THE MESSAGE OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

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The true Resurrection

The one that touches peoples’ lives and transforms them

My friends, readers of the *Salesian Bulletin*, I greet you again with all cordiality by means of this Salesian magazine founded by Don Bosco himself. It was his intention to use this bulletin to convey to the laity the reality of his young Salesian Congregation, which sought to be faithful to God as it was growing little by little. As we read in the 1877 issue, it "is published to give a report of things done or to be done according to the purpose of the Salesian mission, which is the care of souls and the good of civil society."

I hope that today’s *Salesian Bulletin* also helps you feel that Don Bosco’s Salesian Family, now 162 years away from the beginning of the Salesian Congregation, humbly continues to make its contribution so that this world is more humane, more dignified, and fuller of authentic life, and more illumined by the true light that comes from God alone.

**«The Risen Christ»**

For the cover of this month's Italian edition, we have chosen to use the painting of the Risen Christ that is found in the Pinardi Chapel. That most humble chapel wherein the Salesian charism was raised up by the Holy Spirit and where it took root is today a tiny, but precious and serene space for Eucharistic Adoration. It reminds us that the Resurrection of the Lord has transformed and continues to transform everything. It is up to us, through the use of our freedom, to make God’s dream for humanity a reality.

Curiosity led me to search the internet for what is said about the word “Resurrection.” Certainly, I found references to the Christian Faith, but there was also quite a mixed bag of items. I took time to watch the films that bore this title. Some had nothing to do with our Faith. Take the movie *Mechanic: Resurrection*, for example. This film tells a story of violence and revenge—both of which are diametrically opposed to the central Mystery of our Faith.

You may wonder why I make reference to this. I do so simply because I want to emphasize that we live in a world where we find everything: faith and condemnation of faith; freedom and slavery; advancement of children’s rights and forced labor of minors; respect for the dignity of women and exploitation of women; social justice and injustice and abuse; solidarity and distribution of food; and lack of everything necessary to live with dignity. I could go on and on in this vein. It seems that our world is a marketplace where we can find everything imaginable. But not everything is good and not everything is good for us.

**«I cannot permit myself to live without hope»**

The Easter Season that we celebrate and the great event of the Lord's Paschal Mystery, of His Death and Resurrection speak to us of the fullness of Life, of Another Life. It speaks to us of Hope and of humanity as we make our way through life; it speaks to us of the present and the future in God, and it speaks to us of simple realities where the presence of God who is Love is experienced every day.

While I am writing these lines, the Holy Father is traveling to Iraq, on a pastoral journey that seeks to announce peace, reconciliation, and justice. It is his deep desire as a man of Faith and one who lives in God that the wounds can be healed and the gorges that have opened thanks to human misdeeds can be closed and give way to new humane encounters among peoples.

Is this too much to ask? Is it but a “pie in the sky” notion?

I do not believe it is. I believe that this is possible because, as I have stated a number of times, every day miracles happen that change peoples’ hearts and lives because many have believed, have trusted, and have extended a hand to meet others’ needs.

The Risen Christ in the Pinardi Chapel in Valdocco reminds us of what it means to be guided by God and to live our Faith, just as Don Bosco did, with our feet firmly planted on the ground and sensitive to the cries of those nearby.

I am one of those who, perhaps like many of you, want to continue to have hope, a deep hope that is nourished by that strength that comes from God. Do you know why? Because I cannot allow myself to live without hope, for without it, I would not know how to survive because living without Hope would no longer be having “life to the full.”

I wish you a beautiful Easter, this precious time of our lives, filled with God's presence.