



DIREZIONE GENERALE OPERE DON BOSCO

Via della Pisana 1111 - 00163 Roma

Il Rettor Maggiore

Fr Angel Artime's words

Dear Pope Francis,
Dear Father,

We are very happy to be here with you. Thank you for this opportunity to meet you. For us it is a very precious gift and a unique occasion, allowing us to express the feelings we bear for you in our hearts. We love you, Father! We greatly value your courage and your testimony. With joy we see your great love for the Lord Jesus, for the Church, and your desire for the profound renewal of the whole Christian community over which you preside in service and love.

We know very well that for Don Bosco, love for the Pope meant love for the Church and love for the mission. Our meeting would have no meaning were it not accompanied at the same time by the desire to express to you, dear Father, our willingness to renew our charismatic and missionary commitment to the Church and the world with particular attention to the young, especially the poorest and most abandoned. So we accept your invitation to open the doors of our houses and our hearts, to be announcers of Gospel joy, believing strongly in a God who loves human beings and desires their salvation. In the words of “Gaudium et spes”, we want to share the joys and sorrows of today’s world and of the young people who live in it, fully committing ourselves to building the Kingdom of God.

During this General Chapter, with the theme of being “Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel”, we have felt that we are deeply in tune with your Apostolic Exhortation “Evangelii Gaudium”. This text has enlightened and guided our reflection.

It has been an occasion to reflect deeply on our Salesian charismatic identity, bearing in mind at the same time the need to interpret what Don Bosco experienced and passed on to us, in a way that is relevant. We have identified a path to renewal in which we commit ourselves to living the mystical dimension of consecrated individuals who intend to give absolute primacy to God, the Lord of our life. Moved by the Spirit of Jesus therefore we want to be “seekers and witnesses of God”, joyfully accompanying young people on a journey of human and Christian growth.

We are proposing to renew the prophetic witness of our fraternal life. In a world often torn by conflict at every level, it seems to us that our religious life has as one of its principle tasks witnessing to the joy of a communion of brothers who feel they

are all disciples of the Lord. It is a fellowship that involves our daily life, our work, our prayer and it becomes in itself a proclamation of a life expressed in new relationships inspired by the words of the Gospel and able to attract young people to the precious experience of a life given for others according to Don Bosco's charism.

In our mission we want to reaffirm our desire to be servants of the young, through an educative proposal inspired by Gospel values and with a generous commitment to transforming the world. We want to reaffirm the criterion of Don Bosco's choice: preferential availability for the poorest of the young, the most disadvantaged peoples, those on the margins, in traditional missionary settings and in the more secularised societies.

We welcome, dear Pope Francis, your words and proposals for an ecclesial choice of the major guidelines which will guide us over the next six years.

With the entire Salesian Family I take this opportunity to thank you, for having agreed to come to Turin for the Second Centenary of Don Bosco's birth. With the affection of children we assure you of our prayers, as we entrust your mission to the Virgin Help of Christians, Mother of the Church and we ask for your paternal blessing.

Ángel Fernández Artime

Rettor Maggiore