

CAGLIERO 11

Newsletter for Salesian Missionary Animation

Publication of the Missions Sector for the Salesian Communities and Friends of the Salesian Mission



Dear confreres, dear friends,
Here we are at the eighth and final Beatitude in this missionary journey of 2019 with the Gaudete et Exsultate of Pope Francis: **"Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."** **"Accepting the Gospel every day despite our problems; this is holiness"** [GE 94]

This is what Salesian missionaries do, often to a heroic level. They are missionaries with a "tough face" who, like the prophet Isaiah and like Jesus, have "hardened their face" (Is 50, 7) in the hour of persecution. However, they are at the same time, missionaries with a "tender heart", as serene and joyful as children. This is the testimony that emerges clearly from the harsh experience of Fr Tom Uzhunnalil SDB, for example, an Indian missionary kidnapped in Yemen. He had a powerful experience of the consolation and strength of the Lord in the midst of his trials in captivity. But this extraordinary truth has its own ordinary Salesian and missionary expression: the ability to look at the inevitable difficulties of each day with hearts filled with the joy of this final, brilliant Beatitude.

Accepting the Gospel's way every day, even though it gives birth to difficulties, especially when we educate young people; this is typical of the Salesian missionary.

J. Basañes

Fr Guillermo Basañes SDB, Councillor for the Missions

SALESIAN MISSIONARY DAY PROJECT

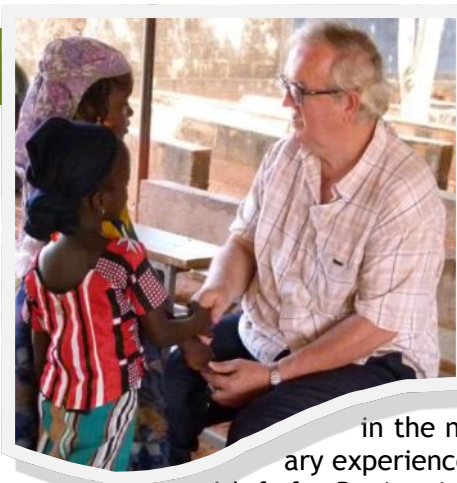
The project proposed for this year's Salesian Missionary Day is the construction of simple places of prayer in the Palabek refugee camp and other similar camps. These halls will serve as "places of prayer", but also for community meetings, meetings of groups and organizations of refugees that work together for their own well-being, and even as spaces where children may gather to play or to study. It is estimated that such a simple structure can be constructed with an amount between 5000 and 10,000 dollars.

The Salesians of Don Bosco in Vietnam decided to use this project as a tool to animate their communities and parishes with a warm missionary spirit. They encouraged everyone to thank God for all He has given them in life and to make small contributions to refugees who have even less than they do. They invited individuals and families to make small sacrifices and symbolically buy one or more bricks, a corrugated sheet for the roof, etc. Every Salesian community in the Province of Vietnam and every Salesian parish got involved. The total raised was 6000 dollars. This sum was handed over to the Superior of the Province in Uganda on 12 September 2019.

Vietnam is already highly regarded for the large number of Salesians who offer themselves as missionaries in various parts of the world (there are already over 100 Vietnamese missionaries in various countries). Now they have stolen a march on their brethren elsewhere with this significant donation of a "place of prayer" to the Palabek refugee camp in Uganda.

It is very encouraging to know that many other provinces are taking inspiration from Vietnam and are planning to "sell bricks" for chapels in refugee camps!





The joy of living and working together

I was born in Spain, at Barakaldo, an industrial city. When I was 13 years old, Fr Jesus Molero, a Salesian missionary in Korea, not only talked about his activities, but also campaigned in several parishes to find funds for the Salesian works in that country. I accompanied him to almost every one of his presentations. It was a missionary experience and an awakening.

After completing high school, I went to the Novitiate, where I wrote my first letter requesting to go to the missions. I was ordained in 1978 and the Africa project was launched. My then Provincial, Fr Salvador Bastarrica, came on a visit and, to my surprise told me, "Since you asked to go to the missions while in the novitiate, I suppose I can count on you to go now to Benin." And so my missionary experience started again.

I left for Benin with Don Jesus Ferrero, and we started the Salesian presence in that country on August 9, 1980, the day we arrived. On 20 August 2016, I took the plane to Europe because I needed a break. I thank God and my confreres for my thirty-six years of missionary life. And now, after completing a workshop, I wrote my second missionary request. To my surprise, the Rector Major welcomed it and blessed me. Now I am on my way to Mato Grosso, Brazil. The initial challenges in Benin were obvious. We had to study the language of the people. French was the official language, but not on the street nor at the liturgy. We needed to learn the culture and traditions, as well as the ways of social and family behaviour, to adapt to the climate and to confront new diseases. To be true Salesians in Benin, we had to respond to what they asked us for and to propose possible answers to the situation of the material, cultural and spiritual poverty faced by teenagers and young people.

We started our accompaniment, I think, with several constants. We listened, and so we were able to accept the orientations and opinions of everyone, whether religious or civil authorities, the people from the villages, the catechists, and the young people themselves, especially the animators. There never was a personal project of any one individual; everything was worked out in the community, and this was one of the constants right from the start of all our presence in Benin. We tried to maintain a climate of closeness and friendship with the other missionaries in the region and with the local diocesan clergy. All this was of the greatest importance to understand a reality that was so different from what we had experienced until then. The closeness of the people, especially children and adolescents, helped us make progress every day.

Difficulties? All the consequences of the political evolution in Benin and in all the countries around us. There were times when the level of poverty was such that it was hard to bear. Blessings? Undoubtedly, that God was with us while we were at his work. We started from scratch, and now we can see that the Salesian work in that country is well rooted. We comb our gray hair, but we see dozens of young Salesians, already well formed, doing a great job among young people, faithful to the charism of Don Bosco, seeing each work as their own.

My best moments in Benin were those lived in the Salesian family with my confreres. In the first few years we were without electricity, phone, or running water. I always supported what is so traditional in Africa ... gather around the fire and talk, listen and laugh together ... and then, those unforgettable moments with the young confreres - times of joy, sharing, planning, living for and with young people.

It is important to have time for the confreres in the community, to welcome them and welcome them and welcome them, to love them. Each of us has our own riches and limits that we ought to be willing to share. Plan and act with a sense of community. What I do is because the community entrusted it to me. And, above all, to be able to present together to God and to his Mother, Our Mother, all what we are, what we live and what we want to be.

Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity

Fr. Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Postulator General for the Causes of Saints



Blessed Magdalene Morano (1847-1908) Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, the 15th anniversary of whose Beatification falls on November 5. Posted in Sicily in 1881, she launched a fruitful educational work among the girls and young women of the poorer classes. Constantly casting "a glance at the earth and ten at Heaven", she opened schools, oratories, boarding houses and workshops in every part of the island. Appointed Provincial Superior, she also took on the responsibility for the formation of numerous new vocations. One of her reflections was: "Holiness is not bought in a few days; just want it, just ask God for it all the time, just start seeking it immediately ... In the world, women work hard to please their earthly groom; we religious, brides of the Lord, we must enter the race to love him far more, not in words but in deeds ... Jesus let me die when I am a saint."

For the Salesian presence in the MIDDLE



Salesian Missionary Intention

That the Lord may bless the new missionary frontiers in the Middle East

The Salesian presence in the Middle East is very varied and rich. The Province lives in the midst of different cultural, religious, social and political challenges, as nowhere else in the Salesian world. Today, this calls for new missionary initiatives. We pray that the Lord may shed light on our way forward, and grant the personnel, the means, and the enthusiasm for the mission.

