



“You are God’s hope and ours too”

Rector Major’s visit to Chile Salesian Province

by Fr Juan Bustamante, sdb



“Young people from the Salesian Youth Movement, come and see!”, the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, shouted, and a thousand young people immediately got on their feet, came down from the stands and gathered around Don Bosco’s successor. Without a doubt, this was the moment that best described the Rector Major’s encounter with the members of the Salesian Youth Movement (SYM) on Saturday 26 March in the context of his visit to Chile. From there on it was a joyful, festive, encounter involving Don Bosco’s representative today and today’s youth.

One by one the Rector Major answered the questions from the youngsters, talking to them in their midst, just as if he were meeting up with good friends who had not met for some time. “I really am very happy spending this time with you, because you are the *raison d’être* of my existence; you are God’s hope and ours too, and that’s why I love you all so much” said Fr Pascual.

One of the questions was about continuity – how they could carry their SYM spirituality forward into adulthood. Fr Pascual answered by saying that the SYM was just one stage in a boy’s or a girl’s life, where they experience fascination for Don Bosco and his spirituality, and where they form a group to ensure they are not alone. “If you only knew how many youngsters today live alone, and then you look around to see how