



# acts

**of the general council**

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**year C**

**january-july 2019**

**N. 429**

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

**Direzione Generale  
Opere don Bosco  
Roma**





# acts

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

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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january-june 2019 **N. 429**

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«So that my joy may be in you» (Jn 15,11)

## HOLINESS FOR YOU TOO

*Strenna 2019*

Introduction. – I. GOD CALLS EVERYONE TO HOLINESS. - “*Becoming a saint*” is the first and most urgent task for the Christian - The “holiness of next-door neighbours” and the universal call to holiness - Mary of Nazareth: a unique light on the path of holiness - With Salesian sensitivity. – II. JESUS IS HAPPINESS. - Don Bosco wanted his boys to be happy in this life and for all eternity. – III. SAINTS FOR THE YOUNG AND WITH THE YOUNG. - Youth a time for holiness - Young saints and the youth of the saints. – IV. WHAT DOES IT MEAN: «HOLINESS IS ALSO FOR YOU»? – V. SOME POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF HOLINESS. – PATHS OF HOLINESS TODAY IN THE LIGHT OF OUR HISTORY AS THE SALESIAN FAMILY. - There are many paths along the road to holiness - Every saint is a word of God incarnated - Every saint in our Salesian Family tells us that holiness is possible. – HOLINESS LIVED OUT IN THE SALESIAN CHARISM (LIST AT 31 DECEMBER 2018).

My Dear Brothers and Sisters, my Dear Salesian Family,

Continuing our century-old tradition, at the beginning of this New Year 2019 I address myself to each one of you, in every part of the “Salesian world” that as the Salesian Family we constitute in more than 140 countries.

I do so while giving a commentary on a subject very familiar to us, with a title taken directly from the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis on the call to holiness in today’s world: *Gaudete et Exsultate*<sup>1</sup>.

In choosing this subject and this title I want to translate into our own language and in the light of our charismatic sensitivity the strong appeal to holiness that Pope Francis has addressed to the whole Church<sup>2</sup>. Therefore I want to emphasise those points that are typically “our own” in the context of our Salesian spiri-

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth *GE*.

<sup>2</sup> I express my gratitude to Fr Pier Luigi Cameroni, Postulator General for the causes of Saints, and to Signora Lodovica Maria Zanet, an expert collaborator of our Postulation Office and renowned lecturer. Thanks to their foresight I have been able to embellish these pages with material from the Postulation Office which can throw so much light on the subject.

tuality, those shared by all the 31 groups of our Salesian Family as the charismatic inheritance received from the Holy Spirit through our beloved Father Don Bosco, who will certainly help us to live our lives with the same deep joy that comes from the Lord: «*So that my joy may be in you*» (Jn 15,11).

### **Who are these words addressed to?**

I can assure you that they are addressed to everyone.

To all of you my dear Salesian confreres SDB.

To all of you sisters and brothers of the various different congregations and institutes of consecrated and lay life in our Salesian Family.

To all of you brothers and sisters of the associations and various groups of the Salesian Family.

To the fathers and mothers, to the men and women teachers, to the catechists and leaders in all our centres throughout the world. And to all the teenagers and young people in our great Salesian world.

I accept the invitation addressed by the Pope to the whole Church. His Exhortation is not a treatise on holiness, but a call to today's world, and especially to the Church, to live life as a vocation and as a call to holiness; a holiness made flesh in this present time, today, wherever each one may be, in our current circumstances.

I make my own this always fascinating call to holiness because this "present time" in the Church demands it of us. Like me all the recent Rector Majors have made very significant contributions to the topic of Salesian holiness and our holy Patrons<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> P. CHAVEZ, *Let us draw on the spiritual experience of Don Bosco in order to walk in holiness according to our specific vocation* AGC 417 (2014); P. CHAVEZ "My dear Salesians, be saints" AGC 379 (2002); J.E. VECCHI, *Beatification of Bro Artemide Zatti: a sensational precedent* AGC 376 (2001); *Sanctity and Martyrdom at the dawn of the third millennium* AGC 368 (1999); E. VIGANO, *Don Bosco, saint* ASC 310 (1983); *Re-planning our holiness together* ASC 303 (1982); L. RICCERI, *Don Rua, a call to holiness* ASC 263 (1971).

As in previous years, I believe that in addition to being read personally, these ideas may be appropriate and suitable “guidelines” for the educative and pastoral programmes needed in the various different contexts and situations of the “Salesian world”, in which we are operating.

## I. GOD CALLS EVERYONE TO HOLINESS

I should imagine that not a few people, even among ourselves and certainly among the many young people who heard the Pope’s call, have felt that the word “holiness” may sound somewhat remote, in many cases very remote and unfamiliar in the language of today’s world. It is quite possible that there are cultural obstacles or interpretations that tend to confuse the path of holiness with a kind of alienating spiritualism that is fleeing from reality. Or perhaps at best the term “holiness” is understood as a word applied to and applicable only to those who are venerated in the pictures or statues in our churches.

Therefore, what the Pope is doing is quite admirable and even “daring” as he presents the perennial relevance of Christian holiness that is to be seen as a call coming from God Himself in his Word, and is proposed as the goal in every person’s journey. God «wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence» (*GE*, 1).

The call to holiness is a natural part of our Salesian tradition (Saint Francis of Sales). The appeal of Pope Francis attracts attention above all on account of the force and the determination with which he maintains that holiness is a call addressed to everyone, not just to the few, in so far as it corresponds to God’s fundamental plan for us. It is aimed therefore at ordinary people, at those people we accompany in their ordinary daily lives consisting in the simple things typical of ordinary people.

It is not about a holiness for the heroic few or for exceptional people, but about an ordinary way of living an ordinary Christian



life: a way of living Christian life rooted in the present day with the dangers, the challenges and the opportunities that God offers us as life unfolds.

Sacred Scripture invites us to be holy: «You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect» (*Mt* 5,48); and: «Be holy for I [the Lord] am holy» (*Lev* 11,44).

There is then an explicit invitation to experience and to bear witness to the perfection of love that is not something different from holiness. Holiness, in fact, consists in the perfection of love; a love that above all was made flesh in Christ.

Saint Paul in the letter to the Ephesians referring to the Father also writes: «In [Christ, the Father] chose us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved» (*Eph* 1,4-6). No longer servants therefore but friends (cf. *Jn* 15,15). No longer strangers and sojourners but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (cf. *Eph* 2,19). Therefore each and every one of us is called to holiness: that is to a full and fulfilled life according to God's plan, in communion with Him and with our brothers and sisters.

It is therefore not a question of a perfection reserved to a few, but of a call addressed to everyone.

Something that is infinitely valuable yet not a rarity, but rather is part of the common vocation of believers. It is the beautiful proposal that God makes to every man and woman.

It is not the pursuit of a false spirituality that takes one away from the fullness of life, but the fullness of being human made perfect by Grace. "Life to the full" as Jesus promised.

Not with a standardised, trivialised, rigid approach; but a response to the ever-new breath of the Spirit, that creates communion while showing appreciation for the differences – «Indeed, the Spirit is at the origin of the noble ideals and undertakings which

benefit humanity on its journey through history»<sup>4</sup>.

It is not a question of a collection of abstract values subscribed to and shown outward respect, but of a harmony of all those virtues that incarnate the real values in one's life.

It is not merely the ability to reject evil and embrace good, but a constant attitude ready with joy to live the good life well.

It is not a goal that is reached in an instant, but an ongoing journey accompanied by God's patience and kindness, that involves personal freedom and commitment.

It is not an attitude that excludes what is different, but rather a fundamental experiencing of what is true, good, just and beautiful.

Finally, holiness is living according to the beatitudes, so as to become salt and light in the world; it is journey towards being fully human as is every genuine spiritual experience. Therefore becoming holy does not require cutting ourselves off from our own nature or from our brothers and sisters, but rather living a full and courageous human life and an experience (sometimes hard won) of communion and relationship with others.

### **“Becoming a saint” is the first and most urgent task for the Christian**

Saint Augustine declares: «My life will be true life, all full of thee»<sup>5</sup>. It is in Him, God Himself that the possibility of the path of holiness in following Christ is to be found. The path of holiness is made possible for a Christian by the gift of God in Christ: in Him – of whom the saints and especially the Virgin Mary are a marvelous reflection – is revealed simultaneously the fullness of the face of the Father and the true face of man.

In Jesus Christ the face of God and the face of man shine out “together”. In Jesus we meet the man from Galilee and the face of the Father: «He who has seen me has seen the Father» (*Jn* 14,9).

<sup>4</sup> JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*, Vatican City, 7 December 1990, 28.

<sup>5</sup> AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, 10,28.

Jesus the Word made flesh is the complete and definitive word of the Father. From the moment of the incarnation, the will of God is fulfilled in the person of Christ. He shows us in his life, in his words and in his silences, in the choices he makes and in his actions, and above all in his passion, death and resurrection, what God's plan is for man and woman, what His will is and the way to correspond to it.

This plan of God for each one of us today is simply the fullness of Christian life that is measured *according to the extent to which Christ lives within us and to the degree in which, with the grace of the Holy Spirit* we model our lives on that of Jesus the Lord. Therefore it does not mean doing extraordinary things but living in union with the Lord, making his actions, his thoughts and behaviour ours. In fact going to Holy Communion means expressing and bearing witness to the fact that we want to take up and make our own the style of life, the way of living and the very same mission of Jesus Christ.

The Second Vatican Council itself in the Constitution on the Church firmly proposed the *universal call to holiness* and declared that no one was excluded: «In the various types and duties of life, one and the same holiness is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God and who obey the voice of the Father, worshipping God the Father in spirit and in truth, following the poor Christ the humble and cross-bearing Christ in order to be made worthy of being partakers in his glory» (LG, 41).

### **The “holiness of next-door neighbours” and the universal call to holiness**

Edith Stein, while still an atheist, wrote about having received a decisive impetus towards conversion from two encounters: one with the wife of a friend killed in the war, who having become a widow, in spite of intense sorrow demonstrated the surprising light and strength of faith; the other was in a church (where Edith had gone simply out of artistic interest) with an elderly woman who had come in with her shopping baskets in the middle of a

busy day to spend a moment of deep trust and adoration with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Don Bosco had as his mother and first teacher Margaret Occhiena: a simple uneducated peasant woman, with no theological training, but with a wise heart and an obedience based on faith.

Saint Teresa of Lisieux used to say that as a child she understood little of what the priest was saying, but it was enough for her to look at the face of her father Louis to understand everything.

None of these lay people – Anna Reinach a friend of Edith, the unknown woman with the shopping bags, mamma Margaret or papà Louis Martin – ever thought in their lifetime of being holy, nor were they aware of the influence they were having on the people around them through their ordinary way of acting.

The presence of these simple and determined people, of these «next-door saints» – as Pope Francis describes them (*GE*, 7) – reminds us that what is important in life is to be holy, not to be declared saints one day. In addition, it helps to reflect on the fact that the canonised saints, first of all reached the simple holiness of the people of God: they all share the same glory in a deep and unswerving communion.

To live holiness then is the experience of being forestalled and saved, and learning to correspond to this faithful love. It is the responsibility of responding to a great gift.

From this point of view, perhaps one of the most important contributions to Christian spirituality is that made by the Bishop of Geneva Francis of Sales with his efforts to propose *holiness for everyone* taking “*devotion*” out of the cloisters into the world. In his splendid work “*Introduction to the Devout Life*” he writes: «As in the creation God commanded the plants to bring forth their fruits each one according to its kind, so he commands all Christians who are the living plants of his Church to bring forth the fruits of devotion, each according to his quality and vocation.

Devotion ought then to be not only differently exercised by the gentleman, the tradesman, the servant, the prince, the widow, the maid and the married woman but its practice should be also adapted to the strength, the employments and the obligations of each one in particular [...] Wherever, then, we are, we may, and should aspire to a perfect life»<sup>6</sup>.

The history of the Church is strongly marked by the many women and the many men, who with their faith, with their love and with their lives have been like beacons that have illuminated and continue to illuminate so many generations throughout time including the present. They are a living testimony to how the power of the Risen Lord in their lives has reached such a level that like St Paul they have been able to declare (so many times without using the words: «It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me» (*Gal* 2,20). And they have demonstrated this, sometimes through the heroism of their virtues and sometimes through the sacrifice of their lives in martyrdom, and at other times through «a life constantly offered for others even until death» (*GE*, 5). At the same time there is a holiness without a name, that of those who have not achieved the honours of the altar, whose «lives may not always have been perfect, yet even amid their faults and failings they kept moving forward and proved pleasing to the Lord» (*GE*, 3). This is the holiness of our own mother or grandmother or of others close to us; it is the holiness of a marriage which is a beautiful path of growth in love; the holiness of fathers who develop, grow to maturity, and give themselves generously to their children, often with unexpected sacrifices. Men and women, the Pope recalls, who work hard to support their families. The sick who bear their illness patiently and with a spirit of faith, in union with the suffering Jesus; elderly religious, with a life given and who never lose their smile or their hope... (cf. *GE*, 7).

It can be said with certainty that in every age of the history of the Church and everywhere in the world there have been and still

<sup>6</sup> Francis of Sales, *Introduction to the devout life* I, 3.



are saints of all ages, and in all conditions of life with very different personal characteristics.

Pope Benedict XVI expressed this very well when, speaking about his personal experience, he said: «I should like to add that for me it is not only the great saints that I love and know well who are the “sign-posts”, but also the simple saints, that is to say the good people that I see in my life, who will never be canonized. They are ordinary people, one might say, without any signs of heroism, but in their every-day goodness I see the truth of the faith»<sup>7</sup>.

Certainly we find all this is the way so many people have incarnated the Christian path in their lives. Some may seem “small” and others “great”; but all have followed an attractive and fascinating journey.

Pope Benedict concludes with a very valuable expression which in my judgment sums up in a magnificent way the message of the Strenna for this year, when he says: «*Dear friends, how great and beautiful but also simple is the Christian vocation seen in this light! We are all called to holiness; that is what the Christian life is*»<sup>8</sup>.

### **Mary of Nazareth: a unique light on the path of holiness**

All these simple and very often anonymous paths of holiness always have a model to look to and on which to reflect. Christian holiness has in Mary of Nazareth, the Mother of the Lord, of the Son of God the most beautiful and the closest model.

Mary is the woman of the “Here I am,” of full and total availability to the will of God. Saying: «let it be to me according to your word» (*Lk* 1,38), Mary is saying that she finds full and deep happiness in everything that “let it be” implies in faith. Not only when the Son leaves home and is separated from her because he has to carry out the mission of the Father; but also at the final

<sup>7</sup> Benedict XVI, Catechesis at the General Audience on 13 April 2011: [Teachings VII (2011), 451].

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 450.

moment in which Mary experiences sorrow for his crucifixion and death. An atrocious sorrow for a mother to experience.

In Mary, the Mother of the Lord, we can witness the richness of *a life that has accepted God's plan at every moment*; a life that has been a constant "Here I am" said to God. How fascinating it is, from this point of view to contemplate Mary and to meditate on the value of human life and its full significance in the context of eternity!

The courageous acceptance of God's mysterious plan leads Mary to become the mother of all believers, the model for each one of us in listening to and welcoming the Word of God and the safe guide towards holiness. And this because she teaches us that only God can make our life great. «Only if God is great is humankind also great. With Mary, we must begin to understand that this is so. We must not drift away from God but make God present; we must ensure that He is great in our lives. Thus, we too will become divine; all the splendour of the divine dignity will then be ours»<sup>9</sup>.

For this reason it is impossible to think that the easy path of holiness can be followed by the Christian without having recourse to Mary our Mother. Looking to her is to learn how to believe, how to hope, how to love. And if we pray like her and with her we shall certainly experience in our daily journey that consolation that can come only from God. In addition invoking her as the Mother of the Son of God we shall open our hearts to the gift of her intercession as Mother of the Son and of her sons<sup>10</sup>.

### **With Salesian sensitivity...**

Therefore it could be said that to become a saint is to have everything. If one does not become a saint one loses everything. The goal of holiness and the invitation almost tender, to achieve it

<sup>9</sup> BENEDECT XVI, Homily on the feast of the Assumption of Mary, 15 August 2005.

<sup>10</sup> As a continuation of this "Marian journey" we shall be celebrating in Buenos Aires between 7 and 10 November 2019 the VIII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians with the title: *Mary the woman who believed*.

is also the great message of Don Bosco, the pivot on which hinges his whole spiritual proposal and his life witness.

The holiness that Don Bosco proposes is easy and pleasant, but also strong as he suggests. In Dominic Savio's declaration: «I want to become a saint, I must become a saint. I can have no peace until I become a saint»<sup>11</sup>, one can hear much – if not everything – of what Don Bosco had managed to convey to him, following the sermon in which Dominic had heard these encouraging words: «It is easy to become a saint. Everyone should become a saint. There is a great reward waiting in heaven for those who try to become saints»<sup>12</sup>. Don Bosco himself continued writing that this talk was like a spark that set off into a consuming blaze the love of God in Dominic Savio's heart.

In the wisdom of Don Bosco, who curbed Dominic's desire for penance and recommended to him instead fidelity in his life of prayer, in his studies and in duties done well, and diligence in recreation (and we can also say in the whole area of relationships in life), there emerges the awareness, typically Salesian, of the universal call to holiness.

In founding the Society of Saint Francis of Sales in the first place, and then (together with Mary Domenica Mazzarello the co-foundress) the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians Don Bosco proposed as the object, right up to today, the sanctification of its members<sup>13</sup>.

Don Rua reminded the Salesians of this shortly afterwards when he exhorted them in these words: «This is what our beloved Don Bosco taught us in the 1<sup>st</sup> article of the Holy Rule, where it says that the object of our Pious Society is first the Christian

<sup>11</sup> ISS, *Salesian Sources. 1. Don Bosco and his work. Collected works*, LAS, Rome 2014, 1187. The complete passage I am referring to says: «Another day explanations were being given about the meaning of words. "What does Dominic mean?" he asked. The reply was: "Dominic means belonging to God". "There you are", he said, "you see how right I am in asking you to make me a saint. Even my name says that I belong to God, so I must at all costs become one. I can't be happy if I am not"».

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 1186.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *SDB Const.*, 2, 25, 65, 105; *FMA Const.*, 5, 46, 82.

perfection of its members and then various works of charity, both spiritual and temporal on behalf of the young»<sup>14</sup>. Without that the whole apostolic endeavour on behalf of youth would prove fruitless. Don Bosco knows perfectly well that the first, most radical and decisive way to help others is to be saints.

In this «school of new and attractive apostolic spirituality»<sup>15</sup>, Don Bosco interpreted the gospel from an original pedagogical and pastoral point of view which «meant a new “fusion” of the common elements of Christian holiness that was well balanced, congenial and regulated; the virtues and the means to holiness had their own proper place, quantity, symmetry and beauty that were characteristic»<sup>16</sup>.

## II. JESUS IS HAPPINESS

The proposal of holiness is addressed to every Christian because it is the fullness of life and synonymous with happiness, of blessedness. We Christians find happiness when we follow Jesus Christ.

These words are directed towards the young. They are meant for them. But we know very well that «holiness is also for you», concerns everyone: the young, educators, fathers and mothers, consecrated lay people, men and women religious, priests. In short these words of mine are directed towards each and every one of the members of our Salesian Family, in such a way that we all feel included, and naturally they concern all the People of God.

Very beautiful are the messages that with great conviction, Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, have sent to young people, and we should not feel detached from them.

<sup>14</sup> M. RUA, *The sanctification of our souls and of those entrusted to us*. Letter of the Rector Major to the Provincials and Rectors of America, Valsalice, 24 September, 1894.

<sup>15</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Address on the occasion of his visit to the Pontifical Salesian University*, 31 January 1981, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 8 February 1981, [ASC 300 (1981), 58].

<sup>16</sup> E. VIGANO *Rediscovering the spirit of Mornese*, ASC 301 (1981) 25.

I shall put together only a small sample of these messages, with one common denominator: in all of them the Popes ask the young take the chance of accepting Jesus as the guarantee of their happiness.

This was the great challenge that Saint John Paul II issued when he told the young people of the world: «***It is Jesus in fact that you seek when you dream of happiness***; he is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; he is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is he who provokes you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is he who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is he who reads in your hearts your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle. It is Jesus who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives, the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves to be ground down by mediocrity, the courage to commit yourselves humbly and patiently to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal»<sup>17</sup>.

No less explicit was Pope Benedict XVI when he told the young people: «Dear young people, the happiness you are seeking, the happiness you have a right to enjoy has a name and a face: it is Jesus of Nazareth, hidden in the Eucharist. [...] Be completely convinced of this: Christ takes from you nothing that is beautiful and great, but brings everything to perfection for the glory of God, the happiness of men and women, and the salvation of the world. [...] Let yourselves be surprised by Christ! Let him have “the right of free speech” during these days!”»<sup>18</sup>.

And Pope Francis told the young people that happiness is not negotiable. There should be no reduction in their expectations so that in the end happiness is not ensured in any genuine and serious way, but only as something that can be experienced in “small

<sup>17</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Prayer Vigil at the XV WYD*, Rome Tor Vergata, 19 August 2000.

<sup>18</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Address at the welcoming ceremony for the young people in Cologne*, 18 August 2005.



doses”, and which as so often happens does not last, and naturally is not true happiness, nor does it bring full human satisfaction: «Your happiness has no price. It cannot be bought: it is not an app that you can download on your phones»<sup>19</sup>.

### **Don Bosco wanted his boys to be happy in this life and for all eternity.**

At the beginning of his Letter from Rome, on 10 May 1884, Don Bosco writes to his boys: «I have only one wish: to see you happy both in this world and in the next»<sup>20</sup>.

At the end of his life on earth these words sum up the heart of his message to young people of every age and of the whole world. He wants them to be happy, as a goal in the dreams of every young person, today, tomorrow, always. But not just that. “In the next” is that extra that only Jesus and his proposal of happiness, that is holiness, can offer. It is the answer to the deep thirst for “for ever” that burns in the heart of every young person.

The world, the society of all nations cannot propose this “for ever” nor eternal happiness. But God can.

For Don Bosco all this was very clear, and he was able to sow in the hearts of his boys the strong desire to become saints, to live for God and to reach paradise: «He guided the young along a path of holiness that was simple, serene and joyful, bringing together their experience of life in the playground, with serious study and a constant sense of duty»<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> FRANCIS, *Homily at the Mass for the Boys' and Girls' Jubilee*, Rome 24 April 2016.

<sup>20</sup> ISS, *Salesian Sources. 1. Don Bosco and his work. Collected works*, LAS, Rome 2014, Kristu Jyoti Publications 2017, 501.

<sup>21</sup> J. E. VECCHI, *Andate oltre. Temi di spiritualità giovanile*, Elle Di Ci, Leumann (TO) 2002.

### III. SAINTS FOR THE YOUNG AND WITH THE YOUNG

The holiness characteristic of the Salesian charism in which there is room for everyone, consecrated persons and lay people has its most specific expression in relation to youth holiness. Fr Pascual Chávez, my predecessor, wrote at the beginning of his ministry in the letter *My Dear Salesians, be saints!*: «The youngsters themselves helped Don Bosco “to begin, in the context of everyday experience, a new style of holiness tailored to the typical requirements of a boy’s development. In this way they were to some extent both pupils and teachers at the same time. Ours is a holiness both for and with the young; because in the search for holiness, “Salesians and youngsters walk side by side”: either we sanctify ourselves with them, walking and learning with them in their company, or we shall not become saints at all»<sup>22</sup>. The genuine Salesian heart of our Family needs to be holy in order to reach the young, while it does not neglect the even more radical duty to make itself holy among the young and together with them.

This desire can be seen to apply to each and every one of the 31 groups that make up our Salesian Family. With a real interest I looked for the references to holiness in the Constitutions and the Regulations of the various Congregations in our Family, in the Project of Apostolic Life of the Salesians Cooperators, in the Plans, Statutes and Regulations (according to their own proper names) of all the groups that belong to the tree of our charism. I can assure you that in one way or another all of them consider holiness as an aim and a purpose for which we are born and also as religious institutions, with the intention of achieving it in our lives. Therefore a holiness that is proposed to each of the members as the purpose of the apostolate directed towards others.

#### Youth a time for holiness.

Convinced that « Holiness is the most attractive face of the Church » (*GE*, 9), before proposing it to the young we are all called

<sup>22</sup> P. CHÁVEZ, *My Dear Salesians, be saints*, AGC 379 (2002), 21-22.

to live it and bear witness to it, in this way becoming a community "that enjoyed favour", as on various occasions the Acts of the Apostles puts it (cf. *GE*, 93). Only living in this consistent manner is it possible to accompany the young on the ways of holiness.

When Saint Ambrose declared that «every age is ready for holiness»<sup>23</sup>, so too without doubt is youth! In the holiness of many young people the Church recognises the grace of God, that anticipates and accompanies the life story of each one, the educational value of the sacraments of the Eucharist and of Reconciliation, the fruitfulness of shared journeys in faith and charity, the prophetic impact of these "champions" who have often sealed in their blood their being disciples of Christ and missionaries of the Gospel. The language most requested by young people of today is *the witness of an authentic life*. For this reason the life of young saints is the real word of the Church; and the invitation to undertake a holy life is the one that is most necessary for today's young people. An authentic spiritual vitality and a fruitful pedagogy of holiness do not disappoint the deep aspirations of the young: their need for life, for love, for growth, for joy, for freedom for a future and also for mercy and reconciliation.

Certainly the proposal has the flavour of a real challenge. If on the one hand it is very attractive, on the other it can give rise to fear and indecisiveness. It requires the effort to avoid the risks and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence» (*GE*, 1); it implies overcoming the temptation to "just struggle along" since the challenge of holiness is nothing different from everyday life, but is precisely this ordinary life lived in an extraordinary way and made beautiful by the grace of God. In fact the fruit of the Holy Spirit is a life lived in joy and in love, and this is what holiness is. In this regard the example the Pope offers us in the Apostolic Exhortation of the testimony of the life of Cardinal Francesco Saverio Nguyễn Văn Thuân, who spent many years in prison is very precious. He refused to waste time waiting for the day he would be

<sup>23</sup> AMBROSE, De Virginitate, 40.

set free and took another decision: «I will live the present moment, filling it to the brim with love and [...] I will seize the occasions that present themselves every day; I will accomplish ordinary actions in an extraordinary way» (GE, 17).

### ***Young saints and the youth of the saints***

«Jesus invites every disciple to give their entire lives, without expecting any human advantage or benefit. Saints welcome this demanding request and meekly and humbly start following the crucified and risen Christ. The Church gazes at the sky of holiness and sees an increasingly large and bright constellation of young men and women, adolescents and young saints and blessed who, ever since the time of the first Christian communities, have endured until our time. When the Church invokes them as our patrons, she indicates them to young people as references for their existence»<sup>24</sup>. In various surveys including those in preparation for the Synod of Bishops on the young, the young people themselves recognise that they are «more receptive when faced with a “life story” [compared with] an abstract theological sermon»<sup>25</sup> and they consider the lives of the saints to be very relevant to them. Therefore certainly it is important to present them in a way that is adapted to their age and condition.

It is also worth remembering that as well as the “Young saints” it is necessary to present to young people the “youth of saints”. In fact all saints were once young and it would be useful to today’s young people to show them how the saints lived their lives as young people. In this way it would be possible to begin to deal with many youth situations that are neither simple nor easy, in which, however, God is present and active in a mysterious way. Showing that His grace is at work through... complex procedures in the patient con-

<sup>24</sup> XV ORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Young people, the faith and vocational discernment. Instrumentum Laboris*, LEV, Rome 2014, 214.

<sup>25</sup> XV ORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Young people, the faith and vocational discernment. Instrumentum Laboris. Pre-synodal meeting. Final Document* (19-24 March 2018).

struction of a holiness that matures with the passing of time in many unforeseen ways, can help all young people, without exception to cultivate hope in a holiness that is always possible.

The last number of the Final Document of the Synod declares in harmony with what we have been saying that the holiness of the young also forms part of the holiness of the Church because, «young people are an integral part of the Church. So too, therefore is their holiness, which in recent decades has produced a manifold flowering in all parts of the world: contemplating and meditating during the Synod on the courage of so many young people who have given their lives while remaining faithful to the Gospel has been for us very moving; listening to the testimony of the young people present at the Synod who in the middle of persecutions have chosen to share the passion of the Lord Jesus has been life giving. Through the holiness of young people the Church can renew its spiritual ardour and its apostolic vigour»<sup>26</sup>.

#### **IV. WHAT DOES IT MEAN: «HOLINESS IS ALSO FOR YOU!»?**

Pope Francis tells us in a simple and direct way.

After saying that to be saints it is not necessary to be bishops, priests or religious he adds: «We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. Are you called to the consecrated life? Be holy by living out your commitment with joy. Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by labouring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters. Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus. Are you in a position of authority? Be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain» (*GE*, 14).

<sup>26</sup> XV ORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Young people, the faith and vocational discernment Final Document*, LEV, Rome 2018, 167.



This encourages us to put into simple words the challenge facing us – one that is a valuable provocation for each and every one of us, at all ages and stages of life.

*So what is holiness, this holiness that is presented to us as being close and accessible to the young person, the woman and man of today?*

- It is something close, real, concrete, possible. Indeed it is the **fundamental vocation to love** as Vatican Council II recognises (*LG*, 11); the soul, the essence of this call to holiness for every individual is love fully lived: «God is love; and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him» (*1Jn* 4,16).
- It is a question of **making the grace of Baptism bear fruit, without being afraid that God is asking too much of us**: «Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation» (*GE*, 15). In practical terms it is a question of living in the Spirit, allowing ourselves to be guided in the simplicity of everyday life by the Holy Spirit without being afraid to aim high and letting ourselves be loved and made free by God Himself. Pope Benedict XVI invited young people, all young people to «open themselves to the action of the Holy Spirit that he may transform our lives so that we too may become tiny parts of the great mosaic of holiness that God is creating in history, so that the face of Christ may shine in all its splendour. We are not afraid to aim high, towards the heights of God, *we are not afraid that God is asking too much of us*»<sup>27</sup>.
- **It is a question of being saints because God has dreamed of us in that way.** «Far from being timid, morose, acerbic or melancholy, or putting on a dreary face, the saints are joyful and full of good humour. Though completely realistic, they radiate a positive

<sup>27</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Catechesis in the General Audience on 13 April 2011: Insegnamenti VII* (2011).

and hopeful spirit» (*GE*, 122). John Bosco, when he was boy founded the *Society of Joy* and Dominic Savio used to say to new arrivals at the Oratory: «Here at the Oratory we make holiness consist in being very cheerful»<sup>28</sup> (even though we know that it was not a superficial joy but deep-seated, in his inner life, in a sense of responsibility before life and before God Himself).

Don Bosco understood very well and so passed on to his boys the fact that commitment and joy go hand in hand, and that holiness and joy are inseparable. His invitation therefore is also a call to the “holiness of joy” and to a joy that is lived out in a holy life. This does not mean ignoring the fact that a commitment to holiness demands courage, since it is, to put it another way, a course of action that goes “against the current”, a path at times leading to opposition, faced with which at times we have to be like Jesus “signs of contradiction”.

→ It is a question of a journey, that of holiness that accepts **the dimension of the cross**.

Pope Francis reminds us of the need for inner strength in order to be persevering and constant in doing good; he recalls the need for vigilance: «We need to recognize and combat our aggressive and selfish inclinations, and not let them take root» (*GE*, 114); he encourages evangelical *freedom of speech* so as not to allow ourselves to be overcome by fear; above all he invites us not to give up contemplating the Crucified One, the source of grace and of freedom: «If, gazing on the face of Christ, you feel unable to let yourself be healed and transformed, then enter into the Lord’s heart, into his wounds, for that is the abode of divine mercy» (*GE*, 151).

Perhaps nowadays reference to the cross is not so common among us, but certainly, in this matter too we need to change. It is not possible to live a genuine Christian life and follow the path of holiness in daily life while putting the Cross to one side.

<sup>28</sup> *BM V*, 228.

Having taken part during the last Synod in the canonization of Saint Paul VI, celebrated together with that of six other saints, I find these words of his most appropriate: «What would a Gospel be, that is to say a Christianity without the cross, without the suffering, without the sacrifice of Jesus? It would be a Gospel, a Christianity without the Redemption, without Salvation, of which we have an absolute need. The Lord saved us with the Cross; he has given us back hope, the right to life with his death. Carrying the Cross! It is a great thing, a great thing my dear children! It means facing up to life with courage, without weakness and without cowardice; it means transforming into moral energy the inevitable difficulties of our life; it means, knowing how to understand human suffering and finally knowing how to truly love!»<sup>29</sup>.

- It is a question of living holiness so that **it does not come between us and our obligations, concerns, affections** but includes them all in love. Holiness is the perfection of love and therefore corresponds to man's fundamental need: that of being loved and of loving. The holier a man or woman may be the more human they are because: «life does not have a mission but is a mission» (*GE*, 27).

Holiness therefore is **a process of becoming more human**.

«We need a spirit of holiness capable of filling both our solitude and our service, our personal lives and our evangelizing efforts, so that every moment can be an expression of self-sacrificing love in the Lord's eyes. In this way every minute of our lives can be a step along the path to growth in holiness» (*GE*, 31).

So holiness coincides with **the complete flowering of all that is human**. It is not a proposed way of living that leads to detaching oneself from the human condition and its circumstances, but one that enables people to experience ever more fully and in a true manner their own human nature and that of their brothers and sisters. In the face of the true saint, one

<sup>29</sup> PAUL VI, *Address during the «Way of the Cross»*, 24 March 1967.

always recognises clearly the man or women they really are with all their special distinguishing features of heart, mind and will and openness to relationships: «In the saints one thing becomes clear: those who draw near to God do not withdraw from men, but rather become truly close to them»<sup>30</sup>.

Right now I invite you to remember, when, at the end of the commentary we shall speak about the saints, blessed, servants of God and venerables of our Salesian Family the precious witness that they offer us in their lives.

Don Bosco himself, so fully human, was the first to have found, healed and reconciled the boys who often arrived at the Oratory having lived through difficult situations of affective poverty, economic difficulties, of being orphaned and abandoned. To these boys he offered all the riches of the family spirit and the Preventive System, in a magnificent atmosphere including the spiritual, which helped to cure them. Those wounds were healed thanks to the fatherly approach of Don Bosco himself, the joyful family atmosphere and the pathway of faith and of friendship with Jesus to whom Don Bosco led his boys.

In Mornese Mother Mazzarello and the first sisters, lived out, with the particular sensitivity of women this coming face to face with life situation of those poor babies and girls taken into the first house of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

In this way our history has been repeated in so many groups of the Salesian Family with a special feature typically ours, which is also that of the Gospel that has allowed us to care for and to heal the humanity of every person with whom we have come in contact.

→ It is a question of a **holiness that is also a “duty” and a gift** (that is a vocation, a responsibility, a commitment and a gift). Holiness is a sharing in the life of God, not a perfection from a moralistic point of view that one has the presumption to arrive

<sup>30</sup> BENEDICT XVI, Encyclical Letter *Deus caritas est*, LEV, Rome 2005, 42.

at with just one's own efforts. In fact a holy life is not principally the result of our own effort, of our actions. It is God the thrice Holy (cf *Isaiah* 6.3) who makes us saints through the action of the Holy Spirit, who gives us the strength and the will. Holiness is a commitment and a responsibility. It is something that only you can do: «May you come to realize what that word is, the message of Jesus that God wants to speak to the world by your life» (*GE*, 24).

For the consecrated persons of our Salesian Family this duty becomes indispensable. Paul VI said so in a radical manner: «Religious life must be a holy life or else there is no reason why it should exist at all»<sup>31</sup>.

## V. SOME POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF HOLINESS

I offer some suggestions that may be appropriate for each one personally and for our mission. Allow me to indicate some particular points.

### – *Living everyday life as the place to meet God.*

The heart of the Salesian spirit, which is our distinguishing feature as a charismatic Family, can be identified by the fact that it thinks of life in a positive way and sees it day after day as the meeting place with God. This place is traversed by a rich network of relationships, of work, of joy and of relaxation, of family life, of the development of one's personal capabilities, of giving and of service..., all lived in the light of God. This is expressed in simple practical terms in that very Salesian conviction that comes from Don Bosco himself: to be a saint you have to do well what you have to do.

It is the proposal of the holiness of everyday life. If Teresa of Avila found holiness among the dishes in a kitchen, and Francis of Sales shows that a Christian can live in the world sur-

<sup>31</sup> PAUL VI, *Address on 27 June 1965*, in E. VIGANÒ, *Replanning our holiness together*, ACS 303 (1981).

rounded the tasks of life and its preoccupations and be a saint, with the simplicity of joy Don Bosco with the exact fulfilment to one's duties and a life lived all for the love of God, creates with his boys at Valdocco a real school of holiness.

– ***Being individuals and communities of prayer.***

Holiness is the greatest gift that we can offer to the young, and – I may add – nowadays young people, youngsters and their families need the witness of our lives. And, as I have said, this simple holiness will be the most precious gift that we can offer them.

Nevertheless, this process is not possible without cultivating depth in our lives, without a genuine faith and without prayer as the expression of this faith. Pope Francis declares: «I do not believe in holiness without prayer» (*GE*, 147). And in fact all of this is impossible without intimacy with the Lord Jesus: prayer of thanksgiving, the expression of our gratitude to the transcendent God; prayer of supplication, the expression of a heart that trusts in God; prayer of intercession, the expression of fraternal love; prayer of adoration, the expression of our recognition of the transcendence of God; prayer of meditation on the Word, the expression of a docile and obedient heart; Eucharistic prayer the summit and source of all holiness.

– ***Developing in our lives the fruits of the Holy Spirit:***

charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty... Holiness is not quarrelling, arguing, envy, division, haste. «Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace» (*GE*, 34).

– ***Practising the virtues:*** not only rejecting evil and pursuing good, but being passionate about good, *doing good things well, everything that is good...* Prayer and action in the world, service and self-giving and also times for silence. Family life and a sense of responsibility at work. «Everything can be accepted and integrated into our life in this world, and become a part of

our path to holiness. We are called to be contemplatives even in the midst of action, and to grow in holiness by responsibly and generously carrying out our proper mission» (*GE*, 26).

So then, following the good life of the Gospel, in the joyful and constant practice of the virtues will truly be a simple way of holiness.

– ***Bearing witness to communion.***

The path of holiness is followed together and the way to holiness is one lived in community and pursued together. The saints are always together, a company. Where there is one of them, others will always be found. Everyday holiness makes communion flourish and fosters relationships. **We become saints together.** It is not possible to be saints alone and God does not save us alone: «no one is saved alone, as an isolated individual» (*GE*, 6). Holiness is nourished by relationships, by familiarity, by communion because Christian spirituality is essentially communitarian, ecclesial, profoundly different and far from a vision of holiness that is elitist or heroic.

On the contrary, there is no Christian holiness where communion with others is forgotten, where one forgets to seek and to look at the face of the other, where one forgets the fraternity and the revolution of tenderness.

– ***Understanding that everyone's life is a mission.***

The Pope clearly asks that the whole of one's life be seen as a mission. Sometimes in difficult moments, people ask what is the purpose of their lives, what is the point of living, the reason for their being in the world, what personal contribution could they make?... In all these cases the question being asked is: what is my mission? And it is in the light of all this one discovers that «a Christian cannot think of his or her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness» (*GE*, 19), always giving the best of oneself in this commitment.

Some Salesian houses, such as Valdocco, Mornese, Valsalice, Nizza, Ivrea, San Giovannino... from the very beginning provide proof of a holiness that is a shared experience, that flour-

ishes in friendship, in dedication and in service, (today we speak about life as “vocation and mission”).

- ***Seeking the simplicity (which is not easiness) of the Beatitudes*** (cf. *GE*, 70-91).

In proclaiming the Beatitudes Jesus offered us a real path to holiness. «The Beatitudes are like a Christian’s identity card» (*GE*, 63).

In them a way of life is proposed to us which includes processes which go from poverty of heart which also means austerity of life, to reacting with humble meekness in a world where quarrels easily arise over the slightest thing; from the courage to allow ourselves to be “pierced” by other peoples’ sorrow and to show them compassion, to seeking justice with a true hunger and thirst, while others share out the spoils obtained by means of injustice, corruption and the abuse of power.

The Beatitudes lead the Christian to look and to act with mercy, which means helping others and also forgiving them; they encourage him to keep a heart that is pure and free from all that taints love for God and for one’s neighbour. The proposal of Jesus asks us to sow seeds of peace and justice and to build bridges between people. It also asks us to accept the lack of understanding, deceitfulness in our regard, and finally all persecutions, even the most subtle ones that exist today.

- ***Growing through small gestures*** (*GE*, 16). This is another simple indicator, practical and within everyones reach. God calls us to holiness through small gestures, through simple things, which we certainly find in other people and reproduce in ourselves in everyday life; encouraged also by the fact that the path of holiness is neither unique nor the same for everyone.

One follows a path of holiness according to one’s own state of being either a man or a woman. From this point of view feminine tenderness, attention to small details and gestures are a magnificent example for all. For this reason Pope Francis says: «I would stress too that the “genius of woman” is seen in feminine styles of holiness, which are an essential means of re-



flecting God's holiness in this world and [...] I think too of all those unknown or forgotten women who, each in her own way, sustained and transformed families and communities by the power of their witness» (*GE*, 12).

– **Everything, except refusing to fly when we have been created for the heights!**

There are so many small steps that can help us to journey in the way of holiness, in this simple holiness, anonymous but which shape our lives in a beautiful way. As I have said, everything can help us; everything except refusing to fly when we have been born for the heights! Because we are «God's chosen ones, holy and beloved» (Col 3,12).

What I want to say has been expressed in a magnificent manner by Mamerto Menapace<sup>32</sup> in a beautiful story, a fine metaphor that speaks of the dilemma between staying on the ground or flying up to God, to holiness, towards the heights.

This is what the story says:

Once upon a time, a countryman who was walking along a path in the high mountains found in the rocks close to the summit a strange egg: too big to be a hen's and too small to be that of an ostrich.

Not knowing what it might be he decided to take it with him.

Back at home he showed it to his wife. She had a turkey which was sitting on its nest. Seeing that the egg was more or less the size of the others, she put it under the tail of the turkey.

The chicks began to break the shells and the little one from the egg taken from the mountain did the same. It seemed to be an animal different from the others, but the differences were not sufficient to make it stand out among the rest of the clutch, even though it was a small condor. Although hatched by a turkey it had another origin.

Given that it had no other model to learn from the little condor imitated what he saw the turkeys do. . He used to follow the large

<sup>32</sup> M. MENAPACE, *Cuentos rodados*, Patria Grande, Buenos Aires 1986 (our translation).

turkey looking for worms, seeds and scraps. He dug the earth and jumping up tried to pluck the fruit from the bushes. He lived in the henhouse and was afraid of the dogs that often came to steal food. At night he climbed up the branches of the carob tree afraid of the weasels and other predators. He lived this way imitating what he saw the others do.

At times he felt a little strange. Especially when he had the chance to be alone. But that did not happen often. In fact the turkeys did not like solitude, nor that others should be alone. It is a species that likes to move about always in flocks, swelling their chests to make an impression and opening their tails and dragging their wings. In the face of whatever happened, there was always a strong scornful response.

The characteristic of turkeys is this: in spite of being a large size they do not fly.

One midday when the clear sky was being crossed by white clouds the little animal was surprised to see some strange birds flying majestically, almost without moving their wings. He felt a jolt in the depth of his being. Something like an old call that wished to reawaken him in the depth of his existence. His eyes used to always looking at the ground searching for food, were unable to distinguish what was happening in the heights. His heart was awakened with a strong nostalgia: why can't I also fly like that? His heart was beating quickly and with anxiety.

At that moment a turkey approached him and asked him what he was doing. He laughed when he heard what he had to say. He told him that he was a romantic and should stop joking. They were something different. They should return to reality and he suggested that he would accompany him to a place where he had found a lot of ripe fruit and a large number of worms.

Confused, the poor animal woke from his enchantment and followed his companion who took him back to the henhouse.

He took up his normal life again always tormented by a deep inner sense of dis-satisfaction that made him feel strange.

He never discovered his true identity as a condor.

Having become old one day he died. Yes unfortunately he died exactly as he had lived.

And to think that he was born for the heights!

It is all about the way of Christian growth towards holiness: «We are not afraid to aim high towards the heights of God; *we are not afraid that God will ask too much*»<sup>33</sup>.

## VI. PATHS OF HOLINESS TODAY IN THE LIGHT OF OUR HISTORY AS THE SALESIAN FAMILY

### – There are many paths along the road to holiness.

We know that some are saints but we never know who is holier than another. Only God knows our hearts. There is a special beauty in each one. One should not ask of someone what they cannot and should not give. Saying this is encouraging, healthy. Otherwise we would convince ourselves that we could not be saints because we shall never be like the saints that are proposed to us as models. «There is no need to put into holiness more perfection than is in fact actually there»<sup>34</sup>. That is to say Christian heroism is not a question of heroics, Christian perfection is not the perfection of the superhero. «In my Father's house there are many rooms» (Jn 14,2). Paradise is like a garden: there is the humble violet or the sublime lily and the rose. *No state of life represents an insurmountable obstacle to the fullness of joy and of life.*

With Don Bosco we meet not only Dominic Savio, John Masaglia and Francis Besucco; but also Michael Magone and many other difficult youngsters whose life stories are characterized by deep wounds.

In the first foundations of the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians are to be found the first real orphanages and people of various kinds the victims of injustice and trauma (Charles Braga, Laura Vicuña...).

<sup>33</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Catechesis in the General Audience on 13 April 2011: Insegnamenti VII* (2011).

<sup>34</sup> P. CATRY, «Le tracce di Dio», in Aa. Vv., *La missione ecclesiale di Adrienne von Speyr. Atti del 2° Colloquio Internazionale del pensiero cristiano*, Jaca Book (= Già e non ancora), Milano 1986, 32 quoted in L. M. Zanet, *La santità dimostrabile. Antropologia e prassi della canonizzazione*, Dehoniane, Bologna 2016, 204.

Then there are those with particular personal wounds: such as Beltrami or Czartoryski who knew that they would never be able to lead a regular oratorian life because of their illness. Artemides Zatti too was rejected from the priesthood because of sickness. Francis Convertini showed very modest intellectual gifts and it was only his outstanding holiness that convinced the Superiors to allow him to continue to the priesthood. Alexandrina Mary da Costa was confined to bed with a progressive paralysis. Nino Baglieri lived through the same situation. Vera Grita, a Salesian mystic, lived a similar calvary, following the trauma suffered in an accident.

In this way, **in Don Bosco's house** there is room and a welcome for a whole variety of those wounded in all sorts of ways by sorrowful family or personal events; people who according to the normal criteria of human prudence or efficiency should never have been accepted. People who at a first cursory glance seem to be completely at odds with the joyful and even "vigorous" vivacity of the Salesian spirit. Yet in the light of faith the facts show that no personal situation constitutes an impediment to holiness.

– **Every saint is a word of God incarnated.**

There are no two saints the same. Imitating the saints is not copying them. Each one needs his own time and has his own path because «the paths of holiness are personal»<sup>35</sup>.

The galaxy of holiness is vast and varied: therefore it should not be levelled out into a generic orientation towards good, but should be considered as an inexhaustible source of inspiration and potential development. Living reflections of the Gospel the saints interpret its most authentic spirit and are a mirror that reflects the face of Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God. They spread abroad the gift of goodness and of beauty, not giving in to the passing and ephemeral fashions of time, and with the flare of a heart forever young make the miracle of love possible. With the power of grace saints change

<sup>35</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Rome 2001, 31.

the world, but also the Church, made more evangelical and more credible by their witness.

It is the same Holy Spirit who inspired the sacred authors who animates the Saints to give their lives for the Gospel. Their different ways of “incarnating” holiness constitute a sure way of undertaking a living and effective hermeneutics of the Word of God.

– **Every saint in our Salesian Family tells us that holiness is possible.**

Every one of our Saints, Blesseds, Venerables, Servants of God brings with them a wealth of elements that deserve further consideration and appreciation. It is a matter of contemplating a diamond with a multitude of facets, some more visible and attractive, others less immediately so, but not for this reason less real and impelling. To know and to make known these extraordinary examples of believers leads to an ever more progressive involvement in their journey, a passionate interest in the events of their lives, a joyful sharing in the projects and the hopes that guided their steps.

I offer you some examples.

– **The holiness of the young people “on our doorstep”.**

With the witness of Dominic Savio, Laura Vicuña, Zeffirinus Namuncurá, of the five young oratorians of Poznan, of Albert Marvelli and others, there are 46 young Saints and Blesseds from the Salesian Family under 29 years of age.

In particular some of the aspects of the witness of Saint Dominic Savio deserve to be highlighted:

- A reminder that the idea of the preventive aspect is not only a pedagogical, educational factor, but also a theological one. In his life as Don Bosco himself testified, there is a preventive grace at work that can be seen<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Don Bosco recalls: «I recognised in him a soul where the Holy Spirit reigned supreme, and I marvelled at the way grace had already worked in his young heart and mind.», J. BOSCO, *Vita del giovanetto Savio Domenico allievo dell'Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales con appendice sulle grazie ottenute per sua intercessione*, Ed. 5,

- The decisive value represented by the First Communion<sup>37</sup>.
  - The fact that he is a sort of leader and teacher in the ways of God (just as Don Bosco also saw him in the Lanzo dream in 1876), as is confirmed in the lives of so many of our Blessed, Venerables and Servants of God who will make their own Dominic's proposals: Laura Vicuña, Zefirinus Namuncurá, Joseph Kowalski, Albert Marvelli, Joseph Quadrio, Octavius Ortiz Arrieta.
  - The role of Dominic in the founding of the Immaculate Conception Sodality, training ground of the future Salesian Congregation, in conjunction with John Massaglia, a true friend of spiritual things, of whom Don Bosco declared: «If I were to write about the good example and virtues of John Massaglia, I should be largely repeating what I have already written about Dominic whose faithful follower he was as long as he lived»<sup>38</sup>.
- **The missionary holiness of the Salesian charism**, expressed in a good number of men and women, consecrated and lay people who demonstrate: the proclamation of the Gospel, the inculturation of the faith, the promotion of women, the defence of the rights of the poor and of the native populations,

Torino, Tipografia e Libreria Salesiana 1878 in ISS, *Fonti Salesiane. 1. Don Bosco e la sua opera. Raccolta antologica*, LAS, Rome 2014, 1039.

<sup>37</sup> Rapture in the life story of Dominic Savio, is typically connected to the eucharist and finds its moment of grace on the day of his First Communion, seen as a seed that if it is cultivated becomes the source of a joyful life and of decisive commitments: «It was a wonderful and never-to-be forgotten day for him; it was a renewal of his life for God, a life that can be taken as an example by anyone. If one got him to talk about his First Communion several years later his face lit up with joy and happiness as he said: "That was the happiest and most wonderful day of my life. He made some promises on that day which he preserved carefully in a little book and often re-read them [...] 1. I will go often to Confession and I will go to Holy Communion as often as I am allowed by my confessor. 2. I will try to keep Sundays and holy days holy. 3. My friends will be Jesus and Mary. 4. Death but not sin". These promises which he often went over were the guiding light of his life until he died» (J. BOSCO, *Vita del giovanetto Savio Domenico allievo dell'Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales con appendice sulle grazie ottenute per sua intercessione*, Ed. 5, Torino, Tipografia e Libreria Salesiana 1878 in ISS, *Salesian Sources. 1. Don Bosco and his work. Collected works*, LAS, Rome 2014, Krysty Jyoti Publications 2017 *Life of the young Dominic Savio, pupil at the Oratory of St Francis de Sales*, 1171).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1210.

the foundation of local Churches. Deeply impressive is the fact that a very large proportion of the brothers and sisters of our Salesian Family who are in the process of the recognition of their heroic virtues and of their holiness are missionaries: (Blessed Mary Romero Meneses FMA; Blessed Mary Troncatti FMA; the Venerable Vincent Cimatti).

- **The oblative holiness of the “victim”** expressing the deep roots of “*Da mihi animas, coetera tolle*”. Leading the way in this group is the Venerable Fr Andrew Beltrami (1870-1897), whose example provides a pattern for a long list of others living Salesian holiness in this way which starting from the trio Andrew Beltrami, August Czartoryski, Louis Variara, continues through the years with other great figures such as Blessed Eusebia Palomino, Blessed Alexandrina Mary da Costa, Blessed Laura Vicuña, without forgetting the numerous host of martyrs (among whom should be mentioned the 95 martyrs of the Spanish civil war, and among these many young confreres in formation and young priests).
- **The dimension of the “broken home”**: families in which at least one of the parents is absent. or else where the presence of the mother and/or the father, for different reasons (physical, psychological, moral or spiritual), creates problems for the children. Don Bosco, who himself experienced the early death of his father and having to live away from home following Mamma Margaret’s prudent decision, wanted the Salesian work to be particularly dedicated to «poor and abandoned youth».
- **Blessed Laura Vicuña**, born in Chile in 1891, who had not known a father and whose mother in Argentina began to live with a rich landowner Manuel Mora. Laura, suffering from the irregular moral situation of her mother mamma, offered her life for her.
- **The Servant of God Charles Braga**, born in Valtellina (in the north of Italy) in 1889. He was abandoned by his father while still very young, and his mother was sent away because, through a mixture of ignorance and gossip, she was considered

emotionally unstable. Charles met with great humiliations and several times saw the authentic nature of his Salesian vocation put in question, but in this great suffering he was able to bring to maturity a great capacity for reconciliation, and to show a deep sense of paternity and goodness especially with regard to the parents of confreres.

- **The vocational dimension:** in the context of the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco there were two beatifications of two confreres martyrs, whose lives reflect some constitutive aspects of our charism.
- The person of **Stephen Sándor** (1914-1953), beatified in 2013 (his cause was introduced in 2006), recalls the complementarity of the two forms of the single consecrated Salesian vocation: the lay (Brother) and the priestly. The shining testimony of Stephen Sándor, as a Salesian Brother, expresses a clear and decisive vocational choice, an exemplary life, an educational expertise and an apostolic fruitfulness, in which we see a presentation of the vocation and the mission of the Salesian Brother, with a special love for the young apprentices and for the world of work.
  - **Titus Zeman** (1915-1969), beatified in Bratislava on 30 September 2017 (his cause was introduced in 2010). When the Czechoslovakian communist regime, in April 1950, prohibited religious orders and began to deport male and female religious to concentration camps it was decided it was necessary to organize secret journeys to Turin to enable young Salesians to complete their studies. Titus took upon himself this dangerous enterprise and organized two expeditions for about 20 young Salesians. During a third expedition Fr Zeman with the other fugitives was arrested. He endured a severe trial during which he was described as a traitor to the fatherland and a Vatican spy and was condemned to death. He accepted his calvary with a great spirit of sacrifice and oblation: «Even if I lose my life I would not consider it wasted, knowing that at least one of those I helped has become a priest in my place.»



- **The dimension of “Salesian paternity and maternity”:** after the great example of paternity in Don Bosco, we recall among others, Saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello, Blessed Michael Rua, Blessed Philip Rinaldi, Blessed Joseph Calasanz, Venerable Mamma Margaret, Venerable Vincent Cimatti, Venerable Teresa Valsè, Venerable Augustus Arribat, the Servant of God Fr Charles Braga, the Servant of God Fr Andrew Majcen...
- **The episcopal dimension:** in the varied examples of holiness that flourished at the school of Don Bosco, there are a significant number of bishops who incarnated in a special way pastoral charity, typical of the Salesian charism, in the episcopal ministry: Louis Versiglia (1873-1930), Martyr and Saint; Louis Olivares (1873-1943), Venerable; Stephen Ferrando (1895-1978), Venerable and Founder; Octavius Ortiz Arrieta (1878-1958), Venerable; Augustus Hlond (1881-1948), Venerable, cardinal; Anthony de Almeida Lustosa (1886-1974), Servant of God; Orestes Marengo (1906-1998), Servant of God.
- **The dimension of “charismatic sonship”.** It is also very interesting to notice that we venerate some saints who shared with Don Bosco some stages of life, appreciated his holiness, his apostolic and educational fruitfulness, but then followed their own path with evangelical freedom and became in their turn founders, with their own perceptive intuitions, a genuine love for the poor and unlimited trust in Providence: Saint Leonardo Murialdo, Saint Louis Guanella, Saint Louis Orione.

This situation that has been described is so beautiful, that it fills us with a sense of responsibility and also encouragement. It can clearly be seen that we are the depositories of a precious inheritance which deserves to be better known and appreciated. The danger is to reduce this heritage of holiness to liturgical celebrations, not fully appreciating its potentiality in the areas of the spiritual, pastoral, ecclesial, educative, cultural, historical, social, missionary mission. The Saints, Blesseds, Venerables and Servants of God are precious nuggets that have been extracted from

the darkness of the mine so that they will shine out and reflect in the Church and in the Salesian Family the splendour of truth and the love of Christ.

- **The pastoral aspect** of these people is connected to their effectiveness as successful examples of Christianity lived in the particular socio-cultural and political situations of the world, the Church and the Salesian Family itself.
- **The spiritual aspect** involves the invitation to imitate their virtues as the source of the inspiration and of the planning ability for our style of life and for our mission. The pastoral and spiritual work involved in a cause is a genuine form of *education to holiness*, to which, given our charism, we ought to be particularly sensitive and attentive.

I end this commentary on the Strenna with the extensive and up-to-date information from our Postulation Office. It will certainly be of great interest to our Salesian Family and especially to all the groups in this beautiful tree of Salesianity who can see one or other of their members included in one of the processes. As Don Rua wrote, the holiness of us all his sons and daughters will be a proof of the holiness lived by and handed down to us by Don Bosco himself, the beloved Father of the whole Salesian Family spread around the world.

My dear brothers and sisters I can confidently state that the greatest and the most pressing need that we have today in our Salesian world is not to do more things, not to plan or replan initiatives, to open new foundations... but rather to show what our lives individually and collectively communicate, our way of living the Gospel which develops and expands in time as the continuation of the way Jesus lived<sup>39</sup>. What really is at stake is our holiness!

We are saints, as was our Father and the Founder of our beautiful Salesian Family which today is spread throughout the world!

<sup>39</sup> Cf. VC, 62.

Pope John Paul II, today a saint, made an enthusiastic appeal to us that although at the time was addressed to the Salesians, equally applies to the whole Salesian Family in general and to each one of its groups. Let us listen to it once again as a word addressed to each one of us and to our Institute. This is what he said:

You want to «propose once again with courage “tending towards holiness” as the principal response to the challenges of the contemporary world. In short it is a matter not so much of taking up new activities as of living and bearing witness to the Gospel without any compromises so as to encourage towards holiness those young people that you meet. Salesians for the third millennium! May you be enthusiastic teachers and guides, saints and formers of saints as was St John Bosco»<sup>40</sup>.

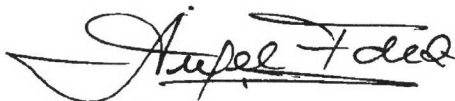
Let us ask Mary our Mother and the Help of Christians that she may grant us the light necessary to see clearly and to follow faithfully with all our hearts this path of life. May she give her support to the commitment of each one and of the whole Salesian Family along the path of Salesian holiness for the sake of those to whom we are sent and for our own.

May she, the Mother, expert in the Spirit, work in us the marvels of grace that she has worked in all our saints.

May the Help of Christians accompany and guide us.

I wish you a year full of the fruits of holiness.

Affectionately,



Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb  
Rector Major

<sup>40</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Message of H.H. John Paul II at the beginning of the GC25*, in *GC25*, 140.

## HOLINESS LIVED OUT IN THE SALESIAN CHARISM

*From now on let our watchword be:  
May the holiness of the children be a proof of the holiness of the father  
(Don Rua)*

### LIST AT 31 DECEMBER 2018

Our Postulation Office details 168 including Saints, Blesseds, Venerables, Servants of God.

The causes conducted directly by the Postulation Office number 50.

In addition there are 5 other causes entrusted to our Postulation Office.

#### SAINTS (nine)

**saint John Bosco**, priest (date of canonization: 1 April 1934) – (Italy)

**saint Joseph Cafasso**, priest (22 June 1947) – (Italy)

**saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello**, virgin (24 June 1951) – (Italy)

**saint Dominic Savio**, adolescent (12 June 1954) – (Italy)

**saint Leonard Murialdo**, priest (3 May 1970) – (Italy)

**saint Louis Versiglia**, bishop, martyr (1 October 2000) – (Italy - China)

**saint Callistus Caravario**, priest, martyr (1 October 2000) – (Italy - China)

**saint Louis Orione**, priest (16 May 2004) – (Italy)

**saint Louis Guanella**, priest (23 October 2011) – (Italy)

#### BLESSEDS (one hundred and eighteen)

**blessed Michael Rua**, priest (date of beatification: 29 October 1972) – (Italy)

**blessed Laura Vicuña**, adolescent (3 September 1988) – (Chile - Argentina)

**blessed Philip Rinaldi**, priest (29 April 1990) – (Italy)

**blessed Magdalen Morano**, virgin (5 November 1994) – (Italy)

**blessed Joseph Kowalski**, priest, **martyr** (13 June 1999) – (Poland)

**blessed Francis Kesy**, layman and **4 companions**, martyrs (13 June 1999) – (Poland)

**blessed Pius IX**, pope (3 September 2000) – (Italy)

**blessed Joseph Calasanz Marqués**, priest, and **31 companions**, martyrs (11 March 2001) – (Spain)

**blessed Louis Variara**, priest (14 April 2002) – (Italy - Colombia)

**blessed Artemides Zatti**, religious (14 April 2002) – (Italy - Argentina)

**blessed Mary Romero Meneses**, virgin (14 April 2002) – (Nicaragua - Costa Rica)

**blessed Augustus Czartoryski**, priest (25 April 2004) – (France - Poland)

**blessed Eusebia Palomino Yenes**, virgin (25 April 2004) – (Spain)

**blessed Alexandrina Mary Da Costa**, lay woman (25 April 2004) – (Portugal)

**blessed Albert Marvelli**, layman (5 September 2004) – (Italy)

**blessed Bronislao Markiewicz**, priest (19 June 2005) – (Poland)

**blessed Henry Sáiz Aparicio**, priest, and **62 companions** martyrs (28 October 2007) – (Spain)

blessed Zeffirinus Namuncurá, layman (11 November 2007) – (Argentina)  
 blessed Mary Troncatti, virgin (24 November 2012) – (Italy - Ecuador)  
 blessed Stephen Sándor, religious, **martyr** (19 October 2013) – (Hungary)  
 blessed Titus Zeman, priest, **martyr** (30 September 2017) – (Slovakia).

#### VENERABLES (seventeen)

**Ven. Andrew Beltrami**, priest (date of the Decree super virtutibus: 15 December 1966) – (Italy)  
**ven. Teresa Valsè Pantellini**, virgin (12 July 1982) – (Italy)  
**ven. Dorothy Chopitea**, lay woman (9 June 1983) – (Spain)  
**ven. Vincent Cimatti**, priest (21 December 1991) – (Italy - Japan)  
**ven. Simon Srugi**, religious (2 April 1993) – (Palestine)  
**ven. Rudolf Komorek**, priest (6 April 1995) – (Poland - Brazil)  
**ven. Louis Olivares**, bishop (20 December 2004) – (Italy)  
**ven. Margaret Occhiena**, lay woman (23 October 2006) – (Italy)  
**ven. Joseph Quadrio**, priest (19 December 2009) – (Italy)  
**ven. Laura Meozzi**, virgin (27 June 2011) – (Italy - Poland)  
**ven. Attilio Giordani**, layman (9 October 2013) – (Italy - Brazil)  
**ven. Joseph Augustus Arribat**, priest (8 July 2014) – (France)  
**ven. Stephen Ferrando**, bishop (3 March 2016) – (Italy - India)  
**ven. Francis Convertini**, priest (20 January 2017) – (Italy - India)  
**ven. Joseph Vador**, priest (20 January 2017) – (Hungary - Cuba)  
**ven. Octavius Ortiz Arrieta**, bishop (27 February 2017) – (Perù)  
**ven. Augustus Hlond**, cardinal (19 May 2018) – (Poland)

#### SERVANTS OF GOD (twentyfour)

##### *The examination of the Positio or of the Report in progress*

**Elias Comini**, priest (Italy)  
**Ignatius Stuchly**, priest (Czech Republic)  
**Anthony De Almeida Lustosa**, bishop (Brazil)  
**Charles Crespi Croci**, priest (Italy - Ecuador)  
**Constantine Vendrame**, priest (Italy - India)  
**John Swierc**, priest and 8 companions, **martyrs** (Poland)  
**Orestes Marengo**, bishop (Italy - India)  
**Charles Della Torre**, priest (Italy - Thailand)

##### *The Decree of the diocesan enquiry is awaited*

**Anna Maria Lozano**, virgin (Colombia)

##### *The Diocesan Enquiry in progress*

**Matilda Salem**, lay woman (Syria)  
**Andrew Majcen**, priest (Slovenia)  
**Charles Braga**, priest (Italy - China - Philippines)  
**Antonino Baglieri**, layman (Italy)  
**Antonietta Böhm**, virgin (Germany - Mexico)  
**Rudolf Lunkenbein**, priest (Germany - Brazil) and **Simon Bororo**, layman (Brazil), **martyrs**

## 2. GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIVES

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### 2.1 ENCOURAGING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES (GC27 75.5)

Don Francesco CEREDA  
*Vicar of the Rector Major*

GC27 asked us to strengthen the consistency of the Salesian community and to make its internationality grow. After having offered in AGC 422 some orientations on consistent communities, let us now consider international communities, according to what the General Chapter itself asks: *“Encouraging international communities also through a worldwide redistribution of confreres and the promotion of missionary projects in the Congregation”*<sup>1</sup>.

Not in all contexts is it possible to have confreres from countries other than one's own. Where it is not possible to establish international communities, let us at least consider the possibility of having multicultural and multi-ethnic communities, i.e. communities in which there are confreres from different ethnic or tribal groups. Establishing international communities is the condition for offering a prophetic witness of “intercultural fraternity”.

The orientations that are now being proposed have been shared with the Rector Major and the General Council; they are intended to help the confreres and the provinces to take this capitular choice to heart and give it full and generous support.

#### 1. Importance of International Communities

Today we live in an era of great *mobility of persons and peoples*. There are various reasons for this phenomenon: poverty, hunger, war, persecution, desertification, climate change, the rising of sea levels, globalization and, as a result, the search for security and better living conditions. The result of mobility is a mixture of people from every nation, culture, ethnicity, religion, lan-

<sup>1</sup> CG27, 75.5.

guage; this situation requires tackling problems of cultural adaptation, civil coexistence and social integration; it is a situation that now occurs in the majority of countries, both rich and poor, and in all continents.

Our Congregation cannot ignore the phenomenon of migration. Many young migrants find themselves without work and therefore without a future, excluded from society, exposed to crime and violence. In order to respond to their needs, the educative and pastoral communities are becoming more and more intercultural, even with the presence of volunteers coming from various countries; for this reason, the provinces feel the need to create international communities. It should be noted that among the young migrants of our educative and pastoral communities we are beginning to have vocations to Salesian consecrated life.

In the field of initial formation, since vocations have decreased and there are no formators, interprovincial and international formation communities have been established in various provinces. In addition to strengthening the formation communities, this choice enables confreres in formation to live a fraternity open to interaction, relationships and cultural diversity.

The growing needs of the missions also make it necessary to send missionaries, to strengthen existing communities or to found new ones; think, for example, of the new communities of Kuching in Malaysia, of Palabeck in Uganda for the care of refugees, of Kunkujang in Gambia which are made up of confreres from various countries.

Finally, we must not forget the communities that respond to the needs of the entire Congregation, such as, for example, the community of the headquarters, the Salesian Pontifical University, the Salesian places, the world formation communities, the communities of the Vatican and the Catacombs. These are international communities that need the contribution of confreres from different provinces.

In the Congregation, as you can see, there is already a considerable exchange of confreres. All the signs described above point

towards a greater internationality of the communities. For this reason, GC27, with a prophetic vision, asked for the promotion of international communities and proposed two ways of making this commitment a reality: the promotion of the Congregation's missionary projects and the global redistribution of confreres.

## **2. Availability to the Missionary Projects of the Congregation**

According to GC27, one way of fostering the emergence of international communities is to make the confreres available for the missionary projects of the Congregation. It is therefore necessary to make these projects known, to grow the missionary spirit, to help the confreres especially in initial formation to have an open look at the life of the Church and of the Congregation; above all it is necessary to form to availability. In general, it is a matter of forming to obedience as availability and in particular to missionary availability; this task is the responsibility of provincials, formators and provincial delegates for missionary animation in synergy with the sector for the missions of the Congregation. Don Alberto Caviglia used to speak of the great development of the Congregation that had grown up with the availability of the "*I go*", which he considered the "Salesian motto". The missionary development was due to the availability of the confreres.

When Don Bosco wrote the Salesian Constitutions, he put *obedience as the first of the evangelical counsels*, overcoming the traditional order that considered first poverty, then chastity and finally obedience. After the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law in 1917, the traditional order was introduced in our Constitutions. Vatican II then gave the first place to chastity and asked religious institutes to renew their Constitutions. For this task of revision, the Code of Canon Law of 1983 indicated that "All must observe faithfully the mind and designs of the founders regarding the nature, purpose, spirit, and character of an institute... and its sound traditions, all of which constitute the patrimony of the



same institute”<sup>2</sup>. For this reason, in the final edition of the Constitutions, GC22 once again placed obedience in the first place.

Don Bosco considered religious obedience as availability to God for the mission, as readiness to do anything in whatever place was needed. Once, shaping his handkerchief into a ball, he passed it from one hand to the other. As the boys watched silently, he would suddenly exclaim: “If I had twelve boys as manageable as this handkerchief, I would spread our Faith not only throughout Europe, but far, far into the remotest lands”<sup>3</sup>.

Don Vecchi comments: “As though in response to such an invitation a tradition grew up in the Congregation encouraging confreres who felt themselves called, to make to the Rector Major a special offer of their availability for the missions *ad gentes*. Overcoming all geographical limitations, it makes them prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere, and gives to Salesian obedience a special worldwide dimension of totality. This availability for obedience... is proper to our tradition”<sup>4</sup>. In this way we have become a worldwide Congregation.

“The missionary dimension,” affirms the current Successor of Don Bosco, “is part of our identity”<sup>5</sup>. And he continues: “We Salesians of Don Bosco, even though we have a juridical organization which is expressed in Provinces, do not make our religious profession for one place, one country or one destination. We are Salesians of Don Bosco in the Congregation and for the Mission, there where there is need for us and where our service is possible”<sup>6</sup>.

When he was about to begin the missions of America in 1875, Don Bosco invited the Salesians to offer themselves freely. Today God’s call to the mission of the Congregation comes to his confreres through the General Chapters: GC21 started the Africa Project and GC26 started the Europe Project. The Rectors Major then repeat-

<sup>2</sup> Can. 578.

<sup>3</sup> MB IV, p. 424. Cfr also III, p. 546; VI, p. 11; XIII, p. 210.

<sup>4</sup> J. VECCHI, ‘I have come to do your will’, in ACG 375, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> A. FERNANDEZ, *Belonging more to God, more to the Confreres, more to the Youth*, in ACG 419, 2014, p. 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> *Oc. cit.* p. 25.

edly addressed these missionary invitations to all the confreres, indicating some priorities. In his first letter to the Congregation, the current Rector Major also made an appeal to his confreres, indicating some missionary areas that are in need; he then renews his appeal every year on the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Missionary vocations are a gift from God, but they need to be requested in prayer, raised up in the confreres, accompanied in their growth; they require discernment and are born where there is an atmosphere of availability. Therefore, it does not seem out of place to put the root of the missionary vocation in a life lived as obedience to God, as listening to the needs of the Church, of the Congregation, of the poor young people, as discernment and response. Obedience is not only availability to the requests of a Superior, but is above all a generous and available offer of oneself.

### **3. Global Redistribution of Confreres**

According to GC27, a second way to foster the emergence of international communities is the global redistribution of confreres. This is more difficult to achieve; while the first way described above is based on the availability of confreres who offer themselves spontaneously, this second way requires the intervention of a Superior who, seeing the needs, asks a confrere for at least temporary availability to go to a province in need.

The problem of the equitable distribution of priests is very much alive in the Church. For example, in Malta there is 1 priest for every 337 inhabitants; in Cuba there is 1 priest for every 20,000 faithful; in some dioceses of the northeast of Brazil there is 1 priest for 35,000 faithful and even 1 for 45,000. These are borderline cases; however, it is known that the countries of Latin America, where 43% of the world's Catholics reside, have only 13% of the world's total number of priests; while the countries of Europe and North America, with less than 39% of the world's Catholics, have more than 73% of the world's total number of priests. These figures are

very eloquent about the imbalance between the north and south of the Church. In this light one understands the concern of Vatican II and the Popes to stimulate a more equitable distribution of clergy among the dioceses of the world, including also the request to religious Congregations to commit themselves to new frontiers or to the dioceses to temporarily send “*fidei donum*” priests.

Returning now to the life of the Congregation, missionary vocations “*ad vitam*” should certainly be encouraged, but the temporary transfer of confreres between provinces is also a valid help. Such transfers could last from three to five years; they could also lead to the maturation of a missionary vocation “*ad vitam*”. This requires a broader vision of the common good in the provinces and in the confreres, the maturation of a sense of solidarity and also the consideration of mutual advantage in favouring missionary availability.

In his first letter to his confreres, the Rector Major Fr. Ángel expressed the conviction that “a great richness of our Congregation is precisely its missionary capability”<sup>7</sup>. He recalled that differences and multiculturalism are a richness, that the identity of the Salesian charism is not monochrome and that it is necessary to prepare confreres with a global outlook. For this reason he asked for an exchange between provinces, recommending, in addition to the offer “*ad vitam*”, the temporary availability of confreres for the provinces in need<sup>8</sup>. He also indicated not to prevent young confreres from studying outside the province and to offer, especially to formators, the opportunity to attend international study centers and to have a missionary experience.

In the provinces there may be confreres in need of spiritual and pastoral renewal of an experiential type, which can sometimes consist of what Pope Francis calls “the way out to the peripheries”. Our Special General Chapter had already considered the

<sup>7</sup> A. FERNANDEZ, *Belonging more to God*, ..., p. 24.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 25.

missionary relaunch as “a thermometer of the pastoral vitality of the Congregation and an effective means against the danger of embourgeoisement”<sup>9</sup>. And when Fr Viganò launched the Africa Project in 1980, he wrote a letter in which he said: “The missions free us from the tendency to a soft and easy life, from superficiality in spiritual things and from genericism”.

In order to realize in the Congregation a global redistribution of the confreres, the growth of a mentality of solidarity among the Provincials is required, as well as the intervention of the Rector Major and the General Councillors to encourage temporary sendings.

#### **4. Intercultural Experience as a Prophecy of Fraternity**

In the Congregation there are different types of international communities: communities of mission “*ad gentes*”, of apostolic commitment among immigrants, of global services, of formation and study. The international and multicultural communities offer the possibility of a special witness of the prophecy of fraternity through intercultural experience.

The confreres, although coming from different countries, recognize themselves as brothers in Don Bosco; the communion among them is based on the bonds of religious profession and of the Salesian charism. By establishing relationships of esteem and friendship, with patience and humility they interact more and more and grow in mutual acceptance and affection. Progressively they consider the differences in culture, sensitivity and viewpoints not as an obstacle to good relations, but as an enrichment. This requires the ability to relativize one’s own way of seeing and building communion on elements of unity; in this way all are transformed by the experiences of others and grow in mutual donation.

Fraternity lived in the community, and especially in an international community, is the first and fundamental mission. When

<sup>9</sup> SGC n. 296.

the youth and lay people see how we, although coming from different countries and cultures, overcome our differences, work in a spirit of mutual understanding and help, dedicate ourselves to the mission of youth, all this becomes a stimulus and inspiration for their lives. Fraternity thus becomes the prophecy of the Church, communion and service. The Apostolic Exhortation "*Vita consecrata*" asks consecrated persons to be experts in communion and to practice its spirituality. Communion is a sign for the world and an attractive force that leads to believing in Christ. In this way communion opens up to mission, it becomes mission itself<sup>10</sup>.

In order to establish international communities in the provinces it is necessary to be available to welcome missionaries, whether permanent or temporary, and to send confreres to other cultures. In addition, an operation of discernment on the part of the Provincials is necessary so that in the communities there are confreres from different backgrounds, ethnic groups and cultures and the richness and variety of differences are assured; on the other hand, it is not easy to build fraternity in international communities if the confreres are not trained or at least open to intercultural experience. It is also necessary for each confrere, in addition to his own language, to learn another international language. Provinces should offer this learning opportunity especially to young confreres.

## 5. Operational Conclusions

We now present as a conclusion, and as an example, some operational guidelines. With the contribution of all, we will be able to find other concrete choices in this promising field of international and intercultural communities.

It is up to the provincials to configure the Salesian communities with confreres belonging to different nationalities, cultures, languages and ethnic groups. This fosters intercultural experience, which is a sign of the prophecy of fraternity; it also re-

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 46.

sponds to the needs of the youth mission, especially in the case of migrations. The welcoming of young people and volunteers from other cultures and nations into the educative and pastoral communities also helps to give an international face to the communities.

The provinces are invited to send confreres to the formation communities and international study centers of the Congregations such as Roma Gerini, Jerusalem, Roma Testaccio, the Pontifical Salesian University, the Pontifical Universities of Rome. International environments favour the openness of the mind, the knowledge of other cultures, the interaction with different Salesian and ecclesial experiences, the study of Italian. Such an international experience is particularly important for the formation of the formators of the formation communities and the teachers of Salesian study centers.

It is useful for provinces to plan missionary experiences, for example during the holidays, especially for young confreres, formators and teachers in study centers. Even the study of an international language, besides one's own, needs planning and cannot be left to improvisation; this is a learning to be offered to the young confreres and formators of the community and of the international study centers. The study of Italian in particular is necessary when it comes to the world communities placed at the service of the Congregation.

It is the responsibility of the Provincials, the provincial delegates of missionary animation and formators, especially in the young confreres, to encourage discernment of the missionary vocation "*ad vitam*" and therefore the sending of missionaries available to the Rector Major. It is also important for the provinces to be available to welcome and accompany missionaries in particular situations such as Project Europe or in particular contexts of migration. Missions or chaplaincies for foreigners that require attention to the inclusion in projects and communities of the provinces are also to be cared for.

Among the provinces, also with the help of the General Councilors, the temporary transfer of confreres to the provinces that are poor in personnel and in need of help or to the formation communities should be encouraged. Such transfers need to be regulated by special agreements.

## 4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

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### 4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

*Below are some of the main activities of the Rector Major in the Semester from August to December 2018.*

#### – **August 2018**

The Rector Major began the month of August 2018 with a visit to the *Brazilian Provinces of Porto Alegre (BPA) and Belo Horizonte (BBH)*. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> he visited the “gaucha” Province of BPA, celebrating with the confreres and the Salesian Family the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Province, especially on the 5<sup>th</sup> with the solemn celebration in Joinville. The Rector Major was present in particular in the cities of Porto Alegre (Rio Grande do Sul), Curitiba (Paraná) and Joinville (Santa Catarina). In Porto Alegre he met with the Provincial Council and in the three areas he met with the confreres of the nearby houses, the members of the Salesian Family and the young people and laity of our works. He also visited the elderly or sick confreres and the FMA sisters gathered in their provincial house. In Curitiba he met the novices, pre-novices and aspirants.

From August 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> he visited the Province of BBH, going to Belo Horizonte and Brasilia. In the two areas he visited, at different times, he met with the Salesian confreres, the members of the Salesian Family, the youth and had a special meeting with the Provincial Council. During his presence in Belo Horizonte, he participated for a moment in the International Congress of Education delivering a conference and having lunch, and visited the social work “Casa Dom Bosco”, spending time with the young people in difficulty who are part of the activity of the house. On one evening he also had dinner with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in their provincial house, together with the sisters who came from the area. When he arrived in Brasilia, together with those who accompanied him, the Rector Major visited the headquarters of CISBRASIL and participated in the launch of the first volume of Biographical Memoirs in Portuguese, promoted by the Regional Councillor and carried out by CISBRASIL. In Brasilia, the federal capital of Brazil and the city dreamed of by Don Bosco before it



existed, he participated in the meeting of the Salesian Missionary Youth and the youth of the AJS (MGS), presiding over the celebration of the Eucharist in the beautiful temple-Sanctuary dedicated to Don Bosco. In the same place he presided over the celebration of Perpetual Professions. Concluding the visit and his stay in Brasilia, on the morning of Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> he participated in a mass demonstration in the streets of the capital.

He returned to Rome on August 13<sup>th</sup>, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> he was already in Piedmont for the feast of the birth of Don Bosco. He presided over the Solemnity of the Assumption, with the inauguration of the church of Our Lady of the Castle in Castelnovo Don Bosco and on the following day, after a moment of remembrance and historical and artistic commemoration in the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians at Colle Don Bosco, he presided over the solemn celebration in the Basilica of Don Bosco.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> he was in his hometown, Luanco, in Spain, to rest and spend a few days with his family.

### **– September 2018**

On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Rector Major leaves for Canada for the planned visit to the Provinces of the

United States. Unfortunately, since he had not received online, in digital format, permission to enter (because of his previous visit to Syria), and as he did not have the time to obtain an ordinary visa with the usual interview at the consulate, he had to suspend part of this visit, the one he proposed to carry out in the United States. During his visit to Canada (SUE) he meets the Salesian confreres and the members of the Salesian Family, the young people and the laity co-responsible for the various works. He also has a meeting with the FMAs in Surrey and at their house in Toronto. He also visits the Salesian presence in Montreal. In Surrey, near Vancouver, in the west of that immense country, he has a meeting with the Provincial Council of SUE. He was in Canada from September 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, when he left for Tijuana, Mexico, a city bordering USA, in the north of the country. The next day, he met with the provincial council of SUO, as the travel time (three hours by car) from Los Angeles to Tijuana was limited. Therefore, although he could not make the complete visit to the two provinces of the United States, at least he visited the SUE territory in Canada and met the two provincial councils.

Returning to Rome on the 12<sup>th</sup>, he remained at the headquarters

until the 21<sup>st</sup>, with various appointments and office work.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> he leaves for Turin to meet the Provincials who have already completed three years of service and who have been summoned to spend a week together with the Rector Major in the land of Don Bosco. The Vicar of the Rector Major also takes part in the meeting. This week extends till October 1<sup>st</sup>, when Fr Ángel returns to Rome.

Again in Valdocco, on Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> he presided over the Eucharist in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians on the occasion of the 149<sup>th</sup> Missionary Expedition.

#### **– October 2018**

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> in Rome, the Rector Major participates in the meeting of the team of the Missionary Procures, in the “Curatorium” of the UPS and in the evening he receives Mgr. Manuel Ochogavia, Bishop of Colón, Panama, and the Ambassador of Panama to the Holy See.

This was a very special month, because from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> the Synod of Bishops on the theme of the youth was held in the Vatican, and the Rector Major was chosen by the Union of Superiors General (USG) as one of the 10 members that the USG has the right to ap-

point as “Synod Fathers”. During this period the Rector Major stayed in the Salesian community in the Vatican, being present at the headquarters of the Sacred Heart on weekends. In addition to his commitment to the Synod of Bishops, on the 11<sup>th</sup> the Rector Major presided over the Eucharist for the beginning of the academic year of the UPS, was present during the Academic Inaugural Address and proclaimed the beginning of the new year as Grand Chancellor of the University. In addition, on October 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, he participated in two evening meetings of the Congress of Salesian Cooperators at Fraterna Domus, in Sacrofano, near Rome, and appointed the new World Coordinator of the Association of Salesian Cooperators, Mr. Antonio Boccia.

From October 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> he was in his hometown to visit his relatives.

#### **– November 2018**

On the first day of November the Rector Major travels to Budapest to visit the Hungarian Province, where he will remain until Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>. In these days he had a meeting with the Provincial Council in Kazincbarcika, a significant Salesian presence in the country, and met the young people of the SYM/MGS

in the 'Don Bosco Sportközpont' of the same city. In Budapest he met the Salesian confreres and then the teachers of the Salesian schools and other non-Salesian schools who wanted to participate in a moment of formation with the Rector Major. At the Clarisseum, a place known because Blessed Stephen Sandor lived there, he met with the FMAs and the Salesian Cooperators.

Back in Rome, he stayed in the headquarters one day; on November 6<sup>th</sup> he left for the Far East to visit the Japanese (GIA) and the Korean (KOR) Provinces.

In Japan he stayed from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>, when early in the morning he left for Seoul, Korea. In the Japanese province he stayed in Tokyo-Chofu, where the post-novitiate is located, and Miyazaki and Yokohama. In Chofu Mons. Mario Michaki Yamanouchi, sdb, former Provincial, and now Bishop in Saitama, near Tokyo, was waiting for him; with him he prepared the plan of the visit. During the visit, the Rector Major met the confreres of the entire Province and the Provincial Council, together with the project office. He visited some of the educational works both in Tokyo and Miyazaki, such as the social works run by the Salesians, as the one of Kodaira (Tokyo). The visit to Don Cimatti's museum and

to the chapel where his body is located (in Chofu) was very significant, as was the one to the house of the "Sisters of the Charity of Jesus" in Miyazaki in the "Garden of Caritas". He also met the young people of the SYM/MGS in the "Don Bosco Hall" in Chofu, participating in their activities. The meeting with the Salesian Family in Akabane was also significant, with a mass participation in the encounter with the Successor of Don Bosco.

When he arrives in Seoul, Korea, on November 13<sup>th</sup>, he begins the visit, which will continue until Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>, when in the afternoon he leaves to return to Rome. In this Province he visited two houses of young people in difficulty, which the Salesians run in agreement with the State, especially with the administration of juvenile justice. In one afternoon he met the confreres of the Province in Nae-Ri, after a morning spent fishing in the Yellow Sea, west of the Korean Peninsula, which was a nice moment of fraternity shared with about twenty confreres. He also had meetings with the Provincial Council, the youth and the Salesian Family, personally accepting the promise of a considerable group of Salesian Cooperators. He also visited one of the houses in the

Province of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and the provincial house of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Seoul. A very significant moment was the visit to the *ImJinGak Peace Park*, which is located on the border with North Korea. In the *Penitence and Redemption Church* he made a prayer for the peace of the two Koreas. Another very significant moment was a Mass with young people, the educational and pastoral community and members of the Salesian Family in Shin-An-Dong, where he presided over the ceremony of the baptism of about thirty young people (helped at the time of the proper rites of baptism by the Provincial and his secretary making in this way 3 groups of about 10 young people each). They were boys and girls prepared by the Salesians and the FMAs in their works.

Back in Rome, after two days at the headquarters, besides the ordinary office work, he participated in the Assembly of the Salesian Historical Institute, which has its headquarters at UPS since the move from Pisana. This was on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

Subsequently, from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Rector Major participated in the Assembly of the Union of Superiors General (USG) in Ariccia,

where he was elected a member of the Executive Board.

From November 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major did ordinary office work at the headquarters, with various appointments. On the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the "Sacred Heart" he met the participants of the musical choirs of Seville and Frascati, who were present in Rome for an international meeting of religious choirs that was held in the Vatican.

On the 29<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major went to Messina to deliver the Inaugural Address at the beginning of the Academic Year of St. Thomas Theological Institute. On the following day, the 30<sup>th</sup>, he went to Turin for the meeting of the Provincials of Europe in Valdocco. This meeting lasted till December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### – December 2018

From December 3<sup>rd</sup> onwards, the Rector Major chaired the winter plenary session of the General Council, which in the first two weeks of the month was held in parallel with the course of the new Provincials (those appointed a year ago). In those weeks, besides the work of the General Council, the Rector Major did a considerable amount of office work, received several people in private audience and participated in the meeting of the

Academic Senate of the Salesian Pontifical University as Grand Chancellor. He also received the past pupils of the central secretariat, the VDBs of their General Council, a representation of the FMAs of the Auxilium Faculty (of which he is also the Grand Chancellor) and the World Council of the Association of Salesian Cooperators.

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major visited Foggia, in Puglia, to celebrate in this very popular presence the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oratory, the beating heart of this work. Distinctive moments of the visit were the Eucharistic celebration with the educational and pastoral community, the blessing of the works of the new playgrounds and the academy in the oratory.

In Rome, worth noting is the participation in the Choral Concert of the "Sistina" Pontifical Musical Chapel, held at the Salesian Headquarters in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart (on the 13<sup>th</sup>) and the Special Audience of Pope Francis who received the artists and organizers of the *Christmas Concert* (on the 14<sup>th</sup>). On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>, he took part in the recording of the *Christmas Concert* in the Paul VI Hall, which is held for the benefit of various projects of 'Missioni Don Bosco' (Turin) and 'Scholas Occurrentes' (Vatican).

On the 18<sup>th</sup> he went to Valdocco (round trip on a day) for a meeting to accompany the works that are being done for the restoration of the *Pinardi House* and the new museum area of the Salesian places. On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> he went to Tivoli to the general house of the "Salesian Oblates of the Sacred Heart", to make his first visit to their house, sharing with them the celebration of the Eucharist and a festive lunch.

On the 21<sup>st</sup>, a break began in the winter plenary session of the General Council, which will resume its work after the feast of the Epiphany.

On the evening of December 24<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major presided over the Solemn Christmas Eucharist in the Generalate of the FMAs, where he returned on the afternoon of Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> for the official presentation to the Salesian Family of the Strenna 2019. FMA sisters from various houses in Rome and various world moderators from different groups of the Salesian Family or their representatives participated in this event.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> the Rector Major left for Spain to be with his elderly parents during the feasts of the end of the year 2018 and the beginning of the new year 2019.

## 4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

### The Vicar of the Rector Major

In **August 2018** the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Francesco Cereda, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> participated in Florence in the celebration, presided over by Don Pascual Chávez, in suffrage of Fr Adriano Bregolin, on the first anniversary of his death. During the month he had several meetings with the Superiors of some Vatican Dicasteries.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of **September** he presided over the celebration for the first professions of the novices of Pinerolo, in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin. On the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> he participated in the meeting of the confreres in formation of the Lombardy-Emilia Province in Milan and presided over the celebration of the perpetual professions of the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of the SDB and FMA Provinces. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> he presided over the Eucharist in Rome for the International Congress, organized by Auxilium and UPS, on “Youth and Life Choices”. In Turin Valdocco, from September 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, together with the Rector Major,

he animated the meeting of the Provincials who have completed half of the period of their service of animation and government in their respective Provinces. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, he participated in the celebration of the presentation of the crucifixes of the 149<sup>th</sup> missionary expedition.

In **October**, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> in Rome he participated in the “Curatorium” and on the 11<sup>th</sup> in the Inauguration of the Academic Year 2018-2019 of the Pontifical Salesian University. On the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> he coordinated the UPS staff group. On October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> he participated in London in the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the beginning of the Salesian presence in Great Britain. On October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> he went to Kigali in Rwanda for a meeting of the provincials and vice-provincials of the Africa and Madagascar Region. On 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> he was in Cordoba, Argentina, for the meeting of the Provincials of the America South Cone Region. From October 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, he was in Kiev, Ukraine, where he met with the rectors of the Salesian communities of the Greek-Catholic and Latin rite, together with their Provincials. In addition, on these days he participated in the inauguration of the Salesian house in Kiev with the presence of the

Apostolic Nuncio, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Major Archbishop, and the Archbishop Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Greek-Catholic Church; he also met the Provincial Council of the Greek-Catholic Province of Ukraine and the Salesian Bishop of Latin rite in Kiev, Msgr. Vitaliy Krivitskiy. Back in Italy, he participated in the Gerini Foundation Council on October 30<sup>th</sup> and coordinated the UPS Staff Group on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

On **November** 19<sup>th</sup> he participated in the Theological Commission of the Union of Superiors General. From the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> he took part in the Assembly of the Union of Superiors General. From November 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> he made the Provincial Visitation to the Salesian community of Rome "San Callisto". From November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 2<sup>nd</sup>, in Turin Valdocco he participated in the VII Meeting for 'Project Europe'.

### **The Councillor for Formation**

Shortly after the end of the summer session of the General Council, Fr Ivo Coelho, General Councillor for Formation, went to Vietnam to preach the Spiritual Exercises to the rectors of the Province, from

August 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, in K'long. He remained in K'long to attend the Congress of Salesian Lay People of the East Asia - Oceania region, from August 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. He then travelled to India to spend a few days with his family (August 13<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>).

No member of the Department was able to attend the meeting of the Formation Commission of the South Cone Region in Bariloche, Argentina, from August 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, also because of the appointment of Fr Salvador Cleofas Murguía Villalobos as Bishop of Mixes. However, the Councillor was able to take part, together with one of his collaborators, in all the other regional meetings: from August 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> in the South Asia region, in Bangalore, India; from September 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> in the Inter-America region, in Lima, Peru; from October 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> in the Africa and Madagascar region, in Kigali, Rwanda; from October 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> in the Mediterranean region, in Turin-Valdocco; from November 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> in the Centre-North Europe region, in Krakow, Poland; from November 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> in the East Asia-Oceania region, in Yamanaka, Japan.

The Councillor also participated in the seminars organized by the Dicastery for rectors and principals

of the Post-Novitiates: the first in Hua Hin, Thailand, from September 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> for the two regions of South Asia and East Asia and Oceania; the second in Turin-Valdocco from November 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> for the two regions of Centre-North Europe and the Mediterranean. The Councillor then took part in the International Convention on Youth, UPS, from September 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>; in the meeting on the new Permanent Formation Centre of the Africa-Madagascar Region (SAFCAM), which was held in Kigali, Rwanda, on October 15<sup>th</sup>; and in the VII meeting of the Provincials of Europe, Turin-Valdocco, from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Fr Ivo Coelho also made the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Salesian Presences in Lithuania* (ICP) from October 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. He also visited the formation community in Jerusalem from November 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>.

During this period, the Dicastery continued its work on the revision of the manual of the Salesian rector and the manual of Salesian prayer. A small group of confreres was convened to begin the drafting of the "Guidelines on Salesian Personal Accompaniment" (Salesian Headquarters in Rome, September 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>).

## **The Councillor for Youth Ministry**

During the months of August-November 2018 the work of the Dicastery for Youth Ministry was carried out through the different contributions of the various members of the same Dicastery.

An account is hereby offered of the various interventions of animation.

Regional Meetings for the Delegates of Youth Ministry were held in the five Regions of Africa and Madagascar, Interamerica, America South Cone, South Asia and East Asia -Oceania. The central theme was that of the Synod of the Youth and its repercussions on the processes of the Provincial Chapters. Besides, the theme of Youth Ministry and Family Ministry and the choices made at the provincial and local levels were also studied.

In Cameroon, in September, there was the Assembly of Vocational Formation Coordinators (TVET), organized by "DBTech Africa" to further strengthen the process of coordination of the sector.

Within this sector, the Dicastery participated in various meetings both in Rome, "Mestieri in Piazza" promoted by CNOS FAP Lazio at the Teresa Gerini Institute, Rome, and in Vienna, "European Voca-



tional Skills Week” where the central theme was linked to the promotion of vocational training.

Various regional and provincial meetings were held in the field of social works and services. In September, in Bogotá, the Dicastery accompanied the regional meeting of “Works and Social Services” for the entire Interamerican Region. In the same field, the meeting of the Mediterranean Region was organized in Lisbon, Portugal, where for the first time the Province of the Middle East (MOR) also participated. The Dicastery also carried out activities of animation at provincial level in this sector in the Provinces of Chile, Paraguay, Portugal and Sicily (Italy).

For the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM/MGS) the Dicastery was present animating the following moments: International Interaction in Vienna in August; SYM/MGS General Assembly of the Middle East in Lebanon in September; General Assembly of SYM/MGS Europe in Brussels in November, where the theme of Europe and that of the Synod on the Youth were the main points.

The process of “Don Bosco International” (DBI) continued with various events and moments of animation with the participation of Provinces and sectors of youth

ministry in Europe. In this context, a monthly report is sent to the Provincials of Europe on the various paths and meetings promoted by DBI.

The Salesian presence at the United Nations was strengthened with the arrival of the new representative, Fr Thomas Pallithanam, who officially commenced his ministry at the beginning of October. During these months the Councilor followed this experience closely, trying to strengthen contacts with the Provinces with the help of the Regions and the Provincials to make the voice of the youth heard.

The IUS sector continued to implement its processes on several fronts:

- Important was the participation in the Seminar on “Youth and Human Rights: For an Ethic of Trust” organized by the “IUS Education Group” network and, at the same time, the presence at the Plenary of the delegates of this network for the election of the new coordination team. This activity was held in Lapa-São Paulo from September 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> under the auspices of the Salesian University Centre (UNISAL).
- The first module of the course for the leaders of the IUS of America, Europe and Africa was proposed at the Don Bosco Univer-

- sity (UCDB) in Campo Grande, Brazil. The course was attended by 35 participants from 10 countries and 14 Provinces. The objective of the course was "To guarantee in each Institution, quantitatively and qualitatively, a significant Salesian presence, made up of religious and lay people capable of guiding and animating a cultural, scientific and educational-pastoral project.
- The Coordinator participated in the Congress on "The Salesian Pedagogical Model" organized by the 'Universidad Politécnica Salesiana' (UPS) in Quito from November 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>. The aim of the Congress was to reflect on Salesian educational practice and the construction of a pedagogical model in the face of the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
  - Finally, the Coordinator was present at the Annual Conference of Salesian Institutions of Higher Education of South Asia (DBHEI), held in Dimapur-India from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>. The main theme of the meeting was the reflection on the political context of the constitutional changes that are taking place in India. In the previous weeks he could visit the IUS of the provinces of Guwahati, Dimapur and Shillong.

The Dicastery was also involved in the course of the missionaries at UPS, Rome, with some speeches on the theme of the model of Salesian Youth Ministry with special attention to the Synod on the Youth.

### **The Councillor for Social Communication**

The Councillor for Social Communication, Fr Filiberto González Plasencia, after the conclusion of the plenary session of the General Council, during the summer was mainly engaged in the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Guadalajara, Mexico (MEG)*. Therefore, leaving for Mexico on July 29<sup>th</sup>, he arrived at the provincial house in Guadalajara.

**August 2018:** together with the Provincial Council of MEG, on August 1<sup>st</sup> he reached Oaxaca and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> he participated in the celebration of the consecration of Msgr. Salvador Cleofás Murguía in Ayutla, Mixes. From August 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> he remained in Oaxaca with some members of his family. From August 6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>, he underwent medical checks for eye surgery and also took the opportunity to renew some Mexican documents

that were stolen from him in Rome in April. On the 17<sup>th</sup> he opened the Extraordinary Visitation, meeting the Provincial and his Council in the provincial house. On the 18<sup>th</sup> he met all the Delegates and those in charge of provincial services with their teams at the Anáhuac Chapalita College in Guadalajara. On the 20<sup>th</sup> he underwent eye surgery, followed by a period of rest until the 24<sup>th</sup>. From the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> he visited the community and the Salesian works of Colima. From August 29<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup> he visits the community and the works of Tlaquepaque.

**September 2018:** from September 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and the Salesian works of San Luis Potosí. From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and the works of Zamora. From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> he makes the visit to the community and works of Sahuayo. From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of St. Francis de Sales. From the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> he visits the community of Anáhuac colleges in Guadalajara. On the 19<sup>th</sup> he takes the plane to San Salvador, El Salvador, to preside over the meeting of the Delegates for Social Communication of the two regions of

America and returns to Mexico on the 24<sup>th</sup>. On the 26<sup>th</sup> he travels by plane to visit the Salesian communities and works of Los Mochis until the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**October 2018:** On September 29<sup>th</sup> he takes the plane to Tijuana and until October 3<sup>rd</sup> he visits the community and the local Salesian works. From the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of Mexicali and then takes the plane to Guadalajara. From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works in León Ciudad del Niño. From the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of León Don Bosco. From the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of CEJUSA, Irapuato. From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of the Prenovitiate and Zatti Home of Arandas, Guanajuato; in that same place he meets the Provincial and his Council. On the 21<sup>st</sup> he takes the plane from Guadalajara to visit the Salesian community and works of Chihuahua until the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> he takes the plane to visit the community and the works of Ciudad Juárez until the 27<sup>th</sup>. From the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> until the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> he makes the visits the community

and works of Nogales. On the evening of the 30<sup>th</sup> he takes the plane from Hermosillo to Monterrey and Ciudad Guadalupe, with a stopover until the morning of November 3<sup>rd</sup> for the visit.

**November 2018:** from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> he makes the visit to the community and Salesian works of Nuevo Laredo. From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of Piedras Negras. From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of Ciudad Acuña. From the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup> until the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> he visits the community and works of Saltillo. From Monterrey he takes the plane to Guadalajara. On the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, together with the Provincial of MEG, he takes the plane to Veracruz and then goes to visit the missionary community of San Antonio Las Palmas of the Mixeopolitana Prelature until the 21<sup>st</sup>. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> he flies to Mexico City and then to Guadalajara. On the 27<sup>th</sup> he meets the Provincial and his Council. On the 28<sup>th</sup> he presents the vision of the Province to the rectors and confreres of MEG in Amatitán. On the 30<sup>th</sup> he takes the plane back to the Headquarters arriving in Rome on the morning of December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## The Councillor for the Missions

At the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Missions, Fr Guillermo Basaños, began a most intense four months' period in terms of intercontinental travels. An interesting evidence of this period are the fifty (50) air flights – international and domestic – that he had to take.

From August 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, Fr Guillermo participated in part in the continental course of missionary formation in the Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation in Quito.

On days 9, 10 and 11 he made a short visit of animation in the Vice-Province of Angola, participating in some celebrations for a confrere who had newly been ordained a priest.

Always in Africa, Fr Basaños participated at the "Bosco Youth Centre", near Johannesburg - South Africa, from August 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, in the Continental Seminar of Missionary Animation for SDBs and FMAs, followed by a full day (August 18<sup>th</sup>) of meeting with the Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation. At the end of this meeting, the Councillor reached the Province of Chile to conclude – from August 21<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> – the Ex-

traordinary Visitation which had begun there in the first semester of 2018.

Before returning to the headquarters in Rome, he spent a few days with his family in Buenos Aires.

Throughout the month of **September** Fr Guillermo participated – in Rome, Mornese, Colle Don Bosco and Turin-Valdocco – in the preparation course for the 149<sup>th</sup> Missionary Expedition, crowned with the traditional Italian youth missionary meeting – “Harambée” – and the missionary expedition from the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians on September 30<sup>th</sup>. During this period, the Councillor was also able to make a visit to the Missionary Formation Course in Shillong between September 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, as well as to spend a fruitful time at the Missionary Aspirantate of Sirajuli (ING).

Back at the headquarters for some meetings of the General Council, on the weekend of October 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> he participated in the celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Salesian presence in the City of Alcamo (ISI), receiving on that occasion the International Prize for Culture from the “Friends of Music” Association, for the worldwide missionary commitment of the Salesian Congregation.

After having participated in some meetings of the “Don Bosco Network” (DBN) in the Roman headquarters of VIS on October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, the Councillor made his first two-day visit to the first Salesian presence in Malaysia, in the diocese of Kuching. From there on the 15<sup>th</sup> Fr Guillermo moved to the Republic of Yakutia (in Russia), visiting our missionaries in Aldan and Yakutsk. Returning to Rome, due to changes in air reservations, he had to stay for a few hours in the provincial house in Seoul (KOR), seizing the opportunity for a nice haircut.

After a brief stay in Rome, Fr Basaños visited the Central American Province (CAM), here also for the first time, travelling especially through part of our missions in Guatemala and Honduras, and in particular those of the Apostolic Vicariate of Petén.

Always in the Latin American context, from November 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, the Councillor for the Missions participated in Manaus (BMA) in the SDB-FMA Salesian Panamazonic Meeting in preparation for the Synod of 2019.

After another short stay in Rome, Fr Guillermo returned to India on November 8<sup>th</sup>, this time to Bandel (INC) to participate in the Regional Seminar of Missionary Anima-

tion for the Salesian Family, followed by the annual meeting of Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation. In that context the Councillor was welcomed and gave the “Good Night” in the aspirantate of Bandel.

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, he continued his Indian journey by participating in the annual meeting of the formation teams of the two missionary aspirantates of India, Sirajuli (ING) and Perambur (INM), in Perambur (Chennai).

From the South Asia Region, Fr Basaños moved to East Asia - Oceania, visiting for ten days part of our missions of the THA Province, both in Thailand as well as in Laos and Cambodia. In the latter country, in Sihanoukville, the Councillor participated in the annual regional meeting of Provincial Delegates for Mission Animation.

Returning to Rome, as he had already done in his other visits to Rome during this period, on November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> he met separately with the missionaries of the 149<sup>th</sup> expedition who were still waiting for their documents, as well as those who participated in the Course of Missionary Formation at UPS.

Finally, Fr Guillermo took part in the annual meeting of the great Procurators in Turin-Valdocco (No-

vember 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>), followed by the meeting of the Superior Council of the Missionary Procure of Turin, and – from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 2<sup>nd</sup> – the biennial meeting of the Provincials of Europe in the context of Project Europe.

At the end of this last meeting in Turin, the Councillor quickly returned to the Roman headquarters for the beginning of the Winter Session of the General Council.

## **The Economer General**

In **August 2018**, the Economer General, Bro. Jean Paul Muller, travelled to Vietnam to meet with the government of the VIE Province and to participate in the “EAO Salesian Brother Congress”, which took place from August 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>. On this occasion he was able to visit the new Provincial Centre in Saigon and some significant projects for the vocational training of young people. Subsequently, from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>, he went to the AFO Province to lead the spiritual retreat that was held in Lomé, Togo. Visiting the construction site for the higher education centre in Lomé, he took the opportunity to make a visit to the youth centres of the Province, especially those that are at the service of poor youth.

In **September**, from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup>, the Economist General visited the Salesian projects in the UNG Province, where he saw the strong economic development of the country. The growth of the educational and pastoral quality of the Province impressed the Economist during his meetings with the staff at the service of the schools and professional centres for the youth of the different tribes of Gypsies.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> he went to Bonn as a member of the Board of Directors of the Missionary Procure. As a member of the NGO "Don Bosco Mondo" he participated in the Kuratorium of the Association, greeting benefactors and cooperators of Salesian works all over the world.

From September 14<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> he went to a part of the Province of Hong Kong where he participated in the conference on the influence of technology and digitalization in the vocational training of young people. The visit of the projects for the young people of the different tribes arriving in the big city was a priority of this visit.

At the same time, he took care of the inclusion of the new treasurer, the Salesian Brother Alberto Rodriguez, within the "Direzione Generale".

In **October**, after attending the General Council and the inaugura-

tion of the academic year at UPS, where the meeting of the Superior Board of Directors was held on the same day, between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> – under the guidance of director Yves Trevalet – Bro. Muller prepared for RTL television a documentary on the life of a Salesian religious.

As a member of the Association of Economers General, Bro. Muller had the opportunity to meet several Bishops present in Rome during the Synod that was held in the Vatican.

At the end of the month, the Economist General led the formation on the protection of personal data according to the GDPR European law and appointed Mr. Zedda as GDPO (Data Protection Officer) for the "Direzione Generale".

In **November**, between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup>, the Economist General made a visit to Sri Lanka, where he could meet the communities and see the projects that are being carried out in this Vice-Province. Considering the great needs, the Economist and those in charge of the Vice-Province drew up a list of priorities for some projects, especially the maintenance and repair of roofs and large buildings, laboratories, etc.. Impressed by the good development of the centres and the great enthusiasm of some

of the confreres, he was able to see an increase in the professional quality of the care of the young orphans who live on the beaches and of the young people in the war zones who today are students in the vocational training centres.

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, the usual meeting of the Economic Commission was held with provincial economists and people expert in entrepreneurship, legal advice and business. The Commission verified the tasks received by GC27 and planned the regional meetings of provincial economists for 2019.

Between the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> the Economist General went to Berlin for a congress on the theme of curative pedagogy. At the end of the month, together with other members of the Direzione Generale, he went to Turin for the meeting of the Missionary Procures, above all to analyse with those responsible the costs for the formation of the Salesians and the financial situation of the Salesian study centres in the world. Given the decline in private donations, especially in Europe, new possibilities must be created to guarantee the formation of novices and young confreres.

In the last days of November, Bro. Muller participated in the meeting of the Provincials of the two European Regions in Turin-

Valdocco, with the theme of the formation of both Salesians and lay people involved in our mission.

### ***The Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region***

At the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region, Fr Américo Chausse, left Rome on July 28<sup>th</sup> for the East Africa Province (AFE) for the meeting of the Board of Directors of "Don Bosco Tech Africa" (DBTA). Afterwards, from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 7<sup>th</sup>, he was in the Vice-Province of Mozambique (MOZ) for a short visit of animation to the novitiate and the aspirantate. At the same time, he also visited a community in Swaziland in the Vice-Province of Southern Africa (AFM). From August 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, he was in the AFM Vice-Province for a period of animation and to participate in the opening of the "SDB-FMA Missionary Animation Seminar" in the Region of Africa and Madagascar, organized by the SDB and the FMA Mission Sectors. From August 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Fr Américo was in the Vice-Province of the "Great Lakes" (AGL). There he met the Provincial Council and on August 15<sup>th</sup> he installed the new



Superior of the AGL Vice-Province in Kigali-Rwanda. On August 16<sup>th</sup> he presided over the Eucharist and received the religious profession of the novices of the AGL Vice-Province. On August 19<sup>th</sup> he arrived at the Provincial headquarters of the *Anglophone Western Africa Province (AFW)* to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation* that lasted from August 19<sup>th</sup> to November 23<sup>rd</sup>. During this time he visited all the communities of the Province, which are located in four countries: Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. From October 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> he interrupted his visit to AFW to participate in the annual meeting of the "Conference of Provinces and Vice-Provinces of the Africa and Madagascar Region" (CIVAM) which was held in Kigali-Ruanda, in the provincial headquarters of the AGL. On November 21<sup>st</sup> the Extraordinary Visitation to the AFW Province was concluded and on November 22<sup>nd</sup> the Regional Councillor participated in the celebration of the day of the Provincial community. On November 23<sup>rd</sup> he left for the Vice-Province of Madagascar (MDG) and went on a visit of animation to the postnovitiate and novitiate from November 24<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, he passed through Rome to go to Turin to participate in the meeting of the

Provincials of Europe. On December 2<sup>nd</sup> he arrived at the headquarters.

### ***The Councillor for the Latin America - South Cone Region***

After participating in the plenary session of the General Council in June and July, the Councillor for the South America Region, Fr Natale Vitali, travelled to Buenos Aires to make the second part of the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of South Argentina (ARS)*.

To conclude the Visitation, the Extraordinary Visitor visited 33 religious communities with their works and 32 works with lay management. Overall, this Visit lasted the whole year, along with other works that the Councillor carried out. He concluded the Visitation with a meeting of the rectors of the Province (November 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>) and with the Provincial Council (November 23<sup>rd</sup>).

Among the other activities of the period, the Regional Councillor accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to the Provinces of the Region of Porto Alegre (BPA), from August 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, and of Belo Horizonte (BBH ) from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of the same month.

He also participated in the Curatorium of the Novitiate of BPA (August 14<sup>th</sup>), of the Theologate of Chile (August 16<sup>th</sup>), of CRESCO in Guatemala (August 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>).

The Councillor attended the joint meeting of the two Provincial Councils of ARN and ARS in Buenos Aires (October 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) and the meeting of the Provincials of the Region (October 22<sup>nd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>), with the presence of the Vicar of the Rector Major and the Director of the Salesian Centre for Ongoing Formation of America.

After the *Extraordinary Visitation* to ARS, Fr Vitali was in Brasilia for the meeting of the Provincials of Brazil (November 26<sup>th</sup>) and the Salesian Network of Schools (November 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>).

He then participated in the CSF-PA meeting on November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Afterwards he returned to Rome for the meeting of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the Interamerica Region***

After leaving Rome at the end of the summer session of the General Council in July, Fr Timothy Ploch, Regional Councillor for the Interamerica Region, flew to Medellín,

Colombia, for the installation of the new Provincial of COM, Fr Luis Fernando Valencia, on July 29<sup>th</sup>. The next two days were occupied with the participation in two "Curatoriums", in the novitiate in La Ceja and in the post-novitiate in Copacabana, Colombia. From Medellín, the Regional Councillor went to Oaxaca, Mexico, for the episcopal ordination of Msgr. Salvador Cleofas Murguía, SDB, as Bishop of the Mixes Prelature on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, he arrived in Santa Cruz to begin his *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Bolivia (BOL)*. He met the Provincial and his Council and then a large group of confreres from the Santa Cruz area for the opening conference of the Visitation. After visiting two communities, he went to the United States for a week's rest with his family.

On August 20<sup>th</sup>, he returned to Bolivia to continue the *Extraordinary Visitation* until September 2<sup>nd</sup>. From September 2<sup>nd</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, he accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to the two provinces of the United States. Unfortunately, as he was unable to obtain a visa to enter the United States, the Rector Major went to Canada and met with the Provincial and the SUE Provincial Council in Vancouver, and then visited the communities

of Toronto and Montreal. Afterwards, the Regional Councillor accompanied the Rector Major to Tijuana, Mexico, where the Rector Major was able to meet with the Provincial and the Provincial Council of SUO Province. The Regional Councillor replaced the Rector Major in two ceremonies of perpetual professions, which were scheduled, one in Stony Point, NY (SUE), and one in Bellflower, CA (SUO). He was also able to attend the meeting of the Provincial Formation Delegates of Interamerica Region in Lima, Peru, from September 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>. From there he flew to Mexico to conduct – between September 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> – the consultation for the new Provincial of the Mexico-Mexico Province (MEM).

Back in Bolivia, Fr Timothy Plock continued the Extraordinary Visitation to the communities in Santa Cruz area until the end of September. On the first day of October he met with the confreres of Cochabamba area for the introductory conference. He also participated in the monthly meeting of the Provincial and his Council. Afterwards, he visited all the communities in the Cochabamba area until October 20<sup>th</sup>, when together with the Provincial, Fr Javier Ortiz, he travelled to Jarabacoa, in the Dominican Republic (ANT) for the an-

nual meeting of the Provincials of the Interamerica Region, from October 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>.

On the last day of October, the Regional Councillor met with all the confreres from the La Paz area of the Bolivian Province for the introductory conference. He then visited each of the communities in that area, and participated in the October meeting of the Provincial and his Council. After returning to Cochabamba, he met with each of the Provincial Commissions and then spent a few days preparing the final report. The Visitation ended on November 27<sup>th</sup> with a meeting with the Provincial and his Council and in the afternoon with all the Rectors. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, Fr Timothy Plock presented the report to the assembly of confreres. On the 29<sup>th</sup> he flew to Quito, Ecuador, for the annual meeting of the "Equipo Ampliado" of the Centre of Quito for Ongoing Formation in America (CSFPA). From there he returned to Rome for the winter session of the General Council from December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### ***The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region***

Immediately after the summer session of the General Council,

Fr Václav Klement, Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region, went in different stages to some areas of the Region for animation visits.

A first stop was in Kuching (FIN, Malaysia), from July 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, meeting with the three confreres of the new mission (the confrere in charge is Fr Ramon Borja). There was also an intense dialogue with the Archbishop of Kuching, Simon Poh, on the project of 'St. Joseph Technological College' entrusted to the Salesians. Then, from July 31<sup>st</sup> to August 1<sup>st</sup>, the Regional Councillor presided over the installation of the first Superior of the new Vice-Province of St. Louis Versiglia (Indonesia, INA) in Jakarta, with a large number of confreres and numerous members of the Salesian Family.

The second stage of the trip was an animation visit – from August 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> – to the Vice-Province of Papua New Guinea - Solomon Islands (PGS), where the Regional Councillor met the Provincial Council in Port Moresby, visited the aspirantate and animated the Salesian Family.

In the Province of Vietnam (VIE), Fr Václav attended the first profession of the 22 novices of the Province after the Regional Congress from August 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>. After-

wards he continued his journey with a few days of animation in Hong Kong (CIN) from August 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>.

Don Klement's next stop was in Anisakan (MYM, August 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>) for the regional gathering of the 15 delegates of the Salesian Family, led by Fr Eusebio Muñoz, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, and by the World Delegate for the Past Pupils, Fr Raphael Jayapalan. The participants appreciated the presence of numerous past pupils and aspirants of the Salesian Cooperators at the event.

Between August 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, Fr Václav animated the most important event of this six-year period, the 7<sup>th</sup> *Regional Congress of the Salesian Brother*, with the participation of three other General Councillors, Bro. Jean Paul Muller, Fr Ivo Coelho and Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, together with 185 Salesians (160 Salesian brothers and 25 Salesian priests, including 6 Provincials or their Vicars) with 19 pre-novices from Vietnam. The theme "We are all brothers" (Mt 23,18) has brought abundant fruits, also thanks to the presence of some Salesian brothers from all continents - America, Africa, Europe and South Asia. The participants appreciated the animating

presence of Fr Silvio Roggia (RMG) and of the Preparatory Commission (Coordinator Bro. Domenico Nam, VIE).

As every year on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of August, the Regional Councillor presided over the 'Curatorium' for the formation communities in Parañaque (FIN, August 23<sup>rd</sup>) with the participation of the Superiors or Delegates from 10 Provinces of the Region and for the first time also a Provincial from South Asia (INB) and a delegate from Hungary (UNG). On the following day, in Manila (August 24<sup>th</sup>), 10 superiors and formators gathered for the first meeting of the Curatorium of the formation houses of FIN (Canlubang) and FIS (Cebu-Lawaan). During the 'Curatorium' in Parañaque Fr Václav blessed the (almost finished) house of the community 'Blessed Stephen Sandor' for the specific formation of the Salesian Brother.

The following day was dedicated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Coordinators of the 5 sectors (formation, youth ministry, social communication, economy and Salesian family) at the regional level of East Asia - Oceania.

The *Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of St. Paul in Thailand (THA)*, from August 26<sup>th</sup> to

October 31<sup>st</sup>, was an intense period of listening to 100 confreres in the 14 communities and hundreds of our "lay mission partners" on the GC28 question "What kind of Salesians for the youth of Thailand, Cambodia and Laos?" The visit ended with two days with the Rectors, the Provincial Council and the assembly of the confreres in Bangkok.

A single interruption of the visit took place for three days in Hua Hin, Thailand, where Fr Klement took part in the *inter-regional gathering of 30 post-novitiate formators* from the two regions of South Asia and East Asia-Oceania, led by Don Ivo Coelho (September 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>).

In the last month before the winter plenary session of the General Council, Fr Klement seized the opportunity for *three other short visits of animation*. First of all, the Regional Councillor dedicated a week (November 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>) to the *consultation* for the new Provincial of Korea (KOR). The Regional then animated the two Provinces of the Philippines: 3 days in Cebu (FIS, November 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>) and 4 days in Manila - Canlubang (FIN, November 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>). The main theme was focused on vocations youth ministry and vocational culture in view of the year of the youth in the country (2019).

### ***The Councillor for the South Asia Region***

After the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for South Asia Region, Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, arrived in Chennai on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. He then went to Dimapur for the installation of the new Provincial, Fr Jose Kuruvachira, on August 5<sup>th</sup>. He then returned to Chennai to travel to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, to attend the Congress of Salesian Brothers, together with a delegate of the Salesian brothers from the South Asia Region. This Congress in the East Asia Region was held from August 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. Returning to India, the Regional Councillor animated the delegates of the Seminary for Formation and Discernment in Chennai. Arriving in Hyderabad, he opened the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of Hyderabad (INH)* on August 16<sup>th</sup> with the initial conference to the Rectors and with the meeting of the Provincial Council. On the following day, the Regional Councillor animated the meeting of the “BoscoNet” (Development Offices) and the regional delegates for youth ministry of the Region in the same city. After beginning the visits to the houses of INH with ‘DB Junior College’, Chandur, on

August 20<sup>th</sup>, Fr Maria Arokiam had to interrupt – from August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 4<sup>th</sup> – the cycle of visits to participate in the Union of Superiors Major and for the Conference of Provincials of the Region in Siloam-Shillong. Returning to Hyderabad, he participated in the day of the Salesian Family at Provincial level in the Provincial House on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, where the Regional Councillor was the animator.

The extraordinary visit was interrupted again from September 30<sup>th</sup> until October 5<sup>th</sup> to participate in the national meeting of the Salesian Schools in Chennai, and then in other gatherings for the region in Chennai and Tiruchy. After the visit by DB Kurnool in the INH-Hyderabad Province, the Regional Councillor had to participate in the annual conference of DBYA - Regional Commission for Youth Ministry, in the jubilee of Don Bosco, Tirupattur (INM), and in the National Congress of Past Pupils in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. Then he went once more to Bangalore to participate in the celebrations of BREADS, Bangalore Development Office and in the meeting of the “Bosconet”. The closing of the Extraordinary Visitation was done on November 26<sup>th</sup> with meetings with the Provincial Council and with all the Rectors,

where the Regional Councillor communicated his observations and recommendations.

Back in Rome on November 29<sup>th</sup>, Fr Maria Arokiam went to Turin to participate in the meeting of the Provincials of Europe. He returned to Rome to participate in the winter session of the General Council, starting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.

### ***The Councillor for the Central and North Europe Region***

Immediately after the closure of the summer session of the General Council, the Regional Councillor, Fr Tadeusz Rozmus, shares two weeks of pastoral service in a parish in Austria while taking his vacation at the same time.

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, he begins the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Slovakia (SLK)*, which will last until October 19<sup>th</sup>. He therefore travels to Russia to visit the confreres present in the community of Yakutsk and Aldan in Siberia – belonging to the SLK Province – and then goes to Azerbaijan where he visits the confreres in Baku – which also belongs to the SLK Province. On August 28<sup>th</sup> he returns to Slovakia and

continues his visit to the various communities and works of the Province in the Slovak territory. In the meantime, on September 17<sup>th</sup>, he goes to Warsaw to lead the meeting for the conclusion of the extraordinary visitation previously made to the PLE Province, with the presence of all the rectors and those responsible of the different sectors.

After the visit to Slovakia, Fr Rozmus goes to Paris on October 21<sup>st</sup> to conduct the consultation for the new Provincial in the Province of France and South Belgium (FRB). Then, from October 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, with the Provincial he travels through the 4 points intended to gather the confreres and reflect together on the person of the future Provincial. The meetings are in Brussels (22<sup>nd</sup>-10), Lyon (23<sup>rd</sup>-10), Nice (25<sup>th</sup>-10) and Paris (26<sup>th</sup>-10).

Directly from France, the Regional Councillor goes to the Province of *Slovenia (SLO)* to do another *Extraordinary Visitation*. From October 26<sup>th</sup> to November 25<sup>th</sup> he remains in the SLO Province, visiting the communities of the Province located in Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro.

On November 25<sup>th</sup>, after the conclusion of the Visit, he leaves for the Province of Warsaw (PLE) to conduct another consultation, this

time among the confreres of this Province, including the Delegation of Belarus. There were three days of gatherings (Ełk, Łód and Warszawa) with meetings with the confreres and discernment of the situation.

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, after having concluded the consultation in the AWP, he left first for Rome and on November 30<sup>th</sup> for Turin to participate in the gathering of the Provincials of the two European Regions: the Region of Centre and North Europe and the Mediterranean Region. In the meantime he leads the meetings with two areas of the Region: the Atlantic-German Zone and the Conference of the Provinces of Poland and the Delegation of Belarus (KSIP).

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, he returns to Rome to participate in the winter session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the Mediterranean Region***

The Councillor for the Mediterranean Region, Fr Stefano Martoglio, after the summer plenary session of the General Council, immediately joined his family to be able to spend some time with his dear ones, after the death of his father in July.

At the end of the family period, the Councillor took part in the meeting of the youth of the Provinces of Spain and Portugal “Campo Bosco”, in the Salesian places of Turin, joining the young people in the celebration in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

He then participated in the formation of the young Salesians of Italy in preparation for their perpetual profession in Rome.

In the second half of August Fr Stefano Martoglio installed the new Provincial of INE, Fr Igino Biffi, and participated in the provincial assembly of the ICC, then going to the Middle East to install the new Provincial. The induction of the new Provincial of MOR, Fr Alejandro José León Mendoza, took place in Cairo and was also an opportunity to meet for a few days with the rectors of the Province and the Provincial Council.

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, the Councillor presided over the first professions of the novices of Genzano and, in the following days, he left for Spain to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Santiago el Mayor, based in Madrid*.

Due to the large size of the province, the Visitation that began in September 2018 will end at the end of May 2019. In this first part of the Visit Fr Martoglio was able



to meet and learn about several houses in Madrid and its suburbs, and then all the houses present in Galicia, in northern Spain.

From September 29<sup>th</sup> to October 3<sup>rd</sup>, all the Provincials of the Mediterranean region gathered in Mohernando, near Madrid, for an encounter of a few days.

At the end of the first period of the Visitation to the Province of Madrid, the Councillor of the Mediterranean region returned to Italy to participate – in Montebelluna, Padua – in a three-day meeting on the reform of the third sec-

tor and its implications for the pastoral work of the Salesians.

In the last week of November he participated in almost all the 'Curatoriums' of the formation houses of Italy and concluded the period with the participation in the meeting of the Provincials of Europe that took place in Turin-Valdocco from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

After the meeting of the Provincials of Europe, Fr Martoglio returned to Rome - Sacred Heart for the beginning of the winter session of the General Council.

## 5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS

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### 5.1 Communication of the Rector Major on the location of Sede Centrale Salesiana

SOCIETÀ DI SAN FRANCESCO DI SALES  
SEDE CENTRALE SALESIANA  
Via Marsala, 42 - 00185 Roma  
*The Rector Major*

Prot. 18/0495  
Rome, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018

**To the attention of:**  
**Members of the General Council**  
**Salesian Provincials**  
**Headquarters**  
**All Salesian Confreres**  
**All the Members of our Salesian Family**

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing this message at the beginning of the Christmas novena so as to share with you a very important decision that I have taken together with the General Council regarding the definitive establishment of the “Sede Centrale Salesiana”.

As you well remember, step by step I have always kept you informed on the development of events and decisions that as General Council we have taken, starting from the decision to definitively leave the former headquarters at Via della Pisana 1111 in Rome for the motives that are well known to you.

For more than a year, we have been received with great generosity and in a true family spirit by the confreres of the Community of the ICC Provincial House, by the Community of “Sacro Cuore” and by the Community of “Centro Nazionale Opere Salesiane” of Italy (“San Lorenzo” Community) in Via Marsala, Rome. Their kindness and their prompt availability have given us the opportunity to overcome the emergency that came about in the summer of 2017, temporarily providing us with part of the house.

In view of a mature and definitive decision, I have initiated a long and deep discernment within the General Council that has reflected on multiple possible solutions within the city of Rome, both within and outside the Salesian presences to be found in the city.

Once, together with the General Council, the decision was taken that the “Sede Centrale Salesiana” should remain in Rome, after having studied the high and unsustainable expenses involved in acquiring or restructuring a building left by other religious institutes and congregations in Rome, and also taking into account the outcome of the ongoing judicial processes against the “Direzione Generale” and “Fondazione Gerini”, together with the complete impossibility of having resources for other possible solutions,

**I communicate to you the final decision  
to establish the “Sede Centrale Salesiana”  
at “Ospizio Sacro Cuore”, Via Marsala 42 in Rome.**

Quite naturally, within this process where myself and the General Council have arrived at the decision to establish in “Ospizio Sacro Cuore” the “Sede Centrale Salesiana”, the necessary contacts were in place with the Provincial of ICC, the Provincial Council and the Rector of the community “San Lorenzo”, Rome, of the National Centre, CISI.

The Rector Major and the General Council are committed to helping the ICC Province and the community “San Lorenzo”, Rome, of the National Centre, CISI, to find a suitable alternative place.

Furthermore, the future community of the “Sede Centrale Salesiana” will take on the animation of the Basilica and the “Sacro Cuore” Parish, the service to young immigrants and the animation of Don Bosco’s rooms as part of the Salesian places.

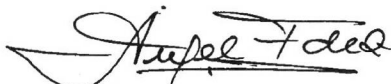
Finally, I recall that, throughout this year, there were many letters, e-mails and opinions received in a verbal manner, which suggested the “Sacro Cuore” as the see of the Rector Major’s house and of the General Council and of the “San Giuseppe” community, Rome, which is at the service of the Rector Major and of the Salesian mission in the world, given the significance of the presence in relation to Don Bosco. This also had a considerable influence on the decision taken.

Naturally, the implementation of this decision will take time to allow the ICC Province and the National Center of CISI to relocate properly to a new location; in any case by the summer of 2020.

I greet you all with true affection.

I assure you of a remembrance in my prayer, in the profound communion of our being a Family of Don Bosco.

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ángel F. Artime', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb  
*Rector Major*

## 5.2 New Provincials

*Here below find (in alphabetical order) some biographical details on the Provincials and Superiors of Vice-Provinces appointed by the Rector Major with his Council in December 2016, during the plenary winter session.*

### 1. *CHOI Timothy (Won Chol), Provincial of the KOREA Province (KOR)*

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Timothy CHOI (Won Chol)* Provincial of the “Holy Korean Martyrs” Province of Korea. He succeeds Fr Stefano Yang.

Born on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1967, in Chung Cheon (South Korea), he made his first religious profession as a Salesian on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2000, in the novitiate of Daejeon and his perpetual profession on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. After his theological studies at the Parañaque Study Center (FIN), he was ordained a priest in Seoul on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

After his priestly ordination, he exerted his ministry for about a year in the house of Seoul - Dae Rim Dong and in February 2008 he was transferred to Papua New Guinea (then a Delegation dependent on the Province of North

Philippines) in the house of Rapolo (Vunabosco), where he had the tasks of Economer and Vicar. In September 2011 he moved to Boroko East, the headquarters of the Delegation, as Economer.

After not many months of work at Boroko East, in February 2012 he returned to Korea, his home province, where for three years he served as provincial secretary in the provincial house in Seoul.

In January 2015 he was assigned to the house of Nae Ri, Korea, with the task of Novice Master and Rector of the community.

In 2015 he was appointed as a Councillor to the Provincial Council. Now the Rector Major calls him to exert the ministry of Provincial in the Korean Province.

### 2. *FEDERSPIEL Daniel, Provincial of the Province of FRANCE - SOUTH BELGIUM (FRB)*

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Daniel FEDERSPIEL* as Provincial of the Province of “Saint François de Sales” in *FRANCE - BELGIUM SOUTH*, for a second six-year term.

Daniel Federspiel was born on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1960, in Mulhouse, Haut-Rhin (France) and has been a Salesian since September 2<sup>nd</sup>,

1982, the date of his first religious profession at the end of his novitiate in Pouillé in the then Province of Southern France. Having made his perpetual vows at Notre Dame de Bausset on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1988, he was ordained a priest on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1990 in Lyon.

After his priestly ordination, from 1991 to 1996 he exerted his educational-pastoral ministry in the house of Nice-Don Bosco. In 1996 he was appointed Rector of the house of Ressins, for a three-year period. In 2001 he took on the role of Rector of the house of Lyon-Fourvière and in 2005 also that of Novice Master in the same house, until 2009. In 2009 he was transferred to Argenteuil as parish priest, and in July 2012 he was also appointed Rector.

It should also be noted that from 2005 to 2008 he was simultaneously Delegate for Youth Ministry, Missionary Animation and Vocations of the Province of France. After the unification with South Belgium, he was Delegate for the Salesian Mission, Vocations, Prenovitiate and Novitiate in the Province of France-South Belgium and was a member of the Provincial Commission for Formation.

On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, the Rector Major Fr Pascual Chávez Villanueva called him to do the ministry of

Provincial of France and Northern Belgium.

After a six-year period, the Rector Major Fr Ángel Fernández Artime and his Council called him to continue his ministry as Provincial for a second six-year period.

### 3. *JARECKI Tadeusz, Provincial of the Province of POLAND - WARSZAWA (PLE)*

At the head of the "St. Stanislaus Kostka" Province of East Poland (PLE), based in Warsaw, the Rector Major with his Council on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, appointed Fr *Tadeusz JARECKI*. He succeeds Fr Andrzej Wujek.

Born on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962, in Swolen (Sandomierz), Poland, Tadeusz Jarecki made his first religious profession as a Salesian on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1983, in the novitiate of Czerwińsk, Poland. He pronounced his perpetual vows on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1989, and was ordained a priest on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1991, in Kutno-Wozniaków, after completing his theological studies in the Holy Land, in the studentate of Cremisan.

After his priestly ordination, he worked for one year (1991-1992) in Warszawa-Bazylika, then for five years (1992-1997) at the UPS in Rome, in the 'Blessed Michael Rua'

community, for his specialization in the faculty of theology.

Back in Poland, he was engaged for 9 years (1997-2006) in the theologate of Łódź (as Rector from 1999 to 2006). In April 2006 he was appointed Vice-Provincial, a task he carried out for one year; then he spent a year (2007-2008) in the house of London-Rinaldi. Subsequently, he was again for one year (2008-2009) in the Theologate of Łódź.

In September 2009, he was assigned to the house of Elk as Rector, a position he held for three three-year periods (2009-2018), together with the ministry of parish priest.

At provincial level, as well as being Vice-Provincial for one year, he was Provincial Councillor for two three-year periods. At various times he was Provincial Delegate for Formation and Delegate for the Salesian Family.

Now he is called to carry out the task of Provincial.

#### 4. OCAMPO URIBE Ignacio, *Inspector of the Province of Mexico (MEM)*

Fr Ignacio OCAMPO URIBE is the new Provincial of the Province "Our Lady of Guadalupe" based in Mexico, Mexico, and was appoint-

ed by the Rector Major with his Council on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018. He succeeds Fr Gabino Hernández Paleta.

Ignacio Ocampo Uribe was born on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1966, in Mexico, and has been a Salesian since August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1986, the date of his first profession in the novitiate of Coacalco. He pronounced his perpetual vows on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1992, and was ordained a priest on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1996, at the end of his theological studies at Tlaquepaque.

After his ordination to the priesthood he worked for seven years (1996-2003) in the post-novitiate in Mexico City, with various tasks (he was vicar for three years). He was later transferred to the provincial house, where he served as vicar of the community and parish priest. In June 2007 he was appointed Novice Master and Rector of the Coacalco Novitiate, tasks he carried out for three years, until 2010.

Former Provincial Councillor, on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, he was appointed Vice-Provincial, a task he was still carrying out (confirmed in 2014 for the second three-year period). He also had the task of Councillor for Formation.

Now the Rector Major with his Council entrusts him with the ministry of Provincial.

### 5.3 Our dead confreres (2<sup>nd</sup> list 2018)

"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 AGUILAR LÓPEZ Joaquín	Guadalajara (Mexico)	17/08/18	79	MEG
P ALAPURACKAL Joseph	Kolkata Liluah (India)	27/12/18	70	INC
L ÁLVAREZ ANTÓN Daniel	León (Spain)	16/11/18	67	SSM
P ANDREATTA Valdir	Viamão (Brazil)	27/12/18	89	BPA
P ARAIZ CHURIO Pedro	El Campello, Alicante (Spain)	31/08/18	90	SMX
P ARRANZ ABRIL Luis	Puerto Ayacucho (Venezuela)	18/05/18	92	VEN
L ATZENI Giuseppe	Rome (Italy)	19/11/18	84	ICC
L BARATTI Alessandro	Brescia (Italy)	08/09/18	87	ILE
P BELLO HERNÁNDEZ Manuel de J.	Bogotá (Colombia)	15/08/18	90	COB
P BENNA Giovanni	Turin (Italy)	17/11/18	84	ICP
P BESAK Stjepan	Cugovec (Croatia)	18/08/18	73	CRO
P BINELLO Domenico	La Paz (Bolivia)	19/10/18	82	BOL
P BRESSAN Angelo Nazzareno	Puerto Ayacucho (Venezuela)	01/11/18	77	VEN
P BRUGGER Josef	Linz (Austria)	03/12/18	90	AUS
P CANIOU Henri	Caen (France)	13/08/18	81	ATE
P CERVANTES PALOMINO Andres	Makati City (Philippines)	21/11/18	86	FIN
L CRIPPA Víctor	Córdoba (Argentina)	11/12/18	92	ARN
P CULU LENGSA SAMBWA Nestor	Lubumbashi (Dem. Rep. Congo)	25/10/18	66	AFC
P Da SILVA Hélio Comissário	Belo Horizonte (Brazil)	20/09/18	85	BBH
P DANIELE Pietro	Banpong (Thailand)	25/12/18	91	THA
L DAVICO Ottavio	Turin (Italy)	22/11/18	83	ICP
P DAVID Jean-Louis	Marseille (France)	11/08/18	79	FRB
P DE CENSI Ugo	Lima (Peru)	06/12/18	94	ILE
P DE GRANDIS Giuseppe	Florence (Italy)	19/09/18	72	ICC
L DE LA FUENTE MARTÍNEZ Félix	Arévalo (Spain)	04/08/18	90	SSM
P DEL RIZZO Mario	Castello di Godego (Italy)	25/11/18	87	INE
P DELOUCHE Yves	Angers (France)	12/11/18	81	FRB
L DI STEFANO Tommaso	Manaus (Brazil)	11/08/18	78	BMA
P DIAMOND Brian Kevin	New Delhi (India)	16/09/18	85	INN
P Díez ÁLVAREZ Tomás	León (Spain)	28/10/18	93	SSM
P DONAGGIO Dino	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	03/09/18	84	INE
P ESTUPIÑAN ARIZMENDY Jorge A.	Duitama (Colombia)	30/08/18	80	COB
P FUIDIO CHOCA Walter	Montevideo (Uruguay)	29/09/18	79	URU
P FUJIKAWA Stephan Nagaki	Tokyo (Japan)	01/11/18	75	GIA
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
L FUMAGALLI Luigi	Arese (Italy)	05/08/18	84	ILE
P GARCÍA HERNÁNDEZ Manuel R.	Arévalo (Spain)	03/09/18	90	SSM
P GILLIECE Bernard	Edmonton (Canada)	09/09/18	86	SUE
P GOORTS Cornelius	Wijchen (Netherlands)	14/12/18	101	BEN



SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P GRENDENE Geraldo	Campo Grande (Brazil)	24/09/18	76	BCG
P GUERCIA Antonio	Salerno (Italy)	04/11/18	81	IME
E HEIMLER Frederico	Campo Grande, MS (Brazil)	07/11/18	76	—
<i>Was for 3 years Auxiliary Bishop in Umuarama (Brazil), for 12 years Ordinary Bishop of the Diocese of Cruz Alta (Brazil) and for 4 years Bishop emeritus</i>				
P HOHENSCHERER Norberto	São Gabriel da Cachoeira (BRS)	03/09/18	80	BMA
P HURNIK Jan	Ostrava (Czech Rep.)	19/12/18	66	CEP
P IRAOLA VÉLEZ Casimiro	Lima (Peru)	26/11/18	90	PER
P JACQUEMOUD Marcel	Paris (France)	31/08/18	83	FRB
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
P JÓŹWIK Jan	Poloń (Poland)	22/09/18	87	PLO
E KERKETTA Robert	Tezpur (India)	22/12/18	86	—
<i>Was for 10 years Ordinary Bishop of the Diocese of Dibrugarh (India), for 27 years Ordinary Bishop of the Diocese of Tezpur (India) and for 11 years Bishop emeritus</i>				
P KUTWIŃSKI Stanisław	Garwolin (Poland)	17/10/18	73	PLE
P ŁASZEWSKI Jerzy	Szcecin (Poland)	08/11/18	86	PLN
P LUNVEN Jacques	St. Brieuc (Cote d'Ivoire)	20/08/18	94	FRB
L LISIESKI CERUTTI Ottavio	Porto Alegre (Brazil)	24/12/18	84	BPA
P LUCHETTA Franco	Civitanova Marche (Italy)	05/11/18	91	ICC
P MAJOR Czesław	Kraków (Poland)	01/09/18	55	PLS
L MARCHETTI Giovanni	Mogliano Veneto (Italy)	12/08/18	74	INE
P MARTÍN UNZUÉ Santos	Caracas (Venezuela)	19/06/18	78	VEN
P MAUCHI LAINES Jorge	Lima (Peru)	23/08/18	93	PER
P McDONNELL Lawrence	Manzini (Swaziland)	25/12/18	83	AFM
P MICHELINO Antônio	Luanda (Angola)	30/08/18	82	ANG
P MILANESI Angelo	Milan (Italy)	27/09/18	88	ILE
P MOLERO SÁNCHEZ Jesús	Seoul (Korea)	18/10/18	90	KOR
L MONTANARI Bruno	Rome (Italy)	15/10/18	92	ICC
P MONTEIRO DA ROCHA Jerónimo	Manique (Portugal)	30/08/18	80	POR
P NADACKAL Joseph	Guwahati (India)	04/08/18	68	ING
P NARVARTE Juan José	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	28/09/18	70	ARS
P ODELLO Augusto	Turin (Italy)	18/11/18	87	ICP
P OVALLE DÍAZ Germán Osvaldo	Santiago del Chile (Chile)	03/08/18	61	CIL
L PALMARINI Michele	Forlì (Italy)	23/10/18	81	ILE
P PARON Omero	Mogliano Veneto (Italy)	13/10/18	93	INE
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years and Economist General for 13 years</i>				
P PEDRETTI PRATTS Ramón	Fernando da la Mora (Paraguay)	06/09/18	76	PAR
P PERINGALATHU Joseph	Imphal, Manipur (India)	29/11/18	63	IND
P PONZO Luigi	Turin (Italy)	08/08/18	88	ICP
E POSSAMAI Antônio	Porto Velho (Brazil)	27/10/18	89	—
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years, for 24 years Ordinary Bishop of the Diocese of Ji-Paraná (Brazile) and Bishop emeritus for 11 years</i>				
P POZZI Giovanni	Pavia (Italy)	05/08/18	77	ILE
P PROL Serafin	Sevilla (Spain)	25/11/18	91	SMX
P RASMUSSEN Harry	Bellflower, California (USA)	15/10/18	87	SUO
P REBOT Raúl Domingo	Córdoba (Argentina)	22/08/18	72	ARN

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
<b>E RIVAS SANTOS Fabio Mamerto</b>	Jarabacoa (Dominican Rep.)	11/08/18	86	<b>EP</b>
<i>Was for 23 years Ordinary Bishop of the Diocese of Barahona (Dominican Rep.) and for 18,5 years Bishop emeritus</i>				
<b>L RODRÍGUEZ CHITIVA José Rómulo</b>	Medellín (Colombia)	01/12/18	86	<b>COM</b>
<b>P RODRÍGUEZ MENA Amando</b>	Irapuato, Guanajuato (Mexico)	02/10/18	93	<b>MEG</b>
<b>L ROMALDI Renato</b>	Turin (Italy)	02/12/18	95	<b>ICP</b>
<b>P ROZEN Serge</b>	St. Brieuc (France)	28/12/18	89	<b>FRB</b>
<b>P RUBIO BRAVO Ladislao</b>	Mérida (Spain)	16/08/18	83	<b>SMX</b>
<b>P SÁEZ MARTÍN Aurelio</b>	León (Spain)	07/11/18	79	<b>SSM</b>
<b>P SAIZ RUIZ Carlos</b>	Logroño (Spain)	08/12/18	92	<b>SSM</b>
<b>P SALLEMI Emanuele</b>	Catania (Italy)	28/10/18	86	<b>ISI</b>
<b>P SANDRINI DAISI Marcos</b>	Porto Alegre (Brazil)	23/10/18	72	<b>BPA</b>
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
<b>P SANTANA MARTÍNEZ Gustavo E.</b>	Caracas (Venezuela)	27/09/18	59	<b>VEN</b>
<b>P SANTOS Alfonso Nuno</b>	Manique (Portugal)	20/10/18	89	<b>POR</b>
<b>P SBARDELOTTO Pietro</b>	Campo Grande (Brazil)	05/11/18	102	<b>BCG</b>
<b>P SCARANTO Angelo</b>	Castello di Godego (Italy)	16/08/18	97	<b>INE</b>
<b>L SENDINO ORTEGA Raimundo</b>	Vigo-Pontevedra (Italy)	26/08/18	80	<b>SSM</b>
<b>P SILVA José Dantas</b>	Juazeiro do Norte (Brazil)	30/10/18	92	<b>BRE</b>
<b>P STELLA Enrico</b>	Arese (Italy)	05/11/18	86	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P STURKENBOOM Ko</b>	Wijchen (Netherlands)	26/08/18	82	<b>BSP</b>
<b>L TAM Aloysius Chalk-kei</b>	Hong Kong (China)	27/08/18	81	<b>BSP</b>
<b>L TARABINI Ermete</b>	Morbegno (Italy)	27/10/18	92	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P TETTAMANZI Ángel José</b>	Córdoba (Argentina)	22/11/18	80	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P THEKKEKANDAM Thomas</b>	Pathialaghat (India)	17/09/18	81	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P ULLOA DOMÍNGUEZ Miguel</b>	Quito (Ecuador)	02/11/18	100	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P VARAPPILLY Joseph</b>	Dharmagiri, Kerala (India)	01/10/18	73	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P VETTICAD Abraham</b>	Aluva (India)	14/03/18	94	<b>BSP</b>
<b>L VIVAS Alejandro</b>	Lubumbashi (Dem. Rep. Congo)	04/09/18	94	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P WALCZUK Kazmierz</b>	Sololów Podlaski (Poland)	24/11/18	82	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P ZANELLA Virginio</b>	Lima (Peru)	31/10/18	86	<b>BSP</b>
<b>L ZÁRATE QUINTANA José Domingo</b>	Fusagasugá (Colombia)	09/08/18	83	<b>BSP</b>
<b>P ZONTA Juvenal</b>	Campinas (Brazil)	18/08/18	90	<b>BSP</b>