



acts

of the general council

year XCVII

january-june 2016

N. 422

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma

acts

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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**WITH JESUS
LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER
IN AN ADVENTURE OF THE SPIRIT!**

Strenna 2016

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Rome, 31 December 2015

1. GREETINGS AND A WORD OF EXPLANATION

My Dear Confreres,

In my mind and heart I still retain the unforgettable memories of the celebration of the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco which we experienced in the month of August in the Salesian holy land of Valdocco and Colle Don Bosco. It fills me with joy to hear the echoes of the celebrations which took place in so many corners of the world to mark this special event. Thanks to the Holy Spirit the Salesian Family is very much alive!

The bicentenary of the birth of our father Don Bosco has given us the opportunity to remember his life story, to deepen our understanding of his pedagogical inspirations and to relive some of the features of his spirituality. This was the programme proposed by my predecessor Fr Pascual Chavez – a very fruitful programme. Weaving together the threads of the history, the mission and the Salesian spirituality of the beginnings, we have discovered what it means to live our Salesian vocation with passion. Like every vocation ours too implies a love story between God and

a real person be it a woman, a man or a young person. Only by giving importance to the origins of our charism on which the Salesian vocation draws will we succeed in *planning together the mission to youth* which as the Salesian Family we have received, and make *appear with clarity the spirituality* from which we drink and draw nourishment.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Salesian Family I come to you in another year to present the Strenna and I do so with words of brotherly love and affection. I express this strong new desire to reach out to you with the same feelings that Don Bosco had. I know that many of you are waiting for this presentation. The Strenna demonstrates the riches of the family that we make up together. It is intended to be a help in linking us together in communion and in sharing mission ventures, moved by the Holy Spirit who in the Church of our times encourages us to follow new paths. This is why we are saying: ***“With Jesus, let us journey together in an adventure of the Spirit!”***

As you can read in the following pages I want to speak about God and about Jesus Christ who is the foundation of our personal lives and of our Salesian Family; however, at the same time I am speaking about the mission that I describe as “an adventure of the Spirit” and about the communion among us, with us as the Church which I describe using the expression “journey together”.

This period of service as Rector Major has enabled me to come to know better and to love more the Congregation and the Salesian Family. I have had the privilege of being able to be a witness of the many paths along which the Holy Spirit is leading our Family nowadays. I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is being very generous with all of us and expects from us on our part the same availability that He encountered in Don Bosco, Mother Mazzarello, Dominic Savio and the very many others who at the school of holiness in our great religious family were ready to follow Jesus, in a radical manner, allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit of God.

2. WITH JESUS!

Saying “WITH JESUS” at the beginning of the title of the Strenna tells us that He is at the beginning and the centre of all our reflections.

The journey we are proposing in these pages is much more than a pastoral strategy; it is a declaration that only with Jesus, in Jesus and through Jesus will we be able to undertake a journey that really is meaningful and decisive for our lives.

In a way similar to the calls of Jesus in the Gospel, today as then he gazes and looks attentively at every individual, into the depth of his or her heart, and from there makes his invitation to follow him heard. This is what the Christian life is about: the beginning of a vocation, hearing oneself called by name. It is essentially the *following of Jesus*.

It is Jesus who takes the initiative, who joins us on the journey, *who with kindness seeks a meeting*. His gaze of predilection and his personal call require a response full of trust and abandonment in him; because when Jesus calls someone to follow him he does not give them a detailed programme, neither giving reasons not imposing conditions. The call of Jesus involves someone in an adventure, in a situation of risk. It is a question of following the path he takes without a roadmap. Following Jesus means going to the trouble of getting to one's feet and setting off, not staying at the side of the road like a person watching someone going by who arouses enthusiasm or controversy or argument.

What we know about the calls of Jesus in the Gospel has been repeated down the centuries, and it is the same call that he has given to each one of us in the Salesian Family, and the one that he gives to every young person who meets him *and who wants and decides to be one of his own*. It is a decision that implies the daring of the disciple who overcomes every kind of fear and makes light of the difficulties inherent in the process of following, such as rejection, exclusion, incomprehension, or the risks.

Meeting Jesus, or better, being met by him provokes admiration, attraction, fascination. However that is not enough. Perhaps the most important experience that this following involves is personal friendship with the Master; a friendship that is understood and lived as dedication, faithfulness and trust. Where there is no personal friendship there can be no following, even though there may be other things such as enthusiasm and hard work to the point of exhaustion. The call brings us face to face with the splendid possibility of friendship, and demands heartfelt attachment to the person of Jesus and a radical change of life: a following and a walking with Jesus that becomes transformed into communion with him (*Jn* 1,31-51); a following and a walking with Jesus that is also a question of staying with him, given that it is linked to a personal experience that is truly an encounter (*Jn* 15, 14-16).

My dear Brothers and Sisters, what I have presented briefly, trying to get to the essentials, ought to be both the starting point and also the destination, the highest priority of our commitments as educators and evangelisers of the young. From this point forward the invitation I am giving to you is to pursue personally, sometimes with other educators in the thousands of centres of the Salesian Family around the world, and always with the young people – *always with them and always for them* – a faith journey in which our relationship with Jesus is rekindled. Yes, this is what it is all about! Allowing ourselves to be captivated by him as a person, allowing ourselves to be won over not only by an ideal or a mission but by the living God incarnate in him. Allowing ourselves to be gradually transformed by this God who is passionate about a life that is more worthy and happy for everyone.

We ourselves and especially our young people have a desire for God and a need for God. "Italy, Europe and the world have changed considerably in these two centuries but the soul of the young has not: even today boys and girls are open to life and to the encounter with God and with others, but there are so many of

them exposed to discouragement, spiritual anemia and marginalization,” Pope Francis says to us the Salesian Family.¹

And we have to be convinced that this opening of ourselves to a meeting with God, this need for God becomes a decisive event for all of us and especially for our young people, when the Christ of the Gospel, just as he is, is experienced as the one who gives full meaning to life, moving on “from admiration to knowledge, and from knowledge to intimacy, to love, to following, to imitation.”² This desire is an educational and pastoral challenge that we have to face up to if we want to cultivate and develop a Christian spirituality for our times.

When one understands this and begins to live it out, one’s personal perspectives often change, because each one of us becomes more aware of God’s free gift, that he loved and loves us, and fixes his gaze on each one of his sons and daughters. This urges us to seek very seriously this **encounter** which generally takes place gradually, which ordinarily matures slowly with the highs and lows of the limited human response, that takes time and space, that implies a process that is freely undertaken. It is for this reason, sharing his own personal experience and conviction, that Pope Francis, in an interview he gave at the beginning of his pontificate invites people “to embark on the adventure of seeking an encounter and of allowing themselves to be sought and allowing themselves to be encountered by God.”³

3. LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER

Thinking about life’s journey as the place in which everything is at stake and about what is the most important thing in it, we

¹ FRANCIS, *Like Don Bosco, with the young for the young*. Letter of Pope Francis to the Rector Major of the Salesians. Vatican City, Rome 2015.

² AGC 406, Letter of the Rector Major Pascua CHÁVEZ: *Bringing the Gospel to the young*. Rome 2010 p. 22.

³ FRANCIS *Interview given to Antonio Spadaro SJ*, Vatican City 21 September 2013.

can look at Jesus as presented in the Bible as he walks the roads of Galilee with his followers, meeting many people, preaching, healing... Jesus who walks the streets among the people, in their everyday lives, and sometimes surrounded by those in need, also by the curious, those seeking something different, those fascinated by him, those who are indifferent, those who see him as dangerous and want to get rid of him.

To pursue a path, in human terms is to be familiar with it and to recognize it, to know the places it goes through which we will come across further ahead, where the refreshing shady places are, and the springs. It is to experience walking on stony ground, climbing steep tracks, sometimes quite difficult and at others quite easy and peaceful. As in the case of a pilgrim who is walking in search of faith, or for some other reason associated with faith, so our pursuing the path of life with Jesus is a ***journey that we make in Him*** (Col 2,6), ***that we make with Him*** because he has fascinated us, and we do it united.

The message of the Strenna as we will be able to see in the challenges and the proposals in the final pages, is meant to emphasise very strongly that we undertake this journey this walking not alone but united among ourselves and with the young.

Why united? Because the community and ecclesial dimension is something essential in the Christian message – which we will be speaking about in these pages. Essentially, it is a question of an experience in which the believer feels supported by a great Love and by a community; a community on the move, which has a plan for the future. All this will mean that we are living a life that is worth living and which is the joy of being a Christian.⁴

⁴ Cf BENEDICT XVI. First interview granted to Vatican Radio before the XX World Youth Day in Cologne. Quoted by Pascual CHÁVEZ, in a Conference at the CISM (Italian Conference of Major Superiors), in Luis Fernando GUTIÉRREZ: *Discepoli e apostoli di Gesù Cristo*, CCS 2014, 222.

4. AN ADVENTURE OF THE SPIRIT

4.1. An adventure very different from any kind of search for novelty

In many cultures the word *adventure* has a primary significance that means something similar to a type of life in which people seek as the ultimate goal the living of new experiences, and in which elements such as insight, uncertainty, danger, good fortune, success or failure are essential.

This concept of adventure, understood in this way speaks to us about enterprising seekers after new emotions in which to discover unknown ways, to experience one's limits, and at the same time demonstrate one's capacity for taking risks. All of these things would be the absolutely necessary qualities of a good "adventurer."

From another point of view, and by way of an example, we know that the European concept of Romanticism considered that "travelling does not so much consist in exploring new places as in detaching oneself from one's native soil so as to come in contact with a world unknown. In this sense, the journey is formative when one returns changed... or does not return."⁵

The intention in these pages is to identify paths of interior life and spirituality in order to pursue a very special kind of adventure; *the adventure of the Spirit*.

4.2. The adventure of the Spirit is a *JOURNEY INTO THE INNER LIFE*

Those who are more *familiar* with the study of the *inner life* frequently begin their reflection saying that in recent years much

⁵ Francesc Xavier MARIN: *Interiorità ed esperienza psicologica*. In Autori Vari: *La interiorità, un paradigma emergente*, Madrid, PPC 2005, 107.

has been written on this subject: sometimes this is in reference to interior journeys that human beings try to pursue in order to recover the meaning of life; at other times to the yearning for the happiness that is always sought but often not found.

The danger of careless mistakes in this pursuit is great. In rather critical terms there is talk of prescriptions which are widespread and provide advice on how to acquire a healthy rhythm of life, or how to recover various aspects of psychic and spiritual health; how to achieve interior equilibrium; how to accept oneself in order to be happy, etc. It would seem that there is on offer a "spiritual supermarket" in which to choose and put in our shopping basket what most appeals to us. We find offerings that are esoteric, exotic, "new-age jewellery" or pseudo spiritualities of every kind.⁶

It can be seen that the danger lies in the false paths of interior life offered by the market or the idolatrous nature of certain invitations to an interior life that is a flight from the world. There is not even safety in "the ideology of obsessive monothematic self-fulfilment approach of 'what is happening to me?' 'how do I feel?' ... a universe that spins around one's own 'ego' and cuts one off from being available for service to and interest in others."⁷

I also found interesting a "metaphor" in which it is suggested that on certain occasions "one has the feeling that it has fallen to us to be living at a time when even the way of relating to oneself appears to have more in common with a hotel where one sometimes stays, rather than with the place where getting to know oneself is an enriching experience. Frequently we would seem to be closer to killing off the interior life than to fostering its strengthening."⁸

Even though what has been said so far, looked at positively, tells us about a search in the hope of filling the emptiness in lives,

⁶ Cf Cristina KAUFMANN: *Interiorità e Mistica Cristiana*, In Autori Vari, o.c. 53-54.

⁷ Dolores ALEIXANDRE: *Interiorità e Bibbia. Il Dio che si riceve nel nascondimento*. In Autori vari, o.c. 39.

⁸ Francesc Xavier MARIN: *Interiorità e esperienza psicologica*. In Autori Vari, o.c. p. 107.

it is certain that sometimes these searches are in response to a whole mass of personal disquiet deaf or silent, that reach the point of becoming unbearable. And it is in this situation that everyone, ourselves and our young people must not fall into the trap of narcissism that self-centredness that closes individuals in on their own interests and imprisons them in their own little world. This situation I am describing leads us to see in ourselves, the Salesian Family in the world and in the young people themselves with whom we share our lives that there is a real danger of losing, or having lost, (or simply of never having experienced) a taste for the interior life and the ability to discover the depths in our own lives.

It is not possible to cultivate an interior life if one “uses up” the time in being spectators of the lives of others, simply stopping and looking at outward appearances. I believe that we have to take this challenge more seriously and *accompany* our young people and those with whom we interact so that we may all live in a state of enquiry, and so that they and we may become seekers after the essential. Because, when any person, a young person does not discover, nor take interest in an inner journey within themselves, this can lead to them becoming incapable of imagining or dreaming their own present situation or their future.

And to continue along these lines what do we mean by the **inner life?**

In the words of a Carmelite nun who has devoted her life to this research which has led her to God, “the inner life is the vital awareness that everything is to found within the Absolute, God, love, life. The inner life is not the place I retire to by my own design but it is to come to an awareness that I am within Someone.”⁹ This Sister has understood the inner life is something that forms part of the essence of our existence. It is that force that urges us towards God, and is the awareness of being “within” God and experiencing this awareness and this joy. “It seems to

⁹ Cristina KAUFMANN: *Interiorità e Mistica Cristiana*, In Autori Vari, o.c. 56.

me,” she adds, “that all have the possibility of discovering their own inner life, of interpreting it and becoming aware of it to love and to live it.”¹⁰ In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church has something similar when it says: “The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for.”¹¹

I believe that it is not a pessimistic view to recognize or conclude that in many cultures, especially the more western ones on our planet, religious experience is socially marginalized, or in other words the interior dimension is mutilated reducing it to the merely psychic dimension, without recognizing its potential to being open to the transcendent. It is for this reason that the individual has to try to find traces or signs of God in his interior experience, going deeply into his inner self, into what echoes in his mind and in his heart because “God is within his inner life as thought, conscience, heart, psychological and ontological reality.”¹²

From the Christian perspective the inner life is not the place into which I retire but rather the recognition that I am within Someone or with Someone. I perceive myself as an “ego” received from Someone, as a gift of Someone. When to the awareness of the interior dimension we give significance (that is to say, that this Someone is the person of Jesus or of God the Father) this awareness becomes transformed into a spiritual search. Therefore a spirituality without an inner life is unthinkable.

4.3. The adventure of the Spirit is a *JOURNEY OF SPIRITUALITY*

How can spirituality be defined? We can say that essentially spirituality *is living according to the action of the Spirit*. In the

¹⁰ *Ibidem* 57.

¹¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, n° 27.

¹² J.E. VECCHI, *Spiritualità Salesiana*, Elledici, Torino 2001, 10.

more complete terms of the theologian Hans Hurs Von Bathasar, "spirituality is the basic, practical or existential attitude proper to man and which is the consequence or expression of a religious view – or in a more general way, an ethical view – of existence."¹³

This means that spirituality is not to be understood as something that is added to a person, like something accidental or circumstantial, rather that it refers directly to the very essence of our condition as human beings. Hence, nothing in the person, neither attitudes, nor behaviour nor relationships can remain on the margins of spirituality. Spirituality therefore penetrates all the dimensions of a person. It concerns his identity, his values, that which gives meaning, hope, trust and dignity to his existence and is expressed in his relationship with himself, with his neighbour and with what transcends human nature, the mystery of God.

And in our case as Christian believers and followers of Jesus we do not speak only of spirituality in general, but of Christian spirituality because we have in Christ the source, the reason for, the goal and the meaning of our lives and of the spirituality with which we live it. We discover that we have God dwelling within us, we believe that there is a place in our heart for him, and we discover that we have been given the privilege of such a personal relationship. How beautiful this is, knowing that at the same time we are *'God's beggars'*.

Christian spirituality is therefore and above all a gift of the Spirit. He is the **"interior Master"** of the spiritual journey of each person. He awakens in us the thirst for God (*Jn* 4,7) and at the same time quenches our thirst. This life in the Spirit is for Saint Paul "life hidden with Christ in God" (*Col* 3,3) the life of "the inner man is renewed day by day" (*2 Cor* 4,16), "new life" (*Rm* 6,4). It is the Spirit who makes the Christian the dwelling place of God, able to welcome him. It is the Spirit who enables the spiritual life to begin, generating man as a son of God.

¹³ H.U. VON BALTHASAR, *Il Vangelo come criterio e norma di ogni spiritualità nella Chiesa*, "Concilium"9 (1965) 7-8.

The Masters of the spiritual life of all times constantly make reference to this inner space where the dialogue with God takes place. Saint Ignatius of Loyola speaks of “feeling and tasting the things of God within” Saint Teresa of Avila compares the interior life to an interior castle with many rooms, in the principal one of which God himself dwells. Saint John of the Cross alludes to an interior shop in referring to this interior space where intimacy with God is experienced. In the Gospels when Jesus of Nazareth speaks about prayer he refers to a secret hidden place where God dwells: “But when you pray go to your private room and when you have shut your door pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.” (Mt 6,6).

4.4. An adventure that is a *LIFE OPEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT*

The consequence of all of this ought to be that of probing, pondering, investigating the fascination that is to be found in living a life open to the Holy Spirit who dwells within it. God comes to meet us and invites us to walk with him and to take part in his life by means of the Spirit. In fact as Fr Vecchi suggests, speaking about our Salesian spirituality, we believe that “everything in the world that points us towards God, everything that implicitly or explicitly reminds us the presence or of the intervention of God, everything that urges us to seek God has as its hidden moving force the Spirit.”¹⁴

Nevertheless, knowing God and seeking him is more than something we ourselves want. It is above all a gift that is offered to us and which is in harmony with our situation of being seekers of the Absolute, despite the fact that very often our steps are small and uncertain.

It is from this perspective that we remain focused on Jesus in

¹⁴ J.E. VECCHI, *Spiritualità Salesiana*, o.c. 11.

order to follow, at his side a real path that is an adventure, a novelty, the fresh air of the Spirit, knowing that it is not something reserved for an elite but open to everyone, every man and woman, every young person open to God; knowing that it touches one's own life in a decisive manner; knowing that it will always lead us to a more profound and intimate encounter with Jesus, noting that it fully extends one's own capabilities, that it is primarily expressed in the communication of God- The Mystery ever beyond our reach – that speaks to us and with which we communicate in various ways, that always urges us to come out of ourselves and to go and meet others, living the faith in the ordinary activities of everyday life. All of this would be the *expression of Christian spirituality*.

5. LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

5.1. Jesus 'event of the Spirit'

The action of the Holy Spirit reaches its highest point, in accordance with the Father's plan in the person of Christ. His whole existence is an *event of the Spirit*¹⁵ from the moment of his conception when to Mary the young woman of Nazareth it was communicated that "the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow." (*Lk* 1,35)

Already before the beginning of his mission in Galilee "Jesus receives the Spirit and God declares that he is the Father who loves him (*Mt* 3,17); he is constituted Son before acting as the apostle."¹⁶

While Jesus recollects himself in prayer after his baptism "heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him" (*Lk* 3, 21b-22a) and by means of the Spirit the Father anoints him as Messiah and presents him as his beloved Son. Full of the Holy Spirit "he was led by the Spirit through the wilderness..." (*Lk* 4,

¹⁵ *Ibidem* 15.

¹⁶ J.J. BARTOLOMÉ, *Imparare a essere Figlio di Dio obbedendogli*. In J.J. BARTOLOMÉ-Rafael VINCENT (de): *Testimoni della radicalità evangelica*. Madrid, CCS 2013, 24.

1-13). In the Spirit having come to the desert he overcomes the temptations and shows himself in a special way the Son of the Father. Still in the Spirit he returns to Galilee, comes to Nazareth and publicly attributes to himself the prophecy of Isaiah "The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me" (*Lk* 4,18).¹⁷

To sum up, these simple references to New Testament quotations show us very clearly how the life of Jesus was marked by the presence and by the action of the Spirit of God, and how his life was an apprenticeship, learning to live as the Son of the Father always and in everything seeking his will.

5.2. Mary, the woman of the "yes" guided by the Spirit

Mary of Nazareth is above all the young woman the believer loved by God, with whom God himself conversed through his Angel (according to the gospel narrative) signifying or making it understood that the presence and the action of the Spirit takes place in a *respectful meeting* with a proposal and a response. The very presence of the Spirit will depend in fact on her yes. In *Lk* 1,35, – as I quoted previously – the Angel tells her of God's plan, to which Mary replies "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me." *Lk* 1,38).

From this yes, she could never have imagined what the paths would be that she would have to take guided by the Spirit, and simply, *she trusted totally in God*. She was present at Cana, at the beginning of the mission of her son, she was at the foot of the cross on Calvary, at the moment her son handed over his life ; she was in prayer with the disciples after the resurrection and was present when the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost. A whole life marked by yes to God and openness to his Spirit. "In her, the Mother, faith shines out as gift, openness, response and fidelity."¹⁸

¹⁷ Cf Marco ROSSETTI, *La radicalità di Gesù di Nazaret come consegna della propria vita agli altri*. In J.J. BARTOLOMÉ-Rafael (de), o.c. 40-44 – Cf J.J. BARTOLOMÉ, *Imparare a essere Figlio di Dio obbedendogli*, o.c. 24-29 – Cf J.E.VECCHI, *Spiritualità Salesiana*, o.c. 13-17.

¹⁸ Document of the Assembly of the Bishops of Latin-America at Puebla, 296.

5.3. Peter and Paul “touched” by the Spirit of God

Looking at Peter, the impetuous fisherman from Galilee, at the various stages of his following of the Lord, with his promises and his infidelities, with his successes and failures one can learn the important lesson: it is the Spirit who urges on this unquestionable leader, full of nobility and love for the Master to follow the plans of God and not deform them with purely human desires.

One who was a believing and observant Jew, trusting in the active presence of God in his people, and ready to make his own opinions prevail even by force surrenders in the face of the evidence of who his Lord was. The first of the apostles in the emerging Church’s advance, he wept for his sin but had no doubt about his being forgiven. This was his greatness not without resistance until the time of his true conversion. And it is like that, in fact, when we allow the Spirit to act, and this confirms the fact that like Peter we have to be converted anew in order to always follow Jesus and not go ahead of him pointing out to him what we believe to be the way (cf *Mt* 16,22-23).¹⁹

Paul of Tarsus was an observer of the Law, and scandalized by the unacceptable message of a man, a certain Jesus who died on the cross, felt it his duty to persecute the Christians and then was *captured by Jesus Christ*. This experience that he himself speaks about as something more than a vision or an enlightenment, he describes as above all a revelation and as a vocation received precisely in the encounter with the Risen One. It is here that Paul is really born anew, it is here that he received the Holy Spirit and was healed of his spiritual and physical blindness. We could say that Paul was decisively against Jesus when Jesus was decisively on his side. This is the experience that changes his life radically, putting all his energies at the service of Jesus Christ and of his Gospel, having encountered the motive of absolute value in the face of which he could not place any limits: Jesus Christ.²⁰

¹⁹ Cf BENEDICT XVI, General Audience. Vatican City, 17 May 2006.

²⁰ Cf BENEDICT XVI, General Audience. Vatican City, 25 October 2006.

5.4. Don Bosco open to the Spirit in order to say his 'yes' to the Lord in the young

The spiritual life of Don Bosco **was a long and patient pilgrimage towards the depth of his rich and intense interior life.** This growth in the inner life, like everything in his apostolic activities, was a journey he undertook step by step aware that the goal God had for him could not be reached all at once. It needed people to accompany him, it needed time, it needed a period of apprenticeship.

From being a boy Don Bosco could not stop dreaming, he imagined a different world for his boys, a better world. However, before all else he wanted to know what God expected of him. The action of the Holy Spirit in him took practical form in the call to become a priest, and in gradually shaping in him the heart of an apostle of the young. He made his interior journey in order to understand, to allow himself to be surprised by God's plans. His hands bore the marks of the difficult situation of XIX century Piedmontese society, his heart was on fire for the salvation of the young, his feet followed the path of commitment to the poorest. However, all this did not happen just by chance. Don Bosco took care of his spiritual life in order to live to the full his highest aspirations, the force that animated him and his innermost ideals.

In addition Don Bosco understood that this "adventure of the Spirit" **was not an experience intended for a few boys** with exceptional gifts or an easy way of avoiding responsibilities. Every boy who entered the Oratory, whatever his state or condition, was invited to live a full Christian life, called to live in a joyful manner the life of the Spirit.

One of his most brilliant insights and achievements was to have introduced in his daily pastoral work the idea of a taste for the spiritual life. Into the lives of those boys he brought streams of light, of colours, of the joyful aspects of Christian life. In the Oratory they did not only learn a trade, a sense of duty, but to-

gether with these the spiritual dimension of life was beautifully presented, ‘drawn out.’

6. CHALLENGES AND PROPOSALS

In the preceding pages I tried to concentrate my reflection, as far as possible, on what could be fundamental in undertaking a journey with Jesus so that it might be a genuine *journey in the Spirit*, something that leads us to have a passion for life ourselves and for accompanying our young people in a true *Adventure of the Spirit* that can fill their lives and ours to the full with meaning.

In our journeying as the Salesian Family with the young people “of our worlds” there where we meet them, we have seen, with sorrow on not a few occasions, boys and girls in whom there are so many seeds of goodness – as Don Bosco used to tell us – but who were wounded, who feel themselves lost, who have a **hunger for Someone** who might look on them with the tenderness that only God possesses, who could remove their fears, could set free their best energies and the gifts they have received, who could reveal the precious pearl that their situation hides and which could make their lives rich and worthwhile.

Having come to this point, the great challenge is to find the ways, the means and the practical suggestions that enable us to *invite the young people* to come together in order **to pursue a path that really is a breath of life, of God’s fresh air, of the presence of the Spirit in their lives.**

I suggest to you some pathways that can possibly help us, by way of a variety of ideas as **road signs for our journey.**

A. LOOKING WITHIN

→ Let us learn to ‘**look within**’: let us practise and educate ourselves to discover and make richer our own inner life, from the earliest years, from infancy and from adolescence. May our young

people feel that they can count on someone who, faced with the culture of distractions, will challenge them to develop their inner lives: faced with escapism will seriously consider the meaning of life.

→ Let us help the young people to acquire the capability and the ability **to enter their own inner world**: educate them to listening and to a taste for silence; cultivate the capacity for contemplation, for wonder and admiration; taste the experience of selflessness... These abilities ought to be proposed and practiced.

→ Let us help young people to **explore**, in the depths of their own heart the **presence of God**, who is Love, Life and the Evernew. Working together let us have the experience of discovering and recognizing Him *who is closer to us than our own inner selves, and higher than the highest point in our being*.²¹

→ Let us learn to grow in our life in God by the humble acceptance of our own limitations, of our personal history and of our sin.

B. SEEKING GOD

→ Together with the young people let us learn **to be seekers of God and to interpret our own life as a blessing from God**, and to be amazed by his Presence and his footprints in us and to recognize him as the One who is seeking us, the One who is present, the One who lives in us.

→ Let us have the courage and the capacity to ask ourselves in prayer whether what we do or do not do is according to the will of this God-Love who lives within us, and let us propose this same exercise to the young.

→ Let us promote a pedagogy of the desire for God which leads to the search for the religious meaning of life and to drinking at the “well of living water which is Jesus”.²²

²¹ Cf Saint AUGUSTINE, Confessions, Book III, n. 11.

²² Renata BOZZATO, FMA: *Educare i giovani a “vivere nello Spirito”*. In Atti della XX Giornata di Spiritualità della Famiglia Salesiana: Riscopriamo con i giovani la presenza dello Spirito nella Chiesa e nel mondo. Rome 1998, 110.

C. MEETING JESUS

→ Let us be daring in proposing to the young experiences that lead us to **the Personal Encounter with Jesus**, a meeting that is capable of fascinating us and of putting our lives to the test, knowing that “the more one knows Christ, the more one follows him, the more the Spirit enters within us, and our eyes are able to see him.”²³

→ Let us suggest strategies to young people in order **to develop a true friendship with Jesus**, which without doubt will shape the way they see things, the way they think and their values.

D. BEING ONE OF HIS OWN

→ Let us be witnesses to the young of our joy in following Jesus and tell them how beautiful it is to be a Christian: “I would like to make them [the young] understand what a beautiful thing it is to be a Christian! And to believe is also beautiful and right!”²⁴

→ Let us allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, who moves our hearts and those of the young **to make a decisive choice to be one of his own**. Let us nourish and take care of the link with Him through prayer, the Word of God, Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

E. MAKING FUNDAMENTAL VALUES ONES OWN

→ From the earliest years let us educate ourselves to esteem and “to taste in all aspects of life, **the family, friendship, solidarity with those who are suffering, giving up one’s own self to serve others, love for knowledge, for art, for the beauties of nature.**”²⁵

²³ J.E. VECCHI, “Nella Speranza siamo stati salvati” (Rm 8,24): riscopriamo con i giovani la presenza dello Spirito nella Chiesa e nel mondo per vivere e operare con fiducia nella prospettiva del regno. In Atti della XX Giornata... o.c. 151.

²⁴ BENEDICT XVI. First interview granted to Vatican Radio before the XX World Youth Day in Cologne. Quoted by Pascual CHÁVEZ, in a Conference at the CISM (Italian Conference of Major Superiors), in Luis Fernando GUTIÉRREZ: Discepoli e apostoli di Gesù Cristo, Madrid, CCS 2014, 222.

²⁵ BENEDICT XVI, *Ibidem*, 3.

→ Let us proclaim the immense joy of believing in a God who has fully taken on all that is human and to be part of creation, and let us be daring in denouncing all that prevents everyone from being able to recognize, contemplate and benefit from his Presence in our world.

→ Let us accompany young people in their **faith experience in the Christian and ecclesial community**, as a splendid opportunity for their discovering and personally developing their own life in Christ.

→ Let us present to young people the **challenge of accepting life as a gift as the service** that makes us better, that frees us from our egotism and gives meaning to our lives. The Spirit of God will always urge us on to give of ourselves because this is “the logic of God”.

F. DEVELOPING A PLAN OF LIFE

→ Let us work together with young people with faith and a deep personal conviction so that they can develop their own plan of life, undertaking a journey, since living life as a gift in every kind of service and profession they can go from their first significant experiences, even circumstantial to the full commitment of a life that responds to God’s call. Someone who embarks upon the Spirit’s ways has not only received qualities as though they were birthday presents, but “is in possession of something like a generic code according to which they go on growing.”²⁶

EPILOGUE

I have offered as pathways these **Challenges and proposals** in the hope that they may help all our Salesian Family, in the most diverse of geographical and pastoral contexts around the world. It is possible that, if not all, some of these challenges and

²⁶ J.E. VECCHI, “Nella speranza siamo stati salvati...” o.c. 159.

proposals can be suitable and timely in reference to the pastoral situations being experienced and to the local evangelising, catechetical and pastoral circumstances.

Allow me to conclude with *three simple suggestions* that might throw light on our efforts to walk in this year of Mercy that we have begun, quite rightly in the experience of a God, who in order to be so, needs to meet us, ourselves and the young, with a heart that is seeking him.

The first is this: I fully share the thought and the sentiments of the previous Rector Major in suggesting to the Salesian Family that the desire of the young to “see Jesus” is already the **fundamental reason for us to come to be disciples of Christ** given that he asks himself: who will present the dreams and the needs of the young to Jesus? Who will make it possible for the young to see Jesus? It is in our accompanying them and walking at their side that our existence is rooted, and it changes us into real companions and apostles of the young.²⁷

The second is this: in the process we are proposing “we cannot do anything better than this: **guide the young towards holiness**”.²⁸ Accompanying them on the journey towards becoming mature in the faith, to high goals, and being ourselves the first to believe in this journey, which we ourselves take as the goal for our lives, *our personal witness* is the determining factor. That is what Don Bosco did putting everything at stake in order to achieve his dream (God’s plan for him) on behalf of the young.

Finally let us not forget that processes are slow and need to be gradual as the very patience and pedagogy of God show us. Of this point John Paul II reminded us with these words in “*Juvenum Patris*”: “Be strengthened by the inexhaustible patience of God in his pedagogy towards humanity, the unfailing exercise of fatherhood revealed in the mission of Christ, teacher and shepherd, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit, sent to transform

²⁷ Cf AGC 406 (2010), 16

²⁸ J.E. VECCHI, “*Nella speranza siamo stati salvati...*” o.c. 174.

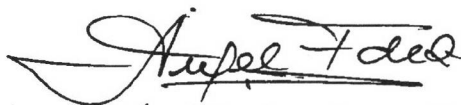
the world. The powerful though hidden efficacy of the Spirit is directed to bringing about the maturity of humanity on the model of Christ. He is the animator of the birth of the new man and of the new world (cf. Rm 8, 4-5). *In this way your educational labours will be seen to be a ministry of collaboration with God and will certainly be fruitful.*"²⁹

May Mary our Mother and Help, the Woman of "yes" who welcomed the Spirit of God in her heart and in her life help us in the beautiful responsibility for the young which as the Salesian Family we have in the Church of today, and may one of the desires which Pope Francis addressed to us almost at the end of his letter in this historic year of the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco become a reality.

"May Don Bosco help you to *not disappoint the deep aspirations of the young*: their need for life, openness, joy, freedom and the future; their desire to collaborate in building up a more just and fraternal world, in fostering the development of all peoples, in safeguarding nature and the living environment. Following his example you will help them to experience that only in the life of grace, that is in friendship with Christ, does one fully obtain the most authentic ideals. You will have the joy of accompanying them in their search for a synthesis of faith, culture and life at moments when they take weighty decisions or attempt to interpret a reality that is complex."³⁰

May the Lord bless you all.

Yours very affectionately,



Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb
Rector Major

²⁹ JOHN PAUL II, *Juvenum Patris*, 20 (Note: the final italics are by the writer).

³⁰ FRANCIS, *Like Don Bosco, with the young, for the young*, o.c. 9.

2. GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIVES

2.1 CONSISTENCY OF THE SALESIAN COMMUNITY IN NUMBER AND QUALITY

Fr Francesco CEREDA
The Vicar of Rector Major

A careful look at our recent General Chapters highlights the extent to which the Salesian community is regarded today with hope, but also with concern. It is the focus of most of the guidelines of the last Chapters. This is only natural since the local community is the place where the confreres live and grow in their vocation; it is the subject of the Salesian mission in the area; and it involves laypeople, accompanies the young in the process of education to the faith, and animates the Salesian Family. That is why a lot is expected of the community.

GC19 asked for a re-dimensioning of our works, a simplification of very large communities and a closure of very small works.¹ It remarked that “too many works were opened in the past with personnel that was insufficient in number and inadequately prepared, and that this lack of number and quality of personnel is a serious deficiency that can lead the Congregation to the risk of seeing its own inner strength greatly diminished and consequently its real effectiveness lessened in carrying out the mission”.² Therefore it called for a period of “an internal and external strengthening of communities” as a “condition of apostolic life and efficacy”.³

From then on the issue of the numerical and qualitative consistency of our communities has continued to resonate in General Chapters and letters of the Rector Majors under different names: re-dimensioning, reinvigorating, reframing, relocation and restructuring. And so we come to GC27 that asked the Provinces to ensure “consistency in number and quality of com-

¹ Cfr. GC19 p. 44-45.

² GC19 p. 43.

³ GC19 p. 43.

munities *by wisely and courageously reshaping*”⁴ them. For this reason, the present Rector Major and the General Council have asked the Provinces to take as a fundamental topic of their Provincial Chapters the “reshaping of our presences: determining where to stay, and therefore where to concentrate our energies, and how to strengthen our Salesian communities.”

The fact that the issue of the consistency of our communities has been returning repeatedly over the last fifty years is an indication that it is a fundamental problem.⁵ GC20 asked for a restructuring of our presences for pastoral purposes, while GC21 sought a new Salesian presence in all our works, both recent ones and those existing over a period of time. GC22 appealed for a return to the young and their many forms of poverty with the help of a renewed educational presence. GC23 reminded us that to educate young people to the faith, the community must become “a sign and a school of faith” and a “centre of communion”. GC24 invited us to involve laypeople in our works and called us to take care of the consistency of our communities. GC25, whose theme was the Salesian community today, focused on how to strengthen it, while GC26 called for a return to Don Bosco by each community returning to the young.

Today GC27, in asking us to give a radical witness to the Gospel, invites communities to go to the existential and geographical “peripheries” of young people. To achieve this end, the Rector Major indicates a way forward that is “indispensable and of prior concern”; he asks us “to undertake a real study and practical effort to look after

⁴ GC27 69.6. A reflection on this topic can already be found in: J. VECCHI, *Redesigning our presences: criteria, perspectives, restructuring*, LIV General Assembly of the Union of Superiors General, November 1998.

⁵ Looking at the *Yearbook of the Congregation for 2015*, we find that, out of a total of 1685 communities, 14.2% are made up of 3 or less than 3 confreres; 14.2% are made up of 4 confreres; 13.8% have 5 confreres; 11.6%, 6 confreres; and 46.2% are made up of 7 or more than 7 confreres. There are four Regions that have 20-22% of their communities made up of 3 or less than 3 confreres, and one Region instead that has only 3.2% of such communities. It is obvious that, at the level of the Congregation, we cannot go into a qualitative analysis of the configuration of our communities; this is something that needs to be done at the level of each Province.

and consolidate our communities, ensuring a robust human quality and also number of confreres, even at the price of there not being a religious community in some presences, and making progress in giving new meaning to and 'reshaping' Houses and Provinces... We certainly have to overcome great resistance that comes from attachments, from having spent so many years in a house, from the pressure of the educative community itself, of the suburb or citizens' associations, right up to local and regional government..., however, the foreseeable difficulties should not impair either our clearightedness or our capacity to act in prudent freedom".⁶

There are several causes of the poor consistency existing in our communities: the aging of confreres, the decline in the number of vocations, the maintenance of all our works without changing the form of management, the desire to reach out to an increasing number of poor young people, the allocation of responsibility to laypeople, and the emergence of new priorities for our mission without taking decisions about our already existing works. However, it would appear that the root of the problem lies in a weak conviction about the need and importance of community. Although all are in agreement about community being a constitutive element of our life and action, the fact is that, when the time comes for taking decisions, practical difficulties and pressures inside and outside the Province take over.

1. Reasons for establishing communities that are numerically and qualitatively consistent

We sometimes wonder why we should "waste" Salesian personnel by sending so many confreres to a house when instead, by distributing them in small communities of two or three members, we could reach new frontiers in our mission to the young today. And so, we are led to ask about the contribution made to the Salesian vocation and mission by a community consisting of an

⁶ GC27, *Address of the Rector Major Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime at the closing of the GC27*, p. 125.

adequate number of Salesians prepared for the job. The answer, although well known and widespread in the Congregation for some time now,⁷ assumes greater import in the changed circumstances of the present day: a community's numerical and qualitative consistency is a necessary condition for its being significant, even if this alone is not enough. So, let us focus attention on some points, knowing full well that the consistency we are talking about is not only a matter of numbers but also of quality.

In the first place, a Salesian community is significant when it accompanies the spiritual and pastoral life of *each confrere*. The community is responsible for the initial and continuing formation of its members; to this end, it makes use of conferences, good nights, readings, the community day and updating. Today, we come across some communities that have a very small number of confreres who are often burdened with work, tired and sometimes discouraged by the very many responsibilities heaped upon them. In addition, when the community is very small, it is not easy to animate the prayers well and see to the spiritual growth of the confreres, despite the fact that they need well-animated prayer together. Again, it often happens that the laypeople who share responsibility with us in the mission are well-prepared, and this constitutes a challenge for the confreres to qualify themselves as well; unfortunately, because of the limited number of confreres in the community, it is not possible to find the time for updating, even short periods, and this damages the quality of their work.

A second element of significance is *the pastoral quality of the community*. This depends mainly on the quantitative and qualitative consistency of the community, on its apostolic awareness, on the qualification of its confreres, and on pastoral discernment carried out as a team. Pastoral quality is based on the witness of the community and on its vitality and presence among the young. It comprises processes of faith education, spiritual di-

⁷ Cf. J. VECCHI, *Significance of Salesian presence*, in "Acts of the General Council" 340, 1992, pp. 35-42.

rection and initiatives offered to young people concerning various aspects such as vocation, prayer, community life, social and missionary commitment. If accompanied by trust in God's grace, it results in pastoral efficacy.

The pastoral quality of the community is ensured in the first place by its *witness*. Witness is "the ability to convey a message that touches the heart, to remind people that there are still more important things in life, to challenge the lifestyle or the values proposed by the world, to present an alternative and better way of living, to show how to live a fully human life".⁸ But, a small community can hardly be seen. To today's young people who live in societies marked by conflict, a not-too-small community gives a witness of unity, brotherhood and love; it educates them for communication and an important dialogue among people of different cultures, religions and social backgrounds; it helps them to overcome individualistic behaviour and to learn to care for others. Particularly significant is the witness it gives when it is an international community. Significant too in the community is the presence of elderly confreres: if the mission is not identified exclusively with efficiency and discharging responsibilities but also with brotherhood, pastoral relations, apostolic prayer, closeness and a serene acceptance of one's fragile health, then they too contribute to the visibility and witness of the community; we must take pains in our communities to avoid the "throw-away culture" mentioned by Pope Francis.⁹

Together with witness, the pastoral quality of the community flows from its *vitality*. We recognize today that pastoral work is never a purely individual activity and that a pastoral plan is a guarantee of apostolic effectiveness. Teamwork benefits from the contribution of each one's ideas and experiences, fosters joint planning, ensures a sharing of responsibility by everyone and creates a unified path towards a common goal. A community ensures continuity in its work through its community plan and the

⁸ CVCSVA, *Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life*, 7.

⁹ Cfr. J. VECCHI, *Sickness and old age in the Salesian experience*, in AGC 377, Rome 2001.

educative and pastoral plan. In this context an important role is played by the Rector as the spiritual the pastoral guide of the confreres. It happens, however, that the many tasks entrusted to the Rector, especially in a small community, affect negatively the quality of his service; to respond to the various needs, he tends to act as a manager of the work, and in this way he empties his role. In particular, this often deprives the confreres of personal accompaniment through the friendly talk. Experience also shows that the multiplication of small communities increases the difficulty of finding directive personnel; a province that has many small communities is not always in a position to prepare future Rectors.

The pastoral quality also comes from our *presence among the young*. One cannot think of a community without a presence among and interaction with young people; when the Salesians are few in number and concentrate on organizational and administrative matters, they find themselves in the position of working for young people, but not with young people. From this there follows, among other things, the scarcity of vocations to Salesian life because the Salesians do not have time to be with young people and accompany them; if young people do not know the Salesians and do not have a friendly relationship with them, if they are not accompanied by them, it will be very difficult for them to choose the Salesian vocation, and especially the vocation of the Salesian brother. Our Constitutions remind us that “the family atmosphere of welcome and of faith, created by the witness of a community which gives of itself with joy, is the most efficacious setting for the discovery and guidance of vocations”,¹⁰ and for their perseverance.

A further element of the significance of the Salesian community lies in its ***ability to assemble many forces*** and involve them in its mission. Experience shows that, with the amount of work to be carried out by a small number of confreres, it becomes difficult to engage in any work involving the educative and pastoral community, like organizing specific activities for the young,

¹⁰ Const. 37.

for families, for laypeople and also for the Salesian Family. The consistency of a community makes its animating role in the educative and pastoral community more effective, and more easily ensures the Salesian identity of the project. This becomes more difficult when only a few Salesians are involved in roles of animation and, still less, when the community is virtually absent. GC24 had already presented the formation of laypeople as the “principal investment” of the Salesians. What sometimes happens is that, due to the weak consistency of a community, there is little opportunity to form the many laypeople involved in our works in the richness of our Salesian charism and spirituality; the same thing can happen with regard to our responsibility for animating the Salesian Family.

Finally, there is another factor that makes for a community that is significant: it is its *openness to the area* in which it is situated, both from the social and the ecclesial point of view. For this reason, the community must go to the “peripheries”; it must work with the local Church and with civil society. The community has to find ways of meeting the young people of the area and seeing to their needs so as to make the Salesian house a radiating centre of the charism in the area. It must therefore also go outside of its works and structures. In this effort it must be able to mobilize public opinion, network with the local Church, involve people, families, organizations and government agencies, and ensure that they share the responsibility for young people. This calls for a work involving formation, animation and support. Obviously, it is difficult, not to say impossible, to embark on such a task in a small community and accomplish it well.

2. An apostolic model of a Salesian presence

Our General Regulations provide the normal criterion for the numerical consistency of a community.¹¹ On this point, when Fr.

¹¹ Reg. 150.

Juan Vecchi was the Vicar of the Rector Major, he remarked: "There is in the first place a certain numerical consistency below which the sign and community life as envisaged by the Constitutions seems impossible of realization. Art. 150 of the Regulations offers a criterion for evaluating this limit when it prescribes that 'the number of confreres in a house shall normally be not less than six'. And art. 20 of the same Regulations provides a safeguard for emergency situations when it lays down that even in missionary presences the number should not fall below three confreres".¹²

For a better understanding of this indication, the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr. Luc Van Looy explained to GC25: "In places of development such as Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe, it is understood that a new presence can be 'started' even with less than six confreres, but the Rector Major has always insisted that there be a plan to complete the number within a few years. In particular, he has insisted on the responsibility of the house council and on the presence of the confreres in the council of the work".¹³ This guideline about a community of three confreres being in a state of emergency and about that number needing to be increased is still valid. It implies that in the case of a community made up of three confreres there must be a plan to overcome the situation.

It seems reasonable for a Salesian work to include two or three kinds of activities for young people, such as a school, a parish and an oratory, a service for poor children, a non-formal training centre, but without it turning into a complex institution. The diversity of activities in a community shows everyone the manifold richness of Don Bosco's charism and its ability to meet the priority needs of the young people of the place, even if not all of them. The community must also form laypeople, animate the Salesian Family, be present in the area...; this is why it has to reach a level of consistency that enables it to realize the model of

¹² J. VECCHI, *The local Salesian community*, in "Acts of the General Council" 335, 1991, p. 45.

¹³ CG25, *Report of the Vicar General Fr Luc Van Looy to CG25*, p. 266.

a Salesian presence that the Province has chosen. The consistency of a community needs to be connected with the model of an apostolic presence that a Province intends to implement.

It is therefore important for a Province to choose the model of apostolic presence it intends to have in its territory; in this way it will be able to achieve it gradually. The model of apostolic presence is not something random and improvised, but one that is deliberately chosen and followed.

3. Particular situations

I shall now present some special situations, making reference to “Juridical Elements and Administrative Praxis in the Government of the Province” where are indicated the documentation and procedures necessary to do these operations.

3.1. *Opening of a community*

When a decision is made to start a new work, it is necessary to include in the request to the Rector Major and the General Council the reasons for the decision and the manner of its implementation;¹⁴ mention must be made as well of the beneficiaries of the work. Together with the decision to start a new work, consideration must also be given to the composition of a community. Since at the beginning the needs of the area are not yet known, it is possible to begin with a reduced number of confreres who will study the needs of the young. In this case a community is opened temporarily and is not canonically erected; it has a confrere in charge. The Rector Major and the General Council consider it appropriate for this community not to be dependent on a nearby

¹⁴ According to can. 610 of the Code of Canon Law, consideration must be given at one and the same time to the advantage of the local Church and of the Institute; there have to be the necessary conditions to ensure for the members the possibility of conducting a regular religious life according to the purpose and spirit of the Institute; and there must be a prudent certainty of being able to provide suitably for the spiritual, financial and other needs of the members.

community, but to be accompanied by the Provincial and his Council; since it is still in the process of defining its mission, the accompaniment must be undertaken by the one responsible for the government of the Province. In addition, in the yearbook of the Congregation the communities that are not canonically erected must be shown as independent entities and not linked to another community.

The Rector Major and the General Council have further decided to authorize the canonical establishment of a community when it has at least four confreres¹⁵; in this case, therefore, the Provincial will have to appoint a Rector and a local council. This also applies to the canonical erection of a missionary residence.¹⁶ All these four confreres must be perpetually professed; the temporarily professed cannot be counted among them; the intention is to ensure in this way that, should there be confreres in initial formation in the community, the community will be able to accompany them. For the same reason, and even more so, temporarily professed confreres should not be sent to communities that are not canonically erected and in which there is no Rector and a house council.

3.2. Closure of a community

In the General Council we have also agreed upon the following criterion. In the case of the canonical closure of a community, one must consider what happens to the work. If the work too is closed, then the situation is clear: there is no longer a community and no longer a work; it will only be a matter of determining how the property is to be used. However, before closing a work

¹⁵ To be able to constitute a juridical person in the Church, can. 115 § 2 requires the presence of at least three members; the same also applies to a religious community. Article 150 of our Regulations states that *ordinarily* the number of confreres in a community should not be less than six. While keeping in mind art. 150 of the General Regulations, the Rector Major also authorizes, for adequate reasons, the canonical erection of communities with fewer than six confreres, but not less than four perpetually professed confreres.

¹⁶ Cfr. Reg. 20.

that serves a useful purpose, some thought ought to be given to another possibility, viz. entrusting the work to lay management, under the responsibility and accompaniment of the Province. These works under lay management will be placed in the year-book of the Congregation in the list of works dependent on the community of the provincial house.

Should the work remain open, some confreres can be left temporarily in it with someone in charge so as to form a community that is not canonically erected. This community will remain open for a short period until the work is closed or entrusted to lay management. Should the work remain open after all the confreres of the community have been withdrawn, and should it be near another community, the work can then be entrusted to the responsibility of the nearby community, on condition however that the confreres live in the same accommodation and that the Rector and the local council exercise responsibility over all the works entrusted to the community. Sometimes it may not be expedient to burden a community with the addition of yet another work; in this case too, if the work deserves to continue, it would be a good thing to consider handing it over to lay management.

3.3. Accompanying the processes in each community

Between the opening and closing of a community, there is a wide range of community situations that need to be accompanied. Each community lives its own processes that need to be monitored. In particular, after the annual provincial visitation, it is advisable that the Provincial read to his Council the conclusions of the visitation, study the various circumstances, and then decide on the necessary steps to be taken.

One may encounter situations of fatigue and discouragement; there can be situations of deterioration and debilitation. One may come across inadequacies in the performance of certain tasks which can be remedied with the help of more suitable confreres. There can be situations of poor health, of premature aging, and

of conflict. All these situations call for different interventions, and therefore acts of government, which have to be identified and require accompaniment. If these situations are not addressed in time, they may become irreversible.

4. Directions for the Province

As I conclude these reflections with which the Rector Major and the General Council concur, I invite each Provincial and Provincial Council to draw up a plan that makes for a consistent number and quality of confreres in the communities of their Province. This is a matter of a multi-faceted action regarding the consolidation of communities, and it comprises: the works, the canonical erection of communities not yet canonically erected, re-dimensioning, the entrusting of works to lay management, and a careful discernment before opening new works in case the above-mentioned priorities have not been implemented.

To ensure a true exercise of government and concerted progress throughout the Congregation, I shall, after the approval of the Provincial Chapters, request the Provinces to send me this concrete plan specifying these communities, the steps to be taken, and the time framework for executing them. If this operation is not done, other needs, emergencies and pressures will cause it to be set aside, as has been the case till now.

The commitment to make our communities consistent must be thought out and realized through an action of government calling for decisions that are practical and clearly defined. Since the Provincial Chapter has helped to “reframe the presences”, the Province now is aware of the fronts on which to concentrate its Salesian personnel. It is now time to get to work; it will not be long before we reap the benefits.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

Here below are reported the main chronicle events of the Rector Major from the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council at the end of July to early December 2015.

– July-August 2015

Soon after the conclusion of the summer session of the General Council, on July 23rd the Rector Major, accompanied by his personal secretary, leaves for Brazil to participate in the national meeting of confrères in the initial stages of formation, which was held in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, and to participate in the meeting of the Provincials of the Conference of Provincials of Brazil (CIS-BRASIL).

On Monday 27th, accompanied by the Regional Councillor, Fr. Natale Vitali, he leaves for Santiago de Chile for an animation visit which continued till August 1st. In Santiago and Concepción he met the confrères, the Salesian Family and the SYM-MGS youth. He visited the following Salesian houses and works: the community of San Ramón, where he blessed and in-

augurated a new building for the school in this popular quarter of the periphery of Santiago; the Health House in Santiago-Macul, where he could personally greet aged or sick confrères; the provincial house of the FMAs, where about eighty sisters came from various houses of the province; the house of Alameda, where he greeted children and youngsters of the school, blessing a new image of Don Bosco with Zefirino Namuncurá and Laura Vicuña, painted in Madrid and donated to Alameda by the Spanish Procure; the house of “San José Patronage”; the headquarters of the ‘Silva Henríquez’ Salesian University and the house of La Cisterna. He presided over the homage paid to Don Bosco in the Theatre “Carabineros de Chile” in the presence of civil and Church authorities, among whom also the former president of the Republic, Patricio Aylwin Azócar. An important moment of the visit was the encounter with the Provincial Council. Finally, in Concepción, he met the young, the pupils and members of the SYM-MGS, and the educative community of the house; at the Don Bosco

monument of the city he was greeted by the local authorities and friends of the Salesian house.

After his return to Rome, on August 2nd, he did some office work and on August 4th, with his secretary, he left for Mornese, where on the 5th he met the FMA sisters who had gathered to celebrate the day of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians; there he presided over the Eucharist for the celebration of the perpetual profession of three sisters. Late in the afternoon he left for Turin to participate in the International Congress of Mary Help of Christians, organized by ADMA for the entire Salesian Family.

The Congress lasted till August 9th; the Rector Major delivered his speech, gave several interviews and presided over the Eucharist. Thousands of photos were taken, 'selfies' included.

From August 11th to 16th he actively participated in the SYM-MGS international encounter, which took place in Palaruffini in Turin, Valdocco, in Castelnuovo and Colle Don Bosco. The sharing experience with more than 5,000 young people and a considerable number of Salesians, FMAs and other members of the Salesian Family was the climax of the Bicentenary celebrations. During

these days, the Rector Major personally met nearly everybody, took innumerable pictures with the various groups, delegations and persons, selfies, etc. He walked with the participants from Castelnuovo to Colle (even under the heavy rain), he delivered several speeches, interviews, and above all he presided over the Eucharist at Colle on August 16th. In those days he also met a delegation from Argentina and talked for over two hours with the 200 participants who had come from the south of the country where he had exerted his ministry before being elected Rector Major.

In the morning of August 17th he met the Salesian Cooperators who had come to Valdocco from Spain for a regional meeting and a pilgrimage to the Don Bosco 'Holy Places' on the occasion of the Bicentenary. In the afternoon of the same day he returned to Rome and on the 18th he left for Spain for a few days' rest and a visit to his relatives in Luanco, Asturias.

– September 2015

On September 3rd the Rector Major arrives in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he is welcomed by his personal secretary, the Provincial and some confrères of the provincial house of ARS

Province. On August 4th and 5th he participates in the SYM-MGS National Meeting, which was held in eleven locations of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. They had to meet in so many places because they numbered more than 7,500 young people – from 16 years of age and over – who had come from all the nation, accompanied by a good number of SDBs, FMAs and other members of the Salesian Family. In those two days the Rector Major visits six of these locations to meet the young and to stay with them in dialogue and prayer. On Saturday 5th, all those participating in the SYM-MGS meeting and other friends of Don Bosco who had come to the capital, numbering over 10 thousand people, took part in a march from the National Congress to “Plaza de Mayo” where there is the Cathedral and there, welcomed by the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Card. Mario Poli, celebrated Don Bosco. The next day, gathered in a Sports Palace, the Rector Major presided over the Eucharist, with the participation of over 9,000 people comprising youth and other members of the Salesian Family. All the Father Provincials and Mother Provincials of Argentina, the Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires and the Bishop of Viedma, former see of Card. Cagliero, Mons.

Esteban Laxague, SDB, were also present.

From August 7th to 11th the Rector Major animated the Spiritual Retreat of Rectors and members of the Provincial Councils of the two Argentinian provinces in Pilar (BA) and on the 12th in Córdoba, see of ARN Province, he met Salesians and members of the Salesian Family of the North of the country.

He then left for Brazil, where, from August 13th to 16th, he visited the Province of Manaus (BMA) meeting confrères, members of the Salesian Family and the youth in Manaus and in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, gateway to the missions in Amazonia, to celebrate the centenary of the Salesian presence in the Amazonian region. He met missionary priests and sisters, the Provincial Council, and was present with the others at a performance in the historical ‘Teatro Amazonas’, in the city of Manaus. This visit showed the warm welcome of the people of that beautiful missionary province.

On his return trip to Rome, the Rector Major stopped for one day in Asunción in Paraguay to meet the confrères, the youth and the Salesian Family on the feast organized by the Province of Paraguay on the Bicentenary of Don Bosco’s birth; he was welcomed with the

typical great cheerfulness of the Paraguayan people.

On the 22nd, together with his secretary, he goes to Turin to meet the confrères who are participating in the meeting of the new missionaries, the ones who will receive the missionary cross in Valdocco on the 27th.

On his return to Rome, on the 23rd, he meets, among others, some probable Deans of UPS faculties, who were appointed in the following days.

From September 25th to October 4th, he visits two provinces of India: *Kolkata and Delhi*. Arrived in Kolkata with his secretary and the Regional Councillor Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga, in the first two days he is also accompanied by the Councillor for Formation, Fr. Ivo Coelho; the Rector Major participates in the National Congress of the Salesian Family with the presence of about 1,900 delegates and – successively – in the meeting of the Provincials of the eleven Indian Provinces. During those days he delivered several speeches and homilies, met the government authorities at ‘Netaji Indoor Stadium’ and paid a visit to the Mother House of the “Missionary Sisters of Charity” where he met the Mother General and some Councillors and celebrated Mass in the chapel

where lays the body of Blessed Theresa of Calcutta. He also visited the Salesian House ‘Don Bosco Ashalayam’ (City of Hope) meeting the children of the poorest and the animators, and then visited the ‘Don Bosco self Employment & Research Institute’ of Mirpara, where formation courses are offered. After a visit to the school in Liluah, he also paid an historic visit to the centre of Hindu monks in Ramakrishna Mission, which is very significant for Hinduism today.

On September 29th he arrives in New Delhi, at ‘Don Bosco School Alaknanda’, where more than 1,200 youth from all Indian provinces have already gathered for the YOUTH EXPO. Here also he meets some authorities of the State and of the Nation. On October 1st, the Rector Major and the others arrive in Ranchi and visit the house of ‘Hatia Don Bosco’, where they are welcomed by the youth and the Salesian Family; they then visit the house of ‘Don Bosco Kokar’, where the Rector Major celebrates the Eucharist and attends several cultural programmes. In the end, he visits the houses of Garigaon and Bariatu.

– **October 2015**

On October 4th the Rector Major returns to Rome and accompanies

in several moments the Elective World Assembly of the Confederation of the Past Pupils of Don Bosco, where the new President of Past Pupils, Mr. Michal Hort, and the World Council are elected.

From the day of his return to Thursday 15th he does office work, meets several people, participates in the 'Curatorium' of UPS and pays a visit to the Spanish Embassy to the Holy see.

On Friday 6th, the Rector Major and his personal secretary go by car to Milan for a private visit to EXPO MILAN 2015. On the 17th they continue their journey to Rimini to meet the confrères and the educative pastoral community of the house, visit the tomb of Blessed Alberto Marvelli and celebrate the 10th anniversary of his beatification. On the 18th, in the morning, the Rector Major presided over the Mass and late in the afternoon he left for Loreto where he visited the Salesian community and the Sanctuary of Our Lady (the "Holy House"). In the morning of the 19th he proceeds to Bari to participate in the concluding feast of the Bicentenary year of the IME Province, with a cultural programme in the historical "Teatro Petruzzelli". On the 20th he returned to Rome.

The 21st and the 22nd were mainly dedicated to office work. On the

21st he presided over the Eucharist for the beginning of the Academic Year at UPS and in the evening he participated in a dinner at the Embassy of Japan to the Holy See.

On October 23rd, the Rector Major, accompanied by his secretary, leaves for New York, USA, to participate in the meeting of the Provincials of Interamerica Region in Stony Point, NY, where he also meets the Regional Councilor, Fr. Timothy Ploch. On that occasion he also meets a group of confrères of SUE Province.

On the 25th he leaves for Bogotá, Colombia, to begin *the visit to the two Provinces of the country*. He is accompanied by the two Colombian Provincials. From the 25th to the 28th he *visits the COB Province*, which has the main office in Bogotá, meeting the confrères, the Provincial Council, the Salesian Family and the Youth. Starting from the Provincial House, where he meets all the Salesians and lay collaborators of the provincial centre, he visits various communities and Salesian houses: the León XIII College; UNISAL (university) project; the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Carmel, where he presides over the Perpetual Profession of 19 confrères, students of Theology, of the Provinces of the Andes region; the centre for professional forma-

tion and social work "San Bosco Obrero", where he meets the young people at risk who attend our school; the crowded house of "Niño Jesús", where he visits the Sanctuary and meets the youth who have come from various Salesian houses and watches the musical performance "*somos tu sueño*" (we are your dream); the Andes Theologate, where he also meets the confrères-formators; the General House of the Institute of the sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (FFSSCC), where he meets a good number of sisters of this Institute that was founded by Blessed Luigi Variara; the Provincial house of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, meeting the sisters of the two Provinces which have their main office in Bogotá; and, finally, the Don Bosco Centre, to attend a concert of Youth Symphonic Bands integrated from 11 bands that came from the entire province and numbered more than 500 young musicians.

From October 29th to 31st, the Rector Major *visited the COM Province*, arriving in Medellín in the morning of the 19th. In those days he met the Provincial Council, the confrères, the Salesian Family and the Youth. He visited the Provincial house and successively numerous communities and hous-

es: Villa de Sales, where he meets the confrères and participates in the official welcome ceremony "Noche de Gala", with the members of the Salesian Family and the SYM-MGS; the house 'Pedro Justo Berrío', where he meets the youth and the Educative Pastoral Communities of the Schools and the youth of SYM-MGS; the "Plaza Mayor" Congress Centre, where he attends and delivers a speech to the National Congress of Pedagogy of the Salesian Family, gathered in those days for discernment of the theme "Salesian Charism and post-conflict"; the house 'Maria Auxiliadora' of the FMAs, meeting the Salesian Family and celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the house, and having dinner with a numerous group of FMA sisters; the fifty-year-old "Ciudad Don Bosco", meeting the young coming from different experiences of youth unease (street children, abandoned youth, former guerrilla members, etc.), where he presided over the Eucharist for the 50th anniversary and met the confrères gathered for the feast of the Province. In this way ends the official visit. On November 1st, still in Colombia, the Rector Major, accompanied by the Provincial and the Provincial Economist, goes on a private visit to the city of Cartagena de Indias, a

very significant place at the time of the Spanish American colonies, meeting in the morning a group of the Salesian Family and above all some relatives of the Salesians.

– *November-December 2015*

From November 3rd to 11th, the Rector Major does office work, meets several people, among whom the Rector of UPS and the Deans of the different Faculties. From November 7th to 9th he is absent for family reasons.

From November 12th to 16th, accompanied by his secretary, *he visits the Province of Slovenia (SLO)*, his last visit to Provinces in 2015. During this visit to SLO he meets the confrères, the Provincial Council, the Salesian Family and the Youth. He visits the Provincial house in Ljubljana Rakovnik, where in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians he presides over the Eucharist and meets the Salesian Family. Successively he goes to various presences and houses: he meets elderly and sick confrères in Trstenik; visits the house of Želimlje, meeting the young residents and talking with them; he visits the Provincial house of the FMAs in Rakovnik meeting a large group of sisters; he attends the musical performance "*Vivo per voi*" (I live for you) in the auditorium of the

Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana; he visits Maribor where the conclusion of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth is being celebrated and the Bishop consecrates the church and the altar of the new sanctuary dedicated to St. John Bosco, the first one in Slovenia.

After his return to Rome on November 17th, the Rector Major does office work, receives several people and at the same time works on the draft of the new Strenna 2016.

From November 25th to 27th, Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime takes part in the Assembly of the elective Union of Superior Generals, in which he is elected as a member of the Executive Committee and of the "Council of the 16".

On November 28th and 29th, the Rector Major, accompanied by his secretary, in Genoa Sampierdarena meets the confrères and the Educative Pastoral Community (CEP) of the house, participating in the presentation of the book "*Genova e Don Bosco*", edited by Fr. Alberto Rinaldini, sdb. Particularly significant was the meeting with the community "Latinos en Don Bosco" which, accompanied by the Salesians, is a space of encounter for many immigrants of Latin-American origin; remarkable was also the visit to the famous "Lanterna di Genova", the second

oldest lighthouse in the world still functioning, from where Don Bosco greeted the first missionaries who left for South America.

On his return to Rome, on the 30th he presided over the beginning of the winter session of the General Council, which will last till January 26th, 2016.

From December 5th to 7th, the Rector Major, accompanied by his secretary, is in Sicily to participate in the celebration for the centenary of the house of Messina-Giostra, in a popular quarter of great juvenile liveliness. Successively in Catania he meets the young people who took part in the SYM-MGS encounter of the Bicentenary in August (SYM 2015), Sicilian confrères and the work of the Salesian Family in “La Playa”, open to the reception of young immigrants. In those days he could contemplate and “suffer” (for detours of incoming flights) the vitality of Etna volcano, even if this did not prevent the implementation of the planned programme.

It is also to be noted that from December 6th to 18th, he also accompanied the works of the course for the new Provincials, talking with each one of them to revise together the “navigation map” given to the new Provincial at the beginning of his service.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

The Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr. Francesco Cereda, in the period August-September 2015, continued his ordinary work at the General House in Rome; he followed the course of ongoing trials; he maintained constant relations with the Provinces that consulted him. He had some particular visits and specific encounters.

In **August** he participated in initiatives and events concerning the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth: on August 2nd in Fiumefreddo di Catania he received the “Poseidone” prize awarded to the Congregation; from the 6th to the 9th he participated in Turin in the Congress of Mary Help of Christians; on 14th-16th he was at Colle Don Bosco with the young of the SYM-MGS for the closure of the Bicentenary. On 26th-27th he participated in the Provincial Assembly of ICC province in Rome.

In **September**, on the 5th in La Spezia he participated in and celebrated the Eucharist for the installation of the new Mother Provincial of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of the Province Italia

Emiliana – Ligure – Toscana and presented to the Provincial Assembly of educating communities the educative pastoral proposal for the year 2015-2016. On the 8th at Colle Don Bosco he presided over the first profession of the novices of Pinerolo. On the 17th he visited the post-novitiate in Nave; on the 27th in Turin he participated in the “Harambe” Assembly of missionary animation of Italy and presided over the Eucharist for the conferral of the cross to the Missionaries in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

In **October** he participated: on the 3rd to the World Assembly of Past Pupils; on the 10th to the “Cura-torium” of the Salesian Pontifical University (UPS); on the 12th to the Theological Commission of the Union of Superior Generals. On 14th-21st he went to the Vice-Province of Madagascar, where he participated in the Provincial Assembly and had personal talks with the confrères, the meeting with the Rectors, the session of the Commission for religious life and discipline, the meeting of the Provincial Council. On 22nd-23rd in Johannesburg he participated in the Conference of the Provincials of Africa-Madagascar Region. On 26th-28th in Pordenone he visited the Salesian community and par-

ticipated in the cultural encounter organized by Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Vatican Publishing House) for the presentation of the book with the interview to the Rector Major, entitled “Don Bosco oggi”. On 28th-31st he participated in the International Conference organized by the Association of Curators of Salesian History (ACSSA) on the theme: “Perception of the figure of Don Bosco from 1879 to 1965, external to Salesian works”.

In **November** he made the Canonical Visitation to the community of the General House. On the 25th-27th he participated in the Assembly of the Union of Superior Generals, who deepened the theme of the Synod of Bishops on the Family and dealt with the theme: “Embracing the Future with Hope”.

The Councillor for Formation

In the month of **August**, after a short stay home, the Councillor for Formation, Fr. Ivo Coelho, visited some formative communities in South India, from August 15th to 24th: the Theologate of ‘Kristu Jyoti’ and the ‘Don Bosco Renewal Centre’ (National Centre for Ongoing Formation) both in Ban-

galore; the post-novitiates of Aluva and Yercaud; and the Theologate of Kavarapettai, Chennai. He concluded his visit participating in the Regional Commission for Formation of South Asia, held in Chennai from August 25th to 28th.

Successively, he went to Stony Point, New York, for the meeting of the Commission of Provincial Delegates for Interamerica Region, from August 31st to **September 4th**. He took the opportunity of this trip to USA to visit the formative communities of Orange in New Jersey, Rosemead in California (pre-novitiate), and the Centre of Berkeley, San Francisco.

After his return to Rome, he met the young Salesians participating in the Workshop for Young Consecrated Persons organized by the Dicastery for Consecrated Life from September 15th to 19th. He then participated with the Rector Major in the meeting of the Provincials of India in Kolkata, on September 27th, and visited the three formative communities in the Province of Dimapur (the post-novitiate of Dimapur, the novitiate of Zubza, and the pre-novitiate of Amguri).

After the intermediate session of the General Council, held between **October 5th** and 14th, he went to Nairobi to participate in the meet-

ing of the Provincial Delegates of South Africa and to visit the formation houses in Zambia (the novitiate of Lusaka and the pre-novitiate of Chingola), the novitiate of Namaacha and the pre-novitiate of Moamba, in Mozambique, and the novitiate of Chem Chem, the post-novitiate of Kansebula, and the pre-novitiate and Theologate of Lubumbashi, the three of them in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and finally the pre-novitiate of Ennerdale, in South Africa. In Walkerville he could also meet nearly all the confrères in ongoing formation of the Vice-Province who had gathered for the Provincial Assembly on October 29th, feast of Blessed Michael Rua.

After his return to Rome, he participated in the meeting of the Regional Commission for Formation of Centre and North Europe in Plitvice, Croatia, (from **November 2nd** to 6th) and then in the one of East Asia-Oceania in K'long, Vietnam, (Nov. 9th-11th). In Croatia he visited the pre-novitiate of Podused, and in Vietnam the post-novitiate of Dalat and the theologate of Xuan Hiep. There was also a visit to the formative communities of Myanmar (November 12th-15th): the community of the students of theology in Yangon, the novitiate in Anisakan, the

post-novitiate in Pyin Oo Lwin. In Anisakan he met the pre-novices and also the confrères in ongoing formation gathered for priestly ordinations. Then there was a short visit to Shillong, India, to deliver a conference at 'St. Anthony's College' and visit the theologate of Mawlai and the novitiate of Sunnyside. And finally, from November 22nd to 27th he visited the theologate of Jerusalem, participating in the 'Curatorium'.

The Councillor for Youth Ministry

At the end of the summer session of the General Council, June-July 2015, the first engagement of the Councillor for Youth Ministry, Fr. Fabio Attard, were the days of *SYMDONBOSCO 2015*, from August 10th to 16th, with the participation of about 5,000 young people from many countries. On September 22nd 2015, all the Dicastery central logistic team spent a full day of assessment of the experience they had lived, preparing a written report that will be submitted to the Rector Major and his Council.

From *September to November 2015* the Councillor lived several types of animation in the various

Regions and Provinces. Engagements of animation were carried out, in the month of September, in the INE and ILE Provinces through meetings with the confrères and presiding over the Eucharist on the occasion of the perpetual profession of some Salesian confrères. Two more animation engagements at a provincial level were focused on the process of socialization and assimilation of the new edition of the *Salesian Youth Ministry*.

Reference table for the month of November:

- *Thailand*, Hua Hin from November 16th to 20th, 2015;
- *Portugal*, Lisbon and Porto from November 23rd to 27th, 2015.

A second type of animation was implemented in four different encounters with the Delegates of Youth Ministry at a regional level jointly organized and promoted by the Dicastery for Youth Ministry and the Dicastery for the Missions. The theme of Salesian Missionary Volunteer Work was the one that the Delegates of the two sectors studied and dealt with together:

- *Africa-Madagascar* in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from September 16th to 19th, 2015;
- *Interamerica and America South Cone* in Quito, Ecuador, from October 17th to 20th, 2015;

– *South Asia* in Begnaluru, from November 2nd to 5th, 2015;

– *East Asia - Oceania* in Seoul, South Korea, from November 10th to 13th, 2015.

Another group of animation encounters was lived by Fr. Fabio Attard with the three Councillors for Youth Ministry, Social Communication and the Missions, participating in three Provincial Conferences in the following Regions:

– *Mediterranean Europe*, in Lisbon, Portugal, from September 30th to October 3rd, 2015;

– *Interamerica*, in Stony Point, New York, USA, from October 22nd to 24th;

– *America South Cone*, in Santiago, Chile, from October 26th to 28th, 2015.

Finally, the Councillor participated in the *Continental Conference of Salesian Institutions of Higher Education (IUS) in America*, which was held in San Salvador, El Salvador, from September 27th to 29th, 2015.

The Councillor for Social Communication

The Councillor for Social Communication (SC), Fr. Filiberto González, after the plenary summer session of the General Coun-

cil, on July 26th participated in the Giffoni International Youth Film Festival to confer, on behalf of the Rector Major, the extraordinary award “Don Bosco Bicentenary” to the film that, according to the Salesian youth jury of CGS, had better presented Salesian educative values in the entire festival.

August 2015. From August 5th to 9th, Fr. Filiberto participates, with the members of the team of the SC Dicastery Felipe Loaiza, Gian Francesco Romano and Jacob Iruppakkaattu, in the VII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians in Turin and Colle Don Bosco. Then, from the 10th to the 16th with the same people he participates in the International Encounter of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) to fulfil the task of International Information of the closing events of the Bicentenary Year.

From August 20th to September 10th, Fr. Filiberto visits the Province of Mexico – Guadalajara (MEG), taking also a few days’ rest at home, in Guadalajara. During this period he meets the Provincial and the Council of MEG to offer some guidelines on behalf of the Rector Major and to deal with the theme of Social Communication in the Province. He visits the com-

munity of the Theologate and the one that is in charge of the schools in Guadalajara. He meets the SC Delegate of the Province and his team. He has a meeting with all the Salesians working in the schools of the Province, offering them a synthesis on the "Fruits of the Bicentenary" written by the Rector Major in the Acts of the Superior Council. During this period, on behalf of the Rector Major, he also pays a visit to sick confrères.

September 2015. From September 10th to 16th the Councillor for Social Communication in Lima presides over the meeting of the Delegates for Social Communication of Interamerica Region. Besides the Delegates, the Regional Councillor, Fr. Timothy Ploch, and the Provincial of Peru, Fr. Santo Ben are also present. The themes dealt with were: synergy among sectors, aggiornamento of the SC Provincial Plan, the challenges of new SC technologies to formation, to schools and parishes, the study and conclusion of the document on the way for SDBs and lay collaborators to be present and to participate in social networks.

From the 17th to the 21st, in the city of Brasilia, he presides over the meeting of the Delegates for Social Communication of America

South Cone Region. Here again the themes dealt with were: synergy of sectors, aggiornamento of the SC provincial plan, the challenges of new SC technologies to formation, to schools and parishes, the study and conclusion of the document on the way for SDBs and lay collaborators to be present and to participate in social networks. Besides the Delegates, was also present for one day the Provincial who coordinates SC in *CISBRASIL*, Gildasio Mendes. In the same days, Fr. Filiberto met the Salesians of the communities that are close to the Brasilia area, who were doing their spiritual retreat and he presented to them a synthesis on the "Fruits of the Bicentenary" offered by the Rector Major and published in the Acts of the Superior Council.

From September 29th to October 2nd, in Lisbon, the Councillor for SC participates in the meeting of Provincials of the Mediterranean Region together with the Regional Councillor and the Councillors for Youth Ministry and for the Missions.

October 2015. From October 5th to 14th, the Councillor for SC participates in the meetings of the intermediate session of the General Council in Rome.

From the 21st to the 25th in Stony Point (SUE) he participates in the meetings of Provincials of Inter-america Region together with the Regional Councillor and the Councillors for Youth Ministry and for the Missions, this time also with the presence of the Rector Major.

From the 25th to the 29th in Santiago de Chile he participates in the meeting of the Provincials of America South Cone Region, together with the Regional Councillor and with the councillors for Youth Ministry and for the Missions. He also seizes the opportunity to meet the SC Delegate and his team.

November 2015. From the 4th to the 9th, accompanied by Bro. Ephrem Santos, he presides over the Regional meeting of SC Delegates and of *Boscom*, in Goa. The Provincial who coordinates SC in the Conference of Provincials of South Asia Region, Godfrey d'Souza, and the Provincial of Panjim (INP), Ian Figueiredo, are also present. The meeting dealt with the theme "Social Communication and the Family" and the International Youth Film Festival.

From the 9th to the 12th in Chofu - Tokyo (GIA) he presides over the meeting of Salesian Publishers in the regions of South Asia and East

Asia-Oceania, with the aim of exchanging information and creating bridges and synergies among the Publishers of the two Regions. At the meeting are also present the Provincial of Japan, Fr. Mario Yamanouchi, and Bro. Ephrem Santos of the SC Dicastery.

From the 12th to the 16th, he presides over the meeting of the SC Delegates of East Asia - Oceania Region, which is also held in Chofu - Tokyo, always with the presence of the Provincial Fr. Mario Yamanouchi and Bro. Ephrem Santos. During the meeting the following themes were dealt with: the aggiornamento of Provincial SC plans, guidelines for Salesians and lay collaborators who make use of and participate in social media, the charismatic value of the traditions of Salesian spirituality and magisterium, the provincial organization of translators teams, the common commitment to send news to the *AustralAsia* website.

The Councillor for the Missions

After the summer session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Missions, Fr. Guillermo Basaños, paid an animation visit, from **July** 27th to 29th, to the Sale-

sian presences in Nepal, recently struck by the earthquake.

Arriving in the Province of Guwahati (ING), he visited once again the missionary aspirantate of Sirajuli, on July 31st, and soon afterwards he attended the opening of the Course for Missionaries in Shillong, on **August** 1st and 2nd. On August 3rd, passing by the Provincial house in Guwahati, he blessed the statue of Don Bosco that in the following days would have been installed in a public place in the city.

After his return to Italy, Fr. Basaños participated in all the concluding ceremonies of the Bicentenary in Turin, both in the ADMA Congress and in the SYM-MGS World Meeting.

From August 20th to 24th, the Councillor was at the Regional Centre for Permanent Formation in Quito to participate in the Seminar of Missionary Animation, and immediately afterwards in the planning meeting.

Later on, till the end of August, Fr. Guillermo paid an animation visit in the Province of Venezuela (VEN), in particular to the Apostolic Vicariate of Ayacucho, going also to the community of Isla del Ratón.

In the month of **September**, as usual, the General Councillor was

practically engaged full-time in the course of preparation of the new missionaries of the 146th Missionary Expedition, which was officially sent from the Basilica of Valdocco on Sunday, September 27th.

During these months, Fr. Guillermo also participated in several regional meetings of the Delegates for Missionary Animation and the Delegates for Youth Ministry: for Africa, in Addis Ababa (AET), from September 16th to 19th; for Inter-america and South Cone, in Quito (ECU), from October 17th to 20th; for South Asia, in Bangalore (INK) from November 2nd to 5th; and for East Asia – Oceania, from November 10th to 13th, in Seoul (KOR).

It is to be noted that in Quito, on “the equator of the world”, the confrères could celebrate with Fr. Basaños his 50th birthday, “the equator of a century”.

Following the inter-sectorial six-year plan, together with the Councillors for Youth Ministry and for Social Communication, Fr. Basaños participated in various Conferences of Provincials: for the Mediterranean Region, in Lisbon (POR) from September 30th to October 2nd; for Interamerica, in Stony Point (SUE), from October 22nd to 24th; and for America – South Cone, in Santiago de Chile from October 26th to 28th.

After this series of regional meetings, Fr. Basaños, together with the FMA General Councillor for the Missions, Sr. Alaide Deretti, presided over the works of Study Days on the Initial Proclamation of Christ that were held at the Salesianum in Rome from November 15th to 20th. Then, the members of FMA and SDB Missions Departments had two days of work and planning (November 23rd and 24th), together with other persons responsible for the preparation of four Seminars of Missionary Animation that will be held in various continents between 2017 and 2018.

The Economist General

In the month of **August**, after a few days of spiritual retreat, the Economist General, Bro. Jean Paul Muller, attended the closing ceremony of the Bicentenary held at Colle Don Bosco on August 15th and 16th. He then went to Sweden, to participate in the meeting of NGOs linked to the Church, committed in an organizational analysis of the new administrative exigencies and in the assessment of the financial situation of the same.

From **September** 1st to 9th, the Economist General went to New York, where he met a group of

American past pupils before participating in a meeting on the fund-raising strategy and administration. He then delivered to the students of an American College a *lectio magistralis* on the virtuous practice of voluntary work.

In the same month, the Economist with various work groups made of expert technicians, prepared different documents and criteria of assessment of the economic activity, in view of respecting the parameters required by the Holy See on accounting and transparency. The work planned within the economic Commission follows the official document "*Guidelines for the Administration of the Assets in Institutes of Consecrated Life and in Societies of Apostolic Life*". Always on the track given by this document, on September 19th the Economist General had a meeting with the economists, where he listed the various peculiar aspects of new norms in administrative/financial field.

Successively, he attended Court hearings and meetings with various Lawyers, and this inevitably filled his institutional agenda. Nevertheless, there were encouraging moments through participation in the audience of the Holy Father with the European Environment Ministers, in which were

discussed the new environment policies to be adopted in Europe, also in the light of the papal Encyclical "*Laudato si*".

The last days of September were dedicated to clarify the necessities and the financial situation of the Vice-Province and of the Salesian University. In particular, the bases were put for the future development of the same University and of the Vice-Province in full respect of the principles of economicity, good administration and transparency.

In **October** the Economist was busy in South Africa in the *CIVAM meeting*, which was held from the 8th to the 23rd, and where economists were presented with the guidelines and the *best practice* concerning administration and the use of funds for a virtuous administration of Salesian works in full respect of transparency and economicity. Always in this viewpoint of the new economic ideas of the Holy See, Jean Paul Muller participated in the encounter presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Pell, held at the Urban University in Rome, on the theme "Statutes of the New Economic Organizations of the Holy See", in which the new functions of the Dicastery called "Secretariat for Economy and of APSA" were illustrated.

The month of **November** started with the speech of the Economist General at the Bishops' Conference of West European Region on *Fundraising*, held in Warsaw (Poland). His research centred on *Fundraising* and *Crowdfunding* applied to projects of religious background, allowed not only the acquaintance with and publicizing of the Salesian work in the world, but also provided a stimulus to the search for new benefactors of Salesian works.

On November 20th the Economist General participated in the Conference entitled "A Multipolar World", in which he could discuss with experts of the university and political environment on the socio-political taking place today in the globalized world.

On November 26th there was the Economic Commission, which dealt with themes concerning the analysis of the budget and final balance of the Provinces and Vice-Provinces, with relevant operational suggestions regarding those that face difficulties. In these meetings of the Commission, a graphic and statistic method was identified for an immediate assessment of the patrimonial state of the Provinces, in such a way as to have at first sight the global situation of the same. There was also

a debate on two delicate issues concerning the study of the placement of movable patrimony of the *Direzione Generale* and the revision of structures in respect of the criterion of ethics, transparency and prudent administration of resources.

The Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region

From **July** 24th to 31st, the Councillor for Africa – Madagascar Region, Fr. Américo Chaquisse, was in the Province of East Africa (AFE) for a short visit, in which he met the Provincial Council and for two days worked with the secretary of “Don Bosco Tech Africa”, had a meeting with the community of the international theologate of UTUME, animated the meeting of the rectors, visited the community of the pre-novitiate and two Salesian communities: Embo e Makuyu. He then returned to Rome to participate, on August 5th, in Mornese, in the perpetual professions of FMA sisters, among whom there also was his sister who pronounced her perpetual vows.

On **August** 11th, he left for Sierra Leone where he opened consultations for the new Superior of

AFW Vice-Province, in the community of Lungi, and successively visited the Salesian community of Freetown and the house of Bo. On August 16th, in Lomé, in AFO Vice-Province, he presided over the Mass for the closure celebration of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco’s birth, during which 12 Salesian novices and 4 FMA novices did their first profession. He also animated the meeting of the Rectors of the same Vice-Province on August 18th.

On August 19th, Fr. Américo arrived in the community of Ashaiman-Accra, in Ghana, see of AFW Vice-Province, to continue the consultation for the appointment of the Superior. During his stay, he had an animation encounter with the Provincial Council. On the 21st of the same month he continued his trip to Lagos in Nigeria for the same purpose, this once in the community of Ibadan. He also visited two Salesian communities: Akure and Ondo. On the 24th he arrived in Yaoundé in Cameroun for the *extraordinary Visitation to ATE Vice-Province*, which kept him busy *till November 28th*. During this period he met various communities in the following countries: Cameroun, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Central African Republic, Congo and Chad.

From **September** 10th to 13th he participated in the first congress of Salesian Cooperators held in Addis Ababa.

From **October** 16th to 19th he participated in the regional meeting of Provincial Economers, presided over *CIVAM* from October 19th to 25th, and had an animation encounter with the Council of AFM Vice-Province. From October 25th to 29th he visited the Vice-Province of Mozambique, where he met the Provincial Council, visited the aspirantate and the pre-novitiate and spent two days with his relatives at home.

For the conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation to ATE Vice-Province, the Regional Councillor gathered the Council, to whom he presented the conclusions. He then had a meeting with all the confrères and in the end there was a thanksgiving Mass and a fraternal meal. On November 30th he returned to the headquarters in Rome.

The Councillor for the Latin America - South Cone Region

On **July** 23rd 2015, the last day of the summer session of the General Council, the Councillor for the

Latin America – South Cone Region, Fr. Natale Vitali, accompanied the Rector Major on his trip to the Province of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, where from July 24th to 26th there was the *meeting of Salesians in initial formation of the six Provinces of Brazil*, in the city of Nitéroï, the first Salesian presence in Brazil, on the occasion of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. Those in initial formation belonged to the various stages from pre-novitiate to theology. They were about 183.

On July 25th, there was also the meeting of the Provincials of CIS-BRASIL with the Rector Major in Nitéroï.

From July 27th to **August** 1st, always with the Rector Major, Fr. Vitali *visited the Province of Chile*. Here he participated in the meeting of the Provincial Council, in the visit to the city of Concepción, the cradle of Salesian life in this country, in the meeting of the young of SYM-MGS in "Gratitud Nacional", Santiago, with the groups of the Salesian Family, followed by the visit to the Salesian houses of Santiago.

From August 3rd to 4th, together with the Regional Councillor for Interamerica, he participated in the *Curatorium* of the Regional Centre for the Formation of the Salesian

Brother in the city of Guatemala. There was a meeting with all the 11 lay brothers of the house, 4 of the second year and 7 of the first year, with their formators.

On August 5th he commenced the *Extraordinary Visitation in the Province of St. Joseph in Uruguay*, which lasted till November 17th.

The Province at present is comprised of 12 religious communities and of 3 houses run by lay people. On the occasion of the Visitation, the Regional Councillor met the Provincial Council with all the Rectors, with the Provincial of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of Uruguay, with the Council of the Salesian Family and with 8 Bishops of the Dioceses where Salesians work.

During the Visitation, on **September** 11th, he participated, in Buenos Aires, in the meeting of the Provincials of CISUR with the Rector Major, and successively from the 14th to the 17th he accompanied the Rector Major in the visit to the Province of Manaus, Brazil, visiting the city of São Gabriel da Cachoeira and meeting the Provincial Council, the Salesians and the Salesian Family.

From September 18th to 19th he accompanied the Rector Major in a short visit to the *Province of Paraguay*.

From September 22nd to 26th he participated in the Regional Meeting of Provincial Delegates for Formation of the Region, in the city of Recife, in Brazil; in these days he also participated in the meeting of the Provincial Council of BRE Province (on the 23rd) and delivered a lecture on Preventive System to Educators in the city of Natal (on the 24th).

From September 27th to **October** 1st he took part in the meeting of *Continental Conference of Salesian Institutions of Higher Education (IUS) in America*, in the city of San Salvador.

From October 5th to 9th, after his return to Rome, he participated in the 'intermediate session' of the General Council, where he expressed his assessment of the Region.

From October 26th to 29th he participated in the annual meeting of Provincials of the Region in the city of Santiago de Chile.

After the extraordinary Visitation, from **November** 19th to 21st, he participated in the meeting of the Extended Team of the "Salesian Centre for Permanent Formation for America" (CSFPA), which dealt with the assessment of the year, the planning of 2016, the revision of the Statutes of the Centre, and other issues of interest.

From November 24th to 26th, he participated, in Brasilia, in the meeting of the Provincials of Brazil and the Salesian Network of Schools in Brazil.

On the 27th he attended the Curatorium of Lapa, theologate in Brazil, and on November 28th he returned to Rome for the winter session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Interamerica Region

The Councillor for Interamerica Region, Fr. Timothy Ploch, spent most of his time from **August** to **November** 2015 in the 'Santa Rosa da Lima' Province of Peru, for the Extraordinary Visitation. He could visit all the presences and communities of the Province, except the one of Kuyuntsa, a missionary presence in the Amazonian region. However, the confrères of Kuyuntsa did a three-day journey to join the community of St. Lorenzo. In this way, the Visitor could talk to each one of the confrères of the Province. A very significant moment was the celebration of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. On August 16th there was a "Caminata en Familia con Don Bosco", a five-kilometres procession in one of the main

streets in Lima, in which over 15,000 young people, Salesians and members of the Salesian Family participated, concluding with the blessing of Mary Help of Christians in front of Her Basilica. Previously, there had been a Holy Mass in the Cathedral of Lima, presided over by the Archbishop, His Eminence Card. Juan Luis Cipriani.

There were three occasions on which the Visitor left the Province: once in August, to participate in the *meeting of the Delegates for Formation of the Region*, held in Stony Point, NY, taking also some time to spend at home with his family. The second occasion was again in SUE Province, to participate in the *Provincial Celebration of the Jubilees*, as this year 2015 was also the 50th anniversary of his first profession. And the third time, in October, he participated in the *annual meeting of the Provincials of Interamerica Region*, once again in Stony Point, NY (SUE). In his trip to Colombia, the Rector Major, passing by USA, spent a full day with the Provincials of Interamerica Region. Even if this was not an official visit to the Province of New Rochelle, many confrères and young people gathered in the evening to meet the 10th Successor of Don Bosco.

Before the Extraordinary Visitation in Peru, after his departure from Rome, the Regional Councillor went to Colombia to participate in three 'Curatorium': in La Ceja for the inter-provincial novitiate, in Copacabana for inter-provincial post-novitiate, and in Bogotá for the inter-regional community of the students of theology. From Colombia he then went to Guatemala for the 'Curatorium' of CRESCO, the Inter-regional Centre for Specific Formation of Lay-Brothers.

At the conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation in Peru, the Regional Councillor travelled to Quito, Ecuador, for the meeting of the Extended Team of the "Salesian Centre for Permanent Formation for America" (CSFPA). From there he went to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to lead the consultation for the next Superior of the Vice-Province. Finally, he could spend the USA national feast of "Thanksgiving Day" with his family, before returning to Rome for the winter plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region

After the summer session of the General Council, Fr. Václav Kle-

ment did for two months the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of AUL* (Australia - Pacific, with headquarters in Melbourne) from **July** 25th to **September** 25th. The Visitation was done following the discernment method in the style of GC27 (listening – interpretation – way forward). Besides the visit to the 15 local communities in four countries of the Province, a discernment path was also started for the creation of a possible Pacific Provincial Delegation including Fiji, New Zealand and Samoa.

After the Extraordinary Visitation to Australia, the Regional Councillor started *Animation visits to the other nine Provinces and to three Vice-Provinces of the Region*. He was in Cebu (FIS, September 26th-28th), Manila (FIN, September 29th-October 4th), Jakarta-Indonesia and Dili-East Timor (ITM, October 5th-17th), Myanmar (MYM, October 18th-24th), Bangkok-Thailand and Phnom Penh-Cambodia (THA, October 25th – November 2nd), Ho Chi Min City-Vietnam (VIE, November 3rd-8th), in Seoul-South Korea (KOR, November 11th-18th), Tokyo (GIA, Japan November 23rd-27th) and finally Hong Kong (CIN, November 28th-29th). In all the nine Provinces and three

Vice-Provinces he presided over a meeting with the Council, referring to the 'Navigation Map' of the Rector Major and to the Provincial six-year plan.

Fr. Václav also presided over the two 'Curatorium' of Parañaque – specific Formation for the priesthood: 'Seminario ng Don Bosco'; and the one of specific Formation for the Salesian lay brother: 'Steven Sandor' (FIN, October 1st). Nine Provincials and four Superiors of the Vice-Provinces (PNG-SI, Cambodia, Mongolia and Indonesia) took part in these meetings.

According to the six-year programme all the Regional meetings of the Delegates for the sectors for the missions and formation were held in the first part of November. The respective meetings this year were held: for Social Communication in Tokyo-Japan (GIA, November 9th-15th), Formation of delegates, formation of formators and formation of new Rectors in K'-Long-Vietnam (VIE, November 9th-21st), Youth Ministry and Missions in Seoul-Korea (KOR, November 10th-13th). The Councillor personally participated in two meetings: of Delegates for Formation (VIE) on November 9th-10th, and of Delegates for Youth Ministry in synergy with the Delegates for the Missions (KOR) on November 10th-13th.

In view of the *Centenary (1917-2017) of the Institute of Don Bosco Volunteers (VDB)*, together with the VBB Central Council, Fr. Klement organized formation days for VDB-CDB ecclesiastical assistants of Asia in Manila, (FIN) on November 8th-22nd. There were 25 confrères – ecclesiastical assistants coming from 12 countries of the two Regions of South Asia and East Asia – Oceania. The formation days were animated by the Central President Olga K. and 5 other VDB sisters. Everybody appreciated the presence of the new VDB-CDB central Assistant, Fr. Luis Playa.

Fr. Klement returned to Rome on November 29th for the winter session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the South Asia Region

After the conclusion of the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Regional Councillor for South Asia, Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanaga, left for India on **July 23rd**. On his arrival in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, he spent two days visiting the Diocese of Kuzhithurai, which is headed by the new Salesian Bishop Jerome Dhas

Varuvel; he then had a week's break for medical treatment.

On **August 5th** he attended the installation ceremony of the new Superior of the Vice-Province of Sri Lanka. He then went to the *Province of Kolkata (INC)* to inaugurate the *Extraordinary Visitation* on August 7th, starting with a meeting of the Rectors and of the Provincial Council. Local visits began at the famous Basilica Sanctuary of Our lady of Bandel on August 10th. The Regional Councillor visited all the houses of the vast Province, which comprises 44 Salesian presences scattered in three countries – India, Nepal and Bangladesh – with four districts in India itself, i.e. West Bengala, Jharkjhand, Bihar and Sikhim. On the whole, the visits to the communities took him more that 90 days, till November 25th. During this period, Fr. Maria Arokiam also visited several local Bishops and almost all the presences of the Salesian Family.

The Regional Councillor had to interrupt his Visit to attend the Provincial Conference of South Asia, from August 19th to 22nd, in Bangalore. From August 27th to 30th he was in Nepal to visit the community and the relief works organized by the confrères after the earthquake. In September, from 5th

to 11th he was also in Bangladesh to visit our houses of Utrail and Lokhikul.

From **September 26th to 28th** Fr. Kanaga was in Calcutta to participate in and animate the Congress of the Salesian Family for the Bicentenary, where the Rector Major was the main guest. There were about 2,000 members of the Salesian Family from the entire Region. On September 28th, there was a significant inter-religious meeting with the Hindu Monks of 'Ramakrishna Mission', in the presence of Rector Major. The Regional Councillor accompanied the Rector major also to the Don Bosco Youth Expo', celebrated in New Delhi on the two following days. Then, on the first two days of October he accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to the Province. The following four days (October 3-6) were spent in various places of the Province of Hyderabad, for the consultation on the new Provincial. He then returned to Kolkata to continue the Visit. From **October 15th to 17th** he participated in the seminar on the occasion of the silver jubilee of the "Don Bosco Renewal Centre" in Bangalore. It is also to be noted that on **November 16th-17th**, during the visits, he presided over the meeting of the permanent Committee of SPCSA in Kolkata.

The programme of the Extraordinary Visitation was concluded on November 23rd with an animation encounter of the members of the Salesian Family and of those responsible for provincial Commissions. On the following day, the Regional Councillor met the Provincial Council. The Visitation was formally closed with the Eucharist and with a meeting of Rectors on November 25th. Fr. Kanaga then went to Chennai on November 27th, and there he spoke at the meeting of the Offices of Development of the Region and on the 29th presided over the Eucharist for the profession of some Don Bosco volunteers, before returning to Rome on November 30th.

The Councillor for the Central and North Europe Region

After the summer session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Region of Centre and North Europe, Fr. Tadeusz Rozmus, remained for a few days in Italy. He left for Austria on **August** 1st, where he did pastoral ministry in an Austrian parish. From the 15th to the 17th he is in Turin and Colle Don Bosco where, together with the Rector Major

and some members of the General Council, he participates in the concluding celebrations for the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. Soon afterwards he leaves for Malta, where he stays for a few days, meeting the confrères and members of the Salesian Family and visiting some Salesian presences. He then goes to Poland to spend a few days with his mother and relatives.

On **September** 1st he begins the *Extraordinary Visitation in the Province of Wrocław (PLO)*. During nearly two months of stay in PLO, he visits all the Salesian communities and presences and participates in various events. Among these, on September 16th he attends the national meeting of Salesian schools gathered in the Sanctuary of the 'Black Madonna' in Czestochowa on the occasion of the Bicentenary and presides over the solemn Eucharist. This pilgrimage gathered more than 8,000 young people of the different Salesian schools in Poland. At the end of September and the beginning of **October** he is in the formation houses, where he participates in the inauguration of the new academic year: first in the post-novitiate of Łódź, then in the theologate of Cracow. From September 28th to 30th he attends the meeting of the

Provincials of the Mediterranean Region, gathered in Lisbon, Portugal.

After the conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation in the Province of Wrocław, on *October 24th*, he immediately goes to the Province of the Czech Republic (CEP), to guide the consultation for the new Provincial. He then meets the confrères gathered in Ostrava, Brno e Prague. From here he leaves for the Province of Pila (PLN), where he also guides the consultation for the new Provincial. In various meetings held in Dębno, Szczecin, Słupsk, Rumia, Bydgoszcz and Piła, he has the opportunity and possibility to meet many confrères and reflect together on the future of the Province.

On his trip to Great Britain for another Extraordinary Visitation, he meets once more the confrères present in Moscow and Stockholm to talk to them and give them the possibility to participate in the provincial consultation of PLO.

From *November 1st to 28th* he remains in the *Province of Great Britain (GBR) for the Extraordinary Visitation*: he meets and talks with all the confrères, visits all the communities and Salesian presences, doing all the tasks proper of a canonical Visitation. After the conclusion of the Visitation, on No-

vember 29th he returns to Rome to participate in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Mediterranean Region

The Councillor for the Mediterranean Region, Fr. Stefano Martoglio, after the summer session of the General Council, on *July 24th* went to Sicily for a meeting with the Provincial Council of ISI and with the executive staff of Salesian professional formation in the Province, to accompany the life and pastoral dynamics of the entire province and of professional formation in particular.

On *July 27th* the Regional Councillor met in Rome the Provincial Council of ICC, always to accompany the journey of the Provinces, listening to the realities of this vast Province and to its related necessities. The meetings with the Provincial Councils of the Provinces are part of the ordinary service of the Regional Councillor and are a precious instrument of listening, accompaniment and construction of the vision of the new Mediterranean Region.

In the following days, at the end of July, the Regional Councillor accompanied some national services

of CISI with meetings and personal talks.

On July 30th Fr. Martoglio went to his family for a period of rest.

From **August** 6th the Regional Councillor was in Turin to participate in the Congress of *ADMA*, which was held precisely from August 6th to 10th. A rich experience of encounter and reflection for the entire Salesian Family, and for the strong presence of *ADMA* in the Provinces of the Mediterranean Region.

From August 10th the Regional Councillor participated in the *SYM Don Bosco*, in the Salesian places, to conclude with the Rector Major and many young people, confrères and members of the Salesian Family, the journey of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. A rich and successful experience of life and vitality of the Salesian charism. For the Regional Councillor it was also an opportunity to meet many young people and confrères of the Mediterranean Region present at the *SYM Don Bosco* meeting.

After this experience, on August 17th he returned to Rome Pisana for a few days of immediate preparation to his trip to Spain.

On August 20th Fr. Stefano Martoglio left for Spain for a period of study of Spanish, in preparation to the *Extraordinary Visitation to the*

SMX Province of Sevilla. This period of preparation and study was spent in the Salesian house of Campello, where he was cordially and fraternally welcomed by the Salesian community.

At the end of the short period of immediate preparation to the Extraordinary Visitation, on **September** 4th the Regional Councillor spent a full day of work with the SMX Provincial Council and on September 5th he started the visit to the houses, beginning with the house of Alicante.

The Visitation continued till **November** 22nd, when the Regional Councillor Fr. Martoglio returned to Italy. This first part of the Extraordinary Visitation to SMX, which will continue till the end of May 2016, allowed the Regional Councillor to meet and know part of this vast new SMX Province, doing a wonderful experience of the richness of the Salesian charism embodied in Spain in many years of Salesian tradition. A wonderful experience!

During this first period of the Visitation to the Province of Sevilla, from September 27th to **October** 2nd, the Regional Councillor participated in the *meeting of the Provinces of the Mediterranean Region in Lisbon*. A very rich and fruitful encounter of fraternity

and sharing, of journey of the Mediterranean identity, wonderfully hosted by the Province of Portugal. In this meeting, in reflection and in different times, the Regional Councillor of the Region of Centre and North Europe and the Councillors of the Dicasteries for Youth Ministry, for the Missions and for Social Communication also participated. In the days of work and reflection there also was a "pilgrimage" of the Provincials to Fatima, to entrust to Mary the life, the confrères, the hopes and toils of the Mediterranean Region.

On November 22nd the Regional Councillor returned to Rome, where he participated in a meeting of the Provincial Economers of CISI. On November 23rd he had a meeting with the Provincial Council of INE, in Venice-Mestre, to accompany the journey of this Province.

On the 24th the Regional Councillor went to Nave for a visit to the philosophic post-novitiate and for an encounter with formators and with the young confrères studying there. On the 25th he participated with the Provincials in the 'Curatorium' of Nave.

On November 26th he participated in the 'Curatorium' of Pinerolo and in the one of Turin Crocetta; on the 27th he participated in the 'Curatorium' of Rome San Tarcisio and on the 28th in the 'Curatorium' of Genzano. His participation in this round of 'Curatorium' allowed him to know and accompany the life of these international formation houses in Italy.

On November 29th he participated in an important assembly of VIS in Rome, accompanying the great renovation process of VIS itself.

5.1 New Provincials

Here below (in alphabetical order) find some data of the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major and his Council in the month of December 2015, during the winter plenary session of the General Council.

1. *BRIODY James, Provincial of the Province of GREAT BRITAIN*

On December 22nd, 2015, the Rector Major with his Council appointed Fr. *James BRIODY* as new Provincial of the Province “St Thomas of Canterbury” of *GREAT BRITAIN (GBR)*. He succeeds Fr. Martin Coyle.

Fr. James BRIODY was born on May 7th, 1964, in Motherwell, Lanarkshire (Great Britain) and he is a Salesian since September 8th, 1984, when he made his first profession in Maynooth at the end of the novitiate he did in Dublin. He did his perpetual vows on September 11th, 1991, and was ordained a priest on July 22nd, 1995, in Motherwell, his hometown.

After his priestly ordination, he obtained his ‘Master of Education’ at ‘Brunel University’, and then exerted his educative and pastoral ministry in various houses of the Province of Great Britain (with the parenthesis of one year he spent in

Dublin). These are the Salesian houses and communities where he worked as a priest: Dublin-Provincial House (1995); Cherstey (1996-2000); Bootle (2001-2002); Farnborough (2003-2005). From September 2005 he was the Principal of the Salesian school in Bootle. Now he is called to assume the responsibility of Provincial Superior of his Province (GBR).

2. *ELÉGBÉDÉ José, Provincial of the FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA Province*

At the head of the Province “Our Lady of Peace” of the *FRANCOPHONE WEST AFRICA PROVINCE (AFO)*, which has the Provincial house in Abidjan (Ivory Coast), the Rector Major with his Council, on December 15th, 2015, appointed Fr. *José ELÉGBÉDÉ*. He succeeds Fr. Faustino García Peña.

Born on October 27th, 1967, in Cotonou (Benin), José ELÉGBÉDÉ did his first profession on August 16th, 1990, in Lomé (Togo), at the end of the year of novitiate he did there. He pronounced his perpetual vows on July 7th, 1996, and was ordained a priest on July 8th, 1999 in Cotonou, his hometown.

After the priestly ordination, he worked for three years in the Salesian parish in Lomé (Togo), and

then he was in Rome to continue his studies at the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome (from September 2003 to June 2005). On his return to the Province (then Vice-Province) from June 2005 to June 2011 he was novice Master and Rector of the community in the novitiate of Lomé (Togo). Simultaneously he was also Delegate for Formation in the Vice-Province. On July 2011 he was appointed Provincial Vicar, a task he was still performing when he was appointed Provincial of AFO.

3. *JACHIMOWICZ Roman, Provincial of the Province of PIŁA, POLAND*

On December 4th, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. *Roman JACHIMOWICZ*, as new Provincial of the Province of "St. Adalbert", with the Provincial House in *PIŁA, Poland (PLN)*. He succeeds Fr. Marek Chmielewski.

Roman JACHIMOWICZ, born on November 3rd, 1967, in Gorzów Wlkp (Poland), did his first religious profession as a Salesian on August 22nd, 1987, in Swobnica, where he had done his novitiate. He made his perpetual profession on July 31st, 1993, and was ordained a priest on May 25th, 1995, in the theologate of Łąd.

After the priestly ordination, for about ten years, (September 1995-June 2006) he exerted his educative and pastoral ministry in the house of Szczecin - sw. Józef, and successively from June 2006 to March 2015 in the house of Aleksandrów Kujawski - sw. Jan Kanty, as Rector of the community.

Now the Rector Major has called him to assume the task of Provincial of his PLN Province.

4. *KARIKUNNEL Michael, Provincial of the ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA Province*

On December 22nd, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. *Michael KARIKUNNEL*, as new Provincial of the Province "Blessed Artemide Zatti" of *ANGLOPHONE WEST AFRICA (AFW)*, which has the Provincial House in Ashaiman (Ghana). He succeeds Fr. Jorge Crisafulli.

Michael KARIKUNNEL was born on August 3rd, 1957, in Marangadu, Kottayam (India) and is a Salesian since May 24th, 1979, when he made his first religious profession in Shillong - Sunnyside, at the end of the year of novitiate he did there, as a member of the Province of Calcutta. He pronounced his perpetual vows on May 24th, 1984, and was ordained a priest of June 4th, 1988.

After the priestly ordination, he was for two years at the “Kristu Jyoti College” in Bangalore. In September he left for Africa, destined to the house of Mafinga-Makalala (Tanzania), belonging to the Province of East Africa. In September 1992 he went to Sunyani (Ghana) then in the Vice-Province of Anglophone West Africa. In Sunyani he worked till September 2000, when he was transferred as Rector to the community of Ashaiman (Ghana). In January 2005 he went to the community of Ondo (Nigeria) as Rector. In September 2011, he was transferred to Lagos and was appointed Delegate of the Provincial Delegation of Nigeria; from 2014 he was Rector and Parish Priest in the community of Lagos. He is now called to the responsibility of Provincial of AFW.

5. *MÉSITOR Jean-Paul, Superior of the Vice-Province of HAÏTI*

At the head of the Vice-Province “B. Filippo Rinaldi” of HAÏTI (HAI), the Rector Major and his Council on December 23rd, 2015, appointed Fr. *Jean-Paul MÉSIDOR*. He succeeds Fr. Ducange Sylvain.

Born on July 7th, 1977, in Duval, Pétion-Ville (Haiti), Jean-Paul MÉSIDOR did his first profession on

August 16th, 1992 in Jarabacoa, at the end of the novitiate he did there. He pronounced his perpetual vows in Rome on January 31st, 1999, and was ordained a priest on July 9th, 2000, in Port-au-Prince.

After the priestly ordination, he continued his studies at the Pontifical University in Rome, obtaining an M.A. in Spiritual Theology. On his return to Haiti, he worked for two years (from September 2001 to September 2003) in the house of Port-au-Prince - Fleuriot. Transferred to Fleuriot-Tabarre, he was Rector of the community from July 2006 to July 2010. He also performed the task of Secretary of the Vice-Province. From July 2010 to June 2013 he was Rector of the community of Cap-Haïtien. In June 2013 he was transferred to Port-au-Prince, as Economist of the Vice-Province, a task he was fulfilling till his appointment as Superior of HAI Vice-Province.

6. *PIZON Jarosław, Provincial of the Province of WROCŁAW, POLAND*

On December 23rd, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. *Stanisław PIZON* as new Provincial of the Province “St John Bosco” in WROCŁAW,

Poland (PLO). He succeeds Fr. Alfred Leja.

Jarosław PIZON was born in Walcz (Poland) on June 21st, 1968, and is a Salesian from August 22nd, 1988, when he pronounced his first profession in Swobnica, location of the novitiate, as member of the Province of Poland-Piła (PLN). He did his perpetual profession on July 30th, 1994 and was ordained a priest on May 30th, 1996, in the theologate of Łań.

After the priestly ordination, he exerted his educative and pastoral ministry in the following houses of the Province of Piła: Piła-Holy Family (September 1996-September 1999); Rumia-Swietojska (September 1999-September 2000); Piła-Holy Family (September 2000-May 2005); Aleksandrów Kujawski (June 2005-June 2010), Rector and Parish Priest. From June 2010 he was in the Provincial house, Piła-St Adalbert, as Rector of the Community and Vice-Provincial. He is now called to the responsibility of Provincial of the PLO Province.

7. THATHIREDDY Vijaya Bhaskar, Provincial of the Province of HYDERABAD, INDIA

At the head of the Province “St Joseph” with the see in *HYDERABAD, India (INH)*, the Rector

Major and his Council, on December 15th, 2015, appointed Fr. *Vijaya Bhaskar THATHIREDDY*. He succeeds Fr. Balaraju Raminedi.

Vijaya Bhaskar THATHIREDDY was born on October 12th, 1974, in Alwanpally, in the Indian State of Andhra Pradesh (Telengana). He entered the Salesian novitiate of Kotagiri in May 1992, did his first profession on May 24th, 1993. He pronounced his perpetual vows on May 24th, 1999, and was ordained a priest on January 3rd, 2003, in Ramanthapur, Hyderabad.

After his priestly ordination, he continued his studies in the “Kris-tu Jyoti College” in Bangalore. Then, from September 2003 to September 2005, he exerted the ministry in the house of Kondabada, and till September 2006 in Karunapuram. Later on he was for three years in Rome, at the Salesian Pontifical University, where he obtained a Ph.D. in Philosophy. On his return to the Province, he worked for one year in the house of Hyderabad-Birdy, fulfilling also the task of Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry and Social Communication. In April 2010 he was appointed Provincial Vicar, and was transferred to the Provincial house in Hyderabad, where he was also Rector. Elected as Delegate of the Province of Hyderabad at

GC27, he was successively called to Rome in August 2015, as a member of the Sector of Youth Ministry. Now, six month after his arrival at the Generalate, he is entrusted with the task of Provincial Superior of his Province of origin INH.

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

On December 4th, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council confirmed Fr. *Petr VACULÍK* at the head of the Province "St. John Bosco" of the *CZECH REPUBLIC*.

Petr VACULÍK was born on November 3rd, 1959, in Zlín (then Czechoslovakia) and is a Salesian since October 21st, 1978, when he did his first religious profession in hiding because of the communist regime that was then ruling the country. He obtained his diploma in electro-mechanics. After doing two years of military service, he started the studies of theology at the faculty of theology in Litoměřice. On September 8th, 1984, still in hiding, he pronounced his perpetual vows, and on June 25th, 1988, he was ordained a priest in Olomouc.

After the so-called "velvet revolution", in November 1989, he was inserted in the community of Zlín.

For four years he lived in the community of the Carmelites in Kostelní Vydří and in Frýdlant nad Ostravicí. In 1998 he was sent to the Salesian house of Prostějov, as Parish Priest and from 2006 he was also Rector of the community. For two years he was Provincial Councillor.

In June 2010 the Rector Major Fr. Pascual Chávez entrusted him with the task of Provincial of the Czech Province. Now Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime and his Council confirm him as Provincial of CEP for a second six-year period.

5.2 New Salesian Bishop

GONZÁLEZ PÉREZ Pablo Modesto, Bishop of the Diocese of GUASDUALITO (Venezuela)

On December 3rd, 2015, the Holy Father erected the new Diocese of *GUASDUALITO*, in Venezuela, with a territory split from the Dioceses of San Fernando de Apure and Barinas, creating it suffragan to the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Mérida; he appointed as *first Bishop* of the new Diocese the Salesian priest Fr. *Pablo Modesto GONZÁLEZ PÉREZ*.

The newly erected Diocese of Guasqualito is located in the

South-West of Venezuela, has a surface of 35.184 sq. Km and a population of 200.000 inhabitants; it has 14 parishes and 13 priests (9 diocesan and 4 religious).

Pablo Modesto GONZÁLEZ PÉREZ was born on June 30th, 1959, in San Antonio de los Altos (Venezuela) and entered the Salesian novitiate located in his hometown in September 1976. He pronounced his first profession on September 8th, 1977, and the perpetual one on September 3rd, 1983. He was ordained a priest in his hometown on July 26th, 1986.

He graduated in Educational Sciences at the "Simón Rodríguez" University of di Caracas, and in Pastoral Theology at the Pontifical University in Salamanca. He was Economer and Vicar in the Parish of "San Francisco de Sales" in

Caracas - La Dolorita (1986-1995). Afterwards he was appointed Rector and Parish Priest in the "San Juan Bosco" Parish in Valencia-Barrio El Consejo (1995-2002) and kept the same tasks when he returned to the house of Caracas - La Dorolita (2002-2005), and then in the "San Juan Bosco" house in Los Teques (2005-2008).

After one and a half years he spent in the house of Madrid-Extremadura, from July 2010 he was Rector of the Don Bosco Agricultural Centre in Carrasquero - El Molinete. At a provincial level, from 2000 to 2008 he was Provincial Councillor and Delegate for Parishes.

Now the Holy Father entrusted him with the responsibility of Bishop of the newly erected Venezuelan Diocese.

5.3 Our dead confreres (2nd list 2015)

"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 |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------|-----|------|
| P AIROLDI Santino | Lugano (Svizzera) | 02/11/2015 | 83 | ILE |
| L BAGNATI Angelo | Torino (Italia) | 03/12/2015 | 85 | ICP |
| P BANIĆ Anton | Galanta (Slovacchia) | 05/08/2015 | 87 | SLK |
| P BARRESI Salvatore | Messina (Italia) | 03/12/2015 | 91 | ISI |
| P BEDARD Paul | Tampa, Florida (U.S.A.) | 07/12/2015 | 89 | SUE |
| P BORG Joseph | Birkirkara (Malta) | 26/11/2015 | 95 | IRL |
| L BOSQUE ÁLAVA Carmelo | Arévalo (Spagna) | 13/10/2015 | 86 | SSM |
| P BOUCHET André | Landser (Francia) | 28/08/2015 | 95 | FRB |
| P BUJALSKI Jan | Siedlce (Polonia) | 29/11/2015 | 87 | PLE |
| P CALDERA Giuseppe | Torino (Italia) | 24/10/2015 | 94 | ICP |
| P CAMPAGNARO Giuseppe | Torino (Italia) | 25/09/2015 | 81 | ICP |
| P CASANOVA Jorge | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 14/10/2015 | 89 | ARS |
| P CHINAGLIA Pietro | Asunción (Paraguay) | 16/10/2015 | 89 | PAR |
| P CIAPPARELLA Andrea | Torino (Italia) | 11/09/2015 | 75 | ICP |
| P CLIFTON Frank | Malta | 10/06/2015 | 80 | IRL |
| P COSTA Emídio Soares | Brasilia (Brasile) | 29/08/2015 | 67 | BBH |
| P COSTA Giovanni | Messina (Italia) | 03/08/2015 | 88 | ISI |
| P DENEKENS Louis | Mechelen (Belgio) | 11/09/2015 | 85 | BEN |
| P DONNE Jacques | Saint-Malo (Francia) | 23/09/2015 | 90 | FRB |
| P FALCONE Aldo | Rio Grande (Argentina) | 03/11/2015 | 85 | ARS |
| P FREZZATO Gabriele | Castelfranco Veneto (Italia) | 03/12/2015 | 75 | INE |
| L FUNG Anthony | Hong Kong (Cina) | 11/12/2015 | 86 | CIN |
| L GARCÍA GINER José María | Valencia (Spagna) | 13/12/2015 | 81 | SMX |
| L GARCÍA RUIZ Anonio | Sevilla (Spagna) | 05/10/2015 | 85 | SMX |
| P GENTILE Antonio | Molfetta (Italia) | 22/10/2015 | 78 | IME |
| P GIOVANNINI Lino | Monteotone (Italia) | 14/08/2015 | 82 | INE |
| P GIROLA Angelo | Treviglio (Italia) | 18/11/2015 | 90 | ILE |
| L GÓMEZ BARÉS Juan Antonio | Sevilla (Spagna) | 29/10/2015 | 86 | SMX |
| P GÓMEZ GARRIDO José María | León (Spagna) | 25/10/2015 | 78 | SSM |
| P GRASSI Carlo | Arese (Italia) | 15/09/2015 | 86 | ILE |
| P GRIL Antonio | Santiago del Cile | 17/09/2015 | 94 | CIL |
| P GUEBEY André | Toulon (Francia) | 31/08/2015 | 91 | FRB |
| P HERR Santiago | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 04/09/2015 | 101 | ARS |
| P HORNIK Jaroslav | Opatov (Rep. Ceca) | 31/07/2015 | 86 | CEP |
| P JACKSON Michael John | Adelaide (Australia) | 26/10/2015 | 77 | AUL |
| P KONGAMALAYIL Sebastian | Aluva (India) | 31/10/2015 | 68 | INK |
| P KRISHNARAJ Rosario | Chennai (India) | 14/11/2015 | 84 | INM |
| P KYSELÝ Anton | Nova Dubník (Slovacchia) | 01/10/2015 | 92 | SLK |

| SURNAME AND NAME | PLACE of death | DATE | AGE | PROV |
|--|--------------------------------|------------|-----|------------|
| P LAGUNA VEGAS Aureliano <i>Was provincial for 12 years</i> | León (Spagna) | 13/10/2015 | 87 | SSM |
| P LE CORVEC Joseph | Saint-Jean-Kerdaniel (Francia) | 23/11/2015 | 85 | FRB |
| L LÓPEZ Álvaro | Bogotá (Colombia) | 13/09/2015 | 85 | COB |
| P MADRIGAL FIGUEROA José Ignacio | Guadalajara (Messico) | 07/09/2015 | 71 | MEG |
| P MARIANI Salvatore | Salerno (Italia) | 29/11/2015 | 93 | IME |
| P MAROŠA Anton | Ljubljana (Slovenia) | 12/06/2015 | 73 | SLO |
| P MENDIZÁBAL UNANUE Ismael <i>Was provincial for 6 years</i> | Alicante (Spagna) | 01/11/2015 | 86 | SMX |
| L MENTUY MENTUY José | Zaragoza (Spagna) | 06/12/2015 | 89 | SMX |
| P MEREU Pietro | Cuenca (Ecuador) | 14/09/2015 | 87 | ECU |
| L MICHEL BOULOS Adam | Alessandria (Egitto) | 07/08/2015 | 73 | MOR |
| P MILANA Orlando | Frascati (Italia) | 20/12/2015 | 96 | ICC |
| P MOREIRA CARRACEDO José María | Arévalo (Spagna) | 01/12/2015 | 92 | SSM |
| P MUÑOZ FUENTES Diego | Linares (Cile) | 03/09/2015 | 86 | CIL |
| P NAWARA Józef | Jelenia Góra (Polonia) | 13/08/2015 | 81 | PLO |
| L NELLIKAL Ambrose | Kolkata (India) | 03/12/2015 | 71 | INC |
| P NEVOLA Antonín | Plzeň (Rep. Ceca) | 27/11/2015 | 48 | CEP |
| L NOTARIO Mario | Torino (Italia) | 25/12/2015 | 87 | ICP |
| P O'SULLIVAN Hugh | Addlestone (Inghilterra) | 26/10/2015 | 85 | GBR |
| P PADRON Ricardo | La Habana (Cuba) | 12/12/2015 | 83 | ANT |
| P PAES Anderson | Campinas (Brasile) | 18/12/2015 | 88 | BSP |
| P PEREGO Domenico | Quito (Ecuador) | 28/12/2015 | 94 | ECU |
| P POMATO Matio Attilio | Avellaneda (Argentina) | 12/09/2015 | 88 | ARS |
| P PORTILLO JARA Antonino | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 16/08/2015 | 63 | PAR |
| P PULIKAL Joseph | Pazhanganadu, Kerala (India) | 01/09/2015 | 73 | INK |
| P RABINO Aldo | Maen, AO (Italia) | 18/08/2015 | 76 | ICP |
| P RAMÍREZ Octavio | Medellín (Colombia) | 04/11/2015 | 81 | COM |
| P REBOLLO GÓMEZ Santiago | Puertollano (Spagna) | 21/07/2015 | 83 | SSM |
| P RITTER Willibald | Amberg (Germania) | 29/07/2015 | 71 | GER |
| P ROMANOWICZ Marian | Suwalki (Polonia) | 31/12/2015 | 93 | PLE |
| L RUBIO GARCÍA Mario | El Campello (Spagna) | 13/12/2015 | 81 | SMX |
| L RUISI Stefano | Messina (Italia) | 21/10/2015 | 86 | ISI |
| P RUIZ DIEGO Rafael | Bahía Blanca (Argentina) | 02/10/2015 | 79 | ARS |
| P RUIZ ESPERIDON José Luis | Guatemala (Guatemala, C.A.) | 30/07/2015 | 76 | CAM |
| P SAGGIN Francesco | Pordenone (Italia) | 07/11/2015 | 87 | INE |
| P SAMSÓ i RABAIXET Antonio | Barcelona (Spagna) | 09/09/2015 | 75 | SMX |
| L SÁNCHEZ SÁNCHEZ José Antonio | Sevilla (Spagna) | 16/12/2015 | 76 | SMX |
| P SARTI Silvano | Roma (Italia) | 31/07/2015 | 86 | UPS |
| P SCHACHNER Georg | Bogotá (Colombia) | 26/10/2015 | 82 | COB |
| P SCHMIDT Ludwig | Wien (Austria) | 09/12/2015 | 88 | AUS |
| L SERRÃO Elmano | Campinas (Brasile) | 23/08/2015 | 86 | BSP |
| P SEVILLANO Octavio | Arévalo (Spagna) | 06/10/2015 | 79 | SSM |
| P SMITH Richard | Fukushima (Giappone) | 28/08/2015 | 87 | GIA |
| P STASZEWSKI Antoni | Wrocław (Polonia) | 04/11/2015 | 82 | PLO |
| P SZEMBORSKI Chester | Haverstraw, New York (U.S.A.) | 20/10/2015 | 92 | SUE |
| P TIRKEY Louis | Dibrugarh (India) | 04/09/2015 | 64 | IND |

| SURNAME AND NAME | PLACE of death | DATE | AGE | PROV |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------|-----|------------|
| P URIA BASTIDA Jesús | Logroño (Spagna) | 16/11/2015 | 84 | SSM |
| P VACCARINI Domingo | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 28/11/2015 | 85 | ARS |
| P VAN DIJCK Jacky | Leuven (Belgio) | 12/08/2015 | 67 | BEN |
| P VAN LAEKEN Gustaaf | Halle (Belgio) | 12/10/2015 | 91 | BEN |
| P WIACEK Wojciech | Kraków (Polonia) | 14/12/2015 | 55 | PLS |
| P WOERZ Christian | Long Beach, CA (U.S.A.) | 20/09/2015 | 71 | SUO |
| P WOIRY André | Issenheim (Francia) | 25/09/2015 | 91 | FRB |
| P ZABALA Ismael | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 26/12/2015 | 85 | ARS |
| P ZUGNO Giovanni | Arese (Italia) | 11/12/2015 | 78 | ILE |



