

## SUMMARY

The text presents a renewed vision on the Salesian Missions with a threefold purpose: *motivate* the confreres to respond to the missionary invitation of the Rector Major, *improve* the processes of discernment, formation and integration and *harmonise* operational guidelines that are still relevant.

There are five pivotal points to this text:

1. *A Renewed Vision*: We collaborate with the Church's mission, especially by evangelising the young. Our founder passed on us and to the entire Salesian Family the missionary spirit, the heart of pastoral charity, as an essential feature of his charism. Thus, the missions interest all Salesians in different ways. Some Salesians feel called to offer themselves with total availability to be sent *ad exteros, ad gentes, ad vitam*. The missionary, above all, receives, learns, keeps alive his ardour for holiness through the 'grace of unity'. He integrates within the local church and in the life and educative and pastoral plan of the Province. Today 'the missions' cannot be understood merely in geographical terms like in the past (go to 'mission lands'), but are also in sociological, cultural terms and even in terms of our presence in the digital continent. All Provinces send and receive missionaries. It is the missionary impetus that invigorates faith, gives new vocational enthusiasm and revitalises the charismatic identity of the confreres both in the sending and receiving Provinces.

2. *Missionary Discernment*: All those in the different phases of initial formation are encouraged to keep the missionary spirit alive as an essential element of our charism. The post-novitiate is the most suitable phase of formation for serious missionary discernment. Those who show interest in becoming missionaries are accompanied through a gradual and progressive process of discernment with the help of the spiritual guide, the Rector and the formation team. There is no age limit for leaving as a missionary but inculturation and language learning are easier at a young age.

3. *The Selection and Sending of Missionaries*: After undergoing a careful process of discernment (spiritual guide, Rector, Provincial) the confrere presents his missionary availability directly to the Rector Major; the Councillor for the Missions dialogues with the candidate and the candidate's Provincial; Having received the favourable opinion of the Provincial and his Council, the Councillor for the Missions dialogues with the Rector Major and the General Council for the missionary candidate's destination; The candidate participates in the five-week Orientation Course in preparation to receive the missionary cross in Rome-Turin. After the missionary send-off, he returns to his Province of origin where he prepares his documents and waits for his visa. In the meantime, he begins his study of the language of his destination, according to local possibilities.

4. *Requesting Missionaries*: To receive missionaries in the Province, the Provincial, with the consent of his Council, presents a concrete missionary project to the Rector Major who will evaluate it with his Council. The approval of the project will be the condition for sending missionaries to that Province. Once approved, the Provincial presents to the Councillor for Missions the *Reception and Integration Plan* for new missionaries where a specific confrere is identified to accompany the new arrivals and a formal language course of at least six months, or more, is assured. If a missionary, for serious reasons, returns to his Province of origin, the Rector Major's consent is needed.

5. *Missionary Experience*: The possibility to work temporarily in another Province in order to respond to a specific or urgent need is a positive experience. For this *missionary experience*, an agreement is signed between two Provincials for three or five years. It may be renewed but not longer than a total period of ten years. A copy is sent to the Councillor for the Missions, the Regional Councillor and the Secretary General. The missionary experience may be an opportunity for some confreres to discern and mature their missionary vocation. In this case, the confrere concerned will present his total availability to the Rector Major for the missionary projects of the Congregation.

## FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- *How can we help our Province move from the old to the new paradigm of missions?*
- *How can the missionary commitment of our Province invigorate faith, give new vocational enthusiasm and revitalise the charismatic identity of our confreres?*