



acts

of the general council

year CI

january-june 2019

N. 430

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

**Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma**

acts

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

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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Entrust, have trust and smile!

Letter on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) - 18 aprile 1869

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Rome, 18 April 2019
Holy Thursday

«My Dear Sons in Jesus Christ,

The Lord knows how much I would like to see you, to be among you, to speak with you about our concerns and to find consolation in the shared trust we have in one another. But unfortunately my dear Sons, my reduced energy, the remaining effects of previous illnesses, the important business affairs in France I have to attend to prevent me, at least for the present, from following the signs of my affection for you.

Not being able therefore to be with you all in person, I am sending you this letter, and I am sure you will be pleased that I am remembering you all. Just as you are all my hope, so too are you my pride and my support. Therefore since I want to see you all grow more in zeal and in merit before God each day, I shall not fail to suggest to you every so often some of the means I believe to be the best so that your ministry may be ever more fruitful.»¹

¹ G. BOSCO, *Circolare ai Salesiani sulla diffusione dei buoni libri*, in ISS, *Fonti Salesiane. Don Bosco e la sua opera*, LAS, Roma 2014, p. 481.

I wanted to begin this letter not with my own words but with those of our beloved Father, and with the same affection and large heart with which he wrote to his Sons in 1885. With the same feelings of closeness I want to reach out to each one of you dear brothers and sisters of the whole Salesian Family as I write this *Letter on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA)* and a year after the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Valdocco, in this way remembering our Father in a special way.

Pope Francis also reminds us of this: «The memory of St John Bosco is alive in the Church. He is remembered as the founder of the Salesian Congregation, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Association of the Salesian Cooperators, the Association of Mary Help of Christians and as the father of the present-day Salesian Family.»² The intuition of our Father has in fact led to the coinciding of the event 150 years ago of the foundation of the *Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians* with that of the Basilica dedicated to her. It seems to me that this anniversary is sufficient justification for this letter of mine which is in line with others written by my predecessors, and can help us to revive in our hearts the same love for the Mother of God that guided Don Bosco throughout his whole life, as we remember that without Mary Help of Christians we would be something different but certainly not Salesians and the Salesian Family!

One of the most beautiful experiences I have had this year of animating the Salesian Congregation and visiting so many countries in the world has been that of getting to know the wonderful situation of the Salesian Family that the Holy Spirit continues to raise up and sustain and within that the consolidation of the groups of the devotees of Mary Help of Christians. I have found it

² FRANCIS, *Like Don Bosco with the young and for the young. Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the Rector Major of the Salesians on the bicentenary of the birth of Saint John Bosco*, AGC n. 421 p 104.

very moving to see this group in the most remote parts of the world. It is very moving to make contact with the many young people who have founded *ADMA Youth* and who want to make the valuable contribution of their vision and their efforts to this beautiful expression of devotion to our Mother so loved by Don Bosco himself. It moves me also to be able to visit, as I shall again in this month of April, such unimaginable places as the land of the Bororo people, the same place where two brothers, Fr Rudolf Lukenbein and the Indian Simão Cristao Bororo, were martyred – and to meet a fine group of ADMA: men, women, and young people, who at the end of the Mass sang in that holy place, to Mary Help of Christians in the language of their own people. The glory proclaimed by the Mother has reached even this place: «Here is my house and hence my glory will come forth.»³

It was GC21 that invited us to renew the Marian dimension of our vocation, examining our convictions and making a careful evaluation of our devotion to the Help of Christians as Salesians of Don Bosco. Certainly this can also be a useful proposal for the whole Salesian Family throughout the world so as to respond in our own days to the appeal Fr Egidio Viganò made in his time when he invited us to «make a place for Our Lady in our home.»⁴

With the desire to make Mary Help of Christians ever more at home with us, in the following pages I offer you a simple reflection on our attachment to the Eucharist and to Mary Help of Christians, on the path followed in these 150 years, on the popular nature of the Salesian charism that has been handed on to us as a treasure to be guarded, and on the path to be followed from Mary's house to our own homes⁵.

³ Cf. *BM* II, 191.

⁴ E. VIGANÒ, *Mary renews the Salesian Family of Don Bosco* (letter published in *ACS* n. 289).

⁵ I take this opportunity to thank the Salesians, the FMA and the ADMA of Valdocco for the valuable contribution they offered me as a result of the reflection they carried out at the dawn of this 150th anniversary.

It gives me great joy to know that following in these footsteps we are also being faithful to the journey undertaken by Don Bosco and that as we surely know devotion to the Mother of God has been specially characteristic and had deeply marked the whole of Don Bosco's spirituality.

1. ANCHORED IN THE EUCHARIST AND IN MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

*«In the Church in Turin dedicated to Mary Help of Christians, there has been canonically erected with the authorization of the Archbishop of Turin an Association of Mary's clients; the members of the Association aim at promoting the glories of the divine Mother of the Saviour in order to merit her protection in life and particularly at the moment of death. They have two special objectives: to spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin and veneration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.»*⁶

These are the opening words of the Regulations written by Don Bosco for the erection of the *Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians*, founded by him and approved by the Archbishop of Turin, Alessandro Riccardi, on 18 April 1869, the 150th anniversary of the foundation of which is being celebrated.

It is significant that this anniversary coincides this year with Holy Thursday, underlining how veneration of the Eucharist together with devotion to the Immaculate Help of Christians are fundamental to the spirituality and to the life of the Association. The reference is to the two columns of the Salesian educational system and spirituality. The Christ who dominates the life of Don Bosco is above all the Jesus living and present in the Eucharist, the Bread of life, the Son of Mary, Mother of God and of the Church. Don Bosco lived by this presence and in this presence. The Eucharist, sacrifice and sacrament, the Eucharist by which to

⁶ *Letture Cattoliche*, Anno XVII (Maggio), Fasc. V, pp. 48-50.

be fed, the Eucharist the real and adorable presence is in the life of Don Bosco strength and consolation, living source of peace and at the same time the powerhouse of activity. On the journey towards growth for himself and for his boys there is no path to holiness without the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the key stone for the radical conversion of heart to the love of God. The centrality of Christ in the Salesian spirit is lived with an extraordinary sensitivity for contemplation and love of the Eucharist.

1.1. In the footsteps of Saint Francis of Sales

When Don Bosco decided to found a Marian association he thought of the members as “devotees” of Mary Help of Christians. This little word antiquated and somewhat out of fashion nowadays, is the key to entering into the burning heart of the relationship that links Don Bosco with the Help of Christians. Saint Francis of Sales teaches that “true devotion” is concerned first and foremost with the love of God. In fact it is precisely the authentic love that we receive from God (grace) that enables us to correspond to His gifts (charity). For this reason the “devotees” are those who “fly” along the path of holiness, in so far as “true devotion” brings to perfection in them every action and every work from the smallest to the greatest. making the “devotees” more friendly and pleasant, more courageous and ready for self-donation, each one according to their own vocation and mission in the Church.⁷

In fact, Saint Francis of Sales, writing *Philothea* with the subtitle *Introduction to the devout life*, proposes a path of Christian life marked by great joy and spiritual depth in which devotion is certainly in no way devotionism: it is “holiness lived as charity.” Saint Francis of Sales clearly expresses his opinion on this matter: «Devotion is nothing else but that spiritual alertness and vivacity which enables us to cooperate with charity promptly and whole-

⁷ Cf. FRANCIS OF SALES, *Philothea* I,1,4; 3,13.

heartedly.»⁸ Reading carefully one understands that the protagonist of devotion is Jesus, who with his love – his charity – “accomplishes in us his works” and does so in such a way that “we work through it.” Being devotees therefore means knowing how to acquire an habitual readiness for charity, This is only possible if at least in the depth of the heart we remain always immersed in Jesus so that we are able to follow promptly the inspirations that he gives us.

In his description of the devout, Saint Francis of Sales tells us that «they are either men with angelic souls or angels with human bodies; though not young they seem so being full of vigour and spiritual agility; they have wings to soar up to God by prayer, yet feet to walk among men edifying them by their holiness. They have beautiful and cheerful faces because they receive all things with happiness and contentment. Their legs and arms and heads are uncovered because all they think and feel and do is unencumbered by any other thought than that of pleasing God, The rest of their body is covered with a beautiful light robe to show that they do make use of earthly things but only of what is really necessary using with moderation what befits their state.»⁹

Here we seem to be hearing once again the words of Fr Eugene Ceria, when he describes how Don Bosco used to live in union with God: «This seems to have been his special gift, in fact, never to let himself be distracted from the loving thought of the Lord no matter how many, serious and uninterrupted might have been his occupations.»¹⁰ Fr Ceria concludes by affirming that every action in the life of Don Bosco no matter what he was doing was prayer.

Devotion is a path that aims high, to the foundations of holiness and of the Salesian charism, and represents that “be cheerful” that we can try to live already here on earth and then enjoy for ever in heaven. Naturally such a beautiful plan while, on the

⁸ IBID., *Philothea* I,1,9.

⁹ IBID., *Philothea* I,2,8.

¹⁰ E. CERIA, *Don Bosco con Dio*, SEI, Torino 1929, p. 209.

one hand, it fascinates us, can make us afraid to the point of discouraging us from starting it. In reponse to this possible temptation, Saint Francis of Sales makes no bones about reminding us (cf. *Theotimus*) that loving one's neighbour and God, the aim of devotion, is not merely a suggestion, it is a commandment! It is that precisely to prevent us from considering it too high a target and so becoming discouraged and giving up the idea of undertaking the life of devotion.

Don Bosco, aware of our struggles and weakness, went a step further, an even better one: we are not devotees in a general sort of way but *Devotees of Mary Help of Christians*. In his experience, the gift of the love that unites us to the Father and to the Son (grace) and which leads to action (charity), passes explicitly, almost tangibly through the maternal mediation of Mary. Throughout his whole life in fact the presence of the Virgin represents constant guidance in carrying out the mission received from the Father: the wise teacher who teaches the art of educating the young with love, as commanded by Jesus in the dream at nine years of age; the safe harbour in adversity in which can easily be obtained protection, consolation and the strength of the Holy Spirit.

1.2. On the way to Heaven

The special mediation of Mary in the life of grace of her children, writes Saint Louis Maria Grignion de Montfort in his *Treatise on True Devotion*, is possible because Mary, among all creatures is the one most "conformed" to Jesus Christ; in other words, the one most similar to Him, the one closest to Him. Essentially, Montfort once again points out, "true devotion" is nothing other than the «perfect renewal of the vows and the promises of Holy Baptism,»¹¹ which implies the renunciation of evil and of sin and total adhesion to Christ. Along the path of keeping the baptismal

¹¹ Cf. L.M. GRIGNION DE MONTFORT, *Treatise on true devotion*, III, 1, 120.

promises, the more we love Mary and let her love us, the more she leads us into letting ourselves be conformed to Jesus, by the work of the Holy Spirit: we know very well that the Mother does not call her sons and daughters to remain with her, but takes them “by the hand” to a meeting with her Son Jesus, the Son of God the Father.

For this reason we can say, in harmony with the Strenna for this year, that Mary is the Mother and Teacher who supports us, so that we may “fly” along the path of holiness. In this call, simple and accessible to everyone, to live in a radical manner the gift of Baptism, to live with Mary our Christian vocation is rooted therefore the lay and popular purpose of ADMA: from the members nothing more is asked than what is asked of every baptised person. The difference lies in that “extra step” that comes from “true devotion”; in other words, from that exchange of effective and affective love with Mary, that is a stimulus to continually grow in love of God and of one’s neighbour.

From this point of view it becomes clear that the spiritual relationship with Mary, even though it is direct, intimate and permanent, does not become «something in isolation, but directed towards Christian life in its fullness [...]». The relationship with the Mother of the Lord, who is our mother too, which consists in the giving of oneself and in readiness for her mission, leads to a mature and persevering response to Christ and through him to the Father in the Spirit.¹² Only love – as Don Bosco had understood so well – gives us wings on life’s journey. Reciprocal love that is exchanged between Mary and her “devotees” is precisely the gift that the members of ADMA are called to bring to all the places in which they find themselves living and working, it being a genuine call and an invitation to live the Christian vocation with vigour and energy.

¹² S. DE FIORES, *Maria nella vita dello Spirito*, Cirié (Torino) 2003, pp.149-151.

This will only be possible if our heart is full of love for God and also for Mary.. In this sense Don Bosco is a real model. Fr Peter Brocardo recognises this when he declares: «Don Bosco, a saint full of God, is at the same time a saint full of Mary. In fact the whole of his life, with God and dependence on God at its centre, revolves round the Virgin. Before the dream at nine years of age, Mary is already a vital presence in his life, on account of his holy earthly mother: “My dear John... when you came into this world I consecrated you to the Blessed Virgin.” “Jesus will say to him, I am the Son of her whom your mother taught you to greet three times a day.”»¹³

Looking again at Don Bosco’s Marian experience we become aware of how Mary can be the model and teacher in every fundamental aspect of Christian life. Now we want to look at these briefly.

1.2.1. *Mary invites to the heavenly banquet*

In the experience of Don Bosco, love for Mary and love for the Eucharist always go together; they are the two columns that support the life and the mission of the Church. In Don Bosco’s ideas about Mary that we can in a special way discover from his dreams, Mary presents herself as the Lady or the Queen who is waiting for the young people at the end of their challenging life’s journey and invites them to take part in the heavenly banquet. As a good mistress of the house, Mary welcomes the guests, after having carefully prepared everything. The heavenly banquet, just like the eucharistic banquet which continually anticipates and prepares for it, is the place of perfect communion. Communion with God and among ourselves is the ultimate aim of the Christian religion. Jesus offers himself on the cross so that we might be readmitted to communion with the Father; he offers himself in the bread so that we might be one with him. “Devotees” of Mary Help

¹³ P BROCARDI, *Don Bosco. Profondamente uomo profondamente santo*, LAS, Roma, 2001, p. 127.

of Christians in the same way are invited to be protagonists in the celebration of the eucharist, offering their own lives, joys and sorrows, so that communion might grow: in the family, in the work place, in the Church community.

1.2.2. *Mary teacher of wisdom*

Mary presents herself to Don Bosco as the teacher of wisdom from the dream at nine years of age. The evangelist Luke paints a picture of Mary as a wise woman, who keeps and meditates everything in her heart. Biblical wisdom in fact is seen precisely as the ability to listen carefully to the Word of God that can be heard in everyday life. Mary is a prophet because she has a heart that listens, that knows how to learn from reality and knows how to recognise in it the signs of God's interventions and His salvation. In Don Bosco's Marian dreams, Mary often presents herself as a woman of the people: practical, active, who has become wise from her experience of life. Mary teaches Don Bosco to start from experience and on the basis of experience to avoid abstractions, to stimulate the intelligence of his disciples. The influence of Mamma Margaret on Don Bosco's way of seeing Mary is clear from this. Like Mamma Margaret, the "devotees" of Mary Help of Christians ought to be prophets in their lives, in their docility in allowing themselves to be challenged by events, to draw on their valuable experience and to let themselves be led step by step by the Spirit. They are prophets first of all because they are witnesses, then, – as educators – they are able to accompany others on life's journey.

1.2.3. *Mary powerful help against evil*

Mary often presents herself to Don Bosco as Queen. The majestic painting of Mary Help of Christians in the Basilica in Turin depicts her in this way too: in majesty, surrounded by the court of heaven, a crown on her head and a sceptre in her hand. A "powerful" Queen as we still say today in the short prayer composed by our Founder. Regality or Queenship, however, is not a privilege of Mary but a baptismal gift in which we are all called to participate.

Mary receives her power directly from Jesus the infant she carries in her arms. It is a power that shows itself in a special way in the fight against evil, against sin. Mary is the Virgin whose child will finally crush the head of the ancient serpent, In his preaching Don Bosco frequently insists on this idea and on the fact that Mary will swiftly intervene whenever she is invoked with filial affection and we follow her advice regarding Jesus: «Do whatever he tells you» (Jn 2,5); since Mary constantly intervenes in the lives of her children. Certain of this, the 'devotees' of Mary Help of Christians are called to share in her queenly power in the daily struggle against evil, keeping fully alive the light of hope even in the darkest moments in the life of a family, of a community, of a people.

2. A JOURNEY OF 150 YEARS

Among the characteristics of Don Bosco and of his holiness is that of being a founder, that is to say the initiator in the Church of a particular school of holiness and of apostolic action that distinguishes him among holy founders. «He initiated a true school of a new and attractive apostolic spirituality; *he promoted a special devotion to Mary, Help of Christians and Mother of the Church (...)* and was an eminent example of a preferential love for the young, and especially for the most needy among them.»¹⁴

Wishing to respond to the grace and to the signs that came to him from on high, and wanting to give consistency and continuity to his work on behalf of youth, Don Bosco heard the call of God to start new apostolic ventures. Exactly ten years after the foundation of the Salesian Congregation and in the year following the consecration of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, he founded the *Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians* (18 April 1869).

¹⁴ JOHN PAUL II, *Iuvenum Patris*, in AGC n. 325 p. 11: the italics are mine and are intended to underline the specific Marian aspect of the spirituality of Don Bosco.

The occasion «*makes us see in a brilliant way that Mary has continued from heaven and with the greatest success, the mission of Mother of the Church and Help of Christians that she began on earth.*»¹⁵ Assumed into heaven, Mary Most Holy has not given up her role, rather she continues to carry it out most effectively. Mary is a living presence among us and continues in the history of the Church and of humanity her maternal mission as mediatrix of grace for her children.

It is natural to think that Don Bosco followed this Marian path both personal and ecclesial because his personal and pastoral life had been marked by a simple yet profound Marian sentiment. One can say with certainty that his love and his devotion to Mary were a constant unbroken thread running throughout his life, a constant reference point, a faith experience that he lived as it modulated, evolved and matured starting from his various personal experiences and from ecclesiastical events. Don Bosco possessed a clear awareness of the personal presence of Mary Help of Christians, something that he felt and experienced in a very practical way that one might dare to call "objective".

Speaking about the foundation of the Salesian Congregation, in various different circumstances Don Bosco demonstrated the conviction, as his successor, Blessed Michael Rua recounts, that the Virgin Help of Christians is its "founder" and also its "supporter," and he declared with certainty that «our Congregation is destined for great things and to spread throughout the world if the Salesians are always faithful to the Rule given them by Mary Most Holy.»¹⁶

Looking back over these 150 years, from the very beginning the great and inseparable link between Don Bosco and devotion to Mary Help of Christians is evident, even to the point that this will be for Salesians an expression of charismatic fidelity; for the

¹⁵ G. BOSCO, *Meraviglie della Madre di Dio invocata sotto il titolo di Maria Ausiliatrice*, Torino 1868, p. 45.

¹⁶ M. RUA, *Lettere circolari*, Torino 1965, 178, pp. 293-294 ss.

Daughters of Mary Help of Christians it is the guarantee of their being in their lives “a living monument to the Help of Christians”; and to all the devotees of ADMA Don Bosco will give the assurance that they are living an ecclesial devotion, specifically of Salesian spirituality, in which the Mother is always a solid support.

Don Rua writes in another of his letters: «I have no doubt at all that with an increase among Salesians of devotion to Mary Help of Chistans so too will grow esteem and affection for Don Bosco no less than the commitment to preserve his spirit and to imitate his virtues.»¹⁷

2.1. Awareness of being an instrument of God with the mediation of Mary

I consider that it is not possible to speak about Don Bosco and his work without drawing attention to the faith journey that he himself undertook. I want to make my own the words of Fr Vecchi which in my opinion describe very well the characteristics of the path followed by Don Bosco which I shall illustrate later on. Fr Vecchi writes: «Without wishing to be too dogmatic, it could be said that Don Bosco began the construction as the Rector of a work [this is in reference to the construction of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians] and completed it as a charismatic head of a great movement, still in its early stages but already possessing distinctive aims and features: he began as a priest from Turin and completed it as an apostle of the Church. He moved on from the city to the world.»¹⁸

By 1862 Don Bosco felt the need to have a bigger church. The church of St Francis of Sales was too small for the Salesians and the boys in Valdocco. The Congregation had begun four year earlier as a “small nucleus”. Everything led one to think that it was the

¹⁷ M. RUA, o.c., p. 353.

¹⁸ J. E. VECCHI, *Spiritualità Salesiana*, Elle Di Ci, Leumann (TO) 2001, p. 229.

beginning of something that in time would grow larger. This was also the year when Don Bosco met Mary Mazzarello (and therefore the start of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians was still some time in the distant future) and marks the beginning of the expansion of the Salesian charism in the feminine world. His pastor's heart led Don Bosco to think about two other foundations: the Archconfraternity of Mary Help of Christians and the Cooperators. At the same time the almost rural district that Valdocco had been was becoming almost an urban quarter and Don Bosco saw the need for giving these people a place of worship.

In any case, the building of a church is more than just a technical matter and the collecting of funds to complete its construction. It is certainly an expression of the way ahead that Don Bosco was reflecting on from both the spiritual and the pastoral points of view, while knowing that it is difficult to explain – even for the most expert of commentators on Don Bosco – what this church might represent in the inner life of our Founder.

Fr Peter Brocardo writes: «All of this would not have made him the great apostle of Mary Help of Christians had it not been for the experience full of the supernatural of the construction of the church of Mary Help of Christians in Valdocco, and if this church had not become the *heart* and the “*centre of the Congregation*”, the “*Mother Church*” of the Salesian Family.»¹⁹

With the construction of the Basilica, and with everything that happened at that time, with the opposition and the “prodigious” un hoped for solutions to problems Don Bosco experienced not only astonishment but almost fear. What above all surprised Don Bosco and later the world was the fact that it was the Virgin Mary herself who actually built her own house going contrary to all human expectations.

«This is the miracle that Dr. Margotti could not bring himself to deny: “They say that Don Bosco works miracles but I don’t

¹⁹ P. BROCARD, *Ibid*, p.131.

believe it, But there is one here that I can't deny and it is this sumptuous church that cost about a million [...] and it was put up in three years with just the spontaneous offerings of the faithful.”»²⁰

It is moving to read the accounts of these events. Like the good Piedmontese he was Don Bosco had obtained the assurance of financial support from some influential people, who as often happens did not keep their promises. In this situation too Don Bosco was left on his own. But as reported above “just the spontaneous offerings of the faithful” made possible the unimaginable: «It would seem that what *then* became the determining factor (in the choice of the title “Auxilium Chistianorum”) was the fact of his having experienced day after day that Mary had practically herself built this “house of hers” in the soil of the Oratory and had taken possession of it in order to spread out from there her patronage.»²¹

This reflection we have been making can be very well summed up in the words of Fr Viganò: «After the establishment of this sanctuary from then on the Help of Christians is the Marian title that will for ever characterize the spirit and the apostolate of Don Bosco: he will come to see his whole apostolic vocation as the work of Mary Help of Christians, and his many great achievements especially the Society of Saint Francis of Sales, the Institute of the FMA and the large Salesian Family, will be seen by him as a foundation willed and cared for by the Help of Christians.»²²

2.2. A memory for which to be thankful

In masterly fashion the Salesian historian Pietro Braidò describes the foundation of the ADMA by Don Bosco in this way: «A born organizer, Don Bosco did not leave devotion to Mary Help of Christians to simple spontaneous devotion. He gave it stability

²⁰ P. BROCARD, *Ibid.*, p.132.

²¹ E. VIGANÒ, *o.c.*, p. 16.

²² *Ibidem.*

through an Association that took its name from her. First-hand witnesses saw in this institution one of the initiatives closest to Don Bosco's heart and one with the widest impact after that of the two religious Congregations and of the Association of the Cooperators. He himself described its origins in the leaflet *Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians canonically erected in the Church dedicated to her in Turin with historical information about this title – by the priest John Bosco*. Following the presentation to the Reader, some short chapters give an account of the history of the title *Help of Christians*, from the Bible to the battle of Lepanto (1571), to the liberation of Vienna in 1683 and, finally to the institution of the feast by Pius VII in 1814. Short pages were dedicated to the *Devotion to Mary Help of Christians in Munich and in Turin* and to spiritual favours granted by Pius IX to the Turinese sanctuary. Documents followed relating to the canonical approval of the *Association*. The first was in April 1869: the *Supplica* of Don Bosco to the archbishop of Turin, "for the canonical approval of the Association". In it he begged him to "take in benign consideration" the "pious project" and to examine its Statutes and – professing the accustomed unlimited readiness – "to add, to delete, to change" whatever might be judged opportune, "with all the conditions" "that might be judged most appropriate to promote the glories of the August Queen of Heaven and the good of souls." The approval of Mons. Riccardi on 18 April was benevolent and generous, in harmony with the brief of 16 March with which Pius IX had granted extensive indulgences valid for ten years to the Association about to be erected. The last part of the leaflet contained the text of the statute, a long series of prayers and devout practices with the indication of the relevant indulgences, a short catechesis *On indulgences* in general, the decree of 22 May 1868, with which Pius IX granted a plenary indulgence to all those who might "religiously" visit «the church dedicated in Turin to Mary the Immaculate Virgin under the title of Mary Help of Christians, on the titular feast of the same church or on one of the preceding days.»

As was his custom in the presentation of important documents, Don Bosco attributed the origin of *the Association to "repeated requests"*, coming «from all parts and from people of all ages and conditions» during and after the building and the consecration of the church. The idea was for associates «who united in the same spirit of prayer and piety might honour the great Mother of the Saviour invoked with the beautiful title of Help of Christians.»

In these circumstances too Don Bosco quickly drew up statutes that were no masterpiece in doctrinal or juridical terms but which were outstanding for immediacy and practicality. He retained the close link that he usually made between devotion to Mary Most Holy and to Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist. The subject matter was divided into three sections without separate initial headings: *the purpose and the means, the spiritual advantages, admission*. [...] For wider diffusion of the Association Don Bosco managed to have it erected as an Archconfraternity, with the faculty of aggregating to it similar associations already existing or to be erected.»²³

2.3. A renewal to be undertaken

The Archconfraternity of Mary Help of Christians as it was called by Don Bosco (today ADMA), from the very beginning acquired a worldwide dimension, alternating between periods of great vitality and wide diffusion and stages of crisis and oblivion. In 1988, the year of the centenary of the death of Don Bosco, an historic relaunching occurred on the part of the Rector Major Fr Egidio Viganò. A significant recognition came from the 24th General Chapter of the Salesians (1996), which declared: «Don Bosco also started up the *Association of clients of Mary Help of Christians* involving them in the spirituality and mission of the

²³ P. BRAIDO, *Don Bosco prete dei giovani nel secolo delle libertà*, LAS, Roma 2003, vol. I, pp. 526-528.

Congregation by commitments readily realizable by the majority of simple people.»²⁴

It could also be said that the Congregation and the Salesian Family have gone through a maturing process in their devotion to Mary Help of Christians. In fact our Salesian spirituality cannot be separated from devotion to Mary Help of Christians. It would be the same as trying – absurdly – to separate Don Bosco from Mary Help of Christians. Our devotion to the Help of Christians is intimately connected both to the Salesian “mission” and to the “spirit” proper to the Salesian charism that we have received from Don Bosco as a *gift* of the Holy Spirit.

The fidelity of the ADMA throughout this historic process was crowned on 7 October 2003, when the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life approved the new Regulations of the Association.

Since 2007 ADMA has distinctly renewed itself and has grown in numbers and quality thanks to the involvement of families and to various initiatives, such as the International Congresses of Mary Help of Christians in Częstochowa (2011) and in Turin (2015).

Of great assistance in the process of renewal, growth in the sense of belonging and of shared formation among the more than 800 local groups present in the world is the annual formation programme, the monthly commemoration of Mary Help of Christians, days of recollection and retreats, the monthly publication of *ADMA online* in 7 languages, the development of the web site,²⁵ the publication of the *Quaderni di Maria Ausiliatrice*.

2.4. According to a dynamic of communion

The process of the renewal of ADMA in these years has taken place in profound harmony with that of the universal Church,

²⁴ GC24, 80.

²⁵ www.admadonbosco.org.

which has dedicated two Synods of Bishops to the family and one to young people.

At the end of the Synods on the Family the Pope remarked: «The experience has made those taking part in the Synod aware of the importance of a synodal form of the Church for the proclamation and the transmission of the faith. The participation of the young has contributed to a “re-awakening” of synodality which is a constitutive dimension of the Church [...]. As Saint John Chrysostom says, “Church and Synod are synonymous” – inasmuch as the Church is nothing other than the “journeying together” of God’s flock along the paths of history towards the encounter with Christ the Lord.»²⁶

This synodal dimension was very strongly reaffirmed in the *the Final Document* of the Synod of Bishops on young people as the right way of being and of acting today for the Church: «Synodality characterizes both the life and the mission of the Church, which is the People of God formed of young and old, men and women of every culture and horizon, and the Body of Christ, in which we are members one of another, beginning with those who are pushed to the margins and trampled upon... It is in relationships – with Christ, with others, in the community – that faith is handed on. For the sake of mission, too, the Church is called to adopt a relational manner that places emphasis on listening, welcoming, dialogue and common discernment in a process that transforms the lives of those taking part... In this way the Church presents herself as the “tent of meeting” in which the Ark of the Covenant is preserved (cf. *Ex* 25): a dynamic Church, in movement, which accompanies while journeying, strengthened by many charisms and ministries. Thus does God make Himself present in this world.»²⁷

²⁶ FRANCIS, *Address for the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops*, 17 October 2015.

²⁷ *Final Document of the Synod of Bishops offered to the Holy Father Francis* (27 October 2018), nn. 121-122.

An expression of this shared journey is the experience ever more vital in the ADMA, of the communion of faith and of charismatic belonging among the different states of life: consecrated, priests, laity. There is a circulation of gifts and of prayer, a fruitful exchange that helps each one to find and to consolidate their own identity. This helps to overcome the way of relating to others that sometimes is understood in terms of function if not at times even utilitarian, by recovering an approach that is more ecclesial and based on communion in the same Salesian spirit.

Emphasis on the beauty and on the complementarity of the various states of life is an approach to be welcomed and appreciated even from a vocational point of view: priests, consecrated men and women and lay people who share a faith journey and a Salesian apostolic commitment. Between consecrated people and laity a communion of life is established that helps to enrich the proper identity of each one, facilitating their reciprocal recognition, appreciation and support not only at the practical level of work but also the fraternal and spiritual, according to the specific nature of each.

This proposal enables lay people to be approached and involved in the right way. ADMA encourages lay people to take on responsibility and to share in the mission not only *ad intra*, but also *ad extra*, that is to say not only in our works but also in other areas in the life of the Church and of society.

The dimension of the understanding and the development of ADMA lies in the formation and fulfilment of lay people prepared for the spirituality and the mission proper to the Association, in harmony with the ecclesiology of communion and with the rediscovery of a new prophetic, regal, and priestly awareness on the part of the laity. In addition the appeal to the lay character of the Association overcomes the tendency to identify the Church solely with the hierarchy and priests, and to encourage the shared responsibility and mission of the People of God. At the same time recalling the lay dimension of the Association discourages any tendency to think of the People of God solely in sociological or politi-

cal terms and promotes the vital concept and the specific nature of the People as the Body of Christ. «Looking at the People of God is to remind ourselves that we all enter the Church as laity. The first sacrament, that which marks our identity for ever and of which we ought always to be proud is Baptism. Through this sacrament and with the anointing of the Holy Spirit, (the faithful) “are consecrated into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood” (LG, 10) [...]. It is good for us to remember that the Church is not an élite of priests, of consecrated persons, of bishops, but that all form the faithful Holy People of God, Forgetting this leads to a variety of dangers and deformations in our own experience, both personal and communitarian of the ministry that the Church has entrusted to us.»²⁸

Certainly, collaboration among the three states of life of the Church requires a change in pastoral thinking which impacts on all vocations but which, as regards the laity, demands that they be recognised and appreciated not merely as “collaborators”, but as “those co-responsible” in the life and action of the Church, so as to foster their maturing process and commitment. For this reason in the ADMA it is precisely the lay people who are those with primary responsibility for the competent and efficient animation of the Association.

2.5. On the path of holiness

ADMA is «*a path that leads to holiness and to the salesian apostolate*,»²⁹ proposed and lived out in the context of that universal call to holiness so dear to both St Francis of Sales who recommended the devout life to everyone and to our Father of the Salesian Family Don Bosco when he put before the youngsters of the oratory and to the ordinary people the path of holiness as open to everyone,

²⁸ FRANCIS, *Letter to the President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America* (26.04.2016).

²⁹ *Regulations ADMA*, art. 2.

easy to follow and one leading to eternal happiness. Saint Francis of Sales and Don Bosco presented holiness not as something reserved to the privileged few, but always as a call for everyone wherever they might be living, whatever might be their state in life, their profession or trade. Vatican Council II confirmed and proclaimed this reality. Pope Francis strongly re-affirmed this in the Apostolic Exhortation on the call to holiness in the world of today *Gaudete et exsultate*. The Salesian Strenna for this year 2019 is also a clear and decisive call to holiness for all, «holiness for you too.»

Certainly it is a pathway that sometimes demands going against the flow, but it is one that, precisely, in the end is a blessing, that is happiness. It is very important, following the example, and being inspired by the humanism and the optimism of St Francis of Sales to let it be seen that living as a Christian is, also from a human point of view, something that brings happiness already in this world, in spite of the difficulties we all have to put up with.

Above all it is a path of holiness to be lived in the family, giving good example especially by persevering in love: between the spouses, between parents and children, between brothers and sisters, between the young and the old. We need to want and to seek what is best for others. In practice this “best” means accepting the other person as they are; taking time to talk, building up relationships based on affection and respect, knowing how to understand and to forgive, and not complaining. A family that does not give in when faced with difficulties and in which parents and children live their faith in God and in His Providence, like the Holy Family in Nazareth, is a great support and a fruitful source of good for the Church and for Society.

No less ought to be the witness from within our Salesian Family spread throughout the world that we give to everyone as consecrated women and men seeking to put into practice with the variety of expressions of the charism in the different groups Don Bosco’s great vision: to make simple and available to everyone the path of holiness in the Christian life of all youngsters.

To the new generations too, therefore, it is a question of proposing the ideal of holiness – following Jesus – in ordinary life made up of studies, friendships, work, service, making them aware that the world and with it the Church is already in their hands. It is for this reason that young people ought to be given a good human and Christian formation and at the same time helped to feel themselves welcomed with hope and trust. The main thing is to help them to know and to love Christ in the ordinary circumstances of life and to live according to their entrustment to Mary Help of Christians.

When in Valdocco I happen to go into the church of St Francis of Sales I find it very moving, because for me it is one of the most significant places we have: it is the little church that has witnessed so many moments of holiness, of prayer, of boys growing up. It was here that Dominic Savio became so much in tune with the Holy Eucharist that he lost all sense of time and space. It was here that he and his companions offered themselves to Mary Immaculate ready to follow a shared path of holiness. It was here that Mamma Margaret prayed. Here Michael Rua, John Cagliero and the other Salesians of the first generations celebrated their first Mass. Here the life of faith of so many boys became a path of growth in holiness day after day. I love to close my eyes and imagine these boys of Don Bosco in this chapel, the same building though painted differently. It really touches my heart.

The Strenna for this year to which I have already referred tells us that we can propose to our young people the notions of gift, grace, challenge, duty, the opportunity to be saints. In our Salesian Family we have 46 saints, blessed, venerables and servants of God under 29 years of age.

What is most fascinating in this call to holiness is that it is not a question of doing special, out of the ordinary things, but seriously to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our heart, in the depth of our being, in all that we are and experience while continuing to get on with studies, work, relationships, service, summer camps, singing – whatever.

Today's world needs young people with convictions, not "strange" young people; young people who have made the choice for God, who are humble courageous witnesses to the joy of the Gospel. Even today there are many young people in the world with our charism who with their own lives want to write a beautiful page, being inspired by the first young people in the oratory at Valdocco, where a real school of life and holiness began and developed.

As I have already said, thinking about the renovations being completed for the "Don Bosco" House (Palazzo Pinardi), there at Don Bosco's side day after day there emerged a *school of everyday holiness*. In fact in the context of the Strenna for this year hundreds and hundreds of boys and girls and young people have told me at various meetings throughout the world that in their faith group, in their Salesian house, on their own or with some friends they have thought seriously about undertaking a real journey of genuine holy Christian life that leads them to a holiness lived out in daily life, an "open door holiness" recalling a phrase of Pope Francis. I want to say that this is nothing strange. It is simply that young people of today, like those of yesterday, need to feel that there are great ideals they can aim for in their lives.

Today's ADMA is also living with this spiritual tension. Likewise the groups of ADMA include among their members some women who are held up by the Church as examples of life who can be invoked for their intercession for support in the faith journey.

Among these are Blessed Alexandrina Maria da Costa: on 12 September 1944 Fr Umberto Maria Pasquale, her spiritual director enrolled her in the Association. Then there is Blessed Teresa Cejudo Redondo, wife and mother a martyr in 1936: she had been involved in the foundation of the ADMA in Pozoblanco (Spain) and was elected the Secretary. In addition, the Servant of God Rosetta Franzi Gheddo, enrolled in 1928 in the ADMA group of Nizza Monferrato, and Carmen Nebot Soldán of La Palma del Condado (Spaia), who died in 2007. These Blesseds and Servants

of God were noted for their special love for the Eucharist and for the Holy Virgin (the two great pillars of Salesian spirituality) as well as for their heroic witness to the faith in suffering, in martyrdom and in Family life. They are also united in their sharing in the Salesian charism and they show in a singular way the spirit of Don Bosco lived in lay life, in the family and in society. They are models and a stimulus for all the members of ADMA and of the Salesian Family for their holiness.

3. POPULAR CHARACTER OF THE SALESIAN CHARISM

In the popular imagination, the Salesian charism and work are normally associated with the world of youth. Together with this fundamental aspect it is very important to remember the popular dimension of the charism, which Don Bosco also expressed through the founding of the ADMA, promoted by him for the defence and development of the faith of the ordinary Christian people. Faith in Jesus Christ and entrustment to Mary according to the apostolic spirit of Don Bosco therefore are the constitutive elements of the identity and of the mission of the Association.

The working class is the natural and normal setting in which to express this option for the young, the social and human context in which to seek and to meet them. In fact between the young and the ordinary people there is a natural affinity. The commitment of the Family of Don Bosco to accompany the new generations in the effort to promote their human development and growth in the faith is intended to highlight the gospel values to be found among the young and the ordinary people. It is among all the people of God, in the variety of states of life and of age that an appreciation of relationships between the generations and the role of the family is to be found, in this way responding in a simple and accessible way to a society that is often breaking down and in conflict.

The popular dimension of the Salesian mission is in a special way our distinguishing feature and is the typical expression of the

founding charism: «Illuminated from on high, Don Bosco also turned his attention to adults, by preference those who were humble and poor, the working classes, the urban underclasses, immigrants, the marginalised, in a word, to all those who were most in need of material and spiritual assistance. Faithful to the guidance of Don Bosco the Groups of the Salesian Family share this preferred option. The Association of Mary Help of Christians has inserted in its new Regulations the Salesian apostolate directed in particular to the working classes.»³⁰

In dedication to this large and varied community of people “in everyday living conditions” we have a very real experience of God: «*The world of the working classes* is the natural and ordinary context in which we encounter the young especially those in most need of help. The commitment of the Family of Don Bosco is addressed to the ordinary people supporting them in their efforts for human development and growth in their faith, indicating and promoting the human and gospel values it stands for, such as the meaning of life, hope for a better future and the exercise of solidarity. Don Bosco traced out also with the Association of the Salesians-Cooperator and the Association of Mary Help of Christians, a path of education to the faith for the people, making good use of the contents of popular religious devotions.»³¹

3.1. Popular religious devotions (or “popular piety” or “popular spirituality”)

Don Bosco, because of the formation he received in his family and the local religious situation, and because of the way his pastoral work with the young was organised took good advantage of the popular religious devotions considering them the expression of a sound view of life, and a good way of blending life and faith, providing fruitful forms of piety and Christian spirituality. Pontif-

³⁰ *Salesian Family Charter*, n. 16.

³¹ *Ibid*, n. 31.

ical teaching in the Church and theological reflection in recent decades has been both profound and rich. It has been illuminating and has confirmed us in the same conviction that Don Bosco had and that nowadays we are promoting and fostering also through ADMA around the world.

In this regard Saint Paul VI wrote in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*: «Popular religiosity, (...) if it is well oriented, above all by a pedagogy of evangelization, is rich in values. It manifests a thirst for God which only the simple and poor can know. It makes people capable of generosity and sacrifice even to the point of heroism, when it is a question of manifesting belief. It involves an acute awareness of profound attributes of God: fatherhood, providence, loving and constant presence. It engenders interior attitudes rarely observed to the same degree elsewhere: patience, the sense of the cross in daily life, detachment, openness to others, devotion. (...) When it is well oriented, this popular religiosity can be more and more for multitudes of our people a true encounter with God in Jesus Christ.»³²

Pope Francis observes how in the same document his predecessor Paul VI suggests using the term popular piety rather than popular religiosity and how later the Latin American Bishops in the Aparecida document go a step further and speak of popular spirituality. «All three concepts are valid but in concert.»³³

The Pope, while being well aware that we always need to be attentive to the purification of the various expressions of this religiosity, considers it a *genuine form of evangelization*, to be promoted and appreciated without its importance being minimised: «It would be erroneous to believe that those who go on pilgrimage live not a personal but an “en masse” spirituality. In reality, pilgrims bring with them their own history, their own faith, the light and dark features of their own life. Everyone bears in his or her heart

³² Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 48.

³³ FRANCIS, *Address to those engaged in pilgrimage work and for the Rectors of Shrines*, Rome 21 January 2016.

a special hope and a particular prayer. Those who enter a shrine immediately feel at home, welcomed, understood, and supported.»³⁴

It is in this ecclesial context that we place devotion to Mary Help of Christians in our Salesian Family, promoted by our father Don Bosco.

3.2. Devotion to Mary Help of Christians

Devotion to Mary Help of Christians was understood and promoted by Don Bosco precisely from the point of view of the help and the defence of the faith of the People of God, tempted by ideologies that removed the Christian sense of the meaning of life, and by the many movements that attacked the faith and the unity of the Church founded on the solid rock of Peter's profession of faith. In Don Bosco devotion to the Help of Christians is not the emphasising of a title that is particular and original, previously unknown; rather it is a reference to the universal mother's role of Mary who intervenes in the work of the foundation of her Family, carrying out in this way, one might say, the work of two. It is the profound and immovable conviction of Don Bosco: «She has done everything». We can have trust in Mary. Therefore we can entrust ourselves to her. All of this in that spirit of the Church that values different public and private expressions in liturgy, doctrine, spirituality, popular piety that the Church recognises and authorises. Don Bosco was convinced that with time it would be possible to implement the apostolic passion of *Da mihi animas cetera tolle* only if it was firmly attached to those great columns of spirituality and of Christian and Salesian pedagogy: the Blessed Sacrament and Mary Most Holy. From a renewed devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and to Mary Help of Christians new fraternal relationships can be built up which are capable of developing and encouraging good processes of discernment and of giving rise to educational and pastoral action in harmony with the Gospel.

³⁴ *Ibidem.*

Making Mary Help of Christians known, loved and served is the task we want to take up encouraged by the prophetic words of Don Bosco, the apostle of the Help of Christians: *«This devotion, in other words, this love, this trust, this rapture and recourse to Mary Help of Christians is growing more and more among the faithful people, and leads one to say that the time will come when every good Christian together with devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus will be proud to profess a most tender devotion to Mary Help of Christians.»*³⁵

In fact *«in the Salesian Family the Association emphasizes and spreads popular Marian devotion as a means of evangelization and advancement of working class people and of needy youngsters.»*³⁶

Indeed it is important to underline that the fact of ADMA belonging to the Salesian Family is not something generic, but is rooted in the particular Marian devotion that St John Bosco lived and spread. The Marian characteristic of the Association is an expression of one of the constitutive elements of the Salesian charism and spirit emphasising the commitment to guarding, implementing and defending the faith among the people of God "today when the faith is being put to the test and many of the People of God are exposed to tribulation because of their fidelity to the Lord Jesus"³⁷, when the human race (...) is experiencing a serious crisis of spiritual values, the Church feels the need of Mary's motherly intervention: to strengthen her adherence to the

³⁵ *La nuvoletta del Carmelo, ossia la divozione a Maria Ausiliatrice premiata di nuove grazie*, per cura del sacerdote GIOVANNI BOSCO, S. Pier d'Arena, Tipografia e libreria di S. Vincenzo De' Paoli, Torino - Nizza Marittima, Libreria Salesiana Patronato di S. Pietro 1877.

³⁶ *Regulations ADMA*, art. 3.

³⁷ While writing these pages for the second time in a short time I received news of the death of one of our missionaries. In the space of three months in Burkina Faso (West African French-speaking Province), the lives of two of our missionary confreres Fr César Antonio Fernández and Fr Fernando Hernández have been cruelly cut short. The words of the Holy Father have come true: «Today, every day thousands of Christians lose their lives throughout the world because of their faith».

one Lord and Saviour, to give a new vitality and the courage of the Christian origins to the evangelization of the world, to enlighten and guide the faith of communities and individuals, and especially to educate in the Christian meaning of life the young people to whom Don Bosco gave his entire self as father and teacher.»³⁸

3.3. VIII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians

From this point of view I am pleased to recall the celebration of the VIII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians that will be taking place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, between 7 and 10 November 2019 with the title: *With Maria, the Woman who believes*.

This event, putting at its centre listening to the Word, shows how faith in Jesus is handed on from person to person, from generation to generation, telling of the marvels worked by God. All of this in the presence of Mary, she who welcomed Jesus and bore him in her virgin's womb, and so is mother, teacher and guide in the faith, in a particular way in the accompaniment of the younger generations, in their journey to holiness.

The VIII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians is a Salesian Family event promoted by the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) following the proposals of the Rector Major and in dialogue with the Secretariate of the Salesian Family and with the Salesian Family in Argentina.

The choice of this country is intended to be a reminder of the first missionary frontier for Don Bosco and at the same time the special importance that devotion to Mary Help of Christians has for Pope Francis. The Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in the Almagro district in Buenos Aires is the place where Jorge Mario Bergoglio was baptised and where he frequently expressed his love

³⁸ JOHN PAUL II, *Angelus* (31 January 1988) in AGC n. 325, p.41

for Mary Help of Christians, until he had to leave his homeland when he was elected to the chair of Peter.

4. FROM THE HOUSE OF MARY TO OUR HOMES

The Salesian charism in the animation of the family returns to its origins, and the family in its encounter with the spirit of Don Bosco grows in gospel vitality and joy. We are giving particular attention to the current situation of the family the primary focus of education and the first place for evangelization. The whole Church has become aware of the serious difficulties in which the family finds itself and recognises the need to offer extraordinary forms of assistance in its formation, its development and in the responsible exercise of its educational task. In this way it is seen that Family Ministry and Youth Ministry need to be open to one another and need to journey together.

In the Salesian Family «special attention needs to be given to the family, the place where the process of human development begins, which is intended to prepare young people for love and the acceptance of life, and the first school of solidarity among people and peoples. All are engaged in ensuring that it is afforded dignity and is soundly based so that it may become in an ever-more evident way a small “domestic church.”³⁹

This attention to the family is aimed at human development, evangelization and the education of the new generations: «The forming of “good Christians and upright citizens” is the aim most often expressed by Don Bosco to indicate *everything of which the young stand in need* in order to live fully human and Christian lives: clothes, food, lodging, work, study, free-time; joy, friendship; active faith, the grace of God, the way to holiness; participation, dynamism, a place in society and in the Church.»⁴⁰

³⁹ *Salesian Family Charter*, n. 16.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, n. 17.

The Association of Mary Help of Christians has also been renewed in this regard and more and more sees a place for the presence of families and young couples, who under the guidance of Mary are sharing a life journey comprising formation, sharing and prayer. Mary is the Mother and Teacher of the education needed to become spouses and parents. This renewal is the result of a specific mandate on the part of the Rector Major Fr Pascual Chávez, after the V International Congress of Mary Help of Christians in Mexico (2007), a mandate that I also confirmed on the occasion of the Congress in Turin in 2015.

ADMA is a support for fidelity to the vocation of spouses, a great help in the education of the children. The plan of ADMA is to look at families from the point of view of the whole family. It links together the progress of the parents and that of their children. In fact it is in watching their parents pray and share their faith that the children learn to live in the family in the presence of Jesus and Mary. In watching their children the parents become more convinced that their witness to the faith is the best gift they can offer, the most valuable inheritance they can leave them.

From this comes the commitment to see to it that families in their daily lives become special places for human and Christian development as they put into practice the virtues that give shape to life itself. It is necessary to journey with families, to accompany them in the complex situations with which they find themselves having to cope, finding new ways and common strategies to support spouses in their vocation of marriage.

Families are the primary source of education and fertile soil for Christian development. In order to propose a Christian pathway to young people it is fundamental nowadays to collaborate with their families and to accompany them. Places in which this can occur include all areas of affective life and family experience: the education to love of teenagers and young people, the preparation for family life of those engaged to be married, the accompaniment of sons and daughters who feel a special call to consecrated

life or to priestly ministry, the celebration of Matrimony, the accompaniment of young married people and of parents, special attention given to families in difficulty and irregular situations, the spirituality of marriage and of the family from the point of view of Salesian spirituality.

4.1. A family-friendly journey

This is the experience found in ADMA, following in the steps of Don Bosco. It is a plan for living to the full the call to be spouses and parents, brothers and sisters, finding in everyday life times for prayer, dialogue, forgiveness and love. In this way it is in harmony with the family style of loving kindness of the Salesian charism, the style of the oratory, under the gaze of Jesus, Joseph and Mary, trying to live every moment even those most tedious in mutual love and without losing hope. The very best witness is to see just how the Eucharist and Mary Help of Christians really become the pillars of life, reference points in the difficulties of every day. Don Bosco's dream of the two pillars becomes the heart of the families' journey. A love between the spouses that is renewed each day, spiritual growth as individuals and as families, a formation for parents in the difficult task of education, friendships between the children that enable them to share the faith and to witness to it with others. Each family takes part according to its own possibilities. They are also invited to share in the life of the local Church, taking an active part in parish activities and in the oratories. All of this seems to me to be a great way to express and to develop faithfully, and with a contemporary theological and ecclesial vision what Don Bosco did in his times.

4.2. Family of families

Nowadays no family can go it alone. The hedonistic and disturbing culture, not to mention the solitude that is often a feature of peoples' life-styles, makes it necessary to create places where

Christian values can be reflected on and cultivated with others. This means working towards becoming a Family of families, sharing the joys and carrying together the burdens and the hardships, while bearing in mind certain points.

- *Putting Matrimony at the centre and Jesus at the centre of Matrimony*

Trying to live the vocation of spouses and parents aware that it is necessary to bring Jesus into everyday life, placing in his hands their anxieties and labours, joys and hopes under the guidance of Mary and the protection of St Joseph. God wants to reveal Himself through “the daily life of the spouses,” in strengthening their relationship, in the education of their children, in their commitment to their work and to the apostolate.

- *Ensuring the primacy of grace*

Every family receives gifts and graces. In daily fidelity to prayer the awareness grows of being sons and daughters loved by God, and conjugal and family love grows. In prayer God renews each day the grace received in the Sacrament of Matrimony, filling life with meaning.

- *Experiencing how prayer leads to love*

The gifts received in the life of prayer and formation are given back in everyday life. This in various ways: from being open to the needs of families close by or in difficulties, to a pastoral commitment especially on behalf of the young or the poorest or in formation and sharing the faith with other families. Particular attention is given to the younger families so that the experience gained by those who have been longer on the journey may be put at their disposal.

- *Accompanied Spiritually*

The spiritual accompaniment of individuals and of couples is fundamental, with the presence of priests, consecrated persons and spouses themselves who have undertaken the beautiful journey of family, married, Christian and Salesian life and so

become valuable guides in the journey of faith, sharing the experience of God that is at the heart of their vocation and mission.

4.3. “ADMA Youth”

A special grace of Mary Help of Christians has been the launching of the youth groups who want to make their own the spirituality and apostolic commitment of the ADMA. Together with families “the grafting” of the young can be seen as a providential gift of Mary Help of Christians who is taking care of the new generations. This is an important point on which there needs to be continuing reflection and discussion, as well as appreciation of the providential situations that can be encountered. Certainly the way ahead is that of linking up with Youth Ministry and providing young people with meaningful experiences and journeys.

“ADMA Youth” is a Christian life project aimed at youngsters and young people, according to the charism of Don Bosco: living with Mary Help of Christians a faith experience of the love of the Father, of the saving work of the Son, of the power of the Holy Spirit, putting themselves at the service of the Gospel and of the Church. It consists in welcoming with joy and availability this gift of grace and making it fruitful through practical and consistent life choices.

Thinking about young people and about devotion to Mary we cannot forget what Don Bosco asked of his boys and how he led them to love the Virgin. Among the many that could be mentioned we can find examples of this in the biographies of Dominic Savio⁴¹ and of Michael Magone⁴² written by Don Bosco.

⁴¹ G. BOSCO, *Vita del giovanetto Savio Domenico, allievo dell’Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales*, in ISS, *Fonti Salesiane. Don Bosco e la sua opera*, LAS, Roma 2014, pp. 1053-1055.

⁴² G. BOSCO, *Cenno biografico sul giovanetto Magone Michele allievo dell’Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales*, in ISS, *Fonti Salesiane. Don Bosco e la sua opera*, LAS, Roma 2014, pp. 1106-1108.

About Dominic Savio Don Bosco writes: «There was no limit to his devotion to the Mother of God. Every day he made some little act of mortification in her honour (...). He had a very special devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Every time he went to church he would pay a visit to her altar, and kneeling there before her, beg her to keep his heart free from all impurity (...). Not only did he practise devotion to Mary but he was never happier than when he could succeed in bringing someone else to honour her.»

Regarding Michael Magone Don Bosco wrote: «It needs to be said that devotion to the Blessed Virgin is a support for every faithful Christian, but especially for young people (...) Our Magone was aware of this important truth, which was revealed to him in a providential way.» He wanted to consecrate himself entirely to Mary but his director told him he was too young to make such important vows.» To this Michael Magone replied: «I want to give myself totally to Mary: and if I consecrate myself to her, she will help me to keep that promise.»

This Salesian educative tradition of love for the Virgin should make us think very seriously about ways of cultivating this aspect of our youth ministry programmes. It is for this reason that, as an expression of the youth dimension of ADMA, young people take a full part in the spirit and the life of the Association in ways and on the occasions proper to them. Of particular importance is the fact that in some parts of the world and especially in the Principal ADMA Centre in Turin many of the youngsters and young people are children of couples who belong to ADMA: this is a help for faith journeys in terms of the generations, attentive to the family situation and marked by the family spirit. In a socio-cultural context also marked by anthropological and ethical relativism, we recognise that close ties with families are a truly valuable extra gift for the apostolic effectiveness of ADMA, for the affective formation of the young and for the potential renewal of education according to the Gospel. In fact within every Christian community the irreplaceable educational role played by parents and other

family members needs to be recognised. First of all it is the parents who on a daily basis show God's care for every human being in the love that links them together to each other and to their children.

The Synod on the young in 2018 and the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation in the form of a Letter to the Young *Christus vivit* are a strong invitation in this regard: to accompany the young in recognising and accepting the call to love and to life in its fulness, and also a challenge to the young people themselves to identify the most effective ways nowadays to proclaim the Good News.

Accompanying the young requires putting aside one's own preconceived schemes, meeting them where they are, adapting to their times and rhythms; it also means taking them seriously in their struggles and interpreting the reality in which they find themselves. They need to be accompanied and helped so that the proclamation, received in words and in actions, becomes part of and makes effective their daily effort to construct their own life story and identity, in the search for meaning in their lives, which is always a part of their journey even when not expressed explicitly or consciously.

Young people by nature have great energy. They need plenty of room in which to express themselves. They need wide horizons, great challenges to respond to, and a future to plan for. They also need people who show confidence in them, give them opportunities, invite and encourage them to translate their energies into service, witness and apostolate. Creating space also means accepting young people as they are; accepting their ways and their mistakes, especially when the young devote all their efforts to opportunities for service, without being too preoccupied with or focusing on results, or expecting from them high levels of "professional standards" This means looking at individuals as the whole person so that they may grow to maturity in their process of human and spiritual development.

CONCLUSION

While we give thanks for these 150 years in the life of the Association of Mary Help of Christians let us commit ourselves in fidelity to the charism of the holy founder of our Salesian Family, to allow ourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit in a renewed evangelizing and educative zeal. This means bringing faith in Jesus Christ and love for Mary to all young people, boys and girls and teenagers, especially those who are poorest and most in need (let us never forget this). It means sowing the seeds of this in their earliest years when boys and girls are still living the golden age of interest in religious values. It means sharing this faith in Jesus and love for our Mother with many friends, family members, companions, neighbours, acquaintances. The essential aspect of this evangelizing zeal consists in the renewal of the Association and giving special attention to the family and to the new generations, fostering and developing personal friendships, openness towards all and a spirit of service, making our own the profoundly gospel attitudes of Mary: her availability to God, her fidelity at the time of trial and of the cross, her spirit of joy and thanksgiving for the marvels worked by the Lord.

In the spirit of the *Magnificat* let us sing our thanks for all the good experienced by ADMA in these 150 years, including thanks for the fidelity of so many humble people who have kept alive the flame of the Association in times of difficulty, of crisis and of challenge so that the gift received by Don Bosco may continue to be handed on to future generations.

Close to the great picture of Mary Help of Christians in the Basilica in Turin, the statue of Don Bosco has him with a model of the church in his hand showing how Salesian work is marked by the presence of Mary Help of Christians. Fidelity to Don Bosco cannot be separated from devotion to the Help of Christians which was so close to his apostolic heart and to the hearts of all his successors. It is a charismatic heritage to be rediscovered and promoted.

*«This active motherly presence of Mary is the foundation of the Association and the inspiration for the commitment of the members to the service of the Kingdom of God.»*⁴³ The Association and the fact of belonging to it are based on the experience of the motherly presence and the help of Mary in one's own life. This motherly presence seen, touched and experienced, animates and supports every effort, good resolution and action. Mary is with us, she loves and protects us. From this comes the gospel sense of service that enamates from the joy of feeling oneself saved and of committing oneself with zeal to the proclamation and the building of the Kingdom of God, following the example and with the help of Mary who glorifies the Lord and at the same time declares herself to be His humble handmaid.

Let us also experience the motherly love of Mary so as to become her hands reaching out to every individual so that everyone may draw close to the God of love. The constant entrustment to Mary is a vital characteristic of our spirituality. «Entrustment has an upward action: it is a giving of oneself in order to respond generously to a mission to be accomplished; but there is also a downward motion: accepting with trust and gratitude the help of Her who guided Don Bosco and continues to guide the spiritual Family which has its origin in him.»⁴⁴

The strongly felt presence of Mary in our educative and evangelizing mission is a confirmation and a safeguard that we are not doing "our own thing" and are not depending solely on our own efforts: we are responding to a gift and to a call, with all the effort and the patience that our responses, limited as they always are, require. Authentic entrustment to Mary, the first to be evangelized and the first evangelizer is for us a charismatic fact which enables us to be aware of being servants and mediators of the grace of God. Mary the star of evangelization is helping us, as she did at Cana in Galilee, to know how to respond to the real ques-

⁴³ *Regulations ADMA*, art. 1.

⁴⁴ *Salesian Family Charter*, n. 37.

tions of the young and of the people that God loves, and she is inviting us to pay attention to her Son: «Do whatever he tells you.»⁴⁵

The Association of Mary Help of Christians is a light that shines out for all the Salesian world and invites us to be with Mary disciples and missionaries of the Gospel of joy. So many eyes are looking at this organisation which is able to involve as an Association, families, parents and children, young people and old, boys girls, and teenagers. My opinion of the situation is based on observing that sometimes new opportunities arise among us not because there is a established programme but because life itself calls; it is life that can highlight what is most important and for what there is most need. The most precious specific aspect of ADMA is the fact of the faith lived in a family where Our Lady is present and providing accompaniment. This is of great value for the Church, of exceptional value.

In conclusion, allow me to share a profound conviction of mine. Travelling around the world I notice that we are putting so much effort into so many different activities in order to make them succeed as well as possible, many of them devoted to generous social work: this is all very valuable and always very Salesian. Nevertheless, sometimes what is missing is a opportunity for real relationships: occasions to speak of God, of Jesus, to celebrate the faith, to express the faith that is our support. We talk about so many things, but sometimes, unfortunately not about what is most deeply rooted. In this situation the Association of Mary Help of Christians has many fine elements, among which the faith and prayer stand out and these need to remain a priority. Seeing families, seeing children, seeing young and old people together is a splendid thing.

I thank all those who have made this journey possible and I invite all our Salesian Family and all the places where we are

⁴⁵ *Jn* 2,5.

present to take advantage of this Mother's love with the same educative and evangelizing passion of Don Bosco. I can assure you that the protection of the Lord, the maternal presence of Mary Help of Christians and the intercession of Don Bosco will not be lacking. In particular, I ask all our Salesian Family to promote with pastoral creativity awareness of this Association in those places in which it is not yet present; even though 150 years have passed since its foundation. Mary Help of Christians will still do the rest.

Saint John Paul II has given us a fine chart, saying to us as the Salesian Family: «By your work, dear educators, you are sharing in a wondrous manner in the motherly role of the Church. (*Gravissimum educationis*, 3). Keep always before you Mary most Holy the most lofty collaborator of the Holy Spirit, who was docile to his inspirations and so became Mother of Christ and Mother of the Church. She continues through the centuries "to be a maternal presence as is shown by Christ's words spoken from the Cross: 'Woman behold your son': 'Behold your mother'" Never take your gaze off Mary," (*Redemptoris Mater*, 24).»⁴⁶

Thank you for all the witness you are giving. Let us continue to forge ahead with great energy: *entrust, have trust, and smile!* May God bless you!



Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb
Rector Major

⁴⁶ JOHN PAUL II, *Iuvenum Patris*, o.c., pp. 33-34.

2. GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIVES

2.1 PROVINCIAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS (CG27 73.4)

Fr Francesco CEREDA
Vicar of the Rector Major

Among the tasks of youth service, GC27 points out to us the protection of minors. In particular, it asks us to commit to “encouraging in our centres an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of minors, committing ourselves to creating conditions which prevent any form of abuse and violence, where every Province follows the guidelines and directives of the Rector Major and General Council” (CG27 73.4).

In order to put this commitment into practice, the Project of the Rector Major and the General Council for the six-year period asks the Vicar of the Rector Major to “help the Provinces to formulate guidelines for the safeguarding and protection of minors and for the prevention of cases of abuse”. The purpose of the present guideline is to sensitize and encourage the Provinces to develop these guidelines.

However, the recent meeting on the “Protection of Minors in the Church” held in the Vatican on February 21-24, 2019, with the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of the whole world and with the representatives of the Superiors General of Religious Institutes, commits us to reviewing, deepening or beginning the process of drawing up some guidelines.

1. Suggestions for the steps to be taken

The protection of minors is not limited to dealing with every *notitia criminis* (notice of the crime) concerning cases of violation of the sixth Commandment *cum minore* (with a minor). Since 2002 our Congregation has prepared guidelines that refer to the listening

and help of the victims, the support of their families, the preliminary investigation. The provinces have gradually learned to deal with these cases, which require commitment to overcoming the culture of silence, to speeding up the canonical investigation, to taking care of the relationship with communication, to collaborating with justice. These actions are an important condition for the credibility of those who, like us, state they to want to guarantee “safe educational environments”; but other interventions are necessary.

I therefore suggest the following steps.

The first one concerns the reading of the reports of the Vatican meeting on the “Protection of Minors in the Church” held last February and of the concluding speech delivered by Pope Francis on that occasion, as well as of the first acts of the Supreme Pontiff himself after this meeting, dated March 26, 2019: the “*Motu Proprio* on the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons”, “Law No. CCXCVII on the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons of Vatican City State”, the “Guidelines for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons” for the Vicariate of Vatican City. It is also necessary to know the work of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, created by Pope Francis in March 2014.

There is also the need to consider the Pope’s “*Motu proprio*”, published on 7 May 2019 and entitled “*Vos estis lux mundi*” (*You are the Light of the World*), on how to proceed in cases of “*notitia criminis*” in reference to crimes against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. The provinces will have a particular interest in everything that is explained in Title I on the “General Provisions” concerning the establishment of a place accessible to the public for submission of reports, the obligation to report by a cleric and a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life, the protection of the person submitting the report, the welcoming of and listening to those who claim to have been offended along with their families. The “*Motu proprio*” equates the “vulnerable person” with the minor, of whom it gives a clear definition in art. 1 §2 letter b. In Ti-

tle II on "Provisions concerning Bishops and Their Equivalents", what is stated about compliance with state laws (article 19) is of particular interest for the provinces. As regards the violation of the sixth commandment of the Decalogue with Minors, "*Vos estis lux mundi*" does not modify the discipline of can. 1395 §2 CIC and art. 6 §1, n. 1 of the *Motu proprio "Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela"*. It is also confirmed that judgement for such crimes, if committed by a cleric, is within the competence of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The second step is to have as a point of reference the "Guidelines" of one's own Episcopal Conference, which are normative for each Province, as they deal with situations related to their cultural context, adopt common solutions, especially bearing in mind the civil and penal legislation of the country. These "Guidelines" are being revised by each Episcopal Conference and will be approved by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The third step is to identify the scheme of these "Guidelines", discussing them within the Regions or Provincial Conferences under the guidance of the Regional Councillor or asking for models from those Provinces that have already done this work. For example, the "Guidelines for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons" for the Vicariate of Vatican City, published by Pope Francis, cover the following topics: the scope of implementation, the contact person for the protection of minors, pastoral workers, pastoral activities, the informed consent of parents or guardians, the treatment of reports of alleged cases of exploitation, sexual abuse and ill-treatment.

A fourth step concerns the involvement of educative and pastoral communities in their various components. Since it is a question of ensuring the creation of safe educative and pastoral environments, the educative and pastoral community must be involved from the beginning of the process and not only during its implementation. For this reason, we think that it is not effective to send to the provinces a single model to be copied and applied. The

“Provincial Guidelines” are not a “bureaucratic implementation”: before being a document, they are a “process” that involves in the reflection the confreres, the laity who are in contact with minors, the representatives of the parents. This “process”, that is made up of reflection, comparison, adaptation to individual situations and cultures, makes the sensitivity and culture of prevention grow in a province.

The last step is the approval of these “Provincial Guidelines” by the Provincial and the Provincial Council and their publication. Making this work public is also a contribution to increasing ever more in the Church and in society a greater sensitivity for the protection of minors.

The protection of minors, just as it is not limited to dealing with every *notitia criminis* concerning cases of child abuse, cannot either be reduced to preventing cases of abuse. In this regard, GC27 offers a guideline when it asks the provinces to commit themselves to “promoting and defending human rights and the rights of minors through the innovative approach of the Preventive System, paying particular attention to child labour, the sex trade, drug dependency and all forms of exploitation, youth unemployment and migration and human trafficking” (GC27 73.3).

2. Operative instructions

The legal entity that conducts the process and approves the “Provincial Guidelines for the Protection of Minors” is the Province; therefore, it is not made up of the educative and pastoral communities, the Provincial Conferences or the Regions.

It seems appropriate that the Province set up a commission to study and conduct the process of involving the educative and pastoral communities in reflecting on and contributing to the provincial “Guidelines”. It will be important that, by beginning this process, the Province offer motivation to its confreres and to the educative and pastoral communities and illustrate to them what

the phases of its realization will be; that is, moments of formation are needed.

Since the responsibility lies with each province, the Rector Major and the General Council will not give an approval of the "Provincial Guidelines". The Vicar of the Rector Major and the juridical office may offer suggestions or advice, but each province will have to decide the modality of the implementation of the process and of the involvement. The Regional Councillors will encourage moments of study and discussion within the Regions and especially in the meeting of the Provincials.

In particular, the Vicar of the Rector Major will ensure that the Provinces can deliver this work before the next General Chapter or give information on the state of the ongoing process, on the steps taken and on those to be taken.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

Here below are some of the main activities of the Rector Major in the Semester from January to June 2019

– January 2019

As in other years, the Rector Major began the year 2019 by accompanying his parents, in his hometown of Luanco, Spain.

On the 6th, on his return to Rome, he presided over the feast of the Epiphany with the communities of the Auxilium Faculty of the FMAs. The following day he met the Ambassador of the Republic of Panama to the Holy See, for the last details of the visit he would make at the end of the month, because of the World Youth Day (WYD) convened by Pope Francis.

From Monday, January 7th, onwards, the meetings of the General Council resumed.

On January 8th, in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, he presided over a Mass on the liturgical memory of Blessed Titus Zeman. The following day he participated in the meeting of the Board of Directors of the IUS (Salesian Institutions of Higher Education) and later on he made

a visit to the novices of the two novitiates of the FMAs in Rome.

From January 10th to 13th he presided over the Days of the Salesian Family in Turin-Valdocco, meeting the numerous participants from all continents and accompanying each moment of the Days.

On the 15th, he presided over the Eucharist in the provincial house of the FMAs in Rome and on the 16th, together with the General Council, he received, at the “Sacred Heart”, Mother Ivonne and the sisters of the General Council of the FMAs.

During the last week of meetings of the General Council, the Rector Major met with some of the newly appointed Provincials to present them with the navigation chart and to plan together their induction.

At the end of the winter session of the Council, this time a little earlier for the celebration of WYD in the City of Panama, before leaving for the American continent, the Rector Major met with the directors of the various missionary Procures who were in Rome for the world conference organized by the Dicastery for the Missions. On the 20th, he participated in the feast of the Salesian Family of Lazio.

On the 21st he leaves for Panama where he will participate in the different moments of WYD, in the meeting of the MGS/SYM with the reason also of the WYD and the feast of Don Bosco which in this nation and especially in its capital is celebrated in a characteristic way. During the Days, residing in the Salesian community of the Basilica of Don Bosco, he not only takes part in the various events, but also receives and greets many pilgrims who pass by to pay homage to one of the urns with the relics of Don Bosco, which were distributed in the different continents. Besides, in these days, the Rector Major inaugurates and blesses the "Don Bosco Museum", which also includes an exact replica of the little house of Becchi.

After WYD, many groups of young people and the Salesian Family remained in Panama for the Feast of Don Bosco. The Rector Major presided over the final triduum of the novena in honour of Don Bosco, extraordinarily attended by thousands of people who filled the Basilica, the corridors, the courtyard, etc. Finally, he presided over the main Eucharist on the Solemnity of Don Bosco and accompanied the procession that was presided over by the Archbishop of Panama. The participation in this procession

is perhaps the most numerous with more than 300,000 people attending in the streets of the city.

– February 2019

Returning to Rome, he remains at the headquarters for office work and some hearings until his departure for the visit to Ireland, except on days 7th and 8th, when he goes to Spain for family reasons.

From February 13th to 15th the Rector Major *visits the Province of Ireland (IRL)*. In particular, he visits the houses of Pallaskenry, Milford, Maynooth, Celbridge, Don Bosco Care and Davy House, meeting young people, students, educative and pastoral communities and members of the Salesian Family. Already on the first day of his visit he met the Provincial Council and on the next day almost all the confreres of the Province. Worth mentioning is a wonderful meeting the Rector Major had with about forty young university students who are in contact with the community in Maynooth, where he shared with them a moment of prayer and adoration and a very interesting moment of exchange and dialogue full of beautiful testimonies from these young students. The Rector Major more than once insisted on the hope that it awakens the fact of finding more and more Salesians among

the youth in the different situations and structures of service, even if the Province has an average high age and there are few confreres.

Back in Rome, on Sunday, February 17th, the Rector Major presided over a Mass in the house “Ersilia Canta” of the FMAs and on February 18th he participated in the Executive Council of the Union of Superiors General (USG) of which he is a member. On the 20th he left for Lyon, France, *to visit this Province (FRB)*, where he remained until the morning of the 25th.

In France he visited the houses ‘Centre Jean Bosco’ and ‘Notre-Dame des Minimes’ in Lyon; he visited Argenteuil, then the ‘Maison Provinciale’ and Monte Cristo in Paris, where he arrived on the Lyon-Paris high-speed train. He then visited the houses of Liège and Grand-Halleux, in Belgium, where he also arrived by train, always accompanied by the Provincial and members of his Council. During his visit to the FRB, he met the young people of the MGS/SYM, parishioners, members of the Salesian Family and obviously the confreres from both France and Southern Belgium. He could also meet with the Provincial Council and the members of the *Tutelle*, an organization that administers and manages the various Salesian schools in

France, as well as the team of the ‘Don Bosco Action Sociale’. A very interesting feature is that throughout the Salesians work together with the Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco (FMAs), also in the formation of consecrated persons and lay people. A note of colour is that the view of the very famous Eiffel Tower was from a corner of the block where the Provincial house is located... about 8 km from the Tower.

Back in Rome, for two days the Rector Major carried out a considerable amount of office work and, among other things, some hearings, and on Thursday, February 28th, he left for Vienna for the *visit to the Province of Austria (AUS)*.

– **March 2019**

The visit to Austria took place until the morning of March 4th. At the arrival he was able to make a quick visit to Vienna by night. In Austria he concentrated his visit to Vienna (Provincial house, Salesianum and Stadlau) and a quick visit to Unterwaltersdorf (Don Bosco High School). During the visit he met the confreres, the FMAs (their Mother Provincial was very present, accompanying the visit of the Rector Major), the young students, the MGS/SYM and the members of the Salesian Family. The Rector Major also had a special

meeting with the younger SDB confreres. As a tourist note, he was able to participate in a concert in the Kursalon, the place of reference of the composer Johann Strauss, and to have a guided tour in the Metropolitan Cathedral Basilica of St. Stephen, a particular Gothic jewel.

On his return to Rome for two days, he does office work and, among other commitments, he receives in audience the Ambassador of Germany to the Holy See, His Excellency Michael Koch (on the 5th), and the new Ambassador of Spain to the Holy See, Her Excellency María del Carmen de la Peña Corcuera (on the 6th), who came on courtesy visits. In the evening of Wednesday 6th he is in Madrid for the signature at the headquarters of official documents of the Spanish State.

On the 7th he leaves for Cape Town, South Africa, to begin his *visit to the AFM Vice-Province*. This visit extends from March 8th to 12th. He visits the Salesian presences of Cape Town and Lansdowne, in the southwest of the country, and then, in the area of the capital, Johannesburg, the works of Walkerville and the house of the FMAs near the airport where he meets the sisters present in the country. In these different houses the Rector Major meets with the confreres, young

people and students, members of the educative and pastoral communities and members of the Salesian Family from the different areas, including Swaziland (today officially called 'Kingdom of eSwatini'). He also visits Maputsoe, Lesotho, where he arrives by car. Here he finds confreres and members of the Salesian Family from both Maputsoe and Maseru, who have come to be present in a good number. As with all visits, the Rector Major meets the Provincial Council and shares with them the situation of the Vice-Province and of the Council itself, and studies together some lines for the future. In Maputsoe the young people of the two houses of Lesotho showed great sympathy, closeness and art, with their traditional dances and costumes.

Returning to Rome on March 14th, he dedicates himself to office work, meeting, among others, the World Council of the Association of Salesian Cooperators.

On Friday 15th, in the afternoon he travels to Venezia Mestre to begin his *visit to the Province of Italy-North East (Triveneta) (INE)*. In this visit, as always, he meets the Provincial Council and the SDB confreres, the youth, especially those who participate in the "Feast of Youngsters" in Jesolo, the Salesian Family and in particular the

Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (in Padua), young people, and animators of the oratory (in Schio), the community of 'Casa Zatti' in Mestre, the laity co-responsible for the mission of the houses of the different presences of the Province (in Mogliano Veneto), and the young people of the "Proposal Community" together with a good group of young people who are making their discernment in the different houses of the Province. The Rector Major finds a very lively Province in its different groups and with a great commitment to the world of youth.

On Tuesday 19th in the morning he returns to Rome to participate in the feast of the community of St. Joseph (community of the Headquarters, at the "Sacred Heart") on the feast of St. Joseph, one of the Patron Saints of the Congregation.

After two days at the headquarters to give way to various themes of ordinary management (among other things the monitoring of the project of the Salesian Places in Turin-Valdocco and Colle Don Bosco), on the 22nd, early in the morning, he leaves for Mumbai, India. Between the 23rd and the 27th he *visits this Province of Mumbai (INB)*. Then, from March 28th to April 1st, he *visits the Province of Goa (INP)*.

In the Province of Mumbai he visits the presences of Matunga

(provincial house), Wadala (SDBs and FMAs), the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians and Dominic Savio, Andheri, Don Bosco Centre of Learning (Kurla), Pune Koragon Road (SDB students and youth centre), Yerwada (Sacred Heart) and Baroda (Gujarat). In the two areas of Mumbai-Pune and Baroda he meets the Salesians, the members of the Salesian Family and the youth. On the first day of his stay in Mumbai he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and then met the FMAs. In Mumbai he also met with the novices and post-novices who had come from Nashik. He also met with theological students along with other professed students in Pune. On the 27th he participated in the 50th Anniversary Jubilee of Comic Savio Boys' Home (Mumbai-Andheri). In the afternoon of the 28th he left for Panjim, Goa.

In the Province of Panjim (INP), starting from the provincial house in Odxel, he visited the presences of Don Bosco Panjim, Auxilium Caranzalem (of the FMAs), Loutolim, Don Bosco Fatorda and Paliem.

Already on the first day he met with the Provincial Council and later with the Rectors and those in charge of the works not yet canonically erected. He met the young students in Panjim and all the confr-

eres of the Province who were able to be present. With them he celebrated the Eucharist in the Shrine and shared the situation of the Congregation and the Province. He also met several guests and benefactors, along with the relatives of the Salesians. He also met with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in their house and with the members of the Salesian Family. He participated in the youth festival in Fator-da and blessed the new structures in Loutolim. He also had a meeting with the press interested in youth issues, the Congregation and the Church in general. The meeting of the Rector Major with a large group of confreres from the early stages of Salesian formation was particularly significant. During the solemn concelebration on Saturday night which was presided over by the Rector Major in the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians, the local Archbishop of Goa and Daman, Msgr. Filipe Neri Ferraro, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Sindhurg, Msgr. Anthony Fernandes Barreto, concelebrated with him and afterwards stayed to have dinner together.

– April 2019

On April 1st he left Panjim and reached Mumbai airport to take the flight back to Rome. At the airport

he shared a fraternal snack with the Provincial of INB and some members of his Council, who had come to greet him and make the forced wait for the next flight less long. When he arrived in Rome on the morning of the 2nd, the Rector Major dedicated himself to office work and some audiences, except on the 4th when he went to Turin for a meeting with the team that follows the work in the ‘Casa Pinardi’ in Valdocco, and in the weekend when he went to Madrid to participate in the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of the CCS Salesian Publications (*Central Catequística Salesiana*).

From Monday, April 8th to Wednesday, April 17th, he presided over the meetings of the General Council in its *intermediate session*. During this period, on Friday, April 12th, he participated in the presentation of the Musical “The Prince of Patagonia”, on the life of Ceferrino Namuncurá, organized by the people of Frascati and produced in the Viganò Theatre in Rome, where Mrs. Consul General of the Argentine Republic in Rome, Ambassador María Lucía Dougherty de Sánchez, was also present.

From Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday Fr Ángel was with his family in Luanco, his hometown. On Easter Monday he went to

Madrid to leave in the evening for Brazil to begin his *visit to the Campo Grande Province (BCG)*. With this trip he concluded his visits in America, after having visited all the provinces and all the countries of this great continent (except the United States, where last year he had not received permission to enter).

In the BCG Province, the Rector Major was able to visit the work of São Gonçalo and the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians, in Cuiabá, Barra do Garças (aspirantate of young indigenous bororos and xavantes) and the mission in Bororo land in Meruri, the Provincial House, the Campus of the Don Bosco Catholic University, Chácara São Vicente (post-novitiate) and S. João Bosco Parish, in Campo Grande.

He met the Provincial Council, his confreres, both in Campo Grande and in Meruri (those most directly involved in missionary work, together with the FMAs), the young people of the cities of Cuiabá and Campo Grande and others who came from other cities, and especially the young bororos and xavantes. He also had a meeting with the members of the Salesian Family. The celebration in Cuiabá for the 125th anniversary of the first Salesian presence in the Province is worth mentioning. In Meruri, the

Rector Major presided over a moment of prayer in the mission cemetery where the bodies of the martyrs, Fr Rodolfo Lunkenbien and Simão Bororo, are buried, and then there was the celebration of the Eucharist with the two communities. The important fact is that this was the first time that members of the Bororo and Xavante peoples met to pray together since these two ethnic groups have been enemies and adversaries for centuries. The visit to the “Museu das Culturas Dom Bosco” was a cultural moment of great significance.

Departing from Campo Grande on Sunday morning 28th, he arrived in Rome for lunch on Monday 29th. The 30th was a day of office work.

– May 2019

The Rector Major began this month with a visit to the house in Kenitra, Morocco. This presence depends on the Province of France-Belgium South (FRB). When he arrived at Rabat airport, he was welcomed by the Provincial of FRB, the Rector of Kenitra and the local Archbishop, our confrere Cristóbal López. When he arrived in Kenitra and after a short rest, the Rector Major presided over the Mass of the small local Catholic community and afterwards shared dinner with the confreres and a group of Mus-

lim lay people, co-responsible for the Salesian work. On May 2nd, at different times of the day, he met the children and young people of the primary, secondary and high schools, the teachers and a large group of parents, 98% of whom are Muslim. The love for Don Bosco and the Salesian charism is to be highlighted, as well as the typically Salesian environment that is perceived in this house. Teachers and relatives thank each other so much for the openness of the work, the interculturality and the respect for each other that one breathes and lives with normality in daily life. On the 3rd, before leaving to return to Rome, the Rector Major visited the nursery and also the CFP (Vocational Training Centre) of boys and the one of girls and women, observing the same Salesian spirit and a great identity on the part of all. The presence of young people from sub-Saharan Africa is very evident, especially in the CFP of boys.

Back in Rome, for three days he carried out various office tasks and on the 7th he left for Veržej, Slovenia, to take part in the meeting of the Provincials of Centre and North Europe Region. In the evening of Wednesday 8th all the participants went to Maribor for a thanksgiving celebration of the Region in honour of the Rector Major,

with the participation also of the Salesian Family of Slovenia (SLO).

In the afternoon of the 9th, the Rector Major returned to Rome and in the evening of the same day he left for Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo, to visit the provinces of Central Africa (AFC) and Africa Congo Congo (ACC), where the Regional Councillor for Africa and Madagascar was also waiting for him. These visits took place from May 9th to 19th.

When he arrived in Lubumbashi, he went to the provincial house, and then gradually visited the various Salesian communities and houses: the *Cité des Jeunes* (City of Youth), the House of Theology (*Theologicum*), Imara, the future *Cité Mariale* now under construction (future university campus), the *Polyclinique Afia Don Bosco* (where some VDBs also work), Kansebula (*post-novitiate*), Bakanja (for young people with family problems), Kwe-su (of the FMAs) and the novitiate in Chem-Chem. As always during these visits, the Rector Major met the Provincial Council, the Salesian confreres, the members of the Salesian Family, with particular attention to the FMAs, and the young people of the MGS/SYM. On his way to the post-novitiate of Kansebula, he stopped at the episcopal house of our confrere Gaston Ru-

vezi, Bishop of Sakania-Kipushi, who had gathered his clergy for a small meeting with the Rector Major, expressing their gratitude for the mission that the Salesians carry out in the Diocese.

Two notes to emphasize about this visit are the always close and helpful presence of the FMA sisters throughout the visit and the numerical strength and courage that is found in this Province that is trying to continue to grow in Salesian identity and service.

On the 15th, Fr Angel left from Lubumbashi for Kinshasa, again in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Here is the see of the new *Vice-Province of ACC (Africa Congo Congo)*. When he arrived at the provincial house in Kinshasa and after greeting the many students of the great school in Masina, the Rector Major met the Provincial Council and afterwards all together they had dinner at *Caffé Mozart*, a café-restaurant run by the FMAs together with the CFP of which it is a member. The next day, the Rector Major met the confreres of the different presences of this new Vice-Province in the territory of the DRC, with whom he shared the dialogue, the Eucharist and the festive lunch, followed by a meeting with the young people of the MGS/SYM. On the 17th he met the

Salesian Family in the morning and until lunch. Then in the afternoon, together with the Provincial and the group, they left for the port on the border, to cross the river towards Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. From there they went to Masengo, house of the Novitiate, where the Rector Major was received by the novices and a group of confreres, lay people, boys and girls from this very popular area. The next day, in the same place, he met his confreres and later the members of the Salesian Family. In the afternoon he left for Pointe Noire, where he met the confreres of this community, the laity and the young people. Our confrere Miguel Ángel Olaverri, Bishop of Pointe Noire, and some of the Prelates of the Diocese also welcome him. On Sunday morning, the 19th, the Holy Mass in honour of Mary Help of Christians is celebrated in a large courtyard in front of the large church, because there are so many people that even more space would be needed. After Mass and a quick lunch, he left quickly for the airport to return to Rome.

During these first five months of the year, the Rector Major visited 14 countries and 10 Provinces, accompanying very closely the animation and government of these Provinces, together with the ordi-

nary government of the Congregation.

Arriving in Rome on Monday morning, May 20th, in the afternoon he leaves by train for Turin to participate in the World Council of the Salesian Family and in the Feast of Mary Help of Christians. He was accompanied by his secretary and Salesian Brothers Renato Celato (95 years old) and Cesare Borlengo (84 years old) to participate together in the feasts in honour of Our Lady. During the Council of the Salesian Family he had the opportunity to meet and greet many General Moderators of the different groups. During the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, he met the novices of the European novitiates and the participants at the fourth level of the course of teaching Salesian Spirituality at the Permanent Formation Centre of America, based in Quito, which serves the two American Regions. The participants made a formative journey in the Salesian places of Piedmont and Rome. He also met with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians of the Province of Piedmont (with streaming broadcast for the rest of the FMA world). He then presided over the solemn Eucharist in the evening of May 24th and participated in the moment of prayer in the Basilica, since the

usual procession did not take place because the organizers were frightened by the possibility of a rain that finally did not arrive. In the meantime, he received several people in private audience.

On Sunday the 26th he presided over the Eucharist at the meeting of the directors of the Salesian Bulletins of the world, held at the La Salle house, in Via Aurelia.

From May 28th to Sunday, June 2nd, he took a week to do the Spiritual Exercises at the Salesian house of Monteortone (INE Province).

– June 2019

On June 3rd, the Rector Major opened the summer plenary session of the General Council. In these days, in addition to the daily meetings of the Council, he did office work and received some people in personal audience.

During the weekend of June 7th-9th, he was in Luanco, Spain, for family reasons.

From June 10th to 22nd, the new Provincials were present at the Headquarters for the course of formation and organization at the beginning of their service. In this way he was able to meet personally with each one of them, in addition to the general meetings.

On June 19th, he also participated in the Academic Council of the Aux-

ilium Faculty as Grand Chancellor. On the 21st in Turin-Valdocco he met the team that follows the works in the Salesian places, especially in this phase of recovery of Casa Pinardi-Casa Don Bosco. In the afternoon of Saturday 22nd he participated in the episcopal ordination of Fr Alberto Lorenzelli, which was done in St Peter's Basilica by the Holy Father Pope Francis.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

In **January 2019** the main work of Fr Francesco Cereda was certainly his participation in the winter session of the General Council, in his capacity as Vicar of the Rector Major. In the last days of the month, from January the 26th to the 31st, he participated in and presided over some celebrations for the feasts of Don Bosco in the Salesian Places in Chieri, Colle Don Bosco and Turin-Valdocco.

In **February**, from the 21st to the 24th, in the Vatican he participated in the meeting on "The Protection

of Minors in the Church", together with the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of the whole world and some General Superiors. Starting in this this month, he met the UPS personnel group, maintained relations with some Provincials and met confreres in the search for personnel to meet the needs of the Salesian University, of the communities of "St. Francis de Sales" in the Vatican, of "San Callisto" in Rome at the Catacombs, of the Salesian Places, and of the Salesian Historical Institute.

In **March 2019**, from the 1st to the 8th, he made the *Canonical Visitation to the communities of Eritrea* that depend on the Rector Major: Asmara, Dekemhare, Barentu. He met the Bishops of the three Eparchies in which the Salesian communities and the new parish of Adi Gombollo, a village near Asmara, are located. On the 24th he participated in the meeting of the Salesian Family of the region of Tuscany, which belongs to the Province of Central Italy (ICC). On the 26th he participated in the meeting of the deans of our Salesian Centres of Theology, which was held at UPS.

In **April**, from the 2nd to the 4th he presided over the *Extraordinary Assembly of the Communities depending on the Rector Major*, in view of

the General Chapter XXVIII, with the preparation of the contributions to be sent to the Regulator and the election of the delegate and substitute to the Chapter Assembly. On the 6th he participated in the Chapter of the Vice-Province of “Mary See of Wisdom” in Rome. From the 25th to the 26th he participated in the meeting of the Provincials of the Mediterranean Region in Santeramo in Colle, in the Southern (Meridionale) Province.

On **May** 12th, he conferred the ministries of Lector and Acolyte to confreres under specific formation for Salesian priests in Roma Gerini. From May 13th to June 5th he made the *Canonical Visitation to the “Saint Joseph” Community of the Headquarters*, meeting also the confreres of the Community of the “Sacred Heart” in Rome, belonging to the Province of Central Italy and who would later be transferred to the “Sede Centrale” for pastoral services. On the 24th and the 25th, he participated in and celebrated the Feast of Mary Help of Christians in the Italian Catholic Mission in Zurich.

In **June**, on days 1-2, he participated in the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Consecration of the Parish “Don Bosco” in Bologna, which belongs to the Lombardy-Emilia Province (ILE).

The Councillor for Formation

In the pause after the Christmas Festivities, the General Councillor for Formation, Fr Ivo Coelho, together with Fr Silvio Roggia, participated in the *Congress of Salesian Brothers of South Asia*, in Bengaluru, from **December** 30th, 2018 to January 3rd, 2019. From **January** 18th to 21st, he took part with Fr Francisco Santos in the *European Meeting of Salesian Brothers* in Martí-Codolar, Barcelona, organized by the Dicastery.

He participated in the *Seminars on Post-Novitiate* organized by the Dicastery in Copacabana, Colombia (from **February** 5th to 8th, 2019), and in Nairobi (from **March** 8th to 11th). On February 12th-13th, he presided over the “Curatorium” in Jerusalem, before reaching Batulao for the World Council on Formation, from February 16th to 20th, and for the course on the methodology of formation, led by Fr S.M. Selvaratnam, OMI.

After a visit to the houses of formation of the Vice-Province of Sri Lanka (LKC) [aspirantate in Dankotuwa, pre-novitiate in Kotadeniyawa, novitiate in Arabegama, post-novitiate in Ahungalla], from February 27th to **March** 3rd, the Councillor went to Seoul in

Korea, where he participated (on March 6th-7th) in the meeting of the Provincials of the East Asia - Oceania region.

From March 18th to **April** 28th, 2019, Fr Ivo made the *Extraordinary Visitation to 7 communities of the ICP Province* (Turin-Crocetta, Chieri, Colle Don Bosco, Pinerolo, infirmary A. Beltrami in Valsalice, community of Mary Help of Christians in Valdocco, community Blessed Filippo Rinaldi, infirmary, in Valdocco). From April 8th to 17th he returned to Rome to participate in the meetings of the *Intermediate General Council*. During this period, he also participated in the meeting to plan the centenary year 2022, dedicated to St. Francis de Sales 400 years after his death.

From **May** 22nd to 24th, he participated, with other members of the Dicastery, in the annual meeting of the novices of Europe at Colle Don Bosco and Valdocco. From May 24th to 30th, with some members of the Dicastery and confreres of the community of St. Joseph (Headquarters) he went to Annecy for the spiritual exercises, organized by the Dicastery at the places of St. Francis de Sales.

During this period, the Dicastery continued its work on the revision of the manual of the Salesian RecTOR and the manual of Salesian

prayer, as well as the drafting of guidelines on the accompaniment of Salesian personnel.

It is worth noting that the Dicastery had the joy of welcoming a new member of the Dicastery, the Salesian Brother Raymond Callo (FIN).

The Councillor for Youth Ministry

The path of animation of the Dicastery for Youth Ministry from **February** to **May** 2019 was marked by a series of meetings, both at regional and at world level, and was carried out by the Councillor and his collaborators.

The various initiatives of animation were as follows:

1. First of all, the *World Youth Day* (WYD) which was celebrated in Panama. The Dicastery together with the Commission for Youth Ministry of the Province of Central America (CAM) prepared the day of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM/MGS) with a morning of study for representatives of the various countries and then with an evening of prayer and celebration for all the youth of SYM/MGS present for WYD.
2. For the last time in this six-year period, the Dicastery organized

the meeting of the Provincial Delegates for Youth Ministry for the two European Regions that was held in Turin, Valdocco, at the beginning of February 2019. The Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation of the same two Regions were also present at this meeting to study the new edition of the document on *Salesian Missionary Volunteer Movement*.

3. Moreover, in February some members of the Dicastery, together with the two *advocacy* bodies – Don Bosco International (DBI) and SDB-UN – took part in the annual meeting of the *Don Bosco Network* (DBN) with an increasingly qualified contribution and in synergy with the various Salesian organizations.
4. Between February and March 2019, the Councillor was invited to the meetings of the two regional Conferences of Provincials, in Dimapur, for South Asia, and in Seoul, for East Asia and Oceania. The themes were mainly around the same theme as the Synod on Youth, but also on the provincial structures of governance, pastoral animation and educative-pastoral projects.
5. At the end of March, at the “Sacred Heart”, the *Council for*

Works and Social Services was celebrated with the presence of the heads of all the regional and national organizations that follow the field of marginalization. The positive experience of this Council, with the contribution also of the Dicastery for Social Communication, has produced a final document on the sector to help the reflection in view of the forthcoming General Chapter 28.

6. In April 2019, an experience of spiritual exercises was proposed for the young Salesian animators of Europe at Colle Don Bosco. This first experience, lived by about 30 young people from various European countries, was animated by Fr Fabio Attard.
7. For the second time in this six-year period, the Dicastery has proposed the *School for the Provincial Delegates for Youth Ministry* who are at the beginning of their mandate. The presence of 37 Salesians and one lay person was experienced at Colle Don Bosco and Valdocco.
8. The Councillor was also called to offer days of reflection in the light of the Synod on Youth to the Diocesan Commission for Youth Ministry of Malta in March 2019, and during the

- month of May to the Episcopal Conference of Greece together with all the parish priests of the country. Towards the end of February 2019, the Councillor made a visit of animation to the Salesian presences in Tunisia, 30 years after the new foundation of the Salesians in this land.
9. Animation visits held by the collaborators of the Dicastery continue:
 - a. in the sector of school and vocational training and in the sector of social works and services in the Philippines;
 - b. for the IUS, the Coordinator made some visits to America, Europe and Oceania to follow the regional processes of this sector.
 10. The DBI continues its animation process with the Provinces of Europe and those outside Europe that are included in some of the Union's programmes. At the end of May 2019, Mr. Angel Gudiña, Executive Secretary of the DBI for the last 4 years, finished his valuable and appreciated work at the DBI. From August 1, 2019 he will be succeeded by Dr. Renato Cursi, who from September 2014 has accompanied the SYM/MGS sector and has also assumed the role of

Secretary of the Department for Youth Ministry.

11. The Salesian presence at the United Nations - SDB-UN - continues its *advocacy* work with the involvement of many Provinces in the various meetings held in New York. Fr Thomas Pallithanam, who is responsible for this presence, is also very well involved in the DBN, facilitating synergies and collaboration with the various Salesian organizations and Provinces.

The Councillor for Social Communication

The Councillor for Social Communication, Fr Filiberto González Plasencia, after the meetings of the winter session of the General Council, engaged in various services and activities.

January 2019: from the 20th to the 25th he participated in the World Youth Day and in the International Feast of the Salesian Youth Movement, paying particular attention to the communicative aspect. From the 26th to the 29th he was in the MEG Province to meet the Provincial and his Council.

February 2019: during the first weeks he started the process for the

renewal of his stay in Italy and to get several visas for his travels. From the 21st to the 24th he presided over the *World Council for Social Communication* at the "Sacred Heart" in Rome. On the 25th and the 26th he met, together with Fr Juan Pablo Abreu and Mr. Hilario Seo, the *Dosatic* team in charge of creating the new *sdb.org* website. On February 28th, he left for Santo Domingo with Fr Juan Pablo Abreu.

March 2019: from the 1st to the 7th he meets the Provincial of the Antilles and several members of the Council in the provincial house, then visits the works of La Vega and Jarabacoa and leaves Fr Juan Pablo who will spend a period of time in his family. On the evening of the 8th he returns to Rome.

On March 17th he leaves for Recife, Brazil, and makes a visit of animation to the Province of BRE. On the morning of the 19th, he goes to Carpina, where he meets with the National Communications Commission of "Brazil Salesian Network" of the fifteen SDB - FMA Provinces of Brazil. In the evening he returns to Recife and on the morning of the 20th he meets the Delegate for Communication of BRE and his team, and in the afternoon he meets the personnel and visits the installations of AMA

(Asociación Misionera Amanecer). On the 21st he is again in Carpina and presides over the meeting of the SDB Communication Commission of Brazil, integrated with the six SDB Provincial Delegates and lay people. The Provincial of BRE is also present. In the evening he returns to Recife. In the afternoon, accompanied by the Provincial, he presides over the meeting of formators and confreres under formation in Lapa, dealing with the themes of the presence of the Salesians in social networks and offering a profile of Salesian communicator for the young people of the digital world; he concludes in the evening with the Eucharist. On the 23rd in the provincial house of BSP he meets the Provincial, the SC team of the Province and the communication referents of all the works. On the 24th he greets the National Commissions for the Missions and Youth Ministry, which had a meeting in the provincial house and at the theologate of Lapa. In the morning of March 25th, Fr Filiberto flies to Porto Alegre and at noon to Curitiba, where on the 26th in the morning he meets the provincial team for Communication and in the afternoon all the confreres under formation of the Province. On the 27th he visits the novitiate: he meets the community,

celebrates the Eucharist and after lunch he takes the plane back to Porto Alegre. In the morning of the 28th he takes the plane to Brasilia and then to Manaus. Here on the 29th he visits the community and the Don Bosco College, offering the “Good Morning” to teachers and students. In the afternoon he meets the Provincial, the Delegate and the Provincial Commission for Communication. In the morning of the 30th he meets the Provincial and then visits the community of the pre-novitiate, where he has lunch and then offers the community and pre-novices a vision of the Congregation and of communication. In the afternoon, in the provincial house, he meets the communication representatives of some of the houses. In the evening he presides over the Eucharist in the shrine of Saint Joseph. On the 31st at two o’clock in the morning he takes the plane to São Paulo and in the afternoon he flies from São Paulo to Rome, returning to the Headquarters on the 2nd of April.

April 2019. From April 8th to 17th, Fr Filiberto takes part in the meetings of the “intermediate” General Council. From the 26th to the 27th he presides over the eighth *Day of Formation in Communication* at the UPS - FSC, for persons under formation and formators of

SDBs and FMAs, Canção Nova and other consecrated persons invited from Italy, reflecting on the theme offered by Pope Francis for the 53rd World Communications Day: “We are members of one another” (Eph 4:25). From *social networks communities* to the human community”.

May 2019. From the 2nd to the 5th the Councilor presides over the meeting of the Salesian Publishers of Europe at the Salesianum in Munich. From the 9th to the 13th he presides over the meeting of the Delegates of Communication of Europe, also at the Salesianum in Munich, reflecting on the theme: “Which Salesian communicators for the youth of the digital world?”. From the 25th to the 29th in Rome, accompanied by the members of the Dicastery of Communication, he presides over the meeting of the *Directors of the Salesian Bulletin*, reflecting on the theme: “The Salesian Bulletin: communicating to involve in the mission, between press and digital culture”.

The Councillor for the Missions

While the winter plenary session of the General Council was drawing to a close, Fr Guillermo Basaños,

Councillor for the Missions, participated in the World Conference of Salesian Procurators, which took place at the "Domus Urbis" center in Rome from January 17th to 19th, 2019.

From January 25th to 27th, he presided over the work of the World Council for the Missions Sector in Valdocco, with the presence for the first time of all the Regional Coordinators for Missionary Animation - CORAM.

Around the festivities of St. John Bosco, the Councillor for the Missions made his first visit to Albania and Kosovo, the IME Province, from January 29th to 31st. In fact, these two countries are respectively the 105th and 106th that Fr Guillermo visits.

A few days later – from February 5th to 7th – Valdocco enjoyed his presence again, this time for the European interregional meeting of Provincial Delegates for Youth Ministry and Missionary Animation.

On his return to Rome, Fr Basañes took part, on February 11th and 12th, in various international meetings called by the "Don Bosco Network" - DBN, which took place at the UPS.

On the evening of the same day, February 12th, the Councillor left for *Bangalore* to carry out, on be-

half of the Rector Major, from February 13th to May 27th, the *Extraordinary Visitation to the "Sacred Heart" Province* (INK). While the houses of formation of this Province were all visited by the Regional Councillor of South Asia, Fr Guillermo Basañes visited 41 communities present in the states of Kerala and Karnataka (where the two remotest communities are located at 1,300 km from one another) in ninety days and met in personal conversation about 280 confreres.

Because of this demanding Extraordinary Visitation, the Councillor could not participate in the Intermediate Session of the General Council in April in Rome.

During the period of the Extraordinary Visitation, Fr Basañes also participated in the Region's Provincials Conference in Dima-pur on February 25th and 26th. During the days of the Provincial Chapter of the INK Province, he also made a brief visit to Goa, INP Province, from April 25th to 28th. This was the last Province of the South Asia Region that Fr Guillermo had not yet visited.

On his return to Rome, Fr Guillermo participated again in a series of meetings of the "Don Bosco Network" at the UPS, on May 29th and 30th.

The Ecomer General

In **January 2019**, the Ecomer General, Bro. Jean Paul Muller, participated on Monday 14th in the General Assembly of the “Don Bosco Network”, which took place in Rome. During the same week, from January 17th to 20th, he took part in the World Conference of Salesian Missions. On January 26th and 27th, he participated in the event organized in Bonn, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of activity of the Don Bosco Mission Procure. At the end of January, the Ecomer General went to Bangalore, India, for the eighth Congress of the Salesian Brothers of the South Asia Region, which is held every five years.

During the month of **February 2019**, the Ecomer General went to Hyderabad, India, to visit the Salesian houses of the INH Province and from February 11th to 14th he led the meeting of the Provincial Economers of the South Asia Region, which took place in Goa. The main themes were the study of the changes needed to be present in the digital world and the self-sufficiency of youth centres in the Region.

In **March 2019**, the Ecomer General made a visit to Papua New Guinea, where he was able to verify on the spot the missionary activ-

ities carried out by the PGS Vice-Province. In the capital Boroko Vision City, Waigani, during the first week of the month, a meeting was also held between the provincial economers of the East Asia-Oceania Region. The growing network of coordination between the economers' offices and the PDOs of the Region supports the Salesian mission in this Region and is of great help in finding solutions in the administrative field.

From March 8th to 11th, Bro. Muller, together with his trusted advisors, went to Manila in the Philippines to verify the economic situation of the Provinces present in the territory.

In **April 2019**, the Ecomer General, from Tuesday 2nd to Thursday 4th, participated in the Assembly of the communities belonging to RMG. The meeting was held at the Headquarters, in view of the forthcoming General Chapter, which will take place in 2020.

From April 8th to 17th he took part in the meetings of the Intermediate General Council. On April 26th and 27th he participated in the Conference of the Provinces of the Mediterranean Region in Bari and, from April 29th to May 3rd at the Headquarters, he directed the course of formation for the new Provincial Economers.

In **May 2019**, in his capacity as Vice-President, he participated in the "Assembly of Economers General", in various meetings with Economers of other Orders, and, at the end of the month, he took part in the congress of the Salesian Bulletin. On May 29th, 30th and 31st, he participated in the various meetings that were held at the UPS with "Don Bosco Tech Africa", "Don Bosco Network" and "Via Don Bosco".

Besides, on Thursday May 30th, he directed the work of the CSA meeting at the UPS in the presence of the superiors and economers of the Vice-Province and of the University.

In the first week of **June 2019**, he went to Israel to address the legal issues concerning the land of Beit Gemal. Then, during the month, he attended the meetings of the General Council and met the new Provincials, who had come to attend the course that will be held at Headquarters.

The Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region

After the conclusion of the winter plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region, Fr

Américo Chaquisse, left Rome on **January** 19th for the French-speaking West Africa Province (AFO), and went to Togo for an animation visit to the houses of formation: the novitiate in Gbodjomé - Lomé and the postnovitiate of Lomé from January 20th to 25th, and the Salesian community of Kunkujang Mariama, where the Salesians arrived for the first time last October 2018. There Fr Américo remained from January 26th to February 1st and was able to celebrate the Feast of Don Bosco with the community.

From February 2nd to 9th he made a visit to the ZMB Vice-Province, starting from Lilongwe in Malawi, where the pre-novitiate is located. Then he continued his journey to Lusaka in Zambia where he visited the novitiate and met with the Provincial Council. Subsequently, from February 10th to 23rd, he visited the Central African Province (CSA) to participate in the "Curatoria" of the post-novitiate and the theologate. Afterwards, the Regional Councillor took a week of retreat to do the spiritual exercises.

Then, from February 24th to March 6th, he visited the East African Province (EAS), where he participated in the "Curatorium" for the theologate in Utume - Kenya, and for the post-novitiate in

Moshi - Tanzania. In Tanzania he also visited the novitiate in Morogoro.

From March 7th to 12th the Regional Councillor was in the Vice-Province of Southern Africa (AFM) to accompany the Rector Major on his visit to that Circumscription. From March 13th to 16th he then made an animation visit to the Vice-Province of Angola (ANG), where he had a meeting with the Council of the Vice-Province and visited the houses of formation: the pre-novitiate in Dondo, the post-novitiate in Palanca-Luanda and also the aspirantate in Viana.

Subsequently, the Regional Councillor arrived in Addis Ababa for the *Extraordinary Visitation to the AET Vice-Province*, which took place from March 17th to May 8th. After having visited all the communities, on May 7th Fr Américo concluded the Visitation, meeting first with the Rectors and then with the Council of the Vice-Province to present the conclusions of the Visit.

Afterwards, the Regional Councillor was again in the AFC Province to accompany the Rector Major on an animation visit to the Province. Immediately afterwards, from May 15th to 19th, he accompanied the Rector Major on his visit to the ACC (Africa Congo Congo) Vice-Province.

From May 21st to 25th Fr Américo was in Burkina Faso, in the AFO Province, to preside over the celebration of the funeral of the Salesian priest Fr Fernando Hénriquez Sánchez. Then, from May 25th to June 1st, he was in Cameroon, in the ATE Vice-Province, for the visit to the pre-novitiate and theologate. The Regional Councillor participated in the Curatorium and presided over the Holy Mass in the conferral of the ministries of Lector and Acolyte to the confreres in the theologate of St. Augustine of Nkol Afeme - Yaoundé. On June 2nd, Fr Américo returned to the headquarters in Rome.

The Councillor for the Latin America - South Cone Region

At the end of the winter plenary session of the General Council, Fr Natale Vitali, Councillor for the Region of Latin America - South Cone, in **January** 2019 left for the city of Panama to participate, together with the Rector Major, in the World Youth Day, sharing the various activities planned and, in particular, the meeting of the SYM/MGS.

On **February** 12th, 2019, the Regional Councillor began the

Extraordinary Visitation to the "Sant'Alfonso Maria de' Liguori" Province of Campo Grande, Brazil. He visited 19 religious communities with 118 Salesians and three works managed by the laity. The works with which the Province carries out its educational activity are: 8 colleges, two of which through an agreement with the State, 4 universities or centres of higher education, 17 parishes and two shrines, 8 social works, 4 missionary residences, where the Salesians work with the Xavante and Bororo ethnic groups, and 25 festive oratories.

The Province has a good number of vocations at this time: 42 young people accompanied in discerning their vocation to the Salesian life, 27 aspirants of whom 7 belong to the Xavante ethnic group and 2 to the Bororo, 15 pre-novices and 7 novices.

The Visit was concluded on May 25th with the meeting of the Rectors of the communities and on the following day, May 26th, with the meeting of the Provincial Council.

It should also be remembered that, during the Visit, on March 13th to 15th, the Regional Councillor participated in the Provincial Chapter which was held in BCG.

From **April** 9th to 13th, Fr Vitali also met with the six Provincials

of Brazil in the city of Brasilia to accompany, with the presence of the FMA Mother Provincials, the Salesian Network of Schools of Brazil.

He also accompanied the Rector Major in the animation visit he made to the Province BCG from April 23rd to 27th.

On **May** 5th he participated in the "Curatorium" of the theologate of Buenos Aires, on May 6th in the "Curatorium" of the Novitiate of CISUR and on May 8th in the "Curatorium" of the Post-novitiate of CISUR.

On **June** 1st, Fr Natale returned to Rome for the summer plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Interamerica Region

Immediately after the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council (January 18th, 2019), the Councillor for the Inter-American Region, Fr Timothy Ploch, flew to Mexico City for the installation of the new Provincial of the Mexico-México Province (MEM), Fr- Ignacio Ocampo Uribe. From there he went to Panama City to participate in the World Youth Day. At the end of **January** he flew to New York to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation*

to the Province of New Rochelle (SUE), which lasted until the end of May. The Province includes the eastern part of the United States and the whole of Canada.

During these months of the Extraordinary Visitation to SUE, the Regional Councillor also participated in four meetings of interprovincial "Curatoria" in the houses of initial formation in the Region: the novitiate in Coacalco (MEM), the theologate in Tlaquepaque (MEG), the novitiate in Richmond (SUO), and the post-novitiate in Orange (SUE). At the end of **February** and beginning of **March**, he was also absent from the SUE Province to conduct the consultation for the next Provincial of Bogotá, Colombia (COB). In mid-March, the Visitor was present at the Provincial Chapter of the SUE Province, at the end of which the Day of the Community of the Province was celebrated.

The conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation coincided with the feast of Mary Help of Christians. At the Marian Shrine of Stony Point, the Regional Councillor presided over the Holy Mass for the pilgrimage of the educative community of "Don Bosco Prep High School" and also for the Salesian Family in the celebration of Mary Help of Christians. The Extraordinary Visitation

concluded with a meeting of the Provincial Council, a meeting with the Rectors and an assembly of the confreres. On **May** 31st Fr Timothy Ploch returned to Rome for the summer plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region

Immediately after the winter session of the General Council, Fr Václav Klement began the *Extraordinary Visitation to the "Mary Help of Christians" Province of the Southern Philippines (FIS)*, which also includes the territories of Visayas, Mindanao, Pakistan. Begun on **January** 20th, 2019, the Visitation lasted until April 26th. During the three months, the Regional Councillor was able to visit all 14 canonically present communities in the five islands in the south of the country, with 114 confreres and three novices, participate in the conclusion of the Provincial Chapter, meet 7 groups of the Salesian Family and numerous young people, especially around the "National Youth Day" in Cebu (April 24th).

The Extraordinary Visitation of FIS was interrupted several times: for the animation of the confreres in Hong Kong (CIN, **February** 5th

to 9th), the participation in the AC-SSA of East Asia-Oceania in Sampran with 45 members of 8 groups of the Salesian Family (THA, February 10th to 15th), the annual gathering of the Provincials and Superiors in charge of the Delegations in Seoul (KOR, **March** 2nd to 9th), the consultation for the new Provincial of North Philippines – Malaysia (FIN, March 10th to 15th) which was held in 5 meetings of discernment, and finally a short animation visit to Ho Chi Minh City (VIE, **April** 8th to 11th). Taking advantage of its geographical proximity (FIS-FIN), the Regional Councillor was also able to accompany the FIN Province during a delicate period of its history. He took part in several meetings of the Rectors and the Provincial Council and participated for three days in the Provincial Chapter in Batulao (FIN, April 30th to **May** 2nd).

Fr Václav presided over the last meeting of the Provincials of the East Asia-Oceania Region before the GC28 in Seoul (KOR), which was preceded by the installation of the new Provincial of Korea (KOR, March 3rd) Fr Timothy Choi Woncheol. During the five days of the gathering (March 4th to 8th) two other General Councillors were present, Fr Ivo Coelho (Formation) and Fr Fabio Attard (Youth Min-

istry), the regional coordinator of Youth Ministry, Fr Jobeth Vivo (FIN) and Mrs Leah Samson, director of the PDO in Cebu (FIS).

The second stage of the semester was fruitful for the animation of the countries of Oceania, beginning with the Delegation of the Pacific (AUL) in Auckland – New Zealand (May 3rd to 7th), Samoa (May 7th to 10th) and Suva – Fiji (May 10th to 12th), where Fr Václav was able to visit all the communities and meet for the first time with the Council of the Delegation of the Pacific.

From Fiji, the Regional Councillor continued his exploration visit to Porta Villa (Republic of Vanuatu) following the invitation of Bishop John Bosco Baremes, SM (May 12th to 15th), accompanied by Fr Alfred Maravilla (Superior of the PGS Vice-Province).

The Regional Councillor continued the animation visits to the communities in Papua New Guinea (PGS Vice-Province, May 15th to 22nd), visiting the SDB communities of Kumgi, Rabaul, Gabutu and East Boroko in Port Moresby. He also visited the communities of the FMAs and the new school of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus in Kimbe (New East Britian province).

Before returning to Italy, Fr Václav contributed to the anima-

tion of the Formation Workshop for Salesian Cooperators and their Delegates in Sihanoukville (THA-Cambodia, May 24th to 28th) with more than 60 participants from the 7 provinces of the SSCCs of the Region (13 SDB-FMA delegates and 40 Salesian Cooperators from 15 countries).

Fr Klement returned to the Headquarters on **June 2nd** after a brief stop in Jakarta (May 29th to June 1st) for the first animation visit to the new “Saint Louis Versiglia” Vice-Province of Indonesia (INA).

The Councillor for the South Asia Region

After the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council, the Councillor for the South Asia Region, Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, arrived in Chennai on **January 24th**, 2019, and began his work by animating a session of the National Congress of Salesian Cooperators and then the animation of the directors of the Youth Centres in Chennai. Then, on January 29th, he traveled to Mumbai to animate the meeting of Delegates for Social Ministries at the national level. Passing through Kochi, the Regional Councillor arrived in Aluva to preside over the Eucharist on the feast of

Don Bosco on January 31st and to start *part of the Extraordinary Visitation to Bangalore*, visiting only the houses of formation. This was to share the task of Fr Basañes, who was the principal Visitor of the INK Province, and since there are many houses in this Province he could not cover them all in the time available. During his stay in Aluva, the Regional Councillor took the opportunity to start an Association of ex-Salesians and ex-Aspirants, who want to come together to support the Salesian mission in the secular world (SSW) around the city of Kochi. The visit to Aluva was followed by a visit to the community of the Padivayal Novitiate (**February 4th to 6th**) and to the community of the Mysore Reservation (February 7th to 8th). He then arrived at Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore, to visit the Theologate (February 9th to 13th). At the end of these canonical visitations, Fr Maria Arokiam met with the Councillor for the Missions, Fr Basañes, who had arrived for the opening of the Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Bangalore, as the principal Visitor.

On February 16th, the Regional Councillor of South Asia travelled to Sri Lanka to hold several meetings – with the Provincial Council, the Development Office, etc. – until February 21st. He returned to

Chennai and then went to Dimapur where he led the various meetings of the SPCSA – Conference of the Provincials of South Asia – which took place from February 25th to **March** 2nd. There were four meetings: the animation of the Provincials by two General Councillors (Fr Ivo Coelho and Fr Fabio Attard); the SPCSA Assembly; two days of animation of the Provincials and their Secretaries on juridical matters, led by Fr Pierfausto Frisoli, Procurator General of the Congregation. Leaving for Mumbai on March 3rd, the Regional Councillor made the consultation for the new INB Provincial in four different places of the Province of Mumbai between March 4th and 7th.

Passing through Rome, Fr Maria Arokiam arrived in San Francisco, in the Western United States Province, for the opening of the *Extraordinary Visitation to the SUO Province* on March 14th, beginning with the house in Bellflower, Los Angeles. This visit lasted two months, until **May** 11th. In addition to visiting the 11 communities in the SUO Province, in the states of California and Texas, the Regional Councillor visited various Salesians of the South Asia region who are in the territories of the United States and Canada – such

as for instance the Indian Salesian community in Edmonton, Canada (linked to SUE). He also visited the UN mission in New York. He concluded his visit on May 11th with a final conference to his confreres in Richmond and a meeting with the Provincial Council.

Immediately afterwards, the South Asia Regional Councillor travelled to Chennai, stopping for two days in Rome, to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Chennai (INM)* on May 18th, 2019. Having made the canonical visitations to four communities in the following days, on May 24th, Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians, Fr Maria Arokiam received the perpetual vows of 9 confreres. Travelling then on May 26th to Fujairah, UAE, he made the *Extraordinary Visitation to the community run by INM*, from May 27th to **June** 1st. Subsequently the Regional Councillor returned to the Headquarters in Rome on June 2nd, for the summer plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Central and North Europe Region

After the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council,

the Councillor for the Region of Central and Northern Europe, Fr Tadeusz Rozmus, went to Bratislava in Slovakia on **January** 19th to finish the extraordinary visitation he had started a few months earlier. During his stay in Slovakia he met the Provincial Council, all the Rectors, most of the confreres and several members of the Salesian Family, who had arrived for the conclusion of the visit.

Directly from Bratislava he left for Israel, where he spent a week of spiritual exercises in Cremisan. For the feast of Don Bosco, he left for Brussels, where in the European Parliament he celebrated Mass for the parliamentarians, participated in the general assembly of the European Parliament and met various representatives of the same Parliament. He also presided over the Mass in the Church of Europe in Brussels in honour of Don Bosco, with the participation of the confreres and the Salesian Family from the two Provinces of Belgium: North Belgium and South Belgium.

From here he leaves for Austria, where the *Extraordinary Visitation* begins in Vienna (**February** 4th to **March** 23rd, 2019). During the course of the Visit to Austria, the Regional Councillor also accompanies the other meetings held in the Region. In particular, he accompa-

nies the Rector Major, who sometimes visits different Provinces of the Region: February 12th to 15th in Ireland and February 20th to 24th in France. Between February 28th and March 4th, he accompanied the Rector Major during his animation visit to the Province of Austria AUS (where Fr Rozmus was making the extraordinary visitation). In addition, accepting some invitations, the Regional Councillor also visits some Provincial Chapters that are taking place in different parts of the Region.

At the end of the Visit to Austria, the Regional Councillor goes to another Province, *Hungary* (UNG), to lead another *Extraordinary Visitation*. This takes place from March 29th to May 4th. In the meantime, during the period of time dedicated to Hungary, he also carried out several other tasks, participating for a few days in the meeting of the intermediate session of the General Council (March 11th to 14th), leading the meeting of the Provincials of the KSIP Conference in Krakow (March 7th to 10th), preaching the spiritual exercises for the Salesians and the Salesian Family in Pelikérd-szentkerest (March 22nd to 28th) and participating in the inauguration of the PGS International Salesian Youth Games in Ljubljana, Slovenia (**April** 30th – **May** 2nd). On May

4th he meets in Peliföldszentkerest the confreres of the UNG Province to conclude together the Extraordinary Visitation.

From here he reaches Verzej in Slovenia where, between May 7th and 10th, all the Provincials of the Region meet, with the participation of the Rector Major Don Ángel F. Artime. Very significant is the feast of the Salesian Family of the Region organized in Maribor, with the presence of the Rector Major, the various leaders and representatives of the Salesian Family present in the Region, many young people and many confreres.

From Verzej, Fr Tadeusz briefly reaches Poland, from where he leaves by bike on May 14th to meet the Provincial Councils of the CIMEC area and visit different Provinces and communities of the Region, especially in the Balkan area. So, on May 15th he meets the Provincial Council of the Province of CEP in Brno; in Bratislava on May 16th he meets the confreres of the SLK Province; on May 17th he visits the confreres of Muzlja in Serbia; then he visits the Salesian communities of Bacau and Constanta in Romania (May 18th to 20th). From Romania he goes to Bulgaria, visiting the brothers of Kazanlak and Stara Zagora and preparing with them the next Ex-

traordinary Visitation. Passing through Macedonia and Albania, he arrives at Podgorica in Montenegro, where he meets the confreres. The next day he leaves for Dubrovnik in Croatia, where he also visits the Salesian house. From Dubrovnik he enters Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of reaching the Salesian house of Zepce. On the way he stops and visits the shrine of Medjugorje. On May 25th, he reaches the Provincial House of Zagreb (CRO), where he participates in the meeting with the Provincial Council and at the same time he participates in the revision of the work of preparation for the future Extraordinary Visitation to the Province. Already on his way to Italy, he visits the other two Croatian communities - Zadar and Split. From Split he crosses the Adriatic Sea by ferry and on May 29th, after disembarking in Ancona, he arrives in Rome.

Before the session of the General Council, he leaves again for Slovakia, where on **June 1st**, in the Strbske Pleso symbolic cemetery in the Tatra Mountains, together with several confreres from Poland and Slovakia and several participants, he presided over the Mass and the ceremony of the blessing of the commemorative plaque of Fr Boleslaw Rozmus, Salesian, younger

brother of the Regional Councillor, who died in an accident in the Tatra Mountains on November 10th, 1996. On June 2nd he returned to Rome to participate in the summer session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Mediterranean Region

At the end of the winter plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Mediterranean Region, Fr Stefano Martoglio, went to Sicily to start the consultation for the new ISI Provincial. Two assemblies of confreres were held, on **January** 24th and 25th, 2019, respectively in Catania and Palermo, thus initiating the discernment, of which the Councillor also explained the manner and indicated the timing for sending the personal consultations of the confreres.

After returning to Rome at the end of the call for the ISI consultation, on January 26th, 2019, the Regional Councillor left for Madrid, to continue the *Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of "San Giacomo Maggiore"* (SSM), which began in September 2018.

From the end of January the Extraordinary Visitation to SSM continued until the end of May 2019, allowing the Councilor to visit all

54 communities of the Province, getting to know and accompanying the individual realities and the Province as a whole.

The Visitation, that was well prepared by the Provincial and the confreres, was lived with a great sense of belonging to the Congregation and was attended with great participation by the confreres. Definitely a good experience of the Congregation and of Salesian life!

During the months from January to May, the Extraordinary Visitation was interrupted by three Boards of Directors of the LDC publishing house in Turin, in which the Regional Councillor participated, on behalf of the Rector Major.

Moreover, from **April** 24th to 29th, 2019, the meeting of the Provincials of the Mediterranean Region took place in the house of Santeramo in Colle, magnificently welcomed by the IME Province, to continue the meetings of the two Conferences of Provincials of the Region, CISI and Iberica.

In the same period of time there were also two days of formation for the Provincials of the Region all together. These days of formation for the "Mediterranean" Provincials were animated one day by Bro. Jean Paul Muller, Economist General, on the themes of economy,

poverty and solidarity; and one day by Fr Francesco Cereda, Vicar of the Rector Major, on the themes of religious discipline and other themes that he wanted to propose and share.

These were intense days of work and fraternity, accompanied by a great welcome from the house of Santeramo and the IME Province, a very much appreciated experience for all.

It is worth noting that these meetings of the Provincials of the Mediterranean Region take place, since the beginning of the six-year period, twice a year, moving to the Provinces of the Region. These

meetings have accompanied the journey of the Region itself very well.

On **May** 29th, 2019, on his return from Spain, the Regional Councillor of the Mediterranean Region went to Colle Don Bosco to see the work of moving the novitiate from Pinerolo to Colle Con Bosco, meeting the Provincial of the ICP Province and verifying the status of the work and the next steps regarding the move.

On **June** 2nd the Councillor returned to Rome to prepare for the beginning of the summer session of the General Council on the following day, June 3rd.

5.1 New Provincials

Here below find (in alphabetical order) some biographical details on the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council in the month of June 2019, during the summer plenary session of the General Council.

1. D'ANDREA Giovanni Antonio, Provincial of the Province ITALY - SICILY (ISI)

On June 5th, 2019, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. Giovanni D'ANDREA as Provincial of the "San Paolo" Province of Sicily, Italy. He succeeds Fr. Giuseppe Ruta.

Born on July 18th, 1968, in Messina (Italy), Giovanni D'Andrea made his first profession as a Salesian on September 8th, 1997, in Rome-Sacro Cuore, at the conclusion of his novitiate in Lanuvio. He did his perpetual profession on October 12th, 2003, and completed his theological studies in the theologate of Messina, Sicily, where he was ordained a priest on May 28th, 2005.

After his priestly ordination, from 2006 to 2009 he exerted his ministry as director of the oratory in the Salesian house of Palermo - Santa Chiara, of which he was ap-

pointed rector on June 26th, 2009. At the same time, he was provincial delegate for marginalization. After three years, in September 2012 he was transferred to Roma-CNOS, as President of "Salesians for the Social", the civil body that expresses the charismatic dimension of the Salesians in caring for young people at risk.

After a six-year period at CNOS in Rome, in 2018 he returned to the Province of Sicily, appointed Provincial Vicar (March 2018), taking on the role of Delegate in various sectors of Youth Ministry (in particular the SCS marginalization office) and the provincial coordination of APS and OCL.

Now the Rector Major calls him to exert the ministry of Provincial in his Province of Sicily.

2. GÓMEZ RUA John Jairo, Provincial of the Province of COLOMBIA - BOGOTÁ (COB)

At the head of the "St. Peter Claver" Province of Colombia based in Bogotá (COB), the Rector Major with his Council on June 6th, 2019, appointed as Provincial Fr. John Jairo GÓMEZ RUA. He succeeds Fr. Jaime Enrique Morales Alfonso.

Born in Medellín, Colombia, on December 27th, 1963, Fr. John Jairo Gómez Rua has been a Salesian

since January 31st, 1984, the date of his first profession, he made in the novitiate of Rio Negro, as a member of the Province of Medellín. In Rio Negro he also made the post-novitiate and the first apostolic experiences. On January 9th, 1990, he made his perpetual profession. He did his theological studies in the theologate of Bogotá, and was ordained a priest on October 17th, 1992, in his native city of Medellín.

After his priestly ordination, he carried out his first years of ministry in the houses of Tuluá and Rionegro, where he was appointed rector in February 1997. Two years later (December 1998) he was appointed Novice Master and Rector in the novitiate of Medellín-La Ceja.

Afterwards, he spent four years in the Provincial House in Medellín with responsibilities at the Provincial level, as Vicar of the Provincial (2007-2010), Delegate for Formation and the Salesian Family. He was then for a year 2011-2012 in Rome UPS (community Blessed Michele Rua).

On July 21st, 2012, the Rector Major with his Council appointed Fr. John Jairo Gómez Provincial of the Province of Colombia-Medellín, a post he held for a six-year period (until July 2018).

Now the Rector Major has called him again to serve as Provincial in

the Province of Colombia - Bogotá (COB).

3. *HAILEMARIAM MEDHIN, Superior of the Vice-Province of AFRICA-ETHIOPIA (AET)*

On June 20th, 2019, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. *TESFAY Hailemariam Medhin* as the new Superior of the Vice-Province "Maria Kidane Meherat" of Africa-Ethiopia. He succeeds Fr Estifanos Gebremeskel.

Hailemariam Medhin was born on October 1st, 1974, in Awo (Tigray, Ethiopia) and has been a Salesian since September 23rd, 1995, the date of his first profession, made after his novitiate in Addis Ababa - Gotera. He did his perpetual profession on August 19th, 2001, and was ordained a priest on May 4th, 2003, in Adigrat.

After his priestly ordination, from 2003 to 2006 he exerted his educative-pastoral ministry in the community of Adwa, first as Vicar, then as Parish Priest and Economer. He then spent several years in Rome (2006-2009 and 2014-2016) to complete his studies at the Salesian Pontifical University, with breaks of work he did in Kenya in the formation house of Nairobi-Utume.

After returning to Ethiopia, since July 2016 he has been living in the

house of Addis Ababa - Mekanissa, as Rector. He is also a Councillor of the Vice-Province and Provincial Delegate of the Salesian Family.

4. *MARTIN Gerardo, Provincial of the Province of North Philippines (FIN)*

Fr. Gerardo MARTIN is the new Provincial of the Province of "St. John Bosco" of North Philippines (FIN), appointed for this ministry by the Rector Major with his Council on June 5th, 2019. He succeeds Fr. Anthony Paul Bicomong.

Born on October 3rd, 1964 in Makati, Manila (Philippines), Gerardo Martin made his first profession as a Salesian on May 24th, 1995 in the novitiate of Bacolod-Granada. After the post-novitiate and his first apostolic experiences during the practical training, he attended theological studies in the Salesian theologate in Parañaque City (Manila), where he made his perpetual profession on March 24th, 2001, and was ordained a priest on December 9th, 2002.

After his priestly ordination, he did pastoral work for two years in the parish of "St. Ildefonso" in Makati, then he was for five years (2005-2010) in the formation house "Seminario ng Don Bosco" dedicated to specific formation for the

priesthood, and then for nine years (2010-2019) in the large house of the aspirantate and pre-novitiate in Canlubang, as rector.

He was Provincial Councillor (2013-2018), member of the Economic and Youth Ministry Commissions, and from 2013 he was Provincial Delegate for Formation.

5. *SILVEIRA Savio, Provincial of the Province of INDIA - BOMBAY (INB)*

On June 12th, 2019, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr. Savio SILVEIRA as the new Provincial of the Province of St. Francis Xavier, based in Mumbai, India (Province of India-Bombay, INB). He succeeds Fr. Godfrey D'Souza.

Savio Silveira was born on December 8th, 1966, in Panjim (Goa, India) and has been a Salesian since May 31st, 1985, the date of his first religious profession in the novitiate of Nashik. He pronounced his perpetual vows on May 24th, 1992, attended the Salesian theologate "Kristu Jyoti College" in Bangalore and was ordained a priest on December 21st, 1996, in Panjim, Goa, his hometown.

After his priestly ordination and about two years spent in the community of Aluva, he was parish

priest in Kawant (1999-2000), then from March 2000 to February 2002 he was rector and parish priest in Chhota Udaipur. In February 2002 he was appointed rector in the house of Baroda, a post he held for three years.

Later he was for two years (from September 2005 to September 2007) in Pavia, Italy.

He returned to India to the Provincial house in Bombay, where he was Provincial Councillor for two three-year-periods and from March 2015 Provincial Vicar, until his present appointment as Provincial.

5.2 New Salesian Bishops

LORENZELLI Alberto, Auxiliary Bishop of Santiago de Chile

On May 22nd, 2019, the Holy Father Pope Francis appointed Fr. *Alberto Ricardo LORENZELLI ROSSI* Auxiliary Bishop of Santiago de Chile, assigning him the titular seat of Sesta (Algeria).

Fr. Alberto Lorenzelli was born on September 2nd, 1953, in Argentina in Isidro Casanova, Province of Buenos Aires, to Italian immigrant parents. Returning to Italy with his family in 1972, he entered the novi-

tiate of Pinerolo, where he made his first profession as a Salesian of Don Bosco on January 24th, 1973, and then his perpetual profession in Rome-San Callisto on September 15th, 1977. He was ordained a priest in Genoa-Sampierdarena on January 24th, 1981, by the imposition of the hands of Card. Rosalio Castillo Lara, SDB.

After his ordination to the priesthood, his educational and pastoral work was mostly carried out in the large house of Genoa-Sampierdarena, of which he was rector from 1996 until 2002, when the Rector Major called him to direct as Provincial the Ligurian-Tuscany Province based in Genoa (ILT).

We can remember the tasks he fulfilled, during his teaching years, as President of "FIDAE - Liguria" (Federation of Institutes of Educational Activities) and member of the National Council of the Catholic School of the Italian Episcopal Conference. From 2005 to 2012 he was National President of CISM (Italian Conference of Major Superiors) and member of UCESM (Union of European Conferences of Major Superiors).

On September 1st, 2008 he was appointed Superior of the Circumscription of Central Italy "Sacred Heart" (ICC), a task he carried out until March 2012, when the Rector

Major with his Council appointed him Provincial of the Province of “St. Gabriel Archangel” of Chile and Grand Chancellor of the Catholic University “Silva Henríquez” of Santiago de Chile.

On January 27th, 2018, having completed his mandate as Provincial of Chile, he returned to Italy and on July 25th, 2018, he took up the post of Rector of the Salesian Community in the Vatican.

On October 23rd, 2018, the Holy Father appointed him chaplain of the Directorate of Security Services and Civil Protection of the Vatican City State.

After his appointment as Bishop, his episcopal ordination took place on June 22nd, 2019, in Rome at St Peter’s Basilica with the imposition of the hands of the Supreme Pontiff Pope Francis.

5.3 New Group of the Salesian Family “*Instituto Religioso das Irmãs Medianeiras de Paz*”

On Monday, February 4th, 2019, the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, officially decreed the entry of the “*Instituto Religioso das Irmãs Medianeiras da Paz*” (*Religious Institute of the Mediators of Peace Sisters - IRIMEP*) in the Salesian Family, of which

this Institute therefore becomes the 32nd recognized group.

The decree signed by the Rector Major (Prot. 19/0067, February 4th, 2019) reports that this decision came after the request of Sister Lucia Barbosa de Oliveira, General Coordinator of IRIMEP, and after the positive opinion expressed by her Council, the Bishops concerned and the Provincia of Brasile-Recife, as well as considering the history of the Institute, the foundation by a Salesian and the spiritual and apostolic relationship always maintained with the Salesians.

Admission to the Salesian Family was a process that lasted several years. The Institute was founded in 1968 by Mons. Antonio Campelo, a Salesian and Archbishop of Petrolina (State of Pernambuco, Brazil); after his death, in 1984, the “Sisters Mediators of Peace”, religious women belonging to the Institutes of Consecrated Life of Diocesan Right, formally asked to become part of the Salesian Family.

It was then in 1986 that Fr. Egidio Viganò, then Rector Major, replying to a letter from the same sisters, wrote: “I rejoice in your presence in the Church and congratulate you on the progress you have made, (while waiting) for this phase of the experience to end with the best results”.

In the Salesian Constitutions we read: "Don Bosco inspired the start of a vast movement of persons who in different ways work for the salvation of the young" (SDB Constitutions, art. 5). Well, this Institute shares precisely Don Bosco's mission of working for the poor, the abandoned, people in danger and in areas where poverty is extreme. In fact, this is what is written in the Constitutions of the Institute: "In order to serve, when possible and circumstances call into question, the Institute can create and develop any work that aims at the protection, social assistance, human promotion and integral edu-

cation of the person, both in urban and rural environments" (Const. Art. 22).

The Institute currently has 70 religious, assisted by about 300 collaborators who share with the sisters the pastoral and socio-educational mission.

Fr Eusebio Muñoz, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, expressed his great joy in knowing that "the Salesian Family continues to grow, not only numerically, but above all on a charismatic level, because where there is a member who works like Don Bosco, they work for the salvation of the poorest young people".

5.4 Our dead confreres (1st list January-June 2019)

"Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with our brothers who rest in Christ's peace. They have spent their lives in the Congregation, and not a few have suffered even to the point of martyrdom for the love of the Lord... Their remembrance is an incentive to continue faithfully in our mission" (*Const.* 94).

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
L AAYILA Matthew	Aluva (India)	20/01/2019	79	AFE
P ADAMO Mario	Córdoba (Argentina)	02/01/2019	75	ARN
P ALTEPOST Michael	Köln (Germany)	24/05/2019	63	GER
P ASHTON John	Farnworth (Great Britain)	04/05/2019	84	GBR
P BADILLA Luis I.	Makati City, Manila (Philippines)	12/04/2019	61	FIS
P BADURA Henryk	Kraków (Poland)	26/03/2019	93	PLS
P BAILEY Antony	Prestwich (Great Britain)	22/05/2019	81	GBR
P BALMES Louis	Fontes (France)	02/06/2019	95	FRB
P BALTUS Henk	Louvain (Belgium)	23/04/2019	89	BEN
L BARRANTES Avelino	San José (Costa Rica)	26/03/2019	81	CAM
P BATTAGLIO Luciano	Turin (Italy)	15/06/2019	84	ICP
P BOGUSZEWSKI Henryk	Sokolów Podlaski (Poland)	23/02/2019	72	PLN
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
P BONARDELLO Marco	Turin (Italy)	27/02/2019	90	ICP
E BORTOLASO Armando	Al-Fidar (Libano)	08/01/2019	92	EP
<i>Titular Bishop of Rafanea, was for 10 years Apostolic Administrator of Alep (Syria)</i>				
P BOSCO Teresio	Turin (Italy)	10/02/2019	87	ICP
P BOSONI Luigi	Rome (Italy)	23/06/2019	91	ICC
<i>Was Provincial for 2 years and for 12 years General Councillor for Italy and Middle East Region</i>				
P BRACCHI Remo	Rome (Italy)	05/05/2019	75	UPS
L BRACKEVA Luc	Nieuwpoort (Belgium)	07/05/2019	89	BEN
L BROGGIATO Giovanni	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	02/02/2019	91	INE
P BRUNELLO Luciano	Turin (Italy)	18/03/2019	86	ICP
P BRUNO MAGGIO Félix Maria	Montevideo (Uruguay)	13/05/2019	97	URU
P BUGADA Sergio	Florence (Italy)	23/04/2019	82	ICC
L BUSATTO Bruno	New Rochelle, New York (USA)	24/04/2019	86	SUE
P CAFARELLI Salvatore	Melegnano (Italy)	15/04/2019	74	CAM
P CALLARI Rosario	Marsala (Italy)	26/01/2019	98	ISI
L CARMINATI Egidio	Arese (Italy)	12/03/2019	93	ILE
P CARRANZA Fernando	San Salvador (El Salvador)	16/01/2019	91	CAM
L CASTRESANA URIARTE Jesús	Vigo, Pontevedra (Spain)	28/02/2018	61	SSM
P CAVASIN Bruno	Castelfranco Veneto (Italy)	31/01/2019	84	MOR
P CEI Luigi	Rome (Italy)	20/06/2019	74	UPS
P CHAMPEYTINAUD Michel	Caen (France)	13/01/2019	88	FRB
P CIGNA Giuseppe	San Cataldo (Italy)	07/06/2019	86	ISI
P CILIA Joseph	Shillong, Meghalaja (India)	10/12/2018	82	INS
P COLUCCI Luigi	Rome (Italy)	20/03/2019	95	ICC
P COMMISSO Rocco	Turin (Italy)	24/02/2019	88	ICP

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P CREAMER GÓMEZ Pedro <i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>	Quito (Ecuador)	04/02/2019	87	ECU
P CUSINATO Walter	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	04/05/2019	83	INE
P DALLA VALLE Giuseppe	Manaus (Brazil)	14/06/2019	92	BMA
P DALLA VECCHIA Flavio	Castello di Godego (Italy)	09/03/2019	93	INE
P D'ANDOLA Gaetano	Salerno (Italy)	01/06/2019	94	IME
P DEL COL Giuseppe	Bahía Blanca (Argentina)	03/01/2019	93	ARS
P DELNEUVILLE Joseph	Bruxelles (Belgium)	27/06/2019	77	FRB
L DUONG HIEN Pietro	Hochiminh City (Vietnam)	01/03/2019	69	VIE
P ENCHYIL Kuriakose	Tirupattur (India)	20/02/2019	76	INM
P FALKOWSKI Jacek	Wrocław (Poland)	11/06/2019	62	PLO
P FANTIN Giuseppe	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	04/02/2019	86	INE
P FERNÁNDEZ F. Antonio Cesar	Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)	15/02/2019	73	AFO
P FERNÁNDEZ VILLAR Carlos José	La Coruña (Spain)	22/06/2019	91	SSM
P FERNANDO Lucian Bernard	Colombo (Sri Lanka)	18/06/2019	65	LKC
P FERRANTI Gian Pietro	Arese (Italy)	09/05/2019	88	ILE
P GADDI Giangaleazzo	Saronno (Italy)	28/02/2019	88	ILE
P GAIME Giuseppe	Arambegama (Sri Lanka)	13/05/2019	83	LKC
P GARCÍA BARRÍA Quintín	Santiago de Chile (Chile)	25/03/2019	94	CIL
P GARCÍA ORTEGA Aurelio	Logroño (Spain)	08/02/2019	83	SSM
L GARCÍA ZURDO Ángel Biblid es	Arévalo (Spain)	07/02/2019	79	SSM
P GASPARI Gabriele	Porto Potenza Picena (Italy)	09/03/2019	82	ICC
L GATTONI Amedeo	Turin (Italy)	28/05/2019	92	ICP
P GIULIO Michele	Turin (Italy)	03/03/2019	90	ICP
P GODOY MORA José Romualdo	Rome (Italy)	03/03/2019	74	VEN
P GONZÁLEZ DOMÍNGUEZ Maurillo	Madrid (Spain)	03/03/2019	83	SSM
P GONZÁLEZ HERRERO Jesús	Arévalo (Spain)	10/05/2019	98	SSM
P GONZÁLEZ LUIS Jesús	Sevilla (Spain)	02/06/2019	84	SMX
P GORRAÍZ AREOPAGITA Eduardo	Donostia (Spain)	19/04/2019	65	SSM
P GRACIAS Reginald	Mumbai (India)	10/06/2019	66	INB
P HALUŽAN Franjo	Zagreb (Croatia)	29/03/2019	79	CRO
P HASBUN Alfredo	San Salvador (El Salvador)	13/02/2019	92	CAM
P HAVASI József <i>Was Provincial for 18 years</i>	Budapest (Hungary)	05/06/2019	90	UNG
P HERNÁNDEZ FONSECA Salvador	México City (Mexico)	21/05/2019	76	MEM
P HERNÁNDEZ SÁNCHEZ Fernando	Bobo-Dioulass (Burkina Faso)	17/05/2019	60	AFO
L HUERTA PALMA Miguel	San Luis Potosí (Mexico)	11/04/2019	83	MEG
P IBÁÑEZ JIMÉNEZ Florencio	Barcelona (Spain)	13/06/2019	89	SMX
P JEANMART José	Liegi (Belgium)	18/06/2019	82	FRB
P KABINA Josef	Vieste (Italy)	23/06/2019	45	SLK
P KEOGH Michael Bernard	Adelaide (Australia)	22/03/2019	92	AUL
P KOBRAS Franz	Ensdorf (Germany)	23/05/2019	85	GER
P KOCHUPARACKAL Thomas	Tura (India)	25/05/2019	80	ING
P KORAL Jarosław	Szczaniec (Poland)	20/06/2019	59	PLN
P KORTE Rainer	Köln (Germany)	21/01/2019	80	GER
P LAÉ Pierre	Caen (France)	02/02/2019	94	FRB

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P LANGUS Jorge (Jurij)	Bernal (Argentina)	10/05/2019	80	ARS
P LEITENBAUER Josef	Vienna (Austria)	16/06/2019	82	AUS
P LEZCANO CAÑETE Eusebio	Monte Lindo (Paraguay)	15/05/2019	65	PAR
P LO MONACO Gaetano	Palermo (Italy)	16/02/2019	92	ISI
P LONARDI Luigi	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	31/03/2019	93	INE
P LUNDA NGANDU Patrick	Lubumbashi (Dem. Rep. Congo)	11/03/2019	43	AFC
P MALFAIT Daniel	Leuven (Belgium)	27/02/2019	70	BEN
P MANARA Giancarlo	Roma (Italy)	02/01/2019	83	ICC
P MANAYIL Anthony	Ernakulam (India)	20/02/2019	73	INM
L MANO Giuseppe	Turin (Italy)	27/06/2019	80	ICP
L MARCATI Giuseppe	Arese (Italy)	10/03/2019	87	ILE
L MARTÍN GONZÁLEZ Carlos	Madrid (Spain)	24/03/2019	57	SSM
P MEJÍA PEÑA Napoleón	San Salvador (El Salvador)	21/02/2019	82	CAM
P MIKHALOUS Alexandr	Lviv (Ukraine)	18/02/2019	49	UKR
P MORALES CEDILLO Abel Jorge	Puebla (Mexico)	24/05/2019	52	MEM
P MURO HÉRNANDEZ Carlos	Mexico City (Mexico)	01/02/2019	81	MEM
P MURZIŃSKI Bogumił	Sokolów Podlaski (Poland)	26/03/2019	76	PLE
P NARDON Luigi	Asunción (Paraguay)	12/01/2019	83	PAR
P NAVARRO GONZÁLEZ Guillermo	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ES)	07/02/2019	93	SMX
P NGUYEN DUC HUYNH Mark	Ben Cat (Vietnam)	18/02/2019	77	VIE
P OLANO MARTÍN Dionisio	Sevilla (Spain)	19/02/2019	95	SMX
P OLMOS VARELA Rudesindo	Zamora (Spain)	09/05/2019	79	SSM
P ORTEGA ARAGÓN Wenceslao	Logroño (Spain)	11/02/2019	86	SSM
P PANIAGUA CÓRDOBA Carlos	San Salvador (El Salvador)	02/02/2019	90	CAM
P PELLIZZARO Siro	Azuay (Ecuador)	13/05/2019	85	ECU
P PERESSON TONELLI Mario L.	Bogotá (Colombia)	30/04/2019	78	COB
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
P PERTUSATI Eligio	Turin (Italy)	19/02/2019	92	ICP
P PITZALIS Salvatore	Rome (Italy)	11/04/2019	92	ICC
L PIZZOLATO Davino	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	09/06/2019	77	INE
P POELMANS Jozef	Oud-Heverlee (Belgium)	04/04/2019	81	BEN
P PONZO Pietro	Turin (Italy)	11/02/2019	89	ICP
P PUXEDDU Vittoriano	Rome (Italy)	14/04/2019	88	ICC
P QUÉGUINER Jean	Guingamp (France)	01/05/2019	92	FRB
P QUINTEIRO Raymundo Simões	Belo Horizonte (Brazil)	23/06/2019	86	BBH
P RAK Roman	Rumia (Poland)	25/03/2019	89	PLN
L ROCHA Anthony	Odxwel (India)	14/05/2019	80	INP
L RODRIGO Meril	Chennai (India)	03/03/2019	72	INM
P RODRÍGUEZ MARTÍN Filiberto	Luanda (Angola)	07/05/2019	76	ANG
<i>Was Provincial for 12 years and for 12 years General Councillor for the Iberic Region</i>				
P ROSSONI Sétimo	San Salvador (El Salvador)	14/03/2019	78	CAM
P SANZ VICTORIA Francisco	El Campello (Spain)	03/01/2019	88	SMX
P SCAGLIONI Arnaldo	Turin (Italy)	17/01/2019	79	ILE
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
P SCOGNAMIGLIO Giorgio	Salerno (Italy)	23/02/2019	95	IME
P SHIN Valentino (Hyeon Moon)	Seoul (South Korea)	13/01/2019	55	KOR

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P SIMONCELLI Mario	Rome (Italy)	20/01/2019	93	UPS
P SPIRAL Bernard	Mulhouse (France)	15/04/2019	92	FRB
P STOCCO Lorenzo	Valencia (Venezuela)	08/03/2019	74	VEN
P STRIZZOLO Benito	Aosta (Italy)	24/04/2019	95	ICP
P STROSCIO Rosario	Calcutta (India)	09/06/2019	97	INC
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
P SZMIDT Stanisław	Łódź (Poland)	22/02/2019	83	PLE
P TAVANO Jacques	Mouscron (Belgium)	28/02/2019	81	FRB
L TESTONI Antonio	Campinas (Brazil)	22/01/2019	89	BSP
P THAIPARAMBIL Anthony	New Delhi (India)	19/03/2019	83	INN
L THAIPARAMBIL Mathew	Kolkata (India)	01/02/2019	78	INC
P THEKEDATHU Joseph	Bangalore (India)	15/01/2019	90	INK
<i>Was Provincial for 6 years</i>				
L THIEL Josef	Berlin (Germany)	18/04/2019	83	GER
P THIRUTHANATHY Jose	Dotma (India)	07/06/2019	69	ING
P ULLUCCI Mario	Rome (Italy)	23/06/2019	75	ICC
P URBĄSKI Ryszard	Oświęcim (Poland)	20/01/2019	82	PLS
P VAN HAVER Guy	Leuven (Belgium)	14/06/2019	85	BEN
P VENERI Mario	Rome (Italy)	05/05/2019	93	ICC
P VOLPATO Loranzo	Venice-Mestre (Italy)	30/01/2019	86	INE
P WANSCH Otto	Benedikbeuern (Germany)	22/02/2018	90	AUS
P ZUDAIRE ECHAVARRI Valerio	Sevilla (Spain)	01/01/2019	88	AFO