

Without the Lay mission partners there is no future of consecrated life!

One year long period of Don Bosco Jubilee Year (2014-2015) helps us to re-discover the roots of Salesian consecrated life – our DNA in the history and spirit of Don Bosco. When Don Bosco passed away in 1888 he left some 776 SDB and more than 250 FMAs. But Don Bosco left also a great flock of 80.000 Salesian Cooperators. In 1888 there were some 100 Salesian Cooperators per 1 consecrated Salesian Brother or Priest!

Fr. Pascual Chávez used to say *‘there is not future of the consecrated life without the lay people’* (in our region we would say ‘without our lay mission partners’). What about our ten EAO provinces? How many among thousands of teachers, catechists and parish council members, SYM group animators are deeply identified with Don Bosco? I can observe in 2014 during my first animation visits a renewed movement to spread and foster Salesian Cooperators Association in many of EAO provinces. At present we have 2500+ members of the Association with 300+ aspirants organized in 120+ local Centers.

During the Sixth EAO Regional Congress of the Salesian cooperators (Manila, April 2014) was elected after 6 years again Mr. Philip Yu (China – Hong Kong) as the World councilor for our Region. The recently renewed edition of **‘Project of Apostolic Life’** off Salesian Cooperator Association – already translated in Korean and Thai – should be in our hands and studied by each Salesian of Don Bosco (SDB General Regulations, 38).

Thanks to God, during this year numerous Salesian cooperators made their **promise** in Taiwan (53), Vietnam (39), Korea (29), Philippines (26) and Japan (2). At least six new Centers started (Taiwan -3, Philippines North -3), Thai Cooperators prepared their second *Congress of local centers* after 26 years and recent trend of new Salesian Cooperators diocesan priests and bishops (Cambodia-Taiwan) is showing a way forward. Wonderful gift is shared by the FIS province with some **165 aspirants being prepared** for their promise on August 16, 2015! After meeting personally many EAO Cooperators Centers during past four months I feel we should invest more in the **formation of SDB Delegates** and help each local Salesian community to foster Salesian Cooperators vocation. First step might be a careful reading of the recently published **Project of Apostolic Life!** Let’s start with a prayerful reading of the Salesian Cooperator Promise (PAL, art. 32).

Yes, there are still many SDB and FMA communities or even some countries in our Region without any Salesian Cooperator (*Fiji, Laos, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Samoa, and Solomon Islands*). To (re) launch the Salesian Cooperator vocation in each of our community might be one of the best gifts to the 200th Birthday of Don Bosco.

With Mamma Margaret, the first Cooperator of Don Bosco
I wish you a “Good night!”

in Don Bosco
Fr. Václav Klement, SDB
EAO Regional councillor