

## YOUTH MINISTRY - MESSAGES

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### **Remembering the fundamental elements of salesian youth pastoral ministry**

#### 1. **Encountering The Young As A Good Shepherd – In Their Own World And Culture**

We, the Salesians of Don Bosco, are called to be pastors and teachers of the young, especially those most in need. We offer them an integral experience of human, spiritual and intellectual maturity. In accompanying young people, we seek to understand their reality and their cultures. In addition, we also strive to meet their needs and their expectations. We are called to be present among them with an attitude of commitment to welcome, listening, study, reflection and interpretation, that help us to learn more about their environments. By this we learn to discern how best we could accompany them with the educative and pastoral proposals that meet their real needs.

#### 2. **Proclamation Of The Gospel Of Christ, With The Educational And Missionary Charism Of Don Bosco**

As Salesians of Don Bosco, we are called to bear witness to the good news we bring to young people. It is a priority given by Christ to the Church. Like Don Bosco, we meet young people where they live, doing our best to render real in their lives the message of gospel joy. With an integral vision of proclamation, as evangelizers and educators, we are committed to offer them processes that will meet their needs and desires. The oratory criterion of Salesian youth pastoral work is basically a mystical and pedagogical process, aiming at, an encounter of the young with Christ and his good news. This experience will guide young people to discover God's plan for them towards a mature vocational commitment, to the society and to the Church. It is a challenge that calls for proposals of integral Salesian Youth Spirituality: friendship, culture, solidarity, celebration of faith, community life, service and catechesis. We are also called to bring good news in non-Christian, multi-religious and multi-cultural environments. In such environments, we bring a proposal rooted in the Gospel values but translate it in respect to the people, their culture and their religions. We are committed to the processes that actually respond to their desires and right to human, intellectual and transcendental development. We feel that, in the current educational crisis, there arises the need to offer a special attention to the family, especially in relation to youth ministry. In a globalized environment, where human relationship becomes increasingly distant and marked by individualism, each of our presence seeks to promote the formation of the parents and offer ways of accompanying the young couples by transforming our centres into a place of welcome and listening.

#### 3. **The Communitarian Dimension Of The Salesian Youth Pastoral Ministry**

Our call to be educators and ministers of the young is an experience to live together as a movement of persons who collectively live and bear witness to the salesian mission, in a response to the mandate of Christ, in the service of the young. The Salesian youth ministry is a community experience – a community of Salesians and lay collaborators – which is at the same time a community with educative and evangelical mission. It educates and bears witness in a spirit of a family. It is a community that is part of

the Church, living its mission with the charism of Don Bosco, giving visibility to the spirituality of communion.

The young, living in a world of constant change and its challenges that leave them powerless and conditioned, are an invitation for us to welcome them, listen to them and guide them. They silently harbor in their hearts, the cry of existential emptiness and yet a clear and profound search for meaning.

Inspired by the example of Don Bosco, who in his time, formed a community of laity, religious and young collaborators, who understood the necessity of their presence in our mission, at all levels. This Educative Pastoral Community (EPC) is adequately formed and committed to meet the new challenges.

We are called, as an EPC, to accompany and empower the young with educational and evangelizing proposals. In this environment, an EPC educates the young with the aim to transform them into protagonists of their own evangelical and educational processes.

#### 4. **Formation For The Mission**

Responding to the call of God to serve the young, we enter into a logical and significant formation process that confirms a pastoral attitude and mentality in the light of the Salesian charism.

The story and the situation of our youth, compels us to go through a process of formation collectively as Salesians, Laity and Young collaborators and the Salesian Family.

It encourages a systematic and consistent formative process in the initial stages of formation of the Salesians. For this reason, in addition to the importance of knowing and studying the model of the Salesian youth ministry, as presented in the Basic Framework of Reference, the processes must ensure pastoral mentoring of young Salesians in the formative stages.

An increasing pastoral need on the part of the youth today is the spiritual accompaniment. This need in youth ministry, demands us to offer formative courses that prepare Salesians and lay collaborators to be pastors and educators with ability to discern and guide.

#### 5. **A Mentality And A Practice of Educative Pastoral Plan**

As part of animating and governing the provinces, there is a communitarian accompaniment that helps in a clear and easy understanding of the application of SEPP. It includes also the capacity to verify the implementation of this process.

We feel the urgency to assimilate the fundamental pastoral motives of SEPP, not merely as an instrument of efficiency but as an expression of our mission.

It also strengthens a mentality and practice of networking that coordinates in the best way possible, the available human, institutional, educational and financial resources.