

Brief homily with the Regions

Dear confreres,

In the first place, I would like to express our joy at this encounter as we come together with the four confreres of the sectors: formation, youth ministry, social communication and missions. It may only be a gesture, but through it we want to express the total harmony of the General Council in a response to the request we have received from the Chapter for communion and coordination.

Then I would just like to offer a short and simple proposal or suggestion which I shall probably develop more in greater depth in the final homily of the Chapter. It has two parts, in harmony as always with the Word of God which invites us - in different ways each morning - to go out of ourselves, to be pilgrims, and to live in faith and hope.

The first idea is this. I think that after what we have experienced during the Chapter; after all our efforts at sincerely seeking authenticity; after our experience of brotherhood and communion – which is quite different from uniformity of thought and vision – we cannot return to our Provinces without sharing our enthusiasm with our confreres. The Chapter is much more than what we have written, even if we hope that what is written may truly offer meaningful proposals and make its own impact.

And the second idea or suggestion is this: we do not have Don Bosco here with us walking through the courtyard of Valdocco; we do not have Don Rua or John Cagliero or Joseph Fagnano or many others. We are not at the time of the foundation in the latter part of the 19th century, **BUT EVERY MOMENT CAN BE A FOUNDATION MOMENT IN THE HERE AND NOW**. Don Bosco asks us to re-create his charism for the world of today, a globalised world, and for the Congregation of today which is 15 times bigger than the one he himself knew.

Let us not fall into the temptation of pessimism nor lament the dearth of vocations. Let us take care not to reduce what is most genuine and charismatic in us to a matter of quantity. The General Chapter (and with it, the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the maternal presence of Mary and the help of Don Bosco) launch us into the future. They ask us to write today, here, at this moment, and in our Provinces **THE BEST POSSIBLE PAGES OF WHAT DON BOSCO WOULD HAVE DONE AND DREAMT TODAY FOR HIS YOUNG PEOPLE**.

May this also be according to the Lord's desire.