



acts

of the general council

year XCI

may-august 2010

N. 407

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma

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of the Salesian Society
of St John Bosco

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***«And he took pity on them
because they were like sheep without a shepherd,
and he set himself to teach them at some length»***

(Mk 6,34)

SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY

1. THE JOURNEY OF THE CONGREGATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AFTER VATICAN COUNCIL II. 1.1 **A long journey.** 1.1.1 *The first steps: from GC19 (1965) to GC21 (1978)* 1.1.2 *The development of the guidelines of the GC21 promoted by the Department (1978-1990)* 1.1.3 *General Chapters 23 (1990) and 24 (1996);* 1.2 **The great goals of this journey.** 1.2.1 *An ever deeper perception of the new situation of the young.* 1.2.2 *An effort to re-formulate the traditional educative and pastoral contents and methods.* 1.2.3 *Broadening the field for action in response to the new situation.* 1.2.4 *Renewal of the structures of pastoral animation and government in the Congregation and in the Provinces.* 1.2.5 *The focal point for attention: the quality of the educative-pastoral action.* 2. **THE CURRENT SITUATION.** 2.1 **Knowledge and assimilation of the pastoral model.** 2.2 **A more systematic relationship of the Department with the teams of the Provincial Delegates for YM.** 2.3 **Some aspects of pastoral renewal.** 3. **THE DIFFERENT SECTORS OF SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY.** 3.1 **Oratories and Youth Centres.** 3.2 **The Parish entrusted to the Salesians.** 3.3 **The School and the world of formal education.** 3.4 **Professional Formation and work preparation.** 3.5 **The world of the University: the progress made by the IUS and other forms of presence in the university world.** 3.6 **Attention to the world of marginalised youth.** 3.7 **Other presences and flexible forms of service to the young.** 4. **FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY.** 4.1 **Continuing the efforts for the assimilation and the practice of the model of Salesian Youth Ministry.** 4.2 **An evangelising pastoral service clearly aimed at the proclamation of Christ and the education to the faith of the young.** 4.3 **Deepen and strengthen the vocational dimension of every pastoral project.** 4.4 **A special attention for the poorest young people and those at risk as a characteristic feature of every Salesian presence and work.** 4.5 **Re-define our presences to make them more significant, that is, "new presences".** 4.6 **A pastoral animation which is more and more inter-linked and coordinated among the different Departments, in particular the Departments for the Salesian Mission: Youth Ministry, Social Communication and the Missions.** **CONCLUSION.**

Rome, 25 April 2010
Good Shepherd Sunday

My Dear Confreres,

I am writing to you once again to wish your every blessing in this season of grace in the light of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, who with his Paschal Mystery has filled history with joy and hope.

And we are witnesses to it. This is our vocation and our mission: to walk “with the young so as to lead them to the risen Lord, and so discover in him and in his Gospel the deeper meaning of their own existence and thus grow into new men” (C. 34).

In the last issue of the Acts of the General Council (n. 406) I presented to you the Strenna for 2010. Immediately afterwards I wrote again to make an appeal for fraternal solidarity with our confreres in Haiti. After my visit to this people so sorely tried I wrote once more sharing my experience and my assessment of the situation, making known to everyone the plan for reconstruction. I repeat the expression of my gratitude for the generous response with which all the Provinces made their presence felt and for the many efforts of houses and centres to involve the educative communities in the desire to help the people of Haiti to rise from the ruins, to come alive as new men and women.

Certainly there have been other important and significant events in the Congregation such as the unification of the Provinces of Argentina on 31 January 2010, but I shall not stop to reflect on these, also because always more and more the information in ANS is arriving accurately and promptly for everyone.

Instead I shall immediately move on to the presentation of this letter. It is very different in its literary form from the three previous ones, (that for the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Salesian Congregation [AGC 404], that for the centenary of the death of Don Rua [AGC 405] and that for the Strenna on evangelisation [AGC 406]), but it is just as important as them or more so: in the first place because it deals with our mission, that which as Art. 3 of the Constitutions says, «sets the tenor of our whole life; it specifies the task we have in the Church and our place among other religious families», but, above all, because in obedience to what was asked for by the GC26 we are carrying out a rethink regarding our pastoral work.

I think that the reflection which is being undertaken at the UPS, in other study centres of the Congregation and in the

Provinces will find in my presentation of Salesian Youth Ministry a point of reference. In fact, I describe in the letter *what* is being done in the Congregation and *how* Salesian Youth Ministry should operate. But I should also like to help people to understand the *why*.

The biblical quotation I have chosen to introduce this letter of mine seems to me to be very illuminating. Unlike the well-known passage in chapter 10 of the Gospel according to St John in which Jesus presents himself as the Good Shepherd, in the text of Mark 6, 30-44 we have a practical expression of Christ's mind, heart and shepherd's hands.

The evangelist says that gazing at the large crowd waiting for him, "he took pity on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he set himself to teach them at some length".

It is his being moved as a good shepherd that expresses itself first of all in his setting himself "to teach them at some length", but only after multiplying the loaves, and feeding all that crowd.

This means that for Jesus the first response of his pastoral compassion is evangelisation, inseparable, however, from his concern to satisfy the basic human needs of the people – to eat, for example.

I shall try to offer a coherent and clear view of the current state of Salesian Youth Ministry. Right from the start I want to say that this text needs to be studied by Provincials, Provincial Councils, Rectors and those in formation. I have the impression that the pastoral model of the Congregation is not fully understood, and even less put into practice, even in the more dynamic Provinces and by the most zealous pastoral workers. I am convinced that there needs to be a veritable 'cultural revolution' in the Congregation which, at the same time, would be a real 'conversion' to the young. I therefore hope and pray that the presentation of our Salesian Youth Ministry will be interpreted with the eyes of Jesus, who teaches us to see what even those who seek him do not see, that is to say the abandonment, the lack of guidance with which young people are nowadays living. In this way our educative-pastoral ac-

tion will become the revelation of God, a demonstration that “Deus Caritas est”.

1. THE JOURNEY OF THE CONGREGATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY AFTER VATICAN COUNCIL II

Salesian educative and catechistical action was modelled in its structure on that of the Valdocco Oratory within which, to respond to the needs of the boys, were established a house for boys without families or far from home, workshops for arts and trades to teach them a job, and a school for those boys who were able to undertake literary or academic studies.

The animation of these works was entrusted to some individuals who were the nucleus of the community: the Rector, the centre of unity and the guide of the community in its educative-pastoral undertaking; the Prefect, the first collaborator of the Director and the one also responsible for administration; the Prefect of Studies, responsible for discipline and for the academic and organisational aspects; the Catechist, who animated the religious aspect, catechetical formation, the groups... This model was to guide development of the educative works of the Congregation and was codified in the Constitutions and Regulations until 1972.

In the last fifty years the need began to be felt to adapt this model to the new social circumstances. In this way a process was begun of re-thinking and of renewal of educative and pastoral practice, which has led to the present pastoral model.

1.1 A long journey

1.1.1 The first steps: from GC19 (1965) to GC21 (1978)

The GC19 represents the first collective stock-taking by the communities in the Congregation with regard to the changes tak-

ing place in the areas of youth, and the need to reformulate the traditional educative-pastoral praxis. A start was made with some small changes, but above all an attempt was made at a first renewal of the central structures of animation and government in order to make them suitable to the new circumstances, while remaining faithful to the original arrangement.¹

Until that time, the structures of animation and government of the mission of the Congregation were organised according to the main sectors of activity: one Consultor of the Superior Chapter charged with responsibility for the schools, another for professional formation, the Catechist who coordinated the animation of the aspects of religious and Christian formation... The GC19 adopted, *ad experimentum* until the following General Chapter, a structure of world-wide animation which showed a more unified vision of Salesian pastoral work, creating a Consultor for Youth Apostolate who assumes responsibility for the animation of all the sectors of Salesian pastoral work in the different works.² At Province level, in similar fashion, Provincial Delegates charged with responsibility for the various activities were established with the tasks of studying, developing, organising and coordinating.

With regard to the area covered by Youth Apostolate the Chapter only proposed some priorities: the Oratory “fittingly brought up to date and reshaped... so that it may attract and serve as many boys as possible, with a variety of subsidiaries (youth centres, clubs, various associations, courses, night schools”.³ It drew up a specific document for the Professional Schools, requesting that in

¹ Acts of the GC19. “The structure of the Congregation”. ASC 244, January 1966, pages 17-47.

² “The General Chapter thought it opportune to entrust to a single Consultor the care of our parishes and the apostolate of the young because of their close interdependence... This Consultor will have care of their general formation, religious, moral and intellectual in every kind of Salesian house: oratories, hostels, day schools, boarding schools, youth centres, sodalities and other youth organisations; due regard being paid to the authority of provincials, and with the collaboration of the Consultor in charge of the group of provinces concerned when there is question of specific local requirements in technical, scholastic or professional matters, or in methods of organisation, etc.” *Idem*, page 24.

³ GC19. “Youth Apostolate”. ASC 244, January 1966, pag. 101.

the Provinces « a commission for the education of the young worker...should be appointed... to study the problems, gather documentation and be an advisory service for the houses».⁴ At central level, under the Presidency of the Consultor for Youth Apostolate, a central Commission for the education of young workers was to be established.

The GC20 (SGC), in its efforts to re-think the life and mission of the Congregation re-formulates the Salesian mission and those it is aimed at, re-affirming the “absolute priority of pastoral work for youth”,⁵ presents the fundamental pastoral attitudes which ought to guide the Salesians in their pastoral activity⁶ and gives encouragement to the opening up of the Salesian presence to the new needs of the young through “new presences” which will broaden the horizons of the pastoral activities undertaken in the traditional works.⁷ At the same time, it re-affirms the new structure of the central animation of Youth Apostolate including it in the Constitutions.⁸

The GC21, taking up the guidelines of the GC20, re-thinks and develops them presenting the educative contents within the framework developed up until that time; it proposed the fundamental lines for a Educative-Pastoral Plan which responds to the new situation of the young;⁹ re-affirms the close connection between education and evangelisation in the Salesian educational system.¹⁰ In addition it committed the Provinces to a re-thinking of the Preventive System, to a study of today’s youth condition, to the expression, in a suitable manner, of the aims, the contents and the

⁴ *Idem*, pag. 125.

⁵ GC20, n. 180.

⁶ Cf. GC20, nn. 360-365.

⁷ “The salesian mission in many areas has unfortunately not been able to find that new presence which a changing world demands. *Much of the work of the XIX General Chapter has remained dead letter*” (GC20, n. 393).

⁸ Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis of Sales. Ed. 1972. Art. 137. 140.

⁹ GC21, cf. n. 14. 80ss. 96ss; cf. n. 105 (province educational plan); and subsequently for the various works: n. 127 (oratory); n. 132. 134 (school), n. 140 (parish).

¹⁰ *Idem*, cf. n. 4. 14.

Salesian style in the Educative-Pastoral Plan, to set up and to expand in every Salesian centre the educative-pastoral community.¹¹ These guidelines will then be codified in the Constitutions and Regulations by the General Chapter 22.¹²

1.1.2 The development of the guidelines of the GC21 promoted by the Department (1978-1990)

The GC21 had committed the Congregation to a profound renewal of the Youth Apostolate. To help the communities and the Provinces to understand it and to implement it fully, the Councilor for the Youth Apostolate, Fr Juan E. Vecchi, and his team made a great effort to study and clarify the fundamental elements of the Salesian Educative-Pastoral Plan and of the educative-pastoral community, offering practical material as a guide in drawing it up, in order to provide educative and pastoral programmes in the various centres according to the indications of the Chapter.¹³ Through these aids, the Department enabled the Provinces to come to know, take up and develop in their own concrete situation the central lines of the model of the Salesian Youth Apostolate as something unified and structured.¹⁴

It should be recognised that this effort of systematic all-round reflection, formation and communication was followed up in the Provinces in a very haphazard way. While some Regions and Provinces did so and put it into practice, others, for various different reasons, continued with the previous model, sometimes only changing a few names. In general, one can see the difficulty the confreres and the communities had in taking on board the new mentality and renewing their daily praxis.

¹¹ *Idem*, cf. nn. 63-68. 79.

¹² Cf. Constitutions art. 47; Regulations art. 4 and 5.

¹³ Cf. The documents drawn up by the Department for Youth Apostolate during the years 1979 – 1988. There is a list in *Salesian Youth Ministry. A basic frame of reference*. Second edition. Rome 2000, pag. 21-23.

¹⁴ For a final synthesis see the book: YOUTH PASTORAL DEPARTMENT. *Salesian Youth Pastoral Work*. Rome. 1993. The basic elements of Salesian Youth Ministry are brought together with diagrams and brief comments.

1.1.3 General Chapters 23 (1990) and 24 (1996)

Subsequently the GC23 resumes the previous journey of the Congregation and presents a unified proposal for a pastoral process which brings together and organises all the fundamental elements of the Salesian educative pastoral Project.

In his report to the Chapter on the state of the Congregation the Rector Major said: «The area of Youth Apostolate needs a further serious examination of its structure and of its operating method [...] Looking at it from the world level point of view, one could say that the youth area has been given a lot of general encouragement but not the innovative decisive and operative structural impetus, with the allocation of the necessary personnel, means and directives».¹⁵ It can be said that GC23 constitutes the response to that need: a unified, structured and practical presentation of the whole of the Salesian pastoral Project.

The Chapter gave the Congregation the fundamental lines of a Salesian process of education to the faith which corresponds to the complex youth situation in its various expressions, achieves in practice the synthesis between education and evangelisation which is a feature of our educational system; it presents, in a dynamic and progressive form, the central elements of the four areas/dimensions of the process of education to the faith, areas which correspond perfectly with the four dimensions of the Salesian educative-pastoral project, that is, the dimension of human maturity; the dimension of an encounter with Jesus Christ, the dimension of belonging to the Church, the dimension of a commitment for the Kingdom.¹⁶

The Chapter also develops the values of Salesian Youth Spirituality which, as a distinctive plan of Christian life and a path of holiness, constitutes the goal and the inspiration which ought to guide and support the whole process of education to the faith.¹⁷

¹⁵ Cf. "The Society of Saint Francis of Sales in the six year period 1984-1990". Report of the Rector Major (to GC23), n. 180.

¹⁶ Cf. GC23, nn. 120-157.

¹⁷ Cf. GC23, n. 161 ss.

In addition to presenting the contents, values and stages of the project, the Chapter also offers some guidelines to help put it into practice: the Salesian community as the animator of an educative-pastoral community, as the fundamental subject of the project;¹⁸ a pastoral animation at Province level which fosters and promotes the structural unity of the various aspect of the pastoral work (the Provincial Delegate for Youth Pastoral work and his team);¹⁹ vocational guidance as a characteristic element of the process;²⁰ the importance of social communication as the current process and method of evangelisation.²¹

After the Chapter, making great efforts and with enthusiasm, a number of Provinces set out to put the directives about the process of education to the faith into practice, in very practical ways in their own circumstances. But often the very limited formation of the animators makes these plans quite ineffective.

The GC24 examined further a central aspect of the pastoral model, its essential subject, the educative-pastoral community, in which Salesians and lay people share the spirit and mission of Don Bosco. In the light of an extensive assessment of the situation and of the progress made in the Congregation, the Chapter presented the ecclesial, charismatic and cultural reasons for going further and for offering criteria for action and the necessary working guidelines.

The novelty, the Rector Major said at the end of the Chapter, «stems from the sudden entrance of the laity on the Salesian horizon and from the insertion of their experience as freshly understood in the heart of the charism».²² The Chapter invites us to pass from accepting lay people as simple collaborators to their real involvement in the mission, from practical help to very real co-

¹⁸ Cf. GC23, nn. 232-238.

¹⁹ Cf. GC23, nn. 239-246.

²⁰ Cf. GC23, nn. 247-253.

²¹ Cf. GC23, nn. 254-260.

²² GC24, n. 231.

responsibility, from relationships which were mainly formal to serious individual and group interpersonal communication regarding the values of Salesian pedagogy and spirituality, and all of this with good systematic formation procedures.

In this way the GC24 re-affirms and emphasises the importance of the EPC, as the practical way of implementing the Salesian educative-pastoral plan, by involving, in a family atmosphere, young people, educators, religious and lay; it defines the specific role of the Salesian religious community in the animation of the EPC, and the fundamental criteria for the Salesian pastoral formation which ought to animate it.²³

1.2 The great goals of this journey

In the course of this process the Congregation discovers and re-affirms some characteristic aspects of its pastoral praxis, which I believe it is important to present briefly in order to better understand the overall basic frame of reference for Salesian Youth Ministry.

1.2.1 An ever deeper perception of the new situation of the young

Everything associated with society and the church has changed profoundly. Young people are living according to new values and have new criteria for their lives which constitute a culture that really is new; the traditional links in the chain for the transmission of culture and religion (the family, the school, the church...) have become weakened and are often in crisis. The circumstances surrounding the work of education and the apostolate are very different and are constantly changing. Therefore it is not possible to limit ourselves to small modifications or adjustments to our traditional praxis, nor to think in terms of a programme for action which is the same for everyone.

²³ Cf. GC24, nn. 149-161.

With this awareness ever more explicit a start was made to design a “new” Salesian presence among the young,²⁴ a “new evangelisation”,²⁵ a “new education”,²⁶ even a “new preventive system”.²⁷ The use of these terms was intended to express the need to re-think and examine more deeply the content and the structure of Salesian education and pastoral practice in response to the new situation of the young.

1.2.2 An effort to re-formulate the traditional educative and pastoral contents and methods

The repeated and pressing calls by the Church to renew catechesis and Christian formation, especially of the young immersed in profoundly secularised situations, giving priority to evangelisation and a renewed proclamation of Jesus Christ, as well as the experience of the inadequacy of many proposals offered in our educational circles, make us aware of the urgent need to seriously re-think the contents and the methods of education to the faith, in particular as regards certain key issues or fundamental points:

- Above all the *unity and completeness of the educative-pastoral project*, overcoming the compartmentalisation of a praxis which considers pastoral work as just one sector (‘the religious aspect’) which is added on to the other aspects of education, rather than the characterising feature of the whole programme. Thinking of pastoral activity as an organic unity means seeing it as a single process in which the different elements making it up are structured and assist each other, contributing together to the achievement of the same aim which

²⁴ Cf. PASCUAL CHÁVEZ. *Together for the young people of Europe*. Final address of the Rector Major at the meeting of the Provincials of Europe, 5 December 2004. AGC 388, January-March 2005, pag. 113-115.

²⁵ Cf. EGIDIO VIGANÒ. “The new evangelisation”. AGC 331, October-December 1989

²⁶ Cf. EGIDIO VIGANÒ. “New education”. AGC 337, July-September 1991.

²⁷ Cf. EGIDIO VIGANÒ. *Called to freedom. Let us re-discover the Preventive System by educating young people to values*. Commentary on the Strenna for 1995. Rome. FMA. pag. 9-12.

is the all-round development of the young person considered in the totality of his or her being.

An expression of this unity is the close relationship existing between the four dimensions of the Salesian pastoral approach (the educative dimension, the evangelising dimension, the associative dimension and the vocational dimension) which ought to be thought of and developed in close connection with each other, and especially education and evangelisation: an education which develops the religious meaning of life and encourages and opens the way to the process of evangelisation, and an evangelisation which proposes to education the model of a human life which is fully successful and respects the educative process, in its development.

- *The community sense of the Salesian proposal* which arises in a community and creates community. The educative-pastoral community, in which Salesians and lay people share the Salesian spirit and mission, is the real subject of Salesian pastoral work. In this broad educative community the Salesian religious community assumes specific roles of witness, animation, communion and formation, as GC24 declares.²⁸
- *A planning mentality.* Even though the Provinces had been asked in 1978 to draw up the Educative Pastoral Plan,²⁹ which was codified in the General Regulations six years later,³⁰ and it had been studied by the Department with a selection of guidelines which clarified its contents and methodology, its practical implementation had not been easy. The communities had not managed to understand that it was not so much a question of

²⁸ "In particular its special duty consists in testifying to the primacy of God and total dedication to education and evangelisation through the vocational figures of the salesian priest and salesian brother; guaranteeing the charismatic identity; being the centre of communion and participation; prompting, urging, and calling on the laity to share in Don Bosco's spirit and mission; promoting spiritual, salesian and vocational formation" (GC24, n. 159).

²⁹ Cf. GC21, n. 105.

³⁰ Cf. General Regulations, art. 4.

drawing up a document in which were described the many varied activities and initiatives they wanted to implement in the work of education as rather, above all, organising and co-ordinating them so that they represented a progressive process towards concrete and verifiable objectives, with clear options regarding priorities and orders of sequence. Without this planning mentality, in fact, the Plan would not succeed in guiding and giving direction to daily praxis.

- *A style of animation* which expresses in the new youth situation some central elements of the Preventive System: a style of presence among the young which gives more importance to interpersonal relationships than to formal ones, an accompaniment which makes the effort, above all, to explain the reasons for the guidelines rather than simply see them implemented, an approach which creates communion and convergence around a shared plan rather than multiplying initiatives.

1.2.3 Broadening the field for action in response to the new situation

With the crisis of the traditional educational agencies, new places and new experiences emerge which become significant for the young and capable of transmitting values and life style. As the years of youth lengthen there are also new possibilities for formation and involvement; an environment which is progressively secularised and the growing expansion of the marginalisation of the young present new challenges and open the way to new opportunities for the education of the young.

On this account, everywhere “new presences” appear which try new kinds of approach to and encounter with the young, both in the area of youth marginalization and in the field of youth groups, which around 1988 evolve into the Salesian Youth Movement; Youth Apostolate and Catechetical Centres also arise, as well as social communication initiatives aimed at the young in order to develop the new youth languages and forms of expression, spirituality centres, greater attention being given to the world of

young university students by means of hostels and youth centres specially for them, the development of missionary voluntary service, etc.

If at the beginning a few of these new presences appear to be in contrast with and even in opposition to the traditional ones, gradually they are taken up by the Provinces and integrated in their educative-pastoral plans. Even more, the idea of the "new presence" is extended to all the works, stimulating the renewal of their pastoral praxis so that they become new forms of presence and of educational service among the young.

This new type of presence requires a new educative and pastoral approach, a new relationship with the ecclesial community and the local area; for this reason slowly but surely the Provinces renew their own presences and try to make them more significant (Schools, Vocational Training Centres, Oratories and Youth Centres...).

Starting from GC20 there was a rapid expansion in our presence in parishes, which ceased to be considered 'exceptional'. Their number grew in the Congregation; but as this development took place there was notable difficulty in their adopting the new perspectives and identity of Salesian pastoral work. In his report at the GC22 (1984) the Rector Major spoke about the difficulties encountered in giving our parishes a youthful image and an organisation consistent with Salesian educative-pastoral practice; the working model of the youth apostolate and the programmes for education to the faith were neither clarified nor put into practice.³¹

1.2.4 Renewal of the structures of pastoral animation and government in the Congregation and in the Provinces

Starting from the GC19, the Congregation felt the need to renew the structures of pastoral animation. In the new situation,

³¹ Cf. "The Society of Saint Francis of Sales in the six year period 1978-1983". Report of the Rector Major (to the GC22), n. 184.

marked by the enormous variety of the contexts in which the Salesians were working, it cannot be imagined that the same programme or scheme of working can be applied in the same way everywhere. The guidelines and the general frame of reference need to be taken up by the Provinces in order to adapt them to their own circumstances, taking into account the social and cultural situation of the place. In order to do this, it is indispensable that in the Provinces a system of apostolic animation and government is developed which is capable of undertaking this reflection and of accompanying the local communities in putting into practice the pastoral model, while also ensuring easy communication with other Provinces and with the centre of the Congregation.

Structural unity of Salesian pastoral practice in the apostolate requires that there be a single point of reference for the whole of the pastoral practice in its various forms and sectors, and this is the Councillor for Youth Ministry at world level and the Delegate for Youth Ministry at Province level; it is for them to animate and guide the various sectors and areas of the apostolate in a unified and coordinated manner in practice; and for this there needs to be, with the Delegate, a team which shares with him the responsibility for animation.

This structure had already been fully explained in the GC23³² and spread throughout the Congregation. The difficulty consists, on the part of the confreres, in assuming this important role of pastoral animation, which cannot be reduced to organising some activities with the young people, or to coordinating some events or areas, but ought to mean accompanying the local communities in their efforts to put into practice the apostolate model, overcoming the tendency to compartmentalise, while growing in the planning mentality and in the community dimension of the youth apostolate. In addition, the Delegate, with the collaboration of the team, ought to coordinate all the areas of the apostolate of the Province, ensuring that in each of them there are the four fundamental

³² Cf. GC23, nn. 243-246.

dimensions, and that there is a real practical convergence and service of the educative and evangelising mission of the young. This requires a full-time Delegate with the ability to be in contact with the local communities and in close connection in pastoral animation with the government of the Province, the Provincial and his Council.

This new arrangement was not easy to understand, and especially to put into practice in some places, where it took a long time to assimilate and implement the pastoral model. It has been seen that where the Provinces have been able to count on a team for pastoral animation, set up on the basis of the renewed criteria, if there is a Provincial Council which devoted time to pastoral reflection, and continuous dialogue and an exchange of ideas with the department and other intermediate bodies of animation (Conferences, national Centres, etc.), in fact they make progress in developing a Salesian youth apostolate which is energetic, meaningful and corresponds to the new situations.

1.2.5 The focal point for attention: the quality of the educative-pastoral action

A first glance at the path pursued starting from 1970 shows us a type of development which was mainly expansive in character. This was required particularly on account of the new openings in the missions, the emerging social needs, the growing involvement of lay people in our works. Because of this, there was an increase in the size of individual works and a multiplication of foundations in almost all the Provinces.

Often this expansion led to a certain loss of quality in the communities, weakened and burdened by organisational and management tasks; and above all without the hoped-for regeneration of forces.

In these last twenty years especially, there has been an insistence that, by preference, there should be concentration on improving the quality of the educative-pastoral activity. In not a few ar-

eas of today's complex society, quality has been seen as a necessary condition for making an impact and also for improving the quantity of a product. Therefore efforts have been made to concentrate all the energy of animation on quality, especially in these areas:

- *not being content with an apostolate of the first steps only*, of 'keeping them amused', of generalised projects for the large group, or of keeping administrative or management control of the activities, but rather concentrating what is being done on the objective of developing human maturity, and of education to the faith, with explicit and powerful projects, devoting time and resources to a systematic accompaniment of groups and of individuals, offering a variety of approaches according to the level reached...
- *ensuring a systematic process of evangelisation* (the proclamation of Jesus Christ) and of education to the faith, capable of leading young people to a personal encounter with Jesus and with the Church; educating to a sense of life as a vocation and to a life of generous commitment, which awakens and accompanies vocations of special commitment and consecration in the Church and in the Salesian Family.
- *developing the educational dimension* in our works and in our programmes, so that values become a matter of personal conviction, and the Christian meaning of life is pursued, paying attention to the kind of culture we are transmitting in what we teach and the way in which we teach it, encouraging concern for and the acceptance of others and care for the common good, giving special attention to the development of the religious dimension of the individual...
- *involving with more co-responsibility and better preparation all those carrying out the apostolate*: the Salesian communities, lay collaborators, youth leaders, etc. to enable them to respond adequately to the educational and pastoral challenges presented by today's young people and to live the mission with enthusiasm and dynamism.

These were the primary preoccupations in the area of the pastoral animation in these last years.

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION

At the end of the 80s there was an extraordinarily rich and sound heritage of reflection and practice on Salesian pastoral action, and the need was felt to have a complete overall view, and to bring together, in a structured and shared synthesis, the fundamental guidelines so as to facilitate their personal assimilation and provide directives for the praxis. The Youth Ministry Department tried to respond to this need by offering the Provinces and the communities a guidance manual, and in these years providing a systematic process of pastoral formation, in particular for those confreres with responsibilities for animation and government, insisting on certain key issues to be borne in mind.³³

2.1 Knowledge and assimilation of the pastoral model

The different Provinces and communities put a considerable effort into assimilation, and they worked at putting into practice the fundamental guidelines of the pastoral model, in order to respond better to the new demands of youth. In this process some difficulties were experienced, such as the rejection of a number of proposals received and the possibility of implementing them, the different rates of assimilation of the new pastoral mentality on the part of the communities and the Provinces, the increase in the number of requests and the requirements which often resulted in a fragmented style of activity and frequently with little planning, which leaves little room for reflection. From all this it follows that the Provinces succeeded with difficulty and in a limited way in assimilating, and above all, putting into practice the guidelines of the Congregation.

³³ Cf. SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT. *Salesian Youth Ministry. A basic frame of reference*. Second edition. Rome 2001.

In these years this pastoral model has been presented to all the interprovincial teams of the Delegates for youth ministry for them to study, and the progress made has been assessed, and the fundamental elements clarified, in particular the understanding of the 'unified and holistic nature' of the Salesian apostolate in a plurality of works, services and activities, assisting in overcoming a compartmentalised system still frequently present. The pastoral model was also studied in the meetings of Provincials in their Provincial Conferences; guidance was provided for some Regions and Provinces so that there was a better knowledge of the fundamental guidelines and a more effective pastoral coordination.

In this effort at assimilation, none the less, one often sees some very restricted views of pastoral practice, as when it is reduced to some form of immediate activity, which leads to a view with very little connection seen between pastoral practice, community life and spirituality, making it difficult to have a sense of vocational unity and the complete development of "Da mihi animas".

Salesian spirituality, a practical expression of pastoral charity, is a fundamental element of Salesian pastoral action: it is the source of its evangelical vitality, the criterion by which to discern and to face up to daily challenges, the source of enthusiasm and apostolic zeal, the foundation of the unity of all those who share and collaborate in the mission. «For us the recovery of spirituality cannot be separated from the mission... Therefore it is inconceivable and unjustifiable to maintain that the mission is an obstacle to our meeting God and cultivating an intimate relationship with Him».³⁴

In the same way, community life is not only a practical way of making pastoral action effective, it rather constitutes a fundamental element of it: "To live and work together is for us Salesians a fundamental requirement and a sure way of fulfilling our vocation" (C. 49). As GC25 reminded us: «the first educative ser-

³⁴ GC25, n. 191.

vice that the young need from us is the witness of a fraternal life that becomes a response to their profound need for communication, a proposal for a truly human life, a prophecy of the kingdom, an invitation to welcome the gift of God».³⁵

Spirituality, community and pastoral action together express the rich variety of our mission from different points of view, and ought always to be thought of and lived in constant connection with each and in profound unity.

2.2 A more systematic relationship of the Department with the teams of the Provincial Delegates for YM

An important strategy in this effort has been the promotion in all the Regions or groups of Provinces of the systematic collaboration of the Provincial Delegates with regular meetings for assessment, study and planning. Frequent contact with the Provincial teams and their accompaniment on the part of the Department has made it possible to guide the pastoral action of the individual Provinces along the lines set out in the planning for the six-year period and to promote fruitful links among them.

To facilitate this relationship and dialogue between the Department and the teams of the Provincial Delegates, an “International Consultative Committee” has been established with representatives of all the Interprovincial groups of Delegates, which provides a significant opportunity for reflection and study of the central aspects of pastoral work, encouraging unity of vision and direction.

Looking at the individual Provinces, one is aware that the role of animation of the Provincial Delegate and his team has been understood and appreciated better, for example in the choice of the Delegate, in the continuity of his service, in the assessment and the reorganisation of the Province team to make it more active and effective, etc...; nevertheless one has to recognise that in some

³⁵ GC25, n. 7; cf. also n. 192.

Provinces this position of the Delegate needs to be strengthened and his role as coordinator of all Pastoral work.

2.3 Some aspects of pastoral renewal

- ***Generous and creative openness to the new youth frontiers***, above all to the new and old forms of poverty (street children, drop-outs, immigrants...), to the world of youth groups and to the new forms of expression (music, theatre, travel...), to voluntary service and, in a more modest but significant way, to the area of youth spirituality (houses and teams for youth spirituality).

In fact, those sectors are still not fully integrated in the Provincial Plan; there is difficulty in their becoming coordinated with the more traditional and organised presences such as the schools, parishes, etc. and often running and organising them require such an effort that the Salesians responsible have little energy left to attend to the quality and the systematic development of the educative project which they provide.

- A renewed sensitivity in order to give more ***educative and evangelising quality*** to the educative-pastoral project we offer in our works, by means of a re-think of the Preventive System in order to adapt it to the new challenges the world of education presents, to the new requirements of work with young people at risk, to the urgent need for a renewal of evangelisation and education to the faith.

But it is difficult to translate this desire for renewal into practical plans and procedures. In fact, our apostolate is still not very missionary, that is to say, it pays little attention to the need for a first proclamation or a renewed proclamation of the Gospel; it has not found a way of adapting itself to the capacities to be found in large groups without neglecting the needs of those who are more open and receptive; it lacks a systematic approach to the vocational apostolate, animated by the com-

munity and finding its secure place within the ordinary youth apostolate. For this reason, only with great difficulty do the vast majority of the initiatives organised produce solid programmes of education to the faith which help the young people to make it their own and for it to become a real part of their lives.

- ***Systematic processes for the pastoral and Salesian formation of educators.***

In the Provinces there is a concern for the pastoral and Salesian formation of the collaborators and youth leaders, with many forms of initiatives: courses for the teachers in the schools and in the vocational training centres, training centres for youth leaders, various meetings in the communities and in the Provinces, etc. In addition, there are some Centres for the pastoral and Salesian formation of Salesians and for lay collaborators such as the Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation in Quito, for the Interamerica Region, which has introduced pastoral formation into its programme, and is developing a course of pastoral formation for the Provincial Delegates for youth ministry and their team members; the Don Bosco Centre in Lyon (France) or the “DonBoscovormingscentrum” in North Belgium, etc. In collaboration with the IUS and the American Commission for the Salesian School in America, a course has begun on the internet for the Salesian formation of school teachers, along the lines of the second continental meeting (Cumbayá II), in which 702 teachers have already taken part.

In this area of pastoral formation, more care needs to be given to making the proposals more systematic, to their having more impact in the everyday life of the centres, to the coordination and the sharing of initiatives and planning, to an organisation according to the model of Salesian Youth Ministry which fosters a more unified and integrated view of the apostolate; in addition attention needs to be given to team work and networking, and to the development of ways of operating which

are geared to facing in a positive manner the complexity of the apostolate and to rising above compartmentalisation.

The strategic objective to be pursued in a special way is the pastoral formation of Salesians so that they may become the animators of the new model of YM and carry out their specific role as promoters and guides of the Salesian and pastoral formation of the collaborators.³⁶

3. THE DIFFERENT SECTORS OF SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY

Salesian youth ministry takes place in a given area “in a variety of ways which depend in the first place upon the actual needs of those for whom we are working” (C. 41) and on the situations in which the young people are living, especially those marked by economic, political and cultural poverty. Through this variety of works and services it shows its unity and at the same time its rich variety. Each separate work and structure brings its own specific characteristics to the whole, and contributes to the realisation of the oratorian criterion which art. 40 of the Constitutions refers to. To clearly express this unified nature of the Salesian apostolate in a given area and in the local church the various works and services which constitute the Salesian presence in that area need to think of themselves in terms of relating to each other and of their complementary nature.³⁷

3.1 Oratories and Youth Centres

The Oratory is at the origin and constitutes the prototype of every Salesian work. As such, today too, it is the first form of Sale-

³⁶ Cf. GC24, n. 159.

³⁷ Cf. SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT. *Salesian Youth Ministry. A basic frame of reference*. Second edition. Rome 2001, pag. 85-86.

sian presence among the young. Nevertheless, nowadays, the Oratory, in trying to respond to the needs and expectations of the young, and to reach the largest possible number of them, in particular those who are poor and in most need takes on a whole variety of forms and features.

In December 2007 in the Congregation there were 635 festive or weekend Oratories,³⁸ plus 164 daily Oratories which offer a variety of services to youngsters after school hours; there were also 529 Youth Centres for older teenagers and young people; a number of these provide the young unemployed or those on the margins of the educational system the possibility of acquiring a basic formation or of preparing themselves for work; some also try to rehabilitate young people in serious at-risk situations.

This variety of forms constitutes a great wealth, offering multiple possibilities of contact with the mass of youngsters, adolescents and young people and is an enormous educative resource. But there is also the danger of concentrating the energies of the Oratory almost exclusively on sporting-recreational activities, while reducing those more specifically educational-formative. On this account several Provinces have been engaged in re-thinking the identity of the Oratory and of the Youth Centre, and in re-creating its former pastoral methodology, involving the Salesian communities and the educative communities together with the various groups of the Salesian Family. A commitment to be encouraged and accompanied.

We want to ensure that the Oratory-Centre is open to all young people, in particular to those who are poor or at risk, who do not manage to benefit from any other educational structures or projects, so that the Oratory may become the missionary frontier of the Christian community. A pastoral methodology needs to be found which succeeds in responding to the more immediate needs of the great mass of young people, without, however, forgetting

³⁸ The numbers given in this and in other sections of this part are taken from the *Dati statistici. Appendix to the Report of the Rector Major*. GC26. Rome 2008.

the most demanding and challenging proposals for those young people who are open to following a formation path at some depth.

The Valdocco Oratory, too, while it responded to the need for the entertainment and the elementary formation of the majority of the boys, provided for the better ones demanding proposals of formation and Christian commitment. Even more, it had within it the power to awaken in the boys the desire to grow and to improve in their own formation, moving on from simple recreational or educational needs to a more systematic and serious human and Christian development, from being those making use of the activities to becoming protagonists and animators of them, and creators of the educative environment at the service of their companions. How are we nowadays to reproduce in our oratories this characteristic feature of the early days?

Another challenge to which we want to respond is that of making the Oratory-Youth Centre a real educative community with a strong identity and a formative force, which is expressed in an environment which is profoundly human and Christian, in which there is a significant presence of Salesians and educators among the young, sharing their lives, varied educational opportunities according to the circumstances and the needs of the young people themselves, the development of a sense of co-responsibility on the part of the lay people and of the youth leaders within a SEPP, shared by all, a process of formation and accompaniment appropriate for the groups and the individuals which can help to make the proposals and the opportunities offered suited to the individual.

3.2 The Parish entrusted to the Salesians

The commitment of the Salesians in the parish area is expressed mainly in the parishes which are entrusted to the Congregation, and in the mission parishes. The number of these has grown considerably in recent years. In 2007 there were 1212 parishes entrusted to the Congregation and missionary parishes in

which more than 3000 Salesians had the pastoral care of over 11 million of the faithful.

Most of these parishes are to be found in working class areas or in situations of first evangelisation. In many places the parish entrusted to the Salesians also has an Oratory, a school or a Centre for social promotion, with particular attention being given to young people at risk. In this way the Salesians, directly inserted in the structure of a particular local Church, offer it the original and specific support coming from their charism.

In spite of the considerable number of parishes entrusted to the Congregation, often this area of the Salesian apostolate is not given the appropriate attention, accompaniment and coordination on the part of the Province. In these years regular meetings are being organised for parish clergy and other Salesians engaged in parishes for their formation and coordination, interprovincial and national meetings to study certain important challenging issues regarding our Salesian presence in the parish field; but much remains to be done, and to be done better.

Here are some issues to be examined urgently:

- 1^o. *Ensuring the Salesian identity* in the apostolate carried out in the parish. This demands that certain charismatic choices are made in the life and mission of the parish community; in particular:
 - building up the parish as a *community of the faithful animated by the Salesian religious community*; a community organised into groups and small communities in which there is greater communication, a more intense commitment, a more real participation and a visible relationship between all these groups and the human and social context of the parish;
 - offering everyone a *systematic programme of evangelisation and of education to the faith*, promoting a more missionary style of apostolate, which tries to reach out to everyone, especially the young and those at a distance, in this way often becoming the first place of a sympathetic and meaningful

contact with the Church, with a project of evangelisation and first proclamation of the gospel for those at a distance, and a continuous and progressive programme of education to the faith, especially for the young and for families;

- promoting an *option for youth* which ensures that the youth apostolate is not only one sector among others but the characteristic which is the special feature of all the life of the parish, so that the young find themselves "at home" in the Salesian parish.

2º. Another important challenge consists in promoting a *more missionary and Salesian pastoral methodology* with great educative sensitivity capable of accepting people where they are so as to arouse in them the desire to be open to the faith and to become involved in a continuous and gradual progression in the Christian way of life, in harmony with the concerns and experiences of their daily lives, in a special way the young, discovering in them the seeds of the Gospel and the action of the Spirit.

3º. In addition there is a need to help the parish community to draw up the *unified, global and shared Pastoral Plan*, which gives unity and continuity to all the initiatives which it has to offer.

To make progress in this direction it is essential that attention be given to the *pastoral formation* of the Salesians who are dedicated to the animation of the parish and that of their lay collaborators, and to have a *Province coordination procedure* capable of accompanying and supporting the parish communities in their lives.

3.3 The School and the world of formal education

Salesian presence in the field of formal education, and in particular in schools, is one of the most consistent, significant and wide-spread.

In 2007 the Congregation was responsible for 1208 educational institutions at various levels with slightly more than a million students, especially at the pre-adolescent phase, even though in this last six year period the number of students has grown considerably in the high schools and in particular at university level. There are 2286 Salesians working full-time and 1364 part time in this area with the collaboration of a considerable host of lay people, almost 60,000.

The Salesian school is a significant Christian presence in the world of education and culture; it helps young people to prepare themselves in a fitting manner for life, and contributes to the formation of a mentality and the transformation of society according to human and Christian values; for this reason it is a fundamental means of evangelisation. In a good number of countries in Asia and Africa the school is often the only form of the presence of the Church which is permitted, and in it the Christian community offers the witness of disinterested service to the poorest sections of society, a human environment permeated by Gospel values as a silent witness of Jesus Christ and also as a valuable opportunity for Christian families in the locality to educate their children in a Christian manner.

In these years the Congregation has made a considerable effort to renew its presence in this field, especially in the following main areas:

- 1^o. The *educative and pastoral quality* of the environment in which people live, of the programmes and of the projects on offer, of the methodology in use, of the facilities and material resources, of the people engaged in them, through a SEPP which works and is agreed by the whole educative community, in such a way that it becomes capable of directing and guiding the way the school functions on a daily basis.

In this regard it is important to overcome the danger of pastoral practice being considered a section alongside the others, rather than the characteristic quality of the whole life of the

school, of its culture, of its method of working, of relationships, of projects etc. in which it is presented and achieved; often this is well presented in documents, but it remains a real challenge to succeed in putting it into practice in the daily life of the educative community.

2^o. *The educative-pastoral community*: making real efforts to build up the school as a community of people at the service of the education and of evangelisation of the young, and not only as an institution providing educational services. A school is an educative-pastoral community when people, especially young people, are put at its centre, with interpersonal relationships, with a sharing in the values of Salesian pedagogy and spirituality, with the involvement and the protagonism of everyone in their own different roles.

3^o. A school as a *platform for effective and normal evangelisation*, especially through the promotion and the transmission of a culture and of a mentality inspired by Gospel values. Salesian youth pastoral practice in the field of education ought to foster in the young not only a Christian life but also a culture inspired by the faith and evangelical values, which is an alternative to the culture of their surroundings often characterised by secularism, relativism, subjectivism and consumerism.

The cultural values which are offered in daily life in the school, in the different subjects, in the method of teaching, in the surroundings and in relationships, etc. do not always receive the attention they need in order to ensure consistency between the material being transmitted or the methods employed and the values of the Christian faith, in such a way that this informs in an effective manner peoples' personal, professional and social lives, and a fruitful relationship is established between faith and culture.

4^o. A school *attentive and open to the poorest young people*; with an organisation and an approach which prevents scholastic failure and helps to overcome it with revision courses, evening class-

es for youngsters who find themselves outside the formal school structures, etc.; which, through the various subjects and activities it offers, fosters contacts with and involvement in society in order to discover the causes of situations of marginalisation and exclusion experienced in it and to give rise to the commitment to overcome them; a school which promotes the culture of dialogue, of collaboration, of the acceptance of what is different, of solidarity.

These objectives have been promoted in recent years through a systematic and continuous effort made in several Regions of the Congregation. Exemplary in this is the process taking place in Salesian America starting from the continental meetings in Cum-bayá (1994 and 2001) and Brasilia (2008). The conclusions of these meetings have been further studied in the various Province or area teams in order to translate them into working programmes which guide the activities of the different educative communities, helping them to assess their educative praxis and improve it. This effort is being made together with the various groups of the Salesian Family which are responsible for schools in America.

Something similar is also being done in Europe (meetings in Rome in 1994 and 2000, in Krakow in 2004 and in Seville in 2010) and in South Asia through interprovincial and national links.

In Brazil with the same purpose the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians have set up a network of Salesian schools, through which the formation of the teachers and the production of school books according to Salesian educational methods are organised.

This process of renewal certainly demands a more systematic ongoing formation of the educators. In addition to the efforts of the Provinces to ensure a good educational and Salesian formation with systematic programmes, in some Provinces and zones there has also been the development of various centres and Salesian educative and pastoral formation projects for lay collaborators, especially for the teachers in our schools.

3.4 Professional Formation and work preparation

From its beginnings the Salesian Congregation has been known and appreciated for its vocational training centres through which it offers the poorest youngsters, those who often from their being small have had to work to help their families, or those who did not manage to follow a regular school programme, a human formation and a good quality preparation for work which enables them to face their future with confidence and a sense of responsibility. Even today, many countries which do not allow the Church to have an explicit presence, entrust to us vocational training centres, and through them we can be a silent but clear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The vocational training centres nowadays are of many kinds, from technical schools, about 180, which offer the youngsters a systematic secondary education which enables them subsequently to continue with university studies, to schools of vocational training (457) which offer the youngsters who are preparing to go to work a high quality preparation with a regular recognised programme. Among those schools the 46 agricultural schools deserve special mention.

In the field of non-formal vocational training, in these years there have grown up more than 300 small work-preparation centres, which offer young workers or those about to begin working short and very practical courses to give them a certain level of qualification for work.

Often these vocational training centres foster and support practical assistance initiatives for the occupation of young workers, cooperatives for mutual support, handicraft centres and other initiatives to help provide work for the poorest youngsters.

In modern societies in rapid evolution, the technical world and that of work is a sector experiencing profound and rapid changes; on this account if it really wants to help young people to enter this new world, vocational training has to make changes in

its programmes, methods and also its funding.

All this requires that there be special support and guidance, in particular in the following aspects:

- 1^o. Promoting the *all-round formation of the young*. Human, moral and spiritual formation is as important as the technical and professional. Very often a pupil from a Don Bosco vocational training centre is preferred to others particularly on account of the qualities of his character rather than for the training or qualifications obtained. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the professional training should be considered as of secondary importance. The final aim of a Salesian vocational training centre, in fact, is precisely that of being able to ensure that a young person has employment suited to the training he has received. The all-round curriculum of formation is precisely directed to this end. Consequently it is essential that every centre has an Educative Pastoral Plan, which effectively directs its daily activities.
- 2^o. Strengthening, in their educative role in the technical-professional schools, the *processes for developing personal qualities of character*. Nowadays a good technical and professional preparation is not sufficient; what are needed more and more are people capable of making up their own minds, with enquiring minds and with a critical sense; people able to establish positive, stable and effective relationships, of fostering collaboration in shared projects; capable of managing and resolving conflicts, of facing up to changes with imagination and creativity. The need for this is also greatly felt by the young themselves who want the educators to take a greater interest in their lives. For this reason it is important to provide opportunities for and forms of communication and personal relationships between educators and pupils, with families and with society; fostering a form of educational guidance which is respectful but at the same time pro-active; planning a moral formation and a education in values that is truly personal, communitarian and open to the needs of others.

3^o. Developing in the various educational procedures a *systematic and serious social formation* which leads to a mentality which is more open to the needs of others and a greater capacity to be engaged effectively in the pursuit of justice. The GC23, in the face of the enormous challenges of poverty, indicated formation in the social sphere of charity as a fundamental task to make education to the faith concrete and credible.³⁹

Here are some elements which should not be missing in this formation:

- an adequate knowledge of the complex socio-political situation, beginning with those closest and most immediate;
- a complete and systematic presentation of the social teaching of the Church as the key to an understanding of the real situation and as an indication of the ideal goals to be aimed at in daily commitment;
- introducing the young people to the situations requiring solidarity and assistance especially in the world of work, for example in the face of the tragedy of youth unemployment, of exploitation, of immigration and of racism, etc.

4^o. Developing in our educative project the *pedagogy of work* as an important element in an all-round human formation, going beyond a pedagogy which is too intellectual and selective. Many young people are exposed to or have already experienced in their lives lack of scholastic success and/or problems of fitting in as individuals, families or in society in general. For them a work experience which is positive, well-planned and followed up with educational criteria, can constitute an excellent opportunity for personal rehabilitation; the young person can re-acquire self esteem, re-discover his own abilities and the capacity to be motivated in his own formation.

This requires that in the educative project we offer sufficient space for some work experience, service in the community,

³⁹ Cf. GC23, n. 204.

work within “non-profit” organisations..., appreciating in them, above all, the opportunity for personal fulfilment and being of service to the common good. It also means developing useful and effective contacts with individuals, institutions and other areas in the world of work, fostering dialogue, discussion and mutual awareness and collaboration in formation.

- 5º. Offering a *process of evangelisation as a significant contribution to be included in the educational process and the work experience*. All our activity on behalf of young workers is aimed at evangelisation, but an evangelisation which is really part of their world.

This kind of evangelisation project ought to pay particular attention to the following:

- offering the pupils a human and evangelical view of society, the economy and the world of work, through lessons of religion, of moral formation and study of the Social Teaching of the Church;
- providing experiences of a spiritual nature and an opening to God, both in ordinary life and on special occasions, with a gradual process of initiation to prayer and celebration;
- offering some experiences of voluntary service for the benefit of the poor, beginning with those in their own locality;
- provide explicit moments of evangelisation and education to the faith through groups suited to their sensitivities and needs;
- linking up with the pastoral initiatives of the Church in the world of work and facilitating the participation of the young.

- 6º. A significant measure of the quality and effectiveness of the formation received will be the ease with which *the pupils who complete the formation find employment and work*, and how capable they are of changing for the better the society in which they take their place. This means establishing close contacts and collaboration with the world of industry and business, encouraging their cooperation in the programmes of practical

experience offered to the pupils and in the “stages” of updating for teachers, seeking their advice in the process of renewal and modernisation, preparing, in conjunction with the businesses and industry, programmes of ongoing formation especially for the young people already at work, thinking about initiatives to accompany the young people in their first steps on entering the world of work.

In this area, Past Pupils can be of great importance and a real help: they can form an excellent bridge between school and the world of work in which they already have their place; they can collaborate in the educative role of the school through their professional work and through their voluntary services; in addition many of them can help the young people who have completed their studies, accompanying them as they enter the work place, assisting them in initiatives of self-employment, creating work bursaries, etc.

In the Congregation there are some magnificent experiences in this field of technical vocational training: technical schools which are in the forefront, which not only offer young people a high-quality professional training but also promote various initiatives to help them to take their place with dignity in the world of work.

Precisely because of the importance which vocational training has in our mission of education for the poorest young people and because of the difficulties and challenges it has to face nowadays in a society in rapid development, it is a matter of urgency that we support it, encouraging greater coordination among the various centres at both Provincial and National level, fostering an exchange of experiences, projects, resources and closer collaboration between the more developed centres and those more modest. especially in the formation of the teachers, in the production of good quality programmes and in methodology... seeking together ways and means of ensuring the continuous support and renewal of the centres.

In recent years the Department for Youth Ministry has promoted some initiatives in this regard, but there is certainly still much more to be done.

3.5 The world of the University: the progress made by the IUS and other forms of presence in the university world

By a decision of the Rector Major, the Department for Youth Ministry has assumed in this six-year period the animation of the IUS (Salesian University Institutions). The aim proposed was that of taking up and implementing the identity and policies approved by the Rector Major with his Council regarding a Salesian presence in higher education (January 2003) through the “2nd Common Plan” (2003-2008), drawn up in the IUS Assembly (July 2003). This plan corresponds to the three strategic objectives (“beams”):

- 1^o. *The formation of the personnel.* This formation takes place especially through the IUS Virtual Course: “Shared learning and education techniques in the university, in a Salesian style (CVI)”. This is about a project carried out in a systematic and professional manner, which in a relatively short time has reached a significant number of the teachers in the IUS (about 3000); it has also had a strong impact on the renewal of the IUS themselves and on the positive development of the “2nd Common Plan”; without this group of people who share the values of Salesian education the success of the proposed plan would have been very difficult to achieve.

One particular development of the CVI has been the “Virtual Course of formation for teachers in Salesian schools in America”, carried out by several IUS in collaboration with the Department for Youth Ministry and the Commission for the Salesian school in America; it is intended to strengthen the identity and the educational skills of the teachers, creating among

them a culture of cooperation and of working in groups, developing new resources for educational work in the schools, along the lines of the Second American Meeting Salesian Schools (Cumbayá II). The first course (2006-2007) was followed by 702 teachers.

2º. The second objective is to ensure the fundamental principles of the Institutions according to the suggestions in the *“frame of reference”* in the documents on the identity and policies. It includes these aspects or columns:

- The “Navigational Chart”, that is, a series of methods and procedures to ensure the direction and the management of Institutions are within the frame of reference of identity and policies;
- The human resources, the management of personnel and senior staff, the role of the Salesian community;
- Economic resources, funds and the production of resources, professional management of the resources, policies for investments, synergy, etc.

The development of the second strategic objective (or beam) has been the fundamental task of the IUS in these years. It has been a rigorous, systematic and well-accompanied process. The response of the IUS has been good, but not uniform; in general the majority have taken part with dedication and according the to conditions requested; a significant group of senior staff has been involved, led by the Rector. Participation in the Seminars held in Brasilia, São Paulo, Lima, El Salvador and in the Conferences (Chile 2004, Guatemala 2006, Porto Alegre 2009) has been satisfactory. Nonetheless, the final result (the drawing up of the “Navigational Chart”), although praiseworthy for the number involved (more than 50% of the IUS took part) and for its quality (it was a first attempt), there are clearly still considerable difficulties in the Universities for there to be a real process of strategic planning.

- 3º. The third strategic objective (or beam) is the aim of promoting *relationships of specific groups among the IUS*. This is a very practical and important initiative in order to create among the IUS a true academic community of collaboration in projects shared by the various Universities, so as to arrive eventually at the construction and the smooth running of real network of Salesian Universities, making a significant contribution to the academic world in fields more in harmony with our educational and youth charism. At present there is a group of the Virtual Course engaged in the formation of personnel, the "IUS-Engineering" Group, the "IUS-Education" Group; while in preparation there are the "IUS-Pastoral Formation" Group and the "IUS-New Technologies".

Through the development of this programme, the IUS have not only grown numerically (in 2006 there were 61 university institutions of various levels: 19 in America, 25 in India, 9 in Europe, 5 in East-Asia and Oceania, 1 in Africa), but especially they are consolidating and growing in quality, in particular those in America and Europe. Through this ongoing process there has been a change in the way of thinking about and organising a Salesian presence in the University, and new forms of presence and university management are being encouraged through the official commitment to the drawing up of the "Navigational Chart".

In every IUS a *group of people* is being created who share the Salesian mission and vision and university projects; these groups are becoming capable of forming the animating nucleus of the academic community and being the promoters and leaders in the renewal of the Institutions. Greater *synergy and collaboration* among the IUS is growing, overcoming the self-centred approach and promoting in them a common understanding and vision of the overall picture.

In July 2007 the V IUS Assembly was held, in which the III Common Plan/Programme was drawn up, which took and examined further the objectives and the steps already taken so far.

3.6 Attention to the world of marginalised young people

Attention to young people in situations of risk has always been a characteristic of the Salesian apostolate. The new situation of our societies challenges us to find new solutions. Poverty is constantly growing and has reached tragic dimensions which afflict many individuals and communities, and among these many young people, so as to have become part of the world in which we live. We can also speak about “new forms of poverty” and therefore of “new forms of marginalisation – social exclusion”, among which those which strike us particularly as they put at risk the very possibilities of young peoples’ development, creating situation of serious hardship and for some even delinquency.

The most worrying aspect is the development of a mentality or a way of living life (individualism, consumerism, the seeking after efficiency at all costs, and profit...) which leads to more marginalisation, exclusion, poverty and suffering, in particular for the weakest groups such as the young.

For this reason, during the last fifty years, there have been many projects, initiatives and works with the intention of responding to this situation and of offering young people a fresh opportunity to build their lives in a positive fashion and to take their place in society in a responsible way. There are “family homes” to take in and educate youngsters and young people in situations of serious danger (youngsters without any family, street children, youngsters the victims of sexual abuse or of prostitution...); projects offering care, protection and education to child or young workers, often from infancy, those welcoming and providing rehabilitation for young people victims of drugs or those coming out of prison... accommodation and formation for young immigrants often with families... and many others.

In the Provinces, sensitivity and a commitment to respond to the various situations of youth poverty and hardship have grown, not only through works, projects and specific activities on behalf

of young people in serious situations of hardship, but above all by putting this commitment into the Educative Pastoral Plan of the Province, and in every educative community fostering concern so that special attention to be given to the issues of marginalisation and exclusion. This attention and this commitment need to increase even more in individual communities and works; more attention needs to be given to the culture and the mentality which they promote, making every effort to foster effectively a culture of solidarity and of active citizenship; it is also important to strengthen net working and collaboration among the various works and services in the Provinces and with other institutions in the locality, attending to the formation and the educative and Salesian preparation of the educators in this specific area of commitment.

The Department for Youth Ministry has promoted and /or accompanied various initiatives in this regard, for example the European meeting on marginalisation (Barcelona 2003); the Regional meeting on education and work preparation of the young (San Salvador 2004); followed by the meeting on the approach to work in Salesian pedagogy for young people at risk (Medellín 2006); the meeting on Vocational Training and work preparation (Africa e Madagascar - Johannesburg 2004). There are also various Regional or National organisations which promote net-working and co-involvement and collaboration with social institutions working in this field, such as the YAR (“youth at risk”) organisation in India, SCS in Italy, “Social Platform” (Spain), and others.

In the animation and the coordination of this sector special importance attaches to the “*Planning and Development Offices*” set up in several Provinces. These Offices help the Provinces in the strategic planning of their efforts in the area of development and in their fund raising to finance the projects. Cooperation is very important between these Offices and the Provincial Delegation for Youth Ministry in order to ensure that projects are put into the Provincial SEPP and, at the same time, to promote a systematic

planning system and a demanding assessment process of the objectives of the SEPP.⁴⁰

3.7 Other presences and flexible forms of service of the young

In our complex and pluralistic society we are assisting at the emergence of *new places or forms of the education of youth*, which propose models and styles of life which the masses of young people find very attractive; one can think of the parallel school of the mass-media, of fan clubs for those interested in music or sport, of tourism, of the new kinds of social or church commitment, of the area of free time, which all become new places for individuals to identify with.

To respond to this new situation there have grown up in various places in the Salesian world *new types of youth groups, new kinds of education, services or works* which are more flexible, able to respond and to adapt to changing needs and demands with greater freedom of action and initiative. These make more use of the possibility of communicating with the young in their natural environment rather than in the stability of a physical location; they give more emphasis to spontaneity in relationships and freedom to opt in, the centrality of the individuals rather than that of the structure or the project; they cultivate close links and work together with other institutions and services in the locality, in an attempt to offer a complete response to the situations. In these things it is relatively easier to help the young people themselves to become aware that following the path together is in their hands.

Here are some of these new forms of presence among the young.

⁴⁰ Cf. Conclusions from the meeting for Planning and Development Offices. Rome, the Generalete, 2005.

1º. The Salesian Youth Movement

One of the most wide-spread and comprehensive of the presences among the young is the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM). This is a Movement with an educational character, offered to all the young to make them the subjects and the protagonists of their human and Christian development, with a missionary slant, open to those at a distance, with a desire to make an impact in the locality and in civil society and to be an active part of the local Church.

The youth groups and associations which, while retaining their autonomy in organisational terms, identify with Salesian spirituality and pedagogy, constitute, in an explicit or implicit manner the Salesian Youth Movement.

Its animation is shared among the groups of the Salesian Family, in particular the SDB and the FMA. A significant occasion for the Movement was the 'World Forum' held in Turin and Rome during the year 2000: in the places where the Salesian charism had its beginnings, representatives of the various Provinces shared their experience of being a Movement, of the great challenges nowadays affecting the world of youth, the possible new ways of responding and of being committed, and finally suggesting to all the young people of the Movement some tasks for the years ahead. This Final Message of the Forum became the frame of reference for the animation which in these last years has developed through various initiatives:

- the annual message of the Rector Major to the young people of the SYM on the occasion of the Feast of Don Bosco, a matter for study and reflection in the groups;
- further reflection on the identity of the Movement (various Provinces have drawn up an "Identity Card of the SYM");
- an increase in the direct leadership of the young people with various Province and Interprovince forms of coordination of the Movement (in particular, in the previous six-year period a European Coordinating Committee of the SYM with a large

participation of the young people as a result of the *Confronto* 2004);

- a considerable number of meetings at Province or Regional level of the groups of the SYM, such as “*Campobosco*” in Spain and Portugal, the numerous pilgrimages of youth groups to the places of the origins of the Salesian charism, European meetings such as *Confronto* and *Eurizon*, meetings of the groups of the SYM in Argentina, Brazil, the “*Boscoree*” for the Don Bosco Scouts in India, etc.;
- efforts made for systematic and serious formation of the leaders and the development, in a good number of Provinces, of a “programme of Christian formation for the different groups”; within the SYM there is a growth of different movements and associations which are clearly of an evangelising nature;
- a greater presence of the SYM in the local Churches, etc.

The SYM is something very promising as it involves many youngsters, adolescents and young people, but it demands an ever-greater effort, which is more systematic and coordinated in evangelisation and Christian formation according to the values of Salesian Youth Spirituality, in the care of the formation and personal accompaniment of the leaders, in the promotion of a commitment of support for other young people, especially the poorest and those at risk, and in an active and responsible presence in the various youth circumstances in Society and in the Church.

Throughout the last six-year period the *youth pilgrimages to the Salesian places in Turin and to Colle Don Bosco* have multiplied and expanded, especially from the Provinces in Europe, as well as Spirituality meetings (retreats in the Salesian places for young people and adults...), meetings for the Salesian formation of lay collaborators, a formation experience for young pre-novices from some Salesian Provinces of Europe, etc. The ICP Province is making a considerable effort to strengthen, with the help of the European Provinces, and coordinate better the Salesian teams which animate the Colle and Valdocco Project. The whole Congregation is grateful for this.

With the help and the collaboration of the Institute of Spirituality of the UPS, a process has also begun of reflection and sharing of ideas among those responsible for the *Salesian Houses of Spirituality* in Europe (May 2004); the basic elements have been identified for a programme of Salesian Youth Spirituality to be offered in these houses, and the role of a Salesian House of Spirituality in the pastoral project of the Province.

2^o. *Voluntary service*

In these years in the Provinces and in the SYM a large number of groups and associations for voluntary service, especially for the young, have grown up. The GC24 recognised voluntary service as *a new style of life of openness to others*, especially in the area of poverty and marginalisation, a challenge to the rampant forms of injustice and selfishness, a significant vocational expression and a valid endorsement of the educative process followed by young people with the SDBs.⁴¹

In the Congregation, Voluntary Service continues to grow through a considerable number of groups and organisations. In some Regions, local or national voluntary service has developed both missionary and social or vocational (America); in others international and missionary voluntary service has developed a great deal (Europe); others receive volunteers (Africa and Asia).

Salesian voluntary service is usually presented as something special to the young who have followed the formation process of the youth apostolate and it helps them to mature and to further reflect on their vocational option for a committed Christian life; but often it also becomes a special occasion of contact, and of an opportunity for evangelisation for young people who come from outside our own centres.

⁴¹ Cf. GC24, n. 26.

The Departments for Youth Ministry and for the Missions have drawn up a document “Voluntary Service in the Salesian mission”, containing the valuable reports from the International meeting in 2001 and the experiences of the Provinces and the Salesian NGO. In this document the identity of Salesian voluntary service is presented, and some basic requirements and conditions for its development, for the formation and the accompaniment of the volunteers and for the animation and promotion of Salesian voluntary service in the Provinces and in the Congregation.

In 2007 this document was presented to the whole Congregation in seven Regional Meetings, so that it would be known and put into practice in the various Provinces through a Provincial Plan for voluntary service inserted in the Provincial SEPP.

4. FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY

After having described how Youth Ministry has developed and how it is now organised in the Congregation, together with a profound thanks to God for the great amount of good He has raised up among us in the service of the young, through the power of the attraction of Don Bosco and of his charism, through the generous commitment of so many confreres, lay collaborators and the young themselves, I should like to put to you and share with you some prospects for the future, several of which were proposed by the GC26 as priority objectives for the next few years.

4.1 Continuing the effort to assimilate and to put into practice the model of Salesian Youth Pastoral ministry

We have seen the great efforts made by the Congregation in these last fifty years to re-think and to renew its educative and

pastoral praxis, responding with greater fidelity to the new needs and expectations of the young and to the inspirational values of the Preventive System of Don Bosco. Today we can draw on a collection of criteria, guidelines, structures, lines of action which translate in today's situation the spirit and the model of action as lived by Don Bosco in the first Oratory: the Preventive System.

All this effort in re-thinking the educational practice necessarily implies an openness to new schemes and a new practices, a new way of thinking and a new way of organising those elements which are part of the educational process, a new methodology and a new way of being present among the young... These are things which require reflection to assess everyday experience, courage to take up new ways of seeing and doing things, patience to give sufficient time to the slow process of changing ways of thinking and attitudes, a sharing of ideas because these processes of change are not achieved alone but with others in a group.

Today the Congregation has an operative model for Youth Ministry, that is to say, a practical way of structuring and organising the various elements of its educational and pastoral practice in order to ensure its identity, its consistency with regard to the objectives of the project and its structure; a model faithful to the inspirational principles of Don Bosco's Preventive System, and one which, at the same time, responds better to the needs and the circumstances of young people today. There is an urgent need, therefore, to commit ourselves to becoming thoroughly familiar with this model, applying its principles, and above all putting it into practice in the various contexts and situations. In these last years a great effort has been made in this regard, but it needs to continue helping individual Salesian and the local communities to measure their praxis against the model to make it more faithful and effective.

In particular, it is important to adopt a **unified and organic vision** of a ministry, centred on the individual young person and not so much on works or services, overcoming a compartmentali-

sation still present in everyday practice. One should also strengthen **the community dimension of pastoral activity** which can be seen, above all, in the efforts to make the Salesian work an educative-pastoral community, in which people are at the centre, interpersonal relationships prevail, the aspects of communion and of collaboration over management and organisational preoccupations. Another aspect on which the last Chapters insisted is **the planning mentality**, that is to say, considering pastoral action as a process which is gradually developed according to precise and verifiable objectives, and not just as the sum total of all the various activities undertaken with little connection between them.

All this implies that efforts in pastoral formation must be redoubled as regards both Salesians and lay collaborators. In this area there are many initiatives, but there is need for them to be organised and be given some continuity, so that in every educative-pastoral community a nucleus may be built up of people who are fully identified with the values and the organisation of Salesian pastoral practice capable of encouraging and leading the others.

4.2 An evangelising pastoral practice clearly directed to proclaiming Christ and to the education of the young to the faith

The educative-pastoral activity of the Congregation is spreading everywhere; the needs of the young and requests from society and from the Church are always more numerous and pressing. In the effort to respond to them there is the danger of overstressing ourselves and leaving in the shade the heart of our mission.

In many of the societies and cultures in which we carry out our educative and pastoral services, a culture is developing which puts religion, and particularly Christianity, to one side, a style of life which fosters the growth of the material and spiritual poverty of many and which multiplies the factors leading to social exclusion... In this climate, religious values and the motivations of

believers which in other times were obvious and recognised in the service of education and human development often become insignificant and irrelevant.

This situation has urged many Salesians and lay collaborators to renew their vocational identity and to devote themselves with great generosity and sacrifice to the task of education and pastoral service; but there is also the danger of « spiritual superficiality, frenetic activity, a bourgeois life style, weak evangelical witness, a half-hearted approach to the mission. This translates into awkwardness in bringing out our proper identity as consecrated persons and into apostolic timidity».⁴²

All of this means that we need to recover the roots and the driving force of our pastoral praxis, the missionary passion of the “Da mihi animas”, the only thing which can guarantee its meaning and effectiveness, and to concentrate our many and varied educative-pastoral activities on evangelisation and on education to the faith, where everything finds its unity and its meaning.⁴³

In the light of the guidelines proposed by the GC26 on the subject of evangelisation, here are some **priorities** which ought to characterise youth pastoral practice in the coming years:

- 1^o. *A more missionary pastoral practice* which would propose «to the young with joy and courage that they live their lives in the way Jesus Christ lived his».⁴⁴ Today it is not enough to place young people in a positive environment with a great number of activities and proposals, nor even to simply offer them catechetical training, or help them become accustomed to religious practices [prayer and the sacraments]; what is needed is a clear and explicit proclamation of Jesus Christ, which can awaken in the young the desire to know him and to follow him; it is nec-

⁴² GC26, “The urgent need for evangelisation”, n. 27.

⁴³ Cf. Concluding address of the RM at the GC26: first key to interpreting the chapter document: “Warming the hearts of the confreres”.

⁴⁴ GC26 “The urgent need for evangelisation”. Guidelines for action 5, n. 36.

essary to teach them and guide them in Christian prayer, in the reading and meditation of the Word of God; there is also a need to awaken in them a desire to commit themselves to a systematic and serious process of increasing their knowledge of the faith, and to help them to plan and live their lives according to Gospel values.

- 2^o. An evangelisation which is *fully inserted in the field of education*. Salesian Youth Ministry lives and develops in the field of education where it tries to promote in the young not only a Christian way of life but also a culture inspired by the faith and by gospel values, which can be an alternative to the culture of their surroundings characterised by secularism, relativism, subjectivism, consumerism...

Consideration of the cultural contents which we offer in the daily activities of a work does not always receive the attention it ought to have in order to ensure consistency between what is offered or the methods used and the values of the Christian faith (the meeting between culture and faith), and to ensure a Christian life capable of giving a person's private, professional and social life that Christian quality it ought to have.

Nowadays, therefore, there is an urgent need to organise pastoral practice, taking special care to integrate evangelisation and education according to the criteria of the Preventive System:⁴⁵

- an evangelisation capable of being adapted to the evolving condition of the young person, which takes care to develop the fundamental human attitudes which make a personal opening up to God and a meeting with Jesus possible, attentive to the values and views concerning life of the young people in order to transform them in the light of the Gospel;
- an education capable of forming the way of thinking, of inspiring a view of life which is open to the religious dimen-

⁴⁵ GC26, "The urgent need for evangelisation". Cf. Guidelines for action 6, n. 41.

sion, of bringing to maturity life choices inspired by the Gospel of Jesus; an education which is attentive, in particular, to developing the religious dimension of the individual and to fostering the attitudes fundamental to a positive openness to the faith; an education which attends to the formation of a moral conscience and educates the young to a social commitment according to the inspirations of the social teaching of the Church.

4.3 Deepen and strengthen the vocational dimension of every pastoral project

Vocational promotion and guidance are an essential element of a Youth Ministry which helps every young person to make life choices in a responsible manner, in the light of faith. «Today we feel more strongly than ever the challenge of creating a vocational culture in every setting, such that young people may discover life as a call and that all Salesian ministry may be truly vocational».⁴⁶ But the best youth ministry does not awaken apostolic and consecrated vocations without giving specific attention to an explicit vocational call, to a decisive personal proposal, to constant spiritual accompaniment.

The lack of vocations has led communities and confreres to reflect on the way of carrying out vocation promotion, but this is still being considered and undertaken as a task seen as complementary to ordinary educational and pastoral work, to be done by those given the task, or by some confreres who are particularly interested. This is to impoverish the two processes: a youth apostolate which does not succeed in guiding young people towards a vocational view of their life, towards the gospel options of gift and service; and a vocation promotion approach which is based too much on enthusiasm and too little on a relationship of deep personal faith with Jesus Christ.

⁴⁶ GC26, "Need for vocation ministry", n. 53.

For this it is necessary to change the way of thinking and introduce some new ways of doing things, particularly in these three areas:

- 1^o. Promoting in all our centres a culture of vocation, through a youth ministry which is decidedly evangelising, which leads the young people to recognise their lives as God's gift, and to respond to it with a generous commitment to the service of others, in particular those in most need.⁴⁷
- 2^o. Ensuring that in every plan of education to the faith special attention is given to fostering in the young an apostolic commitment, rooted in the personal awareness of friendship with Jesus Christ, experienced in communion and collaboration within a strong community experience and matured with a systematic commitment to personal formation.⁴⁸
- 3^o. Witnessing with courage and joy the beauty of one's own Salesian vocation, totally devoted to God in the mission for youth, making of it an explicit proposal, and committing ourselves to accompanying the young as signs of the Salesian religious vocation and in their process of discernment and vocational formation.⁴⁹

4.4 A special attention to the poorest youngsters and those at risk as a characteristic feature of every Salesian presence and work

With joy I recognise that there has been an increase in sensitivity and concern, in reflection and commitment with regard to the world of marginalised and disadvantaged youth. This situation is no longer a rather particular area, identified with some special work or animated only by a particularly motivated confrere.

⁴⁷ GC26, "Need for vocation ministry", Cf. n. 60.

⁴⁸ GC26, "Need for vocation ministry". Guidelines for action 9, cf. nn. 65-67.

⁴⁹ GC26, "Need for vocation ministry". Guidelines for action 8, cf. nn. 61-64. Guidelines for action 10, cf. nn. 69-73.

Concern for the least, the poorest, the most disadvantaged is becoming one of the Congregation's "characteristic features" which, little by little, involves many houses in the Provinces.

But there still exists a certain resistance to a change of mentality and of practice in educational matters, so that every one of our presences may truly be at the service of the most needy youngsters.⁵⁰ Faithful to the directives of the GC26, we need to continue along this path and concentrate our efforts on developing some procedures which involve the whole of our youth ministry:

- 1^o. Concern for young people in situations of risk as a *characteristic and a commitment of every Salesian presence and of every educational project*. It is not enough to have in the Province some works or services explicitly dedicated to the poorest young people; it is necessary that an openness to and concern for situations of poverty, exclusion and marginalisation are adopted by every centre, to the extent of it becoming a characteristic of its significance. It is important that every educative community: identifies those aspects of the surroundings, of its own functioning and working, or certain criteria of evaluation more or less explicit, which in fact produce discrimination and exclusion, and efforts are made to change them; fosters the presence, the participation and the protagonism of the most needy and at-risk youngsters in the activities, in the groups, in positions of responsibility...; and that it identifies with special care those aspects of Salesian pedagogy more suited to these young people and it commits itself to putting them into practice.
- 2^o. Focusing on the *transformation of mentality and of cultural tendencies* not only so as to respond to the immediate expectations, promoting a culture of solidarity according to the criterion of "giving more to those who have received the least". The poverty and marginalisation in our societies are not only economic or social phenomena but also, and I believe especially,

⁵⁰ GC26 "Evangelical Poverty". Cf. n. 82. "New frontiers". Cf. n. 101.

cultural phenomena; there exists a individualistic, competitive, hedonistic and consumeristic way of looking at life which results in the exclusion of the weakest; we cannot therefore be content to help the most disadvantaged to overcome their situations of marginalisation, but what we do must be aimed at the transformation of their way of thinking and that of the whole of society. In this regard every educative-pastoral community needs to be very attentive to the values and the styles of life which it promotes through its daily work of education.

- 3^o. Developing in a special way the *religious dimension of the individual, considered as a fundamental element in the process of becoming fully human and of prevention*. In the anthropological view of Don Bosco's Preventive System the religious dimension is a fundamental aspect of the individual and of society; for this reason its development, up to the proclamation of Jesus Christ, has to be an indispensable element in the Salesian educational project. We believe that in this personal relationship with God, through the mysterious workings of the Spirit Who is active in the heart of every individual and in a special way in those of the poor and most needy, unsuspected strength can be found for the building up of the personality and for its all-round development,⁵¹ and we believe that this is an important element to give hope to the young who are suffering in a special way the tragic consequences of poverty and social exclusion.

Therefore, in its educative pastoral plan, every educative community should provide for these young people experiences and procedures which reawaken in them the religious dimension of life and help them to discover Jesus as the Saviour.⁵² This programme of evangelisation needs to play a full part in the educational process of prevention and rehabilitation, and be expressed in simple projects closely connected with everyday life and similar to the planting of small seeds.

⁵¹ J. E. VECCHI, "He had compassion on them". AGC 359, page 33.

⁵² CG26, "New frontiers". Guidelines for action 15. Cf. nn. 105-107.

The witness of the educators and of the educative community, the atmosphere of joy, of welcome, of a family, the defense and the promotion of personal dignity, become a first proclamation and a first realisation of the salvation of Christ and a offer of freedom and the fulness of life.

This first spark needs to be encouraged and helped to develop with patience and perseverance, always awakening the positive aspect to be found in every young person, an awareness of his dignity, his desire to pick himself up. The whole community offers him religious experiences which are simple but of good quality, such as moments of prayer or celebration, which help him to open himself to the presence of God and a personal relationship with Him. Starting from this experience the Christian community will be able to proclaim with respect, but also with joy, the person of Jesus Christ.

4.5 Redefine our presences to make them more significant, that is, “new presences”

The profound renewal of Youth Ministry to respond better to the needs and to the demands of the young requires as an indispensable prerequisite the serious review of the purpose, the organisation and the management of our works. For this reason, for a number of years in the Congregation we have been invited to restructure our presences, to change them and make them more meaningful, opening them up to new frontiers, making the presences “new” and promoting then anew.⁵³

To make the traditional works that we have, Schools, Vocational Training Centres, Parishes, Oratories and Youth Centres, University hostels etc. new requires that we concentrate the role of the Salesian community not so much on the management and organisation of the work as on the accompaniment and on the for-

⁵³ Cf. for example GC26, “New frontiers”, n. 100; Concluding words of the Rector Major at the meeting of the Provincials of Europe, 5 December 2004. AGC 388, 5.2.

mation of the educators and of the young people, ensuring a presence for their benefit, in the animation of a gradual process of education and evangelisation until it arrives at a proposal for a Christian life of commitment, with the involvement of a vast movement of people in a Salesian educative pastoral Project which is open and shared. It is also about giving preferential and decisive attention to young people at risk, making the necessary decisions with courage and creativity; it is a matter also of promoting initiatives and projects which involve the largest number possible of individuals and institutions at the service of the education and evangelisation of the young, net-working together and working in communion with society and the Church.

It is not enough to renew the already existing presences. Often there is also the need to take the necessary steps to create new kinds of presences, with a strong emphasis on evangelisation and education to the faith, on the Salesian formation of the collaborators, with teams which animate Salesian houses of spirituality, catechetical centres, centres for the formation of lay collaborators; presences for explicit vocational animation and proposal, for the animation and guidance of youth associations and movements for evangelisation and commitment, and for voluntary service, etc...

To facilitate this commitment to make the Salesian presence in a given area more significant and effective, to coordinate better the various kinds of Salesian presence there, to foster the re-location and re-organisation of works, the GC25 asked every Province to draw up a Provincial Organic/Structural Plan (POI) which could offer the criteria, the conditions and the practical requirements necessary in order to reach this objective.⁵⁴ The process was begun, but it needs to move ahead by means of a continuous assessment and renewal of the POI.

⁵⁴ Cf. GC25, nn. 82-84. Cf. also GC26, "New frontiers" n. 113.

4.6 A pastoral animation which is more and more inter-linked and coordinated among the different Departments, in particular the Departments for the Salesian Mission: Youth Ministry, Social Communication and the Missions

Animation of youth ministry has become more and more complex: the different sectors or areas have multiplied with new features to be organised and coordinated. Some of these aspects are closely linked to others entrusted by the Constitutions to other Departments, for example the phenomenon of voluntary service in its various forms has a specific and practical relationship to the missions (when it is a question of missionary voluntary service); the parish entrusted to the Salesians in mission lands also assumes the dynamic associated with mission stations, looked after by the Department for the Missions; the Department for Social Communication, in addition to the animation of the aspects specific to the means of social communication and businesses, contributes to the formation of educators so that they may create strong relationships and foster communication; this aspect is closely linked to youth ministry which animates the educative-pastoral community, the fundamental subject of education and evangelisation; the pastoral formation of the SDB and of lay people ought to be of help to each other and linked together, and in this there ought to be close collaboration between the Department for Formation and the Department for Youth Ministry... And similarly with other areas which are becoming more and more interdependent, and the concern of various Departments, so that their animation is not seen as the task of only one prescinding from the others.

In the face of this situation, GC26 asked the Rector Major and his Council to foster during the next six-year period a more structured collaboration between the three Departments of the mission (Youth Ministry, Social Communication and the Missions), so that, while safeguarding the organic unity of youth ministry, these ar-

eas benefit from the mutual help given to with the support of the three departments which have direct responsibility for the animation of the complementary aspects of the one Salesian mission: the education and evangelisation of the young, especially the poor and the working classes, which, in a culture which is profoundly shaped by social communication and is more and more secularised, requires a clearly missionary approach in which priority is given to the first proclamation of the Gospel.

This directive of the GC26 is not simply an organisational issue but implies a much broader, integrated and linked view of some central aspects of the Salesian mission entrusted to these departments. Youth Ministry needs to be more and more missionary, that is to say, assuming the characteristics and dynamics of missionary action, giving special care to the awakening of the religious dimension of the young who are living immersed in a secularised society, giving priority to the first proclamation of Jesus Christ, fostering dialogue with other religions... Youth Ministry must also assume more and more the new culture of social communication, which shapes a style of life and action, a set of values which is a feature of society, especially that of the young, in which youth ministry carries out its educational and evangelising role.

Therefore, the Salesian as an educator-pastor of the young people of today has to acquire many of the features of the missionary and of the communicator; the educative-pastoral community has to become a powerhouse of high quality human and Christian communication; the Salesian educative-pastoral project has to ensure that it contains and develops the missionary dimension and the dynamism and qualities of the world of communication. Salesian Youth Ministry, Social Communication and Missionary promotion are integral aspects which together contribute to the total implementation of the Salesian Mission.

CONCLUSION

Dear Confreres I wanted to send you this letter on the IVth Sunday of Easter, which the Church dedicates to Christ the Good Shepherd, precisely so as to learn from Him as our beloved Father Don Bosco did, when he felt his call as a vocation and mission to be a good shepherd of the young.

May Mary, his mother and teacher, teach us, as she taught him, the field of action, the mission to be undertaken, and the way in which to carry it out.

Affectionately, in Don Bosco


Fr Pascual Chávez Villanueva
Rector Major

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

– *December 2009*

On Tuesday 1 December 2009 there was the opening session of the *winter plenary session* of the General Council which will conclude on 26 January 2010. As always throughout this period, the meetings of the Council, in the mornings and sometimes also in the evenings were accompanied by meetings and talks with the Councillors and with a number of other people, confreres and others, as well as by his attendance at certain events.

Among meetings during the first week of December should be mentioned that on Thursday 3 with Archbishop Riccardo Ezzati of Concepción (Chile).

On 5 Saturday afternoon the Rector Major left for Turin. From the airport he went straight to the studio of *Eurofilm* to record his Christmas greetings. The following day he went to Druento (in the Province of Turin), where he met the Regional group of the VDB, to whom he gave a conference and then presided at Mass, in the course of which some either made their first profession, renewed their vows or made their perpetu-

al profession. In the afternoon accompanied by his Vicar and the Provincial of the Lombardy-Emilian Province, Fr Agostino Sosio, he went to Milan.

In Milan, on 7 December, the Solemnity of St Ambrose, in the ceremony of the presentation of the *Ambrogino d'Oro* on the part of the city of Milan local authorities, the "Large Gold Medal" was given to the Rector Major on the 150th anniversary of the Salesian Congregation. In the afternoon after lunch with the Salesian community of Saint Ambrose, Fr Chávez returned to Rome.

On Tuesday 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Rector Major celebrated Mass at the Auxilium.

On Wednesday 9 meetings of the General Council were resumed. In the afternoon of that day at the UPS the Rector Major presided at a meeting of the Academic Senate. Among meetings during the week, should be mentioned that on Thursday 10 with Fr Luciano Odorico, former General Councillor for the Missions and now a missionary in Papua New Guinea. In the afternoon of Friday 11 there

was a meeting of the three General Councils of the SDB, FMA and Salesians-Cooperators.

On Saturday morning 12, the Rector Major held a meeting with the World Executive Secretariat – those leaving office and those taking over – of the Salesians-Cooperators, and at the end of the morning he greeted the Past Pupils. In the evening he went to St Peter's Basilica for the episcopal ordination of Bishop Mario Toso, called by the Holy Father to become the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

On Sunday morning 13, Fr Chávez presided at Mass with the Salesians-Cooperators and at mid-day attended a lunch in honour of Bishop Toso.

On Monday morning 14, he presided at a meeting of the General Council. In the afternoon he went to the Senate of the Republic for the presentation, at a press conference, of the Acts of the Congress on "The Preventive System and Human Rights". Afterwards he went to the UPS to celebrate with the confreres of the Vice Province the 150th anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation.

On Tuesday morning 15, the Rector Major chaired an ordinary session of the General Council. In the afternoon with some of the

Councillors he went to the Home Office to take part in a Symposium on "Don Bosco and Government Institutions".

On the evening of Thursday 17 December, with the whole General Council he left for Turin, to *celebrate, in the places of the origins the 150th anniversary of the Founding of the Salesian Society*.

On the morning of Friday 18, after saying morning prayer in the Pinardi chapel, they inspected the Chapel of the Relics and the Chapel of St Peter in order to decide the place for the tombs of the Rector Majors. This was followed by some time of reflection in Don Bosco's rooms. In the afternoon, in the Red Room of the City Hall *honorary citizen of Turin* was conferred on the Rector Major. In the evening at Mass, the renewal of religious took place on the actual day of the commemoration of the 150 years since the birth of the Congregation. The day ended in the theatre with a concert put on by the post-novices from Nave.

On Saturday 19, in the theatre Morning Prayer was said with the Salesian Family during which the Rector Major gave a reflection. This was followed by Mass at which the FMA and the Salesians-Cooperators renewed their profession or promise. After lunch the

Rector Major and the Councillors went to the Lingotto Auditorium where there was a concert. Having returned to Valdocco, they said evening prayer, followed by the Rosary in the Pinardi Chapel. Afterwards with some of the Councillors Fr Chávez has supper in the Provincial House of the FMA.

Early on Sunday morning 20, the Rector Major and the Councillors left for Caselle. Welcomed by the parish priest, the Mayor and representatives of Saint Anna's, the paid a visit to the church where Don Rua was ordained priest. Afterwards Mass was said in the parish church of Caselle Torinese. Then they went to the airport for the return journey to Rome, In the evening at supper in the Generalate there was a celebration to mark the Rector Major's birthday.

There followed two days – Monday 21 and Tuesday 22 – with two sessions of the General Council each day. On Wednesday 23 the meeting ended with the exchange of Christmas greetings and a preview for the benefit of the Councillors of the video of the Strenna for 2010.

On Thursday morning 24, the Rector Major went to the Generalate of the FMA to offer Christmas greetings to Mother Yvonne Reungoat and all the Sisters of the

Council. At midnight in the church of the Generalate he presided at the Christmas Mass.

On Friday 25 December, Christmas Day, Fr Chavez celebrated Mass in the novitiate of the FMA in via Appia Nuova. He then met the novices.

On Monday morning 28, the Rector Major went to the Offices of the Union of Superiors General (USG) for a meeting of the Executive Committee. In the evening he presided at Mass for the beginning of the Assembly of the Volunteers with Don Bosco.

On Tuesday morning 29, he went to the UPS, where he presided at the funeral Mass for Fr Roberto Iacoangeli.

On Thursday morning 31, he received Fr Joseph Grüner, Provincial of Germany. In the afternoon he went to the Generalate of the FMA for the presentation of the Strenna for 2010. Afterwards, having returned, he presented the Strenna to the confreres of the Generalate.

– *January 2010*

Between Friday 1 and Wednesday 6 January Fr Pascual Chávez, with his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, had a few days break at Les Combes. Welcomed by the Provincial of Piedmont and the Val

d'Aosta, Fr Stefano Martoglio, they had lunch with the confreres in the community of Châtillon. On Monday 4 he went to Colle Don Bosco for the funeral Mass for Fr Luigi Basset.

Having returned to Rome, on Thursday 7 January the Rector Major chaired two sessions of the General Council, in the morning and in the evening. During the day he spoke with two new Provincials, Fr Marek Chmielewski (PLN) and Fr Petr Vaculík (CEP). In addition, in the afternoon he received the Principal of the Auxilium, Sr Ausilia Chang FMA.

On Friday morning 8, he chaired the usual General Council meeting. In the afternoon he received the Provincial of Piedmont, Fr Stefano Martoglio and the Provincial of the Southern Italian Province Fr Pasquale Martino and also some Councillors.

On Sunday morning 10, Fr Chávez met the members of the CISI and the members of the National Committee for Salesian Youth Ministry.

On Tuesday 12, at the usual time the Rector Major chaired a session of the Council. In the afternoon he received the Rector Magnificus of the UPS, Fr Carlo Nanni, after which he chaired a meeting of the "Curatorium" of the UPS.

On Thursday 14, he presided at Mass for a Meeting of Salesian parish priests and Rectors or those in charge of Oratories in Italy. The normal meetings of the General Council continue according to the programme as usual.

On Monday morning 18, Fr Chávez received Fr Giuseppe Pellizzari, Provincial of the East Circumscription (EST) and later Fr Alfred Leja, the new Provincial of the Wrocław Province (PLO).

During the week, as the sessions of the Council continued, there was also a meeting chaired by the Rector Major with Fr Francesco Cereda, of the Commission for the Centenary of Don Rua. On Thursday afternoon 21, the Rector Major received Magdi Allam and then took part in the Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family. He presented the Strenna for 2010 and then in the evening gave the Good Night. The full-time participation by Fr Chávez at the Spirituality Days continued between Friday 22 and Sunday 24, with two talks and several meetings with those responsible for groups of the Salesian Family. Among these were Mr. Guido Pedroni, the one in charge of the "Don Bosco Mission Community"; Mother Eulalia Marín, Superior General of the "Hijas de los Sagrados Corazones"; Miss Ol-

ga Krysova, Coordinator of the Volunteers of Don Bosco.

On Monday morning 25, Fr Chávez received Fr Franco Lever, Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication at the UPS, and then went to the Curia of the Friars Minor for a meeting with the new Provincials. In the evening after evening prayer he gave the "Good Night" to the community of the Generalate about the activities of the General Council during the winter 'plenum.'

On Tuesday 26 January, the Rector Major presided at the session of the General Council and the closing Mass for the winter plenary session. In the evening he left for Argentina, together with the Regional Councillor Fr Natale Vitali, Fr Juan José Bartolomé and Fr Donato Lacedonio. One of the main reasons for the journey was the *launching of the two new Provinces of Salesian Argentina*, an amalgamation of the previous ones.

On Wednesday 27, having arrived in Buenos Aires they were welcomed by the Vice Provincial and the Provincial Economist of Buenos Aires and by Fr Angel Fernández Artime, the new Provincial of the South Argentina Province. Before midday the Rector Major presided at Mass for the sick and

elderly confreres in the 'Blessed Artemides Zatti' community. In the early afternoon Fr Chávez, with his travelling companions and Fr Angel Fernandez Artime made the journey to Ushuaia. On their arrival they were welcomed by the Governor of the Province of "Tierra del Fuego and Antartida", who gave the Rector Major the title of "Guest of Honour" of the Province. Waiting for the Rector Major, outside the airport was a group of youngsters and members of the Salesian Family. After supper with the confreres of the community of Ushuaia and Río Grande the Rector Major gave the "Good Night".

On Thursday 28, in the small chapel built by the first Salesian missionaries in Ushuaia, the Salesian community and the members of the Salesian Family said Morning Prayer. After breakfast there was a guided tour of the "Tierra del Fuego" National Park. The morning ended with Mass in the parish church of Ushuaia, at the end of which Fr Chávez blessed a statue of Blessed Zephyrinus Namuncurá. In the afternoon the Rector Major and his companions continued the journey to Río Grande. Here in the "San Juan Bosco" parish church the Salesian Family and the young people of the

city took part in a Mass. At the end of the Mass the Spokesman of the Municipality of Rio Grande conferred on the Rector Major the title of "Guest of Honour" with a shield and other gifts.

On Friday 29, the Rector Major and his companions visited "La Misión", the first mission post of Bishop Fagnano, and said Morning Prayer in the first chapel. After breakfast they visited the Missionary Museum. In the afternoon they left for Buenos Aires.

On Saturday morning 30, the Rector Major, the Regional Councillor Fr Natale Vitali, the two new Provincials of Argentina, Fr Manuel Cayo (ARN) and Fr Ángel Fernández Artime (ARS) and other confreres left for San Nicolás de los Arroyos, the cradle of the Salesian presence in Argentina. After going to their rooms in the Hotel, Fr Chávez gave a press conference to the local journalists. Arriving at the Don Bosco College, the Rector Major was welcomed by 450 young people of the Salesian Youth Movement in Argentina, to whom he dedicated the whole of the afternoon with a meeting at which were present a good number of Salesians from Argentina, the two new Provincials, the Councillor for the America South Cone Region and five Salesian Bishops: Bishop Este-

ban Laxague, Bishop Marcelo Angiolo Melani, Bishop Pedro Pozzi, Bishop Agostino Radrizzani and Bishop Juan Carlos Romanín. The meeting was followed by a short pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Rosary. Here the Rector Major presided at Mass attended by hundreds of young people and the faithful. Accompanying Fr Chávez, in addition to the Salesian Bishops was also Bishop Héctor Cardelli of San Nicolás. During the Mass ten novices from the two Argentine Provinces and that of Uruguay, made their first profession. Before Mass ended the Mayor of the city conferred on the Rector Major the title of "Guest of Honour". The day ended with the "Good Night".

On Sunday 31, the Solemnity of Saint John Bosco, in the morning at the Don Bosco College, Fr Chávez presided at morning prayer at which a good number of young Salesians renewed their profession. This was followed by a meeting with the Salesians of Argentina, who for the most part had come specially for the occasion to San Nicolás de los Arroyos. The Salesian Bishops of Argentina were also present. Immediately afterwards there was the presentation of the Spanish edition of the Fr Braido's book "Don Bosco, sacer-

dote de los jóvenes, en el siglo de la libertad". Interrupting his lunch Fr Chávez was linked by satellite, thanks to the services of the Missioni Don Bosco, with the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin. In the afternoon the Rector Major had a meeting with the two new Provincials and their Councils. Then he had a meeting with the Salesian Family. There were over 400 representing the whole of Salesian Argentina. The high point was the Mass celebrated in the courtyard of the Salesian Institute. With this Mass were launched the new Provinces 'Argentina North' (ARN) and 'Argentina South' (ARS), dedicated respectively to Blessed Artemides Zatti, and Blessed Zephyrinus Namuncurá. It was also the occasion of the official installation of the two new Provincials, Fr Manuel Cayo (ARN) and Fr Ángel Fernández Artime (ARS). At the end of the Mass, the Mayor of the city of San Nicolás de los Arroyos officially greeted the Rector Major, who later unveiled a plaque commemorating the event.

– *February 2010*

On Monday 1 February the Rector Major began the day saying Mass with the two Provincials, the two new Provincial Councils, the SDB Rectors and the lay princi-

pals. During the Mass the two Provincials made their profession of faith. After a break there was a meeting with the Salesian and Lay School Principals which ended with lunch. After this the Rector Major and his travelling companions returned to Buenos Aires, and from there went on to Mendoza, where on their arrival they were welcomed by the Rectors and the confreres of the communities of Mendoza and Rodeo del Medio.

On Tuesday 2, at Rodeo del Medio there was meeting with the SDB confreres in this area which was followed by a meeting with the Salesian Family and the celebration of Mass. In the afternoon the Rector Major blessed the grape harvest and visited the 'Bodega', after which he gave a press conference and ended the day with a meeting with the young people. He then returned to Buenos Aires.

On Wednesday 3, Fr Chávez presided at Mass in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians, received Fr Fabián Garcia, the former Provincial of the Buenos Aires Province, and went to the airport to return to Rome.

He spent 4 February in Rome working in his office and holding some meetings. On Friday 5, accompanied by his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, he left for

Brazzaville. On their arrival they were met by Fr Germain Lagger, Rector and parish priest of the 'St. Charles Lwanga Mission' and by Fr Frédérick Mbayani, Rector of the 'Cité Don Bosco'. Shortly afterwards they left for Pointe-Noire. Here at the 'Agostinho Neto' airport they were met by the Regional Councillor Fr Guillermo Basaños, the Superior of the Vice Province of ATE, Fr José Antonio Vega, and by Fr Miguel Ángel Olaverri, Rector of the Salesian house in Pointe-Noire. Taken to the 'Mission Don Bosco' and received there by a good group of people, the Rector Major was formally welcomed by Fr Olaverri and after a short prayer he gave the assembled group a "Good Night" before having supper with the confreres of the community and other Salesians who had arrived from throughout the Vice Province for the celebration.

On Saturday morning 6, Fr Chávez presided at Mass in the parish church and after breakfast met the children from the 'École Primaire' and afterwards youngsters from the 'École Professionnelle', the staff and collaborators. He then had a meeting with the Salesians. In the afternoon he visited the youngsters in the 'Foyer d'Accueil P. Anton Tanguy', and

then went to visit the house and the community of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Having returned to the 'Mission Don Bosco', he had a meeting with the lay collaborators in the parish (Parish Council, Cooperators, teachers, youth leaders and those in charge of the various movements) and concluded with evening prayer in the parish church and the "Good Night".

On Sunday 7, accompanied by Fr Guillermo Basaños, Fr José Antonio Vega and Fr Miguel A. Olaverri, he went to Bishop's House to greet Bishop Jean-Claude Makaya Loembra. Having returned to 'Mission Don Bosco', he presided at Mass attended by over seven thousand people. He concelebrated the Mass with Bishop Makaya of Pointe-Noire, Archbishop Basile Mvé SDB of Libreville, and numerous confreres and other religious. After the homily a fine group of Salesians- Cooperators took their promise. In the afternoon, after lunch, there was a concert to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the presence of the Salesians in Pointe-Noire. The day ended with evening prayer and the "Good Night" to the confreres.

On Monday 8, the Rector Major, accompanied by his secretary and by Fr José Antonio Vega, left for

Brazzaville. From the airport he was taken to the 'Cité Don Bosco', where he was welcomed by the students, staff and members of the Don Bosco Association. After visiting the premises he met the young people, the teachers, the heads of the workshops, collaborators and friends. In the afternoon he went to the parish of St. Charles Lwanga, where he presided at Mass. During the Mass the Nuncio Apostolic arrived and gave a word of thanks to the Salesians. At the end of the Mass Fr Chávez was greeted by the Mayor of the city and other dignitaries. After supper he left for the airport when he took a plane for Paris and Rome.

Having returned home, on Wednesday morning 10 February he greeted a group Provincial Secretaries from the South Asia Region called to Rome by the Secretary General. In the afternoon he held several meetings including one with Fr Manuel Jiménez, former Provincial of AFO and now the new Provincial of ATE.

On Thursday 11, accompanied by Fr Donato Lacedonio, and Bro Antonio Saglia and Stefano Bianco from the Missioni Don Bosco in Valdocco, the Rector Major left for the Dominican Republic in order to *visit the confreres in Haiti*. On his arrival he was welcomed by the

Provincial of the Antilles, Fr Victor Pichardo. After having supper with the other confreres of the Provincial House in Santo Domingo, the Rector Major went to see Fr Stra, convalescing after his injuries suffered in the recent earthquake in Haiti.

On Friday morning 12, with his travelling companions he went by helicopter to Port-au-Prince, where waiting for him were the Superior of the Vice Province Fr Sylvain Ducange, Fr Jacques Charles, who had just finished his six years as Superior, other confreres and Sr Marie Claire Jean, FMA Provincial. After being welcomed they all went directly to Pétiion Ville. There was a small welcoming ceremony there with the Provincial, his Council, the Rectors of the communities and a group of boys and youngsters from centres in the capital. Immediately afterwards Fr Chávez was taken to visit the ENAM (centre for technical vocational training), Lakou-Lakay (for street children), the OPEPB (Mini Schools of Fr Bohnen), 'Cité Soleil', and the Provincial House. During the visit to the ENAM he prayed for the confreres, pupils and teachers who had died, and whose bodies are still under the ruins, and met the officials of the Italian Civil Defence forces working there. After

lunch in the Provincial House, he visited the most devastated area, an apocalyptic sight. Then he went to Fleuriot, where the Postnovitiate and Study Centre are located which were also severely damaged in the earthquake. Having returned to Pétion-Ville, he said Mass has a meeting with the Provincial Council and ended the day with supper.

Early on Saturday morning 13, with his travelling companions he left for Cap-Haïtien. As soon as they arrived at the airport they went on towards Fort-Liberté, where they were welcomed by the Confreres and by the FMA Sisters and a group of the pupils of this complex work. After a general overall visit they went to the 'Vincent Foundation' Agricultural School. There they were welcomed by the confreres the FMA, other members of the Salesian Family, and by the students and staff. Immediately after lunch they returned to Port-au-Prince and from the airport went straight to Gressier, and on their return visited Thorland, the Prenovitiate house and now a refugee camp for people displaced by the earthquake, with about 12,000 people in 2000 tents being looked after by the two SDB and FMA communities.

Having returned to Pétion-Ville, on Sunday morning 14 the Rector Major presided at Mass and had a meeting with the Salesian Family. In the afternoon he visited the Provincial House of the FMA, where he met a considerable group of them, and then went to the Nunciature for a meeting with Archbishop Bernardito Azua, the Nuncio Apostolic; afterwards he went to greet and speak with Archbishop Louis Kébreau SDB, Archbishop of Cap-Haitien.

On Monday morning 15, immediately after breakfast the Rector Major inspected the Primary School at Pétion-Ville, a part of which was put out of use. Then he held a meeting with the Provincial Council and then with the officials of the Italian Civil Defence Service; celebrated Mass for the Salesians and concluded his visit to Haiti with a farewell lunch and with a message to the confreres of the Vice Province. Early in the afternoon, with his companions he returned to Santo Domingo. In the evening he presided at Mass for the families of past pupils, friends and benefactors of the Province.

On Tuesday morning 16, he gave an interview for Vatican Radio, then went to the Don Bosco centre where he greeted the pupils and staff. Then he met the confreres of

the Province, presided at Mass and hand lunch with them. In the afternoon he held a meeting with the Provincial Council and then went to the airport to return to Rome.

Among meetings the Rector Major had during the following days should be mentioned one with H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone on Thursday 18, in the Vatican. On Saturday morning 20 he led the day of recollection for the confreres of the 'Gesù Maestro' Community of the UPS. Then he had meeting with the Rector Magnificus, Fr Carlo Nanni.

Between Sunday 21 February and Friday 26 he took a few days rest in the mountains in the Venice region. On his return journey he stopped to greet the communities in Albaré and Bardolino, in the Italy North-East Province.

On Sunday 28 February, early in the morning, Fr Chávez left for Ecuador. On his arrival he was met by the Regional Councillor Fr Esteban Ortiz, the Provincial Fr Marcelo Farfan, the FMA Provincial, Sr Vicenta Jaramillo, by a good number of SDB confreres, FMA Sisters members of the Salesian Family and youngsters.

– March 2010

From the morning of Monday 1 March until the evening of Friday

5, the Rector Major preached and directed a *Retreat for the Provincials of both the Regions of America*, during which he also had an opportunity to speak with each of the Provincials. During the week he also paid a visit to the elderly FMA, and had two meetings at Province level: on Wednesday afternoon 3, with confreres and members of the Salesian Family in the Auditorium of the Salesian Polytechnical University in Giron, and on Friday morning 5, with young people from various schools of the SDB, FMA, HHSSCC, in Quito, Cayambe and Riobamba.

On Saturday 6, Fr Chávez took part in a day out with all the Provincials. They visited Otavalo, San Antonio, Cotacachi, Cuicocha and Cayambe, where they ended the day with the community, with supper and the "Good Night".

On Sunday 7, after Mass and breakfast with the Regional Councillors and those Provincials still in Ecuador, the Rector Major went to the Provincial House in Quito, where he gave an interview for the magazine of the Salesian Polytechnical University. After lunch he left for the airport for the return journey to Rome.

Having returned home he took up his ordinary work again with a number of meetings and visitors.

Among these should be mentioned a meeting in the Vatican on Wednesday morning 10, together with the Economer General Bro. Claudio Marangio, with H. E. Cardinal Franc Rodé, Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. In the early afternoon, again together with the Economer General, Fr Chávez received the lawyer Dr Giuseppe Guzzetti, President of the Cariplo Foundation and Dr. Gentiloni.

On Friday evening 12, the Rector Major with his Vicar, left for Portugal. At the airport he was welcomed by Bishop Joachim Mendes SDB, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Lisbon, the Provincial and other members of the Provincial Council.

On Saturday 13, in Fatima there was a meeting with the members of the Provincial Chapter the Provincial Council and other confreres followed by the celebration of Mass. In the afternoon after lunch Fr Chávez and Fr Bregolin went to the airport for the return journey to Rome.

The following day Sunday 14, in the evening after evening prayer, the Rector Major give the "Good night" before beginning to preach the *Retreat for the Rectors of the four Provinces of the Italy-Middle*

East Region: ILE, IME, INE and MOR.

He preached the Retreat between Monday 15 and Saturday 20; during the week he was able to speak with the Provincials of the four Provinces and some of the Rectors; in addition, during the week he received confreres, teachers and young people from the Vocational Training Centre in Zepce (Croatia) and Fr Carlo Socol, from the Chinese Province.

On Wednesday 17, after the afternoon conference, with Fr Pier Fausto Frisoli, he went to the Gemelli Hospital to visit Bishop Carlo Chenis, who was seriously ill.

On Friday morning 19, with Fr Adriano Bregolin, he had a meeting with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, H. E. Cardinal Ivan Dias. In the evening he attended a concert held in his honour at the Generalate by the "Don Bosco" Polyphonic Choir and Chamber Orchestra from the Saint Cataldo Oratory and the "Don Bosco" Theatre Workshop from Ranchibile, in Sicily.

On Saturday 20, the Rector Major ended the Retreat with an open discussion with those taking part, Mass and lunch. In the afternoon he left for Venice-Mestre where, the following day, he took part in

the "Youth Festival" at Jesolo. He returned to Rome on Sunday evening.

On Monday 22 March the meetings of the *intermediate session of the General Council*, began which continued until Wednesday 31, normally with two meetings each day.

On Tuesday morning 23, he presided at Mass for the beginning of the Provincial Chapter of the Middle East Province being held in the Salesianum. In the afternoon of the same day with some of the Councillors he took part in the funeral of our confrere Bishop Carlo Chenis, in the Cathedral at Civitavecchia, of which he was the Bishop. In the evening after evening prayer he gave the "Good Night" to the members of the Middle East Chapter.

On Thursday 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, he visited the Salesian community of the parish of the Nativity of Mary in Rome, linked to the Generalate. Afterwards in the afternoon he had a meeting with Cardinal Ivan Dias, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

On Friday 26 the Superior of the Vice Province of Haiti, Fr. Sylvain Ducange arrived in Rome, and Fr Chávez had a first talk with him in the morning. In the evening he

saw some lay people who are ready to cooperate in helping Haiti. Then on Saturday morning 27, the Rector Major chaired a meeting with those who were to be responsible for coordinating the re-construction of Haiti (Directors and collaborators of the Mission Offices and NGO).

In the afternoon of the same day with Fr Adriano Bregolin, Fr Francesco Cereda, Bro. Claudio Marangio and the Provincial of MOR, Fr Maurizio Spreafico, he had a meeting with H. E. Cardinal Montezemolo, in relation to our Salesian presence in Beitgemal, in the Holy Land.

On 28 March, Palm Sunday, with Bro. Claudio Marangio and the Regional Councillor for West Europe Fr José Miguel Núñez, he went to Madrid, for a meeting with the Provincials and Provincial Economers of Spain. He returned to Rome in the evening.

Among meetings held in the following days should be mentioned that with Dr Gianni Letta, on Monday afternoon 29, and that with the Under Secretary Guido Bertolaso, responsible for the Italian Civil Defence Service on Tuesday morning 30. On Wednesday morning 31 he received the Superior General of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus, Sr Apollinaris, accom-

panied by her Vicar. At the end of the morning of the same day 31 March the intermediate session of the General Council was brought to a close with a final meeting followed by concelebrated Mass.

– April 2010

The Rector Major spent the following days of Holy Week in the Generalate with various meetings and audiences. On Holy Thursday 1 April with his Vicar, he paid a visit to Mother Yvonne Reungoat, FMA to offer her Easter Greetings. On his return he had a meeting with Fr. Emanuele Boaga, O.Carm and Fr. Luigi Mezzadri CM, who had carried out an evaluation of the ISS, the ACSSA and the CSDB. In the evening in the church of the Generalate he presided at the “In Coena Domini” celebration. On Holy Saturday starting at 21,30 he presided at the Easter Vigil.

On Easter Sunday, 4 April, he celebrated the Resurrection of the Lord with the combined communities of the Saint Callixtus Complex (Saint Tarcisius, the Catacombs and VIS and CNOS/FAP).

On Monday afternoon 5, accompanied by his secretary he left for Jakarta for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the presence of the Salesians in Indonesia.

Having arrived at Jakarta in the morning of Tuesday 6, they were welcomed by the Provincial, Fr Andres Calleja, the Regional, Fr Andrew Wong and by some other confreres of the Delegation in the formation house at Jakarta-Wisma.

On Wednesday morning 7, the Rector Major gave a conference to the confreres who were having a half-day recollection. This concluded with Mass. In the evening at the invitation of the Nuncio Apostolic, H. E. Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli. Fr Chávez, with all the perpetually professed confreres went to the Nunciature for supper.

On Thursday morning 8, Fr Chávez had a meeting with the aspirants and prenovices and then with the Salesian Family. In the afternoon he paid a visit to the FMA community after which he went to the “Saint John Bosco” parish. He was welcomed by the confreres, members of the Salesian Family and the faithful. He presided at Mass, had supper and at the end of a concert gave the “Good Night”.

On Friday morning 9, the Rector Major went to the Don Bosco School at Pulomas. Afterwards he called on the Archbishop of Jakarta, H. E. Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja, SJ. On returning to

Wisma he celebrated Mass, had lunch, and after a meeting with the Rectors of the Vice Province left for the airport, to go to Sri Lanka, where he was to be joined by his Vicar, for a *meeting of the Provincials of the South Asia Region*.

Arriving at the airport he was met by the Superior of the Vice Province, Fr. Anthony Humer Pinto, the Regional Councillor, Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga, and other confreres. When they reached the Provincial House they were welcomed by the Provincials of India.

Sunday 11, a working day with the Provincials of the South Asia Region ended with Mass and a concert in the presence of the Nuncio Apostolic, H. E. Archbishop. Giuseppe Spiteri, Bishop Fernando of Kandy and the President of the Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka, confreres of the Vice Province, members of the Salesian Family, friends of Don Bosco and young people.

Monday 12, was the second working day with the Provincials. In the afternoon Fr. Chávez paid a visit to the aspirantate, at Dankotuwa, where he celebrated Mass.

On Tuesday morning 13, after Mass the Rector Major took part in a meeting of the Provincial

Council, followed by a meeting with the confreres of the Vice Province. After lunch, Fr. Chávez, his Vicar and the Superior of the Vice Province left for Nochchiyagama, going by way of Murunkan. To welcome them, in addition to confreres, Sisters and boys was Bishop Joseph Rayappu of Mannar, with whom the Rector Major chatted after supper.

On Wednesday 14, after Mass and a short concert, in which Bishop Thomas Soundruyagam of Jaffna took part, they left for Vavuniya, where there was a formal welcoming ceremony by the FMA community and the girls. Afterwards they continued the journey to Nochchiyagama and Dungalpitiya.

On Thursday 15 Fr. Chávez returned to Rome where he remained on Friday before leaving the next day for Caserta, in the Southern Province of Italy where on Saturday afternoon 17 and Sunday 18 he was to take part in the Provincial Feast Day, in which special commemoration was made, in the centenary year of his death, of Blessed Michael Rua to whom the Province is dedicated.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

On 1 December 2009 the *winter plenary session* of the General Council began, and kept the Councilors busy until 26 January 2010. In addition to the plenary meetings, 29 in total, there were other meetings of groups or commissions to study various items. The Councilors also made their contribution to other meetings especially those held at the Generalate. As always in addition to the more pressing issues or problems for the animation and guidance of the Congregation, sufficient time was given to the ordinary matters of business coming from the Provinces, such as: appointments of Provincial Councilors and the approval of the appointments of Rectors, the opening and canonical erection of houses and/or activities, matters regarding confreres and economic-administrative issues. The following is a summary of the more important items on the agenda.

1. Appointment of Provincials

In this session Superiors were appointed for ten Provinces. Following a careful process of discern-

ment, and taking the consultations undertaken in the Province as the basis point of reference the General Council made the necessary provision.

Here in alphabetical order is the list of the names of the Provincials appointed in this session: CHMIELEWSKI Marek, for the Province of Pila, Poland; COYLE Martin, for the Province of Great Britain; CRISAFULLI Jorge, for the Vice Province of English-speaking West Africa; GARCÍA PEÑA Faustino, for the Vice Province of French-speaking West Africa; JIMÉNEZ CASTRO Manuel, for the Vice Province of Equatorial Tropical Africa; LEJA Alfred, for the Province of Wrocław, Poland; RAMINEDI Balaraju, for the Province of Hyderabad, India; SYLVAIN Ducange, for the Vice Province of Haiti; VACULÍK Petr, for the Province of the Czech Republic; VANZETTA Diego, for the Province of Recife, Brazil.

In n. 5.3 of the present issue of the AGC there are some biographical details of the newly appointed Provincials.

2. Report of the 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 Visitor'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 from the following eight Provinces or Vice Provinces were considered: the Province of China; the Province of India - Tiruchy; the Province of Brazil - Recife; the Province of Mexico - México; the Province of Spain - Bilbao; the Province of Colombia - Bogotá; the Province of Poland - Wrocław; the Vice Province of Zambia.

3. Topics of study and practical decisions

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 govern-

ment 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 made regarding matters discussed. The main topics considered were as follows.

– **Manner of carrying out the Team Visits 2011-2012.** In view of the Team Visits planned for 2011-2012, there was study of the document of the Rector Major of 5 January 2004 on the Manner of carrying out the Team Visit, emphasising in a special way the nature of the Team Visit and the tasks entrusted to the Visitor, including: assessing the progress being made in the communication, the study and the putting into practice of the last General Chapter; presenting the future prospects. The theme and the manner of carrying out the next Team Visits will be reformulated on the basis of the GC26 in the next summer plenary session.

– **Project for the places of Salesian interest.** The General Councillor for Formation, Fr Francesco Cereda, presented the draft of the **Project of the Rector Major and the Council for the places of Salesian interest,**

as a response to the GC26 which invites us to return to Don Bosco. The places of Salesian interest are a valuable resource and an opportunity in this regard. They are not mainly places to be visited and looked after but are places which can offer a spiritual and charismatic experience.

– **Draft of the Identity Card of the Salesian Family.** In the course of the session the Rector Major presented the first draft of the *Identity Card of the Salesian Family* which will also be sent to the Councils of all the groups of the Salesian Family, so as to obtain their suggestions and observations, which will be collected by the Consultative Committee of the Salesian Family. After this it will be submitted for the approval of the SDB General Council in the next summer session.

– **Re-thinking Youth Ministry.** In the course of the session, the General Council - following the presentation of the General Councillor for Youth Ministry – examined and approved a first draft of a **reflection on Salesian youth ministry**, in line with what GC26 asked for. At this first stage, the various Centres of Study and individual Salesians consulted are invited to make their contribution.

For the Study Centres, it is proposed that they make their contribution also by organising a seminar, which will encourage “reflection in context”.

– **Project for Europe.** Following the presentation of the Coordinator of the “Commission for the Project for Europe”, Fr Francesco Cereda, the General Council examined the results of the Meeting of the Commission held in Fatima (Portugal) on 15-18 January 2010, at which the various initiatives of the Departments concerned were presented, with the involvement of the Regions and Provinces, according to the three strategies or areas indicated by the Rector Major: revitalisation from within; relocation and re-structuring; Europe mission territory.

– **The Meeting with Salesian Bishops.** During this session the detailed programme was finalised for the Meeting of Salesian Bishops to be held in Turin-Valdocco on the days 21-25 May 2010, with the following topics offered for reflection: Salesian spirituality in the state of life of a Bishop; the Salesian charism in the animation and pastoral government of the Diocese; areas of communication between the Congregation and the Salesian Bishops.

– **Recognition of a new Group of the Salesian Family.**

The General Council expressed its own favourable opinion about a new group becoming part of the Salesian Family. The group is called “**Community of the Mission of Don Bosco**” (C.M.B.) with general headquarters in Bologna at the Salesian parish of the Sacred Heart and actively based at the Salesian Institute of B.V. of Saint Luke. In fact the group was set up in 1988, juridically speaking in 1994. In 2001 it obtained the approval of the Church of Bologna “ad experimentum” and in 2004 definitive ecclesial approval as a Private Association of the Faithful, as understood in Canon Law. The group is part of the SYM in Italy, Madagascar, Burundi, Argentina. The three key features of the spirituality of the group are: unity, charity towards the young and poor and living simply in a Salesian family style.

– **Annual Magazine “Salesians 2010”.** After the presentation by the General Councillor for Social Communication, the General Council gave a very positive evaluation of the first issue of the magazine **Salesians 2010** intended to make the life and mission of

the Salesian Congregation known through the most significant facts/events of each year, in a journalistic style (as regards all the sectors and regions).

– **Press Office.** After the General Councillor for Social Communication introduced the topic, the General Council examined the question of the **Press Office**. This is/would be the body to deal with relations with the media. It is a body which selects, filters and synthesises/summarises the flow of information/news coming from within the Organisation according to the needs of information agencies, and at the same time interprets the information/news from the mass-media according to the needs of the Organisation. The Press Office is the intermediate link in the process of communication: between the top of the institution and its members and between the institution and the media.

– **Approval of the Budget for 2010.** In the course of the session the General Council – following the presentation of the Economist General – examined and approved in accordance with the General Regulations, the **2010 Budget** of the Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco.

– **Distribution of the “Fund for the Missions”.** The General Council considered and approved the proposals presented by the commission for the 145th distribution– December 2009, of assistance from the Missions Fund. These are funds coming from the Mission Office for the benefit of the numerous projects and activities in the Congregation.

– **Reports on activities of the Departments.** The General Councillors with responsibility for the Departments presented reports on the activities of their Departments in the period August–November 2009.

Among **significant events** in the course of the session in particular could be mentioned:

- The Celebration for the **conclusion of the 150th anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation** in Turin, on 18 December 2009, with the presence of the Rector Major and the whole General Council, during which in fidelity to the Founder profession was renewed. The importance of the presence of the Regional Councillors should be noted as in a certain way they represented all the Provinces of the Congregation.

- **Meeting of the General Councils** of the Salesians of Don Bosco, of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and of the Salesians-Cooperators, held on Friday 11 December 2009, in the Generalsecretariat, in Via della Pisana 1111, with two special moments: the talk of the Rector Major: “as the Salesian Family we are celebrating the gift of the Salesian Charism in the 150th year of its foundation”; the reports by representatives of the three groups: events and initiatives which had taken place this year in connection with the Strenna on the Salesian Family and with the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Salesian Congregation.

- **The Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family** (21–24 January 2010) were, as always, a good experience of Salesian spirituality in reference to the theme of the 2010 Strenna, with a very successful combination of illuminating subject matter, effective group work, fraternal communication among those taking part and the groups of the SF, of celebration and prayer.

Intermediate Session of the General Council

Between 22 and 31 March 2010 there was an *intermediate session*

of the General Council, with the presence in addition to that of the Rector Major and his Vicar, of all the Councillors for the various sectors and of the two Regional Councillors concerned. The main item on the agenda of the meetings was a

careful study of two Regions: the Italy and Middle East Region and the West Europe Region. As always, the conclusions of the study will be presented and submitted to the approval of the General Council at the next summer plenary session.

5.1 The Rector Major to the Salesian Family on the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Salesian Congregation

Below is the text of the talk the Rector Major gave to representatives of the Groups of the Salesian Family present in Turin-Valdocco for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Salesian Congregation. As the Rector Major himself says «it is intended to be a keynote speech for the whole Salesian Family, called... to strengthen its identity as the spiritual and apostolic family of Don Bosco».

MEETING OF THE RECTOR MAJOR WITH THE SALESIAN FAMILY ON THE 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE SALESIAN SOCIETY

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very happy to be able to greet you while I am here in Valdocco for the concluding days of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Salesian Congregation, the first seed of the Salesian Family to which our beloved Father Don Bosco gave its origins. "From

the seed a tree is born and from the tree a wood/bosco".

I welcome you to this meeting of the Salesian Family, which I consider one of the most significant and important moments of these days of celebration. Yesterday was indeed a genuine jubilee which also offered us the gift of a plenary indulgence for which we are happy and grateful to God. Today we have another opportunity to examine together more deeply Don Bosco's charism.

The grace of this jubilee is at the same time a task, which spurs us on to continue the preparations for the bi-centenary of Don Bosco's birth. In fact this year, in which we have recalled the foundation of the Salesian Congregation and hence the beginnings of the Salesian Family, is only the introduction to that bi-centenary.

My talk today is intended to be a *keynote speech* for the whole Salesian Family, called in this year 2009 to strengthen its identity as the spiritual and apostolic family of Don Bosco and to act more and more as a movement of groups of people dedicated to the salvation of the young. The points which I am now going to make can help us to reach that two-fold goal.

1. *Returning to Don Bosco today*

The commitment to loving him, studying him, imitating him, invoking him, and making him known in order to start out afresh from him, rediscovering his most important intuitions, his deepest motivations, his essential beliefs, making our own his apostolic passion which comes from the heart of Christ. This is not nostalgia for the past but seeking the way to the future! He is our criterion for discernment and the goal of our identification.

What we marvel at so much in his tireless activity is precisely his formidable integration of action and union with God: this is the grace of unity, the result of having but one single reason for living: the young, their happiness, their salvation. In this regard Don Rua testifies: "He took no step, he said no word, he took up no task that was not directed to the saving of the young... Truly the only concern of his heart was for souls".

Don Bosco understood his life as vocation and mission; he felt himself called by God and sent by Him to the young. In fact he became holy by giving himself completely for the young, living in their midst, loving them as perhaps no

other saint had ever loved them. Here is the secret of his holiness and his success as an educator, priest, founder: the primacy of God. God was his life's centre of gravity, the fountainhead of his theological existence, the source of his apostolic passion. Returning to Don Bosco is the criterion of spiritual renewal and Salesian holiness and therefore of apostolic effectiveness (cf. SDB C. 21).

2. *Returning to the young*

Returning to Don Bosco means returning to the young, with a universal love which excludes no-one but does give preference to some - those who are most "poor, needy, at risk". It is about going out to meet them and listening to their needs; meeting up with them gladly in their daily life, being attentive to their appeals, ready to know their world, encouraging their personal activity and involvement, re-awakening their sense of God, proposing to them ways to holiness according to Salesian spirituality (cf GC 26).

We are all challenged by the young today, and by their challenges and expectations of life, freedom, love, by the difficulties in understanding their language. But there is no other alternative than that of going to meet them, like

Don Bosco taking the first step, listening to them and welcoming their expectations and aspirations, things which become fundamental choices for us. All this speaks of unconditional acceptance of the young as the starting point to build up an educational rapport which is effective for them.

We should never forget that young people are not a pastime for us, nor a work to be done as quickly as possible and in any old way. Young people are our mission, they are our *raison d'être*, our 'theological place' (cf SDB C. 95), they are our way of experiencing God and our sanctification, and therefore they are the best part of our inheritance.

The renewal of our Congregation and of our whole Family depends on our fidelity to the mission of being with and for the young. We are consecrated by the Lord to be apostles of the young. Only in this way can we return to Don Bosco.

3. Living Don Bosco's spirituality

With a view to overcoming spiritual mediocrity, which deprives us of the ability to have an attitude and outlook of faith, it is absolutely necessary to know, understand

and live Don Bosco's spirituality. Many times I have repeated that we know his life story which has been studied a great deal by our historians, and also his pedagogical method studied in depth by our educationalists; whereas we know much less about his spiritual experience and his spirituality.

Knowledge about the events of Don Bosco's life, of his activities and of his educational method is not enough. At the basis of everything, as the source of the fruitfulness of his work and relevance, there is something which often escapes us: his profound spiritual experience, what we can call his *familiarity with God*. We should not be surprised that Don Bosco's spirituality has been described 'continuous union with God', tireless activity sanctified by prayer and union with God.

A really profound spiritual life is not possible without daily familiarity with the Word of God and the Eucharist, which constitute the essential centre of the life of an apostle and a community of apostles.

Without this familiarity we can easily slip into activism which only produces psychological stress, physical tiredness and exhaustion ('burnout'), insensitivity to the needs of others and spiritual su-

perfidiality. Activism can rightly be called the new heresy, making us think that everything depends on us, our activity, that we can do without God, forgetting what Jesus said: "Without me you can do nothing". (Jn 15,8).

The time has come to give back to the Spirit the primary role that is his and to recover the primacy of grace. Only in this way is an experience of God possible, without which there is no Salesian mission, since this consists not in doing things but in being "signs of God's love" We therefore have to take care of our intimacy with the Lord Jesus, which makes us loving disciples and enthusiastic apostles.

It is obvious therefore that we need to pray and transform our activity in prayer, to the point where we become contemplatives in action, taking account of the fact that what we are pursuing is not only human development and creating a culture filled with values, but the salvation of the young.

4. Contemplating the heart of Christ

All this is in line with what I wrote in one of my first circular letters to the Salesians when I said that "the real challenge for consecrated life today is that of restor-

ing Christ to religious life and religious life to Christ, without assuming that it has been done already" (AGC 382, 2003, p. 16). Today more than ever it should be clear that our Christian identity and in the case of consecrated persons, our vocation is to be the "living memory of the way of being and acting of the obedient, poor and chaste Christ" (VC, 22).

For us members of the Salesian Family the passion of the "Da mihi animas, cetera tolle" necessarily passes by way of contemplation of Christ. This means knowing him more deeply, loving him more dearly, following him more radically. As for St Paul, He must be for us our highest knowledge (cf. SDB C. 34).

It is not by accident that the icon which best represents the Salesian is the one of the Good Shepherd, as Don Bosco contemplated him and found in Him the basic elements of his mission, summed up in pastoral love even to the point of giving his life for his own.

In Jesus in the Eucharist Don Bosco discovers the ineffable mystery of love. In Him Don Bosco sees the Redeemer who brings salvation. In Jesus he contemplates the Master and Model to follow; he sees the Friend and Companion on the journey. In short, in Jesus Don

Bosco contemplates the Good Shepherd, always ready to give his life for the good of his sheep. From this arises His concern to preach, to heal and to save.

5. Recovering the apostolic passion of "Da mihi animas"

Returning to Don Bosco and returning to the young expresses the roots and horizons of the Salesian mission and identity. Don Bosco was above all an apostle and his entire life was determined by the urgency of saving the poorest and most needy young people. Don Bosco was a man with only one passion.

This apostolic impulse which leads us to spend all our energy for the young, is nowadays called "pastoral charity". This is perhaps the most faithful expression of the spiritual and apostolic programme which Don Bosco experienced and gave to us in the motto "Da mihi animas, cetera tolle" (cf. SDB C. 4). We are convinced that the motto chosen and lived by Don Bosco represents for all of us the summary of our spirituality, of Salesian mysticism and asceticism.

This impulse focuses all the energy of one's love, all our charity, all our passion on the souls of the

young. For Don Bosco working for the salvation of souls was the holiest of works. It was all a consequence of his being a priest. This is why he became a priest and he wanted nothing else in life than to be a priest.

In Don Bosco's programme of life we find the motivation and method, courageously and clearly to face up to today's cultural challenges, since the "Da mihi animas" puts at the core of our life the sense of God's fatherliness, the riches of Christ's death and resurrection, the energy of the Spirit and, at the same time, stimulates an ardent yearning to make the young know and yearn for these possibilities as a way for them to have a happy life now, and to enjoy eternal salvation.

This is why it is absolutely essential to warm our hearts by starting out afresh from Christ and Don Bosco. It is not about a passing enthusiasm, but an urgent commitment to conversion, to an encounter with the Lord, allowing Him to speak to our hearts and to help us to rediscover in Him our best energies. It is really about seeing that the Lord Jesus penetrates our being and gives us joy and enchantment in our lives, helping us to strengthen our beliefs, urging us to walk in the sign

of fidelity to the Covenant, ordering our personal, community and institutional lives according to the values of the Gospel and according to Don Bosco's charism.

6. Feeling the urgency of evangelisation

Returning to Don Bosco also means taking a look at our origins. Well then, we cannot forget that the Salesian Congregation "in its beginnings was a simple catechism lesson". Like our founder and father we are called to be "educators of the faith" and like him we must walk with the young to lead them to an encounter with the Risen Lord. This is why evangelisation is at the centre of our mission and today more than ever we need to sense the urgency of giving special priority to an evangelising presence amongst the young.

The Salesian mission is carried out within the Church's mission, which consists precisely in the proclamation and handing on of the Gospel. Proclaiming the Gospel is not just one possible pastoral activity among others in the Church. This is its mission. The Church exists to evangelise and evangelisation constitutes its deepest identity.

Evangelisation is urgent today for the Church, not because soci-

ety, especially in Western Europe, has become strongly secularised - this simply makes the urgency more pressing - but because that is its essential mission. The Church presents this urgency to evangelise nowadays as a new evangelisation, thus transforming it into an authentic pastoral programme for the third millennium. It is about proclaiming the person of Jesus and his fully human form of existence and thus leading the young to accept Him and become his followers.

The fact of needing to be attentive to new socio-cultural contexts, to the signs of the times, to challenges coming from the world and the young, instead of being a reason for not evangelising, urges us to give more quality to our evangelising activity. Globalisation, secularism, pluralism, relativism mark the scene in which today the good news must ring out and give light and hope to mankind.

New evangelisation presupposes and demands new evangelisers, filled with enthusiasm, joy and the credibility of witness, courageous in proclaiming, trustful of modern humanity, humble and ready to serve, able to dialogue, open to pluralism, using a language that expresses the Gospel in today's cultural categories. We are talking about presenting the faith as the

acceptance of a person and his evangelising message. From this arises the need that we ourselves are first of all evangelised.

The urgency of evangelisation supposes a serious commitment to spiritual and pastoral renewal. Without this, evangelisation becomes proselytism and not the true creation of a community of believers united in faith in the person of Jesus, who act with the power of charity and know how to witness through their lives to what they profess by their lips and in their hearts.

The time has come to go beyond timidity and proclaim Jesus and his Gospel with conviction, joy and courage as the greatest gift the Father has given us and that we can give to everyone else.

As the Salesian Family, we evangelise by educating. It is not just any kind of evangelisation that educates and neither does any kind of education evangelise; precisely because evangelising and educating are two different activities, with their own ends and methods. While the former belongs to culture, the second belongs to faith, but both act on the unity of the person to whom they are addressed, both have the individual as the beneficiary, both seek the growth and development of the in-

dividual. That is why our praxis must keep evangelisation and education essentially linked, in order to form "upright citizens and good Christians".

7. Under *the maternal guidance of Mary*

Returning to Don Bosco brings us necessarily to discovering the role Mary played in his life. If his life revolves around God, we can also say that it revolves around Mary. The Madonna was always present in his life's journey. She was the teacher and guide in his seeking and fulfilling God's will.

We know that Mama Margaret consecrated him to the Madonna as a baby and then taught him to call on her three times a day; that little by little the Virgin Mary became a living experience for him, a true mother who accompanied him everywhere. In the dream at nine years of age Jesus gave her to him as the Teacher who would guide him in the mission entrusted to him. He was so convinced that Mary was guiding him that he was to say that "She is the foundress of our work and it is She who supports it". If it is true that Don Bosco was the Saint of the Help of Christians, it is equally true that

Mary Help of Christians is "Don Bosco's Virgin".

I entrust to Her each and everyone of you, our Congregation, the entire Salesian Family, our collaborators and the youth of the world. She will continue to guide us over the next 150 years and will help us to rewrite this brilliant story that we are celebrating today.

Valdocco, 19 December 2009

Pascual Chávez V.
Fr Pascual CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA
Rector Major

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

Below is the text of the *Message which the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez Villanueva, sent to the young people of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) on the occasion of the Feast of Don Bosco on 31 January 2010. The Message with the title WE WANT TO SEE JESUS, refers to the Strenna for 2010, with the aim as expressed by the Rector Major: «through this message, as a sort of personal inner reflection, I offer you the Gospel and I want you to see Jesus, so that you too may become His disciples, witnesses and apostles».*

«WE WANT TO SEE JESUS»

Message of the Rector Major to the SYM

In the centenary of the death of Don Michael Rua

My Dear Young People,

Here I am faithfully keeping our appointment on the occasion of the Feast of Don Bosco, "father and friend of youth". This year, our meeting, which I regret is only a virtual one, even though no less real and genuine for that, coincides with the beginning of the centenary of the death of Don Rua, the first successor of Don Bosco and, without doubt, his most faithful and successfully formed disciple.

This in fact is one of the main reasons for the choice of the theme for the Strenna which I have offered to all the Salesian Family for this year 2010: "*In imitation of Don Rua, as authentic disciples and zealous apostles let us bring the Gospel to the young*".

And so I want to be the first to welcome the spiritual and pastoral programme of the Strenna and through this message, as a sort of personal inner reflection, I offer you the Gospel and I want you to see Jesus, so that you too may become His disciples, witnesses and apostles.

Often when I meet you I notice in you a great desire to find the Lord. Perhaps you don't manage to express this desire very clearly, but nevertheless I hear your deepest desires, those dwelling in your hearts. I take you by the hand and I bring you to my Master, my Lord and my God.

**«Fr Pascual,
we want to see Jesus!»**

If you really want that, you will have to have sound feet and open ears. Because Jesus walks on. And he never stops! In order to find him you will have to hear the music made by the grains of sand raised by his feet. Everything becomes new as he walks by, and his journey never ends.

He is always a stride ahead, and His word is like Him, constantly on the move, always in the process of giving everything, making known everything about Himself. Two thousand years have passed, but He seems to have just passed by. History is still shaking from His passing by, as though a bomb had exploded. And the world is no longer what it was before. No one has ever spoken about God as this man has; no one has loved us as He has; no one has given Himself totally as He has even to destroy-

ing Himself. No one like Him has commanded the wind, the sea, the evil spirits who torment and destroy in a man what is best in his humanity; no one like Him has defeated death and conquered sin. He is different from everyone else.

For this reason, there are many who hate Him, just as they hate those who don't conform to present ways of thinking.

«I have nowhere to sleep when night falls. I have nowhere to hide if someone is looking for me. Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; I am living without protection amid dangers and threats. Someone who wants to get ahead following the usual methods won't find what he is looking for with me».

To those He meets He says: «The time has come to change!».

«God is here in your midst, and nothing and no one can stop Him any more».

**«He is the one that
we are looking for.
Go, take him our request»**

It is not necessary. He knows what you want. On the shore of the lake, the people crowd round Him and ask Him: «What is your message?» Jesus looks at the fishermen who are casting their nets.

His reply is very different from what we would have expected. He doesn't call a meeting or give a conference, but says: «Come! Why are you still fishing? Instead, save those who are drowning, men and women up to their necks in the water! I need you! I want to make you fishers of men».

And they leave their nets, their boats, their parents, wives and children. They go with him. «Do you really want to know who I am? Walk with and you will have an answer!» Jesus says. It takes courage to go against the tide. It's uncomfortable leaving the dull tranquillity of days which are always the same and starting out on a fresh journey.

One day a young person like yourselves comes looking for Jesus and asks Him: «Master, what must I do to become what God wants me to be? Tell me the secret of that happiness!»

Jesus replies: «You know God's commandments: Do not kill. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honour your father and your mother».

«Master», – the young man replies – “I have kept all these from my earliest days». Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and He said: «There is one thing you lack to reach the goal;

go home, sell all your goods and give the money to the poor. Then come and follow me». But the young man's face fell, and he went away.

Following Jesus doesn't mean taking **one** decision. It means taking **the** decision. It means risking everything, putting everything on just one card. It means making one's own the decision He took for us: «I assure you there is no greater love than this: laying down your life for your friends».

And to make all this clearer, Jesus gives an explanation using two parables: «The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field. The Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it».

Jesus even uses a paradox: in another parable he praises an unfaithful and dishonest steward, guilty of forgery, fraud, false accounting and corruption. Just to point out that that man uses all his wits to ensure his future: he is foresighted. He is dishonest, but consistent in taking direct measures: quite unscrupulously he pursues his own interests.

Dear Young People, my friends and Don Bosco's friends, you cannot live without knowing what really matters, without knowing what the meaning of life is, since life is all that you have.

The only certain card you can play, risking everything, is Him, Jesus.

**«But, Fr Pascual,
the Kingdom of God
is not for us.
It is too high and too difficult»**

If Jesus loves you and calls you, you can get up, you can move! You can change direction, begin a new journey. It's enough to know, feel and want to be loved by Him. It's enough to change your habits, have second thoughts about your convictions. That's what the first disciples did, called by name one by one, without delay they set off walking behind Him.

In every person's life there's a day, an hour which leaves an unforgettable memory. It's the time when something new happens, and it's the time when a life changes completely. «It was about four in the afternoon», John recalls, when they met Jesus.

God – and the Scriptures provide many examples – makes His choices without bothering a scrap about

gifts or personal qualities; rather, quite often and paradoxically He chooses the weakest, the poorest, the most ignorant in the world. Sometimes He calls in a peremptory fashion, almost violently, as in the case of Paul, thrown to the ground on the way to Damascus. Often, on the contrary, He does it in a simple persuasive way. That was the sort of invitation addressed to the two disciples of John the Baptist.

More often than not, to call a person God makes use of a human intermediary: the Baptist for Andrew and John, Andrew for his brother Simon, Philip for Nathanael. That's how it was then ...! And today? Today He's making use of me to call you! Come! I invite you to get to know Him!

It's true. It wasn't easy for the disciples to understand the "reasoning" of their Master, but in the end they came to realise that other than from Him they would never have found words capable of giving the light and strength to reach that fullness of life which Jesus spoke to them about.

And not only them. Zacchaeus, a publican, that is a tax collector, was a revenue officer who gathered taxes for the Romans. In the eyes of the people he was a 'collaborator', a traitor, despised and hat-

ed by the 'real' Jews. It is precisely this Zacchaeus, traitor and dishonest, who gets word that Jesus is about to enter Jericho. He has heard people talk about this man. Deep within himself he feels a strong attraction: he would like to know or at least to see Jesus. He leaves his tax office and runs to where the crowd is thronging round the Master. There are too many people, and, small as he is, even by jumping up and down he can't see anything. So he runs on ahead and climbs up a tree. The rich, powerful, and certainly hated Zacchaeus, crouches among the branches of a sycamore tree. In his great desire he loses all his dignity and becomes ridiculous in the eyes of the people. They all laugh at him, and Jesus too has to smile, but then looking deep into his heart He calls to him: «Zacchaeus come down, because I must stay at your house today». Zacchaeus comes down and runs home.

The religious authorities of Jericho and the well-thought-of Jews are annoyed, angry and hurt. They all mutter away saying: «He has gone to stay at a sinner's house!». They are shocked and give the impression that they understand nothing anymore. The world is upsidetown: the Messiah at home with sinners!

But Jesus always does that sort of thing. He upsets our selfish and hypocritical world, He disturbs and overturns it, and takes no account of the established order of things. He turns established values on their heads in order to put a totally new social order in their place.

Jesus is in Zacchaeus' house and He doesn't tell him to leave his wife, sell his house, give his goods to the poor and follow him. He just says: «Today I'm staying with you».

There are two kinds of calls by Jesus. To the young rich man He says: «Go, sell everything you own and follow me. Don't bring any luggage, you won't need it, I will provide for you. I shall be your Good». To Zacchaeus on the other hand he says: «Today I'm going to stay with you». This second call is no easier than the first. In fact, it totally transforms Zacchaeus and his whole way of living.

When Jesus says He wants to live with us and we receive him into our home, then many things inside us change, and our way of living is revolutionised. When we welcome Jesus into our lives, He frees us from everything that is not God.

Only one thing matters: to welcome Him! And in order to do this it is necessary to be ready and on

the watch: at the moment you hear His call you have the possibility of becoming a free person, capable of giving yourself so as to place your life at His service and that of others.

**«Do you really believe
then that God has need of us?»**

As a start, Jesus wanted to have people around Him: twelve friends, a community, a group of people. Then He did much more: He presents Himself and the Church as a vine: «I am the true vine. Make your home in me as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever remains in me with me in him bears fruit in plenty; cut off from me you can do nothing».

Through His friends the same blood flows. «I am you and you are me» He affirms. «And this is the sign by which we will be recognised: its name is Eucharist. We are the same body. In us the same blood flows. Now you are my hands, my feet and my heart».

After having crucified Him, His enemies think: we have got rid of him! Once and for all we have

buried Jesus of Nazareth. But you can't stop the sun rising. You can't stop the One who can conquer death from being the Living One. You can't stop the One who is the source of Life from being Alive. Nothing is more alive than God. And that last evening, at the Eucharist, Jesus says: "Now you are me!" Jesus is alive in us!

My dear young people, you can be geniuses, organisers, inventors, famous people, successful men and women... But all this is nothing compared with the possibility of being an instrument in God's hands.

You cannot have a fruitless life which each day shrivels up a little more. Instead you can be loaded with fruit. It is your responsibility: «My Father is the vinedresser», Jesus explains. «Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he frees from everything that prevents it from bearing even more. You are already free through the Word that I have spoken to you».

You can be the lips through which God continues to speak to human beings, instruments to proclaim true freedom. You can be the eyes which are able to see in the darkness of the world in order to show to others the presence of

God and His Kingdom. You can be the ears which, surrounded by noise and music from *iPods*, manage to hear what seems no longer audible: the voice of those who weep, of those who beg for help, of those who call for respect and dignity, and of those who demand justice and bread. You can be the hands and the feet which go out to people, raise them up and stand them on their own two feet in the name of Jesus. Then you will discover that you have received far more than you have been able to give.

This is the secret of happiness «Happiness lies elsewhere, where you haven't thought about,

Jesus says. Happiness can be made only with God».

A young Jewish girl in Nazareth, His mother, had already proclaimed this before He was born: «I shall sing my most beautiful song for my God because He is all-powerful. He has done great things in me and holy is His name. His mercy remains for ever with those who serve Him. He has given proof of his power, he has destroyed the proud and their plans. He has cast the powerful from their thrones, he has raised up the oppressed. He has filled the poor with good things, but has sent the rich away empty».

God is on the side of the defeated, of the poor, of those who suffer, of the poor and the peacemakers. «The poor are happy, joyful, blessed, in peace, in harmony with themselves, with the world and with God because their hands and their hearts are open to receive God's gifts and they trust in His strength. Happy are those whose hearts are pure, who are not selfish, or self-centred but have their eyes fixed on God, Happy are those who work for peace and fight for justice.

«You are the salt of the earth, and therefore you can prevent this world becoming corrupt. You have to be flaming torches because there is still too much darkness in the world. You are not being asked just to carry a light. You yourselves have to be the light! You have to be fire and to give light you have to consume yourselves, like the log which burns».

Blessed are you if you decide to walk with Jesus, if you are prepared to take the risk of changing your dreams into light; but above all, you will be happy if you remain in Him and not just with Him. Free to bear fruit, that is, the visible works of practical love, which is made up of the truth, of dedication, of the total sacrifice of life if that is necessary.

On the last evening, Jesus stood up, removed His outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round His waist; He then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel He was wearing. Just as the slaves did. Immediately afterwards He said «What I have done, you must do, for each other».

Form a crowd of people who love each other, so that seeing you others may believe in God.

We are a new people. We are the Family of God, we are the true vine which the Father lovingly cultivates. We receive the sap of the Spirit of Jesus and we are the branches which bear fruit ... Our names are Benedict of Norcia, Francis of Assisi, Dominic Guzman, Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Jesus, Francis of Sales, Don Bosco, Mother Mazzarello, Don Rua, Dominic Savio, Laura Vicuña, Bishop Versiglia, Callixtus Caravario, Joseph Calasanz, Joseph Kowalski, Zephyrinus Namuncurá, the Young Martyrs of the Poznań Oratory, Piergiorgio Frassati, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Damian of Molokai, Joseph Quadrio, Nino Baglieri... We...We are so many. A family which every day welcomes the Word. A vine which every day offers the fruits of the Spirit.

Walk therefore with heads held high. You have your life in your hands. Be fully aware of who you are. Keep on you feet, even if alone, even when faced by a crowd. You can bow down only before God and in order to lift up those who have fallen. Love God with all your heart and those living near you as yourselves.

Jesus ends his sermon on the mount with these words: «Anyone who puts into practice what I say is like a sensible man who built his house on rock. When the rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, it did not fall because it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. When the rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it collapsed and fell!».

Watch out for yourselves: build you life on rock or you will crumble away.

**«Fr Pascual,
Jesus expects all this
from us?»**

Serving God is very simple. God is not a tyrant. God speaks to you like a Father and a friend.

«You have not chosen me as a friend, but it is I who have chosen you and made you my friends. So your work will increase and bear fruit which will last for eternity. If you follow the path I show you», Jesus says, «you will see that it is a beautiful thing to belong to God and that the weight which the faith asks you to carry is not heavy».

You need to take a deep breath, lift yourselves up, you need to feel that you are people who are free. My message is an invitation to a celebration. Your life is made for a celebration and we are all on our way to a feast. The future is a banquet full of joy among friends and God will feast with us.

Jesus says that his word is sown within us, as in a field, but the human heart is a difficult and heavy soil, hard and choked by thorny brushwood.

And yet you are the field. If you begin to listen to the Word you could find something precious.

You could, first of all, find yourselves. And you will find God within you. «You do not have to be afraid, but you cannot do anything without Him. And He needs you».

He knows us very well, just as we are. He knows the personal world of shadow and light within us; better than we do, he knows the mysterious mixture we are.

He knows what we are capable of. Others may be disappointed because they had their dreams for us and they projected their hopes on us. God on the other hand is never disappointed. Because I am the one He loves, as I am today...!

God does not live in the future and He does not live in the past, but in the present. He is the present and He sees me in my present situation.

Even the friends of Jesus thought that they had to be great and powerful in order to bring about the Kingdom of God; He, on the other hand said: «To be useful to God you have to be small like a child».

A child is a person who still has his whole future before him.. A child has dreams and trust.

Walk straight on with your heads held high. You have a future before you and it's worth going for. Children are weak: what they most lack is strength. However, what they have is trust. And when everything goes well they know they are loved.

And they have the future before them. You have a word to say in your lives and with your lives.. A consoling word, a liberating word, a word of hope, open to the future. Have the courage to say it. Have the courage to be what you are and to be so wholeheartedly: persons

who are authentic, free, who have a vocation.

Do not be afraid! Let us go towards the other shore with courage.

This ocean of dangers and threats is certainly very large and our boat is small and fragile. But in our boat we are carrying Jesus the Son of God. Who can make us afraid?

My dear young people, I love you and I heard your request to help you see Jesus. I have helped you to see Him and I have brought you to Him. I hope and pray that now, like the disciples of the Baptist, you will be able to say: «We have found the Christ», and that you will set about leading others to Jesus.

I finish by leaving with you a prayer by Cardinal Newman. Make it your own and translate it into a plan of life.

INTO YOUR HANDS

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission – I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work; I shall be a

preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

Therefore, my God, I will put myself without reserve into your hands. What have I in heaven, and apart from you what do I want upon earth? My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the God of my heart, and my portion forever.

(Cardinal J.H. NEWMAN)

With affection and great appreciation.

Rome, 31 January 2010

Pascual Chávez V.
Fr Pascual CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA
Rector Major

5.3 New Provincials

Below in alphabetical order are some biographical details of the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council in the course of the plenary session December 2009 - January 2010.

1. **CHMIELEWSKI Marek** Provincial of the Province of PIŁA (Poland)

To lead the “Saint Adalbert” Province of Piła, Poland (PLN),

Fr *Marek Chmielewski* has been appointed. He succeeds Fr. Zbigniew Łepko.

Born on 10 January 1962 at Gdynia (Poland), he became a Salesian on 22 August 1981, the date of his first religious profession made at the novitiate in Czerwińsk. Perpetually professed on 20 August 1987, he was ordained priest on 25 May 1988.

After ordination he continued his studies in Rome obtaining a Doctorate in Spiritual Theology at the Salesian Pontifical University. Having returned to Poland he worked for several years as a lecturer in the theologate at Łódź; between 1998 and 2001 he was also Vice Rector of the community and between 2001 and 2004 Rector. In 2004 he was appointed Vice Provincial and moved to the Provincial House in Piła. A member of the Salesian Historical Association (ACSSA) and of the Academic Association of Francis of Sales, since 1998 he has been a member of the editorial board of the monthly "Magazyn Salezjański Don Bosco" and of "Seminare".

Now he has been called to the ministry of Provincial.

2. *COYLE Martin, Provincial of the Province of GREAT BRITAIN*

Fr. *Martin Coyle* succeeds Fr. Michael Winstanley as Provincial of the "Saint Thomas of Canterbury" Province of Great Britain (GBR).

He was born on 27 May 1964 at Rutherglen, Lanarkshire (Great Britain). He made his first Salesian religious profession on 8 September 1984 and following the normal course of Salesian formation, took his perpetual vows on 26 July 1991 and was ordained priest on June 1993.

After ordination, between 1993 and 2000 he exercised his educative and pastoral ministry in the house of Bootle. After a year in Chertsey, in 2001 he went to the house in Bolton, where he was a councillor and Head Teacher. Between 1995 and 1999 he was also a Provincial Councillor. In 2008 he was appointed Rector of the house in Bollington, a role he undertook until his present appointment as Provincial.

3. *CRISAFULLI Jorge, Superior of the Vice Province of ENGLISH-SPEAKING WEST AFRICA.*

Fr. *Jorge Crisafulli* is the new Superior of the "Blessed Artemides Zatti" Vice Province of English-speaking West Africa (AFW).

Born on 19 March 1961 in Bahía Blanca, Argentina, Jorge Crisafulli made his first profession on 31 January 1980 as a member of the Bahía Blanca Province. Perpetually professed on 31 January 1986, he was ordained priest in Bahía Blanca on 5 May 1990.

After priestly ordination he exercised his ministry at Villa Regina for two years and afterwards in the house of Bahía Blanca - La Piedad. In 1996 he left as a missionary for Africa. For a number of years he worked at Sunyani in Ghana, first as the one in charge and then in 1999 as Rector. In 2004, when the Vice Province of English-speaking West Africa was established he was appointed Vice Superior, moving to the house of Ashaiman. For three years he was also Delegate for Social Communication and since 2007 Delegate for Youth Ministry.

Now he has been called to lead the Vice Province as Superior. He succeeds Fr. Riccardo Castellino.

4. *GARCÍA PEÑA Faustino, Superior of the Vice Province of FRENCH-SPEAKING WEST AFRICA.*

Fr. *Faustino García Peña* is the new Superior of the "Our Lady of Peace" Vice Province of French-

speaking West Africa (AFO). He succeeds Fr. Manuel Jiménez.

Born on 10 November 1965 in Aldeanueva del Camino, Spain, he made his first profession on 16 August in 1983 in the novitiate at Mohernando. Perpetually professed on 6 June 1992, he was ordained priest on 22 April 1995 in Madrid.

After ordination, in the same year 1995 he left for Africa, to the house of Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), where between 1999 and 2002 he was Vice Rector. In 2002 he was transferred to the novitiate in Lomé-Gbodjome (Togo), as Director of Novices and Rector. In 2005 he went as Rector to the postnovitiate in Lomé-Maison Don Bosco. He stayed there for three years. After a year in Rome at the UPS, he returned to Africa to the house of Cotonou (Benin). Afterwards in February 2010 he went to Abidjan (Ivory Coast), the headquarters of the Vice Province. From 2003 in the Vice Province he had been Delegate for Formation, for Youth Ministry (the east sector) and for Social Communication.

Now he has been called to be the Superior of the Vice Province.

5. *JIMÉNEZ CASTRO Manuel, Superior of the Vice Province of EQUATORIAL TROPICAL AFRICA*

Fr. *Manuel Jiménez Castro* has been appointed to succeed Fr. José Antonio Vega as Superior of the "Our Lady of Africa" Vice Province of Tropical Equatorial Africa (ATE).

Born on 23 October 1959 at Tarifa (Cádiz), Spain, has been a Salesian since 28 September 1977, when he made his first profession at Cabezo de Torres, in the Seville Province. Perpetually professed on 21 August 1983, he studied theology in Seville, where he was ordained priest on 17 May 1986.

After some years of ministry in his Province of origin (in the houses of Seville - Theologians Community, Cádiz-Aspirantate and Sanlúcar la Mayor, as Director of Novices), he left for the missions in Africa, to the house of Kara (Togo), where he was Rector between 1996 and 2002, then Lomé, as Rector and parish priest. In 2004 the Rector Major with his Council appointed him Superior of the Vice Province of French-speaking West Africa (AFO).

Now, having finished the six year period as Superior of AFO, the Rector Major with his Council have entrusted to him the leadership of ATE.

As Provincial of the "Saint John Bosco" Province with headquarters in Wrocław, Poland (PLO), Fr *Alfred LEJA* has been appointed. He succeeds Fr. Bolesław Kaźmierczak.

Born on 6 October 1959 at Niemodlin, Poland, Alfred Leja made his first profession as a Salesian religious on 22 August 1980 in the novitiate at Kopiec. Following the normal Salesian course of formation he made his perpetual profession on 17 June 1986 and was ordained priest on 24 June 1987 in Kraków.

After ordination he began his pastoral activity at Lubin. In 1992, having been transferred to the house of Wrocław-Sacred Heart, he was particularly involved in the apostolate with young university students. He spent the year 1998-1999 at Poznań as a teacher of religion. Afterwards in 1999 he moved to the house of Lubin-Sacred Heart as Head of the school and from 2002 also as Rector of the community. Since 2004 he has been Rector of the house of Tarnowskie Góry and a Provincial Councillor.

Now he begins his service as Provincial.

6. *LEJA Alfred, Provincial of the Province of WROCLAW (Poland)*

7. *RAMINEDI Balaraju, Provincial of the Province of HYDERABAD (India)*

Fr. *Balaraju Raminedi* is the new Provincial of the "Saint Joseph" Province with headquarters in Hyderabad, India (*INH*). He succeeds Fr. Noel Maddhichetty.

Fr. Balaraju Raminedi was born on 23 April 1965 at Ramadurgam (in the district of Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh, India) and has been a Salesian since 24 May 1987, when he made his first religious profession in the novitiate of Kotagiri. Perpetually professed on 18 March 1994, he was ordained priest on 29 December 1995 at Guntur.

After ordination he worked for two years at Guntur, and then went to the house in Kadapa, first as Vice Rector and then as Rector (between 2001 and 2004). He was then for two years at the U.P.S. in Rome, where he obtained the Licence in Theology, specialising in Spirituality. Having returned to the Province, in 2006 he was appointed Rector of the Provincial House. In the year 2006-2007 he was also Provincial Secretary. Since 2007 he was Vice Provincial.

Now he begins his service as Provincial.

8. *SYLVAIN Ducange, Superior of the Vice Province of HAITI*

Fr. *Ducange Sylvaini* is the new Superior of the "Blessed Philip Ri-

naldi" Vice Province of Haiti (*HAI*). He succeeds Fr. Jacques Charles.

Born on 6 April 1963 in Port-au-Prince (Haiti), Ducange Sylvain made his first profession as a Salesian religious on 16 August 1986 in the novitiate at Jarabacoa (Dominican Republic). He took his perpetual vows on 19 September 1992 in Bruxelles (Belgium), where he studied theology, and was ordained priest in Port-au-Prince on 8 July 1995.

After ordination, he exercised his ministry in the houses of Croix des Missions and Carrefour-Thorland. Then for two years he was at the U.P.S. in Rome to continue his studies. Having returned to Haiti, he was appointed Rector of the house in Carrefour-Thorland (1998-2004) and afterwards in the house in Pétion-Ville, starting from 2004. A Councillor of the Vice Province for six years he was also Delegate for Youth Ministry and for Formation.

Now he has been called by the Rector Major with his Council to lead the Vice Province as its Superior.

9. *VACULÍK Petr, Provincial of the Province of the CZECH REPUBLIC*

Fr. *Petr Vaculík*, has been appointed to lead the "Saint John

Bosco" Province of the Czech Republic (*CEP*). He succeeds Fr. František Blaha.

Petr Vaculík was born on 3 November 1959 at Zlín (in what was then Czechoslovakia) and has been a Salesian since 21 October 1978, making his first religious profession secretly because the communist regime then controlled the country. He then obtained a university qualification in electro-mechanics. After two years of military service he began to study theology at the Theological Faculty of Litoměřice. On 8 September 1984, still in secret, he made his perpetual profession and on 25 June 1988 he was ordained priest at Olomouc.

After the so-called "velvet revolution", in November 1989, he joined the community in Zlín. For four years he lived in the community of the Carmelites in Kostelní Vydří and in Frádlant nad Ostravicí. Since 1997 he has worked in the house of Prostějov, as parish priest and since 2006 as Rector of the community. He has been a Provincial Councillor for two years.

Now the Rector Major with his Council has called him to be the Provincial.

10. *VANZETTA Diego, Provincial of the Province of RECIFE (Brazil)*

Fr. *Diego Vanzetta* is the new Provincial of the "Saint Luigi Gonzaga" Province with headquarters in Recife, Brazil (*BRE*). He succeeds Fr. João Carlos Rodrigues.

Diego Vanzetta was born in Italy, at Ziano di Fiemme (Trento) on 16 February 1948. He made his first profession on 15 August 1965 in the novitiate at Albarè, in the West Venice Province. Perpetually professed on 7 September 1971, he was ordained priest at Trento on 27 May 1978.

After ordination he exercised his educative and pastoral ministry for three years in the house of Bolzano, then in 1984 he was transferred to Verona to the Provincial House. In 1987 he left for Brazil, to the house of Matriz de Camaragibe (then twinned with the Verona Province). Parish priest in Murici in the years 1992-1993, in 1994 he was appointed Rector of the house of Matriz. Afterwards between 2000 and 2006 he was Rector of the house of the postnovitiate in Recife-Bongí and from 2006 Rector of Natal-Gramoré. In 2004 he became a member of the Provincial Council.

Now he has been entrusted with leading the Province.

5.4 Salesian Bishops (transfer of sees)

There has recently been the transfer of two Salesian Bishops to other sees.

1. **SÁNCHEZ ARMIJOS Luis Antonio, SDB, translated to the Diocese of Machala (Ecuador).**

On 22 February 2010 the Supreme Pontiff, Benedict XVI, accepting his resignation from the pastoral government of the diocese presented by Bishop Néstor Rafael Herrera Heredia, according to the norms of the CIC, has appointed Bishop *Luis Antonio SÁNCHEZ ARMIJOS, SDB*, Bishop of the Diocese of *MACHALA (Ecuador)*, transferring him from the Diocese of Tulcán.

Luis Antonio Sánchez Armijos, born 27 June 1943 at Olmedo (in the diocese of Loja), Ecuador, made his first profession, as a Salesian religious, on 16 August 1963, in the Province of Ecuador, and was ordained priest at Quito on 31 January 1975. On 15 June he was appointed by the Holy Father Bishop of the Diocese of Tulcán, Ecuador, and was ordained bishop on the following 27 July (other information may be found in AGC n. 379, 5.7).

The Diocese of Machala, in Ecuador, covers 5.819 sqkm, with a population of 550,000 of whom 521,000 are Catholics, and with 31 parishes.

2. **PANFILO Francesco, SDB, Coadiutor Archbishop in the Archdiocese of Rabaul (Papua New Guinea).**

On 18 March 2010 the Supreme Pontiff appointed Bishop *Francesco PANFILO, SDB*, Coadiutor Archbishop of the Archdiocese of *RABAUL (Papua New Guinea)*, transferring him to this see from the Diocese of Alotau-Sideia (PNG).

Francesco Panfilo was born on 23 November 1942 at Schilpario (the Diocese of Bergamo, Italy) and was professed as a Salesian religious on 16 August 1964 in the Province of Lombardy-Emilia. Immediately afterwards he left for the Philippines, where he had his first experience of the Salesian apostolate. Having returned to Italy for theological studies he was ordained priest on 27 April 1974. Back in the Philippines, he held various offices of responsibility including that of Provincial between 1987-1993. In 1997 he was sent to Papua New Guinea, as Delegate of the Provincial for

that Provincial Delegation. Appointed Bishop of Alotau-Sidea (PNG) on 15 June 2001, he was ordained Bishop on 8 September that same year (other information may be found in the AGC n. 376, 5.5.)

The Archdiocese of Rabaul, in Papua New Guinea, covers 15,500 sqkm with a population of 279,000 of whom about 148,000 are Catholics, with 33 parishes. Archbishop Karl Hesse, M.S.C. is the Archbishop.

5.5 Salesian personnel at 31 December 2009

Prov.	Tot. 2008	Temp. Professed				Perp. Professed				Tot. Professed	Novices	Tot. 2009
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
AET	134	4	44	0	1	18	8	0	46	121	14	135
AFC	211	6	62	0	0	27	16	0	90	201	19	220
AFE	178	4	45	0	1	17	10	0	95	172	2	174
AFM	57	1	7	0	0	6	5	0	33	52	0	52
AFO	154	2	55	0	0	13	5	0	75	150	9	159
AFW	128	9	53	0	0	12	5	0	43	122	12	133
AGL	75	2	16	0	0	8	5	0	39	70	6	76
ANG	79	2	20	0	0	8	2	0	36	68	3	71
ATE	136	7	37	0	0	9	10	0	66	129	12	141
ANT	171	3	24	0	0	12	4	0	119	162	11	173
ABA	118	1	3	0	0	15	4	0	91	114	1	115
ABB	86	1	3	0	0	9	4	0	61	78	1	79
ACO	127	2	17	0	0	11	5	0	84	119	3	122
ALP	65	0	2	0	0	9	2	0	52	65	0	65
ARO	89	1	6	0	0	16	5	0	59	87	3	90
AUL	110	4	9	0	0	12	2	0	80	107	0	107
AUS	79	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	67	77	0	77
BEN	212	0	2	0	0	32	1	1	171	207	0	207
BOL	170	4	36	0	0	15	11	0	93	159	8	167
BBH	163	4	22	0	0	26	3	0	94	149	6	155
BCG	157	10	29	0	0	18	6	0	86	149	6	155
BMA	107	2	22	0	0	11	2	0	58	95	4	99
BPA	105	3	12	0	0	9	5	0	73	102	4	106
BRE	117	4	23	0	0	12	9	0	58	106	7	113
BSP	156	7	22	0	0	15	5	0	101	150	5	155
CAM	206	4	22	0	0	27	4	0	139	196	10	206
CEP	167	0	6	0	0	11	5	1	137	160	1	161
CIL	183	2	22	0	0	13	5	0	137	179	7	186
CIN	121	0	9	0	0	26	1	1	75	112	0	112
COB	167	2	31	0	1	15	9	0	101	159	6	165
COM	161	3	20	0	0	16	10	0	97	146	10	156
CRO	85	0	10	0	0	2	2	0	67	81	7	88
ECU	194	2	24	0	0	17	6	0	137	186	5	191
EST	114	1	17	0	0	2	6	0	77	103	3	106
FIN	222	2	31	0	0	16	7	0	156	212	2	214
FIS	104	5	20	0	0	10	1	0	66	102	2	104
FRB	264	1	9	0	0	38	3	0	203	254	1	255
GBR	83	2	5	0	0	6	2	0	71	86	1	87
GER	335	3	4	0	0	73	2	2	240	324	2	326
GIA	119	0	7	0	0	16	3	0	88	114	0	114
HAI	62	1	15	0	0	3	2	0	40	61	3	64
INB	207	1	57	0	0	11	6	0	130	205	12	217
INC	236	1	56	0	0	18	4	0	154	233	10	243
IND	224	2	44	0	0	6	19	0	150	221	9	230
ING	421	14	98	0	0	27	54	0	212	405	27	432
INH	190	1	51	0	0	4	15	0	106	177	9	186
INK	343	3	84	0	0	9	31	0	204	331	15	346
INM	354	6	72	0	0	15	21	0	228	342	22	364
INN	168	2	43	0	0	15	18	0	85	163	12	175
INP	104	0	28	0	0	7	2	0	61	98	5	103
INT	210	0	77	0	0	7	24	0	89	197	16	213
IRL	93	1	5	0	0	6	2	0	77	91	0	91

Prov.	Tot. 2008	Temp. Professed				Perp. Professed				Tot. Professed	Novices	Tot. 2009
		L	S	D	P	L	S	D	P			
ICC	544	3	24	0	0	74	24	2	414	541	7	548
ICP	559	2	12	0	0	136	8	2	378	538	1	539
ILE	356	2	24	0	0	46	9	0	261	342	5	347
IME	252	1	17	0	0	27	12	0	186	243	3	246
INE	403	4	17	0	0	85	7	1	288	402	7	409
ISI	247	0	12	0	0	19	4	1	208	244	1	245
ITM	172	21	52	0	0	10	17	1	59	160	16	176
KOR	123	5	27	0	0	19	8	0	59	118	4	122
LKC	64	0	19	0	0	3	4	0	33	59	4	63
MDG	90	5	26	0	0	5	3	0	49	88	6	94
MEG	201	2	19	0	0	13	5	0	151	190	6	196
MEM	178	3	23	0	0	11	7	1	120	165	7	172
MOR	103	0	6	0	1	9	7	0	77	100	0	100
MOZ	57	3	11	0	0	6	4	0	32	56	1	57
MYM	77	5	34	0	0	1	5	0	26	71	5	76
PAR	99	3	22	0	0	5	3	0	60	93	4	97
PER	167	5	38	0	0	8	8	0	90	149	5	154
PLE	268	1	15	0	0	14	4	0	230	264	3	267
PLN	289	0	32	0	0	6	8	0	237	283	6	289
PLO	208	1	30	0	0	2	3	0	167	203	4	207
PLS	221	1	17	0	0	6	5	0	182	211	4	215
POR	115	0	1	0	0	29	2	1	76	109	0	109
SLK	221	4	15	0	0	13	11	1	171	215	3	218
SLO	103	0	6	0	0	8	1	0	87	102	1	103
SBA	169	0	0	0	0	26	0	1	135	162	1	163
SBI	186	0	1	0	0	48	7	1	123	180	0	180
SLE	210	3	0	0	0	65	0	0	135	203	1	204
SMA	278	0	4	0	0	67	8	0	195	274	2	276
SSE	227	1	11	0	0	25	7	0	174	218	0	218
SVA	153	0	5	0	0	25	6	1	111	148	1	149
SUE	193	1	9	0	0	34	3	0	135	182	2	184
SUO	102	1	4	0	0	21	1	0	75	102	0	102
THA	87	1	3	0	0	13	5	0	65	87	2	89
UNG	43	0	2	0	0	2	7	0	30	41	0	41
URU	103	0	6	0	0	7	2	0	86	101	2	103
VEN	210	4	31	0	0	15	6	0	142	198	6	204
VIE	274	21	84	0	0	25	28	0	105	263	31	294
ZMB	85	3	26	0	1	6	3	0	42	81	3	84
UPS	137	0	0	0	0	9	1	0	119	129	0	129
RMG	80	0	0	0	0	18	0	0	64	82	0	82
Tot.	15975	248	2128	0	5	1722	651	18	10574	15346	487	15833
Ep.	117									119 (*)		119 (*)
Tot.	16092	248	2128	0	5	1722	651	18	10574	15465	487	15952

Note (*): At 31 December 2009 there are 119 Bishops

** Column D indicates permanent Diacons

5.6 Our dead confreres (4th list 2009 and 1st list 2010)

"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." (C. 94).

Deceased 2009 – 4th list

NOTE: Below is a 4th list of the dead in 2009, news of whose death arrived after the publication of the AGC406.

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P CANTIELLO Juan José	Stroeder (Argentina)	31-10-2009	50	ABA
P DONNERMEYER Reinhold	Köln (Germania)	02-06-2009	69	GER
P FRECHOU LEANIZ Pedro Raymundo	Montevideo (Uruguay)	29-10-2009	89	URU
P MACAPINLAC Gerard	Hua Hin (Thailandia)	05-09-2009	50	FIN
P MOSCHETTO Pietro	Esmeraldas (Ecuador)	31-12-2009	77	ECU
P ŠIMIĆ Petar	Zagreb (Croazia)	26-12-2009	71	CRO

* * *

Deceased 2010 - 1st list

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P ABT Karl	Benediktbeuern (Germania)	03-01-2010	82	GER
P AGUS Domenico	Bangkok (Thailandia)	27-01-2010	83	THA
L ALVES Domingos	Manique (Portogallo)	03-03-2010	93	POR
P AMBROSIO Pietro	Torino	06-03-2010	94	ICP
P ANTONY Lazar	Vellore (India)	17-03-2010	39	INM
P ASTUDILLO BUSTAMANTE Néstor	Guayaquil (Ecuador)	04-01-2010	98	ECU
S ATSIMÉ Wilfrid	Port-au-Prince (Haïti)	12-01-2010	28	HAI
L AVULETEH Philip	Ada (Ghana)	09-01-2010	31	AFW
P BASSET Luigi	Castelnuovo Don Bosco	01-01-2010	68	ICP
<i>Fu Ispettore per cinque anni</i>				
P BISSOLI Daniel	Vitoria, ES (Brasile)	18-03-2010	86	BBH
<i>Fu Ispettore per nove anni</i>				
P BROECKX Guy	Lier (Belgio)	26-01-2010	57	BEN
P CÁRCAMO AGUILANTE Fernando	Punta Arenas (Cile)	29-03-2010	35	CIL
L CAUDA Giovanni	Nyack, NY (USA)	21-01-2010	87	SUE
P CHACKALACKAL Dominic	Tirupattur (India)	24-03-2010	82	INM
E CHENIS Carlo	Roma	19-03-2010	55	—
<i>Fu per 3 anni Vescovo di Civitavecchia-Tarquinia (Italia)</i>				
P CHIARLO Guido	Savona (Italia)	08-04-2010	88	ICC
L COLOMÉ Jacinto	Logroño (Spagna)	31-03-2010	87	SBI

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P CUMMINS James	Dublin (Irlanda)	04-03-2010	91	IRL
L DAL POZZOLO Pio	Roma	15-04-2010	85	UPS
L DALLA TORRE Silvano	Torino	14-03-2010	78	ICP
P DI MANTOVA Giovanni	San Nicolás de los Arroyos	13-04-2010	78	ARN
L DÍAZ RUBIANO Luis	Cúcuta (Colombia)	04-01-2010	81	COB
P DIETZ Andreas	Amberg (Germania)	17-03-2010	91	GER
P DOBIS Ervin	Székesfehérvár (Ungheria)	14-03-2010	90	UNG
P DONAGHY Thomas	Dungiven, Co. Derry (Irlanda)	21-01-2010	76	IRL
P DONNELLAN Patrick	Limerick (Irlanda)	22-03-2010	86	IRL
P FALZONE Calogero	Pedara (Italia)	21-02-2010	83	ISI
L FERNANDES João Carlos	Resende, RJ (Brasile)	15-03-2010	76	BBH
P FINAMORE Antonio	Roma	11-01-2010	91	ICC
P FOSCHI Domenico	Roma	23-01-2010	80	ICC
P FRANZINI Dino	Arese (Milano)	09-03-2010	86	ILE
L GRAMLICH Albin	München (Germania)	09-04-2010	89	GER
P GRASSI Giovanni	Torino	20-01-2010	96	ICP
P HONKA Stanislav	Ostrava (Rep. Ceca)	18-01-2010	87	CEP
P HRUBY Vojtech	Roma	03-02-2010	85	ICC
P JARDZIOCH Kazimierz	Plock (Polonia)	01-02-2010	73	PLE
P KÖRPER Siegfried	Koblenz (Germania)	17-04-2010	70	GER
P LARENA FÚNEZ Honorio	Sevilla (Spagna)	25-02-2010	92	SSE
P LEE Tae Seok John	Seoul (Korea)	14-01-2010	47	AFE
P LO GROÌ Nicolò	Kolkata (India)	14-03-2010	88	INC
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
L LOPES Avelino	Manique (Portogallo)	22-02-2010	79	POR
L MANZANA LLENA Juan	El Campello (Spagna)	15-01-2010	97	SVL
L MATHYS André	Aalst (Belgio)	03-03-2010	85	BEN
P MICH Mario	San Francisco (USA)	09-03-2010	90	SUO
P MINJ Joachim	Tinsukia (Assam, India)	07-04-2010	56	IND
L NETTICKATTIL Chacko	Ettumanoor, Kerala (India)	03-02-2010	75	INK
P PANCOT Giovanni	Campo Grande (Brasile)	05-04-2010	90	BCG
P PEDITTO Marino	Messina (Italia)	25-03-2010	86	ISI
P PERRINELLA Giuseppe	Caserta (Italia)	25-03-2010	86	IME
P PERSZKO Piotr	Kobylnica (Polonia)	19-04-2010	43	PLN
P PIERLUCA Giuseppe	Civitanova Marche Alta (Italia)	17-01-2010	93	ICC
L PINEDA ORDÓÑEZ Luis Enrique	Bogotá (Colombia)	20-03-2010	56	COB
P PREMOLI Giovanni	Iseo (Italia)	19-02-2010	81	AET
P PRYSZLAK Mehajlo	Lviv (Ucraina)	11-03-2010	87	EST
P ROCCASALVA Giorgio	Pedara (Italia)	09-02-2010	71	ISI
P ROCHA Jayme de Oliveira	Belo Horizonte (Brasile)	13-04-2010	79	BBH
P RUBIO VAQUERO Juan Bosco	Córdoba (Spagna)	07-03-2010	67	SSE
L SABALIAUSKAS Ladislav	Kaunas (Lituania)	13-01-2010	88	ILE
P SALVATORI Erasmo	Civitanova Marche Alta (Italia)	21-02-2010	95	ICC
L SANON FLEUR Hubert	Port-au-Prince (Haiti)	12-01-2010	85	HAI
L SANTA Luigi	Avigliana (Italia)	08-02-2010	84	ICP
P SCHOBLEN Jozef	Heerlen (Olanda)	15-03-2010	86	BEN

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P SERRADEL Eduardo	Americana (Brasile)	19-04-2010	87	BSP
P SOARES José Antonio	Estoril (Portogallo)	10-01-2010	79	POR
P SPADA Ignazio	Montevideo (Uruguay)	22-01-2010	86	URU
P TANGUY Antoine	Pointe-Noire (Congo R.D.)	23-01-2010	84	ATE
P TATURA Edward	Milicz (Polonia)	28-02-2010	63	PLO
P THAYIL Thomas	Mannuthy, Kerala (India)	23-02-2010	81	INK
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P TULIGI Nicola	Shillong (India)	17-03-2010	82	ING
P TURINESE Emanuele	Palermo (Italia)	22-01-2010	86	ISI
P VARAGONA Francesco	Messina (Italia)	07-02-2010	83	ISI
P VASTA Rosario	Pedara (Italia)	05-03-2010	91	ISI
P VAYALIPARA Sebastian	Madurai (India)	27-03-2010	79	INT
S VILBRUN Valsaint	Port-au-Prince (Haïti)	12-01-2020	26	HAI
P VIRGINTINO Pasquale	Salerno (Italia)	25-02-2010	92	IME
P WALDER Antoni	Dębno (Polonia)	18-01-2010	79	PLN
P ZANCANELLA Ovidio Geraldo	Niterói, RJ (Brasile)	30-01-2010	68	BBH
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
L ZANON Luigi	Castello di Godego (Italia)	20-02-2010	77	RMG
L ZERBATO Davide	Venezia-Mestre (Italia)	10-03-2010	79	INE



