

**Goodnight from the Provincial of SVA**  
**“Salesian national Youth Ministry Centre, Spain”**  
**5<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

I would like to use this Goodnight to present you with the work carried out by the Salesian National Youth Ministry Centre, based in Madrid.

**In sync with the Congregation**

General Regulations (R. 136; R. 142) envisage the setting up of interprovincial structures for the purpose of coordination and animation.

The 19th General Chapter sought to update the Congregation's structures to carry Vatican II's wealth of doctrine forward, and amongst its teachings, a new approach to mission stood out.

This GC foresaw that there could be certain structures amongst provinces in the areas of Formation, Social Communication and Youth Ministry. Concretely, National Youth Ministry Centres were set up for the YM Sector. Centres of this kind exist currently in Italy, India, Poland and Spain.

**The National Delegation and the National YM Centre**

These Centres were established by the Provincial Conferences these countries belonged to, and who support them with material and personnel resources, give them direction through an action plan which is part of their Constitution or statutes. These centres aim at enabling networking between provinces, in Youth Ministry and encouraging youth ministry of a certain quality.

A feature of the Madrid National Youth Ministry Centre – probably we can say similar for other such centres in the Congregation – is the helpful relationship with the National Youth Ministry Delegation, the teams of Provincial Youth Ministry delegates. In concrete, in Spain the National Youth Ministry Delegation has always directed the functions of the National Centre.

**Human resource team**

Projects are supported by human resources. The make-up of the National Centre Team lets us see the direction of such a pastoral structure as it is at the moment.

Currently the CNCPJ team has a Director (who is also the National YM Delegate), someone in charge of ideas (a fundamental theology professor), someone to run the magazine “Misión Joven” and evangelisation (a professor of pastoral theology), someone in charge of the School sector in Spain, another in charge of the Oratory-Youth Centre sector in Spain, another for Spanish social platforms, and finally someone for the Spanish parish sector.

Cardinal Walter Kasper has often said that “evangelisation is a theological, pastoral and spiritual challenge”. We are convinced that Youth Ministry can be of quality if we succeed in harmonising our thinking and our pastoral praxis with what is happening in theology, ministry, spirituality.

**Certain main functions**

What are the functions carried out by the National YM Centre, Spain? The statutes, approved by the Provincial Conference, speak of three functions (coordination, reflection and pastoral planning) and propose that these should be in view of the National delegation, other Salesian pastoral workers and other pastoral workers more broadly speaking in the Church in Spain.

The context tonight, a 'Goodnight', does not allow us to go into detail as regards the concrete aspects of these functions. I'll just make brief reference to the importance of the six year plan as a helpful tool and to the relationship with other Provinces in East Europe, as some of the significant new factors over the last six years. I will conclude by saying something about the Study Seminar approach.

### **A special tool: the six year plan**

I am highlighting one tool, the six year plan which, if well directed, leads to considerable pastoral energy. It is clear that a well-planned set of strategies facilitates good running.

Let me just outline the most significant key points of planning over the last six years:

- *Evangelisation as a strategic choice,*
- *Formation of pastoral workers as a priority,*
- Offering meaningful experience of Christian living as a guideline,
- *the 'Study Seminar approach' as a quality factor.*

These key points make possible:

- Constant reflection on the social and youth context enlightened by dialogue between theology, ministry and spirituality, with the aim of generating renewal in what we offer pastorally
- Openness to the Church's and Congregation's magisterium in the context in which Youth Ministry is situated;
- Ongoing concern for formation and the pastoral and spiritual care for pastoral workers and their formators as an urgent need in this period;
- Significant presence of Salesian Youth Ministry in Church and society wherever young people are present.

### **Relationship with provinces in East Europe.**

Coordinated work with other provinces has been one of the most notable new features over these six years where Youth Ministry is concerned. These relationships have enriched all of us, and undoubtedly have been an encouragement for us all to improve how we define what we offer in pastoral terms. Our networks are extending beyond local and national areas.

### **An example of working together: the Seminar approach**

The past point I want to emphasise is the need to give our pastoral thinking some quality. This is what guides us and we see the need for generating thinking which we share and which can be understood.

We have set up a shared reflection process through study seminars at all levels of coordination: meetings of the CNSPJ, meetings of the National Delegation, twice yearly study Seminars for pastoral workers... meetings of the East Europe area... meetings of various pastoral teams in every province...

The topic for Study seminars over the last six years was evangelisation. We measured our steps with the Church's and Congregation's reflection on this.

For example at the regional level we wanted to highlight evangelisation in our pastoral settings.

The Seminar approach that we have tried over these six years has been of advantage and we believe it will bear fruit at the right moment. This approach has helped us provide more information and formation.

At this time in history, marked by the reduced number of consecrated individuals, we could be tempted to reduce formation structures and our thinking processes. Also the

presence of so many lay people, ever better prepared including theologically, obliges us to further facilitate our formation, thinking and pastoral discussion.

Goodnight!

Juan Bosco Sancho, sdb  
Provincial, Valencia - Spain