

SAINTS IN THE SALESIAN FAMILY

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1. The main “novelties” in the period 2003-2010 regarding holiness in the Salesian Family

The main new developments in the period 2003-2010 can be seen by running through the various “categories” of the one hundred and sixty two members of our Family already glorified or on the way to the honours of the altars.

a. Saints

After the canonisation of the Salesian Protomartyrs Saint Luigi Versiglia and Saint Callisto Caravario (1 October 2000), there was the canonisation of Saint Luigi Orione, a pupil of Don Bosco (16 May 2004). In addition the official list of the saints of the Salesian Family has been completed with other figures representative of our history and of our Family. They are Saint Joseph Cafasso and Saint Leonard Murialdo, in addition to Saint Luigi Orione.

Thus the official list contains eight Saints.

b. Blesseds

This period of time has seen an extraordinary increase of the Blesseds. After the beatification of Fr Luigi Variara, of Brother Artemides Zatti and of Sister Maria Romero Meneses, at the end of the previous Chapter (14 April 2002), equally significant was the next Beatification Liturgy which led to the altars Fr August Czartoryski, Sister Eusebia Palomino and Alexandrina Maria da Costa (25 April 2004). There followed the beatifications of Albert Marvelli (5 September 2004) and Fr Bronislaw Markiewicz, founder of the Michaelites (19 June 2005). Then of special significance were the more recent beatification liturgies: that of Henry Saiz Aparicio and his sixty two companions martyrs (28 October 2007: this was the most numerous beatification in our history), and that of Zephyrinus Namuncurà (11 November 2007), which confirmed – after the beatification of Laura Vicuña – God’s seal on the inculturation of Don Bosco’s educative charism in Latin America.

The official list of the Blesseds too has been completed with other figures representative of our Family: that is to say Blessed Luigi Guanella, Blessed Pius IX and Blessed Bronislaw Markiewicz.

Thus the current list contains one hundred and sixteen Blessed.

c. Venerables

The list of the Venerables has also lengthened in the course of this period. After the Decree on the heroicity of the life and virtues of Bishop Luigi Olivares (20 December 2004), great enthusiasm was aroused in the Salesian Family by the proclamation of the Decree on the heroicity of the life and virtues of Mamma Margaret (23 October 2006). From more recent times, then are the Decrees on the heroicity of the life and virtues of Sister Maria Troncatti (8 November 2008) and of Fr Joseph Quadrio (19 December 2009).

The Roman phase of the enquiry into a presumed miracle attributed to the intercession of the Ven. Maria Troncatti is in progress, and also being studied is a presumed miracle attributed to Fr Quadrio.

The official list contains ten Venerables.

d. Servants of God

The number of the Servants of God has fallen considerably, after the beatification of the 63 Spanish martyrs.

But the number of new Causes introduced in this period of time is considerable. It is a question of ten Causes: those of Fr Carlo Della Torre (*nulla osta*: 14 July 2003), of Fr John Swierc and eight companions (*the start of the diocesan enquiry*: 17 September 2003), of Fr Constantine Vendrame (*the start of the diocesan enquiry*: 19 August 2006), of Bishop Oreste Marengo (*the start of the diocesan enquiry*: 12 April 2007), of Fr Joseph Vador (*opening of the Transunto*: 29 September 2008), of Bishop Stephen Ferrando (*decree of the validity of the diocesan enquiry*: 17 October 2008), of Fr Andrew Majcen (*nulla osta*: 5 November 2008), of Brother. Stephen Sandor (*decree of the validity of the diocesan enquiry*: 14 November 2008), of Fr Carlo Crespi Croci (*decree of the validity of the diocesan*: 15 February 2010), of Fr Titus Zeman (*the start of the diocesan enquiry*: 26 febbraio 2010).

All the Causes (including the other eleven previously introduced) are proceeding towards the Decree on the heroicity of the life and virtues. As is natural, some progress more quickly, others more slowly.

The current list contains twenty eight Servants of God.

e. Some observations

The notes are self explanatory.

Salesian holiness, canonised or on the way to canonisation, is growing strongly. This is undoubtedly a fact which gives confidence and courage.

Nonetheless, the geographical map of the glorified members of the Salesian Family remains somewhat uneven. Some Continents do not appear at all, such as Africa, North America, Australia and Oceania. Asia appears only with some European missionaries who have worked in North-East India. We need to ask ourselves if this uneven distribution simply reflects historical reasons, or whether there is in some regions less concern in collecting and appreciating witnesses of holiness.

Finally it should be noted that in the course of this period the Cause of Albino Luciani (John Paul I) was entrusted to our Postulation Office. The diocesan enquiry was completed on 10 November 2006. In the Diocese of Gravina in Puglia the enquiry has also been completed into a presumed miracle attributed to the intercession of the Servant of God (30 May 2009).

2. The effort to make our saints known

To help make our saints known, a very useful aid is still our site www.sdb.org (“Salesians”), under the heading “Salesian Saints”, regarding the individual Saints,

Blesseds, Venerables and Servants of God. Information can be found there about their biographies, and bibliographies, photographs, pictures liturgical texts, suggestions for celebrations and prayers...

Another aid to be recommended is the small booklet *Santi nella Famiglia Salesiana*, Elledici, Leumann (TO), the second edition published in 2009.

Here is the *Presentation* by the Rector Major (pp. 3-4), since it provides very briefly the guide-lines for an effective catechesis about Salesian holiness addressed to the confreres, to the young and to all those associated with our Family.

««*Saints in the Salesian Family*. Much more than the simple title of a book, this expression represents a fervent hope while it indicates the fundamental vocation of all those who – in every part of the world - belong to the great Family raised up by the Spirit through the charism of Saint John Bosco.

This way of holiness to which we are called is the one which was followed in an exemplary manner by the eight saints, the one hundred and sixteen blesseds, the ten venerables and the twenty eight Servants of God who illuminate the pages of this book.

The variety of profiles respond to the same question: “What aspects of Don Bosco’s charism are illustrated by the holiness of this person?” In this way one comes to a particular deeper understanding of the Salesian charism, not so much through theological speculation on a serious academic level, but rather along the path marked out by the *scientia amoris*, in which the saints are the specialists. This is the way more than any other which awakens in hearts the “nostalgia” for holiness.

Holiness. This is the most demanding path we want to follow together in our educative communities; it is the most precious gift we can offer; it is the highest goal we can propose with courage to everyone especially the young. Only in an atmosphere of holiness which is lived and experienced will the young have the possibility of making courageous life choices, of discovering God’s plan for their future, of appreciating and accepting the gift of vocations of special consecration.

For this purpose the rich heritage of men and women which Don Bosco’s educational system set on the way to holiness, making them masterpieces of human qualities and of grace is very valuable and needs to be put to good use in a wise manner.

Little more than 120 years have passed since the death of the Founder, but in this period of time the preventive system has brought to maturity almost un-hoped-for fruits, and has formed heroes and saints. The host of the 162 Great Ones already glorified or on the way towards the honours of the altars which fill the following pages is the clearest seal which the Providence of God has stamped on history to proclaim the authenticity of the educative charism of Saint John Bosco.

In this way we return to the fervent hope contained in the title of this book; that on the same path of the charism and of holiness we too may find ourselves, together with “so many witnesses in a great cloud” (*Hebrew* 12,1), canonised or “anonymous”, who have walked before us. Since in the end this is the only thing which counts: “Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.” (*Leviticus* 19, 2)».

3. The Calendar of the Proper Salesian Offices

- a. For the present it is not intended to revise the *Missae* and the *Lectionary for the Salesian Family*. Therefore those in use still remain valid. The most recent liturgical guide to which one should refer is the following: *Famiglia Salesiana in Preghiera. Testi per la celebrazione dell'Eucaristia e della Liturgia delle Ore*, Roma 1995.
- b. The *Collects of the most recently beatified* (those after 1995), approved in Italian by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, can be found on the site already mentioned www.sdb.org. Once translated into the various languages, they will be made available on the same site: those in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and Polish.
- c. In a single booklet in the course of preparation in Italian, the following will be published: *the proper parts of the Liturgy of the Hours of those recently beatified* (that is to say the second reading for the Office of Readings with its response). In this case too translations into the various languages are in progress.
- d. The same Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has approved and confirmed the *Calendar for the Proper Salesian Offices*.

SALESIAN SAINTS - CALENDAR

(Update at 15. 03. 2010)

January		
15	Blessed Louis Variara, priest and Founder of the Institute of the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary	>> Memorial [for FMA Optional Memorial; for HHSSCC: Feast]
22	Blessed Laura Vicuña, youth	>> Optional Memorial [for the FMA: Memorial]
24	St. Francis de Sales, bishop and doctor of the Church, Titular and Patron of the Society of St. Francis de Sales	>> Feast
30	Blessed Bronislaus Markiewicz, priest and Founder of the Congregations of Saint Michael the Archangel	>> Optional Memorial
31	St. John Bosco, priest, Founder of the Society of St Francis de Sales, of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and of the Salesian Cooperators	>> Solemnity

February

1	Commemoration of all deceased Salesian confreres	>>	Comm.
7	Blessed PIUS IX	>>	Optional Memorial
9	Blessed Eusebia Palomino Yenes, virgin	>>	Optional memorial [for FMA: Memorial]
25	Saint Louis Versiglia, bishop, and Callistus Caravario, priest Salesian Protomartyrs	>>	Feast

May

6	Saint Dominic Savio, youth	>>	Feast
13	Saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello, virgin and Cofoundress of the FMA	>>	Festa [for FMA: Solemnity]
16	Saint Louis Orione, priest and Founder of the Little Work of Divine Providence	>>	Optional Memorial
18	Saint Leonard Murialdo, priest and Founder of the Congregation of St Joseph	>>	Optional Memorial
24	Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians Principal patron of Society of St Francis de Sales, of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and of the Secular Institute of the Volunteers of Don Bosco	>>	Solemnity
29	Blessed Blessed Joseph Kowalski, priest, martyr	>>	Optional Memorial

June

12	Blessed Francis Keşy, lay person, and 4 companions martyrs	>>	Optional Memorial
23	Saint Joseph Cafasso, priest	>>	Memorial

July

7	Blessed Mary Romero, virgin	>>	Optional memorial [for FMA: Memorial]
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August

2	Blessed Augustus Czaratoryski, priest	>>	Optional Memorial
26	Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá, lay person	>>	Optional Memorial

September

22	Blessed Joseph Calasanz Marqués and Enrico Saiz Aparicio, priests, and 93 companions, martyrs	>>	Memorial
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October

5	Blessed Albert Marvelli, lay person	>>	Optional Memorial
13	Blessed Alexandrina Maria da Costa, virgin	>>	Optional Memorial
24	Blessed Louis Guanella, priest	>>	Optional Memorial
25	Anniversary of the Dedication of the church		Solemnity

(when the date is unknown)

29	Blessed Michael Rua, priest	>>	Memorial
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November

13	Blessed Artemides Zatti, religious	>>	Memorial
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15	Blessed Madeleine Morano, virgin	>>	Optional Memorial
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December

5	Blessed Philip Rinaldi, priest Founder of the Secular Institute of the Volunteers of Don Bosco	>>	Memorial [for VDB: Feast]
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5. The process for a Cause of canonisation

Let us consider now the fortunate (or better providential) situation of a Salesian Provincial who intends to open a Cause of beatification or canonisation for a confrere (or at least the case of a Cause, for which the Province intends to be responsible).

1 PRELIMINARY STEPS TO TAKE

* Above all it is necessary to have a serious discussion in the Provincial Council to ensure that the person is worthy of the honours of the altar, in other words, has practised the virtues to an heroic degree, and this can be proved.

* It is then a matter of involving the Province to see whether the confreres are of the same opinion about the possibility of introducing the cause.

* If the results of these discussions are positive one moves on to the following stages.

a. Identify the right person to take the cause in hand seriously and who will have sufficient time to follow up all the procedures.

N.B. FROM A PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT. IF SUCH A PERSON CANNOT BE FOUND THE WHOLE PROCESS WILL GRIND TO A HALT.

b. Gather together all the relevant material about the individual concerned (in particular the following are necessary: a copy of the published writings of the person in question; and a *critical* biography, that is *well documented*).

c. See whether people turn to this person to obtain favours, and draw up an account of this.

d. Let it be known that it is intended to introduce the cause, so that it may be possible to gather together all kinds of material that could be useful in the process.

e. Draw up a list of “first hand” witnesses to have an idea of how many there might be.

f. Contact **informally** the Bishop of the place where the person died, to see what his wishes might be in the matter

N.B.: 1. If many years have passed since the death of the person, it is well to move as quickly as possible, otherwise witnesses will not be available. Indeed if a useful witness is not likely to last much longer it would be best to collect their testimony, under oath, whether in fact the cause goes ahead or not..

N.B.: 2. Because of all this the Provincial should get hold of the *Manuale delle Cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione* edited by R. Rodrigo, Rome 2004 (3), to which we refer in these pages (from now on as: *Manuale*). More recently, in 2007, the *Instructio “Sanctorum Mater”* was published by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints which refers especially to the Diocesan Enquiry and to previous steps (from now on as: *Instructio*).

2. REQUEST from the Provincial to the Rector Major. This is a request written in formal

terms which ought to give the reasons for the request, giving an account of the steps already taken (as in point 1.), attaching the relevant documentation.

3. The Postulator, in agreement with the Provincial and his Council, APPOINTS THE VICE POSTULATOR (the person mentioned in point 1.a).

4. Official REQUEST of the Postulator to the Bishop of the Diocese in which the person concerned died. This is the so-called *supplex libellus*, to which are attached the documents, mentioned in points 1.b-e.

5. Drawing up of the QUESTIONNAIRE. It is signed by the Promoter of Justice (mentioned in point 9.; cf. also point 11.), but prepared by the Postulation Office. In practice one follows the *Manuale*, pp. 241 seq., especially pp. 245-246, adapting the questionnaire to the particular case.

6. THE BISHOP seeks the opinion of the Bishops' Conference of his Region.

7. THE BISHOP requests the *nulla osta* from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. When he obtains it the person under examination acquires the title of *Servant of God* (from now on: SoG).

a. Diocesan Enquiry

8. THE BISHOP publishes the request of the Postulator.

9. THE BISHOP ESTABLISHES THE TRIBUNAL. In practice he appoints the Judge delegate, the Promoter of Justice and the Notary (and later the adjunct Notaries). For this the indications are followed in the *Manuale*, pp. 61-64, with the formula 9 on pp. 233-238. See also *Instructio*, arts. 53-59.

10. OPENING SESSION OF THE DIOCESAN ENQUIRY. Cf. *Manuale*, pp. 68-72; *Instructio*, arts. 86-95.

11. On the same occasion THE POSTULATION OFFICE OFFICIALLY PRESENTS the list of witnesses, the writings of the SoG, all the document relating to the SoG, the questionnaire signed by the Promoter of Justice.

12. THE BISHOP appoints TWO THEOLOGIAN EXAMINERS and the EXPERTS OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION.

The two theologian examiners have to examine the published writings of the SoG, and declare whether or not there are in them elements in contradiction to Catholic teaching and morality. Strictly speaking the examination is obligatory only for published writings. But it would be well to do so also for those not published (*Manuale*, pp. 49-51; *Instructio*, arts. 62-67). The theologian examiners can belong to the Salesian Family, while the members of the Tribunal not.

The historical experts (at least three) form the so-called Historical Commission. Only one of them may belong to the Salesian Family. Regarding the work of this Commission, and on its final duty, cf. *Manuale*, pp. 87-91; *Instructio*, arts. 68-76.

13. THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE DIOCESAN ENQUIRY. This takes place after all the witnesses have been heard, including those called by the Tribunal *ex officio* (that is two witnesses not listed: this is to be recommended to the Tribunal), after hearing the experts of the Historical Commission and after the last session, before the closing session, devoted to the declaration regarding the lack of a cult. Cf. *Manuale*, pp. 74-81; 92-104, with the various formulas; *Instructio*, arts. 117-127; 141-150.

14. THE FORWARDING of the Acts. The original acts of the diocesan enquiry constitute the *Archetype*, which should be preserved in the Archives of the Diocese.

From the *Archetype* is made the so-called *Transunto* (that is, precisely a copy "extracted" from the original), and from the *Transunto*, in its turn the *Public Copy*: both the two documents – *Transunto* and

Public *Copy* – are sent to Rome. For this should be followed the indications of the *Manuale*, pp. 123-124, and the *Instructio*, arts. 128-140.

b. Roman Enquiry

15. REQUEST from the Postulator to the Prefect of the Congregation: for the opening of the Acts first; for the validity of the Acts afterwards.

16. REQUEST TO THE PREFECT FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE RELATOR.

17. THE DRAWING UP OF THE POSITIO. The person who is working on this, indicated by the Postulator, should be presented to the Relator and guided by him. Regarding the collaborator the Congregation should be given a *curriculum vitae*, publications and an affirmation of his readiness to work under the guidance of the Relator.

Here is an INDEX of the POSITIO:

First part (this is substantially the so-called *Informatio*)

1. Presentation of the Relator
2. History of the cause
3. Sources
4. Biography
5. Synthesis of the virtues

Second part (this is substantially the so-called *Summarium* of the witness statements)

1. Table of texts
2. *Summarium* of the documents presented in the diocesan enquiry
3. Decree on the validity of the diocesan enquiry
4. Other documents.

18. PRINTING THE POSITIO.

19. Official DELIVERY of the *Positio* to the Chancellery of the Congregation.

20. About TEN YEARS after the delivery, the Congregation examines the *Positio* (two examinations: that of the special Congress of theological consultants and that of the Ordinary Session of the Members of the Congregation). If the response is positive, then the Prefect of the Congregation asks the Holy Father to prepare the DECREE regarding the heroicity of the life and virtues: at the moment the Holy Father grants this authorisation, the SoG acquires the title of *Venerable*. If on the other hand it is a question of a process concerning martyrdom, the relevant DECREE, also authorised by the Holy Father, immediately precedes the beatification of the SoG.

21. AT THIS POINT THE HUMAN PROCESS FINISHES. Only a sign for heaven has to be waited for, that is a miracle, one for the beatification and another for the canonisation. The martyrs have no need for a miracle for beatification, but only for canonisation.

6. The process regarding a miracle

Let us consider now the case in which one wishes to set in motion the process regarding a miracle (this happens with regard to a Servant of God, to a Venerable or to a Blessed).

This process too has two parts: the diocesan enquiry and the Roman enquiry at the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

This is the essential process to be followed for the diocesan enquiry:

1. "Supplex libellus" of the Postulator to the Bishop, under whose jurisdiction the presumed miraculous event has taken place, for the setting up of the Tribunal.
2. Questionnaires of the Promoter of Justice (drawn up by the Postulator).
3. "Notula testium" (list of witnesses) of the Postulator.
4. After the setting up of the Tribunal, all the members have to swear "de munere adimplendo" and "de secreto servando".
5. Appointment by the Tribunal of the medical expert, who will attend all the statements by the witnesses.
6. Appointment by the Tribunal of two witnesses "ex officio".
7. Appointment by the Tribunal of the two Medical Experts "ab inspectione", who have to examine the cured person and present a written report.
8. Delivery by the Postulator of all the medical documentation.
9. Closing Session after all the witnesses have been heard, and the sending to Rome of the Acts in duplicate.

NB.: For all this the Postulator will avail of the work of the Vice Postulator (appointed by him in agreement with the Provincial), for which he is expressly delegated.

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