

East Asia – Oceania Region: Good Night Talk (3)

Rome, June 8
Pentecost Sunday 2014

Pentecost - reminder of our first love?

Dear brothers and friends!

Heartfelt greetings from the General house, where with the Rector Major we are busy working in the first plenary session of the Council on the Six-year Project 2014-2020. Also the discernment for new provincial in eight provinces (Bolivia, Ecuador, USA West, Mexico-Guadalajara, Mozambique, Madagascar, UPS and Japan) is going on.

On the Pentecost Sunday I like to share one of the GC27 key word: **Vocation culture**. After my first visit to the Region I was deeply impressed by the fast changing face of young generation of Salesian candidates, strongly influenced by the globalized culture.

There are very different ways of vocation ministry in our ten provinces. Indeed the variety is one of the best gifts of the Holy Spirit to the EAO region! As a matter of fact there are **some 20 'Aspirantates' around our 22 countries**. From the 324 College students Aspirants of Vietnam (meeting every Sunday in 7 centers) up to the junior high school experiences of Japan (Yokkaichi: *cover photo*), Myanmar, Timor, and Thailand. All together some 500-600 boys, youth and young adults are accompanied by EAO Salesians in different ways as 'Aspirants' - thanks be to God!

I'm asking myself often - **what or who does attract the youngsters to the Salesian consecrated life of Brothers or Priests in Don Bosco's style?** *It's about our family spirit? About our commitment to the poor youth education or evangelization? It's Don Bosco himself attracting? Or some model - 'charismatic' Salesian? It's about a good spiritual guides met in the confession, in the youth center, youth group or by chance somewhere else ('Go to the Salesians')? Or it's about our meaningful mission to serve, to save the poor youth: at risk, without parents or education?* Yes, our witness is important. But at the end of the day we should acknowledge the inner call of God, who loves, chooses, picks up one by one 'His' young men to follow his Son as Don Bosco. Really we believe the Holy Spirit *'raised, formed, called and guided'* (SDB Const. art.1) not only Don Bosco but is working in life of each of us some and in our Aspirants.

On this Pentecost Sunday I did a pilgrimage from the General House to the Basilicas of Saint Paul & St. Peter in the Vatican and back. It was a half-day of walk (20 km) and prayer to the Holy Spirit for the growth of vocational culture in our East Asia - Oceania Region communities! May each of us be grateful for the first love and share this gift also today with our youth - with humility and courage!

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