



acts

of the general council

year CV

july-december 2023

N. 440

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Sede Centrale
Salesiana
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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WHERE THE LORD LEADS US

“He said to me: ‘*My grace is sufficient for you; for power is made perfect in weakness*’” (2 Cor 12:9)

Turin, 8 September 2023

Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Dear confreres,

As on many other occasions when I have turned to you through letters addressed to members of our Congregation, I am greeting you with deep and fraternal affection.

On this occasion, what I am writing is accompanied by a very particular feeling. In fact, this is – along with the commentary on the Strenna that I will send shortly – the last letter I will write to you as Rector Major. I am certainly not forgetting that in a few weeks time I will be sending you the convocation letter for GC29.

It is no secret – as you have already known since 9 July, with the appointment as Cardinal made by the Holy Father, Pope Francis – that my life will undergo a major change.

In my letter, sent two days after the news announced at the *Angelus* on 9 July, I shared with all of you, dear confreres, and with the Salesian Family, that on 31 July 2024, if it is the Lord’s will and if he grants me peace and health, I will submit my resignation as Rector Major to dedicate myself to what Pope Francis will ask of me to serve the Church in another field. Here lies the reason for the very particular feeling that accompanies these words of mine.

The title of this letter, inspired by a book a few years ago on religious life, is very evocative. And it is intended to be both a confession of faith and a vocational response shot through with hope.¹

¹ Cf. F. PRADO (ED.), *Adonde el Señor nos lleve. Vida consagrada en el mundo: tendencias y perspectivas*, Publicaciones Claretianas, Madrid 2004, 280.

It is with this attitude that I am addressing you, dear confreres from all over the world: aware of the present moment that we as a Congregation are experiencing and with the aim of offering a perspective which is as lucid as possible, starting from what I have lived and experienced in these almost ten years of my service as Successor of Don Bosco.

Already in 2015, on the occasion of the celebration of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth, I proposed a pathway that included "my dreams" for each Salesian. Several years later, I feel it is appropriate to return to expressing, very simply and directly, what our Congregation has become today, thanks to the good path we have travelled; and, at the same time, bearing in mind the major challenges we still face.

As mentioned, on 25 July 2015, speaking of the fruits of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth,² I told you what my dreams were for each confrere and for our Congregation. I passed them on to you as I felt them in my heart and expressed them in an outline that I then developed page after page:

- I dream of a Congregation of happy Salesians;
- I dream of a Congregation with men of faith and filled with God (on a journey of faith and search for God);
- I dream of a Congregation of Salesians passionate about young people, the poorest (always seeking service, never power or money);
- I dream of a Congregation of true evangelisers and educators in the faith;
- I dream of a Congregation that is always missionary.

Eight years have passed since this "dream". Each of us has had many experiences during this time; the path we have travelled as a Congregation has been long and intense. There have been many good results and some challenges remain. It is

² A. FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, *"That they may have life and have it to the full"* (Jn. 10:10). *Five fruits of the Bicentenary*, in AGC 421 (2015), 3-26.

on these latter that I wish to dwell in this final letter, by way of a stocktake from a faith perspective and in the light of the experience acquired and internalised over these ten years.

And since I will refer to the lights and shadows, the achievements and challenges that still lie ahead, I would like to begin by referring to a publication by Timothy Radcliffe, who was Master General of the Dominican Order. Some time ago he wrote a book entitled *Essere cristiani nel XXI secolo* (*Being Christians in the 21st century*.) His text begins with an expression that pertains to Christian life in general, but which I read and judge to be equally valid and appropriate for consecrated religious life and, in particular, for us Salesians. He writes thus:

We must avoid two temptations: the first is enclosing ourselves in a ghetto, the other is assimilating ourselves into society and being subservient to a now secularised culture (...) We must be with the people, share their problems, stand by their side in the shadow of the teachings and doctrines of the Church, and only then will we be able to go out and discover together a word that must be shared.³

Thinking about the content of this letter and what I intend to share with you, dear confreres, I am well aware that I am offering you in all honesty my point of view, my reading of what I have lived, believed, thought, prayed and formulated over these years. Many other interpretations are undoubtedly possible. I am presenting my view – very succinctly – from the knowledge of our Congregation and the Salesian Family acquired during my service.

Here are some key elements:

- I have repeated on many occasions that as a Congregation we are experiencing very tranquil years. I will say it again. Life in the provinces goes on. The difficulties of the Congregation are those that are typical of an institution comprising some 14,000 Salesians of Don Bosco divided into 92 provinces and to be found in 135 countries.

³ T. RADCLIFFE, *Essere cristiani nel XXI secolo. Una spiritualità per il nostro tempo*. Queriniana (= Spiritualità 143), Brescia, 2012², 17.

Above all, I wish to highlight and underline the atmosphere of profound communion that exists in the Congregation and which is clearly visible in the relationships between each province and the Rector Major and his Council, and between some provinces. This is about the harmony and communion that is perceived when journeying together. In a nutshell, it has been possible – and will still be possible – to carry out a true accompaniment of each province.

- I have insistently reminded and sensitised the Congregation on how vital it is for us to be and live as *consecrated* individuals who seek to belong more and more to God.⁴ From the first *Message* in 2014 to the *Action programme* presented after GC28, I have always given priority to the dimension of our consecration.

- I think I can say that even in these last few years the Congregation has come a long way, giving concrete expression to Article 2 of our Constitutions, testifying that we are “in the Church signs and bearers of the love of God for young people, especially the poorest of them.” (C.2)

The Congregation today has by no means neglected young people and older youth, and in particular the poorest. There has been a journey in all the provinces, marked by successes and failures, but always with a preferential option for young people, especially the poorest, because they, the young, are “our masters”.⁵

I can tell you in all frankness, dear confreres, what I consider to be the absolute truth: in these last ten years we have not taken a single decision within the General Council regarding the Salesian mission of our presences, in which our priority towards the poorest has not been taken into account. I can state this with reference to myself and the other members of the two General Councils in the last ten years: there has not been a single province in the world during this period in which we have not

⁴ A. FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, *Belonging more to God, more to the confreres, more to the young*, in AGC 419 (2014), 3-30.

⁵ A. FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, *op. cit.*, 20.

made this priority explicit, and it has usually been very well received by the provincials and their councils.

I am already hinting at a great risk we might run: that of caring for the poor, of offering services to the poor, but not “being” with the poor and not “being” poor. I will come back to this point later.

- Personal accompaniment and closeness to each provincial in his service to his own province has been a priority over the years, and I think I can say with satisfaction that it has been a good choice.

In one way or another, the 157 provincials appointed over these ten years have been able to experience that they are not alone in their service; and that communion with the Rector Major and his Council has resulted in the closeness and exchange of reflections and knowledge of the reality that has helped us mutually and significantly.

- Evangelisation and the explicit proclamation of the faith have strongly characterised the Congregation’s path in recent years. We have also proposed it as a priority policy direction for the current six-year period. The enlightenment that the Youth Ministry Sector of the Congregation continues to offer is, in this sense, clear and significant, and is of great help to those who want help in meeting the challenges of education and evangelisation within our presences.

At the same time, we have neither ignored nor neglected the fact that in many parts of the world we interact with other religious faiths on a daily basis. We have tried to be attentive to this reality and specificity.

- I can also say that over these years a debt of gratitude to our Congregation has grown and become stronger within the Church, because of the mission we carry out on behalf of the Gospel.

I recognise, in all simplicity and at the same time with all clarity, that we are a valued and respected Congregation in the

Church. This is a feeling I have also picked up in my frequent meetings with the Superiors General of other Congregations within the Union of Superiors General.

- As the Salesian Family, the Family of Don Bosco, we continue to move in a good direction, in a simple but constant way, maturing more and more in the sense of family, growing also in the identity and spirit of belonging, making it visible in many ways, among which I would like to point out the frequent reference to the figure and role of the Rector Major as father and centre of unity of the Salesian Family.⁶

I would also like to emphasise the increasingly numerous and very significant participation of the world leaders of most groups in the Salesian Family World Consultative Meeting held every year in Italy – most recently at Valdocco, Turin, in the most significant Salesian places.

No less important was the growth and development of the Salesian Spirituality Days even in COVID times. Unfortunately, this “blow”, which has hit the whole world hard, causing so much pain and damage in so many ways, has required us to be more creative in seeking solutions that have given impetus and novelty to the Spirituality Days, which are now held simultaneously in Rome and Turin and in all the regions of the Congregation (i.e. in so many provinces).

- There is no question that our greatest gift is the charism of our identity marked by the Salesian mission.

Other Congregations and various Church groups have had to reinterpret and reconvert to the charism of their institution. This has not been the case for Don Bosco’s charism and, in turn, for the recipients of our mission, who are and continue to be the young people to whom we are sent, the same as in Don Bosco’s time.

⁶ Cf. *Charter of Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco* in J. RAPHAEL (A CURA DI), *La Famiglia Salesiana di Don Bosco*, Editrice S.D.B., Roma 2020, 8.

With Don Bosco, therefore, we reaffirm our preference for young people who are *poor, abandoned and at risk*; and among these are the young people in the world of work, the young people from working-class environments and those among peoples not yet evangelised.

In recent years, and always in tune with the previous direction of the Congregation, we have taken care of “missionary work” and mission fields.

We have intervened to encourage, as far as possible, the growth and development of other provinces in all continents through the gift of missionary confreres. In this regard, I remember that there has been a constant response every year.

We have accompanied the birth of other provinces and special circumscriptions.

We have taken steps to make a significant and qualified presence in parts of the Arab and Islamic world.

- We have focused on and moved decisively towards the establishment of increasingly international communities. I know that for some confreres this represented an uncomfortable or even difficult novelty. Indeed, building unity and communion in the one mission from the diversity and variety of our origins and cultures is always challenging. And, at the same time, much more prophetic.

On the other hand, dear confreres, the future of the Congregation is and will be increasingly characterised by cultural diversity: in terms of origin, and our belonging to peoples and nations. In a word, simply more varied

In any case, in the acceptance and care of this diversity, starting with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, we always find the strength that helps and supports us in the implementation of our mission.

- The Congregation continues to tread a valuable path of solidarity in terms of human resources, both through help between the provinces and by relying on the interventions of the Rector Major and his Council. Measures that are urgently needed because of the needs of many provinces and some global or international bodies and services.

In the current six-year period I have stated that we would count on the help of all (or as many as possible) the provinces to support the various international services. In general, I note and appreciate the generosity of both the confreres and the various provinces in making Salesians available for various services and for a specific period of time. This is proving to be something very positive that we will continue to consolidate.

- The Lord is blessing us with the gift of a good number of vocations to Salesian consecrated life.

In the last ten years, the average number of novices has been 442 every year. This is a great gift. We thank the Lord because he continues to take care of Don Bosco's Congregation, and because in this way he continues to show us how much he loves young people.

Later, of course, I will emphasise how we must care – more and better – for the vocations the Lord sends us. We are aware that the origin of these vocations is heterogeneous and varies across continents. In any case, we are very much blessed by the Lord. It is up to us to respond to this gift with absolute responsibility and foresight.

- Economic solidarity in the Congregation is another very positive reality.

About two-thirds of the provinces experience serious economic difficulties, or have a very fragile economy and one always at risk of imbalance, so we must pay close attention to these delicate phenomena. Thank God, I can say that this situation is not usually the result of mismanagement but of the priority given to the mission for the poorest.

Many provinces, because they are located in very poor countries and among the poorest, would not be able to survive without the Congregation's assistance.

I see excellent signs and gestures of solidarity and help between some provinces. There are mission offices in various countries that have twinned with other provinces and countries. And there is the great support that the Rector Major with his

Council can offer to many provinces thanks to the important contribution collected and always made available by the three major mission offices directly linked to the Successor of Don Bosco. They do excellent work and deserve to be explicitly mentioned here. They are the New Rochelle Mission Office in the United States of America; the Madrid Mission Office (Misiones Salesianas) in Spain; and the Turin Missionary Office (Missioni Don Bosco) in Italy.

- We continue to make progress in the field of social communication, with considerable development especially in a good number of provinces.

Fr Juan E. Vecchi already developed an important reflection in his letter “Communication in the Salesian Mission”.⁷ And Fr Pascual Chávez dedicated another significant letter to the same theme entitled “With the courage of Don Bosco on the new frontiers of social communication”,⁸ highlighting how social communication is one of the priority fields of the Salesian mission, already intuited by Don Bosco himself, who gave it great importance through the spread of good books – the most advanced means of communication at the time – with his circular letter of 19 March 1885 on “The spread of good books”⁹ – considered a “true manifesto of social communication for the Congregation.”¹⁰

Well, I believe that especially in the life of many provinces there is significant progress being made in this field, with a sensitive connection to the communication scene today. Perhaps we have the feeling that we are always “a bit behind” or that we

⁷ J. E. VECCHI, *Communication in the Salesian mission*. “They are astonished beyond all measure! ...He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak”, in AGC 370 (2000), 3-44.

⁸ P. CHÁVEZ, *With the courage of Don Bosco on the new frontiers of Social Communication*, in AGC 390 (2005), 3-46.

⁹ G. BOSCO, *Circolare ai Salesiani sulla diffusione dei buoni libri*, in ISTITUTO STORICO SALESIANO, *Fonti salesiane 1: Don Bosco e la sua opera. Raccolta antologica*, LAS, Roma 2014, 481-485,

¹⁰ P. CHÁVEZ, *Lettere circolari ai salesiani*, LAS, Roma 2021, 358.

do not have the influence of the large communication structures – which is true. Nonetheless, we have very direct channels to reach out to those near and far, giving us a visibility that undoubtedly helps the Salesian mission in the growth of the Kingdom of God in the world.

- Another area in which we have made good progress and done good work is in the area of *shared mission*: Salesians and lay people united and actively engaged in the same mission.

First of all, I must recognise that we still have a long way to go, although we have undoubtedly made a lot of progress. There is still some resistance on the part of individuals and groups, but also strong convictions that will not allow backward steps.

There are difficulties related to culture and territories that make themselves felt. There are people and groups for whom, in fact, it seems the time has not yet come to put GC24 into practice, which pointed to living with “one spirit, one mission”: “Salesians and lay people: communion and sharing in the spirit and mission of Don Bosco”.¹¹ Perhaps because somewhere there is an abundance of Salesian consecrated vocations; or perhaps because there is a fear of losing power and control.

There is no doubt that what I have just said is true. In any case, life with its demands will put everything in its place. On the contrary, the entire Congregation has been heading in the right direction for some time, and this has become more eloquent in recent years. It is not only a question of the number of vocations to consecrated life, but also of the great value of complementarity in the mission, because Don Bosco’s charism has no “owners”. It is above all a *gift of the Spirit to the Church*.

In the introduction to the Chapter document approved at GC24 that I just mentioned, we read that “It is the story of a love which is contagious and spreads, drawing many people into its light and strength, a Family, a Movement!... We Salesians, the

¹¹ Cf. GENERAL CHAPTER 24 OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO, “*Salesians and lay people: Communion and sharing in the spirit and in the mission of Don Bosco. Chapter Documents*”, in AGC 356 (1996).

successors of those first boys who wanted to stay with Don Bosco for ever, find ourselves in the company of many lay people, men and women of our time, who feel the same kind of call and ask to be able to work with the heart and manner of the *Father and Master of the young*. To enter that circle of light and strength is what we propose to do.”¹²

Here I think I can say that we are continuing on a path that is worth pursuing and where we all feel more and more comfortable walking together along the path opened up by Don Bosco.

- We continue to be a Salesian Congregation and Family that lives in communion with the Church and that builds the Church, the People of God; in communion above all with the Pope and with the local churches.

Our Constitutions say that “The Salesian vocation places us at the heart of the Church and puts us entirely at the service of her mission. (...) In this way we contribute to building up the Church as the Body of Christ, so that also through us she may appear to the world as the ‘universal sacrament of salvation.’” (C.6).

I think it is fair to say that during these years we have continued to strengthen our keen ecclesial sense and our communion. It is not true what we have sometimes heard some people say, that we are “doing our own thing”. And by this I do not mean that the manifestation of our ecclesiality and communion with the local Churches is always and everywhere perfect. In any case, this is certainly an element of our Congregation’s identity that is cherished and in which we continue to grow. Already the Special General Chapter stated that “our mission is not different from the mission of the Church, it is only a participation in it, a specific aspect of it, a particular ministry; it therefore receives all the authenticity and strength of its insertion in the overall mission of the Church (...). It is clear *we work for the Church*.”¹³

¹² *Ibid.*, 20.

¹³ 20th Special Salesian General Chapter, 1972, no. 27.

To what has been said so far I would add the words of Don Bosco himself: “Any effort is little when it comes to the Church and the Papacy.”¹⁴

The Special General Chapter stated that “Don Bosco lived immersed in the ecclesial reality of his time. The Salesian, aware that the Church is the sacrament of salvation, actively participates in the pastoral care of the local Church; he is open to the problems of the universal Church; he shows sincere respect to the bishops and especially to the Pope, the living sign of the unity of the Church.”¹⁵

It seems to me that all this clearly expresses our position and that, certainly, these have been years of a true congregational and ecclesial journey. We must certainly continue like this in the years to come.

- As a conclusion to this review of the journey so far with so many good things, I leave you with a reference to our *coadjutor confreres, the Salesian Brothers*.

As of 31 December 2022, statistics showed that there were 1434 Salesian Brothers in our Congregation: 1216 in perpetual vows and 218 in temporary vows. They make up 10.24% of the members of our Congregation.

Visiting Salesian provinces around the world, I have sometimes been asked about the “crisis of the Salesian coadjutor” or the “crisis of the Salesian Brother’s vocation”. I have always responded clearly and decisively, stating that I know of no particular crisis in the vocation of our Brother confreres in the Congregation. In any case, if one wants to speak of a “crisis”, it is the same crisis that afflicts consecrated life and the Church – a wearisome phenomenon that I will develop in the following pages.

Having said that, I must add that the charismatic identity of the Salesian Brother’s vocation is beyond question in our

¹⁴ *BM* V, 383; *MB* V, 411 (quoted in C. 13)

¹⁵ 20th Special Salesian General Chapter, *op.cit.*, 99.

Congregation. I would also add that they are a great gift and a gift of precious vocational complementarity, and that they undoubtedly reach many people and groups that would be denied to Salesian priests, as Don Bosco himself said: “There are things that neither priests nor clerics can do, and you will do them.”¹⁶

On the other hand, the Brother transmits all the freshness of the consecrated lay dimension of our Congregation that Don Bosco had already intuited and expressed in the first Constitutions and in the “precious laboratory of Salesian life” that Valdocco was from the beginning. Indeed, throughout our history, the Salesian Congregation has been enriched by extraordinary Salesian Brothers on all continents. From the early days with Don Bosco until today.

The Lord has given us by grace and through the intervention of the Holy Spirit the great gift of *the holiness of Artemides Zatti*.

On 9 October 2022, the Holy Father Pope Francis canonised Saint Artemides Zatti, Salesian Brother and nurse in the lands of Patagonia. The first non-martyr Salesian saint (since we have the grace to include with him the two giants of mission and gift of self, Bishop Aloysius Versiglia and Callistus Caravaglio), after Don Bosco, our founder. A truly eloquent fact. The memories and affections that filled our hearts and minds during those days are still very fresh in these minds and hearts. I can sense the deep emotion of the 637 Salesian Brothers who came to Rome for the canonisation, and the joy at seeing one of their confreres in the Congregation, a Brother like them, already an intercessor among the saints.

All this has been a very special *grace* for our Congregation over these years.

Nothing better, then, than to make my own and echo the words of Fr Vecchi in the letter he wrote on the occasion of Artemides Zatti’s beatification:

¹⁶ MB XVI, 313. MB XVI, 264.

“I prefer rather, on the extraordinary occasion of the beatification of Brother Artemide Zatti, to ask from every Province, every community and every confrere in the coming years – beginning with the present one – *a renewed, extraordinary and specific commitment for the vocation of the Salesian Brother* within our vocational pastoral work: in praying for this, in suggesting and proclaiming it, in welcoming it and following it up, in living it personally and together in the community.”¹⁷

As a sign of gratitude for the many gifts received over the years, let us continue to do all we can to promote this precious Salesian vocation in the Congregation.

What has been said so far, dear confreres, speaks of a journey we are on. There are many reasons for hope and reasons to thank the Lord. How I wish that all the confreres are aware of this and, in faith, thank God’s Holy Spirit for his presence and for the guidance he has given to our Congregation!

Before sharing some of the challenges (or limitations) that slow down the Congregation’s progress, I would like to tell you about something that happened to me while writing this letter.

I had already finished it, and was doing a third revision when, visiting an internet search engine for a few minutes to delve into the aspect of our contribution to the building of ecclesial communion, the letter of convocation of GC28 unexpectedly appeared in first place, bearing the date of 24 May 2018, that is, about five years ago.

I looked at it and the paragraph entitled “Some questions we may ask ourselves”¹⁸ “appeared” first.

I refreshed my memory reading these lines and was struck because what I read there is like the preamble to many of the things that, five years later, I have collected here, showing the road travelled, and many of the achievements and also the

¹⁷ J. E. VECCHI, *Beatification of Brother Artemides Zatti: a sensational precedent*, in AGC 376 (2001), 47.

¹⁸ Cf. A. FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, *What kind of Salesians for the youth of today? convoking the 28th General Chapter*, in AGC 427 (2018), 7-9.

shortcomings that remain as a burden hindering our desire to fly higher.

Therefore, I cannot help but add and include this page, which I feel is still relevant. More so today than then.

“This situation is not the same everywhere nor is it simple. It is for this reason that we are finding contrasting situations which are forcing us to move in the direction of a more radical approach, of greater courage, greater clarity and even greater purification in the light of the Gospel and of the fidelity of our Congregation to the charism received from the Holy Spirit in Don Bosco.

- In this complicated and diversified situation there are confreres, and they are the majority, who are living with total dedication and in tune with the young people, their world and their situation. There are others who feel that this world of youth and the young people themselves are no longer accessible to them.
- Most of the confreres live with a very clear and decisive option for the poor and needy, with a firm commitment to those who every day experience their dignity being trampled underfoot and violated; other confreres seek refuge in life situations that are easy and comfortable.
- The majority of the confreres live the ministerial priesthood like Don Bosco, who, for his boys and youngsters was a priest always and everywhere; while other confreres are greatly influenced by a strong tendency towards clericalism, which does so much damage to the Church herself and from which we are not exempt.
- Many confreres live their lives with total selflessness, sobriety, austerity and generosity in their service of others, in particular regarding those to whom we are especially sent; while there are other confreres who lose their identity and freedom as consecrated religious becoming involved in processes of power-seeking, which quite often are linked to looking for money and to other ties.
- Most confreres, with genuine passion and affection, are living lives that reflect in everyday situations what John Cagliero declared : “Monk or no monk I am never leaving Don Bosco”[5]; other confreres, however, as the consequence of a great lack of Salesian identity, ask to leave the Congregation in order to live not as consecrated religious apostles, Salesians of Don Bosco, but simply to exercise their priestly ministry in dioceses where they think they will be happy or simply be accepted.
- There are confreres who have understood and are living the shared mission with lay people seen as a great gift to the mission. On the

other hand, there are many others who still show great reluctance or even refuse; they are quite happy to see lay people as our dependants but they refuse to share the mission side by side on the same level with them, and all that this implies,

- Most of the young confreres in the stages of formation dream of committing all their energies to the young people to whom they will be sent, preparing their hearts and minds and pursuing their intellectual formation with this aim in view; and on the contrary there are other confreres who dream of appointments, responsibilities that may give them authority and “a certain position”.

This situation of ours made up of contrasts, lights and shadows, is asking from us the same things that Pope Francis, with his lively and direct approach asked from the whole Salesian Family. Today I feel the words: *not to disappoint the deep aspirations of the young* are in a special way addressed to us. This is what the Pope says: “May Don Bosco help you to not disappoint the deep aspirations of the young: their need for life, openness, joy, freedom and the future; their desire to collaborate in building up a more just and fraternal world, in fostering the development of all peoples, in safeguarding nature and the living environment. Following his example you will help them to experience that only in the life of grace, that is in friendship with Christ, does one fully obtain the most authentic ideals. You will have the joy of accompanying them in their search for a synthesis of faith, culture and life at moments when they take weighty decisions or attempt to interpret a reality that is complex.”¹⁹

All this leads me to say that there are aspects in us that, if they were overcome in faith and through genuine conversion – necessary always and for all – would make our Congregation a much more lively body capable of reflecting even more the light we are called to bear witness to and the good we are called to do, collaborating with the One Lord.

I would therefore like to recall a few elements that I consider of the utmost importance for the future direction of the Congregation.

1. I am concerned about a ***certain weakness or fragility in the way of living the spiritual life and relationship***

¹⁹ FRANCIS, *Letter of the Holy Father to Rev. Father Ángel Fernández Artime*, Vatican City 24 June 2015, in AGC 427 (2018), 9.

with God. This is a factor found very much in all consecrated life, but also in ours, as Salesians, and which affects our own charismatic identity.

In recent years I have been very surprised to find that some confreres have presented me with doubts regarding our charismatic identity, or our Salesian identity as consecrated persons; or what should be essential and radical in our Salesian life. I am really surprised, because there should be no doubt about who we are, what we are and what our charismatic essence is.

With the help of our confrere Marco Bay, a Salesian Brother, I looked up some data from the letters of the Rectors Major, and with him I collected references and quotations from the writings of Fr Egidio Viganò, Fr Juan Edmundo Vecchi, Fr Pascual Chávez, and also from my own, in which our charismatic identity as Salesians is alluded to. The end result was impressive. I can recall hundreds and hundreds of expressions – with the relevant citations of sources where to find them – in which the Rectors Major of the last 45 years have referred to our charismatic identity as Salesians, as consecrated persons, emphasising how this is the most important and essential element from which to care for, cultivate and build our spirit and our action as Salesians of Don Bosco.

It is more than evident that both I and my aforementioned predecessors considered it extremely important, that it cannot be neglected and that we must always ensure, cherish and deepen it. Put differently and from another angle: this is an “important fragility” that afflicts our Congregation and – dare I say it – all of consecrated life.

I would like to quote from the opening of GC27 which is, in my opinion, of great value. In his opening address to the Chapter, the Rector Major said to the Congregation at that time: “I would very much like to say that what concerns us is not the future of the Congregation, almost as if it were a matter of survival, but rather our prophetic capacity, meaning our charismatic **identity**,

our apostolic passion which are our true social and ecclesial relevance, following the criterion which Jesus himself gave us: ‘By this will everyone know that you are my disciples, that you love one another’ (Jn 13:35).”²⁰

Consecration makes us people who are unconditionally given to God. It makes us *a living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting*.²¹ It is that which allows us, therefore, to be totally dedicated to our confreres and to those to whom we are sent, even if, unfortunately, so many current anthropological models – or, to put it more colloquially, so many lifestyles in today’s world – push religious life in another direction, causing it to risk losing what is most genuine in consecration and what one should witness to most through one’s life. These are drives that reduce their scope to short-term projects and actions where “doing” and “efficiency” become more important than being and witnessing by one’s life – even when it is a simple, silent witness with no noteworthy achievements.

Today, there are authors and interpreters of consecrated life who think that it can be described as a blinkered way of life whose aim is the pursuit of efficiency alone, and which ultimately leads to a sterile and infertile type of existence. What is called apostolic *Prometheism* has crept in, urging us to feel the need to do things, to do more and more, as if the end of the world were imminent! A mentality that leads us to believe that we are the only true players in this moment. As if God did not exist or count. A mindset that drives us to strive for maximum performance, even at the cost of being crushed by the weight and burden we carry on our shoulders. And it turns out that, in the end, this frenetic way of living our “apostolicity” bitterly rewards our efforts with *fruitlessness*. Because apostolic *Prometheism* is certainly not what the Lord of the Gospel asks of us.

²⁰ 27th GENERAL CHAPTER SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO, “*Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel*”. *Work and temperance*, in AGC 418 (2014), 74.

²¹ VC, 22.

We would be wrong if we interpreted Don Bosco's well-known saying "we will rest in paradise" as being consumed without *pastoral heart and soul*, without being truly nourished and fed.

One discovers that this frenzy, this rhythm without God and without his Spirit – a climate in which some confreres are fatally immersed, living, deciding to live without the possibility or the will to get out of it – is *dehumanising* and, therefore, does not produce joyful lives, nor happy confreres, Salesians who convey peace, goodness, enthusiastic presence among our young people, true and profound joy for the life we live.²²

Along the years of our formation and studies, we certainly came across a famous text by Karl Rahner, which he considered to be his likely testament. In it we read: "*The Christian of tomorrow will be a mystic, a person who has experienced something, or he will not exist at all, because tomorrow's religiosity will no longer be shared on the basis of a unanimous and evident public conviction.*"²³

Rivers of ink have been spilt on this belief. In any case, the future of faith, and I would now say of personal faith itself, passes through the personal experience of God and his ineffable presence. Without a true experience of God, there will be no believers and – let me say it – even fewer consecrated men and women and even fewer Salesians of Don Bosco with a life totally spent for the young.

This evidence also emerges from the recent study we carried out with data from the last six years on why people leave the Congregation: *weakening of the spiritual life and relationship with God* emerges, in all cases, as a very strong cause. It could

²² This is what I meant when I wrote about "happy Salesians" as I dreamed in my letter published in AGC 421 in the year of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. Cf. AGC 421 (2015).

²³ Quoted on this occasion by J. A. PAGOLA, *Testigos del misterio de Dios en la noche*, in *Sal Terrae*, n° 1.030, Tomo 88/1, Santander, gennaio 2000, 30-42. See also K. RAHNER, *Nuovi saggi*, San Paolo Edizioni, Roma 1968, 24.

be said that the life of faith and the experience of God (and the experience of prayer) are part of a dimension that cannot be neglected in any way; otherwise, elements such as *routine*, superficiality, an oppressive secularism, the compulsive use of *social networks* and the fascination with their world, will profoundly affect our lives, inevitably eroding and wearing them down.

It is useful here to recall the words of Pope Francis: “If consecrated life is to maintain its prophetic mission and its appeal, continuing to be a school of faithfulness for those near and far, it must maintain its freshness and the novelty of Jesus’ centrality, the appeal of spirituality and the strength of mission, show the beauty of following Christ, and radiate hope and joy. Hope and joy.”²⁴

Allow me now to make my own the reflection we made in the study I mentioned. We can certainly agree that perhaps “there is no real circularity between faith celebrated, lived and witnessed, so it is easy to fall into a *routine* of acts (...). One does not intentionally and consciously enter into a true and personal relationship with God, but only into a ‘way of doing’ practices of piety (e.g. organising a vigil, preparing aids, holding celebrations, posting emotions on social media, organising everything again in a blog linked to other appointments and convocations), one may feel good, but all together it could be reduced to an educational professionalism and/or a pastoral or community professionalism.”²⁵

And in fact, what I am writing is known to everyone. Decade after decade the magisterium of the Congregation reminds us of this. There have been no lack of retreats in which we were invited to deepen our understanding of it; there have been no lack of readings. There has been no shortage of days of ongoing forma-

²⁴ FRANCIS, *Address to the participants in the plenary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, Rome 28 January 2017.

²⁵ Cf. M. BAY, *Lettura interpretativa dei casi di abbandono dal 2016 al 2022*, Digital edition for use by the General Council awaiting publication in this issue of the AGC.

tion, but after all, life is not only made up of ideas to dialogue with, it is also made up of *life experiences*. And if in these life experiences we come to strongly feel and experience that it is indeed true that “*in him we live and move and have our being*” (Acts 17:28), then the solidity of our life as consecrated Salesians will be of a certain kind; otherwise it will be something else.

If we come to have the personal, deep, intimate certainty that we are not alone, that we know in Whom we rest and Who sustains us – even in our fatigue and *routine* – then our way of life as Salesians will be of a certain kind. Otherwise it will be something else.

When the Salesian experiences something like this, he no longer lives only before himself and for himself, but lives before God and for God. This is the essence of what we know as the *experience of God*. And this experience allows one to enter, in a certain way, into the Mystery of God, “*where one no longer understands, but is deeply touched; where one no longer reasons, but adores; where one no longer dominates, but is dominated.*”²⁶

And we always return to the same point, to that certainty (at least in our ideas) that our life can only rest if it has the Lord Jesus Christ at its centre. Otherwise we live in anaemia or aridity. And I fear to imagine my Salesian confreres falling prey to spiritual and evangelical anaemia. But this can happen. Indeed, “consecrated religious life today suffers from an undeniable ‘evangelical anaemia’. Personally and institutionally.. To overcome this anaemia, it is necessary to recover the passion for the person of Jesus Christ, the first love that must radiate consecrated religious life.”²⁷

In conclusion, dear confreres, “let us be imitators of Don Bosco as he was of Christ (...) Contemplation of Christ embodies

²⁶ K. RANHER, *Glaube, der die Erde liebt*, quoted in J.A. PAGOLA, *op.cit.*, 31.

²⁷ C. PALACIOS, *Luzes e sombra da Vida Religiosa Consagrada nos dias de hoje*, in *Convergencia*, September 2011, quoted by J. M. ARNAIZ, *Los grandes desafíos de la vida consagrada hoy*. Conference in September 2013.

three inseparable elements: **knowing him more deeply, loving him more intensely, following him more radically.**”²⁸

2. In all sincerity, I must share with you another concern due to the fact that *there are many confreres who feel the need to leave Salesian life, the Congregation, for very different reasons...* What I am about to say is obviously in continuity with what I described and referred to earlier, although I will point out different reasons.

I think you are familiar with a line by the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Father H. Kolvenbach, who said, not without astonishment: *“It is quite contradictory that the mission that the Lord has entrusted to us exhausts so many of our members.”*²⁹

It is painful to see how fidelity to the following of Jesus, the path of fidelity of our Salesian consecrated life, which surely began with that first love, can today lead some confreres to live with “little light in their lamps” and “little flavour in the salt shaker.” What has happened to the invitation of the Lord who says, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Mt 11:28-30)?

Pope Francis has been talking about this for a few years now, but the situation has not improved: “We can well say that fidelity is being put to the test at the moment; the statistics you have examined prove this. We are facing a ‘haemorrhage’ that weakens consecrated life and the very life of the Church.”³⁰

This is something that we Salesians have not satisfactorily

²⁸ P. CHÁVEZ, “*But who do you say that I am?*” (Mk 8:28). *Looking at Christ through the eyes of Don Bosco*, in AGC, 384 (2004), 40 in P. CHÁVEZ, *Lettere circolari ai salesiani*, LAS, Roma 2021, 174.

²⁹ G. URIBARRI, *Contro il prometeismo apostolico*, in *Sal Terrae*, June 1999, vol. 87/6, p. 505.

³⁰ FRANCIS, *op. cit.*

overcome over these ten years. It is true that this is not just about us as a male congregation. It happens in all congregations and religious orders, male and female. We also discussed this at meetings of the Union of Superiors General. In any case, my first concern is a particular one and it is addressed to us Salesians of Don Bosco.

The reasons behind this difficulty are quite diverse:

- Not infrequently all this has to do with the real difficulty of *achieving maturity*, which entails a journey of years, effort, time and the action of grace that pushes us to abandon a superficial lifestyle that can lead us to live as distracted, decentralised religious, at the mercy of the “winds” that blow our way; or even more, dependent on and in need of the approval and recognition of others.

Sometimes the delicate situation of some confreres is affected by the fragility of the “baggage” with which they come to Salesian consecrated life. And, walking a path towards full and conscious identification with what consecration is and consolidating it well, is not always easy.

At other times, clear and lucid discernment is missing or has been lacking.

- As we know, the *affective dimension* is another area of vital importance for every individual. I would just like to point out that affections and the area of affectivity deeply mark our lives. We all have and express affections, emotions, feelings. The level of maturity of each individual affects and will affect their being and activity.

There are people with a fully developed and mature affectivity. Others experience fragilities, blockages and defensive attitudes that, sooner or later, will emerge and demand and “account” for everything that has not been resolved.

There may be difficulties in relating to others, problems with people of different or the same sex, or difficulties with people in authority.

There are confreres who experience an emotional void, which they are unable to fill in our form of life, and who, therefore, look elsewhere for what they feel or experience as lacking. Even going so far as to abandon or ask to leave the Congregation.

- Other confreres, while serene, experience a real and heavy difficulty in resolving conflicts – the conflicts that accompany the life of every person, in any kind of life and society. And even in consecrated life there are conflicts that can and must be managed serenely, with maturity.

One of the reasons most often given by those who leave the Congregation – let me say this: not always completely true, but because it is an easier reason to expound in public and one that projects responsibility onto others rather than themselves – has to do with fraternal life and the difficulties they encounter (or believe they encounter) in it. But I will refer to this in a later section.

- Finally, as I indicated at the beginning of my presentation of these vital challenges we face, we find everything that concerns the faith dimension of our lives – today so conditioned by the vital contexts in which we find ourselves and put on the back burner even before our very eyes – leads some confreres to say, “I have come this far and I can no longer take other steps because I lack the motivation to live as a consecrated person, as a Salesian.”

The truth is, as I anticipated, that in this we continue to have, as a Congregation, one of our most serious weaknesses; a real “Achilles heel” to which we will undoubtedly have to continue to give priority attention.

As I said – although this should not reassure us – this is a general situation that concerns all congregations (male and female – albeit with different nuances). And it is one of the urgent matters that has most alarmed the **Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life** in recent years.³¹

³¹ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF

As for us, I am confident that the new *Ratio* for the formation of Salesians of Don Bosco will be a means that will help and enlighten our path. However, we cannot naively think that the promulgation of a document alone can solve the challenges of the Congregation. Many other elements need to be brought into play.

3. I am concerned when I encounter situations of community life in which *the community serves for what it is meant to do: it is “functional” but it is not prophetic and, therefore, not attractive to young people.*

In the light of the previously mentioned study on why people leave our Congregation, it can be said that *community life is the common denominator among the reasons for leaving.*

As I mentioned earlier, in all honesty I do not think it can be said that this is always and in all cases the only and true reason. Although there are often other hidden or even explicit and overt reasons that are not included in the letter requesting to leave the Congregation, and which show personal weaknesses, in many cases it is easier and more convenient to resort to the “myth of lack of fraternal life”. There is no doubt that if our fraternal life were more enthusiastic, less utilitarian and pragmatic, less functional, richer in healthy affection and permeated by the prophecy of the Gospel, it would attract more and we who live it directly would experience the great value of this precious “evangelical utopia” of universal fellowship.

We read in the Constitutions that we have professed, that “To live and work together is for us Salesians a fundamental requirement and a sure way of fulfilling our vocation. This is why we come together in communities, where our love for each other leads us to share all we have in a family spirit, and so create communion between person and person. The community is a

reflection of the mystery of the Trinity: there we find a response to the deep aspirations of the heart, and we become signs of love and unity for the young.”(C.49)

In reality, we live – in many parts of the world – in contexts that mainly exalt *individualism*. In many societies where we are present, life is lived “in a hurry”, in atrocious activism; relationships with others are ruined and much of what we experience is determined almost exclusively by efficiency and the achievement of goals and results.

The situation is no less harsh where loneliness dominates. There is a lot of loneliness in the world. And there is also loneliness in religious communities of consecrated life, and sometimes even in Salesian communities. In short, *in our communities, we must free ourselves from the high price we pay for having communities tied to functional roles and management alone. This in itself hurts us a lot and extinguishes the vocational flame in the confreres.*

Faced with these risks, Pope Francis proposed that consecrated persons live “the mystique of the encounter”³², since consecrated life is called to be a visible sign of welcoming, transparent and sincere human relationships.

Consecrated life is characterised by the presence of persons whom the Pope describes as *experts and craftsmen in communion*³³ and the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CIVCSVA) in its document *Fraternal Life in Community* states in this regard: “Fraternal communion, as such, is already an apostolate. In other words it contributes directly to the work of evangelisation. (...) The sign of fraternity (...) is the sign that points to the divine origin of the

³² FRANCIS, *Apostolic Letter to all consecrated people on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life*, Vatican City 2014, 2.

³³ *Ibid.* See also J. E. VECCHI, “*EXPERTS, WITNESSES AND CRAFTSMEN OF COMMUNION*”. *The Salesian community - animating nucleus*, in AGC 363 (1998), 3-42.

Christian message and has the power to open hearts to faith. For this reason, ‘the effectiveness of religious life depends on the quality of the fraternal life in common’.”³⁴

It is more than evident, even if it costs us a lot, that in the face of so much running (and chasing), so much activism, and management that dominates and reigns, we need to cultivate and cherish our interiority more and more. Only from within will we have the necessary maturity to relate in a mature and healthy way; rich first of all for ourselves, for our confreres in community and for other people. Even if the environment around us is not conducive or seems to counteract this.

As I have already said, the intercultural reality of our communities may make their construction more difficult, but its promotion is and will continue to be a very strong prophetic sign to oppose those who despise others; or who, without despising them, build and erect walls, simply because they are not “mine” or “ours”.

We are called to be one so that the world may believe (*Jn* 17:21). That is to say, although we are different also because of our cultural roots, we are capable of creating communion and community. Indeed, “community is well understood and seen when it is nourished by communion and tends towards communion. A community without communion, with all that it entails in terms of welcome, appreciation and affection, victim support and love, is reduced to a group in which people are happy to live together, but in reality leaves them isolated.”³⁵

Furthermore, our communities must offer and witness joy in the face of haste, stress and pragmatism. In the document *Fraternal Life in Community* we read: “A joyless fraternity is one that is dying out; before long, members will be tempted to seek

³⁴ CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Fraternal life in community*. “*Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor*”, Vatican City 1994, 54 (henceforth FLC).

³⁵ P. CHÁVEZ, *Lettere circolari ai salesiani*, op.cit., 1176.

elsewhere what they can no longer find within their own home.”³⁶ And this joy certainly has a testimonial value along with the ability to bring people together. But above all, it is able to offer the confreres fullness and quality of life.

Finally, our communities bear witness in the communion of goods to the great value of solidarity and sharing. At the same time, communities are expected to be, for the sake of our lives and in the face of devastating and inhuman consumerism in many parts of the world, places where the culture of moderation and austerity is proposed. And that, in addition to proposing such a culture, we are ourselves more moderate and austere.

4. Dear confreres, *I am not yet satisfied with the **attention given to the poorest children and young people**. Our hearts should be madly in love with the poorest, as was Don Bosco’s.*

I know that over these ten years there has not been a single province and a single country of the 118 visited so far in which I have not always recalled and asked for this. I have always said that, in the name of the Lord and out of loyalty to Don Bosco, we cannot lose the poorest, nor forget them or neglect them. We were born for them. They, the young people, and in particular the poorest, are our *holy place of encounter with God*.

It is true that so much good is being done. It is true that there are very many confreres with great sensitivity. But we are not all like that.

Dear confreres, let me borrow the words of one of us who wrote to me just this morning and, among the various things he shared with me, told me what I will now propose to you. These are words that touched my heart because they manifest the truth. There will be those who consider them a little harsh and those who, feeling a little uncomfortable, will think that this confrere and the Rector Major are pessimists.

³⁶ *FLC*, 28.

I assure you that neither this confrere – who for years has demonstrated his missionary dedication and his radical option for the poor – nor the undersigned are or feel pessimistic. On the contrary, I invite everyone not to be afraid to look inside themselves and to name by name both the strengths and weaknesses that we discover in ourselves and in our beloved Congregation.

This confrere wrote to me like this: “I confess to you: I have the impression and perception that our Province has wonderful Salesian works, very valid ones and which do a lot of good... But also – on a general and institutional level – I have the impression and perception that it lacks life and enthusiasm; that it is a ‘sedentary’ satisfied, somewhat hedonistic and triumphalist Province, with little real attention to the poor [**we take care of the poor, but we are not ‘with the poor’ nor ‘are we poor’**], and with little capacity for personal and institutional testimony. And where – alongside holy Salesians – there are ‘bourgeois’ Salesians who desire more social life than missionary life, attracted by careerism and with superficial attitudes, with distractions and various comforts and – what’s worse – everything is considered normal.”

I believe, dear confreres, that what has been said is true. There are truly holy Salesians. And they are the majority: Salesians dedicated to the mission, because their heart is filled with God and love for young people; confreres who make the Congregation great and support it.

And I must painfully admit and recognise that there are also other confreres who do not live this way. And that hurts us so much. How I would like us all to live our vocation in a radical way! I assure you that the vocational response of young people would be incredible. But for this we must be more enthusiastic, and give a more authentic testimony of life.

I was struck by an expression I read some time ago: “[In religious life] we too ‘domesticate’ the charism so that it does

not make us too uncomfortable and because we are benevolently accepted among the citizens of this world. Christian communities, the salt of the earth, can become extinct, and then they do not really serve to embody in history the impulse of the Spirit that gave birth to them (...) We prefer the figure of this passing world and we cling to it attracted by the vertigo of speed, without being aware in which direction we are going, [and without knowing] whether we are making the Kingdom of God visible or whether we are just hasty consumers of water that cannot quench our thirst.”³⁷

Let me conclude the simple reflection of these pages, dear confreres, with which I have tried to shed some light on this particular moment of ours, not so far from the celebration of the next General Chapter.

In faith, the certainty that the Holy Spirit guides and accompanies us always prevails. Pope Benedict XVI expressed it very well: “Dear friends, we must live according to the Spirit of unity and truth, and for this we must pray for the Spirit to enlighten us and guide us to overcome the charm of following our truths, and to welcome the truth of Christ transmitted in the Church.”³⁸

Without a doubt our Mother the Help of Christians will continue to accompany the life of our Congregation and the Salesian Family and to obtain for us many graces from her beloved Son.

And it is with such certainty that I wish to end not by saying goodbye, but with how our Father Don Bosco did so, he whom we all truly love, and who, in a very short letter written on the occasion of the arrangements for the Fourth General Chapter,

³⁷ J. A. GARCÍA-MONGE, *Tener; acaparar; poseer... Ecología del alma liberada*, in *Sal Terrae*, Santander, Febbraio 2000, volume 88/2, n° 1.031, p.139.

³⁸ BENEDICT XVI, *Homily of Holy Father Benedict XVI. Solemnity of Pentecost*, Rome 27 May 2012.

wrote: “May Mary May Help of Christians continue her maternal assistance and may St Francis de Sales obtain for us the grace of being her true followers. May the Lord bless you all, and pray to him also for me who sincerely am your dear friend in J.C.”³⁹

I make these feelings of our Father my own.

May the Lord bless you, dear confreres, and continue to bless our precious Congregation.

Pray for me. I promise to do so, be in no doubt, for all of you.

With true affection,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ángel F. Artime". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A' and 'F'.

Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb
Rector Major

³⁹ P. ALBERA, *Lettere circolari di D. Bosco e di D. Rua ed altri scritti ai Salesiani*, Tipografia Salesiana, Torino 1896, 35.

2. GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIVES

2.1 REVISED ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF OUR RULE OF LIFE

Fr Ivo COELHO

General Councillor for Formation

A revised and updated English translation of the 2015 Third Edition of the Constitutions and Regulations of the Society of St Francis de Sales is now available in PDF on the Congregation's websites, «sdb.org» and «sdl.sdb.org».

The text also contains the modifications introduced by GC28.

By decision of the Rector Major, who has encouraged and supported this revised translation from the outset, a new print edition will not be available until after GC29, given the possibility that this Chapter will introduce modifications to the existing Italian *editio typica*.

One may ask why there is a new translation at this particular point in time. The most immediate reason lay in glaring mistranslations such as “Vicar General,” when it should have been “Vicar of the Rector Major.” Another reason was the availability of a small and excellent group of confreres with the qualifications and willingness to work on the project. By way of other and more substantial reasons we could also speak of the evolving nature of language, the changing demographics of our Congregation, and an advance preparation for GC29.

The evolving nature of language

The renewed and approved text of our Rule of Life was translated into English back in 1984, nearly 40 years ago, and subsequent editions only adjusted some articles following modifications introduced by General Chapters 23-28.

Language is in constant change, as we know, but cultural

sensitivities involving language have also changed in our rapidly evolving modern world. Certain expressions, the need for more gender inclusive language, and, indeed, an evolving understanding of translation as both an art and a science all played a part in the realisation that the existing translation could do with some renewal. And, as can happen with the best of intentions, a detailed comparison of the existing translation with its approved Italian original soon made us realize that there were additions to the original, an important omission in one case, the occasional mistranslation, adherence to language and typographical conventions belonging more to Italian than English, typographical errors, and so on.

One of the decisions was to use the inclusive language NRSVCE version of the Bible. Another was to replace ‘class’ terms with equivalents such as poorer or low-income areas, groups or surroundings.

The changing demographics of the Society of St Francis de Sales

Recent surveys, the annual FLASH data, and the general appreciation of the formation situation of the Congregation has brought the realisation that by now 50% or more of young Salesians in formation are using English on a daily basis.¹ It may not be their first language, but it is the language they use in many apostolic, academic and even domestic circumstances. And they may or may not (in many cases do not) have an understanding of Italian. This means that the only Constitutions and Regulations they know are in English. So it essential that what they know in this regard is accurate and, as far as possible,

¹ In the 2017 survey of young Salesians and accompaniment, 52.5% of the confreres (including 438 spiritual guides) seem to have answered the questionnaire in English. See Marco Bay, *Young Salesians and Accompaniment: Results of an International Survey* (Bengaluru: Kristu Jyoti Publications, 2019) 42.

able to be read with ease. It was right for the Formation Sector, therefore, to inspire and promote the work towards a renewed English translation, requesting attention to accuracy, fluency, language sensitivity.

The need to prepare for GC29

Work began on this renewed translation almost a year ago. There were reasons suggesting we wait for GC29. On the other hand, translations always take time and much effort. Gone are the days when a single individual could sit down and put together a translation of a major prescriptive text such as a set of Constitutions and Regulations and do so under pressure of deadlines. Today it is all about teamwork, collaboration, providing the time and resources needed, so the feeling was that if a renewed text was to be worked on, it needed time, and the upcoming General Chapter would be well served by a ready translation that could easily accept any modifications that might result from it, and also adjust any aspect of that translation it felt necessary. The Formation Sector put together a team of confreres with native understanding of English, long Salesian and administrative experience, a good knowledge of Italian (including one native speaker of Italian with good knowledge of English) to carry out this task.

*

The end result, dear confreres, can be found on the two websites indicated above. The files are in PDF format, though neither contain the appendices or indexes. One of the texts is actually of print quality, the other is an interactive PDF.

This revised English translation of 2023 is now the official English language text of our Rule of Life.

Our sincere gratitude to the excellent team that worked with great enthusiasm and competence on this project. It has been a real pleasure working with them. Thank you dear confreres!

2.2 WALKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN DIGITAL CULTURE

Fr Gildasio Mendes DOS SANTOS

General Councillor for Social Communication

1. I would like to begin this letter with a question that involves all of us: how can we continue to be communicators, faithful to Don Bosco and our charism, in a changing world? It is a question that has been asked of me by provincials, young people, communication delegates and members of the Salesian Family concerned with living and transmitting our charism in the digital world today, without losing their souls.

2. If Don Bosco were here today, he would be an explorer of the digital world; he would know how to reach the hearts of young people. He would like to grasp the meaning and mechanisms of this environment so he could pursue teenage forays into it and their potential. He would invite us to follow him without any generational detachment, but with the light known only to those who are able to walk close to the earth with a gentle and accustomed step, and who know how to deal with essential issues at the pace of life itself.

Intelligent as he was, Don Bosco realised that communication was about relationships. He lived and developed his educational system based on one central idea: young people are the reason for our life. It is with them and for them that we communicate. In these times of great social and cultural change, the educational presence of Salesians in digital education aims to educate through direct relationship with young people, with a clear identity and charismatic fidelity.

3. We all communicate within a virtual universe that affects our relationships. Social media in particular are a place where people interact, share experiences, and cultivate relationships like never before.

This dimension can make us lose our sensitivity to interper-

sonal relationships, neglect fraternal communion in the community or distance ourselves from the educational relationship with young people. The digital world is a great opportunity to educate and evangelise, but it always requires reflection and discernment, starting from the Gospel, in order to always place fraternal relationships and communion at the centre.

Walking into the future, in line with the Church and the Congregation

4. In this letter, and in line with the Salesian Congregation's programme of animation and governance, I am presenting ideas for reflection, and guidelines regarding our Salesian presence as educators and communicators in the context of great social and cultural changes. This letter is the result of work that has involved Salesians and lay experts in communication, educators, and young professionals from the various Regions of our Congregation.

5. The objective is to address some of the main issues concerning the digital world, social media, the internet, artificial intelligence from an educational, pastoral and Salesian perspective. It is not our intention to carry out an analysis of the digital context in today's world, nor to define the different concepts that concern the complex and ever-changing digital world. Our precise intention is to adopt an approach inspired by our Salesian identity, which allows us to better understand and value the digital world at a personal, community and pastoral level.

6. The Salesian Congregation, in its different areas of intervention, aims to always keep up with the times. This is an attitude that has led us, over the years, to the continuous search for dialogue between faith and science, the Gospel and youth culture, the Preventive System and the digital world. As educators of young people, we have certainly found ways to respond to the great transition of communication towards information tech-

nologies, the internet and social networks. Together with lay people and educators, we seek to approach reality by listening to the new generations, accompanying teenagers in their *social* worlds, finding new languages and new methods to educate them to love, to the meaning of life and responsibility, to the construction of their personal project starting from the values of the Gospel and the Preventive System.

7. Following the Synod on Young People, the Church asked us to deepen our knowledge of digital dynamics: “The digital environment presents a challenge to the Church on many levels; *it is essential therefore to deepen knowledge of its dynamics and its range of possibilities from an anthropological and ethical point of view.* This requires not only entering into it and promoting its communicative potential with a view to the Christian proclamation, *but also giving a Gospel flavour to its culture and its dynamics.* Some initiatives along these lines are already underway and should be encouraged, deepened and shared.”¹

Recently, the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communication² published a text on the subject of the digital reality, stating that we are experiencing a gigantic change today, but we still have to face the way in which we, as individuals and as an ecclesial community, can approach the digital world as “loving neighbours”, genuinely present and attentive to each other on our common journey along the “digital highways”.

8. Digital reality belongs to our lives. The Church and the Salesian Congregation walk together in the discernment, vision and guidance of our young people, especially starting from an educational, critical and ethical approach, to provide a concrete example.

We know that adolescents and young adults are intensely involved in the digital world. Their world is a network of images,

¹ FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS ON YOUNG PEOPLE, *Young People the Faith and Vocational Discernment* (27 October 2018), no. 145.

² DICASTERY FOR COMMUNICATION, *Towards full presence. A pastoral reflection on engagement with social media*, Vatican City, 28 May 2023.

sounds and interactivity. They are natives of a reality where real and virtual are one and where the imagination speaks a multi-dimensional language. For them, the internet and social networks are places of study, research, personal and professional promotion, friendships and entertainment. There are also great challenges in this universe. The digital environment reflects the complex economic, political and social scenarios where poverty, violence, war, indifference towards others, individualism, injustices, lack of work and the climate crisis constitute a threat to the present and the future. Although young people are skilled at navigating digitally, they still seek our friendship, our listening, our support as travel companions and educators. We must learn, with young people, to walk alongside them.

9. We have no difficulty following this path, because it is part of our roots. Don Bosco, in fact, created a real “communication ecosystem”. He created a real network. He himself was a born communicator and insisted on taking care of this important dimension of the Salesian charism, as stated in our Constitutions which establish that Social Communication is “*a significant field of activity which constitutes one of the apostolic priorities of the Salesian mission...*”.³

10. This is evidenced by the fact that Salesians around the world are active communicators through media such as radio, publishing houses, the Salesian Bulletin, magazines, films, internet sites and all the other educational and institutional communication initiatives. For us, communicating is not only a technical and functional matter. It is an important dimension of Salesian pastoral care and a style of operational intervention: “Salesian communication, therefore, has this educational side to it, and expresses it as a commitment to the cause of culture and education, as a safeguarding of Salesian cultural tradition, a response to the question of communication and the skills of educators and young people in this area, and as communication

³ C. 43.

content and form. We believe that our commitment to education is 'our most important contribution to changing the world for the coming of the Kingdom' (GC24, 99)."⁴ For us, communication is a dimension of animation, a basic element of our educative and pastoral action.

Following the journey of the Church and the Salesian Congregation, our intention is to continue to develop criteria for analysis and produce critical considerations to strengthen project proposals in the field of social communication. We will commit ourselves to this journey, always being careful to take into account the different socio-cultural realities of the Provinces and Regions.

11. Today we are all communicators. Hence, each of us has the task of developing this topic, and not only in its functional and technical aspects. It is therefore necessary to reflect on how, in a high-technology context, it is possible to continue to place the human person at the centre, fostering fraternal communion. While recognising the importance of the digital environment, the Church has shown its possible shortcomings such as individualism, relativism, indifference, mental health problems and political radicalism and violence. These dangers, but also the many opportunities, require our experience and our active presence so that no one is left behind.

12. We Salesians walk in step with the times, as our Father Don Bosco asked us to and, as educators of young people, we cannot be afraid of what is part of their social and cultural reality. Currently, artificial intelligence, computer systems that simulate the behaviour of the human brain are gaining more and more importance. It is a momentous change that requires our discernment, to educate for their critical and conscious use.

13. As the world becomes increasingly digital and virtual, we

⁴ SOCIAL COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT, *Salesian Social Communication System. Guidelines for the Salesian Congregation*, Editrice S.D.B., Rome 2011, no. 28.

all have a responsibility to explore, with our educators, the guidelines for establishing a healthy relationship between people and technology, with a particular focus on care for creation, dignity and rights, the ethics of economics and politics. The goal is to safeguard the Common Home through fraternity, as proposed by Pope Francis starting from the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*⁵ and the *Global Educational Pact*.⁶

To face the present and the future it is essential to develop an interdisciplinary dialogue on digital and artificial intelligence, with an epistemology that involves philosophy, anthropology, ethics, psychology and studies on the digital world and artificial intelligence.

Therefore, we respond to the call of digital and artificial intelligence by looking for inspiration in Don Bosco. Our aim is to continue working together, to give quality and operational professionalism to our way of communicating, pastorally promoting social communication.

Living and communicating in a changing world

14. Information technology has transformed the way we think and act. It has influenced all human activities: the way we study, work, travel, shop, do research, listen to music... The digital reality is to be found in almost everything we do. Recently, we have observed the impact that artificial intelligence has had, for example in medicine, scientific research, creativity and economics.

The great technological achievements on the one hand contribute to human, social and cultural development; on the other hand they question the person. Our security and privacy are at risk and a reflection on the ethics of artificial intelligence

⁵ Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father Pope Francis on caring for our common home, St Peter's, 24 May, 2015.

⁶ *Message of the Holy Father Francis for the launch of the Educational Pact*. Vatican, 12 September 2019.

and the emergence of the digital divide is increasingly urgent. Moreover, the digital world has catapulted the human being into a new temporal and spatial dimension, characterised by instantaneousness and interactivity. This dynamic has led to the emergence of various challenges such as the importance of dialogue in different social and cultural contexts; the care of psycho-social health; ethics in the processing and transmission of news, with respect for the person and his or her values.

15. As educators of adolescents and young adults we have a responsibility to help our audiences read and critically interpret the digital world. Cyberspace evolves in the economic and political system. So it is always necessary to connect digital usage with knowledge of its contexts of reference. For example, some areas of Africa, Central and South America and Asia are plagued by poverty and the digital divide. Many communities do not have the power grid to power a computer or phone. In some countries, the State controls the content that users publish on the web and their interactions on social media.

16. Despite this, we should not be afraid of things digital, because it remains a great opportunity to educate and evangelise, but it always requires reflection and discernment. Starting from the Gospel, it is important to put communion at the centre of any form of communication, maintaining a Salesian educative and pastoral vision and an ethics that ensures respect for the human person and the entire community. This is essential to ensure that communication is always a means and never an end. The value of the encounter will change communication, consequently the quality of our lives, making us people open to the future, to the “signs of the times”, in the conviction that faith is bringing the Gospel to young people today, and an authentic call for us Salesians.

Dwelling digitally with evangelical wisdom and a sense of beauty

17. Living in the world today implies knowing and understanding it, making right choices. Starting from some points of reference which contain extensive and significant analyses, we would like to verify how, in our daily lives, we see, understand, choose, judge and act in today's world. We must evaluate whether our actions contain the "heart" of Jesus.

We all live in an era not only of great changes, but in a time that questions our way of being Christians, religious and members of the Church. This is why we need to continually check our ability to read and interpret the world properly and live consistently according to Jesus' proposal.

In order to have a healthy relationship with the digital environment we need to put young people at the centre. Indeed, the Salesian's approach cannot be reduced to the trivial and superficial suggestion to download social apps on one's smartphone or to become a star on Instagram or Twitch.

Rather, it is necessary to take the approach of dynamic accompaniment, which translates into "walking alongside" young people who live most of their lives with their eyes focused on the screen of their mobile phones. More necessary, as Don Bosco would say, is that they know that they are loved!

18. The model for accompanying young people digitally is Jesus on the road to Emmaus (cf. *Lk* 24:13 -35). A very Salesian text, very youthful!

In the dynamics of communicative accompaniment, Jesus approaches and walks together with two men to Emmaus. Along the way, an intimacy is created between the three of them that makes their hearts "burn" during their conversation. This passage has always made me think about the very nature of our role as communicators.

To communicate with the other, it is not necessary to "become" the other, that is, to change our attitude. Everyone can re-

main themselves. The important thing is to acquire the attitude that leads us to know the values of those before us, even when they are light years away from ours. To touch them first-hand we must know the digital world they inhabit and frequent: immerse ourselves in it, observe, explore, try to understand. Through conversation, we will seek the closeness that goes straight to the heart, that breaks down barriers, that leads to mutual respect.

We believe this is the way to “propose and not impose oneself”, as Pope Francis recommends in his message for World Communication Day.⁷ It is the educational approach to arrive at the “miracle of encounter that makes us look at each other with compassion, welcoming each other’s fragility with respect.”

19. The invitation for us is to continue to walk with young people in digital culture, crossing their digital habitat and walking alongside them in their time: it is a difficult challenge to enter into this, to enter their way of thinking. Is it possible they will not follow us, or that we will be clumsy or inadequate? So fragile, so variable is our way of love, the fact of being beside them. But this is our place. Because by walking together, with the Salesian kindness and joy that we learned from Don Bosco, we will be able to create trust and bonds, and, in this way, to dialogue, to put into practice the great art of communication: listening in order to interpret. Walking with them in the search for truth and in the experience of beauty.

Personal and community responsibility. We are here!

20. Living digitally affects the way we express ideas, create our communication policy, share information, express ourselves, and see the world and the realities in which we live. This requires great responsibility so that we can always communicate

⁷ Message of the Holy Father Francis for the 57th World Day of Social Communications. *Speaking with the heart*. “The truth in love” (Eph 4:15), Rome, St John Lateran’s, 24 January 2023, memorial of St Francis de Sales.

without dominating, relate without controlling people, express ourselves without the temptation of worldly power. We are also faced with challenges such as individualism and relativism, malaises that take on the traits of self-referentiality, indifference, lack of respect for nature, up to and including various forms of violence. Sometimes, even unconsciously, digital communication propels and leads people to situations of personal and group conflict, even to forms of radicalism. This can lead to a digital identity crisis. A kind of contemporary version of Plato's "cave myth". Instead of seeing the shadows on the wall of a life happening elsewhere, the prisoner is forced not only to observe himself, but also to see others showing themselves on social media. This can transform us profoundly.

21. In line with the Salesian charism, our role is to "equip" young people to confront the "cave" represented by current events. Obviously, it is in no way desirable to make them misfits, trying to distance them from social networks or to terrorise them. We must rather help them to train themselves for responsible freedom, providing them with the tools so that they are aware of the opportunities, risks and the opacity of the algorithms that manage how the internet functions; free to fully live their emotions outside of social networks; free from unwritten rules that can be overwhelming if one does not know the IT and sociological strategies that generate them.

It is true that young people are much better than us at creating a *reel* or airing a live broadcast. But it is also true that, at times, they have difficulty reading and interpreting everything behind the digital world: the commercial dynamics that animate social networks and the relationships that populate them. And this is where we come into play with our Salesian culture. We must inform, support and often even console them. We must try to be reliable and trusted interlocutors for them, motivating them to share difficulties and frustrations. It is up to us to get them out of the drama of isolation which leads them to thinking that no one is willing to understand them and that everyone is

instead ready to judge them. We need to communicate to them that a problem, if shared, is lighter, maybe even solvable and definitely addressable. And that we are there for them. We are here.

We communicate as a great movement in the world

22. Don Bosco, our father, was a born communicator and placed communication at the service of education and evangelisation. Following this path, we move today as Salesian Family in a vast movement of people guided by the same pastoral and apostolic energy. In our homes, schools, social works, universities and parishes, we can count on a wide and very varied range of media material which expresses our creativity and culture in all the Regions of the Salesian Congregation.

23. Fr Egidio Viganò, writing to the Salesian Family, observed how communication is a cultural phenomenon, which has young people at its centre: “Now we are well aware that our Salesian mission is closely linked with cultural matters: the whole of our evangelizing activity lives and develops within the ambit of culture.”⁸

24. Consistent with what Fr Egidio Viganò wrote, Fr Juan Vecchi⁹ felt the urgent need to incorporate communication into the Salesian mission. He emphasised the importance of designing our educational project, in which communication plays a fundamental role in formation, in the organisation of pastoral work, but also in project mentality.

25. In addition, Fr Pascual Chávez¹⁰ encouraged the Salesians

⁸ VIGANÒ Egidio, “*The challenge of the media*”, in: *Acts of the General Council* 62 (1981) 302, pp. 3-30.

⁹ VECCHI Juan Edmundo, *Communication in the Salesian mission*. “*They were astonished beyond measure! He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak*”, in: *Acts of the General Council* 81 (2000) 370, pp. 3-44.

¹⁰ CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA Pascual, *With the courage of Don Bosco on the new frontiers of social communication*, in: *Acts of the General Council* 86 (2005) 390, pp. 3-46.

to educate and evangelise “with the courage of Don Bosco on the new frontiers of social communication”. Fr Chávez added that it is not enough to use communication technologies, but that a “cultural conversion” must be implemented, giving priority to the formation of Salesians and ensuring an organisational and institutional response, so that the Salesian educator and pastor is a communicator for young people in a constantly changing world.

26. In the Rector Major’s Guidelines following GC28,¹¹ Fr Ángel Fernández Artime called for a commitment aimed at “offering resources and stimuli for a constant process of verification, updating, inculturation of the Salesian mission in the digital habitat.”

Starting from the Salesian educative and pastoral vision, the 10th Successor of Don Bosco¹² cites Pope Francis who spoke of the “Valdocco option” in his message to GC28, and of the Salesian charism at the service of young people. The Pope writes that the Salesian is “a living reminder of a presence in which availability, listening, joy and dedication are the essential features which give rise to processes.” Francis adds that “The gratuitousness of presence saves the Congregation from any activist obsession and from any kind of technical and functional reductionism.”

27. Historically, some General Chapters have reflected on the importance of communication and how this activity is part of the DNA of the Salesians. For example, in GC24,¹³ dealing with the guidelines of Social Communication, Chapter members stressed that evangelising by educating and educating by evangelising sums up Salesian activity also in the field of communication. As the spiritual children of Don Bosco and St Francis de

¹¹ GENERAL CHAPTER 28, *The Rector Major’s guidelines for the Salesian Congregation after General Chapter 28*, Guideline no. 3 – *Living the “Salesian sacrament” of presence*, in: *Acts of the General Council* 102 (2020) 433, pp. 25-29.

¹² *The Rector Major’s guidelines for the Salesian Congregation after General Chapter 28*, op. cit., p. 24.

¹³ GENERAL CHAPTER 24. *Salesians and laity: communion and sharing in the spirit and mission of Don Bosco*. (1996), pp. 130-132.

Sales, we feel this activity is in perfect harmony with the choices made by our founder and our patron. It is therefore up to each member of our Family to be open to this new reality. For this reason, it is necessary to invest in the formation of Salesians and lay people, to continue the dialogue between the Gospel and youth culture.

Don Bosco, our example of the communicator

28. I would like to introduce Don Bosco as a communicator starting from an episode in his life. One of his biographers describes Don Bosco's communicative vitality: "He walked on the rope as if he were on a path; he jumped on it, danced on it, he hung from it now with one foot, then with both hands and then with just one. To those who applauded him, the future Saint John Bosco responded by talking about God."¹⁴

Walking with balance, looking ahead with confidence is a great gesture of confidence and courage, but it is also a revolutionary act of communication. This was Don Bosco, the first and among the greatest communicators of his time. When we talk about communication in the Salesian Congregation, it is always important to remember where we come from.

Don Bosco is our first teacher and model. In his time he was intuitive and pragmatic, innovative and enterprising, visionary and unconventional. His idea was to form a real communication ecosystem, starting from the production of texts, right through to establishing printing and distribution centres. In his *Circular Letter on the Spread of Good Books*, our Founder places communication at the foundation of Salesian values and, consequently, at the basis of formation and catechesis, for the construction of the good Christian and upright citizen.

Don Bosco began his life as a communicator as a teenager. He developed his artistic skills through music and play. A young

¹⁴ LEMOYNE Giovanni Battista, *Vita di San Giovanni Bosco*, new edition edited by Fr Angelo AMADEI, vol. 1, SEI, Turin 1983, p. 50.

man in search of new languages to create human relationships and talk about God. As a writer, he dealt with a wide variety of topics: from the almanac of agriculture to the metric system, from the history of the Church to the biography of Dominic Savio. Don Bosco was the complete communicator: he could write scientific texts, tell stories, evoke dreams, create theatrical texts, integrate music with theatre, establish musical bands.

His vision of communication as a “single body” combining various experiences was brilliant. He did not “limit himself” to building a church, but gave rise to a new Salesian work. He established a printshop and a communications media such as the *Salesian Bulletin*. His strength lay in his originality, a characteristic that was accompanied by the ability to create a network of relationships, motivate people to collaborate in his projects, involve young people in professional learning, create affective relationships, promote the active involvement of young people and open them to a rich and joyful spiritual life.

29. Today, 135 years after his death, it is up to us to continue walking on the rope that he stretched out. A rope that crosses the era of social and cultural transformation that we are experiencing. We are called to be communicators with and for young people in the world of the internet, e-sports and artificial intelligence. We live immersed in the digital environment, in a network of friends, young people, people with whom we work and live, but we are also immersed in solicitations, distractions and threats. It is a privilege, an opportunity and a great challenge all at the same time.

Communicating based on the Salesian charism, so as not to become invisible in society

30. Communicating today means rereading the Salesian charism, putting on contemporary spectacles and taking the clear decision to follow a path of ongoing formation. The updating of each of us and of the communities represents a commitment that expresses our spirituality and our fidelity to the Salesian

charism. The goal is to know the values of the world in which we live from an evangelical perspective. We don't always like them and we don't always share them. But we must know them if we want to maintain an open dialogue with our young people. Otherwise, we risk isolating ourselves and becoming invisible in society. As the *Youth Ministry Frame of Reference* indicates, pastoral action starts from the "situation of young people" and takes into account all the implications of their context.¹⁵ The challenge of communication is a fundamental part of the world of young people, culture and society.

In the light of *Don Bosco's Preventive System*, we are called to be educators through communication. Our commitment must grow through participation in the Educative and Pastoral Community (EPC). Our sharing of Salesian spirituality and pedagogy with the laity allows us to set out for the future while remaining faithful to the charism, without losing the energy that distinguishes us.

31. In a world of great social, cultural and religious changes, it is very important to be open to listening, dialogue and discernment. The aim is to establish a religious exchange with the people where we live, maintaining the ability to bring the Gospel to a constantly changing world. This means not only keeping up with the pace and rhythm of technology, but also communicating by starting from the core of the charism and our Salesian mission. This entails a broadening of the vision of communication, which must always be at the service of the charism, in line with the Salesian mission of youth ministry and in synergy with other Sectors, such as Formation, Missions, Economy. In this task, the EPC has the great responsibility of collaborating in a harmonious way and with a planning mentality, in a process of operational and organisational shared responsibility.

¹⁵ SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT, *Salesian Youth Ministry. Frame of Reference*, Printer Grafisur S.L., pp. 21-36.

Starting from the “*Salesian sacrament*” of presence

32. The Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, in his action guidelines following GC28, presents original and interesting content in number 3: “Living the ‘*Salesian sacrament*’ of presence”.¹⁶ The theme of communication in this reflection is deeply linked to the Salesian charism and mission. Communicating is living our consecration to young people with the educational style of Don Bosco and embodying the presence of the “good shepherd communicator” among them. Today there is a big change in what we mean by “presence”, which is physical, but also, virtual. A presence where there is a continuity between the offline and online world: it is there that we must guarantee the Salesian presence.

Living the sacrament of communicative presence means giving value to our choice, that is, being Salesians for young people. Moreover, evangelising digitally does not only mean creating a network of contacts or sharing information. Our task is to show that the authenticity and novelty of our communication are the fruit of fidelity to our religious consecration, our testimony of life and our capacity for dialogue; the result of the encounter between the closeness, welcome and trust established in human and institutional relationships.

Today, communicating means offering a testimony, sharing experiences, serving others. It also means valuing initiatives oriented towards art, volunteering and charity. For this reason, communicating starting from the “*Salesian sacrament*” of presence translates into trying to express clearly and visibly that our mission is to educate the poorest young people. We are a movement of people gathered around this mission enlightened by the Gospel, a fundamental starting point for living communication as fraternal communion and empathetic service.

¹⁶ GENERAL CHAPTER 28, *The Rector Major’s Guidelines for the Salesian Congregation after General Chapter 28*, op. cit., pp. 25-29.

Communication and fraternal communion

33. God creates a dialogue with human beings. He does not impose himself: he proposes himself. He first of all seeks his creature's assent. Communicating is a simple and fundamental reality: it is the relationship between human beings and God, between person and person, between people and groups and among groups. It consists of listening, receiving, welcoming and, subsequently, giving, transmitting and self-giving at various levels: personal, family, community, social and religious.

How can we build fraternal communion in our communities and in our relationship with young people? Today, at times, there is a lack of communication that focuses on interpersonal and community relationships. Young people often feel immersed in a world of worthless connections. Even in religious life there is the risk of a loss of the sense of the other, of the ability to experience moments of gratuitousness, sharing and celebration.

In the document *Fraternal life in community*¹⁷ by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, we read an important text dedicated to communication: "In the renewal of recent years, communication has been recognised as one of the human factors acquiring increased importance for the life of a religious community. The deeply felt need to enhance fraternal life in community is accompanied by a corresponding need for communication which is both fuller and more intense. In order to become brothers and sisters, it is necessary to know one another. To do this, it is rather important to communicate more extensively and more deeply."¹⁸

Undoubtedly, communication is the lifeblood of the community. Without it there is no unity of hearts and projects and everything is reduced to a group of people who live physically or

¹⁷ CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Fraternal Life in Community*. "Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor", Rome, 2 February 1994.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 29.

virtually together, but who are spiritually distant from one another. Interpersonal relationship consists, first of all, in fraternal communion, in taking care of each other, in the awareness that fraternity is realised by communicating and constructing God's project together. The future of Christian life and religious life is played out in fraternal community.

34. In his Letter to the Ephesians Saint Paul, one of the greatest communicators in history, reveals a way of communicating by speaking the truth in love (*Eph 4:15*). This means desiring each other's growth, leaving everyone the freedom to be themselves, accepting their gifts and defeats, but always believing and acting with sincerity and honesty. Of course, fidelity in charity requires strong and clear convictions, including the duty to intervene between brothers and sisters on a personal and community level at the right time and for the common good, without attempting to placate the other or convince them of one's own point of view.

What is the gift of gifts? In Christian communication, the greatest gift is not made of things, but of ourselves. So even the lowliest and simplest individual has something to give and to communicate. It is our young people, on the journey with us, who teach us and at the same time learn that communication is a "thing of the heart".

Mary, an example of a communicator for the digital world

35. Let us conclude with a brief reference to Mary. The Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus and of the Church and our Helper, is an important reference point for communication in the digital world. A look at her attitude, starting from biblical quotations, reveals her wisdom and greatness so much so that she could be described as the "Mother of Communication".

Mary is the communicator of God's grace, from her unconditional and loving "yes" addressed to the One who chose her as his chosen one (Lk 1:38). Mary announces to Elizabeth that she

has been chosen to be the mother of Jesus, the Saviour (Lk 1:39-44). The interpersonal relationship between them is an encounter between two women deeply involved in the love of God. An exchange between sisters, a communication made of mutual attention and care.

In Cana in Galilee, Mary is the communicator of human relationships, empathy, sensitivity and openness. She interprets the situation with faith, coming out of herself and projecting herself towards others: "When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine' " (*Jn* 2:3). She values the group, knowing how to live in community, participating in its rites and joining in the joy of the guests. Her communication with Jesus and with the guests at the feast is characterised by loving, active, firm and creative authority: "His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you' " (*Jn* 2:5). Mary takes the initiative, takes the first step, dialogues, questions, listens and acts to find a solution to the lack of wine. Communicator and great guide, she shows a specific sensitivity for others and an immediate active attitude, a magnificent example of fraternal closeness.

In the Upper Room we see her silently present among the disciples of Jesus. In the Acts of the Apostles (1:14), Luke mentions the humble presence of Mary when they receive the Holy Spirit. She is a woman of communion, of integration in the community; she fits among the disciples as a Woman and as the Mother of Jesus. She interacts, listens, prays, accompanies, participates in the community that is being born. Despite being the Mother of Jesus, she does not place herself above the disciples. She communicates through her friendly and humble presence, with her deep sense of community.

At the foot of the cross (*Jn* 19:25-27), she is the communicator of faith in God's plan for each of us. Faithful to the love that is given beyond all human logic, she teaches us to communicate God's redemption in human history and to share the hope that will never pass away, because it has its source in the risen Christ.

Mary is the communicator who knows how to walk with young people! Let us be inspired by the great trust and devotion that our Father Don Bosco had towards the Virgin Mary, Help of Christians and let us entrust to her our mission as Salesian communicators wherever we are present.

In a changing world, Mary is the star that guides us and always enlightens us.

Valdocco, 24 July 2023

3. RULINGS AND DIRECTIVES

Prot. 2023/SG/0245



II RETTOR MAGGIORE
della Società Salesiana di San Giovanni Bosco
Sac. Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME

a seguito della promulgazione, ad opera del Dicastero delle Cause dei Santi, del Decreto super miraculo del 9 aprile 2022, e della conseguente ascrizione nell'Albo dei Santi del salesiano Coadiutore Artemide Zatti, avvenuta con rito proprio dal Santo Padre, Papa Francesco, in data 9 ottobre 2022,

vista la numerosa titolarità legale che, nella Società Salesiana di San Giovanni Bosco, si è data al Beato Artemide Zatti in capo a Circoscrizioni territoriali, Opere, Presenze, ecc,

con il presente

DECRETO

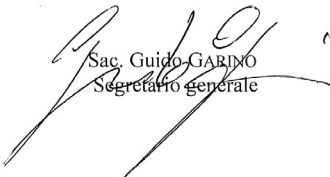
- dispone che il titolo di Beato, in capo al Coadiutore Artemide Zatti, sia sostituito dal titolo di **Santo** nella determinazione della titolarità legale di ogni Circoscrizione territoriale, Opera, Presenza, e altro,
- tale sostituzione viene ammessa *ipso iure* in forza al presente Decreto, senza ricorrere ad ulteriori procedimenti amministrativi *ad hoc*,
- si dispone infine che il titolo di Beato, in capo al Coadiutore Artemide Zatti, sia sostituito dal titolo di **Santo** in ogni documento della Società Salesiana di San Giovanni Bosco.

Il presente decreto entrerà in vigore a partire **dal 1° maggio 2023**.

Roma, 12 aprile 2023




Sac. Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME
Rettor Maggiore


Sac. Guido GARINO
Segretario generale

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

The main events of the Rector Major's chronicle are recorded here.

The new year opened with a busy programme. The General Council Plenary session was held from 1 to 27 January. The following appointments were dealt with: 6 Provincials, 43 Provincial Councillors, 89 Rectors of Works and 2 Novice Directors. At the level of Salesian houses, 2 works were canonically erected and 3 new presences were opened.

Numerous reports of Extraordinary Visitations were studied. We should also recall the meeting with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians General Council on 22 December 2022 and the 41st edition of the Salesian Family Spirituality Days that saw the presence of the entire Council. The Days took place from 12 to 15 January and saw 300 live participants and thousands online from the Salesian Family reflect on the theme of the 2023 Strenna "As Yeast in Today's Human Family".

After following all the work of the Days, the RM concluded with the Eucharistic Celebration on

15 January. "We believe in Christian humanism" Fr Artime said among other things, "and we have inherited Salesian optimism; for this reason we believe that we can be a simple and humble leaven for many people. And this is the Gospel, this is the construction of the Kingdom."

From the 20th to the 22nd, the RM went to Spain to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Salesian house in Barakaldo and the 75th anniversary of the FMA presence in the same city. The event was characterised above all by the meeting of young people and educators. "The challenges for young people are very clear: to have profound reasons for getting up every day with enthusiasm and passing on hope to other young people, because in the world there is a lack of hope" Fr A. F. Artime said.

29 January was dedicated to visits to Chieri and Colle Don Bosco where he celebrated the Eucharist. On 31 January, Don Bosco's feast day, Fr Artime celebrated in the Basilica at Valdocco in a joyful and participatory atmosphere.

Fr Artime made a unique and extraordinary visit to the historic

Ferrante Aporti juvenile prison in Turin. The visit, which took place on Wednesday, 1 February, recalling Don Bosco's meetings with imprisoned young people.

From 13 to 20 February, he visited the St Rose Province of Peru. During the visit, the RM met with the Salesian Youth Movement, the Salesian Family and representatives of missionary presences in the Amazon. The RM was very happy and sowed joy and encouragement in a situation facing no small difficulties of a socio-political kind. The new Provincial was installed in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians with a special ceremony.

From 25 to 28 February we find Fr Arttime visiting the Province of Hyderabad in India. Here he met organised groups and the Provincial Council. The Team Visit to the South Asia Region continued until 4 March. At the beginning of the work, Fr Arttime said "It is a precious moment for the 12 Provincials and their Regional Councillors to experience this communion. This makes us more aware of our charismatic identity and the communion that unites us as brothers of the same family. We are here much more to listen and learn from you, rather than to give you advice. I am convinced

that Don Bosco and our Mother Mary Help of Christians are accompanying us on this significant journey."

After India, from 4-12 March the RM was in Istanbul to celebrate 120 years of Salesian presence. In addition to the Salesian Family, the RM was able to meet Patriarch Bartholomew I, who did not fail to thank the Salesians for their educational work.

From 13 to 17 the RM was back in Turin for the Intermediate Council. On 18 March he was in Buenos Aires for the celebrations in honour of Artemides Zatti. On the 19th and 20th he was in Viedma in Patagonia. Back in Buenos Aires on the 21st, he led the Team Visit to the America South Cone Region until 24 March. The Team Visit took place on the 26th in Peru and concluded in Piura "the city of eternal heat". "The Lord," the Rector Major recalled, "has a dream for each of us and if we do not hinder it, that dream will come true."

The days from 28 to 31 March were also devoted to the Team Visit to the Interamerica Region.

April was occupied above all by the visit to Australia on the occasion of the centenary of the Salesian presence in that great continent. The RM arrived in Sydney

on 21 April after 31 hours in the air, and the visit lasted for eight days. It involved all the Salesian houses and works in the Melbourne area (Sunbury, Ascot Vale, Chadstone, Clifton Hill, Ferntree Gully and Lysterfield, but also included Sydney with the large complex in Engadine and other works. During the visit Fr Arttime had the opportunity to meet with confreres, members of the Salesian Family, and above all many young people who always cherish the hope for the future.

Back in Europe, from 2 to 4 May Fr Arttime visited the Salesian presences in Santa Cruz , Tenerife, La Orotava and Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, Spain, participating from the 5th to the 7th in the Salesian Cooperators Assembly in Malaga South, in the Mary Help of Christians Province in Seville.

Back in Valdocco, Turin, from the 9th to the 13th he chaired the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region. From 20 to 23 May he chaired the Salesian Family World Advisory Council gathered in Valdocco.

From 24 to 26 May he participated in the Assembly of the USG (Union of Superiors General) in Rome. On 27-28 May he was in Livorno to celebrate the 125th an-

niversary of the Salesian presence there. On 30 May, at the Vatican Teutonic College in Rome, he presented the book "The charism of presence and hope", which contains words and images of his travels in 2022. The presentation, hosted by the Congregation's co-spokesperson, Fr Giuseppe Costa was attended by Cardinals Bertone and Farina as well as numerous Italian and Spanish Vatican journalists.

The first week of June was dedicated to the General Council's retreat in Domodossola. The retreat was preached by Fr Luigi Roggia and animated by the Vicar, Fr Stefano Martoglio. From the 9th to the 29th of the month the Rector Major chaired the Plenary session of the General Council, interspersed on the 17th in Rome with the Curatorium for the UPS.

On the 24th of the month the Rector Major's Feast day, celebrated at Valdocco, was saddened by the death of his mother, Isabel Arttime Garcia. The funeral was held on 26 June in the parish of Our Lady of Luanco (Asturias) with the participation of many Spanish Salesians, the General Council and members of the Salesian Family. The Rector Major and the family thanked them all for their affection and participation.

From 30 June to 2 July the RM spent a weekend away with his Council in the mountain house at Cogne in the Valle d'Aosta.

From 3-28 July he was back in Turin, where he presided over the summer Plenary session of the General Council, while at the same time from the 3rd to the 14th, the course for the new provincials took place. That Sunday at the Angelus everyone was taken by surprise at the announcement by Pope Francis, appointing our Rector Major as Cardinal.

Fr Artime continued his work, meeting with six new Provincials, giving them their Road Map. On the 10th he welcomed the members of the Community of the Mission of Don Bosco, a group of the Salesian Family, while from the 19th to the 20th he met with the Provincials and their Councils from Philippines North Province, at Valdocco.

On the 29th he left for World Youth Day in Lisbon where he took part in numerous meetings.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

At the end of the General Council's winter session, the Vicar of the Rector Major attended some celebrations of for the liturgical feast of Don Bosco in different Salesian houses: Sampierdarena Genoa, Crocetta Turin, Colle Don Bosco, Cuneo and Arese parish.

At the end of this period of Don Bosco celebrations, he left for an animation visit to Taiwan and HK with the Missions Councillor and the Economer General. A week of very useful and important meetings and talks for the pastoral service of the confreres in those places.

When he returned to Rome in mid-February, he was able to devote some time to meetings and talks and then return to Valdocco on 20 February.

Starting from 24 February he went to India, first for an animation visit to INN and then for the Team Visit to the South Asia region. Two very rich but different experiences, yet so important for accompanying this large part of the Salesian Congregation.

Returning to Valdocco, he left for Rome to make the Provincial

Visitation of the Vatican community in the first ten days of March.

From 13 March to the 18th he participated in the intermediate Council in Valdocco, days of advice for ordinary administration issues and for the preparation of some subsequent team visits.

On 20 March he left for Argentina where the South Cone Region Team Visit was being held, and then from 27 March until 1 April he went to Peru for the Interamerica Region's Team Visit. Two very rich experiences of animation that allowed him to get to know and encounter the situation of a large part of the Congregation.

During this period, between the two Team Visits he was also able to visit the two Salesian communities in Patagonia, Argentina, a wonderful experience of the Congregation that he was able to see with his own eyes.

From mid-April the Vicar went to Rome for the Provincial Visitation of the other three RMG communities: Sacro Cuore, San Calisto and Castelgandolfo. The Provincial Visitations are always times for accompanying the communities and confreres.

This period of visits to RMG communities took about twenty days, until the first days of May.

From 8 May, the Vicar partici-

pated in the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region, held in Valdocco. This last meeting brought to a conclusion a very rich round of Team Visits for this semester.

On 19 May the Vicar left for Chile to conduct the consultation for the new Provincial, returning to Valdocco on 31 May. This visit, aimed at conducting a consultation for a new provincial, also allowed us to get to know the beautiful Province of Chile, from the north to the south of the Province.

On the first day of June, the Vicar left with the Rector Major, together with all the Councilors, for the Council's Retreat preached by Fr Giuseppe Roggia and held in the Rosminian house in Domodossola. With this week of rest and spiritual recharge, the summer session of the General Council began.

The General Councillor for Formation

Following the conclusion of the General Council's winter session 2022-2023, on 28 January 2023 Fr Ivo Coelho, the Councillor for Formation, went to Jerusalem for a visit to the theologate and for the Curatorium (2-3 February).

Returning to Turin on 4 February, on 11 February he went to

Mumbai for the world advisory council for Formation to be held at the Provincial House (13-17 February) and ended with a visit to the inter-provincial novitiate and postnovitiate at Nashik (INB), 18-19 February.

After a week with the family and also a visit to the inter-provincial prenovitiate at Loutolim – Goa (INP), Fr Ivo went to Hyderabad to take part in the Team Visit for the South Asia Region, 28 February – 4 March.

On 4 March he returned to Turin. On 8 March he held an online session for Provincials from the East Asia – Oceania Region on the question of formation in the mission (the Provincials were gathered at Dili-Comoro – Timor Leste).

On 19 March Fr Coelho travelled to Buenos Aires to take part in the Team Visit for the America South Cone Region, 20-23 March. On 25-26 March he made a visit to the inter-provincial postnovitiate in Cordoba (ARN). On 27 March he went to the inter-provincial theologate in San Justo (ARS), and to the Instituto Teológico de Estudios Teológicos (ISET) in Buenos Aires.

From 28 March to 1 April, the Councillor was part of the Team Visit for the Interamerica Region in Lima – Peru.

On 21 April, he presented an online report at the presentation of the book by Fr Thomas Anchukandom, *Theological formation of Salesians in India with special reference to Kristu Jyoti College Bangalore (1967-1976)* (LAS, Roma 2022).

On 25 April he went to the Zeferino Namuncurá Community, via della Bufalotta, Rome, where he took part in the UPS Vice-Province Feast Day.

From 9-13 May he took part in the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region at Valdocco, Turin.

On 16 May he made a visit to the School of Accompaniment (English version) at Colle Don Bosco, presenting the letter “The friendly talk with the Rector, spiritual accompaniment and admissions: some guidelines and policies” (AGC 438 – July-December 2022).

Meanwhile, during these months, work also continued on the revision of the *Ratio*.

The General Councillor for Youth Ministry

As part of the institutional meetings, the General Councillor for Youth Ministry gave the address on the “Statement of the European Sunday Alliance on the

annual European Day for a Work-Free Sunday” (February) and the opening speech at the Conference “Grounded in the Present, skilled for the Future”. He also participated in the meeting of Catholic organisations engaged in advocacy at the European level, organised by the Commission of the Episcopal Conferences of the European Union (COMECE). He also met with Archbishop Noël Treanor, Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union in Brussels (14 February).

Meetings and coordination meetings of the DBI have been held regularly since the first months of 2023, with the incoming and outgoing treasurer and the Executive Secretary, as well as the annual meeting of the DBI (16 January). During this first semester, the Councillor made arrangements with Fr Mathew Thomas, the new Salesian representative of the UN in New York, to replace Fr Thomas Palithanam. At the same time, he organised trips to introduce the new member to the UN offices in Geneva and Vienna.

Fr Miguel Angel continued the organisational and planning appointments with the Sector Team in the various scheduled meetings (eight sessions and a weekend of evaluation in July), both with the

members present at headquarters, and with those who reside outside Italy. At the same time, coordination meetings were promoted with the FMA Youth Ministry Department and with the Regionals (15 June).

Regarding the activities of DB Tech, the Councillor continued to promote coordination between DB Tech India, DB Tech Africa, CFP America Network and Tech Don Bosco Europe (11 March). He convened a Select Committee for the implementation of DB Tech Europe.

Regarding other coordination meetings, in the first month of the new year Fr Miguel Angel planned an appointment with those responsible in the Provinces for Salesian schools in Europe (17 January). In July, he organised a meeting with the new director of the Casa Don Bosco Museum (24).

The Councillor for Youth Ministry participated in the National Council of the “Exploradores de Don Bosco”, in the meeting with the councillors of the “Mallín” movement, and also in the meeting with the councillors of the leadership school for the Buenos Aires Region (25-26 March).

Within the framework of the IUS, on the occasion of the coordination meeting with the Provin-

cials of IUS Africa (18 January) and their Rectors (20 July), Fr Miguel Angel presented some choices and guidelines to begin an adequate coordination in the continent. In February he spoke at the annual meeting of the CIMAC-NAC and Mesoamerica Region of the Salesian School in America and with the ANDEAN Region (22 March). His intervention was requested at the Salesian Youth Leadership Conference (May) in SUO and at the RASS meeting on “educational partnerships”.

The Councillor planned pastoral animation visits to Egypt and Alexandria (28 January-5 February), to INK (5-9 March), ARS (25-27 March), FOR (1-12 April), BSP (18-25 May) and BPA (25-30 May). In these visits he met groups of school, provincial and local pastoral leaders; he held formation sessions with Salesians in formation; in addition to Eucharistic celebrations he also gave reflection days to educators, young people and Salesians; he also participated in congresses and inaugurations.

As is the case every year, great importance is also placed on formation in order to provide an opportunity for the provinces to grow and compare notes. During these months, Fr Miguel Angel, with the team at Sector Head-

quarters, organised an interesting webinar on digital health (16, 20 and 24 February), in which numerous delegates and lay people participated with interest and with a very positive final evaluation. He then offered a formation session to formators in the Mediterranean Region (Lisbon, 15 January); a formation meeting with the Provincials of the Mediterranean Region (27 April) and with the FIN Provincial Council (19 and 21 July); a formation day in the meeting of Principals, Rectors and catechists in the ICP (7 July); an online formation session on vocational animation (FIN, 24 February).

He preached the Retreat to the Rectors and Provincial Councils of the two Salesian Provinces of Mexico (16-22 April). He directed a formation course geared to the Councils of Educative and Pastoral Communities in Peru (12 April).

It is important to highlight the numerous meetings for the preparation of the World Youth Day scheduled for August 2023, for the Fourth School of Delegates for Youth Ministry (May 2024) and for the Synod of Young Salesians, which will be held in August 2024.

Also in the field of formation, the Councillor participated in the Governing Board of the Salesian

and Lay Formation Centre of Europe (10 July) and with the Rector and Vice-Rector of the UPS he launched a charismatic formation proposal (a “second level” higher education course) for lay people who have positions of responsibility in the Works in Europe (26 July).

At the level of animation of the provincial delegates, his involvement took place in the following events: the meeting with provincial youth ministry delegates from Europe (7-10 February, Munich), Brazil (21 May) and, online, with those from Africa (7 May).

The Councillor for Youth Ministry held a meeting for the drafting of the OPP and SEPP in some provinces.

Fr Miguel Angel conducted formation sessions in the course for new Provincials (23 June) and spoke with each of the ten. He participated in the Team Visit for the South Asia Region (1-4 March), the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region (9-13 May), the Interamerica Region (28-32 March) and the America South Cone Region (21-24 March). In addition, he participated in the winter (March) and summer (June-July) plenary sessions of the General Council.

In addition, it is important to mention that in these months

Fr Miguel Angel has coordinated the preparation of the document called “The Oratory-Youth Centre”, meeting the provincial delegates of this Sector (4, 5 and 6 May) and subsequently delivering it to the General Council; at the same time, he participated in the preparation and printing of the document known as “A youth ministry that educates to love” (March). The latter text was then presented on several occasions to different groups of Salesians and lay people. Finally, he dealt with the retrieval of data relating to Provinces’ Code of Ethics.

The Councillor sent a message for the Newsletter of the Salesian Representative to the United Nations. Also with regard to written production, he has written some articles for magazines and two new Flash supports for the animation of the Provinces.

The General Councillor for the Missions

The General Councillor for the Missions, Fr Alfred Maravilla, presided over the meeting of the Mission Offices dependent on the Rector Major, in Valdocco, from 18 to 22 January 2023. After the winter session of the General Council, he convened the World Consulta-

tive Assembly of the Missions Sector, also in Valdocco, from 28 to 30 January. After the celebrations for the Solemnity of St John Bosco, from the evening of 31 January he presided over the meeting of the PDMA of the Africa-Madagascar Region, until 4 February.

Together with the Vicar of the Rector Major and the Economer General, Fr Maravilla went to Taiwan on February 7 and 8 and then another two days in Hong Kong. On February 11, the Councillor was in Port Moresby to meet the Provincial Council of PGS Vice Province and present the proposal that the young Vice Province takes up the responsibility for the possible new Salesian presence in Vanuatu. Having received the unanimous acceptance of the Provincial Council, Fr Maravilla went to Vanuatu from February 22-26 with the Superior of PGS. The highlight of the visit was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the local bishop, Mons. John Bosco Baremes, SM, on 25 February, to prepare for the arrival of the first Salesians in 2025.

From February 27 to March 4, Fr Maravilla took part in the Team Visit to the South Asia Region in Hyderabad, India. Since he could not go to Bangladesh as

planned, due to the impossibility of obtaining a visa, he travelled to Sri Lanka. From March 6 to 12, the Councillor was able to visit all presences except one. During his visit, he met the Prenovices, Novices and the Provincial Council, with whom he shared his recommendations to foster the missionary spirit and commitment throughout the Vice Province.

From March 13 to 18, Fr Maravilla returned to Turin for the Intermediate Council. From March 20 to 25, he took part in the Team Visit to the Southern Cone region, in Pilar, Argentina. After the Team Visit, Fr Maravilla made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Blessed Zeferino Namuncurà at San Ignacio, Neuquén, accompanied by the PDMA of the Argentine Southern Province (ARS), Fr Francisco Chimento. The pilgrimage of the General Councillor for the Missions concluded with a visit to Junín de los Andes, which calls to mind the figure of Blessed Laura Vicuña. From March 29 to April 1, he went to Santa Rosa, Peru, for the Team Visit to the Interamerican Region.

From April 2 to 27, he returned to Italy for the Portuguese language course in Rome, interrupted only for a visit to Ljubljana, Slovenia, from April 14 to 17,

where he met the missionaries of Project Europe in that Province, accompanied by Fr Pavel Ženíšek, member of the Missions Sector.

From April 29 to May 3 the Councillor visited the Salesian presences in Uganda, accompanied by Fr Pierre Célestin Ngoboka, Superior of the Africa-Great Lakes Vice Province (AGL). From May 2 to 3, he was then in Palabek, the main reason for his visit. Since 2017, the Salesians have been working to develop the Palabek Refugee Centre, supporting the approximately 56,000 refugees from South Sudan and the 11,000 members of the host community in Palabek. After visiting Uganda, Fr Alfred Maravilla drove with Fr Ngoboka to Rwanda. During his stay, accompanied by the Vice Provincial, Fr Raymond Bavumiragiye, Fr Maravilla visited the Prenovitiate, Novitiate and Postnovitiate, where he had lively and interesting dialogues with those in formation and their formation guides, on the 'missionary spirit' and the 'missionary vocation'. On May 7, from Rwanda, the Councillor made a one-day stop in Nairobi, Kenya, to be updated by the Provincial and the

Provincial Delegate for Sudan on the situation of the Salesians of the Delegation. From Nairobi, Fr Maravilla travelled to Rome and then to Turin to participate in the Team Visit of the Central-Northern Europe Region from May 9 to 13. From May 13 to 27, he attended the special course for missionaries who were sent during the COVID pandemic. Afterwards, from the 28th to the 31st, all the members of the Missions Sector spent a few days of evaluation, planning and relaxation.

On June 1, Fr. Maravilla reached Domodossola with all the members of the General Council for their annual spiritual retreat. He attended the General Assembly of the Don Bosco Network in Valdocco from June 12 to 14. On June 17 he was in Madrid for the Governing Board of 'Misiones Salesianas'. On June 25 he left with the other members of the General Council for Luanca, Asturias, Spain for the funeral of the Rector Major's mother. On June 28 he chaired the Administrative Council of 'Missioni Don Bosco', in Turin. He participated in all the sessions of the General Council until its conclusion on July 24.

The General Councillor for Social Communication

After the winter plenary session of the General Council (December 2022-January 2023), held in Valdocco, Turin, on 31 January, the General Councillor for Social Communication, Fr Gildasio Mendes, celebrated the feast of Don Bosco in Brussels, participating together with Don Bosco International (DBI) in a meeting at the headquarters of the European community, and subsequently presiding over the Eucharist for the members of the DBI. Then, on 1 February 2023, he went to Rome for meetings with the Sector Team, the ANS Team and the translators.

On 9 February he returned to Valdocco to participate, together with the members of the Communication Sector Team – Fr Ricardo Campoli, Fr Harris Pakkam and Fr Maciej Makuła – in the review and planning meeting for the year 2023-2024.

On 15 February he was at UPS, at the Faculty of Social Communication Sciences, together with Fr Maciej Makuła, to meet with the Dean, Fr Fabio Pasqualetti, and the professors of the Faculty, in view of the preparation for the World Communication Conference

to be held at UPS in August 2024.

On 17 February, he participated, through a digital link, in the World Meeting of Regional Coordinators. On 28 February he then travelled to Hyderabad, India, to participate, together with the General Council, in the Team Visit to the South Asia Region, returning to Rome the following 5 March.

On 13-17 March he participated in the meeting of the Intermediate Council – for the Study of the Regions – with the General Council in Valdocco.

On 18 March he left for Buenos Aires, Argentina, to participate in the Team Visit to the America South Cone Region, which took place from the 20th to the 25th of that month; on the 26th he left for Lima, Peru, in view of the Team Visit for the Interamerica Region, which took place from 28 March to 1 April.

On 2 April he reached Brazil, to visit his mother in the city of Alta Floresta, in the State of Rondonia, in northern Brazil; and on 12 April he returned to Rome.

From 22 to 26 April he participated, in Valdocco, in the International Meeting of Salesian Bulletin Editors, where he oversaw the launching of his new book “Don Bosco and the Digital reality” published by ElleDiCi (Turin).

From 28 to 29 April he participated in the Communication and Formation Day – SDB and FMA – at the UPS, in Rome. And from 27 April to 7 May, he held various meetings with the Team following up preparations for the new communication document.

On 8 May he left for Turin to participate together with the General Council in the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region, which then took place in the days from 9 to 13 May.

At the end of the Team Visit, he made an animation visit to the Salesian Guardian Angels Province of Austria (AUS). On 15 May he visited Provincial Headquarters and spoke with the Provincial and some members of his Council; the following day he visited the Don Bosco Sozialwerk centre (Don Bosco Social Works), based in Vienna; and on 17 May he met with the new Delegate for Social Communication for the Province.

From 18 to 20 May he paid a visit to the St Boniface Province of the Salesians in Germany. On the first day he met the Provincial, Fr Reinhard Gesing, and gave a “good night” to the Salesians at the Provincial House telling them about the cause of martyrdom of Fr Rodolfo Lunkenbein and Simão Bororo.

On 19 May he met the various members of the editorial staff of Don Bosco Medien, the Salesian organisation that is responsible for both the German Salesian Bulletin – the “Don Bosco Magazin” – and the public relations and marketing of the Province. He also met the Head of Communication at Don Bosco Mission, the Salesian Mission Office based in Bonn, Ulla Fricke; and also met Fr Alfons Friedrich, SDB, and the editorial team, who presented him with the structure and guidelines of the “Don Bosco Magazin”.

From 20 to 24 May he visited the St John Berchmans Province of Northern Belgium and the Netherlands (BEN). The first day was dedicated to meeting with the Salesian Cooperators. It was the beginning of an extensive program, during which Fr Gildasio Mendes was introduced to several works, such as Don Bosco Medi, “Don Bosco Formation & Animation” (DBV&A), Don Bosco Rijswijk, Don Bosco Assel and the Provincial House. The Councillor also met with some “external” partners to get a clear picture of the role of the media in our society. There was, therefore, plenty of time for interesting exchanges with Lodge, Halewijn, Kerknet, Kerk & Leven and StampMedia.

On 22 May, the programme of his visit began in Rijswijk, a city near The Hague on the west coast of the Netherlands. Subsequently, Fr Gildasio Mendes went to Assel, where there is a Salesian community and where the offices of employees of the Salesians in the Netherlands are also located. There he was welcomed by Anja Hoogeveen, Head of Social Communications in the Netherlands.

Returning to Rome on 24 May, he participated, on 25 May, in the meeting of the DON BOSCO NEL MONDO Foundation and on 26 May he held an online meeting with the coordinator of Communication in Brazil (CONAC), Fr João Carlos, to prepare the first meeting of composers of Salesian music, and the first Don Bosco Digital Forum.

On Tuesday, 30 May, at the Vatican, he participated in the launching of the book on Rector Major's travels "The charism of presence and hope".

Then he also offered an online intervention at the first National Communication Meeting (ENAC) of the RSB, "Rede Salesiana Brasil".

Finally, on 31 May, he travelled to Turin, to take part together with the other members of the General Council in the Retreat held in Domodossola.

The Economist General

During the month of **January**, the Economist General was present at the various sessions of the plenary session of the General Council, which took place in Valdocco (Turin). In the middle of the month he participated in the CISI (Conference of Salesian Provincials of Italy) finance meeting in Milan and in the Salesian Family Spirituality Days that took place in Turin. On 31 January and 1 **February** he attended meetings with the Mission Office in Bonn.

From Wednesday 8 to Saturday 11 February he participated together with the Vicar of the Rector Major and the Councillor for Missions in the meeting with the Provincial and his council in Taipei and Hong Kong and, in the following week, he took part in a series of meetings in Rome with some provincials and consultants at the Economist's office. On 13 May he gave a lecture to economists and PDO members of ANN Province. From 23 to 26 February, Bro. Muller participated in the Economic Forum of the South Asia Region that took place in Kochi and in the following week, together with the Rector Major, his Vicar and the other

Sector Councillors, he was part of the Team Visit for the South Asia Region in Hyderabad (from 28 February to 4 **March**).

From 13 to 17 **March**, the Economist General took part in the work of the intermediate session of the General Council, and in the second half of the month he participated together with the Rector Major, his Vicar and the other Sector Councillors in the Team Visit for the South Cone Region that took place in Buenos Aires. Back in Rome, he gave a speech at the conference on St Willibrord in the *campo Santo* in the Vatican. In the last week of March and the first days of **April**, Bro. Muller took part in the Team Visit for the Interamerica Region that took place in Lima, Peru.

Immediately after Easter week, the Economist General participated in several meetings of some Foundations and the Don Bosco Network. On 23 April, Bro. Muller spoke at the meeting of world Salesian Bulletin Editors and on 25 April he participated at the opening of the new Roman headquarters of the Blessed Zefferino Namuncurà community (Bufalotta).

During the second week of **May**, the Economist General together with the Rector Major, his

Vicar and the other Sector Councillors participated in the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region that took place in Valdocco (Turin). In the following week, from 15 to 19 May, Bro. Muller together with his team coordinated the work of the course for new provincial economists (ANN, AUS, AOS, CRO, CAM, FRB, ILE, MEM, MYM, PLS, SSM, URU and Cambodia) which took place at the Pontifical Salesian University in Rome. On 28 May he met artist Baldessari in Milan to discuss the progress of the creation of a bronze statue of Saint Artemides Zatti.

Starting from the beginning of **June**, the Economist General took part in the different sessions of the plenary session of the General Council that took place in Turin. In the same month he participated together with the other members of the General Council in the Retreat at Domodossola and in the week of formation for new provincials.

The Councillor for the Africa and Madagascar Region

On 28 January at the conclusion of the General Council's Plenary Session, Fr Alphonse Owoudou, the Regional Councillor for Africa

and Madagascar, went to Cameroon to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Vice-Province Our Lady of Africa (ATE) with the Salesian Family. It was also an opportunity to take part in the launching of the centenary year of the death of Fr Variara (1923-2023), organised by Fr Variara's Sisters, the HHSSCC.

On 1 February, in the wake of these jubilee celebrations, Fr Alphonse left for Zambia. On 2 February, the Solemnity of the Presentation and the Day of Consecrated Life, he presided at the installation of the new Provincial for ZMB, Fr Michael Mbandama, the first indigenous Provincial of Zambia. The Regional Councillor seized the opportunity to visit the Postnovitiate, and the PDO headquarters. On 4 February, he flew to Maputo, capital of Mozambique. He had to wait some days to obtain a visa for the Kingdom of Eswatini. He took advantage of the occasion to be involved in the National Assembly of Schools and Technical Centres in Mozambique, as well as the Salesian Family Assembly on 5 February. On 6 February, Fr Alphonse was able to travel by road to the Kingdom of Eswatini. This Kingdom is one of the three nations of the AFM Vice-Province. From 7-

10 February he visited the Salesian work at Manzini, its different schools, and to the MSMHC Sisters and Bishop José Luís Gerardo Ponce de León, IMC, Bishop of Manzini. While waiting for his visa for the Kingdom of Lesotho, to gain time, Fr Alphonse summoned a number of confreres from South Africa (Walkerville, Johannesburg) to come and meet him in Manzini (Eswatini) to begin interviews and examine the documentation of their community. On 19 February, he travelled to Kenya to obtain a South African visa.

On 3 March, he led a working session with the Southern Africa Provincial Council AFE, in the presence of the CIVAM secretary, to clarify the terms and conditions of the consultation for the appointment of the two future provincials of AFE and TZA. On 4 March he returned to South Africa to complete his visit there: from 4-7 March at Ennerdale, and from 7-9 to the community at Walkerville before finally entering Lesotho. From 10-13 March, after a brief visit to the Bishop of Maseru, the regional Councillor visited the parish sector of Maseru – a Salesian work that has been canonically closed – before going down to Maputsoe on Sunday

12 March for the solemn Mass of welcome and for the rest of the visit to the Salesian community and the Salesian Family in Lesotho. Returning to Johannesburg on 14 March, the following day he concluded his visit with three significant moments: the meeting with the Provincial and his Council in the morning in the presence of the new Provincial, the Assembly of confreres in the afternoon, and finally the Eucharistic celebration with the installation for Fr Vaclav Klement.

On 16 March, Fr Alphonse left for Madagascar. He immediately met the Provincial Council and the Rectors of the entire Province who were at the Provincial House in Ivato. He then began a tour of the Province to visit each Salesian work. From 18-21 March, he visited the house at Betafo, in the diocese of Antsirabe. Then on to Fianarantsoa, where he stayed at the Postnovitiate to meet the formators, the young men in formation, and personnel teaching at the Institut ISSAPHI, personnel at the house, as well as the Salesian Family. This visit took place from 22-27 March. For the first time, this visit was held separately for the Postnovitiate and for the rest of the sectors, given the recent separation of the work into

two communities, for better animation. During his stay at the Postnovitiate, the Regional Councillor also organised a General Assembly online for the Provinces of the Region, on 24 March, for the pooling of preparatory material for the next Team Visit to be held in Rwanda from 19 to 24 February 2024. In accordance with Malagasy traditions, on the morning of 28 March, the confreres of the Postnovitiate accompanied the Regional Councillor in procession to the gate leading to the other Salesian work, the Don Rua Community on the Parish and Youth Centre side. The delegation from the parish asked for him then “took” him from the Postnovitiate to welcome him with all the teachers, pupils and confreres of the parish, where he stayed until 30 March. This was also an occasion to meet Bishop Fulgence, the bishop of the place, as well as the FMA and many other religious families, without forgetting Michael Magone House, a residential boarding school for children from broken homes. Fr Alphonse took part in the Chrism Mass in Fianarantsoa, as is customary in this diocese, before being taken by Frs Thomas and Nathanaël to the south-west of the island, to the Salesian work at

Ankililoaka, where he stayed until 3 April. From 4 to 7 April, he visited the Salesian work at Mahavatse, in the coastal town of Tulear (Toliara), before returning to the capital Antananarivo for the rest of the Easter triduum. At Ivato, he took part in the annual assembly of confreres, also an occasion for a conference by Bishop Jean Pascal Andriantsoavina, auxiliary bishop of the place, on the work on synodality. The assembly was held at the Clairvaux community, and from the 15 to the 17th, it was the turn of the Ambohidratimo novitiate to welcome the General Councillor. From there he went to visit the work at Clairvaux, which includes the Prenovitiate, a Boarding school, Oratory, school complex and technical and professional formation centre. After the Novitiate, Fr Alphonse visited the work at Ijely before returning to Antananarivo to spend a few days with the confreres in Mahajanga, and discover this work which is particularly significant because of the support it gives to aspirants, a large Technical Institute, a beautiful parish and a huge Oratory where the confreres collaborate with the FMA, who also have a Technical High School for girls. On 28 April, the regional Council-

lor returned to Antananarivo and on 29 April he travelled from Antananarivo to the island of Nosy Be. The following day he continued his journey to find the confreres at Bemaneviky, with whom he stayed until 2 May. On 3 May, accompanied by the Rector of the work, Fr Luca Treglia, he left again for Nosy Be and later took the plane for Antananarivo. From 4 to 6 May, it was the turn of the Provincial House in Ivato to receive the Extraordinary Visitor, before leaving for the new community in Tamatave (Toamasina). On 11 May, he left for Mauritius, where he met with the confreres, the Salesian Family, the staff of Saint Gabriel Technical School, Cardinal Maurice Piat and the two parish communities entrusted to the pastoral care of the Salesian community in Port-Louis. On 14 May, Fr Alphonse finally returned to Antananarivo to conclude his visit on 15 May, surrounded by the Provincial and his Council.

After two months of extraordinary visits to Madagascar, Fr Alphonse left on 16 May for Togo (AOS) to preside over the AOS Curatorium. On 20 May, he left for Cameroon to obtain a visa for the DRC. On 23 May, he was able to travel to Kinshasa (DRC)

where, on 24 May, he presided at the solemn Mass of Mary Help of Christians, the provincial feast and occasion for the installation of the new ACC Superior, Father Aurélien Mukangwa. It was also an opportunity to thank Fr Manolo Jimenez, the outgoing provincial. On 25 May, Fr Alphonse returned to Cameroon to take part in the 2nd Regional Congress of Brothers of the Africa and Madagascar Region. On 26 May, he presented the official theme of the Congress: “Walking together, with Raphael and Tobias, cycling with Zatti”. On 27 May, he presided over the Curatorium at Yaoundé for the Salesian Theologate and the Regional Centre for the Specific Formation of Brothers; he also presided over the jubilee Mass of Sr Michèle Nyangono, FMA at Mimboman III. On 29 May, he visited ATE’s new PDO structure. Finally, on 30 May, he returned to Turin to take part in the June-July 2023 plenary session of the General Council.

The General Councillor for the East Asia-Oceania Region

Fr Joseph Nguyen Thinh Phuoc

After the Winter Plenary Session of the General Council (December 2022-January 2023), the

Regional for East Asia-Oceania started his services to Provinces in the Region. First, he made the Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Japan over two sessions, from 27 January-22 February 22 (and later from 10-25 May 2023 as each trip had single-entry only Visa). Then, he travelled to Malaysia to visit the first Salesian work in this country. The visit brought a lot of hope as he experienced the zeal of the Salesians who made great effort to be present (since 2018) and started the Salesian missions in a very challenging circumstance (since 2018). Under the active animation of the Missions Sector and the leadership of the Province of Philippines North, the resilient effort and sacrifices of the confreres have brought fruits as the Diocese of Kuching has entrusted a large parish to the Salesians and the animation of the Diocesan Youth Ministry Commission which has grown from 2 full-time staff into 4 full-time and 5 part-time staff members who actively animate the Youth Ministry in the multicultural parishes with a distinctively Salesian approach.

In Timor Leste from March 7-9, Fr Joseph Nguyen presided at the Annual Meeting of the EAO Provincials in Dili, the capital of

Timor Leste (TLS). It was their first physical meeting after the two years of Covid (2021 and 2022 with Zoom Meetings). And the result was different as the Provincials could share their experiences in leading their respective provinces and how they assimilated the inputs of the Speakers on 3 topics: *Formation in the perspective of the new Ratio* (Fr Ivo Coelho, Councillor for Formation), *the Youth of Today's World* (Fr Fabio Attard, former Councillor for Youth Ministry) and *Experiences in Shared Mission with the Laity* in Australia (Fr William Matthews).

Right after the meeting, Fr Joseph Nguyen went to Australia for the Consultation for the new Provincial of Australia-Pacific Province from March 11-28. He had a number of meetings for the community discernment process in the 4 countries of the Province: Australia-New Zealand- Samoa and Fiji. On the way back to Vietnam for legal documents and visa process, he could make a 4-day stopover in the Solomon Islands where the Salesians are running one technical school and one agricultural school. It was the first time he witnessed the practical responses and successes of our Salesians to the needs of the

young in this country. Getting the Visa to Japan again, he made a fraternal 6-day visit to Taiwan where the Salesians have a parish and the attached formation house in Taipei and a school in Tainan (South of Taiwan). Then he flew back to Australia to join the Rector Major in his visit to Australia to celebrate the Centenary of the Salesian presence in the Pacific (April 21-28). Back to Italy to get his Residence Permit, Fr Nguyen continued his second phase of Visitation in Japan (May 10-25).

His spring services in East Asia-Oceania ended with the participation in the Regional Congress of Salesian Cooperators held in Hong Kong for 3 days (May 26-28). Fr Joan Lluís Playa (Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family), Brother Dominic Nguyen Duc Nam (Delegate of the Rector Major for Salesian Cooperators and Past-Pupils), Sr. Lucrecia Uribe (FMA) and Mr. Antonio Boccia (World Coordinator of the Salesian Cooperator Association) contributed to the solemnity of the event. They showed their appreciation and offered their guidance to this largest branch of the Salesian Family in the Region with more than 2500 active members. The EAO Cooperators succeeded in

electing Mrs Imelda D. Benitez-Dometita (University Professor of Administration in the Philippines North) as their EAO World Councillor. They also came up with the vision for the next 4-year period (2023-2027): *Solidarity - Following the 150th anniversary Path - For the Young and With the Young*.

and their Delegates from various countries in the Region, and listening to their journeys of sharing the mission of Don Bosco, the Regional came back to Rome on 29 May for the Summer Plenary Session, full of joy and hope for the future of the charism of Don Bosco in the countries for which he is responsible.

The Councillor for the South Asia Region

Following the conclusion of the General Council's winter session, the Regional for South Asia, Fr Biju Michael, took part in the meeting of the DBTech Council in Bangalore on 3 February 2023. On 4 February, the Regional presided at the ceremony of installation of the new Provincial, Don Bosco Lourdusamy, in Chennai (INM).

On 8 February the Regional formally began the Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Shil-

long with a meeting of the Provincial Council. On 9 February he held a meeting with those in charge of all the communities in the Province (Rectors, those in charge, Parish priests). The extraordinary visitation to communities began with Seling in Mizoram on 10 February, but was interrupted by a visit to Goa to be part of the funeral rites for Fr Ivo Coelho's mother. The visit then continued to communities in Seling (10-15 February), Don Bosco School Thenzawl (15-16 February), Don Bosco Lawngtlai (16-19 February) and Don Bosco Siaha (19-21 February). After completing the visits to Salesian Houses in the State of Mizoram, on 21 February he met Bishop Stephen Rotluanga from the diocese of Aizawl.

On 22 February the Regional went to Hyderabad to welcome the Rector Major who was arriving on the 25th early in the morning to visit the Province of Hyderabad before the beginning of the Team Visit for the South Asia Region. The Regional accompanied the Rector Major in his visits to Don Bosco School Bangdlaguda, Don Bosco Navajeevan Ramanthapur, Don Bosco Navajeevan Vijayawada, Assumption Church Pezzonipeta, Don Bosco School

Gunadala, to the FMA Siluvagiri Nandigama, St Theresa's Parish Sanathnagar and Don Bosco Motinagar. The final day of the visit to the Province there was a meeting of the Provincial Council with the Rector Major and the Regional at the Provincial House in Hyderabad.

On 28 February the Vicar of the Rector Major and other members of the General Council, together with Provincials and their counsellors from the South Asia Region, and other participants arrived in Hyderabad to begin the Team Visit. This took place from 1-3 March 2023 and included an outing together on 4 March. Il 4 March è deceduta la madre del Regionale don Biju Michael, che si è recato al funerale il 6 March ed è tornato al Consiglio SPCSA di Hyderabad il 7-8 March.

On 10 March, the Regional returned to the Shillong Province to continue his extraordinary visitation, beginning the second stage of visits in the State of Tripura, to the Prenovitiate community at Herma (11-13 March), then continuing with visits to Don Bosco Centre, Bishramganj (13-15 March), St Xavier's Pathaliaghat (15-17 March), Don Bosco Mandwi (17-18 March), Don Bosco Baijalbari (19-21 March) and Don

Bosco Agartala (21-23 March). On 23 March the Regional met with Bishop Lumen Monteiro from the diocese of Agartala. On 24 March, after completing his visit to Houses in Tripura State, he went by car to the Barak Valley in Assam State and visited Don Bosco Silchar (24-26 March). He then went to the State of Meghalaya and visited Don Bosco Byndihati (27-29 March), Holy Family Khliehriat (29-31 March), Mary Immaculate Mawkyndeng - Raliang (31 March-1 April), Bosco Pnar Jowai (2-3 April) and Don Bosco Technical School Shillong (4-6 April). He spent the Paschal Triduum with the novices, continuing his visit (6-9 April). He began his visit to St Anthony's College on 11-12 April, but delayed its conclusion due to the illness of one confrere. He then carried out the visit to Salesian Training Centre Shillong (13-15 April). On 16 April he took part in the episcopal ordination of Bishop Wilbert Marwein, the new bishop of the diocese of Nongstoin. He then continued with his visit to the Provincial House (17-18 April), Sts Peter and Paul Pynthorumkhrach (19 April), Don Bosco Smit (20 April), St Joseph's Laitkor (21 April), the Apostolic School at Savio Juniorate (22-24

April), St Dominic Savio Parish Savio Mawlai (25-26 April), the Shrine to St John Bosco Cherrapunji (25-26 April), Don Bosco Centre, Mawjrong (27-28 April), Divine Saviour Parish Nongthymmai (28-29 April), Mary Mother of the Church Rangblang (30 April-1 May), Don Bosco Tech Pyndenglawar (1-2 May) and St Peter the Apostle Pyndengrie (2-3 May). On 3 May the Regional met Bishop Wilbert Marwein from the diocese of Nongstoin. The Regional then continued his visit to Mount Calvary in Rambrai (3-4 May), Christ the King in Sonapahar (4-6 May) and the Pastoral Centre in Shillong (6-7 May).

The Regional went to Vietnam (10-15 May) and attended and gave the keynote address at the regional meeting of Delegates and Presidents of Past Pupils of Don Bosco in K'Long, Vietnam.

On his return from Vietnam, the Regional continued his visit to Our Lady of the Assumption Nongpoh (16-17 May) Lum Sinai Umden (17-18 May), St Joseph Rural Resource Training Centre Umran (18-20 May) and Don Bosco Aspirantate Nonglakhiat (20-21 May). On 22 May the Regional concluded the visit to St Anthony's College, not having previously been able to conclude

it. On the same day the Regional met Archbishop Victor Lyngdoh of Shillong Archdiocese. On 23 May, the Regional held two meetings, one with the leaders of the Salesian Cooperators and another with the leaders of the Past Pupils of the Province. On 24 May, the Regional presided over the Eucharist and received the first profession of 32 novices belonging to the Provinces of Shillong and Guwahati. On the same day, in the afternoon, he received the perpetual profession of 6 confreres. On 25 May, the Regional celebrated the Eucharist and addressed the community of Sacred Heart Theological College in Shillong. He then met with the Provincial Council at the conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation. On 26 May, the Extraordinary Visitation concluded with an Assembly of the Confreres of the Province and involving all community leaders. The Regional then travelled to Turin and arrived on 29 May 2023 for the Summer Session of the General Council.

The General Councillor for the America South Cone Region

On the same day that the General Council ended its winter ses-

sion in Italy, the Councillor left for Argentina. On 31 January, on behalf of the Rector Major, he accompanied the celebrations for Don Bosco in Córdoba, where the new Provincial of the new FMA Laura Vicuña Province of Argentina, Sr. Silvia Bullosa, was starting her term of office.

On 5 February he presided at the installation of the new Provincial of Porto Alegre at Itajaí (Santa Catarina - Brazil) Fr Ademir Ricardo Cwendrich.

After some days visiting his family in Argentina he began the Extraordinary Visitation to the St Gabriel the Archangel Province of Chile in the name of the Rector Major. This concluded on 21 May. During this time he spoke with all the Salesians in the Province (97); visited the 14 canonical houses, works run by lay people, The Card. Silva Henríquez University UCSH, and the Don Bosco Foundation. He got to know the situation of the 22 schools, most of which re supported by the State, meaning they are philanthropic; the 11 parishes, some of which have rural areas under their pastoral care; the various Shrines, social works and SYM groups.

From 21 to 24 March, he took part in the Team Visit with the Rector Major and other Sector

Councillors, in Pilar (Buenos Aires - Argentina) and with the all the Provincials and Provincial Councillors of the Region.

During the Extraordinary Visitation to Chile, he met twice with the Provincial Council and once with all the Salesian rectors. He also spoke with 10 diocesan bishops, with the Provincial of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and the provincial coordinators and presidents of the other groups of the Salesian Family.

On 5 May he took part in the Curatorium for the Postnovitiate at Córdoba, an inter-provincial house involving 4 Provinces: ARN, ARS, CIL, PAR, URU.

He visited the formation houses in CIL Province: the studentate of theology (Lo Cañas) and the prenovitiate at La Cisterna (Santiago).

He also took part in meetings of the Salesian Network, Brazil (RSB), with Provincials of Brazil (CISBRASIL), Provincials of CISUR and with the FMA Provincials in CIS.

From 21 to 29 May he also made a visit to other Provinces to carry out the consultation for new Provincials: Uruguay, Sao Paulo and Manaus.

On 29 May he returned to Rome to take part in the summer session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the Central and Northern Europe Region

After the conclusion of the Winter Plenary Session of the General Council Fr Roman Jachimowicz, Regional for Central and North Europe, went for the Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of Germany (GER) from 3 February to 27 April 2023.

After his arrival at Provincial Headquarters in Munich, the Regional met with the Provincial, Fr Reinhard Gesing and over the following days 3-4 February met with the Provincial Council.

During the Extraordinary Visitation the Regional visited the following Salesian communities – in February: 6-19: Munich and Rosenheim, 20-24: Benediktbeuern, 25-26: Penzberg, from 27 February al 3 March: Aschau and Vilsbiburg, 6-8: Regensburg, 9-11: Würzburg.

From 11-13 March the Regional was in Valdocco, Turin for a meeting concerning Salesian formation.

Following this, in March the Regional continued his visit to individual Salesian works in GER: 13-14: Pfaffendorf, 14-16: Bamberg / Forchheim (IWH), 17: Nürnberg (Einrichtung), 18-19: Forchheim (parish) and Nürnberg (parish), 20-22: Sannerz, 23-25: Ensdorf, 26-28: Chemnitz / Burgstädt, 29-

30: Heiligenstadt, from 31 March to 2 April: Berlin, 3-5: Cologne, 6-10: Istanbul (Turkey), 11-13: Beromünster (Switzerland), 14: Karlsruhe, 15-17: Trier / Hehlenberg, 17-19: Jünkerath, 20-22: Essen, 23-25: Bonn and Mainz.

On 25 April at the Provincial House in Munich the Regional, Fr Roman Jachimowicz, had a final meeting with the Provincial Council, while on the following day in Würzburg he had a final meeting for the Extraordinary Visitation with the rectors of Salesian communities, other confreres from GER Province and collaborators of Salesian communities.

From 9-13 May the Regional, Fr Roman Jachimowicz took part in the Team Visit for the Central and North Europe Region held at Valdocco, Turin.

On 12 May, in the early afternoon the Regional presided at the Conference of Provincials in Poland (KSIP).

From 22-23 May the Regional was in Warsaw Province to meet with the Provincial, Fr Tadeusz Jarecki (PLE) and from 24-25 he went to the Province of Wrocław (PLO) to meet with the Provincial, Fr Bartłomiej Pola ski.

On 30 May the Regional, Fr Roman Jachimowicz, arrived in Valdocco, Turin for the Summer

Plenary Session of the General Council which began with a Retreat on 1 June.

The General Councillor for the Interamerica Region

At the end of the winter session, I left immediately for the installation of Fr Julio Navarro as the new Provincial of Central America and Fr Marcelo Farfán as the new Provincial of Ecuador. During the first week of February I visited the Province of the United States East with the intention of carrying out the Consultation for the discernment of their next Provincial. I met the Salesians in four communities: at the Mary Help of Christians Center, Tampa, USA (3 February) at the Marian Shrine, Stony Point, USA (4 February) at the community of the Parish of St Benedict, Toronto, CANADA (6 February) and at the Parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Surrey, CANADA (7 February).

I made the Extraordinary Visitation to the Province of the Antilles, which began on Saturday 25 February and ended on Wednesday 17 May, where I was able to meet the confreres of the Salesian communities in the three countries that make up the Province of the Antilles: Cuba, the Dominican Republic

and Puerto Rico, together with a large number of lay people who share the mission, a large group of children and young people and several representatives of the Salesian Family. During this Extraordinary Visitation I also greeted four bishops on behalf of the Rector Major: Archbishop Kébreau Louis, Archbishop emeritus of Cap-Haïtien, Haiti; Bishop Andrés Napoleón Romero Cárdenas, Bishop of Barahona, Dominican Republic; Bishop Héctor Rafael Rodríguez Rodríguez MSC Bishop of La Vega, Dominican Republic and Bishop Marcelo Arturo González Amador, Bishop of Santa Clara, Cuba.

I participated in the Curatorium of four initial formation houses in the region, in the postnovitiate in Orange, New Jersey USA; in the novitiate at Coacalco in Mexico, in the theologate at Tlaquepaque in Mexico Guadalajara and in CRESCO, again in Mexico Guadalajara. It was an opportunity to evaluate the proper functioning of these stages and to encourage the confreres in these formation communities.

From 28 March to 1 April I participated in the Team Visit for the Interamerica region that took place in Lima, Peru; together with the General Council we met the Provincials and their respective

councils from the region, an experience of great fraternity, closeness and concrete directions.

From 18 to 25 May I made a fraternal visit to the Province of Haiti, after three previous occasions when I had wanted to visit it, but was only able to do so now. I visited 8 of the 12 communities and greeted the Salesian confreres, their children, their young people and the adults with whom we share the mission. We celebrated the feast of Mary Help of Christians with the post-novices and the community of the provincial house.

The General Councillor for the Mediterranean Region

After the winter session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Mediterranean Region went to Schio to continue the Extraordinary Visitation on behalf of the Rector Major in the North-East St Mark's Province (INE) of Italy. This second part of the visit began on 28 January, meeting with the confreres of the community in Schio until 30 January. On Sunday 29 he celebrated the feast of Don Bosco in the cathedral. From there he moved to the house in San Zeno, Verona, where he carried out the Extraordinary Visitation until 4 February and

celebrated the solemnity of Don Bosco on 31 January. On 5 February he continued his visit to a group of Houses in the Province until 10 March: Bardolino, Verona Don Bosco, Trento, Bolzano, Mons. Cognata, Castello di Godego, Zatti, Mestre, San Marco, Mestre, San Donà, Mezzano and Pordenone. During his visit, on 26 February and 5 March, he participated in the meetings of young adults and teenagers from the INE Province at Astori, Mogliano.

From 13 to 18 March he participated in the session of the Intermediate Council where he presented the report on the Mediterranean Region for an in-depth study by the Rector Major and the Councillors present, in view of the preparation for the Team Visit to be held next September at Fatima. After the Intermediate Council he went to Romania to make the Extraordinary Visitation to the houses at Bacau and Constantine from 19 to 24 March. On 25 March he participated in a meeting of the Educative and Pastoral Councils of the Schools and Vocational Training Centres and on 26 March at the celebrations for Salesian Cooperators in INE.

From 28 March to 4 April he participated in and coordinated the retreat for the Provincials and

other members of the Mediterranean Region in the Holy Land. On 5 April he moved to Moldova to visit the House in Chisinau until 8 April. The Easter night and Sunday were spent with his family on the way to Lisbon, from where he took the flight to visit our house in San Vicente (Cape Verde), unable to land for weather reasons and having to return to Lisbon. From 17 to 21 April he participated in all the *Curatoriums* of the formation houses belonging to the Region in Messina, Crocetta, Colle, Nave, Genzano and San Tarcizio. From 21 to 24 he visited the house in Belluno. In the afternoon of the 24th he met the confreres in Practical Training in a moment of formation, celebration of the Eucharist and dinner. On the morning of the 25th he participated in the Provincial Feast Day, offering the confreres a formation theme: "Building a future of hope".

At the Provincial House in Mestre from 25 April afternoon until the morning of 29 April, he participated in the various meetings of the Iberian Conference, the Mediterranean Region and CISI. From 29 to 30 April he made the first part of the visit to Santa Croce Verona. From 2 to 7 May he accompanied the Rector Major on an animation visit to the

three houses in the Canary Islands (SMX) and to Malaga with the Salesian Cooperators, gathered in their Provincial Assembly.

After these visits to Spain, he resumed the Extraordinary Visitation to INE in the houses of Udine, Santa Croce Verona, Porto Viro, Chioggia - participating on Sunday 21 May in the original water procession (of Mary Help of Christians) in Venice, where he celebrated the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians, then again to Udine to conclude the visit.

On Sunday 28 May he attended the meeting of the "Mamma Margaret" Association formed by parents of Salesians; on the morning of 29 May he had the final meeting with the Provincial to share an overview of the visitation and in the afternoon with the Provincial Council. On the morning of the 30th he was with the Rectors, thus concluding the Extraordinary Visitation to this North-East St Mark's Province (INE).

After the visit to the INE Province, on 30 May he moved to Schio for the inauguration and blessing of the new spaces for the Oratory and the House in general, on 31 May. After this celebration, he returned to Turin to start the summer session of the General Council.

5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS

5.1 New Salesian Provincials

Following (in alphabetical order) are some data regarding Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with the consent of his Council from January-July 2023.

1. **BAUZIÈRE Philippe**, Provincial of Brazil-Manaus Province (BMA). He succeeds Fr Jefferson Luis da Silva Santos.

On 28.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Philippe Bauzière as Provincial of the St Dominic Savio Province of Brazil-Manaus, with its headquarters in Manaus, for the 2023-2029 six-year period.

He was born in Tournai, Belgium, on 2 February 1968. He entered the novitiate at the Woluwe-Saint-Lambert house (Brussels) and made his first profession in Brussels on 9 September 1989. He arrived for the first time in Manaus, Brazil, in 1994 where he made his perpetual profession on 5 August the following year.

He was ordained a deacon in Ananindeua on 15 November 1997, and the following year, on 28 June 1998, he was ordained priest at the cathedral in his home city, Tournai.

He spent his first years as a priest in the Salesian presence in Alvorada, Manaus (1998-2003). He then lived in Porto Velho from 2004 to 2008, serving first as Parish Priest and then as Rector (2007-2008). In the following years he lived in Belém, São Gabriel de Cachoeira and Ananindeua. From 2013-2018 he was in Manicoré as Parish Priest and Rector. Back in Manaus, he lived in the Salesian houses in Alvorada, Domingos Savio and Aleixo until 2022. This year, 2023, he has been in Ananindeua, accompanying the “Salesian School of Work”.

He joined the Provincial Council in 2019, and has held various positions of responsibility: from 2021 he was Vice-Provincial and also Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family and for Formation.

2. **DE OLIVEIRA Alexandre Luis**, Provincial of Brazil-São Paulo Province (BSP). He succeeds Fr Justo Piccinini.

On 16.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Alexandre Luis De Oliveira as Provincial of Mary Help of Christians Province of Brazil-São Paulo (BSP) based in São Paulo for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

Fr Alexandre Luis was born in Campinas, in the State of São Paulo on 18 October 1975. He got to know the Salesians at the Salesian work in Campinas. He is a past pupil of the school and was a member of youth groups there as well as being involved in parish activities.

His mother, Tamar A. Da Silva, still lives in Campinas.

He made his novitiate in Indápolis, Dourados (1997-98), his post-novitiate at Lorena (1998-2000), practical training at San Carlos and at Pindamonhangaba and his theological studies in the house at Lapa, in São Paulo. He made his perpetual profession on 31 January 2004 in São Paulo, and was ordained priest on 17 December 2005 in Campinas.

He spent his first years as a young priest in the Salesian presence at the San Joaquín Institute (2006-08). He has been Rector and Parish Priest of the Salesian work in the city of Americana (2009-11); in 2012 he became Rector of the Provincial House in São Paulo, and also Youth Ministry Delegate; from 2013 to 2017 he was Rector of the Postnovitiate at Lorena and Provincial Delegate for Formation; from 2018 to 2022 he was Rector and Parish priest of the Mary Help of Christians

house in Campinas and is currently the Rector of the San José House, again in Campinas.

He has also served as a Provincial Councillor from 2012 to 2020.

3. *HOANG Kim Huy Peter, Provincial of the Australia-Pacific Province (AUL). He succeeds Fr William Matthews.*

On 28.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Kim Huy Peter Hoang as Provincial of the Mary Help of Christians Province of Australia-Pacific (AUL) with headquarters at Ascot Vale, for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

Kim-Huy Hoang was born in Phuoc, in Vietnam, on 16 February 1965 and while still a teenager he migrated to Australia together with his brothers and one sister. Since arriving in Australia he was always actively involved in the life of the Melbourne Church, including what is now the Salesian-run Collingwood parish.

He made his Salesian novitiate (1988) in the house at Lysterfield, where he made his first profession in 1989. He was ordained a deacon at Collingwood (Melbourne, Victoria) on 24 January 1997 and was ordained priest the same year at Scoresby.

Fr Kim Huy-Hoang has held various roles and responsibilities: he has been a teacher in various Salesian schools; Parish Priest of Clifton Hill-Collingwood, in Victoria. In recent years he has been the Rector of the community at Engadine (2019-2022) and Sunbury (from 2022) and Chaplain of three schools in both places. In 2022 he was appointed Vice-Provincial, and has been in charge of Religious Discipline and the Social Communication Sector for the Province.

The AUL Province includes four countries: Australia, Samoa, Fiji and New Zealand, with a total of 14 communities. The nature and mission of the Province has been multicultural from the very beginning, with missionaries from Italy and Europe, and continues to be so, with many local vocations (from Samoa and Tonga) and confreres from all over South-East Asia.

4. *LEZAMA Francisco, Provincial of Uruguay Province (URU). He succeeds Fr Alfonso Bauer.*

On 15.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Francisco Lezama as Provincial of the St Joseph Province of Uruguay

(URU) with headquarters in Montevideo, for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

Fr Francisco Lezama was born in the city of Montevideo on 11 September 1979. He got to know the Salesians in the work in Las Piedras, where he was involved in youth groups and parish activities.

His parents, Luis Carlos Lezama and Graciela Pérez, still live in Las Piedras.

He did all of his initial formation in Montevideo. He completed his novitiate between 1999 and 2000, made his perpetual profession on 31 January 2006 in Montevideo, and was ordained priest in the same city on 11 October 2008.

He spent his early years of priestly ministry in the Salesian Juan XXIII Institute in Montevideo. He then studied Holy Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome from 2012 to 2015.

Between 2018 and 2020 he was Rector and Parish Priest at the Pio IX Institute at Villa Colón, a member of the Province Formation team and Delegate for Vocation Ministry.

In 2021 he became Vice-Provincial and Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry, roles that he kept until October 2022 when he was appointed Provincial Economist.

5. **MENDONÇA Pinto José Aníbal Milhais**, *Superior of the UPS Vice-Province. He succeeds Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga.*

On 09.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr José Aníbal Milhais Mendonça Pinto as Superior of the Mary Seat of Wisdom Vice-Province of the Pontifical Salesian University (UPS) for three years from 2023-2026.

José Aníbal Mendonça was born in Murça, in Portugal, on 10 July 1967. He made his novitiate at Vilarinho, professing his first vows on 8 September 1985. He completed his initial formation in Portugal and Italy, then studying theology at the Crocetta in Turin, and made his perpetual profession in 18 July 1992 at Vila do Conde. He was ordained priest in Porto on 10 July 1994.

His first pastoral duties as a newly ordained priest were as a Councillor at the work in Manique (1994-95) and Vice-Rector (1995-97) then Economer (1998-2000) at the Prenovitiate in Porto. Once again a Councillor at Manique (2000-03), he then served as Rector both in Poiães da Régua (2003-09), and Manique (2014-2017).

Over the years he has also

served the St Anthony Province of Portugal (POR) in various responsibilities: Provincial Councillor for two three-year terms (2009-15), Delegate for Youth Ministry (2009-15), Sports Animation (2009-11) and Vocation Ministry (2011-15), then ultimately as Provincial (2017).

6. **MORENO Ruiz Nelson Javier**, *Provincial of the Province of Chile (CIL). He succeeds Fr Carlo Lira Airola.*

On 22.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Moreno Ruiz Nelson Javier as Provincial of the Saint Gabriel Archangel Province of Chile (CIL) for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

Fr Moreno Ruiz (57 years of age), was born in the city of Concepción on 11 September 1965. He got to know the Salesians at the Salesian School in Concepción, which he attended as a student and where he was involved in pastoral activities and youth groups.

His parents are Fabriciano Moreno and María Mercedes Ruiz, today still living in Concepción.

Fr Moreno Ruiz did all of his initial formation in Santiago, pro-

fessing his first vows on 31 January 1987. He made his perpetual profession on 8 August 1992 in La Florida, Santiago, and was ordained priest on 6 August 1994 in Santiago.

He spent his first years as a priest at the Salesian San José Institute in Punta Arenas and at the Salesian school in Concepción where he did pastoral work. From 2001 to 2006 he was the Rector at Puerto Natales and from 2006 to 2012 the Rector at Puerto Montt.

From 2012-17 he was Provincial Economer and Rector of the Provincial House. In 2018 he became Rector of Gratitude Nacional house in the centre of Santiago, and from 2019 has been Rector of the work at Puerto Montt.

7. PATERNÒ Domenico, Superior of the new Special Circumscription of North Africa dedicated to Saint Augustine (CNA), which was canonically erected on 14 March 2023.

On 28.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council appointed Fr Domenico Paternò as Provincial of the Special Circumscription of North Africa (CNA) for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

Fr Domenico Paternò was born

in Messina (Italy) on 6 October 1955. He completed his education in his city, concluding with a degree in Jurisprudence from the Law Faculty at the University of Messina.

While still at school he got to know the Salesians at the Dominic Savio Oratory in the suburb where his family lives.

After finishing his studies, and after a time of discernment, he entered the novitiate and made his first profession on 12 September 1978 at Lanuvio (Rome) before the Rector Major, Fr Egidio Viganò.

After practical training and having gained his State qualification in 1983 at Catanzaro for teaching Law and Economics, he undertook theological studies and in October 1984 he made his perpetual profession at Catania before the Rector Major emeritus Fr Luigi Ricceri.

On 29 December 1985 he was ordained priest in Messina by Salesian Bishop Domenico Amoroso.

Most of his Salesian journey has been with the CNOS-FAP Professional Formation Centres in Sicily where he has held various positions as director of centres, eventually becoming the Regional Delegate for CNOS-FAP from 1994 to 2010.

He was the Assistant of the VDB in the Palermo area from 1995 to 2001 and Rector in various houses from 1998 to 2013.

He was also a Provincial Councillor from 2002 to 2008.

In September 2013 obedience sent him as Rector of the house in Manouba in Tunisia where he ran a primary school for Muslim pupils and an Oratory, taking on various roles for the local Church in service of Muslims.

From September 2022 he has also been on the provincial council for ISI.

8. *SALEMA Emilius, Provincial of the new Province of Tanzania (TZA).*

On 19.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Emilius Salema as Provincial of the Saint Artemides Zatti Province of Tanzania (TZA) for the 2023-2029 six-year period.

Emilius Salema was born in Mashati, in Tanzania, on 17 July 1968.

He made his novitiate in Moshi, in Tanzania, and made his first profession on 15 August 1995; he professed perpetual vows on 16 August 2001 and was ordained priest on 12 July 2003 after com-

pleting his studies in Theology at the Tangaza University College in Nairobi.

Over the years he has accumulated a very rich Salesian experience. He was Vice-Rector both of the Don Bosco community in Embu (2005-08), and of the house in Upper Hill, in Nairobi (2013-16); he was Principal of the Don Bosco technical school at Embu from 2006-08 and of the seminary at Mafinga (2008-13); he has also been Rector and Parish Priest of the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Upper Hill (2013-16). He gained his Licentiate in Sacred Liturgy and is currently pursuing a doctorate in the same area.

From September 2020 he has been Economer of the Salesian Theological formation community at Utume; and at Provincial level he was also a Councillor for the East Africa Province (AFE) from 2011 to 2014.

The new TZA Province he has led from September 2013, was canonically erected by the Rector Major in January 2013 and marks a new official beginning, a new page in the future story of the African continent, following on from the AFE Province, and comprising a hundred confreres and a dozen communities.

9. *SEQUEIRA Gutiérrez Luis Víctor, Provincial of the Province of Angola (ANG). He succeeds Fr Martin Lasarte who was appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Lwena.*

On 19.07.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Gutiérrez Luis Víctor Sequeira as Provincial of the Mama Muxima Province of Angola (ANG), for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

With this appointment the Rector Major also decided, after consulting his Council, to elevate the Vice-Province of Angola to a Province on the day that Fr Sequeira Gutiérrez is installed. Therefore he will be the first Provincial of the new Province.

He was born on 22 March 1964, in Asunción, Paraguay. The son of Cristóbal Sequeira and Victoria Gutiérrez, Victor Luís Sequeira Gutiérrez attended the Salesian aspirantate in Ypacaraí in 1984, the prenovitiate in 1985 and finally went to the novitiate in La Plata, in Argentina, in 1986.

He made his first profession on 31 January 1987.

His studies in philosophy took him to São Paulo in Brazil, and to the Catholic University in Asunción.

From 1992 to 2020, he worked

as a missionary in Angola, holding various positions: Economist of the Don Bosco Formation house in Luanda (1997-98), Director of the Catholic Mission in Libolo (1998-2005), Rector and Parish Priest at Dondo (2005-11). From 2011 to 2014 he was Rector of the Formation Centre in Luanda, as well as Vice-Rector of the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie et Pédagogie Don Bosco in Luanda, now known as the ISDB.

He has already been Superior of the Salesians in Angola for the 2014-2020 six-year period.

From 2020 in Portugal he was part of the formation team for the students of Theology in Lisbon, also offering a brief period of service as chaplain at the Rehabilitation Medical Centre in Alcoitão.

Finally, from February 2023, he returned to Angola, appointed Rector and Parish Priest of the community at Lwena.

Fr Sequeira Gutiérrez speaks excellent Spanish, Guarani, French, Italian and Portuguese.

10. *THARANIYIL George, Provincial of the Province of East Africa (AFE). He succeeds Fr Lipuku Simon Asira.*

On 19.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the Gen-

eral Council, appointed Fr George Tharaniyil as Provincial of the St John Bosco Province of East Africa (AFE) for the six-year period from 2023-2029.

George Tharaniyil was born on 15 August 1966 in Padimaruth, in the State of Kerala, India. He entered the Salesian aspirantate in Mannuthy, Kerala, in 1978. He did his novitiate year in Kotagiri, India, and made his first profession on 24 May 1984. He made his perpetual profession on 4 June 1991 and after completing his theological studies at Tangaza University College in Nairobi, Kenya, he was ordained priest on 23 April 1996 in Padimaruth, India.

Fr George arrived for the first time in AFE Province in 1986 when he came to Mafinga, in Tanzania, as a missionary, where he did his practical training. He then returned to India to gain a diploma and certificate for teaching motorised vehicle mechanics.

Once back in AFE, in Nairobi, to complete his studies in Theology, he also completed a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) at Strathmore University Business School in Nairobi.

After ordination he was sent to the Don Bosco Youth Formation Centre at Iringa, in Tanzania, as Director of the Technical Forma-

tion Centre, a role he kept from 1996 to 2005; in his final year at Iringa he was also the Rector there.

From August 2005 he was Provincial Economist for 9 years, until 2014. From July 2014 he was Director of Don Bosco Tech Africa (DBTA) the body that coordinates the network of Technical and Vocational Formation Centres throughout the Region of Africa and Madagascar.

The AFE Province that has been led by Fr George since August 2023, comprises just three countries – Kenya, Sudan and South Sudan – insofar as Tanzania, which has been part of it, from 8 September 2023 became a Province in its own right.

11. *TRAN Danh Cong Dominic, Provincial of the United States East and Canada Province (SUE). He succeeds Fr Timothy John Zak.*

On 13.06.2023 the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, appointed Fr Tran Danh Cong Dominic as Provincial of the St Philip the Apostle Province of the United States East and Canada (SUE) Province for the 2023-2029 six-year period.

Dominic was born on 14 August 1969 in Dalat, Vietnam. He mi-

grated to the United States together with his family, and made his first profession in the Salesian Congregation on 15 August 1995 at Bellflower, in California.

He was ordained priest by the Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, Bishop Raymond Emil Goedert, on 24 May 2003, at the Church of Our Lady of the Valley in Orange, New Jersey.

From 2005 to 2007 he was a Councillor at the High School in New Rochelle.

He was then successively Vice-Director from 2007 to 2011, and then Director from 2013 to 2016, at the community in Orange.

From 2016 to 2021 he was Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry of the United States East Province.

While holding the Position of Vice-Provincial, from 1 September 2021 he was also Provincial Delegate for Formation.



SOCIETÀ DI SAN FRANCESCO DI SALES

SEDE CENTRALE SALESIANA

Via Marsala, 42 – 00185 Roma

Il Rettor Maggiore

Prot. n 2023/SG/0167

**DECRETO DI EREZIONE CANONICA
DELLA CIRCOSCRIZIONE “SANT’AGOSTINO”
NORD – AFRICA**

Il sottoscritto,

sac. Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME,

Rettor Maggiore della Società Salesiana di San Giovanni Bosco,

- considerando la situazione delle presenze ed opere salesiane nel territorio dell’Africa, suddiviso al presente nelle due Ispettorie “San Francesco di Sales” con sede in Parigi, “San Paolo” con sede in Catania;
- dopo aver sentito i due Ispettori;
- con riferimento all’articolo 156 delle Costituzioni;
- ottenuto il consenso del Consiglio Generale nella riunione del **25 gennaio 2023**, a norma degli articoli 132 §1,1 e 156 delle Costituzioni;

ERIGE CANONICAMENTE

mediante il presente Decreto, la **CIRCOSCRIZIONE NORD AFRICA** con sigla **CNA**, **intitolata a “SANT’AGOSTINO”, con sede in MANOUBA, casa “Nostra Signora di Cartagine”, e sarà ricompresa nella REGIONE MEDITERRANEA.**

Tale Circoscrizione risulterà composta da tre Stati: Marocco (distaccato dall’Ispettoria di Francia Belgio Sud – FRB), **Tunisia** (distaccata dall’Ispettoria Italia Sicilia – ISI) e **Algeria**. **Faranno parte della Circoscrizione** le Comunità attualmente esistenti sul territorio, appartenenti alle suddette Ispettorie, con i confratelli ad esse assegnate, ossia:

- Tunisia – MANOUBA, “Nostra Signora di Cartagine”
- Tunisia – TUNIS, “Ecole Secondaire Libre”
- Marocco – KENITRA, “Cristo Re”
- Algeria – ALGERI*

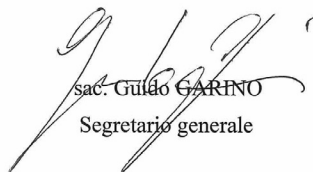
* La presenza ad Algeri avrà il suo inizio stimato nel Settembre 2023 secondo il disposto del Consiglio Generale, verbalizzato nella sessione del 11 luglio 2022 (Verbale n.051/22).

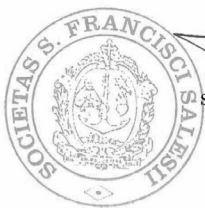
Si stabilisce quanto segue:

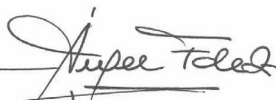
- 1° Appartengono alla Circoscrizione i confratelli che, alla data dell'erezione canonica, vivono e lavorano nelle Case salesiane sopra elencate così come i missionari che sono stati destinati a suddette case.
- 2° I confratelli presenti nelle case sopra menzionate vi rimarranno almeno per i primi tre anni dalla data di erezione. Dopo questo ci saranno consultazioni personali per la permanenza o meno.
- 3° Il Superiore della Circoscrizione ha le facoltà di Superiore Maggiore. Egli sarà coadiuvato nel governo e animazione da un Consiglio composto da tre consiglieri, tra i quali figureranno il Vicario e l'Economo Ispettoriale.
- 4° A norma degli articoli 156 delle Costituzioni e 114 dei Regolamenti Generali, al Capitolo Generale parteciperà il Superiore della Circoscrizione.
Il Capitolo della Circoscrizione è composto dal Superiore, che presiede, dai membri del Consiglio della Circoscrizione, dal Regolatore del Capitolo della Circoscrizione, dai Direttori e da un Delegato di ciascuna casa canonicamente eretta.
- 5° Il Presente Decreto entrerà in vigore il **28 agosto 2023**.

Per tutto il resto valgono le norme stabilite dalle Costituzioni e dai Regolamenti generali.

Roma, 9 marzo 2023.


sac. Guido GARINO
Segretario generale




sac. Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME
Rettor Maggiore

5.3 Decree on the heroicity of the virtues of the Servant of God Carlo Crespi Croci

DICASTERY FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

CONCHENSIS IN AEQUATORE

BEATIFICATIONIS et CANONIZATIONIS

SERVI DEI

CAROLI CRESPI CROCI

SACERDOTIS PROFESSI SOCIETATIS SANCTI FRANCISCI SALESII

(1891-1982)

DECREE OF HEROIC VIRTUE

“We were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us” (1Thes 2:7-8).

The Servant of God Carlo Crespi Croci’s missionary life was deeply characterised both by the Salesian loving-kindness and tireless hard work proper to the Preventive System of St John Bosco, whose faithful and enthusiastic follower he was in Ecuador both among the Shuar people and in the city of Cuenca where he spent most of his long life.

Born in Legnano (Milan) on 29 May 1891, the third of thirteen children, to a wealthy and influential family, the Servant of God attended the local school and at the age of twelve entered the Salesian St Ambrose school in Milan where he had his first encounter with Salesians and Salesian work. In 1903 he went to the Salesian senior school at Valsalice in Turin to complete his studies and it was here that he met Renato Ziggotti, a classmate of his and future successor of St John Bosco. Feeling called to Salesian life, at the end of his novitiate year, on 8 September 1907 he made his first religious profession and in 1910 he made his perpetual profession. During this period he studied philosophy, theology and taught mathematics, music and natural sciences. On 28 January 1917 he was ordained priest.

At the University of Padua he discovered the existence of an

hitherto unknown microorganism, and made a name for himself in the scientific field for this important discovery. In 1921 he completed a doctorate in natural sciences, specialising in botany, and shortly afterwards also graduated in music.

In 1923 he left for Ecuador as a missionary. He spent the first six months of 1925 in the forests in the Sucúa-Macas region, with a view to gaining a deeper knowledge of the language, the area, culture and spirituality of the Shuar tribe. Taking advantage of his own understanding in various areas of culture, he began a work of revolutionary and innovative evangelisation involving mutual exchange and enrichment with very different cultures. He got to know the indigenous myths and re-presented them from a new, transformed and enriched perspective in the light of the Catholic Faith. Fr Carlo soon became a friend and the Christian message, passed on with care and respect, was no longer the foreigner's religion but something that the population recognised as their own.

Having settled in Cuenca he began a work of human development that was unprecedented, founding various works: the festive oratory, the Oriental School for formation of Salesian missionaries, the Cornelio Merchán elementary school, the school of arts and trades that would later become the Salesian Technical College, the Quinta Agronomica or first Agricultural Institute in the region, the Salesian Theatre, the community Gran Casa, the Dominic Savio Orphanage, the Carlo Crespi museum, famous for its many scientific finds. In 1938 he organised the first Diocesan Eucharistic Congress in Cuenca.

Generations of Cuencans benefited from his teaching and his generosity. The gratitude of the common people for the good Fr Crespi did is such that it was strongly manifested even during the sad circumstance in 1962 that saw the almost total destruction of the Cornelio Merchán Institute by fire. The inhabitants of Cuenca set about its rebuilding without hesitation.

Underlying his immense work and manifold activities was the desire to imitate Christ in his preferential love for the poor, in his reaching out to the little ones, in his concern for sinners. His great humility was reflected in the simplicity of his gestures.

Much of his time was spent at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Cuenca, from where he zealously spread devotion to her. The final

years of his life were spent entirely in the hidden work of the confessional, where the faithful flocked in long queues wanting to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, but at the same time also advice and comfort.

Worn down by a life of hardship and having chosen to live as a poor man among the poor, on 30 April 1982, by now almost a centenarian, after having asked for the last time to be able to hold the crucifix in his hands, the Servant of God died in the Saint Inés Clinic in Cuenca as the result of bronchial pneumonia and a heart attack.

By virtue of his reputation for holiness, the Diocesan Inquest was held at the Archdiocesan Curia of Cuenca (Ecuador) from 2 March to 7 December 2007, the validity of which was recognised by this Dicastery with the decree of 15 January 2010. Once the Positio was prepared, it was submitted for examination by the Theological Consultors on 11 October 2022.

The Ordinary Session of the Cardinals and Bishops took place on 7 March 2023.

The undersigned Cardinal Prefect then reported all these things to the Supreme Pontiff Francis. His Holiness, accepting and confirming the votes of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, today declared: *From the foregoing, there is sure evidence of the theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity both toward God and toward neighbour, and the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance and their dependent virtues, practised to an heroic degree by the Servant of God Carlo Crespi Croci, Professed Priest of the Salesian Society of St John Bosco, to the goals and effects of which is written.*

The Holy Father has ordered that this decree be published and transcribed in the acts of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

Given in Rome, on 23 March in the year of the Lord 2023.

MARCELLO Card. SEMERARO
Prefect

✠ FABIO FABENE
Archiv. tit. of Montefiascone
Secretary

5.4 Decree on the heroicity of the virtues of the Servant of God Antônio De Almeida Lustosa

DICASTERY FOR THE CAUSES OF SAINTS

FORTALEXIENSIS

BEATIFICATIONIS et CANONIZATIONIS

SERVI DEI

ANTONII DE ALMEIDA LUSTOSA

E SOCIETATE SANCTI FRANCISCI SALESHII

ARCHIEPISCOPI FORTALEXIENSIS

(1886-1974)

DECREE ON HEROIC VIRTUES

“In the shadow of your wings.” This expression, present in various psalms and chosen by the Servant of God. Antônio De Almeida Lustosa as episcopal motto, illustrates well the witness of virtuous life of the Servant of God who, placing his trust and refuge in God, lived an intense union with Him, source of his tireless and fruitful pastoral action.

The Servant of God was born on February 11, 1886, to a peasant bourgeois family of São João del Rei, in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. From his parents he learns the spirit of sacrifice and the value of work. The Salesians had opened Don Bosco College in Cachoeira do Campo a few years ago, and Antonio entered it at sixteen. Three years later he decided to become a Salesian, distinguishing himself for his intellectual acuity and commitment to religious life. After his first religious profession, which took place on January 28, 1906, he also became a teacher of philosophy, studying theology in the meantime. His perpetual profession took place three years later, and on 28 January 1912 he received priestly ordination. He was chosen as Master of Novices in Lorraine, then Director in Lavrinhas, in charge of the formation of Salesian aspirants and students of philosophy and theology. In addition to teaching, he forms numerous clerics in the Salesian apostolate, called to animate nearby parishes and oratories.

He then carried out the task of Director in Bagé in the Maria Ausiliatrice high school and the position of Vicar of the annexed parish.

In 1924 he was appointed Bishop of Uberaba and received episcopal consecration on 11 February 1925. In Uberaba he found the seminary practically empty, but after a year he had around him about thirty seminarians of the gymnasium. It takes care of the marginalized, making its own the urgency of social justice. After less than four years he was transferred to Corumbá in Mato Grosso, the largest and most difficult see for evangelization. Just two years after he was appointed Archbishop of Belém do Pará, an immense diocese in the Northern Region of Brazil. He remained there for ten years, doing his utmost with the generosity he had always done.

In 1941 he was transferred to the important headquarters of Fortaleza. Here he gave the best of himself, in 22 years of stay, living intensely Don Bosco's "Da mihi animas, cetera tolle". Convinced that the first evangelization consisted in restoring dignity to the poorest people and families, he founded clinics, the "Saint Joseph" Hospital, free popular schools, and workers' circles, inaugurated the "Soup of the poor" and the Social Services of the Archdiocese. Without ever forgetting the care of souls, he gave life to the Preseminary, the Shrine "Our Lady of Fatima" and the radio station "Assumption Cearense". Together with a large number of initiatives and actions of a social and charitable nature, it erects more than 30 new parishes, 45 schools for the needy, 14 health centers on the outskirts of Fortaleza. Its pastoral activity is articulated in particular in the field of catechesis, education, pastoral visits, the increase of vocations, the enhancement of Catholic action, the improvement of the living conditions of the poorest, the defense of workers' rights, the renewal of the clergy, the establishment of new religious orders in Ceará, such as the Institute of Clergy Cooperators and the Congregation of the *Josefinas*.

The Servant of God was also a prolific writer in the most varied fields: theology, philosophy, spirituality, hagiography, literature, geology, botany. He was also much appreciated in the artistic field: his are the stained-glass windows of the Cathedral of Fortaleza.

In 1963 he renounced the archiepiscopal see of Fortaleza and retired to the Salesian House of Carpina, where he spent the last eleven years of his life. Confined to a wheelchair due to a disastrous fall that caused

a fractured femur, he died on August 14, 1974, demonstrating, even during illness and suffering, an exemplary attitude of full and unconditional acceptance of God's will. His body rests in the Cathedral of Fortaleza.

Appreciated for his constant and incisive commitment in the four dioceses he led, the Servant of God is also remembered for his asceticism, for having lived poorly, for having been an authentic man of God and a wonderful man of prayer, humble, dedicated to penance and welcoming to all, especially the neediest. He was totally dedicated to the cause of the Kingdom of God: "I would simply continue here to work for the Lord's Prayer: sanctified be your name! May your Kingdom come to us; A bishop's program is always the same: to fulfill his duty!"

By virtue of its reputation for holiness and signs, the Diocesan Inquiry was celebrated at the Archbishop's Curia of Fortaleza (Brazil) from 14 August 1993 to 14 August 2001, the validity of which was recognized by this Dicastery by Decree of 2 May 2003. Once the *Positio* was prepared, it was submitted to the Theological Consultors for examination on 8 November 2022. The Ordinary Session of the Fathers Cardinals and Bishops was celebrated on 20 June 2023.

The undersigned Cardinal Prefect then reported all these things to the Supreme Pontiff Francis. His Holiness, accepting and confirming the wishes of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, today declared: *The theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity towards God as well as towards neighbor, the cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance and the other related virtues, practiced to a heroic degree by the Servant of God Antônio De Almeida Lustosa, of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco, Archbishop of Fortaleza, in the case and for the purpose in question.*

The Holy Father has ordered that the present decree be published and transcribed in the acts of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints.

Given in Rome on June 22 of the year of the Lord 2023.

MARCELLO Card. SEMERARO
Prefect

✠ FABIO FABENE
Archiv. tit. of Montefiascone
Secretary

5.5 Deceased confreres (1st list January-June 2023)

"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" (C. 94).

| SURNAME AND NAME | PLACE of death | DATE | AGE | PROV |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----|-------|
| P BOGATTO Giuseppe | Civitanova Marche (Italia) | 02/01/2023 | 75 | ICC |
| P THARAKAN Mathew | Dibrugarh, Assam (India) | 03/01/2023 | 87 | IND |
| P SCAVARDA Augusto | Vercelli (Italia) | 03/01/2023 | 70 | ICP |
| P SIMON GATINE Joseph Maceus | Pétion-Ville (Haiti) | 06/01/2023 | 93 | HAÏTI |
| L VICARIO TEJADA Celestino | León (Spagna) | 07/01/2023 | 78 | SSM |
| L ESPINOSA GÓMEZ Juan Manuel | Utrera (Spagna) | 08/01/2023 | 87 | SMX |
| P PULICKAL Thomas Joseph | Kolkata (India) | 08/01/2023 | 75 | INC |
| P PICHLER Konrad | Amberg (Germania) | 10/01/2023 | 76 | GER |
| P GRABULOSA i Novell Francesc | Barcelona (Spagna) | 11/01/2023 | 84 | SMX |
| P MARTÍN BORREGO Vicente | Sevilla (Spagna) | 12/01/2023 | 96 | SMX |
| P ARRIETA ZUBIAURRE Esteban | Azkoitia (Spagna) | 12/01/2023 | 91 | SSM |
| P CID RODICIO José Manuel | Sevilla (Spagna) | 13/01/2023 | 93 | SMX |
| P JAROMIN Wladyslaw | Częstochowa (Polonia) | 14/01/2023 | 95 | PLO |
| P MOONEN Piet | Bonheiden (Belgio) | 15/01/2023 | 101 | BEN |
| L QUARANTA Silvio | Northcote, Victoria (Australia) | 20/01/2023 | 96 | AUL |
| P PUTZU Salvatore | Makati City (Filippine) | 26/01/2023 | 84 | FIN |
| P GALLEGO Herrera Jesús | Logroño (Spagna) | 27/01/2023 | 81 | SSM |
| P BOSCAINI Luigi | Negrar (VR) (Italia) | 29/01/2023 | 102 | INE |
| <i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni.</i> | | | | |
| P LINCOLN Marcel | Tiruchy (India) | 01/02/2023 | 60 | INT |
| P STOCO Armando | Venezia - Mestre (Italia) | 02/02/2023 | 96 | INE |
| P DURANTE Federico | Castello di Godego (TV) (Italia) | 06/02/2023 | 90 | ICP |
| P FRANCO Chiaffredo | Chivasso (TO) (Italia) | 06/02/2023 | 87 | ICP |
| P ARAMPULIKAL Joseph | Tirupattur (India) | 07/02/2023 | 90 | INM |
| P SCOTTI Osvaldo | Cuiabá (Brasile) | 09/02/2023 | 77 | BCG |
| P YOUNG BARCOS Jimmy | Montevideo (Uruguay) | 09/02/2023 | 63 | URU |
| P COSTA (Giacobbe) Giuseppe | Messina (Italia) | 10/02/2023 | 94 | ISI |
| P MENJÍVAR CUÉLLAR Jesús | Città del Guatemala (Guatemala) | 10/02/2023 | 82 | CAM |
| P PAGANELLI Remo | Torino (TO) (Italia) | 11/02/2023 | 93 | ICP |
| L COFFELE Luigi | Verona (Italia) | 15/02/2023 | 76 | INE |
| P TANI Joseph Satoshi | Yokohama (Giappone) | 17/02/2023 | 68 | GIA |
| P RAMAROSANDRATANA Ignace | Antananarivo (Madagascar) | 17/02/2023 | 55 | MDG |
| P POSE Fernandez Francisco | Montevideo (Uruguay) | 18/02/2023 | 92 | URU |
| P HERNÁNDEZ LÓPEZ Vidal | San Salvador (EL Salvador) | 19/02/2023 | 92 | CAM |
| P JÍLEK Martin | Stara Zagora (Bulgaria) | 19/02/2023 | 47 | CEP |
| P CARNIELLI Braz | Vitória (Brasile) | 21/02/2023 | 92 | BBH |
| P DALL'ANTONIA Sergio | Bacau (Romania) | 21/02/2023 | 83 | INE |
| P VIELVA COSTANA Manuel | Logroño (Spagna) | 26/02/2023 | 89 | SSM |

| SURNAME AND NAME | PLACE of death | DATE | AGE | PROV |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|-----|------|
| P FABBRIZI Francesco | Roma (Italia) | 27/02/2023 | 83 | ICC |
| P DI MARCO Francesco | Roma (Italia) | 28/02/2023 | 95 | ICC |
| P SADOWSKI Izydor | Pila (Polonia) | 28/02/2023 | 88 | PLN |
| P BERGAMASCO Arturo | Santa Cruz (Bolivia) | 03/03/2023 | 88 | BOL |
| P NGUYEN CHUONG Paul | Rosemead (Stati Uniti) | 08/03/2023 | 64 | SUE |
| P PETRAVICIUS Mykolas | Vilnius (Lituania) | 10/03/2023 | 86 | ICP |
| L BALLAN Luigi | Torino (TO) (Italia) | 11/03/2023 | 83 | ICP |
| P VAILATT Thomas | Aluva (India) | 13/03/2023 | 93 | INK |
| P MINJ John Bosco | Shillong (India) | 15/03/2023 | 75 | INS |
| P PRELLEZO GARCÍA José Manuel | Roma (Italia) | 16/03/2023 | 90 | UPS |
| P NIKOLIN Michał | Lubin (Polonia) | 16/03/2023 | 91 | PLO |
| P CIMA Ottavio | Borgomanero (Italia) | 17/03/2023 | 94 | ICP |
| P SALVATORE Giuseppe | Salerno (Italia) | 18/03/2023 | 99 | IME |
| P LUPO Giuseppe | Pedara (CT) (Italia) | 18/03/2023 | 84 | ISI |
| L FORMOSO FORMOSO Servando | Sevilla (Spagna) | 19/03/2023 | 87 | SMX |
| P NGUYEN Tien My | Da Lat City (Vietnam) | 19/03/2023 | 80 | VIE |
| L FARFÁN QUISPÉ Justo | Piura (Perù) | 19/03/2023 | 78 | PERÙ |
| L ZONTA Aniceto | Poxoréu/MT (Brasile) | 20/03/2023 | 94 | BCG |
| L BERNARDO PÉREZ Gonzalo | León (Spagna) | 24/03/2023 | 78 | SSM |
| L POGGIO Carlo | Torino (TO) (Italia) | 24/03/2023 | 75 | ICP |
| P GONZÁLEZ Selestino | Córdoba (Argentina) | 25/03/2023 | 95 | ARN |
| P BALAUDER I RAMOS Francesc Manel | Barcelona (Spagna) | 25/03/2023 | 90 | SMX |
| P FEDERICI Alessandro | Aosta (Italia) | 27/03/2023 | 86 | ICP |
| E BALESTIERI José Jovêncio | Blumenau (SC) (Brasile) | 02/04/2023 | 83 | |
| <i>Fu Vescovo per 17 anni e Vescovo emerito per 15 anni</i> | | | | |
| P SELVADURAI (DURAI) Clement Paulraj (Selva) | Coimbatore, Tiruchy (India) | 10/04/2023 | 46 | INT |
| P CHITTAPANATT George | Guwahati, Assam (India) | 11/04/2023 | 86 | ING |
| P KODADALA Jayaprakash | Madras, Wisdom Town (India) | 11/04/2023 | 68 | INM |
| L LÓPEZ GARCÍA Manuel | Madrid (Spagna) | 12/04/2023 | 81 | SSM |
| P CARMONA GARCIA Gabriel | Irapuato, Guanajuato (Messico) | 13/04/2023 | 91 | MEG |
| P BARBERO Valeriano | Galliate (NO) (Italia) | 14/04/2023 | 84 | PGS |
| P DÍAZ GARRÉ Carlos Alberto | Montevideo (Uruguay) | 14/04/2023 | 80 | URU |
| P BRAMBILLA Guido | Castano Primo (MI) (Italia) | 15/04/2023 | 93 | ILE |
| P CHATRIAN Giorgio | Torino (TO) (Italia) | 16/04/2023 | 68 | ICP |
| L NEELIYARA Joseph | Aluva (India) | 17/04/2023 | 90 | INK |
| P ZADRAVEC Jože | Trstenik (Slovenia) | 22/04/2023 | 84 | SLO |
| P FONSECA CELY José Humberto | Tunja (Colombia) | 22/04/2023 | 76 | COB |
| P CASTRO DUÍLE de Assis | Resende (Brasile) | 24/04/2023 | 81 | BBH |
| P BORGETTI Carlo | Vibo Valentia (Italia) | 28/04/2023 | 90 | IME |
| P NANGACHIVEETIL Joseph | Dimapur (India) | 28/04/2023 | 94 | IND |
| P GUGLIELMI Alberto | Venezia-Mestre (Italia) | 01/05/2023 | 78 | INE |
| P PEDROSA PEREA Víctor | Bilbao (Spagna) | 05/05/2023 | 83 | SSM |
| P REYNDERS Jules | Bonheiden (Belgio) | 06/05/2023 | 92 | BEN |
| L CALCATERRA Roberto | Roma (Italia) | 06/05/2023 | 85 | ICC |
| P BRUI Jean | Caen (Francia) | 08/05/2023 | 84 | FRB |
| P PRIETO URRRA José Miguel | Santiago de Chile (Cile) | 09/05/2023 | 53 | CILE |
| P POVALEJ Adolf | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 10/05/2023 | 91 | ARS |

| SURNAME AND NAME | PLACE of death | DATE | AGE | PROV |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----|------|
| P MORAGUES ORDÍNEZ Damián Ramón | Sevilla (Spagna) | 11/05/2023 | 72 | SMX |
| P CAVARZAN Giulio | Castello di Godego (TV) (Italia) | 16/05/2023 | 91 | INE |
| P MARCON Léonce | Toulon (Francia) | 16/05/2023 | 91 | FRB |
| P TOUSSAINT Joseph | Liège (Belgio) | 16/05/2023 | 90 | FRB |
| P SWAMINATHAN Stanley | Ayanavaram, Madras (India) | 17/05/2023 | 72 | INM |
| P PEZZOLO Luis Alejandro | Buenos Aires (Argentina) | 19/05/2023 | 88 | ARS |
| P STIENAERS Hubert | Heverlee (Belgio) | 23/05/2023 | 87 | BEN |
| P GARCÍA-VERDUGO Fernández Alberto | Arévalo (Spagna) | 24/05/2023 | 93 | SSM |
| P KOZERA Władysław | Wrocław (Polonia) | 24/05/2023 | 86 | PLO |
| P CUBILLOS Carlos | Bogotá (Colombia) | 25/05/2023 | 87 | COB |
| P MAINO Antonio | Verona (Italia) | 29/05/2023 | 87 | INE |
| P VECCHI Giovanni | Santiago de Chile (Cile) | 31/05/2023 | 91 | CIL |
| P PIOVESAN Giovanni | Venezia-Mestre (Italia) | 31/05/2023 | 93 | INE |
| P SEYNS ETIENNE Stefan | Lubumbashi (R.D.C.) | 31/05/2023 | 91 | AFC |
| P ŁUGOWSKI Stanisław | Suwalki (Polonia) | 31/05/2023 | 81 | PLE |
| P SANTORO Pasqualantonio | Vasto (Italia) | 01/06/2023 | 96 | ICC |
| P GANGOSO LÓPEZ José | Arévalo (Spagna) | 02/06/2023 | 85 | SSM |
| P MORENO QUINTANA Salvador Carlos | Córdoba (Argentina) | 02/06/2023 | 81 | ARN |
| L VAZHAMPLACKAL Mathew | Shillong, Meghalaya (India) | 03/06/2023 | 87 | INS |
| P DESRAMAUT Dominique | Lille (Francia) | 05/06/2023 | 92 | FRB |
| P MOŠAŤ Bohuslav | Nitra (Slovacchia) | 07/06/2023 | 89 | SLK |
| P BIESMANS Henri (Rik) | Heusden-Zolder (Belgio) | 08/06/2023 | 97 | BEN |
| P VILLAMIL Alonso | Bogotá (Colombia) | 08/06/2023 | 94 | COB |
| P ROBEWNO Francisco | Wau (Sudan del Sud) | 09/06/2023 | 38 | AFE |
| L SARTORI Francesco | Venezia - Mestre (Italia) | 10/06/2023 | 101 | INE |
| L SABAG VALENZUELA Juan Jalil | Santiago de Chile (Cile) | 10/06/2023 | 89 | CILE |
| P PÉREZ GONZÁLEZ Dimás | Barcelona (Spagna) | 11/06/2023 | 79 | SMX |
| P POLACKAL Thomas | Calcutta (India) | 12/06/2023 | 86 | INC |
| <i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni.</i> | | | | |
| P VALIAVEETIL Jose | Shillong, Meghalaya (India) | 19/06/2023 | 72 | INS |
| P KANTON Jerzy | Przemyśl (Polonia) | 20/06/2023 | 90 | PLS |
| P MONDOTH Ittira | Aluva, Kerala (India) | 22/06/2023 | 83 | INK |
| P WILCZYŃSKI Jacek | Czerwińsk nad Wisłą (Polonia) | 23/06/2023 | 60 | PLE |
| P DOMÍNGUEZ RODRÍGUEZ Félix | León (Spagna) | 24/06/2023 | 91 | SSM |
| P OMBWORO NICODEMUS Nyagetta | Marsabit (Kenya) | 30/06/2023 | 38 | AFE |

