





"STRENNA 1964"

While the long-desired Second Vatican Ecumenical Council is running its solemn course and at Colle Don Bosco our Temple in honour of St. John Bosco is being built with the help of our "bricks"; let us all strive spiritually to follow these two events:

with unity of mind and heart in our family life;

with greater effort to reach personal sanctity;

with apostolic zeal for the souls entrusted to us.

The *dream of the ten diamonds* invites us to practise the virtues that are essen-

tial for us during the year 1964, in which we are going to celebrate the double centenary of: 1. the laying of the foundation stone of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians; 2. and of the "decretum laudis" of the Salesian Congregation (*M. B.* VII, p. 652 and 705).

May Our Help assist us and bless us always together with our dear ones.

FR. RENATO ZIGGIOTTI

Turin, 1st January 1964.

THE SALESIAN SOCIETY
AS IT OUGHT TO BE

(Dream Vision September 1881)

*Spiritus Sancti gratia illuminet sensus
et corda nostra.*

For the Instruction of the Salesian Society.

On September 10 of the present year (1881), Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, the Salesians were gathered at San Benigno, making their retreat. During the night of the tenth as I was sleeping, I found myself in a vast hall magnificently adorned. It seemed to me that I was having a stroll with the Rectors of the Houses when a majestic personage appeared in our midst. So shining was his face that we could not fix our gaze on him. The personage looked at us fixedly with-

out speaking; then he began to walk a few paces away from us. He was appareled in a rich mantle, the upper hem of which bore the following inscription: SOCIETAS SALESIANA QUALIS ESSE DEBET ANNO 1881.

Ten glittering diamonds of an extraordinary size and brilliancy adorned the mantle. Their light was so vivid that you could hardly gaze on them. Three of the diamonds were on his breast; the first of them bore the words FIDES, the second the word SPES, and the third which was upon the heart bore the word CHARITAS; the fourth diamond was on the right shoulder and bore the word LABOR. The fifth one, on the left shoulder bore the word TEMPERANTIA. The other five diamonds adorned the back part of the mantle and were arranged thus: One of them, of a larger size, and of more vivid splendor occupied the central part of the quadrangle and bore the word OBEDIENTIA. On the first to the right one could read VOTUM PAUPERTATIS; on the second lower down, the word PRAEMIUM; on the left

higher up the words VOTUM CASTITATIS. The latter was of unusual brilliancy and attracted the eye of the spectator as a magnet attracts iron. On the second diamond down to the left stood the word JEJUNIUM. All these four diamonds flashed their brilliant rays towards the central diamond. Rays in the shape of little flames flashed forth from the diamonds; each bearing a scriptural sentence.

Around the word FIDES was written: *Take up the shield of Faith that you might fight against the wiles of the devil.* Another ray bore the words: *Faith without works is dead. Not the hearers but the doers of the law will possess the Kingdom of God.*

On the rays of SPES was written: *Hope in the Lord, not in men. Let your hearts be fixed where true joys are.*

On the rays of CHARITAS: *Bear ye one another's burdens if you want to fulfill my law. Love and you shall be loved. But love your souls and the souls of your*

own. Let the Divine Office be recited with devotion; let Mass be celebrated attentively. Let the Holy of Holies be visited with love.

On the word LABOR: *A remedy for concupiscence, a powerful weapon against the wiles of the devil.*

On the word TEMPERANTIA: *Take away the fuel and the fire is extinguished. Make a pact with your eyes, with your appetite, with your sleep lest these enemies rob your souls. Intemperance and chastity cannot live together.*

On the rays of OBEDIENTIA: *The foundation of the whole edifice, and the compendium of sanctity.*

On the rays of PAUPERTAS: *For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Riches are thorns. Poverty is not made of words but is in the heart and in deed. Poverty will open the gate of Heaven and will enter.*

On the rays of CASTITAS: *All virtues will come with it. He who is clean of*

heart will see God's mysteries, and God Himself.

On the rays of PRAEMIUM: *If the greatness of the reward delights you, you should not be frightened by the greatness of the work. He who suffers with me will rejoice with me. Suffering is but for the moment, eternal that which my friends will enjoy in Heaven.*

On the rays of JEJUNIUM: *A most powerful weapon against the wiles of the enemy. The Guardian of all Virtues. By it every kind of demon is defeated.*

There was a large red ribbon on the lower part of the mantle on which was written: *Subject for preaching. Morning, noon and night. Gather up the fragments of virtues and you will build a great edifice of sanctity for yourselves. Woe to you if you despise small things. Little by little you will fall.*

Up until then the Directors, some standing, some kneeling, were stricken speech-

less. At this point Don Rua said excitedly: "We must take notes of everything lest we forget". He looks for a pen but cannot find one. He searches for a pencil in his pocketbook but in vain. "I will remember all", says Don Durando. "I am going to take some notes", says Don Fagnano. He begins to write with the stem of a rose; all were looking on and followed the writing of Don Fagnano. When he stopped writing, Don Costamagna continued to dictate thus: "Charity understands all, bears all, conquers all; let us preach it with words and deeds".

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While Don Fagnano was writing, the light disappeared and we were all in darkness. "Let us keep silence", said Don Ghivarello. "Let us kneel and pray. The light will come back". Don Lasagna began the *Veni Creator*, then the *De Profundis*, then *Maria Auxilium Christianorum* to which we all responded. As we

said *Ora pro nobis* the light reappeared and lit up a large card on which was written: PIA SALESIANORUM SOCIETAS QUALIS ESSE PERICLITATUR ANNO SALUTIS 1900 (The Salesian Society as it risks to be in the year of Salvation 1900).

As the light was growing we could now recognize one another. It was at this moment that the personage reappeared. But what a change! He looked sad and disconsolate as one who was about to weep. His mantle was shabby and tattered. The shining diamonds had given place to gnawing canker worms.

"RESPICITE", the personage said, "et INTELLIGITE" (Look on and understand).

I did look and noticed: the diamond of *Fides* was replaced by *sleep and sloth*.

In the place of *Spes* there was *laughter and buffoonery*.

In the place of *Charitas* there was: *Negligence in performing Divine duties. They love and seek what are their own and not the things of Christ.*

Instead of *Temperantia* there was:

Gluttony and those whose God is their stomach.

In the place of *Labor: Sleep, theft and idleness.*

In the place of *Obedientia* there was nothing but a large and deep rent without any writing.

In place of *Castitas: Concupiscence and pride of life.*

Instead of *Paupertas* there was: *Bed, clothes, drink and money.*

In the place of *Praemium: Our reward shall be the things of this earth.*

In the place of *Jejunium* there was a rent but no writing.

At that sight we were all dismayed. Don Lasagna collapsed in a faint. Don Cagliero turned pale as a sheet and leaning on a chair exclaimed: "Can it be that things have already come to such a state?" Don Lazzero and Don Guidazio were beside themselves held on to one another for support. Don Francesia, Count Cays, Don Barberis and Don Leveratto were on their knees praying their rosary. At that

moment a deep voice resounded in the hall: QUOMODO MUTATUS EST COLOR OPTIMUS! (How the finest color is changed!).

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At this point a sudden change of scene takes place. Amidst a brilliant light a noble looking youth moves into the hall. He is appareled in a white dress and a diamond studded mantle. Turning towards us with a look at once majestic and amiable he addressed us:

Servants and instruments of the Almighty, listen and understand. Be confident and make yourselves strong. What you have seen and heard is a celestial warning which has been given to you and your brethren. Take heed of what you have been told and understand it. Blows that are foreseen are less wounding and can be prevented. Let the words that have been put before you be made so many subjects of exhortation. Preach them unceasingly, in season and out of season. But see that you constantly do

what you preach, so that your words be a light which as a solid tradition may be passed on to your brethren of the succeeding generations. Be cautious in selecting novices; strong in training them, prudent in admitting them to profession. Prove them all. Keep only what is good. Dismiss the light-minded and inconstant. Listen well and understand. Let your morning and evening meditations be constantly on regular observance. If you do this, the help of the Lord will never fail you. You will become a spectacle of the world and the Angels. And your glory will be God's glory. Those who will see the end of this century and the beginning of the next one will say: This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes. Then all your brethren and sons will sing with one voice: Not to us, O Lord, not to us give glory but to Thy name.

These last words were sung and with the voice of the speaker a multitude of other voices joined in; these were so me-

ludious and powerful that we were left speechless and in order to steady ourselves we were forced to join in their singing. When the singing finished the light disappeared and I awoke. It was already morning.

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P.S. The dream lasted the whole of the night and left me in a state of exhaustion. For fear of forgetting it I rose in haste and put down some notes. These helped me to recall the dream as I related it on the day of Our Lady's Presentation. It has not been possible to recall all. Amongst the many things, I could ascertain that Our Lord is being very merciful to us. Our Society is blessed by God but he wants us to lend our cooperation. The evils threatened in the dream will be prevented if we preach about the virtues and vices indicated in it. If we practice what we preach we will be able to hand on to our brethren

a practical tradition of what has been done and what is to be done in the future.

I came also to know that many thorns, many labors, are impending. These will be followed by great consolations.

Around 1890, a great fear; around 1895 a great triumph.

Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis.



