



acts

of the general council

year XCII

january-april 2011

N. 409

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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«**Come and see**»

(Jn 1,39)

THE NEED FOR VOCATION MINISTRY

Strenna 2011

PREMISS: Some significant events in the second half of 2010 – **COMMENTARY ON THE STRENNA 2011:**

1. Returning to Don Bosco. How did Don Bosco carry out this task of promoting vocations? – **2. A prior need: to create and develop a vocational culture.** *Life is vocation - Open to God and to others - Lived as a gift and as a task.* – **3. Aspects which have a special significance in vocational animation and proposal.** Promoting a vocational culture: the essential task of Youth Ministry. - Education to love, to chastity. - Education to prayer - Personal accompaniment. - The centrality and the role of religious consecration in the mission of the Salesian Family. - The Salesian Youth Movement, a special place for vocations. – **4. Conclusion. The beauty and the relevance of the Salesian vocation.** - The caravan in the desert. - *The dance of life.*

Rome, 25 December 2010

Solemnity of the Birth of the Lord

My Dear Confreres,

Wherever you may be, may my greetings bring you my very best wishes for a beautiful, joyful and fruitful celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Obviously it is not a mere declaration of faith with nothing to do with our life. On the contrary, this confession of faith becomes the revelation of the mystery of the human being and therefore a plan of life. In fact He became man, fully like us, sharing our poor human condition in everything, sin excepted, so that we might become children of God. He did not come to consecrate our human nature, but to transform it from within, and to make it new by taking it fully upon himself. This is our vocation: to reproduce his image faithfully in ourselves (cf. *Rom* 8, 29), and also our mission: «we educate and evangelize according to a plan for the total well-being of man directed to Christ, the perfect man» (C. 31).

Since my last letter, you can find accounts of the activities undertaken in these months by reading the chronicle of the Rector

Major, even though ANS offers a regular service regarding all my travels, visits, commitments and addresses. Nevertheless I think it opportune to mention some of the more significant events and/or celebrations.

First of all, the Extraordinary Visitation to the Delegation of Malta, at the beginning of September, while my Vicar was visiting Ireland, was an opportunity to have a fresh experience of being close to the communities, not for some celebration or anniversary, but to get to know the Salesian presences, the contexts in which they find themselves as they live their Salesian life and carry out their mission, the challenges they face and the projects they are working on. Usually in the Congregation the Extraordinary Visitations are made by the Regional Councillor or by other visitors according to art. 104 of the Regulations which states: «Personally or through others the Rector Major may visit each and every Province and local community whenever the need arises». I think that for the confreres the visit was a breath of fresh air and for me a real grace.

The World Assembly of the Past Pupils, at the end of September and the beginning of October, took place in an atmosphere of great serenity and responsibility. Once again I was able to realise the great energy we have available to us in this Association, but from which we have so far scarcely managed to profit. I think we are wasting a potential which could be of great importance if we can help the Past Pupils to move on from simple anecdotes about their being pupils in a Salesian school to realising the gift of a Salesian education and therefore to their commitment to bringing to their families and to society the wealth of the values learned and working as real Federations and Confederation with clear and effective projects. Here we as a Congregation have a challenge we need to take up.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, the most important event we have celebrated in this period was the International Congress “Don Rua in History”, at which there was a marvellous world-wide repre-

sentation of the Provinces of the whole Congregation, the distinguished presence of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and some other members of the Salesian Family. As well as the Congress organised a year ago by ACSSA (Salesian Historical Association), this International Congress gave us as its most precious fruit an image of Don Rua that was full of insights and I would say quite novel. From now on it will no longer be possible to continue to use the classic cliché describing him as “the living Rule” or “another Don Bosco”, but he will have to be studied, in the knowledge that he represents the stage in the history of the Congregation which is the most significant, that is to say that of transition after the death of Don Bosco the founder. While I express the hope that the Provinces will organise their own Provincial Congresses or Seminars on the subject, I invite all of you to read and study the texts of the two Congresses which have already been collected together. It will be the best way of setting in motion the preparations for the bi-centenary of the birth of Don Bosco.

Then I cannot fail to recall the meeting of all the Provincials of Europe, gathered in Rome between 26 and 28 November, to continue their reflections – already set in motion in the two previous meetings – on the “Project for Europe”. This Project is intended to bring about the re-vitalisation from within of the charism in Europe; to launch and consolidate the process of giving fresh significance to, re-locating and reorganising the Salesian presences in this continent; to take up the commitments of the new evangelisation of Europe, also by sending “missionaries” who will come from all parts of the Congregation. This third meeting of the Provincials of Europe has helped to clarify better and give concrete form to the objectives to be achieved in the two year period 2011-2012.

Finally, before presenting to you the Strenna for 2011, I remind you that Fr Marek Chrzan was appointed Councillor for the North Europe Region following the resignation on health grounds of Fr Štefan Turanský, to whom I publicly renew my gratitude for the generous service undertaken in the two and a half years

following his election. In addition, I appointed as Postulator for the Causes of Beatification and Canonisation Fr Pier Luigi Cameroni in place of Fr Enrico dal Covolo, who was appointed by the Holy Father Rector Magnificus of the Pontifical Lateran University and then ordained Bishop.

And now I procede to present to you the *Strenna* for 2011. I do so certain that I shall be offering you a welcome gift both on account of the value which the *Strenna* in itself has in our Salesian tradition from Don Bosco's times, and also on account of the subject chosen which concerns our life and our mission. I invite you to help young people make the discovery that life is vocation, and in more practical terms help them bring to maturity apostolic life-plans through their education in the faith, taking their place in the Church, listening to the Word, prayer, participation in sacramental life, spiritual accompaniment and initiation in apostolic work.

* * *

«*Come and see*»

(Jn 1,39)

The need for vocation ministry

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,
members of the whole Salesian Family
and friends of Don Bosco,

I greet you with the great affection and esteem I have for each one of you, wishing you a New Year full of the blessings the Father wanted to give us in the incarnation of his Son.

I am writing to you to present the *Strenna* for 2011, certain that it will be a welcome gift both for the value which the *Strenna* as such has had in our Salesian tradition since Don Bosco's day,

and because of the topic chosen which affects our life, our mission and our ability to help in discovering that life is vocation, also because of the times in which we are living as the Church and the Salesian Family, especially in the West.

After the Strenna for 2010, “*Lord, we want to see Jesus*”, about the urgent need to evangelise, the most logical and natural thing, it seemed to me, was to make a heartfelt appeal to the whole Salesian Family to feel with us SDB, **the need for vocation ministry**. In fact, we Salesians

“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. This requires that we help young people overcome an individualist mindset and the culture of self-fulfilment which urges them to plan their future without heeding God; it also requires us to involve and form families and lay people. There has to be a particular effort put into engendering apostolic passion amongst the young. Like Don Bosco we are called to encourage them to be apostles among their own companions, taking on various kinds of ecclesial and social service, being involved in missionary projects. To encourage a vocational option for apostolic commitment, these young people should be offered a more intensive spiritual life and a more personal and systematic accompaniment. This is fertile ground where families capable of authentic witness can flourish, as well as committed lay people at every level of Church and society. Vocations to consecrated life and to ministry can also flourish”.¹

Evangelisation and vocation, dear brothers and sisters, are two inseparable elements. Indeed, the criterion for the authenticity of a good evangelisation is its capacity to give rise to vocations, to bring to maturity evangelical life plans, to involve the

¹ GC26, *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, Rome, 2008, n. 53: “*Apostolic Vocations*”.

whole person of those who are being evangelised, to the point of making them disciples and apostles.

An historical fact in the life of Jesus, confirmed by all four evangelists, is that from the beginning of his evangelising activity (cf. *Mk* 1,14-15), Jesus called some to follow him (cf. *Mk* 1,16-20; *Mt* 4,18-19; *Lk* 5,10-11; *Jn* 1,35-39). In this way, these first disciples of his became “companions throughout the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out amongst us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day he was taken up from us” (*Act* 1,21-22).

The vocation of these first disciples according to the Gospel of John was the result of a personal meeting which evoked in them an attraction, a fascination which changed their minds and especially their hearts, as they recognised in Jesus the One in whom were being fulfilled the deepest expectations, the prophecies, the awaited Messiah. This experience tied them so closely to the person of Jesus that they followed him enthusiastically and told others about their experience, inviting them to share in it, by meeting Jesus personally. St Luke’s Gospel also speaks about the group of women who accompany and assist the Lord (cf. *Lk* 8,1-3) which means that Jesus had women among his disciples, some of whom were to be witnesses of his death and resurrection (cf. *Lk* 23,55-24,11.22).

Therefore, brothers and sisters, I am inviting you to be for young people real spiritual guides, like John the Baptist who pointed out Jesus to his disciples telling them: “*Look there is the Lamb of God!*” (*Jn* 1,36). In this way they followed after him so that Jesus becoming aware that some people were following him turned to them and asked them directly: “*What do you want?*” and they, taken with the desire to really know who this Jesus is, asked him: “*Rabbi, where do you live?*” (*Jn* 1,38). And He invited them as the first disciples, to have the experience of living with him: “*Come and see*”. It was something extremely beautiful that they experienced from the moment in which “*they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day*” (*Jn* 1,39).

There you have the first of the characteristics of the Christian vocation: a meeting, a personal friendly relationship which fills the heart and changes one's life. This transforming meeting is the faith, which animated by love, makes believers and the Christian communities into those who spread the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus. St Paul in his letter to the community in Thessalonica puts it this way: "You received the word... you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia; by your means the Word of the Lord has gone forth everywhere" (cf. 1 Ths 1,7-8). We are called therefore to renew in ourselves this vocational dynamic: to communicate and to share the enthusiasm and the passion with which we are living our vocation, in such a way that our life itself becomes the proposal of a vocation for others. Just as Don Bosco did, who rather than using vocation campaigns knew how to create at Valdocco a microclimate in which vocations grew and matured, creating an authentic vocational culture in which life is understood and lived as a gift, as a vocation and as a mission, within a diversity of options.

1. Returning to Don Bosco

Invited to start afresh from Don Bosco in order to understand ever better and to put into practice with greater fidelity the passion which burned in his heart and urged him to seek the glory of God and the salvation of souls, let us imitate him in his untiring labours to foster vocations in the service of the Church, the most precious fruit of his work of education and evangelisation, the human and Christian formation of the young. His experience and his criteria and attitudes can throw light on and guide our commitment to vocations.

"Don Bosco, while working with tireless generosity in fostering many kinds of vocation in the Church, also called young men to stay with him permanently. For us too, proposing the Salesian consecrated vocation to young peo-

*ple is part of our fidelity to God for the gift we have received. It is what drives our desire to share the joy of following the Lord Jesus, staying with Don Bosco, in order to give hope to many other young people of the whole world”.*²

Don Bosco lived, let us not forget, *in a climate which was hardly encouraging* and in some ways was opposed to the fostering of ecclesiastical vocations. The Kingdom of Sardinia with its new constitution, and the subsequent freedom of the press, of conscience, of worship and the potential “laicisation” of the State, had resulted in a growing opposition to the Church. Freedom of worship and the active Protestant propaganda had disturbed the ordinary simple people, projecting a negative image of the Church, of the Pope, bishops and priests. This had created among the people, and especially among the young, an atmosphere of nationalism filled with liberal and anti-clerical ideas.

Don Bosco himself referring to those times wrote: “a frenzied spirit developed against the religious orders, the ecclesiastical Congregations; and then in general against the clergy and all the authorities of the Church. This scornful outcry against religion had the consequence of distancing young people from moral behaviour, from piety; hence from a vocation to the ecclesiastical state. Therefore no religious vocations and almost none for the ecclesiastical state. While the religious institutes were gradually being dispersed, the priests were held in contempt, some put in prison, others sent into forced exile, how ever could it be possible, humanly speaking, to cultivate the spirit of vocations?”³

But notice, my brothers and sisters, how Don Bosco responds. He does not waste time complaining but immediately sets to work to gather together and to cultivate vocations and to promote the formation of the young men left without their seminary, looking

² GC26, *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*, Rome, 2008, n. 54: “*Accompaniment of candidates to Salesian consecrated life*”.

³ *Cenno storico sulla Congregazione di S. Francesco di Sales e relativi schiarimenti*. Roma. Tip. Poliglotta 1874. In OE XXV, p. 233.

after the good-natured boys and directing them towards an ecclesiastical career. In the Oratory, together with the young workers, orphans, Don Bosco very quickly gathered together good spirited boys and young men who gave signs of an inclination for the priesthood and religious life. He carefully devoted himself as a priority in their formation, to an active and practical formation with personal accompaniment in an atmosphere with a strong spiritual and apostolic nature. From the '60s the "student" section of the Valdocco Oratory was considered a sort of seminary. Don Bosco himself writes in the *Memoirs of the Oratory* "We can say that our Oratory house for almost 20 years became the diocesan seminary".⁴ As Fr Braido writes, between 1861 and 1872 281 boys from the Oratory entered the Turin Seminary.⁵

How did Don Bosco carry out in practice this task of promoting vocations?

In the first place Don Bosco gave special attention to discovering the possible signs of a vocation in the boys with whom he came into contact when he went to preach in the churches in the various nearby villages, and in the boys gathered in the Valdocco Oratory. He noted that among the masses of his boys in some of them there began to emerge the suitable conditions for suggesting a possible vocation which until then were hidden under a covering of coarseness and ignorance. In fact, in these poor Oratory boys there was the combination of good behaviour and awakening intelligence; he therefore tried them out as leaders among their companions and on his part followed them with special attention. Because Don Bosco did not wait for an almost

⁴ *Memoirs of the Oratory*. Trans. Daniel Lyons SDB. Don Bosco Publications, New Rochelle, New York 1989 p. 346. Putting his (new) private schools at the service of the dioceses as minor seminaries was a major contributing factor in the expansion of Salesian work, cf. A. J. LENTI, *Don Bosco. History and Spirit*. Vol. 5^o: Institutional Expansion, Roma, LAS, 2009, pp. 49-73.

⁵ Cf. P. BRAIDO, *Don Bosco, prete dei giovani nel secolo delle libertà*. Vol. I, Roma, LAS, 2003, p. 544.

automatic development of a vocation, he knew from experience that youthful inconstancy can put it in serious danger. Therefore he actively collaborated with the gift of God creating a suitable environment, maintaining a spiritual atmosphere which responded to the requirements for the development of a vocation, and committing himself to being the support and guide of those whom he recognised as called by God to the priestly and religious life or to Salesian cooperation in the various ways this can be expressed.

1. The first task for Don Bosco was that of creating an ***atmosphere***, nowadays we would say a *culture*, in which the suggestion of a vocation could be welcomed positively and brought to maturity.

- *An atmosphere of familiarity* in which Don Bosco shared everything with the boys. He is with them in the playground, listening to them and creating an atmosphere of joy, of celebration and trust which opens their hearts and makes the boys feel as though they are in a family. The joy which emanated from Don Bosco's whole being when he was carrying out his self-sacrificing and enthusiastic apostolate was already in itself a vocational proposal. The boys in contact with Don Bosco on a daily basis had a great exhilarating experience of being and of really feeling themselves to be members of a family, learning to open their hearts and to look to the future with optimism and hope.
- This joyful and family atmosphere is nourished by *a strong spiritual experience*. The religious view of the world which Don Bosco had and which gave unity to all his many varied undertakings is almost spontaneously acquired by the boys who learn to live in the presence of God. A God who loves them and has for each of them a plan for their happiness and a full life. In the Oratory a spiritual atmosphere is created which leads to an interpersonal relationship with God and with one's brothers and permeates the whole of life. This atmosphere is

nourished by a simple but constant form of sacramental and Marian piety. Prayer which leads the boys to a personal relationship of friendship with Jesus and Mary, and the appropriate sacramental experience which supports and stimulates growth in daily life, constitute the first resource in cultivating vocations and bringing them to maturity.

- A third characteristic of the atmosphere created by Don Bosco was the *apostolic dimension*. From the beginning Don Bosco involved the boys, in particular those who gave signs of a vocation, in assisting him in his work of education and catechesis. He entrusted to them some of their more mischievous companions so that making friends with them they could help them to feel at home and settle into the life of the Oratory positively. In this way the boys learned to work for the others with great commitment and total lack of self-interest. They also learned to make themselves more and more available and open to the demands of the apostolate, maturing in their own motivations and doing everything for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. With careful and constant accompaniment Don Bosco ensured that this apostolic service among their companions, lived with enthusiasm and readiness, while being effective in bringing along the right path those it was offered to, became also a practical “proposal” of life for these boys he had himself chosen. In this atmosphere, the Sodalities considered by Don Bosco a key element in the experience and the education provided in the Oratory, began and developed.

2. As well as the atmosphere, Don Bosco offers young people and adults, who are looking for guidance in their vocation, a faithful ***spiritual accompaniment***. The natural place in which Don Bosco offers the help of spiritual direction is the confessional, but not only there: Don Bosco arranges for and in various ways facilitates the possibility of a meeting and a chat between the “sons of the family” and the “father”, offering everyone a profound expe-

rience of education and of spiritual direction. He acts in various ways, and in a personal way adapted to the needs of the young people or the adults, aspirants to the ecclesiastical life, to religious life or simply to the life of a good Christian and upright citizen. Likewise he is particularly attentive in his activity of accompaniment with the Cooperators, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Salesians, etc.

One of the more striking features one notices in watching Don Bosco acting as a spiritual director, is the discernment and the prudence he shows in giving advice about vocation. Even though in those days the Church lacked pastors and he himself had great need of collaborators, Don Rua testifies under oath, that “never did he advise anyone to enter (priestly or religious life) who did not have the necessary requisites... I am aware that he dissuaded various people in spite of their wishes”.⁶

Always inspired by prudent discernment, he did what he could to lead those who, while having the necessary gifts, had never thought of becoming priests or religious to consider the possibility. Little by little Don Bosco put before them some ideas which could help them to re-think their choice of life and none of them ever regretted following his advice.

Don Bosco’s spiritual direction was totally illuminated by “the gift of counsel” which enabled him to guide safely those who turned to him.

3. The intense work which Don Bosco undertook on behalf of vocations was sustained by an ***intense love for the Church***: with total dedication, he devoted all his efforts to obtaining its good. It is precisely this love for the Church that enables us to understand the importance he gave to the apostolic activity of fostering vocations and his insistence that all should work together and devote themselves to obtaining for the Church the great treasure which

⁶ *Summarium*, 676 par. 14.

vocations represent. Thus he used to say: "Whenever we procure a good vocation we are giving an inestimable treasure to the Church; it does not matter whether this vocation or this priest goes to the diocese, the foreign missions or a religious order. It is always a great gift that we give to the Church of Jesus Christ".⁷ This view of the good of the whole Church never left him, not even when it engaged all his efforts, all his time, the financial means which cost him so much hard work, nor when it involved his limited personnel or his houses.

*"Run, run quick to save those boys...!"*⁸ This appeal of the dying Don Bosco we can consider as addressed not only to those present at that moment in his room, but to the whole Salesian Family in general. An appeal which is pressing and always will be, because the young people of all times are in need of "salvation".

The dying Don Bosco addresses this invitation also to us. It is an invitation to roll up our sleeves and to work hard so that around us a good number of sound Salesian vocations bud, flower and come to maturity, as they did around him. Taking up this invitation requires that each one of us renews the holy passion for the salvation of youth which Don Bosco himself had; this passion will give us courage and enable us to overcome the fear of not being understood or of being marginalised or rejected by this secularised and pagan world of ours, which rejects diversity, suppresses the supernatural and marginalises the believer.

Let us therefore fearlessly live a style of life which challenges this world and this society which does not allow the holistic development and promotion of the human person; a style of life which provides the stimulus for living out one's vocation with joy and enthusiasm and for proposing to young people and adults, men and women, boys and girls, the Salesian vocation as a suitable response of salvation to this world of today, and as a plan of life capable of making a positive contribution to the

⁷ BM XVII, p. 236.

⁸ BM XVIII, p. 449.

renewal of present day society. This is what article 28 of the Constitutions of the Salesians of Don Bosco has to say: "We are convinced that many young people are rich in spiritual potential and give indications of an apostolic vocation. We help them to discover, accept and develop the gift of a lay, consecrated or priestly vocation for the benefit of the whole Church and of the Salesian Family". This commitment had been one of the purposes of the Congregation even before its approval⁹ and nowadays takes on an extraordinary urgency (cf. C. 6), as the Church repeatedly reminds us.

2. A prior need: to create and develop a vocational culture¹⁰

"It is necessary, therefore, to promote a culture of vocation which will recognize and welcome this profound human aspiration, which brings a person to discover that Christ alone can tell him the truth about life".¹¹ Speaking about a *culture of vocation*, as, for the first time John Paul II did, is nowadays not only pertinent, but also urgent. In fact we can see that sometimes there is a gap between what people are doing generously and well-intentioned and the collective mentality, between individual initiatives and society's actions, between the practice and its foundations. Thus in the Congregation, as in the Salesian Family, we see that there can be a certain amount of work for vocations by individuals, the so-called Delegates for vocations, but at the same time, in the communities or in the groups, one notices that a real culture of vocation does not exist.

⁹ Even though there is no article on minor seminaries in the first extant text of the Constitutions, Don Rua's manuscript of 1858, one was introduced by Don Bosco in the draft of 1860. Cf. G. BOSCO, *Costituzioni della Società di S. Francesco di Sales [1858] - 1875*. Edizione critica di Francesco MOTTO, Roma, LAS, 1982, pp. 76-77.

¹⁰ For this section I draw freely on the article "*Cultura della Vocazione*", by Fr JUAN E. VECCHI, in *Dizionario della Pastorale Vocazionale*, Libreria Editrice Rogate, Roma 2002, pp. 370-382.

¹¹ JOHN PAUL II, Message for the XXX World Day of Prayer for vocations (8 September 1992).

This culture in fact, requires not individual initiatives no matter how numerous, but a mindset and an attitude shared by a group; it is a question not only of private intentions and good resolutions, but the systematic and deliberate employment of the forces which the community has at its disposal. A vocational culture, understood in this way operates in three areas: the anthropological, the educational and the pastoral. The first refers to the way in which being a human person is seen and presented as vocation; the second aims at fostering a appreciation of values conducive to vocation; the third pays attention to the relationship between vocation and the underlying culture and draws conclusions from this for vocation work.

Life is vocation

We know that underlying all educational and pastoral activities there is a particular view of mankind, one that is either spontaneous or the result of reflection. For the Christian it evolves in the course of life, with the mental effort to understand its significance and with the enlightenment provided by faith. The three elements – personal lived experience, a search for meaning and faith discernment – are indispensable and inter-connected. Revelation should not be understood as something external, superimposed on experience and on human understanding, but precisely as a revealing of its more profound and definitive significance. In the first place, therefore, it is necessary to overcome a way of thinking and speaking about vocation as though it were an *extra*, an incentive only for some, an aid to recruitment procedures for some states of life, rather than something fundamental to a person's fulfilment. The crisis of vocations in fact may also be due to the style of life they represent. But on a deeper level, it is due to a view of human life in which the aspect of the "call", that is to say of one's personal fulfilment depending on listening to another and conversing with him, is not only in fact excluded, but is not even taken seriously into consideration. This happens with those views of man's nature which put the satisfaction of an individual's

needs before anything else, proposing personal self-fulfilment as the only goal in life or seeing freedom as mere autonomy. These views are very widespread nowadays having a certain attraction, and even when they are not fully subscribed to they are reflected in what is being communicated and influence some aspects of education.

A first task then of a vocational culture is to draw up and promote a view of human life seen as “a call and a response”, which is the considered conclusion following a serious reflection on the nature of man. Leading to that conclusion will be the experience of relationships, the moral demands that flow from them, questions about the meaning of life. These then are the paths to be pursued in order to identify some of the factors of the vocational culture we are considering. People are conscious of their own individuality. They recognise that their life is unique, quite distinct from anyone else’s and from the world itself. It belongs totally to them, but it does have the characteristics of a gift, something that precedes any desire or effort on their part.

Open to others and to God

At the same time, man is conscious of being part of a network of relationships, not optional nor secondary, among which that with other people is immediately evident and occupies a special place. The first thing a person notices is not his own EGO with its potentialities, but the inter-dependence with others who need to be accepted as they are and recognised in their dignity. From this point of view, acting responsibly is seen as an ability to recognise the signals which come from others and to respond to them. It is a moral issue because it involves the demands of responsibility and commitment. A man wakes up to his own personal existence when he stops seeing others merely as instruments to be made use of for his own benefit.

A vocational culture needs to lead a young person away from a subjective view of life which makes the individual the centre

and the only criterion for self-assessment, which sees personal fulfilment in defending and seeking his own interests, rather than in openness and self-giving; and likewise from that view of interpersonal relationships as tied simply to pleasure-seeking without their moral dimension being perceived. The experiences of relationships and their moral element lead people towards the Transcendent, because in them is to be found something that is unconditional and immaterial. In fact, other people are not simply objects of passing acquaintance or things to which one reacts instinctively. It is necessary to recognise the mystery within them as persons, which implies respect, selflessness, love, the promotion of moral and spiritual values.

But this reference to transcendence becomes even more evident when people are able to face up to the fundamental questions about life and appreciate it. Then their openness to the Other, already perceptible in its positive aspects and in its limitations, becomes clearly apparent. They understand that they cannot stop at what is immediately perceptible nor be confined to the here and now. Individuals are an infinite mystery who only God can explain and only Christ can satisfy. Therefore they are naturally inclined to seek the meaning of life and to find their place in history. Being faced with various alternatives they have to decide their own long term goals. You can't live your life twice over: you have to take the plunge! The real quality of life and salvation itself depend on the values pursued and on the choices made. Jesus puts it very clearly: "Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and to forfeit his life?" (*Mk* 8,35-36). The task of a vocational culture is to encourage people to want to listen to such questions, to enable them to reflect deeply on them. The role of a vocational culture is also to help people to grow and to make the right choices regarding the *Bonum*, the *Verum*, and the *Pulchrum*, since it is in responding to and appreciating these that a person's full development consists.

Lived as a gift and as a task

All this requires a deeper reflection on vocation the name a person gives to his life when perceived as a gift and a call, conducted with responsibility and freely planned. The most fruitful source for discovering this foundation are the Scriptures, read as the revelation of the meaning of human life. In the Scriptures the nature and the significant relationships of human beings are defined by their condition as creatures, which does not imply inferiority or dependence, but God's gratuitous and creative love.

Man does not possess within himself the reason for his own existence nor his own fulfilment. He owes it to a gift, and he enjoys it when he makes himself responsible for it. The gift of life has within it a plan; this is gradually revealed as he reflects on it in the light of his own experience, of history, of God, and it requires a personal response. This determines a man's place in relation to the world and to all the things existing within it. These cannot satisfy his desires and so a man is not subjected to them.

A typical example of the way life is constructed is the covenant between God and his people as it is presented in the Bible. This is a gratuitous, freely-made choice on the part of God. Man has to recognise it and take it up as a plan of life, guided by the Word which challenges him and forces him to choose. In Christ, the truth about mankind which reason perceives vaguely and the Bible reveals, finds its complete manifestation. Christ, with his words but especially through the power of his human-divine existence, in which he shows his self-awareness as Son of God, opens a person up to the full comprehension of himself and of his destiny. In Christ we are made God's children and we are called to live as such in history.

The Christian vocation is not an optional extra in man's personal fulfilment. Rather it purely and simply complements it. It is the indispensable condition for authenticity and fulness, satisfying the deepest desires, those which flow from our essential nature as creatures. In the same way being a part of the building of

the Kingdom to which Jesus invites his disciples, is the only form of existence which corresponds with man's destiny in this world and in the next. In this way life is revealed completely as a gift, a call and a plan.

Taking all this as the basis and the inspiration for all activity, spreading it in such a way that it becomes the mindset of the educative pastoral community and especially of those involved in vocation ministry with the relevant practical educative consequences constitute this "culture" of which pastoral ministry has urgent need.

Here then are the fundamental attitudes which give life to a vocational culture and to which we want to give priority:

- ***The search for meaning.*** Meaning is closely related to an understanding of the immediate, the medium term and especially the ultimate purpose of events and things. It is also an intuition of the relationship which exists between reality and events and man and his well-being. Coming to an understanding of meaning implies the use of reason, an effort at investigation, a contemplative and interior attitude. It is gradually discovered in various contexts: in a person's own experience, in history, in the Word of God. Everything comes together in an acquisition of individual and community wisdom which is expressed in a trusting and hope-filled attitude to life. "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him" (*Rom*, 8,28).

It can take a long time to grasp the real meaning. It is important not to give up the search nor to be put off at the prospect of further and even more fruitful discoveries. Modern culture is the domain of those who ignore, when they do not actually deny, any meaning which transcends immediate and subjective experience. This leads to an only-partial view of reality which makes a person incapable of coming to grips with the thousands of everyday events, of going beyond what

is skin-deep or experienced by the senses. Cultural maturity implies a synthesis, a frame of reference that goes beyond one individual's knowledge so as to be able to look further and not remain imprisoned by events. The quality of life declines when it is not supported by a certain view of the world; and with the quality so too decline the reasons for committing oneself to the service of noble causes.

- **Openness to *transcendence***, to that beyond the human, to an acceptance of limitations, to welcoming mystery, welcoming the sacred in all its subjective and objective aspects, to reflection and to a religious approach.

This then is something which appears in everything that a person does until it becomes an essential element: in the use of intelligence, in the exercise of will, in seeking one's hearts' desires, in the nature of relationships, in the carrying out of enterprises. A person's life is open to the infinite and so too to the perception of reality. Nowadays there are some kinds of culture which, consciously or not, lead to an exclusive concentration on the "rational" and the temporal, and make it impossible to recognise one's life as mystery and as gift. Taking transcendence into account means accepting unanswered questions, going beyond the visible and the rational. Experiences, needs, immediate perceptions can be the starting points in an opening up to deeper values, demands and further truths even more demanding which are not seen as a denial of one's own impulses but rather as a way to freedom and their fulfilment. As Jesus said to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you «Give me a drink!» you would have asked him and he would have given you living water" (*Jn* 4,10).

- **An "*ethical*" mentality** capable of distinguishing between good and evil and of directing oneself towards the good. This culture is enlightened by a moral conscience, centred on values rather than on means, and assumes as its basic foun-

dation the primacy of the person. Culture always has within it an ethical impulse and is in itself a moral value, because it seeks the human qualities of the individual and of the community. But human limitations can be an obstacle to this.

Some of its tendencies and achievements, and sometimes its whole system of values, are invested with moral ambiguity, both objective and subjective. This becomes a very serious matter when, in the evolution of the culture, ethical criteria are ignored or are subordinated to others. Every reference to good or evil is lost sight of, and other criteria are used such as utility, pleasure or power. Recently, a series of expressions have been coined which illustrate in a contrasting way the primacy or the total absence of any valid ethical criteria in the evolution of a culture: a culture of being or of having; of life or of death, of the individual or of things. Developing a culture with an ethical mindset will mean not allowing it simply to develop unchecked, but challenging its views and expressions with a conscience enlightened by faith so as to purify it and rescue it from ambiguity and move it forward in the direction of values.

- ***A planning mentality.*** Lack of concern about meaning often becomes indifference about the future. Without a sense of history there are no goals attractive enough to work for apart from those connected with personal self-interest. In former times ideologies, with their utopian overtones, were the driving force for social planning and this encouraged people to become personally involved in an historic project.

Nowadays there can be a sense of the future contracting and the present expanding, which leads to a culture of the immediate. Projects are implemented in the short-term and form part of a limited personal experience. Even beneficial projects can be limited to a desire to correct something, to a search for personal fulfilment, to a passing enthusiasm. Planning means

organising resources and time according to the great pressing needs of history and the demands of the community in order to reach goals and ideals worthy of man. This requires a critical conscience in order to be on the watch for apparent imperatives, and the capacity to discern in order to reveal psychological pressures, self-motivated generosity so as to go beyond these immediate horizons.

- **Commitment to *solidarity***, as opposed to the culture which leads to a concentration on the individual. Generous personal projects can come to the fore only when people accept that their own personal fulfilment is linked to that of others. Solidarity is a widespread aspiration which is deeply embedded in consciences, at the heart of historical events and reveals itself in unusual and sometimes unexpected ways. It appears as a response to large-scale problems which are a cause for concern such as under-development, hunger, exploitation. It inspires practical initiatives such as aid plans, voluntary service, public opinion which change the previous relationships between the individual and society. And all of this in circumstances near at hand and far afield. Consequently, it engages the spirit of service and motivates it.

But the culture of solidarity is often side-lined or weakened by strong economic and cultural currents. It presupposes a view of the world and of the individual person which considers interdependence as the key to interpreting the positive and negative phenomena of humanity. Nothing has its complete explanation, or a rational solution if considered in isolation. Poverty and wealth, hunger and waste are co-related phenomena. Between these contradictions what is involved is not only sympathy and compassion, but human responsibility. The individual person cannot be considered as someone who first of all exists in isolation and only at a second stage, is concerned with others. The individual can only be himself when accepting responsibility for the destiny of his fellows human beings in a spirit of solidarity.

3. Aspects which have a special significance in vocational animation and proposal

Promoting a vocational culture: the essential task of Youth Ministry

All ministry and in particular youth ministry, is at its roots vocational: the vocational dimension constitutes its main driving force and its natural culmination. Therefore it is necessary to give up any minimalist idea of vocation ministry, which only concerns itself with looking for candidates to religious or priestly life. On the contrary, as was said above, vocation ministry ought to create the suitable conditions so that every young person may discover, take up and follow in a responsible manner their own vocation.

The first condition, following the example of Don Bosco, consists in creating the circumstances in which a real "*vocational culture*" is lived and transmitted, that is to say, a way of understanding and facing up to life as a gift freely bestowed; a gift to be shared at the service of the fullness of life for everyone, overcoming a mindset which is individualistic, consumistic, relativistic, and the culture of self-fulfilment. Living this vocational culture demands making an effort to cultivate certain attitudes and values, such as the promotion and the defence of the sacred value of human life, confidence in your self and in your neighbour, an inner life which enables you to discover in yourself and in others the presence and the action of God, being ready to feel yourself responsible and to allow yourself to become involved for the benefit of others with an attitude of service and of giving freely, the courage to dream and to have desires on a large scale, solidarity and a sense of responsibility for others especially those most in need.¹² Within this context or vocational culture youth ministry ought to propose to the young *the different vocational paths* – matrimony, religious or consecrated life, priestly service, social and

¹² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Message for the XXX World Day of Prayer for vocations (8 September 1992).

ecclesial commitment –and accompany them in their process of discernment and choice.

Every educative-pastoral community needs to be aware of the characteristics of its own cultural surroundings and of the educative-pastoral activity it undertakes in its daily work with the young. All of this with the aim of promoting and developing the typical elements of a vocational culture, which is often not accepted in the surroundings in which the young people themselves are living.

Here I mention two things which could help in the development of a vocational culture:

- *Giving the educative-pastoral community a family atmosphere including significant vocational witnesses.*

Young people are living in a standardised environment, in which they don't feel recognised or listened to; they have to earn or fight for everything, so that the weaker ones or the less prepared remain marginalised and forgotten. In this sort of environment it is almost impossible to live life as a gift to be shared; instead it appears to be a fight for survival or a race in order to win prosperity and personal fulfilment. In a typically Salesian family atmosphere young people feels freely accepted and appreciated; they have the experience of trusting relationships with significant adults; they feel involved in the life of a group; they develop the ability to take the lead and to take responsibility; they learn to help to build the educative community and to feel co-responsible for the common good; they find room for moments of reflection, of dialogue and calm discussion. This is the best kind of environment for the development of a vocational culture.

- *Ensuring guidance and accompaniment for people.*
- In a standardised environment or one in which relationships are only functional, it will be very difficult to develop a vocational view of life. In fact, such a process requires the pres-

ence and the closeness of educators among the young, especially in the more spontaneous and informal moments; familiarity with and interest in their lives; the capacity for personal relationships; moments of conversation and reflection together which help them to see life from a positive and vocational point of view; space and time for more organised meetings for personal accompaniment.

Education to love, to chastity

In vocational guidance and direction education to love has a very important role. It is necessary to help the adolescents to integrate their affective-sexual development with the educational process and also with the process of education to the faith. And this so that they can live their affectivity and sexuality in harmony with the other fundamental dimensions of their personality, maintaining attitudes of openness, service and self-giving.

Nowadays adolescents have to cope with a cultural and social climate which is highly sexualised and which continuously sends out its messages in the street, on television, in cyberspace. It is a question of suggestions which encourage a consumeristic form of sexual behaviour and advocate immediate satisfaction in the pursuit of pleasure. Permissiveness is the dominant social feature in this area, and the sexual appetite sadly becomes commercialised. It all gives rise to confusion with regard to values and to great moral relativism. It often happens that a premature practice of sexual relationships in the course of friendship is advocated or the satisfaction of simple compulsive pleasure seeking. Young people place great store on love, often challenging prejudice and criticism, anxious to respond to their own affective needs, sensitive to the value of a relationship which is open and unlimited. But very often in this area they do not have any guidance nor anyone to help them to understand their own affectivity and sexuality according to an holistic view of the person, presenting in a continuous and clear way a plan for education in love which might guide

them towards the formation of their personality which is harmonious and makes it possible to see life as a gift and as service.

Already several years ago the GC23 pointed out to the Salesians that education to love was one of the three important key issues around which the synthesis faith-life becomes possible and is put into effect. "It is not a matter of particular points, but rather of areas where the significance, strength and contrasts of faith can be found".¹³

Nowadays this is even more important especially when one wants to develop in a effective manner the vocational dimension of life and to create an atmosphere in which it is possible for a young person to bring a vocational plan to maturity, especially when it is a question of vocations of a particular commitment, which often include the choice of celibacy. In fact many young people find themselves in an atmosphere which is of little help for an integral and positive view of love. Many of them are living with considerably difficult problems which the educator needs to know in order to help them to overcome them.

For many of them there is a lack of any experience of selfless love in their family, in which they have to cope with tensions and conflict between their parents which not infrequently leads them to opt for separation or divorce. The friendly relationship they may experience among themselves is superficial, and the result of all this is that instead of resisting the temptations presented by their environment they are overcome by them. In this way, very quickly, some of them form a close relationship with each other as a couple which cuts them off from the others and from the life of the group. The need they feel to have a full relationship with their partner leads them to disordered sexual practices. Certainly in all of this one sees the effects of a lack of any real education to love: either the subject is avoided or it is treated in a moralistic and negative way, which instead of being a help is rejected by adolescents.

¹³ Cf. GC23, 181.

Our Preventive System and the family spirit, a characteristic feature of our centres, can create the conditions for happily putting it into practice.¹⁴

Education to prayer

Prayer is an essential and primary element in guidance and in the choice of a vocation, since this gift of God freely offered to man can be discovered and followed only with the help of grace. Therefore an effective and profound vocation ministry for the young is not possible without introducing them to and accompanying them in the assiduous practice of prayer.

The first Christian community was waiting in prayer on the day of Pentecost, the day of the birth of the evangelising Church (*Acts* 1,14). Jesus himself prayed before choosing the apostles (*Lk* 6, 12ss) and taught them to pray so that the Kingdom of God might come (*Mt* 6,7ss). The command "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he may send labourers into his harvest" (cf. *Mt* 9,37ss; *Lk* 10,2) is understood in all its weight and urgency in the light of the example and the teaching of Christ. Prayer is the best path to follow and the best form of vocation ministry.

Considering this centrality of prayer in the faith journey it is important to help the young and introduce them to and initiate them into a really deep life of prayer: only in this way will they be able to bring to maturity a possible vocation in them of special consecration.¹⁵

Young people nowadays are often living in an environment which hardly favours the spiritual life. They are immersed in a culture of consumerism and profit, of personal enjoyment and the

¹⁴ A simple, but still relevant, programme for education to chastity was proposed by the 23 General Chapter: cf. GC23, 195-202.

¹⁵ "Fostering consecrated vocations demands certain fundamental choices: constant prayer... We should be committed to daily prayer in our communities and involve young people, families, lay people, Salesian Family groups" (GC26, 54).

immediate satisfaction of desires; the superficial view of life is dominated by subjective ethical-moral criteria, very often in contrast with each other and even contradictory. The environment in which they move fosters a agitated rhytm of life, in which they have a great variety of experiences without being able to really savour any of them. "The crisis of the family, a widespread relativist and consumerist mentality, the negative influence of *media* on consciences and behaviour are a strong obstacle to a vocational culture".¹⁶

On the other hand, we do find in adolescents and young people a search for an inner life, an effort to discover their own identity and an openness to and real seeking after an experience of the Transcendent. Even though, often, this process is perceived in a subjective light and as corresponding to their own needs, it has to be said that it is a good opportunity to help them to discover the God of Jesus. Groups and movements are on the increase which, in very different ways, promote experiences of spirituality, and young people are present in large numbers in these groups. Just think for example of the Taizé community!

All this constitutes a favourable situation in which to offer young people the possibility of beginning an educational process towards an inner spiritual life which gradually leads them to discover and to savour Christian prayer, especially that which gives it its unique nature and makes it so precious: the meeting with the person of Jesus who reveals to us the love of God, who invites us to and offers us the grace of a personal relationship with Him. This is why in a world so imbued with secularism and superficiality, there is an urgent need to promote this education to an inner life and to offer our young people a strong and profound spiritual life. "Today the times demand a more explicit return to prayer... It is a kind of prayer which is in harmony with the re-awakening of faith; to be committed believers and not just people of habit, implies a dialogue with the Lord which is more ex-

¹⁶ GC26, 57.

plicit, more frequent and more intense. In an atmosphere of secularism a pressing need is felt for meditation and a deepening of faith".¹⁷

Education to prayer ought to foster the conditions which lead young people to become true to themselves. These are: silence, reflection, the ability to interpret one's own life, a readiness to listen and to contemplate, gratuity and trust. Young people who live agitated lives full of activities will not easily succeed in creating within themselves the silence in which to cultivate an inner life which leads them to a real meeting with themselves. This too should be one of the aims we try to achieve. Hence the importance of beginning prayer moments with a short period of calm, of silence, of serenity, which will allow our young people to become conscious of themselves, and starting from this experience, to accept their own lives and to place them before the Lord.

At the heart of Christian prayer is listening to the Word of God. This ought to be the great teacher of Christian prayer, which does not consist so much in "speaking" to God as rather in "listening to Him" and opening oneself to His will (cf. *Lk* 11,5-8; *Mt* 6,9ss). "In your groups, dear young people", John Paul II wrote, "multiply the occasions for hearing and studying the word of the Lord, especially through the *lectio divina*. You will discover the secrets of the Heart of God and will derive profit for discerning situations and transforming reality".¹⁸ Normally the young person needs to be initiated into this process of listening, helped to understand the meaning of the Word as it is heard or read. It also needs to be recognised that the Word of God is effective in itself and therefore it will sometimes be necessary to allow it to act on its own in the heart of the young person without forcing it too much with our own schemes: very often it will itself guide them to a personal dialogue with Jesus.

¹⁷ EGIDIO VIGANÒ, "Our prayer for vocations", AGC 341 (1992) p. 27.

¹⁸ JOHN PAUL II, Message on the occasion of the XII World Youth Day (15 August 1996).

Another great school of prayers is the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church: the young person needs to be helped to take part in these more and more consciously, understanding the signs and the symbols of the liturgy. An education to the faith which forgets or neglects the *sacramental encounter* of the young with Christ, is not the way to find him and even less will it indicate the possibility of following him. "Like us the young find the Lord in the ecclesial community. However, in its life there are moments in which he reveals himself and communicates himself in a singular way: these are the sacraments, in particular of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Without the experience to be found in them, knowledge of Jesus becomes inadequate and limited, even to the point of not being able to recognise him among men as the Risen Saviour... Rightly is it said that the sacraments are the true memorial of Jesus: of what he did and still does today for us, of what he means for our life; rekindling therefore our faith in him, so that we see him better in our life and in events.

They are also the revelation of what seems hidden in the recesses of our life, through which we become aware of them... In the sacrament of Reconciliation we open our eyes and we see what we can become according to God's plan and will; we receive the Spirit which purifies and renews us. It is said that it is the sacrament of our future as sons, rather than of our past as sinners. In the Eucharist Christ incorporates us in his offering to the Father and strengthens our gift of ourselves to our fellow men. It inspires in us the desire and it gives us the hope that both the love for the Father and love for our brothers and sisters may become a grace for everyone and in everything: we announce his death, we proclaim his resurrection, come Lord Jesus".¹⁹

Among the many forms of initiation into prayer, Salesian Youth Spirituality offers us its own precious contribution and a

¹⁹ JUAN E. VECCHI, "Lo riconobbero nello spezzare il pane", NPG 1997, n. 8 (novembre) pp. 3-4.

specific style of spiritual life, with a characteristic style of prayer and a way of organising life around some insights of faith, value options and attitudes. In it are to be found certain characteristics that belong to Salesian prayer: it is prayer which is simple without unnecessary complications, part of everyday life, which is presented and offered to the Lord; a prayer full of hope, which fosters a paschal view of life, in personal conversation with the Risen Lord, alive and present among us; prayer which leads on to the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist in which one has a personal encounter with Jesus; prayer which helps us to discover the presence of Jesus in every young person, especially in the poorest ones, and leads us to commit ourselves to education and evangelisation.

It is important, therefore to give particular attention to these characteristics in our process of educating to prayer, helping the young to live them and in this way introducing them to Salesian Youth Spirituality: It is a way of Christian life which can lead even adolescents and youngsters to the great goal of holiness.²⁰

We need to be certain about this: only with a life of prayer which is more and more centred on Christ will young people be able to clarify and consolidate their choice of vocation, particularly if it is a question of a vocation of special consecration.

Personal accompaniment

Another fundamental element in vocation ministry is the regular personal accompaniment of the young person. It ought to be respectful, taking due account of the maturity and the spiritual progress of the person being accompanied. It is a form of accompaniment which helps people to absorb and make their own the experiences they have had and the suggestions they are given; it encourages and guides them in an introduction to person-

²⁰ Cf. GC23, 158ss and particularly 173-177.

al prayer and to the celebration of the sacraments; it directs them towards a personal plan of life as a practical means of discernment and vocational maturing. The grace of the Spirit Who is working in the hearts of people needs the collaboration of the community and of a spiritual director. For this reason at the side of every saint there is a spiritual director who accompanies and guides him.

Accompaniment is even more important within the Salesian educational system, which is based on the presence of the educator among the young and on a personal relationship based on them knowing each other, on understanding and trust.

When we speak about accompaniment, we are not referring only to a one-to-one dialogue, but to a whole *variety of personal relationships* which help the young person to assimilate the values and experiences lived personally, to relate the general suggestions to his own concrete situation, to clarify and deepen motivations and criteria.

This process includes the Salesian community providing *experiences at progressive levels* to ensure that there is a educative environment, capable of fostering the personal approach and vocational development. By way of example:

- ❑ a presence among the young, with the willingness to get to know them and share life with them with a trusting attitude;
- ❑ encouraging groups, in which the young are given the support of the leaders and of their own companions;
- ❑ brief, occasional contacts which show an interest in the young people and their world; and at the same time, a readiness to provide instruction at certain times of special significance for the young person;
- ❑ moments of personal conversation short, frequent, systematic, according to a practical plan;
- ❑ contact with the Salesian community, with the experience of sharing their life of prayer, fraternity and apostolate;

- ❑ the frequent offer of the sacrament of reconciliation; in which the attentive and friendly observations of the confessor often prove decisive in guiding people to their vocational option.

In the practice of accompaniment, especially in personal dialogue, it would be well to ensure that attention is paid to *some fundamental points* for the human and Christian development of the young person and to discerning the signs of a vocation. In particular, here are some of these:

- *Educating to self-knowledge*, in order to discover the values and the qualities which the Lord has given to each one, but also the limitations and the compromises in one's way of living and thinking. How many young people have not responded to the call of a vocation, not because they were lacking in generosity or were indifferent, but simply because they were not helped to know themselves and to discover the ambiguous and unChristian roots of certain mental and affective patterns, or because they were not helped to free themselves from their fears and self-defence in the face of the vocation itself.
- *Bringing to maturity the recognition of Jesus as the Risen Lord and as the ultimate meaning* of their life. Vocational motivations need to be based on the recognition of the initiative of God who loved us first. As Pope Benedict XVI explained to the young people of Rome and Lazio: "The Lord is ever present and looks at each one of us with love. Except that we have to find this gaze and to encounter him. How can we do this? I would say that the first point for an encounter with Jesus, for an experience of his love, is getting to know him... To know a person, above all the great person of Jesus, God and Man, also requires reason, but, at the same time the heart. Only by opening our heart to him, only by knowing all that he said and did, can we, with our love, our moving toward him, gradually get to know him a little better and thus also experience being loved. ...In a true conversation we are increasingly able to find this

way of knowledge which becomes love. Naturally it is not only thinking, not only prayer, but also doing that is part of the journey to Jesus: doing good things, taking trouble for our neighbour".²¹

- *Educating to interpret the experience of one's own life and historical events as a gift of God as being called to place oneself at the disposal of the mission for the Kingdom of God.* For this purpose to help the young to throw light on their lives through the Word of God, with constant reference to Jesus Christ, felt as the Lord of life who proposes a particular plan for each one of us. "My life has been willed by God since eternity. I am loved, I am necessary. God has a plan for me in the totality of history: he has a plan specifically for me. My life is important and also necessary. Eternal love created me in depth and awaits me. So this is the first point: to know, to seek to know God and thus to understand that life is a gift, that it is good to be alive. Then the essential is love. To love this God who has created me, who has created this world, who governs among all the difficulties of man and of history and who accompanies me. It means loving my neighbour... Hence there is a fundamental will of God for us all, which is identical for us all. However its application is different in every life, for God has a specific project for each person... not to "possess" life but to make life a gift, not to seek for myself but to give to others. This is the essential".²²
- *Deepening the personal assimilation of the evangelical values as the permanent criteria which guide them in the choices which are made in daily life.* In this way it will be easier to resist the temptation to conform in following the crowd. As I said earlier, one aspect to which we will need to pay special attention in this area is education to love and to affectivity.

²¹ BENEDICT XVI, Meeting with the young of Rome and Lazio, Feast of the Annunciation (25.03.2010).

²² *Ibid.*

The centrality and the role of religious consecration in the mission of the Salesian Family

The Salesian mission is an educative mission (the holistic development of the individual) and the mission of the evangelisation of the young. These two dimensions of our Salesian mission (the educative and the evangelising) are essential, and need to exist together mutually complementing and enriching each other.

The Salesian Family, while respecting the charism of the different groups of which it is composed, is the subject of the mission and needs to ensure that this organic unity is preserved intact; on this account it is a great benefit that in it there is a significant presence of the two complementary forms of living the vocation, the secular one and the consecrated, and in this latter the lay and the priestly form.

But it is essential to recognise and to emphasise the *fundamental value of consecrated life* in the carrying out of the Salesian mission. “Don Bosco” – GC24 declares – “wanted consecrated persons at the centre of his work, persons oriented to the young and their holiness”.²³

The lay form of the Salesian vocation, in its various expressions within the Salesian Family, recalls the values of creation and of the secular state, it is particularly sensitive to the world of work, pays special attention to the local situation, underlines the need for a professional approach; the lay condition of the members of the Salesian Family, religious, consecrated or not, shows everyone how, through these values and secular occupations, to live a total dedication to God for the sake of the Kingdom. The other form is that of the priesthood, which recalls the ultimate purpose of all educative activity; the priests belonging to the different groups of the Salesian Family exercise a priesthood fully involved in a commitment to education: offering the Word of God

²³ GC24, 150.

not only in catechesis, but also in their educational personal contact and activity, they build up the Christian community while building up the educative community.

The value of religious consecration needs to be rediscovered in the Salesian Family. In fact it is a necessary sign, which, while it specifies the identity of those who have made a total choice in the following of Jesus, at the same time indicates to the lay people who share our charism, that their contribution to the mission is not simply an extra help, but rather a particular experience of God, in the sharing of the same spirituality and of the same mission. "There is no future for a religious who does not express immediately, and almost emotionally, a transcendent dimension – like an arrow pointed to the divine and to love of his neighbour, which stems from the divine".²⁴

Not infrequently, in our view of the Salesian vocation and in our presentation of it, we give the impression of emphasising the functional aspects leaving to one side or taking for granted as though clearly understood those belonging to consecrated life. "If we are going to put religious consecration in parentheses, so as to argue in terms of roles and actions, this not only changes the terms of reference but completely alters the dimensions".²⁵

In its specific role the Salesian Family *is enriched by the significant and complementary presence of priests, religious, consecrated and laity*. Together they form an unusually strong combination of forces engaged in witnessing and in the educative mission; the various different lay vocations enrich the witness value of consecrated life with its animating function which, as such, it has to carry out in the Salesian Family and Movement.

This relationship therefore is not based on the roles or on the different functions which each one may have, (very often these

²⁴ JUAN E. VECCHI, *The Beatification of Brother Artemide Zatti: A sensational precedent*, AGC 376 (2001) p. 44.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 43.

roles are the same), but on the specific vocational gifts through which each one makes a contribution to the common mission. The fact of dedicating one's life ought to be identical because it is total, not, however, the way of dedicating it.

The Salesian Youth Movement a special place for vocations

The Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) is an organisation full of life and to be found in the five continents. It is a very significant expression of the strong attraction which Don Bosco and his charism have for the young. In various national and international meetings of the SYM there has been a lively and strong experience of a flowing current of communion which has its source in the person of Don Bosco, in the values of his pedagogy and in Salesian Youth Spirituality.

This development of the SYM with its variety of groups and associations, with the presence of a good number of leaders, the diversity of the initiatives and formation programmes, for us members of the Salesian Family is a grace from God, and at the same time a call. The Lord is sending us all these young people so that we may help them along the path of growth as individual persons so as to reach the fulness of the Christian life.

A tendency to gather people together, the life of a group, the inspirational value of community was an almost spontaneous experience in Don Bosco's life. He had a natural inclination to be sociable – for friendship. Gathering young people together therefore is an indispensable part of the educational approach Don Bosco wanted. Through a large variety of youth groups and associations we have the opportunity of ensuring a high quality educational presence in the new places where the young socialise. This experience becomes significant when the young people are called upon to appreciate the existence of the living Church and to commit themselves to it as living members of the "body" of the Christian community.

Sometimes it can seem that the young people in our centres and in some of our groups are superficial, especially when they are in their noisy and festive mode. In reality many of them are profoundly good and spiritual. They demonstrate a great thirst for God, for Christ, for the Gospel lived in the simplicity and the normality of daily life. Don Bosco was convinced that a high proportion of the young people that God sends to our houses have the right dispositions, if they are properly motivated and accompanied, to follow a vocation of special commitment.²⁶ Precisely because they are often living in an atmosphere which is little conducive to silence and to an inner life, they look to us for help, for our support and our accompaniment on the path of bringing their life to maturity. Salesian Youth Spirituality, the style of Christian life lived by Don Bosco and the boys at the Oratory in Valdocco, constitutes then a treasure to offer these young people.

In a good number of places in the world many vocations to religious and priestly life and also to a committed lay life in the Salesian Family are flourishing in the groups and in the associations of the SYM, especially among the leaders. It is something we have to take account of, appreciating and accompanying this group experience in a much better way. Perhaps we need to be more convinced that our young people, especially the young leaders, have the right to receive from us a stimulus which leads them to see their lives and their commitment in a vocational key; in their personal accompaniment we need to propose very clearly the question of vocation and encourage in them a generous response.

This is an important and urgent task for every Salesian and for every member of the Salesian Family in their daily contact with the young people in the groups and in their various leadership roles. When there is a suitable moment and when the young person is potentially receptive that is the time to suggest a voca-

²⁶ Cf. BM XI, p. 248.

tional commitment. In making this suggestion we have to be free and courageous, entrusting ourselves to the action of the Spirit, Who will often surprise us with what He does.

Nowadays the age for making a decision about vocational life-options is changing, and even though the seed is planted in pre-adolescence or adolescence, often it is maturing later, when the young people are at university or having their first experience of work. It is important to provide opportunities and situations in which we are able to accompany them in these moments which are decisive for their future. Among these young people we need to give special care to those who are closer to us, the leaders, the volunteers, those working with us in our centres, generously sharing many of the aspects of the Salesian mission, who have a genuine desire to serve and are looking for a meaningful plan of life. It is necessary to ensure that the experience of leadership and of voluntary service helps them to organise their lives according to a line of enquiry and an openness to vocation.

We notice how among the groups of the SYM, *voluntary service* groups are developing in a wonderful way. These constitute a first step in the formation process previously carried out in the groups. Young people in opting for voluntary service, discover an opportunity for initiative and service which becomes a courageous challenge to the individualistic and consumeristic mentality which pervades much of society. At the same time, it helps them to bring to maturity a vocational view of life as a gift and as service.

This "sign of the times" needs to be welcomed and the many openings it provides exploited, especially in the education to solidarity and the vocational opportunities included in it.

Don Bosco knew how to involve his boys, often very young, in forms of voluntary service which were quite heroic. Just to recall the young "volunteers" at the time of the cholera epidemic in Turin. By means of these responsibilities in service he helped

them bring to maturity a vocational option for life. The direct co-involvement of these same boys in their own education and in the transformation of the environment was for Don Bosco one of the fundamental keys of his educational system, in addition to its being a real school of citizenship and of holiness.

And we too today, through voluntary service, want to re-propose a vocational view of life inspired by the Gospel lived according to Salesian Youth Spirituality. The volunteers make a reality of these values and this attitude characteristic of a “vocational culture” as mentioned before, such as the defence and the promotion of the sacred value of human life, confidence in themselves and in their companions, an inner life which enables them to discover in themselves and in others the presence and the action of God, being ready to feel themselves responsible and to allow themselves to become involved for the benefit of others with an attitude of service and of free self-giving. These values need to be cultivated during the formation of the volunteers and should inspire their plans and their way of giving service in such a way that their experience of voluntary service shapes their lives as citizens and as committed Christians and is not merely limited to one experience among many during their youthful years.

In this way voluntary service becomes a real school of life; it contributes to educating the young to a culture of solidarity in relation to others, especially those most in need. It helps them to develop a spirit of welcoming, of openness towards others, and quite naturally leads to an openness to the total and free gift of themselves.

It is important, therefore, to promote voluntary service in the Salesian Family. It is an option that should be made known, appreciated and accompanied. In itself it is a typical experience in which a vocational culture can be appropriately cultivated.

4. Conclusion. The beauty and relevance of the Salesian vocation

On my visits to the Congregation and to the other groups of the Salesian Family present in various places I have been able to observe the enormous force of attraction and the enthusiasm aroused by Don Bosco, among both the young and adults, among the ordinary people and also among the authorities, the politicians, social workers, in the different cultures and also among people of other religions. Speaking with many of them I have been able to appreciate the gratitude they show for the presence and the work of Salesians. They are all proud to be past-pupils and to have experienced the Salesian method of education. Often the memory of Don Bosco produced great enthusiasm among the people and mobilised whole populations. This happens, for example, in Panamá during the novena and the feast of Don Bosco. We are seeing the same phenomenon during the travels of the casket of Don Bosco, which is going the rounds of the various continents. His teaching method and style of education, especially when it is known and studied, is considered a treasure which needs to be both known and preserved. In fact it represents a very suitable response to the challenges and to the expectations of today's young people.

All this encourages us to live our vocation with justified pride and gratitude, as we feel ourselves to be the heirs and the continuers of a special charism which God raised up for the young especially the poor and those at risk. In these 150 years of Salesian history, starting from the founding of the Congregation and of the Salesian Family, we see Don Bosco's dream fulfilled, of involving a vast movement of people who sharing his spirit, commit themselves to the mission for youth. We are all part and a proof of this dream as it unfolds.

We therefore need to live our Salesian vocation with a great sense of gratitude. And the first sign of our thanks is our own fidelity lived with joy and shining witness. We need to speak about our vocation. We need to speak about Don Bosco and his mission.

We need to point out what the Salesian Family, through its groups, has achieved in the world and to encourage many people of good will to offer not only their collaboration but their very lives so that the Salesian mission on behalf of the young so loved by God may continue in the world.

All of us have known and can remember brothers and sisters, communities and groups who have lived and are still living their vocation in an admirable and attractive way. Their lives attract the esteem and the co-involvement of many people. I am just thinking now of Fr Cimatti who with his pleasant kindness and his musical talent made Don Bosco and his work known and appreciated in Japan, raising up numerous vocations; or Fr Carreño who in India, together with other great missionaries, made the Salesian vocation known and loved, involving large numbers of young people and setting in motion a vocational movement the abundant fruits of which we are still gathering today. I also remember Blessed Sister Maria Romero, a tireless apostolic woman in Costa Rica, or the shining figure of Sister Eusebia Palomino, or the Salesian Cooperator Attilio Giordani, or the Past Pupil Alberto Marvelli, or Alexandrina da Costa, or Nino Baglieri.

Even in the most difficult situations such as those in communist countries, the members of the Salesian Family did not allow themselves to be frightened or discouraged by the obstacles, and they did not retire, waiting for better times, but tried to live their vocation with fidelity, helping one another to persevere in almost impossible situations and giving rise to new and creative ways in order to carry out in a clandestine manner pastoral work according to the Salesian spirit. In this way too, in such adverse circumstances, they were able to foster numerous vocations to religious life and to the Salesian Family.

I am sure that each one of you in the various groups and in the Congregations and the Institutes of the Salesian Family, has known brothers and sisters around whom numerous vocations to religious life have developed. Others will have promoted the

commitment to Don Bosco's mission among many lay people. This kind of power of inspiration has its source in the person of our great Father Don Bosco. Today too, whenever our lay co-workers know Don Bosco well, with his Educational System and his Spirituality, they become really enthusiastic about him and they feel the desire to make him known to others.

Therefore we ought to be proud of our Salesian vocation; to know Don Bosco better and better, and above all to live and communicate with enthusiasm his spirit and the Salesian mission. As a sign of gratitude for the gift of the Salesian vocation we have received, we commit ourselves to making it known to all, especially to the young. We will speak about it whenever it is possible, to our co-workers and to the friends who come in contact with us. Our life, our enthusiasm, our fidelity will clearly show that we believe in the beauty and the value of the vocation we have received. We believe in its relevance, and we live it with intensity in order to respond joyfully to the needs and to the expectations of the young and of society today.

The Lord Jesus and Mary Help of Christians have entrusted to us this precious gift for the salvation of the young. It is a gift we guard with love, we live intensely, we communicate with joy.

As usual I conclude with a fable which, it seems to me, will provide plenty of stimulus for the reflection which we want to make on the theme of the *sequela*, the journey, the fundamental life-option, and the Lord as the only and highest good, and the truly precious pearl for which it is worth-while selling everything. They are all aspects which are concerned with the idea of life as a vocation.

THE CARAVAN IN THE DESERT

In the Far East there used to live a rich and powerful Emperor. In all the courts of the world they used to sing the praises of his kingdom, of his palaces, of his wisdom. But the bards and minstrels

who travelled from castle to castle sang above all of his immense wealth.

«The jewels alone in his diadem could support a city!» they used to declaim.

As always happens, all of this provoked the envy and the greed of other kings and other peoples. Some tribes of fierce and violent barbarians gathered on the frontier and invaded the kingdom.

No one succeeded in stopping them.

The Emperor decided to find refuge among the faithful tribes who were living in the mountains, beyond the terrible desert.

One night he left the imperial palace accompanied by a small caravan which carried his fabulous treasure of gold bars, jewels and precious stones. To hasten his march, he was accompanied only by select guards and his pages who had sworn their absolute fidelity even to death.

The track across the desert snaked between sand dunes scorched by the sun, narrow passage ways and steep inclines. A track known only to a few.

Half way along the journey, while they were climbing up an icy slope, exhausted by fatigue and the slippery surface of the rocks, some of the camels in the caravan collapsed gasping for breath and did not rise again.

The strong boxes they were carrying rolled down the sides of the dune, turned over and scattered all their contents of coins, jewels and precious stones which slipped down among the rocks and the sand.

The Sovereign was unable to slow down. The enemy was probably already aware of his flight.

With a gesture which was both a sign of displeasure and of generosity, he invited his pages and the guards to pick up what precious stones they could manage to gather together and to take them with them. A handful of those precious objects would make them rich for the rest of their lives.

While the young men eagerly threw themselves on the precious spoils, and scrambled anxiously in the sand and among the stones, the sovereign continued his journey through the desert.

However, he became aware that someone was continuing to walk behind him.

He turned round and saw that it was one of his pages, who was following him panting and perspiring.

«And you» he asked, «didn't you stop to collect anything?».

The young man looked at him calmly with a gaze full of dignity and pride, and replied:

«No, sire. I follow my king».

The story reminds us of that decisive passage in John's Gospel, which is a watershed in the story of Jesus:

«Many of the disciples of Jesus left him and stopped going with him. Then Jesus said to the Twelve: "Do you want to go away too?"

Simon Peter answered: "Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God"» (Jn 6,66-69).

Such a demanding decision to commit one's life into the hands of God is only possible if, Madeleine Delbr  l writes, we are able to dance allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us.

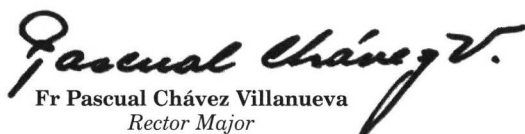
The Dance of Life

"To be a good dancer, with You as with others, it is not necessary to know where the dance is leading. It is enough to follow the steps, to be happy, to be light-footed and above all not to be stiff. You don't have to seek explanations about the steps you like to take. It is enough to be the extension, light and alive, of You, and to receive from You the transmission of the rhythm of the orchestra. It is necessary not to want to make progress at all costs, but to accept that you turn round, progress side by side. It is necessary to know to stop, to slide rather than to walk. And these would only be the steps of a fool were the music not to turn into harmony. We however forget the music of Your Spirit, and we make life a gymnastic exercise; we forget that in Your arms life is a dance and that Your holy will is a fantasy.

If only we could be content with You, Lord, we would never be able to resist the need to dance which is spreading through the world, and we would come to realise what dance You like us to dance, espousing the steps of Your Providence”.

Dear brothers and sisters, I pray that all of you may have this exhilarating experience of allowing yourselves to be led by the Spirit. Our life will be full of joy and of enthusiasm, and then we shall be able to become, like John the Baptist, teachers who know how to help their disciples to become disciples and apostles of the Lord Jesus.

With my very best wishes, and may you have a peaceful 2011 rich in vocations for the whole Salesian Family.


Fr Pascual Chávez Villanueva
Rector Major

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

– July 2010

At the end of the Retreat at Camaldoli (cf AGC 408, *Chronicle of the Rector Major, June 2010*), on Saturday 3 July, the Rector Major returned to Rome with all the Councillors.

Late in the morning on Monday 5 he met the members of the “Don Bosco Mission Community” Association from Bologna.

On Tuesday 6 the meetings of the plenary session of the General Council, interrupted for the Retreat were resumed. On the afternoon of the 6, with some of the Councillors he went to the Vatican for a Mass on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the priestly ordination of H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

On Wednesday morning 7, at Castel Gandolfo there was the usual half-yearly joint meeting of the SDB and FMA General Councils.

Then as always the meetings of the Council alternate, when the time is available, with meetings and audiences of the Rector Major with the Councillors, Superiors and confreres, and other engagements. Among his various audiences in this week should be men-

tioned that with the Superior General of the “Maria Auxiliatrix Sisters” Sr Jeyarani, accompanied by her Assistant Sr Josephine.

At midday on Saturday 10, the Rector Major had a meeting with the Commission which had been making an external assessment of the Faculty of Social Communication Studies at the UPS, at which Fr Filiberto González, Fr Michele Pellerey and Prof. Diego Contreras were present.

The following week was devoted exclusively to the work of the Council, accompanied as always by audiences and meetings.

On Friday 16, when the session of Council was over, with his Vicar, he left for Madrid to meet a family of benefactors; they are guests of the community of the Missions Office.

Having returned to Rome in the afternoon of 17, on Sunday 18 he went to Castel Gandolfo, where he first celebrated Mass in the community of the FMA Novitiate and met the novices; afterwards he gave a conference to the new Provincials and said Mass for them, the Sisters of the house and the FMA General Council.

The week of 19 to 25 was occupied with the ordinary work of the General Council and the usual meetings and audiences, including one with Fr Pedro Aguado Cuesta, Superior General of the Scolopians.

During this week should be mentioned the official information the Rector Major gave to the community in the Good Night on Wednesday 21, of his having accepted the resignation of Fr Štefan Turanský from his office of Regional Councillor for the North Europe Region, on health grounds.

On Friday 23 Fr Enrico dal Covolo, recently appointed Rector Magnificus of the Lateran University is present; the Rector Major and the Councillors thank him for the work he had done as Postulator for the Causes of Saints.

On Monday 26, Fr Chávez went to the headquarters of the UISG for a meeting with the new President of the International Union of Female Superiors General, Sr Mary Lou Wirtz; after which he went to the Curia of the Jesuits for a meeting with Superiors General who have Pontifical Athenaei in Rome. In the evening he presides at an extraordinary meeting of the Council.

On Tuesday morning 27, he spoke with Fr Marek Chrzan, the current Provincial of Krakow, and

appointed him the new Councillor for the North Europe Region, to take the place of Fr Štefan Turanský. Before lunch Fr Chávez introduced him to the community of the Generalate.

The work of the plenary session of the General Council continued in the following days and ended on Friday 30 July with a final meeting preceded by Mass.

– *August 2010*

Having spent the first days of August in the house, with the usual office work, on Thursday 5 the Rector Major, with his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, left for Sant'Agello, in Campania, to spend a few restful days in the local community of the FMA.

He returned to the Generalate in Rome on Wednesday 11 August, and took up his usual work again.

On Sunday 15, Fr Chávez, accompanied by Fr Adriano Bregolin and a family of friends Mr. Armando Fontana and his wife Mrs Franca, went to the Parish in Castel Gandolfo, where he concelebrated with the Holy Father for the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. After the Mass they stayed for breakfast together, during which time they also wished H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone a happy feast for his name day.

On Monday 16, with Fr Marco Mazzanti, the Bregolin, Tibaldini and Fontana families, the Rector Major left for the Holy Land, on a pilgrimage until the evening of Monday 23.

On the evening of Wednesday 25, with his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, Fr Chávez left for *Brazil*. Arriving at São Paulo, he was welcomed by Bishop Hilário Moser, Bishop João Corso and some confreres from the Provincial House in São Paulo. After Mass and a short rest, he continued his journey to *Belo Horizonte*, where he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Nilson Faria, and some other confreres of the Province.

On Friday morning 27, Fr Chávez received a visit from Archbishop Valmor Oliveira De Azevedo of Belo Horizonte, after which he travelled to Cachoeira do Campo. Before going to the Salesian house he went to greet the FMA community at 'Retiro das Rosas' and the coordinators of the Salesian schools network. In the afternoon he had a meeting with the confreres of the Province, attended by the Provincial Councillors, the Delegates, the Rectors of the communities and those in charge of the works.

On Saturday 28, he met and said Mass with the Salesian Family and with the young people from the

Salesian College, and then travelled to *Brasília*. At the airport he was welcomed by the Regional Councillor Fr Natale Vitali, by the Provincials of the CISBRASIL, by the FMA Provincials of the Belo Horizonte and Rio do Janeiro Provinces, and by other confreres and sisters. In the afternoon he held a meeting with the Regional and the Provincials of the Cis-brasil, followed by evening prayer and supper, in which Archbishop João Braz De Aviz also took part.

On Sunday morning 29, Fr Chávez took part in the pilgrimage of the Archdiocese from the Sanctuary of Don Bosco to the *Ermida*, stopping on the way at the Cathedral where the Rector Major blessed the statue of Don Bosco. Having arrived at the *Ermida* Don Bosco the Archbishop of Brasília, Mons. Braz, presided at Mass and the Rector Major gave the homily. In the afternoon in the "Israel Piñeiro" house, Fr Chávez met the Salesian Family and the young people. Later he presided at Mass at the Don Bosco parish in the Núcleo Bandeirante.

On Monday 30, after giving an interview for the TV *Canção Nova*, the Rector Major began the return journey to São Paulo. He stopped for some hours at the community of Itaquera, where he had lunch

with the Provincial Council and the confreres of the community. Then he continued on his way to Frankfurt and Rome, where he arrived in the afternoon of Tuesday 31.

– *September 2010*

He stayed in the house only the one day Wednesday 1 September, in the morning of which he spoke to those taking part in the General Chapter of the Dominican Order of Preachers being held at the ‘Salesianum’.

The following day, Thursday 2, Fr Chávez left for *Malta*, to make the *Extraordinary Visitation* of this Delegation of the Irish Province. On his arrival he was met by the Delegate, Fr Paul Formosa and Fr Joseph Forte.

On Friday 3, he began the Visitation talking with the Provincial Delegate followed by a meeting with the Council of the Delegation. In the afternoon, he began his visits to the communities starting with that of Sliema-St. Patrick.

On Sunday 5, accompanied by the Delegate, he visited the ‘Hippogeum’ archaeological site. In the evening he began his visit to the community of “Savio College” in Dingli, which ended on the morning of 7 with Mass at which the postnovices Robert Falzon and

Kenneth Micallef renewed their profession. In these days he also visited the Grotto of Saint Paul at Rabat.

In the evening of 7 September he visited the “Osanna Pia Home” (Sliema), a hostel for young people in difficulty and the youth centre. He concluded the visit to this house on Thursday morning 9, having also visited the “Salesiana Press” and in the afternoon he went to Senglea, to the “Saint Philip Neri” community where he stayed until the afternoon of Friday 10 September.

On Saturday morning 11, he had a talk with the Provincial Delegate Fr Paul Formosa and visited the two FMA who are in Malta. In the evening he went to Berzebugia, where he said Mass during which the young confrere Clive Mifsud made his perpetual profession.

On Sunday morning 12, he left for Rome, to take up again his usual work with a number of audiences and various meetings. Among these, in the evening of Thursday 16, was one with the new missionaries who will be part of the 141st missionary expedition at Valdocco on 26 September.

In the afternoon of 17 September he left for Venice, where he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Eugenio Riva. At Mestre he

greeted the confreres in the "Artemide Zatti" community and then went to the Provincial House where among other things after he gave the Good Night to the confreres, he met a group of young people and a group of past pupils.

On Saturday morning 18, accompanied by the Provincial Fr Chávez left for Padua and the Don Bosco Institute of the FMA. He met the boys and girls of the Institute, and then gave a conference on "Consecrated Life, Challenges and Prospects" to the USMI of Triveneto. Afterwards he went to Monteortone for Mass with the communities gathered together for a day of recollection. After lunch he returned to Padua, to the Don Bosco Institute, where he met the FMA for the opening of the centenary of the Salesian presence in the city. Later he returned to Rome to take up his usual work again. Among the people he saw in this period mention should be made especially of Fr Francis Alencherry, former Councillor for the Missions and now working in Bangladesh, of a group of confreres from the Provinces of India and Sri Lanka who had completed their course in Salesian studies at Bangalore, and Bishop Francis Anthonisamy of Kumbakonam, India, accompanied by two priests from his diocese.

On Saturday morning 25 he left for Turin, going to the Michael Rua Oratory in the "Monterosa" community for the festivities in this significant Salesian centre on the occasion of the centenary of the death of its Patron. The Rector Major met the various groups, presided at Mass and stayed for supper.

On Sunday 26, at 09.00 he met a large group of SDB, FMA and young people taking part in the Harambée and at midday in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians he presided at Mass for the *141st Missionary Expedition Ceremony*. In the evening he returned to Rome.

On Tuesday morning 28, he presided at Mass for the Consultative Committee of the Missions Department.

On Wednesday evening, he took part in greeting those arriving for the *IV World Assembly of the Don Bosco Past Pupils*.

On Thursday morning 30, he took part in the Vatican Basilica of Saint Peter's, in the Mass at which H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone presided. In the afternoon he presided at the opening of the World Assembly of the Past Pupils and after supper and evening prayer he gave the Good Night.

– October 2010

Fr Chávez began the month of October taking part, for the first three days, in the World Assembly of the Past Pupils. On Friday 1 he spoke with the three candidates for the Presidency indicated by the Assembly and the following morning announced the appointment – by the Rector Major, according to the Regulations – of Mr. Francesco Muceo, who was thus re-elected as President of the World Confederation of the Don Bosco Past Pupils for a second mandate. On Sunday 3 October the Rector Major concluded the Assembly presiding at Mass.

On Monday 4 October, at 11.00, presiding at the first meeting the Rector Major opened the *intermediate session of the General Council*, a busy and demanding session with usually two meetings each day, which ended on Friday morning 8. As always in between meetings of the Council there were audiences and other meetings.

The same day, 8 October, Fr Chávez, with the Vicar Fr Adriano Bregolin, left for Dublin, where they were welcomed by the Provincial Fr John Horan. The following morning the Rector Major presided at a meeting of the Provincial Council and then the Vicar Fr Bre-

golin presented to the confreres of the Provinces gathered together the concluding report of the *Extraordinary Visitation* of the Irish Province. This was followed by Mass and lunch.

In the afternoon the Rector Major and his Vicar left for Madrid and from there for Seville, on Sunday morning 10. They were then accompanied to Rota. Arriving in the city Fr Chávez greeted the Salesian Family and the educative pastoral community and then was honoured by the Mayor and City Council from whom he receives the “Golden Key” of the city of Rota. Then in the parish of “Saint Mary of the O” he presided at Mass, at the end of which the Gold Medal of the Patroness of the City was conferred on him. Finally during lunch he received another Gold Medal from the “Fundación Zoilo Ruiz Mateos”. He then left for Sanlúcar la Mayor. Here he presided at Mass with the Provincials and Rectors from the West Europe Region, to whom the following morning – Monday 11 – he gave a conference on the subject of Consecrate Life in Europe. After lunch he returned to Rome.

On Tuesday morning 12, the Rector Major went to the UPS for the opening of the Academic Year 2010-2011.

In the afternoon of Wednesday 13, accompanied by his Vicar and his Secretary he left for a *visit to Korea and the Philippines*.

Arriving at Seoul on Thursday 14, he was welcomed at the airport by the Provincial Fr Stephanus Nam, and by some confreres, by the FMA Provincial and other members of the Salesian Family. In the evening after supper he paid a visit to the Don Bosco Youth Centre and prayed with the young people, the co-workers and the confreres, ending with the Good Night.

Early in the morning on Friday 15, the Rector Major and Fr Bregolin went to the hostel of the community of "Shin Kil Dong" to greet Fr Marc Cuvelier, former Provincial of Korea. Afterwards the Rector Major led a day of recollection for the Salesians in the Seoul houses which ends with Mass. After lunch with the Vicar he had a meeting with the Rectors, after which he left by train for Kwangju, and the house of "Shin An Dong", where he was welcomed by the postnovices and all the confreres in the community. The following day, Saturday 16, still in Kwangju, he spends the morning in the community of "Il Gok Dong", meeting the young people the teachers and the confreres.

He then gave a conference to the members of the Salesian Family, which was followed by lunch and some festivities. In the afternoon he concelebrated Mass at which the Archbishop of Kwangju, Mons. Igino Kim presided. Then the Rector Major left for the Provincial House of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus, where he gave a conference to the Delegates at their General Chapter.

Having returned to Seoul, on Sunday 17, he had a meeting with the Salesian Family in Seoul and with the Nuncio Apostolic, Archbishop Osvaldo Padilla. After lunch he took part in the Feast of the Salesian Family and presented the prizes to the winners in the "Don Rua Art Festival" after which there was Mass at which the Nuncio Apostolic presided. Afterwards still in Seoul, he went to the House of "Dae Rim Dong", where he was welcomed by the community of students of theology, postnovices, novices, prenovices and youngsters from situations of psycho-social risk.

Early on Monday morning 18, he went to the Provincial House of the FMA. There he presided at Mass, had breakfast with the Sisters and gave a conference to the FMA. Having returned to the SDB Provincial House, he gave an in-

interview and then spoke with the Provincial, and held a meeting with the Provincial Council. In the afternoon he went to the airport to travel to Manila in the Philippines. Arriving there he was welcomed by the Vice Provincial and the Rector of the Provincial House.

Early on Tuesday morning 19, he left for Pampanga, where he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Eligio Cruz, by Cardinal Joseph Zen, by the Salesian Bishop Patrick Buzon, by Archbishop Paciano Aniceto of San Fernando and by the confreres gathered for the Province Feast and for *the launching of the cause of beatification of Fr Charles Braga*. The Rector Major presided at Mass and gave a conference to the confreres. In the afternoon he returned to Manila airport to travel to Cebu, where he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr George Militante and other confreres.

He spent Tuesday 20 at Lawaan. He was welcomed by the confreres the novices and the aspirants. He gave a conference to the confreres and the novices, presided at Mass for all the Salesian Family and then in the afternoon with Fr Bregolin he had a meeting with the Rectors and the Provincial Council. After supper they left for Manila.

On Thursday morning 21, at Parañaque Fr Chávez presided at Mass for the community of the students of theology, the teachers, the Rectors and the confreres. Then with Fr Adriano, he had a meeting with the Rectors and after lunch left for Tuloy, where they were met by the youngsters there and whom he greeted. Then with Fr Adriano, he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and then was given a reception by the educative pastoral community of the Don Bosco centre. In the evening he went to the airport to return to Rome.

Immediately the next day, on Saturday morning 23, he left for Madrid for the 50th anniversary of the magazine "Misión Joven" and the 25th of "Catequistas". The event, which was attended by Cardinal Antonio Maria Rouco Varela, Archbishop of Madrid, by the recently created Cardinal José Manuel Estepa, by three other Bishops from the Spanish Bishops' Conference, by the Regional Fr José Miguel Núñez and the Spanish Provincials was held in the afternoon at the Paseo di Extremadura College, where Fr Chávez gave the commemorative address.

Having returned to Rome on Sunday 24, the following day the

Rector Major went to the Auxilium for the formal opening of the Academic Year 2010-2011, in his role as Grand Chancellor, and gave the Inaugural Address.

Among the more significant events in the following days were Mass on Wednesday morning 27, with the members of the Provincial Chapter of the ICC Circumscription and the meeting with H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, with the Economist General, Bro. Claudio Marangio, on Thursday morning 28.

In the evening of the same day 28 he gave the opening Good Night welcoming those taking part in the International Congress "*Don Rua in History*". On Friday 29 he presided at Mass in honour of Blessed Michael Rua. Then he took an active part in the Congress on 29 and 30 and he brought it to a close on Sunday 31 with a talk summing up the occasion.

– November 2010

The Rector Major began the month of November presiding at Mass in St Peter's Basilica on the Solemnity of All Saints; this was immediately followed by the "Saints Run", a fund-raising event promoted by the "Don Bosco in the World Foundation". (this year on behalf of Pakistan).

At midday on Tuesday 2 he left for *Johannesburg*, in South Africa where he arrived the following day. Welcomed by the Provincial Fr François Dufour, and by the Rector of the Don Bosco Centre, together with the Provincial Sr Julienne Munyemba and some other FMA, he was taken to the Don Bosco Centre, where waiting for him were Fr Guillermo Basañes and all the Provincials from the Africa-Madagascar Region, with the youngsters from the Centre.

The following day, Thursday 4, the meeting of the Provincials of the CIVAM (Conference of the Provinces and Vice Provinces of Africa and Madagascar), which was to continue until midday on Saturday 6, began. The visit on Friday 5 by Archbishop Buti Tlha-gale OMI of Johannesburg should be mentioned,

In the afternoon of Saturday 6, accompanied by the Provincial Fr François Dufour and three other Provincials (ATE, AFW and MOZ), the Rector Major left for *Lesotho*. Arriving at Maputsoe he was welcomed by the Rector of the community, Fr Marian Kulig, by the confreres, the FMA, the MSMHC, by the local authorities and by a large number of youngsters, young people and adults from the various sectors of the Work. After the re-

ception ceremony, he met a group of people who were preparing to make their promise as Salesian Cooperators. This was followed by supper, attended also by Bishop Augustinus Tumaole Bane OMI, and by evening prayer and the Good Night with the SDB, FMA and MSMHC communities.

On Sunday morning 7, the Rector Major presided at Mass in the parish church which was followed by a concert and then lunch, at the end of which he left again for Johannesburg. In the evening he began a *Retreat* for the Rectors from the English-speaking Provinces, together with some others French and Portuguese speaking. Our Bishop Mons. Gaston Ruvezi was present at the Retreat. The visit on Wednesday 10, by the Nuncio Apostolic Archbishop James Patrick Green should be mentioned.

On Saturday 13, after the Retreat was over, in the early afternoon, the Rector Major, accompanied by Fr Adriano Bregolin, – who had returned to Johannesburg after a visit to Angola –, by the Provincial Fr François Dufour and the Rector of the Salesian house in Manzini, drove to *Swaziland*. Arriving at Manzini, they immediately went to the house of the Bishop, Mons. Louis Ncamiso Ndlovu

OSM, who wished to express his own appreciation for the Salesian presence, so significant for the city. Arriving at the Salesian house, Fr Chávez was welcomed in formal Swazi fashion; supper followed, during which the Rector and some of the more important co-workers spoke. The Rector Major then concluded with the Good Night.

On Sunday 14, Fr Chavez presided at Mass in the Cathedral, and then visited the whole complex of the Salesian presence in Manzini. After lunch he greeted the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC) and then went to the airport to begin the return journey to Rome, where he arrived at 19.00 on Monday 15.

The following day Tuesday he remained in the house and then set off again on Wednesday 17 for the house of *Macerata*, in the Marche, for the celebration of the 120th anniversary of the start of the Salesian work in that city. Important occasions during the visit were the celebration of Mass for the young people, parents and staff, followed by a concert in the theatre, and then the blessing of the re-structured premises of the Oratory. In the afternoon, in the Aula Magna of the University Fr Chávez received the diploma of *Visiting Professor*, and gave a

conference on “Don Bosco and his Educational System”. The day ended with another concert in the Lauro Rossi Theatre, attended also by the Bishop Claudio Giuliodori, the Mayor Dr. Romano Carancini, Administrators, Salesian Cooperators and Past Pupils. Fr Chávez then returned to Rome.

On Friday morning 19, the Rector Major went to the Vatican for a meeting of the “Council of 16” (composed of the two Executive Committees of the USG and UISG) at the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. On Saturday, 20 he went to Nave, the post-novitiate with a study centre affiliated to the UPS, where he gave the Inaugural Address for the formal opening of the Academic Year 2010-2011.

Having returned to Rome, on Monday 22 he took part in a meeting of the Executive Committee of the USG in the Generalate of the Sacred Heart Fathers. Between Wednesday 24 and Friday 26 at the ‘Salesianum’ the *Assembly of the Union of Superiors General*, of which Fr Chávez is President took place. A specially significant event was the audience granted by the Holy Father to the Superiors General, on the morning of Friday 26,

in the Clementine Hall of the Apostolic Palace.

The final days of November were devoted to the meeting of the Salesian Provincials of Europe, called to Rome to continue the reflection – already set in motion in the two previous meetings – on the “Project for Europe”, deciding on the objectives for the two year period 2011-2012. The Rector Major gave a talk on “Salesian life in Europe today”.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

At the end of the summer session of the General Council (31 July) the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Adriano Bregolin, left immediately for Ecuador, where he preached two retreats – at Macas and at Cumbayá – for the confreres of the Province. During his stay at Macas he had the possibility of visiting two missions in the Amazon region: Yaupí and Sevilla Don Bosco. Before returning on 14 August, he paid a visit to the Provincial

House, and to the Ongoing Formation Centre in Quito, meeting those attending a course at the time.

Having returned to Rome, on 15 August with the Rector Major he took part in the Mass celebrated by the Holy Father in our parish in Castel Gandolfo, meeting the Pope personally at the end of the Mass.

Between 16 and 23 August, with the Rector Major, some family members and friends he took part in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Back in Italy, on 30 August he left for Tunisia, where he began the *Extraordinary Visitation* at the house in Manouba, belonging to the *Province of Ireland*. Having returned to Rome on 1 September, he left for Ireland on 2, to continue the Extraordinary Visitation of this Province (IRL).

The detailed calendar of the Visitation: 3 September: a meeting with the Provincial Council; between 4 and 6: visiting the Community of Dublin – “Rinaldi House”; between 6 September and 11: visiting the Community of Celbridge-Maynooth; between 11 and 14: visiting the Community of Warrenstown; between 14 and 19: visiting the Community of the Provincial House in Dublin; between 19 and 22 September: visit-

ing the Community of Pallaskenry; between 23 and 26 September: visiting the Community of Limerick. Then having returned to Dublin, on 27 he left for the Generalate in Rome.

Between 29 September and 3 October he took part in the World Assembly of the Confederation of the Don Bosco Past Pupils.

During the following week he was busy with the work of the *Intermediate Session of the Council*.

On Friday afternoon 8 October, he left with the Rector Major for Dublin, where on Saturday 9, with the Rector Major, he met the Provincial Council and the Rectors for the closure of the Extraordinary Visitation of the Irish Province. The same day he left with the Rector Major for Spain.

On 10 at Sanlúcar la Mayor he met the Rectors of the West Europe Region and gave them a conference on the role of the Salesian Rector. The following day with the Rector Major, after a meeting with the Provincials of the Region on the subject of the reshaping of the Spanish Provinces he returned to Italy.

On the afternoon of 13 October with the Rector Major he left for *Korea*. On 15 and 16 he accompanied the Rector Major during the various events of the visit, in par-

ticular at the meeting with the Rectors in Seoul on the afternoon of 15, then at Kwangju for a meeting with the postnovices and the confreres in the community of "Shin An Dong". The following day in the community of Kwangju – "Il Gok Dong" with the Rector Major he gave a conference to the members of the Salesian Family in Kwangju. In the afternoon he celebrated mass with the Archbishop of Kwangju, Mons. Igino Kim. Then with the Rector Major he went to the Provincial House of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and attended the Conference the Rector Major gave to the General Chapter of the Sisters. The following day when the Rector Major returned to Seoul, the Vicar stayed on with this Community of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and on Sunday morning 17 celebrated the closing Mass of the General Chapter of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus. Having returned to Seoul, in the afternoon he took part in a meeting of the Salesian Family held at the Provincial House.

In the evening with the Rector Major, he went to the Salesian house of "Dae Rim Dong", where he met the community of the students of theology, the postnovices, novices and prenovices and the youngsters with psychosocial prob-

lems. On Monday morning 18, with the Rector Major, he went to the Provincial House of the FMA for Mass and a meeting with the Sisters.

In the afternoon with the Rector Major he left for the *Philippines*. On Tuesday 19 at Pampanga with the Rector Major he took part in the launching of the cause of beatification of Fr Carlo Braga.

Afterwards he left for Cebu, in the South Philippines Province. On Wednesday 20, in the house of Lawa-an, after a meeting with the confreres, novices and aspirants, led by the Rector Major, in the afternoon the Vicar had a meeting with the Rectors on the subject of religious discipline.

On returning to Manila, on Thursday 21, with the Rector Major he went to Parañaque, where he also had a meeting with the Rectors, again on the subject of religious discipline. After lunch he left for Tuloy, a centre for the rehabilitation of street children. Here, with the Rector Major, he met the Provincial Council and then after supper left to return to Italy.

Having arrived at the Generalate, on Tuesday morning 26 he celebrated Mass for those attending the Provincial Chapter of the Circumscription of Central Italy

(ICC). Then from Friday 29 until Sunday 31 October, he took part in the International Congress "Don Rua in History".

On Monday 1 November he went to St Peter's Basilica where the Rector Major presided at Mass on the Feast of All Saints followed by the "Saints Run".

On Tuesday 2 November at mid-day he left with the Rector Major for Johannesburg, in *South Africa*. At the Don Bosco Centre he met the Provincials of the Africa - Madagascar Region, gathered for the CIVAM, with the Regional Fr Guillermo Basaños. Fr Bregolin took part in the meetings of the CIVAM, and gave a talk on the subject of religious discipline as well as meeting some of the Provincials personally.

On Sunday 7 November, accompanied by the Provincial Fr Filiberto Rodríguez, he left for *Angola*, to visit this Vice Province. On 8 he was in the house in Luena, and then on the afternoon of 9 he visited the work at Lixeira with all its satellite centres. On 10 he went to Cabinda. On account of problems and delays with the flight the visit was very short: little more than two hours. On 11 he went to Dondo, where he met the prenovices and also the confreres of the communities of N'Dalatando and Calu-

lo. Returning to Luanda he stayed for supper at Viana and met the aspirants. Finally on 12 he said Mass for the conclusion of the academic year at Luanda-Palanca, at the postnovitiate and Centre for Higher Studies, also open to lay people.

In the afternoon he left again for Johannesburg and re-joined the Rector Major, who was preaching a retreat for the African English-speaking Rectors.

At midday on Saturday 13, at the end of the retreat and after lunch, with the Rector Major and the Provincial Fr François Dufour and with the Rector of the Salesian centre in Manzini, Fr Lawrence McDonnell, he was driven to *Swaziland*.

On Sunday 14, with Fr Chávez he took part in Mass in the Cathedral and then with the Rector Major he visited all the sections of this Salesian centre in Manzini. After a festive lunch with the local Salesian Family, he began the return journey to Italia via Johannesburg and Dubai, arriving in Rome on 15 early in the afternoon.

On Friday 19 he went to Verona, where he preached a day of recollection for all the Confreres of the Salesian communities in the city. Then after supper he went to the city airport to welcome the Rector Major, who had arrived there and

together they went to Nave to the postnovitate community where in the morning of 20 the Rector Major gave the formal address for the opening of the academic year.

Between Wednesday 24 and Friday 26 he took part in the Assembly of the Union of Superiors General at the 'Salesianum'.

From Friday evening 26 until Sunday 28 he finally took part in the meeting of the Provincials of Europe studying the "Project for Europe".

The Councillor for Formation

The General Councillor for Formation, Fr Francesco Cereda, between 4 and 15 August was visiting the East Asia and Oceania Region. In particular, in the Philippines he took part in the "Curatorium" of the formation community and the centre of studies at Parañaque and then visited the aspirantate, the prenovitiate and the postnovitiate at Canlubang. On 9-10 August with the Councillor for Youth Ministry he chaired a meeting of the Regional Commissions for Youth Ministry and for Formation in the East Asia and Oceania Region regarding the implementation of the third key issue of the

GC26 "The need for vocation ministry". Finally, on 11-12 August he took part in the Regional Commission for Formation.

On 15 August at Colle Don Bosco the Councillor presided at the procession for the Assumption; on 16 he celebrated the commemoration of the birth of Don Bosco; he met the prenovices of Europe, who were studying Italian before starting the novitiate at Pinerolo and Genzano. On 30 August at Venice-Mestre he took part in the Province Assembly of the Italy North-East Province (INE) on the subject of the Strenna for 2011 "Come and see".

On 1 September he began – in the name of the Rector Major – the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Middle East Province*.

Having returned to Italy on 8 September at Colle Don Bosco he received the first professions of 24 novices from Pinerolo and welcomed the new novices. On 10-11 September with the Councillor for Youth Ministry he chaired the meeting of the Regional Commissions for Youth Ministry and for Formation of the West Europe Region regarding the implementation of the third key issue of the GC26 "The need for vocation ministry". On 12 September at Milan he met the young confreres in ini-

tial formation in the Lombard-Emilian Province (ILE) and received some perpetual professions. On 13 September he took part in the Theological Commission of the Union of Superiors General.

Then on 16 September until 22 November, except for the interruption of the Intermediate Session of the General Council, Fr Cereda continued the *Extraordinary Visitation*, passing through the various countries in which there are Salesian presences: Israel and the Palestinian territories, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Turkey.

Having returned to Rome at the end of the Visitation, on 24-26 November he took part as facilitator in the Assembly of the Superiors General. Then between 26 and 28 November he took part in the third meeting of the Provincials of Europe and on 28-29 November he chaired the meeting of the Commission for the "Project for Europe".

On 1 December with the Grand Chancellor he took part in the Academic Senate of the UPS; on 6 December he took part in the Higher Council of Administration of the UPS and on 12 December he presided at the "Curatorium" of the "Blessed Zephyrinus Namuncurá" Gerini formation community of the students of theology.

The Councillor For Youth Ministry

During the period between August and November 2010, the main occupation of the Councillor for Youth Ministry, Fr Fabio Attard, was that of accompanying the Regions in the process of animation. For this purpose he held meetings in Hong Kong, between 9 and 13 August 2010, for East Asia-Oceania, and in Madrid, in September, for West Europe, which completed the cycle of meetings held in conjunction with the Department for Formation, and at the same time continued the process of reflection on youth ministry.

In a similar way the Councillor chaired meetings for reflection and study in the following Regions: in the Africa-Madagascar Region, between 13 and 16 September 2010, held at Lusaka, Zambia; between 29 September and 2 October 2010 a meeting for the Delegates for Youth Ministry in America South Cone. After the session of the 'Intermediate Council' there were also meetings for Interamerica at Quito, Ecuador, between Saturday 16 and Monday 18 October 2010; for the South Asia Region at Kolkata, India, between Monday 1 and Sunday 7 November 2010; for

the North Europe Region at Leopoli, Ukraine, between Thursday 11 and Sunday 14 November 2010. At these last five meetings the letter of the Rector Major on youth ministry (AGC 407) was the main topic for study and reflection.

As well as these meetings for the Delegates for Youth Ministry the Councillor gave a study seminar on youth ministry and afterwards a retreat in Lomé, Togo, between 20 August and 2 September 2010.

The letter of the Rector Major was also the subject for a day of study and reflection with the students of the Faculty of Theology at Turin-Crocetta, on 20 September 2010, at Colle Don Bosco.

There were other occasions for reflection on the Strenna which Fr Attard had with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and their pastoral co-workers: the first, also on the subject of spiritual direction, at La Spezia, on Saturday 4 September 2010, the second, at Milan, on Saturday 9 October 2010.

Among other engagements to be mentioned were the *Lectio Magistralis* on Blessed John Henry Newman – his thought and holiness – on the occasion of the *Dies Academicus* at the studentate of Ratisbonne, Jerusalem on Thursday 14 October 2010. In addition there was the meeting of the three

Councillors for the Mission with the Provincials of the Interamerica Region at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on 21 and 22 October 2010, on the subject of the unified nature of the Salesian mission and participation in the first meeting of the SYM in Interamerica, at Cumbayá, Quito, between Saturday 23 and Tuesday 26 October 2010.

On Wednesday 17 November in Brasilia, the Councillor took part, as the representative of the Rector Major, in the conferral of the Doctorate *Honoris Causa* on Fr Carlos Garulo by the Catholic University of Brasilia. This was a sign of recognition for the work Fr Garulo had done as the General Coordinator of the IUS.

Finally on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 November 2010, Fr Fabio Attard took part with Fr Jacquinet, from the Pontifical Council for the Laity, in a round table discussion on youth ministry. The young people taking part from the Italian SYM had the opportunity to discuss preparations for the WYD in Madrid 2011.

The Councillor for Social Communication

During the month of August, after the conclusion of the summer

plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for Social Communication (SC), Fr Filiberto González Plasencia, spent the first days of the month editing the magazine *Salesians 2011*. Afterwards, between 6 and 24 he was in the Province of Guadalajara, Mexico, where he met the Provincial and the Provincial Council, as well as the Commission for Formation, and also visited the theologate at Tlaquepaque and the community and work at San Luis Potosí. Then for two weeks he was with his family visiting his mother and having medical checks.

Between 25 and 30 August, with Fr Jaime González, a member of the SC Department, the Councillor chaired a meeting of the directors of community Radio and TV stations in America, held in the Salesian House of Muyurina, Bolivia. At this meeting there was discussion about the resources and opportunities available and the weaknesses and threats to these important enterprises of Salesian communication. At the same time the synergies were sought between the radio participants and proposals were made to implement the SSCS with regard to community radio and TV. Taking part in the meeting there were also two Salesian confreres from Africa, who

are intending to install radio in their Provinces.

Between the morning of 30 August and the morning of 1 September, Fr Filiberto paid a visit to the Province of Paraguay, meeting the Provincial and his Council, the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team, and the personnel involved with the Salesian Bulletin. He also met the aspirants, the prenovices and the post-novices with their superiors. He visited the Publishing House and the Don Bosco Bookshop; in the Publishing House he had a meeting with the editorial and graphics personnel.

During the month of September, from the morning of 1 until 4 the Councillor visited the Province of Uruguay. During his visit he met the Provincial and his Council the Provincial Delegate for SC, the editor of the SB and the editorial team and the Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry and a group of young people involved in the production of the Radio programme called: "*Piruetas... en la cuerda*". He visited the Prenovitiate and the Theologate, speaking with the staff and students about SC in the Congregation, in the Church and in society. Finally he visited the "Colegio Pio" and the social work at Tacurú.

Between the morning of 4 and the morning of 7 he visited the Province of Chile. Here too he met the Provincial and his Council the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team, those responsible for the SB, the management of the Publishing House EDEBE Don Bosco and the personnel of the "Salesianos Impresores S.A". In Locañas he visited the Prenovitiate and the Postnovitiate and spoke to the staff and students. He paid a visit to the Provincial House of the FMA in Santiago and said Mass there. Then he had a special meeting with the team of the "Cetera tolle" Media Oratory made up of SDB, FMA, SSCC and young people, all in Santiago.

Between the morning of 7 and the morning of 10 he was in the Bogotá Province, meeting, as in the other Provinces, the Provincial and his Council the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team, the editorial team of the SB and some of the local coordinators of SC. In the Leo XIII College he visited the radio run by the students. Then he visited the premises of the "Apostolado Bíblico" and the sanctuary of the "Niño Jesús" and the press where the Salesian Bulletin is printed. Finally at the "Santo Tomás" Theologate he met the prenovices, novices and students

of theology with the staff and explained to them the significance and the organisation of SC in the Congregation.

Between the morning of 13 and the morning of 16 he visited the Province of Central America, in the city of Guatemala. In this city he spoke with the Provincial and his Council, the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team, the team of the Salesian Bulletin. Then he paid a visit to the Mesoamericana University, holding a meeting with the Rector and all the professors of the Faculty of Social Communication. At CRESCO he met the novices, postnovices, brothers and students of theology with their staff. Having returned to Rome on 17 September, he stayed at the Generalate working in particular with Fr Julian Fox and Bro. Hilario Seo, on the magazine "Salesians 2011".

During the month of October, from the afternoon of 1 until the morning of 3 he took part in the meeting of the Provincial Delegates for SC from the Iberian Region at the Provincial House in Lisbon.

Between 4 and 13 he took part in the meetings of the "Intermediate Council".

Between 16 and 19 he visited the Province of the Antilles. At the Provincial House in Santo Domin-

go he met the Delegate for SC with his team, the editorial team of the SB and some of the local coordinators of SC; on another occasion he went to see the prenovices the postnovices and their staff. He paid a visit to the "Instituto Técnico Salesiano - ITESA" and met the design and printing students. He presided at the Sunday Mass in the parish of "María Auxiliadora" and met the Salesians-Cooperators. Then he went to the premises of the "Radio Juventus Don Bosco", gave a radio interview and spoke with the Director, the technicians and the personnel of the Radio.

Between 19 and 22 at the invitation of Fr Esteban Ortiz, he took part in the meeting for the Sectors for the Mission with the Provincials of the Interamerica Region at Port-au-Prince (Haïti). At the same time he visited the works of Enam and Pétion-Ville and met the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team.

Between 22 morning and 25 evening he was in the Province of Venezuela. In Caracas he visited the works of Altamira, La Dolorita and Petare. In Sarriá he visited the premises of the "Fundación Editorial Salesiana e la Librería Salesiana". At the studentate of theology in Macaracuay he met first the staff and the students of

theology and then the Provincial Delegate for SC with his team and the collaborators of the SB. Having returned to Rome on the evening of 26 he continued the revision of the magazine "Salesians 2011". With Fr Julian Fox and Bro Hilario Seo,

During the month of November between the evening of 9 and the evening of 13 Fr Filiberto paid a visit to the Vice Province of Tropical Equatorial Africa (ATE). During this visit there was a meeting in Yaoundé, at the Provincial House, with the Provincial and his Council, with the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team and with the personnel working with the Salesian Bulletin. At the prenovitiate in Mimboman he met the staff and the prenovices. At the InterProvince Studentate of Theology he met the staff and the students of theology. At Ebolowa he visited the vocational training centre and the Don Bosco Technical Institute and had a meeting with the Rector and the senior staff of the work. He also paid a visit to the FMA from the school and postulancy in Yaoundé and to the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts (HH.SS.CC).

Between midday on 14 the afternoon of 17 he went to the Vice Province of Angola. At Luanda he

met the Superior and his Council, the Provincial Delegate for SC and his team, and the people involved in the small Publishing House and the SB. He visited the aspirantate in Viana, the prenovitiate in Don-do and the postnovitiate in Luan-da-Palanca and the community and works at Luanda-Lixeira.

Between the afternoon of 17 and the evening of 20 he was in the Vice Province of Southern Africa (AFM). In the headquarters he met the Superior and the Delegate for SC. He also went to Ennerdale and Walkerville.

Between the evening of 20 and the evening of 23 he visited the Vice Province of English-speaking West Africa (AFW). In the city of Ashaiman, at the Provincial house he met the Superior and the Council, the Delegate for SC and his team, and he blessed and opened the multimedia centre "Article 43" (referring to the SDB Constitutions) and had a meeting with the one in charge of formation and those on practical training in the Vice Province. Finally he paid a visit to the Artemides Zatti vocational training centre. He returned to the Generalate in Rome on the evening of 24.

From the afternoon of 26 until midday on 28 at the Salesianum in Rome he took part in the meeting

of the General Council with the Provincials of Europe concerning the Project for Europe, and from the afternoon of the same day 28 until the evening of 29 he took part in a meeting of the Commission for the Project for Europe.

The Councillor for the Missions

Immediately after the summer session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Missions, Fr Václav Klement, left for Haïti for a fact-finding visit; accompanied by the Superior Fr Sylvain Ducange he visited all five of the works in the capital, the Rinaldi Foundation, and concluding with a meeting with the Provincial Council.

Then the Councillor spent almost the whole of the month of *August* visiting the South Asia Region. Between 6 August and 1 September he visited eight Provinces (INN, ING, INP, INB, INH, INM, INT, LKC) meeting the Provincial Councils, the Commissions for missionary promotion, and also making a short visit to the frontier works in Gujarat (INB) and Sri Lanka (LKC). The high points of the visits were the houses of formation and the aspirantates (3 theologates, 4 postnovitiates, 5

novitiates, 4 prenovitiates, 6 aspirantates), the missionary groups in our works and the promotion of synergy between the three sectors of the Salesian mission.

The month of *September* was spent on the accompaniment of the new missionaries for the 141st Expedition, in Rome (the Gerini – Institute community) and Colle Don Bosco, between 1 and 25 of the month. The 38 taking part in the course were accompanied by the Department team and two other cultural experts. The presence of six missionaries from Africa should be noted and the great majority of the 24 new-missionaries coming from the Provinces of Asia.

The second meeting of the World Consultative Commission for the Missions was held at the Generalate on 28-30 September, attended by 16 Salesians, one FMA and one Salesian Cooperator. Among the main topics for reflection were the first drafts of the Frame of Reference for the Salesian Missions and the Guidelines for formation in the missionary dimension.

After the meeting there were two short visits for missionary promotion to the Provinces of Croatia (Zagreb, Rijeka) and Slovenia (Ljubljana, Celje) on 1-3 October.

Immediately after the meetings of the Intermediate Council (3-12

October) Fr Klement was involved in three meetings on missionary solidarity held in Rome: the Council of the DB Network (13 October), the General Assembly of the DB Network (14 October) and the Seminar for missionary NGO for development (15-17 October). Taking part in the Seminar were 40 SDB, FMA, other members of the Salesian Family and Lay co-workers from the 21 NGO from four continents. The Seminar focused especially on the Salesian identity of the NGO and their role within the context of Salesian missionary solidarity, in particular helping the development of the PDO (*Planning and Development Office*) in the Provinces.

On 19-24 October the Councillor went to the Vice Province of Haïti for a second time, following up the coordination of the help needed for the reconstruction and visiting the four houses outside the capital. On 20-21 with two other Councillors for the Salesian Mission he was involved in the meeting of Provincials from the Interamerica Region taking place in Port-au-Prince.

In Cuba (24-28 October) Fr Klement, with the Delegate of the Provincial met all the confreres and all the candidates for Salesian life, from Santiago, Cuba to Havana. The number and high quali-

ty of the missionary groups in our parishes, youth centres and social communication centres is exemplary. In Guatemala (CAM) the first fact-finding visit to the Vicariate Apostolic of El Petén entrusted to the Salesian Congregation (Bishop Mario Fiandri, SDB), together with our missions in Carchá, in the diocese of Alta Verapaz (29 October - 3 November), was the final stage of the journey in America.

Returning to Europe, the Councillor, together with Sr. Alaide Deretti FMA, led the Days of Missionary Studies at Prague (CEP), 4-9 November, on the "First Christian Proclamation" in Europe. Taking part were about 30 SDB, FMA, a Salesian Cooperator and a VDB, from the three European Regions.

The visit for missionary promotion in the four Provinces of Poland (10-13 November) had been well prepared in synergy between the National Centre in Warsaw (PLE) and the Kraków Centre (PLS). During the four day Fr Klement met all the Provincials, the Delegates for Missionary Promotion as well as the Delegates for Youth Ministry and Social Communication, and visited the Postnovitiate in Łódź and the Theologate in Kraków. On 11 November the anniversary of Don Bosco's

first Missionary Expedition, the Councillor entrusted to the Madonna of Czestochowa the letter of appeal for the 2011 Missionary Expedition.

The last stage was dedicated to two countries in Asia. In the Province of Vietnam (15-20 November) Fr Klement took part in two events of the Province Missionary Day (Dalat and Xuan Hiep), meeting all the 200 young confreres in initial formation, representatives of groups of the Salesian Family, evaluating with the Commission for Missionary Promotion and the formation teams the discernment and preparation process for the 65 missionaries sent from Vietnam in the last 10 years. On the final days before returning to Rome the Councillor visited some works in Hong Kong, China (21-24 November).

In this semester Fr Placide Carava (FRB) has taken the place of Fr Dionisio Pacheco as Secretary of the Department and the one responsible for the Course of Ongoing Formation for missionaries

The Councillor for the Africa - Madagascar Region

When the summer plenary session of the General Council was

over, the Regional Councillor for Africa and Madagascar, Fr Guillermo Basaños, left Rome on 30 July, stopping at the weekend in Luan-da (Angola), where he was able to greet the confreres and also take part in a session of the Provincial Council.

On 3 August he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the East Africa Province* (AFE), having a meeting with the Provincial Council in Dar Es Salaam. This Extraordinary Visitation filled almost the whole of his calendar until 24 November, the date of the final meeting with the Provincial Council this time in Nairobi.

In this period Fr Basaños was able to visit each of the 27 houses in the Province, including those in the Delegation of the Sudan. He met personally 253 of the confreres for a chat, considering that the novitiate at Morogoro (Tanzania), the postnovitiate at Moshi (Tanzania) and the theologate at Utume (Nairobi) are interprovince formation houses and therefore contain a good number of confreres not belonging to the AFE Province. To reach all these houses the Regional Councillor covered 17,630 kilometres in the Province, about 9,000 by road, the rest by air.

During the Visitation he received the perpetual profession of two

confreres in the parish in Mafinga (Tanzania) and also presided at the first professions in the novitiate at Morogoro, on 15 August. On 15 September he took part in a meeting for Rectors at DBYES (Nairobi), followed by the celebration of the Province Feastday. On 26 October in Nairobi he was able to arrive in time for the funeral of the Salesian Brother Alfonso Morcelli: who had just begun his service as Economist of the Delegation of the Sudan and died quickly from a serious attack of malaria.

The Visitation of the *Delegation of the Sudan* began with a meeting with the Council of the Delegation on 20 August at Juba and ended with a meeting of the Rectors and the Council of the Delegation on 13 September. The whole period of his stay in Sudan was marked by the delicate political situation of the country which is preparing for the referendum on 9 January 2011.

The only parenthesis, which the Regional Councillor had during this Extraordinary Visitation, was the 9th meeting of the Provincials' Conference - CIVAM (between 3 and 6 November), followed by the Retreat for English-speaking Provincials, Provincial Councillors and Rectors of the Region (between 7 and 13 November). These

two important events were held in the Salesian house of Daleside (Johannesburg - South Africa) with the presence of the Rector Major and his Vicar. Fr Pascual Chávez presided at the CIVAM and preached the Retreat.

The Councillor for the Latin America - South Cone Region

After having taken part in the summer session of the General Council, on 1 August Fr Natale Vitali travelled to Guatemala City to take part – on 3 and 4 August – in the “Curatorium” of the Regional Centre of Formation for Salesian Brothers (CRESCO), which is for both the Regions of America. At present the Rector of the Centre is from the South Argentina Province. The Councillor also has a meeting with the six Brothers from the Region.

On 7 August he took part in the Provincial Council of Uruguay at Montevideo to present to the Provincial and his Council the letter of the Rector Major which brings to its completion the Extraordinary Visitation previously made.

On 10 August he began the *Extraordinary Visitation* of the “*Saint Pius X*” Province of Porto Alegre,

Brazil, with a meeting with the Provincial Council at which was read the letter of the Rector Major explaining the significance and the purpose of the Extraordinary Visitation; in addition the programme for the Visitation was considered. At present the Province has 102 Salesians and 16 communities.

Interrupting the Visitation between 26 and 28 August Fr Vitali took part in a meeting of the Provincials of Brazil, in Brasilia, together with the nine Provincials of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Between 28 and 30 with the Rector Major he took part in the celebration of the 50 anniversary of the city of Brasilia and of the Salesian presence in this city.

On 31 he returned to the Porto Alegre Province to take part in a meeting of the 13 parish priests gathered together to review and revise the SEPP for the parishes.

On 16 September during a visit to the Salesian house in Ascurra, he also took part in the annual reunion of the Salesian Past Pupils.

On his visit to Massaranduba, he took the opportunity to visit the birthplace of Fr Hélvecio Baruffi, the previous Regional, with the chapel where he was ordained priest; it is a place which has given to the Congregation three bishops and more than 20 Salesians.

On 24 September in Chile, he took part in the Feastday of the Province which has as its patron the Archangel Raphael. On 29 he said Mass in the "Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez" Salesian University which was celebrating the 28 anniversary of its foundation.

The same day 29 September he took part in a meeting of the Youth Ministry Provincial Delegates of the Region in the city of Santiago, Chile and between 30 September and 2 October in a meeting of the Provincials of the Region.

On 3 October he had a meeting with the two Provincials of Argentina.

Between 6 and 10 he was present at a meeting for those in charge of Voluntary Service at Regional level.

On 25-26 October he took part in a meeting of the two Provincial Councils of Argentina, in Córdoba.

On 9 November he took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council of Manaus Province and visited the prenovitiate and the postnovitiate; on 12 he attended a meeting of the Provincial Council of Campo Grande and visited the novitiate and postnovitiate.

On 25 November he met with all the Rectors and the Provincial Council of Porto Alegre to bring

the Extraordinary Visitation to an end with the final report.

On 27 and 28 November he took part in the expanded team of the Salesian Centre for Ongoing Formation (CSRFP) in Quito, at which a Salesian from the South Cone Region was also present.

Afterwards he returned to Rome for the winter session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Interamerica Region

At the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council, Fr Esteban Ortiz González, Councillor for the Interamerica Region, on Saturday 31 July travelled to Caracas to meet the Provincial of Venezuela, Fr Luciano Stefani, and some members of his Council, to discuss, among other things the preparation for the Extraordinary Visitation which will take place in the first part of the year 2011.

On 2 August he went to Guatemala (CAM) to take part in the "Curatorium" of the Regional Centre of Formation for Salesian Brothers (CRESCO), which was held on 3 and 4 August.

On Thursday 5 August he travelled to Bogotá (COB) to take part

on Friday 6, in the "Curatorium" of the Formation Community for students of Theology from the Provinces of the Andes (BOL, COB, COM, ECU, PER).

On Saturday 7 August he went to Medellín (COM) and met the Provincial Fr Vidal Niebles and the Provincial Council in order to present the letter with the recommendations of the Rector Major after the recent Extraordinary Visitation of the Province which was in the first part of this year (2010).

On Sunday 8 August the Regional Councillor travelled to La Paz (Bolivia) and on Monday 9, began the inter-community meetings to launch the consultation prior to the appointment of the new Provincial of Bolivia. On Tuesday 10 in Cochabamba he had a meeting with the confreres of the area and also with the Provincial Fr Juan Pablo Zabala and his Council. Finally he had the last meeting at Santa Cruz on Wednesday 11. In all, 125 confreres from the Province took part in the meetings.

On Thursday 12 he went to Panamá where the same day there began a meeting of the confreres from the Province of Central America (CAM) to start the consultation process for the new Provincial. On Friday 13 he had a

meeting with the confreres from the communities of Costa Rica and on Saturday 14 with those from the communities in Nicaragua. On Sunday 15 Fr Esteban Ortiz went to San Salvador and met the Provincial Fr Luis Corral, and some members of his Council, while the following day there was a meeting with the Salesians from El Salvador. On Tuesday 17 he went to Honduras to meet the confreres from this country, and so had the opportunity to greet Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga SDB, Archbishop of Tegucigalpa; he said Mass with a group of confreres who were attending a course on Youth Ministry. Finally on Wednesday 18 August in Guatemala there was last meeting for the CAM Province. All together 157 confreres took part in the meetings in the Province.

On Thursday 19 August he went to New York to visit his family and stayed with them until 26, when he left for Guadalajara, Mexico. Here in the name of the Rector Major he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the "Christ the King and Mary Help of Christians" Province (MEG)*.

On Thursday 27 he was with the Provincial Fr Salvador Cleofas Murguía Villalobos and his Council. In the evening of the same day

with the Community of the Theologate (Tlaquepaque), the visits to the houses (30) began.

On Sunday 17 October he interrupted the visits to the communities to go to Port-au-Prince (Haïti) and coordinate the annual meeting of the Provincials of the Inter-america Region. The meeting took place between 18 and 22 October in the house of the Bishops' Conference. Present during two days were the Councillors for the Mission (Fr Fabio Attard, Councillor for Youth Ministry; Fr Filiberto González Plasencia, Councillor for Social Communication; Fr Václav Klement, Councillor for the Missions). Also present at the meeting were the Rector of the CRSFP, Fr Jaime Morales, and the Rector of the CRESCO, Fr Santiago Negrotti.

The week began with a day of recollection led by Bishop Pierre-André Dumas of Anse-à-Veau and Miragoâne (Haïti). At the end of the meeting there was a visit from Archbishop Louis Kébreau SDB of Cap-Haïtien and President of the Bishops' Conference of Haiti.

On Wednesday 20 all the Provincials of the Interamerica Region with the Councillors for the Mission took part in the blessing of the foundation stone of the new Provincial House which was done by Fr Ducange Sylvain, Superior

of the "Blessed Philip Rinaldi" Vice Province (HAI).

On Saturday 23 October the Provincials paid a visit to the Salesian houses (6) in the area of Port-au-Prince, and were able to see for themselves the destruction caused by the earthquake, as well as the work the Salesians and lay people are doing to re-launch the Salesian presence.

In spite of the great difficulties they are still having to face, the confreres in Haiti were most attentive to the needs of the Provincials during the week.

On Sunday 24 October the Regional Councillor left Haïti and for two days went to Mexico City where he had a meeting with the Provincial Council of MEM and visited the inter-province communities of the novitiate (Coacalco) and of the postnovitiate (Huipulco).

On Wednesday 27 he recommenced his visits to the communities of MEG, which occupied him until 21 November, when he concluded his rounds of the Province in the Provincial House. Finally on Thursday morning 25 he presented his final report of the Extraordinary Visitation to the assembly of the Rectors and confreres numbering 159, who gathered in the Anáhuac-Revolución College. In the afternoon there

was a meeting with the Provincial Council.

On Friday 26 the Regional travelled to Quito to take part in the first meeting of the expanded team of the Salesian Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation (CSRFP), composed of: the two Regionals for America, the team of the Centre, the Coordinators for Formation in CISBRASIL and CISUR, the Delegates for the Departments for Formation and Youth Ministry.

On Sunday 28 November he began the return journey to Rome, to attend the winter plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the East Asia - Oceania Region

The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region, Fr Andrew Wong, left Rome on 4 August to undertake some visits in the Region. Between 5 and 7 August he visited the North Philippines Province. Here on 7 he presided at a meeting of the "Curatorium" of the Region. For this occasion Fr Francesco Cereda and Fr Chrys Saldanha were present.

Between 8 and 13 August the Regional took part in the joint meeting of the sectors for Formation and Youth Ministry. Fr Fabio

Attard and Fr Francesco Cereda, with their collaborators, led a Regional meeting of Delegates for these sectors.

Between 14 and 23 August the Regional paid a visit to the new Delegation of Indonesia. During his visit he had the opportunity to meet the Bishop of Surabaya, Mons. Vincentius Wisaksono.

Afterwards between 23 and 27 August the Regional visited the missionary community of Korea in Yanji, China. Then between 23 and 30 he paid a visit to the Korea Province.

On 31 August Fr Wong arrived in Japan to carry out the *Extraordinary Visitation* of this Province. He continued with the visit between 1 and 18 September. On the 14 he attended the funeral of Fr. Francis Drohan from the community of Miyazaki. Between 19 and 25 September the Regional preached the Retreat to a group of confreres. Then between 26 September and 31 October he continued with the duties of the *Extraordinary Visitation*. On 20 October he took part in the funeral of the confrere Brother Stefano Romelli from the community of Nakatsu.

Between 24 and 30 October the Regional preached the Retreat for the Provincial and his Council and all the Rectors of the Province.

Then between 31 October and 3 November he continued the Extraordinary Visitation. On 4 and 5 November he had meetings with the Provincial and his Council and all the Rectors of the Province, meetings which marked the end of the Extraordinary Visitation.

On 6 November Fr Andrew Wong went to Manila to be with his family at the funeral of his eldest sister. Then between 7 and 10 November, he was in the theological studentate of Parañaque, Manila.

Between 12 and 16 November the Regional was in Thailand to carry out the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial. Afterwards between 16 and 22 he visited the Solomon Islands. On 23 November, while he was travelling from the Solomon Islands towards Rome, Fr Andrew had a severe back pain which made him stop in Manila, for hospital treatment between 23 and 27. Then on 28 and 29, he was in a small clinic in the Province to continue the treatment.

On 30 November he returned to Rome.

The Councillor for the South Asia Region

Returning to the Region after the conclusion of the summer ple-

nary session of the General Council Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga took part in the ordination of a confrere from the Middle East Province (MOR), with the Provincial Fr Maurizio Spreafico. Then on 4 August he paid a visit to the new theologate in Chennai; here the following day he met a group of confreres. The Councillor then went to Bhopal to take a course in Hindi for ten days. On 17 August he visited the novitiate at Siliguri and the new University Institute in the same city. The following four days were spent making the canonical visitation of the houses in Nepal, belonging to the Kolkata Province. Then the Regional travelled to New Delhi for a three day visit to the SPCSA community.

On 25 August Fr Arokiam began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Mumbai Province (INB)*. This Visitation took him to four States in India, – Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan – visiting 27 communities canonically erected and 12 other Salesian presences. He also visited the community of Salmiya, in Kuwait, belonging to INB, between 27 and 29 October. The Extraordinary Visitation ended on 31 October with the final conference to the confreres gathered in the Provincial House in Mumbai.

During his Visitation the Regional met personally about 260 confreres and 40 lay co-workers, various groups, visited the houses of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and saw groups of the Salesian Family etc. He also met the groups of confreres in initial formation, the lay confreres, groups of confreres in various areas of the Province and the Provincial Council etc.

In the month of September, during the time of the Visitation, between 2 and 4, Fr Arokiam also chaired a meeting of the Assembly of the Provincials' Conference (SPCSA); in addition he took part in a meeting of the Principals of Salesian schools in India between 24 and 26, with 165 confreres and guests.

In the first two weeks of November, the Regional travelled to the Provinces of Chennai (INM) and Tiruchy (INT) and met all the confreres in nine groups in various cities while carrying out the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial in these two Provinces. Leaving for Rome on 17 November, Fr Arokiam stopped for two days in the community of Fujairah (UAE), and for 5 days in the Province of Ethiopia and Eritrea. He arrived back in Rome on 26 November to take part in the

third meeting of the Provincials of Europe on the "Project for Europe".

The Councillor for the North Europe Region

Fr Marek Chrzan, after his appointment as Councillor for the North Europe Region in the place of Fr Štefan Turanský, who had retired on health grounds, and after having taken part in the final summer session of the Council, returned to the Krakow Province to tidy things up and to hand over the government of the Province to the Vice Provincial until the appointment of the new Provincial.

In August he paid a short visit to some communities. On Sunday 8, in the Marian Sanctuary of Szczyrk he presided at Mass being broadcast on Polish TV. At Oświęcim on 17 August, he took part in the patronal feast of the 'Saint Hyacinth' Province and met the Provincial Council. He then visited the Warsaw Province meeting the Provincial Council and taking part in the Youth Festival ("Camp Bosco") at Czerwińsk. After this he took part in the Youth Festival of the Piła Province at Trzciniec; he presided

at the perpetual profession and the renewal of temporary religious profession of the young confreres of the Piła Province; then he met the Provincial Council. He then visited the Wrocław Province where he took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council and paid a short visit to the novitiate at Kopiec. On 26 August he took part in the SYM Youth Forum for the whole of Poland held at Łódź in the Warsaw Province.

At the beginning of September he went to London to attend an English language course. In this period he also visited the Salesian communities in Great Britain.

On 1 October he presided at the opening of the Academic Year at the Polish Inter-Province Studentate of Theology at Kraków.

Then in Rome he took part in the *intermediate session* of the General Council held between 4 and 13 October.

Afterwards he paid a visit to get to know some of the Provinces. In Poland he took part in the meetings of the confreres for the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial for Krakow. In Hungary he took part in the blessing of the new hostel for young gypsies in our school. He also visited some of the houses in the Hungarian Province and met the

confreres. Later he spent four days in Croatia and another four in Slovenia, getting to know the confreres and introducing himself. On 30 October he returned to Rome for the concluding part of the International Congress "Don Rua in History". Afterwards he paid a visit to some of the houses in Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic with the intention of getting to know the confreres and introducing himself. Between 14 and 17 November, he was present at the end of the Extraordinary Visitation of the German Province meeting the Provincial Council, the Rectors and lay people with responsibilities in the works. He took part in the solemn Mass at the end of the Visitation at which the Visitor Fr Tadeusz Rozmus presided.

Then he paid a visit to the Province of North Belgium, and on 20 November chaired a consultation meeting in view of the appointment of the new Provincial. On 24 November he returned to Rome to take part in the meeting of the Polish Provincial Conference and the EST. Afterwards he took part in the meeting of the Provincials of Europe, which was followed by the beginning of the winter plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the West Europe Region

At the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Regional Fr José Miguel Núñez left Rome to travel to Turin to take part in the International "Campobosco" for Spain and Portugal (and with the participation for the first time of a French group), held in the places associated with Don Bosco during 1-8 August. On 8 August he travelled to Madrid and then to Loyola (San Sebastián) for a meeting with young confreres from the Region in the context of the "Project for Europe", held between 12 and 15 August.

At the end of the meeting on 15 August Fr José Miguel went to Granada to preside at the first profession of the novices from Spain. On 17 he took part in the *Curatorium* of the novitiate.

Between 17 and 20 the Councillor made a short private retreat.

Between 21 and 28 August he spent a week's rest with his family.

Between 31 August and 5 September he preached a Retreat to the Salesians of the Gesù Maestro community (Rome - UPS) at Fatima (Portugal).

On 6 and 7 September he had meetings with the Salesian com-

munities from Portugal at Porto and at Manique to carry out the consultation process in view of the appointment of the new Provincial by the Rector Major during the winter session.

Between 10 and 12 September the Councillor took part in the meeting of the Formation and Youth Ministry Departments with those responsible in the West Europe Region in the house at El Plantío (Madrid).

Between 13 and 15 Fr José Miguel took part in the meetings of the Youth Ministry National Centre in Madrid.

On 16 September the Regional began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Valencia Province*. The Visitation lasted for two and a half months with some breaks for other events in the Region and the Congregation.

Between 8 and 12 October Fr José Miguel took part in the meeting of Rectors in the West Europe Region at Sanlúcar la Mayor (Seville), at which the Rector Major and his Vicar were present.

Similarly the Councillor went to Madrid on 23 October to accompany the Rector Major at the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the magazine "Catequistas" and the 50th anniversary of the magazine "Misión Joven".

Between 2 and 4 November he chaired the meeting of the Iberian Conference in Madrid, and on 19 November the Councillor took part in the conclusion of the formation course and the presentation of diplomas for senior school staff in Spain, during which Fr José Miguel gave a conference entitled "Educating in difficult times".

Afterwards the Councillor returned to Valencia to conclude the Extraordinary Visitation with a meeting with the Provincial Council and with the Rectors.

On 21 November he paid a visit to the students of Theology at Martí-Codolar in Barcelona. On 23-24 he also visited the post-novices in Burgos.

On 26 November Fr José Miguel returned to Rome to take part in the meeting of the Provincials of Europe and later in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Italy and Middle East Region

When the summer plenary session of the General Council ended, Fr Pier Fausto Frisoli directed the second stage of the Course for new Rectors in the Region at Genzano,

Rome, between 31 July and 2 August. Then he went to visit his parents. Afterwards he met the young confreres on the course of preparation for perpetual profession in Turin-Valdocco and Messina 'Saint Thomas.' He then returned to the Pisana to study and prepare for future engagements. On 8 September he received the first professions of the novices in Rome - Sacred Heart.

On 13 September he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Circumscription of Central Italy (ICC)*. In succession he visited the following communities: Rome Ss. Peter and Paul, Rome Saint Laurence, Formia, Cagliari Sant Paul, Cagliari Institute, Selargius, Lanusei, Nuoro, Sassari, Gualdo Tadino, Terni, Perugia, Florence, Scandicci, Figline Val d'Arno, Colle di Val d'Elsa, Livorno, Rome Saint Callistus, Civitavecchia.

In the course of the Extraordinary Visitation there were several other engagements: the Provincials' Conference of the Region (Rome, 20-22 September), Formation Course for new Rectors - third stage (Palermo, 15-17 November).

On 25 November he returned to the Generalate and between 26 and 28 November took part in the III Meeting of the Provincials of Europe.

The Secretary General

Implementing the guidelines for the planned programme of the six-year period, the Secretary General Fr Marian Stempel in agreement with the Rector Major and the Regional Councillors organised in this period *a meeting of the Provincial Secretaries of the Latin America - South Cone Region* held at Santiago, Chile between 25 and 29 October.

As was indicated in the letter calling the meetings, their purpose was updating and an exchange of ideas. Subjects on the agenda were those of particular interest to the Secretary and the Provincial Secretariat with regard to documentation, to the statistics, juridical aspects, the archives and libraries.

Special attention was given to the archives and to the various juridical issues. The active participation of the Secretaries and the fraternal atmosphere of the meetings should be mentioned, as well as the value of the opportunity to get to know the different situations.

After the meeting at Santiago, thanks to the kindness of the Provincial and several confreres, the Secretary was able to visit some of the houses in the Province admiring the rich variety of the works and the commitment of the confreres.

A special word of thanks for their hospitality is due to the community of the house of Santiago - La Florida Theologate, who hosted the Secretaries and gave them a Salesian welcome.

5.1 The “Salesian Proper” of the Liturgy of the Hours

We print below the preface written by the Rector Major for the book “LITURGIA DELLE ORE – PROPRIO SALESIANO” recently published – for the present in the official version in Italian – an update of the first edition produced in 1994.

As the Rector Major writes, the update has been made necessary following the recognition by the Church of new Blesseds and Saints of the Salesian Family.

The work was undertaken in the first place by a Commission set up for the purpose by the Rector Major, then by the Councillor for Formation jointly with the Procurator General, in view of his role of presenting the texts to the Congregation for Divine Worship, and receiving from them suggestions before the necessary approval.

The opportunity was also taken to improve the layout and printing, harmonising them with the texts of the Liturgy of the Hours of the Universal Church.

In these last few years the Church has recognised a number of new Blesseds and Saints belonging to various groups of the Salesian Family. This has necessi-

tated an updating of the Salesian Liturgical Calendar and also the preparation of the proper liturgical texts for the Liturgy of the Hours. Contributing to this work of revision and updating has been a Liturgical Commission which I set up and which I sincerely thank. Among the new Blesseds and Saints introduced into the Salesian Calendar have also been considered some figures of note who have had close links with Salesian history such as for example Blessed Pope Pius IX.

The Salesian Family has within it a variety of vocations which reflect the wonderful creativity of the Holy Spirit in raising up charisms in the Church and all of which have Don Bosco as father. We are grateful to God, because we recognise that indeed the Salesian Family is a “Family of Saints”. The different examples of holiness offer us a multiplicity of forms of Salesian spirituality, which have their origins in the same source and offer us the possibility of choosing among so many models of holiness. We therefore have shining examples to imitate and a great variety of intercessors to invoke.

The Proper Calendar and Liturgy of the Hours have received on

the part of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments a specific approval for each of the three groups of the Salesian Family which have requested it: The Salesian Society of Saint Francis of Sales, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and the Institute of the Volunteers of Don Bosco. The respective decrees of approval are reproduced.

These texts can be of help to all the groups and the members of the Salesian Family in living to the full the Gospel according to the style which is proper to the charism received, to celebrate the marvels/wonders of God in his saints, to continue the commitment to holiness in the liturgy of life. All, therefore, can draw strength and grace from these overflowing riches of the liturgy.

“In the various types and duties of life, one and the same holiness is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God and who obey the voice of the Father, worshipping God the Father in spirit and in truth. These souls follow the poor Christ, the humble and cross-bearing Christ in order to be made worthy of being partakers in his glory. Every person should walk unhesitatingly according to his

own personal gifts and duties in the path of a living faith which rouses hopes and works through charity” (*Lumen gentium* 41). We are all therefore called to holiness. May this liturgy inspire in us resolutions of holiness. May Mary Help of Christians, Don Bosco and the Saints and Blesseds of the Salesian Family support us in our efforts.

Rome, 8 September 2010.

*Feast of the Birthday
of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Fr Pascual CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA
Rector Major

5.2 Decree on the heroicity of the virtues of the Venerable Fr Giuseppe Quadrio, SDB

Below in the original Latin version and in an English translation (from the Italian) is the text of the Decree regarding the heroicity of the virtues of the Servant of God Fr Giuseppe Quadrio SDB, published on 19 December 2009. In virtue of this Decree the Servant of God is declared Venerable.

LATIN TEXT

CONGREGATIO
PRO CAUSIS SANCTORUM
TAURINENSIS
BEATIFICATIONIS et CANONIZATIONIS
VENERABILIS SERVI DEI
IOSEPHI QUADRIO
SACERDOTIS PROFESSI
E SOCIETATE SANCTI FRANCISCI SALESI
(1921-1963)
DECRETUM SUPER VIRTUTIBUS

«Dominum Christum sanctificate in cordibus vestris, parati semper ad satisfactionem omni poscenti vos rationem de ea, quae in vobis est, spe» (1 Pt 3,15).

Haec beati Petri Apostoli adhortatio idoneum ad intellegendam vitam et opus spirituale Servi Dei Iosephi Quadrio esse potest exordium, qui totam vitam impendit, praesertim vero in munere magistri, quo enituit, mysterii Dei pulchritudine demersus, ad veritatem divinam, quam ut intimius amplectaretur et aliis diligenter tradere posset perquisivit, cum fide et humilitate summopere accedens.

Venerabilis Servus Dei Iosephus Quadrio Vervii prope Sondrium in Italia die 28 mensis Novembris anno 1921 e modesta agricolarum familia christiana pietate penitus informata natus est, in qua solidam humanam et religiosam in-

stitutionem recepit. Infantiam in scholae assiduitate, in doctrinae christianae studio, in liturgicarum celebrationum participatione et in rusticis operibus degit. His in rerum adiunctis, humilitate atque ima evangelica pietate suffultis, puer Iosephus expressam iam animadvertit peculiarem inclinationem religiosae vocationis. Prima Eucharistica Communio, quam nonum aetatis annum agens percepit, et voluntarium votum perpetuae castitatis, quod cum undecimum annum implevit privatim professus est, in honorem Beatae Mariae Virginis emissum, huius praecipui atque impensi spiritualis proventus denotaverunt initium.

Vix duodennnis, Servus Dei, postquam Sancti Ioannis Bosco vitam et opera legerat, domino Aloysio Sartorio parrocho suscitante, apud Institutum Missionale Salesianum Eporediense se recipi postulavit, ubi enim mense Septembris anno 1933 pervenit: quod paulatim fervens eius desiderium, iam inde ab infantia tempore processum, omnino omnesque per annos Domino inserviendi perfecit. Insequentibus annis, professionem religiosam temporariam Iosephus emisit ac dein in studia philosophiae et theologiae sollicito animo incubuit; perpetuis demum vo-

tis professis, die 16 mensis Martii anno 1947 presbyteratu auctus est. Exitus studiorum dissertatio fuit ad Doctoratum assequendum de Assumptione Beatae Mariae Virginis, quam apud Pontificiam Universitatem Gregorianam in Alma Urbe discepsavit.

Illis institutionis annis, Servus Dei non modo severo intellectuali officio valde emicuit, sed etiam fervida pro iuvenibus belli causa vagis et derelictis pastoralis navitate. Hac in actiosa diligenti opera erga iuvenes egenos et afflictos, Iosephus agentem efficacemque spiritum Fundatoris se adumbrare posse ostendit.

Munerum fastigium, quibus Servus Dei totam vitam functus est, Theologiae dogmaticae magisterium fuit: hic altus potissimusque cardo ipse exstitit et testis mirabilis Evangelii; in cotidiana vicissitudine vitae virtutem praestitit, qua officium suum religiosi, presbyteri et magistri profunda ac benigna suipsius abnegatione servare valuit, numquam otium seu requiem sibi concedens et consensum rationalis fidei investigationis cum actiosa theologia iugiter persectans.

Vita Servi Dei ex ardenti quadam mystica intelligentia etiam hausit, acuta notione de primario Christi ac Matris Dei loco in hi-

storia salutis signata. Omnis eius conversatio constans fuit intentio ad sanctitatem atque ad exercitium modo heroum omnium christianarum virtutum. Dominus Iosephus, enim, omnibus in adiunctis benignum, familiarem et hospitalem se exhibuit. Licet universali scientia, praesertim theologica, eruditus, humilitate, simplicitate et mira morum humanitate insignem se praebuit. Summum ab ipso traditum praeceptum praesertim in decursu eius ultimi morbi patuit: nam, die 4 mensis Iunii anno 1960, post aliquot signa aegritudinis, diagnosis ei patefacta est tumoris granulosi maligni glandularum lymphaticarum. Servus Dei autem nuntium hoc funestum renovato fidei impetu accepit, qui eum virtutibus decoris et tranquillitatis animi honestabat, quas per omne acerbiae huius probationis insequens triennium retinuit. Aspera enim infirmitas aequo vultu et iugi misericordiae Dei fiducia suscepta in eo aditus spiritualis fortitudinis, praemii supremi et sacrificii pro necessitate fratrum facta est.

Temporibus quoque recessus in valetudinario, Servus Dei Iosephus numquam ministerium praeteriit, quin etiam visitabat fovebatque aegrotos et medicos, infirmorum ministros atque omnes

nosocomii servitio addictos cohortabatur. Receptaculum eius verum consistorium fuit cuiusque ad Evangelium accedere, consolationem excipere et remissionem peccatorum adipisci quaereret.

Dies protinus ante mortem dominus Iosephus pro pulcherrimis faustissimisque habuit: exemplo suo testimonium praebeuit mortem omnium non esse finem, sed expectatum reditum ad Christum. Pace et tranquillitate circumfusus, Servus Dei, quadraginta et unum annos natus, die 23 mensis Octobris anno 1923, Augustae Taurinorum pie in Domino quievit. Quae conscia misericordiae Dei fiducia vixit, in cordibus multorum firmam persuasionem eum plenae ac perfectae sequelae Evangelii fuisse testem mors reliquit.

Hanc ob sanctitatis famam a die 21 mensis Ianuarii anno 1991 usque ad diem 10 mensis Novembris anno 1993 apud Curiam Taurinensem Inquisitio Dioecesana Principalis et a die 2 mensis Octobris anno 1991 ad diem 18 mensis Iulii anno 1992 apud Vicariaturn Urbis Inquisitio Rogatorialis celebratae sunt, quarum auctoritas et vis iuridica a Congregatione de Causis Sanctorum decreto diei 24 mensis Iunii anno 1994 probatae sunt. Positione ex more confecta,

die 5 mensis Iunii anno 2009, in Congressu Peculiari Consultorum Theologorum prospero cum exitu disceptatum est an Servus Dei more heroum virtutes christianas exercuisset.

Patres Cardinales et Episcopi in Sessione Ordinaria diei 1 mensis Decembris anno 2009, audita relatione Excellentissimi ac Reverendissimi Domini Hieronymi Grillo, Episcopi emeriti Centumcellarum - Tarquiniensis, Causae Ponentis, professi sunt Servum Dei virtutes theologales, cardinales iisque adnexas heroum modo coluisse.

Facta demum de hisce omnibus rebus Summo Pontifici Benedicto XVI per subscriptum Archiepiscopum Praefectum accurata relatione, Sanctitas Sua vota Congregationis de Causis Sanctorum excipiens rataque habens, hodierno die declaravit: *Constare de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe et Caritate tum in Deum tum in proximum, necnon de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia et Fortitudine iisque adnexis in gradu heroico Servi Dei Iosephi Quadrio, sacerdotis professi e Societate Sancti Francisci Salesii, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur.*

Hoc autem decretum publici iuris fieri et in acta Congregatio-

nis de Causis Sanctorum Summus Pontifex referri mandavit.

Datum Romae,
die 19 mensis Decembris a. D. 2009.

† ANGELUS AMATO, S.D.B.
Archiepiscopus Tit. Silensis
Praefectus

† MICHAEL DI RUBERTO
Archiepiscopus Tit. Biccarensis
a Secretis

ENGLISH TEXT

CONGREGATION
FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

TURIN

BEATIFICATION and CANONISATION
OF THE VENERABLE SERVANT OF GOD

GIUSEPPE QUADRIO

PROFESSED PRIEST
OF THE SOCIETY OF SAINT FRANCIS OF SALES
(1921-1963)

DECREE CONCERNING THE VIRTUES

«Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have» (1 Pt 3,15)

This exhortation of the Blessed Apostle Peter could be a suitable introduction to understanding the life and spiritual work of the Servant of God Giuseppe Quadrio, who spent his whole life, especially in his role as a teacher, in which he distinguished himself, immersed in the beauty of the mystery of

God, drawing close with all his strength, with faith and humility to the divine truth, which he studied so as to be able to assimilate it more deeply and transmit it conscientiously to others.

The Venerable Servant of God Giuseppe Quadrio was born on 28 November 1921 at Vervio, near Sondrio, in Italy, into a modest Christian farming family, of deep piety, in which he received a sound human and Christian education. He passed his childhood going to school, studying Christian doctrine, taking part in liturgical celebrations and in farm work. In the combination of these duties undertaken with humility and deep evangelical piety, the boy Giuseppe was already conscious of an explicit and special inclination towards a religious vocation. His first Holy Communion which he made at nine years of age, and the spontaneous vow of perpetual chastity which he made privately, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary when he was eleven, marked the beginning of his remarkable and intense spiritual progress

Scarcely twelve years of age, the Servant of God, after having read the life and works of Saint John Bosco, encouraged by the parish priest Fr Luigi Sartorio, asked to be accepted at the Salesian Mis-

sionary Institute in Ivrea, which, in fact, he entered in September 1933: gradually this event brought to maturity the fervent desire he had nourished since his infancy to serve the Lord totally and for ever. In the following years Giuseppe made his temporary religious profession, and then seriously dedicated himself to the study of philosophy and theology; after taking his perpetual vows, on 17 March 1947 finally was ordained a priest. The high point of his studies was his obtaining a doctorate with a thesis on the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary which he defended at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

In those years of formation, the Servant of God not only greatly distinguished himself for his serious intellectual application, but also for his zealous pastoral activity on behalf of boys poor and abandoned on account of the war. In this active, diligent work for needy and unhappy young people, Giuseppe showed his ability to imitate the active and effective spirit of the Founder.

The most important of the tasks undertaken by the Servant of God throughout his life was the teaching of dogmatic Theology: in this he showed himself to be a major and very important authority, and

an admirable witness to the Gospel; in the events of daily life he showed the ability to carry out his duties as a religious, priest and teacher with a deep and amiable spirit of self-denial, never allowing himself holidays or rest periods and always trying to harmonise the intelligent investigation of the faith with an effective theology.

The life of the Servant of God also drew on a burning mystical intelligence marked by the penetrating understanding of the primary place of Christ and of the Mother of God in the history of salvation. His whole way of life was directed towards holiness and the exercise of the Christian virtues to an heroic degree. In fact, in every situation Fr Giuseppe showed his benevolence, affability and welcoming nature. Although thoroughly well-versed in all academic matters especially the theological, the way in which he manifested humility, simplicity and admirable human warmth in his dealings with people was quite extraordinary.

The best teaching he imparted was especially that given in the course of his final illness: in fact, on 4 June 1960, after some signs of sickness, he was informed that a malignant lymphogranuloma had been diagnosed. The Servant of God received this devastating

news with a renewed expression of faith which gave him the strength of a dignified peace of mind which he preserved throughout the following three years that this hard trial lasted. In fact, the painful illness which he accepted with a serene expression and constant trust in the mercy of God, became for him an occasion for spiritual fortitude, a higher reward and a sacrifice for the needs of his brothers and sisters.

Also while he was in hospital, the Servant of God Giuseppe never ceased to exercise his ministry, but rather he used to visit and encourage the sick and the medical staff, giving support to the nurses and all the ancillary staff of the hospital. His room there became a real meeting place for whoever might be in search of the Gospel, to receive comfort and the forgiveness of sins.

Fr Giuseppe considered the day immediately prior to his death to be among the most beautiful and blessed: through his example he bore witness that death is not the end of everything, but the long-awaited return to Christ. In peace and calmly, the Servant of God, at 41 years of age, on 23 October 1963 in Turin slept in the peace of the Lord. With that conscious trust in the mercy of God that he lived by,

his death left in the hearts of many the firm conviction that he had been a witness to the full and perfect following of the Gospel.

Because of this reputation for holiness, between 21 January 1991 and 10 November 1993 at the Curia of Turin the Primary Diocesan *Inquisitio* was conducted and between 2 October 1991 and 18 July 1992 at the Vicariate of Rome the Notary *Inquisitio*, the authority and juridical validity of which were recognised by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints with a decree dated 24 June 1994. The *Positio* then having been drawn up as usual, on 5 June 2009 it was discussed in the special assembly of the Theological Consultors with a favourable result.

The Cardinals and Bishops, in the Ordinary Session on 1 December 2009, having heard the report of His Lordship Bishop Gerolamo Grillo, Bishop emeritus of Civitavecchia-Tarquinia, declared that the Servant of God had practised to an heroic degree the theological, cardinal and other associated virtues.

After the undersigned Archbishop Prefect presented an accurate report of all this to the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, His Holiness, accepting and ratifying the votes expressed by the Congregation for

the Causes of Saints, on today's date declared that: *«It is certain that the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, towards God and one's neighbour as well as the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude and the other virtues connected with them were practised to an heroic degree by the Servant of God Giuseppe Quadrio, professed priest of the Society of Saint Francis of Sales, "in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur" [in view of eventual beatification and canonisation].»*

The Holy Father directed that this Decree be published and preserved among the Acts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Given at Rome,
on 19 December 2009.

† ANGELO AMATO, S.D.B.
Titular Archbishop of Sila
Prefect

† MICHELE DI RUBERTO
Titular Archbishop of Biccari
Secretary

5.3 New Salesian Cardinal: Archbishop Angelo AMATO

The Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, in the public Consistory held on 20 November 2010 in the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome, raised to the

dignity of Cardinal the Salesian Archbishop Angelo AMATO, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Born at Molfetta (Bari) on 8 June 1938, Angelo Amato made his first Salesian profession on 16 August 1956 in the novitiate at Portici, near Naples. He studied philosophy at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, obtaining a Licence in Philosophy. Perpetually professed on 28 June 1962, after the normal theological studies he was ordained priest in Rome on 22 December 1967. Later he obtained a Doctorate in Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1974.

Holding the Professorial Chair of Dogmatic Theology at the Salesian Pontifical University he was also Dean of the Faculty of Theology (1993-1999) and Vice-Rector of the University 1997-2000.

On 20 December 2002 he was appointed *Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* and consecrated Archbishop with the titular see of Sila on 6 December 2003 by the Servant of God Pope John Paul II

On 9 July 2008 he was appointed by the Holy Father Benedict XVI *Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.*

Now Benedict XVI has created him a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church in the Consistory of 20 November 2010, assigning him the Deaconate of Santa Maria in Aquiro in Rome.

5.4 New Salesian Bishops

Below are some news items regarding Salesian Bishops, including the appointment of a new Bishop, Bishop Enrico dal Covolo and the change of the see of two other Salesian Bishops.

1. **Bishop DAL COVOLO Enrico, Titular Bishop of Eraclea.**

On 15 September 2010 the Vatican Press Office gave the news of the appointment by the Holy Father Benedict XVI of Fr **Enrico DAL COVOLO, S.D.B.** as **Bishop**, assigning him the titular see of ERACLEA (Italy). The previous 30 June 2010 Benedict XVI had entrusted him with the role of Rector Magnificus of the Lateran Pontifical University in Rome.

The Episcopal Consecration of Bishop Enrico dal Covolo took place on 9 October 2010 in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, by H.E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone SDB, Secretary of State.

(In n. 408 of the A.G.C. details can be found of the religious and academic curriculum of Bishop Enrico dal Covolo).

2. **Archbishop VIAN MORALES Oscar Julio, Metropolitan Archbishop of Guatemala.**

On 2 October 2010 the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, accepting the resignation from pastoral responsibility presented by Cardinal Rodolfo Ignacio Quezada Toruño, according to the norms of the CIC, appointed **Mons. Oscar Julio VIAN MORALES SDB, Metropolitan Archbishop of GUATEMALA**, transferring him to this see from the Archdiocese of Los Altos, Quetzaltenango-Totonicapán (Guatemala).

Born on 18 October 1947 at Guatemala City, professed as a Salesian on 7 December 1965 in the Province of Central America, and ordained a priest in Guatemala City on 15 August 1976, Mons. Oscar Julio Vian Morales was appointed Vicar Apostolic of El Petén (Guatemala) on 30 November 1996, and given the titular see of Pupiana (cf. AGC 358, p. 96). He was consecrated Bishop at El Petén on 1 February 1997. On 19 April 2007 he was transferred from the Vicariate of El Petén to the Arch-

diocese of Los Altos, Quetzaltenango-Totonicapán.

3. Archbishop TAFUNGA MBAYO Jean-Pierre, Metropolitan Archbishop of Lubumbashi.

On 1 December 2010 the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, accepting the resignation from pastoral responsibility presented by Archbishop Floribert Songasonga Mwitwa, according to the norms of the CIC, appointed **Mons. Jean-Pierre TAFUNGA MBAYO SDB, Metropolitan Archbishop of LUBUMBASHI** (Democratic Republic of the Congo), where he had already been Coadjutor Archbishop since July 2008.

Born in Panda (Likasi), Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 23 July 1942, he made his first Salesian profession on 28 August 1965 in the Salesian Province of Central Africa. Perpetually professed on 20 February 1971, he was ordained priest at Likasi on 16 September 1972.

On 6 October 1992 he was appointed by John Paul II Bishop of the Diocese of Kilwa-Kasenga, and consecrated Bishop at Kasenga on 31 January 1993, by Archbishop Eugenio Kabanga of Lubumbashi.

On 10 June 2002 he was transferred to the see of Uvira (D.R.C.)

and then on 31 July 2008, to the Metropolitan See of Lubumbashi as Coadjutor Archbishop.

4. Archbishop EZZATI Riccardo, Metropolitan Archbishop of Santiago, Chile.

On 15 December 2010 the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, accepting the resignation from pastoral responsibility presented by Cardinal Francisco Javier Errázuriz Ossa, according to the norms of the CIC, appointed **Mons. Riccardo EZZATI SDB as Metropolitan Archbishop of SANTIAGO, CHILE**, transferring him to this see from the Archdiocese of Concepción (Chile), where he was the Ordinary.

Born on 7 January 1942 at Campiglia dei Berici, in the Province of Vicenza, in Italy, Riccardo Ezzati, following his Salesian missionary vocation, in 1959 immediately after secondary school studies went to Chile, where he made his novitiate a Quilpé, making his first profession on 31 January 1961. He did his philosophical studies at the Catholic University of Valparaíso and his theological studies at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, obtaining a Licence in Theology. Perpetually professed on 30 December 1966, he

was ordained priest on 18 March 1970. Afterwards he obtained a Licence in Religious Studies at the *Institut de Pastorale Catéchétique* in Strasbourg.

Rector of the Salesian house in Concepción between 1973 and 1978, then of La Florida, Santiago, in the philosophical-pedagogical studentate (1978-1983) and afterwards in that of theology, in 1984 he was appointed Provincial of the Salesian Province of Chile. At the end of his term of office in 1991, he was called to Rome as a collaborator in the Congregation

for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Appointed Bishop of Valdivia on 28 June 1996, he was consecrated on 8 September the same year. In July 2001 he was transferred to become Auxiliary Bishop in the Archdiocese of Santiago, Chile. Later on 27 December 2006 he was appointed Metropolitan Archbishop of Concepción. Now he returns to Santiago, Chile as Metropolitan Archbishop. Recently he was elected President of the Bishops' Conference of Chile.

5.5 Our dead confreres (3rd 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." (*Const.* 94).

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
L ACCORSI Giulio	Milano (Italia)	02-08-2010	99	ILE
L ÁLVAREZ AGUADO Juan	Madrid (Spagna)	19-08-2010	84	SMA
P ANDREOLETTI Mario	Alassio (Italia)	28-10-2010	88	ICC
P BAROSCO Luigi Natale	Treviso (Italia)	13-09-2010	85	INE
P BECK Jean-Marie	Toulon (Francia)	20-08-2010	88	FRB
P BERTOLUSSO Marcello	Belém (Brasile)	20-07-2010	76	BMA
P BONACOSCIA Arnaldo	Massa Carrara (Italia)	02-10-2010	92	ICC
P BORTOLOZZO Angelo	Torino	06-11-2010	91	ICP
P BOUCHERY Marcel	Bruxelles (Belgio)	27-09-2010	86	FRB
L BRIGNONE Giovanni	Torino	09-12-2010	88	ICP
P BRIONES Juan Antolín	Rosario, Santa Fe (Argentina)	14-08-2010	75	ARN
P BRÍTEZ ESTIGARRIBIA Emiliano	Fernando de la Mora (Paraguay)	04-11-2010	89	PAR
P BUSATO Bruno	Castello di Godego (Italia)	06-10-2010	75	INE
P CALCAGNO Raimondo	Messina (Italia)	05-10-2010	81	ISI
P CALEMARD Marius	Toulon (Francia)	05-11-2010	89	FRB
P CELESTINO Pedro	Belo Horizonte (Brasile)	12-11-2010	84	BBH
P COLUSSI Luciano	Calcutta (India)	11-10-2010	86	INC
L CORDEIRO Tristão de Oliveira	Niterói (Brasile)	14-10-2010	92	BBH
P CROCI Antonio	Torino	06-11-2010	84	ICP
P DA SILVA João Batista	Belém (Brasile)	20-09-2010	51	BMA
P DABBENE Bernard J.	San Francisco (U.S.A.)	09-09-2010	73	SUO
P DAMÁSIO Edgar	Manique do Estoril (Portogallo)	05-08-2010	77	POR
P DAU HAWNG Lucius	Anisakan (Myanmar)	17-09-2010	69	MYM
L DE JUAN SUTIL Matias	Belém (Brasile)	06-08-2010	79	BMA
P DEVITO Enrique	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	28-10-2010	89	ARS
L DHO Giuliano	Sesto San Giovanni (Italia)	03-12-2010	71	ILE
P DI BIASE Carmine	Salerno (Italia)	21-09-2010	85	IME
P DOBRŠEK Ivan	Stoney Creek (Canada)	22-08-2010	98	SUE
P DROHAN Francis	Beppu (Giappone)	12-09-2010	90	GIA
P D'SOUZA Crispin	Fatorda (Goa, India)	13-11-2010	74	INP
P EKKA Rajesh	Boko (Assam, India)	28-08-2010	35	ING
P ELEJALDE PANCORDO Alfredo	Bilbao (Spagna)	24-10-2010	55	SBI
P ELIZONDO Isidro	Barcelona (Spagna)	02-11-2010	77	SBA
L FAELLA Armando	Caserta (Italia)	06-10-2010	79	IME
P FELBER Franz	Martkoberdorf (Germania)	14-11-2010	70	GER
L FERNANDES Lindolpho	Belo Horizonte (Brasile)	16-12-2010	89	BBH
P FIORE Carlo	Rivoli (Italia)	08-08-2010	89	ICP
L FOGAGNOLO Paolo	Torino	20-10-2010	90	ICP
P FOLTIN Štefan	Beppu (Giappone)	02-08-2010	91	GIA

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
L FUENTE VEGAS Fermín	San Juan (Alicante, Spagna)	04-08-2010	94	SYA
L GIANNINI Serafino	Alasio (Italia)	12-12-2010	87	ICC
P GROSSO Roberto Constantino	Bahía Blanca (Argentina)	14-08-2010	91	ARS
L GUGLIELMINO Carmelo	Pedara (Italia)	14-08-2010	87	ISI
P HERGUETA TORREALBA Gustavo	Carrasquero (Venezuela)	19-10-2010	82	VEN
L HERRLER Cornelius	Benediktbeuern (Germania)	05-10-2010	85	GER
P HEYSE August	Heverlee (Belgio)	03-08-2010	84	BEN
P JENKO Janez	Ljubljana (Slovenia)	30-10-2010	87	SLO
P KELZENERG Rudolf	Bad Driburg (Germania)	19-10-2010	77	GER
P LABORDA FERRER Jesús	Barcelona (Spagna)	13-10-2010	67	SBA
P LANARO Giuseppe	Garbagnate (Italia)	18-09-2010	90	ILE
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P LAUDATO Francesco	Manaus (Brasile)	21-09-2010	77	BMA
L LE FLOC'H Jean-Louis	Guingamp (Francia)	29-09-2010	84	FRB
P LENFERT Alexander	Neunkirchen (Germania)	03-12-2010	79	GER
L LIROT Michel	Caen (Francia)	19-10-2010	89	FRB
P MÁSPOLI Isidro Edelmiro	General Arenales (Argentina)	23-09-2020	90	ARN
P MASSIDDA Aldo	Selargius (Italia)	06-11-2010	92	ICC
P MEIRELES Luiz de Andrade	Niterói (Brasile)	23-09-2010	83	BBH
L MÖLLER Bernhard	Bonn (Germania)	21-09-2010	86	GER
L MORCELLI Alfonso	Khartoum (Sudan)	23-10-2010	61	AFE
L MOREIRA Manuel	Mogofores (Portogallo)	07-12-2010	76	POR
P NEUMEIER Andreas	Würzburg (Germania)	20-09-2010	85	GER
P OBIDZIŃSKI Stanisław	Pieszyce (Polonia)	04-10-2010	76	PLO
P O'CONNOR Patrick Joseph	Tralee, Co. Kerry (Irlanda)	13-08-2010	91	IRL
P OLEKSY Stanisław	Częstochowa (Polonia)	22-11-2010	91	PLO
P PACE Mario	Ancona (Italia)	24-11-2010	85	ICC
P PASCUAL LAPORTA Gonzalo	Elche (Alicante, Spagna)	29-08-2010	84	SYA
P PATRON Leonzio	Torino	01-08-2010	94	ICP
P PAWLACZEK Jan	Łublin (Polonia)	05-08-2010	75	PLS
L PAZ CARRO Luis	Córdoba (Argentina)	27-08-2010	80	ARN
P PETRACCO Giovanni	Tokyo (Giappone)	15-08-2010	89	GIA
P PINAFFO Giuseppe	Torino	04-09-2010	76	ICP
P PLHAL Ferdinand	Stará Boleslav (Rep. Ceca)	19-11-2010	84	CEP
P POSFAI László	Székesfehérvár (Ungheria)	22-10-2010	88	UNG
P PRIVOZNIK Josef	Benediktbeuern (Germania)	18-09-2010	83	GER
L PUTHUR Thomas Mathai	Andheri (India)	12-12-2010	76	INB
P QUAGLIAROLI Francesco	Varazze (Italia)	30-07-2010	87	ICC
P QUÉRÉ Pierre	Marseille (Francia)	06-09-2010	77	FRB
P REYES NIEVA Carlos	México (Messico)	17-06-2010	78	MEM
P RIGO Flavio	Venezia-Mestre (Italia)	28-08-2010	87	INE
P ROBREDO GALGUERA Cosme	Lima (Perù)	06-10-2010	83	PER
<i>Fu Ispettore per sei anni</i>				
P ROLLET Charles	Toulon (Francia)	23-10-2010	86	FRB
L ROMELLI Stefano	Nagatsu-Nagasoe (Giappone)	18-10-2010	88	GIA
P ROSSI Giorgio (Facchini)	Civitanova Marche (Italia)	08-12-2010	72	ICC

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P SANTA MARIA Nicanor Garry	Pampanga (Filippine)	07-09-2010	56	FIN
P SCHIASSI Pietro	Arese (Italia)	08-12-2010	95	ILE
L SCHIPKE Wolfgang	Memmingen (Germania)	26-08-2010	77	GER
P SCHWARZ George	Makati, Manila (Filippine)	10-08-2010	95	FIN
L SCOLLARD Charles	Manzini (Swaziland)	24-08-2010	90	AFM
P SHAKAI Tarcisio	Esmeraldas (Ecuador)	27-08-2010	37	ECU
P SILLS Ricardo	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	31-10-2010	76	ARS
P SILVANO Silvio	Torino	07-12-2010	97	ICP
P TEIXEIRA Sirio Henriques	Belo Horizonte (Brasile)	26-07-2010	56	BBH
S TOPPO Vijay	Boko (Assam, India)	28-08-2010	28	ING
P TORRES MEZA Guillermo	Quito (Ecuador)	05-09-2010	87	ECU
P TRISOLINI John Fitzgerald	Seoul (Corea del Sud)	22-11-2010	74	KOR
P TSANG Peter Hing Sum	Melbourne (Australia)	10-12-2010	74	AUL
P VALLEJO CORONA Pedro	Irapuato, Guanajuato (Messico)	24-10-2010	72	MEG
P VAN LAER Leopold	Leuven (Belgio)	11-11-2010	74	BEN
P VASSALLO Mario Gerónimo	Córdoba (Argentina)	30-07-2010	84	ARN
P VÁZQUEZ Vicente	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	07-12-2010	92	ARS
P VENTUROLI Giorgio	Sondrio (Italia)	02-11-2010	80	ILE
P VIGANÒ Angelo	Arese (Italia)	21-11-2010	87	ILE
<i>Fu Ispettore per dodici anni</i>				
P VÍO HENRÍQUEZ Oscar Octavio	Santiago del Cile	15-08-2010	87	CIL
L WILLIAMS John	Nairobi (Kenya)	01-09-2010	69	AFE
L ZABRET Ludvik	Trstenik (Slovenia)	30-10-2010	87	SLO





