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newsletter for Salesian
Missionary Animation



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Dear friends,

From a merciful heart flows forth compassion, forgiveness and sacrifice. As the Church, with her maternal heart reaches out to wounded humanity, bringing repentant sinners back to the fold, embracing them and nurturing their faith, we, the beneficiaries of God's merciful love are obliged to be compassionate and merciful to those wounded by sins.

This year, we, the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians, celebrate the 100th year of the priestly Ordination of our Founder, Venerable Stephen Ferrando, and the centenary of his arrival in India. His priestly motto - On the Cross is Salvation became the driving force of his endearing missionary activities. Fixing his gaze on the rugged cross, which is the symbol of sacrificial love and mercy, he tended his flock with a heart like that of Jesus.

May we too become generous dispensers of love and mercy to those in need.

■ **Sr. Philomena Mathew,**
MSMHC
(Missionary Sisters of Mary
Help of Christians)
Superior General

On the side of the minors



"Whoever does not have a well-founded hope of being able to preserve, with divine help, the virtue of chastity in words, deeds and thoughts, should not be professed in this Society, because they would often find themselves in danger".

Thus wrote Don Bosco in the first text of the Constitutions, in 1875.

These are true words, because we Salesians carry out our mission mainly in contact with minors and, often, in environments of material and moral poverty. **No ambiguity is possible** in these environments.

In recent years, much has been done in this area by the Salesian Congregation. All our Provinces have activated channels to receive any reports of abuse. Each denunciation is taken into serious consideration, activating the canonical proceedings, imposing the sanctions provided for by the penal law of the Church on the guilty and collaborating fully with the civil authorities. No means, time or people have been spared to get to the truth. Each Province has drawn up **"Guidelines for the protection of minors"**.

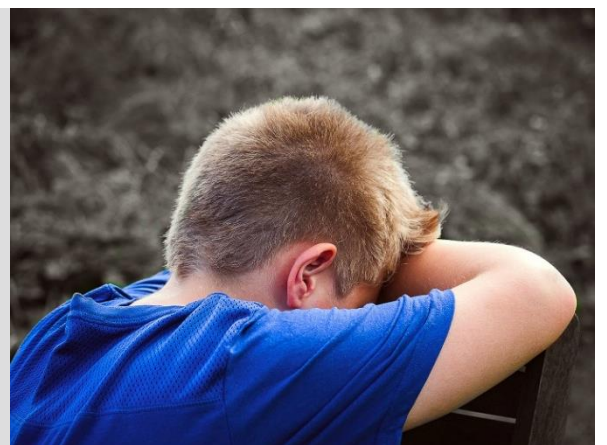
But that is not enough. It is not enough to listen to the victims, accompany them, and prosecute the perpetrators. It is not enough to develop strict control procedures. A **"preventive" culture** is also needed in this field. The key to prevention is "assistance". It is a word well known to us Salesians. On the one hand it requires "vigilance", that is, an attentive presence to recognize and neutralize any form of evil in the bud.

But "assistance" also means *"being fraternally in the midst of young people with an active and friendly presence"*. This makes **trust and mutual trust** possible. Trust and confidence, above all among Salesians, co-responsible lay people, parents and young leaders. Under these conditions, the Salesian house becomes a "home that welcomes", a house that is open, transparent, reliable and secure.

■ **Fr. Pier Fausto Frisoli, SDB**
Procurator General of the Salesian Congregation

FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- How can I contribute to creating a Salesian environment that is a "welcoming home"?
- Do you know the "Guidelines for the protection of minors" in your Province?



SALESIAN "MISSIONARY DIMENSION" IN IRELAND



Dear Dominic, there is a growing number of non-Irish Salesians present in IRL province. How do they manage to adapt to the conditions and situation there?

In order to adapt to the conditions and situation here, they learn the Irish culture and history; the history of the Catholic Church and its current situation; the Irish mentality and lifestyle. Besides, they need to be open to new realities and be creative in the ministries. They also need to be patient when things do not work out as well as they planned or expected. Moreover, they need support from the Salesian community they belong to.

You are one of the confreres who came to IRL 12 years ago; what was the greatest difficulty you faced in the first years of working in Ireland?

I came to Ireland in 2011 after I did my philosophy in Viet Nam. The most difficult thing I experienced was when I started my practical training in a Salesian secondary school that had non-Salesians working in it. Therefore, I did not know what to do or how I would get involved in the Irish school system to start with.

Thanks be to God that there was a teacher, an ex-Salesian, who helped me a lot in that period and after. He helped me discover possibilities to get involved in the school in terms of sports and assistance. Moreover, with my background in mechanical engineering, I was able to help some pupils in some subjects, such as metalwork, woodwork, and technical graphics.

What do you think will be the future of Salesian presence in Ireland?

The future of Salesian presence in Ireland would be the chaplaincies in Salesian Schools, College and parishes. Moreover, Salesian presence could in future be extended to local parishes and primary schools because there is a serious shortage of priests and religious in Ireland.

In recent years, I have been working with some local primary schools to prepare children for the Sacrament of Confirmation. For me, it is a great opportunity to bring the Gospel to them. Moreover, it is also a great opportunity for me to get to know them and they get to know me before they come to our Salesian school in the coming years.



Fr. Dominic Binh Nguyen, SDB

I grew up in a small town in **Southern Vietnam**, two kilometers away from the Salesian Theologate. I began my Salesian journey when I was fifteen and my desire to become a missionary came to me after I encountered some missionaries in novitiate.

Paul Binh Tran (my Salesian companion) and I were sent **to Ireland in 2011**. Fr. Paul is a chaplain in the Salesian College Celbridge, and I am a chaplain in the Salesian College in **Limerick**.



6 different types of abuses

The commonly held definition of abuse, which we use in all of our trainings, is "a pattern of behaviour used by a person to gain and maintain power and control over another." One thing to note about that definition: there is a pattern of behaviour, in other words, not just one incident.

- Physical
- Sexual
- Verbal/Emotional
- Mental/Psychological
- Financial/Economic
- Cultural/of Identity



Source: REACH <https://reachma.org/>

**MARCH
SALESIAN
MISSIONARY
INTENTION**

For victims of abuse

For victims of abuse by priests and religious in Ireland

We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church; may they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering. [Prayer intention of Pope Francis]

IRELAND

