



# **acts**

**of the general council**

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**year LXXXIV october-december 2003**

**N. 383**

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

**Direzione Generale  
Opere don Bosco  
Roma**





# acts

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

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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00163 Roma

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Tip.: Istituto Salesiano Pio XI - Via Umbertide, 11 - 00181 Roma  
Tel. 06.78.27.819 - Fax 06.78.48.333 - E-mail: [tipolito@pcn.net](mailto:tipolito@pcn.net)  
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## 1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

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**«YOU ARE A LETTER FROM CHRIST,  
WRITTEN NOT WITH INK,  
BUT WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD»  
(2 Cor 3,3)**

*News and reflections on recent journeys*

Visit to Albania (IME) – Don Bosco Boys Town, Rome – Retreat at Fatima – Spiritual retreat of the Rector Major and his Council – Visit to the Province of Portugal – Visit to the Holy Land – Intermediate session of the General Council – Encyclical on the Eucharist – Visit to the Province of Great Britain – The work at Treviglio and Chiari (ILE) – Visit to the Sicilian Province – Visit to the Bilbao Province – Visit to the Munich Province – Visit to the Cologne Province – Feast of Mary Help of Christians at Turin – Visit to the Verona Province (IVO) – Six-monthly meeting of the USG – Visit to the Adriatic Province – Conclusion: Don Bosco's birthday.

Rome, 8 September 2003  
*Feast of the Birth of Our Lady*

My dear confreres,

I send to you my affectionate greetings in whatever part of the world you may be working, and especially to those who are isolated or at a greater distance, or in difficult or dangerous situations. We have followed with great concern the course of events in the various countries of Africa: Ivory Coast, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia, all of which continue to witness scenes of violence, war and social unrest. Reconciliation and peace are needed, together with stability and calm, as essential conditions for the building of a truly human way of life. If we are horrified by the death of so many innocent people, we are still further moved by the fate of children, adolescents and young men and women who are left without either hope or future. I want you to feel the truth of my words when I tell you that I am close to you in spirit and have the highest regard for your generous dedication; let me encourage you to continue to bear witness to God's love for the young.

In his letter to the community at Corinth, St Paul replied to those who challenged his authority as an apostle and the lawfulness of the gospel he was preaching. The credibility of his actions derived not from the testimony of others nor from esoteric experiences, but from the Spirit who works in men's hearts to change them and make them docile to the word of the gospel. The very existence of the community is his "letter of recommendation". The solid faith and practical charity of the community are his best credentials: "You are my letter". And he immediately makes it more precise: "You are a letter of Christ, written by me not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor 3,2-3). If the first metaphor was forceful, the second is quite astonishing: the life-giving presence of the Spirit is at the birth of the community; and the result is the creation of new persons, open and docile to God's saving plan.

I feel sure that our beloved father Don Bosco, proud as he surely is of his sons, of their educational and pastoral activity spread over so many countries in the world, and of their service to poor youngsters through a multiplicity of different works, could say to you – paraphrasing St Paul's words – "You are *my* letter of recommendation. You are a letter of Christ which I have written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God". And for my own part, do I have any better recommendation before God and the world than you yourselves? No, because for me too you are *my letter from Christ*.

My last letter provoked in many confreres, communities and provinces a desire to examine the quality of the consecrated life that we are living, with the aim of being ever more converted to Christ and his Gospel and the determination to live a life still more authentic and meaningful, more prophetic and effective. And so I now come to you again to share with you some more news and reflections on my recent journeys.

My purpose, as you know, is always that of making known and esteemed all that you are and all that you are doing; of col-



lecting together the challenges the salesian mission is facing, offering my own reflections on them and trying always to draw on our rich salesian heritage, so as to respond to them with the mind, spirit and enterprise of Don Bosco.

But this will be the last letter of this kind because, as I have already said, I intend to alternate letters of doctrinal content with the presentation of the eight Regions of the Congregation. Do not be disturbed therefore if I do not speak at length about all the provinces I have visited: it certainly does not indicate any oversight or lack of esteem.

### **Visit to Albania (IME)**

One weekend in early February I visited Albania, where they were celebrating the tenth anniversary of the beginning of salesian work in this part of the Balkans. Initially it had been entrusted by Fr Egidio Viganò to the responsibility of the four Italian provinces IME, IRO, ISI and ISA, but from 1997 it has depended on the Southern Province alone.

On their arrival on 24 September 1992, the first Salesians began two kinds of work: a catechetical sector to help the Churches of the whole country to overcome decades of atheistic propaganda, and a sector for technical training together with an oratory and youth centre to give the youngsters an all-round education with training in trades and preparation for employment, independently of their cultural, religious and social situation.

In 1999, during the war in Kosovo, many refugees sought safety in our refugee camp in Tirana, where they found a welcome and came to know an environment which aroused in them the desire to have a similar work in Kosovo. To this Fr Juan Vecchi gave a positive response and so was launched our work at Pristina, which will see in a few months time the opening of a technical training centre.

From the moment of my arrival at Tirana I was pleasantly surprised at the warmth of the welcome I received from the young people who attend the oratory and the Don Bosco training centre. With the difficult period of the war behind them there are now 500 pupils at the centre which has become the most significant training centre in the country. Our complex activities at Tirana include an expression of youthful entrepreneurial initiative. The *Pony-Express* project provides work for 70 youngsters chosen from orphans from state institutions, street-children and the disabled. In the parish of Mary Help of Christians in the northern part of Tirana, in addition to its usual educational and animating activities the oratory and youth centre works in collaboration with UNICEF for the benefit of gypsy children. In this needy area there is still a great deal to be done to provide a more systematic service.

In the Albanian capital I was able to see for myself the results of our work and its reflection in the great esteem the civil authorities have for us; they were present at the public discussion on: *"The challenges to the education of the young in a globalized world"*, in which I explained the reason for our presence in Albania, that is, the desire of the Congregation and the Salesian Family to work wherever there are young people to be educated. Here is to be found one of the jewels in the crown of VIS, the International Volunteer Service for Development, which is committed to the rebuilding of the country through the Tirana Centre not only with money but also with volunteers who are involved in a very positive experience that creates great enthusiasm.

During the visit an important event took place: the consecration at Scutari of the church dedicated to Don Bosco. It is a beautiful shrine serving all the work, which includes a house of formation for aspirants and novices, the parish with its oratory and youth centre, and especially the characteristic element of the catechetical centre – which at first served the country – and now the diocese. The new church is a sign of gratitude to God for ten

years of salesian work in Albania and an encouragement to the further educational commitment of the Congregation and the Salesian Family in this country. In the present transitional circumstances it is necessary to concentrate all efforts on preparing young Albanians to share the responsibility for change and to bring it about.

It is gratifying also to note the encouragement given by the Salesian Family to the work at both Tirana and Scutari. After ten years we find a flourishing salesian activity in which Don Bosco's family is developing well. Local salesian vocations have begun to appear which will help to consolidate and give growth to this delegation.

A foundation of this kind demonstrates the Congregation's ability to meet new ecclesial and social challenges, its specific contribution through education to a country in process of reconstruction, and innovations in methods of meeting needs; in other words it is a network of collaboration which creates synergy, the involvement of NGOs for funding, the commitment of volunteer movements, an effort to bring about the inculturation of the charism and to foster local vocations. The sight of this work, so recently begun, makes one wonder at salesian charismatic creativity: personnel and resources may be lacking, but never faith and enterprise.

After the visit to Albania, mid-June found me once again in the Southern Province for the celebration of the centenary of the work at *Portici*. As elsewhere, here too I had honorary citizenship conferred on me, which I willingly accepted in the name of the confreres who have worked over the past 100 years for poor and needy youngsters. They are the ones who deserve citizenship; to them is due the gratitude! You may wonder why I should speak of the harmony and appreciation to which salesian work in this town has given rise. It is because all the prominent citizens, with their different shades of political opinion, were so unanimous in

expressing their encouragement that I felt proud to be a Salesian and grateful to the confreres who had worked here. At Portico Don Bosco would have felt well and truly at home!

A very homely event was the meeting with the youngsters of the SYM from all over the province. I am always struck by the openness and sensitivity of young people; what a great deal of good we can do, if we are able to propose to them really high ideals! That was the masterly way in which Don Bosco used to work, and we are called to do the same.

### **The Don Bosco Boys Town of Rome**

The fact that the Generalate is in Rome makes it possible for the Rector Major to be present at frequent meetings, gatherings and celebrations in the Roman province. And although I have made visits to several of our foundations I would like to dwell on that to Don Bosco Boys Town which over the past fifty years has helped young and older boys on the outskirts of Rome and which I visited at the beginning of March when many of the civil authorities were present.

In addition to the involvement of political and social bodies which recognise in Boys Town a very valid work, it is worth noting that today, just as fifty years ago when it was set up at the instigation of the Church and the Congregation to take care of the “shoeshine” boys, one finds that there still exists among the confreres the desire to continue to “dream” with and for young people in difficulty, to whom it offers various kinds of educational programmes: a home for teenage mothers and babies, a training centre for 300 youngsters, the SOS projects “listening to the young”, semi-autonomy, a family approach, involvement in the area and youthful entrepreneurial activity. There is also present an eloquent expression of this social sensitivity which I found quite surprising, that is, the creation of “Operation Argentina” to meet the needs of poor children in that sorely tried country.



I think it unusual to find a social work which lives on the contributions of others being concerned about giving help to those in still greater need. This surely is an example of Christian solidarity!

Boys Town is one of those works which are inherently significant in themselves, on account of their geographic location, those they work for, the variety of the educational opportunities they offer, the identity of their numerous collaborators and at the same time the involvement of political authorities and private institutions, in order to solve a social problem by working together to attain the same goal and offer hope and a future to the young. It should not be overlooked that the Bishop has agreed to the proposal that our church become the first parish church for the young, which gives it less of a territorial aspect and a more pastoral dimension for the service of the young, in line with art. 40 of the Constitutions according to which every salesian house is a "parish that evangelizes" young people. I hope we may deserve to merit this gesture of trust and confidence and provide a model of what a parish for the young could be in the city which is the see of the Vicar of Christ.

## **Retreat at Fatima**

From 16 to 22 March at Fatima I preached a retreat to the SDB and FMA local superiors of the southern provinces of Italy. Though this is not the only example of the two sets of superiors making the spiritual exercises together I want to emphasize its positive aspects. The Salesian Family grows in unity as the result of listening together to God's Word, by shared enlightenment concerning the criteria of salesian life and mission, and of union in prayer. Evidently this is not the only form of doing this, nor will it infallibly achieve its purpose which will depend on the preparation and attitudes of those taking part. But it is certainly a significant sign of communion.

I was able to note the effective preparation of the spiritual experience, which left nothing to chance or improvisation. This is always a great help to ensure that things will turn out well, and that the beauty of the liturgy shines out, not in a formalistic but in a spiritual way that creates an atmosphere that encourages a meeting with God. It is true that in the last analysis everything depends on each individual taking part, but the atmosphere can also be a great help!

I would also like to say a brief word about the place of the retreat: Fatima, next to the Sanctuary and the chapel of the apparitions, with its enormous open space marked by an atmosphere of prayer and recollection; it really is a “sacred” place. I was struck by what has resulted from a simple and humble event with its three young shepherd children at its centre. Today at Fatima you can feel the force of God’s presence. There is no doubt about it: it is the humble that attracts the God of Jesus Christ.

What sets me thinking is the fact that the whole Congregation, which means about 17,000 between confreres and novices, spends a week every year living a powerful experience of the retreat. The same is true of the FMA and nearly every group of the Salesian Family. This is surely the most important official obligation and personal opportunity for spiritual renewal and progress. But it must be said that the personal, communal and institutional benefit depends on the attitude of each individual for acquiring this grace and making progress in the spiritual and pastoral life under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who works wonders in those who are docile to him and let him be their guide.

Art. 91 of the Constitutions, describing the nature and objectives of the monthly day of recollection and the annual retreat, is headed: “*opportune times for renewal*”. The days of recollection and the retreats, together with the frequent effort at vigilance and the use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, are the three basic elements of our penitential pilgrimage. It is a question of a

pedagogy and a discipline – in the best sense of the term, which is that of an ascetical journey to become disciples – which places us at the “school” of Jesus, letting him be the teacher and putting ourselves at his feet to listen to him, as did Mary at Bethany who chose the better part. Let it not happen that we fall into the temptation of Martha, who wanted to teach Jesus what to do, distorting the roles: “Tell my sister...” (cf. Lk 10,38-42). Acceptance and listening are at the service of the realization of the Christian and religious life which – as Karl Rahner says – is a process of ongoing conversion.

Two biblical terms can help us to be more precise about the nature of such a process and consequently live these “opportune times for renewal” with greater awareness.

- In the Old Testament the usual way of speaking of conversion is by use of the verb ‘*shub*’, which means ‘*to return*’, with a clear reference to the original experience of the loving relationship of covenant between Yahweh and Israel. It has an evident personalised connotation: finding the loved one again. The most eloquent text is that of Hosea: “Then she shall say: ‘I will go and *return* to my first husband for it was better with me then than now’... Therefore (says Yahweh) I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her... And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as in the time when she came out of the land of Egypt” (Hos 2,7.14.15).
- In the New Testament, on the other hand, the term invariably used is ‘*metanoia*’, usually translated as ‘*conversion*’, but which in the context of many texts in which it is found implies rather a ‘mental reversal’, that is a change in the way of seeing, judging and living. It is rather a kind of “fresh assessment” like the so-called ‘conversion of St Paul’ (Acts 9; Gal 1,15; Phil 3,7-14; 1 Tim 1,12-16), in which everything that was formerly considered to be of value is now counted as

loss and something to be despised in the face of the discovery of what is of real value: Christ the Lord.

I do not think that the two terms “return” and “transformation” or “conversion” are mutually exclusive. In fact we who have made an option of faith in Christ and consequently to follow him, that is we who have been ‘converted to him’, are constantly urged to ‘return to him’. To be converted to Christ is therefore to “*start afresh from Christ*”, that is “finding again one’s first love, the inspiring spark which first gave rise to the following of him. The primacy of love is his.” (RdC 22).

In the light of these texts it is easier to understand the article of the Constitutions which states that the retreats are “occasions of spiritual renewal”. The expression brings to mind another biblical scene, that of Jesus with the disciples who were returning from their first apostolic experiences, full of enthusiasm about “all they had done and taught”. Jesus responded to their euphoria with the invitation: “Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest awhile” (Mk 6,30-31). This text forms part of the passage which so well expresses what we call “pastoral charity” (Mk 6,30-44). Indeed how could we succeed in being loving shepherds for those to whom we are sent, without first remaining alone with Jesus? From whom and how could we learn to have compassion for those who go astray, if not from Christ as Don Bosco did? (cf. C 11).

The key to the understanding of the text is provided on the one hand by that “*by yourselves*” and on the other by that “*rest awhile*”. The evangelists, in fact, are unanimous in saying that Jesus used to withdraw to pray. Now this is what Jesus means by ‘resting’, ‘being restored’, an expression with deep anthropological and mystical implications. This is clearly shown by our own human experience which tells us that nothing is so strengthening as entering into deep and intimate communion with God. This was the kind of rest to which Jesus invited his apostles.



Our kind of life, with its multiple activities and few practices of piety in common, runs the risk of making us fall into a frantic activism with its threefold consequences: physical fatigue, mental stress and spiritual superficiality which, far from converting us into “contemplatives in action”, make us at best workaholics or – in the worst cases – mere functionaries rather than missionaries.

The only way to combat such negative consequences of activism and give depth to our life, giving it new meaning and filling it with a dynamism which makes us live not in a *bureaucratic* manner (doing what we are bound to do) but *creatively* (in the image of God our Father and Creator – cf. Jn 5,17-18) and *salvifically* (prolonging the saving activity of the Lord Jesus – cf. Acts 3,1-10), is by becoming first of all “contemplatives in prayer”. An intimate relationship with the Lord will help to remind us that it is he who is the lord of the vineyard and of the harvest, who causes the seed to grow, who charts times and rhythms. Similarly from close union with him we shall learn the secrets of his Kingdom, we shall understand more deeply his plan of salvation and make his pastoral charity our own.

Again according to art. 91 of our Project of Life, days of recollection and retreats offer us three special means for:

- *Listening to God’s Word.* To this art. 87 attributes the ability to be a “source of spiritual life, food for prayer, light to see God’s will in the events of life, and strength to live out our vocation faithfully”, provided that like the Virgin Mary we accept the Word unconditionally, treasure it in our hearts and bring it to fruition.
- *Purifying the heart.* This requires a rectification and maturing of motives and what they imply, in awareness of the value and drawing power inherent nowadays in these implications which give meaning to life; it calls for a purification of feelings, especially if they are disordered by excessive dependence on external expressions of affection, esteem or appreciation, or are caused by resentment, bitterness or frustration.

- *Discerning God's will*. It is this that really matters and on this our happiness ultimately depends. Here too Mary at the Annunciation is our model in searching for God's will in our lives (cf. Lk 1,26-38). Discernment must be more than something just occasional – to which to have recourse in moments of crisis or when an important decision must be made – it must be a permanent attitude of life which leads us to seek always “the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12,2).

The result is twofold and could not be more attractive; in the first place there is an increase in interior unity, precisely at a time when everything seems to foster disintegration and sometimes leads even to pathological situations; and secondly it revives our longing for the Lord who, by delaying his coming, could lead us to abandon our feeling of expectation and try merely to survive. To some extent this is what we are led to by the present age with its proclamation of the “death of utopias”.

### **The Retreat of the Rector Major and the Council**

Because of its connection with the theme I have just been developing, I would like at this point to give my personal testimony to the retreat preached to the General Council in the last week of June by Fr Peter Braido. It was indeed a “spiritual pilgrimage” under the wise guidance of a genuine expert and devotee of Don Bosco, who took us by the hand and led us through the major stages of the interior and exterior life of our beloved Father in a truly heart-warming manner. While reminding us of biographical details the preacher offered us also some criteria for “*Travelling towards the future with Don Bosco, the ‘priest of the young’*”; this in fact was the theme of the retreat.

The starting point was the declaration of the principle that for us Salesians Don Bosco is not only a point of reference but a

life model; this is something that prompts us to get to know and understand him in the totality of his being.

The preacher's perspective, which aimed at helping us to look at Don Bosco in his historical setting, allowed us to gain a better understanding of his personal maturing process, the initiative of God who guided him, and the development of his work. It also offered us a comprehensive vision of the salesian life in its basic components: identity, place in the Church and its social role, the mission among young people and method of education, community of life and activity, style of practice of the evangelical counsels, specific kind of spirituality, the profile of the Salesian to be formed, and the style of animation and government.

By way of a short commentary on the theme, I would like to share with you some points that were offered within the broader reflection and some thoughts they gave rise to in me:

- *Travelling*. For Don Bosco, as indeed for all Salesians, vocation is not something abstract; it means doing something, an experience of life similar to that spoken of in John's gospel: "Come and see" (cf. Jn 1,39). Don Bosco moulded his Salesians by telling stories rather than by formal lectures, and the implication is that the salesian vocation should continue to be understood, presented and lived in the same way. It is an experience with an immediate fascinating effect, one that is convincing and constructive. Maybe this was in Fr Viganò's mind when he wrote that "the birth of the Salesian of the new era began with Don Bosco": he is our "incunabulum", the early work of art from which we began.
- Nowadays, as indeed has always been the case, we need to fulfil our vocational and pastoral work and mould Salesians by "telling stories", with frequent and explicit references to Don Bosco, after the manner of Don Barberis, one of his biographers, who in narrating events of the "old days" of the Valdocco Oratory gave us also the underlying reasons:

these instruct us in matters which are specifically ours, in our methods, in our family spirit, and at the same time they increase our sense of belonging, of membership of the family; they make us protagonists.

- *Towards the future.* It is true that the young are our future, though we must admit that this is not in the sense of a dream or utopia, because they bring with them legacies and experiences. But Don Bosco succeeded in staying young and hence in harmonizing with the future through being always among his boys. The demands of the youngsters, their needs and requirements defined the future for Don Bosco; they still shape and guide the decisions of our Congregation today and must continue to do so.
- *With Don Bosco.* In the Valdocco experience there was clearly a maturing of the mission and hence a transition from the joy of “staying with Don Bosco” to “staying with Don Bosco for the young”; from “staying with Don Bosco for the young in a stable manner” to “staying with Don Bosco for the young in a stable manner with vows”. Remaining with Don Bosco does not exclude *a priori* a study of the times that modelled or conditioned him, but it requires us to live with his commitment, his options, his dedication, his spirit of enterprise and pushing ahead.
- *Priest of the young.* Here “of the young” is to be understood both subjectively and objectively: that is, he is a priest *for* the young, working for them and at their service; and at the same time he is a priest *of* the young, belonging to them and sought out by them. He is completely for the young and always with them. Being with young people and always available for them is a deep mark of our identity as Salesians of Don Bosco. We can never think of ourselves as far from them, detached or indifferent in their regard; remaining close to the young is the first decisive step we all have to take at the present day.



All this makes of Don Bosco a fascinating person, and in our case a father to love, a model to imitate, but also a saint to invoke. In this connection we may do well to recall the letter written by Fr Ricaldone after the canonization of Don Bosco, in which he said: "It would pare down God's intention very much to think that he had sent Don Bosco only for the Salesians or for the Salesian Family. No! God sent him as a gift to the whole Church and to all the world. And we must make him known and promote devotion to him".

At the end of the retreat we were all well satisfied with our experience. If it is important for all Salesians to know Don Bosco and have him as their normative point of reference, this is indispensable for the Rector Major and his Council, called as they are to continue Don Bosco's guidance of the Congregation. We are well aware that the more the time separating us from our Founder increases, the more real is the risk of speaking of Don Bosco only on the basis of well known incidents and anecdotes without any real knowledge of our charism. Hence the need to know him through the medium of reading and study; to love him affectively and effectively as our father and teacher through the spiritual legacy he has left us; to imitate him and try to reproduce him in ourselves, making of the Rule of life our personal life plan. This is what is meant by returning to Don Bosco, to which I have invited the whole Congregation – myself included – from my first "good night", by means of a process of study and love that tries to understand, the better to throw light on our life and present-day challenges. Together with the Gospel, Don Bosco is our criterion of discernment and our goal of identification, and I take this opportunity to encourage you to always keep Don Bosco as your point of reference for the spiritual and pastoral renewal of the provinces.

## Visit to the Portuguese Province

Immediately after the retreat at Fatima, I took advantage of the fact that I was already in the country to make a visit of animation to the Portuguese province. In addition to the provincial council and rectors, I was able to meet with the confreres, groups of the Salesian Family, pupils and teachers in our schools, and lay collaborators in the works at Porto, Mogofores, Lisbon, Manique, and Estoril.

If it is true that some of these works are outstanding for the quality of their premises, the level of those for whom they work, and the good name they have in society and before the civil authorities, nonetheless the province has a varied and significant range of works in the fields of marginalization and social advancement.

I will mention three elements that are particularly characteristic of the Portuguese province. A knowledge of its history makes its missionary dimension quite remarkable. We do well to recall that this province, not least for political reasons, was responsible for the beginning and development of salesian work in Goa, East Timor, Macao, Mozambique, Cape Verde and the Azores. It is no longer present in the first three of these places but continues to work in the others.

A second characteristic is the Marian devotion in salesian Portugal, due partly of course to the influence of the Madonna of Fatima as it could not be otherwise, but also to the spreading of devotion to Mary Help of Christians. For us Salesians Marian devotion is a pledge and guarantee of charismatic fidelity.

Finally one can point to the intense religious mentality of the whole country, which provides great possibilities for pastoral and vocational work of high quality among the young. Precisely because secularism is beginning to spread, it is important that the Salesians help young people to face up to it through an education to the faith that leads to contact with Christ and mature options of Christian life. The coming beatification of the Venerable

Alessandrina da Costa must be used as a reason for re-launching salesian youthful holiness; it will be an effective way of giving thanks to God for this gift.

## Visit to the Holy Land

At the beginning of April I went to the Holy Land. The occasion was the celebration of the centenary of the Middle East province, founded by Don Rua in 1902, the year in which Don Bosco's first successor erected juridically no fewer than 32 provinces. The celebration had been scheduled for 12 May 2002, but the *intifada* and curfew led to its being twice postponed. Even though the political situation remained the same, and had even got worse with the war in Iraq, I decided to go and be present among the confreres who have lived for so long in this oppressive atmosphere.

The visit had been prepared by the Provincial and his council as a pilgrimage; and so I went to Nazareth, where I celebrated Mass in the Grotto of the Annunciation with the participation of the confreres of the community, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and a small group of Cooperators and past-pupils. It was an occasion for reflecting on our vocation in the light of Mary and of learning from her how to respond positively to God's plan for each one of us. This is possible only to the extent that we develop in ourselves Mary's fundamental attitudes: the continuous seeking for God's will, its welcome acceptance as a plan of life, and docility to the action of the Spirit so that he may guide us.

I also had a meeting with teachers and pupils and a brief celebration with members of the Salesian Family, the educative community and the ecclesiastical and civil authorities. The atmosphere continues to be one of hostility and terrorism, which has deprived the holy places of tourists and pilgrims, bringing the recently developed Palestinian economy to its knees and creating a very oppressive social climate.

The next stop on my visit was at the community of Beitgemal, a beautiful place of great value, set in a Jewish context where our mission is limited to witness and welcoming reception of all comers. There we celebrated the Eucharist in the church of Saint Stephen with the participation also of the communities of the Sisters of Bethlehem and of the Assumption and Saint Bruno, with three priests of the same congregation. These are two contemplative religious communities we have welcomed onto our property to enable them to establish their convent there.

From Beitgemal we went on to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre where we spent a brief period of intense prayer at the site of Calvary and in the Holy Sepulchre itself. Here the power of death and the final triumph of life find their best icon. The sanctuary overflows with the presence of Christ; all of Christ is there, for he has taken on himself all our guilt and our death and he is the firstborn of those who rise from the dead. I cannot conceal the deep emotion I felt, like that of Jesus at the tomb of his friend Lazarus, at feeling the force of death which takes away the sense of life, and at the same time the dynamism of love that overcomes death. Sad it was that time did not allow us to stay longer; I felt the need to do so.

We were then taken to Cremisan to meet the confreres of the studentate, those in formation and their superiors. It was a wonderful moment, as indeed was the family environment I found there.

Finally we went to Bethlehem where we visited the Grotto of the Nativity. Here I was able to pray for a longer period, and I can assure you that I prayed for all of you, having in mind the concerns of all the world, the needs of the Congregation and the Salesian Family, the expectations and needs of the young. The God incarnate, who experienced everything human except sin, is a compassionate priest who intercedes for us before the Father.

At Bethlehem there was a meeting with the young people of the oratory and the technical training centre, and with the community of the House of Bread which is true to its name, for despite the present straitened circumstances with the economy down to zero, it continues to distribute bread every day free of charge.

The culminating point of the visit was the celebration of the centenary on Sunday 6 April. The emphasis was on gratitude to God rather than on festivities, not least because it would not have been right to have the latter in the midst of so much suffering. A large number of priests, Salesians and other religious took part in the Eucharistic celebration. In my opening greeting I said that the visit of the Rector Major was not meant to mark a mere commemoration but was rather intended to signify the renewed commitment of the Congregation for the benefit of the young people of the Holy Land, with whom we want to continue to be fellow pilgrims like those of Emmaus.

At the commemoration that followed in the theatre of the salesian school were present representatives of the civil and ecclesial authorities. It would be worth our while to know something of the history of salesian work in the Holy Land which was presented, because it has been a troubled one usually marked by external conflicts which nevertheless affected us deeply. Equally we should know something of the work done before us by Fr Antonio Belloni, who handed over to Don Bosco in the person of Don Rua his works at Bethlehem, Cremisan e Beitgemal, and his "Work of the Holy Family" foundation. We are heirs of a great man who was known to all, and rightly so, as "*Abulyatama*": the father of orphans.

In my final address at the end of the visit, I gave the confreres the following guidelines for their future work.

- Don Bosco and Fr Belloni were both priests sensitive to the needs of youngsters who were poor and in difficulty. The practice of their ministry had made them priests for the

young and educators of the young to help them to mature and develop in every way, to discover the meaning in life, to be citizens of the world, open to God and their fellow men. You could not ask for a better patrimony than this: young people and education.

- One of Fr Belloni's special characteristics was his gift for inculturation; it led him to learn the language of those for whom he was working, to absorb their culture and make himself one of them. For us Salesians this is a practical demonstration of the preventive system, which insists on the need for the boys not only to be loved but to know and feel that they are loved. Love is expressed in kindness in dealing with others, in approaching them, sharing their interests, thinking like them and conversing with them. Inculturation is therefore an essential part of evangelization and salesian education.
- The secret of the success of the educational and pastoral work of Don Bosco and Fr Belloni is to be found in the fact that their total dedication to the mission among young people resulted naturally in the fostering of vocations. These are the result of several different factors, of which the most decisive is the environment created around the youngsters which is such as to give rise in them the desire to share as consecrated apostles our educative passion for the young. Vocations must therefore be one of our priorities in this part of the world.
- Both Don Bosco and Fr Belloni were aware of the demands inherent in working for the benefit of poor youngsters and adolescents; they were so farseeing and open to civil society that they were able to involve the latter in their works and projects to meet all the needs of their young people. The same road lies open before us too, and should lead us to continue the same commitment, working in greater collaboration.

- Finally, this troubled story – so significant for its location, mission and those to whom the work is directed – has been sealed by a confrere on the way to beatification, the Venerable Brother Simon Srugi, who even in his lifetime had made a great impression on Don Rua. Holiness is one of the signs that the charism has been well and truly established and continues to be the most precious gift we can offer to the young.

### Intermediate session of the General Council

In April we had the first intermediate meeting of the General Council of this six-year period. The idea of having every year two intermediate Council sessions is due to Fr Vecchi, who felt the need for greater reflection by the Rector Major and his Council on themes of primary importance for the life of the Congregation. At the same time the intermediate session ensures that there will be a sufficient number of Councillors present at the Generalate to be able to meet requests for authorizations and approvals, which require the presence of at least six Councillors.

Although during the previous six years I had twice taken part in this kind of meeting and had seen its objectives and method of functioning, I have now become more aware of the great value of the idea, because its effect is to give us the opportunity for a period of study to prepare for a subsequent wider reflection at the level of the whole Council. This time in fact we examined several themes.

- *Promotion of the vocation of the Salesian Brother.*

We wanted to study more deeply and make further practical decisions in connection with Fr Vecchi's appeal, following the beatification of Bro. Artemides Zatti, to undertake a new, extraordinary and specific commitment for the vocation of the

Salesian Brother. It was a question of passing from the aspect of celebration that characterized the beatification year to practical consequences with precise proposals and suggestions. I take this opportunity to remind Provincials, Rectors and the confreres in general to study the guidelines of the Councillor for Formation in the Acts of the General Council (cf. AGC 382, pp. 29-43).

– *Manner of carrying out the General Chapter.*

We have begun to study possible ways of conducting the General Chapter, so as to respond to the directive of the GC25 (n.136) which asked the Rector Major and his Council to “carry out an assessment of the celebration of the recent General Chapters with a view to evaluating and proposing a manner of operation that is more streamlined, and aimed at carrying out an examination of the situation of the Congregation and drawing up fundamental guidelines for the policy to be implemented during the following six year period”. We are aware of the need to set up a General Chapter in such a way that instead of devoting itself to the study of a particular theme – as was the case with the GC23, GC24 and GC25 – it will start from the state of the Congregation with its trends, challenges and opportunities, to determine together a common future projection. We have already devoted a great deal of reflection to this and we are reaching a conclusion to be sent to the provinces.

– *Vocational frailty of young confreres.*

We have examined this from three forms it takes: one psychological, in the face of any problem, difficulty or frustration; another moral, which shows up in the difficulty of organizing one’s whole life around great options; and an extreme form, as in the loss of all meaning in life. Although we have already given it some thought, the theme deserves deeper study, keeping in mind that what it entails is greater consistency and tenacity, the result of growing in “humility, determination and strength”.



– *Topics for the coming provincial chapters.*

We have already decided on some themes for the provincial chapters which on the one hand must deal with local problems and on the other need to respond to the requests of the GC25. Among the themes indicated I mention: the drawing up of the Organic Provincial Plan; the updating of the formation section of the provincial directory to bring it into line with the new edition of the *Ratio*, and of the section on poverty and administration; and the matter of promoting the vocation of the Salesian Brother.

– *The “Don Bosco International” (DBI).*

This association is the civil face of the Salesian Congregation; it promotes various kinds of networks of NGOs, like that of the Mission Offices, and of associations for the implementation of the different aspects of the salesian charism. The DBI has been in existence since the previous six-year period with headquarters in Brussels: it needs to function always more efficiently, so that we can be present in an effective way as Salesians in those places where decisions concerning young people and education are taken, and at the same time can access sources of funding for new and urgent works.

– *The Salesian Bulletin.*

The process of renewal needs to continue, as we try to develop all its potential possibilities, and foster further coordination.

– *The Ratisbon Institute of Jerusalem.*

This was originally created to foster dialogue between Christians and Jews, but now the Holy See has transferred this task elsewhere and has offered us the premises for use as a Theological Institute or an important study centre. Acceptance would have considerable advantages as a presence in Jerusalem but would imply certain consequences, such as the future of Cremisan. At the moment we are in the discussion phase in which the Middle East province (through its Provincial and

provincial council) and the community of Cremisan have been involved from the beginning.

All these themes were taken up again at a wider and deeper level during the plenary session of the Council in June and July; and to them others have been added, such as the Strenna for the Salesian Family for the year 2004, the salesian pastoral plan for the same year, the revision of the Statute of the ADMA, an evaluation of the Fusagasugá project, the “logo” of the Salesian Headquarters, and consideration of the accounts for 2003.

### **Encyclical on the Eucharist**

On Holy Thursday of this year the Holy Father, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his pontificate, instead of his customary letter to priests, presented the new encyclical “*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*”, a meditation on the Eucharistic mystery which emphasizes the close and inseparable relationship between the Church and the Eucharist.

Some parts of the text are very personal and prompt meditation; there are also references to pastoral situations and theological considerations. But it is mainly a declaration addressed to the Catholic Church, asking that in its consideration of the Eucharist the sense of mystery, the linkage with the cross and with Jesus’ offering of his life, the aspects of respect and solemnity be strengthened. This will lead to the avoidance of inappropriate innovations, ambiguities and exploitations in the celebration.

Some have described the encyclical as a little catechism of the Church’s faith in the Eucharist, but more important perhaps is the reminder of the central position the Eucharist must be given in each one’s personal life of faith, and in the liturgical practice of communities.

For us the document must be a valuable means of renewal for the celebration of the Eucharist and also for our pedagogical

activity, as the Eucharist was for Don Bosco. We are invited to be moved to amazement at the extreme nature of the manifestation of God's love for us (n.11), and this is accompanied by references to those indications that show a loss of appreciation for this Sacrament; they range from the abandoning of Eucharistic adoration to the reduction of its celebration to a mere friendly meal; from carelessness in the celebration to a loss of the sense of mystery. It should never be forgotten that we are called to be "mystagogues", true initiators of the young to a meeting with God.

The encyclical reasserts in the first place that the Eucharist is Christ's gift *par excellence* – he offers himself for us and for our salvation; secondly the Eucharist truly builds the Church, not only because the Church is born of the Eucharist but because it is nourished by it and grows in it; and thirdly, precisely because it is a mystery of communion, the Eucharist is necessarily linked with reconciliation, in the sense (as St Paul says) that nothing can separate us from Jesus – not even death – except sin, which is a negation and breaking of this communion. It will do us a lot of good to study this encyclical and continue the incentive of Fr Vecchi, who had himself written a letter on the Eucharist and had expressed some of these same ideas.

I invite the confreres of our three European Regions to begin a deeper analysis of the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation "*Ecclesia in Europa*", on the communication of the gospel of hope in the continent; it will be the object of our particular attention in the meeting we shall have with the Provincials of these Regions between 1 and 5 December 2004.

### **Visit to the Province of Great Britain**

During the last weekend of April I was in the Province of Great Britain to visit some of the communities, meet the confreres, and take part in two gatherings of the Salesian Family at

Bolton and Chertsey, where I spoke about the vocation of the Salesian at the present day, beginning with the story of my own vocation and my experience in inviting others to become Salesians; I was also able to dwell at some length on the identity of the Salesian Family today, and on its role and mission.

I was struck by the friendly fraternal welcome I received from the confreres and from all the members of the Salesian Family, an expression not only of the well known British courtesy and kindness, but also of love and attachment to Don Bosco. The programme had been carefully prepared by a group made up of various members of the Salesian Family and drew a large crowd everywhere. I am convinced that in the future we must always work more as a network, as Don Bosco's Family, with the full harmony, synergy and fraternal solidarity that I have witnessed here.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that, even though the province has two houses for aging or sick confreres, there is also a good number of young priests on whom it can rely for ever more effective work and more flourishing pastoral results. I would like at this point, in line with what John Paul II has written in the Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, to express my esteem, gratitude, closeness and encouragement to all young Salesians, priests and brothers; they are a real gift from God, the sign of his love and hope for the future (cf. EIE 36-37), and I urge everyone, as a response to this gift, to stay with the young and be a sign of hope for them.

### **Treviglio and Chiari (ILE)**

At the end of April I visited the two communities of the Milan Province at Treviglio and Chiari. Both had prepared a very concentrated programme. At Treviglio I met the students and teachers of the middle and high schools, the city's mayor, and went to the "Cassa Rurale" Bank, which offered the Rector Major the

finance needed for the drilling of some wells to provide water in Ethiopia; this was followed by a Holy Mass in the Sanctuary of the Weeping Madonna.

At Chiari the day began with a Mass for the school children, after which there was a meeting with the young people and the inauguration of the new premises for the high school and for the oratory and youth centre. I spent the afternoon meeting the Cooperators and Volunteers and in getting to know details of "*Auxilium*", a work with strong social and missionary objectives; I was amazed to see what this work by so many lay and professional people had been able to achieve in hearts and personal lives, quite apart from its social activity; those involved have become true modern Samaritans in providing help for immigrants and the missions. The day closed in the gym with a performance of "The Giant's Garden", which led me to think of the need we have to revive and improve the quality of our education in the performing arts as a typically salesian means of education and evangelization.

We must thank the Lord for the pastoral zeal of the confreres and for all their initiatives in education and social work with such great concern for the poorest people of the local area and of the world.

### **Visit to the Sicilian Province**

During the year I have made two visits to this province. At the beginning of May I was at Caltanissetta, for the golden jubilee there of salesian work. On the same occasion I also had meetings at Zafferana and Palermo, where I met representatives of all the Salesian Family of Sicily. In this way I was able to meet most of the confreres.

Later I returned to the province at the end of August for the meeting of the Salesian Youth Movement, which provided a further opportunity for meeting the confreres.

Between them the two visits enabled me to get to know the situation in the province, and to appreciate how much the confreres are doing in the fields of salesian formation, the school and technical training, parish work, and in problems of marginalization and human development.

Widely known is the commitment by some of our confreres to the defence of children who were being bullied, harassed and abused in the "Santa Chiara" quarter of Palermo; it led to the public denunciation and closing of the Oratory, which was later reopened with greater recognition and appreciation on the part of the civil authorities and society. Visiting Santa Chiara, I said that it is a place where the Salesians must be present with a more constructive kind of work involving the whole of the Salesian Family. It is my hope and prayer that this dream may gradually attain reality for the benefit of all the children, adolescents and young people in an area which is socially deprived, both for the families that already live there and for the growing number of immigrants.

### **Visit to the Bilbao Province**

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the house at Pamplona was the reason for a visit during the second week of May to the Bilbao province where I got to know nearly all the houses in Bilbao, Santander, Pamplona, Logroño, Burgos, Vitoria, Urnieta, and Azkoitia. The programme of events included visits to a well planned exhibition of salesian life and interests, several radio and television interviews, meetings with Bishops, civil authorities, confreres and young people, teachers, collaborators, members of the Salesian Family and others interested in our work.

The events that made the greatest impression on me were the meetings with the young, like the one at Deusto where numerous members of the SYM had gathered from all over the province. Their joy, the artistic quality of the performance they

gave of the musical "*Namaskar*", the way they welcomed the message of the Rector Major, their obvious determination to be involved in social work and to live their Christian life in an intense and responsible manner, all remind us of the immense power young people represent for the Church and society, as Don Bosco who always believed in them discovered.

And then there were also the meetings with the Salesian Family, with the communities of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, with the committed Cooperators and Past-pupils in their well organized centres, with the flourishing ADMA groups, all united by the Eucharist and devotion to Mary Help of Christians, and very much in harmony with the original foundations of Don Bosco.

I cannot omit a word about one of the most famous Salesians of this province, Fr José Luis Carreño Echandía, the great missionary of India and the Philippines after the example of St Francis Xavier, whose tomb I went to visit, with veneration, admiration and gratitude, in the Missionary House which he himself built at Alzuza. He was a Salesian rich in human qualities, a musician and poet, of sharp and lively intelligence, a dreamer but one who could also make dreams real, with a spirit of enterprise like that of Don Bosco himself, of whom he felt himself a worthy son.

A sign of the esteem of the civil authorities was the awarding of the Gold Medal of Navarre to the Salesians of Pamplona; the same authorities are now preparing to collaborate in the construction of a new technical training centre in recognition of what the Congregation has done in the past and is doing still for the technological development of the Navarre area through the technical training of young people. Perhaps it is worth recalling that this is a province which has done a great deal, as indeed have nearly all the Spanish provinces, to develop such training centres. The relationship with the authorities and their involve-

ment, where possible, is a matter of no little importance, because education is something in which the State too is involved, and we must work with the greatest possible collaboration, while at the same time maintaining the autonomy and freedom proper to the Congregation. This too is an important salesian criterion.

Finally a last memory of these days was the visit to Loyola, to the house and museum of Saint Ignatius, with a pause for prayer in the “chapel of the conversion”. What struck me most was his spiritual experience and what took place in his interior life journey. He returned home with a war wound and with thoughts in his mind of the woman he loved – and he left it in love only with God. What had happened in the meantime? The infinite grace of a meeting with God! Proud of himself as he was, and thinking about conquering the world, he had asked for some books about knightly deeds so as to draw inspiration from the great heroes. Providentially the only books available were a history of the saints and a life of Christ. Even though he found them boring he began to read them. The more he got to know about the great saints, the more he began to wonder: “If St Francis of Assisi was so radical, why could I not be the same? If St Dominic Guzman did such things, why could I not do them?”. The more he read of the life of Jesus, the more he felt deeply moved, wanting to begin a new life, become his disciple, be among his followers. He wanted to do nothing else but God’s will and to seek only his glory. In this way he learned the art of spiritual discernment, the criteria for distinguishing what comes from God and leads us back to him from what, even though it might appear good, does not come from him and lead back to him. Once he was cured he left the house a man completely transformed. What can St Ignatius suggest to us Salesians in our commitment to leading young people to a meeting with God and his Son Jesus? If we want to be fully capable of this task, I think we need to search always for God, and to become expert guides in leading young people to Christ.



## Visit to the Munich Province

In mid-May, after the visit to the Bilbao province I was in the province of Munich, where I was able to visit some communities and get to know certain of our works, like the Don Bosco publishing house which is engaged in an interesting series of publications in collaboration with similar enterprises in the North West European Region, and the house of Waldwinkel, a very significant work of high educational quality in collaboration with the State for handicapped children; the variety of opportunities offered make it a work of great value.

The main purpose of my visit was to take part in the meeting of the *Curatorium* of Benediktbeuern and to meet the Salesian Family of the province. At Benediktbeuern I was able to admire the beauty and nobility of the ancient monastery which is a real jewel, but more especially the variety of the departments and formative programmes offered, and in particular the Faculties of Theology and Pedagogy which have made this study centre famous throughout the salesian world. In my address, in addition to expressing my gratitude for the service carried out in the formation of numerous confreres, I urged that Benediktbeuern become a centre of theology for the whole Region. This would be something to pursue when the Congregation, at the present time, is encouraging interprovincial formation communities and study centres, as a service to provinces unable to offer all the phases of formation, in a spirit of shared responsibility and the desire to work together for the same end.

The meeting with the Salesian Family brought together about a thousand persons; it was a real festive occasion, beginning with the Eucharist which was followed by lunch and an enjoyable musical concert in the theatre. We could not fail to thank the Lord for the gift of the Salesian Family which is everywhere growing in numbers and becoming stronger and open to new challenges. And having received this gift, how could we fail to make great efforts to pass it on faithfully?

## **Visit to the Cologne Province**

On 23 April I went to Bonn to take part in the festivities in honour of Fr Karl Oerder, who was celebrating his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, 50 years of religious profession and 25 years as Director of the Salesian Missions Office. It is not customary for the Rector Major to participate in personal events of this kind – it would be impossible for him to join every confrere in his particular moments of celebration – but my presence on this occasion served to express the gratitude of all the Congregation for the tireless, generous and effective work carried out as a service to the Congregation for the benefit of the missionaries of Latin America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. The presence of civil and ecclesial authorities, of representatives of important organizations of the German government and Church, and of many confreres and friends, was a clear manifestation of the great esteem for Fr Oerder and appreciation for what he has done over the years. He has made of the Bonn Office a true window on the world through which the German people could observe the Salesian Congregation and vice versa..

At the suggestion of the Provincial I took the opportunity to have a meeting with the Rectors of the province who gave me an account of the situation of their works and communities, and this was followed by a questions and answers session. In a society which is feeling, perhaps for the first time after the second world war, the limitations of its economic and social progress, the process of deep secularization is posing new challenges to evangelization and to our work among the young. At present the two German provinces are working on a plan for unification which will be completed by the year 2005.

## **The Feast of Mary Help of Christians at Turin**

As usual, I went to Turin on 24 May for the celebration of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians. 17 May had already seen the

celebrations for the centenary of the crowning of the image which would have as its culmination the Fourth International Congress on Mary Help of Christians, held in Turin during the first days of August with the presence of more than 800 participants from 30 countries.

Once again I witnessed the love of the city of Turin for Don Bosco's Madonna, fruit of the great devotion which our beloved Father cultivated and spread so zealously. The Basilica was always filled to capacity and the procession, at which Card. Severino Poletto presided with his auxiliary Bishops, saw the Madonna carried through the streets and blessing the families.

An event which took place on the same day in Don Bosco's Rooms was the inauguration of *the new web site of the Salesian Headquarters*, which is a very important way of making contact with all those who are interested in knowing who we are, what we do, where we work, what are our ideas in the fields of education, evangelization, marginalization, culture, missionary activity, communication and formation, together with our methods and objectives and how we are organized. All this is in line with the mind of Don Bosco that it is not enough simply to do good but that it is important the good we do is known. The new site has greater possibilities than its predecessor with a variety of services, research facilities, and especially broader interaction possibilities. The new site is a way of access through which the Salesians want to enter into dialogue with the world, especially the world of youth, and with all who may want to browse our web pages. I hope that this effort to make use of the Internet to renew our commitment on behalf of the young, to their education and evangelization, with the creation of a culture of anticipating their needs, may prove fruitful.

I made another visit to the Province of Piedmont-Valle d'Aosta for the centenary of the birth of St Callistus Caravario at Cuornè, his native town. The coincidence of this celebration

with the Feast of Pentecost gave me an opportunity to point to the efficacious action of the Holy Spirit when he finds a soul so well disposed as was this young Salesian. The civic commemoration amply demonstrated, in addition to the recognition of such a fellow citizen, the great esteem for what the Congregation has done for Cuorgnè through the work we have there. Three days earlier the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of St Louis Versiglia had been commemorated at Oliva Gessi.

### **Visit to the Verona Province (IVO)**

At the end of May I went to Verona so as to visit the province before its imminent unification with that of Venice. By the time this letter is published the new province of North-East Italy will have begun to exist.

I was there for only one day, but the programme was a very full one. It included a visit to the sick confreres in the house of Negrar, a meeting with 800 pupils and teachers in the "St Zeno" technical training centre with the neighbouring salesian parish of St Dominic Savio, the blessing of the new Chapel of the "St Zeno" Institute, a visit to the Don Bosco Institute where I had a meeting with the pupils of the middle school, an assembly of the confreres and a Mass to commemorate various jubilees.

Sometimes it may be asked whether such brief visits do any real good: I think it is up to you to reply to that one. For my own part I must say that I have found them to be moments of great communion of a loving, spiritual, pastoral and vocational kind, because there is nothing so constructive as personal contact. From the echoes that follow visits of the Rector Major I have come to realize that the confreres, youngsters, collaborators and members of the Salesian Family are motivated as though refilled with salesian spirit; and this is precisely because the Rector Major is the Successor of Don Bosco. I remember how Fr Vecchi, when he was already sick and unable to move about to any great extent, in-

sisted on the need to take part in events of the provinces and the Congregation since, he said, the Rector Major is important not because of what he does, but because of the one he represents.

### The Six-monthly Meeting of the USG

From 28 to 31 May the *Salesianum* was the venue for the six-monthly meeting of the Union of Superiors General (USG), with the theme: *The Religious, a man of dialogue at the service of the Church and with the Church*". There were three conferences illustrating the theme, followed by group work, first on a language basis and then by office: Superiors General and their Vicars.

The topic had been chosen in response to an easily observable situation, that is the difficulty of dialogue at all levels: within a religious community and a religious Institute, between consecrated life and the ecclesial community, between the Church and the world.

The theme showed very clearly that dialogue is difficult but urgently needed, precisely in a cultural and ecclesial context like our own. It is something absolutely necessary for the development of the human person who is a relational being, for the life of the community, for the mission which is essentially a matter of communication and witness, and for insertion in the world. It is a taxing process, not least because it implies the ability to change one's own point of view, one's own convictions and ways of working; but it is indispensable if we want to make our witness as Jesus' disciples credible and effective, if we want to be known and recognized because we love each other, because we are one, because we have a single heart and soul.

Starting from the Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam* (1964), in which Paul VI said that "dialogue is the new name of charity" and spoke of its four fundamental characteristics: clarity, moderation, confidence and prudence, the speakers showed how dialogue

between cultures, between men and women, between ourselves and the poor, is possible only by listening attentively to each other, trying to see the other in the best possible light, dealing with each other with extraordinary respect, and in general looking at others with the eyes of God.

The degree of health of a local or provincial community is directly proportional to the manner in which the members are able to share with each other their respective points of view and respective spiritual and personal strengths.

Along this line, the first topic of the GC25 aimed at encouraging confreres and communities to foster a deep personal relationship and hence to share their own experiences of life and of God, so as to form a much more solid and robust community. This too is the objective of the local community project which tries to foster communion among confreres through a process of sharing and discernment, beginning from the call of God, going on to a clearer understanding of the situation and challenges with which we live and work, and concluding with the making of the great options and objectives to be achieved. True communion, in fact, is the fruit of love expressed in a common project, against every temptation to individualism and selfishness.

Don Bosco met this need by trying to make of his community a home, inculcating in it a family spirit permeating all relationships. In this way the life of the community came to embrace its joys and hopes, its trials and fears, its internal dynamism and spiritual progress, as well as the burning question of the quality of its educative and pastoral work, its ability to meet challenges, and the involvement and formation of lay collaborators.

Dialogue with the Church, with the Bishops and other religious, though not always easy has nowadays become more indispensable and demanding than ever before, because it means overcoming fears and distrust and facing together the great problems such as evangelization, human advancement, social justice and culture.

There is no doubt that dialogue is a value that must be learned and developed during the years of formation. It is an expression of the spirituality of communion, indispensable for us who are called to be its architects.

### **Visit to the Adriatic Province**

At the end of May I spent a weekend in the Adriatic province. It began with a meeting at Aquila, where on Friday 30, the Mayor conferred honorary citizenship on all the salesian community to mark 70 years of its work and influence on the city and its environs. The following morning there was a meeting with the provincial community, and in the afternoon and evening the Feast of Mary Help of Christians was celebrated with the Salesian Family with a procession and other festivities. We then moved on to Vasto where I was once again given honorary citizenship before inaugurating the new gymnasium, presiding at the Mass of the Ascension, and taking part in the festivities organized by youngsters from the different salesian works of the province.

I found a lively province, full of vitality, where even the elderly confreres seem to maintain the enthusiasm of their early days rooted in the experience of salesian traditions. I noted the presence of a group of young confreres which brought to mind the possibility of a fruitful pastoral work for vocations, especially if the communities continue to be open, welcoming and present among the young, and if the SYM becomes consolidated and is able to bring to maturity plans of life. Let us hope that this will be the case.

### **Conclusion: Don Bosco's birthday**

On 15 and 16 August I was at Colle Don Bosco for the celebration of the Feast of the Assumption, the entrustment of chil-

dren to Our Lady – as Mamma Margaret did with her son John – the procession of Our Lady of the Castle at Castelnuovo, and for the 188<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Don Bosco's birth. It was the first time that this had been given a special celebration but nonetheless there was a significant participation by confreres from the communities of the province, with the presence also of the civil authorities for the birthday of their most celebrated fellow citizen.

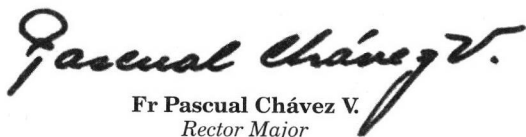
There were also groups of young people from Belgium, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland, led by salesian confreres. It is astonishing to see the extent to which Colle is becoming a pilgrimage centre for confreres, youngsters and members of the Salesian Family, who come to see the cradle of the father, teacher and friend of the young: the meadow of the dream which sealed his whole life, entrusting him with a mission, showing him a field of work, giving him a Mistress; the place of our origins and of our spiritual and apostolic communion. It is true that it was at Valdocco that Don Bosco brought to maturity his apostolic project, and it was there that took place the founding of the Salesian Congregation, of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, of the Cooperators and of ADMA; but it is also true that his life, the beginning of every gift, began at the Becchi where he took those first steps that were to mark for ever Don Bosco's life.

The initiative of the Colle community in celebrating the birthday of our Founder was, I think, a well chosen decision and in line with our present project of giving importance to our "salesian holy places". We are still twelve years from the bicentenary of his birth and we want to begin a process of preparation that must be translated into a better knowledge of him and especially into giving practical effect to his charism and mission in today's context, so different in many respects from his own. This was the point of the message of 16 August last. In many parts of the Congregation the month of August is kept, in fact, as Don Bosco's month, and so this reminder is very appropriate.



188 years have now gone by since the birth of Don Bosco, man of God and man of the young. The prodigious expansion of his charism to 126 countries in the world, thanks to a multitude of consecrated men and women who have made his plan of life their own, and to the serried ranks of lay collaborators reaching thousand and thousands of young people, makes it possible for Don Bosco to say with St Paul: *"You are a letter from Christ, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God"* (2 Cor 3,3).

May the Virgin Mary, on the feast of her own birthday, teach us to be open without limit to God's plan, so as to welcome it with joy and generosity, and collaborate with him for the benefit of the young.

  
Fr Pascual Chávez V.  
Rector Major

### 2.1 THE DELEGATE AND PROVINCIAL COMMISSION FOR FORMATION

Fr Francesco CEREDA  
*General Councillor for Formation*

The figure of the provincial delegate for formation is gradually taking on an ever more decisive role in the animation of the life of provinces, especially because of the now recognized importance of formation for the vocational growth of confreres, for the quality of educational and pastoral activity, and for charismatic identity. The delegate is the one who “gives life” to formation in the province: he animates it, stimulates it, follows it up and monitors it; the same can be said of the provincial formation commission which he coordinates.

Recent guidelines of the Congregation assign *new tasks* to this person. The *Ratio* frequently speaks of his role and presents an overview of his duties, comparing them with those of the Provincial (FSDB 246 - 247). The GC25 calls for his involvement in the study and animation of the personal life-plan, the community project, the province's yearly programme for ongoing formation, and the plan for the qualification of the confreres (GC25 16, 60). And finally the Councillor for Formation requires of him that he take special care to foster and promote the vocation of the salesian Brother (AGC 382).

I think it important therefore that the provinces become fully aware of the *new figure* of the provincial delegate for formation that is taking shape, and hence of the actual formation demands of which he will have to ensure the implementation. At present the application of the *Ratio* is dependent mainly on the qualifi-

cation and strengthening of the delegate and of the provincial formation commission. They are at the service of the Provincial and his Council for the animation of the communities and the growth of the confreres. Here I offer you an overview of their obligations; the provinces will thus be able gradually to better appreciate their duties and make better use of what they can do.

## 1. Reflection

The first task of the delegate is to **reflect** on formation in the province. This means that he must keep up to date in the field of formation and in areas connected with it, such as consecrated life, the human maturing process, the spiritual life, “Christian states of life” and the challenges of evangelization, and also in the guidelines of the Church, the General Chapters, and the Rector Major with his Council. It also requires that the delegate be in contact with the real situation in the province, especially with the young people in initial formation, the formation guides, the formation communities, and indeed with all communities, confreres and initiatives in ongoing formation.

1.1. He reflects on the ***Ratio*** and on the “Criteria and norms for salesian vocational discernment”. The *Ratio* provides charismatic, spiritual and pedagogical guidelines which accompany the norms; they give the general picture of formation and identify its dimensions. It presents a synthesis of the salesian vocation and of how growth in it takes place by accepting the principal directives of the Church and of the Congregation and by observing formative methods. It is a strategic document, and so merits meditation, study and assimilation on the part of every Salesian, and especially of those who have responsibilities for animation and government, for initial and ongoing formation, and especially on the part of the delegate and provincial formation commission.

1.2. After assimilating the *Ratio* and the other documents of the Church and Congregation on formation, the delegate reflects on the **formative practice** of the province, that is, he constantly asks himself whether the formative processes – and especially their results – really correspond to the expectations of the Church and the Congregation, to the present circumstances and to local demands. In this way he becomes aware not only of what is valid in formative procedures within the province, but also of their weaknesses and difficulties.

1.3. It is not sufficient that he reflect with the Provincial, the provincial council and the formation commission; he must be able to persuade every confrere and community to do likewise and accept their share of responsibility. In this way he will help in implementing one of the guidelines of the *Ratio* which declares: “The Province engages in a continual process of reflection on the situation of the confreres, and the communities and their formation, and becomes a setting that animates, fosters and demands fidelity to the salesian vocation” (FSDB 226).

## 2. Planning

Reflection with the provincial formation commission on the guidelines of the Church and the Congregation, verification of formative practice, and the inculcation of reflection throughout the province, leads to the second task of the formation delegate, which is that of **planning**.

2.1. The delegate and the commission work together in preparing the formation section of the **provincial directory**. In this are found the norms and broad formative options of the province. It is the task of the Provincial Chapter to do the actual drawing up of the directory which, once it has received the approval of the Rector Major and his Council, becomes the code

of particular law for the province. It is then up to the delegate, with the commission, to prompt its implementation and ensure at regular intervals that it is being applied in practice.

2.2. The province is involved in the drawing up, implementation and revision of the **province formation plan**. It is a mistake to think of the provincial plan as a document to be prepared by the delegate and the commission. The plan is in fact the process of discernment and convergence of the provincial community on its own formation; this is the responsibility of everyone, and the delegate is the one who helps the province to accept this responsibility.

It is a matter of creating an agreed view among the confreres of the province about the type of Salesian they want to form, about the stage they have reached, what still remains to be done, and how they intend to do it. The plan covers the areas of initial and ongoing formation, qualification of confreres, and the joint formation of Salesians and lay people. In it special care is taken to provide the various elements for the formative curriculum of the salesian Brother (FSDB 424).

When the plan has been drawn up and approved by the Provincial with his Council, it belongs to the delegate to see to its implementation, evaluation and if necessary to its revision. He, therefore, is the one who follows up its implementation by everyone: by the formation commission, by the Provincial and his Council, by the formation guides, by the confreres and by the communities. He makes of the plan the means for the continued growth and renewal of the Province.

2.3. The GC25 asks the Provincial and his Council, with the help of the delegate and commission for formation, to suggest ways and means for drawing up the **personal life-plan** and the **salesian community plan** (GC25 16). The personal life-plan, already asked for from everyone by the *Ratio*, is a way of “bringing together one’s desires, energies and values in a personal project of life, in which one assumes responsibility for one’s growth

and lives to the full the deepest motivations of one's vocation" (FSDB 69). In it the confrere depicts the kind of Salesian he feels called upon to be and the process for achieving this. The salesian community plan is an effective means for giving a solid foundation to the ability to "live and work together" and overcome the dispersion of individual work and the risk of fragmentation. The community tries to discern the will of God in its regard, appraises its situation, and discovers the path to be taken to reach the goal; in this way communion grows among the members, together with a sense of common responsibility.

2.4 Finally, according to the guidelines presented in AGC 382, it belongs to the delegate with the provincial commission for formation to plan and develop activity for **promoting the vocation of the salesian Brother**, involving the whole province, the educative and pastoral communities and the Salesian Family. This activity aims at the realization of the four lines of action mentioned by the Councillor for Formation: a better knowledge and appreciation of the identity of the salesian Brother, beginning with the confreres and salesian communities; a greater visibility of this figure especially in educative and pastoral communities; a formation of quality for the Brother; and a strong commitment to the promotion of this vocation. To this must be added the animation of constant prayer. The delegate and commission have to involve the whole province in the planning and implementation of these commitments, but they should take the initiative for stimulation and coordination.

### 3. Following up initial formation

Initial formation calls for specific kinds of care according to the phase the young confreres are living through. The formation delegate must give particular attention to stages, persons and situations.

3.1. The part of the provincial plan of formation that deals with initial formation is called precisely the **plan for initial formation**. The delegate and formation commission must arrange the various procedures and the different experiences, activities, persons involved, periods, contents, environments and phases, so that they converge on clear goals. It should be noted that the emphasis is to be placed not on the number of things to be done but on their purpose. If, for instance, in its provincial formation plan a province has the aim to inculcate among young confreres a strong incentive to work for the very poor or to the formation of a missionary mentality, the delegate will try to concentrate the efforts of all on this objective. For this reason it is a great help to draw up at the beginning of the year a good *programme of initial formation*, based on the provincial plan.

3.2. The delegate must also foster the **continuity of the formation process** during initial formation. This can be achieved in different ways. There can be periodic meetings between those responsible for the different phases to reflect on how the formation process is proceeding (FSDB 239); the *Ratio* suggests links be maintained between those responsible for formation in the postnovitiate, novitiate and practical training (FSDB 415) and between those responsible for the prenovitiate and the director of novices (FSDB 345). There can be meetings of formation guides in order to exchange views regarding knowledge and convergent application of criteria and norms for salesian vocational discernment (FSDB 297) or initiatives for ensuring continuity in pedagogical formation or the method of teaching at various phases. There should also be a plan to ensure that the young confrere experiences a true continuous and unified process during the various phases.

3.3. The delegate follows up the **formation communities** and the study centres. This means that he visits them periodically, keeps himself informed about their general situation and

programming, and monitors their formative activity. He also visits any interprovincial formation communities, maintains contact with the formation personnel and meets the young men in initial formation.

3.4. The delegate organizes suitable initiatives of animation and guidance for those in **practical training** in accordance with a prearranged programme. For them these initiatives are opportunities for direct comparisons, exchange of experiences, shared reflection and mutual support; they help to make the individual formation process effective (FSDB 439). The delegate also maintains contact with the Rectors of those in practical training and receives the quarterly formation assessments.

#### 4. Following up ongoing formation

Ongoing formation is a field in which the delegate has an important role to play. He sensitizes the confreres and communities to the need for conversion, renewal, updating and continuous growth; it is a matter of inculcating in everyone a mentality of openness, reflection, research, a desire for holiness and responsibility for one's personal growth, or in other words a ***mentality of ongoing formation***.

4.1. At provincial level the delegate involves confreres and communities in the formulation of the **plan of ongoing formation**, which forms part of the provincial formation plan aimed at spiritual renewal, pastoral qualification, and the educative and professional competence of the confreres. Its elaboration takes into account the different roles and ages and specific vocation and life situations: the quinquennium, degree of maturity, significant anniversaries and old age (FSDB 556).

It is expressed in a *yearly programme of ongoing formation* concerning the formation of the main animators: Rectors, for-



mation guides, delegates, but without overlooking the sick and elderly, so that they can live their particular situation with untroubled mind and a spirit of faith (CG25 60). It prepares helpful material and organizes appropriate services: retreats, days and other periods of prayer, renewal courses, updating meetings for different categories, meetings for the study of documents of the Church and the Congregation, and bibliographical information (FSDB 549).

It helps every *community* to draw up its own *annual programme of ongoing formation* and follows up its implementation, all of which forms part of the community project. It watches over the day to day life of the community to make sure it is formative. It encourages the confreres to foster the quality of personal prayer, and especially meditation, fostering the knowledge and use of methods consistent with our spirituality (FSDB 120), and to give special attention to the affective area and the building of interpersonal relationships (CG25 60) and the practice of the “lectio divina” (CG25 31).

4.2. Nowadays it is becoming increasingly important that the formation delegate help to create in the province concern for the **salesian spirit** and encourage communities and confreres to give more serious attention to it, by promoting initiatives or providing helpful material to make known the guidelines of the Congregation, the Rector Major’s letters and other salesian documents. He sees to it that the province has a good salesian library (FSDB 51) to facilitate access to the sources of our charism (CG25 60). He ensures that in the various phases of formation there is a serious and updated programme of salesian studies embracing history, spirituality, pedagogy and pastoral work. Similarly he organizes salesian experiences as part of ongoing formation (FSDB 50). Another of his important functions is the help he should provide for a deeper understanding of the vocational identity of the salesian Brother and for giving it greater visibility in the salesian and the educative and pastoral communities.

4.3. The delegate helps the Provincial to plan the qualification of all the confreres for their educative, pastoral and formative tasks; particular attention needs to be given to the preparation of those who will have to assume the responsibility of animation, government and formation in the local and provincial communities. It is a question of identifying the prior needs of the province in the light of the mission and formation, of finding ways to respond to these needs and choose the persons best suited to them by aptitude and inclination. All this is expressed in the **plan for the qualification of the confreres**, that is part of the provincial formation plan submitted by the delegate to the Provincial and his council for decisions. It belongs to the delegate to see to it that they are given effect, and in so doing he takes care to give due weight to philosophical, pedagogical, theological, salesian, professional and academic studies (CG25 60); the *Ratio* recommends that we keep in mind the preparation of specialists in salesianity for the benefit of confreres and communities (FSDB 547).

4.4. The delegate ensures that within the provincial formation plan are found the suggestions for the **common formation together of Salesians and lay people**, envisaging the content, experiences and times dedicated to formative activities (FSDB 547, 560). He promotes collaboration with the various groups of the Salesian Family in the field of ongoing formation by systematic action or particular initiatives that can be proposed and animated by teams including members of the different groups (FSDB 547).

## 5. Working as a team

It is fundamental for formation in the province that there be an animating nucleus; this is normally made up of the delegate and provincial formation commission (FSDB 18); without a ref-

erence group it is difficult to make progress. Formation is a crucial element for the life of the province. It embraces a variety of communities, programmes, situations, persons, experiences and needs; it includes initial and ongoing formation, the qualification of confreres and the formation together of Salesians and laity. It is difficult to think that a single person, highly qualified though he be, could attend to all of this and do it well.

5.1. This is why the delegate has alongside him a commission to collaborate directly with him in the formation field. It is with the commission, in fact, that he reflects on the situation of formation in the province, identifying the crucial points, seeking the most suitable responses, making proposals to the provincial council, planning for the future, organizing and coordinating the various activities, implementing decisions made, and checking up on results. Team work like this produces an activity which is organic, well programmed and unified (FSDB 22).

5.2. Attention needs to be given to the **composition** of the commission. It must be made up of people who because of their preparation and/or experience can make a valid contribution and who have the time required for meetings, reflection, and collaboration in practical initiatives. It is desirable that among the members there be at least one salesian Brother.

5.3. The situation of the province and the options it has made can lead to **particular roles** within the commission. Animation of the various areas can suggest the setting up of working groups for initial formation, for ongoing formation, for the formation of Salesians and laity together, for links with the Salesian Family; but it is always necessary to ensure a convergent set-up which refers back to a single delegate and a single provincial formation commission.

## 6. Working within a network

The provincial delegate for formation collaborates with many other people; formation is something which needs many contacts and synergy producing contributions; the delegate must be a 'network' person.

6.1. The delegate maintains frequent contact with the **delegate for youth ministry** and his team, so as to promote in the province mutual collaboration between youth ministry and formation. Knowing the plan for educative and pastoral work in the province, he sees what lines must be followed in the educative and pastoral formation of the confreres and seeks the support of the delegate for youth ministry in the formative process. In dialogue with him he draws up a programme of educative and pastoral activities for every phase of initial formation; he organizes them and later evaluates them. Together they discuss vocational animation, the aspirantate or special supportive community, the prenovitiate and the vocation of the salesian Brother; they also collaborate in defining the lines of common formation of Salesians and laity. One form of link between youth ministry and formation is the presence of the delegate or a member of the formation commission on the team for youth ministry.

6.2. The delegate offers studies, suggestions and proposals to the **Provincial and provincial council**. It is fitting that he be a member of the provincial council (FSDB 247); in this way he can keep the council informed about matters relating to formation and maintain their concern in its regard. When, as is already the case in many provinces, the delegate for formation is the Vice-provincial this gives him added authority before the confreres, makes more clearly visible the importance of formation, facilitates his proposals in the area of formation, creates a link with the provincial council, and fosters closer contact with all the communities.

6.3. The delegate maintains **contact with other formation delegates**. Because of the multiplicity of formative requirements it is impossible for a single province to “go it alone”; inter-provincial collaboration has become essential, and the delegate can foster it.

This contact between formation delegates helps the provinces to reflect together, to promote the exchange of experiences, to adopt common policies, to strengthen collaboration, and to assess the contribution of study centres and those of ongoing formation. A particular link is needed between the delegate and the *regional coordinator* and with the *regional commission for formation*; the *Ratio* recommends contact with the delegates of other provinces and with the person responsible for coordination at interprovincial level (FSDB 549).

In addition to the setting up and strengthening of inter-provincial formation communities – the form of collaboration most urgently needed – there are *numerous ways* of combining forces at the service of formation: they range from occasional co-ordination to interprovincial teams and to national or regional centres; from sporadic meetings to periodic initiatives and organic planning; from the sharing of experiences to meetings for reflection to the preparation of common helpful material; from the training of formation personnel to formation courses for specific groups of confreres: rectors, priests and brothers of the “quinquennium”, confreres preparing for perpetual profession, salesian Brothers.

6.4. Finally, the delegate keeps in contact with the **Councillor General for Formation**. It is a great help, in fact, to the Councillor to be aware of the formation situation of each province: the challenges appearing, experiences made, decisions taken; in this way he can assess the formation problems and needs of the Congregation as a whole; he is prompted to reflect on them and find ways to respond to them. Moreover the Councillor and all the personnel of the Department are always avail-

able to support the formative work being done by the delegate in the province, and to offer him their help.

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The *Ratio* highlights the diversity of tasks of the Provincial and of the provincial formation delegate (FSDB 246 - 247); they are not tasks which are either super-imposed nor mutually exclusive. The Provincial has the ultimate responsibility for formation, and the delegate – precisely as a delegate – performs all his activities in the name of the Provincial and in agreement with him. This makes it all the more necessary that the provinces reflect on this figure, give it proper importance and augment it with a view to competent animation and effective formation. This is the line already taken by many provinces; the delegate and provincial formation commission have proved to be a resource for their growth.

### 4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

#### – June 2003

The Rector Major began the month of June 2003 with a visit to the Adriatic Province. On 30 May he went to Aquila, where he was given honorary citizenship and on 31 he took part in a Provincial Assembly, in the course of which he gave an address, held a question and answer session with the confreres and finally celebrated Mass and had lunch. In the evening Fr Chávez presided at a procession in honour of Mary Help of Christians.

The following day, the first of June, he left Aquila, and went to Vasto. At the Town Hall he was received by the Mayor and then led into the Council Chamber where he was given the honorary citizenship of Vasto, to mark 40 years of salesian presence. Subsequently the Rector Major visited a Stamp Exhibition and the City Museum, before returning to the Salesian House for the official inauguration of the sports hall in the presence of the President of the Province, the Mayor and almost all the Town Councillors.

More than one thousand five hundred youngsters from all the houses in the Province gave Don Bosco's successor a rousing reception. After the inauguration of the sports hall, the first part of the new multi-purpose Social Centre (Oratory) which is being built for the benefit of the young people, Mass was celebrated for the Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord. In his homily the Rector Major invited the youngsters to take seriously the message of the Ascension: like Jesus we are passing through this world; but while we are here we need to be witnesses to the Risen Lord, making our world a place of brotherhood, solidarity and peace. «Become masters of your own lives, not just consumers», Fr Pascual Chávez said. Then he also invited them to rise above mediocrity and facelessness, and to become courageous and strong in the choices they make, ready to commit their lives to the things that really matter. The visit concluded with a concert in the new sports hall.

Between 3 June and 25 July the Rector Major presided at the "plenum" of the General Council. During this period when he was almost always in the house, as usual he received the Councillors, confreres who were at the Generalate for various reasons, Salesian Bishops and members of the Salesian Family.

His only outside engagements during these two months were visits to Cuorgnè, on 7-8 June, and to Portici, on 14-15 of the same month. At Cuorgnè in the theatre of the Institute, he met the youngsters from the house and those from Canavese, and after visiting the Town Hall, where he was received by the Mayor and by many religious and civic authorities, he went to the birthplace of *St Calistus Caravario*. After giving a brief account of the Saint's life and unveiling a commemorative plaque, the Rector Major, accompanied by the local authorities and a number of guests, went to the parish church of St. Dalmazzo, where he presided at Concelebrated Mass. After the Mass, everyone went to the former church of the Holy Trinity for the civic ceremony commemorating the Centenary of St. Callistus Caravario's birth.

Also at Portici honorary citizenship was conferred on the Rector

Major, who accepted it in the name of the confreres who for 100 years had worked on behalf of youth in this salesian house. In the evening Fr Pascual Chávez had a meeting with the youngsters of the SYM of the Southern Province, and with representatives of the EPC, and then later with members of the Salesian Family. The day concluded with a celebration organised by the youngsters of the SYM during which the Rector Major gave the traditional salesian "Good Night." The following day he presided at a solemn outdoor Concelebrated Mass including about 40 Salesian priests who had played their part in the history of the Salesian work in Portici; more than 500 people were present.

In the late afternoon of 20 June Fr Chávez visited the infirmary at the UPS and chatted with the sick confreres, and then held a meeting with the members of the council of the Education Faculty. Afterwards he stayed with them for the evening meal.

Between Sunday 22 and Saturday 28, at Chianciano Terme, the Rector Major and the General Council made a Retreat led by Fr Pietro Braido, with the theme: "*Walking towards the future with Don Bosco 'priest of the young'*".



On the evening of Sunday 29 the course for the new Provincials officially began and continued until 9 July.

### – July 2003

In addition to the ordinary activities of the meetings of the General Council, on 8 July the Rector Major presided at the Opening of the *IV Assembly of the IUS*, in the “Salesianum”; on Sunday 13 he presided at Mass and took part in the closing ceremony, bidding the participants at the meeting a final farewell.

On 9, after the conclusion of the course for new Provincials, he paid a short visit to the community at San Callistus in Rome, where he gave the Good Night to the confreres and stayed for supper with them. In the Good Night he thanked the community for their invitation, for the welcome they had given two years earlier to Fr Vecchi, after he had just had his operation, and for the work undertaken by the confreres: although it might not be directly aimed at the young, their work had a salesian significance because it puts visitors in contact with the early Christian church.

On Saturday 12 July the Rector Major returned to the UPS at midday in order to preside at the

“*professio fidei*” of the new Rector Magnificus, Fr Mario Toso, and then joined all the communities of professors present for lunch. After lunch before saying good bye, Fr Chávez thanked Fr Michele Pellerey, the former Rector Magnificus, for the work he had done, and gave his encouragement to the new Rector assuring him of his constant support.

On Sunday 20 July the Rector Major went to Castelgandolfo with a Spanish group to attend the Holy Father’s Audience, at the end of which he greeted the Pope personally and presented the members of the group to him.

On Monday 21 he returned to Castelgandolfo with the members of the General Council for a meeting of the General Councils of the FMA and SDB, which had as its theme the pastoral proposal and the *Strenna* for 2004.

On Thursday 24, as usual, before the conclusion of the session of the Council, Fr Chávez gave a Good Night to the Generalate community.

On Sunday 27 July, the Rector Major visited the novitiate community at Genzano. He spoke to the novices and answered their questions; this was followed by Mass and lunch, with the presence of the novices’ families. At

the end Fr Chávez thanked those parents present for the gift of their sons and assured them of the Congregation's gratitude and care for them. He also thanked the formation personnel for their work and wished them every happiness in the period of preparation for the first professions.

On 31 July Fr Pascual Chávez spent most of the morning with the new Italian Rectors, who were finishing their course of preparation for their ministry. He presided at Mass during which he spoke about the spiritual experience of St Ignatius Loyola, whose memorial was being celebrated that day in the liturgy, and about his ability to guide others, two important elements in the life and mission of Rectors. Afterwards he met the group and spoke about the figure of the salesian Rector as the heir and the communicator of a spirit, that of Don Bosco. At the end of the morning he had dinner with them.

### **– August 2003**

On the first of August the Rector Major went to Turin in order to take part in the *IV International Congress of Mary Help of Christians*, that was taking place in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians between 2 and 4 Au-

gust, attended by more than 800 people from 30 countries around the world.. During the morning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fr Chávez spoke on three occasions. At the official opening of the Congress he first of all greeted all those present, and this was then followed by his address entitled "*The Crowning of Mary in the light of her Assumption*" – *Theological and salesian reflections*; the morning ended with Mass. During the afternoon and evening he spoke with various confreres who had come for the Congress.

The following day when those attending the Congress went to Mornese, the Rector Major stayed at Valdocco; then in the company of the Vicar Fr Luc Van Looy, and the Provincial Fr Pietro Migliasso, he went to Colle Don Bosco, where he was welcomed by the Rector Luigi Testa, and the community. In the early afternoon when the Church of Don Bosco was crowded with those taking part in the Congress and others who joined them, he presided at Holy Mass.

On Monday 4 August the Rector Major visited the "Andrea Beltrami" community for sick confreres, and then immediately went to Mornese where he was welcomed by Sr. Ivonne Reungoat,

the Vicar General of the FMA, the Sisters of the Retreat House and others who were making a retreat there. After lunch Fr Chávez went to Ovada to visit the house where St Paul of the Cross was born and then returned to Mornese, where the Mayor and Deputy Mayor called to see him. He then presided at the concelebrated Mass at which 15 Sisters renewed their vows. After supper the Rector Major attended an Academy, during which was recalled in a very simple but moving way the visit of Don Bosco to Mornese on 4 and 5 August 1872, 131 years ago, when the first Daughters of Mary Help of Christians took their vows.

The following day the Rector Major said Mass for the FMA communities in Mornese and then left for Rome by car, stopping off at Pisa, where he paid a visit to the salesian community.

Between Saturday 9 and Thursday 14 August Fr Pascual Chávez took a few days rest at Les Combes, in the Valle d'Aosta, accompanied by the ICP Provincial and Economist, his private secretary and Fr Genesio Marasco, who looks after the house where the Pope stayed during the two previous summers. During these days he had the opportunity to

climb and admire some of the mountains in the area, the *Gran San Bernardo*, the *Cervino*, *Mont Blanc* the highest peak in Europe and to visit the community at Leperrere, in Cervinia. Prior to the outing to *Mont Blanc* he celebrated Mass at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Good Health, a sanctuary Don Bosco once visited; this was followed by a climb to the refuge the Salesians have near the *Gran Paradiso*. On the final day the Rector Major had a visit from Mgr. Tarcisio Bertone, SDB, Archbishop of Genoa.

On Friday 15 the Rector Major left Les Combes and went by car to Colle Don Bosco, where he was welcomed in front of the Church by Fr Luigi Testa, the Rector, with a group of youngsters from Belgium, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland by the salesian community and some other visitors. At 11.00 he presided at Mass at which the Choir of the church sang. In the afternoon he presided at a ceremony of entrustment of the children to Mary, recalling Mamma Margaret's gesture. In the evening he took part in the recitation of the Rosary and the procession in honour of "Our Lady of the Castle" at Castelnuovo Don Bosco, which concluded with the Good Night and the Blessing

of Mary Help of Christians.

On 16 August, still at Colle Don Bosco on the occasion of St John Bosco's birthday the Rector Major presided at the solemn celebrated Mass at which more than thirty Salesian priests took part. Before the Mass there was the narration of Don Bosco's birth, and of events connected with the beginnings of salesian history during which there was the symbolic reconstruction of Don Bosco's face. Before the offertory the SDB, FMA and other religious present renewed their vows. After communion the young people present and also the adults entrusted themselves to Mary with one of the Pope's prayers. In the afternoon before returning to Rome Fr Chávez went to visit the house where St Dominic Savio lived, at Morialdo, and the one where he died at Mondonio, spending some time in prayer at both places.

The Rector Major spent most of the rest of the month working in his office, and seeing confreres. One event to mention was the celebration of Mass for the VDB of Europe who were meeting in the "Salesianum". On Friday 22 August he went to Loreto for a meeting with young confreres from Italy (priests and brothers) on a *quinquennium* course. On his way

there he went to the community for old and sick confreres at Civitanova Marche Alta, where he said Mass during which a young Polish Salesian on practical training renewed his religious profession. He also visited the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Loreto.

On Saturday 23 he went to the Vatican to see the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education. On Thursday 28 he was in Aquila for the installation of the new Provincial of the Roman Province Fr. Pier Fausto Frisoli. He ended the month and this whole period with a visit to the Sicily Province where he took part in a day for the Salesian Youth Movement and in the Assembly of the Provincial Community.

## **4.2 Chronicle of the General Council**

The summer plenary session of the General Council began on 4 June 2003 and occupied the Councillors until 25 July 2003. In addition to the full meetings, 27 in number, there were group or commission meetings dealing with the study of certain issues. During this session there was also

a meeting of the new Provincials with the Rector Major and his Council – between 29 June and 9 July. The Councillors also played their part in contributing to other meetings, especially those held at the Generalate (as for example, meetings of the Rectors of Italy). In addition each Departmental Councillor presented a short report of activities in his own department.

As always, in addition to the more pressing topics or problems regarding the animation and guidance of the Congregation, the time necessary was also given to ordinary business matters coming from the Provinces, such as the appointment of Provincial Councillors and the approval of the appointments of Rectors, the opening and canonical erection of houses and/or activities, issues regarding confreres and economic or administrative affairs.

There follows a summary of the main issues on the agenda..

### **1. Appointment of Provincials.**

During this session four new Provincials were appointed to Provinces where the mandate of the Provincial was coming to an end.. Following a careful process

of discernment and taking special account of the results of the consultation held in the Provinces, the General Council made the necessary decisions.

In alphabetical order this is a list of the Provincials appointed during this session: Charles Jacques, for the Vice Province of Haïti; Nguyen Van Them Giovanni Battista, for the Province of Vietnam; Palazzo Leonardo for the Province of Córdoba, Argentina; Sanchez Arthur Junior, for the Province of South Philippines.

N. 5.5 in this issue of the AGC provides some biographical details of the new Provincials (the details regarding Arthur Sánchez Junior can be found in AGC382, n. 5.1).

### **2. Reports of Extraordinary Visitations.**

The examination of the reports of the Extraordinary Visitations to the Provinces 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 Visi-

tor's observations and to offer suggestions for action regarding its 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 were considered from the following Provinces: Córdoba, Argentina; Australia; Croatia; Dimapur, India; Southern Province of Italy; Rome, Italy; Perù; Wrocław, Poland; Portugal; Bilbao, Spain.

### **3. *Erection of a new Vice Province in Africa.***

After careful study and on behalf of the Rector Major the consultation of the confreres, the Rector Major and his Council also took the decision to erect a new Vice Province "Africa West", including Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, until now dependent respectively on the Provinces GEK – GBR – IAD and ICP – SUO.

### **4. *Topics of study 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 taken regarding matters discussed. The main topics considered were:

- **The Strenna of the Rector Major for 2004** together with a **Pastoral Proposal for Salesians**. The **Strenna** with the new text will be presented to the whole Salesian Family. The **pastoral proposal** on the other hand will be presented to the Provinces and confreres. It has the following objectives: to focus our educational and evangelising project, proposing *wholeheartedly to everyone a high standard of ordinary Christian living, holiness; re-launching the journey of education to the faith* (with an *active presence among the young, which gives priority to the poorest and the most lowly*, fostering and accompanying the vocational development of the *more committed youngsters*, which is carried out *in community, with a strong spiritual dimension*) as indicated by

GC23 (nn. 97-111); making the *Salesian Youth Movement* the place where the *role of young people themselves* in evangelisation and in education to the faith for all youngsters is given full scope, *in communion and in collaboration* with groups and movements in the Church and in the Salesian Family. All the Provinces are encouraged, according to their own possibilities, to draw up an *educational and pastoral programme for the year* along these lines.

- **The vocation of the Salesian Brother.** The General Council wished to consider further and to give practical form to Fr Vecchi's appeal to the Provinces, following the beatification of Bro. Artemides Zatti, to undertake a new, special and particular commitment to the vocation of the Salesian Brother. Moving on from the celebrations which had marked the year of the beatification, to practical concerns, the Council provided guidelines and made special suggestions for an greater appreciation of this vocation and its re-launching.

- **Vocational frailty** (physical, spiritual and practical). Taking up again the study that had been begun with the intermediate Council

meeting, in its plenary session the General Council again examined more deeply the problem that concerns the vocational process in its beginnings, and the formation process especially regarding the phases of initial formation. It was noted that given its importance the topic needed further consideration.

- **The personal project of life.**

This is a process of identification with the salesian vocation (initial formation); a process of creative fidelity towards holiness (on-going formation). The notes drawn up in the form of motivations, explanations and suggestions addressed to individual confreres, are offered to Provincials, Provincial Formation Delegates and Rectors of formation communities.

- **The revision of the Statutes of ADMA.** Following a proposal by the Vicar of the Rector Major, the General Council spent some time considering some corrections introduced in the Statutes of the ADMA Association. The Statutes were drawn up in 1992 and revised in 1997. The present revision follows the request of the last World Congress at Seville. It was undertaken during the last two years by the Primaria Group,

based at the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin. The changes are mainly concerned with names, organisation and new members of ADMA. The only novelty is the definition of the role of the Primaria (art. 15).

- **The evaluation of the "Fusagasugá Project".** The Fusagasugá Project (Colombia) regarding social communication for Latin America at the service of the new evangelisation, of human development and of Christian culture among the young and among the ordinary people, was developed in 1992 as an initiative of the Rector Major Fr Egidio Viganò. The present evaluation asked for by the Rector Major Fr Pascual Chávez, after ten years operation, also fits in to the Planning for the six year period. Another aspect under review was the overall situation, that is the way in which the Agreements undertaken, the participation of the Department as envisaged in the process and the identification of future arrangements regarding a Congregational policy in the field of social communication businesses were in fact working out. The evaluation was undertaken by the General Councillor for Social Communication and the Economist General.

- **The approval of the "Logo" for the *Direzione Generale*.**

The "Logo" is the result of the combination of the two logos that have been well established for some years in some parts of the Congregation: the German logo and the Brazilian logo. The idea of combining them follows on from suggestions coming from an enquiry carried out regarding a new logo throughout the Congregation and the suggestions of the General Council. The combination, in addition to drawing on and complementing the individual characteristics is intended to be an expression of communion and of intercultural dialogue. The central idea of the logo: *Don Bosco and the Salesians walking with the young in the world.*

- **Approval of the accounts.**

During this session, following its presentation by the Economist General, the General Council examined and approved according to the norms of the Regulations, the consolidated account of the *Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco*, at 31 December 2002.

- **The way of holding the General Chapter.** The General Council began to study the possible ways in which the General



Chapter might be carried out, responding to the deliberation of the GC25 (n. 136), which asks the Rector Major and his Council to "carry out an assessment of the celebration of the recent General Chapters with a view to evaluating and proposing a manner of operation that is more streamlined and aimed at carrying out an examination of the situation of the Congregation and drawing up fundamental guidelines for the policy to be implemented during the following six year period, in addition to fulfilling the constitutional requirements". Starting from the initial reflection during the intermediate session, the General Council considered further some of the possible ways with the intention of offering some suggestions to be considered in the Provinces.

- The **unification of the two German Provinces**. After having examined the results of the consultation promoted by the Rector Major himself about the unification of the two German Provinces, North Germany (GEK) and South Germany (GEM) the General Council approved the process for the unification of these two Provinces to be carried out by 2005. Before the unification, the

two Provinces will separately: hold their Provincial Chapters preparing the draft of a common OPP; the Extraordinary Visitation by the Regional and the Team Visit..

- **"Don Bosco International – Don Bosco Network"**. Following the approval during the previous winter session of the creation of the *"Don Bosco Network"* (DBN), made up of the Mission Offices and other NGO, the General Council took up again the study of the Statute of the DBN (which at present is called *Don Bosco Network for human and social development*), also considering ways in which it could come under the umbrella of the already existing and approved *"Don Bosco International"*, which represents the Congregation at the European Community.

Among some **significant occasions** in the course of the session, the following in particular could be mentioned:

- Beginning the meetings with a *relaxed gathering at Genzano*, with the aim of providing an opportunity for sharing. The intention was to underline the importance of letting each of the confreres, in this instance the

Councillors, feel that there really was interest in him and his life and not only in the work he was doing.

- The *Retreat* (22-28 June, at Chianciano-Terme), preached by Fr Braidò. As the Rector Major writes, it was a “spiritual pilgrimage” under the wise guidance of a genuine expert and devotee of Don Bosco, who led the Councillors through the main stages of the external and interior life of our beloved Father. While referring to the biography, the preach-

er offered several criteria for «Walking towards the future with Don Bosco “the priest of the young”» (this was the theme of the Retreat).

- The Meeting of the *General Councils of the SDB and the FMA* (21 July 2003, at Santa Rosa, Castelgandolfo), with the purpose of introducing the Councillors to each other; establishing the aim, the nature and the purpose of these meetings; studying the pastoral proposal, prepared by the Rector Major for the Salesians.

## 5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS ITEMS

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### 5.1 Message of the Rector Major to Salesians, Young People, Parents, and Educators, on the anniversary of St John Bosco's birth

*The following is the text of the Message that the Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chávez Villanueva, sent from Colle Don Bosco to Salesians, Young People, Parents and Educators on the occasion of the 188<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of St John Bosco, on 16 August 2003.*

My dear Confreres, Young people, Parents, Educators,

I am writing to you from the 'Hill of Beatitudes', the place of the young John Bosco's dream, on the anniversary of his birth. 188 years have passed since that day on which God chose to give the Church and the world that marvellous gift of a man who consecrated his whole life to the young through education, so as to make 'honest citizens and good Christians' of them, and to teach them to be always happy. From that time on, thousands upon thousands of people have found in Don Bosco a father, friend and model, and have drawn upon his charism, his mission and his spirituality, for inspiration, vision, motivation and

energy, in order to make 'God's dream' a reality.

As the successor of Don Bosco, I am happy to be able to address myself to you, to announce to you what he himself would have announced today: **'God's dream' is our sanctification!**

Communities of consecrated persons, young people, parents, educators, all of us are called to form a family that is a 'home and school of communion', where we can develop those values that help us to mature as persons, to bring to fruition the potential in every man and woman to the point where we live – as Don Bosco used to put it – as 'honest citizens and good Christians'.

**For parents**, the pressing appeal is that of turning your gaze upon Mamma Margaret, that simple, wise woman who knew how to offer trust to her sons, communicating to them those human values that are the foundation of any spiritual growth, such as being in touch with reality, work, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, respect for the other, and above all a sense of God, of His presence and His goodness; the source, centre and summit of life.

Today there is no doubt how important the role was that Mamma Margaret played in young John's

life: for his essential self-esteem, his education, for his religious sense, his openness to the needs of others, for that pedagogical genius which characterized the entire life of our beloved father Don Bosco.

At a time when families are going through a difficult crisis as a result of an ever more secularised and individualist view of things putting in the first place one's own good, one's own interests, one's own self-fulfilment, the Becchi Home is a school where we can learn the difficult but indispensable art of education of our children; a school which, like the home at Nazareth, provides *growth in age, wisdom and grace in the sight of God and human beings* (cf. Lk 2,40.52). This is the message of Becchi for you, dear parents.

**For young people**, Colle Don Bosco – rightly called by John Paul II during the beatification of Laura Vicuña, the ‘Hill of Youthful Beatitudes’ – reminds us that God wants good things for you, indeed He wants you to be happy now and in eternity. And since He wants you to be happy, He offers you in the Gospel a programme of life from which you can draw your identity, meaning in your life, your mission in the world, your vocation. In fact, the Beatitudes are a programme of happiness, hence

the word that is so often repeated: “*Happy are you...*”

A happiness that consists in putting God at the centre of your life, as an absolute value from which all other values take their meaning and in which they find their rightful place. A happiness that certainly doesn't coincide with what the world thinks, but which is seen to be authentic and long-lasting from the moment that Jesus gained victory on the Cross over the world, sin and death, and rose for evermore. A happiness like that of youngsters such as St Dominic Savio, Blessed Laura Vicuña, Zeferino Namuncurá, the five young martyrs from the Oratory at Poznan, and so many other young boys and girls who have reached the stature of spiritual giants. This is the message from Colle Don Bosco for you, dear young people.

**For Educators**, Becchi recalls the pedagogical kindness of St. John Bosco, his capacity for believing in young people, in their potential, their energies, the value of consecrating one's life on their behalf, of becoming their walking companions along life's journey, of helping them to discover the meaning of life and the key to finding real long-lasting happiness, discovering their vocation and so identifying attractive and chal-

lenging objectives.

Becchi is the cradle of the preventive system of Don Bosco, which he developed and perfected at Valdocco, discovering the importance of being among young people, with a loving, reasonable, religious presence, that keeps them free from falling into unhelpful experiences, sometimes harmful experiences that can ruin their health, existence and eternal life; a presence that can urge them on to victory. «The preventive system makes a saint of the educator, proposes holiness and helps the young to become holy: its birthplace and its place of rebirth is the Oratory», wrote my predecessor at the end of his letter on the Polish martyrs. This is the message for you, dear educators.

Finally, *for Salesian Confreres* Colle Don Bosco reminds us of our origins and brings us back to them, there where young John had the dream that was to leave a lasting impression on his whole life, because he discovered God's plan for him, such that from that moment «he took no step, uttered no word, put his hand to no task that did not have as its aim the salvation of the young» – as Don Rua wrote. We are sons of a dreamer, but one who was granted a huge capacity for initiative and

achievement; and our vocation continues to be that of carrying out the dream of Don Bosco, which is God's dream for us and for the young. This is the message for you, dear Confreres.

This in essence is the meaning of the strenna that I have already prepared for the year 2004, addressing the whole Salesian Family with an invitation to re-launch the proposal for youthful holiness. The celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the canonization of Dominic Savio, and the centenary of the death of Laura Vicuña will be an occasion for proposing again to every young person, with joy and conviction the commitment to holiness as the “high standard of ordinary Christian life” (NMI, 31).

Today more than ever, Italy, like the whole of Europe, needs people who give to God the primacy that is His right, and who become His witnesses, making Him visible, while they open wide their hearts and their compassion.

May Mary Help of Christians be our mother and teacher as she was for Don Bosco, and make us tireless missionaries for youth, enlivened by the passion that is the “*Da mihi animas...*”

Pascual Chávez V.  
Colle Don Bosco 16 August 2003

## 5.2 Strenna of the Rector Major for 2004

*We publish the text of the Strenna of the Rector Major for 2004. Seizing the grace of the anniversary of the canonization of Dominic Savio, and recalling the programme given to the Church by the Holy Father in “Novo Millennio Ineunte”, the Strenna is an invitation to the whole Salesian Family to re-present to young people their call to holiness.*

*The text is as follows:*

***On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
of the canonization  
of Dominic Savio,***

**LET US PROPOSE  
WHOLEHEARTEDLY  
TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE  
JOY IN THE CALL TO HOLINESS  
AS “THE HIGH STANDARD  
OF ORDINARY CHRISTIAN LIVING”**

*(Cf. NMI, 31)*

## 5.3 Pastoral proposal for Salesians

*The following is the text of the “Pastoral Proposal addressed principally to Salesians” – drawn up by the Rector Major with his Council, during the plenary session June-July 2003.*

## Background:

*Pope John Paul II* is always proposing to the whole Church and particularly to young people the prospect of holiness, as the foundation and at the heart of the pastoral programme for the new millennium: “The time has come to re-propose wholeheartedly to everyone this high standard of ordinary Christian living: the whole life of the Christian community and of Christian families must lead in this direction. (NMI, 31). “Young people of every continent, do not be afraid to be the saints of the new millennium! Be contemplative, love prayer; be coherent with your faith and generous in the service of your brothers and sisters, be active members of the Church and builders of peace” (Message for the XV World Youth Day 2000).

“Dear Salesians, (...) Be saints! As you well know, holiness is your principal task”. This was also the Pope’s exhortation to our General Chapter, which ended with the gift of three new *Beati* to the Salesian Family. *The Rector Major* in his closing address to GC25 said: “Holiness is the demanding way that together we want to follow in our communities; it is “the most precious gift we can offer to the

young" (Const. 25); it is the highest goal that, with courage, we can set for all. Only in an atmosphere of holiness that is lived and experienced will the young people have the possibility of making courageous life choices, of discovering God's plan for their future, of appreciating and welcoming the gift of vocations of special consecration." (CG25, 196).

It is a matter therefore of:

**1. Making explicit our educational and evangelising aim, proposing to everyone, wholeheartedly, a high standard of ordinary Christian living, holiness:**

- going beyond a certain apostolic timidity (limited to activities and entertainment) with an apostolic approach that is really missionary, offering everyone (those who are seeking, those already committed, the leaders, but also those set apart, the uninterested, the superficial ones) a clear and radical proclamation from the One who is the centre of our faith, the person Jesus Christ;
- leading them to a personal relationship with Him;

**2. Re-launching the journey of education to the faith proposed by GC23 (97-111):**

- A journey that begins with a *presence among the young*, a welcoming presence, selfless and significant (cf. CG25, 46);
- A journey that *puts in the first place the lowliest and the poorest*, that adapts itself to those who need to begin, and at the same time encourages and accompanies the vocational development of *the more committed youngsters* to the threshold of holiness. (cf. CG25, 48);
- A journey that takes place in community with adults and youngsters together fostering the creation of an oratorian atmosphere with a *strong spiritual character* and one of selfless service (cf. CG25, 47).

**3. Making the Salesian Youth Movement the privileged setting in which the active leadership role of the young in given scope in evangelisation and education to the faith for all the young, in communion and collaboration with groups and movements in the Church and in the Salesian Family:**

- developing *groups* as the main elements in the Movement, in which the youngsters can meet and help each other in their faith journey;

- ensuring a *variety* of groups, with different levels and rhythms of involvement and commitment, always open to all youngsters especially the poorest;
- promoting, in the various youth groups, a *positive atmosphere* of support in their spiritual journey and alternative models of Christian life, that can represent a specially suitable place for vocational proposal and discernment;
- caring for the basic elements of Salesian Youth Spirituality in the leaders through a process of systematic formation and personal guidance..

NB. Cf. The Final Document of Forum SYM 2000.

### **Some suggestions:**

- To give the *annual educative and pastoral programme* in the Provinces this emphasis.
  - To foster in the Province, as far as possible:
    - a systematic and practical opportunity for participation in “*a school of prayer*” in a salesian style for the young;
    - concrete initiatives for *personal guidance* of the young, to help them, above all, to reach a mature decision about their vocation in life;
- this implies making available, people, time, places, training etc.
- *salesian group activities*, of different kinds, giving priority to spiritual formation and apostolic activity for young people;
  - suggesting to young people that they make a *personal plan of life*, as a practical help along the way of growing to maturity and making a motivated decision about their vocation.
- Directing along these same lines *meetings of the Salesian Youth Movement* at provincial and also regional or continental level.
  - For the animation of the religious communities and also the educative and pastoral communities making good use of the *particular contributions of the Rector Major*: the comment on the Strenna for 2004, the letter in the AGC, the message to the SYM for 31 January 2004...
  - Providing material to help *re-discover Dominic Savio*, as a model of a salesian animator, and of other young models of holiness of the past and present. (Look up the articles by the Rector Major in the Italian *Bollettino Salesiano*; encourage



support for the special commitment of the groups of "Friends of Dominic Savio")...

- Making effective use of the *centres for youth spirituality* already present in the provinces, ensuring that they have an animating team, a regular programme, a certain continuity, a clear vocational direction..

#### **5.4 Facing the challenge of the Common Programme II**

##### ***Contribution of the Rector Major to the IUS***

*Below is the talk the Rector Major gave at the IV Assembly of the IUS (Salesian University Institutions) on 9 July 2003. He offers some very important guidelines for a presence of the Congregation in Universities.*

The unanimous approval given by the Rector Major and his Council in their plenary session on 7 January to the documents "*Identity of the Salesian Institutes of Higher Education*" and "*Policies regarding a salesian presence in Higher Education*", marked an important stage in the consideration of university foundations in the Congregation, foundations that fi-

delity to our mission as educators of the young had led us to establish, and which we want to develop and improve.

This process was begun at the express wish of my predecessor Fr Vecchi, who in that field too showed himself to be well-informed and far-sighted. In fact, his well-known Circular Letter "*For you I study*," in which he laid out the cultural policy of the Congregation, made it clear that it was necessary to adopt a hands on approach, to accompany and to direct the University Institutions that here and there were developing in different parts of the Congregation. With the appointment of Fr Carlos Garulo as the personal delegate of the Rector Major, what at first was thought to be only a matter of gathering information so as to be better informed about the situation became a significant enterprise both from the point of view of the knowledge of the "Salesian Universities," and from that of clarifying and defining the identity of our Universities, of a formal project, and of various formation initiatives, such as the "on line" course on the Preventive System, and of collaboration.

Today the *IUS* already have established their claim to full citi-

zenship in the Congregation and in the Provinces. There has been a transition from a state of “fait accompli” to works forming part of the Provincial Projects. And thanks to the desire for greater coordination and synergy there has been even further progress.

And now we are once again gathered here to look to the future together. I can say straight away that regarding the immediate future of our presence in the university world these two documents are valid instruments of direction and government for all of us; with the definition of the salesian character of these works, the description of the guiding principles, the identification of new objectives and the means for reaching them. Therefore the first thing I want to do is to encourage you above all to become familiar with these documents and then to put into practice the policies they contain.

I wrote to you saying that a process needs to be set in motion of giving greater importance to the IUS, encouraging – between ourselves and you and among yourselves – a consensus, collaboration and a sense of responsibility, already in fact successfully in progress. My hope is that you succeed in agreeing a new *common*

*programme* which will establish the way and the timescale for the implementation of the policies already determined.

I think it useful to recall what I wrote in that regard: “For some time yet those responsible for the IUS – Provincials and Academic Authorities – will need to give special attention to laying the foundations and creating the conditions so that the guidelines regarding “Identity” and “Policies” come to permeate the ordinary life of each Institution. In this task all the IUS personnel should be involved. I am convinced that by means of this commitment by people, the results of what has already been undertaken, through the internet course aimed at the educational and salesian formation of the teachers, will come together. In this way the Salesian Congregation will give a solid foundation to the construction within the university world of an educational tradition that is now just beginning”.

Let me now offer you some reflections on the wider issues.

### ***Commitment at university level***

Culture is a vital sector for the Congregation, and the IUS a primary instrument in that strategy.

Making this choice explicit implies not only accepting with loyalty certain structural factors proper to every university centre, but assuming responsibility for and actively entering into the development of the life of the universities that is more dynamic and more demanding than any statute, with the profound need for change that man's evolving history, the life of the Church and the vocation of the Congregation require.

What might these demands be?

### ***Closely linked with life***

The driving force of a university is learning, but the highest concern of a true university is human culture. Scientific effort needs to be allied with human culture at the service of the human person and of his vocation.

If this is true of any university it is especially so of the university institutions such as ours which either deal with the study of the saving presence of God in history and man's participation in this mystery or have an identity and a specific character from the fact of being salesian.

A university without a close link with life is not genuine.

If "research" and "teaching"

are complementary and inseparable functions in the university world, these ought to be carried out in the service of living people, involved in concrete circumstances. It is therefore necessary that the concern for "a scientific approach" finds its place within the context of current human society and its problems, to which it is offering its services.

### ***Specific contribution***

The IUS, as for that matter all Catholic Universities, should be distinguished "rather than for their number for their commitment to culture" (GE 10). This is the constant criterion for renewal: the aspect of quality.

The IUS ought to bring to the university activity in different countries the specific characteristics of the salesian mission, ensuring a presence that is well prepared and specialised in the world of youth and of the ordinary people.

The Congregation has founded and wishes to maintain the IUS not as a matter of prestige – if that were the case it would not be justified – but as a specific expression of fidelity to its own vocation in society and in the Church. It is necessary therefore

to ensure that the IUS have a specific contribution to make that is in harmony with our charism and our mission in the world.

### ***Interdisciplinary approach***

The growth of specialization in the sciences can lead to the disintegration of a University structure into almost air-tight compartments, without any communication between them. In such a situation, a Faculty or an Institute organises its programmes unilaterally and develops its own work without any concern for the overall role of the University and for the importance of drawing everything together towards a vision of synthesis. A University cannot be reduced to a mere collection of Faculties and Institutes!

The commitment of the Congregation in the university field goes far beyond the sciences and it is striving to create centres capable of building up a Christian culture; therefore it is trying to ensure that in its Universities there is a formal structure for interdisciplinary dialogue.

Each University has the serious task and the obligation to clarify its own nature: how it sees itself, what specific mission it intends to fulfil and what methods it is go-

ing to employ to reach its objectives. We have tried to define this in the documents already mentioned: "*Identity of the Salesian Institutes of Higher Education*" and "*Policies regarding a salesian presence in Higher Education*", which therefore are not an 'optional' for the individual IUS, but a normative frame of reference.

That which distinguishes a University should be its "pluridisciplinarity" and the "inter-disciplinarity" between the sciences, and – where they exist – philosophy and theology, so that everything converges on a Christian view of life. It is a question of promoting a Christian vision, not only incidental but as a fundamental part of the community and the institution.

### ***Dangers from the lack of an interdisciplinary approach***

The lack of an interdisciplinary approach in a University leads to the so-called watertight compartments. Here are some of the dangers:

- The loss of a sense of the specific aim of the IUS as an institutional unit; which gradually would lead to the adulteration of its character as a "salesian" "university", even though there might remain areas of scientific

study with their own specific aims.

- A one-sided intellectual formation, cultural imbalance, a naturalistic approach in certain areas of the human sciences, and inability to translate the faith in scientific terms in the drawing up a vision of synthesis.
- A sidelining of theology and philosophy, considered as out of date, but which, if they do not enter into dialogue with the new sciences and if they are not seen to be relevant to the practical problems of the men of today, can lead to a distortion of the realism of the faith and of reason as they become mere purveyors of erudition and of abstract concepts.
- Useless dissipation of energy, repetitions, defensive and aggressive ideological closed positions not open to dialogue, incapable of rising above the so-called "conservative" or "progressive" positions.
- Juridical formalism of a misunderstood autonomy.

### ***Specifically salesian aspect***

The IUS ought to build up as their characteristic feature the aspect of "pastoral concern". This cannot be limited neither to a

complementary course of study, nor to a partial programme, nor simply to an "ad hoc" Institute nor to a single Faculty.

Pastoral concern ought to be the over-riding criterion or a form of measurement for the IUS, such as a norm in the overall programming for all the Faculties and Institutes, as the determining factor in interdisciplinary activity, as the heart of scientific dialogue, as the unifying element in all the many countless university activities and as a shared commitment towards a vision of synthesis.

Why do the IUS exist? What was it intended to achieve through their presence? What do the Congregation and the Salesian Family today hope to have from them? The Church itself? Even Society?

An attempt has been made to respond to these questions in the already quoted documents "*The Identity of the Salesian Institutions for Higher Education*" and "*Policy regarding the salesian presence in Higher Education*", which are seen to be ever more relevant in order to say who we are, what we are doing, what are our aims, through what kind of educational method. We therefore need to be convinced that we should not try to pursue unrealistic aims as in organising the Uni-

versity, or a part of the university or a Faculty, or an Institute to be autonomous, or to have a research programme, or to be totally independent self-contained and cut off from the pressing concerns of society and the Church and the guidelines of the Congregation.

In this context I would insist on a faith view that knows how to dialogue with the sciences so as to give special attention to the world of youth and the ordinary people: precisely because that is the human field of action where we set ourselves through the IUS to be of service to society.

In the area of youth and the ordinary people our presence or service goes back over a hundred years, invented one might say by Don Bosco, or willed by God through Don Bosco, which has a certain spirit, a certain pastoral criterion, a certain way of doing things..

Knowing how to preserve the salesian vision will imply the creation of a scientific approach or an attitude to life, an atmosphere, that focuses primarily on those for whom and with whom the Salesians work as the subjects that best express that kind of scientific research and intellectual formation that these Universities of ours want to offer to everyone.

Finally, another element that appears from a consideration of the specific aim of the IUS, is *the particularly significant role that the Faculty of Education ought to have in them..*

The IUS ought to be seen as an institution that is as highly organised as possible, with the character of a real "Catholic University", but with its own specific features. And the IUS have their special character because the Salesians with their educational and pastoral mission give them a distinctive unmistakable feature.

These particular characteristics of the structures, of the way of carrying out the whole work of the university, are to be seen especially in the pastoral and pedagogical field. This field finds its clearest expression in the Faculty of Education. Therefore the pedagogical and pastoral area ought to be understood not as a sector or a group that is set beside another, but as the focus of everything. This idea implies:

- a choice in favour of the Faculty of Education.

- a special openness in the interests of this Faculty towards those of the other Faculties

- finally, that the other Faculties also broaden their horizons for the development of the human-

ities and to interdisciplinary activities.

The important thing is that our Universities should know how to present as their characteristic feature the originality of the salesian vocation within the Church..

Naturally, crucial to any possibility of promoting and carrying forward the identity and university development are the academic authorities, the Teachers and the Students: yourselves. The responsibility for making everything work well is in your hands.

### **Hope**

I conclude on a note of hope.

The Congregation is looking to you and expecting much from you. In a certain sense you are indispensable: not individually, but as community structures for study and reflection, since from within the Congregation you can throw light on many important aspects of the salesian mission at the service of youth and of the people. You have space and freedom of action; you have a precise task; it has been given to you with confidence; you have received it as a mission.

You are living in providential times: the beginning of a new millennium, times of profound

change throughout the world, a General Chapter which has taken very precise choices. Here is a challenge that is cultural, ecclesial and charismatic!

### **5.5 New Provincials**

*The following (in alphabetical order) are the biographical details of the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council during the plenary session June-July 2003.*

#### **1. CHARLES MARSEILLE Jacques, Superior of the Vice Province of HAITI.**

To succeed Fr. Julio Nau, as Superior of the Vice Province of Haïti "Blessed Philip Rinaldi" with headquarters in PORT-AU-PRINCE, Fr. **Jacques CHARLES** has been appointed.

Born at Trou-du Nord (Haïti) on 17 March 1953, Jacques Charles became a Salesian on 16 August 1976 when he made his first profession at Caracas - La Vega (Venezuela), where he had completed his novitiate. He studied theology at Cremisan. Having made his perpetual profession on 12 September 1982 (Rome -Generalate), he was ordained priest

on 21 July 1985 at Trou-du Nord, his birth place. He obtained a baccalaureate in Theology and a degree in Civil Engineering.

After ordination he was sent to Cap-Haïtien, where he held a variety of posts of responsibility in the school. In 1992 he was appointed Rector of the house of Cap-Haïtien. After completing six years as Rector in 1998 he remained in the school as Vice Rector and Head Master. In 1995 he became a member of the Provincial Council for three years.

2. *NGUYEN VAN THEM* *Giovanni Battista, Provincial of VIETNAM.*

Fr. **Giovanni Battista NGUYEN VAN THEM** is the new Provincial of the "St John Bosco" Province with headquarters in Ho-Chi-Minh City, Vietnam. He succeeds Fr. Giovanni Nguyen Van Ty, who has completed his mandate.

Giovanni Battista Nguyen Van Them, who was born at Tay Ninh (Vietnam) on 10 March 1947, made his first salesian profession on 28 August 1966 at Dalat - Tram Hanh, where he had completed his novitiate. He made his perpetual profession on 15 August 1972, undertook his theological studies at Dalat, and was

ordained a priest there on 17 August 1975.

After ordination he exercised his ministry and held posts of responsibility in several houses in the Province: in charge of the house of Tan Cang (1991-1994); then, from 1995 until 2000, Rector of the Provincial house at Xuan Hiep. In 2000 he became Rector of the formation community at Xuan Hiep. Between 1991 and 1997 he was a member of the Provincial Council and was also Provincial Secretary. In 1997 he was appointed Vice Provincial and held the post until appointed Provincial.

3. *PALAZZO* *Leonardo Daniel, Provincial of CÓRDOBA, Argentina.*

Fr. **Leonardo Daniel PALAZZO** has been called to succeed Walter Jara at the end of his term of office to lead the Province of °Córdoba in Argentina.

Born in Argentina, at Tucumán, on 12 September 1963, he made his first salesian profession on 31 January 1985 in La Plata, at the end of the novitiate. He made his perpetual profession on 6 October 1990 at Córdoba and was ordained priest on 18 December 1993. He then spent a year at the Theolo-



gate in Córdoba. In 1994 and 1995 he was at Tucumán - Tulio, as Vice Rector. Between 1995 and 1997 he was Rector of the house in Tucumán - Massa. Afterwards, in 1997 he was appointed Rector of the house of Córdoba - Domingo

Savio, where he remained for three years. In 2001 he moved, as Rector, to Córdoba - Miguel Rua, the site of the postnovitiate and Teacher Training College. In 2000 he became a member of the Provincial Council.

## 5.6 Our dead confreres (3<sup>rd</sup> list 2003)

"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).

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
<b>E ARTALE Ermanno</b> <i>Fu per 2 anni Amministratore Apostolico e per 9 anni Vescovo di Huánuco (Perù)</i>	Napoli	18.09.2003	70	---
<b>P BERTOLDI Roberto Tarcisio</b>	Torino	04.08.2003	89	ICP
<b>P BESSONE Miguel</b>	Río Tercero (Argentina)	30.04.2003	84	ACO
<b>P BIANCHI Carlo</b>	Roma	08.07.2003	80	IRO
<b>P BIGOTTI Mario</b>	Torino	25.06.2003	78	ICP
<b>P BIN Gesuino</b>	Bologna	16.06.2003	70	ILE
<b>P BONUCELLI Miguel</b>	San Isidro (Buenos Aires))	31.08.2003	87	ABA
<b>P BORGOGNO Giuseppe</b>	Torino	06.08.2003	82	ICP
<b>P BOUTOILLER Vincent</b>	Caen	09.07.2003	89	FRA
<b>P BRAWLEY James</b>	Bairnsdale (Australia)	02.08.2003	84	AUL
<b>P BRUNO Cayetano</b>	San Isidro (Buenos Aires)	13.07.2003	91	ABA
<b>P CALENDINO Francisco</b>	Bahía Blanca	13.05.2003	77	ABB
<b>P CARLI Carlo Maria</b>	Torino	18.09.2003	88	ICP
<b>P CASTIAUX Hector</b>	Sirault (Belgio)	08.09.2003	71	BES
<b>P CONINX Henri</b>	Hoboken (Belgio)	30.06.2003	90	BEN
<b>P CORSO Domenico</b>	Guiratinga (Brasile)	07.09.2003	95	BCG
<b>P COUTO MACHADO Osmar</b>	Rio de Janeiro	29.07.2003	82	BBH
<b>P CRÉVENAT Alain</b>	Toulon (Francia)	27.06.2003	60	FRA
<b>L DAL POZZOLO Pietro</b>	Verona	29.08.2003	87	IVO
<b>P DAPARO Francisco</b>	Buenos Aires	26.08.2003	91	ABA
<b>L DOMESTICI Pietro</b>	Cogne (Italia)	02.08.2003	81	ICP
<b>D DOMÍNGUEZ NUEZ Eulogio</b>	Córdoba (Spagna)	20.09.2003	79	SCO
<b>D DOMINICIS Arturo</b>	Roma	14.09.2003	91	IRO
<b>P ERCOLI Osvaldo</b>	Varazze	12.07.2003	78	ILT
<b>P FERNANDES Carlos Homero</b>	Lisboa	14.08.2003	68	POR
<b>P FERRERO Américo Remiro</b>	Luján (Argentina)	22.05.2003	81	ARO
<b>P FRIZZELL Edward</b>	Boston	05.08.2003	59	SUE
<b>P GANSER Leonhard</b>	Neunkirchen (Germania)	16.06.2003	87	GEK
<b>P GARCIA MAGNASCO José Juan</b>	Buenos Aires	30.07.2003	84	ABA
<b>P GASTALDI Italo</b>	Santa Fe (Argentina)	10.07.2003	83	ACO
<b>L GAZDIK Štefan</b>	Žilina (Slovacchia)	19.08.2003	81	SLK
<b>L GONZALEZ GIL Julio</b>	Sevilla	29.06.2003	73	SSE
<b>P GOULART Januário</b>	Goiania (Brasile)	16.07.2003	88	BBH
<b>P GREGHI Juan</b>	Fortín Mercedes	06.05.2003	87	ABB
<b>P GUZMÁN MORENO Francisco</b>	Granada (Spagna)	16.09.2003	77	SCO

NAME	PLACE	DATE	AGE	PROV.
P HEYMANS Jacques	Braine-l'Alleud (Belgio)	29.08.2003	73	BES
P KORUS Roman	Ostrzeszów (Polonia)	15.07.2003	84	PLO
P KOVÁCS László	Miskolc (Ungheria)	18.06.2003	70	UNG
P KUNICKI Kazimierz	Lubin (Polonia)	08.08.2003	79	PLO
P LANDOLT Edoardo	Waldkirk (Friburgo)	23.08.2003	82	ISI
P LEONARD Jules	Liège (Belgio)	23.06.2003	86	BES
P LONGO Giovanni	Castello di Godego	25.08.2003	90	IVO
P LÓPEZ ALLO Luís	Barcelona	01.07.2003	65	SBA
P LORRIAUX Georges	Toulon (Francia)	06.09.2003	81	FRA
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P MARCHETTI Luigi	Verona	17.08.2003	78	IVO
P McGOVERN Michael	Durham	22.08.2003	83	GBR
P MÜLLER Josef	Amberg (Germania)	22.06.2003	83	GEM
P MUTTONI Guerrino	Sondrio	29.06.2003	61	ILE
L NASTRAN Izidor	Dubrovnik	11.07.2003	50	SLO
P NAVA CALZADA Salvador	Guadalajara (Messico)	03.09.2003	87	MEG
<i>Fu Ispettore per 5 anni</i>				
P OTTONE Mario	Santiago del Cile	27.07.2003	89	CIL
P PALOMINO Felipe	Guayaquil	02.08.2003	93	ECU
P PASCUAL BASSONS Antonio	El Campello (Spagna)	23.07.2003	77	SVA
L PONZO Giovanni	Torino	16.08.2003	87	ICP
P RE Natale Eliseo	Varese	04.07.2003	92	ILE
P RIBEIRO Joaquim	Campo Grande	17.07.2003	73	BCG
L ROGGIA Emilio	Châtillon	13.07.2003	85	ICP
L ROMANATO Antonio	Punta Arenas (Cile)	12.07.2003	84	CIL
P SALVI Tomás José	Bahía Blanca	20.07.2003	82	ABB
P SICA Eugenio	Barranquilla (Colombia)	12.08.2003	74	COM
P ŠKRABL France	Ljubljana	04.09.2003	64	SLO
P SLIŠKOVIĆ Ivan	Rijeka (Croazia)	08.09.2003	62	CRO
P SŁOMA Franciszek	Dębno (Polonia)	10.07.2003	84	PLN
P STAGNOLI Saverio	Brescia	19.09.2003	74	ILE
P STRITAR Franc	Golnik (Slovenia)	04.08.2003	75	SLO
P SZANTO Ernesto	Bahía Blanca	27.07.2003	80	ABB
P TETTO Paolino	Pedara	11.06.2003	84	ISI
L THIJS Mathieu	Hasselt (Belgio)	22.08.2003	88	AFC
P TRIPOLI Raffaele	Pedara	06.09.2003	77	ISI
P TYNDALO Basilio	Roma	18.06.2003	87	IRO
P URANGA ARAMBARRI José M <sup>a</sup>	Barcelona	10.08.2003	77	SBA
E VELASCO GARCIA Ignacio A.	Caracas	07.07.2003	75	---
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni, Consigliere regionale per 6 anni, Vescovo per 13 anni e Cardinale per 2 anni</i>				
P VIDELA TORRES Pedro Alfredo	Santiago del Cile	01.09.2003	73	CIL
<i>Fu Ispettore per 4 anni</i>				
L VIGANÒ Giacomo	Arese (Milano)	26.06.2003	85	ILE
P VICENT PASCUAL Alfonso	Alcoy (Spagna)	12.09.2003	76	SVA
P WILK Józef	Lublin (Polonia)	11.09.2003	66	PLO





