as a proof the perfect artistic celebration that had taken place. He encouraged all present to maintain the same spirit for the next fifty years now beginning in the service of the young and of Philippino society.

18 January. Fr Chávez, with the Regional Fr Václav Klement, the Provincial and two cameramen left in two helicopters for San José City, where they celebrated the Eucharist with Bishop Leo Drona SDB, the Mayor, secular priests of the Diocese, members of religious congregations, benefactors, students and their relatives.

Afterwards the party left once again by helicopter for Tarlac, the

town of the Don Bosco Technical Institute, the first salesian foundation in the Philippines, where Fr Chávez was received with great cordiality and immediately blessed the newly restored chapel, beautiful in its simplicity. In the school playground he was given a formal welcome by the local Mayor, the educative community, relatives of the pupils and representatives of the past-pupils. He spoke to the pupils, encouraging them to be "sentinels of the dawn" for all in society.

Once again by helicopter he continued on to Pampanga, to inaugurate the newly constructed buildings of Don Bosco Mabacalat. He was received with great festivity and dancing, accompanied by the Arun Vithaya School Brass Band made up of boys from Thailand. Before blessing the new building Fr Chávez thanked God for this gift to young people of a school, and thanked also all the benefactors who had made its realization possible.

In the afternoon he returned to Manila, still by helicopter, and spoke to the DBV and later to the FMA at their Provincial House.

19 January. The Rector Major ended his visit to the Manila Province at Canlubang with a Mass for all the members of the

Salesian Family who were celebrating the Feast of the Holy Infant. From there he went to the airport to fly to Bacolod, where he began the visit to the Province of **Cebu** with a meeting with all the Salesian Family on the Island of Negros.

On the following day he left for Cebu City, and a series of meetings with Cardinal Ricardo Vidal, confreres, and the Salesian Family.

Tuesday, 21st. He celebrated Mass for the students and the whole educative and pastoral community of the Don Bosco Technology Centre before a meeting with the Rectors. He had lunch with the novices and aspirants, had a meeting with the FMA, visited the Sanctuary of the Holy Infant, and ended the day with a visit to Pasil, a very significant work of the Province.

The visit to the Southern Philippines Province finished on Wednesday 22nd with a Mass for all the aspirants, postulants and novices. After breakfast Fr Chávez had a meeting with the Provincial Council and then left for the airport to fly to Bangkok.

The visit to **Thailand**, where celebrations were in progress for the 75th anniversary of salesian

work in the country, extended over two days. The first was of a religious character and took place in the church of the *Don Bosco Technical School* with a Eucharistic celebration at which Cardinal Michael Kitboonchoo presided and the concelebrants included six Bishops, all the Rectors and many priests from the various Salesian communities, as well as representatives of the different groups of the Salesian Family. After lunch Fr Chávez visited the *St Dominic Savio School*, and in the evening was taken for a cruise on the river.

The second day was given over to dynamic and enthusiastic youthful celebrations. About 7,000 young people came together in the immense covered space of the Sports Stadium from the works of four congregations belonging to the Salesian Family (Salesians, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Daughters of the Queenship of Mary), for a spectacle and manifestation of gratitude that went on for eight hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Government deputies, led by the Prime Minister, were the guests of honour on this great day, together with many important past-pupils of

the groups of the Salesian Family of Thailand. The projection of a video depicting 75 years of salesian history in the country was followed by spectacular musical and other presentations by the youngsters. The Rector Major closed the day with words of gratitude to the organizers, the past-pupils and especially the early Salesians whose work must be held in benediction. A most interesting day ended with a concelebration in honour of St Francis de Sales, and a procession of Mary Help of Christians.

After supper in the provincial house the Rector Major, accompanied by Fr Václav Klement and the provincial delegates of both the Asian Regions, left for Hua Hin, Prachuapkhirikhan, for the retreat preached by Fr Chávez from the 25th to 28th. While at Hua Hin, he was able also to visit the FMA and speak to their pupils. The retreat ended with a festive supper and a presentation of Thai culture in music and dance by the staff and pupils of the High School and the young people of the aspirantate.

The Rector Major called at Bangkkuaek, the place of arrival of the first Salesians in Thailand, and presided at a concelebrated Eucharist in the Cathedral. He

then continued his journey along the River Maeklong to Ratburi, where he paid a brief visit to the Bishop, the successor of two great salesian Bishops, Pezzati and Carretto. Going on to Banpong, he was received at Sarasit College. After lunch he first visited the house of the FMA and then the whole party moved first to the cemetery where are buried the deceased Salesians who have worked in Thailand, and then to the first salesian parish in the country where Fr Chávez had a short meeting with the parish council. He then returned to Sarasit on his way to the aspirantate of Narivoot-Nazareth, and later made a visit to the Don Bosco Technical Centre of Banpong. The party arrived back in Sampran in sufficient time for the Rector Major to visit the work of the FMA and of two other branches of the Salesian Family. The visit ended with supper in the studentate and a rapid visit to the school for the blind.

On his return to Italy, the Rector Major left on **31 January** for Turin and the Feast of Don Bosco. In the morning he had a meeting with the Cardinal Archbishop of Turin, Severino Poletto, and the Salesian Provincial, Fr Peter

Migliasso. He had lunch with the combined communities of Valdocco and then went with the Provincial and Vice-Provincial to call on the Mayor of Turin and his Deputy, who received him with great kindness in the City Hall, the first time a Rector Major had set foot in the building. They spoke at length about the social history of Turin and the prominent part played in it by Don Bosco in the education and formation of the young. The close collaboration which still continued between the Salesians and the City in running formative projects was seen as an investment for young workers to take their place in the working and cultural life of the town. In this connection Fr Stephen Martoglio presented the AGS Project (Salesian Youth Associations) for the area and explained to the Mayor how the salesian oratories fitted into the scheme. Next there was a significant exchange of gifts: the Mayor gave the Rector Major an inscribed plaque in memory of this event and a volume published in view of the coming winter Olympics of the year 2006, and Fr Chávez, on his side, presented the Mayor with a medallion of Don Bosco, impressed on both sides with scenes from salesian work for young peo-

ple, and a book dealing with the history of the Saint and the Congregation, written by a French Salesian, and subsequently translated into many languages and accompanied by a CD. Concluding the visit the Mayor expressed the hope that collaboration would continue, as a powerful investment in the city's future. "This city", he said, "is closely linked with Don Bosco, and even those who are not salesian have a positive impression in his regard". In his reply Fr Chávez emphasized the style in which the cooperation between Salesians and City should go ahead, the typical kind of education which has at heart the overall advancement of the young. "Let us continue to believe in young people", he said, "and to be convinced that education and positive anticipation are fundamental and essential elements in their regard".

Returning to Valdocco the Rector Major presided at the evening Mass, with the participation of the members of the Salesian Family of Piedmont, the young people from our various works and a great number of friends and devotees of Don Bosco. In his homily he addressed a Message to the members of the Salesian Youth Movement throughout the world:

“Be builders of peace and communion, beginning with those around you in the places where you live, in your families and schools, and in your entire neighbourhood. Bear witness to peace by creating peace around you”.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

The **winter plenary session** of the General Council began on 5 November 2002 and involved the Councillors – many of them coming from a first appreciation of the situation in the Regions – until 10 January 2003. In addition to the full assemblies, 34 in all, there were other meetings of groups or commissions for the study of certain topics. During the session there was also – between 17 and 27 November – a meeting of new provincials, who met with the Rector Major and the Council. The Councillors also contributed to other animation meetings especially those taking place at the Generalate (such as for example the meetings of the Rectors of Italy).

As always, in addition to dealing with topics or problems more directly concerned with the anima-

tion and guidance of the Congregation, the necessary time was also devoted to the ordinary practices coming from the provinces, such as: the appointment of members of the provincial councils, and the approval of the appointments of rectors, the opening and the canonical erection of houses and/or activities, practices regarding confreres and of an economic or administrative nature. There follows a summary of the more important items on the agenda.

1. *Appointment of Provincials.*

Also in this session, as in the previous one, there were a number of provinces in which, on account of the completion of the mandate of the provincial a new superior needed to be appointed. This the General Council proceeded to do following careful discernment and taking particular note of the results of the consultation that had taken place in the province.

This is the list, in alphabetical order of the provincials appointed during this session: Algorta del Castillo Juan, provincial of Uruguay; Filippin Claudio, provincial Venice, Italy; Frisoli Pier Fausto, provincial of Rome, Italy; Grünner Josef, provincial of München,

Germany; Havasi József, provincial of Hungary; Heuser James, provincial of New Rochelle, USA; Kuttianimattathil Jose, provincial of Bangalore, India; Lobo Charles, provincial of New Delhi, India; Niewęglowski Jan, provincial of Warsaw, Poland; Perrrelli Vito Luigi, provincial of Sicily, Italy; Puppo Orlando, provincial of Japan; Purdy David, provincial of San Francisco, USA; Ramírez Fernández José Pastor, provincial of the Antilles; Tirabasso Vicente, provincial of Bahía Blanca, Argentina.

At n. 5.3 of the present issue of the AGC are to be found some biographical details of the new provincials.

2. *Reports of Extraordinary Visitations.*

The examination of the reports of the Extraordinary Visitations presented by the respective Visitors, is always one of the more important items on the agenda of the General Council for the animation of the Congregation in its various local presences. It provides the opportunity to reflect together on the progress of each province on the basis of the Visitor's observations and to offer suggestions for the action of the

government. This results in recommendations useful for the Rector Major's concluding letter and in proposals for initiatives and guidance on the part of the General Council.

During this session, reports from two provinces. Great Britain and Tiruchy, India, and from the Mozambique Delegation (part of the Portuguese province) were studied.

3. *Drawing up the six year plan.*

Following up the work already begun in the plenary session of June-July 2002 (cf. AGC 379, pp. 66-68), the drawing up of the *Project of animation and government of the Rector Major and his Council for the period 2002-2008*, in its three parts was completed.:

1 – the priorities of the Congregation, with reference to the four priorities indicated by the recent General Chapter 25 which concluded in April: the primacy of the spiritual life in the community; the witness of the community to communion and fraternity; the renewed effectiveness of the salesian presence among the young; formation as a personal and community commitment. These general priorities become the refer-

ence points for the projects of the sectors and the regions.

2 – the application of the project to the individual sectors, in which the priorities and general objectives are applied to the areas of animation of each of the sectors with their respective and specific areas of competence.

3 – the application of the project in the individual regions, in which the priorities, the objectives and the proposals, both of the general project and of the sectors are “contextualised” in the different regions or areas; there is then added whatever is specific to the Region on account of its structure and composition or of the religious and cultural situation in which it finds itself.

The Project in its entirety and especially in the general part was presented by the Rector Major himself in n. 380 of the AGC (cf. pp. 9-17). The whole project in its three parts and their development was published in the same n. 380 of the AGC.

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

Among acts of government, should be mentioned in particular the decision taken by the Rector

Major with his Council, after careful study and consultation of the confreres promoted by the Rector Major, to erect a new province in the north east of Italy, with headquarters in Venice- Mestre, as the result of the unification of the two provinces of Venice-Mestre and Verona.

The decree of the erection of the province, named “San Marco”, in which its composition and the criteria for belonging to it are specified, is reported in the present number of the AGC in n. 5.2 (p. 102-104).

5. *Topics studied and decisions taken.*

In the course of the session, as well as matters concerning the provinces and regions, the Council considered some issues connected more generally with the government and animation of the Congregation, paying particular attention to the Project of animation and government for the six year period and to the life and activity of the Council itself. Some practical decisions were then taken regarding matters discussed. The main topics considered were:

– **Vademecum of the General Council.** One of the issues

with direct reference to the General Council itself was that of the *Vademecum* of the General Council which was reviewed part by part, in the light of some of the changes prescribed by GC25 and of a clarification of the roles and tasks of the Council as a whole and of the individual Councillors.

– **The organic project of the UPS.**

For the present, the topic was considered from one aspect, the basic juridical standpoint. It is a question of re-defining the policy of the Congregation with regard to the UPS; of giving an authoritative direction to the University and to the individual faculties; indicating our strong points in relation to the identity of the UPS and to the service it ought to render to the Congregation; revitalizing the University as a place for getting to know Don Bosco and his educational system, as has always been and should continue to be one of the greatest contributions provided by the UPS.

- **IUS: approval of important documents.** Continuing the study undertaken in other sessions regarding the Salesian

University Institutions, approval was given to the documents “*Identity of salesian institutions of higher education*” and “*Policies for salesian presence in higher education*”, which become the frame of reference for the future of our formal presence in the university context. The service of the Headquarters to the IUS from now on will be the responsibility of the Youth Ministry Department.

– **The formation house at Cremisan:**

during the session, the General Council considered a “Study of the Cremisan Project” prepared by the Councillor for Formation, which represents a stage beyond the “Report on the Theological Studentate of Cremisan”, prepared by the provincial of the Middle East for the summer session of 2002. One of the decisions taken by the General Council, after having studied the project, was to reopen the first year of theology beginning in September 2003.

- **The OPP (Organic Provincial Plan).** The General Council prepared a document for the provinces to help them draw up

and implement - during the next three years - the Organic Provincial Plan (cf. GC25, 82-84). It is an attempt to provide a more systematic synthesis of the various projects indicated by the last General Chapters, particularly by GC25. The purpose of the document is to clarify the various projects altogether (the nature, the elements of each one, the relationship between them etc.). The document presented by the Councillor for Youth Ministry, is to be found in the present number of the AGC in n. 2.1.

- **The Generalate: the Blessed Michael Rua community.** In response to the deliberation of the GC25 (cf. n. 117), the General Council spent some time during the session considering the question of the Blessed Michael Rua community, more specifically the relationship of the General Council with the Community of the Generalate.
- **The financial and economic policy of the Congregation.** Following the presentation by the Economist General who described the current situation and the commitments

that will need to be faced, the General Council approved the general lines for the financial and economic policy of the Congregation.

- **Don Bosco International (DBI) and Don Bosco Network.** The General Council approved the creation of "*Don Bosco Network*", made up of the Mission Offices and other NGOs, so that they come under the umbrella of the already existing and approved "*Don Bosco International*", which both in the manner of its foundation and in the formulation of its Statutes was set up to represent the Congregation as such before the European Community.
- **Manner of conducting the General Chapter.** The General Council considered an outline drawn up by the Councillor for Youth Ministry Fr Antonio Domenech, with Fr Francesco Maraccani, regarding an evaluation of the General Chapters requested by GC25, 136. There was a first discussion of the topic in the Council in order to better define the points on which to concentrate so as to respond to the deliberation of the GC25.

– **Project for the cultural heritage of the Congregation.**

Considering the huge quantity of cultural patrimony that the Salesian Congregation possesses, the Rector Major proposed to define more specifically the policy of the Congregation in this regard. A commission was set up, composed of some of the Councillors, which would be responsible for some areas of this patrimony. During this six year period it is proposed to begin to catalogue some of the items of the cultural heritage. The initiative will be further clarified and communicated to the provincials in a future number of the AGC.

- **A “logo” for the whole Congregation.** Following a proposal by the Councillor for Social Communication, the General Council, spent some time considering the possibility of a common *Logo* for the whole Congregation. It is a proposal that needs to involve all the Provinces, bearing in mind the various cultural contexts; for this reason it is proposed to create a new *Logo* for the Headquarters, which could be a common point of reference for all the Congregation, and prepare

the way for the future with its spontaneous and gradual adoption by the Provinces and groups of the Salesian Family.

– **Internet Web Page of the Congregation.**

The General Council was informed about the project of a new web page and the process of its restructuring.

- **AFW Delegation:** The General Council was informed about the present situation and the prospects for a process of creating a new independent circumscription in English speaking Africa (AFW), that includes four countries in West Africa (Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone). The Rector Major with a view to setting up a Vice Province, has written to the confreres in the present AFW Delegation, asking their opinion on the matter.

In the course of the session, among specially significant events were the Celebration of the Eucharist by the Rector Major and all the General Council on 16 November 2002 at the Generalate of the FMA, on the occasion of the closure of the FMA GC21. On Monday 23 December, the Gener-

al Council had a full day of recollection, at the novitiate in Genzano, led by Prof. Mauro Morfino, SDB, Teacher of Biblical Studies in the Pontifical Theological Faculty of Sardinia in Cagliari.

4.3 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

The Vicar of the Rector Major began the month of August 2002 presiding at two Masses on the occasion of the religious profession of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Roma, and *Contra di Missaglia*. In the middle of August he attended three study days in Mozambique, commemorating the fifty years presence of the Salesians there. On the way back from Mozambique he visited the communities of Manzini in Swaziland and Luanda in Angola. He spent the last week of August with his family in Belgium and was then in Turin on the last day of the month for the installation of the new Provincial.

On 7 and 8 September in Verona he took part in a meeting of the National Committee of the Italian Past Pupils. On 10 Sep-

tember he was at Mornese to receive the urn of Mother Mazzarelli in her own home town. Then between 13 and 16 he was in Ireland. On 18 he was present for the opening of the General Chapter of the FMA. Then on 20-21 September, he went to England for a meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Union of Catholic Teachers. On 22 September he was in the parish of Cassino; that evening he presided at the perpetual profession ceremony of some Salesians from the "Sacro Cuore" in Rome. Between 24 September and 1 October he was in South Korea; then between 1 and 6 October he attended the celebrations for the 50 years presence of the Salesians in Vietnam, first in Hanoi and then in Ho-Chi-Minh City. Between 14 and 29 October in the name of the Rector Major, he carried out the canonical visitation of the Blessed Michael Rua Community of the Generalate. However in the course of the visitation he went to Spain for a meeting of European Past Pupils 19-20 October, and to Vigliano Biellese (Piemonte) on the 26, and Palermo on the 27th.

On 2 November he presided at the vigil organized by the FMA to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the departure of the first

missionaries for Latin America and on 3 November he took part in the Central Council Meeting of the Volunteers of Don Bosco. On 5 November the plenary session of the General Council began. On 8, 9 and 10 November Fr Van Looy attended in Fürstenried near Munich in Germany, the Salesian Youth Spirituality Days organized by the 5 Provinces (SDB and FMA) of Germany and Austria. On 8 December he celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in the house of Cuorgnè in Piedmont.

The Councillor for Formation

From the end of July until the end of September 2002 the Councillor for Formation Fr Francesco Cereda, was in *Maynooth*, Ireland, studying English. During this time on 11-12 September he took part in *Madrid* in the *formation week for all the formation personnel* and the provincial delegates for formation in the Iberian Region; during the meeting special attention was given to a study of the art of personal guidance; the projects of the formation communities for the different stages were also considered.

In October Fr Cereda took part

in a meeting of the Rectors in the Lombardo-Emiliana Province, presenting the topic: "The Project of the Salesian Community". Afterwards he visited the *international communities in Rome*: Gerini, Testaccio, and the UPS; he met the équipes of formation personnel and the young confreres in the novitiate of *Pinerolo* and the Theologate in *Torino-Crocetta*; he also met the teaching staff of the Study Centre Torino-Crocetta. On Sunday 6 October he took part in the commemoration of Fr Egidio Viganò at Sondrio and the naming of a Square in the city in his honour.

Between 21 October and 3 November he was in Africa. First he visited the *formation communities in the AFE Province* the prenovitiate in Nairobi, the novitiate and postnovitiate at Moshi in Tanzania, the community of the students of theology in Nairobi-Utume, the inter-congregational Study Centre "Tangaza College". He was able to speak with the young confreres, with the équipes of formation personnel and the teachers. At the same time he was able to see the pastoral and salesian context, meeting confreres and youngsters in various other communities: street children, a technical training cen-

tre, a youth spirituality centre. He also went to visit the community of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

He then went on to *visit South Africa*, where he met the young confreres and the formation personnel in the postnovitiate at Cape Town, and also the Bishop, the diocesan Study Centre and the teachers there. He greeted the confreres working in the parishes and with the street children; he also met the prenovices from Rynfield.

Finally he took part in the first meeting of the CIVAM, *the Conference of the Provinces and Vice Provinces of the Africa and Madagascar Region*, which was held in Johannesburg. With the Provincials and Delegates for two days there was study and discussion of the topic: "The formation communities and study centres of the Region" and also "The application of the 'Ratio' in every Province." Some interesting decisions were made regarding inter-provincial collaboration, the specific formation of the Salesian Brother, Salesianità and inculturation in Africa, the formation of the formation personnel. A day was also spent studying GC25, in particular the topic: "Formation requirements of GC25".

The Councillor for Youth Ministry

As soon as the plenary session of the General Council was finished, the Councillor for Youth Ministry Fr Antonio Domenech, took part, with a group of the SYM of the Roman Province in the *World Youth Day* in Toronto, between 21 and 28 July. In the afternoon of 23 July he met the groups of the SYM present at the Day.

On 3-4 August he took part in the formation meeting for the parish clergy of Italy which took place at the Pisana, and from 7 until 9 August in the Provincial Assembly of the FMA of Seville (Spain), speaking about the co-responsibility of lay people in the educative community.

After some days rest with his family, between 30 August and 1 September he met the équipe of the "Jeugddienst Don Bosco" from North Belgium to hear about the progress made by some salesian youth organizations in Europe to create a European network.

During the month of September the Councillor with his équipe studied and completed the drawing up of the animation project of the Department.

Between 21 and 23 September at Catania he took part in a meet-

ing of the Youth Ministry section of the CNOS, at which the basic outline of the work of animation to be carried out in the next few years in Italy was decided.

In the first weekend in October Fr Domenech attended a meeting of the SYM in Slovakia, held at Zilina, with more than 2000 young people taking part.

On 11 October at the Pisana there was a meeting of the central équipe for the preparation of the European meeting on salesian presence among immigrants. Then the Councillor took part in the closing ceremony for the centenary of the Salesian presence in Ancona, with a meeting about the Oratory.

Between 13 and 19 October he was in New Delhi (India), to take part in an assessment and planning meeting by Provincial Delegates and team members for Youth Ministry from the nine Indian Provinces (DBYA). At the meeting the basic outline of the work of animation for the next five years in the Indian Provinces was agreed.

During the weekend 25-27 October the Councillor met with the Provincials of CIMEC and discussed the projects requested by GC25 from the Provinces and communities. After this he left

for Chile, to take part in a provincial meeting of Rectors, parish clergy and pastoral workers. In the meeting he was able to help clarify some aspects of the working model of Salesian Youth Ministry and its application to the concrete situation in the province.

In the course of the plenary session of the Council, Fr Domenech led a workshop on community discernment, within the formation sessions for Rectors of the Italian Provinces held at the Pisana between 18 and 21 November and between 2 and 5 December.

The Councillor for Social Communication

The Councillor for Social Communication, Fr Tarcisio Scaramussa, spent the months between August and November 2002, attending above all to the organization of the Department.

The Department completed the work of drawing up its Plan for the six year period bringing together the reports sent in from the Regions and Provincial Councils (04), the personal reports of the Provincials (17), from Social Communication delegates and directors of the Salesian Bulletin (21) and from various advisors (12).

At the same time the process was begun of forming a new *équipe* for the Department and reorganizing the work in view of the planning programme.

The projects on the new web page and for the provision of a central assistance service for the Salesian Bulletins were launched.

With the aim of improving the contributions by the Department to the General Planning of the Rector Major and his Council several items were produced for the greater diffusion of the Project and of the 25th General Chapter especially through the ANS Agency.

In addition the Department took part in the meeting of the Social Communication Delegates of the Iberian Conference and those of Italy. The Councillor also visited the provinces of Barcelona, Córdoba, Madrid, Seville, in Spain, and that of Portugal. These meetings provided the opportunity to have a better first hand knowledge of the situation regarding Social Communications in these Provinces, and at the same time to present the planning for the six year period.

The Councillor for the Missions

Between 21 July and 22 August the Councillor for the Missions,

Fr Francis Alencherry, was in the community of Maria Auxiliadora, Salamanca, attending an intensive course in the Spanish language. He availed of the occasion to visit some of the nearby salesian houses and also Barcelona. In particular, he spent the 18 August in the postnovitiate at Burgos, in the Province of León, speaking to the students about the salesian missions.

Before and after the course, he visited the Mission Office in Madrid to get to know the confreres working there.

Between 27 August and 3 September he was in Germany and in Switzerland: in Germany he visited the Bonn Mission Office and took part in a meeting for the Mission Offices in the German speaking Provinces which took place at Saasgrund in Switzerland 30-31 August. It was a good opportunity to get to know at first hand the efforts made by these Offices, working closely together, to carry on the great work undertaken to support the missions.

Between 19 and 29 September the Councillor and the members of his *équipe* in the Department were engaged in the animation of the missionaries due to leave. The first part of the short course in preparation for the ceremony of

giving the missionary cross was held at the Pisana, led by the Councillor and by Fr Joseph Puthenpurackal. The second part consisted in a guided pilgrimage to those places of significance in salesian history and spirituality. On 29 September the Rector Major gave the missionary cross to 11 Salesians and 12 lay volunteers in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin.

On 10-12 October the Councillor and his équipe took part in a meeting of those responsible for the International Mission Offices and of the NGOs connected with them. This first meeting of the new six year period which took place at St Callistus, in Rome, was a useful opportunity to share the experiences of those in charge of the Offices and the managers, in order to better focus the policy for missionary assistance.

On 14 October the Councillor left for the Indonesia-Timor Vice Province, to visit the missions. After two days in Jakarta, he went to East Timor. He visited all the communities as well as several mission stations of some of the parishes. At Quilicai and Baguia, in the vast parish of Laga, he met groups of catechists, and spoke to them about the role of the cate-

chist. On 25 October some of the confreres directly involved in the missionary work met with the Councillor and with the Provincial at Baucau, to reflect together on missionary animation and missionary planning. Fr Alencherry also had the opportunity to take part in the first thanksgiving Mass of two new Timorese priests, one of whom - Fr Adolfo de Jesús Sermento - is a missionary in Mozambique.

After his visit to East Timor, the Councillor went to Cambodia. Between 29 October and 3 November he visited the salesian presences in this country. On 31 October all the 10 confreres who are working in Cambodia came together in Shihanoukville for the monthly day of recollection. After leading the day, the Councillor took the opportunity to consider with the confreres the future of the salesian presence and apostolate in Cambodia.

On the way back to Rome, he also visited some salesian houses in Thailand, close to the city of Bangkok.

In this first visit, the Councillor for the missions was able to appreciate the magnificent work done in various places by our confreres in spite of great difficulties.

The Economer General

At the end of the first plenary session of the new General Council, Fr Mazzali stayed at the Generalate until the end of August. Between 27 August and 3 September at the salesian house of Col di Nava, he led the school camp for the boys and youngsters from the Don Bosco Oratory of the parish of the Holy Martyrs of Sangano (province of Turin). After a period of rest with his family he returned to the Generalate to continue his normal activities.

Between 1 October and 4 November Fr Mazzali visited the Provinces of Guwahati and Dimapur, in the North East of India, with a very heavy programme that enabled him to reach the great majority of the salesian communities. During the visit to the communities he was also able to visit some of the presences of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians and other groups of the Salesian Family.

The Regional Councillor for Africa and Madagascar

In these months at the beginning of the six year period, the Regional Councillor for Africa and

Madagascar Fr Valentín de Pablo, has made a rapid visit to the eastern part of the region, to make a first contact with the confreres and get to know the salesian presences. The countries visited were: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In each of the provinces the Councillor met the provincial councils and visited some communities, especially the training houses. In the local communities he spoke with the confreres and greeted the students. In the meeting with the provincial Council, the Regional was able to hear about the conditions in each province: the situation, challenges and action plans. In meetings with the confreres he presented the "*Project of the RM and his Council*" and the current situation in the Africa-Madagascar Region, emphasising openness and a sense of belonging to the region.

Ethiopia (28 July - 05 August).

In the capital of the country, *Addis-Abeba*, the Regional visited the new Provincial House building, the Technical Training Centre and the Prenovitiate at *Mekanissa*, and the new presence *St Joseph's House* for street children. Accompanied by the Provin-

cial he went to the north of the country to visit the community at the Technical School in *Adwa*, the Formation House in *Adigrat* and the Aspirantate and Technical School at *Makallé*. Returning to the capital, the Regional continued visiting the presences in the south: the Novitiate at *Debre-Zeit*, the parish and secondary school at *Zway* and the nearby mission station *Adamitulo*. At *Dilla*, he visited the primary and secondary schools, the hostel for difficult boys, the parish and mission stations at *Cabado* and *Walame*. In this community his visit coincided with that of the Prefect Apostolic of *Gambella*, the Salesian Mgr. Angelo Moreschi, and the Regional was able to hear from him about the fine work that was being done in this Prefecture Apostolic and the possibility of salesian collaboration.

Kenya (05-12 August).

At the provincial house in *Nairobi*, the Regional met for the first time the Salesians from the nearby houses. The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians were also there. On another occasion he met the Provincial Council and examined the situation in the four countries making up the Province: Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and

Tanzania. On the 6th he drove to the frontier with Tanzania; here during the following week he visited the communities of *Moshi*, where there are the Novitiate Postnovitiate, the two presences in *Dodoma* – a Seminary and Technical School –, The Technical School at *Iringa*, the three presences in *Mafinga*, Parish, Seminary and Catechetical centre; the two presences in *Dar-es-Salaam* – the Youth Centre and Technical School. In the grounds of the latter a new Mission Office and Hostel are going to be built.

Mozambique (12-31 August).

The Regional took part in the celebrations for the 50 years presence of the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Mozambique. The most important occasions were: between 15 and 18 August, the *National Congress of Technical Training*; this received considerable attention because of the publicity in the media; the first address was given by the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Luc Van Looy, who spoke about the humanistic values of Technical Training in the light of salesian educational methods. A second important occasion was the *Ordination to the priesthood* of four Salesians,

by his Eminence the Cardinal of Maputo.

South Africa.

During the months of September and October, the Regional stayed for a longer time in South Africa, to visit the salesian presences and for a period of intense study of English. Between 13 and 15 September, he went to *Lesotho*, to get to know the salesian presence in *Maputsoe*, a very active Parish, primary and secondary schools, and an oratory; there is also the Novitiate for the Provinces of Zambia and South Africa. In the region of the Transvaal (Gauteng), the Regional visited community of *Walkerville*, a very active Youth Pastoral Centre for the diocese and Catholic schools, with extensive facilities for meetings of young people; there is also an exemplary primary school for those most in need. He also visited the community of *Robertsham*, made up of the confreres who are working in the presences of *Booyens* and *Ennerdale*: this is an extremely poor area with many young peoples, and presents a real challenge for the salesian charism.

On 2 October, the Regional went to visit the area of *Cape Town* in the south of South Africa. *The*

Salesian Institute, the first salesian presence in the province, is geared to working for boys in difficulty and is the residence for the group of Postnovices from ZMB and AFM. He also visited the areas of *Lansdowne* and *Michel's plain*, where the Salesians are in charge of six Parishes: *Hannover Park*, *Westridge*, *Rocklands*, *Lentegeur* and *Strandfontein*. He also visited the Major Seminary where the Postnovices are studying and went to see the Archbishop.

Madagascar (27 September – 1 October).

The Regional visited for the first time the large island's plateau. At *Fianarantsoa* there was the inauguration and blessing of the new buildings of the Formation House for the postnovitiate and the theologate, and the perpetual profession of three Malagasci confreres. On 30 September he visited the Parish mission of *Betafo* with secondary school and aspirantate. At *Ivato* he visited the Provincial House, *Radio Don Bosco*, the Technical School *N.D. de Clairvaux*, and the site of the future novitiate.

Zambia (20-25 October).

In the capital, *Lusaka*, the Regional inaugurated the new

Provincial House in the *Chawama* district, in the presence of the Archbishop, various authorities and many Salesians and Friends from the Salesian Family. He visited the Parish in *Lusaka-Bauleni*, with a hostel and development centre. On 22 October he travelled to the north of the country to visit the parish of *Kabwe* and the technical school and aspirantate at *Chingola*.

Zimbabwe (25-26 October).

Accompanied by the Provincial, the Regional visited – in the capital of the country – the salesian presence of *Harare-Bellvedere*, site of the community that looks after the parish with three centres: *Kambusuma*, *Waren Park* and *Kuanza*.

A very important event was the “*Conference of the Provinces and Vice Provinces of Africa-Madagascar*” (CIVAM), that took place in Johannesburg between 28 October and 2 November.

It was the first time that the Region had come together as a Conference, after the CIVAM was approved by the Rector Major and his Council (29-04-2002). The existence of this Conference enables the Region to take responsibility for the animation of the salesian

life and mission. The topics dealt with in the first meeting were: *Planning programme for the six year period as a Region*, selecting some priorities. – *Methodology of coordination according to different sectors*. – *Reflection on initial formation and on inter-provincial centres*. – *Transmission and implementation of the GC25*. – *Situation and challenges in the area of finances*. At the meeting of CIVAM Fr Francesco Cereda, Councillor for Formation and Fr Chrys Saldanha also took part.

As a methodology for the Region the setting up of two commissions was approved: *Formation and Youth Ministry*, which will be made up of the respective provincial delegates. The following Provincials were named as chairmen for the Commissions: Fr Luiz Piccoli (ANG) for Formation, and Fr Miguel Olaverri (ATE) for Youth Ministry.

A “*Financial Fund*” was also set up to which all the provinces contribute, to help with the running of the Commissions, with a sense of solidarity as a Region. Fr Alfredo Roca (AET) was chosen to administer the fund.

The Conference was an experience of great harmony and communication among the Circumscriptions of the Region. With this

first meeting a process of reflecting together and collaboration has begun that will lead to a growth in salesian identity, and to the consolidation of the choices that are being made.

The Regional Councillor for Latin America – South Cone

When the summer session of the General Council concluded, the Regional Councillor Fr Helvécio Baruffi, spent two weeks in León, Spain, in the provincial house, for a course in Spanish. Afterwards he left for Brazil, spending some days in Porto Alegre, where he visited the prenovitiate and the postnovitiate.

From Porto Alegre he went to Campo Grande. Between 14 and 19 August the Regional Councillor visited the formation houses, met with the Provincial Council and visited some of the works in the city.

Afterwards between 21 and 30 August he went to the Province of Manaus, where he met the Provincial Council and visited the formation houses. The vocation situation is very positive. Although the time was short he was able to visit the confreres in the mission of São Gabriel da Cachoeira.

Between 21 and 23 August at Manaus, he chaired the meeting of the *CISBRASIL* (Provincial Conference of Brazil), which took place in the provincial house. The following topics were on the Agenda: strategic planning of the *CISBRASIL*; evaluation of the meetings held in the period. After a long period of discernment, the Provincials agreed that the Pius XI Theological Institute, at Lapa, São Paulo, starting next year will be the Study Centre for the students of theology from all the Provinces in Brazil. The theological study centre in the province of Belo Horizonte would continue as an alternative.

Between 2 and 8 September the Regional Councillor went to the province of San Paolo where he visited the aspirantate of Piracicaba, the postnovitiate of Lorena and the theology students at Lapa. He observed an atmosphere of serenity among those in formation and of trust in the formation personnel.

On 9 September he left for Paraguay. Between 10 and 22, besides visiting the formation communities, the Regional Councillor had a meeting with the Provincial Council and with the Commissions for Formation and Youth Ministry. In the missions of Chaco

Paraguay he met the Salesian missionaries and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians during a pastoral planning session.

Between 23 September and 5 October, Fr Baruffi conducted the consultation in the province of Bahía Blanca, Argentina, in view of the appointment of the Provincial, meeting groups of confreres for a day of discernment in five areas of the province: for those in the mission region, at Junín de los Andes; for those from the Rio Negro region, at Cipolletti; for those of the Southern region at Comodoro Rivadavia; for those from the centre at Fortín Mercedes; for those from the Mission Office and students of theology at Buenos Aires.

On 7-8 October he took part in the *CISUR* (Provincial Conference of the South), which was held at Buenos Aires, where they exchanged experiences of the implementation of the GC25, evaluated the meetings of ongoing formation and those of Youth Ministry for the young, and produced the forward planning. On the 8th he met the *JIAR*, (Committee of the Provincials of Argentina), to deal with some issues of common interest for the Salesians in Argentina. These included the Interprovincial Novitiate, the Sale-

sian Bulletin, etc.

Between 9 and 19 October the Regional accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to all the provinces of Argentina. The visit of the Rector Major was a very significant occasion for animation in this very difficult time that is being experienced in Argentina.

Finally between 19 and 21 October, he accompanied the Rector Major to Recife, and took part in the closure of the provincial centenary celebrations. There were two particularly important occasions: the solemn thanksgiving celebration in the Sanctuary of the Sacred Heart and the celebration as part of the pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians at Jaboatão.

After spending some days with his family, on 29 October the Councillor returned to Rome to take part in the meetings of the winter session of the General Council.

The Regional Councillor for Interamerica

When the summer session of the General Council concluded the Regional Councillor Fr D. Esteban Ortiz González, immediately went to Ecuador for the instal-

lation of the new Provincial, Fr Francisco Sánchez Carrión, and the episcopal ordination of Mgr. Luis Sánchez Armijos, Bishop of Tulcán, former provincial of Ecuador 1991-1997.

Beginning on 5 August for seven weeks he took an intensive course in English in New York.

Between 10 and 12 August the Regional visited the community in Montreal (Canada) and taking advantage of the beginning of the annual retreat was able to meet almost all the SDB.

On 16 August in Manhattan (New York) he joined in the Mass for the first profession of three novices, two from SUE and one from CAN.

On 21 September he began the consultation for the new salesian provincials in the United States: East (SUE) and West (SUO). In five meetings in the SUE province (at Chicago, Washington, New York, Tampa and Miami) 119 SDB took part; at three in the SUO province (at San Francisco, Watsonville and Los Angeles), 86 SDB. Being in the United States for the consultations enabled him to get to know several salesian works and to visit the formation houses.

On 4 October, to begin the consultation in the Antilles province

he went to Cuba, then on to Puerto Rico and to the Dominican republic. In this province there were four meetings in which 128 SDB took part. In addition to the consultation, he visited several houses including the postnovitiate in Santo Domingo.

On 10 October he visited Haïti passing through the salesian houses we have in Port-au-Prince, including the postnovitiate.

On 12 October Fr Esteban Ortiz went to Cochabamba, in Bolivia, to chair the annual meeting of the Provincials of the Inter-america Region which began on Monday morning 14, and finished Friday evening 19.

With the participation of all the Provincials and of the Rectors of CRESCO (San Salvador) and of CSRFP (Quito), there was a consideration of the communication of the GC25 and of the implementation of the Ratio. The Planning of the Rector Major and his Council were looked at, and some documents concerning the IUS (identity and policies) examined, and the guidelines regarding cases of the "abuse of children". In addition there was an evaluation of the progress of the ongoing formation centres and their programmes for the coming year approved.

After the meeting in Cochabamba, everyone went to La Paz to get to know the salesian presence in that city and also in El Alto.

On 22 October with seven Provincials, the Regional took part in the inauguration at Quito of the new headquarters of CSRFP.

On 24 October he was in Bogotá to take part in the "Curatorium" of the theologate, which has students from the provinces of COB, ECU, HAI and PER. Then, for two days he visited the province of Bogotá: meeting the provincial council, visiting the prenovitiate (Mosquera) and the postnovitiate, and some other salesian works.

On 27 and 28 he was in Medellín, where he met the Provincial Council, visited several works and saw the prenovices in Rionegro. Having returned to Bogotá, he visited the new community that the Medellín province has set up in the city for its students of theology.

On 29 October Fr. Esteban Ortiz reached Caracas for a visit: meeting the Provincial Council and visiting several presences of the province in Caracas and Valencia. At Los Teques he had a meeting with all the Salesians in initial formation.

Finally on 1^o November the Regional returned to the Generalate.

The Regional Councillor for East Asia – Oceania

When the summer plenary session of the Council finished, Fr Václav Klement left for his first visit to the new Region, in the course of which he was able to visit eight of the nine provinces. He was able to get to know the situation of the Salesians in 13 countries and to present the forward planning for the six year period.

He began his visit in Indonesia and East Timor (19-31 July), meeting all the communities and taking part in a meeting of the Provincial Council. On 24 July at Fatumaca he presided at the first profession of 14 young confreres.

Then for the whole month of August he visited Manila (Philippines North), taking the opportunity to improve his English and to visit all the 24 communities. He took part in a meeting of Rectors, presided at the perpetual profession ceremony on 15 August and conferred the Ministries of Lector and Acolyte on 14 September in the studentate at Parañaque.

In the month of September he went to Papua New Guinea (1-11 September) where he met the confreres from the 4 communities; there was also a meeting with the Council of the Delegation.

Returning to the Philippines he was able to visit almost all communities in the Cebu province, and took part in a meeting of the Rectors and of the Provincial Council (12-20 September). On 19 September in Cebu he presided at the perpetual profession of Brother Thomas De Carvalho (ITM).

From Cebu he went to the province of Thailand where in three different places he was able to speak about the General Chapter to almost all the confreres (21-28 September). During these days he also visited the missionary community in Cambodia.

The week spent in the province of Vietnam (28 September – 4 October) was marked by the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the salesian presence in the country. Besides joining the celebrations in Ho-Chi-Minh City and Hanoi, he met the provincial council.

Between 5 and 15 October the Regional carried out the consultation in Japan in view of the appointment of the new Provincial, meeting the confreres from all the communities in 7 places. In the meeting of the Rectors and the Provincial Council he presented the forward planning for the six year period. On 5 October he was able to meet the Salesian Family

gathered together for “Cimatti day” at Chofu, Tokyo.

During a short visit to Korea (16-20 October) Fr Klement went to the formation communities, and met the Provincial Council. He spent 20 October with the Provincial Council of the Cooperators and with Mr Philip Yu, Regional Councillor for the Cooperators, preparing the Regional Congress planned for 2004.

From Seoul the Regional went to Mongolia (21-24 October), where he visited the new community in Ulanbaatar, and went to see the city of Darhan where we have been invited by the Prefect Apostolic of Mongolia, Mgr. Padilla, CICM.

Then he headed for the Chinese Province (25 October-2 November). In the company of the Provincial and Vice Provincial, the Regional was able to visit all the communities and works in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. He took part in the meeting of the Rectors, the Provincial Council and the confreres gathered together to discuss the future of the Province. As part of this discernment, he also met all the Bishops in whose dioceses we are working (Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei, Tainan, Kaishung).

Finally on 3 November he returned to Rome.

The Regional Councillor for South Asia

When the first summer session of the Council after the GC25 was finished, the Regional Councillor for South Asia, Fr Joaquim D'Souza, went to New Delhi to carry out the consultation for the appointment of the new provincial (25-30 July). The consultation was presented in three meetings, two in New Delhi itself and a third at Jabalpur in the State of Madhya Pradesh. Another that was planned for Ranchi, in the State of Bihar, could not be held because of the political disturbances in that area.

From New Delhi the Regional went to Bangalore for a second consultation for the new provincial. For this there were several meetings, two in Bangalore and two in the State of Kerala (31 July-3 August). Most of the confreres were able to take part in the meetings.

After this Fr D'Souza went to Tiruchy in the State of Tamilnadu, to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation* on 5 August, feast of Our Lady and third anniversary of the founding of the province of Tiruchy (INT). The Visitation finished on 12 October, after which the Regional visited all the 22

houses and presences in the province and met all the confreres living there during the Visitation.

Between 17 and 19 September the Regional presided at a session of the Provincial Conference of the Region, which took place at Tiruchy, and which was attended by the nine provincials and nine provincial Delegates plus the Delegates of the Delegations of Sri Lanka and of Konkan (the Delegate from the Delegation of Myanmar was absent), those responsible for the Interprovincial Commissions for Formation, Youth Ministry, Social Communication, the Salesian Family and the Missions - 25 participants in all. The main purpose of this special Assembly was to study the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council for the six year period 2002-2008, and the drawing up of a similar Plan for the South Asia Region. There was also discussion and a plan drawn up of the celebration of the Centenary of salesian presence in India which will take place in 2005-2006. On 20 September the Regional with all those attending the Assembly made a pilgrimage to the well known Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Health at Vailankanni, to offer the results of the planning done to Our Lady

and ask her blessing on the new Region.

Having completed the Extraordinary Visitation of Tiruchy, Fr D'Souza went to New Delhi again to take part in the plenary session of the Interprovincial Commission for Youth Ministry (Don Bosco Youth Animation), at which, in addition to all the members of the YM teams of the nine Provinces of the Region, the General Councillor for Youth Ministry, Fr Antonio Domenech was also present. Between 14 and 17 October the Assembly, with about sixty participants studied the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council and that of the Youth Ministry Department in order to draw up its own Plan for the six year period 2002-2008.

After the meeting at New Delhi ended the Regional went to Mumbai for another working session with the Inter-Provincial Formation Commission (19-20 October), with the same purpose of studying the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council and that of the Formation Department, in order to draw up their own plan for the six year period.

When the meetings were over, between 21 and 24 October the Regional went on a fact finding and animation visit to the houses

of Gujarat in the Province of Mumbai (INB) after the devastation caused by the earthquake and the recent inter-religious conflicts between the Hindus and the Muslims, in which more than a thousand people lost their lives. He found the confreres at their posts, serene and involved in helping the youngsters and the poor.

On 30 October, after a short stay with his family, the Regional returned to Rome.

The Regional Councillor For North Europe

At the end of the summer session of the General Council, Fr Albert Van Hecke, spent some days with his family in Belgium, after which he went to Cogne for a period of rest.

Immediately afterwards, between 12 August and 5 September he was at Maynooth (Ireland) to attend an English language course.

After spending three days in Rome he left for Glasgow where he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Great Britain Province*. During the Visitation he also had the opportunity of meeting the various groups of the Salesian Family, of seeing the very courageous presences in areas of

great poverty, of appreciating the very significant commitment of confreres in school chaplaincies and the strong collaboration of the lay people in the parishes.

After finishing the Extraordinary Visitation he returned to Rome on 15 October.

Between 17 and 22 October, the Regional was in Waldwinkel (Germany) for the inauguration and blessing of the new buildings for the work with the handicapped. He then went to Warsaw to take part in the meeting of the Polish Provincial Conference. At the meeting the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council for the six year period 2002-2008 was presented. Other topics dealt with were: the Mission Office, co-ordination of Youth ministry, religious teaching in schools, then work of the Publishing house in Warsaw, the Salesian Bulletin, the future of salesian schools in Poland.

The Regional had another important engagement in Hungary at Péliföldszenterest, between 25 and 28 October, when he was able to meet several confreres and take part in the annual meeting of CIMEC. On this occasion too he was able to present the Planning Programme of the Rector Major and the various projects proposed

by the GC25 were considered: the Organic Provincial Project, the Community Project, the personal project of salesian life, the SEPP. These projects were presented by Fr Antonio Domenech, Councillor for the Youth Ministry Department.

Immediately afterwards the Regional chaired the Commission of the "Atlantic Area" of the Region at Soest in Holland, which had the same purpose: the presentation of the Forward Planning for the next six year period. Other issues considered were models of Interprovincial collaboration, especially in the field of Formation, vocation ministry, international communities etc.

Between 29 November and 2 December the Regional chaired the meeting of the German speaking Provincial Conference at Munich in Germany. There too the Planning programme was examined. Other items dealt with were: the unification of the two German provinces, foreign confreres working in Germany, the GC25, Youth Ministry etc.

The Regional Councillor for West Europe

When the summer plenary session of the General Council fin-

ished, Fr Filiberto Rodríguez immediately left for Madrid, for the introduction of the new Provincial of the "St John Bosco" Province, Fr Luis Manuel Moral, who was taking the place of Fr Jesús Guerra. His installation took place on 20 July and Fr Filiberto took the opportunity to hold a meeting of all the Rectors of the Province.

He then went to León for some medical tests in view of a possible operation, which fortunately was not needed. Then between 1 and 10 August Fr Filiberto accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to some communities in France.

On the eleventh of August he began a short stay with his family during which he took part in the first profession of the Spanish novices at Sanlúcar la Mayor on 16 and 17 August and on 20 he joined a good group of Salesians from the Salamanca area who had come together for a vocational celebration.

After a quick visit to Valladolid, Fr Filiberto arrived at the Don Bosco House in Madrid on 26 August. This would be his base until 13 September, but during this time he visited houses belonging to the Iberian Conference: the postnovitiate at Burgos, several communities in the Madrid Pro-

vince, and he also took part in the meeting "on personal guidance" organized by the National Delegation for formation which was also attended by the General Councillor for Formation.

On Friday 13 September, via Lisbon, he left for Mozambique, where he stayed until 13 October, carrying out the *Extraordinary Visitation* of this Delegation of the Portuguese Province. Mozambique is a marvellous field where the harvest for the salesian mission is extraordinary but where unfortunately the labourers are few.

Having returned to Spain, between 17 and 25 October he visited all the houses in the province of Valencia. He took the opportunity in all the communities to present the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council for the next six year period.

Between 26 and 30 he attended and chaired the meeting of the Iberian Conference (the Conference of the Provincials of Spain and Portugal) which took place in Madrid. In addition to the prescribed evaluation of the progress made by the various National Delegations, here too there was an examination of the Planning of the Rector Major, seeing how to apply it all to the Region with

practical aims and activities.

On 3 November Fr Filiberto returned to Rome to take part in the winter session of the General Council.

The Regional Councillor for Italy – Middle East

At the conclusion of the summer session of the General Council and after a short rest, the Regional Councillor Fr Adriano Gregolin, **between 16 August and 1 September** carried out a fact finding visit to the Middle East Province. Accompanied by the Provincial, Fr Gianmaria Gianazza, he was able to get to know the works in Palestine and Israel (Bethlehem, Beitgemal, Nazareth), Syria (Damascus, Kamishly, Aleppo, Kafroun), Lebanon (El Houssoun, Fidar).

In Lebanon, between 28 and 31 August, he also took part in the SYM gathering of youngsters from Syria and Lebanon.

Having returned to Italy, on **8 September** in Turin – Mary Help of Christians he presided at the first profession of the novices from Pinerolo.

On **9 September** he was in Ancona for a meeting with the confreres in the Province who were

holding an Assembly. The morning was spent as a period of recollection with a reflection on the Rector Major's letter on holiness. In the afternoon the Regional presented the main points of the Forward Planning of the Rector Major and his Council.

On **13 September** in Catania he took part in a *Forum* of the Past Pupils on "Work and youth employment".

The following day, **14 September**, at Potenza there was the official opening of the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Southern Province*. On this occasion he presided at the perpetual profession of three confreres from the IME.

The next day, **15 September**, at the provincial house in Milan he took part in the perpetual profession of four confreres of the ILE and of two FMA.

On **18 September** in Naples he met the IME Provincial Council. Then **between 19 September and 28 October** he carried out the first part of the Extraordinary Visitation, meeting the communities of Campania, and also Potenza and Santeramo (BA). Between 24 and 27 September, he also carried out the Extraordinary Visitation of salesian Communities in Albania and Kosovo (which de-

pend on IME): Tirana, Scutari, Pristina.

On **28 September** he was in Turin -Valdocco to take part in the *Harambée*; a meeting with the young people who had had a missionary experience during the summer.

On **29-30 September** at Venezia-Mestre he met the united Councils of IVE and IVO, in view of the unification of the two Provinces.

On **24 October** he led a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Pompei with the Salesian Family of the IME Province.

Between 2 and 4 November at Palermo he chaired a meeting of the CISI with the Provincials of Italy and the Middle East.

Having returned to Rome to

take part in the session of the General Council, on **15 November** he went to Catania for a meeting of the Rectors of the Sicilian Province, on the occasion of the appointment of Fr Calogero La Piana as Bishop of Mazara del Vallo. He presents to the Rectors the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial.

Also to be mentioned:

- 18-21 November: at Rome-Pisana, taking part in the formation meeting for the Rectors of the Provinces IVE - IVO - ILT - IRO - IME - ISA;

- 2-5 December: at Rome-Pisana, taking part in the formation meeting for the Rectors of the Provinces ICP - ILE - ISI - IAD - MOR.

5.1 Message of the Rector Major to the young people of the Salesian Youth Movement

The text of the Message that the Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chávez Villanueva, sent to the young people of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) on the occasion of the Feast of Don Bosco 31 January 2003 is given here. The Message is also an encouragement for Salesians in their educational work for the young.

My dear young people,

I am writing to you on the feast of our beloved Father. And my first thought is one of gratitude to the Lord for the precious gift he has given us in Don Bosco, the spiritual father of youth and of the entire Salesian Family, the teacher and model of holiness. It is the first time that I write to you and I do so willingly, as Don Bosco himself did, and as Fr. Vecchi did several times during his period as Rector Major.

I would like to speak to you on behalf of all the Salesians, and remind you first of all of the words addressed to you by the members of the recent Salesian General Chapter: *"We want to be for you and with you... We are with you in*

the search for Love that gives full meaning to life and leads to happiness... We want to renew our pledge: the door of our hearts and of our houses are always open for you." (Documents of the General Chapter 25, *Message to young people*, 139). These words express our desire to remain faithful to the mission entrusted to us and serve as our renewed commitment, demanding from all of us a continual effort of openness, welcome, dialogue, and understanding. Precisely in this line I have proposed to all the Salesian Family the Strenna of communion for the year 2003: *"Let us make every family and every community the home and school of communion."*

Dear young people, to you also I bring the same gift for the year which we are beginning: **Believe in God who is Three in One, in God who is Communion; build communion at all levels, live in communion with other young people, witness to the world the prophecy of communion.**

Every day you meet and relate with so many people. At times, building understanding and communion comes easy, but often it can be quite difficult. Friendship among your contemporaries, life in a group, the sharing of numer-

ous experiences, are all clear signs that we are made for interaction and communion. But if we look at our restless and troubled world, we realize how difficult it is for persons, peoples and nations to live in communion. For this reason, at the beginning of the new year the Pope has invited us to be tireless builders of peace: "*peace on earth: an ongoing commitment*," to foster the values of freedom and truth, of justice and love, precisely because the peaceful living together of persons and peoples demands a constant and enduring commitment.

In your celebration of the World Forum of the Salesian Youth Movement in the year 2000, you yourselves identified the theme of communion and coordination as being among the most important of the conclusions and commitments which you adopted. I now sum up these same ideas again and invite you to commit yourselves in a concrete way to the building of communion.

Build communion above all in your local environments: communion in the family, in acceptance and mutual respect between parents and children, between young people and adults. See the generation gap as a possibility for growth and enrichment,

not as a reason for conflict and quarrelling; communion in the areas of study and work, where often the opposing logic of indifference and power play prevails; communion in the educative environments which you frequent, overcoming possible misunderstandings and competition. Don Bosco wanted "the family spirit" to permeate every setting of salesian work, so that every young person would feel properly at ease and would find a positive atmosphere of serene friendship and spontaneous confidence.

Build communion within the Salesian Youth Movement.

This is by definition the venue of communion for all the salesian groups and associations marked by the same spirituality and the same educative commitment. Do all you can in every way and at every level to make the SYM an opportunity for sharing and working together so as to attain common goals and joint aims and projects.

Build communion in the local Church, by playing an active part in the proposals and initiatives programmed for young people. Try to be present in the organisations coordinating youth ministry in the diocese, bringing to them the originality and rich-

ness of the salesian charism. Collaborate with other groups, associations and ecclesial movements, working hand in hand with them for the good of so many children and youngsters.

Build communion similarly in the local civil society of which you are a part. Reject all forms of intolerance and restriction, and be builders of dialogue and openness. Welcome everyone, especially those poorer and more fragile. Commit yourselves to the creation of a culture of openness and communion. Be present too in those places where guidelines and decisions are being made that will have an influence on the good of society.

This is the very same commitment that the Pope entrusted to you during the World Youth Day celebrations in Toronto, when he told you: *"The aspiration that humanity nurtures, amid countless injustices and sufferings, is the hope of a new civilization marked by freedom and peace. But for such an undertaking, a new generation of builders is needed. Moved not by fear or violence but by the urgency of genuine love, they must learn to build, brick by brick, the city of God within the city of man. Allow me, dear young people, to consign this hope of*

mine to you: you must be those 'builders!' You are the men and women of tomorrow. The future is in your hearts and in your hands. God is entrusting to you the task, at once difficult and uplifting, of working with him in the building of the civilization of love." (Toronto, Discourse of John Paul II during the Vigil of Saturday, 27 July 2002, nos. 3-4)

My dear young people, you are certainly aware that building communion is a demanding commitment, calling for inner strength and continuous formation. Communion is built before all else in one's heart and life. It can happen to all of us to find ourselves not at all in communion with our very selves, that we feel fragmented, divided, not at peace. Our rhythm of life is often chaotic and under pressure, and can lead to anxiety and dissipation. We must always be watchful to ensure that our daily life retains its unity.

As believers, remember that the secret and force behind our becoming men and women of communion is our **intimate communion with God through a personal friendship and relationship with Jesus Christ**. Know him, love him, be close to him. This deep and authentic friend-

ship with Christ will make it easier to build and bear witness to communion in every walk of life.

Dear young people, I invite you to turn your gaze **to Mary, Mother of the Church and of the Salesian Family**. She, who lived in intimate communion with her Son Jesus, took part also in the birth of the Church, an experience of communion for all believers and the centre of unity for all the children of God. The year in which we are living (October 2002 – October 2003) was proclaimed by the Pope “The Year of the Rosary.” Listen to his invitation to rediscover this Marian and Christological prayer; learn with and from Mary how to contemplate the mystery of Christ; pray the rosary individually, in your families, and in your groups; treasure the Rosary, which is “by its nature a prayer for peace,” (*Rosarium Virginis Mariae* 40), in order to ask for the gift of peace and concord, of reconciliation and forgiveness, of communion among individuals, peoples, and nations.

I conclude this message with the announcement of an anniversary which we will recall in a particular way in the year 2004: **the 50th anniversary of the canonization of Dominic Savio**. We can truly say that Dominic

was among the first members of the Salesian Youth Movement, even if at that time the salesian associations had another name. In him we can discover the goal to which all are called by the Lord: “*this high standard of ordinary Christian living*.” (Novo Millennio Ineunte 31)

Build communion then; may this commitment which I entrust to you make the Salesian Youth Movement more robust and ready to take up with special intensity the challenge of youthful holiness.

Rome, 31 January 2003

Fr. Pascual CHÁVEZ V.
Rector Major,
9th Successor of Don Bosco

5.2 Decree of erection of the Province that re-unites the two current Provinces Venice East and Venice West.

The following is the Decree by which the Rector Major, with the consent of his Council has erected the Province “San Marco”, which reunites the two current Provinces Venice East, with headquarters at Venice-Mestre, and Venice West, with headquarters at Verona.

Prot. n° 275/2002

**DECREE OF CANONICAL ERECTION
OF THE SALESIAN PROVINCE
“SAN MARCO”
OF ITALY – NORTH-EAST**

The undersigned,

Fr. Pascual CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA,
Rector Major Of the Salesian Society
of St John Bosco,

– considering the situation of the salesian presences and works in the North-East area of Italy, divided at present between the two Provinces “San Marco” with headquarters in Venice-Mestre and “San Zeno” with headquarters in Verona;

– after having heard the opinions of the two Provincials and their respective Councils and taking into account the results of the consultation among the confreres of the two Provinces;

– with reference to article 156 of the Constitutions;

– having obtained the consent of the General Council in the meeting of **13 November 2002**, in accordance with articles 132 §1,1 and 156 of the Constitutions;

CANONICALLY ERECTS

by this present Decree, the **SALESIAN PROVINCE of North**

East Italy, with the title “SAN MARCO”, with headquarters at VENICE-MESTRE, in the house “Beato Filippo Rinaldi”, as a result of the unification of the two Provinces of Venice-Mestre and of Verona, including therefore all the Communities that at present form part of the aforementioned Provinces with the confreres assigned to them.

The Houses of the new Province “San Marco” – *on Italian territory* that comprises the three Regions of North East Italy: Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia – are the following:

ALBARÈ, “Sacro Cuore di Gesù”
BARDOLINO, “Gesù Adolescente”
BELLUNO, “San Giovanni Bosco”
BOLZANO, “S. Giuseppe”
CASTELLO DI GODEGO,
“Maria Ausiliatrice”
CASTELLO DI GODEGO,
“Sacro Cuore di Gesù”
[Casa Mons. Cognata]
CHIOGGIA, “San Giusto”
ESTE, “S. Giuseppe”
GORIZIA, “San Luigi”
LEGNAGO, “San Davide”
MEZZANO DI PRIMIERO,
“Santa Croce”
MOGLIANO VENETO,
“Maria Ausiliatrice”
MONTEORTONE, “San Marco”

PADOVA, "San Giovanni Bosco"
 PORDENONE,
 "Maria Ausiliatrice"
 PORTO VIRO-Donada,
 "San Giusto"
 SAN DONÀ DI PIAVE,
 "S. Giovanni Bosco"
 SANTA MARIA LA LONGA,
 "S. Giovanni Bosco"
 SCHIO, "San Luigi"
 TOLMEZZO, S. Francesco di Sales"
 TRENTO, "Maria Ausiliatrice"
 TRIESTE, "S. Giovanni Bosco"
 UDINE, "S. Giovanni Bosco"
 VENEZIA-Castello, "S. Fedele"
 VENEZIA-S. Giorgio, "San Giorgio"
 VENEZIA-MESTRE
 Provincial House,
 "B. Filippo Rinaldi"
 VENEZIA-MESTRE, "San Marco"
 VERONA, "S. Giovanni Bosco"
 VERONA, "San Domenico Savio" –
 Centro via Provolo 16
 VERONA, "San Domenico Savio" –
 Parrocchia
 VERONA, "Santa Croce"
 VERONA, "San Zeno"

and in addition the following pres-
 ences (not canonically erected):

MOGLIANO VENETO
 Comunità Proposta
 S. MARTINO IN CASIES
 VENEZIA-MARGHERA

Also belonging to the Province "San
 Marco", at present, *in Romania*:

- the house of CONSTANTA, "S.
 Giovanni Bosco"
- and the presence at BACAU
 ("Maria Ausiliatrice").

The following decisions have
 been made:

1° Members of the Province are
 all those confreres who at the date
 of the canonical erection are liv-
 ing and working in the salesian
 Houses listed above.

2° Also members of the Province
 are the confreres in formation in
 the two former Provinces of "San
 Marco" Venice and "San Zeno"
 Verona and other confreres incar-
 dinated in the same Provinces
 who at the time of the canonical
 erection are outside the Province
 for reasons of study, or health or
 work or other [just cause].

As regards everything else, the
 norms established by the Consti-
 tutions and the General Regula-
 tions prevail.

The present Decree will come
 into force on **6 September 2003**.

Rome, 13 September 2002.

Fr. Pascual CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA
Rector Major

Fr. Marian STEMPEL
Secretary General

5.3 New Provincials

The following (in alphabetical order) are the biographical details of the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major and his Council during the plenary session November-December 2002.

1. **ALGORTA DEL CASTILLO JUAN**, *Provincial of Montevideo, Uruguay.*

Fr Juan **ALGORTA DEL CASTILLO** is the new Provincial of the Province of **URUGUAY**. He succeeds Fr. Enrique Bisio, at the end of his mandate.

Juan Algorta was born at Montevideo on 19 May 1939 and became a Salesian on 29 January 1958, when he made his first profession in the novitiate at Montevideo-Manga. He made his perpetual profession in 1963, and was at Turin and then Rome at the "Salesian Pontifical Atheneum" for his theology. He was ordained in Rome on 22 December 1966.

He then obtained a Doctorate in Moral Theology.

After ordination he held a number of responsible posts in different houses of the Province, including: Rector and Parish priest at Las Piedras (1992-1997), Provincial Councillor (from 1996),

Rector at Montevideo-Juan XXIII (from 1997), Vice Provincial from 1998 until his appointment as Provincial.

2. **FRISOLI Pier Fausto**, *Provincial of the Roman Province.*

As successor of Fr. Mario Carnevale as Provincial of the **ROME** Province Fr. *Pier Fausto FRISOLI* has been appointed.

Born at Foggia on 5 September 1955, Pier Fausto Frisoli became a Salesian on 12 September 1975, when he made his first profession at Lanuvio (RM), where he had made his Novitiate. He was perpetually professed in 1981, studied theology in Rome and was ordained priest on 1 October 1983. In his secular studies he obtained degrees in Modern Languages and Philosophy, and qualified as a teacher of History and Philosophy.

After some years teaching he was given various responsibilities: in charge of vocations in 1983, and in 1986 a member of the Provincial Council, and in 1992 he was appointed as Rector of "Don Bosco" in Rome. In 1994 he was transferred, as Rector, to Frascati "Villa Sora", where he continued to teach. Now he has been called to guide the Roman Province.

3. *GRÜNNER Josef, Provincial of MÜNCHEN, Germany.*

Fr. *Josef GRÜNNER* has been called to guide the Province of *MÜNCHEN, South Germany*

Born on 26 September 1949 at Mötzing-Dengling (Baviera), *Josef Grünner* became a Salesian on 15 August 1968, when he made his first religious profession at the Novitiate in Jünkerath.

He made his perpetual profession on 8 December 1976, and studied philosophy and theology at Benediktbeuern, obtained degrees in Philosophy and Theology and a Diploma in Social Pedagogy.

After ordination, for many years he was a member of staff at the Study Centre in Benediktbeuern. In 1994 he became a member of the Provincial Council and in 1997 he was appointed Vice Provincial.

4. *HAVASI József, Provincial of HUNGARY.*

Fr *József HAVASI* was appointed Provincial of *HUNGARY*, with headquarters in Budapest for a further six years.

Biographical details may be found in n 335 of the Acts of the General Council, p. 74.

5. *HEUSER James, Provincial of NEW ROCHELLE, United States East.*

Fr. *James HEUSER* is the new Provincial of the Province of *EAST UNITED STATES*, with headquarters at New Rochelle. He succeeds Fr Patrick Angelucci, at the end of his mandate.

James Heuser was born on 20 September 1955 at Glendale (N.Y. – U.S.A.) and became a Salesian on 1 September 1975, when he made his first religious profession at Newton, where he had made his Novitiate.

Perpetually professed on 29 August 1981, he studied theology while in the salesian studentate at Columbus, and obtained the M. Div. in Theology. He was ordained priest in Columbus on 19 May 1984.

After ordination he worked in the houses of West Haverstraw and Boston. Then in 1997 he was appointed Rector of Orange, the postnovitiate. In the same year he was appointed Vice Provincial. During the last two years he has also been Novice Director in the novitiate in New York.

6. *KUTTIANIMATTATHIL Jose, Provincial of BANGALORE, India.*

As successor of Fr. Matthew Maruvathrail guiding the Province of *BANGALORE, India*, Fr. *Jose KUTTIANIMATTATHIL* has been appointed.

Born at Eleppaly, in the State of Kerala, India, on 13 September 1955, Jose Kuttianimattathil became a Salesian on 24 May 1974, when he made his first religious profession in the novitiate at Yercaud.

Perpetually professed on 24/05/1981, he studied theology at "Kristu Jyoti College" in Bangalore and was ordained priest on 29 December 1984. He then completed his ecclesiastical studies obtaining a Licence in Philosophy and a Doctorate in Theology in Rome.

Having returned to the Province for a number of years he taught at "Kristu Jyoti College", of which he became Rector in 1998. In the same year he also became a member of the Provincial Council.

7. *LOBO Charles, Provincial of NEW DELHI, India.*

Fr. *Charles LOBO* is the new Provincial of the Province of *NEW DELHI*, India. He succeeds Fr. Joseph Kezhakkekara, at the end of his mandate.

Charles Lobo, born at Barkur, Mysore, India, on 4 November 1943, made his first salesian profession on 18 April 1965 in the novitiate at Shillong.

Perpetually professed on 24/

05/1971, he studied theology at "Kristu Jyoti College" in Bangalore, where he was ordained priest on 17 December 1974.

After ordination, he worked in various houses in the Calcutta Province (to which he then belonged) and then in New Delhi, with some responsibilities as follows: Rector of Ranchi-Hatia ((1988-1992), Rector of Jabalpur (1994-2000), Provincial Councilor (from 1997), Rector and Parish priest of Ranchi-Kokar (from 2000). Now he has been called to undertake the responsibility of Provincial.

8. *NIEWĘGŁOWSKI Jan, Provincial of WARSAW, Poland.*

Fr. *Jan NIEWĘGŁOWSKI* is the new Provincial of the Province of *WARSAW, Poland*. He succeeds Fr. Józef Strus, at the end of his mandate.

Born at Zakrzew (Warsaw) on 14 May 1960, Jan Niewęgłowski became a Salesian on 22 August 1980, when he made his first profession at Czerwińsk, where he had made his novitiate.

Perpetually professed on 20/08/1986, he studied theology in the salesian studentate in Lad, where he was ordained priest on 26 May 1987. He then completed his studies in Rome at the Salesian Pon-

tifical University, where he obtained a Doctorate in Educational Sciences.

On his return to Poland he was for several years in the house of Warsaw-Bazylika (provincial house). In 1997 he was appointed Vice Provincial, the office he still held when he was appointed Provincial.

9. *PERRELLI Vito Luigi, Provincial of the SICILIAN province.*

As successor of Fr. Calogero La Piana – appointed Bishop of Mazara del Vallo by the Holy Father – Fr *Vito Luigi PERRELLI* has been called as Provincial of the Province of *SICILY*.

Born at Gasperina (CZ) on 8 May 1946, Vito Luigi Perrelli made his first salesian profession on 15 August 1962 at San Gregorio di Catania. Perpetually professed on 15/08/1968, he studied theology at the salesian studentate in Messina, and was ordained priest on 4 August 1973 at Catania-Barriera. He completed his studies obtaining a Doctorate in Classics and a Licence in Education.

He carried out a number of educational and apostolic roles and responsibilities including: Rector of Catania-S. Filippo Neri (1989), Vice Provincial and Rector of the Provincial House in Catania

(1990-1995), Rector of Messina-San Luigi (1995-1998), Rector of Palermo-Ranchibile (from 1998) and Provincial Councillor (from 1999).

10. *PUPPO Orlando, Provincial of the Province of JAPAN.*

To guide the Province of Japan Fr. *Orlando PUPPO*, has been called to succeed Stefano Nagaki Fujikawa, at the end of his mandate.

Born in Argentina, at San Isidro (in the province of Buenos Aires), on 21 April 1941, he made his first salesian profession on 31 January 1960. After practical training he made his perpetual profession (Buenos Aires, 31/12/1965), and left as a missionary in Japan. He studied theology in Tokyo, where he was ordained priest on 4 July 1970.

He then worked in a number of communities and missionary presences in Japan. In 2000 he became a member of the Provincial Council and the following year 2002 was appointed Vice Provincial.

11. *PURDY David, Provincial of the Province of SAN FRANCISCO, United States West.*

Fr. *David PURDY* succeeds Fr. Nicholas Reina in animating and leading the Province of *UNITED*

STATES WEST, with headquarters in San Francisco, California.

David Purdy was born in Long Beach (California) on 21 February 1940 and became a Salesian on 8 September 1959, when he made his first profession at Newton where he had made his novitiate. Perpetually professed on 26/06/1965, for two years he studied theology at Monteortone, in Italy and then in the salesian studentate in Columbus, Ohio. He was ordained priest at Columbus on 21 March 1970.

After ordination he did educational and pastoral work in various communities in the Province (Richmond, Rosemead, Bellflower, Los Angeles). In 1992 he was appointed Rector of "Don Bosco Technical Institute" in Rosemead and the following year became a member of the Provincial Council. In 1994 he became Rector in San Francisco – Ss. Peter & Paul and since 2001 he had been Rector of Watsonville.

12. *RAMÍREZ FERNÁNDEZ*

José Pastor, Provincial of the Province of the ANTILLES.

The successor of Fr. Angel Soto as Provincial of the *ANTILLES*, with headquarters in Santo Domingo, is Fr *José Pastor RAMÍREZ FERNÁNDEZ*.

Born at Jarabacoa (Dominican Republic) on 28 March 1959, José Pastor Ramírez made his first profession as a Salesian on 16 August 1980 in the novitiate of Jarabacoa. Perpetually professed on 15/08/1986, he studied theology at the salesian studentate in Tlaquepaque, Mexico. He was ordained priest at Jarabacoa, his birthplace on 22 July 1989.

After ordination he worked for three years in the aspirantate at Jarabacoa (as headmaster and then as Vice Rector), and then went to Rome for two years to the UPS for further studies..

Having returned to the Dominican Republic he carried out educational and pastoral work in the houses of Santo Domingo. A Provincial Councillor since 1997, he was appointed Rector and Parish priest of the "Don Bosco" salesian community in Santo Domingo in 2000 and then Vice Provincial, the office he was holding when he was appointed Provincial.

13. *TIRABASSO Vicente, Provincial of BAHÍA BLANCA, Argentina.*

Fr. *Vicente TIRABASSO* is the new Provincial of the Province of *BAHÍA BLANCA, Argentina*, chosen to succeed Fr Joaquín López,

at the end of his mandate.

Born in Bahía Blanca on 20 December 1955, Vicente Tirabasso became a Salesian on 31 January 1976, making his first religious profession in the novitiate at Manucho. Perpetually professed on 24/01/1982, he studied theology in Buenos Aires, obtaining a baccalaureato in theology. He was ordained priest in Bahía Blanca on 10 May 1986. He also completed his secular studies in Philosophy and Pedagogy.

After ordination, he carried out educational and pastoral work and held offices of responsibility in various houses in the city of Bahía Blanca (Don Bosco, La Piedad, Juan XXIII, Provincial house). Since 2000 he was Rector of the Provincial house in Bahía Blanca.

14. *FILIPPIN Claudio, Provincial of the unified Province IVE-IVO.*

During the session November-December 2002, the Rector Major with his Council also appointed the Provincial for the Province of "San Marco" which will result from the re-unification of the two Provinces Venice East and Venice West, with headquarters at Venice-Mestre, which will officially come into being in September 2003.

The Provincial appointed is Fr *Claudio FILIPPIN*.

Born at Vallà di Riese Pio X (Treviso) on 30 December 1956, Claudio Filippin made his novitiate at Albarè di Costermano (VR), where he made his first salesian profession on 2 September 1973. Having completed his philosophy studies at Cison di Valmarino (TV) and his practical training, he pursued his theological studies in the Seminary at Treviso, while attached to the community of Castello di Godego, and completed them at the UPS in Rome. He was ordained priest in his home town on 17 March 1984.

After ordination he completed his studies at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome obtaining a Licence in Educational Sciences.

Having returned to his province, for many years he was in charge of the "vocational community" in Mogliano Veneto and provincial delegate for youth ministry and vocations. In 1994 he was appointed Rector of the salesian house in Udine and in 1996 became a member of the Provincial Council.

On 27 June 2000 he was appointed Provincial of the Province of Venice East.

5.4 New Salesian Bishops

The following (in alphabetical order) are the biographical details of the Salesian Bishops recently appointed by the Holy Father.

1. *Mgr. Angelo AMATO, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.*

The Osservatore Romano of 20 December 2002 published the news that the Holy Father had appointed the Salesian Fr *Angelo AMATO Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, raising him at the same time to the titular see of Sila, with the dignity of Archbishop.

Born at Molfetta (Bari) on 8 June 1938, Angelo Amato made his first profession as a Salesian on 16 August 1956 in the novitiate of Portici, near Naples. He did his philosophy at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, obtaining a Licence in Philosophy. He made his perpetual profession on 28 June 1962, and after the normal course of theology he was ordained priest in Rome on 22 December 1967. He then obtained the Doctorate in Theology at the Gregorian University in 1974.

Ordinary Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Salesian Pontifi-

cal University, he was also Dean of the Faculty of Theology (1993-1999) and Vice-Rector of the University 1997-2000.

He was a Consultor of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

2. *Mgr. Patricio BUZON, Bishop of Kabankalan (Philippines).*

The Osservatore Romano of 27 December 2002 published the news of the appointment of the Salesian *Patricio BUZON* as Bishop of the Diocese of *KABANKALAN*, in the Philippines. Fr Patricio Buzon was the present Provincial of the Salesian Province of Cebu, South Philippines.

Born on 14 March 1950 in Cebu City, Patricio Buzon became a Salesian on 29 June 1967 when he made his first profession at Canlubang, at the end of his novitiate. During his postnovitiate at Canlubang he studied philosophy and pedagogy and after practical training he undertook his theological studies in the studentate of Parañaque, Metro Manila, where he was ordained a priest on 8 December 1976. He completed his studies obtaining a Licentiate in Educational Sciences.

After a period of intense educational and pastoral work in the house of Lawa An, Talisay, he was appointed Rector in 1987, but the following year was transferred to “Boys’ Town” in Cebu as Rector, and at the same time becoming a member of the Provincial Council. In 1992 he was appointed Vice Provincial, and retained the office until his appointment as Provincial. In these years he was again also Rector at Lawa An, then of the provincial house in Cebu-Talamban and finally at Cebu-Boys’ Town. In 1996 he took part in the GC24 as delegate for the province.

In December 1997 he was appointed provincial of the Philippines South.

3. *Mgr. Calogero LA PIANA, Bishop of MAZARA DEL VALLO, Italy.*

The news of the appointment of Mgr. Calogero LA PIANA – at the time Provincial of the Salesian Province of Sicily – as Bishop of the Diocese of MAZARA DEL VALLO was announced by the Vatican Press Office on 15 November 2002.

Born at Riesi (CL) on 27 January 1952, Calogero La Piana made his novitiate at Lanuvio, where he made his first salesian profession

on 12 September 1974. He did his philosophical studies at Messina and then, after practical training, his theological studies in the studentate of “St Thomas” in Messina. He made his perpetual profession on 14/09/1980, and was ordained a priest in his home town on 8 August 1981. He completed his ecclesiastical studies obtaining a Doctorate in Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome.

The Superiors then gave him the task of being a teacher of theology and one of the formation personnel in the Theological Institute of Messina, of which he became Rector in 1989. He carried out this task for nine years until he was appointed Provincial in 1999.

4. *Mgr. Esteban LAXAGUE, Bishop of VIEDMA, Argentina.*

The Osservatore Romano of 1 November 2002 gave the news of the appointment of the Salesian Fr Esteban LAXAGUE as Bishop of the Diocese of VIEDMA, Argentina.

Esteban María Laxague was born at Coronel Pringles, in the province of Buenos Aires, on 4 March 1957. Having completed his studies he entered the Salesian Society and made his first profession on 31 January 1976 in

the novitiate of Manucho. He made his perpetual profession on 24 January 1982, followed his theological studies at Buenos Aires and was ordained a priest at Bahía Blanca on 10 May 1986.

As a priest he had a number of responsible roles: Rector of "La Piedad" College in Bahía Blanca, in the years 1990-1996; Rector of the salesian house at Trelew, Chubut, in the years 1996-1997.

From 1997 he was Vice Provincial of Bahía Blanca.

NOTE. We record also that the Holy Father appointed Mgr. *Tarcisio BERTONE*, S.D.B., former Archbishop of Vercelli and then Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Archbishop of GENOVA*, where he made his formal entry on 2 February 2003.

5.5 Salesian Personnel at 31 December 2002

Prov.	Tot. 2001	Temp. Professed				Perpet. Professed				Tot. professed	Novices	Tot. 2002
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
AET	93	14	27	0	0	12	5	0	31	89	12	101
AFC	259	9	69	0	0	36	11	0	120	245	20	265
AFE	160	4	40	0	0	20	11	0	84	159	6	165
AFM	65	3	4	0	0	7	1	0	41	56	4	60
AFO	111	4	21	0	0	14	6	0	64	109	6	115
ANG	59	5	13	0	0	8	4	0	32	62	0	62
ATE	108	4	28	0	0	6	6	0	56	100	11	111
ANT	184	6	37	0	0	13	14	0	106	176	11	187
ABA	145	0	7	0	1	14	2	0	119	143	1	144
ABB	128	3	9	0	0	8	0	0	95	115	3	118
ACO	141	6	16	0	0	13	4	0	98	137	4	141
ALP	92	6	6	0	0	11	5	0	60	88	0	88
ARO	129	8	16	0	0	12	3	0	84	123	3	126
AUL	119	4	20	0	0	13	1	0	81	119	1	120
AUS	97	0	1	0	0	9	2	0	80	92	1	93
BEN	201	1	2	0	0	20	0	0	167	190	3	193
BES	81	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	66	78	0	78
BOL	147	4	23	0	0	19	13	0	81	140	8	148
BBH	170	9	20	0	0	22	6	0	107	164	12	176
BCG	154	7	22	0	0	20	4	0	92	145	4	149
BMA	116	3	15	0	0	16	1	0	74	109	3	112
BPA	105	1	7	0	0	9	2	0	79	98	4	102
BRE	105	2	26	0	0	13	3	0	52	96	5	101
BSP	169	3	20	0	0	22	4	0	117	166	4	170
CAM	205	5	17	0	1	29	5	0	151	208	0	208
CAN	34	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	31	37	0	37
CEP	190	3	8	0	0	11	4	1	155	182	3	185
CIL	227	0	26	0	0	18	8	0	159	211	5	216
CIN	128	1	4	0	0	33	1	1	86	126	2	128
COB	174	3	27	0	1	24	6	0	106	167	4	171
COM	172	3	36	0	1	16	5	0	105	166	8	174
CRO	80	1	3	0	0	4	2	0	68	78	1	79
ECU	227	4	17	0	0	22	12	0	161	216	11	227
EST	128	3	29	0	0	1	8	0	80	121	9	130
FIN	208	3	39	0	0	19	2	0	142	205	1	206
FIS	97	3	13	0	0	11	8	0	57	92	2	94
FRA	269	0	4	0	0	39	3	0	213	259	1	260
GBR	107	1	0	0	0	10	0	0	98	109	0	109
GEK	166	6	10	0	0	34	1	0	109	160	0	160
GEM	259	2	4	0	0	53	1	0	189	249	1	250
GIA	140	1	10	0	0	18	6	0	99	134	2	136
HAI	60	1	19	0	1	2	7	0	29	59	8	67
INB	285	2	66	0	0	20	12	0	181	281	18	299
INC	268	8	59	0	0	22	17	0	153	259	16	275
IND	220	4	59	0	0	7	16	0	130	216	16	232
ING	356	13	96	0	1	21	23	0	192	346	22	368
INH	169	4	50	0	0	7	16	0	83	160	8	168
INK	316	4	101	0	0	7	25	0	165	302	7	309
INM	377	11	92	0	0	16	27	0	223	369	15	384
INN	133	4	40	0	0	12	12	0	57	125	7	132
INT	166	5	67	0	0	3	13	0	69	157	16	173
IRL	104	1	3	0	0	8	2	0	87	101	2	103

Prov.	Tot. 2001	Temp. Professed				Perpet. Professed				Tot. professed	Novices	Tot. 2002
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
IAD	142	0	16	0	0	21	5	0	97	139	6	145
ICP	714	5	35	0	0	180	8	1	454	683	6	689
ILE	391	5	17	0	0	54	10	0	291	377	5	382
ILT	201	2	13	0	0	24	11	1	142	193	1	194
IME	294	1	27	0	0	34	4	0	217	283	5	288
IRO	258	0	4	0	0	54	2	2	192	254	5	259
ISA	65	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	59	67	2	69
ISI	287	1	20	0	0	24	3	1	233	282	3	285
IVE	261	2	25	0	0	43	8	1	171	250	5	255
IVO	198	0	5	0	0	44	1	0	137	187	1	188
ITM	117	10	64	0	0	7	6	1	36	124	19	143
KOR	106	7	23	0	0	17	2	0	53	102	9	111
MDG	92	2	19	0	0	9	9	0	44	83	10	93
MEG	212	7	36	0	0	12	15	0	134	204	11	215
MEM	172	2	22	0	0	13	10	0	118	165	10	175
MOR	130	1	14	0	1	18	4	0	85	123	3	126
OLA	67	0	0	0	0	18	2	1	43	64	0	64
PAR	105	3	16	0	0	7	2	0	70	98	5	103
PER	166	6	34	0	0	10	9	0	93	152	10	162
PLE	339	4	59	0	0	15	20	0	225	323	7	330
PLN	310	4	54	0	0	11	6	0	222	297	11	308
PLO	244	1	32	0	0	1	6	0	189	229	5	234
PLS	251	1	26	0	1	7	7	0	189	231	7	238
POR	207	2	25	0	0	42	9	1	120	199	0	199
SLK	257	8	62	0	0	11	15	0	150	246	11	257
SLO	117	0	3	0	0	10	3	0	97	113	0	113
SBA	198	0	4	0	0	34	0	1	154	193	0	193
SBI	202	3	3	0	0	51	5	1	135	198	1	199
SCO	112	1	10	0	0	5	2	1	89	108	4	112
SLE	217	3	4	0	0	71	1	0	137	216	1	217
SMA	338	0	12	0	0	84	13	0	217	326	1	327
SSE	162	2	9	0	0	24	8	0	111	154	0	154
SVA	174	2	7	0	0	28	5	1	128	171	1	172
SUE	198	0	10	0	0	36	2	0	139	187	2	189
SUO	124	0	10	0	0	25	4	0	83	122	0	122
THA	84	0	6	0	0	14	7	0	57	84	3	87
UNG	53	0	5	0	0	4	1	0	37	47	0	47
URU	120	1	12	0	0	5	4	0	93	115	4	119
VEN	249	4	44	0	1	18	9	1	160	237	6	243
VIE	199	6	56	0	0	21	29	0	71	183	27	210
ZMB	61	1	4	0	0	5	6	0	43	59	4	63
UPS	127	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	124	134	0	134
RMG	81	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	65	79	0	79
T.	16805	299	2198	0	9	1961	624	16	11068	16175	522	16697
Ep.	108									115 (*)		115 (*)
Tot	16913	299	2198	0	9	1961	624	16	11068	16290	522	16812

Note (*): At 31 December 2002 there are 114 Bishops + 1 Prefect Apostolic

5.6 Our dead confreres (2002 2nd list and 2003 1st list)

"Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with our brothers who rest in Christ's peace. They have spent their lives in the Congregation, and not a few have suffered even to the point of martyrdom for the love of the Lord. Their remembrance is an incentive to continue faithfully in our mission." (*Cost.* 94).

2002 – 2nd list

NOTE: The 2nd list of the dead for 2002 is published here since it was not published in ACG n. 380.

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P ACQUISTAPACE Mario <i>Fu per sei anni Ispettore della Cina e per 12 anni Delegato del RM per il Vietnam</i>	Hong Kong	25-09-2002	96	CIN
P ALBERTIN Pietro	Castelfranco Veneto (TV)	20-12-2002	90	IVE
P ALLOCCO Cesare	Torino	23-10-2002	91	ICP
P BALDAZZI Adriano	Roma	14-12-2002	79	IRO
P BERTI Iginio	Albenga (SV)	30-11-2002	71	ILT
P BERTOLDI Gerardo	Verona	10-12-2002	90	IVO
P BIENKOWSKI Jan	Czerwinski	22-11-2002	82	PLE
P BITTNER Jan	Ostrava	30-10-2002	77	CEP
L BOTEK Jan	Paseka u Sternberka	04-06-2002	82	CEP
P BRIZIO Juan Bautista	Rosario	06-09-2002	91	ARO
P BRUNOLDI Donato	Lugano (Svizzera)	11-10-2002	80	ILE
P CALAMANDREI Giuseppe	Milano	14-09-2002	82	ILE
P CANTALAPIEDRA SANCHEZ Manuel	Madrid	15-12-2002	41	SMA
P CASTEL Miguel	Mendoza	22-07-2002	88	ACO
P CIULLI Oreste	Bari	27-10-2002	88	IME
P COLLINS Declan <i>(Ucciso in modo violento)</i>	Ennerdale (Sud Africa)	16-11-2002	50	AFM
L CZUBA Józef	Lublin	20-11-2002	77	PLS
L DA ROIT Luigi	Torino	27-12-2002	89	ICP
P D'ANDREIS Enrico	Trento	03-10-2002	82	IVO
P DE MEULENAERE Francis	Saigon (Vietnam)	10-10-2002	66	FIS
P DEL POZZO Domenico	Castellammare (NA)	16-12-2002	58	IME
P DELLA SALA Modesto	Roma	22-11-2002	63	RMG
P DELSALE João Batista	Rio dos Cedros (SC)	27-11-2002	93	BPA
P DIEZ DEL POZO Luis	Cochabamba	27-12-2002	73	BOL
P DOMÉNECH LLORENS Antonio	Valencia	26-10-2002	71	SVA
L DORIZZI Gottardo	Torino	18-11-2002	85	ICP
P DVORÁK Stanislav	Brusno (Slovacchia)	14-09-2002	90	CEP
P FERNANDEZ FERRO Sergio	Rota (Cádiz)	05-10-2002	88	SSE
P FESTOC François	Caen	05-09-2002	92	FRA

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
L GEMIGNANI Nello	Varazze (SV)	22-11-2002	88	ILT
P GUITTON René	Toulon	19-06-2002	83	FRA
P HERNANDEZ MARTIN Salvador	Sevilla	26-08-2002	82	SSE
P HERNANDEZ MEDINA Matías	Sevilla	21-08-2002	85	SSE
L JEULAND Joseph	Angers	12-12-2002	82	FRA
P KERHOAS André	St Jean Kerdaniel	18-11-2002	92	FRA
P KIRO Benedict	Guwahati	18-09-2002	83	ING
P KLIMKOWSKI Roman	Ji-Paraná (Rondônia)	08-09-2002	84	BMA
L LAMA Lamberto	Roma	17-12-2002	91	RMG
P LECAROS GOROSTERRA José I. Iusto	Montevideo	11-12-2002	78	URU
L LORO Albano	Varazze (SV)	03-12-2002	87	ILT
P LUIS Lázaro	Mogofores	11-10-2002	83	POR
P MANOLINO Aldo	Caracas	24-11-2002	82	VEN
N MARAK William	Shillong-Sunnyside	25-12-2002	20	ING
P MARCOLLA Casimiro	Negrar (Verona)	16-11-2002	81	IVO
P MARQUES Gabriel	Panamá	08-10-2002	76	CAM
P MARTIN Italo	Bahía Blanca	29-08-2002	85	ABB
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P MASSARINO Pascual	Asunción	27-09-2002	88	PAR
P MEBOLD KÖHNENKAMP Luis	Santiago de Chile	18-06-2002	76	CIL
L MIGLINO Mario	Brescia	17-10-2002	60	ILE
L MIHALEC Jean	Tournai (Belgio)	05-10-2002	77	BES
P MIRÓ GARCIA Javier	Asunción	24-09-2002	82	PAR
L MORELLINI Lino	Guayaquil	07-12-2002	77	ECU
L MORENO PEREZ Alfonso	Sevilla	09-12-2002	83	SSE
L MORONI Giuseppe	Arese (MI)	03-12-2002	87	ILE
P MOTRONI Edidamo	Borgo a Mozzano (LU)	13-12-2002	80	ILT
P MOUILLARD Michel	Toulon	09-12-2002	79	FRA
<i>Fu ispettore per sei anni</i>				
L MUNDULA Francesco	Firenze	16-10-2002	86	ILT
P NOVAGLIO Mario	Arese (MI)	27-07-2002	84	ILE
L OLIVEIRA Domingos	Porto	08-01-2002	86	POR
P ORSZULIK József	Kopiec	04-11-2002	89	PLO
P PACHECO Tomás	Chosica	23-11-2002	85	PER
P PADRIN Giovanni Battista	Castello di Godego (TV)	01-11-2002	90	IVO
L PASSERA Calocero	Ivrea (TO)	21-12-2002	88	ICP
P PASSONE Evaristo Chiaffredo	Punta Arenas	25-09-2002	88	CIL
P PEETERS Aloïs	Courtrai (Belgio)	07-12-2002	82	AFC
P PÉREZ SALAZAR Anselmo	Arévalo (Spagna)	03-11-2002	79	ATE
L PETTERIN Eugenio	Castello di Godego (TV)	17-11-2002	91	IVE

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
L PIEVANI Giuseppe	Nazareth	04-10-2002	77	MOR
P PIZARRO Manuel	Lima	16-11-2002	90	PER
P QUINTERO CABO Francisco	San Juan (Porto Rico)	01-10-2002	86	ANT
P RASSON Jean	Templeuve (Belgio)	04-10-2002	83	BES
D REDONDO DIEZ Miguel	Ourense	24-04-2002	31	SLE
L REIML Johannes	Amberg (Baviera)	26-09-2002	85	GEM
P RIZZATO Giovanni	Livorno	27-12-2002	65	ILT
P RODRIGUEZ RINCÓN Luis Enrique	Bogotá	14-12-2002	81	COB
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P ROLDAN Benigno	Bahía Blanca	23-10-2002	78	ABB
P RONCO Roberto	Udine (Italia)	17-10-2002	40	MDG
L ROSSI Luigi	Lugano (Svizzera)	24-12-2002	80	ILE
L RWABUHUNGU Ferdinand	Butare (Rwanda)	03-10-2002	60	AFC
P SCHIÉLÉ Robert	Caen	13-09-2002	82	FRA
L SCHUTZ Herbert Josiah	Brooklyn Park	14-10-2002	79	AUL
P SERRANO Emeterio	Panamá	10-11-2002	99	CAM
P STYRNA Jan	Rumia	20-10-2002	75	PLN
L SWEENEY Laurence	Melbourne	12-12-2002	75	AUL
L TOFFOLI Giovanni	Tirupattur	26-11-2002	87	INM
P TRIACCA Achille	Roma	04-11-2002	66	UPS
P VARRICATT John	Karunapuram	21-08-2002	70	INH
P VASEK Nikodém	Bratislava	30-09-2002	83	SLK
L VIDONDO SOBEJANO Tomás	Zaragoza	26-11-2002	77	SVA
P ZSÉDELY Gyula	Székesfehérvár	17-12-2002	79	UNG
P ZUK Marian	Warszawa	21-10-2002	71	PLE
P ZUPPINI Luigi	Negrar (Verona)	30-10-2002	58	MDG
<i>Fu Ispettore per 12 anni</i>				

2003 – 1st list

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P BOEM Fausto Mario	Manaus	17-02-2003	88	BMA
P BROJA Georg	Berlin	04-02-2003	88	GEK
P CASSE Germán	San Isidro (Bs. As.)	08-02-2003	84	ABA
L CRISTEL Guido	Mezzano di Primiero (TN)	21-02-2003	96	IVE
P CZMOCH Ludwik	Szczecin	08-02-2003	80	PLN
P DANESI Giordano	Bologna	04-02-2003	79	ILE
P DE MEULENAERE Guido	Antwerpen	22-02-2003	61	BEN
P DUMONT Lambert	Lubumbashi (Congo R.D.)	05-02-2003	87	AFC
E FARESIN Camillo	Guiratinga (Brasile)	25-01-2003	88	
<i>Eletto Vescovo nel 1954, fu per 25 anni Prelato Nullius di Guiratinga e per 10 anni Vescovo nella stessa sede di Guiratinga</i>				
P FLAC Mirko	San Pedro, California	17-02-2003	83	SUO
L GANDI Luigi	Civitanova Marche Alta	07-02-2003	93	IAD
P GARZA VENEGAS Jesús	Guadalajara	02-01-2003	59	MEG
P GATTO Massimo	Monselice (PD)	12-01-2003	89	IVO
P GELMI Antonio	Castellammare di Stabia	11-01-2003	87	IME
P GOBBI Osvaldo	Latina	04-01-2003	79	IRO
P GONZÁLEZ GAVIRIA Gabriel Ignacio	Medellín	05-01-2003	86	COM
E ITURRIZA GUILLÉN Francisco José	Coro (Venezuela)	14-01-2003	99	
<i>Eletto Vescovo nel 1939, fu Vescovo di Coro (Venezuela) per 40 anni</i>				
P LASKOWSKI Andrzej	Wroclaw	04-01-2003	73	PLO
P MENDES José Alberto	Lisboa	21-02-2003	45	POR
P MORELLO Arturo	Varazze (SV)	14-01-2003	84	ILT
P NEGRO Pietro	Torino	24-02-2003	80	ICP
P RIALTI Mario	Savona	12-01-2003	73	ILT
L SAMBO MUTONKOLE Jean-Pierre	Lubumbashi (Congo R.D.)	08-01-2003	36	AFC
P SANOM VIRAKANON Stephen	Bangkok	23-02-2003	83	THA
P SANTOS Antonio	São Paulo	18-01-2003	85	BSP
P TESSAROLO Francesco	Rosario	06-01-2003	75	ARO
<i>Fu ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P THAYUIL Philip	Ernakulam	15-02-2003	85	INK
L URLINGS Aloïs	Lubumbashi	17-02-2003	62	AFC
P VALERIÁN Josef	Linz	13-02-2003	75	AUS
L VALESINI Aurelio	Torino	30-01-2003	79	ICP
P VIZVÁRY Frantisek	Bratislava	31-01-2003	87	SLK
L WÜRSTLE Franz	Cuiabá (MT - Brasile)	08-02-2003	73	BCG
L YU Shek-tchu John	Hong Kong	18-01-2003	77	CIN

