



Publication of the missions sector for SDB communities and friends of the salesian mission



Dear friends,

During the month of July, in the Southern Cone region, several missionary experiences took place with adolescents and young people linked to the Salesian Youth Movement. The various youth groups and missionary experiences that form part of the Salesian Missionary Volunteer Project are a good way to present to young people the true face of a 'Church that goes out': an open and welcoming ecclesial reality, in which communion and participation are promoted.

The missionary perspective of Youth Ministry contributes to a culture of solidarity. It is a witness to God's love for the most diverse peoples, especially the most vulnerable young people. It is a matter of taking seriously the missionary dimension of one's own life, which springs from our encounter with Jesus and is nourished by the experience of Salesian Youth Spirituality. Such missionary experiences are fertile ground for the maturation and vocational discernment of our young people.

Sérgio Ramos de Souza

■ Fr. Sérgio Ramos de Souza,
SDB Regional Coordinator for
Missionary Animation,
Southern Cone Region

Missionaries: Prophets not Messiahs



After the resurrection of Jesus, he commissioned his disciples to go, make disciples, baptize and teach with the assurance that he will be with them always (Mt 28:18-20). Jesus' command to all his disciples leads us to understand that, through our baptism, **we are missionary disciples** sent to share the Gospel to all peoples at every opportunity. Indeed, the mission of sharing the Gospel and offering them the gift of baptism is part of our identity as Christians.

The Apostle Paul is considered the greatest missionary, who founded Christian communities in the various parts of Asia and in Rome and Spain. Does this mean that every Christian is called to be a cross-cultural missionary? Acts 13:2-3 could provide us a hint: "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them forth." Thus, while all Christians ought **to have the ardour to share the Gospel**, some are called to go out of their country or culture, while others are called to stay and share their Gospel in their home country.

'Mission' comes from the Latin word that means "to send." The missionary is one who is 'sent out' to **share, communicate and proclaim** the gift of faith and baptism. The place does not matter. It could be in any continent or country.

In the Bible a prophet was one who spoke in God's name and by His authority (Ex 7:1). His mission is to remind God's people to be faithful to their commitment. Every **missionary is a prophet**, sent to tell people about God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

If a missionary does not make this his priority, then he really is only a social worker or a social service provider which is no different than the numerous humanitarian organizations.

Today, the vast majority of people still associate missionary work with Africa, social work, or forests and jungles. This idea is not wrong, but it is too narrow and does not fully encompass all that the missionary is called to. It also brings with it the risk that the missionary be over concerned about providing for their material needs, like the messiah the Jewish people wanted Jesus to be.

Indeed, missionaries are prophets not messiahs!

■ Fr. Alfred Maravilla, SDB
General Councillor for the Missions

FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- To whom I am sent to announce the Gospel as a missionary disciple?
- What are the temptations that make me a messiah instead of a prophet?



HOW WE LIVE THE MISSIONARY 'GOING OUT' IN CILE



Dear Don Claudio, Pope Francis often reminds us that the Church must be open to everyone. How is the situation in Chile from this point of view?

At present, the Church is on a path of discernment towards an ecclesial assembly that will take place in October. We are progressing in the synodal process convened by Pope Francis for 2023: 'For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission'. This process reveals some challenges that the Church in Chile will face in the years to come. A few of them are: interpersonal relations, which are affected by abuse; clericalism; the secondary role of women, and the lack of youth participation; as well as the proposal for a path of greater depth and maturity around the centrality of baptismal grace.

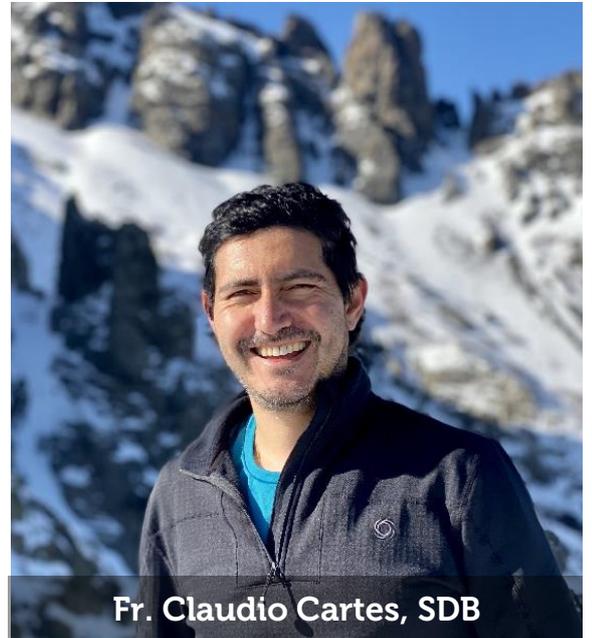
Apostolic commitment grew among the most vulnerable. They already were in situations of constant fragility, and were even more affected by the scourge of the pandemic. The Church stood out as part of the support network for thousands of migrants, the homeless and people deprived of their liberty.

Another favourite theme of the Pope is 'missionary outreach'. How does your Salesian Province respond to this challenge?

With a constant attitude of service among the poorest young people in the country, ensuring that Salesian presences are at the service of families and the working classes through free and quality educational proposals. In addition, opening up to new realities, such as the university world, and establishing ourselves in increasingly vulnerable sectors through open playgrounds. We offer them activities complementary to their formal studies, which enable them to be integrated into society.

What could be done to foster dialogue between us, the members of the Salesian Family, and young people outside the Church?

The key word is 'presence' without the distance of judgement. To be present beyond intra-ecclesial interests. Although there is a growing gap between young people and the Church, Salesian spirituality has a unique quality that enables it to reduce this distance: to empathise with their needs and their search. We go beyond our needs to 'recruit' them. We avoid pre-judging, which would increase the distrust between young people and adults.



Fr. Claudio Cartes, SDB

39 years old **Chilean**. Perpetually professed in 2009 and priest since 2011; currently director of the first Salesian house in the country: **Concepción**.

Member of the **Youth Ministry** Sector as the reference point in America for Salesian Schools (ESA) and Professional Training Centres.

For 6 years he was the **Delegate** for Youth Ministry in the Chilean Province, chaplain at the Salesian Catholic University and in charge of pastoral care at the **Salesian College 'San José'** in Chilean Patagonia.

M U R O F Religious affiliations in Latin America

- According to a recent survey (Statista, 2020), about **57%** of respondents in **18** Latin American countries confirmed being **Catholic**.
- Catholics 57.1%** • evangelicals (not specified) **19.1%** • no faith **16.6%** • others **7.2%** (• atheists **1.1%** • Pentecostal evangelicals **1.1%** • Adventists **0.8%** • Jehovah's Witnesses **0.8%** • believers without formal affiliation to any religion **0.7%** • Baptist evangelicals **0.4%** • Mormons **0.4%** • Protestants **0.3%** • African-American cults - Umbanda **0.3%** • agnostics **0.3%** • Methodist evangelicals **0.1%** • others **0.8%**)

OCTOBER SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

A Church open to everyone

For true dialogue and understanding in the Salesian province and the Church in Chile.

We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality. [Pope Francis' prayer intention]

CHILE