

acts

of the general council

year XCVI july-december 2015

N. 421

official organ
of animation
and communication
for the
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale
Opere don Bosco
Roma

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of the General Council of the Salesian Society of St John Bosco

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR	1.1	Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME **FIVE FRUITS OF THE BICENTENARY** ***«So that they may have life and have it to the full» (John 10,10)***	3
2. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES	2.1	Fr Francesco CEREDA **RELIGIOUS LIFE AND DISCIPLINE**	27
	2.2	Fr Ivo COELHO **LIFE AS PRAYER**	32
	2.3	**SECRETARIAT FOR THE SALESIAN FAMILY**	43
	2.4	**CENTRAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION**	49
3. DISPOSITIONS AND NORMS	3.1	**PROCEDURES FOR THE ECONOMIC OPERATIONS LISTED IN ART. 188 OF THE CONSTITUTIONS – MAXIMUM LIMITS OF EXPENDITURE**	52
4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL	4.1	Chronicle of the Rector Major	57
	4.2	Chronicle of the General Councillors	67
5. DOCUMENTS AND NEWS	5.1	The Rector Major to the Salesian Bishops – Presentation of the General Chapter XXVII *"Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel"*	88
	5.2	Speech of Pope Francis in Valdocco	99
	5.3	Letter of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, on the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco	104
	5.4	New Provincials	109
	5.5	New Salesian Bishop	116
	5.6	Our dead confreres	118

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«So that they may have life and have it to the full» (John 10,10)

FIVE FRUITS OF THE BICENTENARY

1. A YEAR OF GRACE WITH SO MANY FRUITS. – 2. BECAUSE, ALMOST WITHOUT REALISING IT, THE CONGREGATION IS BECOMING KNOWN AT GREATER DEPTH. – 3. THE MATURE FRUITS OF THE BICENTENARY. 3.1. The dream of a Congregation of happy Salesians. 3.2. The dream of a Congregation with men of Faith filled with God. - *3.2.1. A faith journey in search of God.* - *3.2.2. Staying, Loving, Bearing fruit.* 3.3. The dream of a Congregation of Salesians filled with passion for the young, the poorest. - *3.3.1. Because throughout the years we have always said and reminded ourselves what the path of our fideleity is.* - *3.3.2. Always seeking to serve, never power or money.* 3.4. The dream of a Congregation of real Evangelisers and Educators in the Faith. 3.5. The dream of a Congregation that is always missionary. - *3.5.1. Because it is a characteristic of our make up.* - *3.5.2. Because the times we are living in insistently demand it.*

Rome, 25 July 2015
Feast of Saint James the Apostle

1. A YEAR OF GRACE WITH SO MANY FRUITS

My Dear Confreres,

It is possible that when this letter reaches you we shall have already celebrated at Colle Don Bosco, with thousands of young people, the conclusion of this Bicentenary year of the birth of Don Bosco, that we formally opened also at Colle Don Bosco on 16 August 2014.

Certainly, in what remains of this year 2015 there will still be occasions of celebration in the many varied places of our Salesian world.

In the letter in no 419 of the AGC I wrote that the year we had begun as a celebration of the 200 years since the birth of Don Bosco would have two aspects: an external one, more public and official, and another interior and more intimate.

In harmony with what Pope Francis wrote in his message for the opening of the Year of Consecrated Life, a first aim is "to look

to the past with gratitude,"[1] and one could say that we have done precisely this in our celebration of the Bicentenary, because we wanted to experience it as "an opportunity for us to feel gratitude to the Lord for two hundred years after the birth of Don Bosco, we are here as a gift from God to the young."[2] And in this external, official and public aspect of the hundreds of celebrations of all kinds that have taken place wherever there is a Salesian house, we have been able to acknowledge and give thanks for *this gift of God that Don Bosco is for the Church and the world.*

But just now I want rather to refer to the other aspect of the Bicentenary, more interior, more intimate, and which leads me to think, to wish and to dream what deep traces will be left by our living the unique, truly historical event, in our lives, in the heart of each one of my SDB confreres, and in my own heart.

It is this that is leading me to *dream*. I have a dream of some ***fruits of the celebration of the Bicentenary*** as I will now explain.

2. BECAUSE, ALMOST WITHOUT REALISING IT, THE CONGREGATION IS BECOMING KNOWN AT GREATER DEPTH

I should like to dream about some *fruits of the Bicentenary* which I think are really life-giving, because I am coming to realise that long before I could possibly visit all the countries and all Provinces I am getting to know the real situation of our Congregation pretty well.

After the GC27 finished on 12 April 2014 and following the first plenary session of the General Council, up to the present day I have been able to visit 27 countries – 8 in 2014 and 19 so far in

[1] Pope FRANCIS: *Apostolic Letter to all consecrated persons on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life*, Rome, 21 November 2014, I, 1.
[2] ACG 419, 27.

this year 2015 – and, God willing, reaching a total of 32 in this year and a half. Certainly this has not been accidental but deliberately and carefully planned, well aware that the demands were almost excessive, but necessary given the singular nature of this year.

Added to the overview that each individual visit to the Provinces gives me is the knowledge that comes from the "snap-shots" that in fact are provided by the consultations that take place in the Provinces in view of the appointment of new Provincials. In addition there is the information and the opinions that the confreres themselves offer in these consultations regarding the Province. There have been 21 new Provincials appointed in these fifteen months.

Together with the General Council I have also had the opportunity to deepen our knowledge of some Provinces after the 7 Team Visits which have taken place and the serious examination that we made of two Regions, those of South Asia and of East Asia and Oceania.

For all these reasons I want to say to you my dear confreres, that with all that I have been able to visit, to get to know, to see for myself, reading and listening to all the advice I have been given, I feel in the position to be able *to have a dream about our Congregation*, in which the Lord and Don Bosco, always under the maternal gaze of our Mother the Help of Christians, are gifting us with these ***fruits of the Bicentenary*** of the birth of Don Bosco.

3. THESE MATURE FRUITS OF THE BICENTENARY

3.1. I have a dream of a Congregation of happy Salesians

Right from the start I invite you to overcome the very human temptation to think negatively, to think that I am saying this because we Salesians are not happy.

Just the contrary! That is not the case. I am convinced that the majority of us SDB are happy, very happy in living our vocation. That includes myself, since I too am very happy. However, I believe that we need to *come to a greater happiness, on everyone's part*, with no confrere remaining on the sidelines on our journey, feeling that he cannot manage or that this goal is not for him. This goal is for everyone, since humanly speaking this profound desire is rooted in the heart of every man and woman, from the moment we are called into existence.

It is for this reason that I want to share with you my great dream. That of a Congregation of ours, in which every Salesian can *say to himself,* in his deepest being, in his heart, *in his true self: I am happy and I feel fully alive and full of joy living as a Salesian of Don Bosco".*

The Pope proposes to us as religious, this programme: "Being full of joy show everyone that following Christ and putting his Gospel into practice fills your heart with happiness. Infect those who are near you with this joy."[3]

I believe, my dear confreres that this is the point: living our life more intensely and with joy. I could put it in my own words, but we have already said it in our last General Chapter in which we gave thanks to God "for the ***fidelty*** of so many confreres and for the ***holiness that has been recognised by the Church*** of some members of the Salesian Family. Every day we are in contact with adults and young people, confreres old and young, sick or at the height of their activity who bear witness to the fascination of the search for God, the radical approach of the Gospel lived joyfully and with a keen passion for Don Bosco."[4] It is a gift that we have in our Congregation: the thousands and thousands of confreres who every day are life-giving and who give their own lives with wonderful generosity. I am sorry for the pain of the confreres who

[3] Pope FRANCIS: *Message for the opening of the Year of Consecrated Life*, 30 November 2014.

[4] GC27, n. 4.

do not feel this way. There are Salesian confreres who in their lives and in their hearts carry the burden of wounds, confreres who feel they are miserable, who show their sufferings! How much I wish that with the strength that comes from the Lord and with the affection and closeness of some other confrere they might have confidence and once again hope for something good in their lives. There are confreres going through difficult situations or those who have lost that fervour of the first Love we all felt at the Lord's call; there are even perhaps confreres who are following a path that will bring them nothing worthwhile as Salesians of Don Bosco. How happy I would be if these confreres allowed themselves to be touched by God "to go that extra step"; how happy I would be if they let themselves be surprised by God. who without doubt always leads us to life situations far beyond our imaginings!

My dear confreres no matter how extensive or not our knowledge of Don Bosco may be, we are all certain of how important for Don Bosco the cheerfulness and happiness of his Salesians and his boys was, not without sacrifices, and of course with that central and essential point of living in God and for God. We have taken the most important and far-reaching decisions in our lives culminating in our 'Yes' to the Lord, and after that, all the rest ought to be a help to our living "whole-heartedly" more fully, conscious of our living a life full of significance and happy with it.

Already the SGC20, quoting *Evangelica Testificatio*, more than 30 years ago, told us that "the joy of being the Lord's for ever is the incomparable fruit of the Holy Spirit. You have already had experience of it. Filled with this joy...learn to face the future with confidence."[5]

To tell the truth, my dear confreres. what I am saying through this dream of happiness for each one of us is that our beautiful vocation and dedication should not be only a job, sometimes marked by exuberant joy, sometimes by an excessive activity that

[5] ET 55 quoted in SGC20, n. 22.

comes close to or reaches "activism," that can extinguish that flame burning in us and can lead us to that *"practical dreariness"* that Pope Francis speaks about. I have a dream of a vocation in each one of us lived out as it was in Don Bosco, forgetful of oneself and ***full of passion for God and for the young.***

In fact among his many gifts, Don Bosco had the great ability to offer "to the emarginated youngsters of his time the possibility of living life as a feast, and faith as happiness."[6]

As you can imagine, this dream of mine for each one of us is closely connected to what I have already been able to experience in these 15 months as Rector Major, thinking about each one of our confreres. For example I cannot hide from you my sadness every time a Salesian priest confrere writes asking me to facilitate his entrance into a diocese, after having first sought a Bishop willing to satisfy his aspirations. I ask myself: in these situations what remains of the love for Don Bosco and the enthusiasm with which we became Salesians? Has what has been exprienced so far been only a form of pastoral work that can easily be changed for another...? There comes to mind the incident of the young John Cagliero fiercely going over in his mind while walking up and down in the Valdocco courtyard the suggestion Don Bosco had just made to him. As we know this was the proposal to form a religious society in which the members would be called *Salesians*. After thinking it over he declared with the well-known expression: "monk or no monk, I am staying with Don Bosco".

I have been thinking about that 14 May 1862, the day on which 22 young men together with Don Bosco made the first Salesian profession (BM VII, 101). They were ordinary lads who had grown up at Don Bosco's side. They had had the courage to start a new Religious Congregation and to make their profession with great enthusiasm, with trust in what Don Bosco helped them see.

[6] GC23, n. 165.

Thinking about our origins never ceases to move me and confirms the strong conviction I have that putting God in the first place in our lives and keeping young people in our hearts, especially the poorest ones and those who have most need of us, we are marked out – I would almost say "deterministically" – for happiness as Salesians of Don Bosco. I really believe this because it is certain, as it is said in the document of 'Aparecida', that "life grows when it is donated and is weakened in isolation and comfort. In fact those who most benefit from life are those who leave behind their security and are passionately engaged in the mission of communicating life to others."[7]

3.2. I have a dream of a Congregation with Men of Faith filled with God

Why this dream? And why, you could ask me, are we not like that?

Once again I have to say that I am convinced of the depth of faith and the sense of God of thousands and thousands of our Salesian confreres. Why then this dream? This is the answer: thinking about the whole of our Congregation spread around the world, a delicate matter to which undoubtedly we need to give attention is that in many places, in many of the countries where we are working with so much dedication and generosity we are known for the work we carry out but what is not known is why we do what we are doing and where the vital deep motivation comes from. We are admired for our work with the young, our network of schools is greatly appreciated, and in these especially the technical training and work preparation. Our commitment to street children meets with great respect and support. The dedication and creativity found in many of the oratories is praised; our childrens' homes and hostels for poor youngsters receive a great deal of attention etc.

[7] Vth General Conference of the Latin-American and Caribbean Bishops'. *Document of Aparecida* (29 June 2007), n. 360.

However, very often they cannot say who we are or even less why we are doing what we do and why we are living the way we live. And so this is my dream: that whoever were to meet a Salesian religious, or whoever were to come into contact with one of our communities would feel touched by the presence of men of faith, of a deep and proven faith, who in their simple way of living and acting, almost without wanting to would let their state as religious, men consecrated by and to God and by Him consecrated to the young shine out.

3.2.1. A journey of faith and the search for God

I believe my Brothers that this concern and perception is not new. In the documents of our Congregation we can see how the 'great struggle' in the SGC20 was precisely the tension between consecration and mission. And a magnificent work was brought to conclusion in the light of Vatican II, to identify our charism in a new way and at great depth and to reveal it in the wealth of our new Constitutions. There were many years of discernment in three General Chapters. The SGC20 and the GC21 which wisely considered the time of six years of experimentation for the new Constitutions insufficient and extended it for another six, and the GC22 in which there was already a deep maturing process in the concept of consecration as the 'Action of God'.

I believe that in our Congregation we have no problem as regards our charismatic identity or with the harmony among all the elements that constitute it. From our Constitutions and the many other writings we find an abundant series of elements that enlighten and enrichen us.

The key is to be found in living our identity harmoniously. Many times we have said and recalled that we are not social workers nor are our works places for social service no matter how great the good we may be doing in them and through them. We are above all believers, persons consecrated by God in our religious state, and "how much good it does us when he once

more touches our lives and impels us to share his new life! What then happens is that, 'what we have seen and heard we are telling you' (1 Jn 1,3)."[8]

I am profoundly convinced, Brothers, that this is the path for which nowadays we have the greatest need. That of caring for, nourishing and deepening our faith (*being men of faith*), that we are doing everything that we are doing because we feel ourselves to have been attracted and fascinated by Jesus and that freely we have felt the great joy of saying "yes" to God the Father, who consecrates us also in religious profession (*men filled with God*).[9]

Reading some pages about religious life some time ago, I was greatly impressed by the account given by a religious woman who wrote that on a certain occasion in Vienna a Superior had spoken about an *atheism of old age* in some religious, men and women, and this Sister remarked that she was afraid that we all knew some religious sister (and male religious, we have to say to be fair[10]), who only had to open their mouth for their discontent to be apparent..., and we could say *manifest the secret disenchantment with regard to God...*, And she asked herself the question: "are perhaps our ways of thinking, judging and acting frequently conditioned by a faith that is asleep, by a relationship with our God without love?"[11]

In the face of this testimony, I can hear echoing within me the question in the psalm: "Where is your God?" (Psalm 42,4), or that

[8] Pope FRANCIS, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 264.

[9] Fr Vecchi describes the experience of consecrated life in this beautiful way: "The personal experience of someone who has felt called to this way of life: the exceptional brightness with which Christ makes himself present to us and the fascination that he has exercised over us, the wealth of possibilities that open up before our lives when one concentrates on God, the peace that is experienced in loving God with an undivided heart, the joy of giving oneself in the mission , the privilege of enjoying intimacy with Christ and participating in the Life of the Trinity." in J.E. VECCHI, *Educatori appassionati esperti e consacrati per i giovani*. Roma, LAS 2013, 112.

[10] This is my own addition.

[11] M. BEATRIX MAYRHOFER, SSND: *Paradigma innovador en la Vida Consagrada*. Revista Vida Religiosa - Monográfico -. Madrid, 5/2014 Vol 116, p. 65/(513).

question we can ask: where are you my God? This seems to me to be the question and the life situation to which we need to give a great deal of attention, both personally and as communities, because not even working with youngsters and young people makes us immune to a life without love for God or with 'the secret disenchantment with regard to God'.

3.2.2. Stay, love, bear fruit

These three words in the context of the icon of the Vine and the Branches (Jn 15,1-11) which was a constant theme in our last General Chapter, are inviting us to become aware of the need to be thoroughly rooted in Jesus in order to remain firmly in Him, and through Him to live a life of fraternity that really is attractive and that leads us to serve the young.

For this reason really having a dream about a Congregation of men who are living by Faith and are full of God is to aim by this desire to make the ***Primacy of God*** a reality in our lives without ever forgetting that above all else we ought to be "seekers of God"[12] and witnesses to His Love for the young and among these for the poorest.

Our precious Constitutions, like a Gospel read in Salesian terms, are filled with this sense of God and this call to faith as was in an absolute manner the life and mission of Don Bosco.

In them we read that 'as he works for the salvation of the young, the Salesian experiences the fatherhood of God" (C. 12), maintaining a simple and heart-to-heart colloquy with the living Christ and with the Father, whom we feel close at hand. And so, conscious of God's call to form part of the Salesian Society (cf. C. 22) and living out the sign of a loving encounter between the Lord who calls and the disciple who responds he makes one of the most lofty choices a believer can make (cf. C. 23). At the same time, immersed in the world and in the cares of the pastoral life,

[12] GC27, n. 32.

the Salesian learns to meet God through those to whom he is sent. (cf. C. 95).

My Brothers with the light that our Constitutions give us, I don't think it necessary to add anything else with regard to this *dream*. I just repeat the invitation I gave you at the conclusion of the General Chapter. With the deepest conviction, in my first talk – in the so-called closing address, which has a clear intent of forward-planning – I told you that I refuse to accept that the "fragility we see in living the primacy of God in our lives" is something that is part of our Salesian DNA. No, I said at the time and I repeat it now. It is not, since it was not so for Don Bosco; on the contrary, he lived his whole life with deep faith, filled with God, and for this reason gave his life to the last breath for and always for the sake of his boys. He lived radically caught up in ***God's storyline***.[13] This is my dream today for our Congregation and for each one of us, Salesians of Don Bosco.

3.3. I have a dream of a Congregation of Salesians full of passion for the young, the poorest ones

This is another of the dreams, an obvious fruit of the experience of this Bicentenary.

I am convinced of the precious value of the witness of so many confreres who are giving their lives every day with real educative and evangelising passion on behalf of the yong; I am convinced that there are many Salesian centres that are looking at the poorest with a special preferential love.

I give thanks to the Lord for this, and I am saying to you as I did earlier: Brothers we have "to go further', ***all Salesians*** in order to be those who with a heart like Don Bosco's, with the heart like that of the Good Shepherd give the best of ourselves on behalf of the young. And Salesian houses which are not in a direct

[13] Cfr. GC27. *Closing Address of the RM; Point 2.2.1.*

or indirect manner at the service of the poorest ought to cause us pain. We have to be *creative* so that everything that we do, think and decide in some way is for them, for those who have most need of us.

Pope Francis in the message already quoted says: "Wake up the world, illuminate it with your prophetic and countercultural witness!"[14]

I really think that our Salesian way of illuminating the world in a prophetic and countercultural way is with this radical approach in all of us and in all our presences. And don't have the slightest doubt that in living and working in this way, and without any need for words, the message is challenging and with great power as a witness; and have no doubt that the means to reach the poorest will not be lacking. Let us remember Don Bosco's firm trust in Divine Providence, when we provide the motives for this to happen certainly.

3.3.1. Because throughout the years we have always said and reminded ourselves what the path of our fideleity is

With this title I want to point out how in our Congregation there has always been the Official Teaching that has directed us towards the preferential option for the poorest young people. Then, every confrere, every local and provincial community, and at the very centre of the Congregation, we need to make it become reality. Pope Francis reminds us that the hope he invites us to have is not based on statistics or accomplishments, but on the One in whom we have put our trust (cf. 2 *Tim* 1:2), and invites us not to yield to the temptation to see things in terms of numbers and efficiency, and even less to trust in our own strength.[15]

[14] Pope FRANCIS. *Message for the opening of the Year of Consecrated Life.*
[15] Cf. Pope FRANCIS, *Apostolic Letter to all consecrated persons...* I, 3.

In our Constitutions there are seven articles that refer to the poorest young people as our preferred option, and another five that direct our attention to the need to have solidarity with the poor. In our General Chapters we find a progressive succession of reminders concerning this "fundamental option" (as it was called at the Assembly of the Bishops of Latin-America of Puebla). The SGC20 spoke to us of channelling our efforts to the poorest of the young and to adults most in need, i.e. to those who have the least possibility of realising in their lives the designs of God.[16] The GC21 issues an invitation to create new presences in areas of the rejected or excluded,[17] and the GC22 asks in a deliberation addressed to Provinces "to return to young people, to their world, their needs, their poverty, by giving them true priority expressed in a renewed educational, spiritual and affective presence among them. Let the confreres make the courageous choice of going to the poorest among them, relocating our works if necessary in the places where poverty is greatest."[18] In the same way the GC23 focused on educating young people to the faith, asks each Province to single out new and urgent frontiers with some work which will be a "sign" of our intention to go after those youngsters we have not yet reached.[19]

It is good to observe how steps have been taken in many Provinces involving and cooperating in this process confreres of many different sensibilities. If this is so what more do we still need to do? The answer is to continue this improvement until..., until every Salesian would be dismayed when a poor boy or a poor girl could not find his or her place in a Salesian house, in Don Bosco's house! Until every Salesian regrets not being able to care for every poor boy or girl who has need of us. If we feel this in our heart, we should not doubt that we shall aways find solutions and we shall always be very faithful to this choice for the poorest youngsters. Take note.

[16] Cf. SGC20, n. 181, also in. 70, 71, 76, 181, 596, 603 and 612.
[17] Cf. GC21, n. 158, 159 and reference to GC20 nn. 39-44, 181, 515 and 619.
[18] Cf. GC22, n. 6.
[19] Cf. GC23, n. 230.

3.3.2. Always seeking to serve, never power or money

I imagine, Brothers, that most of you have read and meditated on the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudiun*. If you have not yet been able to do so I would encourage you in this reading and meditation. I have no doubt that you will draw much fruit from it. Recently I meditated on the second chapter in which there is reference to the seeking after power and the idolatry of money.

Very beautifully our Constitutions express which are the young people to whom we are sent: "The Lord made clear to Don Bosco that he was to direct his mission first and foremost to the young, especially to those who are poorer... and with Don Bosco we reaffirm our preference for the "*young who are poor abandoned and in danger*", those who have greater need of love and evangelisation, and we work especially in areas of greatest poverty" (C. 26).

In the light of this expression, also a fundamental and essential part of our charism, I can tell you Brothers that when we follow this path we need not worry about the identity of our mission or about our fidelity. We are on the right path. If on the contrary we don't concern ourselves about being with poor young people, those who have most need of us, and we remain comfortable in having power and economic means, we ought to be afraid. And I have to tell you that I feel worried in the face of confreres who exercise authority not as a service but as power, not as service but as power that enables them to have and to do things, even more so if they have in their hands economic resources, or seek to have them. Further on I shall refer to this again to explain what I want to say.

In *Evangelii Gaudium* the Pope quotes powerfully a classic text. It is the Father of the Church, Saint John Chrysostom, who says: "Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs."[20] The Pope reminds us of the globalization of indifference that makes us incapable of feeling compassion at the cry of pain of others, in a culture of prosperity that deadens us. (EG 54). With great force he draws our attention to a "throwaway" culture that society has created in which the excluded are not the "exploited" but the outcast, the "leftovers" (EG 53), and also to the *new idolatry of money* that appears as a new version of the worship of the ancient golden calf (cf. *Ex* 32: 1-35) going on to say that "the thirst for power and possessions knows no limits."(EG 56). He concludes clearly saying "Money must serve, not rule!" (EG 58).

[20] Saint John Chrysostom, quoted in EG 57.

The Pope is thinking about the Church and the world. I am looking at something much smaller, our Congregation, and I am convinced that it is in the service of our boys and girls and seeking their welfare, especially the poorest ones that our strength lies. It is natural to fall into the temptation of placing our hopes on numbers, on the works, on efficiency, but that is not the path to follow."Don't be closed in on yourselves" the Pope says, "don't be stifled by petty squabbles, don't remain a hostage to your own problems... A whole world awaits us: men and women who have lost all hope, families in difficulty, abandoned children, Young people without a future, the elderly, sick and abandoned, those who are rich in the world's goods but impoverished within, men and women looking for a purpose in life, thirsting for the divine."[21]

What a great and specific challenge for us. It is for this reason that I have a dream for our Congregation after the Bicentenary of Don Bosco as that part of the Church that sees itself faithful in service, humilty, poverty and with economic means solely at the service of the educative and evangelising mission. On this account I ask only that we help each other. That we help each other when sometimes authority is exercised more like power that service. That we help each other when people look for office, to be in charge; help when there is the risk of seeking as though for *an*

[21] Pope FRANCIS: *Apostolic Letter to all consecrated persons...*, 2 4.

aim that gives purpose to one's life a management role, to be in charge of works (despite our saying that it is for the benefit of others). We have to help each other when money is used to have power, decision-making power over things and people; we need to help each other when the use and control of the money and economic means of the community and of the work are not clear or are not transparent... Let us help each other. Brothers, let us always help each other with the truth and gospel freedom because these dangers also exist among us.

3.4. I have a dream of a Congregation of real Evangelisers and Educators in the Faith

This is another of the concerns, Brothers, and a real dream that I know is not only mine. It can be found throughout the whole history of our Congregation, and there are hundreds of pages in our documents, in our Constitutions, General Chapters and so many statements of the Rector Majors, which urge that special attention be given to looking after that dimension of ours, of evangelisation and of being educators to the faith.

Why this dream? Because I really would not want these words of Fr Vecchi to be prophetic when referring to the primacy of evangelisation he said: "It can happen that under the pressure of a multitude of activities, concerned about structures and busy about organisation, we run the risk of losing sight of the horizon of our activity and appearing like so many activists or grass-root theorists, managers of works or structures, admirable benefactors but poor as explicit witnesses to Christ, mediators of his saving work, formers of souls, and guides in the life of grace."[22]

Reading this passage I felt that this was precisely the same conviction that had been growing in me during my years of Salesian life and at the same time I was pleasantly surprised to come

[22] J.E. VECCHI, AGC 373, 36.

across so many reflections of Fr Pascual Chávez which showed his conviction and commitment to leading us in this direction,[23] just as Fr Egidio Viganó[24] and also Fr Juan E. Vecchi[25] had done earlier.

What I am quoting is a demostration of how the dimension of evangelisation and education to the faith is certainly a concern that can be found throughout the history of our Congregation, as I have already said.

Many other essential and motivating reminders come to us from our Constitutions. In these we find texts which tell us that "faithful to the commitments Don Bosco has passed on to us, we are evangelizers of the young, and the more so if they are poor" (C. 6), and as Don Bosco told us that the Congregation began with a catechism lesson, "for us too evangelizing and catechizing are the fundamental characteristics of our mission." (C. 34), a mission that we carry out in this way: "We educate and evangelise according to a plan for the total well-being of man directed to Christ, the perfect Man" (C. 31), and this because we also really believe that "*God is awaiting us in the the young* to offer us the grace of meeting with him and to dispose us to serve him in them, recognising their dignity and educating them to the fullness of life."[26]

I would dare to say that all of us Salesians have received this formation and information, in one way or another. I really believe that if we meet with difficulties in carrying out our evangelising mission, in general it is not because we don't know what is at the heart of our being Salesians, missionaries of the young. I think we

[23] P. CHÁVEZ, AGC 379, *"Dear Salesians, be saints"* 14,15sq, 19sq; AGC 383, 70 sq; AGC 384, 19-20 and 25-28; AGC 386, 16-19 and 44sq.

[24] E. VIGANÒ, cf. Circular Letters: *Salesian educational Project* (AGC 290); *New education* (AGC 337); *Educating to the faith in the school* (AGC 344); *We are educator-prophets"* (AGC 346).

[25] J.E. VECCHI, AGC 357, 19sq; AGC 362, 13-16.

[26] GC23, n. 95, also quoted in SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT, *Salesian Youth Ministry. Frame of Reference* Rome, 2014, 60.

really believe that "**Christ must be proclaimed.** To know him is the right of everyone,"[27] and as evangelisers and educators of the faith "we want (the young) to hear the voice of God the Father and come to know Jesus Christ. We are convinced that the offer of the Gospel brings unexpected power to the building of one's personality and to the integral development that every young person deserves."[28]

I believe there are other challenges and other difficulties. One great challenge is the effort needed to take on this task and mission, in spite of the fact that very often it is difficult, when the young people are not exactly ready for it nor do they feel motivated by it. There are some continents – and the outsanding one I feel in this regard is Europe – where the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, even when this is done with the appropriate techniques and educational method does not always find a field suitable for cultivation. Then the reaction of drawing back is very human, or even more so that of stopping half-way and of spending more and more time with the introductory elements that open the way to an initiation to the faith. It is for this reason that the first great challenge is to be convinced of the highest importance that our mission has, and to find the necessary energy for us to become fully engaged in it, even though we know we shall not be received with enthusiasm nor attention. On the other hand, we need to be aware that these situations of difficulties, indifference and at times rejection have accompanied the work of evangelisation from the earliest times. Also quite often the diversity of the religious contexts slows us down in the proclamation of Jesus Christ, and we can stop short at social and humanitarian activity, which in itself is good, but if evangelisation and education to the faith do not form part of it we are only half-way there.

And to this challenge of coldness, indifference, including the rejection of a need for God in the various contexts in which

[27] J.E. VECCHI, AGC 364, 18.
[28] SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT, *Ibid*, 64.

we find ourselves are added other difficulties which I dare to call the high price that we pay as a result of some actions or decisions: a preoccupation with structures, the administrative burdens that we feel we must bear, the management, growth and overlapping of activities, and many other things restrict us in certain situations. Energy wears thin, vocational joy and happiness in being Salesians diminish or are killed off, and above all this can take us away from being among young people, and if we are not with them and always at their service evangelisation is not possible.

My dear confreres, with all my heart I would not want anyone of you to interpret my words as a sign of pessimism. We are not pessimists. On the contrary I continue to declare as I have for a long time now that we have a fine Congregation, in which, while not being without difficulties we are doing a great deal of good and we need to give great thanks to the Lord for this. However what I have mentioned as risks, fears, difficulties and limitations is nothing new. We know it and we have all heard it many times. The decisive issue will be the way we act after the appropriate analysis and diagnosis.

In this context I want to tell you that reading the letters of Don Rua, Don Albera and Don Rinaldi, addressed to the Congregation in the first decades of its existence, I greatly appreciated the direction they gave to them. They are simple letters, very familiar in style that try to capture the mood of the growth, development and organisation of the Congregation, with its lights and shadows and with the great challenges that were appearing, including among these the first world war. They are letters that point out the risk of "neglecting" what was central in Don Bosco: in short the "Da mihi animas cetera tolle", our Evangelising and Educating nowadays, being totally dedicated to the young and for them. In the face of this challenge they did not hesitate to give simple but very strong reminders about not neglecting the fundamental reason for which Don Bosco gave life to the Salesian Society.

In harmony with this conviction of the Rector Majors – the first and most recent ones, in these pages I am speaking to you about what is deep in my heart. I firmly believe that in what I have decided to call "*My Dream – in five parts*", I am presenting a great deal of the life and riches of our Congregation, and I have the great hope that we shall continue along this path, growing and advancing in what is fundamental, in what really makes us be what we are. Being with Provincials on various occasions I have told them that they should never allow the problems that they might encounter to obscure the view of the so much good and beautiful that each one has in his own Province. Difficulties have to be faced up to, but it is much better to encourage each and every Salesian to go ahead giving the best of themselves, of what we are, that is to say showing in the way we live that as educators and evangelisers we are *people filled with passion for the young, involved in* ***God's storyline***, and that together with our fellow Salesian brothers, in our communities, and with so many educators, male and female, friends and committed lay-people we want to continue to bring to reality this dream of Don Bosco, with the same enthusiasm with which he succeeded in handing it on to his first Salesians and lay people so as to deserve the description given us by Paul VI, when he called us "missionaries of the young".

3.5. I have a dream of a Congregation that is always missionary

3.5.1. Because it is a characteristic of our make up.

We read in our Constitutions: "People still awaiting the gospel message were the special object of Don Bosco's concern and apostolic effort. They continue to stimulate our zeal and keep it alive. *We look upon missionary work as an essential feature of our Congregation.*[29] Through our missionary activity we carry out a

[29] The *italics* is an emphasis of my own.

patient work of evangelisation by founding the Church within a group of people." (C. 30).

Allow me to recall here what we know very well: from his youth Don Bosco had a desire to become a missionary. Don Cafasso, accompanying him in his vocational discernment, "blocked" that path, telling him that the missions were not for him (cfr. BM 2, 160-161). However he always had this idea in mind and in his heart and he realised it through his sons. Starting on 11 November 1875, he chose from the group of his first Salesians those he would send to America to provide for the spiritual needs of emigrants and to bring the Gospel to people who did not know it. From that first expedition until the one due next 27 September 2015 there have been 146. Shortly after the first expedition of Salesians, year after year the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians also went to the mission lands. Nowadays this departure ceremony frequently includes the presence of lay missionaries male and female.

We should not forget a fact that speaks for itself and which I mentioned in a previous letter (AGC 419). At Don Bosco's death, in America there were 153 Salesians, that is 20% of the Salesians at the time, as the catalogue of the Congregation for that year records.

In one of his letters written in 1912 Fr Paul Albera states, referring to Don Bosco: "The missions were a privilged subject of his talks and he knew how to inspire in hearts a strong desire to become missionaries, in such a way that it seemed the most natural thing in the world."[30]

I have always been convinced that the ***missionary dimension is an essential and constitutive feature*** of our identity as a Congregation. The more I have consulted our documents, the stronger has this conviction become, and what follows demon-

[30] Circular Letters of Don Paul Albera to the Salesians. Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, Torino, 1965, 133.

strates this. The GC19 asked the Congregation to revive "the ideal of Don Bosco, who wished that the work of the Missions should be a permanent preoccupation of the Congregation, to the extent of being part of its nature and end,"[31] and in his time Fr Vecchi wrote: "Since the missionary sense is not an optional trait but forms part of the Salesian spirit in every time and situation in the programming of the Rector Major and his Council we have proposed it to all the Provinces as an area of special attention."[32]

We know very well how Don Bosco, who never went to any far-away foreign land, worked with his boys in Valdocco enflaming in them and in his young Salesians this missionary passion, this zeal for spreading the Gospel. His various writings, the Salesian Bulletin and whatever appeared useful or timely was employed to spread this missionary dream.

3.5.2. Because the times we are living in insistently demand it

I am not with these lines presuming to say anything new in this regard. There is much valuable documentation. However, I do want to underline some things that I have very much at heart in what I have called my dream:

a) The missionary dimension ought to be a characteristic feature of each one of us, because it forms part of the Salesian spirit in itself. This means that it is not something added on for some people. It is an essential part of our pastoral heart. Then for sure, many of our confreres hear this special and personal invitation from the Lord to be a missionary 'ad gentes'.

B) More than ever and in fidelity to the Gospel, to the Church and to Don Bosco our Congregation needs to continue to be missionary. On other occasions I have listed some missionary challenges that we have on the horizon and some fields where we need to strengthen the mission.

C) Right now I renew my invitation to those who feel themselves called to the 'missio ad gentes et ad vitam' to accept the call so that we may carry out at a suitable time the appropriate discernment. I have received letters from confreres, usually young ones, who have told me that it was their desire to be missionaries but that their superior (sometimes the Rector, sometimes the Provincial) discouraged them or simply forbade them or did not give them permission.

Looking with the heart of Don Bosco, I think that I can say that no one should put obstacles in the way of these vocational calls that the Lord makes, and that difficulties at a local or provincial level should not impact on these generous desires. Let us never forget, my Brothers, that the Lord is much more generous than we can be.

Finally I should like to add that I believe the times are ripe and the needs of the mission advise it, so that in a coordinated manner and with the knowledge of the Rector Major through the Regional Councillor and the Councillor for the Missions, we can offer the help of the confreres of those Provinces that have more vocations, on a temporary basis for a fixed period of time, to other places and Provinces of the Congregation. My dear Provincials, be generous. Don Bosco was to an exceptional extent.

I conclude this letter that I have wanted to share with you, with lively affection and conviction, reminding my Salesian brothers, that this is the time to think about our Congregation, our Consecration and Mission, while always thanking the Lord for the life of each one.

There have been many visits this year to Valdocco. Shortly I shall be there again. I promise to remember you in my prayers to the Lord through the intercession of Don Bosco and our Mother the Help of Christians. She is not only the One who did

[31] AGC n. 244, p. 178.
[32] J.E. VECCHI, AGC 362, 8.

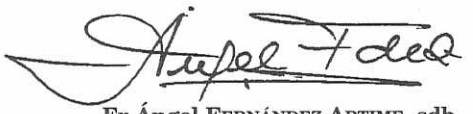
everything with Don Bosco, but also the One who, as Mother of the Church and Help of God's People, is accompanying us as Evangelisers and Educators in the faith of our young people at this special historic moment that we are living.

To her we raise our prayer, with the words of Pope Francis in "Lumen Fidei":

Mother, help our faith!
Open our ears to hear God's word
and to recognize his voice and call.
Awaken in us a desire to follow in his footsteps,
to go forth from our own land and to receive his promise.
Help us to be touched by his love,
that we may touch him in faith.
Help us to entrust ourselves fully to him
and to believe in his love, especially at times of trial, beneath the shadow of the cross,
when our faith is called to mature.
Sow in our faith the joy of the Risen One.
Remind us that those who believe are never alone.
Teach us to see all things with the eyes of Jesus,
that he may be light for our path.
And may this light of faith always increase in us,
Until the dawn of that undying day
Which is Christ himself, your Son, our Lord!

With the Lord's Blessing and my very best wishes to each one of you, my Brothers.

Yours affectionately,



Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb
Rector Major

2.1 RELIGIOUS LIFE AND DISCIPLINE

Fr Francesco CEREDA
Vicar of Rector Major

Rome, 6 July 2015
Prot. 15/0289

To the Reverend
Fathers Provincial
and Vice-Provincial

More than a year has passed since the XXVII General Chapter assigned a new task to me as Vicar of the Rector Major.

According to our Constitutions, the Vicar of the Rector Major is particularly entrusted with the care of religious life and discipline (cf. Const. 134). I am aware that of these two tasks the more important one is that of presenting the beauty of religious life; at the same time, I also realize how necessary it is to pay attention to religious discipline. In his dream of the ten diamonds, Don Bosco saw the Congregation "*qualis esse debet*" and "*qualis esse periclitatur*"; we too must have in our Provinces the same preoccupation of Don Bosco for our Salesian consecrated vocation: we have to reinforce whatever makes it attractive and be vigilant about whatever can disfigure it.

In this period, in my contacts with the Provinces, I have noted certain needs that require your cooperation, particularly in caring for religious life and discipline, in settling irregular situations, and in dealing with difficult situations concerning vocation. Recent years have witnessed an increase in sensitivity to these issues; it is now time to continue along the path, taking further steps in the direction of a more coherent lifestyle and a more effective manner of conduct.

1. Vice-Provincial

I have found in the first place that in the Provinces the Vice-Provincial is often the reference point for the difficult situations in which confreres find themselves with regard to living the religious life in all its aspects: illegitimate absences from the community, acts of disobedience, abuses in the matter of poverty, irregularities in administration, problems regarding chastity, scandals, individualism in the apostolic mission, negligence in prayer, "spiritual worldliness"... The Vicar, along with the Provincial Secretary, helps the Provincial to resolve irregular situations and to prepare some juridical proceedings: absence from the religious community, dispensation from celibacy and the obligations of the diaconal and priestly ministry, indult of departure from the Institute,[1] exclaustration...

I maintain that the Provinces need to enhance the figure of the Vice-Provincial in the area of religious life and discipline. He must contribute towards fostering among the confreres an appreciation of our Salesian consecrated vocation and making it understood that religious discipline is primarily a matter of learning how to be true disciples of Jesus. In view of the services rendered by the Vice-Provincial to the confreres, it would be advisable for him, in my opinion, to be also the Provincial Delegate for formation.

2. Provincial Commission for religious life and discipline

I have also noticed that many Provinces have set up a Commission, chaired by the Vice-Provincial, to examine cases of a lack of religious discipline and irregular situations. It seems appropriate that this Commission be set up in every Province and that it concern itself also with fostering religious life and not only with examining disciplinary problems. This Commission, if made permanent, can function on a regular basis and in timely fashion. In the Provinces where it has been set up, it has been given different names; I would think a fitting name for it would be the "Commission for religious life and discipline".

[1] The *indult of departure from the Institute* can be granted upon a request made by a temporarily professed member before the expiry of his temporary profession, or by a perpetually professed member; should the perpetually professed member be a deacon or a priest, the indult may be granted, on condition of his being incardinated by a Bishop in his diocese: "pure and simpliciter" or "after a period of probation".

One of its first tasks is to help the Provincial in fostering religious life in the Province and encouraging the confreres to live it joyfully in all its aspects. To this end, the members of the Commission will have to pay particular attention to their preparation and competence in the wide area of consecrated life, both by drawing on the teachings of the Pope and the Church, and by constantly referring to the Constitutions and the General Regulations. The daily experience of a religious life fully lived in its three components – the mystic, the fraternal and the apostolic – is the best condition for preventing crises, difficulties and abuses.

Another of its tasks is to assist the Provincial in assessing the situation of religious discipline in the Province and studying how to deal with irregular situations. There are at times public situations that cause scandal and that need to be dealt with speedily. Resolving irregular situations helps towards nurturing consecrated life and preventing new cases: in a special way, it contributes to a change in the culture and lifestyle of the Province.

Finally, there may be some particular tasks that the Provincial assigns to the Commission itself. A specific task is the one that the GC27 entrusts to every Province when it asks us to "encourage in our centres an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of minors, committing ourselves to creating conditions which prevent any form of abuse and violence, where every Province follows the guidelines and directives of the Rector Major and General Council." This duty is specified in the project of the Rector Major and the General Council for the six-year period when it asks the Vicar to "help the Provinces to formulate guide-

lines to safeguard and protect children, and to prevent cases of abuse" (cf. GC27, 73.4).

With regard to the composition of the Commission, it is advisable to include a canon lawyer and, if need be, a lawyer as well. If the Provincial Delegate for formation is not the Vice-Provincial, it would be appropriate for him to be part of the Commission.

3. Preliminary investigation

There is a matter of religious discipline that lies outside the purview of the Commission. This is the case when the Provincial is informed of a crime (cf. Can. 1321 §1), or even a probable crime, committed by a confrere. The Provincial is required to initiate a preliminary investigation, unless such an inquiry seems entirely superfluous. He must carry out the investigation into the situation personally or preferably through an Instructor and a Notary, appointed by a proper decree, for the purpose of prudently verifying the allegations made, the circumstances, and their imputability to the confrere. This matter is regulated by canons 1717-1731 of the Code of Canon Law. In conducting the preliminary investigation, no intervention by the Commission is envisaged, but the Provincial may choose the Instructor and the Notary from among the members of the Commission.

Given the sensitive nature of the matter, the juridical office, basing itself on the guidelines of the Code of Canon Law and the norms subsequently issued, is in the process of studying a series of operational indications concerning the manner of conducting the preliminary investigation and the actions to be taken when the investigation itself is over. These indications will be made available to the Provincials in due time.

The preliminary investigation also concerns allegations of abuse of minors; following the publication by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of "Guidelines for dealing with cases of sexual abuses of minors perpetrated by clerics" and the subsequent norms of Episcopal Conferences, we shall have to update our protocol in this matter.

4. Form for monitoring difficult and irregular situations

I am attaching herewith a form concerning juridical proceedings and religious discipline. The Vice- Provincial keeps it up-to-date and from time to time presents it to the Provincial and the Provincial Council to keep them informed about how difficult situations are being dealt with and irregularities handled. The form will receive particular attention on the occasion of the extraordinary visitation.

I thank you for what you will do to enable your Province to take religious life and discipline in right earnest. I greet you cordially. In Don Bosco,

2.2 LIFE AS PRAYER

Fr Ivo COELHO
Councillor for Formation

In his Presentation of the documents of GC27, the Rector Major, Fr Angel Fernandes Artime, speaks of the "grace of unity": it is "the way ahead in order to respond with generosity and be ourselves: consecrated Salesians, brothers at the service of the young. In welcoming this gift we encounter a characteristic feature of our spirituality – union with God; this fosters the unification of our life: prayer and work, action and contemplation, reflection and the apostolate" (CG27, p. 12). The Chapter itself chose the icon of "The vine and the branches" as a symbol of the deep unity between being mystics in the Spirit, prophets of fraternity, and servants of the young. We want to offer here a reflection that might help us on our journey towards the unification that transforms us into contemplatives in action (C 12), persons with a "closely-knit life project" like that of our father Don Bosco (C 21).

There is no doubt that Salesian life is characterized by tireless work, in fidelity to the motto "work and temperance", but above all in imitation of Don Bosco. Work alone, however, can become a great risk, an obstacle to prayer. We are not referring here only to "prayers", understood as "practices of piety", but above all to that "union with God" that ought to characterize our whole life. Recalling the beautiful phrase of St Teresa of Jesus that "mental prayer is nothing but friendship, the willingness to spend much time in the company of someone who we know loves us",[2] we could ask: how might our lives become an experience of God, a loving encounter with him? And how might our mission set the tenor of our whole life (C 3), in such a way that life becomes prayer?

[2] "Que no es otra cosa oración mental, a mi parecer, sino tratar de amistad, estando muchas veces tratando a solas con quien sabemos que nos ama." St Teresa of Jesus, *Vida* 8, 5.

In the very first section on the fundamental identity of the Salesian, our Rule of Life says:

> "As he works for the salvation of the young, the Salesian experiences the fatherhood of God and continually reminds himself of the divine dimension of his work: 'Apart from me you can do nothing' (Jn 15,5). He cultivates union with God, aware of the need to pray without ceasing in a simple heart-to-heart colloquy with the living Christ and with the Father, whom he feels close. Attentive to the presence of the Spirit and doing everything for God's love, he becomes like Don Bosco a contemplative in action" (C 12).

How could we transform this ideal into reality? Clearly, we have no intention of downplaying the importance of the *practices* of piety and of the sacraments that give concrete shape to our dialogue with the Lord. We are asking, rather, about how our life and work might become experience of God.

"Life as prayer": The distinguishing mark of Salesian prayer

To this question, which lies at the very core of our life as consecrated apostles, we have an extraordinarily rich response in our Constitutions. Article 95, which in fact bears the title "Life as prayer", runs thus:

> "Immersed in the world and in the cares of the pastoral life, the salesian learns to meet God through those to whom he is sent. Discovering the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of men, especially the young, he gives thanks for everything; as he shares their problems and sufferings, he invokes upon them the light and strength of God's presence. He draws on the love of the Good Shepherd, whose witness he wants to be, and shares in the spiritual riches offered him by the community. His need of God, keenly felt in his apostolic commitment, leads him to celebrate the liturgy of life, attaining that 'tireless industry, made holy by prayer and union with God' that should be the characteristic of the sons of St John Bosco."[3]

[3] While union with God is the topic of C 12, C 95 on life as prayer occupies a very special place in the Constitutions, coming as it does at the very end not only of ch. VII: In Dialogue with the Lord, but also of the Second Part of our Constitutions: Sent to the

In order to highlight some of the elements of this beautiful text, I would like to compare it with the earlier version in the Constitutions approved *ad experimentum* by the Special General Chapter (1972). Interestingly, the text of 1972 speaks of the *problem* of the synthesis between prayer and life: "The Salesian immersed in the world and in the cares of the apostolate **may at times find it difficult to meet God freely and spontaneously**." This observation certainly contains some truth, but at the same time it implies a certain *dichotomy*, which recurs once again towards the end of the article: "an interior need of God can lead us to live in him 'the liturgy of life', offering ourselves in our daily work 'as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God' (Rom 12,1)." (C 67, 1972) This also is true, reflecting as it does the whole spiritual tradition of the Church; but we could ask ourselves: is this "offering of ourselves" not so generic that it could be applied to just any kind of work and to any kind of spirituality?

Our present article, instead, tries to overcome this dichotomy at its very root. It proposes to us *a Salesian way of understanding* the relationship between our work and union with God. We might add here that it was not easy to arrive at the formulation of this article, which is a true jewel of Salesian spirituality: only towards the very end, in the final draft, did the Chapter hit upon this wonderful and illuminating synthesis. This can be seen from the very first words of the article, which stand in sharp and explicit contrast to the earlier text: "Immersed in the world and in the cares of the pastoral life, **the salesian learns to meet God through those to whom he is sent**." And the same thing is highlighted at the end: "His need of God, **keenly felt in his apostolic commitment**..."

I would like to invite you to an attentive and careful reading of this article in order to discover in it precious elements that constitute a set of **criteria** that can not only help us discern whether

Young – in Communities – following Christ. GC22 was extremely attentive to the structure of the Constitutions, and the position of C 95 makes it a kind of summary not only of our life of prayer but of our whole life. It deals, precisely, with life as prayer.

our activity is becoming prayer, experience of God, but can also suggest the *conditions of possibility* for moving towards such prayer and experience.

1. In the first place, we find an element that is essential and indispensable: *being in the midst of young people and with them*. This "active and friendly presence" (C 39) that we call "**assistance**" has nothing to do with a police kind of presence that is interested solely in keeping order. But neither is it merely something on the basis of which we then go on to do other, more important things. Our mission does not consist in "doing things"; it consists in being like Jesus and in him, epiphany, revelation, the Face of the Father; it consists in being signs and bearers of his love (C 2). Salesian presence is a concrete mediation of the presence of "God-with-us"; and in some way we can say that it is an anticipation of Jesus' prayer to the Father for all of us: "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am" (Jn 17, 24). This "being-with" constitutes the heart and essence of eternal life: being with God and with all our brothers and sisters.[4] This is one of the aspects in which all of us are called to grow: all of us, and not only our young confreres, are called by vocation to be "assistants".

2. Salesian presence is marked by a very clear characteristic: *the consciousness of* ***mission***. The text of the Constitutions speaks not just about "people", and not even merely about "young people", but explicitly about "*those to whom he is sent.*" No matter how much good will we have, we will not find the Lord

[4] It is worth dwelling on Salesian presence as an anticipation of eternal life, and as essentially a being with God and with all our brothers and sisters. On the former point, see J. Ratzinger, "My Joy is to Be in Thy Presence: On the Christian Belief in Eternal Life", in J. Ratzinger, *God is Near Us: The Eucharist, the Heart of Life* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003). On the latter, see the pregnant suggestion of J. Alison that "the joy that was set before him [Jesus]" (Heb 12, 2) was precisely "the possibility of delighting forever in a huge celebration along with a huge multitude of us human beings, people who are good, bad, creative, depressive, but humans and, for that reason, loved." J. Alison, *Raising Abel: The Recovery of the Eschatological Imagination* (New York, Crossroad, 1996), 189. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6, 21). The heart of Jesus is certainly set upon his Father and upon us, his brothers and sisters.

if we do not search for him in those to whom he himself sends us. This is one of the essential elements of Salesian obedience, understood as the constant and passionate search for the will of God, after the example of Jesus: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me" (Jn 4,34). This is not always easy, especially when the work is not "gratifying".

3. In this movement towards the young people to whom we are sent, we find an interesting dialectic: God waits for us in these recipients of our mission, but at the same time we are called to bring them His saving Love. This is a dialectic which, in certain sense, we also find in the words of Jesus in Mt 25, 31-46. This seems to me the central element if Salesian life is to become prayer. It can be summed up in the phrase "leaving God for God", provided we understand it well and not just as a convenient excuse either to abandon 'prayer' for 'work' or the other way around.

4. The educational and pastoral work for young people presupposes an *analysis of reality* on the basis of faith and the Salesian mission. It means *looking at the youth situation through the eyes of Jesus, the Good Shepherd*, in the style of Don Bosco. Such a "reading" determines whether a particular action is really Salesian, or whether we are reduced to being, as Pope Francis repeatedly says, a mere NGO working for the welfare of youth. This "pastoral look" – and the "serene attentiveness, which is capable of being fully present to someone without thinking of what comes next" (*Laudato Si'* 226) – will enable us to discern the evangelical priorities in our work, and at the same time recognize "the work of the Spirit" in the lives of young people: otherwise we run the risk of working a lot, but leaving aside the *mission* – a very real danger, given the complexity of the youth situation.

5. A feature of Salesian prayer, emphasized from the beginning in our Rule of Life, is the inseparable relationship with life, following the example of Don Bosco who "lived an experience of humble, trusting and apostolic prayer in which praying and living

were spontaneously united" (C 86). Article 86 ends by stating that Salesian prayer "is drawn from life experience and flows back into it": it is both *source and summit*, as the Second Vatican Council says, speaking of the Eucharist.

It is not a question, therefore, of leaving our pastoral projects, enthusiasms and disappointments "at the door of the chapel". What kind of person is he who is entering into dialogue with God if we do that, we could ask: an empty person, without identity or history, without *reasons* for meeting the Lord... As we have seen already, article 95 speaks explicitly of "the need of God, **keenly felt in his apostolic commitment**..."

6. Trying to make this point even more concrete, the same article indicates, in a way that is brief but very important, how different "**forms**" of prayer arise from *the life situation of our young people*: "discovering the fruits of the Spirit in the lives of men, especially the young, he gives thanks for everything;[5] as he shares their problems and sufferings, he invokes upon them the light and strength of God's presence." The prayer of *praise* and *thanksgiving* arises from the contemplation of the work of the Spirit in our youth (here again we need the look of faith of the Good Shepherd: we must remember that Jesus praises and gives thanks to the Father even after the failure of his preaching in the cities of the Lake: Mt 11,25-30). The prayer of *petition* arises from the sharing in their problems and difficulties. I would like to add a form of prayer typical of the mediator-apostle that is too often forgotten: that of *intercession* ("so that the design of the Father may be fulfilled in each of them" – C 86) and even *reparation* in its truest sense.

7. Finally, among many other aspects, I want to underline the **community dimension** of our prayer: "(the Salesian) shares in the spiritual riches offered him by the community". In the light of all that we have been saying, could we not understand this also as

[5] The article cites *Eph* 5,20; I would add *Phil* 4,6 (the Pauline text in the Mass of Don Bosco).

a *community sharing of the experience of God of every confrere*? How wonderful it would be if, in the community, we could talk about and share the way in which each of us "finds God" in those to whom we are sent! I think of the icon of Emmaus: between those who stayed behind in Jerusalem, and those who went to the village, there is an exchange of encounters with the risen Lord that culminates in the presence of the Lord himself (Cf. Lk 24, 33-35).

Concretely...

What we have been talking about is certainly an ideal, a goal that we do not always reach in our daily lives. On the other hand, it remains true that it is a key element in our spirituality: the "grace of unity", the call to become "mystics in the Spirit" and "contemplatives in action." This, I think, is also the goal of life understood as *ongoing formation*, and so I would like to emphasize a key word that I have deliberately avoided up to now: "the Salesian **learns** to meet God..." This word indicates that we need a period of learning, an apprenticeship, in which personal effort is certainly called for, but also time, accompaniment, and experiences that facilitate such learning. We should not assume that every encounter and work with young people automatically becomes prayer and encounter with God. In other words, having reflected on the "***what***", we need to insist also on the "***how***."

Before going on, however, I would like to note that the "what" that we have been outlining above is itself eminently practical, and in that sense already a "how." "We are as we come to see and as that seeing becomes enduring in our intentionality. We do not come to see, however, just by looking but by training our vision through the metaphors and symbols that constitute our central convictions."[6] In any effort to change our lives, acquiring

[6] Stanley Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981) 2.

a right vision is far more important than diligently exercising will power. Jesus, we might remember, used images. "Willpower is a notoriously sputtery engine on which to rely for internal energy, but a right image silently and inexorably pulls us into its field of reality, which is also a field of energy."[7] Moving towards life as encounter with God, or, better still, *union* with him, involves a training of our vision that cannot be underestimated.

It is up to every province and every local community to find ways and means to this end. But we could also go back to the "criteria" proposed above that are also at the same time "conditions of possibility" for moving towards life as prayer.

The *first* criterion is a necessary (though not sufficient!) condition: unless we take the trouble to be with the young, there is no possibility of discovering the working of grace in their lives. We note today, in different parts of our congregation, a certain "distancing" on the part of our confreres, both young and old, from young people, and, above all, a certain downplaying of assistance, as if we had "more important things to do". We run the risk of failing to meet real youth (often very difficult to handle), taking refuge instead in virtual encounters through the many modern means of communication – though sometimes we might go to the extent even of "offering these to God"! But this is not the way to become "good shepherds of the young", after the example of Don Bosco. It is, instead, essential to offer our young confreres the **experience** of being with youth, educating them – and this is indispensable! – to the true meaning of Salesian assistance, which of course is to be done not merely by words but by example.

The *second*, *third* and *fourth* criteria involve, in fact, a training of our vision: the consciousness of mission, the awareness of the dialectic between God who awaits us in the young and our

[7] Eugene H. Peterson, *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans / Leominster: Gracewing, 1992) 6.

vocation as epiphany, the "pastoral look." Merely "being with the young" is not enough: it has to be done with a sense of mission, which derives directly from obedience understood as a search for and fulfilment of God's will. We need to discover strategies and lines of action to strengthen this "sense of faith" in working with youth, avoiding any kind of individualism or "purely personal choice" in educative and pastoral action. It is not enough to merely "do good things", or even to "find God in people". We are called to find God precisely in youth who are "poor, abandoned and in danger" (C 26), "primarily boys and young men" (R 3), and not just in any people at all.

The *fifth* condition is the dialectic between "prayer" and life: there is a vital relationship between our "practices of piety" – community as well as personal – and life. Jesus himself felt the need to spend long moments in prayer. Love is first and foremost a state rather than an act, but it needs the acts, the special moments that declare, affirm, celebrate, share and strengthen it. It is of vital importance to overcome a dichotomous attitude. The God we discover in those to whom we are sent is also the God before whom we stand and whom we invoke and celebrate and thank in our formal and informal moments of prayer. The Salesian *needs* to take time out of his busy day to look back, relive, give thanks, intercede. He cannot afford to neglect the quiet moments that are built into the structure of community life. Such practices and moments are important elements in the dialectic by which we move towards the loving union that is life as prayer. Our life and our work enters into these moments, our intentions are purified (C 90, 91), our eyes are sharpened and our vision cleared, so that we can see the work of God in the lives of those to whom he sends us. It is time to pay heed to the call of our recent General Chapters and to give special attention to personal prayer and meditation, where each of us expresses our own personal and heartfelt way of being son of God, giving thanks to the Father and telling him about our yearnings and concerns in the apostolate, and recalling that for Don Bosco mental prayer was "a guarantee

of joyous participation in our vocation", strengthening our intimate union with God, saving us from routine, keeping our hearts free, drawing energy and endurance, and fostering our dedication to those to whom we are sent (C 93, 88). As provincial and local communities, we need to also give renewed attention to our monthly recollections and annual retreats, which are "privileged moments for listening to the Word of God, discerning his will and purifying our hearts", and which "restore to our spirit a deep unity in the Lord Jesus and keep alive in us the expectation of his return" (C 91). To this we need to add the spiritual guidance that 'trains' our eyes, that helps us develop the contemplative intelligence that is the ability to discern the presence of God and the working of grace in our own lives and in the lives of those to whom we are sent (see GC27 67.2), as well as pastoral accompaniment in the early years of ministry – and here novice masters, Rectors and spiritual guides of postnovices, practical trainees and young confreres in specific formation have a very special responsibility. In the early years of formation, especially, we learn and are helped to remind ourselves of the divine dimension of our work. We become aware "of the need to pray without ceasing in a simple heart-to-heart colloquy with the living Christ and with the Father", we learn to attend to the presence of the Spirit and to do everything for God's love (C 12).

The *sixth* condition, the "forms" of prayer, needs no further comment. The *seventh*, the community dimension, is worth dwelling upon, because of the way it makes sense of the insistence of our recent general chapters on common forms of prayer, both new and old. One of the difficulties with regard to community prayer is fraternal sharing, in particular of our experience of God. It is not easy to "re-educate" ourselves in this sense. It is, of course, much easier to do this with young people who are beginning their Salesian life, but even with them it cannot be taken for granted. It is important to find suitable moments of community sharing (including *lectio divina*) in order to educate them (and ourselves) to pray together on the basis of our educative and

pastoral experiences: prayers of thanksgiving, petition, intercession, reparation... Such experiences strengthen and deepen fraternal life in an extraordinary manner, so as to become almost a thermometer of it: where there is no deep communication, community life is very superficial, and sometimes even inexistent.

I invite the Rector of each community, after having studied and reflected personally on this letter, to help each confrere do the same, and to make possible a moment of community sharing and dialogue, with the help of these or similar questions: What aspects of this letter raise an echo in me? Where would I/we need to grow? What steps could I/we take in this direction?

In a special manner, I invite novice masters, Rectors and spiritual guides at all levels of initial formation to work out ways of accompanying our young confreres, as individuals and as community, in their journey towards life as prayer.

Let us, dear confreres, invoke together the assistance of Our Lady, "model of prayer and pastoral love" (C 92) and "Mother and Teacher" (C 98) and of St Joseph, "master of the interior life", of our father Don Bosco and of a host of confreres, great and small, among whom Blessed Artemide Zatti and Ven. Simaan Srugi, who lived the grace of unity and now intercede for us.

2.3 SECRETARIAT FOR THE SALESIAN FAMILY

Here below are quoted the STATUTES-REGULATIONS of the ***Secretariat for the Salesian Family****, instituted with a Deliberation of General Chapter XXVII (cf. CG27, No. 79 – Deliberation concerning the Vicar of the Rector Major). The Regulations quoted below have been approved by the Rector Major and the General Council on 29th January, 2015.*

1. Nature and purpose

The Secretariat for the Salesian Family is an organ of animation and coordination, established by the GC27[8] and directly dependent on the Rector Major in accordance with Article 108 of our General Regulations.

Its purpose is to animate the Congregation with regard to the Salesian Family and to promote the communion of the various groups that belong to it, respecting their specificity and autonomy.

It assists the Congregation in taking up the responsibilities Don Bosco wanted it to have towards the Salesian Family, viz. to preserve unity of spirit and to foster dialogue and fraternal collaboration for our mutual enrichment and greater apostolic effectiveness".[9]

[8] The GC27 has taken the following resolution:
"A. suppresses paragraph 3 of Article 134 of the Constitutions which attributes to the Vicar of the Rector Major the task of animating the Salesian Family;
B. establishes a *Central Secretariat for the Salesian Family*, directly dependent on the Rector Major, in accordance with article 108 of the Regulations, with the following duties:
- to animate the Congregation in the Sector of the Salesian Family and ensure interaction with the other Sectors of the Congregation at world level;
- to promote, in accordance with article 5 of the Constitutions, the communion of the various groups, respecting their specificity and autonomy;
- to direct and assist the Provinces so that in their own territories they develop, according to their own statutes, the Association of the Salesian Cooperators, the Movement of the Past Pupils and ADMA" (CG 27, n. 79).

[9] *Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis de Sales*, article 5.

2. Members of the Secretariat

The Secretariat consists of the following members:

2.1. The Delegate of the Rector Major for the Secretariat for the Salesian Family; he is the Secretary of the Central Secretariat and performs the tasks described in Article 6.

2.2. The SDB confreres who have tasks of animation within those groups of the Salesian Family for whom the Salesian Congregation has responsibility for the charism:

- The World Delegate of the Salesian Cooperators;
- The World Delegate of the Past-pupils of Don Bosco, both men and women;
- The Spiritual Animator of the Association of Mary Help of Christians;
- The Central Assistant of the Volunteers of Don Bosco;
- The Central Assistant of the Volunteers with Don Bosco.

2.3. Three members of the World Consultative Body of the Salesian Family:

- An FMA chosen by the Mother General;[10]
- Two members elected by the World Consultative Body.

3. Duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Congregation

The basic duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Congregation are:

- ensure on world level an interaction with the sectors and the regions of the Congregation;[11]

[10] The presence of an FMA chosen by the Mother General among the members of the Consultative Body of the Salesian Family is motivated by the historic collaboration that has existed between the Salesian Congregation and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians since the beginning of the charism of Don Bosco and that has now developed in several areas of the mission all over the world.

[11] Cfr. CG27 n. 79.

- "direct and assist the Provinces so that in their own territories they develop, according to their own statutes, the Association of the Salesian Cooperators, the Movement of the Past Pupils and ADMA";[12]
- encourage and support the regions and provincial conferences in promoting the growth of the Salesian Family in number and quality;
- offer to Provincials, Provincial Delegates of the Salesian Family, and Province-level delegates, spiritual animators and assistants of the groups of the Salesian Family help in forming delegates and local groups.

4. Duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Rector Major and his Council

The main duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Rector Major and the General Council are:

- prepare the section of the six-year project of the Rector Major and his Council concerning the Secretariat and forward it to the Rector Major and his Council for their approval;
- draw up the Secretariat's plan of work for each year and present it to the Rector Major;
- submit an annual budget and statement of accounts to the Rector Major and his Council for their approval;
- examine the requests to belong to the Salesian Family and offer an assessment of them to the Rector Major and his Council.

5. Duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Salesian Family

Some of the duties of the Secretariat in relation to the Salesian Family are the following:

[12] CG27 n. 79.

- offer the Rector Major the necessary guidelines for ensuring the fruitfulness of the charism in every group of the Salesian Family;[13]
- represent the Rector Major in the various groups in order to ensure the "growth of each group, guidance in being faithful to the charism, and commitment to the fruitfulness of the Salesian vocation in all its forms";[14]
- animate and involve the various groups in world-level activities concerning the Salesian Family: the World Consultative Body, the Spirituality Days, regional meetings;
- foster in the groups an awareness that the Salesian Family has to become "a vast movement of persons who in different ways work for the salvation of the young";[15]
- pay special attention to the groups of the Salesian Family towards whom we have a special responsibility concerning our charism;[16]
- foster communion among the various groups by referring to the "Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family" and drawing on their specific contribution;
- motivate the groups of the Salesian Family to realize some pastoral projects jointly;
- study and reflect deeply on Salesian spirituality with the groups of the Salesian Family.

6. Duties of the Delegate of the Rector Major for the Secretariat

The Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family Secretariat has the following duties:

[13] Cfr. *Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco*, n. 13.
[14] *Ibidem*, n. 13.
[15] *Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis de Sales*, art. 5.
[16] *Charter of the Charismatic Identity...*, n. 38.

- submit for the approval of the Rector Major and the General Council the part of the six-year project that concerns the Secretariat;
- keep the Rector Major and his Council informed of plans for formation and animation, of meetings and the progress of the Salesian Family;
- inform the Rector Major and his Council every year of the implementation of the Secretariat's plan of work and the progress of the Secretariat itself;
- represent the Rector Major, at his request, in events of the Congregation, the Church and civil society that may require the presence of the Salesian Family;
- convene the Secretariat at least three times a year to study, analyze, plan and assess the progress made by the Salesian Family;
- coordinate and animate his projects and activities with the members of the Secretariat;
- in agreement with the Councillor for Formation, schedule meetings with Salesians in initial formation to cultivate in them a sense of belonging to the Salesian Family and a responsibility for our charism within it;
- coordinate the World Consultative Body of the Salesian Family and the Spirituality Days;
- make known to the individual groups the documents of the Salesian Family;
- carry out visits of animation and accompaniment in the regions, in agreement with the Rector Major and the Regional Councillors;
- take part in the regional meetings of the Provincials to motivate and sensitize them to a sense of belonging to the Salesian Family;
- promote useful materials and publications concerning the Salesian Family;
- take up every other task that the Rector Major chooses to entrust to him.

7. Duration

The present Regulation of the Secretariat for the Salesian Family is valid for three years, and is therefore "ad experimentum". After this period there will be an assessment and then a revision by the Rector Major and the General Council.

2.4 CENTRAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION

With direct reference to the guidelines of General Chapter 27, and to the Six Year Project of the Rector Major and of the General Council for 2014-2020, the **Central Economic Commission** is created to implement in a stable way the norms of art. 185 of the General Regulations

The first goal of the Economic Commission, which is coordinated by the General Economer, is to render a qualified service to improve, at all levels, the administrative processes in the Salesian Congregation.

The Commission is composed of a team of experts with unquestionable experience in economy, finance and the legal field.

The members of the Commission will be some Salesians and other non-Salesian collaborators. Their country of origin is international, with a certain preference, for obvious reasons, for the macro European region. Some other invitees coming from other regions can also participate, depending on the matters dealt with and the specific languages. A secretary will also be appointed. The venue of the meetings, which will be at most five per year, will be in Rome, Via della Pisana 1111.

The tasks of the Economic Commission are the following:

a) Analyze the budget and final balance of the provinces and vice-provinces of the Congregation and identify the operational interventions to suggest to the provinces and vice-provinces that find themselves in economic difficulties.
b) Submit to the General Council an annual report on the economic and financial situation of the provinces and vice-provinces.
c) Study the placement of the real estate patrimony of the Direzione Generale in full respect of the criteria of ethicalness and responsible and prudent management of resources.

d) Make a revision of the buildings of the Direzione Generale, of their use and the ordinary and extraordinary running costs.
e) Revise the annual budget and final balance of the Direzione Generale, and propose actions of improvement that are in keeping with criteria of poverty, functionality and transparency and inform the provinces and vice-provinces on the use of resources and on the solidarity contribution.
f) Propose forms of solidarity.
g) Examine on an annual basis the economic state of the Salesian Pontifical University (UPS) and of the vice-province of "Mary Sedes Sapientiae" in view of their sustainability.
h) Verify on an annual basis the existing conventions with ICP (Circoscrizione Speciale del Piemonte e della Valle d'Aosta) with regards to the management of Salesian places of Valdocco Mother House and of Colle don Bosco.
i) Provide advice on particular exigencies of the Economer General or on issues indicated by the Rector Major and the General Council: provide solutions to the processes of analysis and precise guidelines in view of the realization of the goals set by the Rector Major for the Six Year Period 2014-2029.
j) Outline with the Economer General the programs for the formation of provincial economers and of provincials

Functioning and composition

The Economer General sets the issues to deal with and the objectives to achieve in agreement with the General Council, even in terms of time, and after consulting with the Economic Commission assesses the opportunity of consulting external or sdb experts.

The Commission will propose to the Economer General the results of the work done. The Economer, after the examination he will deem wise, will submit, if necessary, the conclusion of the works to the General Council.

The stable members of the Economic Commission are:

- The Economer General;
- 4 Salesians with an experience of provincial economer: Bro. Giampiero Pettenon (ICP), Fr. Giordano Piccinotti (ILE), Fr. Agustin Pacheco (RMG), Fr. Gabriel Stawowy (PLS);
- 3 laypeople: an entrepreneur, a legal advisor and a management consultant.

3.1 PROCEDURES FOR THE ECONOMIC OPERATIONS LISTED IN ART. 188 OF THE CONSTITUTIONS – MAXIMUM LIMITS OF EXPENDITURE

Bro. Jean Paul MULLER
Economer General

In the summer session of the General Council, the issue was often raised of the procedures to follow for requesting possible authorizations to place the acts indicated in art. 188 of the Constitutions: acquiring and alienating, exchanging, mortgaging or renting real estate, etc... The various requests received are sometimes lacking in the documentation needed to consent a precise assessment of the Superior Council.

Considering the norms of the Code of Canon Law and the guidelines of the Holy See in matters of alienation of real estates belonging to Ecclesiastical bodies, it is necessary to send to all provinces more precise information on how to prepare the documents so that they may be canonically valid, and provide clear indications on the procedure to follow to request the due authorizations.

The fundamental canonical texts of reference are canon 638, quoted here below, and canons 1290-1295 of the ***Code of Canon Law***.

Can. n. 638

1. *Within the scope of universal law, it belongs to proper law to determine acts which exceed the limit and manner of ordinary administration and to establish what is necessary to place an act of extraordinary administration validly.*
2. *In addition to superiors, the officials who are designated for this in proper law also validly incur expenses and perform juridic acts of ordinary administration within the limits of their function.*
3. *For the validity of alienation and of any other affair in which the patrimonial condition of a juridic person can worsen, the written permission of the competent superior with the consent of the council is required. Nevertheless, if it concerns an affair which exceeds the amount defined by the Holy See for each region, or things given to the Church by vow, or things precious for artistic or historical reasons, the permission of the Holy See itself is also required.*

Besides, it is also necessary to refer to the ***articles of our Constitutions*** which are directly related to the above-quoted Can. 638:

Art. 188, *besides alienations, provides a list of those acts ("deals") from which the patrimonial condition of the juridical person can worsen, and for which the authorization of the Rector Major is required:*

- *acquiring, alienating, exchanging, mortgaging or renting real estate;*
- *contracting loans with or without mortgage;*
- *accepting inheritances, bequests or donations to which obligations are attached; (when no obligation is attached it is sufficient merely to notify the Rector Major);*
- *establishing annuities, student burses, Mass obligations, special or charitable foundations;*
- *constructing new buildings, demolishing existing ones or making major alterations.*

Art. 189: *With regard to all the operations referred to in article 188, it belongs to the Rector Major with the consent of his council, after hearing the opinion of the provincials with their respective councils and in the light of relevant decisions of the Apostolic See, to determine the financial limits within which each provincial with the consent of his council is competent to grant authorizations by an analogous procedure.*

Art. 190: *All temporal goods are administered respectively by the economer general and by provincial and local economers, under the direction and control of the appropriate superiors and*

councils, in conformity with canonical dispositions, in accordance with the Constitutions and general Regulations, and in compliance with the laws of each country.

Some Remarks

1. In the above-quoted canons and articles, mention is made of an amount (which indicates the value of the real estate to alienate from which the juridical person might be harmed, for instance by contracting a mortgage), beyond which, for the validity of the act, it is imperative to request and obtain the permit of the Holy See. This amount, which constitutes a **maximum limit**
   - varies from nation to nation;
   - is fixed by the local Bishops' Conference or by the Holy See;
   - is expressed in Euro or in US$, but can also be set with a formula (for instance 3.000 x the minimum salary currently paid in the country);
   - represents – in our case – the maximum amount within which the Rector Major, with the consent of the General Council, can give the authorization;
   - must be taken into account when signing an act that implies a decrease of the patrimony of the body (for instance an alienation), or else the act itself is null;
   - must not be taken into account when the act implies an increase of the patrimony of the body (for instance accepting inheritances or bequests with no obligation attached).
2. The prospect of the maximum limits consented at present is updated to 2010 and around one hundred nations of the whole world are listed in it.
3. In case of operations whose value exceeds the maximum limit, it is imperative to request the authorization of the Holy See. However, for this matter it is necessary that the request be sent to the Rector Major and obtain the favorable opinion of the General Council.

4. With regards to the administration of temporal goods, three levels of responsibility are foreseen in our Congregation (Const. art. 190):
   - The highest level, represented by the Rector Major with the General Council;
   - The intermediate level, represented by the Provincial or the Vice-Provincial with the respective provincial or vice-provincial council;
   - The local level, represented by the Director and his council.

   To authorize the operations described in art. 188 of the Constitutions:
   - the maximum limit allowed to the Rector Major coincides with maximum limit set by the Holy See for Religious Institutes. Beyond this limit it is necessary to request the authorization of the Holy See;
   - the maximum limit allowed to the Provincial and the Provincial Council is fixed for each Province in compliance with art. 189 of the Constitutions; beyond such limit the authorization of the Rector Major and the General Council is required;
   - the Provincial Directory will set the limits of expenditure and will define the acts which go beyond the ordinary administration for which the Director and the local Council must request the authorization of the Province and the Provincial Council.
5. The above limits of availability do not regard ordinary administration, but the extraordinary one, as stated in art. 188 of the Constitutions.
6. The documentation to attach to the request of authorization – at all levels – must be clear, concise and exhaustive.
   a. For instance, in case of a request of authorization to alienate properties, indispensable elements of such a documentation are:

- the request of the Director to the Provincial or of the Provincial to the Rector Major, in which the reasons leading to the decision of alienation are explained;
- the abstract of the minutes of the Local Council or of the Provincial Council with a concise mention of the decision and the result of the votes;
- letter to the Ordinary of the place, with evidence that he has been informed;
- written estimate of the goods to alienate, duly prepared by experts;
- destination of the money deriving from the alienation.

b. When the value of the real estate to alienate or of the deal to make exceeds the limit of availability of the Rector Major:
- the Director, with the consent of his Council, requests the authorization from the Provincial;
- the Provincial, with the consent of his Council, requests the authorization from the Rector Major, sending all necessary documentation (the one listed above in point a.);
- the Rector Major, with the consent of his Council, requests – through the Procurator – the authorization from the Holy See.

Conclusion

All the Provinces will be informed on the maximum limit of availability reserved to the Rector Major in the various countries and on the limit of the value within the competence of the Provincial and of his Council. The knowledge of these data will favor a more adequate definition of the acts which exceed the ordinary administration and of the maximum limits reserved to Directors and local Councils, in those Provinces which have not yet included these data in the provincial Directory.

4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

Below are some of the main activities of the Rector Major from the end of the winter plenary session of the General Council in January 2015 until 31 May 2015.

– January 2015

On 23 January, The Rector Major and his secretary left by train for Valdocco to participate the following day in the celebrations organized by the Provincials of Italy for the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco. In the morning the celebration was in the Basilica and in the afternoon there was the commemoration of Don Bosco with the religious, civilian and military authorities, in the Teatro Regio in Turin. He returned to Rome on 25 January and spent the next few days in office work. He had several audiences and interviews with journalists around the Feast of Don Bosco.

On 30 January he went again by train to Turin, together with his secretary, to attend the special meeting of the Superiors, coordinators, etc., of the groups of the Salesian Family at the places associated with Don Bosco in Valdocco and Colle, returning to Rome on February 2.

– February 2015

From 4 to 6 February, the Rector Major was in his home town of Luanco in Asturias, to preside over the feast of "Cristo del Socorro", a festival closely linked to the fishermen of the area.

He returned to Rome, and on 8 February left with his secretary for a visit to Chad and Cameroon in the ATE Province and South Sudan in the AFE Province.

At noon on 9 February they arrived in N'Djamena, capital of Chad, and were welcomed by the students, teachers and confreres of the Salesian Community. The following day they set off very early to make the long journey to the south, reaching the city of Sarh in the evening. The Rector Major met the young people and the faithful of the parish. For the whole of the visit they were accompanied by Fr Manuel Jiménez, the Provincial of ATE.

On Wednesday 11 February the Rector Major presided over the Mass in the parish and later met

the confreres from Sarh and Doba. He visited a village in the parish, blessed a new water well, and made a brief visit to the Bishop. He left then for Doba, where he met the young people and the faithful of the parish.

On the 12th he left to return to N'Djamena. In the afternoon he met the young people of the parish, with whom he celebrated the Eucharist.

The next day he gave the good morning talk to the students of the school, met with the members of the community, and then left with his secretary for Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon, where they arrived in the late afternoon.

On the morning of 14 February the Rector Major reached the Salesian Theologate of St Augustine and, after the traditional welcome, met the confreres of the Theologate and several houses in the city. After the Eucharist and a festive meal, which were both attended by Archbishop Piero Pioppo, Apostolic Nuncio in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, he met the Provincial Council of ATE and in the late afternoon went to the FMA work in *Cité Marie-Dominique*. Upon arrival, after a traditional greeting which took him a bit by surprise, he held a meeting with the Salesian Family.

On the 15th he presided at Mass in the parish of Mary Help of Christians in a playground full of young people and members of the Salesian Family. Before lunch he gave a press conference. In the afternoon all the guests attended cultural and artistic performances given by the young people.

On 16 February, the Rector Major and his Secretary departed by car for Douala to catch the plane that took them to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia for a stopover on their way to South Sudan.

On 17th he spent the morning with the confreres of the Provincial House in Addis Ababa and some other confreres of from nearby houses who came to greet him. After lunch they left for Juba.

They arrived in Juba, capital of South Sudan, in the late afternoon, took part in Evening Prayer and had supper with the Salesian Family. From their arrival to their departure on 21 February, they were accompanied by Fr Giovanni Rolandi, Provincial of AFE, and the Provincial Delegate for Sudan, Fr Ferrington Poobalarayen.

On Wednesday 18th they left early in a small plane for Tonj. When they arrived they were met by a huge crowd on the dirt track and all headed off for Mass. Before the Mass the Rector Major visited the new hospital and blessed it. After lunch with the community, the Rector Major visited the leper community in Laicok. In all the works in the area, the Salesians are working together with the FMA, the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians and the Sisters of Mary of Kakamega.

On the 19th the Rector Major and his Secretary departed by car for Wau, a journey of about ninety kilometres on a dirt road full of potholes and craters. When they reached Wau they were welcomed at the bridge at the entrance to the city. They went to the FMA school to meet the educational community. The Rector Major then presided at the Eucharist and met Salesians and FMA.

On Friday 20th the Rector Major, his secretary, the Provincial and the Delegate returned to Juba by air. They participated in the Mass with the parishioners and the Salesian students and in the afternoon made a visit to the refugee camp, in the grounds of the Salesian House. The camp hosts 2000 people, mostly Sudanese women and children who had fled from the north.

On Saturday 21 February, Fr Ángel Fernández met the confreres of Juba and after lunch with the confreres and other invitees, they returned to Rome where they arrived on the following day.

From 23 to 27 February the Rector Major and his secretary had to rest because of a fever, although the doctors ruled out any tropical disease.

– *March 2015*

On the morning of Saturday 28 February the Rector Major and his Secretary left by train for Venice-Mestre to take part in the youth festival organized annually by the INE Province. They returned to Rome on 2 March. In the north they were welcomed by the community of San Dona di Piave. They greeted the young people from the oratory and spent time with the confreres, always accompanied by the Provincial, Fr Roberto Dal Molin.

From 3 to 5 March, the Rector Major spent many hours in the office and received several people. On Wednesday 4 March he participated in the Holy Father's audience in St. Peter's Square on the occasion of another anniversary of the UPS. He greeted Pope Francis after the audience.

On the 6th he left for Madrid, accompanied by his secretary. There they visited the Mission Office, and the next morning the Rector Major presided at Mass for the

50th anniversary of ordination of Fr José Antonio San Martín, director of the Mission Office. In the afternoon of 7th they arrived in Luanco, the home place of Fr Ángel, and he spent the day with his family.

On Monday 9th the Rector Major and his secretary left for Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, for a visit to the Vice-Province of Haiti. In Santo Domingo they were met by the Provincial, Fr Francisco Batista, and the confreres of the Provincial House. On the 10th the Rector Major and Fr Horacio López went to Port-Au-Prince, capital of Haiti. They were welcomed by the Provincial, Fr Sylvain Ducange, and then went to the headquarters of the Vice-Province. In the afternoon the Rector Major met the Council of the Vice-Province and then visited the post-novitiate where he had dinner.

On 11 March, the Rector Major visited Cap-Haitien and Fort Liberte, the communities in the north of the country. In Cap-Haitien he presided at the Eucharist, in which the entire educative community participated. After lunch he went to Fort-Liberté where he visited the work, celebrated Evening Prayer together with young people and staff, and then had supper followed by festivities.

On Thursday 12 March the Rector Major returned to Port-Au-Prince to visit the works of ENAM and Gressier, where he met the street children from the south who are hosted there. The morning ended with the Eucharist. In the afternoon, after a show with the young people, he visited the work of Thorland.

On the 13th, after breakfast, the Rector Major and those accompanying him visited the parish and the young people from the school in Cite Soleil, a huge slum area in the capital. After a brief visit to the FMA, Fr Ángel met the confreres in the provincial house and in the afternoon visited the work of Pétion-Ville, where he presided at the Eucharist with the parishioners and members of the Salesian Family. Supper was followed by dinner and a farewell show.

At noon on 14th the Rector Major arrived back in Santo Domingo for a stopover *en route* to Rome. On the morning of Sunday 15 March he presided at Mass attended by a large number of Salesians and members of the Salesian Family in the Church of Mary Help of Christians in Santo Domingo.

He returned to Rome on the afternoon of Monday 16 March. On

17th he was in the UPS for a meeting of Deans of Centres of theology. The 18th was a day of intense work in the office.

From 19 to 21 March he participated in the International Pedagogical Congress taking place in the UPS and the Salesianum. He made a speech at the Congress and presided over the final Eucharist.

From 23 March to 1 April there was the so-called intermediary session of the General Council, with regular meetings in the morning, and some days also in the afternoon.

– *April 2015*

When the intermediary session of the Council ended, the Rector Major left on 1 April for Madrid to spend the days of the Easter Triduum with his family in his hometown.

On Easter Monday, 6 April, the Rector Major left his hometown and returned to Madrid, where he re-joined his secretary. The following day they left together to visit the countries of the Andes in Latin America. They arrived in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, on the morning of 8 April and were met by the Provincial, Fr Javier Ortiz, with a group of confreres and some young people of the SYM. He had one day of rest and personal work with some short visits to the students of the school. On the Thursday the Rector Major met with the confreres from the area, visited the Don Bosco Project and had a meeting with the Salesian Family.

They had a very early start on 10th to catch a plane for Cochabamba, where Fr Ángel had a meeting with the confreres in the provincial house. Some Salesian Bishops were present and in mid-meeting the Nuncio and the diocesan bishop arrived. At noon, the Rector Major presided at the Eucharist, concelebrated with all the priests present, including the bishops and the Nuncio. In the afternoon he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and later met the Salesian Family in the area.

On the morning of Saturday 11 April, the Rector Major and the group accompanying him took a plane to La Paz, a city located 3,600 metres above sea level. He met the Salesians and in the afternoon visited a satellite city of La Paz called El Alto, at 4,000 metres above sea level. Here he visited the Salesian work which, of all the Salesian works in the world, is definitely the one at highest altitude. On their return to La Paz, the Rector Major met the Salesian Family and presided over the Eucharist, thus concluding his visit to Bolivia.

Early in the morning of the 12th the Rector Major and his secretary took a plane to Lima, the capital of Peru. As usual, the Provincial, Fr Santo dal Ben, accompanied them for the entire visit.

On the Sunday morning there was time for rest and personal work. In the evening the Rector Major presided at the Eucharist in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

On the 13th he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and later met the confreres of the province. In the evening he presided over the Eucharist in the Temple of Don Bosco at Rimac in Lima. The next day he visited the works of El Callao and Rosenthal de la Puente. He had dinner with the leaders of the groups of the Salesian Family in Peru. In the afternoon he met the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians who were there in large numbers. He presided at Mass in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, this time especially with the Salesian Family and friends of the Salesian works.

On the 15th, he met journalists in the capital for a press conference and received Cardinal Archbishop Juan Luis Cipriani for lunch. In the late afternoon he met the young people, presided over the Eucharist and participated in a youth festival. The following day the Rector Major with his secretary left for Ecuador, the last leg of his visit to the Andes.

They arrived in Guayaquil, Ecuador at noon on Thursday 16 April. After the welcome at the airport by the Provincial, Fr Jorge Molina, he met the young people from the project for street children. He had lunch with them and with some members of the Salesian Family. Throughout the visit he was accompanied by the Vice-Provincial and the Provincial social communication team. In the afternoon Fr Ángel presided at the Eucharist in the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians and had supper with the Salesians of the area. In Guayaquil he received a special recognition from the municipality.

Early in the morning of 17th, the Rector Major and his secretary left for Quito, capital of Ecuador. Upon arrival he met the confreres and, after lunch, the teachers from the educational centres in the area. He celebrated the Eucharist in the house of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. The Daughters of the Sacred Hearts and the VDB were also present.

Early in the morning of Saturday 18th the Rector Major left for Cuenca. There, at the headquarters of the Salesian Polytechnic University (UPS) he met the Salesian Family. Later he visited the Don Bosco Publishers (EDIBOSCO) where he had lunch. In the afternoon he met the students of the school for a Mass, concelebrated with Archbishop Luis Cabrera of Cuenca.

On the Sunday morning the Rector Major, with the group accompanying him, travelled on a small plane to Macas, the place of entry to the missionary area of the Amazon. He was welcomed at the airport by the authorities and by Bishop Néstor Montesdeoca, SDB, of the Vicariate Apostolic. Fr Ángel then presided at the Eucharist with the Salesian Family. After Mass he received the *Doctor Vicente Rocafuerte* cross, the highest award of the National Assembly of the Republic of Ecuador, from the hands of a member of parliament. This official honour was dedicated to the "Salesian Congregation for its Social Contribution". In the afternoon he met the Salesian missionaries. Later, he had supper with all present and attended a cultural encounter with the young people of indigenous origin from the Salesian House of Sevilla Don Bosco.

On the morning of 20th he took the small plane back to Quito, where he met the confreres in the early stages of formation. On 21st, the last day of this trip, the Rector Major visited the Centre for Ongoing Formation where he met a group of new Rectors of the region who were doing a formation course. Then he had a meeting with the Provincial Council. In the late afternoon he took the plane to return to Europe. He arrived in Madrid on 22 April and remained there for the launch that evening of the book *Don Bosco Hoy* containing his interview.

On the afternoon of the 23rd the Rector Major was back at the Generalate. On 24th he did some office work and in the late morning presented the Italian version of the book *Don Bosco Oggi* in the headquarters of the Agostinianum.

On the morning of Saturday 25th Fr Fernandez Artime granted several audiences and in the afternoon, along with his secretary, he went to Genzano for a meeting with the FMA and SDB novices.

On Tuesday 28 April, the Rector Major and his secretary left for a long visit to several countries in the South Pacific, the most remote from the headquarters in Rome. In some of these countries this was to be the first visit by a Rector Major.

They arrived in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on the morning of the 30th after two flights and thirty-two hours' traveling. From his arrival he was accompanied by Fr Václav Klement, Regional Councillor for East Asia and Oceania. The Salesian communities in Papua and in the Solomon Islands belong to the Northern Province of the Philippines. The Vice-Provincial, Fr Danilo Torres, and the Delegate for these islands, Fr Pedro Baquero, accompanied the visit.

During the day the Rector Major greeted the young people of the Don Bosco Technical Institute and the Sisters of Charity of Jesus. Later in the evening after the Eucharist he had supper with members of the Salesian Family, coworkers, benefactors and the authorities, including the Prime Minister of PNG, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Bishop of Port Moresby and some ambassadors.

– ***May 2015***

The Rector Major began the month of May by visiting the Salesian work at Gabutu on the first day of the month. Here he celebrated Mass in a gym full of young people from the Salesian schools. After lunch he visited the parish of Sabama, where he met the parishioners of this very poor area.

On Saturday 2 May he visited the FMA house and had a meeting with the Salesian Family, followed by the Eucharistic celebration. In the afternoon, he met the delegation Council and later the confreres of the Delegation.

On the morning of 3 May, he left for Honiara in the Solomon Islands. After the welcome at the airport by the Salesians and Sisters and a good group of young people, he went to Tetere to have lunch with the confreres and in the afternoon to celebrate Mass. This was followed by the traditional welcome.

On 4 May after Mass at which Archbishop Adrian Thomas Smith of Honiara presided, there was an official function with the presence of Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare and other authorities. In the afternoon the Rector Major met the Salesian Family of the island, and later the confreres.

The next day, after Mass with the young people from the schools of the Salesians and the FMA, he visited the Cathedral of Honiara and the youth section of the prison. In the afternoon he was due to leave for Fiji, but an earthquake in PNG triggered a tsunami alert throughout the area and all

flights between the islands were suspended.

On the evening of 6 May, the Rector Major with his secretary and the Regional arrived a day late in Suva, Fiji. This community, and those of Samoa and New Zealand, belong to the Province of Australia. In Fiji and Samoa the Rector Major was accompanied by Fr Mossese Tui, Provincial Delegate for these islands.

The following day the Rector Major met the confreres of the houses of formation (novitiate, post-novitiate and theologate), the parishioners, and Archbishop Peter Loy Chong of Suva, who presided at the Eucharist. He also has a meeting with the formation personnel of the community.

On the morning of Friday 8 May, the Rector Major and his entourage left for Samoa, arriving at the airport in Apia in the afternoon. They went to the Salesian house in Alafua.

The following morning after Mass, the Rector Major was received by Archbishop Alapati Mataeliga of Samoa-Apia. He visited a new house of the FMA, which is close to the Archbishop's House, and then had a meeting with the confreres in the Salesian house. In the evening he met the Salesian Family of Apia.

On Sunday 10 May, after Mass in the parish of Leauva'a, they left by ship for Savai'i, another island of Samoa. On arrival in Saleloga, he received the traditional welcoming ceremony.

After Mass on the morning of Monday 11 May, he met with students and teachers of the Salesian school. The whole party then took the ship to return to Apia. In the evening they left for Auckland, New Zealand.

On the 12th the Rector Major and his secretary were welcomed by the Provincial of Australia, Fr Greg Chambers, and the young confreres from this fairly new community. Over two days the Rector Major visited the two parishes that have been entrusted temporarily to the Salesians and met the parishioners, the children of the parish schools, etc. He also met the confreres based in New Zealand.

On the morning of 14 May he left for Melbourne, Australia. After lunch at Sunbury with the community and other Salesians, the Rector Major spoke to the students and teachers of the school. He celebrated the Eucharist with the confreres and then met some members of the Salesian Family and other collaborators.

On 15 May the Rector Major visited Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne and met young executives and leaders of various Salesian schools in the work of Ferntree Gully. On his return to the Provincial House, he presided at Mass with a good group of Salesians and later had a meeting with them.

The following day, he visited the formation house where he celebrated the Eucharist. In the afternoon he had a meeting with the Provincial Council. On 17th he met the Salesian Family and the various national communities in the parish of St Margaret. In the evening, after dinner the Rector Major and his secretary left for their return to Rome, arriving at the Generalate in the afternoon of Monday 18 May after a long journey of 23 hours.

On the 19th the Rector Major did some office work and met a group from RAI for a special programme on Don Bosco.

On the afternoon of 20 May, he left by train with his secretary for Turin to attend the meeting of the Salesian Bishops, which took place from 21 to 25 May. There were three key moments: the Mass celebrated in the cathedral before the Holy Shroud on the morning of Friday 22 May; the pilgrimage to Colle Don Bosco on Saturday 23rd, and the Feast of Mary Help of Christians on the 24th.

On the afternoon of 25th, the meeting with the Salesian Bishops ended and the Rector Major returned to Rome where, from 27 to 29 May, he attended the meeting of Superior Generals, held at the Salesianum.

On 30, along with his secretary, he travelled back by train to Turin for a visit to the villages of Mathi and Nole, places much visited by Don Bosco. A special moment was the granting of honorary citizenship of Mathi and a visit to the paper mill that was once owned by Don Bosco and still has a small room that was used by Don Bosco and the chapel. On 31 May he paid a visit to Chieri, to the houses of the Salesians and the FMA. He presided at the procession of Mary Help of Christians. In the municipality he was granted honorary citizenship of Chieri. He returned to Rome on the morning of 1 June. In the afternoon the summer plenary session of the General Council began.

4.2 Chronicle of the General Councillors

The Vicar of the Rector Major

During this semester, the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Francis Cereda, while continuing with his ordinary tasks at the Generalate in collaboration with the General Secretariat, the Juridical Office, and the Economer General, also followed up the processes under way and kept in constant touch with the Provinces that approached him. He gave his support to some initiatives connected with the Bicentenary, like the EXPO in Milan, the International Pedagogical Conference of the UPS, collaboration with the Mission Office of Turin, and the Pope's visit to Turin. He made some particular visits and held specific meetings.

From Jan. 23 to Feb. 6, together his collaborator Fr Saimy Ezhanikatt, he visited the Vice-Provinces of Indonesia-East Timor (ITM), Sri Lanka (LKC) and Myanmar (MYM). In ITM and MYM he presided over the celebration for the installation of the new Superior, took part a meeting of the confreres and of the Provincial Council, met representatives of the various groups of the Salesian Family, visited some communities and met those in formation and their formation guides. In LKC he took part in the celebrations of the Bicentenary, met several confreres, including the Provincial Council, the confreres in formation and formation personnel, and visited all the communities in the Tamil-speaking area in the north of the country.

On Feb. 25 at Genzano he participated in a meeting held by the novices of Genzano and the post-novices of San Tarcisio, Rome to commemorate St. Louis Versiglia. On Feb. 27 and 28 and from Mar. 1 to 5, he took part in the Provincial Conferences of the South Asian Region at Hyderabad and the East Asia-Oceania Region at Hong Kong respectively, at which the Economer General too was present for a portion of both meetings. The Vicar also met the Provincial Councils of the two host Provinces of Hyderabad and China.

Fr Cereda represented the Rector Major on some particular occasions: on Mar. 12 at the Urban University, at a meeting of the Congregation for Catholic Education together with the Rectors and the Superiors General responsible for the Pontifical Universities in Rome; on Mar. 20 at the Capitol in

Rome, to receive a recognition given by the Catholic School Parents' Association (AGESC) to the Congregation for its commitment to education; at San Remo, to receive an award for creativity given to Don Bosco by the 'Global Education' World Association.

From Mar. 23 to Apr. 1, he participated in the intermediate session of the General Council, which studied especially the two regions of South Asia and East Asia-Oceania. On Apr. 11-12, he took part in the Bicentenary celebration and the commemoration of Fr Egidio Viganò at Sondrio (ILE); on Apr. 13-14 at Valdocco, Turin, he animated formation meetings for the Rectors and the Provincial Council of the Province of the Middle East; on Apr. 15-16 he was present at the academic celebration of the Colégio Mayor of Seville; on Apr. 17-18, on his journey to San Remo, he animated a gathering of Salesians, young people and laity on Project Europe; and on Apr. 29 he took part in the meeting of the Italian novices and pre-novices at Genzano.

On May 1, he was present for the feast of the Vice-Province of the UPS; on May 4, he conducted a meeting with the new Provincial Economers on the subject of religious life and discipline; On May 8 he received the Deputy Prime Minister of East Timor and his delegation at the Generalate; on May 9 and 10 he participated in the Bicentenary celebrations at Parma (ILE); on May 14 he was in Turin on the occasion of the visit to Valdocco of the President of the Italian Republic, the Hon. Sergio Mattarella; on May 15 he attended the opening of the International Catechetical Congress at the UPS. From May 21 to 25, with the collaboration of Fr Saimy, he coordinated the meeting of the Salesian Bishops in Turin, Colle Don Bosco and Chieri; and from May 27 to 29 he took part as a facilitator of the Assembly of Superiors General held at the 'Salesianum' in Rome.

The Councillor for Formation

In the period from January to May 2015, Fr Ivo Coelho, the General Councillor for Formation, paid visits to, and held meetings in, different formation communities in almost all regions:

– In January: in Portugal, where he conducted meetings for the animation of Rectors and the Provincial Council; and in Hungary, where he had the opportunity to animate the confreres and

celebrate the feast of Don Bosco with them;

– In February: on the first leg of his trip to Asia, that is, India, he met the regional formation coordinators at Siloam (Feb. 16-21), the Provincials of the South Asia Region at Hyderabad (Feb. 25-28), and visited some houses of the Provinces of INC, INS and INH (in the two last-mentioned Provinces he met the Provincial Councils);

– In March: he participated in the Conference of the East Asia–Oceania Region, which was held in Hong Kong (Mar. 2-4), where he also met the CIN Provincial Council. He then proceeded to visit various formation communities in the Region: in Hong Kong itself, in Vietnam (Mar. 5-8), in the Philippines North and South (Mar. 9-14), and in each Province he made it a point to sit down for a conversation with the Provincial Council.

Back in Rome, he attended the meeting of the Deans of the Salesian Theology centres of the Congregation, which took place at the UPS (Mar. 16-18), the International Pedagogical Congress held at Pisana (Mar. 19-21), and the intermediate session of the General Council (Mar. 23-Apr. 1).

– In April: after taking part in Rome with other Salesian formation personnel in the International Seminar for formation guides to the consecrated life, organized by the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, he paid a visit to the communities of Don Bosco and of Don Rua at the UPS (Apr. 13 and 24); he also visited Nave (Apr. 20-21) and the Crocetta in Turin (Apr. 22-23), and took part in the 'Curatorium' of these two communities. He concluded the month with a visit to the formation communities of Poland (Apr. 26-30).

– In May: after participating in the Provincial Conference of Central and Northern Europe (May 4-6), he made a round of visits to the different provinces of Central and South America, holding meetings everywhere with the respective Provincial Councils: in CAM (May 7-8: visit to CRESCO and the formation communities), in COB (May 9-10) and in COM (May 10-11). The last stop was in Brazil where he visited the formation communities of BSP and BPA. The month ended with a meeting with the novices of Europe at Colle Don Bosco, and then with the Salesian Bishops at Valdocco (May 20-23).

Among other things, he devoted his time during this period to revising the text on Salesian per-

sonal accompaniment and to organizing the courses of the Directors of Novices slated for next year.

The Councillor for Youth Ministry

In the six months following the winter session of the General Council, the Councillor for Youth Ministry, Fr Fabio Attard, continued the process of animation of the Mediterranean Region by holding two meetings aimed at strengthening the process of assimilation of the new edition of "Salesian Youth Ministry. Frame of reference."

In the first part of the month of February 2015, the remaining two meetings were conducted: the first, in Rome from Feb. 3 to 6 for the delegates and the members of their teams from the Provinces of Italy and the Middle East; the second, at Lisbon from Feb. 10 to 13 for the delegates of the provinces of Portugal and Spain.

The following were the animation meetings conducted by the Councillor for Youth Ministry:

- a meeting with the Rectors of the SSM Province (Madrid) on the role of the Rector in the light of the Year of Consecrated Life;
- two spiritual retreats on the theme of the 27th General Chapter: Feb. 22-28 at Genzano for the ICC; Apr. 6-11 in Malta for the Delegation of Malta;
- a visit of animation to three Provinces in India: ING (Guwahati), IND (Dimapur) and INN (New Delhi) from Mar. 2 to 16, including meetings for Salesians and collaborators on the new edition of "Salesian Youth Ministry. Frame of reference";
- a visit to the houses in the Holy Land, May 13-18, again on the Framework of Reference;
- participation in the meeting of those responsible for Development Offices (PDO) in the Africa-Madagascar Region, at Addis Ababa, Apr. 20-24;
- taking part, along with the Councillors for Formation, for the Missions and for Social Communication, in the meeting of the Provincials of the Region of Central and Northern Europe, at Munich from May 4 to 8.

The Councillor also represented the General Council at the official opening of EXPO 2015 at Milan from May 1 to 3.

Finally, together with the other members of the General Council, he took part in the meeting of the Salesian Bishops which was held in Turin from May 21 to 25.

The Councillor for Social Communication

January 2015. Following the winter plenary session of the General Council, the Councillor for Social Communication, Fr Filiberto González, took part from Jan. 23 to 25 in the opening of the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco at Turin - Valdocco, at which were present the Rector Major and the other General Councillors, the whole Salesian Family of Italy and the religious, civil and political authorities of the Region of Piedmont. From Jan. 28 to 30 he was in Barcelona, Spain to meet personally with the SMX Provincial, Fr Cristobal Lopez, and the Director of the EDEBE Publishing House together with its Governing Body. He participated in the XXIII award ceremony of the "EDEBE Literature Prize for Children and Youth" which was also held as a tribute to Don Bosco in the Bicentenary of his birth.

February 2015. In the following months, in addition to his ordinary work, he, together with the personnel of the Department, focused on preparing and disseminating information about various events connected with the Bicentenary and in renewing the sdb.org site. From the 19th to the 22nd there took place the meeting of the World Advisory Council for Social Communication on two central themes: strategies, contents and methodology for the systematic formation of Salesians to Social Communication, and the updating of Salesian Publishing Houses, according to Don Bosco's original way of thinking in the field of new cultures and technologies.

March 2015. From the 9th to the 12th, Fr Filiberto carried out a visit of animation in the CEP Province. In Prague he met the Provincial Delegate for Social Communication and Director of the Salesian Bulletin, the Director of the PORTAL Publishing House and the governing body. Also in Prague he met the one responsible at world level for the VDB and visited the Provincial House of the FMA. In Brno he met the interprovincial team for Social Communication, made up of 2 SDB, an FMA and a Salesian Cooperator. At Velehrad he met the team in charge of preparing the "DB 200 Event" and the director of NOE TV. Over the following days, from the 13th to the 16th, he paid a visit of animation to the SLK Province. In Bratislava he met the Provincial, the Delegate for Social Com-

munication, the Director of the Salesian Bulletin, the Director and staff of the Don Bosco Publishing House, and a group of Web and video editors. At Žilina he met those in formation together with the staff of the post-novitiate and the novitiate, and participated in the "School media" programme along with young people. He also visited the Salesian communities and works of Dubnica nad Vahom and Nova Dubnica and the Provincial House of the FMA. At Velky Biel he met the Provincial team for Social Communication. On his return to Rome, he was present at the International Pedagogical Congress at the Salesianum from the 19th to the 22nd. On the 27th he held a meeting of the Board of Directors of the SEI.

April 2105. From Apr. 8 to 10, he had a meeting in Madrid with the the Board of Directors of the CCS Publishing house and also the delegates for Social Communication of the SMX and SSM Provinces. On the 17th and 18th, at the FSC-UPS, together with the FMA Councillor for Social Communication, he chaired the Days of Salesian Formation of the SDB and FMA to Social Communication. From the 23rd to the 26th at the Salesianum he presided over a meeting of the Directors of the Salesian Publishing Houses in Europe. From the 26th to the 28th he paid a visit of animation to the Province of Slovenia (SLO), where he met the Provincial, the Delegate for Social Communication who is also the Provincial Secretary, and the Director of the Bulletin and of the website. He met the Provincial team for Social Communication. He visited the house of Maribor. From Apr. 29 to May 2 he made a visit of animation to the Province of Croatia (CRO). He met the Provincial, the Delegate for Social Communcation together with his team and the Director of the Salesian Bulletin. He dedicated a full day to explain the SSCS and to present the Message for the 49th World Day of Social Communication to forty Salesians of the Province. He visited the prenovitiate and the Salesian community of Zagreb and the house of Žepče in Bosnia Herzegovina.

May 2015. From the 3rd to the 8th he attended the meeting of the Provincials of the Region of Central and Northern Europe. He met the Sister Delegate for Social Communication and the Director of the Don Bosco Publishing House. From the 14th to the 17th, at Valdocco-Turin, he had a meeting with the

Delegates for Social Communication of the Mediterranean Region. He paid a visit to the Book Fair and to Valsalice. Subsequently, he dropped in at Pinerolo for some animation of the novices. He visited the "Don Bosco House" at the EXPO in Milan, and spent time with the coordinators and the staff of the Project. He met the Director of the Salesian Bulletin and the Don Bosco Mission Office. From the 21st to the 23rd he participated in the meeting of the Salesian Bishops in Turin-Valdocco. After that, from the 25th to the 28th, at Debki-Danzig (PLN), he presided over a meeting of the Delegates for Salesian Communication of the Region of Central and Northern Europe.

The Councillor for the Missions

When the winter session of the General Council concluded, Fr Guillermo Basañes left for Malaysia to be the guest of the Archbishop of Kota Kinabalu, from the 26th to the 31st of January. During his visit, accompanied by two confreres (from FIN and ITM), he conducted a study of the situation in view of a possible new presence in this country where there are no SDBs.

Soon afterwards, until Feb. 8, the Councillor made a visit of animation to the houses of the Delegation of Indonesia.

Back in Europe, he was in the Salesian community of Vilnius, in Lithuania (ICP), from Feb. 12 to 15. At Riga he met the only confrere (from PLE) who lives and works in neighbouring Latvia.

On his return journey to Rome, Fr Guillermo stopped for a few hours at Brussels to meet the missionaries of Project Europe, the community of the Mission Office and the staff of Via Don Bosco.

At the Generalate, he attended several meetings of the 'Don Bosco Network' (DBN) from the 18th to the 29th of February.

Later, accompanied by the entire team of the Department for the Missions, he presided over the World Consultation Body of the Sector at Barcelona, Spain from Feb. 23 to 25.

From Feb. 28 to Mar. 9 Fr Basañes carried out a visit of missionary animation to some of the communities of the Apostolic Vicariate of Chaco Paraguayo, and took part in the annual meeting of missionaries at Puerto Casado, which was presided over by our confrere, Bishop Gabriel Escobar.

Being close by, he stayed for a few days (from Mar. 10 to 16) at

Buenos Aires, visiting his parents and relatives.

Subsequently, along with the other members of the General Council, he took part in the International Pedagogical Congress in Rome from Mar. 19 to 21.

At the end of the Intermediate Council, Fr Guillermo left for Baku, Azerbaijan where he celebrated Holy Week together with the confreres.

From Apr. 8 to 21, the Councillor for the Missions again travelled to South America, this time to the Provinces of Campo Grande and Manaus in Brazil. There, making long journeys in many different ways, he met the confreres (the Provincial Councils, those in formation, missionaries, etc.), paying special attention all the while to the Salesian work with indigenous peoples.

A few days later, Fr Guillermo found himself involved in an intense programme of missionary animation in the Provinces of Tiruchy and Chennai in India from Apr. 26 to May 1, which also included a particular visit to the missionary aspirantate at Perambur (INM).

On May 3, the first Sunday of EXPO - Milan 2015, he spent the entire day going around the international exhibition and made a special intervention on Salesian pedagogy at our stand, the "Casa Don Bosco".

From May 4 to 7, at Munich, he took part, along with other Councillors, in a meeting of the Provincials of the Region of Central and Northern Europe.

A few days later, he had work to do at the annual DBN assembly at Stony Point, New York, from May 12 to 15. On the 15th he spent some time with the confreres of the formation house of Orange, and on the following weekend with the confreres and the Mission Office of Montreal, Canada, concluding there the Bicentenary celebration of Don Bosco on Monday the 18th together with the Salesian Family.

He celebrated the feast of Mary Help of Christians together with the Salesian Bishops from around the world in Turin from May 21 to 25.

Finally, on May 28 at the UPS, along with other confreres from the Generalate, he participated in an important meeting for a reflection on missiology in the Congregation.

The Economer General

The Economer General's calendar for the first half of 2015 kept him occupied with regional meetings of Provincial Economers (of South Asia, at Chennai; of Europe, at Barcelona; of East Asia and Oceania, at Hong Kong), and of Latin America and Interamerica, at Sao Paulo. In all these meetings, he treated both formative and informative topics aimed at bringing about a better coordination of the administration at all levels in the Congregation.

The role of the Provincial Economer and the responsibility of the Provincial Council for putting the administration completely at the service of youth ministry was the focus of the Economer General's talk in his meetings with the Provincials of the East Asia-Oceania Region (Hong Kong) and the South Asia Region (Hyderabad).

A deeper understanding of the South Asia and the East Asia-Oceania Regions, which were treated in the meeting of the General Council in March, helped him to strengthen the bonds with the Provinces and with the confreres holding responsibility.

To the 18 participants taking part in a course for new Provincial Economers, he offered guidelines for a modern, transparent and effective administration. The challenge arising from a diversity of cultures in managing the administration, both at provincial and local levels, still remains and requires greater efforts in all the formation stages of our young Salesians and at all levels of our Congregation.

In his meeting with the Directors of Salesian Publishing Houses, and especially at the annual assembly of the SEI in Turin, he emphasized a professional approach and suggested a deeper pooling of our resources in the field of entrepreneurship.

His visit to the Zenit Consortium centre in Florence and his dialogue with Catholic entrepreneurs and those responsible in the socio-educational field in America, Europe and Asia led him to a greater understanding and awareness of the possibilities existing in the social field and in the work with and for the marginalized.

The reflection he had with the members of the Vatican Curia (diocesan bishops and administration heads) was an occasion for an in-depth dialogue on implementing the guidelines issued by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. The two assemblies of the Economers General in Rome (in March and in May) dealt with the same issues.

His visit to the confreres of Ethiopia in March, his participation in a conference to the Salesian Brothers, and his visit to the Provincial Economer's office made for a greater mutual understanding, a deeper sense of the common mission, and a constructive partnership with the AET Province. The same could be said of his visit to Eritrea, where the Economer General faced a number of difficult situations arising from the highly restrictive policies of the place and the miserable social environments.

His participation in the Forum on "Economics and Business Ethics in Christianity and Islam" and at a conference on "New Environmental Economics" at the University of the Holy Cross in Rome were two important opportunities for formation and sharing among experts with a view to being better prepared to meet future challenges.

His presence at the Tribunals in Rome, Luxembourg and Milan, and his several meetings with lawyers and legal experts to defend the rights of the Direzione Generale, to guide the handling of the ongoing processes and to launch the criminal process have been, and will continue to be in the coming months, a matter of high priority.

The Economer General's team continues with the work of registering the data relating to accounts, analyzing the provincial budgets and fine-tuning the database so as to arrive by 2017 at a global and permanent oversight of the administrative situation of the Congregation.

After Easter, because of the flaring of mineral oils from storage tanks at the Generalate, the work of eliminating the contamination from the soil called for a huge expenditure of his time in meetings and site visits in view of the urgent and necessary decisions to be made and the bureaucratic requirements to be complied with.

In the first half of the year, as a member of the Board of administration, the Economer General actively took part in various associations and foundations linked to the Direzione Generale, such as "Don Bosco International" in Brussels, the "Governing Body" of the Mission Office in Madrid, the "Pro Juventute" at the UPS in Rome, the Foundation "Don Bosco in the World" in Rome, the Mission Office in Bonn, the Edulife foundation in Verona, and others. At all of them, he worked hard to give guidelines for an administration that is more in line with our Salesian spirit.

His participation in the Salesian Pedagogical Congress and his intervention in the European Assembly of therapeutic pedagogy were moments for reflection and a personal sense of direction.

The Councillor for the **Africa and Madagascar** *Region*

When the winter session of the General Council concluded, the Regional Councillor for Africa and Madagascar, Fr Américo Chaquisse, left for a two-day animation meeting, in the presence of the Provincial, in the Salesian community of Manzini, Swaziland (AFM). From Jan. 27 to 29 he visited Mozambique (MOZ) for a meeting with the Council of the Vice-Province. On Jan. 30, he left for the Ivory Coast to begin the Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of West Francophone Africa (AFO). On Feb. 1, he presided at the Mass for the feast of Don Bosco in the Salesian parish of St. Francis of Assisi, Abidjan-Koumassi. On Feb. 2 he had a meeting with the AFO Provincial Council at Abidjan and officially began the extraordinary visitation. This visitation took up all his time till May 22, 2015 and required him to travel to all the seven French-speaking countries of West Africa (Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea Conakry, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin).

The Regional also took part in "conferences for the SDBs and FMAs in initial formation" that were jointly organized by the SDB and FMA Formation Commissions and held in the postnovitiate of Lomé. On Apr. 19, he took part in the Youth Pasch and presided at the Eucharist. On May 18 and 19 he participated in the Curatorium of the novitiate and the postnovitiate of ATE and AFO at Lomé. In the afternoon of May 19 he met the Provincial Council to share the conclusions of his extraordinary visitation. The next day he concluded his visitation by presenting his conclusions to the confreres and celebrating the Eucharist. On May 22 he returned à Rome and went on to Turin to take part in the meeting of the Salesian Bishops. On May 26, he went to Yaounde - Cameroon to participate in the meeting of the formation personnel of AFO and ATE, and in the 'Curatorium' of the St. Augustine theologate of Yaounde. On May 30 he presided at the Eucharist and installed the new Superior of ATE. The following day he returned to Rome.

The Councillor for the Latin America - South Cone *Region*

After taking part with the Rector Major in the feast of Don Bosco in Turin on Jan. 31, Fr Natale Vitali left on Feb. 2 for Brazil, where on the 7th, at the Salesian studentate of Lapa (BSP), he participated in the ordination of 11 deacons from the six Provinces of Brazil.

On Feb. 10 he presented to the Provincial Council of Belo Horizonte the letter of the Rector Major at the close of the extraordinary visitation that he had carried out in the second half of 2014.

The following day he began the Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of "St. Aloysius Gonzaga", Recife, with a meeting of all the Rectors and the Provincial Council. The Visitation continued till May 7.

During this period he visited the 15 communities of the Province, met the Provincial Council (three times), all the Rectors, the Provincial of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and also participated in a two-day provincial assembly at which more than 50 Salesians were present.

At the same time, during the extraordinary visitation, he carried out, in the same province, a consultation for the new Provincial.

From Apr. 1 to 12 he took part in a meeting of the Salesian Provincials of CISBRASIL in the city of Brasilia. On Apr. 15 he spent the whole day with the Commission of the Salesian parish priests of Brazil in order to launch the Salesian Parish Network.

From Apr. 19 to 22 he was present, together with the Economer General, Br. Jean Paul Muller, at the meeting of the Provincial Economers of America, at Campos do Jordao (BSP).

On Apr. 23 and 24 he met the ARN Rectors for an assessment of the extraordinary visitation of the year 2012. Subsequently, he carried out the consultation for the new Provincial of ARN in three places: Rosario, Córdoba and Resistencia.

On Apr. 29 he took part in the 'Curatorium' of the postnovitiate of Córdoba whose postnovices are from ARS, CIL and URU. And the next day he spent with the 'Curatorium' of the novitiate of Alta Gracia (ARN) where there are 11 novices from the Provinces of CISUR: ARN, ARS, CIL, PAR and URU.

On May 1 and 2 he was present at the Congress of 140 Salesian Cooperators of the South Cone Region, which took place in the city of Luján, Argentina and which, among other things, elected a Councillor for the World Council of Cooperators.

On May 9 he took part in the BMA Provincial Council to study various topics, particularly the financial situation of the Province.

On May 11 and 12 he took part in the ARS Provincial Council and over the next two days met 37 Salesian religious directors and 29 lay directors for an evaluation of the extraordinary visitation made in 2012.

On May 17 he returned to Rome to take part in the meeting of the Salesian Bishops in Turin from the 21st to the 25th of May.

The Councillor for the Interamerica *Region*

For most of the period between the end of January and the end of May 2015, Fr Timothy Ploch, the Regional Councillor for Interamérica, was kept busy with his first Extraordinary Visitation in the province of Mexico-México (MEM). However, before he started the Visitation, he paid a visit to the provinces of BOL (Jan. 27 to Feb. 1 to get acquainted with the communities of El Alto, Escoma and La Paz), MEG (Feb. 2- 6 to get to know the communities of Irapuato, Leon, Sahuayo and Zamora and meet the Provincial Council), SUO and SUE (Feb. 7-11 for Curatorium meetings in the novitiate and post-novitiate). He joined the Provincials, Provincial councils and Rectors of both Mexican provinces from Feb. 12 to 14 for their spiritual retreat preached by the Rector Major emeritus, Fr Pascual Chavez. During those days he also held a meeting with the Provincial Council of MEM as required at the start of an Extraordinary Visitation.

Upon arriving in Mexico City on Feb. 14 the Regional went to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe to entrust the visitation to the patroness of the province of MEM. On Feb. 16 the confreres came together for their Provincial Gratitude Day, on which occasion the Regional was able to meet most of the confreres, present himself to them, and give the outlines of the visitation. There then followed visits to each of the communities of MEM until mid-May. The Regional absented himself twice from the province: first, to accompany the Rector Major on his visit to the Vice-Province of Haiti (Mar. 10-14), and the second time, to return to his home province of SUE for

the Sacred Triduum of Easter. Towards the end of the visitation he met the MEM provincial commissions of youth ministry, formation, and the Salesian Family. The visitation concluded on May 18 with a meeting of the Provincial council, a meeting of all the Rectors, the presentation of the report to the confreres, and a final Eucharist and festive meal.

Of particular significance was the national celebration of the Bicentenary of Don Bosco's birth. All the four Salesian provinces of Mexico (2 SDB and 2 FMA) filled the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Saturday, May 2, with close to 15,000 members of the Salesian Family and young people. The Papal Nuncio to Mexico, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, presided over the Eucharist and the Regional delivered the homily. The day concluded with a youthful presentation of music, dance and drama in the Arena of the City of Mexico.

After concluding the Extraordinary Visitation in MEM, the Regional went to Guatemala on May 19 to meet the Central American (CAM) Provincial and his Council for an evaluation of their implementation of the conclusions of their previous Extraordinary Visitation in 2013, and also for a few days of rest. Afterwards, he joined the Rector Major and the rest of the General Council in Turin for the Feast of Mary Help of Christians and the meeting of Salesian Bishops, arriving back in Rome to begin the summer session on June 1.

The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania *Region*

When the winter session of the General Council ended, Fr Václav Klement spent three months carrying out the extraordinary visitation of the Province of China (CIN, based in Hong Kong) from Jan. 25 till Apr. 28. The visitation took place in the form of a discernment according to the style of GC27 (listening - reading - the way forward) and every local community received at the end a biblical icon of 'Jesus the Vine' as a visible sign of conversion and deeper belonging to God, to the confreres and to the young. The extraordinary visitation had to be interrupted three times.

The first interruption occurred from Mar. 2 to 7 when the Councillor went to Cheung Chau (Hong Kong, CIN) to chair the first annual post-GC27 meeting of the Provincials of the Region. Along with all the ten Provincials and the four Superior-Delegates, the Provincial Economers were also present. Thanks to the solid preparation and the presence of the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Francis Cereda, the Economer General, Br. Jean Paul Muller, and the Councillor for Formation, Fr Ivo Coelho, the meeting was a very fruitful one. It was also very enjoyable to listen to Card. Joseph Zen SDB sharing his experiences and to visit some of the cultural and ecclesial realities of China during the week.

The second interruption from Mar. 25 to 30 was due to Fr Klement's having to participate in the Intermediate Council in Rome for a study of the East Asia and Oceania Region. During this period, five Provincials from the Region were also present in Rome: the four newly-appointed Provincials of FIS, ITM, MYM and VIE, and the Provincial of THA who was half-way through his six-year term. After five days of intensive contacts with the Rector Major and the Councillors for the Sectors, the five new Provincials received from Fr Ángel a navigation chart comprising ten practical points for their work of animation and government.

The third interruption occurred on Apr. 11 when the Regional presided over the installation of the new Provincial, Fr Godofredo Atienza, in Cebu (FIS, Philippines South) and met the Provincial Council of Southern Philippines and Pakistan at Punta Princessa, Cebu.

From Apr. 29 till May 18, Fr Václav accompanied the Rector Major on his visit of Salesian animation in Oceania: Papua New Guinea (Apr. 30-May 2), Solomon Islands (May 3-6), Fiji (May 7-8), Samoa (May 9-11), New Zealand (May 12-13) and Melbourne, Australia (May 14-17). Thanks to the regional service of Australasia (*www.bosco.link*; Br. Hilario Seo, KOR) which was reactivated in Feb. 2015, the entire visit of the Rector Major received good coverage in the Region and in the Congregation. Accompanying the team was Fr Jacob Irruppakkaattu from the Social Communication Sector (RMG) who saw to the videos and the photos. The Rector Major's visit also helped to gather various testimonies for the Salesian Mission Day of 2016 concerning the 'first proclamation of Jesus Christ in Oceania'.

On his return to headquarters in Rome, the Councillor left for Piedmont. He spent a day at Chieri with the Salesian Bishops who had gathered at Valdocco, Turin (May

20-23), and met the nine Salesian Bishops from East Asia and Oceania.

The final trip of the semester was to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (May 25-31) to instal the new Provincial of Vietnam-Mongolia (VIE), Fr Joseph Nguyen Van Quang. Fr Klement also took part in the Provincial Assembly, in the Bicentenary celebrations with the parents of the confreres, and in the perpetual profession of six young Vietnamese missionaries from Cambodia (THA), South Sudan (AFE), Nigeria (AFW), Pakistan (FIS) and Uganda (AGL). The first meeting with the new Provincial Council was the most important moment of this visit.

The Councillor for the **South Asia** *Region*

When the winter session of the General Council ended, the Councillor for the Region of South Asia, Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, left for Bangalore on Jan. 27, 2015 to instal the new Provincial, Fr Mathew Thonikuzhiyil. The next day he took part in the installation of the new Provincial of New Delhi, Fr Jose Mathew Koorapallil. He celebrated the feast of Don Bosco in the Province of Dimapur.

On Feb. 1, the Regional began the Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of Dimapur (IND) by meeting with the Provincial and his Council. He then began to visit all the communities, one by one. On Feb. 7 he held a first meeting with all the Rectors and those in charge of communities. His visits, which occupied the period from February to May, took in the 47 Salesian presences scattered in four Indian States, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland and Manipur. During his visit, he met all the confreres, the significant groups in each community, and the members of the Salesian Family and other religious who collaborate in the mission. He also called on the bishops of the Diocese of Miao, Dibrugarh, Imphal and Kohima, and the Provincials of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA) and of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC), both of which institutes operate in the territory. In the course of his visit, he met the Provincial Council three times, and conducted the monthly retreats for the confreres in four different areas - Harmutty, Dimapur, Tinsukia and Imphal.

He had to interrupt his visits to take part in two important meetings. One was the annual Assembly of the Salesian Provincial Conference of South Asia (SPCSA), held from Feb. 23 to 28, at which were also present for the last two days Fr Francis Cereda (Vicar the Rector Major), Fr Ivo Coelho (Councillor for Formation) and Br. Jean Paul Muller (Economer General). The other interruption took place from Mar. 22 to 28 when he participated in the Intermediate Session of the General Council in Rome for a study of the South Asia Region.

Returning to Dimapur, the Region continued his visit to the remaining houses. In the meanwhile, he also paid a brief visit to the missionary aspirantate of Sirajuli and offered some guidance to the Regional Commission for Social Communication in Guwahati. Towards the end of the visit, Fr Maria Arokiam presided over the function for the perpetual profession of three confreres on May 17. The following day, he held a meeting with the Provincial Council and all the Rectors to conclude the Visitation. From Dimapur, the Regional travelled to Chennai, celebrated the feast of Mary Help of Christians in the city, and then moved on to Sri Lanka. From May 25 to 28 he held the consultation for the appointment of the new Superior, and returned to Rome on May 31 for the summer session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the **Central and North Europe** *Region*

At the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Region of Central and Northern Europe, Fr Tadeusz Rozmus, participated in the Bicentenary celebrations of the birth of Don Bosco in Turin, and soon afterwards left for Poland to preside over the festivities for the Feast of Don Bosco in the community of Oswiecim, Świętochłowice and Krakow-Nowa Huta. Starting from Jan. 31, the feast of Don Bosco, he was fully occupied till May 16 in conducting the extraordinary visitation of the Province of Piła (PLN). The visitation in the name of the Rector Major began with a meeting with the Rectors of the Province, followed by a meeting with the Provincial Council. The first communities to be visited were the Salesian communities of Piła. On Feb. 6 Fr Rozmus returned to Rome to take part in the Commission of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy. The following day he returned to the Province and

continued the extraordinary visitation, visiting the communities of Kawnice, Poznań and Kowalewo, the post-novitiate in Ląd, Konin, and then the confreres in Stockholm and Fitja in Sweden.

On his return from Sweden, the Regional visited the community of Łomianki, where he met the confreres serving the Card. Stefan Wyszynski University in Warsaw. He spent Feb. 20 at the studentate of theology in Krakow, and then went by train to North Poland to visit the confreres of the communities of Gdańsk, Rumia, Slupsk, Szczecin, Gumieńce, Wielgowo, Swobnica, Trzciniec and Czaplinek. He celebrated Palm Sunday with the confreres, and before Easter, paid a visit to the community of Debrzno. Because of a serious deterioration in the health of his mother, he went to visit her in hospital, and then returned to Piła.

Immediately after Easter Fr Rozmus left for Russia to visit the confreres of the community of St. Petersburg, Rostov and Moscow. He returned to Poland to take part in the meeting of the Conference of the Polish Provinces (KSIP) which was held in Krakow.

From Krakow he proceeded to Warsaw to attend the International Fair of Catholic Publishers, where the Regional was awarded the "Mały Feniks 2015". On Apr. 21 he was present at the celebrations of the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco at the Card. Stefan Wyszynski University, where he also gave a conference. He returned once more to the Province of Piła to continue his visitation, this time to the two communities of Bydgoszcz.

On Apr. 26, he left for the extraordinary visitation in Georgia and on May 2 travelled to the Marian Shrine of Szczyrk to preside over the festivities. He then returned to Piła and went with the Provincial, Fr Marek Chmielewski, to the meeting of the Provincials of the Region of Central and Northern Europe at Munich from May 4 to 8. The meeting was attended by all the Provincials of the Region, and included the four General Councillors for the Sectors.

Returning from Munich, he continued his visit to the two remaining communities, viz. those of Aleksandrów and Toruń. He was back on May 13 at the Provincial House of Piła, and on May 15 and 16 concluded the extraordinary visitation by meeting the Provincial Council and taking part in the feast of the Province of St. Adalbert.

Before returning to Rome, he made a brief visit to his mother

who had made a miraculous recovery, and took part in a historic session in the Polish Parliament in Warsaw in connection with the Bicentenary celebration. On May 21, together with the Rector Major and the Council he was present in Turin for the meeting of Salesian Bishops. He then went to Slovakia to preside, in the name of the Rector Major, at the Marian feast on Mount Butkov.

From Slovakia he returned to Rome, and thence proceeded to the Holy Land, joining in the Retreat of the confreres of the Province of Great Britain.

On May 31, he was back in Rome to participate – from June 1 – in the summer plenary session of the General Council.

The Councillor for the **Mediterranean Region**

In the period immediately following the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council, the Councillor for the Mediterranean Region, Fr Stephen Martoglio, attended the national celebration of the Bicentenary in Turin on 24 January 2015. It was a national celebration, a homage of gratitude, that Salesian Italy wanted to pay to Don Bosco by celebrating a solemn Mass in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, at which the Rector Major presided. In the afternoon, there was a civic commemoration at the Teatro Regio, in the presence of religious, civil and military authorities, to honour Don Bosco.

On Jan. 28, Fr Martoglio commenced his extraordinary visitation of the Province of the "Adolescent Jesus" in the Middle East. The visitation began in our house in Tehran, where we have a Latin-rite parish. After the visit to Tehran, Fr Martoglio went to Istanbul to continue the visitation in our community there. From Turkey he proceeded to Egypt, and then to Lebanon.

From Lebanon, the visitor travelled by car to Syria to visit the confreres of the two communities of Syria: Damascus and Aleppo. The visit to Syria was a very important one, besides being a very moving and highly significant experience. Fr Martoglio brought the assurance of the nearness and the presence of the Rector Major and the entire Congregation to those confreres and those people who are bearing witness to their Christian faith in a heroic manner in a nation that is at war for the past four years. Fr Martoglio had a wonderful experience of Christian

and Salesian witness during the week he spent in Syria.

From Syria, passing through Lebanon and Jordan, Fr Martoglio proceeded to visit the Salesian communities of Israel and Palestine. He ended these visits on Mar. 22 and returned to Istanbul to conclude the visitation with three days of meetings with the Provincial of the Middle East and his Council.

On Mar. 25 Fr Martoglio returned to Rome for a change of situation and suitcases! On Mar. 28 the Regional left for the Province of Portugal to start the extraordinary visitation of that Province.

Arriving in Lisbon, he began his visit at Evora where he spent Palm Sunday. During Holy Week, he proceeded to Vendas Novas, and for the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday, he was at the Provincial centre in Lisbon. In the evening of Easter Sunday, he went to Porto to visit the two communities there. The visitation then took him to Pojares, Mirandela and Mogofores in central Portugal. He later returned to the Lisbon area to visit Manique and Estoril, and finally the community of Lisbon - Oficina San Jose.

In early May, the Visitor went to visit the house of Funchal, Madeira Island. From May 11 to 13 there was a meeting of the Iberian Conference, at which were present the two Provincials of Spain and Portugal, and the Regional himself, Fr Martoglio. The Iberian Conference was a time for work, but also for a pilgrimage: all members of the Conference went to Fatima to take part in the vigil during the night of May 12 and in the feast next day, which was an extraordinary celebration of faith by a multitude of the faithful.

From May 18 to 22, Fr Martoglio was in Cape Verde, Sao Vicente, to visit the community in the city of Mindelo. When the visit was over, he travelled together with the Provincial, Fr Artur Pereira, to Valdocco to take part in the feast of Mary Help of Christians together with the Rector Major, the General Council and the Salesian Bishops invited for the feast by the Rector Major.

On May 26, Fr Martoglio was back in Portugal to complete the extraordinary visitation. He spent two days with the Council, and a day with the Council and the Rectors of the houses of Portugal. The visit to Portugal was a wonderful opportunity to experience the pastoral life and history of this beautiful country, this portion of the Congregation and the Mediterranean region.

The two visitations that Fr Martoglio carried out in this period were a time of intense work, enriched by a beautiful Salesian experience and the grace of God.

5.1 The Rector Major to the Salesian Bishops – Presentation of the General Chapter XXVII *"Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel"*

This is the talk given by the Rector Major on May 22, 2015 during the meeting of the Salesian Bishops gathered in Turin-Valdocco to celebrate together, in a spirit of Salesian brotherhood, the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco.

Your Eminences and Excellencies,

but above all, dearly beloved Salesian confreres! This morning I renew the welcome I already expressed to you last evening and my profound "Thank you!" for having accepted the Rector Major's invitation to come to Turin on the occasion of the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco. Welcome, welcome back to your home! Because Valdocco is the home of every Salesian of yesterday, today and tomorrow. It continues to be correctly called the "Mother House", because our beloved Father Don Bosco lived here, and here was born the Salesian Congregation, the spiritual family to which each of us belongs. In this year of grace you have become pilgrims to Turin to draw strength and inspiration for your episcopal ministry from the source of the Salesian charism. To greet you together with me is the Rector Major Emeritus, Fr Pascual Chavez, who so worthily led the Congregation for 12 years as the ninth successor of Don Bosco, and whom we have the joy of having with us these days.

A few or many years ago, you left the service in the Salesian Congregation to take up – at the behest of Peter's Successor – the ministry of bishops in the particular Churches or in the offices of the Holy See. I imagine that this new mission has been an unexpected and decisive turning point in your life. It has brought you not only new and different responsibilities, but also costly detachments. You have left the apostolic "front line" among the young, you have left the Salesian communities and a network of relationships with your confreres who were your "fellow travellers" and shared the story-line of your life. You have probably felt this detachment and – at certain times – it may have generated in you a sense of loss and loneliness. Well, allow me to tell you – as Don Bosco would certainly tell you right now – "Feel yourselves always at home in the Salesian Congregation!" It always

remains your "Mother House". Feel always near and present to you the affection of the Rector Major and the confreres who are proud of you, and the gratitude of the young people you have met in carrying out your Salesian mission. Feel always at home in any Salesian house in the world. Do not be afraid at any time to ask for the support and help that one would expect to find amongst one's brothers.

The Congregation has given you much: the example of holiness of so many good confreres, spiritual help and accompaniment, doctrinal and pastoral formation. The experiences you matured in the Congregation (oftentimes in tasks of governing or teaching) have formed you into suitable candidates for the episcopate and have made you worthy – in the eyes of Peter's Successor – to assume the episcopal ministry. This charismatic Salesian heritage is now in you and certainly marks the style of your episcopate.

But you too, though no longer serving the Congregation on the operational level, give much to it because of who you are. In you there has been realized a singular manifestation of the Holy Spirit, who has made you successors of the Apostles, Pastors in the Church, endowed with the office of sanctifying, teaching and governing. Through your episcopal consecration there has been conferred on you the fullness of Holy Orders: "By means of the imposition of hands and the words of consecration, ... bishops... sustain the roles of Christ Himself as Teacher, Shepherd and High Priest, and... act in His person" (LG 21). By your presence, therefore, you bear witness to us of your love for the Church and the Pope (so alive and real in Don Bosco), you point to us the living and active presence of the Holy Spirit, you call us to cherish and safeguard the precious gift of the priesthood, you remind us that our Salesian communities spread around the world are called to live in communion with the local Churches and their Pastors.

I renew, therefore, my thanks to you for having accepted the invitation to participate from all over the world in this pilgrimage to our Salesian sources and I confirm my personal affection and that of all the confreres.

1. A prolonged season of grace

The 27th General Chapter ideally brought to a close a time-span which, starting from the 22nd Gen-

eral Chapter, placed the whole Congregation in a state of operative reflection in order to safeguard the precious spiritual patrimony inherited from Don Bosco, to grasp its greatness and beauty, to respond – starting from it – to the questions and expectations of the young people of all continents, and to revive in the heart of every confrere the awareness of the gift received and the sense of responsibility. Looking back over the 30 years from 1984 to 2014, we realize that we have been guided from above, within a coherent design, of which only now we can perceive the story-line. Let me recall it briefly.

The 22nd General Chapter of 1984 concluded the reflections launched by the Special General Chapter to rethink and adapt the *Constitutions* to the vision and guidelines of the Second Vatican Council and to the impulse given to the renewal of religious life. It gave us a text "which every Salesian should keep with him as his identity card".[1] The approval of the Apostolic See, on November 25, 1984, the feast of Christ the King, pronounced authoritatively once again the authenticity of the evangelical way traced out by our Founder.

The 23rd General Chapter focused on the heart of the Salesian mission, viz. educating young people to the faith.

The 24th General Chapter identified the new subject of the Salesian mission, which no longer comprises only consecrated persons, but also "*Salesians and lay people*" who are called to live in communion and share in the spirit and mission of Don Bosco by drawing up an educational and pastoral project together with us.

The next Chapter, the 25th, in 2002, asked itself about the physiognomy of the Salesian community today within this new and broader view of the subject of the mission, and identified it in its task of being the "*animating nucleus*" of the educative and pastoral community.

The 26th General Chapter reflected on the *spirit* that should animate and pervade the mission, which is not pure social action but arises from a heart full of zeal for the salvation of humanity and has its source in the heart of Christ. Every Salesian, then, can describe himself in this way not only if he works for the young but if he carries out his mission, animated by the very same spirit of Don Bosco,

[1] E. VIGANÒ, *Presentation. Constitutions of the Society of St. Francis de Sales*, p. 5.

and becomes his programme of life: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*. The mystical and ascetic dimensions are thus two inseparable components of our Salesian identity.

As you can see from the journey we undertook, the movement – starting from the new draft of the Constitutions – was gradually becoming more and more focused. We went from the vast horizons of the mission ("educating young people to the faith") to the subjects who carry it out ("Salesians and lay people"), to the face and the role of the Salesian community today, to the spirit that must permeate and animate the mission.

A last piece of this mosaic was missing, viz. the person of the Salesian. In other words, there came about a realization that it is crucial for *every Salesian* to have a clear awareness of his identity as a consecrated person and to be prepared to live the freely assumed demands and obligations of religious life in a consistent and courageous manner, in work and temperance.

And so, we come to the 27th General Chapter which focused on the theme, "*Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel. Work and Temperance*." Explaining the choice of this theme, the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chavez, stated in his opening speech that it "is an appeal addressed to the entire Congregation"[2] and aims to apply the dream of the "ten diamonds" to the current situation. The dream, on the one hand, outlines the solid God-centred physiognomy of the Salesian founded on faith, hope and charity, which is "given a particular tone through work and temperance, and is characterized by a life consecrated to the Lord that finds support in fasting and prayer".[3] At the same time, it realistically offers "a warning of what could happen if our personal, pastoral, community and institutional life is not up to the measure of the gift of the vocation we have received".[4]

As you can see from these enlightening words, "*Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel*" is much less a study theme peripheral to us, and much more a "*decisive question*" on which depends the future of each of us and of our Congregation. Explaining the term "*radical*" which is connected semantically with the word "*root*",

[2] P. CHÁVEZ, *Acts of the XXVII General Chapter*, p. 90.
[3] *Ibidem*.
[4] *Ibidem*.

Fr Chavez pointed to both aspects, viz. a *depth* of life and also *humility* (from *humus*), which is "'a life hidden in Christ', from which and only from which can spiritual, apostolic and vocational fertility (fruits!) spring forth".[5]

At the end of this journey which lasted 30 years, we cannot but praise God who with his Spirit has guided us, in the Church and with the Church, to make our own the broad guidelines of the Second Vatican Council. I am also happy at this moment to recall and to bless the various successors of Don Bosco we have had after the Council: Fr Luigi Ricceri, Fr Egidio Viganò, Fr Juan Edmundo Vecchi, Fr Pascual Chavez. With the total dedication of their lives, they have wisely led the Congregation in this journey of fidelity and renewal.

2. The development of the theme in the Chapter

The 27th General Chapter took place from 24th of February to the 12th of April, 2014. The concluding date was especially dear to us because it recalled the beginning of the work of Don Bosco at Valdocco on Easter Sunday, the 12th of April 1846. The Chapter members – members by right and those elected – were 207. In addition, there were 13 guests, especially Salesian brothers or newly appointed Provincials. So, the assembly was made up of 220 Chapter members, of whom 128 were taking part for the first time. They represented the 90 juridical circumscriptions of the Congregation. Without taking into account the members of the General Council and the confreres who were invited, the participants came from the following geographical areas: 24 Chapter members from Africa and Madagascar, 47 from America, 47 from Asia, and 69 from Europe. The average age was 48 years.

The theme, *Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel*, was structured around three key points: *mysticism, prophecy and service*. They highlighted the fundamental aspects of our apostolic consecration: the experience of God, fraternal life in community, and the mission among the young.

With this choice we set ourselves on the path laid down by John Paul II and Benedict XVI. The former, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata,* had summarized the identity of that vocation in those three basic elements: our vocation is a *confessio Trinitatis, signum fraternitatis* and *servitium caritatis*. The latter, in his Address to the General Assembly of the Union of Superiors General and the International Union of Women Superiors General on the 26th of November 2010, had highlighted these same traits of the identity of consecrated life: the search for God that leads to a desire for the absolute realities, the fraternity which is a "confessio Trinitatis" and a parable of communion in the Church, and the mission that drives us to bring the Gospel to everyone.

In developing each of these three key-points, the fundamental frame of reference of the Chapter members was that of bearing witness to the radical approach of the Gospel. We then asked ourselves about what signs could make this *witness* visible today, knowing full well that witness is not an objective but a consequence. When the consecrated person, any consecrated person, can declare with simplicity and truth: "*For me to live is Christ*" (Phil 1:21) and make his own Jesus' way of life, he bears witness to a reality and mentality that are not of this world, he raises questions, he disturbs and makes people think, he speaks without speaking.

In each of the three key-areas we asked ourselves how we ought to be witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel in our Salesian mission, and we recognized in the motto, *Work and temperance*, a visible expression of the radical approach of the Gospel, a lifestyle which – if lived faithfully – describes well how the Salesian should appear before others.

Furthermore, as we went deeper into the three inseparable dimensions of every form of religious life, we wondered how to incarnate them in the person of each of us and in our communities. We followed the methodology of discernment which is marked by three successive steps: *listening* (to life, to situations, to people), a faithful *reading* of reality that draws its criteria from the Word of God, the Magisterium and the Salesian charism, and the *way forward* that proposes objectives to be attained in the coming years and the steps to make them more concrete.

It seems to me that in all the three phases we were not afraid to call the problems and resistances by their name; there was a sincere desire to grasp what the Spirit is saying to us today through the Magisterium of the Pope and the bishops, the voices of our confreres, and the expectations of the

[5] *Ibidem.*

young people in different cultural contexts; there was courage and hope in pointing out to all our confreres and communities the steps on the way to a continual conversion. The final document, intentionally reduced to essentials, focused on these aspects in a concrete way, and so became a text on which to reflect in order to act.

The result was a concrete and coherent reading of the life of the confreres and the Salesian communities, of the difficulties and weaknesses, but also of the resources and wealth. The dangers threatening the fidelity of our response are accompanied by formidable challenges (especially in the youth world) that make the Salesian vocation all the more relevant and necessary.

We Salesians, therefore, are called to be, in our times, *mystics in the Spirit, prophets of fraternity, and servants of the young*: three dimensions that refer us to the "inseparable elements of our consecration" mentioned in Article 3 of the Constitutions. They are a gift and a call, and they ask for a daily response. Each of them is characterized by specific choices, but at the same time they reflect and reinforce each other in a coherent life marked by the grace of unity and "in a single movement of love towards God and towards our brothers" (Const. 3). They refer to the life of each confrere, but – at the same time – they challenge the lifestyle of each community and of the entire Province.

There is a common thread running through the reflection carried out by the General Chapter; the three stages can be summarized – in a nutshell – in the phrase placed at the beginning of each section:

- *like Don Bosco, in dialogue with the Lord, we journey together, moved by the Spirit,*
- *experiencing fraternal life, as at Valdocco, being available for planning and sharing,*
- *going out to the peripheries, becoming prophetic signs in the service of the young.*

As a result of the 27th General Chapter, we expect to make our Salesian life even more authentic and therefore visible, credible and fruitful. These are the consequences of the one who "*becomes*" what he is and is called to be. Don Bosco had already warned us clearly about the interdependence between identity, credibility and fruitfulness when he indicated the weakening of the radical approach of the Gospel ("*the seeking of an easy and comfortable life*") as the cause and the beginning of a decline. This warning is particularly appropriate and true for us today.

Another, but not secondary, part of the Chapter work was then dedicated to the revision of the structures of the central government of the Congregation, which had been preceded by an extensive consultation among all the Provinces. Some deliberations have brought about significant changes. One of them entrusts the *Salesian Family* to a *Central Secretariat* directly dependent on the Rector Major and no more on a General Councillor. A second deliberation introduces a balanced procedure, before the vote, of drawing up a shortlist of suitable confreres for filling the roles of *Councillors for the Sectors*. Another deliberation asks the Rector Major to set up a *Central Financial Commission* for purposes of study, advice and monitoring. This leads to the need to monitor the economy at all levels in a collegial fashion, to activate transparent processes in decision-making, and to make use of professional skills.

Apart from the theme for study and the deliberations, I can assure you that the climate that came to be created immediately among the Chapter members and the profound harmony and concord in the sincere search for God's will gave all of us an image of a Congregation that is united and moved by the desire to be faithful to the Founder's project.

3. My vision of things at the present time

The Chapter members chose to elect me – against every expectation of mine – as Rector Major and the tenth successor of Don Bosco. Together with my newly elected General Council, I took up the Chapter document as a "*navigation chart*" for the next six years. At the same time, I began to know the Congregation in the various continents and meet many confreres. I'm maturing in my vision of things (it is certainly still partial at the moment), but I wish to share it briefly with you.

I am becoming more and more aware that we Salesians have a wealth, and that this wealth is *Don Bosco*, the *family spirit* that he taught us and left as his legacy, and our *mission among young people*, especially those most neglected and abandoned. As long as we remain the jealous custodians of these assets, we can look to the future with confidence and hope.

In my interactions in the Provinces, I have taken the cue

from the 27th General Chapter and kept on insisting that we must continue to *grow in our interior life*, in our union with God, in the mystical dimension of our life. From Fr Albera till today all the Rectors Major have highlighted this priority. This insistence is not something accidental; it points to a shortcoming that needs to be remedied. "It would be really worrying if someone came to the conclusion that 'the fragility we see in living the primacy of God in our lives' was something that was part of our Salesian DNA. It is not! It was not for Don Bosco".[6] These are the words I addressed to the Chapter members in my closing address.

Another point to which I very often call the attention of the confreres concerns the community dimension of our life and our mission. Brotherhood within communities must become our strength, not our weakness. This requirement, proper to every form of religious life, takes on a special connotation for us Salesians. We are called to brotherhood because young people need us to live as brothers and *our works to be real homes*, especially today, when for many of them there is less unity and stability in their families. In Don Bosco's mind, the community is not the residence of individual pastoral workers, but the place to create a real family spirit that also becomes an element of attraction for vocations to Salesian life, together with apostolic generosity and the centrality and dignity of prayer in common. "Not infrequently, in the four corners of the world where our Congregation has been established, we run a certain risk of sacrificing the community, our fellowship, and at times even our communion, for the sake of work, activity, or simply sheer activism".[7]

Visiting for the first time several Provinces and Regions of the Congregation, I find a clear and undisputed option for the young, especially the poorest. This is for me a matter of great consolation. I usually tell the confreres to safeguard this choice, because it is the young people who save us and are the guarantee of our fidelity. Our physical presence among them enables us to understand their resources, their needs and their sufferings. As Fr Chavez repeatedly stated, our physical distance from them can lead to a distance of

[6] Acts, p. 120.
[7] Closing speech at the GC27, in Acts, p. 121.

mind and heart, and so deprive our lives of a fundamental dimension which is that of a spiritual fatherhood. In his fifth recommendation to his missionaries, Don Bosco pointed to the "special care of the sick, of the young, of the old and of the poor" as the source of the blessing of God and the goodwill of men towards our Congregation. That is so, indeed. This is our true wealth which no one can take away from us, ever.

Another thing closely related to this is my personal belief that what saves and will save the Congregation will not be power or strength, but *simplicity*, *humility*, and total *self-giving* to the Lord, to the mission and to young people. The assignment given to our Founder in the visionary dream of his life (*"Make yourself humble, strong and robust"*) is the permanent programme for the whole Congregation and for every Salesian. If we humbly recognize that we have received everything from the Lord and we place ourselves at the service of each other; if in our difficulties and hardships we draw strength from the Holy Spirit; if our response is generous, strong and enterprising, *then we shall have a future*. The teaching of Pope Francis and his personal witness show us the evangelical road we have to follow. Pseudo-apostolic individualism, intellectual pride and the adoption of an easy-going style of personal and community life are always looming temptations and sometimes, unfortunately, painful realities that sap the strength and vitality of the Salesian charism.

At a distance of two hundred years from the birth of Don Bosco, we understand a posteriori the fruitfulness of that little seed planted in the holy humanity of simple peasant families of the hills of Asti, of people who were really humble, strong and robust. Now that seed has become so great a tree *"that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches"* (Mt 13:32). That poor orphan without means has become the Father of a vast family. By this I refer not only to the so-called "branches" of the Salesian Family, but to that vast movement of people who look fondly at Don Bosco and work with his spirit and in his mission or experience its charm and efficacy. We are becoming increasingly aware that the mission is not only an expression of the geniality and generosity of an individual or a group, but lasts in time and grows stronger if it is the fruit of communion. This is not a requirement of organization, but a constitutive

element of our mission. If there is no communion, then is absent also the mission which the Church, by divine mandate, seeks and implements, because the source of the mission is the Trinity. In his excellent speech at the opening of the General Chapter, the Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, His Eminence Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, reminded us of how Pope St. John Paul II, while ushering the Church into the new millennium, pointed to the promotion of a spirituality of communion *as a new paradigm* for the life of the Church.[8] For my part, when I visit the communities and the Provinces, I remind everyone that sharing the spirit and the mission of Don Bosco with the laity and the members of the Salesian Family is not something optional, but an important duty deriving from our charism.

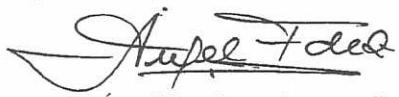
4. Conclusion

On Sunday, the 7th of December, 1884, at 7.30 a.m., there took place in the Church of Mary Help of Christians in Turin the consecration of the first Salesian Bishop, Msgr. John Cagliero. As was the custom, there was an academy at 6 in the evening. Biographers describe the scene of Don Bosco's meeting with the new bishop at the end of the celebration. After Bishop Cagliero, breaking away from the procession, embraced his elderly mother who was present, he continued with difficulty through the crowd towards the second sacristy. And, there was Don Bosco, head uncovered, approaching him to kneel down and kiss his ring. "The bishop was concealing his hand in the folds of his robe, and instead he flung himself into Don Bosco's arms. It was a most tender sight, enhanced by tears! Then the saint was able to press lips against the ring that the bishop had not allowed anyone else to kiss until Don Bosco had done so. After that, Don Bosco always treated Bishop Cagliero with the same deference he used toward other bishops, kissing his ring and observing every formality due to his episcopal dignity".[9]

[8] JOÃO BRAZ CARD. DE AVIZ, *Opening speech at the 27th General Chapter*, in: Acts pp. 94-105.

[9] E. CERIA, BM XVII, p. 268.

In the name of Don Bosco and of all the confreres in the world, I renew to all of you, dear brother Cardinals and Bishops, the same affection, the same joy and the same emotions. I wish that each of you, while praying before the casket of Don Bosco during these days, may feel the warmth of that embrace of a father for his favourite son who has been called to the episcopal service in the Church. Hold fast to Don Bosco, entrust your sufferings to him, your anxieties, your preoccupations, your hopes, your projects. Recommend to him the priests and the priestly vocations in your dioceses. You will certainly receive affection, encouragement and inspiration. Draw from this holy land of Valdocco simplicity, courage and trust in Divine Providence. May you confide in Mary Help of Christians who inspired the holy priest Don Bosco, you who have received the fullness of the priesthood.



Fr Ángel FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, sdb
Rector Major

Turin, 22nd May 2015
Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco

5.2 Speech of Pope Francis in Valdocco

Here below find the speech the Holy Father addressed – in a familiar way – to the Salesians, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and all the Salesian Family during his visit in Valdocco, on June 21st, 2015, to honour Don Bosco on the occasion of the Bicentenary of his birth. The style reflects a certain improvisation (because the written text was put aside), but reveals the passion of the Holy Father in his friendly talk.

Dear Salesian Family, I have thought at length of what to tell you. And I have written something I wanted to tell you. But it is too formal. And I hand it over to the Rector Major, to make it known to you. I got acquainted with this Rector Major in the confessional *(laughter and applause)*. But I did not go to confession to him, neither did he come to me. He was on a pilgrimage to our Lady of Luján. He had just arrived in Argentina, in the month of October. A friend of the Salesian Province was with him, and he sees this pilgrimage of youth that reaches the figure of one million in 48 hours. When a penitent left the confessional they approached me and said: "The

new Provincial". And I told him: "Oh, this is the man who comes to give us orders". Then we had good relations, even though we had difficult moments... I was always impressed with his service and his humility. I remember once we had to do something in the parish ... and he signed everything.

Then he came here for the Chapter, tranquil, to return later to his Province... And instead, they "entrapped" him... But with the Holy Spirit.

But I would like to talk to you of my experience with the Salesians. My family is very much attached to the Salesians. Soon after his arrival in Argentina, my dad went to the Salesians in the Italian church, to the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, to St. Charles's parish, and there he knew many Salesians. And my dad soon became a fan of a football team that had been founded by a Salesian!

At about 500 meters from St. Charles's church, that Salesian founded a football team with the colors of Our Lady, red and blue. But with street children, mind you! To me, this is the best team in Argentina, many times champion... Then he knew my mom, who lived nearby, and there they got married, with the blessing of a priest who followed me and my dad for the whole life. He was a Salesian missionary in Patagonia, born in Lodi, a good man and a great confessor of the Salesian Family. He baptized me. I went to him for confession, and he helped me in my vocation. He helped me when I had to pass from the seminary to the Company of Jesus.

I am very grateful to the Salesian Family. After her fifth delivery, my mom was paralyzed for one year, and we, the elder ones were sent to Salesian colleges. I did my last elementary class there, and there I learnt to love our Lady. The Salesians formed me to beauty, to work – and this is a charism of yours! With love they formed affectivity, they made children's affectivity grow.

I remember the Salesian confessors, merciful, great! There in the basilica there were always many. Then my dad died, and that Salesian father also died, but I always went to Mary Help of Christians every May 24th. I brought some flowers and prayed to our Lady. There is one thing I have received from you. Something that always makes me think: affectivity. I believe Don Bosco was capable to educate the affectivity of the youth, because he had had a mother who educated his affectivity. A good mother, nice, and strong. She educated his heart with great love. One cannot understand don Bosco without Mamma Margherita. One cannot understand.

But there is something else. In those days, towards the end of the 19th century, this region of Italy was freemason, "mangiapreti" (priest-eaters), anti-clerical, even satanic – even satanic. Turin was one of the satanic points – but how many saints did come out from here! Just count them! The Lord has given a mission to families born here. Nowadays many things have improved. There is the computer, many things! But the situation of the youth is more or less the same. What did don Bosco do? He worked with the youth who were there, without a job, without education, in the street. He put at stake his own ministry. And because of this, many spoke ill of him.

He put his ministry at stake there: "These (boys) are second class, there is nothing we can do...". Nowadays the situation is that 40% of the youth below 25 are jobless. They do not study, they do not work. You Salesians face the same challenge as Don Bosco. Take these boys and girls. What did Don Bosco do? Sport, because sport leads one to socialize, to a healthy competitiveness, leads one to the beauty of working all together. And then, education! Don Bosco did not say great things; no, he organized small schools to educate to crafts. Those Salesian schools, which after all were *de arte y oficio* (of arts and crafts), where the youth learnt their craft.

But are Salesians today capable of educating to these crafts of urgency? Truly, I do not know; I just put this question. I do not know, a six-month course to learn to be an electrician or a plumber (there are always taps that break). Education, but education in the size of the crisis. Let us not think that these street children today – I am thinking of my home country – may at once go to high school. Let us give them something that can be a source of work, even small works... An education of emergency, I think this is what street children are in need of today. Just a short time, a practical job, and later on we can see. This 40% is in need of something. Let Salesian creativity face this challenge.

And then bring them to joy, to Salesian joy, which is another thing I learnt and will never forget. It is the joy that comes from all the Lord has given us, which is beautiful. Animation, education. Let us feed street children: it is true, one cannot praise God with

an empty stomach. But we must educate them, and how? With creativity. Education in the size of the crisis. This is what I feel I must tell you.

What did that priest do, his name was Lorenzo Massa, the one who founded the football team in 1908? Sport. He gave those street children a mysticism. They might be drug addicts, they might be victims of addiction, and there may even be boys who commit suicide... but that Salesian priest gave the joy of something that can help to carry on. This is what I feel I must tell you. This is a moment of a bad crisis, even hostile to the Church. But Don Bosco was not ashamed of speaking of three white loves: our Lady, the Eucharist and the Pope.

He instilled these three loves. He was not ashamed of our Lady. Because he was never ashamed of his mother. In the '80s I went to Belgium for a meeting of benefactors of the Catholic University of Córdoba. And then I was invited for dinner at a wedding of professors, who were believers and practicing Catholic, with four little children. At table they started talking of Theology, Christology, the situation of the Church. And at a given time they say: "Our Lady nowadays is not relevant; thank God we have overcome that stage". And yet they were good... Even nowadays, not among you, there are people who do not really feel ashamed, but who never speak of our Lady with love, as Don Bosco did. Don Bosco's first love, our Lady. He entrusted himself to God praying to our Lady, and risked so much!

The second love, the Eucharist. The celebration of liturgy which is done so well and is so well explained in the Salesian Family. It leads the youth to enter into the mystery of the Eucharist. And also the adoration (of the Blessed Sacrament), which so often Salesians do. This is good. The Pope also does it.

Don Bosco loved the Church, our Lady and his mother. And to you, consecrated women, I say: live the mystery of the woman in the Church. Love for the Pope is not love for one person alone, it is love for Peter as head of the Church. As representative of the groom of the Church. Behind that white love for the Pope there is the love for the Church.

I do not know how Don Bosco managed to hide or explain certain scandals. But I know that he instilled love for the Church. Think of this link: the Church, mother; our Lady Mary, mother; Margherita, mother. You form girls to become mothers, mothers who make their children grow in love of Mary and of the Church. Sometimes they ask me: are not stronger decisions on women needed in the Church? Certainly. But do you think that appointing a woman as head of a Dicastery is a strong decision? Woman in the Church has the same work, so to say, as our Lady had with the Apostles on the morning of Pentecost. The Apostles without Mary could not cope: Jesus willed it to be so.

Do not forget the three white loves. Do not feel ashamed of speaking about our Lady, of partaking in the Eucharist and of doing it well, and do not be ashamed of Holy Mother Church, that is being attacked every day!... And hence learn the role of the woman in the Church. The three white loves of Don Bosco lead us on this path. Then, I said, trust in God. Don Bosco always prayed to Mary Help of Christians and carried on.

My Salesian experience is what I said, the one I had in the college and no more. I did the rest of my education in public schools. And my family was attached to the Salesians. To Mary Help of Christians. I used to ask Salesians "to give me the blessing of Mary help of Christians"... I thank God for this experience; they helped me to grow without fear, without obsessions. To go on in joy, in prayer. Your charism is tremendously modern. Look at the streets, look at the youth and take courageous decisions. Do not be afraid. (Do) as he did.

I thank you so much for what you do for the Church and in the Church. I thank you so much for being missionaries. So many Salesians hidden in Africa... I think of the beginnings in Patagonia, when the sisters went there with the dress of the time – how did those women manage to ride a horse? – and yet they evangelized Patagonia. An the Salesian martyrs of Patagonia...

It's not that I am obsessed with Patagonia. But Don Bosco dreamt of it. And he sent his sons there. Those first Salesians did so much good. And may the Rector remembers when he came to us for a meeting in view of a beatification, together with the Bishops of the permanent Commission, in Aparecida, to find the place where to celebrate it. And there was a good proposal, to do it in Buenos Aires; so all old pupils could come. And I opposed this, do you remember? No, it must be done in Patagonia. But it was not in a city. Card. Bertone, who presided over the be-

atification, remembers... It was in a field!

Salesians who do not have this concrete perception of things are lacking something... A Salesian is a concrete person, he sees the problem, thinks about it and handles it. In the end I said: "As Archbishop, I would not give permission...". On this missionary activity I tell you one thing: one of the regions of Patagonia had been abandoned by priests. There were no Salesians over there. In the course of 15 years, evangelists came... That one was an isolated people, but a religious one. They wanted to listen to the Word of God and went to listen to the pastor... They more or less converted. When a new parish priest came, a cultured lady – Salesians had not been in that place but they had held several missions there – did not welcome him. She accused him of having abandoned them. Then she let him in... In the end, the priest asked forgiveness and, as he was leaving, the lady called him back. She showed him the statue of Mary Help of Christians: "I am an evangelist now, but this one I do not leave... I hid it so that the pastor does not see it". This is your being missionaries. Many thanks for what you do all over the Church.

5.3 Letter of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, on the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco

It records the Letter which the Holy Father Francis has addressed to the Rector Major, and through him to the Salesians and to the whole Salesian Family, on the occasion of the celebration of the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco. The letter is dated June 24, the traditional day of celebration of the name day of Don Bosco at the Oratory.

LIKE DON BOSCO, WITH THE YOUNG AND FOR THE YOUNG

To Reverend
Fr Ángel Fernández Artime
Rector Major of the Salesians
on the Bicentenary
of the birth of St. John Bosco

The memory of St. John Bosco is alive in the Church. He is remembered as the founder of the Salesian Congregation, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Association of the Salesian Cooperators, the Association of Mary Help of Christians, and as the father of the present-day Salesian Family. He is likewise remembered in the Church as a holy educator and pastor of the young who opened the way of holiness for young people, offered a method of education that is at the same time a spirituality, and received from the Holy Spirit a charism for modern times.

In the Bicentenary of his birth I had the joy of meeting the Salesian Family gathered in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin, where lie the Founder's mortal remains. Through this message I wish to join with you again in thanking God, and at the same time in recalling the essential aspects of Don Bosco's spiritual and pastoral legacy and urging you to live them courageously.

Italy, Europe and the world have changed considerably in these two centuries, but the soul of the young has not: even today boys and girls are open to life and to the encounter with God and with others, but there are so many of them exposed to discouragement, spiritual anemia and marginalization.

Don Bosco teaches us first of all to not stand idly by, but to put ourselves in the vanguard by *offering young people an integral educational experience* which, firmly based on the religious dimension, affects the mind, the emotions and the whole person, always considered as someone created and loved by God. This leads to a genuinely human and Christian pedagogy, one that is animated by a concern for prevention and inclusion, especially of the children of the working classes and the marginalized groups of society, and offers them an opportunity for education and learning a trade in order to become good Christians and honest citizens. By working for the moral, civil and cultural education of youth, Don Bosco worked for the good of people and civil society, following his particular view of man that combines happiness, study and prayer, or to put it another way, work, religion and virtue. An integral part of this process is the development of a person's vocation in order to enable him to assume the concrete way of life in the Church to which the Lord calls him. This wide-ranging and demanding educational vision which Don Bosco condensed in his motto, "Da mihi animas", accomplished what we today express in the phrase, "educate by evangelizing and evangelize by educating" (Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* [August 15, 1997], n. 147).

A characteristic feature of Don Bosco's pedagogy is loving kindness, which is to be understood as a love that is manifested and perceived, and reveals itself in caring, affection, understanding and in-

volvement in the life of another person. In the experiential process of education, according to Don Bosco, it is not enough to love, but love needs to be expressed in gestures that are concrete and effective. Thanks to this loving kindness, so many children and adolescents in Salesian settings have experienced an intense and serene emotional growth, which has proved very valuable in the shaping of their personality and in their life's journey.

Within this framework lie *other distinctive traits* of Don Bosco's educational method: a family environment; the presence of the educator as a father, teacher and friend of the young person, which is conveyed by a classical term of Salesian pedagogy: assistance; a climate of joy and celebration; ample space offered for singing, music and the theatre; the importance of the playground, games, sports and outings.

We can summarize the salient aspects of Don Bosco's personality in the following manner: he lived the total surrender of himself to God in his dedication to the salvation of souls and lived his fidelity to God and to the young in one and the same act of love. These attitudes led him to "go out" and take courageous decisions: the decision to devote himself to poor youth with the aim of giving rise to a vast movement of poor people for poor people; and the decision to extend this service beyond the boundaries of language, race, culture and religion, thanks to his tireless missionary impulse. He realized this project through his style of joyfully accepting and personally caring for each one whom he met and accompanied.

He was able to elicit the cooperation of Saint Mary Domenica Mazzarello and the cooperation of lay people, giving rise to the large tree of the Salesian Family which has received and enhanced his legacy.

In short, Don Bosco lived with a great passion for the salvation of the young, appearing as a credible witness of Jesus Christ and an outstanding herald of his Gospel, in profound communion with the Church, and in particular, with the Pope. He lived in constant prayer and union with God, with a strong and tender devotion to Our Lady, whom he invoked as the Immaculate Virgin and the Help of Christians; he was endowed with mystical experiences and the gift of miracles for the sake of his boys.

Even today the Salesian Family opens out to new frontiers in education and missionary work, pursuing the paths traced out by the new means of social communication and by an intercultural education among peoples of different religions in countries of the developing world or in places marked by migration. The challenges of the Turin of the nineteenth century have assumed global dimensions: the idolatry of money, an inequality that generates violence, an ideological colonization and cultural challenges related to urban contexts. Some aspects are more directly connected with the world of the young, such as the spread of the Internet, and therefore they pose a challenge to you, sons and daughters of Don Bosco, called as you are to work and to keep in mind, together with the hurts, also the resources that the Holy Spirit inspires in crisis situations.

As a Salesian Family you are called to *let the creativity typical of your charism flourish* once more in and beyond your educational institutions, as you take your place with apostolic dedication among young people, especially those on the peripheries.

"Youth ministry, as traditionally organized, has also suffered the impact of social changes. Young people often fail to find responses to their concerns, needs, problems and hurts in the usual structures. As adults, we find it hard to listen patiently to them, to appreciate their concerns and demands, and to speak to them in a language they can understand" (Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 105). Let us ensure that, as educators and as a community, we accompany them on their journey so that they feel the joy of bringing Jesus to every street, to every square, to every corner of the earth (cf. ibid., 106).

May Don Bosco help you to *not disappoint the deep aspirations of the young*: their need for life, openness, joy, freedom, and the future; their desire to collaborate in building up a more just and fraternal world, in fostering the development of all peoples, in safeguarding nature and the living environment. Following his example, you will help them to experience that only in the life of grace, i.e., in friendship with Christ, does one fully attain the most authentic ideals. You will have the joy of accompanying them in their search for a synthesis of faith, culture and life at moments when they take weighty decisions or attempt to interpret a reality that is complex.

In particular, I want to point out *two tasks* that arise today from a discernment of the youth reality:

the first is that of *educating, in accordance with a Christian anthropology, to the language of the new means of social communication and of the social networks*, that deeply shape the cultural and value systems of the young, and therefore their outlook on the reality of man and religion; the second is that of *promoting forms of social volunteering*, and not resigning yourselves to the ideologies that place the market and production above the dignity of the person and the value of work.

To be educators who evangelize is a gift of nature and grace, but it is also the result of *formation, study, reflection, prayer and asceticism*. Don Bosco used to say to young people: "For you I study, for you I work, for you I live, for you I am ready even to give my life" (*Salesian Constitutions*, art. 14).

Today more than ever, in the face of what Pope Benedict XVI often referred to as an "educational emergency" (cf. *Letter to the diocese and the city of Rome on the urgent task of educating young people*, 21 January 2008), I invite the Salesian Family to promote an effective educational alliance between different religious and secular agencies so as to move forward with the diversity of your charisms at the service of youth in the different continents. In particular, I remind you of the imperative need to involve the families of young people. There can indeed be no effective youth ministry without a good family ministry.

The Salesian is an educator who, in the midst of his many relationships and commitments, *always lets the first proclamation resound*, the good news that directly or indirectly can never be absent: "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you, and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you "(Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 164). To be faithful disciples of Don Bosco requires you to renew *the choice of catechesis* that was his lifelong commitment, understanding it today within the mission of a new evangelization (cf. ibid., 160-175). This evangelizing catechesis deserves pride of place in Salesian institutions, and must be made with theological and pedagogical competence and the educator's transparent witness. It requires a process that involves listening to the Word of God, frequenting the sacraments, especially Confession and the Eucharist, and a filial relationship with the Virgin Mary.

Dear Salesian Brothers and Sisters, Don Bosco testifies that *Christianity is the source of happiness*, because it is the Gospel of love. It is from this source, and in your Salesian educational practice as well, that joy and celebration find their consistency and continuity. "We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being. Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelization"(Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 8).

The Church has great expectations concerning the care of the young; great too is the charism that the Holy Spirit bestowed on St. John Bosco, a charism that has been carried forward by the Salesian Family with a passionate dedication to the youth of all continents and a flowering of numerous priestly, religious and lay vocations. I therefore cordially encourage you to take up the legacy of your founder and father with the Gospel radicalism that he made his own in his thinking, speaking and acting, with a proper competence and a generous spirit of service, *like Don Bosco, with the young and for the young*.

From the Vatican, 24 June 2015
Solemnity of the Birth of St. John the Baptist

5.4 New Provincials

Here below find (in alphabetical order) some biographical details on the Provincials appointed by he Rector Major with his Council after the publication of the previous number 419 of the Acts of the General Council; they were appointed respectively in two plenary sessions: the winter session of December 2014-January 2015 and the summer session of June-July 2015.

A. Provincials appointed in the Winter Session (December 2014-January 2015)

1. *ATIENZA Godofredo, Provincial of the Province of the PHILIPPINES SOUTH*

The Rector Major and his Council appointed the Salesian priest *ATIENZA Godofredo* at the head of the Province "Mary Help of Christians" of the *PHILIPPINES SOUTH*.

Born in Manila on November 8th, 1957, Godofredo Atienza made his first profession on April 1st, 1978, at the end of his novitiate in Canlubang. He made his perpetual vows on March 24th, 1986, and was ordained a priest on January 31st, 1988 in Makati, Metro Manila.

After his ordination, he was Vicar in the Salesian house of Victorias; later on he was Director, Novice Master, Vicar and Economer in the community of Talisay-Lawaan; then he was Director in the provincial house in Cebu-Talamban. At the time of his appointment as Provincial, he was again in Victorias as Rector. At a provincial level he had the tasks of Delegate for Formation (from 2004 to 2012), Provincial Secretary (2005-2008), Assistant of the Don Bosco Volunteers and of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (from 2007 to date); since March 2014 he also covered the role of Provincial Vicar.

2. *BATISTA Francisco, Provincial of the Province of the ANTILLES*

Fr *Francisco BATISTA,* the new Provincial of "Saint John Bosco" Province in the *ANTILLES,* was born on August 26th, 1953, in La Torre-La Vega, Dominican Republic, and is a Salesian since August 8th, 1975, when he made his first religious profession, in the Novitiate of La Vega. He pronounced his perpetual vows on September 13, 1981, and was ordained a priest on July 16th, 1983 in Santo Domingo.

After his priestly ordination, he had various responsibilities in the Province of the Antilles, as Vicar, Economer and Rector of various Salesian houses: in Jarabacoa, Santo Domingo, La Vega and lately in Mao, where, at the time of his appointment as Provincial, he was Rector and Parish Priest. He is a member of the Provincial Council.

3. *Da SILVA Virgilio, Superior of the Vice-Province of INDONESIA - EAST TIMOR*

Fr *Virgilio do Carmo da SILVA* is the new Superior of the Vice-Province "St. Callistus Caravario" of *INDONESIA-EAST TIMOR,* appointed by the Rector Major and his Council on January 14th, 2015.

He was born on November 27th, 1967 in Venilale, East Timor, and is a Salesian since January 31st, 1990, when he pronounced his first religious vows in the novitiate of Fatumaca. He made his perpetual profession on March 19th, 1997, and was ordained a priest on December 8th, 1998.

After his priestly ordination, he permanently exerted his ministry in the house of Fatumaca (except for the years 2004-2007 he spent in Rome-UPS). In Fatumaca he covered various roles. In particular, since 2007 he was Novice Master and since 2008 also Rector. Since 2010 he was also a member of the Council of the Vice-Province.

4. *KOORAPPALLIL Jose Mathew, Provincial of the Province of NEW DELHI, India*

On December 19th 2014, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Jose Mathew KOORAPPALLIL* Provincial of the Salesian Province of "Jesus the Good Shepherd", with its see in *NEW DELHI, India.*

Jose Mathew Koorappallil was born on January 22nd, 1964, in Coorachundi-Calicut (Kerala, India) and made his first religious profession on May 24th, 1983, the perpetual profession on January 30th, 1989, and was ordained a priest on January 9th, 1993.

After his priestly ordination he exerted his educational and pastoral ministry successively in the communities of Jabalpur, Hatia and Kereng, with different tasks. After obtaining an M.A. in Social Works, in 2003 he was put in charge of the house for endangered youth of Ashalayam, New Delhi, a responsibility he held for 6 years. In 2009 he was appointed Provincial Economer, a task he covered till the present appointment as Provincial. Lately he was also Director of the Development Office and of a UN mission for International Refugees in Delhi.

5. *NGUEMA Miguel Angel, Superior of the Vice-Province of AFRICA TROPICAL EQUATORIAL*

Fr *Miguel Angel NGUEMA* is the new Superior of the Vice-Province of "Our Lady of Africa" of *AFRICA TROPICAL EQUATORIAL,* and was appointed on December 16th, 2014.

He was born on July 13th, 1970 in Mokomo, Equatorial Guinea, and pronounced his first vows on August 13th, 1992 in the novitiate of Lomé, Togo, and his perpetual vows on September 19th, 1998, in Bata, Equatorial Guinea; in this city he was ordained a priest on July 24th, 2000.

After his priestly ordination, he exerted his ministry in various houses of the Vice-Province, with different tasks: Economer in Pointe-Noire, Republic of Congo (2001-2004); Rector of the house of the Vice-Province, in Yaoundé, Camerun (2005'2008), and Rector of the oratory in Yaoundé from 2011 to date. In the Vice-Province he was also a Councillor and did the service of Delegate for the Pastoral of the Youth.

6. *NGUYEN VAN QUANG Joseph, Provincial of VIETNAM*

On January 19th, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Joseph NGUYEN VAN QUANG* at the head of the Province of "St. John Bosco" in *VIETNAM.*

He was born on June 2nd, 1948, in Rui Chu-Giao Thuy, Vietnam, and is a Salesian since August 15th, 1968, when he made his first profession in Dalat, Vietnam, after the novitiate he did in Tram Hanh (where his Novice Master was the Servant of God Fr Andrej Majcen). He made his perpetual profession on August 12th, 1974, and was ordained a priest in Dalat on September 1st, 1976.

When the situation allowed it, in 1991 a Salesian house was erected in Phuoc Loc and Fr Nguyen Van Quang became the first Rector. Successively he was also Parish Priest and Vicar of this same house. In the meantime, in 2000, the Committee of the District of Tan Thanh had given permission to Salesians to direct a Formation Center to prepare the youth of the place as technicians for the factories of the area. Fr Van Quang has been the Rector of this Centre till this present appointment as Provincial. He has also been for many years a member of the Provincial Council.

7. *SAW Charles, Superior of the Vice-Province of MYANMAR*

On January 13th, 2015, the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Charles SAW* Superior of the Vice-Province of "Mary Help of Christians" of *MYANMAR.*

Born on August 17th, 1962, he made his first profession on December 8th, 1984, in the novitiate of Anisakan, the perpetual profession on February 3rd, 1991, and was ordained a priest on May 5th, 1991. Belonging at first to the Province of Calcutta, he was transferred to the Vice-Province of Myanmar, when it was juridically erected (2004).

After his priestly ordination, he was first economer and then Rector of the Novitiate of Anisakan-Nazareth. He was also in charge of the houses of Mandalay and Myitkyina. In the years 2000-2003 he was then in UPS, in Rome, where he obtained an M.A. in Philosophy. At Vice-Provincial level he was Vicar (2004-2007), Councillor and Delegate for Missions and the Pastoral of the Youth.

8. *SHAFRAN Steven, Provincial of the Province of EAST UNITED STATES*

On January 20th, 2015 the Rector Major and his Council appointed Fr *Steven SHAFRAN* Provincial of the Province "St. Philip Apostle" of *EAST UNITED STATES,* with the see in New Rochelle.

He was born in Paassaic (USA) on February 22nd, 1956 and is a Salesian since September 1st, 1976, when he made his first profession in the novitiate of Newton. He made the perpetual profession on September 13th, 1982, and was ordained a priest in Philadelphia on May 5th, 1985.

After the ordination, he exerted his ministry in various houses of the East United Stated Province: Stony Point (1986-1988); Harvey-Sta. Rosalia (1988-1991); Marrero (1991-1993), as Vicar; Columbus (1994-1997), as Rector; Ramsey (1998-2004), as Rector; Washington (2005-2015), Vicar. At a provincial level, he was for about ten years (1997-2006) provincial Councillor and provincial Delegate for Formation.

9. *THONIKUZIYIL Mathew, Provincial of the Province of BANGALORE, India*

To lead the Province of the "Sacred Heart", with its see in *BANGALORE, India,* the Rector Major and his Council, on December 12th, 2014, appointed Fr *Mathew THONIKUZIYIL.*

Born on October 11th, 1963, in Teekoy, in the State of Kerala, India, he made his first profession on May 24th, 1982, in the novitiate of Kotagiri. He pronounced his perpetual vows on June 4th, 1988, and was ordained a priest on January 3rd, 1992. In 1998 he obtained an M.A. in Spiritual Theology at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.

Among the tasks he accomplished after the ordination, it is to note that he was Rector of the Don Bosco Cultural Center in Vennala. He also worked for short periods in Aluya, Mannuthy and in the Provincial House in Bangalore, and as Provincial Delegate for Past Pupils in the biennium 2004-2006.

10. *YAMANOUCHI Michiaki Mario, Provincial of the Province of JAPAN*

Fr *Mario Michiaki YAMANOUCHI* is the Provincial of the Province of "St. Francis Xavier" of *JAPAN* and was appointed by the Rector Major and his Council on December 4th, 2014. He was born on December 8th, 1955 in Saeiki (Oita) in Japan.

His family emigrated to Argentina, in Manucho, and there he got acquainted with the Salesians and

was attracted by this vocation. He entered the novitiate in Manucho and made his first profession on January 30th, 1976, in what then was the Province of Córdoba. He pronounced his perpetual vows on January 24th, 1982 and was ordained a priest on December 21st, 1984 in Córdoba.

After the ordination, between 1984 and 1996, he exerted his educational and pastoral mission, with different tasks, in various houses in Argentina: Córdoba, La Plata and Ramos Mejia are the cities where he worked as Rector and Novice Master. He also was Provincial Councillor in the Provinces of Córdoba and of La Plata. In 1996 he was transferred to the Province of Japan, his homeland (the transfer was juridically finalized in 2001). In Japan he was Rector of the houses of Tokyo-Suginami (2001-2004), Tokyo-Chofu (2004-2010) and Tokyo-Yotsuya (2010-2015). He also as Provincial Delegate for Formation and the Salesian Family.

B. PROVINCIALS APPOINTED IN THE SUMMER SESSION *(JUNE-JULY 2015)*

1. *ALMEIDA Joseph, Superior of the Vice-Province of SRI LANKA*

To lead the Vice-Province of "St. Joseph" in *SRI LANKA* the Rector Major and his Council, on June 14th, 2015, appointed Fr *Joseph ALMEIDA.*

Joseph Almeida was born on March 7th, 1955 in Bombay, Maharashtra (India) and is a Salesian since May 24th, 1976, when he made his first profession. After his studies of philosophy and the practical training, his did his theological studies in the Theologate of Shillong. He pronounced his perpetual vows on January 31st, 1982 and was ordained a priest on December 19th, 1984.

After the priestly ordination and a first pastoral experience in the novitiate of Shillong-Sunnyside, he continued his studies at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, where he obtained an M.A. in Spiritual Theology and Missiology. When he returned to the Province, he was Provincial Secretary for two years (1991-1993), then Novice Master and Rector in the novitiate of Shillong-Sunnyside, from 1993 to 1999. After one year as Director in the Salesian Training Center in Shillong, in 2000 he was appointed Provincial Vicar. In August 2006 he was appointed Provincial in the Province of "Mary Help of Christians" in Guwahati, India, a mandate he covered for six years till September 2012. After the six years as Provincial, he was appointed Rector of the house of Sirajuli, in the same Province of Guwahati. Now he has again been called to take the responsibility of Provincial Superior.

2. *PESSINATI Nivaldo Luiz, Provincial of the Province of RECIFE (Brazil)*

Fr *Nivaldo Luiz PESSINATTI* is the new Provincial of the Province of "St. Louis Gonzaga" with the see in *RECIFE, Brazil,* and has been appointed to this office by the Rector Major and his Council on June 12th, 2015. He takes over from Fr Diego Vanzetta.

Fr Nivaldo Luiz Pessinatti was born on February 16th 1951 in Araras (São Paulo) and is a Salesian since 1968, having made his first profession on January 31st, 1968, in Pindamonhangaba, see of the Noviziate. He later did his studies of philosophy and pedagogy and his practical training, then the course of theology in the Salesian Theologate of São Paulo-Lapa, which he crowned with the priestly ordination on October 1st, 1977, in his home town. He then completed his studies with an M.A. in Sciences and a Ph. D. in Philosophy.

We then find him working in some houses of the Province. In 1984 he was appointed Rector of Lorena-St. Joachim and simultaneously Provincial Councillor. In 1988 he is appointed Vicar of the Provincial, a task he holds for six years. In 1994 he continues as member of the Provincial Council and is appointed Rector of the house of São Paulo "Campos Elisios".

In December 1999 the Rector Major and his Council entrust him with the responsibility of Provincial of the Province of São Paulo, a mandate he fulfills for six years. After this period as Provincial, in February 2006 he is appointed Rector of the house that is the see of CISBRASI, for three years, and after that he remains in the same house as Vicar, a responsibility he holds till the present new appointment as Provincial of Recife.

3. *ROMERO Héctor Gabriel, Provincial of the Province of NORTH ARGENTINA*

To lead the Province "Blessed Artemide Zatti" of *NORTH ARGENTINA,* with its see in Cordoba, Argentina, the Rector Major and his Council, on June 18th,

2015, appointed Fr *Héctor Gabriel ROMERO*. He takes over from Fr Manuel Cayo.

Héctor Gabriel Romero, born on September 10th, 1971, in Tucuman, Córdoba (Argentina), made his first religious profession on January 31st, 1991 in what then was the Province of Argentina-Córdoba. Following the ordinary Salesian formative curriculum, he made his perpetual profession on October 5th, 1996, and was ordained a priest in Cordoba on December 11th, 1999, where he had done his studies of theology. Continuing his studies, he obtained the title of Professor of Philosophy and Educational Sciences. Later on, after a brief period – in 2001 – in the house of Alta Gracia, in November 2001 was appointed Rector of the Community of Córdoba-Dominic Savio, which he led till November 2007. Immediately afterwards he was appointed Rector of the post-novitiate in Córdoba-Miguel Rua, a responsibility he was having till now. In 2006 he became a member of the Provincial Council, as Provincial Delegate for Vocations and later on for Formation. In 2009-2010 he also was provincial Delegate for V.D.B. and from 2012 Delegate for C.D.B. He continued the charge as Provincial Delegate for Formation to this year 2015.

5.5 New Salesian Bishop

YASHEUSKI Aliaksandr, Auxiliary Bishop of MINSK-MOHILEV (Bielorussia)

On June 9th, 2015, we were notified the appointment, on behalf of Pope Francis, of the Salesian priest *Aliaksandr YASHEUSKI as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of MINSK-MOHILEV, in Bielorussia,* with the titular episcopal see of Fornos Major.

Aliaksandr YASHEUSKI was born on August 6th, 1974 in Smarbon, Bielorussia. He entered in the Salesian Aspirantate of Czerwińsk nad Wislą, did his novitiate in the same place and made his first profession on August 22nd 1992, as a member of the then Salesian Circumscription of the East. Following the ordinary formative Salesian curriculum (he did his studies of philosophy in the Salesian Studentate of Łódz and those of theology in the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome), he made his perpetual profession on August 2nd 1998 and was ordained a priest of June 24th 2000 in his home town Smarbon.

After the priestly ordination, in Smarhon he rendered pastoral service in two parishes. Then in September 2001 he was sent to the Salesian Novitiate of Oktiabrskij, in the province of Moscow, as Rector in charge. In August 2005 he was appointed Rector of the Community of Minsk (Bielorussia), a responsibility he covered for three years till 2008. Simultaneously (till 2011) he was Vicar of the parish church of St. John the Baptist in Misk and Director of the office of Education and teaching of religion of the Archdiocese (in Rome-UPS he obtained an M.A. in Theology). In June 2011 he was appointed Rector of the Salesian community in Smarhon (being at the same time parish vicar of the local parish of St. Michael Archangel). In June 2013 he was appointed Vicar of the Delegation of Bielorussia. Since June 2014 he was Rector of the Community of Minsk.

Appointed by the Holy Father Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Minsk-Mohilev, his episcopal ordination was celebrated on June 27th, 2015 in the Cathedral of Minsk.

5.6 Our dead confreres (1st list 2015)

"Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with our brothers who rest in Christ's peace. They have spent their lives in the Congregation, and not a few have suffered even to the point of martyrdom for the love of the Lord... Their remembrance is an incentive to continue faithfully in our mission" (*Const. 94*).

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P **ACTIS Giuseppe**	Torino (Italia)	06/03/2015	87	ICP
P **ÁLVAREZ ÁLVAREZ Francisco**	Pontevedra (Spagna)	11/03/2015	84	SSM
P **ANDREATTI Ernesto**	Trento (Italia)	22/07/2015	85	INE
P **ARGIBAY SERRANO Andrés**	Caracas (Venezuela)	06/03/2015	76	VEN
P **BAMBO Jesus Miguel Joaquim**	Roma (Italia)	01/03/2015	42	MOZ
P **BARBESSI Virgilio**	Negrar, Verona (Italia)	17/07/2015	76	ECU
L **BARRETO João Augusto**	Manique (Portogallo)	13/05/2015	87	POR
P **BATTISTEL Cesare**	Mestre (Italia)	21/01/2015	95	INE
P **BEKSTA Casimiro**	Manaus, AM (Brasile)	21/07/2015	91	BMA
P **BIANCO Enzo**	Torino (Italia)	14/07/2015	85	ICP
D **BLATNICKY Rudolf**	Roma (Italia)	09/03/2015	87	ICC
P **BOMBARDIERI Arturo**	Arese (Italia)	08/02/2015	95	ILE
P **BONDUEL Willy**	Heverlee (Belgio)	22/04/2015	83	BEN
P **BOOTH John**	Bolton (Gran Bretagna)	07/01/2015	89	GBR
P **BORELLO Francesco**	Santa Cruz (Bolivia)	11/04/2015	81	BOL
P **BORELLO Luciano**	Mestre (Italia)	25./03/2015	88	INE
P **BOROSKI Basilio**	Córdoba (Argentina)	23/01/2015	96	ARN
P **CAGGIATI Leonardo Calixto**	Córdoba (Argentina)	25/05/2015	76	ARN
P **CAGNIN Severino**	Mestre (Italia)	07/06/2015	81	INE
P **CALLEGARI HAMERLY Oscar**	Córdoba (Argentina)	07/03/2015	85	ARN
L **CARABIAS SANCHO Juan Evang.**	Sevilla (Spagna)	29/01/2015	88	SMX
P **CARETTE Albert**	Manchester (Gran Bretagna)	10/03/2015	95	GBR
L **CASTRILLO LOSADA Eusebio**	Logroño (Spagna)	29/05/2015	89	SSM
P **CATTANEA Mario**	Torino (Italia)	15/06/2015	85	ICP
P **CHARBEL Daoura**	El Obeid (Sudan)	23/06/2015	61	MOR
P **CHIAPPINI Luciano**	Belém (Brasile)	25/02/2015	85	BMA
P **CHIRDO Giovanni**	a Messina (Italia)	29/06/2015	83	ISI
P **CLOUTTE Alix**	Sint-Denijs-Westrem (Belgio)	29/04/2015	69	BEN
P **COALOVA Emilio**	San Salvador (El Salvador)	03/04/2015	89	CAM
P **COFANO Gaetano**	Salerno (Italia)	29/04/2015	89	IME
P **COFFEY Peter**	Dublin (Irlanda)	19/05/2015	76	IRL
P **CONTERNO Agostino**	San Francisco, CA (USA)	11/07/2015	100	SUO
P **COSTA Benedito**	Campinas (Brasile)	26/04/2015	78	BSP
P **DARIO Enrico**	Pordenone (Italia)	07/07/2015	80	BOL
L **DE SOUZA Neri Philip**	Goa (India)	24/06/2015	55	INP
L **DEEBACKER Jozef**	Zelzate (Belgio)	27/02/2015	83	BEN
P **DEL VENTO Pietro**	Salerno (Italia)	08/05/2015	92	IME
P **DELGADO ZÚÑIGA Germám Néstor**	Quito (Ecuador)	15/07/2015	85	ECU
Was provincial for 4 years				

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P **DE MECHELEER Pierre**	Pouillé (Francia)	16/07/2015	94	FRB
P **DI RENZO Antonio**	Roma (Italia)	09/01/2015	76	ICC
P **DINGENEN Jan**	Heverlee (Belgio)	17/02/2015	91	BEN
Was provincial for 6 years				
P **DOHERTY Peter Lawrence**	Manzini (Swaziland)	19/07/2015	85	AFM
P **DOS ANJOS Edilson Alexandrino**	Salvador (Brasile)	04/04/2015	74	BRE
P **EKKA RAJENDRA Albinus Joseph**	Gridih, Jharkhand (India)	26/07/2015	44	ING
P **ERNEMANN Pierre**	Comblain-au-Pont (Belgio)	07/02/2015	87	FRB
P **FARGNOLI Giovanni**	Salerno (Italia)	19/01/2015	90	IME
P **FAUCOMPRET Louis**	Halle (Belgio)	15/03/2015	80	BEN
P **FERNÁNDEZ AIRAS José**	Valencia (Venezuela)	26/05/2015	85	VEN
L **FERREIRA Alberto Nascimento**	Vendas Novas (Portogallo)	04/02/2015	78	POR
P **FRANCO ARREGUI Juan**	El Campello (Spagna)	16/03/2015	88	SMX
P **GARCÍA GUITIÁN Bienvenido**	Ávila (Spagna)	15/05/2015	77	ATE
P **GAYA TIMONEDA Miguel**	Campo Grande (Brasile)	22/06/2015	76	BCG
P **GIORGIS Giuseppe**	Nazareth (Israele)	03/03/2015	78	MOR
P **GOMEZ Cirilo**	Córdoba (Argentina)	01/04/2015	86	ARN
P **GONÇALVES Manuel Geraldo**	Manique (Portogallo)	14/04/2015	103	POR
P **GONZÁLEZ GONZÁLEZ Antonio**	León (Spagna)	27/02/2015	86	SSM
P **GROTE Franz**	Aßmannshausen (Germania)	06/06/2015	79	GER
P **HERNÁNDEZ MARTÍN Ernesto**	Sevilla (Spagna)	04/05/2015	89	SMX
P **HIDALGO DE LOS SANTOS Antonio**	Sevilla (Spagna)	15/03/2015	86	SMX
Was provincial for 6 years				
P **HORTÚA MARTÍNEZ Luis María**	Fusagasugá (Colombia)	11/07/2015	68	COB
P **KABEY A KALEND Dieudonné**	Kinshasa (Congo Rep Dem)	01/07/2015	49	AFC
L **KASS Émile**	Lubumbashi (Congo Rep. Dem.)	14/07/2015	88	AFC
P **KERKHOFS Alfons**	Hasselt (Belgio)	18/05/2015	78	BEN
P **KHARJIA Francis**	Salmiya (Kuwait)	17/06/2015	62	INB
P **KUTHUR VELLATTUKARA Chacko**	Tangla (India)	05/04/2015	58	ING
P **L'HER Jean Maurice**	Caen (Francia)	26/05/2015	85	FRB
P **LACENERE Vittorio**	Castiglione Calabro (Italia)	05/02/2015	72	IME
P **LACROCE Luigi**	Salerno (Italia)	03/05/2015	72	IME
P **LAROCCA Felice**	Salerno (Italia)	11/07/2015	92	ISI
L **LE COZ Yves**	Les Ponts-de-Cé (Francia)	15/02/2015	98	FRB
P **LLÁCER SANCHO José**	El Campello (Spagna)	06/07/2015	86	SMX
P **LOSADA Manuel**	Guayaquil (Ecuador)	23/06/2015	77	ECU
P **LOSS Luigi**	Arese (Italia)	08/03/2015	77	ILE
P **MADLEMUTHU Arulappa**	Ajjamahalli (India)	18/07/2015	38	INK
P **MAINO Girolamo**	Treviglio (Italia)	21/04/2015	94	ILE
P **MALEC Piotr**	Lufubu (Zambia)	06/05/2015	49	ZMB
L **MANGIAPANE Giuseppe**	Palermo (Italia)	09/03/2015	83	ISI
P **MARONGIU Giuseppe**	Selargius (Italia)	20/04/2015	95	ICC
P **MICHURSKI Józef**	Warszawa (Polonia)	15/01/2015	77	PLE
L **MULANGANANICKAL Mathew**	Aluva (India)	09/07/2015	78	INK
P **MURRU Vincenzo**	Lanusei (Italia)	07/05/2015	63	ICC
P **MYLADOOR Thomas**	Ajjamahalli (India)	18/07/2015	82	INK
Was provincial for 6 years				

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P **NEENDICHERRY Joseph**	Chennai (India)	22/02/2015	83	**INM**
P **NETO António Maria**	Manique (Portogallo)	15/02/2015	86	**POR**
S **NICHOLAS Ouseph**	Tiruchy (India)	15/07/2015	26	**INT**
P **NOKONOKO BATAJOLO Domingo**	Viana (Angola)	09/01/2015	36	**ATE**
L **PAKMA Joseph**	Shillong (India)	30/01/2015	87	**INS**
P **PASCUCCI Philip**	Ridgewood, NJ (USA)	01/02/2015	95	**SUE**
P **PERELLÓ Julio**	Quito (Ecuador)	05/05/2015	88	**ECU**
P **PIGHI Carlos**	Lima (Perú)	30/03/2015	84	**PER**
P **PIRRONE Pasquale**	Messina (Italia)	03/02/2015	74	**ISI**
L **PIZZIOLA Antonio**	Torino (Italia)	20/02/2015	84	**ICP**
P **REGUEIRO SALGADO Ramón**	Puerto La Cruz (Venezuela)	10/06/2015	78	**VEN**
P **REMÓN REY Jesús Ángel**	Cabezo de Torres (Spagna)	26/02/2015	69	**SMX**
P **RESCALLI Ernesto**	Hong Kong (Cina)	16/07/2015	102	**CIN**
P **RIBEIRO António**	Manique (Portogallo)	21/05/2015	87	**POR**
P **RICHINI Gerolamo Natale**	Arese (Italia)	03/03/2015	100	**ILE**
P **ROBSON George**	Bolton (Gran Bretagna)	06/02/2015	80	**GBR**
P **RODRIGUES José Rolim**	Recife (Brasile)	12/01/2015	88	**BRE**
P **RODRÍGUEZ FERREIRO Evaristo**	Sevilla (Spagna)	22/03/2015	80	**SMX**
P **RODRÍGUEZ GIMÉNEZ Antonio**	Sevilla (Spagna)	07/03/2015	87	**SMX**
P **RODRÍGUEZ OVELAR Eugenio**	Fernando de la Mora (Paraguay)	10/03/2015	86	**PAR**
P **RODRÍGUEZ Xavier**	Manikandam (India)	02/03/2015	85	**INT**
P **ROMÁN Abel Fernando María**	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	12/04/2015	64	**ARS**
P **ROSA Carlo**	Torino (Italia)	29/01/2015	88	**ICP**
P **RÖSCH Werner**	Stará Boleslav (Rep. Ceca)	29/03/2015	71	**CEP**
L **ROSEREN Pierre**	Colmar (Francia)	19/02/2015	96	**FRB**
L **ROSSETTO Valentino**	Nizza Monferrato (Italia)	24/05/2015	75	**ICP**
P **SABATER GARCÍA José**	Valencia (Spagna)	02/04/2015	73	**SMX**
L **SACRISTANI Carlo**	Roma (Italia)	07/07/2015	93	**ICC**
P **SALA Mario**	Arese (MI) (Italia)	27/06/2015	80	**ILE**
P **SALGADO PUMAR Domingo**	León (Spagna)	14/06/2015	86	**SSM**
P **SÁNCHEZ SÁNCHEZ Ángel**	Ciudad Real (Spagna)	16/02/2015	79	**SSM**
P **SÁNCHEZ VAQUERO Avelino**	Caracas (Venezuela)	28/03/2015	98	**VEN**
P **SANZ SUESCUN José**	El Campello (Spagna)	19/02/2015	83	**SMX**
P **SCAVUZZO Antonino**	Palermo (Italia)	14/04/2015	88	**ISI**
L **SIMMONDS Peter**	Cape Town (Sud Africa)	28/05/2015	87	**AFM**
P **SIMONS Dominique**	Kinshasa (Congo Rep. Dem.)	10/03/2015	83	**AFC**
L **SISMONDA Secondo**	Torino (Italia)	17/02/2015	77	**ICP**
P **SOTTANI Pedro**	Brasilia (Brasile)	18/07/2015	55	**BBH**
P **STIEVANI Gerardo**	Torino (Italia)	01/02/2015	90	**ICP**
P **STRINGHINI Darbino**	Torino (Italia)	08/04/2015	86	**ICP**
P **TAQUEBAN Iose Generoso**	Pampanga (Filippine)	25/04/2015	59	**FIS**
P **THEKKEL Anthony**	Aluva (India)	18/06/2015	48	**ING**
L **TORRE Giuseppe**	Torino (Italia)	15/05/2015	99	**ICP**
P **TRZESZCZKOWSKI Tadeusz**	Złotów (Polonia)	26/05/2015	81	**PLN**
P **TULLINI Leonardo**	Ravenna (Italia)	08/07/2015	65	**ILE**
P **UYTTENDAELE Omer**	Gijzegem (Belgio)	19/03/2015	101	**BEN**
P **UZHUNNALIL Mathew**	Pazhanganad (Kerala, India)	21/03/2015	88	**INK**

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P **VADACHERRY Mathew**	Kochi (India)	19/05/2015	86	**INK**
L **VALENTE Duarte**	Manique (Portogallo)	28/04/2015	87	**POR**
L **VANZO Silverio**	Istanbul (Turchia)	25/04/2015	99	**MOR**
P **VELTMAN Kees**	Hoofdorp (Olanda)	18/07/2015	78	**BEN**
L **VIALETTO Lorenzo**	Torino (Italia)	21/04/2015	83	**ICP**
P **VIDESOTT Bartolomeo**	Bolzano (Italia)	12/06/2015	80	**INE**
P **WARSZEWSKI Stanisław**	Amberg (Germania)	04/07/2015	69	**PLN**
P **WOLFERMANN Klaus**	Caracas (Venezuela)	23/02/2015	80	**VEN**
P **WONTKA Stanisław**	Rumia (Polonia)	05/05/2015	70	**PLN**
P **WYSEUR Jozef**	Bertem (Belgio)	01/06/2015	76	**BEN**
P **ZARAMELLA Teodosio**	Castello di Godego (Italia)	22/03/2015	86	**INE**
L **ZDANOWICZ Bernard**	New City, NY (USA)	20/02/2015	90	**SUE**
P **ZUPAN Ivan**	Trstenik (Slovenia)	15/03/2015	91	**SLO**