

## **Goodnight by the Provincial of ICP**

### **“The charismatic significance of the Salesian places”**

#### **Some statistics for ICP**

ICP has 38 communities which 2 are mission communities in Lithuania and 4 are formation communities. Here is the educational and pastoral work we do::

Infant schools: 6

Primary schools: 2

Junior Secondary schools: 13

Upper secondary schools: 8

Vocational training centres: 12

Oratories and youth centres: 27

Juvenile centres: 2

Reception centres for young people at risk: 1

Parishes: 24

Parishes “ad personam”: 20

Public churches: 7

Sanctuaries: 2

Spirituality centres: 1

University institutes: 2

University residences: 4

Hostels: 2

Reception centres: 6

Summer camps: 15

Mission office: 1

Publishing Houses: 1

Radio: 1

Chaplaincies to FMA: 6

Salesian Cooperator Centres: 32

Past Pupil centres: 37

ADMA: 12

We have 506 confreres and around 1600 staff who share the mission with us. The Salesian Family has a lively and abundant presence, almost all member groups are represented, which is a singular blessing! This is an overall picture of the Province. It is a normal province with all the complexity you find in any area, multicultural and with all the challenges of being “servants of the young”. But the Province also has a very special treasure it looks after, the treasure of where the Congregation was born and grew up: the Salesian places.

#### **Salesian places**

This is a gift given us, one that we are asked to animate, aware that it is a gift given to everyone and which we must “look after” as a source of richness for the entire Salesian Family: the richness of a house that protects the father’s memory, God’s energy at the beginnings of the charism, the richness of faith and apostolic courage that is part of the development of the entire Congregation.

*The visiting card for Valdocco and all the Salesian places is the phrase that welcomes everyone to Valdocco: “ Valdocco, Don Bosco’s land: do not enter distracted. Look upon it as the field that has been sown, the house where you father lived. Listen!” (E.Renoglio)*

Nothing better expresses the sense of wonder accompanying the immense gift of the Salesian places which are the heart of the Congregation, a home for everyone. These places are Valdocco, Colle don Bosco, Chieri, San Giovannino in Turin, San Benigno, and many others ...an endless line-up of physical places important for the spirit they communicate.

Colle and Chieri tell us of the growth in faith of a vocation. They speak to us of a sense of God learned first from Mama Margaret, and then built on under the inspiration of the dream at nine years of age – a vocational response which leads to priestly life.

*Valdocco speaks to us of the poverty and faith at our beginnings: “Pinardi field: and old book filled with memories, tells us what happened that spring morning long ago. Pinardi field, the green field of our hope, final goal of great love. We were few, we were poor, but HE was there...and he rang the bells at Easter” (E. Renoglio).*

But Valdocco also tells us of the birth of Don Bosco’s educational approach, the founding of the Congregation, the journeys of faith he led his youngsters on ...to the point of sanctity.

Valdocco tells us of the devotion to Mary that begins with the Consolata, grows as the Immaculate and develops into the Help of Christians, with that clear perception of Mary’s presence that Don Bosco told everyone about: “remember that if you came here it was because Mary brought you here!”

Then there’s the other oratory of St Aloysius, with the Church of St John the Evangelist, San Benigno Lanzo, Foglizzo, Mirabello Borgo San Martino... and these all speak of the early development of the Congregation, the always sure steps Don Bosco took as he built up God’s work, for boys then for girls.

We have the responsibility of letting them “speak” so we can draw on them and disseminate the riches of faith and educational passion which every stone and area passes on to us. These places are a great treasure for young generations of Salesians in formation, and in the formation houses in our province a good number of young Salesians from your provinces spend time and grow up as Salesians.

The spirit of the Salesian places allows me to say strongly that they contain a potential for great faith, in the name and spirit of God through devotion to Mary Help of Christians and the testimony of Don Bosco’s educative holiness. They are an incredible vocational treasure which speaks and attracts...they are a legacy for everyone of us. It is my task to highlight this gift of God’s which is a gift for us all. It is up to all of us to reflect how can let these places speak through the people who are dedicated to looking after them. In the end – few words. Only the Lord can warn our hearts.

This is to help us grow as mystics, brothers, servants of the young, because in the history of salvation of these Salesian places, great Wisdom can be found.

Fr Stefano Martoglio  
ICP Province