

SALESIANS²⁰¹¹







“Christ is everybody's right”



Fr Filiberto González Plasencia sdb
General Councillor for SC

Dear friends, grateful for the appreciation shown for "Salesians 2010" I am now happy to present you with the 2011 edition.

We are offering you good news which can realistically enlighten a society which seems to live entrenched in darkness. Don Bosco's work continues to offer effective proposals for overcoming poverty and for the education of the young, and all this thanks to the efforts of so many consecrated Salesians and their lay partners, who are always able to count on help from you all. This way we make a Family, a great Movement, that believes in the transforming energy of the Gospel, education and young people themselves.

The magazine this year is divided into new sections corresponding to the General Administration and eight Regions in which the Salesian Congregation has organised itself. You will find general statistical information and five articles on each Region, which let you see a small part of the good we are achieving in favour of poor and needy youth in every continent.

Along with the great team that has worked on this edition so capably, I reiterate my gratitude for your generous support for the Salesian Mission.

To each and every one of you, and your dear ones, I wish you a 2011 filled with God's blessings and the assistance of the Help of Christians, Don Bosco's teacher and guide.

December 8, 2010



Cover:
 Volunteer in Nigeria
 from ICP Province

Table of contents



SALESIANS 2011 1

- » Index
- » Rector Major: "Christ is everybody's right"
- » Salesians in the World



AFRICA - MADAGASCAR 6

- » AFC: Oases of hope
- » AFW: Don Bosco, credible model for alternative coexistence
- » ANG: 2,000 lollipops
- » AGL: Don Bosco Oratory Kabgayi
- » AFM: LoveMatters!



SOUTH AMERICA CONE 18

- » BRE: "Tell your story, speak of your life"
- » CISBRASIL: Provincial Conference of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Brazil
- » Brazil: Salesian Youth Volunteers in Brazil
- » Argentina: Don Bosco's Work in Argentina
- » ARN: Give me a smile!



EAST ASIA - OCEANIA 30

- » VIE: Darkhan, starting from zero!
- » KOR: Summer Bible Camp for Catholic Youth
- » GIA: Blessed Laura Vicuña and Artemides Zatti, pastoral patrons in Japan
- » AUL: Cagliari Lay Missionaries
- » MYM: Sunday Oratories à la Don Bosco!



SOUTH ASIA 42

- The Magic of Bosco Kids: INK «
- Life plus campus for young Misings: IND «
- Don Bosco Media: INT «
- A Communication Formation Project for the Church in India: India «
- Short Films for powerful values: INM «



INTERAMERICA 78

- » SUE: Chicago parish mission experience
- » ECU: *Universidad Politecnica Salesiana*
- » MEM: *CECHACI Don Bosco*, Mixes Prelature
- » BOL: Don Bosco Schools for the people
- » ANT: Boys and Girls with Don Bosco

NORTH EUROPE 54

- Don Bosco's spiritual and pedagogical heritage : BEN «
- Missionaries in the park: PLS «
- A promise and a challenge: EST «
- Oratory on wheels: SLO «
- Evangelising pilgrims create community: PLN «



ITALY - MIDDLE EAST 90

- » ICC: The Catacombs of St Callistus
- » ILE: Growth after Confirmation
- » ICP: Spiritual accompaniment
- » ISI: Teens meet
- » MOR: Zeitun, fertile ground

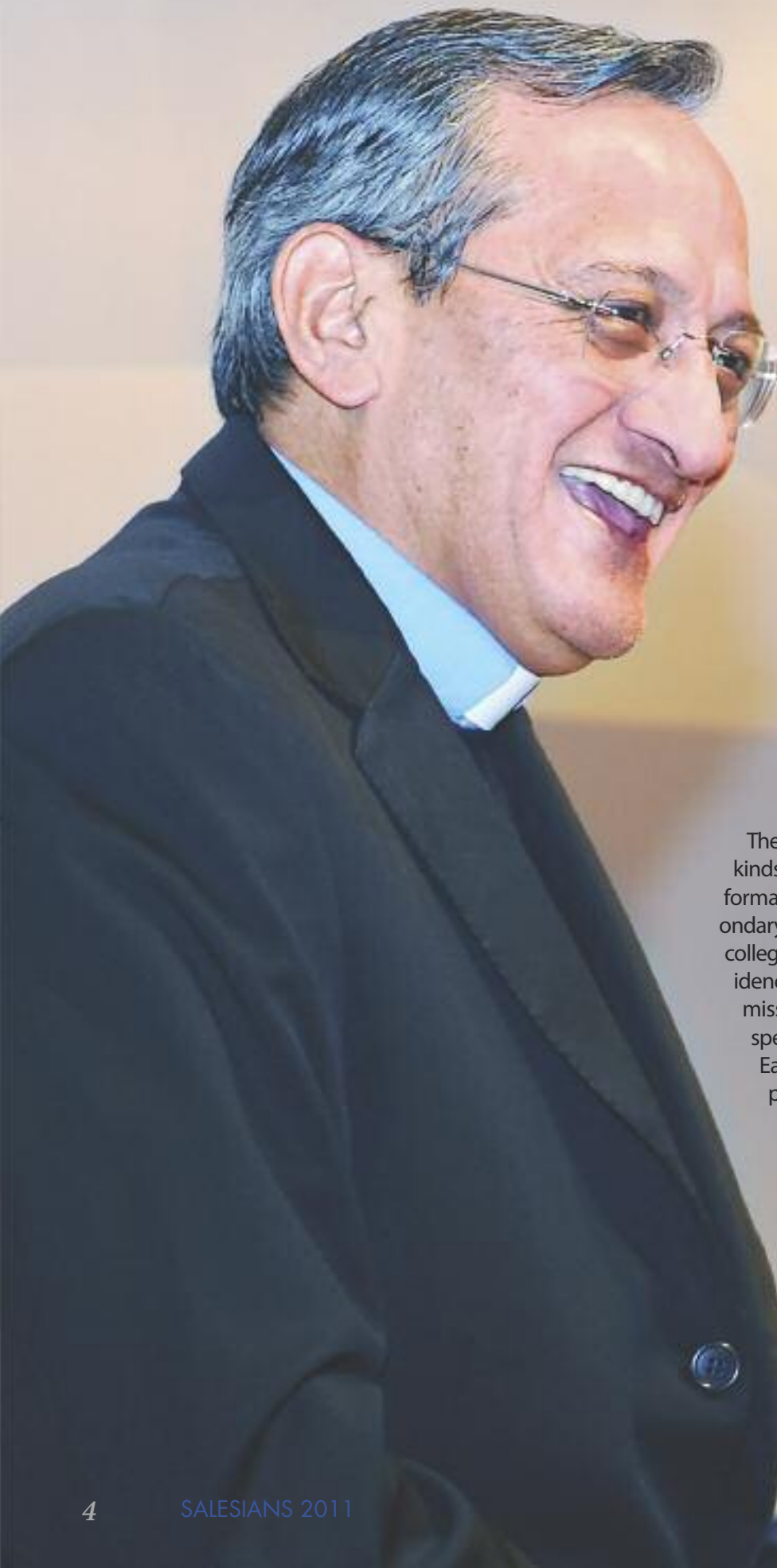
WEST EUROPE 66

- 'The Journey' of education in faith: Spain «
- A salesian open door, *Edições Salesianas*: POR «
- Farnières*: FRB «
- Catequistas y Misión Joven*: Spain «
- Salesian Mission & Development Office: SMA «



ROME - GENERALATE 104

- » Haiti, sorrow pregnant with hope
- » The meeting of all the novices of Europe
- » Community of the Mission of Don Bosco
- » Salesian Bishops Meeting
- » 141st Missionary expedition



“Christ is everybody's right”

Fr Pascual Chávez V., sdb
Rector Major

Dear members of the Salesian Family, Friends of Don Bosco, young people around the world, I take great pleasure in extending my greetings and best wishes to you all. May the new year 2011 be a peaceful one for you, rich in blessings and good things!

The Salesian mission is carried out in very different kinds of works, especially in the field of education, formal and informal. We work in primary and secondary schools, professional and technical institutes, colleges and universities, hostels and university residences, oratories and youth centres, parishes and missions, reception centres of various kinds and specialised projects for youngsters in difficulties. Each of these aims at being a response to the poorest and most neglected people, giving preferential attention to the young, who are the very first we are concerned about. We want to spend our lives for them, all our energies, following the example of our beloved Founder, Don Bosco.

We seek to foster an education which is attentive to human rights, in the desire to promote the dignity of the individual and improve his or her all-round growth. We accompany our young people and all those for whom we work

The central element that colours and enlightens everything to do with our Salesian presences is evangelisation, the proclamation of Jesus Christ

with our very own Preventive System. It is based on certain fundamental beliefs: that love, rich in concrete and tangible expressions, is the great energy behind education; that educational accompaniment is a gradual process, attentive to and in constant dialogue with the individual; that the most complete formation means looking after and accompanying not only the human but also the moral and spiritual dimensions of the person. This is why our work is typified by a convinced Christian anthropology and has as its point of reference the great values of the Gospel, even when we are working in non-Christian contexts.

Evangelisation is at the heart of things

The central element that colours and enlightens everything to do with our Salesian presences is evangelisation, the proclamation of Jesus Christ. It takes all kinds of shapes, from a simple, silent witness which gives rise to questions, to explicit proclamation, being part of a Christian community and active involvement in its mission. Don Bosco expressed it with the well-known claim regarding the origins of his work in Turin: "In its beginnings this Society was a simple catechism class".

This means to say that Don Bosco's educational work is typified by a religious and Christian animating force. The educator must not and cannot delay this great proclamation: Jesus alone can satisfy the infinite thirst for love, happiness and life in the heart of every young person. Christ is everyone's right!

Today certainly, as yesterday or even before, we have to take account of the obstacles that evangelisation encounters. The first of these is disinformation: not only is Jesus not spoken of often, but there is an effort to eliminate him from today's culture, from social organisation, from personal awareness. His presence is felt to be irrelevant in society and his absence seen as an advantage.


A second obstacle is the subjective view of Jesus who, deprived of his real history, becomes more and more a Christ tailored to our own measure, imagined according to our own needs and desires. The third obstacle is more refined: in a pretense at inter-religious dialogue Christ can be relegated to being just one amongst other masters of the spirit or founders of religions, so he is no longer recognised as the unique Saviour of all. Finally, there is the not just imaginary risk, indeed one very common amongst Christians themselves, of considering Christ to be so well known that there seems to be little more to be said about him; at this point, having become insignificant, there seems little value in having him as guide and Lord.

Evangelisation also means paying attention to very different contexts. The desire to bear witness to the Risen Lord urges us to confront urgent current situations, noted as a strong appeal and great concern. I refer to peoples not yet evangelised, to the secularism that threatens ancient Christian tradition, to the phenomenon of large scale migration, to kinds of poverty and violence, the spread of movements and sects.

Every context presents its only particular challenges to the proclamation of the Gospel. We fell challenged by certain opportunities too, like ecumenical, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue, the new sensitivity to peace, the safeguarding of human rights and care for creation, the many expressions of solidarity and volunteer service. These elements commit us to finding new ways to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ which respect and value local cultures.

Evangelisation and education are strictly connected

It is true that we Salesians carry out our mission of evangelisation by educating and that we educate by evangelising. It expresses the strict bond between evangelisation and education. Education is authentic when it respects every dimension of the child, the teenager, the young man or woman, and it is clearly oriented towards the complete formation of the individual, opening him or her to transcendence. Evangelisation, for its part, has in itself a strong educational worth, precisely because it tends to the transformation of the mind and heart, the creation of a new person, the result of being configured to Christ.

It is my great hope that you may find and appreciate all these values while thumbing through and reading this year book Salesians 2011. For all of you may it tell the story of our educational and evangelising experiences across the many countries of the world 

Salesians Journeying with

We, the Salesians of Don Bosco, are an international organization of men dedicated full time to the service of young people, especially those who are poorer and disadvantaged.

Wherever we work, Youth Resource Development through education and evangelization is the focus of all our concern - because we believe that our total dedication to the young is our best gift to humanity.

INTERAMERICA

Canada (1924)
 U. S. A. (1896)
 Mexico (1892)
 Guatemala (1929)
 El Salvador (1897)
 Honduras (1906)
 Nicaragua (1911)
 Costa Rica (1907)
 Panama (1907)
 Cuba (1917)
 Haiti (1935)
 Dominican R. (1934)
 Puerto Rico (1947)
 Dutch Antilles (1979)
 Colombia (1890)
 Venezuela (1894)
 Ecuador (1888)
 Peru (1891)
 Bolivia (1896)

ITALY - MIDDLE EAST

Italy (1846)
 San Marino (1922)
 Switzerland (1889)
 Romania (1997)
 Moldova (2005)
 Albania (1940)
 Kosovo (2000)
 Lithuania (1934)
 Turkey (1903)
 Iran (1936)
 Syria (1948)
 Lebanon (1952)
 Palestine (1891)
 Israel (1896)
 Egypt (1896)

WEST EUROPE

France (1875)
 Belgium (1891)
 Switzerland (1889)
 Andorra (1966)
 Spain (1881)
 Portugal (1894)
 Marocco (1929)
 Cape Verde (1943)

AMERICA SOUTH CONE

Brazil (1883)
 Paraguay (1896)
 Uruguay (1876)
 Chile (1887)
 Argentina (1875)

SALESIANS IN THE WORLD

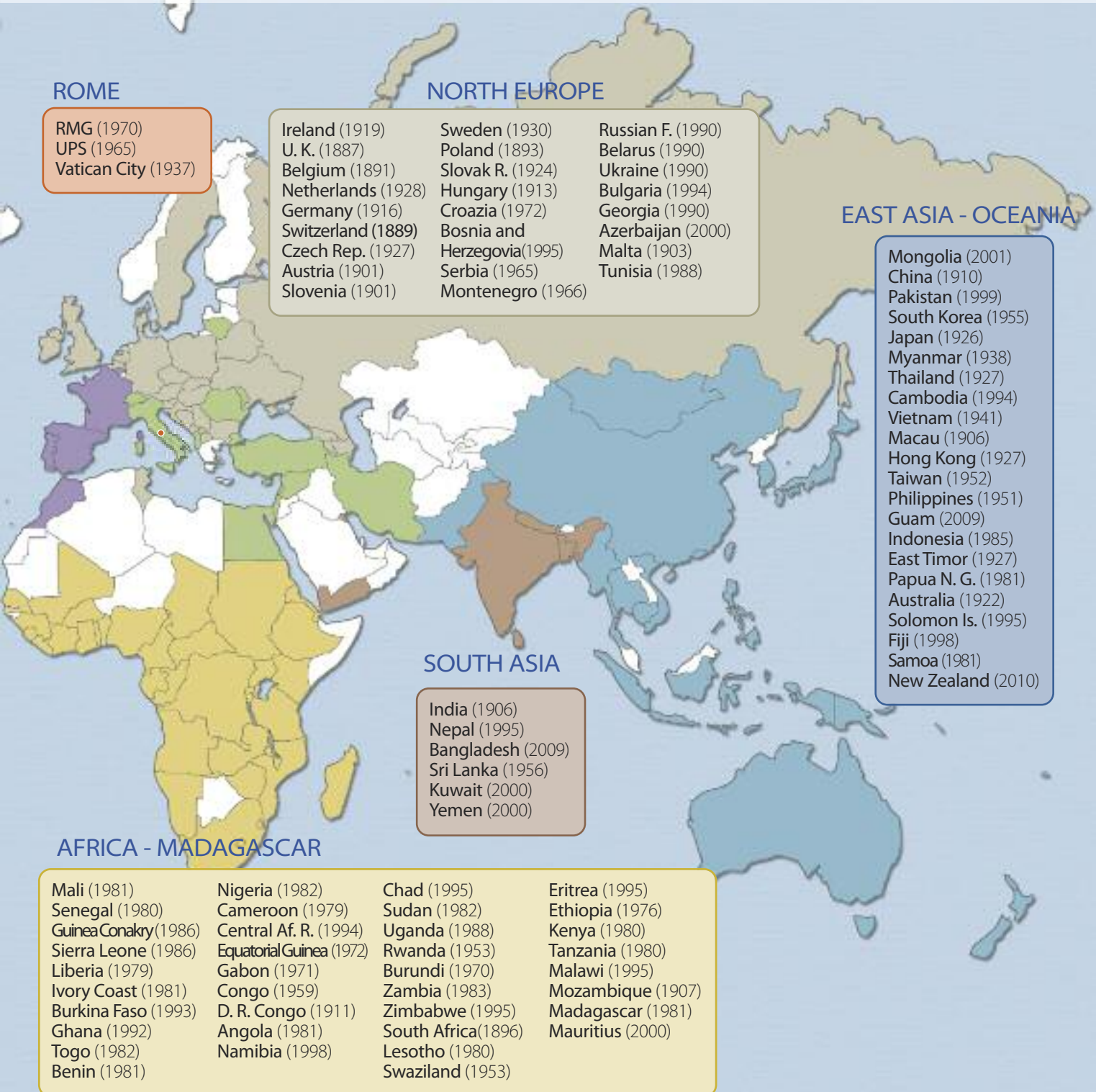
(December 31, 2009; Annuario2010, vol. 2)

Number of Countries: 130
 Number of Provinces: 89
 Number of Confreres: 15,346
 Number of Novices: 487
 Number of Salesian Bishops: 120

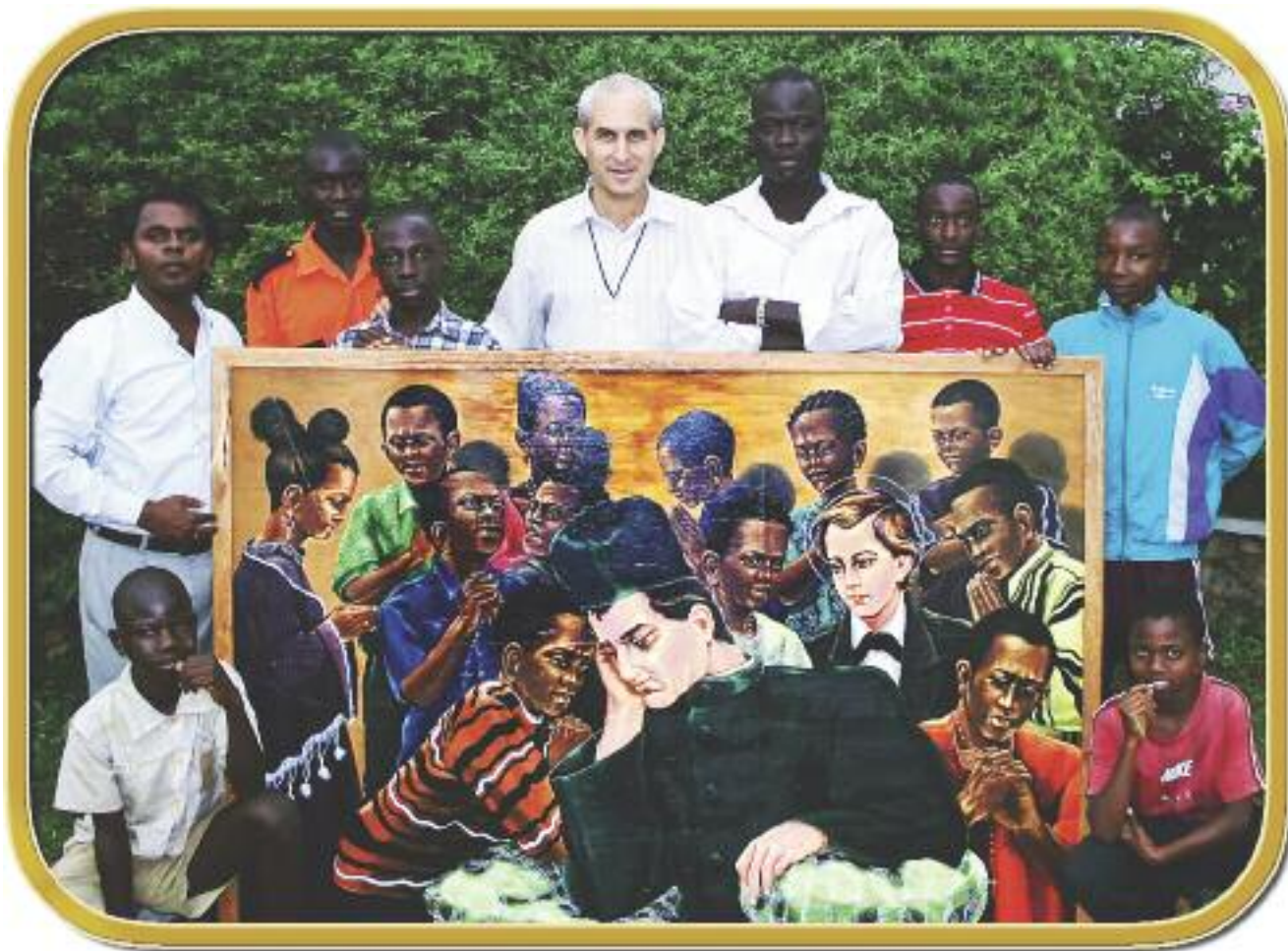
the Young in the World

Journey with the young: be a part of the adventure!

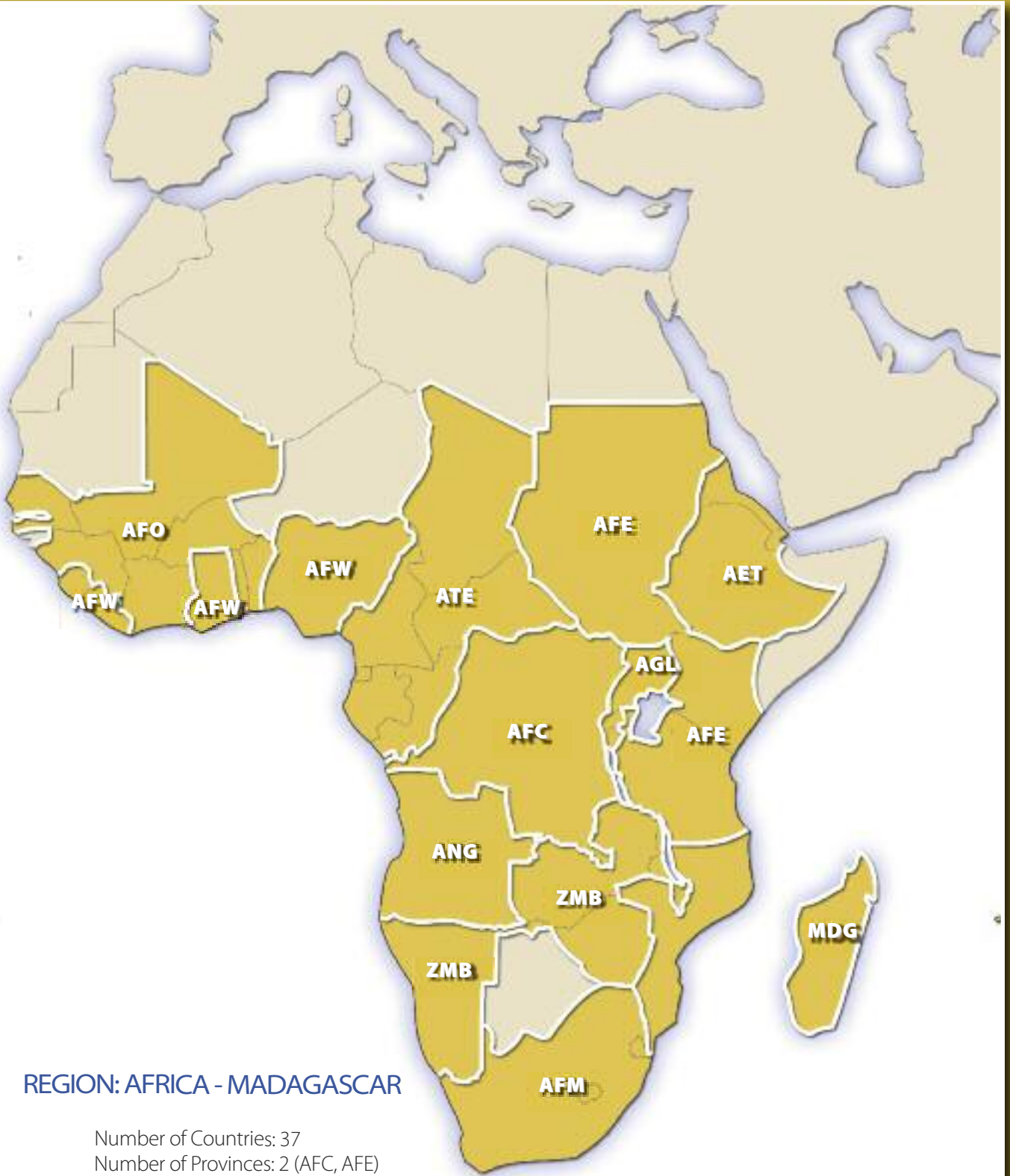
Founded by St. John Bosco, an Italian saintly educator of the nineteenth century, we are in 130 different nations, since ...



AFRICA MADAGASCAR



- » AFC: Oases of hope (10)
- » AFW: Don Bosco, credible model for alternative coexistence (12)
- » ANG: 2,000 lollipops (14)
- » AGL: Don Bosco Oratory Kabgayi (16)
- » AFM: LoveMatters! (18)



REGION: AFRICA - MADAGASCAR

Number of Countries: 37
Number of Provinces: 2 (AFC, AFE)
Vice Provinces: 10
Number of Confreres: 1,310
Number of Novices: 87
Number of Salesian Bishops: 8

Oases of hope

2011 - One hundred years!

Our Lady of the Assumption Province, D. R. Congo, AFC

by Fr Dieudonné Makola sdb

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a huge country, one of the largest in Africa. Salesian communities can be found in the east, towards Rwanda and Burundi, others towards the south-centre of the nation at Mbuji Mayi and yet others at Kinshasa, the capital, to the west. AFC Province will be celebrating its centenary of existence in 2011.

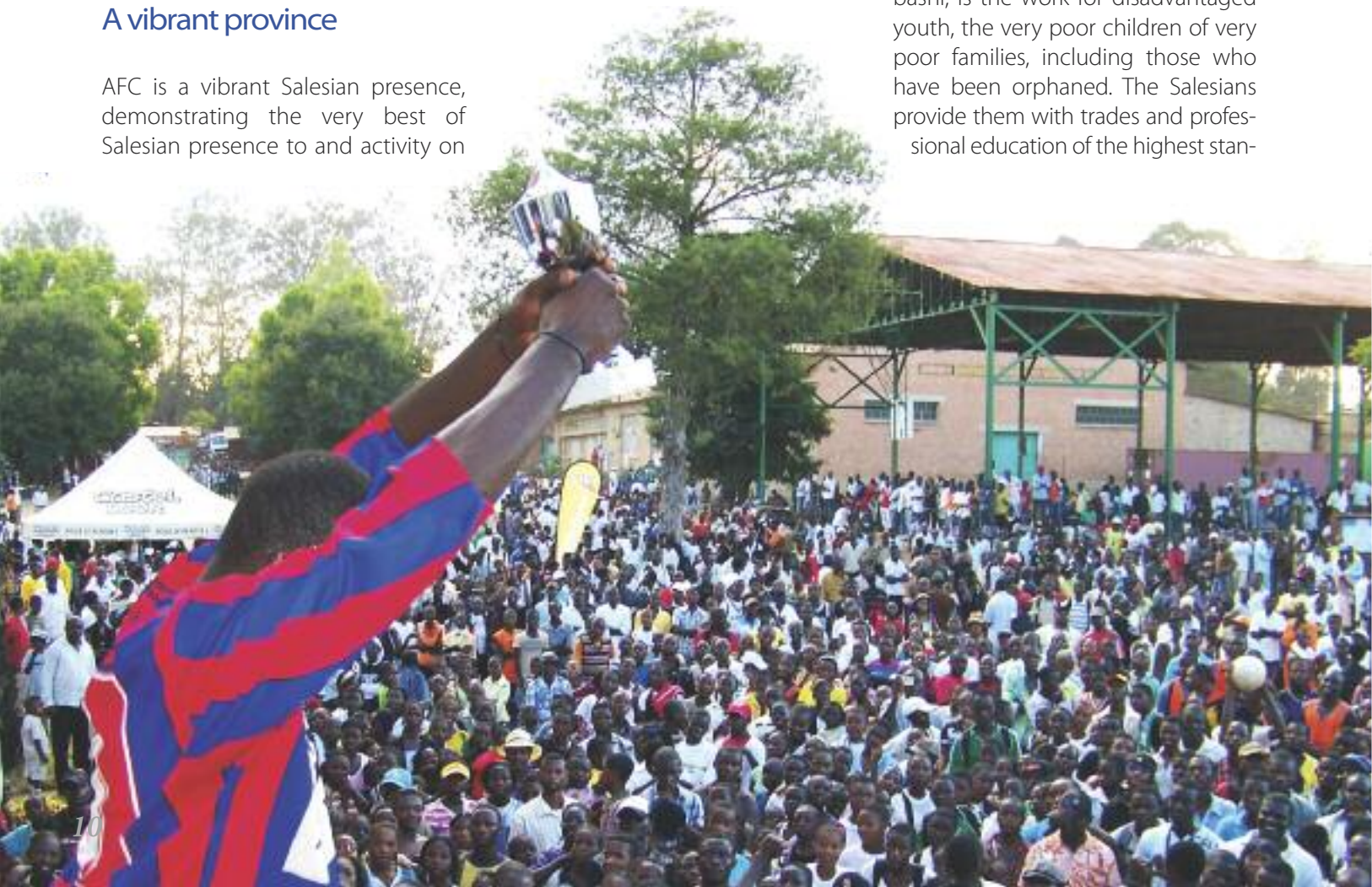
A vibrant province

AFC is a vibrant Salesian presence, demonstrating the very best of Salesian presence to and activity on

behalf of poor young people. While the international view of D. R. Congo is sometimes clouded by the economic and political problems the nation is struggling to overcome, the nation's greatest resource is young people who look forward in hope, and the Salesians have been behind that construction of hope for a century. Belgium sent its finest missionaries, a good number of

whom continue to work for and especially be present to thousands of young people, and they stirred up a lively vocational interest which has born fruit. Initial formation centres are flourishing.

An outstanding feature of Salesian work in AFC, well represented by a variety of centres in and around Lubumbashi, is the work for disadvantaged youth, the very poor children of very poor families, including those who have been orphaned. The Salesians provide them with trades and professional education of the highest stan-





*The very best of Salesian presence to and activity
on behalf of poor young people
The purpose is to make them welcome,
and then to try to reinsert them into family
or social life*

dards. There are other outstanding Salesian works in other parts of the country, but here we focus on the Lubumbashi zone, to provide an idea of the wonderful 'oases of hope' provided by the Salesians.

Oases of hope


Don Bosco Masina, situated at the heart of the suburb whose name it bears, always makes an impression on its visitors for its capacity to bring together many young people. A huge oratory with a wide range of activities: sports and martial arts, dance, various games, local and foreign music. Such is the atmosphere reigning in this work. In addition, many young people are prepared for life through a business centre, a technical college, an elementary school combined with a kindergarten. Don Bosco Masina is also a

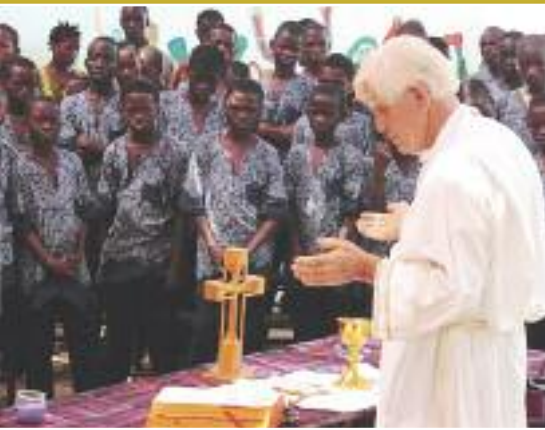
parish that evangelises. Here we find the splendid and imposing Mary Help of Christians Church.

Salama. The complex work at Salama is a setting with some 2,500 young people involved each day. It offers them education, spiritual formation and technical printing, electronics, general mechanics, auto mechanics, electricity. There is also a school of computer science. The school trains engineers in Design, Computer Networking, Programming. To accomplish this great ministry, Salesians work with hundreds of lay staff. The confreres also offer opportunity each day and on Sundays for local people to attend Mass.

Cité des Jeunes, Lubumbashi. Boys Town has many young people. They are offered many activities. It is primarily a vocational training school offered to young people in Mechanics, Welding, Agriculture, Construction, Joinery. There are also other activities like: sport, music. Each evening the grounds are filled with young people playing a wide range of games. Each Sunday at 7.30 am, the confreres provide a Mass for those living in as well as Catholics from the surrounding area. Twice a week there are catechetics classes to prepare young people for the sacraments of Christian initiation.

Bakanja: Bakanja forms part of a work called 'Œuvre Maman Marguerite' (OMM). This includes a collection of homes for young people from broken families. The purpose is to make them welcome, and then to try to reinsert them into family or social life. The Bakanja Home itself takes in children from the street. After discussion with the child and helping him or her to be aware of the situation, efforts are made to re-establish connection with the family. In the case where dialogue and negotiation leads to good results, the child stays at home with family. Otherwise, the child remains at Bakanja and benefits in the meantime from the school with the hope that at least his rehabilitation will be possible through the trade he will learn.

Imara: Located in the centre of Lubumbashi, Imara accepts more or less 5,000 young people each day. Its set-up allows for a primary school, a secondary school and a chapel where local Catholics are welcome to visit. In both schools, further studies and other activities are organised: sports, music, retreats, celebrations, catechesis, ... In the chapel, several activities similar to those of the parishes are held: morning masses and vespers celebrated each day, Sunday masses, activities of groups and youth movements, choir practice, celebrations, recollections 



Credible model

Blessed Artemides Zatti Vice Province, Sierra Leone, AFW

by Bro. Lothar Wagner sdb

This immense apostolic work is achieved through strict collaboration between Salesians and lay people.

John Kargbo was 12 years old when he ran away from home because he could no longer bear the extreme poverty. He and his two sisters often went hungry to school and hungry to bed. He had only finished primary school when his parents could no longer afford to pay his school fees. His father, a trained bricklayer, was unemployed; his mother could only move laboriously on crutches due to polio, and went begging at the ferry. John wanted to earn his own money and left the family. In the first year he used to visit his parents once a month but afterwards he stopped doing so. The boy looked for a better life in the capital, Freetown. For nearly three years he lived, ate, worked and slept on the street. He was lucky though, for he never became a victim of physical or sexual violence. Full of pride he recounts that he never stole and always managed to get by. On the street the boy heard of Don Bosco Fambul and asked for help there: "They told me that you could find everything there, a safe place to sleep, enough food, a school and people who listen to you", he recounts. Now the 16-year-old is sitting there in an office telling of his life "on the street and afterwards".

Deep wounds resulting from the civil war

Approximately 4,000 children, like

John, live on the streets of Sierra Leone. They can neither read nor write and live in permanent danger of being exploited and abused. Infant mortality in the country is the highest in the world; moreover, a lot of women die during or after giving birth on account of a medical service that has remained poor. All this has its roots in the cruel, eleven-year civil war that raged in Sierra Leone, and in the government's lack of ability – together with an unimaginable level of corruption. The people underwent untold suffering and now have to cope with their war traumas. Former child soldiers are now moped-taxi drivers; people, raped or mutilated, struggle along somehow. The infrastructure was largely destroyed. It is eight years now since the war ended officially in this West African country, only slightly larger than Bavaria with its 71,000 km². The social, political and economic situation, however, has remained fragile. Nearly 90 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. It is the young generation who are hit particularly hard since they cannot see any prospects for themselves, and their desperation is a latent source of unrest in the country.

Training and support for youth

Don Bosco Fambul is committed to giving street children prospects for the future and strengthening their families in the difficult post-war situation of the

for alternative coexistence

“The street boys who undergo rehabilitation at our house are neither beaten nor are they attacked verbally. We differ from the other institutes in Sierra Leone offering extra-familial education.”

country. With the help of the institute, John Kargbo has also made his way. He has returned to his parents and is regularly visited by a Don Bosco Fambul social worker who makes sure that everything is fine at home and that John is not going to return to the street. Don Bosco Fambul has been paying his school fees and financing an income-producing measure for the mother as the breadwinner of the family. Not only homeless persons but also unemployed youth have their place at Don Bosco Fambul: for 250 young people between age 18 and 28 the institute procures training places both within and outside Freetown and provides their accompaniment by social workers from the Skills Department.

Part of the services provided is a youth

centre for children, youth and young adults in the district and a crisis line. Since the start of the crisis line in January this year, more than 750 young callers have used it every week and found a sympathetic ear for all kinds of problems. Brother Lothar, the Director of Don Bosco Fambul, explains that the target of Don Bosco Fambul is to educate the children to become responsible citizens and good believers. This is to be achieved with the help of love, reason and religion. “The street boys who undergo rehabilitation at our house are neither beaten nor are they attacked verbally. We differ from the other institutes in Sierra Leone offering extra-familial education,” says Brother Lothar, a Salesian since 1993 and head of the institute in Freetown for one and a half years. He adds, “Furthermore we attach great importance to the fact that mutual care also plays a role within the team. You cannot give care and love to street children and youth and at the same time be an egoist in the team or privately in your family.”

Model for non-violent conflict resolution

The war in Sierra Leone not only caused many deaths and destroyed economic undertakings. Families were torn apart, children misused as soldiers and slaves, while drugs and brainwashing caused an incredible blood frenzy. All these experiences are still far from being coped with or overcome; in fact in large parts of the population they are rather played down.

In many families or neighbourhoods either silence or uproar prevails when it comes to dealing with problems or conflicts. A new way of talking to one another has to be found. Therefore, religious institutes like Don Bosco Fambul can prove to be very valuable for the country, as they set an example of another way of living together. Every day they demonstrate their credibility by their example of care, non-violence and tolerance.

Their active charity, their applied faith and spirituality can serve as a model where communication and coexistence have become difficult or even impossible.



Don Bosco Fambul (Fambul in Krio, the local language, means “family”) is the largest institute in Sierra Leone working with street children and unemployed youth. Every year it supports nearly 1,500 children and youth in one of the poorest countries on earth.

2,000 lollipops

“Sometimes it's just enough to make someone happy.”

Mamá Muxima Vice Province, Angola, ANG

by Fr Luigi De Liberali sdb



Christmas is God's gift to us and it is tradition to give gifts in this period, especially to children. In eastern Angola, poor and destroyed by war, parents are not in a position to give gifts to their children. So I took along a few boxes of lollipops, to deliver them in person, from village to village, to the kids. I figured that I met some 2,000 children in the 31 villages I visited. Many of them experienced the joy of receiving a gift for the first time in their lives! You just can't imagine the party spirit! Sometimes it's enough just to make someone happy.

For a year and half now I have been living in the Moxico region, eastern Angola, after more than twenty years of experience as a missionary in Brazil. Moxico was first evangelised in 1933 by the Benedictines, who came from Portugal, and founded various missions, built large churches, monasteries and colleges. The Salesians arrived 30 years later, taking on the parish of Sts Peter and Paul on the outskirts of Luena, bringing the spirit of Don Bosco to the young and to the poorer. From 2002, after the end of the long war of “independence”, the Salesian presence in this city was further strengthened by the construction of a middle school and a technical school, thus continuing the work of evangelisation in the large urban and rural area entrusted to our parish. And I follow up this work of evangelisation in the rural area.

A touch of reality

Moxico is one of the provinces of Angola which still today shows most signs of the civil war which raged for some 30 years. Almost 10 years after the signing of the peace agreement (2002), the consequences of this internecine struggle are still visible everywhere: impassable roads (most were ripped up or closed for fear of mines; Angola is the third most mined country in the world) bridges destroyed or unsafe, because made of poor quality materials.

When I was sent to Angola, I thought I would find a very hot land full of deserts and savannah, but instead, I see this piece of African land is a paradise of rivers and water, with an enviable climate. Most of the area is covered by forests, while the plains, filled with fruit trees and animals, accompany the course of the rivers. My attention is drawn to the number of rivers I have to cross! I have to cross rivers of every kind on every trip I make: little ones and big ones, broad or narrow, straight or winding ... And I always think of the reason why I am here in Angola: to give “living water” (as Jesus told the Samaritan woman: Jn 4:10) to everyone I meet.

Religious aspects

Because of a lack of priests in the diocese, as well as our own parish, we have to look after another parish, 350 kms away: in all there are 175 communities spread over 90,000 km², almost all of





*Many of them experienced the joy of receiving a gift
for the first time in their lives!
You just can't imagine the party spirit!*

this area difficult to access. Most villages have a catechist, a chapel and are more or less organised, but 40% do not have any Catholics in them or have not yet been visited. The statistics tell us that 80% of the inhabitants of this region are Protestants. Most speak the Chókoe language, but there are various other local languages (dialects). There are already translations of the bible, liturgical texts and catechism in local languages.

I find many difficult circumstances in the communities: in some places the chapels are poor and poorly kept, others have been destroyed by the rain or because the material was too weak, yet others are neglected or unfinished; in some communities there is almost no life of prayer and Catholics do not even know the 'Our Father' or 'Hail Mary' and some coordinators (called catechists) are at loggerheads with the community, or have personal problems (like drinking) that discourage the other faithful.

One of the major problems is witchcraft, and the belief that there is a cause of this kind for everything that happens (illness, accidents, disasters ...). That's why people call on an "expert" to figure out why that situation occurs or who caused it and this produces complaints, quarrels and divisions in families and communities.

The work of evangelisation

In every community there is a coordinator, called a catechist, who is very important for keeping the Christian faith alive. This person connects with the people, but is often not prepared for this mission.

The most significant moment for all the villages is certainly the Eucharistic celebration, which is always very lively and helps build communities.


Many chapels organise several processions: the entrance procession, in which the choir and the ministers enter dancing, the Bible procession, before the Liturgy of the Word, the offertory procession (called *Tambuli*), to take to the altar what the community has offered, and a dance after communion. Every Mass usually lasts more than two hours. On the more important feast days, at the end of the celebration the people leave the church in procession, forming a circle in front of the chapel, ending their time together with joyful celebration.

Formation and catechesis

Seeing the need to form catechists, I then began to bring them together by area, and gave them instruction. So the first year, I met 104 catechists from 47 different villages in six different places, living with them for a week of study, prayer and visits to communities.

Aiming to help catechists in their mission, along with four catechists who help coordinate the visits and the various areas, we prepared a new catechism, with a simple text, divided into three stages and translated in local languages.

Conclusion

In this year and a half I found many difficulties, but always recall the words of a hymn to Our Lady, which gave me great courage: "If your life seems a pointless journey, remember to carve out paths: another will follow you!" 



Don Bosco Oratory Kabgayi



St Charles Lwanga Vice Province, Rwanda, AGL

by Fr Camille Swertvagher sdb

Since the Salesians first came to Kabgayi in 2000, the formators and the young Salesians studying philosophy at the Grand Séminaire, have been of great pastoral help for the young people of the place. They have been engaged in catechetics, the hostel or playing fields, youth movements.

Since 2003 they have been living at the new formation house at Ruli, blessed and opened by the Rector Major. It was a boon for the Oratory: new sports grounds, organisation at the hostel ...

In 2006 -2007, the Don Bosco Oratory has developed further, becoming an important place of apostolate for the post-novitiate. The Salesians of the community are the first in responsibil-

ity for this educational and pastoral work. Formation at the *Philosophicum* in Kabgayi is, one must understand, the priority for young Salesians in formation. Especially during the weekend and as far as possible during the week, they engage in ministry with youth in the oratory, which bears Don Bosco's name.

Educative and Pastoral Community formed

Subsequently other areas were added or renovated; these were opened in December 2007. On this occasion, we remembered our fellow post-novice Anaclet Nyirimana, who had died; he had given himself body and soul to the oratory.

Since 2008, leaders have offered voluntary service at the Oratory. Some of them are now Salesian aspirants or Co-operators. Thus the educative and pastoral community was formed. It has developed the Salesian Educative and Pastoral Plan for the Oratory. The young people, boys and girls, who come to the Oratory are generally very poor. Since 2009 they have been coming each afternoon to take part in sports : football, basketball, volleyball or other activities: traditional dance, modern music, karate, gymnastics ...

Saturday afternoon is a better time to organise the young people into groups and associations. There is a time for prayer and then a Good Night closes the activities.



The major Salesian feasts are celebrated with the young people. Each month there is at least one Mass at the Oratory, as well as a recollection or formation session. The Oratory infrastructure has been improved through the support of benefactors and NGOs and the Rector Major.

Good Christians and upright citizens

In 2009, a Marian area was built with the help of *Solidarité Don Bosco* from the Salesian Belgium North Province. Further construction is envisaged. But other than material concerns, the priority for the Salesians and the Salesian Family is especially that of educating and evangelising the young people to help them become 'good Christians and upright citizens' in society and Church today.

We seek this goal through all the educational activities, education in faith, joy, love and cultural values

and moral, social education, encouraging them to take part in youth movements so they can discover their own vocation in Rwandan society and the Church today.

In the light of GC26, we also try to give our attention to families, since the parents are the first ones responsible for the education of their children.

Don Bosco Oratory, Kabgayi, draws its inspiration from the first Oratory at Valdocco in Turin. Today - with the necessary modifications for the realities of this time and this place - we see it as a home that welcomes, a school that prepares them for life, a parish and evangelising playground that offers joy and friendship.

We the formators and confreres in formation, want to "be Don Bosco" in Kabgayi, and we want to act like Don Bosco. This makes young people happy and makes us happy too!



We remembered our fellow post-novice Anaclel Nyirimana, who had died; he had given himself body and soul to the oratory.

The priority for the Salesians and the Salesian Family is especially that of educating and evangelising the young people to help them become 'good Christians and upright citizens' in society and Church today.

LoveMatters!

Blessed Michael Rua Vice Province, Johannesburg, AFM

by Fr François Dufour sdb

For the first time in my life I have been able to ask any questions I like and get an answer", says a teenage boy from Soweto. He is one of thousands of teenagers from schools and churches who have attended a 5 day residential program called LoveMatters! The program has been offered over the past ten years by a team of Salesians of Don Bosco, peer ministers and invited experts, at the Bosco Youth Centre near Johannesburg in South Africa. The program seeks to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Southern Africa.

LoveMatters is an abstinence-based HIV/AIDS prevention program which also promotes spiritual awareness, since sexuality does not operate on the level of the merely physical but includes spiritual and psychological planes as well. And since youth programs are often identified as attending to the problems of young people (assisting drug-takers, small offenders,

school drop-outs . . .) LoveMatters sets out to address a wider spectrum. It does sometimes deal with 'problem teens' but its participation is chiefly the average disadvantaged teenager who just needs to be guided and affirmed along the path to health, happiness and holiness. "We believe", say the program's leaders "that our dynamic, formative LoveMatters program convinces participants to make wholesome choices and avoid the painful consequences of irresponsible behaviour. LoveMatters provides experiences which build up their self-esteem and confidence, and helps teens find a basic spirituality and philosophy of life for their future".

Bring them in while they are young

"I think this camp should be for younger people because I have got myself involved in a lot of things a



LoveMatters is an abstinence-based HIV/AIDS prevention program which also promotes spiritual awareness. Typically Pippa Jarvis shares the story of her family who have opened their home to abandoned babies, giving her effectively 18 brothers and sisters!

while ago and I never knew what I was getting myself into. So if young people could find out earlier ...": thus writes a Grade 9 boy who handed in this note before jumping on the bus to go home after the program. One school in Soweto realised that it was almost too late to send Grade 9s, as their pupils start experimenting with sex at a much younger age, so they sent a Grade 7 class along. The last morning a few girls made a very emotional commitment to the abstinence pledge. They were just 13 years old and on different occasions had been raped by men on the way home from school. Fear and shame was their lot from then on, but the LoveMatters program had addressed many of their fears and they had a desire to reclaim their virginity, forcibly stolen from them and still have the courage to make a positive commitment to life.

The program uses the SEE-JUDGE-CHOOSE process. Participants go into groups initially with a ratio of 7 youths to 1 leader. A doctor and midwife provide appropriate information on the biological intricacies of the male and female reproduction system and the young people are invited to ask any questions they wish. Issues of gender, parenting, peer culture are dealt with along the way. A married couple shares how they met, why they decided to marry, the impact of children on their marriage and so on.

Professional dramatists help the JUDGE phase by examining life situations and the impact that choices made have on them: peer pressure to have sex, alcohol use and abuse at parties, abortion

suicide. By this stage a deep level of trust has been built up in the group and with leaders, as boys and girls begin to share some of the immense life choices they have already had to make - an unwanted pregnancy and subsequent abortion, or someone toying with suicide after bearing a tragedy that seems too hard to bear. Towards the end of the week there is a shift from facts, information, discovering the truth to making quality judgments for oneself. How would I act if I found myself in this or that situation?

Invitation to a commitment

On the last day 'role model' speakers are invited to share their stories of how they made a difference to communities they live in. Typically Pippa Jarvis shares the story of her family who have opened their home to abandoned babies, giving her effectively 18 brothers and sisters! She challenges the

young participants to be part of the solution rather than the problem. And finally the young people are invited to a pledge ceremony where, if they feel called, or feel the need to join the struggle against HIV/AIDS, they pledge to abstain from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity to their future spouse. It is not uncommon for 75% of participants in a session to make this pledge.

Of course it is not all talks and discussions. There is ample time for games, time to relax, laugh, be young. The Salesians recognise that physical challenges shape and augment mental strength, the "I actually did it!" feeling. The change that comes through the LoveMatters program is significant. If 75% commit to the life-changing choice of abstinence and keep to it, they too become great agents for social change in their communities.





AMERICA SOUTH CONE

- » BRE: "Tell your story, speak of your life" (22)
- » CISBRASIL: Provincial Conference of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Brazil (24)
- » Brazil: Salesian Youth Volunteers in Brazil (26)
- » Argentina: Don Bosco's work in Argentina (28)
- » ARN: "Give me a smile!" (30)



REGION: AMERICA SOUTH CONE

Number of Countries: 5
Number of Provinces: 11
Number of Confreres: 1,587
Number of Novices: 53
Number of Salesian Bishops: 43

“Tell your story, speak of your life”

Salesian Youth Festival mobilises youth

Recife, St Aloysius Gonazaga Province, BRE

by Jakeline Lira

Since 1996 the then recently formed Salesian Youth Movement of the northeast has organised, along with Salesian Youth Ministry in the northeast Brazil Province (BRE) the Salesian Youth Festival or *Festival da Juventude Salesiana (FJS)*. It is a wonderful occasion for encounter and exchange amongst young people from different circumstances throughout the entire region. They can share their experiences and show off their artistic skills in theatre, dance and music, in a real experience of Salesian Youth Spirituality.

The FJS always takes place in October, at the *Sagrado Coração* (Sacred Heart) College in Recife, and lasts some three

days. It commences on the Friday evening and goes through till after lunch on Sunday. During this time, classrooms become dormitories and covered courtyards a refectory, as well as an arena for choreography and a stage for the music festival.

Taking into account an average in recent years of 900 - 1000 participants, the event requires, besides physical space, a huge human effort to ensure a positive outcome, keeping young people happy and refreshed, despite their tiredness. Coordinators, Salesians and youth leaders, along with other groups of the Salesian Family, are involved in the organisation and distribu-

tion of tasks, transforming the event into a real experience of teamwork.

The Salesian perspective sees that there is always a choice of theme pertinent to young people, society and/or the Church, which young people reflect on in the months leading up to the festival, including in their communities, and during the event, through talks and other activities on offer, like festivals of choreography and theatre. In 2010, for example, the theme proposed was: “young actors on life’s stage”, under the banner of: “Tell your story, speak of your life”. Eucharistic celebrations and prayer opportunities are also part of the programme.




In recent years of 900 - 1000 participants, the event requires, besides physical space, a huge human effort to ensure a positive outcome, keeping young people happy and refreshed, despite their tiredness

Those who take part in the Festival are primarily members of youth groups and come from quite different circumstances, not only in terms of the rural-urban divide but also from various socio-economic strata. The great majority of these young people belong to one or other Salesian house (SDB and FMA) - especially parishes, social works, schools - and the Festival offers a privileged space for experiencing difference, sharing experiences and showing off artistic skills, through theatre, dance and music.

Given the distance factor in the region, some need to travel up to 12 hours by bus, so Youth Ministry always runs a raffle to help the youngsters to take

part, since the costs become high and many would not be able to afford it otherwise. In their own groups at home the youths also arrange various ways of mobilising the resources that will enable them to come. Maybe this is a keyword for the Festival in many ways: mobilisation.

Recalling that young people are often shown and interpreted by the media and society negatively and generically, the Festival also serves as a time to create a culture of life, by showing and appreciating art and the friendship that many of these young people have already developed so practically in their schools and communities. 



CISBRASIL

A journey of networking and solidarity in the mission to young people

Provincial Conference of the Salesians of Don Bosco, Brazil

by Fr Nivaldo Pessinati sdb

Since 1960 the six SDB Provinces of Brazil have been sharing challenges and solutions via a Conference which is religious and charismatic in nature. In the course of the yearly Conference meetings we have discovered significant work patterns, and sought joint solutions and action.

Only towards the end of 1999 was the Conference set up juridically as the Provincial Conference of the Salesians of Don Bosco Brazil – CISBRASIL.

Once the Conference was given its official, legal set-up the history of sharing that had been built up over earlier years offered the maturity and required experience for expressing its identity as well as confirming the opportunities it provided.

Coordination, articulation, orientation

The CISBRASIL statutes clearly lay out its identity and express an awareness of how to share and build up a network: “Coordination, articulation, orientation which is aimed at the improvement, modernisation and productiveness” of the Provinces. The Statutes then established that CISBRASIL should create, involve, coordinate and provide incentive for maintaining the “Salesian Network of Education and Social Work”.

Later still through Assembly meetings and the Directory - drawn up by the Provincials - the Province commissions and especially the executive headquarters in Brasilia took on responsibility for carrying out the directions and decisions taken by the Conference.

“Coordination, articulation, orientation which is aimed at the improvement, modernisation and productiveness” of the Provinces

It is worth highlighting the involvement and performance which the prior-mentioned networks achieved.

In his letter of 25 April 2010 the Rector Major himself, Fr Pascual Chávez, cites the Salesian Schools Network which emerged from the Cumbayá (1994 and 2001) and Brasilia guidelines (2008) bringing together the 110 SDB and FMA schools into a single formation project for teachers as well as for developing school text books which are based on Salesian pedagogical principles.

Salesian Social Action also took significant steps towards setting itself up as a network. The Life Association (*União Pela Vida* or UPV in Portuguese) continues to provide motivation for benefactors who play a part through prayer and offerings, in supporting Salesian social work.

These networks comprise a range of



specific projects within their area of activity. Overall we can say that the major focus of this development is the planning and execution of ongoing formation of teachers in both real time and virtually. Some 20% of the resources generated through the activity of these networks is directly invested in the preparation of teachers and educators.

There is no shortage of difficulties and challenges in networking. But the positive results overall are gratifying and





consistent: awareness of the Salesian mission brought about at a national level; recognition of the quality of the educational, social and pastoral quality by Church and society; positive reinforcement and extension of the Salesian image in the country; a sense of solidarity with and belonging to the Salesian Family.

The executive office

Other than the networks mentioned the executive office responds in areas of communication, by editing, producing and distributing the Salesian Bulletin for Brazil, which has now achieved the significant print-run of 104,000 copies for each edition. The office also runs an educational TV channel – TV Educator.



The executive office endeavours to respond to requests from our university institutions and Salesian parishes, offering representative and logistic services amongst others. The Salesian Family can also depend on its support.

The CISBRASIL Directory sets out and approves a two year plan which the executive office develops, evaluates and is responsible for. Salesians SDB, FMA and lay are involved in this executive work.

The result is that the mission or horizons guiding the work of CISBRASIL through its commissions and executive office becomes even clearer and better followed up: "by taking part in, checking on and developing Salesian Youth Ministry in Brazil".

At the same time the vision established through CISBRASIL's strategic planning takes on consistency: "It is recognised as the point of reference for the Salesian mission in Brazil."



Salesian Youth Volunteers in Brazil

Salesian Provinces of Brazil

Salesian youth proactivity begins a new step in their experience – the desire to be disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ so that those who are less fortunate in society may have life



by Fr Antonio Ramos do Prado sdb

Salesian Youth Volunteers in Brazil came into being in 1968. Father Walter (now bishop) Ivan left Sao Paulo for Porto Velho, Amazonia, with 12 young adults, Salesians and lay people. In the years that followed, these missionary expeditions continued for Amazonia and Mato Grosso, and later (1990) young university students looking for pastoral experience and at the end of their course were sent to Angola.

In the same way, other Provinces in Brazil began to broaden out the youthful Salesian volunteer mission experience. Along with AJS (the Salesian Youth Movement) which began to develop around 1999, there was a growing number of young people who took part

in this experience. Salesian youth proactivity begins a new step in their experience – the desire to be disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ so that those who are less fortunate in society may have life.

The mission experiences are also open to teenagers to share their days between study and volunteer work in creches, kindergartens, orphanages. During the holidays these teenagers, after a formation process, spend some weeks on mission, bringing the Gospel and festive oratories to needy parishes in Brazil.

Brazil today

Brazil today has 189.6 million people. 52





million are young people between the ages of 15 to 29 years. 70% of these live on the margins of poverty and promiscuity. In 2009 more than 45 thousand young people died. Faced with a culture of death, corruption and the collapse of structures many young people live without fixed points of reference. The models which society offers them today are not models of human growth, but of obsession for power. So the volunteer experiences help young people to open themselves up to solidarity and seeking new models which foster life.

Processes

The Provinces of Brazil organise the

missionary volunteer movement as a process with 4 steps:

Child mission: 10 to 12 years of age, Teen mission: 13 to 15, Young adult mission: 16 to 25, Adult mission: 26 and older.

Child mission: catechesis for first communion and missionary subsidies from CNBB (Brazil National Bishops Conference). The Lives of Dominic Savio, Michael Magone and Laura Vicuña.

Teen Mission: Education to Faith curriculum (SDB and FMA Conference, Brazil), with following topics: Personal identity, Encounter with Christ, Being part of Church, Commitment for the

Kingdom and *Cadernos de Mística da EJS*.

Young Adult Mission: study of documents of the Church like *Redemptoris Missio*, Aparecida, the lives of Salesian missionaries in Latin America and Don Bosco's Memoirs of the Oratory.

Adult Mission: study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Salesian texts, Scripture and the DOMISAL campaign.

After the First Salesian Mission Volunteers Congress for South Cone, Brazil is attempting to focus the mission experience for the Salesian Provinces in South Cone even more. This fosters greater exchange amongst the young concerned



Don Bosco's work in Argentina



Argentina, Blessed Artemides Zatti province, ARN
and Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá province, ARS

by National Mission and Development Office, Argentina

The Salesian Congregation arrived in Argentina in 1875 with the arrival of the first missionaries who sought to locate themselves in areas of greater social conflict, undertaking services aimed at complete human development of children and older youth throughout the nation, respecting the cultural and geographical differences they found.

This gave rise to agricultural and industrial schools, technical and general training, mission centres in Patagonia which looked after ethnic groups, set up clinics, schools, homes for youngsters in difficulty, prevention activities and opportunities to do something in their free time.

This was brought about and is still so today by bringing together many groups and people who share a similar concern for the young, and by offering real opportunities for those who these services are directed to, to themselves share in the task of helping other young people, in due course, to develop. Thus they have set up a model for self-development.

Salesian work cooperates with anybody who in any way whatsoever is working for the good of young people in Argentina and elsewhere. But apart from the statistics in fact we come across very many more young people who need recognition of their right to grow up in a dignified manner.





Salesian work in Argentina:

- 96 Salesian Houses.
- 479 parishes and churches.
- Rodeo del Medio was the first Faculty of Oenology in Latin America.
- About 77,000 students in schools, faculties and tertiary institutes.
- 6,000 students in 146 Technical Training Centres.
- About 9,000 teachers, instructors and other educational agents.
- 500,000 past pupils throughout Argentina.
- 24,000 youth in youth groups, scouts and oratories.
- 48 missionary groups.
- 31 centres for teenagers at risk looking after more than 2,000 youngsters.
- 12 radio stations, 3 audiovisual centres and 4 museums.
- Each month the two provinces distribute more than 60 thousand copies of magazines which appeal to people throughout the nation.
- 3 publishing houses, 14 bookshops and 3 printing presses.
- More than 100 digital publications/web sites.



“Give me a smile!”



Córdoba, Blessed Artemides Zatti Province, Argentina North, ARN

by the National Mission and Development Office, Argentina

In the Oratory style that we find in the Parish of Sts John Bosco and Dominic Savio in Tropezón in Córdoba, a group of people are working, with well-chosen experiences of a community and professional kind, to accompany young people and their families as they try to resolve their problems and contribute to a much more humane society.

Through a system of scholarships for boys and girls with difficulties in attending school, or because they don't have exercise books, pens, uniforms, or they have learning difficulties, their "patrons", who see to material needs, and their "mediators", who work with them directly to help them in their education, are working with the Oratory Team which is also providing scholastic assistance.



REGION: EAST ASIA - OCEANIA

Number of Countries: 20
Number of Provinces: 8
2 Vice Provinces (MYM, ITM)
2 Delegations (Indonesia, PNG/SI)
Number of Confreres: 1,346
Number of Novices: 62
Number of Salesian Bishops: 12



- » VIE: Darkhan, starting from zero! (34)
- » KOR: Summer Bible Camp for catholic youth (36)
- » GIA: Blessed Laura Vicuña and Artemides Zatti, pastoral patrons in Japan (38)
- » AUL: Cagliari Lay Missionaries (40)
- » MYM: Sunday Oratories à la Don Bosco! (42)

Darkhan, starting from zero!

A story of first evangelisation

Mongolia (St John Bosco Province, VIE)

by Fr Andrew Nguyen Trung Tin sdb



The Salesians of Don Bosco established themselves in Darkhan on April 2, 2005 on precisely the day that Pope John Paul II passed away. That day two Salesians, Fr. James Cheruvathur and Fr Andrew Nguyen Trung Ting, left





Ulaanbaatar after Mass with the blessing of Fr. Carlo the Rector, and two other priests, to set out for the new mission. It was a freezing day, lots of snow on the way to Darkhan ... but inside, our hearts were full of love, zeal and enthusiasm for the new mission. A young man came with us; he was our student (mechanic) and had recently graduated. He was our driver.

Five years later we have an Education Centre and the Church of Mary Help of Christians. The Education Centre offers a program for English language learning and computers. Mongolian teachers help us to teach English and computers to the children, and they double as adult workers in their spare time. We have also opened a small library which also serves as a place for the children to do homework or private study (some families have no proper place for the children to sit down to study, no chairs or tables, and possibly not even a light at home). This library and other inside areas are very important in Mongolia where winter lasts six


months and temperatures plunge to minus 40 degrees centigrade or more!

Starting from zero

Not only do temperatures plunge. We began in Darkhan with zero Catholics! Darkhan had never had a Catholic presence before. Now we can count 135 newly baptised Catholics, 60% of whom are adults, 25% young adults and 5% children, with a small percentage of catechumens, some 20 adults in all in this latter group. We have six catechists helping the Salesians SDB and the Missionaries of Charity Sisters MC. But it is also true that much of the work we do here is simply through witness and the ability to talk to the children, teenagers and adults, especially those who attend the Oratory, and the educational activities we offer, about our faith. We do our best to nurture the newly-found faith of those who attend Sunday Mass and other religious occasions. The parish priest visits families, especially the sick and elderly and we have a small clinic called St Anne's,

staffed by a Catholic nurse. She accompanies the priest when he visits the sick.

Many other attractive activities

Beside the Church, the Study centre, library, Oratory, we have an active Youth Center, where our activities invite young people to encountering the Lord, meet up with friends and others who attend there. It is a place to grow in apostolic work, helping others, and an opportunity for us to visit families, discussing their lives, needs, their dreams; it is also a place for them to study, attend the seminars we offer 



Summer Bible Camp for catholic youth

Salesians of Korea Province are zealous in showing Jesus to young people they encounter in their pastoral settings including "The Summer Bible Camp for Catholic Youth." In 2010, about 2,500 young people, who are involved in Sunday schools in the parishes of different dioceses in Korea, took part in the SBC under the theme "We want to see Jesus!"

The SBC has been a regular feature of

pastoral activity of the Salesians in Korea. It has been taking place twice a year during summer and winter vacations for middle school and high school students. The Salesians, working in the "Salesian Education Centre", are in charge of this project. Some pre-novices and theologians are also involved in the project for their pastoral formation. The Salesians advertise the project through weekly bulletins of dioceses, in Catholic jour-

nals and websites and do so some three months before the SBC starts its first session. The application for participation is made not individually but collectively, which means participation is decided by the catechists or parish priests, and the youths who are interested in the SBC can make applications through the parishes.

The SBC has nothing to do with lectures or seminars or something intel-

A group of young people, likely participants in a summer Bible camp, are shown from the chest up, wearing bright yellow life jackets. They are in the middle of splashing water, with droplets of water suspended in the air around them. The background is a clear blue sky and the surface of the ocean. The overall mood is energetic and joyful.

"Sir, we want to see Jesus"

lectual. It is all about experiences. One session lasts for two nights and three days and there are about 300 youths participating in the program in each session. Participants can get access to the important Gospel messages and have a chance to reflect on meanings of the messages while they are running, swimming, canoeing and playing different games. Each program is delicately designed by the Salesians so as to give the young people a chance to grow in their faith under the guidance of Gospel messages instead of merely giving them an occasion to play without reflecting on the matters of their faith.

Consequences of this project have been quite significant. A considerable number of today's Salesians heard God calling them, inviting them to the life and mission of Don Bosco here in Korean soil during the SBC. The writer of the current article is also one of them. I was one of the high school students who had experienced the happiness, joy and enthusiasm of the Salesians in the SBC in 1991. Now, it has become my turn to show those Salesian values and Gospel messages to young people in the very circumstances where I got them and discovered my Salesian vocation.

A second fruit of the SBC is the fact that the Salesians have become very well known for this project in the Korean Church. The people now more easily know who the Salesians are and what they do.

There is yet another effect that must be emphasised. Many young people who have participated in the SBC have become very familiar with the Salesians and Salesian houses and it is now becoming a most important motivation for them to be involved in the Salesian Youth Movement in Korea 🙏





Blessed Laura Vicuña Blessed Artemides Zatti

by Fr Hitoshi Yamanouchi sdb

What, you may well ask, have two Salesian saints who lived and died in South America, to do with Japan? The answer lies in the real changing face of Catholicism in Japan represented by the migrant population.

Immigrants now outnumber the national Catholic population. According to the Japanese Immigration Bureau more than 2 million foreign residents live in Japan, a country of 127 million people. More than half of these are Korean and Chinese. Of the rest Brazilians account for more than 300,000, followed by Filipinos at 200,000 and Peruvians with 60,000. The majority of these latter three groups, obviously, are Catholic, though not necessarily practising. The Salesian outreach to these often struggling immigrants is a particularly well-noted aspect of recent years. Hamamatsu City has 800,000 residents, 20,000 of whom belong to the Brazilian community, mostly migrant workers 'feeding' industry in the area. The parish has some 150 Japanese regular worshippers, 450 migrant



pastoral patrons in Japan

St Francis Xavier Province, Hamamatsu, GIA

workers with a further 600 somewhat closely involved.

May 2010 saw the opening, in the presence of the Bishop of Yokohama, Bishop Rafael Masahiro Uemura, of a new two-storey building intended for ministering to the people of Hamamatsu.

Revisiting the history up to the present, we can say that this Salesian presence began with the dream of one Salesian of Japanese descent, in São Paulo Province Brazil, who asked to come to Japan as a missionary to accompany Brazilians who had emigrated to Japan in search of a better life. The missionary's name is Fr Evaristo Higa, who on arrival in Japan set up in an area where there were already many Brazilians working in auto-part factories. Thus he began his mission amongst his own,

gradually building up a Catholic Brazilian community in Hamamatsu, bringing together various communities which had sprung up in different cities in the Shizuoka area.

When the Japanese Province officially took up this presence, Fr Evaristo had already been working there for ten years and had built up a strong Christian community open to other groups from Latin America and Asia, showing prophetic attention to homeless Japanese, helping them especially through Brazilian and other Latin American volunteers, and also some Japanese.

In 2006, the then Provincial, Fr Orlando Puppo, sent Fr Angel Yamanouchi to Hamamatsu to study possible directions for opening a Salesian Pastoral Centre. Amongst other things, the

socio-economic situation in Japan was in strong recession and the crisis was affecting migrants especially. God in his Providence and Mary Help of Christians through her protection led to the purchase of a property almost adjacent to the parish. After much coming and going, especially involving those responsible for administration in the diocese, and also the architect and engineers, this large, modern Salesian Pastoral Centre was built in less than a year.

May Blessed Laura Vicuña and Blessed Artemides Zatti, the protectors of this Pastoral Centre, fill us with joy and hope so that this Centre may be an authentic Salesian home to poor children and youngsters and others in need of acceptance, education and Christian formation.





Cagliero Lay Missionaries

Mary Help of Christians Province, AUL

Lauren Bicknell

Teaching English is an incredibly valuable skill in Thailand as much of the employment is in tourism and the ability to speak English in this industry is essential. Don Bosco Home, Bangsak, where Steph, an Australian 'Cagliero' young missionary and volunteer taught English, is a truly amazing place – the happiness of the children is evident as laughter echoes around the beautiful grounds – the spirit of Don Bosco is truly well and alive. So, who are these 'Cagliero' missionaries and what do they do?

In 2006 biblical scholar Fr. Frank Moloney returned from the United States to take up the position of the Provincial of the Australia-Pacific Province. Among his goals for the Salesian family in Australia and Pacific was the creation of a program that allowed young men and women the opportunity to volunteer with overseas Salesian communities. Fr. Moloney,

with the support of Salesians province-wide, wanted to model this program on those that are so commonly associated with religious orders in the United States. In 2007 a director for the program was employed and thus started The Cagliero Project! The Project was named after Cardinal John Cagliero who was the first Salesian missionary sent to Patagonia (Argentina) by Don Bosco in 1875.

Inaugural volunteers

The inaugural Cagliero volunteers departed to two separate places in Thailand in June 2008. Both volunteers were leaders from Don Bosco Camp in Dromana, Australia. Steph's assignment to Don Bosco Home was more than just 'teaching English'. The home was set up by the Thai Salesians shortly after the Tsunami in 2004, to help care for the many children who were orphaned in the south of Thailand. So Steph was

involved in the general care of these children, as well as travelling out to the local schools to teach English.

At the same time David travelled to Chiang Mai in the north of Thailand. Don Bosco Home Chiang Mai was established to give young men from the northern hill tribes an education. It also provides a supportive living environment for the young men when they are studying. The Home has a farm associated with it in order to help them support themselves. In 2010 the Cagliero Project was lucky enough to have a volunteer with an agricultural background who has been a great asset to the farm.

A major goal from the beginning of the Cagliero Project was sustainability; not to simply provide one time volunteers but consistently support overseas Salesian communities. In the early stages of the Cagliero Project, Fr.

The goals and dreams of the Cagliariro Project are being fulfilled as we bring young people closer to Don Bosco through their encounters with disadvantaged young people



Moloney asked the other Provincials in the East Asia Oceania region if they had any need for volunteers. Quick to respond was Fr. John Bosco Thepharat Pitisant, Provincial of the Thai Province that also encompasses Cambodia and Laos. Thus began a very important relationship between the Thai and Australia Pacific Province.

The Cagliariro volunteers sent to Thailand have quite a challenge as they endeavour to learn Thai. However all the Cagliariro volunteers have persisted and been successful in mastering the difficult language (to varying degrees!). The Thai SDB community has welcomed them with true Thai hospitality and the volunteers have completed their experiences with a deep love for Thailand, the culture and of course the Salesians!

Dream being realised

In the beginning of the Cagliariro Project, the dream was to be able to consistently sustain a few countries within the East Asia-Oceania Salesian Region with missionary volunteers. This dream is slowly being realised as the Project sends in the second and third round of volunteers to many of the placements. The Cagliariro Project has sent twelve missionary volunteers to Thailand, Cambodia and Samoa. In

the future the Project would like to expand to other countries in the East Asia-Oceania region.

This rapid growth is due in part to the introduction of a new program - a short term immersion experience. The first of these took place in Samoa where the Salesians of Don Bosco have a strong presence. The journey was one that the group will never forget as they spent time living with local families and learning about Samoan culture. Most importantly it gave everyone a chance to understand another culture and what life as a missionary volunteer would be like. This immersion was held again in 2010

and has led even more young people to give up their time for a long term volunteer experience in the Cagliariro Project.

Slowly the goals and dreams of the Cagliariro Project are being fulfilled as we bring young people closer to Don Bosco through their encounters with disadvantaged young people in third world countries. The generosity and service of our missionary volunteers to the Salesian Missions is also helping us

achieve our goal of sustainability. It is not an easy task, however a truly life changing experience, as the missionary volunteers walk with the Salesians and young people in their joys and hardship.



Sunday Oratories à la Don Bosco!

**Do not think of grand buildings
and expensive equipment,
but rather of vibrant activities**

Mary Help of Christians Vice Province, Anisakan, MYM





by Fr Mariano Naing sdb



The academic exams barely over and full of the joys of a Myanmar spring, 'Oratory Day', organised by the Novitiate Community in collaboration with the neighboring Salesian Sisters and their girls is celebrated in grand style at Anisakan, Pyin Oo Lwin. Nearly 300 oratory children from the neighboring villages come together at Our Lady's Shrine.

Myanmar, the largest country in South East Asia in geographical terms, sharing borders with the world's largest countries population-wise (India, China), is a Salesian Vice province belonging to the East Asia-Oceania Salesian region. Salesians first set foot in Mandalay in 1939. Not only have they survived all the vicissitudes of war, natural disasters and politics. They are a thriving, zealous band of Salesians on the move, growing in numbers and in determination. Don Bosco's initial intuition, the oratory, is their intuition too.


In Anisakan, every Sunday during the year, as is the case for most of the Salesian communities across the country, there is an oratory. Do not think of grand buildings and expensive equipment, but rather of vibrant activities, Salesians, Sisters, committed lay people, and lots of kids on playgrounds, under trees, whatever.

The novices at Ansikan organise oratories for the different villages, giving

preference to the poorer areas. For the most part, the people they deal with are Buddhists, and the novices are reminded to be careful in not attempting to proselytise the children. On Sundays, at the oratories, the youngsters are involved in games, given educational instruction and tickets are distributed which will stand them in good stead on the Annual Oratory Day. The children are prepared well and understand how to take part in Oratory Day, which concludes the Oratory Year.

This year, as always, the day was filled with interesting contests and games. The celebrations began with an introduction for the leaders - Fr. Francis Cyril explained the rules of the games for Oratory Day to the excited and restive children. Following his skilfully prepared program there were three groups for the games with their respective leaders. The boys and girls all had ample opportunities and chances to play and enjoy the different games.

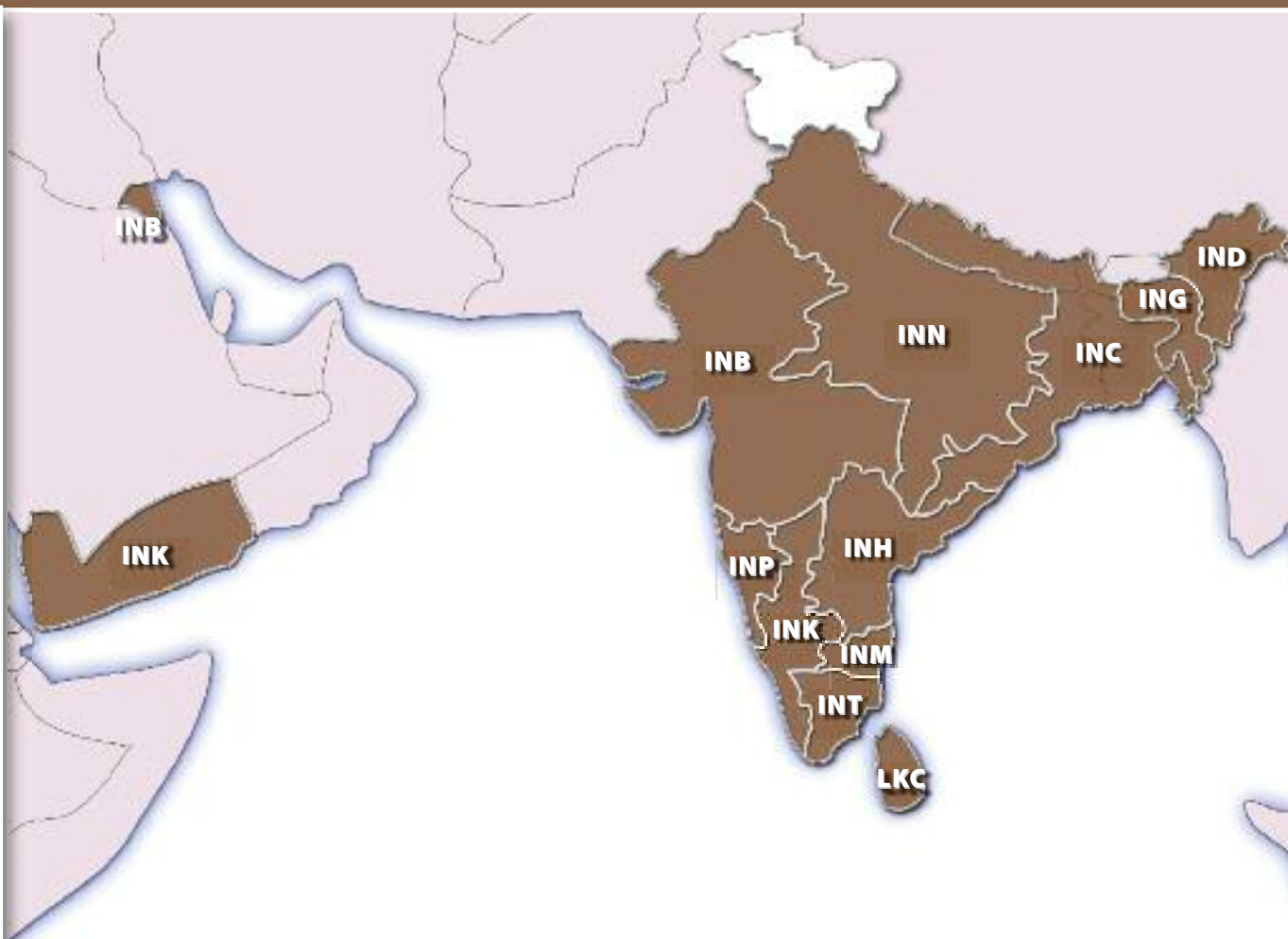
For their part, the Sisters and their girls not only generously took charge of the prize distribution, selling the foodstuff and clothes, but also some of them helped in conducting the games and led the youngsters throughout the games in their spontaneous Salesian style. Towards the evening, after enjoying the whole day, the oratory children returned to their respective villages refreshed and renewed with zest and vigour.

When one of them was asked his impression about the events of the day, he said: "This oratory festival opened up new prospects for me". Another said: "The events of today will be imprinted always in my memory" 



SOUTH ASIA





REGION: SOUTH ASIA

Number of Countries: 6
Number of Provinces: 10
Vice Province: 1 (LKC)
Number of Confreres: 2,431
Number of Novices: 141
Number of Salesian Bishops: 10

- » INK: The magic of Bosco Kids (46)
- » IND: Life Plus Campus for young Misings (48)
- » INT: Don Bosco Media (50)
- » India: A communication formation project for the Church in India (52)
- » INM: Short films for powerful values (54)

The Magic of Bosco Kids

Sacred Heart Province, India, Bangalore, INK

by Fr Jude Anand sdb

I love to be a 'BOSCO KID' and 'BOSCO KIDS' is what helped me to achieve this unbelievable feat". Ashiwini, the top student at the recently held SSLC examination from Sacred Heart High School, Bangalore, proudly expressed her joy.

A better world begins with a better self. "Become the change you want in the world!" said Mahatma Gandhi. We want the 'kids' to grow to love themselves, others, their life, the world and God to be architects of a 'better' world

'BOSCO KIDS' focuses on friendship and harmony rather than on competitive programmes and activities where one has to prove his or her worth! The child's worth is in his or her being and not in performance! To promote self-confidence

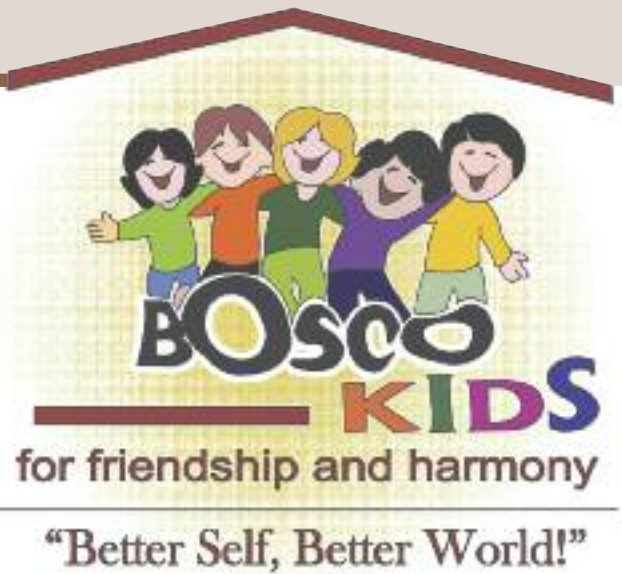
and creativity we have monthly 'talent demonstration' programs.

'BOSCO KIDS' is a movement for children between 10 and 15 years of age. It brings them together under one umbrella as a family. They take a pledge to love everyone as brothers and sisters. They pray daily that they may be true to themselves and do good to all. To date we have more than 7,000 children enrolled in the movement. 'BOSCO KIDS' is spreading its wings all across India!

'BOSCO KIDS' focuses on helping our children to grow up with goodness considering themselves as precious and unique gifts of God destined to bring about positive changes wherever they find themselves. It cuts across all religious, linguistic, cultural, communal barriers!

'BOSCO KIDS' Provides the young with a genuine group experience where they can experience freedom, joy, love, friendship, support, trust and other human qualities both from their leaders and from their companions. We see 'Bosco Kids' as an experience that will effect a difference in all aspects of life of a young person. Focus is on building up the 'self'. – Better Self. A better world begins with a better self. "Become the change you want in the world!" said Mahatma Gandhi. We want the 'kids' to grow to love themselves, others, their life, the world and God to be architects of a 'better' world.





EMPHASIS

- » We emphasise the crucial role of the animators and guides who should make themselves loved by the young. They should let the 'kids' know that they are loved! They are the ones who draw the 'kids' to the group!
- » We celebrate life: birthdays and other significant events in the life of the 'kids' and in the life of the community – national festivals of universal importance.
- » 'Bosco Kids' learn to appreciate team work that produces synergy rather than individual work that reinforces selfishness.
- » We inculcate the spirit of appreciation of the good found in others.
- » We encourage them to live with a grateful heart which is a sign of true self-esteem!
- » We stress the need for Acceptance, Affection, and Appreciation in life as a means towards the achievement of true friendship.
- » We instill in the 'kids' the truth that all human beings are different.

BOSCO KIDS grow up to be upright, honest and responsible citizens of India. They accept all Indians as members of their family.



Life Plus Campus for young Misings

St Francis of Sales Province, Jorhat, Assam, Dimapur, IND

by Fr K.A. Thomas sdb

In the Life Plus programme for Bosco Asha, Jorhat, the Salesian Educative and Pastoral Plan (SEPP) was put to the general public in a novel manner on 31st May, 2010. The presentation area, christened Don Bosco Lotta, was blessed and inaugurated by Rev. Fr. James Poonthuruthil SDB, the provincial of Dimapur Province. The Mising tribal word, *lotta*, meaning "courtyard", where meetings and gatherings occur, is given a new connotation in the Life Plus campus.

The concepts of SEPP, the life and achievements of Don Bosco and his educational philosophy, have been translated into the Assamese language by Fr. Thomas Kalapurackal, Salesian director of the Institute for Culture And Rural Development (I-CARD), which is an experiment in tribal development with the Mising community. Don Bosco's ideas and the teachings of the Salesian Congregation have been digested and re-presented for a secular

Don Bosco's ideas and the teachings of the Salesian Congregation have been digested and re-presented for a secular and modern audience

Visitors will now have a better understanding of the person of Don Bosco from the colourful pictures and writings presented on the walls around the verandah

and modern audience. They have been re-written, without losing their original richness, in a language that is acceptable and understandable to the common man.

Hundreds of young people belonging to the over 250 'Young Misings' groups of I-CARD, frequenting Life Plus for various training programmes, and other visitors will now have a better under-

standing of the person of Don Bosco from the colourful pictures and writings presented on the walls around the verandah. Most people in the region know 'Don Bosco' only as a school.

"I congratulate Fr. Thomas," said Fr. Provincial, "who has presented the SEPP in a novel manner for the general public in the Life Plus campus. This is going to inspire other institutions."

Life Plus, which began operation in 2006, houses a tribal reference library, a publication centre for Misings, a yarn dyeing unit, handloom weaving centre and a cultural tourism department. It is called a 'one-step learning centre about Misings'. Soon DBTech India will be launching computer training courses in Life Plus, financed by the Ministry of Rural Development, for training poor unemployed youth. A Mising museum and an audio-video production studio are also in the pipeline 





DON BOSCO MEDIA

Communicates to educate, empower, employ and entertain

Our Lady of Health of Velankanni Province, INT

Don Bosco MEDIA is a centre for communication in the Salesian Province of Tiruchy in Tamil Nadu. In a short span of time it has emerged as one of the leading media centres in Tamil Nadu with the motto; 'communicate to educate, empower, employ and entertain'. It functions with four independent operational wings.

Don Bosco Institute of Information & Communication Excellence (DBIICE) runs five media-related diploma courses affiliated with Bharathidasan University, Tiruchy. DBIICE provides higher education opportunity in the field of information, communication and media. It aims to educate poor young people in media with social consciousness and values. The centre offers five diploma courses: Television Production, Visual Editing (Apple Final Cut Pro), Film Technology, Animation and Graphics (Multimedia) and Radio & Video Jockeying (RJ & VJ). On completion of the course students receive University certificates and job placements. This is the only institute with University recognition in the

by Fr A. Raj sdb

This is the only institute with University recognition in the State to have revolutionised media studies by making it accessible to the poor. 'Life, love, hope' a trilogy of short films on children living with HIV/AIDS created great impact in Tamil Nadu. Its subsequent release in theatres across the state is a first of its kind for short films




State to have revolutionised media studies by making it accessible to the poor.

Alaihal MEDIA ('sound waves' in Tamil), the production department, is widely known and vastly appreciated for its audio and video productions. It has produced 25 audios, 26 videos, including participatory documentaries and has published 10 books in the last five years on social, cultural, educational and religious themes. *Neeye Nirantharam* (You are everlasting), one of the religious albums, continues to be a bestseller for over 5 years. 'Life, love, hope' a trilogy of short films on children living with HIV/AIDS created great impact in Tamil Nadu. Its subsequent release in theatres across the state is a first of its kind for short films. 'Alaihal MEDIA' brought together Government

and Non-Government organisations, Corporates, celebrities and the public to spread awareness and promote the care and dignity of people living with HIV/AIDS specially children. Our productions also include 2D animation videos and games. Its social awareness productions are used in schools, colleges, radio and television channels to preserve and promote culture and also as education and evangelising tools.

Alaihal MEDIA CLUBS are designed to develop in young minds greater awareness, analysis and participation in media. There are 50 clubs with 20 members each. The number of clubs keeps increasing every year. They are governed and recognised by their distinct flag, anthem, rules and regulations. A facilitator guides in their regular fortnightly meetings. Regular work-

shops, seminars, symposiums, alternative and folk media characterise the animation of media clubs. Educational tools are regularly distributed to media clubs in schools and colleges. Alaihal MEDIA CENTRE is located in Madurai while the other three departments are in Tiruchy. It caters to our extension works specifically for distribution of our products. The centre envisages to organise mobile media ministry for education and evangelisation. It also organises media events and award programs for social and educational audios and media-related productions.

Don Bosco MEDIA, with its multifarious activities, reaches out concretely with concerted effort to impart quality media education to the poor youth and empowers vast number of youth and public with its media initiatives. 



A Communication Formation Project for the Church in India

India, South Asia Region

Education and training in communications is to be an integral part of the formation of priests and all pastoral workers. (*Aetatis Novae*)

The focus is on helping pastoral personnel to understand, appreciate and creatively apply the principles and practices of social communications in their varied ministries

by Fr K. J. Louis sdb

The Holy See is very pleased with a significant communications venture by Indian Salesians which is now helping to form Indian clergy. Many people in other countries are waiting for this book, or better the full three-volume series. The initiative is a big moment in the life of the Church and can be an inspiration for many", said Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication, on 12 February 2010, while launching the three-volume work by Salesians in India.

The series entitled Communication for Pastoral Leadership contains three separate books: 'Basics of Social Communication' by Fr Louis Kumpiluvellil SDB, 'Critical Understanding of Social Communication' by Fr Robert Pen SDB and 'Theological Perspectives in Social Communication' by Fr George Plathottam SDB. These books were prepared at the request of the Catholic Bishops'

Conference of India. They are meant for progressively training Church personnel in communication in the seminaries and religious formation houses.

The Indian Church's Commission for Social Communication has taken the initiative in promoting these books across the country through a series of nine seminars where Church personnel familiarise people with the content and the project goals.

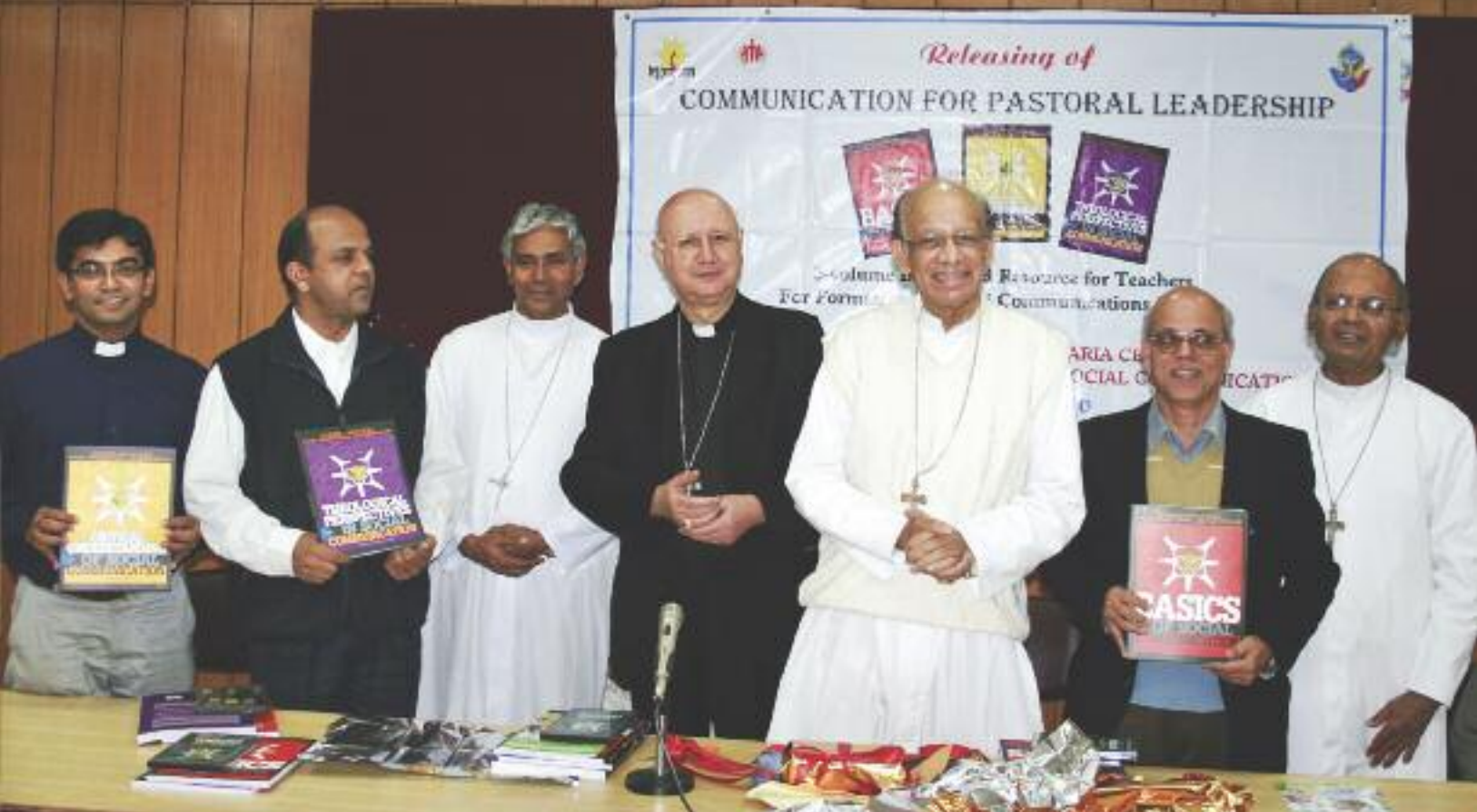
Education and training in communications is to be an integral part of the formation of priests and all pastoral workers. *Aetatis Novae* insists that in today's world, so strongly influenced by media, "Church personnel require at least a working grasp of the impact which new information technologies and mass media are having upon individuals and society (AN 18)." Future leaders of the Church, particularly priests and religious, can be effective

ministers only if they learn to integrate communications as an essential component of their formation. This calls for acquiring knowledge and skills, critical thinking, value judgements, creativity and the ability to process and manage information. The Indian Bishops' Conference in 2004 declared "bishops, priests, religious and lay leaders should get adequate training in communications so that they can effectively discharge their duties for evangelisation and for the genuine interests of the Church and society".



DVD

Resources for Teachers of Communication.



Book 1

Basics of Social Communication presents the essentials of communication in a simple and straightforward manner. It introduces the students to all aspects of communication from verbal, non-verbal and para-verbal communication to intra-personal, interpersonal, group and mass communication; from old media to new media; from the communication challenges of the real world to those of the virtual world.

This book is for those in initial stages of formation, particularly those in minor seminaries and pre-noviates and pre-university students.

And it is not all theories and abstractions – there is a whole section on skill-building – language skills, listening skills, speaking skills, writing skills, presentation skills, virtual skills.



Book 2

Critical Understanding of Social Communication is an in-depth study of the media and their pervasive influence on people.

It examines media's underlying assumptions, values, hidden agendas, complexities, concerns, and relevance. It aims at helping students become critical consumers and creative users of the media products. It is meant for students of philosophy, those in regency and post-novariate years of religious formation.

Book 3

Theological Perspectives is a well-researched and up-to-date presentation of social communication from the perspective of pastoral leadership.

The book is meant primarily for students of theology and those in the final stages of religious formation. The focus is on helping pastoral personnel to understand, appreciate and creatively apply the principles and practices of social communications in their varied ministries. Priests, religious and lay leaders will find it a veritable treasure-trove with insightful and innovative strategies to enhance their fruitfulness of their ministries. It includes sessions on preaching, evolving effective strategies and plans, networking and integrating communications into one's ministry.



Short Films for powerful values

Chennai, St Thomas the Apostle Province, INM

by Fr Glorious Stephen sdb

Don Bosco Institute of Communication Arts (DBICA) has emerged as one of the premier media institutes actively involved in imparting values, skills and promoting media literacy among young people and those involved in the field of media in India. DBICA continues to provide a good avenue for media critics and professionals to discuss media and social

issues through seminars, research, short film festivals and various other campaigns.

This initiative of introducing short films of various genres from all over the globe by way of film festivals, is to illustrate to film lovers and the public the power of short films to deal with different themes in a way that is entertaining,

educative and motivating. Short film is also a very rich form of film making, which can be a good alternative to mainstream cinema and can powerfully communicate stories and themes that are touching and impressive.

In pursuit of this vision, DBICA has successfully conducted a number of film festivals like the International Short Film



Short film is also a very rich form of film making, which can be a good alternative to mainstream cinema and can powerfully communicate stories and themes that are touching and impressive.

Short films that celebrate diverse cultures, aesthetic traditions, social and political themes and other works that challenge and transcend expectations

Festival of India, Human Rights Film Festival, Documentary Film Festival, Children's Short Film Festival, PSA Fest, DBICA Film Festival. These festivals have been conducted in collaboration with a number of colleges, NGOs, media institutes and also in joint collaboration with the department of Information, Government of Tamil Nadu.

ISFFFI

The International Short Film Festival of India, which has been conducted successfully four times, the most recent with 419 entries from 28 countries, is conducted at Albert Theatres, Chennai. ISFFI strives to showcase short films that celebrate diverse cultures, aesthetic traditions, social and political themes and other works that challenge and transcend expectations. Award winning world class short films have been screened during this festival and it has facilitated and encouraged international, national and local cultural exchanges and interaction among short film makers, media professionals and the society.

ICSFF

The International Children's Short Film Festival aims at introducing short films of various genres solely targeting children to bring awareness concerning the situation of children worldwide and also to celebrate childhood. The past two editions of this festival have been very successful and meaningful, bringing children of different schools together to view films/short films that

can elevate and entertain them and bring awareness of issues concerning them. The festival has been held in the Don Bosco Auditorium in the month of November, with more than 2000 children participating in it.

DBICA Short Film Festival (DSFF) has been organised consecutively for the past nine years. The scope of DSFF is to promote regional and local film makers and young media apprentices to showcase their works and provide them with a platform that offers them interaction, networking and greater visibility. The festival is normally conducted in the month of March.

Public Service Announcement Festival (PSAF) is celebrated every year with the twin objective of modifying public attitude by raising awareness of specific issues and encouraging youth to become socially committed, creative and relevant media producers. DBICA has successfully organised this festival for the past five years and is in its sixth edition now.

There are other issue-based short film festivals that DBICA organises periodically in collaboration with a number of organisations and institutions, such as The Documentary Film Festival, The Human Rights Film Festival, The Women's Film Festival, The Water Film Festival. The current year has two new festivals planned by DBICA: the Christian Short Film Festival, and the Eco film festival.



NORTH EUROPE



REGION: NORTH EUROPE

Number of Countries: 24
Number of Provinces: 15
Special Circumscription: 1 (EST)
(plus 3 Delegations - Malta, The Netherlands, Ukraine)
Number of Confreres: 2,448
Number of Novices: 35
Number of Salesian Bishops: 9



- » BEN: Don Bosco's spiritual and pedagogical heritage (58)
- » PLS: Missionaries in the Park (60)
- » EST (UKR): A promise and a challenge (62)
- » SLO: Oratory on wheels! (64)
- » PLN: Evangelising Pilgrims create community (66)



Don Bosco's spiritual and pedagogical heritage

St John Berchmans Province, Belgium North, BEN

by Colette Schaumont

Salesian works in the Belgium North Province are many and flourishing: large schools, places for the young at risk, playing fields and more. The education they offer draws on the spirituality and pedagogy of Don Bosco. Collaboration between Salesians SDB, FMA and lay groups is something deeply rooted in Salesian spirituality and it already has a long tradition in our Province. Lay people now take on much more responsibility for the work and for the Salesianity which is part of it.

To accompany and sustain this process the Belgium North Province has set up the "Don Bosco Centre for formation and animation". The Centre sees to providing formation, accompaniment and support for personnel in Salesian works. An especially important initiative is the formation course entitled "Don Bosco's spiritual and pedagogical heritage",





which is now in its eleventh year. This formation package requires 17 working days, spread over two years successively. The course aims at offering participants the chance to put their Salesian motivation and skills to good use and its view is that each participant should multiply the Salesian spirit in his or her own context. Before undertaking this course, the participants have to declare themselves ready to assume responsibility for safeguarding the Salesian identity of the institution they work in. Each year some fifteen people freely take on this course. There are always more requests than places available.

There are four major parts to the course: historical, pedagogical, spiritual, organisational.

The history is that of Don Bosco, placed in his own context, the development of his work and charisma, and similarly the story of the FMA beginnings. Once this part is concluded participants present a brief written thesis on a Salesian topic.

Then comes **the pedagogy** of Don Bosco, which starts from educational

issues today and assistance for young people in risk situations. Participants are encouraged to use these criteria in how they see education. At the end of the first year they take stock.


The pastoral and spiritual part takes up again from Don Bosco's practice as an educator of faith and a pastor. Here too there is an effort to confront situations today. There are considerable challenges in the secularised Europe of today. Finally, attention is given to the spirituality of the Salesian teacher and educator today

When it comes to Salesian **practice in an educational setting** participants are offered the ideas and skills needed to pass on to others where they work, the Salesian pedagogical and spiritual heritage. They learn in detail how they can do this in their particular work setting, applying what they have learned throughout the course.

Participants have a major task to accomplish in the second year. They plan an appropriate initiative for the setting where they work. Its purpose is the implementation of Salesian identity. At the end of the course each participant

draws up a personal profile and an evaluation of the course. He or she is encouraged to express Don Bosco's image in a visual way as he has appeared for them over the two years. This is an artistic expression of their view of Don Bosco. In fact it is a touching moment of witness.

There has been a huge response to this course. For many it is a unique opportunity to re-create and deepen their commitment and personal spirituality. Administrators in Salesian works also express their satisfaction especially since the program has very positive effects in the institution. Thanks to these formation courses various Salesian animation centres have sprung up as a support to administrators in their job of looking after Salesian identity. Don Bosco's spiritual heritage seems an inexhaustible source. Lay people and Salesians in the Province are involved together in offering this vital resource to young people.

This is how we seek to carry forward the mission entrusted to us by GC24: Salesians and lay people together become responsible for the mission and charisma of Don Bosco 

Missionaries in the Park

St Hyacinth Province, Krakow, Poland, PLS

by Katarzyna Woźniak

"Where did you spend your holidays?"

Before us stands a group of primary school children.

"In Egypt."

"And you?" we ask, when a child seated next to a girl who was riding camels last year puts up his hand. The answers left us wondering. These are children of families whom we might call fairly well-off. We are sitting under a large tree protecting us from the early morning sun. We often sit there with kids to give the group an idea of how school can take place in Africa.

"But how?"

"Yes, it's true, and do you know how many students in the classroom?"

"30! – 40! – 20!"

"Even more than 100"

"But how come? Just one teacher?"

Then we begin to tell them about it. The Education Park for Global Awareness, thought up and brought into

being by the Salesian Mission Volunteer Movement in Krakow, is the first project of its kind in Poland, and began in 2007 as a small African village. Today, covering an area of 2 ha, children, young people of all ages, can literally put a finger on the world of the Missions. The motto "See, touch, feel" which goes with our work of education includes all dimensions of an innovative approach to education. In the Park we are invited not only to look at life-sized dwellings in Africa, Peru, Mongolia and of the North American Indians, but to enter into their circumstances a little by touching original objects from the area and thanks to the high quality equipment (including interactive screens) to enter a truly interactive world. As we have said, it is not so much this innovative dimension that makes it so important.

These youngsters come into contact with a world they have never seen or

heard, depending on their age. We help them reflect on two key issues in our commitment as educators in the world of the Salesian missions: the first is the lack of awareness in Poland of problems of developing countries, while the second is giving them information that is not simply a collection of facts and figures. Visiting places in the Park is to give them more than simply tourist experiences in miniature. Some might say that the laboratory method of direct contact with the sights and tastes is something that changes their perception, makes it more accountable. Visits to the Park are prepared through a series of educational materials to support the teachers, then there is a concern to see to an ongoing educational



Salesian Volunteer Movement – Youth for the World (SWM)

Founded in 1997 in Krakow, today it is a group with more than 200 volunteers from throughout Poland. It was the first Polish association to gain European funding. Until now it has carried out 120 volunteer or similar projects: most have been in Africa, but also South America and East Europe. In Poland and western Europe – with local partners – it is committed to Don Bosco's spirit, sensitising young people to the problems of developing countries.


process and the consolidation of knowledge acquired. But the underlying problem is much more subtle and far more important: how to lead them, along with the information and entertainment from many art studios, to have an awareness of the evangelical dimension of poverty and human life.

Not just about education

The basic issue, in fact, is very simple: it is about the way we speak of poverty in today's world or rather of the many kinds of poverty we have to contend with – and it is also a question touching the heart of the Salesian mission which is, even more so today, a program of spiritual life for people who founded the Krakow Volunteer Movement 13 years ago.

This is a journey in Salesian Youth Ministry, which has led young men and women to dedicate their free time to the missions, as seculars, but strongly anchored in Salesian spirituality (and also encouraging new vocations to the Salesian Cooperators). The question of Christian identity and the evangelising dimension of our Volunteer Movement is strongly marked when we reflect on the development of the Association. The importance of this Park experience, along with all the other educational projects to bring global awareness which are carried out with various European partners, should be sought not only or better not especially in the spectacular nature of the undertaking.

There is great educational potential in this Salesian setting of encounter, education but also work, which

gives the volunteers themselves the chance to meet up with many young people who become ever more sensitive to the world's problems. Letting them be guided by us, instead of bringing our workshops to the schools, in addition to the dimension of adventure and a school trip, gives children the chance to meet a Salesian educational environment (even more so since the Park is located in the immediate vicinity of the Salesian Seminary and the National Centre for Youth Ministry). This potential, which we have only begun to engage in our mission as educators in the spirit of Don Bosco, is also significant because of an exemplary transformation of an environment that is able to capture an emerging need among young people in Poland to talk about developing countries, and offer a pastoral response through the Salesian mission 



A promise and a challenge

Ukraine Salesian Byzantine Rite Delegation

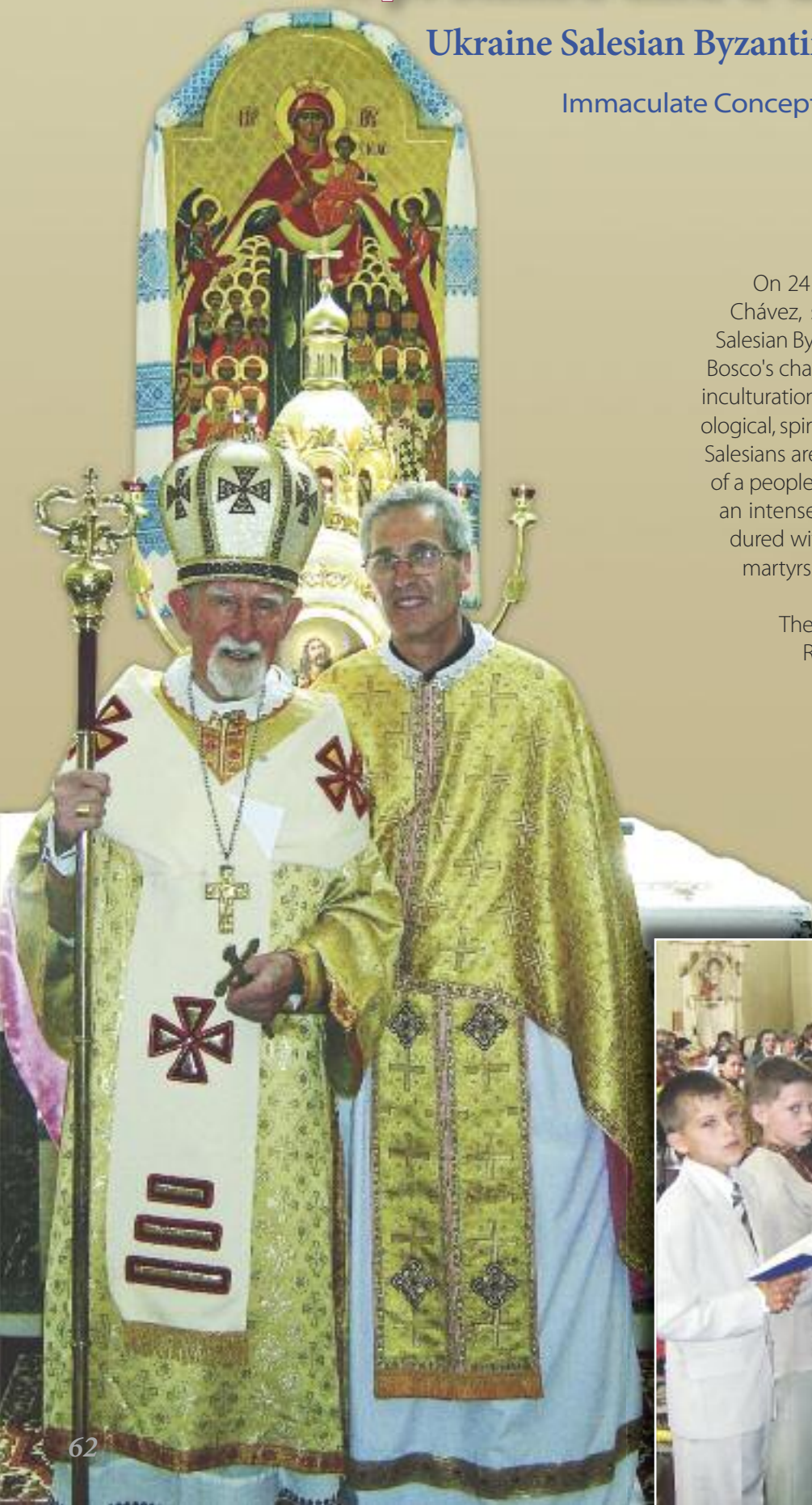
Immaculate Conception Special Circumscription, EST

by Fr Rino Pistellato sdb

Something new for the Salesian Congregation.

On 24 January 2005 the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, signed the Decree which set up the the Salesian Byzantine Rite Delegation of Ukraine. For Don Bosco's charism this opened up the great challenge of inculturation in the Oriental Church, taking on all its theological, spiritual, liturgical and disciplinary heritage. The Salesians are called to merge with the soul and the life of a people of ancient tradition, recently released from an intense and systematic religious persecution endured with great fortitude where it was not just the martyrs who gave their lives.

The roots of the binomial 'Salesians-Byzantine Rite Ukraine' go back to the 1930s, when Pope Pius XI asked the then Rector Major, Fr Philip Rinaldi, to open colleges and institutes, especially schools of arts and trades for ordinary people in the



The Delegation has 43 Salesians, a solid group of active and enthusiastic Cooperators involved in the list of works indicated here

Ukraine in, order to promote good education and good Catholic education amongst the less well-to-do. He invited the Salesians to begin immediately, without losing precious time, and suggested sending young people to Italy to give them a chance of formation in their own Rite and to ready themselves to set up a religious Province.

And so it was that between 1932 and 1939, four groups of young men left successively for Rome. Around fifteen solid vocations emerged from this effort. The flag-bearer was Fr Stefan Czmil, who died with a reputation for holiness to the point where we are working to open his Cause for Beatification and Canonisation. Along with him, and a living relic, is Andrij Sapelak who became Eparch for the Ukrainian faithful in diaspora in Argentina, and who took part in Vatican II. Now 91 he is the oldest bishop in The Ukraine and in the Salesian Congregation. In 2012, God willing, he will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his Episcopal ordination.

These are but two names. We do not forget the others who have brought

honour through their work abroad and who with great sacrifice prepared for their return home only to be hindered by historical circumstances. The gates were opened with the fall of the Soviet regime and some of them, led by Bishop Sapelak, returned. Advanced in years, but rejuvenated by the breath of hope and spring in the history of the Church, they have devoted themselves with great zeal to meet young people left to fend for themselves, since all pre-existing institutions had collapsed under communism, and there has been little by way of support for families, schools, society.

The Church, emerging from the catacombs to which repression had confined it, was noted for meeting

the great religious needs of the faithful given the lack of priests, religious buildings, and financial means. The work and sacrifice of the pioneer Salesians has seen results in the first vocations, after 75 years.

Currently the Delegation has 43 Salesians, a solid group of active and enthusiastic Cooperators involved in the list of works indicated here, all of which have sprung up in recent times: high school, technical school, family home for orphans, formation house for candidates to Salesian life, prenovices, a large parish with an oratory, a youth centre and many young leaders, and a multi-sport centre. The Salesian mission is also been shared with the Salesian Sisters at Leopoli from the start. Thus we work together as a Salesian Family.

The Salesian future is promising and very relevant, because the country still does not have a firm political, economic structure and is still taking its first steps in democracy. Undoubtedly there are many challenges, amongst which ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox Church and the opening up of the Delegation to the whole Congregation.





Oratory on wheels

SKALA, the fun minibus!

Sts Cyril and Methodius Province, Slovenia, SLO

by Fr Marjan Lamovsek sdb

As part of his effort to save souls, Don Bosco was ready to adopt a wide variety of means and equipment, including some of the most *avant-garde* for his time. This charisma for seeking new ways and possibilities for reaching out to the young and helping them to be at ease with one another, society, God, is something that Salesians have in their blood. A modest indication of this seeking of new approaches to reach young people on today's streets is the "Minibus veselja" project, or the Fun Minibus.

The initiative started out in the Slovenia Province a decade ago as part of the Skala project (in Slovenian, the rock) which tackles the problem of young people at risk, including those on the street. The idea of the Minibus begins from the same assumption that Don Bosco made: we need to go out looking for young people where they are to

be found. This is why we have an Oratory on wheels going around the streets of the Slovenian Capital, Ljubljana, especially in suburbs where immigration, from the Balkan regions in particular, leaves its mark with all the consequences this implies: problems of education, schooling, integration, work ...

The vehicle, specially adapted for this kind of street work, has three 'educational' spaces to it: a "chat-room" in the front, "games room" in the back and a "verandah" attached externally, under an awning. The project has a social and educational structure split into three sections: there are psycho-social and guidance activities, creative, educational and spiritual ones, and then finally sports and entertainment. The first aim of this mobile youth centre is to gather street children together (those with the least opportunities in



life) in a setting which offers them a stimulus, as desired by the Preventive System of St John Bosco. Besides prevention we can also intervene in some of the more difficult cases (secondary prevention) which require support from specialised agencies.

Street Oratory

The Minibus programme takes place three times a week, and in summer and autumn holidays, daily, where it is also known as the Street Oratory. This way holidays for these youngsters are an experience of active, fruitful free time and being together.

The results from last year, when the program was relaunched with a new vehicle went far beyond our expectations. We have to pay attention to variety in the program, checking on what's offered once we know the specific nature of the group of youngsters we are dealing with.

This mobile centre offers new potential for putting the preventive system into action in society as we find it today. The Minibus has proven to be practical, adaptable and offers a variety of possibilities for education and getting closer to the young. It remains but a tool however. It is the teachers and leaders who give it

its heart and soul, who feel inspired and moved by Don Bosco's passion for the spiritual and material good of the young.



Desert of the cities

Evangelising pilgrims create community



St Adalbert Province, Piła, Poland, PLN

by Fr Jarosław Wąsowicz sdb



The idea of creating Salesian Evangelising Communities (SEC) emerged with the great stir caused by the World Youth Days in Czestochowa at the beginning of the 1990s. John Paul II, at the time, gathered young people from East and West at the sanctuary of Our Lady of Jasna Gora. The Iron Curtain had fallen, the world began to change, people took a stand, the 'Generation of JP II' people took a stand. The Pope called on youth to be part of new evangelisation. It took only a year to start the Salesian Evangelising Pilgrimage (SEP, in Polish SPE). In 1994 a new community was created – the 'Desert of the Cities'. Both communities sprang from the Salesian being-with-young people which helps in new evangelisation.

SEP and SEC at work

There are weekly meetings as well as evangelising efforts during the year, mainly in the members' parishes. The essential feature of the communities is that the members put their own ideas into practice. They have meetings in their parishes with children and young people, animate the masses, prayer vigils, adorations, help with recollection days.



Following a year of active evangelising work, SEP members take part in the summer retreats in Szczaniec, and members of the 'Desert of the Cities' have recollection days in various places. During these occasions they carry out numerous evangelising efforts, meeting the local people, sharing their faith with them, meeting people from different walks of life, or others in hospitals, prisons, reformatories. The main goal of these activities is to reach out to people who cannot express their faith, have not attended a mass for a long time, or who have lost their sense of God. We pay special attention to young people, including the rebellious ones, lured by what the world offers today: sex, alcohol, drugs, treating fellow human beings as mere objects, improper treatment of money as a substitute for God. We can show our peers a different reality, not without problems but acceptable if we can see a merciful God helping us in our lives. During the summer holidays it is easier to get to people – they easily open up, share their doubts and painful experiences. Quite often, through all this, they find God and join us in our 'divine wanderings'.


The almost twenty years of SEC now have been a constant reading of the signs of the

times. And because we have always been looking for new ways of reaching young people, we have survived. And this is our biggest success.

Terminus Jesus!

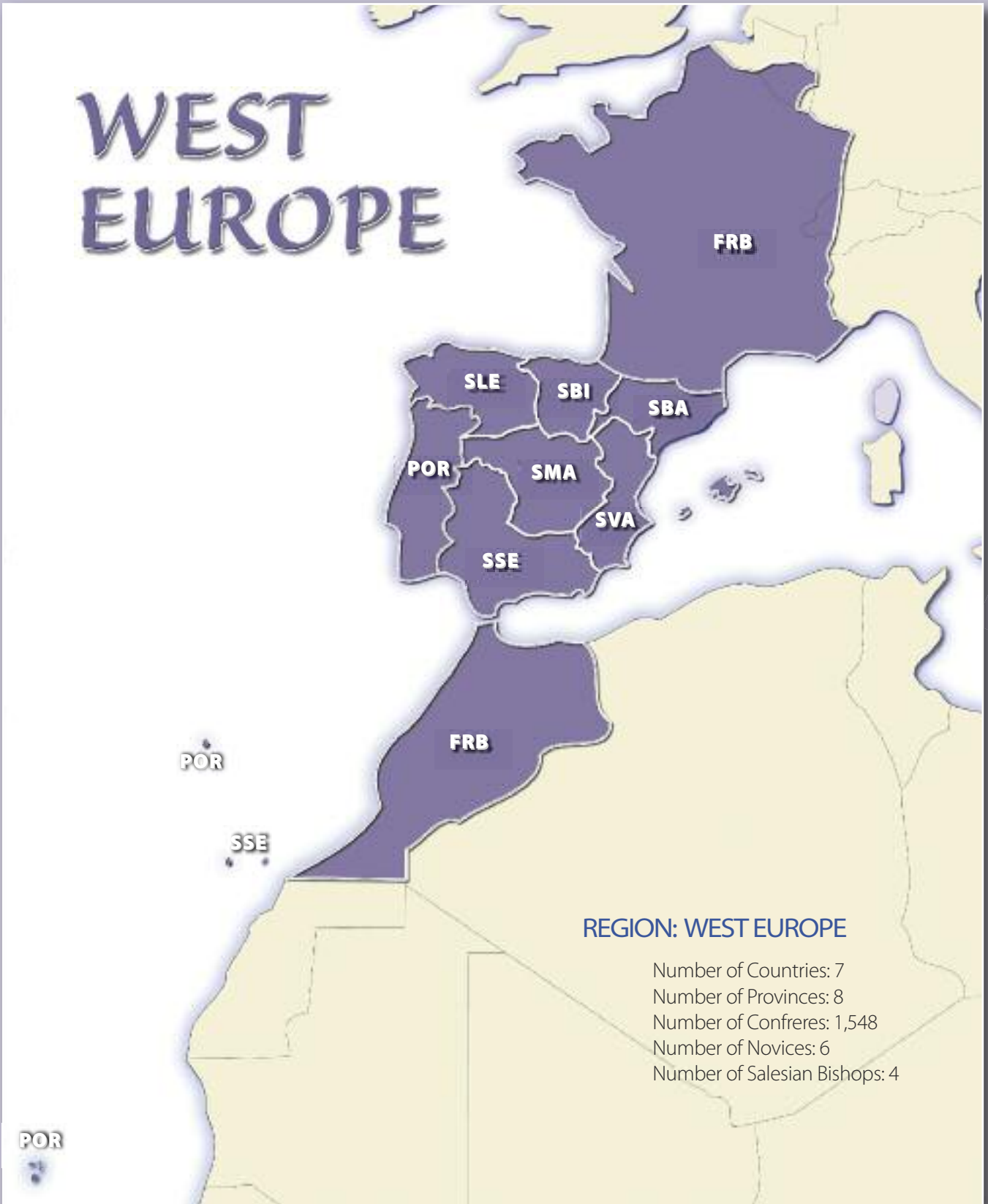
The 'Desert of the Cities' is the co-founder of the largest Polish evangelising initiative during the biggest rock festival in Eastern Europe, the "Przystanek Woodstock" ('Terminus Woodstock'). We invented "Przystanek Jezus" ('Terminus Jesus') to be part of that.

A couple of years ago we began leading a group in the International Walking Pilgrimage Suwałki - Ostra Brama, in Poland. Several TV and radio programmes on our group have been produced – there were also articles in the most important Polish Catholic newspapers. We publish the bulletin "Czas Łaski" ('The Time of Mercy') and we have published a few books in the "Biuletyn SWE" ('SEC Bulletin'). We have our own website.

Since 1999 on we have also conducted regular pilgrimages to where St John Bosco lived and worked 



WEST EUROPE





- » Spain: The Journey of education in faith (70)
- » POR: A Salesian open door: *Edições Salesianas* (72)
- » FRB: Farnières, evangelisation begins with nature (74)
- » Spain: *Catequistas y Misión Joven*, a happy coincidence! (76)
- » SMA: Salesian Mission and Development Office (78)



The Journey of education in faith:

a mature and fertile ministry

Spanish Provinces, West Europe Region

by Manuel F. Ruiz Piqueras

In 1981 the National Youth Ministry Centre in Spain published a doctoral thesis by Fr Angel Larrañaga sdb: *Youth Ministry along Catechumenate lines*. His approach promoted and encouraged by the National Centre, found fertile ground in many of the Salesian Provinces in which he had been working over the years on education and accompaniment of the faith of young people in new ways.

Youth ministry - a new model?

The model was taken up by the Salesian National Delegation for Youth Ministry and has become a reality in all the Spanish provinces.

It came to completion with the publication of an overall and structured collection of texts to be found at various levels and stages of the process in a consistent, unified approach with well-adapted material. The degree of acceptance and widespread use of these materials allows us to say that the *Youth Ministry along Catechumenate lines*, throughout the 1980s and the early '90s, resulted in a proven pastoral response and faith accompaniment for children and older youth in both the Spanish and Latin American Church.

Years later, changes in the socio-cultural and religious circumstances of those to whom this programme was directed meant the need for a thorough review in order to respond to a new generation of young people whose profile is markedly changed in a society affected by secularisation and religious indifference.

In the 1990s, after the 23rd Salesian General Chapter on education to faith of the young, a new pastoral project was developed, the Journey of Education to Faith, in a desire to

*Today 'The Journey'
is strongly represented in the educative
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and can be found in our schools,
oratories, youth centres
and parishes*



continue accompanying the faith journeys of young people in new socio-cultural and religious contexts. The Journey of Education to Faith (1994) was gradually adopted throughout the Spanish provinces with due adaptation to different contexts and cultural differences within the country.

As it is today

Today 'The Journey' is strongly represented in the educative and pastoral projects of our presences, and can be found in our schools, oratories, youth centres and parishes. Even in a strongly secularised context, thousands of children, teenagers, older youth, grow and mature in their faith through this offering which is clearly evangelical, unified and gradual.

Through childhood, the early teens and then into adulthood, dynamic and group-oriented in its method, it aims at making faith personal by means of meaningful experiences which help, at each stage, an encounter with the Trinitarian God in the Church community. Group meetings, celebrations, live-in experiences, retreats, summer camps, volunteer movement ... these are just some of the occasions which are part of the year's structure and which are offered in a systematic way.

The search for one's own identity as a believer is an integral part of the process, initiation into Christian celebration, the opportunity to share personal experiences and life involvement through real activities which invite personal commitment which can help other young people.

Leadership formation continues to be a priority in every province. Young people with adults who have already made this journey of growth in faith help accompany the younger ones. Guaranteeing their catechetical, theological and spiritual formation is essential for ensuring the handing on of faith and its adequate accompaniment.

'The Journey' also has a marked vocational dimension running right through the process. As they go through, the youngsters discover God's call and their place in society and Church. Many respond with either to a Salesian consecrated or lay vocation or become involved in the various Christian communities in local churches.

The National Youth Ministry Centre continues to drive and follow up these experiences always aiming to go further. In recent years, concern for formation of the various players has led to offering significant experiences for preparing leaders in spiritual accompaniment, especially of young adults, thus continuing the journey of maturing in faith.

There is no doubt that 'The Journey' in Spain has been and continues to be a treasure which significantly characterises youth ministry and which has produced and continues to offer good and abundant fruit. General Chapter 26's call regarding the urgent need to evangelise urges us to keep pushing a valid and credible model of animating presence and accompaniment of the faith of Spain's young people.



Edições Salesianas:

A Salesian open door

St Anthony Province, Portugal, POR

by Fr Rui Almeida sdb

For more than 50 years now Salesians have been running a publishing house called *Edições Salesianas* (Salesian Publications). Taken on as an obvious work of evangelisation, it is a way in which the Portuguese province shares the spiritual and pastoral wealth of the Congregation with the Local Church.

Innovation is part of our tradition

Since the 1980s *Edições Salesianas* has been in the vanguard of Portuguese catechetics. Through involvement with and publication of materials aimed at adolescent catechesis, the publishing house introduced into the Portuguese Church the need to accompany teens with quality and credible offerings. In the 1990s the publishing house collaborated with the Portuguese bishops in a national catechetics project. At the beginning of the 21st century the publishing house, combining the hard work done by the Congregation on faith journeys for young people with the needs of the Portuguese Church, presented an innovative catechetical project for young people: the GPS Project.

Priority given to evangelisation

Throughout the decades *Edições Salesianas* has always tried to offer the Local Church the "Salesian tradition" of broad church-based intuitions regard-

ing evangelisation. And the Church appreciates the focused attention we give to the circumstances of children and older youth. Another side of this evangelising option is the care given to the formation of pastoral workers.

A publishing house that 'does' formation

This publishing house is also a pastoral formation centre. By free initiative or in response to requests from dioceses, parishes or movements, the publishing house offers dozens of formation activities each year. Besides permitting more widespread diffusion of published materials, this contact with pastoral workers enables the gathering of feedback on the difficulties and challenges they have to confront. This gathering of information and the dialogue with hundreds of parishes, leaders and catechists helps the publishing house to discern its way. It becomes a stimulus to the development of quality materials, able to offer solutions of high pastoral quality.

Christian music

In recent years the publishing house has made a serious effort towards renewal of Christian music in Portugal. As has been the case throughout Europe, Catholic music has little impact outside of the liturgy. To change this situation, convinced of the enormous educational and evangelising potential of music, the publishing house, realisti-





cally helps young Christian artists in their efforts to translate their experiences into musical form. This enterprise does not result in 'classic' editions of CDs. We seek new places for Christian music to be enjoyed: "live" performance in city squares or opportunities for prayer spaces are important for the visibility and viability of these projects.

In partnership

Being a small country and a Province with limited resources, a more active partnership with other Salesian publishers has been a resource we could not substitute. The exchange of materials, the mutual stimulus, joint purchase of solutions has strengthened our part in Project Europe.

Journals and magazines

Our publishing house continues to be responsible for various periodicals.

Catequistas is a magazine aimed at basic catechetical formation. Its writers come from the Salesian Family and various dioceses, and the magazine has a contemporary look about it. We value interdisciplinary content and attention to the concrete, to educational approaches and context from which we can draw out the actual process of faith maturation. Founded in 2005 it quickly reached 3000 subscribers and became the

most widely read catechetics journal in Portuguese.

We have a youth magazine on offer for the world of the pre-teens. Giving attention to their experiences, we can provide hints and values that can help them find their way. It is a very helpful tool for leaders for this age group.

Another journal, *Cavaleiro na Imaculada* (Knights of Our Lady), with a print run of some 118,000 copies comes out monthly and is free. It is intended for adults in ordinary popular settings. As a publication it helps an important sector of the Portuguese population, a sector which is culturally weak, to rediscover the Church as presented by Vatican II.



Farnières: evangelisation begins with nature

St Francis of Sales Province, France-Belgium South, FRB

by Fr Jean-François Meurs sdb

Grand-Halleux, Belgium, a country of hills and forests. We leave the dark valley and the raging river to discover the luminous calm of the Farnières hillside. Most young people get here by walking through the woods: the spiritual journey begins with this scenery and this joint effort, through contact with nature. The place is magical, full of beauty and peace, with the castle stone coloured rose and gold, the elegant chapel steeple. Very soon the youngsters feel completely at home. They sense a presence. They soon discover a community of fellowship.

Core leadership group

Community life at Farnières involves both Salesians and Salesian Sisters. Both have their own separate space ; and it goes

even
further

than that – the charisms and state of life are respected and valued for what they are. But when it comes to prayer, work, meals, recouping energies, developing community life and celebrating, they do this together.

The ministry team is broader still; a lay volunteer looking after reception, two lay leaders, and a network of volunteer workers. Together they evaluate, analyse, reflect, form, draw up leadership programs adapted to the various demands of the young.

An asset for schools

During the week lots of school groups come, mostly young people around 17-18 years of age. Two or three days to take stock of one's life, look at the future with others - too short, really! Especially when it is often necessary to begin by offloading heavy personal baggage.

The pressure of academic achievement becomes such an obsession that many put the question of meaning on hold. They dare not trust their intuition about their deep sense of generosity, and sometimes this makes them sad. They are wary of any talk about God and it often takes them some time to rediscover another image of the Church. But there is a search for spirituality: the need to give impetus to their lives, to strike a covenant with that Someone who is bigger than we are, and they discover in nature to recognise and experience love. We try to help them discover sources of joy in expression, listening, search for meaning; in group experience, the discovery of the Gospel.

We also welcome younger students (10-12 years) for classes in



*We try to help them discover sources of joy
in expression, listening, search for meaning;
in group experience,
the discovery of the Gospel*

the forest. We offer them the discovery of nature and moments of inwardness.

Parish and diocesan ministry

We have a place in the pastoral care of local parishes and dioceses by taking in groups of profession of faith (11 years of age) and confirmation (15-16 years of age) and we create programs for them according to the time they are with us. They come mostly during the weekends or during holidays.

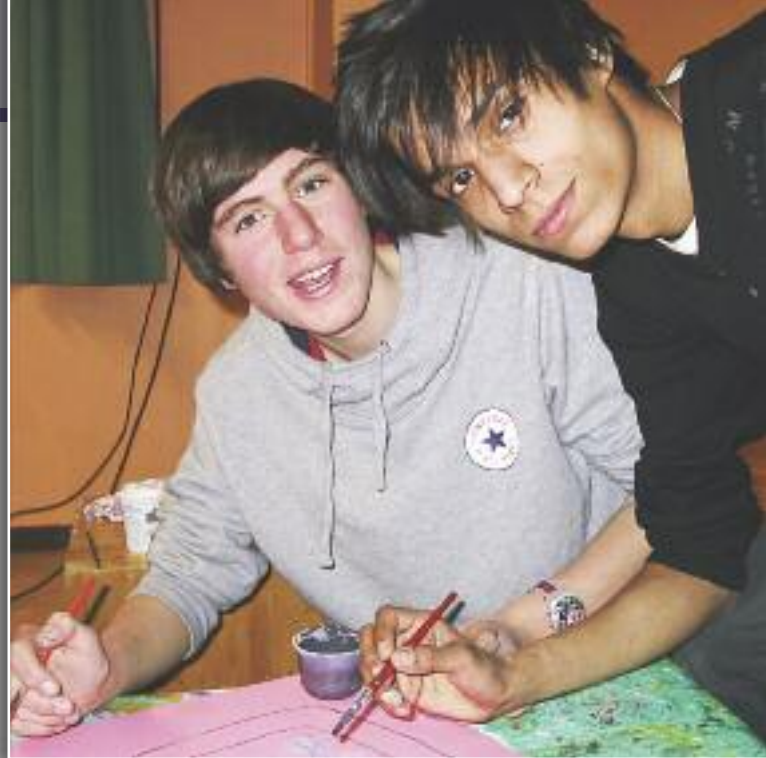
The cottage is well suited to supporting youth summer camps and week-end training.

Salesian youth ministry

Farnières is part of the "Ephata Don Bosco" movement. Young people around 14 - 16 years of age come regularly to experience a week-end of spiritual animation. A team of young leaders suggests a focus on a theme and a program that works on the dimensions of identity, reciprocity and solidarity. Games or audio-visuels introduce reflection and sharing, which leads to the "desert time" and continues with a testimony, and a celebration of the Eucharist. Every summer, alternatively, a pilgrimage by bike or a "Sing & Pray" camp. Those who are 17 or older join a different group. There are also summer sessions for families.

A place for families

For the good of the young people, we extend our pastoral care to families: many couples are looking for a place that exudes optimism, gives them room to breathe, heals their relationships, gathers scattered pieces of a life, helps them re-discover or enrich their spiritual life.




We have week-ends for parents and children exploring biblical topics, nature, song. There is time for living and for Christian formation.

Nurturing the Salesian spirit

Farnières is a resource place for the Salesian Family: Cooperators, Past Pupils and Friends of Don Bosco, Don Bosco Volunteers. They like to be there, several times a year to nurture the Salesian spirit, their knowledge of Don Bosco and their concern for the young.

We also bring our skills and resources to form educators imbued with the spirit and pedagogical skill of Don Bosco. Formation for teachers and staff of our institutions is organised each year.

Icon workshops

Icon art plays a special role in what we offer. Programs are organised each summer and one weekend each month. It is a way of entering into a prayerful reading of the Gospel, silence and meditation, and eastern spirituality. A brief introduction allows young people to create a small icon of the Good Shepherd in three days 



Catequistas y Misión Joven, a happy coincidence!

Spanish Provinces, West Europe Region

In 1960, *Misión Joven* saw the light of day, bearing the title *Técnica de apostolado* or 'Techniques for the apostolate'. In 1985, *Catequistas* came into being as *Proyecto Catequista*, or 'Project Catechist'.

The two magazines together, as the pastoral and catechetical voice of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Spain, are celebrating their Golden and Silver Jubilees respectively, both giving thanks to God who has clearly played a part in motivating their regular publication, the authors, and yesterday's and today's readers.

Some history of *Misión Joven*

Misión Joven is a youth ministry journal which provides a service of educational and pastoral leadership as a specifically Salesian support for the Church and Spanish society, through the Salesian National Youth Ministry Centre.

Having been part of the development after Vatican II, it is a platform for research and dialogue, and encourages proposals for people today, especially for the promotion

and evangelisation of youth.

It is aimed at those in the Church and society who have responsibility for education and ministry amongst teens and older youth. It aims at providing opportunity for analysis and critical reflection on praxis, exchange of experiences and materials, and advancing creative pastoral thinking in ever new contexts, as well as faith in the Good News.

Given today's democratic, pluralistic and secularised culture, *Misión Joven* seeks to affirm a pastoral mentality which leads to a more just, fraternal and solid humanity..

Misión Joven already has a history. When it began in 1960, humbly and hopefully, practical in nature and very much tied to religious group experience, for 17 years its



INVITACIÓN



CATEQUISTAS/
MISIÓN JOVEN

ACTO CONMEMORATIVO
del Aniversario de las revistas
CATEQUISTAS y MISIÓN JOVEN

Madrid, 23 de octubre de 2010, a las 16:15 h

- ▶ **LUGAR:** Teatro del Colegio Salesiano "San Miguel Arcángel",
C/ Repullés y Vargas 11 – Paseo de Extremadura – Madrid.
- ▶ **DESTINATARIOS:** Suscriptores y amigos de las revistas, catequistas
y agentes de pastoral, Familia Salesiana y simpatizantes de las revistas.
- ▶ **RESERVA** tu entrada en: uneto@25y50.com

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Catequistas has been a journal, throughout its history, which has been faithful to the basic formation of catechists:

- with its own particular style to help an understanding the formation offered through its pages;
- with a balance between theory and practice;
- committed to remaining close to the ordinary catechist.

Catequistas has resulted in a range of complementary catechetical initiatives which reach a much wider public than those who subscribe to it.

name, *Técnica de apostolado*, reflected that practicality. In 1977, it was strengthened and renewed, broadened in its appeal and renamed *Misión Joven*.


The history of *Catequistas*

These 50 years of its existence have enabled it to clarify and enrich its overall contribution as a journal. Its founder and first director was Luis Chiandotto (1960-65). Then followed: José Antonio Rico (1965-66), Antonio Mérida (1966-70), Jesús Mairal (1970-78), Antonio Sánchez Romo (1978-1983), Eugenio Alburquerque (1983-1986), Alfonso Francia (1986-1990), José Luis Moral (1990-2002), Manuel Cantalapiedra (2002), Jesús Rojano (en funciones 2003), Eugenio Alburquerque (2003-2009) y Koldo Gutiérrez (2009-...).

The first edition was published in January 1985. The original title was *Proyecto Catequista*, intended for the formation of animators in faith. It was broadly aimed at catechists. Its particular and distinguishing objective was to provide tools for reflection which were simple but serious and part of the dialogue of Church and faith.

The journal has 32 pages. The pages are black and white on one side and full colour on the other. Between October and May it is published monthly (on the 15th of each month). It has sections which are developed by a single writer over the eight editions. This structure allows for continuity in a formation approach.

More than a magazine

By saying that it is more than a magazine we mean that the initial idea has developed into a much wider concept. We refer to publications which make up a "small universe" or "small family" around it. Today a subscription to *Catequistas* includes other things: Events calendar for the catechist, catechetical posters, liturgical calendar 





Salesian Mission and Development Office

St John Bosco Province, Madrid, Spain, SMA

The Salesian Mission and development Office, Madrid, supports hundreds of missionaries and their helpers to undertake development projects in places where they work. It is a tough task. In order to carry it out, in 1970 the Rector major set up the Madrid Mission and Development Office. It is a work of mission animation and support for Salesians sent to mission countries, as well as being a reception centre for Spanish missionaries coming back to Spain for a short period, either to rest or visit family or to undergo some sort of medical treatment.

The office is located at 81 Ferraz St, near Rosales Park, Madrid. It is in charge of relationships with benefactors and the financial management of donations which help overcome many of the financial problems in supporting the missions and development projects managed by the Salesian Family.

Some of the mission animation tools used are magazines: *Gioventù Missionaria*, for younger readers, and *Salesian Missions*, with reports, interviews and news from missionaries; such as sensitisation campaigns and the website, www.misionessalesianas.org.

There is also a mobile mission exhibition which visits Colleges and parishes through the country. It contains many interesting items coming from all over the world which missionaries have collected here and there across the five continents. There is a permanent mission display at the Office itself; this is currently being revised and improved.

Young people and development

As part of the Madrid Mission and Development Office there is a Young People and Development Foundation (JyD), a not-for-profit NGO which came





into existence in 1988 and is tied to the Salesian Youth Movement.

Its chief purpose is to cooperate in sustainable human, social and economic development, contributing to the eradication of poverty in the world through projects in Salesian works in developing countries.

JyD gives special attention to children and older youth by seeing education as its most effective tool. Thanks to this in 2006 it was given recognition by the Spanish Cooperation Agency as a specialised organisation in the education field.

In the area of cooperation some 80 projects a year in more than 20 countries are under way, constituting an important effort over recent years for technical and job education.

The main activity in Spain itself is focused on consciousness-raising for the population, especially youth, fostering values of justice, peace, equality, democracy, participation, solidarity and respect for the environment. It also fosters an international volunteer movement where solidarity can be exercised.



INTERAMERICA



REGION: INTERAMERICA

Number of Countries: 17
 Number of Provinces: 12
 Vice Province: 1 (HAI)
 Number of Confreres: 2,055
 Number of Novices: 79
 Number of Salesian Bishops: 24

- » SUE: Chicago parish mission experience (82)
- » ECU: UPS, *Universidad Politecnica Salesiana* (84)
- » MEM: *CECHACI Don Bosco – Mixes Prelature* (86)
- » BOL: Don Bosco Schools for the people (88)
- » ANT: Boys and girls with Don Bosco (90)



Chicago Parish Mission Experience

St Philip the Apostle Province, United States East, SUE

by Fr Timothy Zak sdb

Responding to the urgent need for Revangelisation, St. John Bosco Parish in Chicago conducted its 5th parish mission. The parish is mostly a Hispanic community in a culturally diverse neighbourhood. During the course of 2 weeks, numerous members of the parish participate in the work of the Church to share the Good News, in both explicit and implicit ways. This extensive outreach into the neighbourhood is divided into 5 inter-related activities.

Prayer

The zeal to announce the Good News arises from the joy of knowing Jesus Christ. During the parish mission, the volunteers who go into the streets and homes begin with prayer and a blessing. While they are evangelising, other parishioners are always before the Blessed Sacrament praying. Those who cannot come to church are invited to pray in their homes. A prayer chain is organised, so that, every hour of the

day during the mission, someone from the parish is at prayer.

Home Visits

Missionaries go out into the streets in groups of 2 or 3 with a simple but clear message: God loves you. These missionaries go door to door, sharing the Word of God with anyone who will receive them. After announcing the Good News, the missionaries invite their listeners to attend a faith sharing





group in a local meeting house. In the experience of the modern missionaries, we see the stories of the Gospel come to life - many people have no time or interest and refuse to open their doors, some are surprised that Catholics are evangelising, a few gratefully accept the message.

Meeting Houses

A small team of catechists gathers with neighbours to reflect on God's Word

and pray. They share their experiences of faith, giving personal witness to the power of Christ in their lives.

Mama Margaret's Garden

A dedicated group of catechists and volunteers offers a mission for children. The young of the parish community are taught to live in the presence of God, as Mama Margaret taught her sons and the children of the Oratory.

Café Don Bosco

The adolescents of the parish organise their own activities during the parish mission. Each night a topic is discussed which relates faith to life. The café includes refreshments, music, sports and games. The young are responsible for preparing the events and inviting their friends—young people evangelising young people.

The Organising Team

The organising team is responsible for training the volunteers and the coordination of the mission. They offer 8 hours of formation, presenting Christ as the model for all evangelisation. They encourage the volunteers to give their best for the Lord in their particular aspect of the parish mission. They also note issues that are identified during the home visits, for example the need for the sacraments, so there can be follow-up in the months after the

mission.

After 9 days, 8 hours each day, of active participation in the mission of the Church to evangelise, the parish celebrates with 2 days of festival. It is a wonderful occasion to experience the dynamic family spirit so typical in Salesian works. It also renews the energies of the parishioners, as a community of believers, to continue announcing the Good News throughout the year.



UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA SALESIANA

Sacred Heart of Jesus Province,
Ecuador, ECU

by Luís Alfonso Alvarez Rodas

- The Salesian University and Polytechnic, Ecuador, is one of the important works in that Province.
- It was established in 1994 and capitalises on the prestige won by the Salesian Congregation in the fields of technical and educational training of indigenous people and street children, over 106 years in Ecuador.
- The Polytechnic has three main centres: Cuenca, Quito and Guayaquil as well as academic programmes in the Missions within the country and amongst different social, economic, ethnic, physical and psychological strata, as well as tackling social groups that have traditionally been excluded from this kind of education.
- The UPS has 27 undergraduate faculties and 20 postgraduate programmes, along with 8 research centres, whose studies cover the human sciences and social sciences as well as education; life sciences, agriculture, and environmental studies; technology and other exact sciences; finance and management.
- The UPS in Ecuador is a structure which creates, manages and communicates knowledge with due academic requirement and rigour through research, teaching and links with the community, besides being an institution of Higher Education of Christian inspiration, Catholic and Salesian in character, with a pastoral element running through everything.





CECHACI Don Bosco – Mixes Prelature

Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, Oaxaca, Mexico, MEM

by Fr Isidro Fábregas Sala sdb



Salesian missionaries from the Mixes Prelature, along with the Salesian Sisters, and supported by a group of Past Pupils, Volunteers and other committed lay people, have set up the *CECHACI* Centre in the Chinanteca region, or more concretely in *Río Manso Joc., Choapam, Oax, México.*

Working closely with parish priests in this part of the Prelature, they look after some hundred boys and eighty girls who come from a hundred or more villages around the area.

It is a residential centre, and offers secondary-level classes with catch-up opportunities for those who need it.

The programme runs Monday to Friday from early morning (7 am) to early afternoon (2.15 pm). At other times and weekends, planned programmes are available according to the focus of each Centre, but keeping in mind always a complete educational programme, including religion, so that students will have a strong cultural and Christian





identity, and be ready to serve their communities and families. The intention is to raise the socio-cultural level of the region.

This has created a healthy and happy atmosphere, where each student feels part of a family and close to the kind of experience that would be found in the village of origin: boys work on the farm and with poultry in after school hours, cultivating a variety of crops, and raising livestock. They also breed fish.

The girls tend vegetables, help with planting and harvesting, and have workshops for sewing and embroidery.

Sundays and other special occasions offer additional activities to complete their formation: mechanics, computers, first aid, sign-making, music, visual arts, dance, updating courses. The music education they receive is special: philharmonic orchestra, choir, guitar for

everyone, while older ones learn the flute.

Special respect is shown for the distinct cultures that come together in the Centre: *Chinanteca*, *Mixe*, *Zapoteca* and *Mestiza*. This includes the learning of languages of the region: *Chinanteco* and *Mixe*, which have their own script. The indigenous language is taught in the seventh grade. Mass is celebrated on Saturdays for ethnic groups, one priest for the Mestizos, another for the Chinantecos and a third for the Mixes.

Bilingual texts have been published in Chinanteco and Mixe to help strengthen the students in their cultural identity. Many missionaries over the years have shown great care and respect for the cultures. In *CECHACI* Fr Mario Martínez Gallegos is a Chinanteco and works with his language, drawing up the first Chinanteco grammar; he is helped by Fr Isidro Fábregas

Sala the author of a number of works in this language. Sisters Edith and Beatriz Reyes Chávez, themselves members of the Mixes tribe, help with work in this language, and Fr Raúl Prado García has left excellent material on the Mixes culture.

The Centre's dream for now is to broaden possibilities of attention to those students who find difficulty in trying to pursue their studies in other centres; attempts are being made to set up a residence for them and to accompany them while they continue their efforts in the study centre in the next door village of Río Manso.

The Centre's great joy is that there are already a number of past pupils preparing for the priesthood, some girls who are already Religious, others working as doctors, engineers, teachers, vets and in the fine arts.





Don Bosco Schools for the People: their origin and development

Our Lady of Copacobana Province, Bolivia, BOL

by Fr José Ramón Iriarte sdb, National Director EPDB



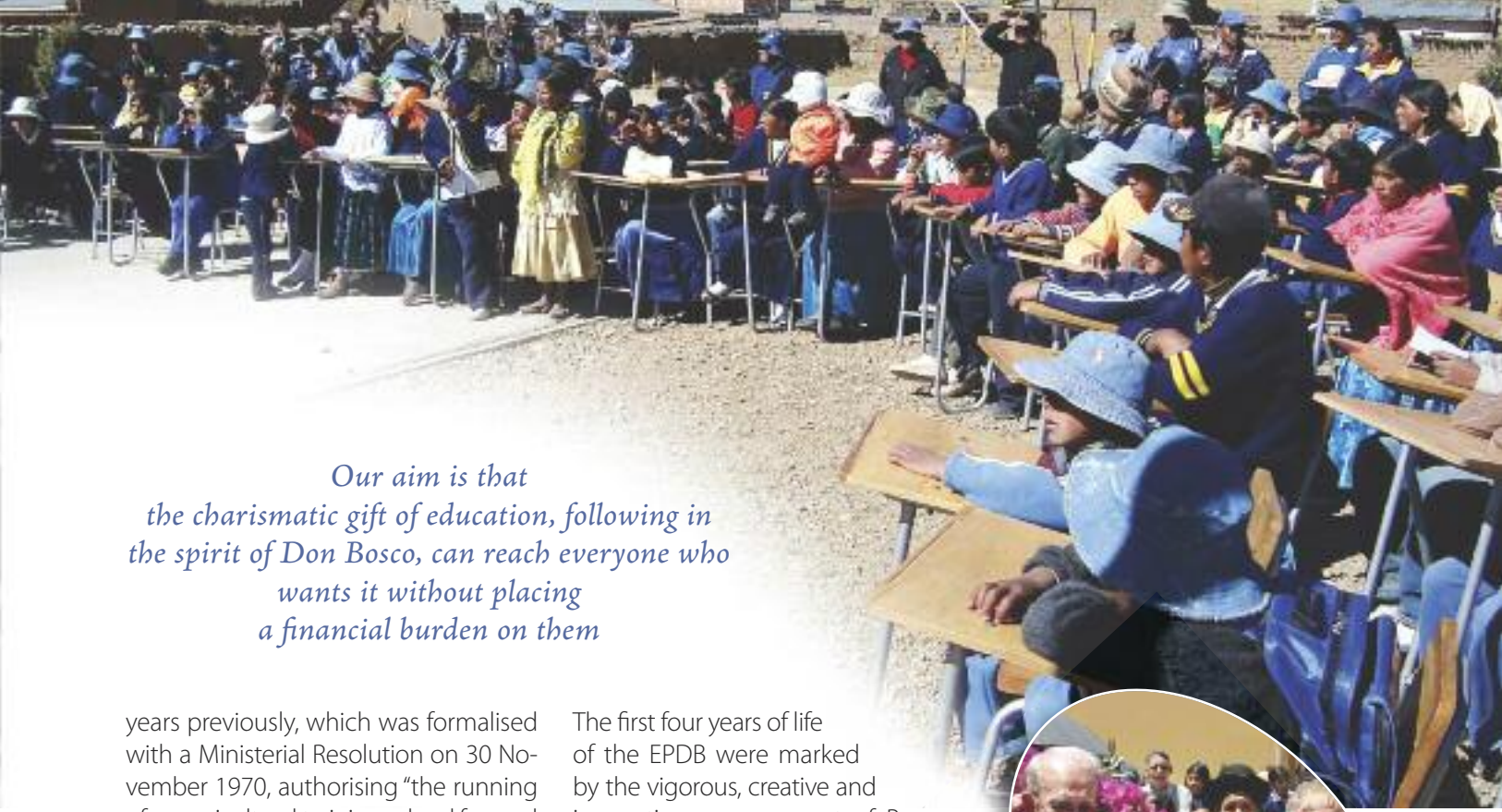
What began as a handful of educational activities has blossomed into 265 schools and colleges dealing with 110,000 pupils, and a complement of some 4,500 teachers and administrators. It is known as Don Bosco Schools for the People or EPDB in its Spanish acronym. The number of families involved in this education system is not easy to calculate, however we can say that the educational influence is growing and renewing society.

The Second Vatican Council awakened a concern for fidelity and return to the sources of the founding charism of Congregations. Salesian work in Bolivia began by working with the very poor, the orphans and working class people in the cities of La Paz and Sucre. With the passing of time the failure of governments to give financial attention to these works created a lack of trust in the Salesians and a need for them to sustain their work.

In 1970 there were six Salesian activities in Bolivia: Don Bosco in La Paz, Quintanilla, Sucre, Santa Cruz, Calacoto and Muyurina, all in an urban setting. The major part of the population at that time, rural folk, miners, did not benefit from the Congregation's attention.

Muyurina had started out with a pioneering work in agricultural education ten





Our aim is that the charismatic gift of education, following in the spirit of Don Bosco, can reach everyone who wants it without placing a financial burden on them

years previously, which was formalised with a Ministerial Resolution on 30 November 1970, authorising “the running of an agricultural training school for rural workers”.

The same date saw the signing of another resolution that authorised free education in colleges at *Colegio Don Bosco* in La Paz and in the other Salesian colleges in Bolivia through an agreement drawn up between the Ministry of Education and *Colegio Don Bosco*. The Minister for Education, Dr. Huáscar Taborga and Fr Hermann Artale signed the agreement.

These and other dates are contained in a leaflet entitled: “Towards a cultural revolution: Popular schools for agricultural education” in 1970.

The intention of offering the educational services of Don Bosco to the ordinary strata of the population, noted in the above-mentioned documents, was then confirmed by an agreement signed on 31 January 1990, ratified and then reformulated on 23 November that year and which came into force on 1 January 1991. Thus we have the legal origins of the Don Bosco Schools for the People signed into act by the Minister, Dr. Mariano Baptista Gumucio and the then Provincial, Fr Carlos Longo Donà.

The first four years of life of the EPDB were marked by the vigorous, creative and innovative management of Bro. Pacífico Felletti. He set in motion the high school certificate in technical and humanities subjects, modelled on Muyurina. There were further Ministerial Resolutions that supported these schools and provided them with the necessary educational materials. During the administration of Frs Luis Chamizo and Carlos Longo this kind of work grew and was consolidated. It was during this time that Fr Carlos Longo set up the famous Two-year Preparation Course for teachers which then led to the beginnings of the Salesian University of Bolivia.

Over the last 11 years through the staunch efforts of lay people closely identified with Don Bosco's charism and with the support of finance projects from international organisations, EPDB has been able to grow and offer society and public institutions the educational strength of Don Bosco for ordinary working people.

With no other ambition than that of service, our aim is that the charismatic gift of education, following in the spirit of Don Bosco, can reach everyone who wants it without placing a financial burden on them.





Boys and girls with Don Bosco: pedagogy that works miracles

We can see how Don Bosco's pedagogy can work miracles. We are part of the Salesian Province of The Antillas: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Pure Caribbean, replete with beauty, warmth, colour and life.

Boys and Girls with Don Bosco (*Muchachos y Muchachas con Don Bosco* or MMDB) began as a typical oratory work in response to a decision of The Antilles Province on behalf of those chosen to benefit from the preferential option of the Salesian charism.

MMDB results from the pastoral activity of

the Youth Centres, and the involvement of a group of young people who began the work with youngsters eight years old and over who, every morning, head for the city streets to find work in Santo Domingo, R.D.

MMDB is a Province network of educational and pastoral and development organisations aimed at providing a rounded education and development, run by the Salesian Family to benefit boys and girls at risk and their families. It is offered through a number of structures which are local centres (12 of them in all) and a central office, and involves all the mechanisms of a network.

St John Bosco Province,
Santo Domingo,
ANT

by Fr Juan Linares sdb

The centres take in children and teens living on the street, especially those who have to find work because of the precarious financial situation they are in, boys and girls orphaned or without family, kids who have dropped out of school, others caught up in a world of drug addiction, teenage girls who are pregnant...

The well-planned curriculum offered by MMDB has six stages:

- **Seek**, where we go out and look for the children to show them love and interest and then invite them to join a local centre.
- **Welcome**, which we do as if we were receiving a gift, accepting a person whom we want to get to know and make him or her part of us.
- **Socialisation**, in an effort to integrate them into a world they are part of and belong to, their family, their group, school, various programmes, society.
- **Accompaniment**, with a wide variety of programmes: schools, professional training, recreation, education in faith, artistic apprenticeship, etc.
- **Life project**, with an eminently vocational flavour, giving them direction in life at distinct levels: profession, family education, consecrated life.
- **Christian and socio-political involvement**, this means active participation in social life as agents of change, true social justice.


This curriculum, offered our boys and girls, and which can last for up to ten years, has programmes covering five areas:



Pedagogy, work, family and social, legal, recreational and cultural, and each area may have various programmes.

Our secret is in creating a huge movement which involves everyone, and which asks for their commitment: the boys and girls themselves, their families, teachers, local government, the various Churches, professions, business people, media, every citizen.

There are more than four thousand children and teenagers in these centres, and since the activities extend to their families, the population being reached by our programmes is around thirty thousand people.

The best results we are experiencing are being written up in an encyclopaedia bearing the title "Stories with happy endings"; stories of those who have had critical moments in their lives but are now people who have come through all that 





REGION: ITALY - MIDDLE EAST

Number of Countries: 15
Number of Special Circumscriptions: 2 (ICC, ICP)
Number of Provinces: 5
Number of Confreres: 2,410
Number of Novices: 24
Number of Salesian Bishops: 5



- » ICC: The Catacombs of St Callistus (94)
- » ILE: Growth after confirmation (98)
- » ICP: "Cheerfulness, study, piety" (100)
- » ISI: Teens meet (102)
- » MOR: Zeitun, fertile ground (104)

The Catacombs of St Callistus

**Christian initiation
as the first Christians lived it**

Sacred Heart Special Circumscription, Rome, Italy, ICC

by Fr Rozmus Tadeusz sdb



In 1930 Pope Pius XI, invited the Salesians to look after, on behalf of the Holy See, one of the most precious testimonies given by the Church in the early centuries, a piece of land fertile with saints and martyrs, and the goal of many pilgrimages. Fascination for this "martyrs' plot of land" has attracted pilgrims even today and they continue to come, turning up from all parts of the world. A large number of these pilgrims, some

hundreds of thousands every year, are young people. We are talking about the Catacombs of St Callistus in Rome, "the most august and celebrated of the Roman Catacombs" (Pope John XXIII), "Catacombs *par excellence*, first official cemetery of the Roman Communities, glorious final resting place for around 16 Popes from the 3rd Century" (Giovanni Battista de Rossi).

Today, after 80 years of continuous service by the Salesians, the Catacombs of St Callistus are served by a community of 30 Salesians from 14 nations.



The Catacombs of St Callistus

The Catacombs of St Callistus are the most ancient collection of burial places, and the best preserved, on the Via Appia. Having begun towards the end of the 2nd Century from a huge burial area belonging to the Church, managed autonomously by the Church authorities, they took their name from Deacon Callistus who was asked to administer the area by Pope Zephyrinus. When he in turn became Pope, Callistus enlarged the complex and it became the burial place for sixteen Roman Pontiffs from the 3rd Century (Crypt of the Popes).

One goes down a steep staircase at the catacombs, which leads to the Crypt of the Popes, via a small opening, a cubicle where St Cecilia's tomb lay: on the walls you can see paintings going back to the 5th and 6th centuries, amongst them the oldest extant image of the Saint in an attitude of prayer. It was



from here, in 821, that Pope Pasqual I brought the martyr's sarcophagus to

the Church which bears her name in Trastevere.



Once you leave St Cecilia's crypt, you go further along to an ossuary, with layer upon layer stretching to around 4 metres high, and then along a gallery opening on to a series of cubicles known as the "Sacraments" due to paintings alluding to Baptism and Eucharist. After visiting the huge sarcophagus "of Pope Milziade", the path leads off into other areas belonging to Saints




Gaius and Eusebius in what is known as the "liberiana" because of three inscriptions said to belong to Pope Liberius (352-366), where the archways are painted with scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Continuing on you can come to a primitive set known as the "Crypts of Lucina", where you find the tomb of Pope Cornelius decorated in Byzantine style and, nearby, two frescoes, one with the "Good Shepherd and a prayerful figure" and the other with two fish and two baskets of bread and a glass filled with wine, evidently symbols of the Eucharist.

For organisational and security reasons visitors and pilgrims may only visit a small section of the Catacombs, but this already leaves an unforgettable impression. Just knowing that you are in touch with places where some 56 martyrs and 18 saints are buried becomes a powerful spiritual experience. No wonder then that you see so many groups of young people, catechetical, scouts, students, scholars coming from all over the world to the Catacombs to breathe in the fresh air of faith.



Salesians and lay guides to serve in the Catacombs.

Visitors are led by guides in their own language for a 30 minute tour with plentiful explanation which is more than just history and culture. Each visit becomes a catechesis *par excellence* which leaves a strong impression. To make the visit more meaningful still some seek the possibility of celebrating Mass down there. There are dozens of Masses every day in various languages, along the cubicles in the Catacombs, and they seem to join in with the murmured prayers of the saints.

The Catacombs of St Callistus attract Salesians from all over the world who, as guides, give part of their life to this service. Some have been doing it for more than 50 years while others come to St Callistus just for a brief period of service. Direct contact with the "Saint's burial plot", the possibility of knowing places tied in with Don Bosco, getting to know some Italian, a wider knowledge of Roman history are some of the advantages for the Salesian. There is no lack of young volunteer guides, either, especially in summer, who strengthen their faith in harmony with the profound message of the primitive Church. 



So they have been confirmed.



St Charles Borromeo Province, Bologna, Italy, ILE

by the Educative Community St Benedict's Parish, Ferrara

Confirmation day has arrived. This closing feast of Christian initiation seems a bit like the final school certificate. Just as the holidays after finishing school for the last time are ones we never want to end, the newly confirmed exit their parishes with a sense of having finished something. Duty done, something to be revisited occasionally for marriage, death or to keep the family happy! St Benedict's Parish, Ferrara, with its Salesian Oratory, doesn't escape this particular "exodus". We have so many young people who pass through our hands to play, meet, but a mere few seem to accept our proposals when it comes to a continuing faith journey.

Urged on then by the need to put

evangelisation at the heart of our activity with young people, something repeated time and again by our bishops and the Rector Major, we have been forging a new direction for some years now, seeking ways to encourage youngsters to continue their growth as young Christians after this period of initiation. The community (Salesians and lay people) has taken a look at lots of experiences around Italy, its dioceses and movements. There have been some interesting similarities in the thought given to starting points and objectives: one has to begin with the complex and variable world of pre-teens as they begin to show interest in public gestures, the profession of faith which marks full entry into the Christian community, with various shades of

difference. We began a discussion with our Diocesan Catechetics Office and have begun to experiment with group opportunities, identifying a curriculum that we believe should have two steps: promise followed by profession of faith.

Promise

We believe the first step is a personal re-appropriation of what has been received over the years of catechism. This takes place through a promise; it is an important commitment, but not as solemn and definitive as a profession of faith. In the current circumstances where little remains constant and everything is precarious, we think young people need accompaniment to help strengthen their capacity to



Now what? Growth after confirmation

number of possible directions from this.

Profession of faith

Once the time of promise is over, and given a personalised accompaniment, we propose a profession of faith in three stages (three years, but it could take longer). This part begins where the individual is currently at. The core of it all however is a convinced and real adherence to the person of Jesus and the choice to live as a Christian. Education to liturgical and personal prayer, along with personalised accompaniment, is the fertile ground for taking up such a direction. Teenagers need reference points and people to help them express unconditional trust in themselves or others. Using the Catechism of the Catholic Church (as an outline) we propose rediscovering the mystery of God and the human condition starting with Jesus, who reveals the Father, so that the gift of the Holy Spirit can lead to a more public and concrete profession of faith.

Teenagers need reference points and people to help them express unconditional trust in themselves or others

will be accepted and used by the wider Church) where youngsters and teachers can know what stage the journey has reached.

We have been surprised by the results, despite modest beginnings. We have seen that it cannot be limited to an annual, static course, but is something more flexible and dynamic. It needs to be adapted to the pre-teen, teen, and older person, without losing sight of the need for gradual development through each stage. This movement through stages is something addressed to everyone, but even within the same group people can arrive at a new stage at different times. We have some sev-

enty youngsters 'on the road' at the moment. The results are encouraging because numbers have more than doubled from our first efforts and because we have noted a real appreciation on the part of the young people of the gradual nature and freedom they have.

There are still some questions. Sometimes they seem to be doing too much - part of their own group, a leaders' course for the Oratory, helping the Catechist, and even sometimes being part of a Missionary group! Another weak point is the preparation of appropriate people to accompany and support them.

In conclusion we can praise the Lord who is helping us to forge a way already taken up by many others, and ask Him to help young people see and experience the happiness and beauty of following him



offer a faith response. It begins by reading some passages from Luke's Gospel concerning Jesus' disciples. These have become the outlines of a threefold commitment. Using the Vatican Council's idea of mystery - communion - mission as a background, we add a

Movement from one stage to the other includes pilgrimages to places that have seen the witness of saintly lives: Turin (Don Bosco and Dominic Savio), Rome (Peter and Paul), Assisi (Clare and Francis), Savoy and Southern France (Francis of Sales, Curé of Ars ...) Shrines in Abruzzo (Manoppello, Lanciano, San Gabriele dell'Addolorata ...). Besides choice of place, it has been important to study the formulas and signs marking the journey, officially recognised in a celebration. We believe we need to create rites of passage (which we hope





“Cheerfulness, study, piety”: Spiritual accompaniment

Vocational animation SDB - FMA, Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta

Mary Help of Christians Special Circumscription, ICP

by SDB and FMA vocation animators

A program which runs over two years with 4 meetings yearly on Saturday mornings for SDB, FMA and lay people tackling the important but delicate issue of spiritual accompaniment with a vocational slant, has distant roots, but ones worth pursuing to understand deep down the aims we have chosen to achieve.

At a joint meeting of the SDB and FMA Provincial Councils in December 2005 the topic of vocation animation was discussed. Both groups realised that the moment had come to make the collaboration they had developed over a number of years official, so they approached a small group of people to be part of a joint commission (SDB-FMA Vocation Animation) with a view to sharing and planning vocation animation for the two provinces.

The commission looked at four possible ways for developing the task before them: firstly a review and re-planning of what was already in place, vocation animation activities in the specific sense, already common to the two provinces; a second approach could be to develop an overall project of vocation animation for the different age groups, from the youngest to the final stage; a third possibility was dis-

cussion and sharing about vocation animation as a way of developing a vocational culture in religious communities and educative communities (EPP); and finally, and perhaps the more distant but possibly fruitful approach if it could be put into place, the role of the two initial formation communities in vocation animation activities across the area covered by the two provinces.

It soon became obvious that if, on the one hand, the immediately urgent thing seemed to be joint planning of activities directly addressed to young people, it was, on the other hand, just as essential to work with the religious and educative communities who are the real actors in vocation animation. This is why the commission decided, in agreement with the Provincial Councils, to focus attention on forming the communities. This gave rise to a formation course guided by certain basic decisions:

1. **The urgent need to work together:** presenting and acting as a single movement, varied internally, but with coordinated activity and reference points, including theoretical ones. The corresponding urgent need to see vocations together, male and female, so young people could be offered an ac-

Cheerfulness, Study, Piety: Spiritual accompaniment

The vocational journey is more than something done in the group, as it is also a proposal to individuals who need to be followed up in a particular and personal way, constantly and with quality


companiment which is personalised and helps them be their own person. Thanks too to working in a common setting, it remains important to coordinate not just the practical bits, but projects and aims, to increase the possibility of presence and make the proposal more meaningful and incisive.

2. **Need for community:** vocation animation is neither singular, nor provincial, but communal, and in religious and educative communities it finds its strength and its true realisation. This is why planning as a Salesian movement, two provinces together, means succeeding in thinking through together the part played by formation of communities and confreres, sisters to construct community.

3. **The urgent need for a personal and accompanied program:** the role of the community certainly does not take away from the need for personalisation in the journey at two levels: the accompanier and the one being accompanied. Community is made up of people who always have to be prepared for vocation proposal, in a planned and specific way, so they can be effective and efficient witnesses of the Lord's call. Besides, the vocational journey is more than something done in the group, as it is also a proposal to individuals who need to be followed up in a particular and personal way, constantly and with quality. The quality of spiritual accompaniment finds its proper place and importance in this double kind of personalisation.



4. **Formation as a choice:** working together as a charismatic movement and community, personalising what is offered to young people and following up their vocational development can certainly not be improvised, but requires a solid and constant formation which can also be an ideological point of reference for those involved. It is not a formation which belongs to a few specialists or to whoever has the aura of a vocation, but ought involve as many people as possible so it becomes common ground for community thinking and planning.

At the end of it all this is printed as a book and given to participants and all the houses in the two provinces 





Teens meet:

“ ... another part fell on good soil and bore fruit ... ” (Mt 13:8)

Reading the newspapers and studying sociological statistics, or watching TV, reading blogs and Facebook, navigating the Internet one has the sensation of hearing a mantra: “Where will it all end up if it goes on like this?”

The image of the teenager presented by today's world is speckled with dark and negative colours: they are far from faith, diffident towards their teachers, unable to choose strong and lasting values, all part of a promiscuous, dissipated lifestyle, indifferent to the needs of others, far from being involved in volunteer efforts.

This is not where we are! We do not share this negative, pessimistic and disheartening viewpoint. In fact we see that it is simply not so. There are so

many in their teenage years who undertake a demanding journey of faith, spiritual and vocational discernment; many choose to dedicate time to younger and more disadvantaged children through service experiences, volunteer groups, Salesian leadership; they seem able to make strong and important choices, and know how to say know to facile or banal solutions.

And we are not speaking of a rarity. In Sicily there are more than 3,000 teenagers frequenting Salesian centres who accept their gift of faith and pursue Don Bosco's educational charism by growing up as good Catholic men and women.

One of the more significant evangelisation experiences we are undertaking

in our Province for this age group is called: Teens Meet. Four days of formation for the best teenagers in our Salesian houses offered during the Christmas holidays. It is a well-established yearly appointment for some 250 participants who look at their journey of faith and their readiness to follow the Lord in a Salesian style.

The topics vary from year to year. Here we refer to a particularly poignant theme of evangelisation: “I trust You”. It is the title of a well-known song in the teenage world, and we have used it to help us analyse the Christian journey and a program for laying out steps and commitments.

After watching a video which raises many questions (“And the people, who



do they say I am?") which presents a number of interviews of their peers about their faith journey in this somewhat delicate period of Christian growth, participants meet in groups to look at the basic question Jesus puts to those who want to follow him: "And you, who do you say I am?"

This is then followed up with three workshops, during which those taking part can discuss, with the help of a leader, some of the more important questions faced by teenagers: "The Gospel in my faith experience; the link between Christ and the Church; the importance of the sacraments in my faith journey".

At this point the youngsters are into the second stage of their Meeting,

which turns on the biblical idea of "the human face of Jesus", indicating the basic features of Jesus of Nazareth. Following a discussion with the speaker the youngsters go back into groups to explore, through drama, some of the main Gospel passages which refer to the faith journey Jesus proposed to those whom he met.

Then there is a process called "the languages of faith", using different artistic approaches (music, film, art, poetry, dance) to help participants assess the degree and depth of their personal belonging to Christ.


This also involves presenting some important faith witnesses, well known local figures such as Fr Puglisi, Piergiorgio Frassati and many others.

St Paul's Province, Sicily, Italy, ISI

by Fr Marcello Mazzeo sdb

The meeting concludes with a Salesian reading of the faith journey through a report entitled "Whenever you did this for one of my brethren you did it for me". Service and leadership as a characteristic trait of Salesian Youth Spirituality.

Throughout this formation process the youngsters are accompanied by well-prepared occasions for personal and community prayer and powerful moments of fellowship and leadership in a Salesian style.

Along with others, this experience has strengthened our belief: young people are on the lookout for strong values and want to be seriously involved in a faith journey "to see Jesus" 

Zeitun: fertile ground

Jesus the Adolescent Province,
Zeitun, Egypt, Middle East, MOR



by Fr Giancarlo Manieri sdb
Editor of Italian Salesian Bulletin



They face some notable difficulties, more with their Christian brothers and sisters than with their Muslim ones. I was amazed to hear that the Orthodox parish priests, to discourage their faithful from attending the Catholic churches, warn that: "It is a sin to enter a Catholic church and you need to confess it!"... In the light of Christian fellowship and the ecumenical efforts of Pope Benedict, which at least in Cairo seems to be going a bit far. Zeitun is a Christian suburb, with Christians of the Latin Church, Copts, and Coptic Orthodox, as well as Greek Catholics and a number of Protestant groups.

The Sudanese

The Sudanese have established themselves in the suburb of Zeitun where the Salesians have only an Oratory and a social work with a public church and some chaplaincies.

I was struck, while visiting this work in Cairo, Zeitun by the order... of the week. Every day the community, made up of four Salesian priests, is involved in a variety of activities - formation, sports, culture, religion, without counting the chaplaincies to the two FMA communities, a community of Armenian refugees, two other communities of Sisters and helping out in the Coptic Catholic parish in the area.

The most numerous community of all, if one is to believe the locals, is the Sudanese refugee community, people fleeing the war that has raged for nearly fifty years and bathed their unfortunate country in blood. They have fled to Zeitun in anything possible that could bring them, some have even walked there... carrying only their Catholic faith and the hope for a better future than their own country can offer them. As for baggage, nothing, except the few rags they wear and perpetual hunger. The Combonian missionaries were the first to make a move, doing their best to give






the refugees some sort of order, a roof, work... The Sudanese community is cohesive, active, and committed to its faith. They help and support one another. The more able young people study, and are not afraid to get their hands dirty in humble tasks. The women are ready for domestic work or to help the elderly, handicapped, sick. The Salesian community is involved with them in areas other than religious assistance, helping with medical visits, finding milk for the children, medicine for the sick, school books for the children.

Mass

I was present at a regular Sudanese community Mass in the Salesian church, their fixed point of reference, indeed, their church. Or at least that's how they see it. It was an extraordinary celebration, lasting one and a half hours, led from beginning to end by a choir made up of the faithful. Entry to the Church was made up of a "greeting of peace": little ones and small ones, young and old, women and men ... a holy confusion! "Is this typical?", I asked. "Yes, but it is also a Gospel-like ceremony: if you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift in front of the altar and first go and be reconciled with him".



The Sudanese do this for real! The celebration was a murmuring of prayers, hymns, dances, offerings: a participation which would be the envy of even our best!

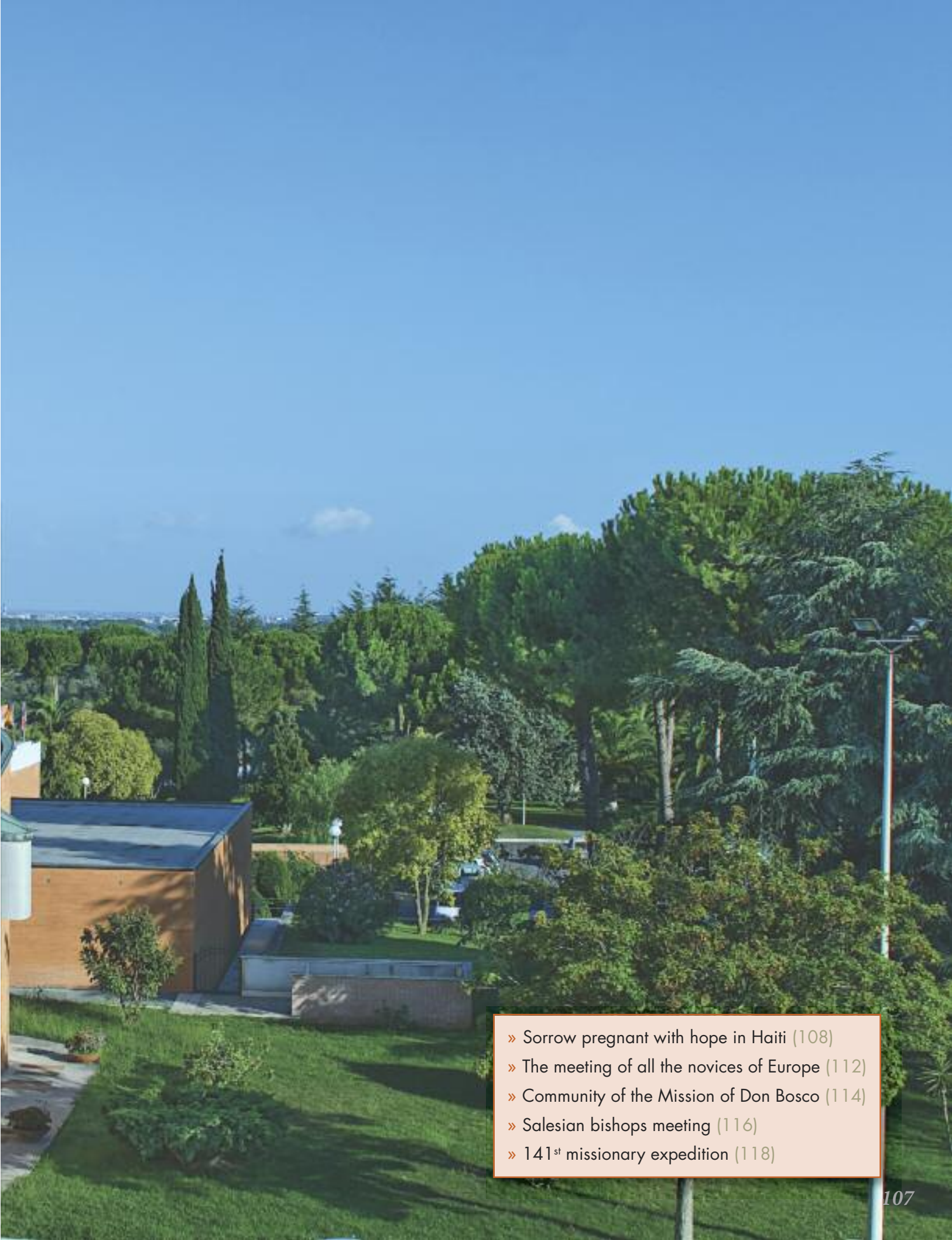
Zeitun is a poor suburb where more than 98% of the people are Orthodox, but, says Fr Nagib, the Rector, "It is fertile ground". I saw an oratory without any of the sports fields or structures typical of our youth centres, but equally vibrant: animation, catechesis, sacramental preparation, theatre, recitals and Good Nights. So while I believe that sports fields, stadiums, games halls, rooms for group work are good, they are not essential. "Everything depends on the way you work, your availability, the welcome you provide, patience". In circumstances like these, I thought aloud, you are either a priest through and through or you are bound to fail. "And that's precisely the way it is!", the Rector answered me 



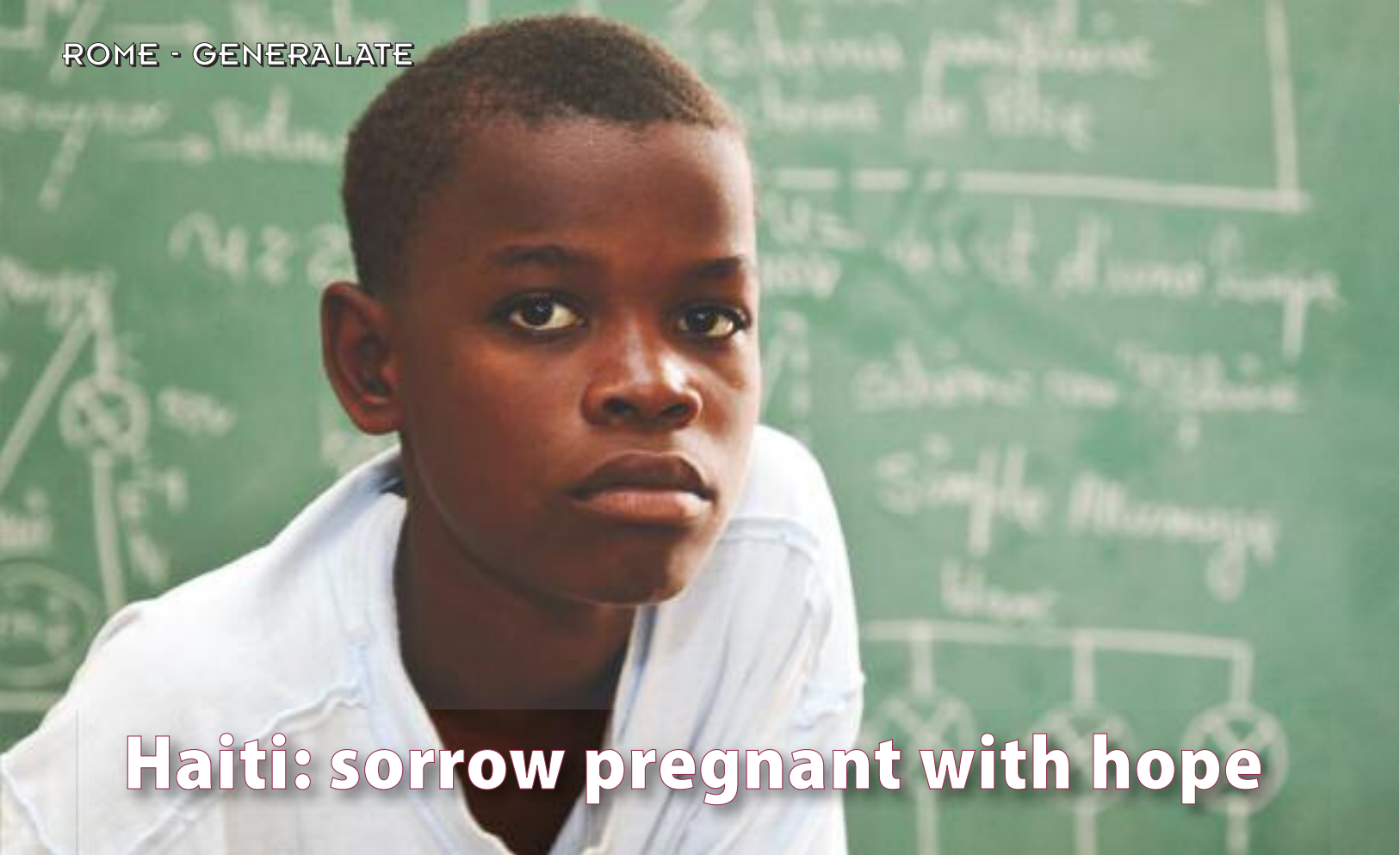


ROME - GENERALATE (RMG)

Number of Vice Province: 1 (UPS)
Number of Confreres: 211
Number of Novices: 0
Number of Salesian Bishops: 5 (Vatican)



- » Sorrow pregnant with hope in Haiti (108)
- » The meeting of all the novices of Europe (112)
- » Community of the Mission of Don Bosco (114)
- » Salesian bishops meeting (116)
- » 141st missionary expedition (118)



Haiti: sorrow pregnant with hope

Thank you for being part of our people's resurrection

by Salesians of Haiti



When President Sténio Vincent came to know that the Salesians were going to open a technical school in the Dominican Republic, he took advantage of Fr Pittini's stopover in Port-au-Prince to insist on the need for his presence in this western zone too, the "pearl of the Antilles", Haiti.

If in 1936 the education of the masses was urgent for the first four Salesians to arrive here, led by Fr Gimbert, with the mission of opening the *École Nationale des Arts et Métiers* (ENAM) on the outskirts of what is currently La Saline, one of the poorest suburbs you could find on the planet, you can just imagine the immense field of work now facing the 62 Haitian Salesians making up this vice province: street children, boarders; primary, secondary, technical and higher education offered in day and evening classes; agricultural schools, oratories,

youth centres, parishes, public churches.

In a Congregation which has 150 years behind it, the 75 years the Salesians have been in Haiti are testimony to a youthful maturity. Testimony to this maturity is the mission thus far accomplished and the consistent number of activities implemented; and its youth, since the vice province began in 1992 - the average age of the Salesians is 44 years of age; and testimony too is the pastoral and educative energy which drives them.

The Salesians have given the Haitian people tremendous service in areas such as technical formation (since 1936, ENAM has formed qualified workers in mechanics, electricity, carpentry, tailoring and design; plumbing ... ; technical schools were later opened in Cap-Haitien, Gonaïves, Les Cayes, Fort-

“I tried to open my ears and heart to the cry of God which could be heard in the anger and feelings of powerlessness of those who see how everything that they had built had vanished into smoke, into nothing.”

Liberté), youth ministry (especially in Thorland, but in all works in general terms), primary and secondary education (Pétion-Ville, Cap-Haïtien, Gressier, and the OPEPB e, Fort-Liberté), higher education (Philosophy), parish (Immaculate Conception Cité Soleil), street children (Lakay).

Dr Jean Price-Mars, well-known Haitian

writer, began one of his articles with the comment that “in all of history perhaps there is no more pathetic drama than the one the Haitian people have had to face”. This was said in 1953, and referred to the endless struggles the descendants of negro slaves had to endure to achieve full freedom, but it seems just as apt in reference to the situation in the country following the cat-

astrophe wrought by the earthquake on 12 January 2010.

Our Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, following his historic visit in February 2010, one month after the catastrophe, accurately described the situation and the future of Salesian presence in Haiti. Amongst other things he told us:

“I was totally dismayed by the magnitude of the destruction, the apocalyptic landscape of death, suffering and despair. The National Palace, symbol of pride and power, has practically collapsed in on itself, its remaining pillars sticking up in the air, and similarly the other Ministry buildings. Only the facade and side walls of the Cathedral remain standing; its roof and columns are in ruins. It seems as if the city, in those 28 seconds of prolonged shock, had lost its head and its heart. And effectively that is precisely the case, since from that moment on there has been an absolute lack of leadership, and life, so terribly tried, seems to be going on more by impulse of inertia and the struggle for survival than by a social organisation to support it and encourage it.

While I listened to the accounts of survivors, especially those who escaped death after hours and days trapped between floors, ceilings and walls; while I was looking at buildings and houses destroyed, I tried to hear the voice of God which like the blood of Abel cried out with the voices of the thousands of the dead buried in mass graves or still under the ruins. I tried to listen to God who was speaking through the dull sound of the thousands of people struggling to live under the tents given them by international agencies or made of rags, cobbled together anyhow. I tried to open my ears and heart to the cry of God which could be heard in the anger and feelings of powerlessness of those who see how everything that they had built - much or little as the case may be - had vanished into smoke, into nothing.

Also in the church, the death of the Archbishop, the Vicar General, the Chancellor, 18 seminarians and



46 religious, with the collapse of houses, schools and healthcare centres has meant a painful loss of pastors, an absolutely necessity for this people.

Time to roll up our sleeves and start rebuilding the country, better yet, rise from the ashes. That is the great opportunity that is offered to this poor nation, the former “Pearl of the Antilles”.

On our part we feel the need to renew our commitment to the rebirth of the country, re-founding the Congregation, step by step together, with presences which respond to the expectations and the needs of Haitian society, the Church and the young. Rather than simply rebuilding the walls it is a matter of a change in our way of thinking. The Church and as part of it consecrated life, has to change, seeking more and more its identity, fidelity to the Lord Jesus, and his Gospel, properly bringing together evangelisation, human development and the transformation of culture and society.

An immediate plan has been set in motion which involves the reorganisation of the vice province at all levels, including that of the re-founding of the works, the revision of the pastoral approach in general, and in certain places, always keeping in mind, in particular the needs of society, the Church and the young.

In practice we have to:

- » make secure all the works, some of which have already been looted, rebuilding the boundary walls which collapsed;
- » re-build the whole complex of the OPEPB, those next

to the ENAM and those located in Cité Soleil, which implies drawing up an overall plan for the Lakay School and a Youth Centre;

- » re-locate ENAM in such a way as to build a Vocational Training Centre of the highest quality, also opening a fresh page of the history of this work: however, the best place has to be chosen;
- » rebuild the Young Peoples' Centre in Thorland and the multi-purpose hall;
- » rebuild the Parish in Cité Soleil and the Youth Centre;
- » rebuild the dormitory and the class-rooms of the school at Gressier;
- » rebuild a part of the Primary School at Pétion-Ville;
- » re-think the whole of the work at Fleuriot, taking into account the needs of the house for the post-novices and the Study Centre;
- » re-locate the Provincial House, leaving the present house for the community of Cité Soleil;
- » simplify the complex of works at Fort-Liberté, giving priority to the Vocational Training Centre, the training school for teachers, which is of strategic importance and absolutely necessary for the training of the new kind of educators which Haiti needs, and the



school for nurses, the only one left in the country;
 » carry out a process of discernment about the future of the 'Vincent Foundation' Agricultural School in Cap-Haïtien, situated on a property which is not ours, and consider re-locating it at Tosià. For the moment it should continue to function with the various educational services which it offers.

This does not mean that everything has to be done at the same time. We will be able to count on the readiness of, and on the donations that have already arrived from the Mission Offices, from international organisations, from the Provinces or individual houses, from Bishops' Conferences and from benefactors. What becomes the priority is to keep the schools and youth centres functioning where they are fit for use, and in addition, to build or re-build as soon as possible those works which have become unfit for use. The priority of the care and the education of the young is absolute, all the more so since what is at stake is the creation, through a new education, of a new culture, capable of building the new Haiti.

In 2011 the "Blessed Philip Rinaldi" Vice

Province of Haiti will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of its presence in this country. For the Haitian confreres it will be a real Jubilee, and I hope and pray that by then we

may see the re-foundation of the charism as a renewed gift from God for young Haitians.

While I thank the Congregation, the benefactors and friends of Salesian work for the generosity and enterprise with which they have responded to my previous letter, I invite everyone to continue with the efforts we are making to respond to the immense demands of this country in so much need. I entrust to Mary this new phase of history. I entrust to Mary this new phase of history. May she guide us in rising to the challenge. May she bless you all", (Thus far the Rector Major's words).



This is why the sons of Don Bosco are here, even though affected physically and psychologically by the devastating earthquake of January 2010. We are aware that we are the "new Salesian missionaries" of Haiti; and with the enthusiasm of those who first arrived in 1936, we are committed to rebuilding Salesian life through a ministry which is

up to responding to the challenges of society and the needs of the young.

2010 placed every Salesian house in Haiti at a new departure point. We need to return to the playground, organise the oratories, relaunch groups and youth movement ... youngsters are there, waiting for us, many homeless

and without a school to go to. It is these we must think of and stand with, bringing to fruition the spirituality of the *da mihi animas cetera tolle*.

We can do it by depending on God's grace and through the solidarity of the entire Congregation and many others. Our life now is one solely due to grace



On our part we feel the need to renew our commitment to the rebirth of the country, re-founding the Congregation, step by step together, with presences which respond to the expectations and the needs of Haitian society, the Church and the young



To everyone, whether Salesian or not ...

The meeting of all the novices
of Europe

by the novices of Monte Oliveto (Pinerolo)

The holiness of the Father was the actual reason for the vocation of all his sons". These words of Fr. Paul Albera can be a good basis for a reflection around the meeting, as it was called, of the Novitiates of Europe. It was as if such a meeting among neighbours, new sons of Don Bosco, desiring to become like their Father, had been inspired by him, still the humble servant of the will of God that wishes everyone to be a participator in His holiness.

The Formation Department planned this meeting of all the novices of Europe, in line with the initiative of Project Europe, during celebrations for the 150th year of the foundation of the Salesian Congregation. This worthwhile and strategic occasion was to begin to raise awareness and to build through this a

Salesian European network of young people that was real, looking to the future, and secure.

The meeting lasted between Friday 21st and Monday 24th of May, at the Novitiate at Monte Oliveto, in Pinerolo (TO). The Novice master Fr. Carlo Maria Zanotti, the assistant Novice Master Fr. Ivan Ghidina, the confreres and all the novices welcomed with joy the arrival of the other communities of novices. The total number of novices was over 50, coming from Monte Oliveto, from Genzano in Rome, from Madrid, Slovacchia, and Poland.

In the days together the novices were involved in times of study of the historical figure of Blessed Michael Rua, and in times of fraternity and prayer,





enriched by the visit to the places in which the Salesian charism had bloomed.

The novices, guided by their formators, began by remembering the anniversary of the foundation of the Salesian Congregation; re-reading and discussing the episode on 18 December 1859 reported in the *Biographical Memoirs*. The various Novitiates presented their journeys and distinctive qualities reflecting the particular cultural traits and traditions of each country. They then shared their own experiences of vocation, a formative and spiritual period central to the whole meeting. The pilgrimage to Our Lady of Graces of Pinerolo and the meeting with Bishop De Bernardi, the local Ordinary, finally reinforced the close links between the Salesians and the local and universal Church.

The final part of the meeting was at Valdocco on the occasion of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, in which the novices took an active part, and of the


The novices left a lasting impression on everyone of a deep spirit of fraternity, refreshed and inspired by the beauty and challenge of the Constitutions.

gathering of all the Salesian Bishops of the world.

Throughout, the novices left a lasting impression on everyone of a deep spirit of fraternity, refreshed and inspired by the beauty and challenge of the Constitutions.

"Beautiful, interesting the encounter with other cultures, with differing spiritual and faith experiences. Pity there was not enough time to deepen an awareness which I hope may be a space for future growth," revealed Giacomo, who would like to see other occasions to meet and share. This was echoed by Ivan, "A wonderful meeting, intended to preserve a deep and enduring bond of friendship in Christ. Although it may not be easy to see how

this meeting fits into a personal formation journey, and there is a strong temptation to consider it merely as a pleasant digression. But we are united in prayer and in the conviction that we are loved by God and called by Him to follow Don Bosco as courageous and bold educators of heaven." "I particularly liked," added Davide, "that each group of novices wished to leave behind an impression of its particular style and tone. This is a witness to the diversity and originality of the Spirit".

These are only some of the impressions, but they reflect in general a very successful meeting and an overall positive experience for all the novices. Beyond the differences, challenges and richness for today and tomorrow, there rests in the heart of everyone, we believe, a deep desire to live religious life in the distinctive Salesian manner, remaining in the heart of Christ. The whole event is a sign of great hope for a Congregation that wishes to continue its journey as the bearer of the love of God to young people. 



Community of the Mission of Don Bosco, the 28th Salesian Family Member Group

Four verbs for action in education

by Guido Pedroni cmb

Salesians of the Community of the Mission of Don Bosco, already! Salesians CMB! After a 15 year journey here we are now, since January 2010, recognised as the 28th Group of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco. What can we say? ... we have always felt we were Salesians for various reasons but to hear it said officially is a confirmation that fills our hearts with joy and renews our apostolic impulse. Working for the good of young people as Don Bosco taught

us is a calling that involves one's whole life and not just free time occasions for specific service in a specific setting.

Already from 1990 we said we were called to offer the gift of Don Bosco as a service to dioceses, not exclusively this but certainly it has seemed the particular direction indicated for us. In fact the first non-Salesian parish of the Diocese of Bologna, where the Community was founded, and which called on

the Community to open an Oratory (1996) was San Carlo's, where the first Salesians had come to 100 years ago, sent there by Fr Michael Rua. Could we say that this was a concrete sign for us of our originality in the service of the young? That's what we believe.

This particular approach of ours certainly opens up many possibilities but it is not without its difficulties, especially since one needs to remain faithful



to one's identity in a context which often asks one to follow diocesan directions or the pastoral and even personal guidelines of parish clergy.

Two dioceses are particularly interested in this approach to youth ministry, the first being the diocese of Bologna and the second a missionary district in Madagascar, in the diocese of Fianarantsoa.

At Vado, a small city in the Apennines near Bologna, the parish priest has entrusted youth ministry and the Oratory to the Community. In this case we have a relationship of trust and mutual esteem, involving more than just children or teenagers or older, but also a number of families who recognise the familiar climate we have developed.

There is a fundamental point in all the formation activities we offer according to their age group. The general formation guide prepared by the CMB is an aid to a personal journey of faith but also one which leads to the service of the least amongst us.

The Community comprises educators and young people, the youth group having been formed by those who are looking after a specifically community style formation.

In Vohimasina, a rural village in the mountains near Fianarantsoa, the Oratory, catechesis and different youth groups have been entrusted to the local CMB which has been helping to form many young people to an experience of Church in that area for many years. Here too there is a young group of the Community made up of a dozen or so girls who are in formation to enter the Community and then continue on in the service of young children.



From these two experiences of ordinary and oratory life (but not only these), something clear emerges: we have discovered that Don Bosco's Preventive System can be experienced today as a typical originality which draws its strength from the activities we carry out there where we are and that are taken up in the way the Community likes to do it as expressed by these four verbs:

Believing, creating, involving and Prevent

believing that Christ comes to the hearts of the young (and ours too); we must believe in a "Salesian humanism" as Don Bosco used say;

creating relationships, opportunities for dialogue, discussion, play;

arousing the attention of the youngsters;

involving their own sense of responsibility.

Prevent and prevent again; it is a problem today because it seems to be within a system that arrives before good does; it seems that the system may be used by others; it seems that the youngsters' hearts are captured by other interests, other ideas, other suggestions, as is the case with their families.

The general concern, but it is quite generic, is for young people who have lost basic points of reference; the Italian Episcopal Conference is talking about an educational emergency for the next ten years; the Pope himself has strongly and often emphasised the educational emergency and the need to educate.

Paraphrasing St Paul one could say that the "battle for the Gospel" is a "battle for education" today. It is a mission we try to carry out with a missionary spirit which can be identified with a specific value of the Community of the Mission, which we call the State of Mission.

All of our educational activity is in a state of mission whether in Italy, Madagascar or Argentina; what is important is to be there, paying close attention to the youngsters, with the desire to "inspire them", call their attention, make them aware, believing that the Lord today can come to their hearts through our witness. This much is essential: He can come to their hearts if we are capable of a credible witness, a spirit of acceptance, attention, sharing which leads to experiencing a relationship between young people and educators in an affective and effective atmosphere of familiarity.

I believe this is what is being asked is us through our specific calling 



**Archbishop
Malayappan Chinnappa
Archbishop of Madras (India)**

My dear confreres,

With a heart full of gratitude I would like to give thanks in this Eucharist for the intense days spent in Turin with Salesian cardinals, archbishops and bishops, together with the Rector Major and his Council. We were called together by the Rector Major himself to celebrate 150 years since the foundation of our Congregation, to recall the centenary of the death of Fr Rua and at the same time the 125th of the nomination and episcopal ordination of our first Salesian bishop, Cardinal John Cagliero.

These were days when we felt very much at home, living in a wonderful family spirit, an atmosphere of sincere warmth and real involvement by everyone. At the Mother House in Val-

docco we sensed Don Bosco's presence, as also at the Becchi in Castelnuovo. Beyond all of this we shared together all the experiences, and these Salesian places inspired a very special atmosphere and reminded us of our common Salesian vocation. We understood here what it means to start afresh from Don Bosco, as we now approach the Bicentenary of his birth in 2015.

It was like a second novitiate for me, being bathed in Salesianity, a deep spiritual renewal. Really, everyone had this profound spiritual experience, the immediate result of which was spontaneous and contagious happiness and joy. We do not have the possibility in our dioceses of being in such contact with the sources of our charism; so here we were

The Salesian charism and the episcopal ministry

Salesian Bishops Meeting

The Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, called together 120 Salesian bishops from around the world in Turin from 21 to 25 May 2010 around the topic and banner of: "The Salesian charism and the Episcopal Ministry". Challenges and directions in faith for the new evangelisation of today's youth! During the 125th anniversary of the consecration of Bishop John Cagliero". During his opening address he noted: "My dear brother bishops, it gives me the greatest of pleasures to offer you a warm welcome, and thank you for your positive response to the invitation to this gathering, and I want to express my joy at your being here.

This will always be home for you, our hearth, because in some way or other every Salesian is born here in Valdocco".

They were five days of brotherly sharing together, prayer and deep reflection, celebrated in the light of the Feasts of Pentecost and Mary Help of Christians. Turin, Valdocco and Colle Don Bosco were the witnesses to this Salesian and ecclesial event which was also shared by members of the General Council. There were many expressions of thanks received by the Rector Major from cardinals, archbishops and bishops who took part. Here is one such which sums up the general feeling:

able to renew our vocational choice, something that remains in us always and on extraordinary occasions like this can be refreshed.

The visit to the Holy Shroud too enriched these days. The Salesian novices from around Europe helped us to pray at the Mass. This precious sheet takes us back to the passion of a man who has a great likeness to the one described in the Gospels. The Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez and the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Poletto, brought out the meaning of this visit recalling Christ's passion and the passion of mankind: "*Passio Christi, passio hominis*". Looking at the man of the Shroud we were invited to look after all those who are suffering, in our ministry.

The Solemnities of Pentecost and Mary Help of Christians helped us live at Valdocco as if in the Upper Room. The procession of MHC was thronged with people but also an experience of recollection and a spirit of prayer. How many experiences we had in just a short period of time! We are grateful to the Lord, and to the Rector Major. These days were unforgettable.

Here we are now in the final days of May; may the Virgin Mary accompany us, so we may bear abundant fruit in our dioceses stemming from what has been sown in our lives. May she accompany our Congregation, Salesian Family, the Rector Major and his Council, all our Salesian confreres, through her intercession



Being evangelised is not enough ...

One needs to be active in evangelising

141st Missionary Expedition, Valdocco, Turin

by Fr Stanislaw Rafalko sdb

The Christian vocation in all its dimensions is by nature a missionary vocation. In a particular way the lay person, religious, priest or bishop living out Don Bosco's charism feels the same sense of urgency about evangelisation as he did.

In view of the preparation for the 141st missionary expedition, Fr Václav Klement, Councillor General for the Missions, communicating with the Salesian Provincials, wrote: For Don Bosco being Christian meant being sent – sent by God to proclaim the Gospel. There is no more satisfying or happier way of living than giving oneself as a missionary *ad gentes – ad extra – ad vitam*, with all the radical nature that is implied in the “*da mihi animas, cetera tolle*”.

In the course of 150 years of the Salesian Congregation, more than 11,000 missionaries have been sent out from Valdocco. As with every other year this year too, on the last Sunday of September, the ninth successor of Don





Bosco, Fr Pascual Chávez, in handing them the missionary cross, sent new groups of Salesians, Salesian Sisters and lay volunteers to bring Jesus to all the continents. It was the 141st missionary expedition, since the first sent by Don Bosco himself in 1875.

Mission-mindedness is especially alive today, since the world has once again become “mission territory”- wrote Fr Pascual Chávez in his 2010 Strenna. In fact the traditional distinction between mission countries and Christian countries no longer holds true, seeing that Europe too is ever more a mission land. In this context it is significant that amongst the 38 who received the Mission Cross, 12 come from Vietnam and the majority of them are young Salesians at the initial formation stage. Besides, 11 of these new missionaries have been sent to different European countries as part of Project Europe, and even if it has not been so easy, it is beginning to show results. The third sig-

*The witness
given by Salesian and lay missionaries
can be an appeal to many young people
to discern their call and mission
as Jesus invited them to do:*

Come and see

nificant feature of this expedition has been the sending of lay volunteers who are present in greater numbers in this story of missionary expeditions as the years pass.

The Rector Major's wish, as expressed in the 2010 Strenna, that young disciples become evangelisers of the young, is becoming more a reality. Each year in fact, hundreds of young volunteers from various countries are sent out to the continents to evangelise their peers. This youthful energy expressed through the Mission Volunteer Movement, will be the special theme for the 2011 World Mission Day: Volunteers to proclaim the Gospel. In the 125th anniversary of the fifth missionary

dream – his last – that Don Bosco had in Barcelona, we would like to give a strong push to the Salesian Mission Volunteer effort throughout our provinces. A young missionary during the preparatory course held in Rome at the General House in September said: by becoming a Salesian I discovered the joy of being a disciple of Jesus. The Lord got me to understand that I cannot keep this experience just to myself, but that I must share it with other young people who are often lost like I was beforehand. I will be a missionary from Asia in Europe. A Polish Volunteer, instead, after returning from a year of service with street children in Peru, said: it is a wonderful thing to share one's love of Christ and one's little faith with others.

The witness given by Salesian and lay missionaries can be an appeal to many young people to discern their call and mission as Jesus invited them to do: Come and see



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