

**CHURCH - COMMUNION
AND
MUTUAL MISSIONARY
RELATIONSHIP**

**FIRST MEETING OF THE
AFRICA - MADAGASCAR REGION
ADDIS ABABA, 5-10 MAY 1997**

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CHURCH - COMMUNION
AND
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CHURCH - COMMUNION and MUTUAL MISSIONARY RELATIONSHIP

INTRODUCTION

Dear Superiors and Delegates of the African Region,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this pan-African meeting on salesian missionary animation. I hope you are able to feel yourselves in a family atmosphere and able to take an active part in the understanding and programming of this indispensable dimension of the salesian identity.

This meeting at Addis Ababa is the first to be realized by the African Region, only recently erected by the GC24, for the purpose of bringing about a progressive consolidation of the salesian work in this continent. It is certainly symptomatic that the theme relates specifically to missionary work and mentality. I do not think this is a matter only of chronological priority, but rather the choice of a field which tends to emphasize the particular missionary aspect of the continent.

In the past many meetings of various kinds took place in Africa and Madagascar to deal with specific points and to accommodate the different language areas. These meetings were essentially a response to urgent items concerning the foundation, expansion and structural organization of Project Africa.

In the present six-year period recently begun (1996-2002), the need has been felt to hold meetings with more specific objectives, in line with the various essential dimensions of a region which is authentically salesian in all its aspects. This is the fundamental reason which has prompted the preparation, convoking and realization of this seminar.

The theme of missionary animation has never previously been dealt with as a salesian and ecclesial dimension of local communities and of communities at the level of Delegation, Circumscription with special statute, and Province.

In a certain sense there was an implicit or explicit belief that missionary animation was concerned almost exclusively with the Provinces and old Christian Churches and their missionary contribution to the young Churches. This is therefore a suitable occasion for going more deeply into the theological and pastoral significance of missionary animation in the light of the very nature of the Church and of its mission in history.

1. Theological foundation

I think it essential to indicate some theological and pastoral considerations about the reality of missionary animation. The relevant literature is plentiful and variegated, and I shall limit myself to some essential elements.

1.1 - Theological and pastoral significance of missionary animation.

- ❑ The term "*animation*" emphasizes in particular the motivation, deepening of perspectives, climate of spirituality and aspects of organization of a specific reality.
- ❑ *Animation* also means bringing to light from a pedagogical standpoint whatever seems hidden or latent, and helping towards the realization of the goal proposed.
- ❑ *Animation* is also the explicit purpose of attaining the intended objective, in a shared organic and responsible manner.

- The term "*missionary animation*" in Christian theology refers directly to the growth of the Church's mission: it gives particular priority to the first evangelization, the implanting of the Church, and the various contents and means of missionary cooperation.

If the Church is missionary of its very nature, it fosters and promotes missionary animation to the extent of making it the "soul" of its own expansion. Briefly this means that missionary animation as an ecclesial reality tends to manifest itself as:

- an overall dimension of the whole of Christian reality which makes of the mission the reason for its existence;
- a quite special and urgent dimension of the Catholic Church which, because it is "catholic" (universal in space and time), has to make itself present throughout the world, in every culture and in every reality open to salvation;
- a strictly missionary fact which aims at involving the sending Churches and the receiving Churches in an unbreakable reciprocal relationship;
- an attitude of missionary spirituality which tends to emphasize the radical nature of self-giving for the extension of the Kingdom of God;
- a fact of pastoral planning which tends to pervade all the other dimensions of the Church to enrich them with a new missionary freshness.

Missionary animation in the universal Church of the present day comes up against new perspectives and difficulties never before experienced. Favourable perspectives are due especially to the fact that today the Church feels itself to be universal, catholic, and engaged in an irreversible process of globalization. The mass media have eliminated distances and rendered simultaneously present geographical areas, cultures, social and ecclesial relationships, and the web of initiatives. The missiological and missionary teaching of Vatican II (LG, AG, UR) and the magisterium which has followed

(EN, RM, DP) represent a sure, systematic and updated platform for an intelligent action of missionary animation in areas of first evangelization and of intercultural, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue.

Naturally there is no lack of difficulties, synthesized and centered especially around religious relativism: how are we to give animation to the renewed proclamation of the Good News of Jesus of Nazareth if the prevailing context of post-modern society is one of religious relativism, of atomization of beliefs, and of the thirst for an immediate consumerism.

In the Church in Africa and in Madagascar missionary animation has to face the challenge of a turnabout: to take up an active task of missionary thrust which will foster missionary generosity towards the Churches of other continents and towards the African Churches which still have areas of first evangelization.

The turnabout is truly epoch-making because in the past the African Churches considered themselves almost exclusively as receivers and beneficiaries of the Churches of ancient Christianity. Today, after the Synod, the African Churches must take on an active role of missionary involvement.

The salesian missionary reality is very similar to the ecclesial parallel: the launching and foundation of Project Africa has represented one of the finest pages in the story of the missionary expansion of the Salesian Congregation. Almost all the Provinces of the world (and not only those of Europe) have been involved in the missionary thrust. Missionary animation in the 'sending' Provinces has been the basis of missionary cooperation of a spiritual and material kind and in personnel.

This missionary influx has certainly benefited the embryonic salesian reality of Africa and Madagascar, and has ensured and consolidated the subsequent growth. And in turn Africa has

certainly brought to the Provinces of origin a new missionary enthusiasm and a renewed freshness of salesian spirit. Today is emerging the urgent challenge of taking up the reality of missionary animation as a reciprocal attitude within the Church and within the different salesian circumscriptions of Africa in relationship to the ecclesial and salesian reality which is intercontinental and universal.

1.2 - The Church at the service of the Kingdom of God

We have already pointed out that the reality of missionary animation takes its rise from the essentially missionary nature of the Church. We cannot fail therefore to give a brief explanation of the ecclesiological foundation of missionary animation. We know that there are many images of the Church which seek to describe its mysterious reality. None of them is exhaustive but all of them concentrate on some particular aspect of the mystery.

Here I want to emphasize some of these images which are particularly linked with the Church's missionary nature. The Church at the service of the Kingdom of God and the Church as communion, the Body of Christ and the Family of God.

In his message, in his witness and in his works, Jesus of Nazareth represents the Kingdom of God already present. He proclaims it as:

- a Kingdom of total conversion to God who creates a new person, a new order and a new world (*cf. Mk 1,15; Mt 5,3-12*);
- a Kingdom which is the fulfilment of the hopes and the utopia of humanity (*cf. Mt 11,4-5*);
- a Kingdom manifested in forgiveness and in love towards all, and especially the poor, sinners and those at a greatest distance (*cf. Lk 15*).

Summing up, Jesus of Nazareth, already the presence and realization of the Kingdom of God (*cf. Lk 4,14-21*), points to the God's Kingdom as the plenitude of love and as an intimate relationship with the Father (*cf. 1 Jn 4,8; Lk 11,2*).

Jesus of Nazareth, as the emissary of the Father and as the Good Shepherd, is constantly at the service of the proclamation and growth of the Kingdom of God. His whole life was a witness of the Kingdom. The Church as the sacrament of the saving presence of Jesus Christ (*LG 1*) is a community essentially at the service of God's Kingdom (*LG 5; RM 17*); it is not the Kingdom of God, but as its germ, sign and instrument it proclaims and builds the Kingdom of God in history

The tendency towards the eschatological fullness of the Kingdom maintains the Church in a constant missionary dynamism, and the thrust to achieve total harmony between humanity and God, between the different races and human cultures, and between humanity and the cosmos (*cf. RM 17*).

Missionary animation therefore emphasizes the absolute priority of the mission of Jesus of Nazareth, lived in the Church and by it transmitted to the different generations of the human family in the present phase of history.

1.3 - Church as communion, Body of Christ and Family of God.

Other ecclesial images which indicate the reciprocal missionary relationship are: *the Church as communion*, the Church as *the Body of Christ*, and the Church as *the Family of God*.

The Church is substantially the sacrament of the love of the Trinity for humanity. In it **the communal reality** is manifested in the communion of the Word, of the sacraments, and of service at local level (Basic Ecclesial Communities), parish level (BEC network), diocesan level (communion of parish communities), and

finally at universal level (in communion with Peter's Successor and all the other Churches of the world). The ecclesial reality is essentially a reality of communion which demands of its nature an interchange of gifts, of ministries and of services.

The image of a Church of communion and in communion means that the Church in Africa and Madagascar is aware that it is sharing its own prophetic, priestly and regal reality in communion with the other African Churches and with the sister Churches throughout the world: it is not alien to any other Church nor are the others alien to it, because all of them are vertically united in Christ, and horizontally interdependent in ecclesial communion.

The Church as the Body of Christ is a historical and mystical reality: in it all the members are baptized in a single Spirit and form one body (*cf. 1 Cor 12-13*); they are united to Christ, the Head of the Body, and visibly and mystically united among themselves (*cf. Rom 12,3-5*).

The Church as the *Body of Christ* strongly emphasizes the aspect of reciprocal permeability and enrichment; it foments an authentic participation in Salvation in Christ as a personal and communal experience.

During the African Synod, the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar discussed and examined more deeply the communal and collegial reality of the Church at both continental and world level. In the light of certain aspects of African anthropology, they stressed the understanding of the Church as **the Family of God**: an image which "*emphasizes care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust*" (EiA 63).

The Bishops also declared that this image of the Church as the Family of God would foster:

- ❑ new pastoral efforts aimed at the achievement of reconciliation and communion between different ethnic groups and cultures;
- ❑ a new thrust towards solidarity and the sharing of personnel and resources between the particular Churches (*cf. EIA 63*).

These three images of the Church clearly underline the vertical mystical union with Christ and the dynamic ecclesial union within every particular Church and in relationship with the other sister Churches. Above all they support the reciprocal ecclesial and missionary relationship as a reality stemming from and demanded by the very essence of the Church in mission which proclaims the Good News of Salvation and communion.

2. Mutual missionary relationship

2.1 - Missionary animation

In the light of the above ecclesiological reflections it is evident that mutual missionary relationship, understood as an interchange of gifts, ministries and services, is of concern to the whole of ecclesial reality and all ecclesial communities. In this reciprocal dynamism no Church can feel itself excluded or a simple receiver. All of them, in virtue of the very fact of being Churches, are involved in missionary cooperation.

Missionary animation should give priority to the following areas:

- the missionary area "ad gentes": missionary animation gives special attention to the reality of first evangelization, both within the continent itself and to the Churches of other continents; it is the missionary area par excellence;
- the missionary area of inculturation: missionary animation highlights the urgency of promoting an authentic transformation

from cultural values to Christian values, and of fostering in its turn the radical insertion of the Gospel in the different African cultures. Missionary animation not only fosters missionary inculturation but promotes the choice and long-term duration, and especially the missionary choice *ad vitam*, as ways for the embodiment and global assumption of values;

- the area of the organization of missionary animation: missionary animation provides for the creation of missionary structures at local, diocesan and interdiocesan level, at the service of the growth of ecclesial and congregational missionary activity. It also explicitly promotes pastoral work for missionary vocations, both at the level of religious and priestly vocations and at the level of lay volunteers.

2.2 - Missionary cooperation

In the light of RM (*nn.77-78*) missionary animation takes care of the different levels of missionary cooperation as a daily practical expression of ecclesial mutual missionary mentality and practice.

□ **Spiritual missionary cooperation**

Through this, emphasis is laid on the fact that the fertility of the message depends substantially on God's grace, and the need is confirmed of mutual prayer as an attitude of contemplation and dependence on God. The interchange of prayers, sacrifices and sufferings bears witness in fact to a deep accompaniment of the life of the missionaries themselves.

In the different Churches scattered throughout the continent this awareness of spiritual interchange becomes greater every day: religious communities (and especially those of a contemplative nature), basic communities, missionary catechists, bishops and priests, all dedicate particular time and space in their prayers to

missionary intentions for the extension of the Kingdom in the continent of Africa and in the world. In this way an ever deeper bond is forged between the young Churches and those of ancient foundation.

❑ **Cooperation at the level of personnel**

It is a positive fact that in Africa and Madagascar strictly missionary Congregations of both men and women have arisen and continue to be formed. This is a reality which is an evident sign of the progressive maturing of African Christianity.

Mutual missionary cooperation in personnel is manifested as an interchange of gifts between:

- missionaries coming from other continents for the benefit of Africa, especially to help in the field of formation;
- missionaries of African origin sent to other nations in the same continent (*Africa for Africa*), and to Churches of other continents;
- exchange of lay missionaries coming especially from the ancient Churches towards Africa;
- new African missionary vocations belonging to international missionary institutes, charismatically available for sending "*ad gentes*" both within and outside the continent.

The reality of missionary cooperation at the level of personnel is gaining in rapidity and manifesting new features.

❑ **Financial cooperation**

This is an integral part of missionary cooperation between Churches, and the practical expression of the charity of a Church which is the Family of God.

Economic missionary cooperation is still substantially unidirectional, given the tragically precarious nature of the financial

situation of the African continent and consequently of the African Churches.

The Bishops themselves recognised this in their interventions in the African Synod, and suggested that future external help should be directed especially to the creation of sources of local self-financing.

We cannot fail to note however that the Churches of Africa and Madagascar are already embarking on courageous initiatives in the direction of economic missionary cooperation between the Churches of a single nation and between Churches of different nations: they are initiatives which are still partial and tentative, but none the less significant on that account. A progressive change of mentality is evident and a new approach to mutual missionary aid.

And so the African Church too is beginning to discover the truth strongly emphasized by RM: "Generosity in giving must always be enlightened and inspired by faith: then we will truly be more blessed in giving than in receiving" (*RM 81*).

Conclusion

Dear confreres, the preceding theological and ecclesial reflections on missionary animation for Africa and Madagascar suggest to us new attitudes in this phase of consolidation of the different salesian foundations in the continent. I indicate some of them below, and I invite you to make them your own:

- an attitude of openness and sincere collaboration with those in charge and the respective diocesan and national committees of the Pontifical Missionary Works for an organic ecclesial missionary animation;
- an attitude of sharing of spirit and missionary animation with missionary Institutes working in the same area for an enriching interchange of missionary charisms;

- an attitude of mutual integration with the Provincial Delegate and the provincial committee for pastoral work for the young and for vocations;
- an attitude of generous interchange of personnel between Provinces, Delegations and Communities at an informal level of coordination, especially in the sector of initial formation;
- an attitude of availability (on the part of both missionaries and young African Salesians) for work in different countries included in the terrain of the new circumscriptions, which in the present phase must necessarily be international in composition;
- an attitude of sincere union with the mother provinces of origin, manifested through the exchange of news and visits by superiors and confreres;
- an attitude of welcome and accompaniment for lay volunteers coming from other countries;
- an attitude of generous financial cooperation (the widow's mite) towards missionary projects proposed by the Missions Department for the missionary animation for the entire Congregation;
- an attitude of intense exchange of spiritual gifts (experiences of faith, catechumenate and prayer), both with provinces of origin and with other salesian foundations in Africa.

"Missionary activity in fact renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. *Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!* It is in commitment to the Church's universal mission that the new evangelization of Christian peoples will find inspiration and support" (*RM 2*).

Fr. Luciano ODORICO

Addis Ababa, 5 May 1997

GROUP WORK

Reflexions starting from the points made in the Conclusion

ENGLISH SPEAKING GROUP

(AFE, AFM, ZMB, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone)

1. All provinces noticed that this work of contacting Dioceses in Africa and get to know their work on evangelization and missionary animation is still at the first stage. Some Dioceses do not have any missionary office for animation, neither do they have any Pontifical Missionary work. The idea of dialogue with the Diocese and local clergy is not welcomed by all Salesians - some prefer to stay in their own schools and institutions - more difficult the cooperation and understanding with the local clergy.
2. Cooperation and dialogue with other religious congregations is generally good and healthy, but little or nothing is done in the field of "missionary animation", even by strictly missionary congregations.
3. None of our provinces has a missionary Delegate for Missionary Animation.
4. We should foster a general attitude that considers each salesian sent to work in Africa, not for a particular project or province. Exchange of personnel should be encouraged especially in the fields of initial formation and technology, with benefit for both the province and the individual.

Some Salesians are opposing the idea of working in other Countries: they are too attached to the projects of their provinces. During initial formation - especially for those provinces that cover more than one Country - the African

salesians should accept the "missionary ideal" and be ready to work in any Country, within the Province. In some provinces (AFE) all salesian candidates are sent to different countries - within the Province - for Practical Training.

5. We also said that "international communities" should be open and very sensitive, especially when accepting into their fold new African candidates for Practical Training or pastoral work. Should we accept Salesians coming over to our provinces for a contracted period of a few years? It is somehow difficult to set up a Province with "contractors". Although a five-years-commitment is acceptable.
6. More stress and conviction should be placed on the fact that we belong to a new Province. And the newly established province in Africa should make efforts to take care of the members fully (not send them home in case of illness). Visits of superiors and friends of the old "mother province", should not raise feelings of "homesickness". A better attitude of welcoming missionaries should be fostered in Salesians and houses of our "mother provinces", when missionaries go for homeleave or visits.
7. To accept lay volunteers is positive: they need this experience of work in developing countries and we should help them in this; they can challenge our "routine" work with the young; they are closer to young people. However, the lay volunteers should be thoroughly prepared before they come over to the missions and the community hosting them should also be prepared (with structures, accommodation, and proper definite work for them) and ready to follow them up.
8. It is a good idea to participate in the "world solidarity fund" of the whole Congregation and make our little contribution. This requires sensitizing and creating awareness among the Salesians and the communities.

The Salesian Missionary Day could help our communities and people to get to know the salesian missionary work.

9. A mutual bond of prayer should join all our provinces working in Africa, especially in those Countries most at risk. There could also be a mutual exchange of some people for spiritual recollections (yearly retreats) and workshops for confreres in formation.

AOB. During the GC24 there was a suggestion for an "English Desk" to circulate news about the English speaking world (replacing the English speaking Region) What is the position about that proposal?

GROUPE FRANCOPHONE (*AFC, AFO, ATE, MDG, Rwanda*)

1. Nous sommes venus en Afrique pour fonder des présences salésiennes au milieu d'Eglises déjà organisées dans certains domaines.

D'autres religieux travaillent dans les structures d'animation du Diocèse. Parfois il n'y a pas assez de collaboration et nous sommes repliés sur nos oeuvres. Nous devrions être par exemple, plus présents dans la catéchèse du Diocèse.

Il nous arrive de nourrir des préjugés envers le clergé local. Mais nous sentons aussi des préjugés de leur part envers nous. Il nous faut beaucoup d'humilité, parce que parfois cela crée de la jalousie.

Nous manquons quelquefois de souplesse pour nous intégrer dans la structure locale. Pourtant, dans d'autres régions il existe une très bonne collaboration dans l'animation des structures diocésaines et cela depuis pas mal d'années.

En général, la pastorale diocésaine s'enrichit et intègre assez bien les mouvements d'animation paroissiale; cependant nous y constatons l'absence des autres secteurs de notre charisme: les écoles, les centres de jeunes, l'*oratorio*, les écoles de formation professionnelle ...

Là où cela existe, nous sommes attentifs aux dispositions nationales de l'épiscopat pour l'animation missionnaire. D'autre part, nous devons être plus attentifs aux dispositions diocésaines pour les écoles du réseau catholique. En général la pastorale des jeunes est confiée aux salésiens.

L'expérience actuelle de l'adoption différenciée de langage au sein des confédérations entre religieux et prêtres diocésains pour la préparation au Jubilé de l'an 2000, constitue pour nous un défi: celui de nous ouvrir davantage à une programmation organique, tout en gardant notre charisme.

Parfois l'animation missionnaire organique est quasiment inexistante. Faut-il alors la créer? Nous croyons qu'à la base de l'animation missionnaire il y a la formation à une attitude ecclésiale missionnaire. Au milieu d'ombres et lumières, nous ressentons ce besoin comme une sollicitation pressante à plus de créativité dans l'animation pastorale et missionnaire.

2. Le partage de l'esprit et de l'animation missionnaire avec les Instituts missionnaires qui travaillent dans le même territoire se fait surtout entre Congrégations ayant le même charisme missionnaire.
3. La figure du chargé de l'animation missionnaire n'est pas encore claire chez nous. Le problème des "délégués" rencontre aussi un problème structurel dans les juridictions comprenant 8 ou 9 pays. Il y a aussi un problème de terminologie. Certains l'appellent "délégué pour l'évangélisation".

Nous trouvons que cette proposition devrait tout d'abord trouver sa place dans une conscience et une mentalité missionnaires globales dans le PEPS de nos Provinces, parmi les chargés de la pastorale des jeunes et des vocations. Il faudrait que ceux qui travaillent dans les différents domaines de l'animation pastorale de la Province puissent se rencontrer et travailler ensemble.

Il est important de créer cette "conscience et mentalité missionnaires" dans toutes les délégations. Les chapitres provinciaux et les provinciaux et délégués peuvent y contribuer fortement.

4. Une attitude comporte des engagements. En ce qui concerne l'échange de personnel entre Provinces, Délégations et Communautés, elle se vit de façon positive surtout au niveau de nos jeunes confrères africains. Nous y insistons lors de la formation initiale: nous sommes envoyés en mission non seulement dans notre propre province mais dans toute la région ou le continent. Nous nous posons la question du statut "missionnaire" de nos confrères qui changent à l'intérieur d'une même juridiction, de fait, "internationale".

Il faut renforcer l'échange au niveau culturel et au niveau des professeurs destinés à la formation, en ayant le souci de susciter en eux des motivations de générosité missionnaire.

Quel est notre témoignage de missionnaires européens? On demande une ouverture aux autres mais nous ne sommes pas très disposés à changer, à partager, nous sommes trop attachés à nos origines.

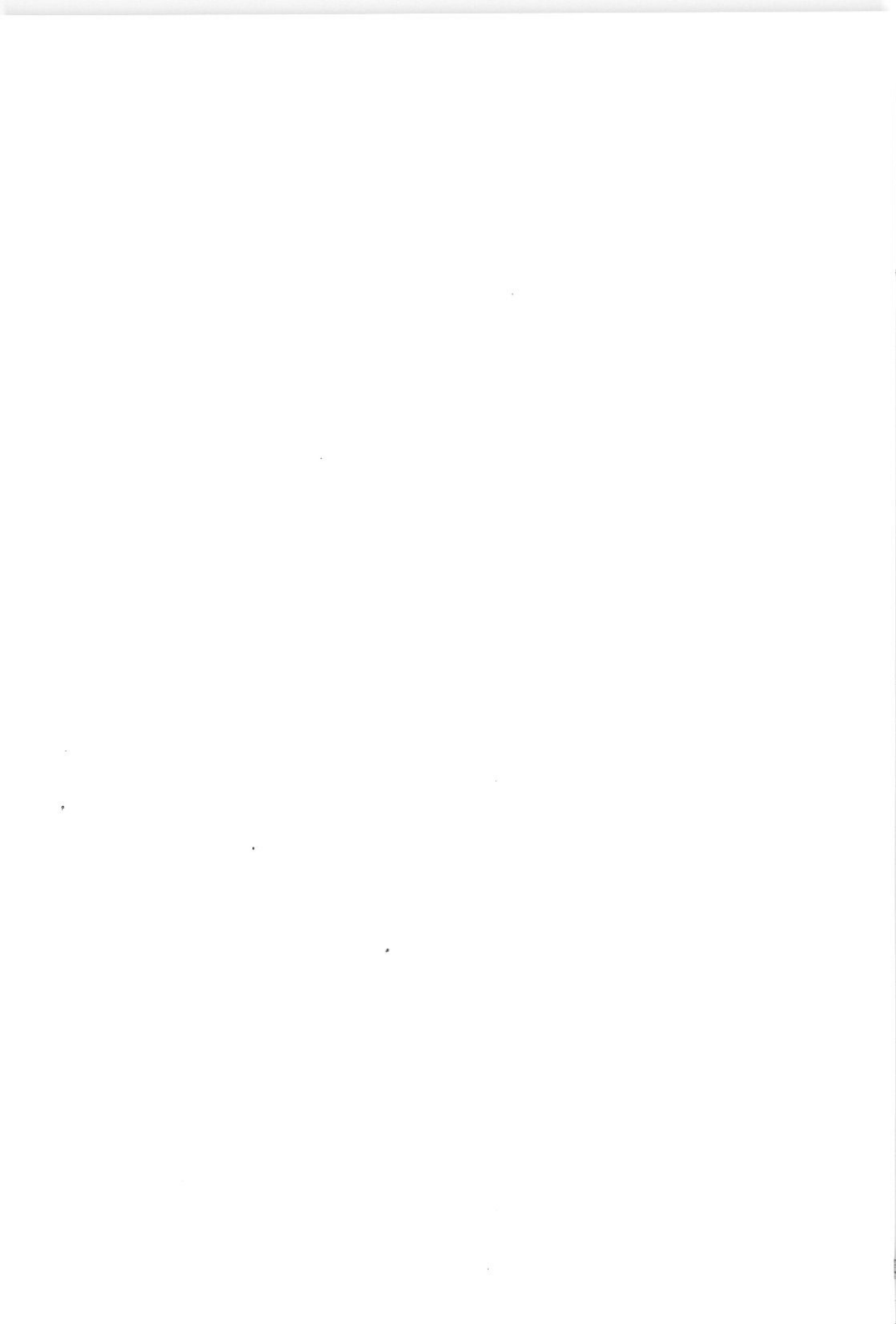
Nous pensons aussi qu'il faut nous poser le problème de la transition avec réalisme et souplesse.

5. La situation actuelle des Circonscriptions Internationales sollicite de la part de tous une conscience d'appartenance à la Province. Nous formons une seule et même Province, et tous nous devons être disponibles pour aller dans n'importe quel pays d'une même juridiction. C'est l'appartenance à la Province qui est importante.
6. L'union avec les Provinces-mères d'origine dépasse les visites réciproques. Il s'agit d'une réciprocité concrète basée sur les conventions établies et sur l'aide spirituelle réciproque. Quand nous parlons d'union sincère nous pensons que le sens d'appartenance à la nouvelle Province doit être clair. Il n'est pas bon d'entretenir dans son coeur une double appartenance et que le langage parfois trahit: "si ça ne va pas, je rentre en Europe", "chez nous en Italie, ou en France, etc ...". Ces façons de s'exprimer ne montrent pas un vrai esprit missionnaire.
7. L'accompagnement des volontaires missionnaires laïcs nous demande de bien définir et approfondir le sens du "volontariat laïc". Il faut que les volontaires soient convenablement préparés à la tâche missionnaire, avant et pendant leur expérience sur le terrain. Nous devons les accompagner du point de vue spirituel et missionnaire.

Nous nous demandons si les volontaires laïcs doivent être considérés dans le sens du CG24, c'est-à-dire, des non chrétiens aussi.

8. La coopération missionnaire se traduit déjà dans des gestes très concrets, par exemple lors de la campagne de solidarité pour le Rwanda. Nous pourrions envisager aussi une année de solidarité avec une présence missionnaire quelconque sur proposition et au niveau de la Région Afrique.

L'échange de dons spirituels s'exprime par une prière systématique des confrères pour la mission, mais aussi en soignant les dates du 11 de chaque mois, rappelant la première expédition missionnaire (*11 novembre 1875*) et en priant, spécialement à l'occasion des célébrations et veillées missionnaires, pour tous ceux qui travaillent plus directement dans la mission "ad gentes".



This working Document was presented for study to the Delegates present at the meeting.

The observations and suggestions offered will be taken into consideration in the final Document

THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE

FOR

MISSIONARY ANIMATION

VADEMECUM

WORKING PAPER

Salesian Missions Department

THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION ❖ VADEMECUM

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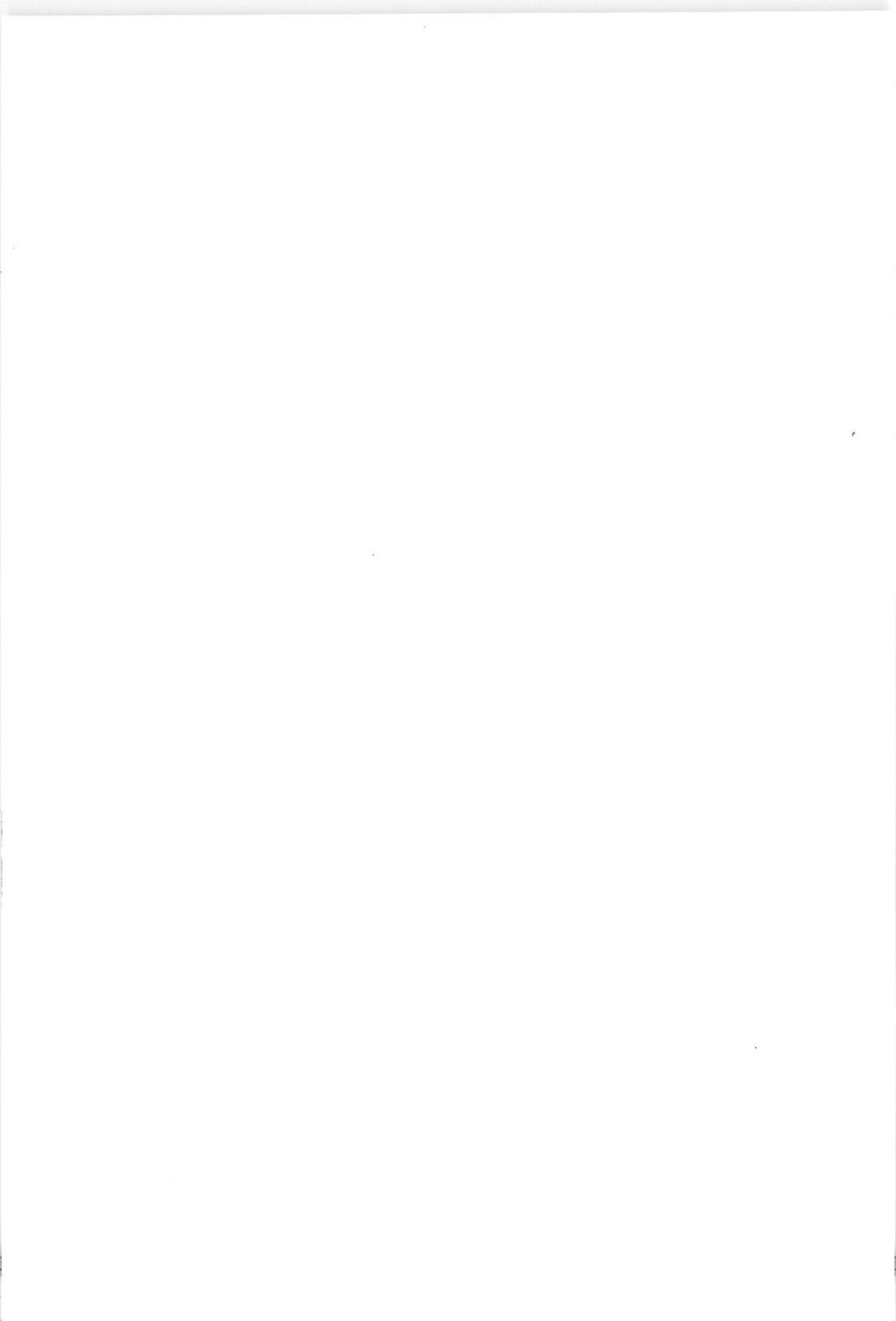
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Abbreviations

- ACG = Atti del Consiglio Generale
AM = Animazione Missionaria
AMS = La propuesta pastoral de la Animación Misionera Salesiana. Madrid, 1991.
CGS = Capitolo Generale Speciale
CG19 = Capitolo Generale 19
Cost = Costituzioni della Società di San Francesco di Sales
DIAM = Delegato Ispettoriale di Animazione Missionaria
DOMISAL = Giornata Missionaria Salesiana Mondiale
EDM = Educare alla Dimensione Missionaria
PGS = Pastorale Giovanile Salesiana
R = Regolamenti della Società di San Francesco di Sales
RM = GIOVANNI PAOLO II, "Redemptoris Missio", 1990.



THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION ❖ VADEMECUM

Introduction

- 1 This document has its origin mainly in the experience of the animation of provinces in recent years, and particularly in missionary animation.

In the context of an organic vision of salesian pastoral activity, this document is entrusted to Provincials, Delegates for Youth Pastoral Work, and the animating nuclei of Educative and Pastoral Communities.

The figure of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation (DIAM) is not a new one of the present day: Missionary Animation (AM) is actively present in many provinces. and various meetings have taken place for Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation at continental level¹.

- 2 The purpose of this *Vademecum* is to offer to the DIAM suggestions concerning his situation and tasks, and the structures of AM in the context of the pastoral animation of the province.

So far resources for the DIAM have been less than plentiful. The Document "Education to the Missionary Dimension"², should be considered the main handbook of the DIAM. It is clear that the role of the Delegate

- is a necessary element in the overall pastoral animation of the province,
- the delegate must therefore be recognized and supported in his role,
- the delegate needs to have a certain length of time in office if the missionary animation of the Province is to be effective.

I - ORIGIN OF THE FIGURE OF THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION - <i>Historical outline</i>

3 The figure of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation seems to have acquired definition gradually through:

- the progressive awareness of the missionary dimension of our Charism,
- the development of new missionary frontiers in recent years,
- the renewal in religious life which followed the Council,
- the development in ecclesiology brought about by Vat. II.

1. The GC19 (1965)

4 The CG19 asked that every house and province should promote activity for collecting offerings for the Missions, uniting the efforts of the whole Congregation, especially on the occasion of the "*Salesian Missionary Day*".

The GC19 also thought it necessary to lay down that Mission Offices be set up in various countries, and that there be established a "*Central Missionary Office* under the direct responsibility of the Superior of the Missions" for the "organization, coordination and promotion of the missionary activities"³.

2. The SGC (1971)

5 The SCG (1971) perceived that it was urgent to stir up a new missionary awareness among the confreres beginning with initial formation, and to facilitate the technical training of lay volunteers to be sent to mission territories.

This was the first explicit invitation to others to share in the missionary effort of the Salesians.

The same SGC (1971) created the *Councillor for the Missions*" to encourage, coordinate and promote salesian work at all levels⁴.

- 6 In the years immediately following the SGC a change of mentality was noted through the growing awareness of the *common missionary vocation of the provincial community*: the latter was no longer satisfied with allowing its confreres to leave for the missions, but began to send them on its own initiative. The link which came into existence between the missionary and his home province helped to increase missionary awareness among the confreres and young people.

3. The new Constitutions and Regulations of the Congregation (1972)

- 7 The new Constitutions and Regulations (1972) called on the Provincial and his Council to *establish norms for the animation and coordination of missionary activity*⁵ The setting up of Mission Offices at world and provincial level, and the encouragement of 'twinning' seemed the best way to attain the desired objective.

This missionary thrust soon showed itself to be an efficacious means for the renewal of the Congregation⁶.

4. The celebration of the Centenary of the Salesian Missions (1975)

- 8 This celebration was an invitation to communities to realize, at their different levels, the various initiatives suggested by the Centre, and to involve the Salesian Family in them in a practical manner (AGC 277):

- there was *the 1st Meeting of the Italian Provincial Delegates* for the study of Missionary Animation (*Rome - San Tarcisio, 16 November 1975*). In his address to them the Rector Major, Fr. Luigi Ricceri, indicated some lines of action to be prepared in the provinces for the centenary of the missions.
- there was also a meeting of 34 young Cooperators and 6 Salesians of the movement "Terra Nuova" to study *how to sensitize the people of their own territory to the missionary vocation*.

5. The GC21 (1978)

- 9 To attain these objectives, **the GC21 (1978)** emphasized the importance of missionary animation at the level of local and provincial communities to encourage a greater missionary awareness. Various kinds of missionary service were devised, e.g. missionary centres and offices, and the opportunity for extending the salesian missionary movement to the laity.

In this way the idea of "**Animation**" became a 'key word' throughout the Congregation in initiatives of various kinds.

The period from 1978 to 1987 saw a great increase in salesian missionary literature, especially through the efforts of the recently founded Salesian Historical Institute, and in a renewed attention to the missions, particularly with the remarkable development of *Project Africa*.

6. The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation

- 6.1 - The purpose of a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation.
- 10 Speaking of *Project Africa*, Fr. E. Viganò declared: "*I call on all confreres, but especially Provincials and Provincial*

*Delegates, to be intelligent and constant animators of the various groups of the Salesian Family in this new missionary venture*⁷.

It was the Councillor for the Missions, Fr. Luc VAN LOOY, who first proposed the creation of a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation: *"To coordinate the different sectors of the province in what concerns missionary activity, and to sensitize adequately the confreres and young people in the same field, the Provincial chooses an able and suitable confrere as **provincial delegate**"*⁸

The idea of the Delegate already existed in the Provinces, especially in connection with Project Africa. Progressively the need to have someone in charge of the missions at provincial level developed from the organizational and logistic level to the wider one of Education to the Missionary Dimension.

6.2 - The Provincials Manual

- 11 The first official reference is found in the Provincials Manual, which states: *"Every provincial has **the task of promoting the missionary spirit and commitment**"*⁹ Indeed, he has the obligation with his Council to *"lay down norms for the animation and coordination of missionary activity"*¹⁰.

The role of the Missionary Animator is to:

- Co-ordinate his work with the committee for youth pastoral work,
- be a member of the provincial committees for youth pastoral work and for formation,
- collaborate with the other groups of the Salesian Family.

6.3 - A powerful impetus to AM and to the figure of the DIAM has been given in recent years by:

- 12 The Encyclical "Redemptoris Missio"¹¹.
- The various contributions to its deeper analysis, and in particular the letter of Fr. E. VIGANO , "The Pope's Appeal for the Missions"¹².
- The meetings of the DIAM over the last twelve years, both at world (*Rome 1987*) and Continental levels (*Madrid 1989; Lima 1990; Brussels 1991; Bangalore 1992; Rome 1994; Belo Horizonte 1995*).
- La propuesta pastoral de la Animación Misionera Salesiana. This is a joint edition of the Salesian Iberian Conference and of the Spanish FMA Provinces, 1991. *The Councillor General for the Salesian Missions, Fr. L Odorico, in presenting this document gave it his approval and encouraged its wider distribution*".

II - SALESIAN MISSIONARY ANIMATION

1. Animation

- 13 ☩ To "animate" means to move in the context of a deep energy and spiritual activity, which is the source of life and harmony, of growth and coherence, among all the elements in a living organism.
- ☩ Animation does not imply any imposition from outside, but rather the motivation, persuasion, stimulation, encouragement and promotion of interactive attitudes and relationships. It implies the ability to work with others and to be able to receive from them, without losing sight of one's own role as an animator.
- ☩ In the context of a religious community, animation applies to the orientation of initiatives able to foster attitudes, behaviour and vitality. In this case it calls for mature and constant participation among the members in respect of the roles of individuals. **All true animation inevitably gives rise to responsibility and involvement.**
- ☩ "Animation" is rather an art to be learned, a gift of God like prayer and fellowship. The animator knows that his interior strength comes from the Spirit, who is the source from which he continually draws his energy. Creativity, organizational ability, planning, are all of them important but they cannot make up for a deep spirituality, of which indeed they all have need.
- ☩ Both the Church's magisterium¹³ and salesian praxis¹⁴ emphasize this dimension, which our charism enriches with pastoral charity and the preferential option for the poor¹⁵.

2. Missionary Animation in its theological dimension ¹⁶

- 14 "Animation" is a term applicable essentially to all disciplines. The adjective "missionary" distinguishes it from other kinds of animation, e.g. cultural, recreative, social, etc.

There are three key elements involved in missionary animation.

2.1 - The Christological Foundation

- 15 Christ is the definitive Revelation of the Father's plan of salvation. He is the divine reality become human history.

Christ not only reveals the intimate divine life of the Trinity but communicates it to us in and through himself; it is his whole person, his message, and above all his paschal mystery, that leads us, that propels us towards the Father.

Jesus Christ is the first missionary and the missionary par excellence because he is the unique Mediator: his life is a message of salvation and his words and deeds are the instruments of animation for the meeting between God and all people.

2.2 - The Pneumatological Foundation

- 16 The unique mission accomplished by Jesus Christ, once and forever, is animated and accompanied in the history of the Church's missionary expansion by the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit who animates, inspires, gives fresh strength, opens the way to new ideas, and urges towards new frontiers, especially those "ad gentes".

Moreover from an etymological standpoint *spirit* and *mission* are synonymous and indicate a transforming action from within.

2.3 - The Ecclesiological Foundation

- 17 In history the Church is the sign and sacrament of Christ. She is the fruit of Jesus' missionary activity; she is constantly animated and prompted in missionary activity by the sanctifying action of the Spirit.

The purpose of the Church's existence is the salvific mission of Christ. The Church is essentially a community sent to save all. Redemptoris Missio states explicitly that her mission reveals the Church's most intimate nature¹⁷.

Consequently Missionary Animation is the instrument and driving force of her pastoral enthusiasm and spirituality.

- 18 Through twenty centuries of history the Church has always emphasized her missionary dimension, in both the local Churches and in missionary areas "ad gentes"

3. Salesian Missionary Animation

3.1 Missionary Animation

- 19 "By missionary animation we mean all activity intended to create, develop and keep alive the missionary awareness of young people and communities¹⁸.

Missionary animation is distinguished from every other kind of animation by its specific objective. The spirituality which inspires it "*is not a different spirituality but the same one, intensified and particularly enlightened by the fact of the mission 'ad gentes'*"¹⁹.

3.2 - Salesian Missionary Animation

20 "We recognize in missionary work an essential feature of our Congregation" which "mobilizes all the educative and pastoral means proper to our charism"²⁰.

Missionary Animation involves confreres, youth groups and members of the Salesian Family as *an integral part* of Youth Pastoral Work, and is inserted in its structures of animation *as an overall mentality and essential dimension*. It brings with it in fact "a strong relationship with the educative and cultural commitment and with the vocational perspective"²¹.

"Basic educational interests and the reawakening of the missionary awareness are two processes which can coexist and interact, each being a stimulus for the other: faith stirs up missionary interest, and the missions provide an impulse for the processes of faith and the growth of the community"²².

21 For this reason:

- The starting point must be an analysis of the reality of every Province so as to define the urgent needs and the priority options of Missionary Animation in dialogue with the other sectors of provincial animation.
- The commitment to Missionary Animation, especially in provinces which have so far been the subject of missionary activity, now leads them to testify to their maturity by sending out their own missionaries.

3.3 - Aims of Salesian missionary animation

22 ♦ **To create a missionary climate in the community**²³: The GC 23 stated that *"Above all the community is missionary, i.e. its mission is the reason for its existence and work"*²⁴.

- ❑ The first target of missionary animation is the community, called to internal growth, putting itself in a state of mission and ready "to listen to the Gospel and to be open to the universality of the Church"²⁵.
- ❑ The "missionary" perspective of a community implies that the community be consciously alive and responsible in the Church's mission, and hence committed to a patient evangelization which is not satisfied with giving and bringing about growth, but seeks to improve itself through the rich qualities of others, and which does not close itself in nor limit itself to the sustaining of its own missionary expansion.

The richness of a Church - even a missionary Church - can be measured by its ability to manage its own educative and pastoral commitments with a missionary spirit, to share the faith with others, to open itself to the universal nature of the Church and the Congregation, always tending towards the proclamation and witnessing of the Gospel to all creatures.

23 ♦ **To involve young people**

- ❑ All who come in contact with an educative community of a missionary outlook, should feel themselves provoked, in some way at least, to question themselves about their own style of life²⁶, to the point of

- ♦ “stirring up in them the ardour of faith that will transform them into credible witnesses and proclaimers of God's word²⁷;
- ♦ "making themselves missionary leaders through social service, volunteer work, missionary groups and movements²⁸.

- In this sense AM gives strength to the life of "those to whom we are sent", and in particular to the young.

"The reawakening of missionary awareness *to reach new levels of faith and commitment* is typical of groups and movements which have a specific interest in the missions, the development of peoples, and international collaboration: *missionary experience then becomes transformed into a process of human growth and maturing of faith*"²⁹.

24 ♦ **To promote and give growth to new missionary vocations**

The missionary is always opening up new horizons and revealing frontier zones where the sense and future of men and women are questioned.

Reflecting on the meaning and challenge of Christian faith leads people forward human and Christian maturity, which finds expression in :

- a mentality of openness to the world,
- a willingness to listen,
- a capacity for adaptation,
- gratuitous self-giving,

Missionary animation also strengthens the faith and vocation of anyone who undertakes it. In recent decades a distinct connection has been observed between missionary commitment and the renewal³⁰ of religious life.

"For missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others³¹.

III - IDENTITY AND TASKS OF THE PROVINCIAL DELEGATE FOR MISSIONARY ANIMATION

1. The identity of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation³²

25 The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation needs a gift for communication and creativity to effectively develop links with Province groups in strengthening and supporting Missionary awareness.

"The *special vocation* of the missionary is not 'something exceptional with respect to other confreres, but rather the more lively and more generous expression of the vocation of all. It manifests in fact a condition proper to the characteristics of the common charism³³.

The first person to whom missionary animation is addressed is the Delegate himself. Like every Salesian therefore, "he accepts responsibility for his own formation³⁴.

The Delegate will take care to acquire progressively a solid missionary and spiritual formation, so that he may not base his service of animation "*on human abilities, but on the power of God*³⁵.

The RM goes on to say: "even before activity, mission means witness and a way of life that shines out to others³⁶, "it demands a specific spirituality³⁷, "intimate communion with Christ³⁸. "Unless the missionary is a contemplative he cannot proclaim Christ in a credible way. He is a witness to the experience of God³⁹ⁱ.

All animation, in addition to the contents to be transmitted, needs the communication and concrete actualisation of the activities that have been programmed. It is obvious that the Delegate must be at home with the elementary laws of **social communication** and the processes of **group dynamics**.

2. The tasks of the Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation

These can be expressed in the following services:

2.1 - Keeping alive the missionary awareness of the confreres

- 26 The first task of the Delegate is to keep alive a missionary awareness in the province, helping everyone to carry out their activities with a missionary spirit.

"The Congregation's missionary commitment is called at the present day to grow in quality and intensity and also to stimulate the pastoral quality of all our foundations"⁴⁰.

"We are missionaries above all because of what we are, even before we become missionaries in word or deed"⁴¹.

2.2 Ensure a competent service of missionary animation

- 27 To encourage the local communities to be "missionary" in the context of the local Church and of the Educative and Pastoral Plan of the Province⁴². It follows that **"the Missionary Animation Programme"** should be integrated with the Youth Pastoral Plan at local and provincial level⁴³.

The missionary animation of the Province is a service of formation, a service of sensitisation and a service of co-ordination.

□ A service of formation - the contents

- 28 □ The first service to offer the provincial and local community is a PLAN for Missionary Animation, which is *simple, practical and realistic*.

There is no "**animation**" without a "**plan**". The Delegate's role is precisely to support the development, implementation and evaluation of the missionary dimension of the Province educative and pastoral plan. It is not a plan which is different and additional to the more comprehensive "educative and pastoral" plan of the province, but a **re-reading and practical application of that plan from a missionary standpoint**.

The Delegate will help in the programming and evaluation of the missionary dimension of the pastoral plan of the local communities, especially on the basis of the indications emerging from the concrete situation of the young and the needs created by the new areopagi for a new evangelization⁴⁴.

- 29 □ He will create and update basic documentation on the missions; encourage and verify the presence of the missionary dimension in provincial newsletters and in the local Salesian Bulletin.
- He will encourage the development of in themes of missiology, history of the salesian missions, and missionary activity in the Church and the Congregation in communities and local groups. He will promote the inclusion of these themes in provincial programming for the **ongoing formation** of confreres and in meetings of the Salesian Family.

- 30 In the provinces which have missionary extensions beyond their own territory, the Delegate will inform the missionary confreres concerned of the possibility of courses of missiology and similar topics in Centres of missionary formation and Universities.
- 31 In the Christian formation of the young he will encourage missionary awareness. He will speak of these things in meetings for programming purposes and for formation with those in charge of missionary animation in the different communities of the province.
- 32 In the context of educating young people to the faith, it will be recalled that the goal is to reach Christ and live in communion with himⁱⁱ. "Mission is based not on human abilities but on the power of the risen Lord"⁴⁵.
- 33 In provinces where the catechumenate exists, the Delegate will make his contribution to ensure that the structures and contents of the process of initiation may guarantee the quality of this fundamental experience for the Christian life.

A service of sensitization - the means

- 34 The following are some ways for realising and facilitating communication in the educative community, on the contents of the mission⁴⁶:
- 35 ♦ Fostering the birth and development of **missionary groups** which:
- have a specific reference to the contents of the mission,
 - are at the service of the educative community and of the local Church,

- are open and dedicated to the knowledge of the territory, and to those "farthest away"⁴⁷.

36 ♦ Encouragement and development of **volunteer work in the missions**.

For this the Delegate:

- will ensure that candidates for such work will follow a formative process in line with existing programmes at national and interprovincial level;
- will see to it that the volunteers receive supervision from an adequately prepared confrere during their experience and especially on their return, so that they can be active witnesses in the Christian community which sent them;
- will seek their collaboration in the formation of other volunteers and in the animation of missionary groups;
- will co-ordinate and represent the activities of missionary groups and of overseas volunteers at interprovincial level, with other ecclesial and lay Associations, and with NGOs.
- will arrange that there be close collaboration **with the missionaries who receive volunteers and with the volunteers themselves**, as regards summer experiences and medium and long-term service. This collaboration should cover the periods before, during and after the experience.

37 ♦ Exploiting the creativity of the educative community for **the celebration of the World and Salesian Missions Days (DOMISAL)**.

- These "days" will be preceded by due preparation in all the local communities, involving those in charge of missionary animation in the local communities and prompting their creativity.
- For this purpose they will use the various means made available by the Salesian Missions Department, the multiplication of material contained therein or the fruit of their own creativity, the provincial newsletter, and the local salesian bulletin.

38 ♦ **Maintaining contact with missionaries through:**

- Setting up informal meetings with them, inviting them for celebrations, talks etc.
- Hosting celebrations, days of formation, panels, etc.
- Programming retreats animated by missionaries or experts in missiology.

39 ♦ **Making regular references to missionary experiences.**

- Urging local delegates to keep alive the witness of missionaries who live and work in difficult conditions.
- Taking part in or organizing celebrations and prayer vigils at both provincial and local level, both in October (the "missionary" month) and on the occasion of other events which stir up consciences.
- Speaking of the missions and opportunities for missionary volunteers in "good nights" or "good

mornings", and particularly on the 11th of each month, recalling the first missionary expedition⁴⁸.

- 40 ♦ **Using available resources for missionary animation:** missionary publications, travelling missionary exhibitions, contributions in money and personnel (volunteer movement), small development projects, etc.

♦ **Developing appropriate means for educating the Christian community and young people in particular to the duty of contributing financially to missionary work,** by indicating destinations, expressing thanks for offerings received, and providing information on the evolution and realization of particular projects.

□ A service of coordination - belonging

- 41 It is also the task of the Delegate **to foster a sense of belonging to the one mission of the Church and the Congregation:** This can be achieved through:

- Maintaining contact with the Missions Department, especially in what concerns:
- reflection on themes relating to the Mission in the letters of the Rector Major,
 - information, guidelines and possible directives of the Councillor for the Missions in the Acts of the General Council,
 - the organization of the DOMISAL,
 - the overall animation of ongoing formation initiatives for missionaries,
 - the possible publication of accounts of missionary meetings or handbooks of missionary spirituality.

- 42 **Maintain contact with the missionary animators of the local communities, local and provincial committees or groups, and the other branches of the Salesian Family.**

This is to be done not only at the level of information concerning activities programmed and realized, but also with respect to responsible co-involvement in common strategies of animation, of intervention in the locality and of commitment in the social field. e.g. the volunteer movement in the short or longer term.

- 43 **Represent the province in dealings with other organisations and committees for missionary animation of the local Church.**

IV ORGANIZATION

44 It will be useful to keep in mind that:

- The following guidelines should be assessed in the light of the realities of the particular geographical area and be integrated into the Educative and Pastoral Project.

- According to the possibilities, each province or group of provinces should involve persons and structures in such a way as to give continuity to what they are seeking to achieve.

These guidelines have been already expressed in broad terms in the Department's document: "Education to the Missionary Dimension"⁴⁹.

1. AT PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL LEVEL

45 1° - The Provincial, in agreement with his Council, is to appoint a Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation⁵⁰.

With a sense of realism, and keeping in mind the priorities of the provincial programme and the interests of all sectors of animation, it should be remembered that:

- ◆ The Delegate is not necessarily a member of the Provincial Council, but he must remain in close contact with it and at least be invited to take part whenever the Council is dealing with matters of his competence or with the approval of pastoral projects of the province.

- ♦ If he is not a full-time delegate, he must have at least sufficient time to realize the essentials of the service entrusted to him.

2° - The Provincial is to present the Delegate to the provincial community and define his area of activity and intervention in it.

46 3° - The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation:

- ♦ **Should be a member of the provincial committee** for the pastoral animation of the province.
- ♦ **Should take part in the various meetings for the programming and animation** of the province and of the Salesian Family.
- ♦ **Should establish relationships of collaboration** with the other members of the committee for pastoral animation, and in particular with the Delegate for Youth Pastoral Work and for Pastoral Work for Vocations.

With them he should verify that the missionary dimension is present in the programmes for the education of young people to the faith and in vocational follow-up.

With them he should programme the formative training process for volunteer workers and their summer experiences as volunteers at home or in mission territories⁵¹.

- ♦ **Should set up a *team*** (*committee, collaborating group*) at provincial level, to share his work. **This team will:**

- **involve** the salesian animators, members of the Salesian Family and young people, coming from the individual communities;

- **help** the DIAM to carry out his work of animation, making known to him the needs and difficulties of animation in the local communities.

- 4° - These indications serve also to define the role and work of **the person in charge of missionary animation at local level.**

2. AT REGIONAL LEVEL

- 47 The Delegate does not work in isolation; in addition to his relationship with the team for provincial animation, he will try to integrate also the options and general objectives of the other provinces of the same Region.

He will therefore carry out his functions at provincial, interprovincial and world levels, keeping in mind (even at local level) "the need for a gradual approach and variety in the organization of the animation itself"⁵².

- 48 For this reason:

- 1° - Encouragement and support should be given to experiences of meetings, exchanges of views, and common planning at regional level or for groups of provinces.

Such meetings should:

- consider the possibility of a plan programmed in common,
- study the figure of the Delegate,
- coordinate the various missionary experiences of the volunteer movement, of meetings of Delegates, seminars of ongoing formation, etc.

2° - Each Region or group of provinces should choose a Delegate to be its coordinator at interprovincial level.

This coordinator should be a capable and generous person with the good-will to sacrifice his time for the work.

49 3° - The various "*curatoria*" are asked to see to it that **in the houses of formation** there are courses in missiology and the history of the salesian missions, as well as the involvement of the young confreres as animators of missionary groups and volunteer experiences.

This will be helped by a previous dialogue with the Provincial concerned and with the delegates for youth pastoral work, pastoral work for vocations, and missionary animation.

4° - All work however will be carried out in union in the context of the single mission of the Church and of the salesian charism.

AT WORLD LEVEL

- 50 1° - The exchange should be fostered of updated news about the missions, experiences of the volunteer movement, formative processes for missionary groups, and a database should be prepared of information about the Salesian Missions.

Good use should be made of the various communication services, such as the Salesian Bulletin, ANS, the Acts of the General Council, and the aides for animation published by the Missions Department.

- 2° - The DIAM will take care to send to the Missions Department material and a summary of significant activities, schemes and programmes of formation to the missionary dimension, celebrations, studies and researches of common utility, so as to ensure their wider use for the benefit of all.

Salesian Missions Department
8 December 1996

NOTES

INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER 1

- (1) Cfr. L. ODORICO, Missioni, Prassi Missionaria, Cooperazione Missionaria, Nuove Frontiere Missionarie, Animazione Missionaria, Urgenze, Roma, 1996², 5.
- (2) Salesian Missions Department, Educating to the Missionary Dimension, in the series Salesian Missionary Spirituality, VII, Rome, 1995.
- (3) Cfr. CG19, pp. 179-180.
- (4) CGS, 478.
- (5) Cfr. R 16.
- (6) ACS 267.
- (7) ACG 297, p. 25.
- (8) ACG 323, p. 48.
- (9) L'ispettore Salesiano. Un ministero per l'animazione e il governo della Comunità Ispettorale. Roma, 1987², n° 207.
- (10) R 18.
- (11) JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical "Redemptoris Missio", 1990.
- (12) ACG 336.

CHAPTER II

- (13) Cfr. RM 87-91.
- (14) ACG 303, 306.
- (15) ACG 315, 2.2.
- (16) The essential reference is to ODORICO L., Missionary Animation according to the Encyclical "Redemptoris Missio", in Missionary Animation, First Meeting of the Provincial Delegates of Missionary Animation for Asia and Australia. Bangalore - 1992. Roma, 1993.
- (17) Cfr. RM 1.49; AG 2.
- (18) EDM, 45.

- (19) Cfr. EDM, 35.
- (20) Cfr. C 30.
- (21) Provincials Manual, n° 206.
- (22) Cfr. E. VECCHI, *Pastorale Giovanile, una sfida per la comunità ecclesiale*. LDC 1992, 294-295.
- (23) Cfr. EDM, pp. 46-49.
- (24) CG23 217.
- (25) EDM, p. 47.
- (26) EDM, p. 15.
- (27) CG23 93.
- (28) EDM, p. 45.
- (29) E. VECCHI, *Pastorale Giovanile, una sfida per la comunità ecclesiale*. LDC 1992, 294-295.
- (30) ACG 267.
- (31) RM 2.

CHAPTER III

- (32) For this sector we have used in particular :
 - MELIDA A., La figura del delegado inspectorial para la Animación misionera: responsabilidades, competencias, método, in *Animación Misionera Salesiana, Primer Encuentro de Delegados Inspectoriales de América Latina*. Lima - 1991. Roma, 1991.
 - La propuesta pastoral de la ANIMACION MISIONERA SALESIANA. Delegacion Nacional Salesiana de Pastoral Juvenil, Madrid, 1991.
- (33) Cfr. EDM, p. 47.
- (34) C 99.
- (35) RM 11.
- (36) RM 26.
- (37) RM 87.
- (38) RM 88.
- (39) RM 91.

- (40) E. VIGANÒ, ACG 336, p. 36.
- (41) RM, 23.
- (42) Cfr. EDM, pp. 48-49.
- (43) Cfr. EDM, pp. 45-46.
- (44) Cfr. EDM p. 47. Cfr. also the themes of formation proposed in AMS, 17 - 18.
- (45) RM 23.
- (46) Cfr. EDM, p. 52 and AMS, pp. 16-18.
- (47) Cfr. EDM, pp.46-49.
- (48) For this purpose the practice already in use in some Regions should be followed, e.g. the VIS: *Volontariato Internazionale allo Sviluppo*, via Appia Antica, 124 - 00179 Roma. We shall be grateful to those who can send us information about other initiatives of this kind.

CHAPTER IV

- (49) Cfr. EDM and also AMS, pp. 19-21.
- (50) R 18; Provincials Manual n. 207.
- (51) Cfr. EDM, p. 50 and p. 51.6.
- (52) Cfr. ACG 336, p. 11.

**MAIN LINES
OF
PROGRAMMING
OF THE DEPARTMENT
FOR THE SALESIAN MISSIONS**

THE PERIOD 1996-2002

MAIN LINES OF PROGRAMMING OF THE DMS FOR THE PERIOD 1996-2002

1 - Significant references of the document of the GC24

On the basis of what was said earlier about the history of the DMS, the following points can be deduced from the GC24 for special attention:

- ❑ The inculturation of the Gospel, as the immersion of the Gospel in culture and the transformation of culture into the newness of Christianity.
- ❑ The involvement of the laity of other religions, and the "credo", as a clear opening to their values, to their offer of collaboration, and the attitude of offering the fullness of the truth in Christ.
- ❑ Formation carried out together, as a reciprocal involvement of Salesians and Laity in formative processes, especially with volunteer lay missionaries.

For an overall view of the directly or indirectly "missionary" points of the GC24, cf. the Appendix under: *culture, evangelization, inculturation, worldwide, pluricultural and plurireligious, volunteer movement.*

2 - Guidelines of the Rector Major and General Council

2.1-**The Rector Major**, in his address to the capitulars on 20 April 1996 naturally referred only to the main contents of the Chapter document. Nevertheless he made in passing some significant references to the salesian missionary reality. The following are the principal ones:

- The growing missionary awareness of the Congregation and its openness to worldwide aspects (2; 3.9),

- The commitment to first evangelization (2),
- The specific nature of missionary commitment in the context of the salesian mission (3,2),
- The need to explore the new areopagi (3,2),
- Stress on the inculturation and missionary cooperation of salesian and lay personnel at the level of the whole Congregation (3,9).

2.2-**The General Council** decided on the following priorities as common points in programming for all the Departments, while respecting particular points peculiar to each sector. From the general programme we extract below for each of the four areas the points which directly or indirectly refer to missionary practice.

3 - Priority areas for the growth of the salesian missionary dimension

A further reading of the programming of the preceding period (1990-1996), the attention given to suggestions indicated by the recent capitular document (interventions of the Rector Major and priorities laid down by the General Council), together with the study of the missionary situation, have brought to light the following priority areas:

- Missionary animation
- Missionary practice and formation
- Missionary cooperation
- New missionary frontiers
- Transverse area of the missionary dimension

The intention is to accentuate the internal logic of the five choices, which are interdependent among themselves: the mission always open to new frontiers, the driving force of motivations, commitment, animation in depth and generous quality of response. These priority areas at the same time lay stress on areas already tried out and proposed as a general synthesis of salesian missionary praxis.

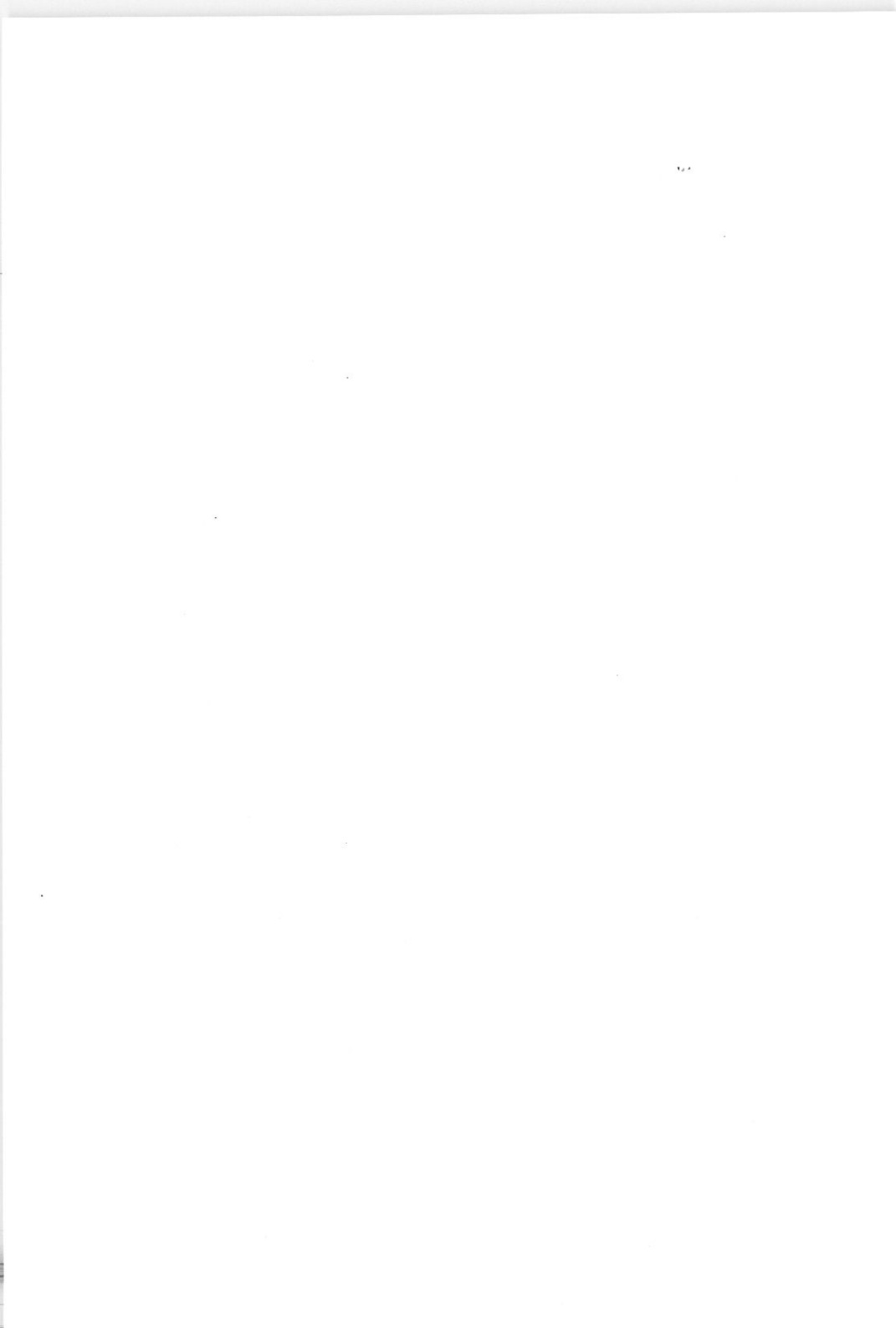
We present the scheme of the programme.

GENERAL COUNCIL PRIORITY PLANNING
with special reference to missionary activity

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	GENERAL OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	PARTICULAR OBJECTIVE (practical interventions)	POINTS FOR PARTICULAR ATTENTION
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SDBs AND LAITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Develop from a missionary perspective positive relationships between Salesians and lay catechists, between laity who are believers and those who are not. ❖ Facilitate an atmosphere of wider sharing in missionary responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Foster the quality of intercultural, interreligious and ecumenical dialogue, in the light of the changed contexts in which the salesian community is working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ensure in the prevailing communal and educative situation a charismatically efficacious transmission of the preventive system in line with the different cultural missionary contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Create a common mentality by a deeper study of the indications of V.A.T. II concerning the ecclesiology of communion, the People of God, and an updated missiology.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SALESIAN PRESENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work to bring it about that every community becomes inserted in an ever more evident and successful manner in the locality with a missionary mentality and openness. ❖ Promote the commitment to those most in need and to the missions ad gentes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Accustom the communities to prepare and offer significant messages concerning human advancement and evangelization, especially through programmes of the catechumenate. ❖ Give priority to those who are least developed from a sociological, cultural and religious standpoint. ❖ See to it that the Provinces ensure numeric and qualitative consistency of the communities (GC24, 173-174), <i>rendering them capable of missionary communion.</i> ❖ Stimulate the ability of the community to involve lay people and make them participants in our spirit and life (GC24, 167). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Consolidate recently founded missionary areas, and move on towards others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Promote the linkage with civil and ecclesial initiatives of an educative nature in the area, especially through the voluntary lay missionary movement.
THE SDB COMMUNITY AS ANIMATING NUCLEUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make the community aware that its primary task is to be and work in solidarity as the animating nucleus of lay volunteers, lay catechists, lay friends and benefactors of the salesian missions, and lay people in ecumenical and interreligious contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Follow up in a particular way the experience of activities and works managed by lay people within the provincial project (GC24, 181), <i>especially in parishes and very extensive missionary areas.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Promote a "revision of the Ratio in line with the orientations of the GC24", stimulating a rethinking of initial formation to adapt it to new situations and to the diverse contexts of candidates from missionary territories. ❖ Stimulate and coordinate study centres and teams for reflection and for ongoing missionary formation. 	
QUALITY OF FORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make the initial and ongoing formation of SDB missionaries adequate to the demands of other cultures, to the challenges of evangelization, and to the requirements of the new roles of animation. ❖ Form the Salesians to communion and sharing with lay people, both Christians and those belonging to other religions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Deepen salesian missionary spirituality so as to live it, propose it and share it (GC24, 239-241, 257). Make the sharing of daily life a factor as a means of ongoing formation, by qualifying the main moments of community life: experiences of prayer, of programming, of cultural enlightenment, and of communion with the young and the laity. 		

OPTIONS PROGRAMMED FOR THE SIX-YEAR PERIOD 1996 - 2002

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	GENERAL OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	PARTICULAR OBJECTIVES (practical interventions)	POINTS FOR PARTICULAR ATTENTION
MISSIONARY ANIMATION	<p>“Create, develop and keep alive the missionary awareness in young people and in the communities throughout the Congregation”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ stimulate missionary quality in the area and the sense of missionary reciprocity between Churches and Provinces ◆ consolidate the figure and role of the <i>Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation</i> (D.I.A.M.) ◆ make detailed visits to missionaries, following them up in their missionary praxis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ programme meetings of Provincial Delegates for D.I.A.M. at three-yearly intervals ◆ preparation of a <i>voluntarium</i> for the D.I.A.M. ◆ informal support activity ◆ meetings of missionaries by areas for dialogue and verification (cf. the “<i>Missionary Praxis</i>.”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ world and continental ⊕ regional and interprovincial ⊕ provincial ⊕ local
MISSIONARY PRACTICES AND FORMATION	<p>Requalify the spiritual and apostolic formation of the missionaries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ make a new and deeper study of the doctrinal content and the relationship between : <i>evangelization, inculturation and salesian charism</i> ◆ follow-up of missionary candidates and missionaries in the field, in their initial and ongoing formation and in experiences of <i>requalification</i> ◆ encourage the commitment to a renewed missionary spirituality ◆ encourage and support the initial and ongoing formation of catechists in mission territories and of lay missionaries volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ promote meetings, seminars, courses and relevant publications ◆ promote courses for departing missionaries, course in missiology (UPS), short updating courses ◆ organize retreats for missionaries ◆ organize visits and check-ups ◆ foresee logistic and financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ world and continental ⊕ annual occasional ⊕ permanent and occasional
MISSIONARY COOPERATION	<p>Promote an ecclesial and salesian mentality of missionary reciprocity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ foster discernment in the choice and sending of missionaries ◆ encourage the involvement of lay people in missionary animation and the volunteer movement ◆ follow-up the Mission Offices already in existence, and encourage the setting up of new ones in mission territories ◆ create new examples of missionary reciprocity (twinning and linkage agreements) ◆ create a mentality of interprovincial cooperation as regards personnel (<i>Exchange of gifts</i>) between Provinces in vocational crisis and others where vocations are increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ decide on the most appropriate interventions ◆ plan specific meetings for animation and formation at the required level with D.I.A.M. ◆ creation and development of new Mission Offices ◆ promote frequent meetings for “macro” Mission Offices and every two years at world level ◆ assigning of mission territories to Provinces where vocations are increasing, with criteria of international composition and coordination between Regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ world ⊕ regional and provincial ⊕ world ⊕ local ⊕ intercontinental and interprovincial ⊕ Western
NEW MISSIONARY FRONTIERS	<p>Enthusiastic obedience to Christ’s missionary mandate “ad gentes.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ constantly stimulate the missionary dimension of the salesian vocation in response to new and urgent missionary needs ◆ create new motivations for missionary animation and consolidate projects already existing ◆ foster a new missionary sensitivity in strongly secularized environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ promote new foundations through the sending of missionaries and cooperation concerning personnel ◆ encourage spiritual solidarity, help as regards personnel, and financial support ◆ study the phenomenon of the new atropagi, and the most suitable interventions of evangelization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊕ East and South Asia ⊕ Africa, Eastern Europe, ⊕ Afro-American peoples ⊕ Countries in difficulties ⊕ Western and urban areas



**MISSIONARY PRIORITIES
OF THE MISSIONS DEPARTMENT FOR THE
REGION OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR**

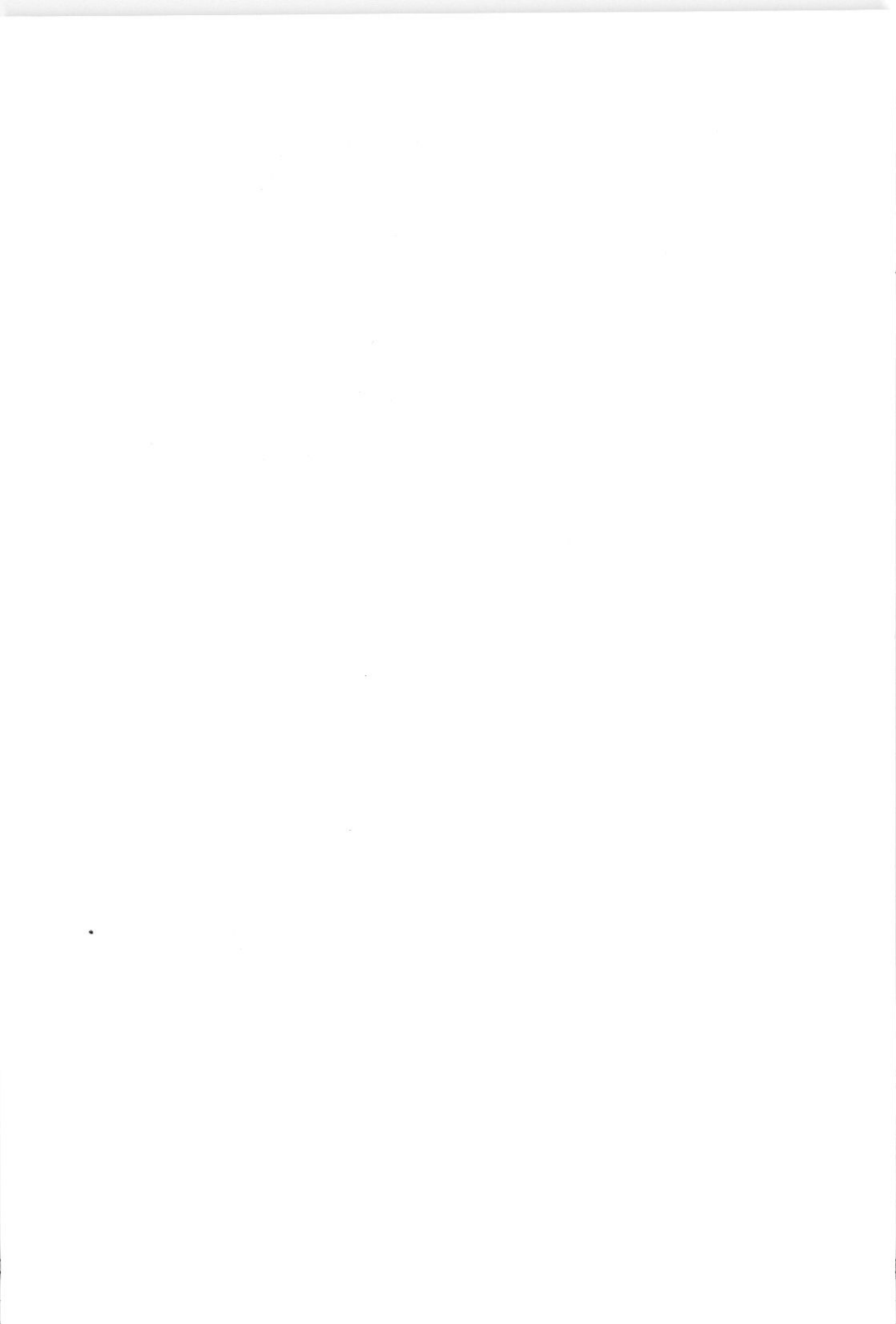
The different language groups of the Region of Africa and Madagascar have unanimously endorsed the following missionary priorities:

1. **A continuation of ongoing formation for the missionaries** already working in the Region and for those who are preparing themselves for missionary life.

This formation must pay particular attention to *Salesian spirituality* and to *Missionology*.

Similar efforts must be made for **the initial formation** of candidates to the Salesian life, especially for the *Brothers*.

2. **The Educative Pastoral Projects** of the Province, of the Vice-Province, of the Delegation and of the local communities **must be studied** thoroughly so that *all confreres will have a common pastoral vision and individualism in missionary work will be avoided*.
3. **Consolidation of the present deployment of personnel.**



**PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES
FOR FINACIAL MANAGEMENT
AND NEW PERSPECTIVES
OF SOLIDARITY**



MEETING OF AFRICAN - MADAGASCAR REGION

ADDIS ABEBA 5-10 MAY 1997



I - THE FIGURE OF THE ECONOMER

1. INTRODUCTORY REFERENCES

"None are exempt from the obligation to grow humanly and as Religious; by the same token, no one can be over-confident and live in self-sufficient isolation. At no stage of life can people feel so secure and committed that they do not need to give careful attention to ensuring perseverance in faithfulness, just as there is no age at which a person has completely achieved maturity" (Vita Consecrata, 69).

This reference to "Vita Consecrata" is intended to insert the following contribution into the broad framework of the theme of ongoing formation, from which it derives and in which it is meant to find its place.

And so my intervention, developed against such a background, will aim at highlighting some general aspects of the identity of the economer in the first place from the standpoint of his particular position as a mediator between the "sacred" and the "profane", and secondly by pointing to some general aspects of his office, some particular characteristics, the tasks which await him, and mentioning albeit fleetingly some new cultural perspectives for an alternative economic vision.

I am grateful to Fr. Rodriguez Tallón for this invitation and the opportunity it gives me to contribute to the exchange of gifts which characterizes this group of Provincials and Provincial Economers.

"Ongoing formation helps the priest to overcome the temptation to reduce his ministry to an activism which becomes an end in itself, to the provision of impersonal services, even if these are spiritual or sacred, or to a business-like function which he carries out for the Church.

Only ongoing formation enables the priest to safeguard with vigilant love the 'mystery' which he bears within his heart for the good of the Church and of mankind" (Pastorem do vobis, 72).

Leaving aside the specifically priestly references, the quotation adds force to the formative nature of what we are saying and points to our intention to verify not only our daily attitudes but also their underlying motivations.

2. THE ECONOMER AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE "SACRED AND THE PROFANE", BETWEEN THE "CITY OF GOD AND THE CITY OF THE WORLD".

"Once again it is like a game. Life is without purpose, but then thousands of purposeless objectives are thought up and, within them, an entire economy is put together which goes on to declare them transcendental, mystical and absolute.

*Let us compare our monastery at Louisville with the General Electric Establishment in the same city. Which of the two is the more serious and more 'religious' institution? We are inclined to say 'the monastery' from pure habit. But in reality the religious seriousness of the monastery is like a baseball team of a minor league as compared with the seriousness of Series A of the General Electric. The same kind of thing can happen to many people, including monks who can begin to have doubts about the monastery and what it represents. But who is going to have any doubts about General Electric?" (T.Merton, *Diary of a guilty witness*, p.230).*

The quotation is certainly provocative (but this time the provocation comes from within, from our own ranks). On the one hand it highlights the problem of the seriousness or lack of it with which individuals or social groups carry on their own experience of

life, and on the other the danger that, in our own case, we may go ahead in many spheres (including that of economy) with a certain institutionalized superficiality, taking too many things for granted with the general justification that we move in a scenario of "faith". It is a reflection which could take us too far from our theme; perhaps this suggestion, possibly in too sententious a manner, that our 'professional' approach should be divested of connotations which are simply technical and pragmatic, if life is to be invested in its fullest sense, will suffice. It would certainly be interesting to reflect at greater length on the "professional approach to religious life".

2.1. Spelling out our professional approach

It is quite common for those who are asked to take on the task of an economist (and hence also of an economic general) to go through a more or less deep crisis of identity concerning the relationship between our choice of God and the largely profane task required of us by obedience. I wonder how many of us volunteered for the work we are now doing. It is an indication that the rapport between the economic reality and religious consecration is not transparently clear! On the other hand nothing functions unconditionally, as though the fact of our choice of God frees us from bonds and obligations linked with our identity as citizens of the earthly city, in which the Kingdom of God is developed, manifested and grows.

The right way to look at the autonomy of earthly realities, among which economy naturally has a place, includes on the one hand the emphasis that these realities have a system of their own, particular ways of functioning and developing, and on the other that in any case they are human expressions of the service of man created by God, and called to dialogue with him in the history of salvation. And so our faith, our salvation, our consecration, in respect of the whole man, do not and cannot prescind from profane and secular realities, to the extent that they are realized in history and not just a crying for the moon.

Our "professionalism" therefore starts from a daily appreciation of the fact that economy and salvation, economy and consecration, are not opposed one to the other as a matter of principle. Our work is not a no man's land, but rather a frontier where the life of the man of God becomes interwoven with the more fundamental of his daily requirements, and with his insertion in a civil society governed by particular laws and regulations. This must always be kept in mind in respect of 'material' requirements for the charisma and mission: structures, pastoral instruments, charitable availability, financial projects, feasibility of new projects to be launched or new frontiers to be opened.

2.1.1 - Management expertise and fatherliness

The point may be obvious but I think it will be worthwhile to look at it briefly, if only synthetically. I think we can safely say that this is a case of false opposition, as though suggesting that one who has the task of directing could not fulfil it in a fatherly manner, the latter being associated by definition with the idea of spontaneity and disorganization. The religious environment, which is often also one of community, would seem on the contrary to provide possibilities and conditions favourable for the making of a synthesis of the two, in which organization never takes place to the detriment of the individual and vice versa.

What does it mean to be a manager? There are those who see him as a man (or woman) with a directive career, self-assured, detached, cold and efficient, pragmatic, ready to ride rough-shod over persons and situations with the single purpose of reaching fixed objectives. Applied to religious it would indicate an imbalance in the direction of activism, organization and a prevalently rational interpretation of social relationships, work and the mission itself. Opposed to this would be a 'pastoral' mentality (which in this context would be synonymous with inaccuracy and naiveté) and a juridically economic mentality amounting to rigidity, apprehension and the lack of the courage of faith. I am sure you are all aware of

the disputes and even the strong conflicts that can be created in communities at various levels, when a person rigidly adheres to positions which necessarily tend to become extreme.

I think that our task of animation and reflection as people with responsibility should be to do our utmost to oppose such dualism so as to indicate, not least by example, that true managerial ability implies intelligent attention to individuals, aims at achieving what is possible, and relies on unforeseen and unexpected elements which sometimes prove to be decisive for the solving of even complex problems; and equally that authentic fatherliness tends to give responsibility to individuals for the realization of clear objectives, well studied and assessed with the possibilities offered by the operator and the situation.

The need for fatherliness, so strongly expressed at the present day especially in religious communities, cannot therefore be opposed to a rigorous method of organizing our work in the name of serious professionalism or competence, or to the study and planning of enterprising strategy. It would be different in the case of disturbing signs of immaturity, laziness or superficiality in someone who could not face up to a confrontation with today's people and tendencies. Emphasis on dualism could lead religious to become closed in on themselves, to flee from any confrontation, and worse still to hand over almost completely the management of their life and mission to third parties.

2.1.2 - Efficiency and poverty

From this standpoint our reflection becomes still more arduous and demanding, to the extent that all our institutions, albeit in different ways and degrees, live (and not just endure) human progress and the so evident phenomenon of the acceleration of history.

In a recent revision of a community directory there was a discussion of the expression "our condition as poor people" and it was thought necessary to change it to "our profession of poverty"; the example, though tied very much to its context, is a clear indication of the delicacy needed in speaking of our witness to poverty at the present day, so as to preclude the risk of stating principles which are empty and moreover are without credibility in today's reality.

The fact is that we profess the evangelical counsel of poverty on the one hand, with all that it implies, and on the other we are citizens of this world, of which the institutions tend to ignore or at least undervalue our radical choice. And so from one standpoint we feel the burden of complying with laws as normal citizens and private organizations (taxes, insurance etc.), and from another the systemization of our work in the different sectors of our mission (health, assistance, education, retrieval, etc.) must respond to an ever greater extent to criteria of efficiency and be adapted to various legislations which are continually changing. We need think only of the capital expenditure which has been called for, and will continue to be required, in various countries for the installation of safety and security precautions in both public and private structures, with a marked tendency to greater rigour in respect of the private sector.

I will merely mention, in passing, the delicate and thorny problems attached to our condition as employers of third parties. This is an area in which our manner of being as religious and poor people would seem to be turned upside down, because for all practical purposes we are the "bosses" or employers on whom depend workers, employees and tradesmen, who are paid regularly and whose relationship with us is based on work contracts enforceable in large part at national level. How do we reconcile our mission which is eminently pastoral with the tensions, demands and litigation which sometimes characterize the relationship between employers and employed? What happens to our witness to poverty?

Without any doubt evangelical poverty is a value associated with a certain context; it cannot be understood outside the historical processes and the social and cultural environments of consecrated life; but nevertheless we must at least single out some lines of thought and action through which poverty may present an effective challenge to both the style of life of individuals and the prevailing culture. In this sense a reference to "*Vita Consecrata*" (n.89) is enlightening:

"Another challenge today is that of a materialism which craves possessions, heedless of the needs and sufferings of the weakest, and lacking any concern for the balance of natural resources. The reply of the consecrated life is found in the profession of evangelical poverty, which can be lived in different ways and is often expressed in an active involvement in the promotion of solidarity and charity".

I will indicate some lines of thought which I believe could be productive for a reflection in this sense. The effectiveness of our witness to poverty will also depend, to my way of thinking, on the following parameters:

- ❑ the relationship between the *management of the capital we have available* and the serious and organized commitment to the realization of solidarity;
- ❑ the effort (sometimes laborious) to read our *economic dimension in the light of the Gospel*, and in particular:
 - in a balanced relationship *between institutional demands and the primacy of the person*;
 - in the fundamental '*missionary*' *dimension of our goods* (of both an economic and pastoral nature);
 - in the harmonization of faith in *Providence* with the application of the necessary *foresight and caution*.

"Keep always in mind that what we have is not ours but belongs to the poor; woe to us if we do not use it well" (Don Bosco).

3. GENERAL ASPECTS, CHARACTERISTICS AND TASKS OF OUR ASSIGNMENT

This part of my intervention is not intended as a further contribution to the reflection but rather an essential setting out of some elements known to us already, and especially to those among you with long experience in this field, but it is sometimes useful to remind ourselves of them to revise our methods of work.

3.1 Three general aspects

3.1.1 - A situation of trust and control

This implies the regular and exact keeping of records, conscientious checking, and requests for permissions in line with canon law and our own particular legislation. For us who are Economers General I emphasize the duty of checking up on the general economic situation and management of our institutions, requiring credible financial returns and monitoring situations of a precarious nature. A point which may require particular and urgent attention at the present day may be the sending in of the mandatory documentation for obtaining the necessary permission for operations which exceed the competence of individual communities. Nowadays there is a certain tendency to take on responsibilities without the necessary authorization, leaving it until later to provide the documentation, or sometimes leaving a successor to tackle a situation heavily in debt.

3.1.2 - Centralization and autonomy

A further element on which we need to reflect in this connection is the relationship between centralization and autonomy.

With the reduction in the strengths locally available, the necessity is frequently felt for organizing an administration strongly linked with the centre, for greater efficiency and also for a more rational use of resources and for a better and more economical utilization of consultation possibilities. Naturally, often enough and within the boundaries of our Constitutions, necessity will determine whether there should be a greater tendency to centralization or to decentralization.

3.1.3 - Relevant administration (integrity and professionalism in administration).

Our religious identity and our mission characterize also our mode of administration and the objectives of our management. What does this mean in practice? that we must avoid anything in the nature of financial speculation or managing affairs solely for profit? It is a question which, I think, arises not infrequently, especially when we cannot fail to observe that some of our works seem to respond exclusively to criteria of profit. This includes also the management of stocks and shares and of other investments, which can never be for the sole purpose of financial gain but must aim at making capital available for our mission and apostolate. It is in this area that the relationship between Providence and prevision needs to be examined more closely, so that we develop a critical conscience with respect to our options and criteria.

3.2 - Tasks and qualities

I take from a Manual for Economers (manuscript edition) a good synthesis of the responsibilities which derive from what we are, and hence indicate what we have to do.

- Administer the material goods which depend directly on the Province, and prepare a budget and regular financial reports for the Provincial Council.

- Supervise the administration of the Houses of the Province and report to the Provincial Council in this regard.
- Make the Institute aware of the aspects of justice, linked with the proprietorship of material goods.
- Prepare a financial report on the state of the Institute for the Provincial Chapter.

I think that substantially a Provincial Economist should direct his activities:

- to the central area of his Province: the administration of the Provincial House and everything that directly depends on it;
- to the relationship between the centre and the periphery with reference to operations of greater importance (Constitutions art.188), to the preservation of poverty and to the organization and animation of solidarity;
- to the area of administration of the various houses in respect of orientation and control;
- to dialogue with other institutions, both ecclesiastical and civil, in matters concerning administration.

4. CONCLUSION

While thanking you for the invitation you extended to me and apologizing for the inadequacy of my contribution, I would like to conclude by inviting you to insert the considerations we have made, of both a more theoretical and more technical nature, in a context of openness to the new cultural perspectives which are tentatively coming to the fore and leading to an alternative economy. In effect it is a matter of a political option stemming from a cultural interpretation of our identity as consecrated religious in the context

of the present day, at this moment in history in which a wave of almost uncontrolled neo-liberalism seems to prevail.

What attitude are we religious to adopt in the face of initiatives like Ethical Banking Practice , Trade of Goods based on justice and solidarity, the promotion of the Volunteer Movement and of Private Non-profit Social Organizations, and in general in facing a trend of opinions and practical realizations which are inclined towards the building of an alternative?

The serious problems we are called upon to meet every day could serve as an excuse for remaining entrenched in positions of short-sighted conservation, and leave us sadly lagging behind in society and history.

"The foundation of every religious institute is always prophecy in action. It denounces a situation of salvation not yet finalized, constituted by the factual need of the people of God to which no one is paying attention"
(A.Gomez).

To what kinds of attention is the Spirit urging us?

Fr. Gianni MAZZALI
Economer General

II - ECONOMY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOODS

In introducing Chapter 12, the Provincials Manual emphasizes that Economy is a value with a specific objective and with its own laws and instruments. It must be understood, used in competent fashion, and **directed to the mission** which gives the concrete tone to all our existence and hence to this aspect as well.

- ❑ Temporal goods: the support of pastoral and educative activity, and of assistance.
- ❑ Economy: an important sector of the religious life, regulated by precise norms of the Church and the Congregation, especially with reference to the values of evangelical poverty.

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In the Congregation authority "of any kind" (C 124) is exercised in line with the principles of subsidiarity and decentralization in respect of the competence of various levels and for a correct evaluation of individuals and communities.

The principle of unity shown successively in various environments is in harmony with the autonomy recognized at the different levels.

1.1 - The first principle is unity of government in respect of temporal goods:

- ❑ At world level on the part of the Rector Major who, with the assistance of his Council, has ordinary power over all the provinces, houses and members (C 127,130);
- ❑ At provincial level by the provincial and his council, a regards the goods both of the province and of the individual houses (C 161);
- ❑ At local level by the rector and his council in what concerns the administration of the goods of a house (C 176).

1.2 - The second principle is unity of administrative management (C 190)

- the Ecomer General administers those goods which do not belong to any particular province or house but to the whole Society (C 139);
- the provincial ecomer administers the goods of the province (C 169);
- the ecomer of each community is the one immediately responsible for the administration of the temporal goods of the individual house (C 184).

1.3 - The third principle is solidarity (C 76)

Solidarity is understood as sharing at various levels:

- Between the communities of the province;
- At the level of the entire Congregation;
- At the level of the Salesian Family, of the Church and of the world.

1.4 - The fourth principle concerns the function and levels of control:

- By the Rector Major, provincial and rector, after obtaining the consent of the General Council for matters referred to in C 188; by the provincial council in respect of the matter referred to in n.7 of C 165; by the local council for the operations detailed in n.4 of C 181.
- By the Ecomer General, provincial ecomer or local ecomer, in matters concerning the administrative management of the goods of the Congregation, of the province or of the house (R 192, 193, 198).

This function presupposes that financial returns are made at the various levels to the appropriate council.

2. COORDINATION, ORGANIZATION AND SHARING AT PROVINCIAL LEVEL

Some basic aspects to keep in mind:

- ❑ *the function of direction, control, coordination and supervision, by means of detailed norms* relating to provincial and local administration emanating from the provincial chapter or from the provincial with his council;
- ❑ *the organic manner* of setting up the administration expressed in the elaboration, examination and approval of the budget and final balance sheet of the province;
- ❑ *sharing and solidarity*
 - At the level of individual houses in respect of the province (*cf. R 58,3; I 56, 11*);
 - At provincial level: the plan of solidarity drawn up in line with the provincial project (*R 197*);
 - At the level of the world community, specifically through the indications of the Rector Major and his Council (*cf. R 197; C 76*);
 - solidarity attentive to the needs of the Church and the world (*can 640*).

3. OBJECTIVE AND ORIENTATION OF THE ECONOMY

"The structures must be at the service of the community and of the individual members so that they may be able to fulfil faithfully their vocation" (SGC 706,2).

This fundamental objective is guaranteed by certain specific guidelines in the economic field and that of the administration of goods:

- A just relationship between sound administration and poverty;
- The awareness of being depositaries of the goods of the Church;
- The priority of institutional ends over material goods;
- The functional relationship between witness, service and temporal goods (*cf. SGC 600-610*);
- Financial solidarity among all the works of the province (*cf. R 197*).

4. RESPONSIBILITY, TASKS AND COMPETENCE

4.1 - The provincial with the provincial council exercises a function of direction and control over the administration of the goods of the province and of the individual houses.

The following is a list of tasks to be kept in mind:

- Approval of the budget and of the final balance sheet of the province and of the houses;
- Determination of the contribution to the province to be made by each house;
- Authorization for modifications or solutions of unusual financial problems;
- The request for authorization in the case of matters referred to in C 188;
- The formulation and launching of norms, by delegation of the provincial chapter, for provincial and local administration;
- Withdrawal of surplus funds from local communities;
- Preparation of a periodic plan of financial solidarity among the houses of the province;
- Attention to solidarity with the world community.

4.2 - The provincial personally, and in close collaboration with the provincial economist, will concern himself with:

- The selection and training of future economists (brothers, as far as possible), and the updating of present economists;
- Vigilance over the financial management of the houses;
- Organization of an administrative office;
- Availability and use of professional advice.

5. SOME INSTRUMENTS

The governing of a province from a financial standpoint foresees:

- The budget and final balance sheet of the province, showing the state of assets and liabilities;
- This is indispensable for a more rational provincial policy at all levels;
- Close collaboration with the provincial economist;
- Prompt and transparent collaboration with the Economist General in what concerns the preparation and sending in of the annual Financial Report.

Fr. Gianni MAZZALI
Economer General

III - LETTER ON THE SOLIDARITY

*Rome, 24.01.1997
Feast of St Francis de Sales*

Dear Father Provincial,

A few days ago we finished the second plenary session of the General Council for the period 1996-2002. They were two months of intense discussion and sharing, with particular reference to the programming of lines of animation and government in which we will be committed during the next six months for the realization of the objectives and resolutions of the GC24.

Of particular significance was the effort to overcome an excessive sectorialization of the objectives of the various sections so as to reach a broadly shared and solid vision consciously adopted by the whole Council. The efforts have now developed into the operative phase, with all the responsibilities and different nuances already provided for in fact in the present structures which allow for exact and efficacious work.

One of the aspects of the programming entrusted to the responsibility of the Economer General is that of animating in the Congregation fidelity to the spirit of poverty, especially in what concerns the administration of goods, a task which is already clearly indicated in our Constitutions. In due course I shall be making contact with you to indicate some deeper principles necessary in this context for a renewed fidelity and witness.

But there is one element which I am anxious to point out at once in the name of the Rector Major, who has asked me to raise the point with you and to ask for your timely and active collaboration.

It is the matter of the solidarity which our Constitutions indicate as a qualifying element of the witness of our poverty. "As brothers we share what we have with the other communities of the province, and we show solidarity with the needs of the entire Congregation, of the Church and of the world" (C 76).

Without doubt we have a solidly founded tradition of strong solidarity within our Congregation. It was Fr. Ricceri who launched the initiative of a "solidarity fund" at world level, an idea endorsed by Fr. Viganò who, on the occasion of the centenary of the death of Don Bosco, set up the "Don Bosco Fund". Subsequently, following the opening up of the frontiers of Eastern Europe, it was felt necessary to channel solidarity in the Congregation in the direction of the former communist countries, and the "Eastern Fund" was established, which has produced successful results in the past six years.

After mature reflection in the General Council, in view of the wide collection of urgent needs which frequently confront a worldwide Congregation like our own, we have thought it opportune to concentrate during the present six-year period on the setting up of a "**solidarity fund**", at the disposal of the Rector Major for meeting urgent and undelayable needs, linked directly with our mission and witness, which we could not otherwise fulfil.

It is a matter of an "open" and wide-ranging solidarity in which all, confreres, communities, provinces, can concur to emphasize in a practical manner that they are sensitive to the needs of all, that we are not committed to solving only our own problems, and that we play a direct part in the universal mission of the Congregation.

It is above all an internal solidarity, a free and ample sharing of the resources which God has placed so liberally in our hands. It is a solidarity which binds everyone, even those who have little or next to nothing, and is expressed in small or great gestures which

build us up concretely as a family. It is a way of recognizing that the good things we have at our disposal are not ours but belong to those who have greater need of them, to the poor as Don Bosco used to say. It is a practical and credible way of expressing our gratitude.

This solidarity fund will be administered from the Generalate, and to this address should be sent both contributions to the fund itself and requests to the Rector Major for help from it. The Ecomer General has the responsibility for the management of the fund's resources, and will send out regularly at fixed intervals an account of the contributions received and the help disbursed.

For further information and clarifications the Ecomer General's Department is at your service, and I would add that the Provincial Ecomer can well be the privileged protagonist both for sensitizing the province and for maintaining contact with the Centre.

I send you in anticipation my heartfelt thanks for whatever you are able to do in this connection among the many concerns and responsibilities which daily beset you. Perhaps this initiative for solidarity on a large scale will prove to be a stimulus to solidarity among the houses of the province itself.

Greetings to you from the Rector Major and from myself personally, with best wishes for a joyful and fruitful feast of Don Bosco.

In union of prayer,

Fr. Gianni MAZZALI
Ecomer General

GROUP WORK

- Reflexions about:*
- ♦ the administration of goods and the poverty
 - ♦ the solidarity
 - ♦ some specific problems

ENGLISH-SPEAKING GROUP

1. *Poverty*

- ❑ How to give witness in an understanding way in our Africa context?

No matter what our style of life is or our effort to get closer to people and adapt to their lifestyle, all still consider we are rich. All missionaries feel this tension between striving to be poor and the misunderstanding in people's minds.

- ❑ We thought that feeling the pains of this tension is still a sign of a healthy religious life, since some have even compromised with the situation. ...
- ❑ All the same, we have to accept realistically that people will always consider us part of the rich class. However it is our belief that three major areas are the test of our poverty:
 - Availability to share with people our gifts, our time, our education, our means and our money. Some have already withdrawn from people and live in a world of comfort with a close group of friends (oftentimes of the same Country of origin).
 - Use of money. We know we manage large sums of money, but what use do we make of them? Are we ready to spend time in looking for the best deal? In our constructions, are we moderate

in the project, without getting trapped into "European designs"?" Do we give proper and timely accounts of our money? Are we able to show and share the accounts of our works with people who work in our schools?

- Our service has to address uncompromisingly the poor people. Although in Africa people are generally poor, there are large pockets of extremely poor and abandoned persons, the poorest of the poor. In our works we have to consider offering services and education to them. People will appreciate and understand this as a sign of poverty: to fight to eradicate poverty among the poorest classes.

2. Solidarity

- ❑ A bishop from Zimbabwe said once: "Stop building churches and schools and then handing them over to us. Give us time to build our schools and our churches" Although the statement is extreme, it has some truth.

We accept this idea of provincial and world solidarity as a new challenge for our provinces and houses that have always considered themselves on the "receiving end".

- ❑ We need time and effort to sensitize our community to this solidarity, making sure it is not a cheque signed by the economist at the end of the year, but rather a "budgeted solidarity", planned by all at the beginning, that will touch our lives and community organization..
- ❑ In this respect, more effort should be made to educate our young salesians in formation to share generously the world over.

3. *Specific problems*

3.1 - Solidarity with the families of the local young salesians from Africa.

We cannot escape from this duty. The Salesian Congregation also has in her tradition this "Charitable tradition" to take care of the parents of salesians (father or mother) and it could continue here in Africa as well. Nothing - or very little - to be given to the African extended family.

Special help to be considered in case of ordination expenses and on leaving the Congregation for good.

3.2 - A growing complaint from the local African salesians that different (inferior) treatment is given to them, when compared with the style of life and freedom of decision of the missionary and expatriate salesians.

This complaint comes up even in formation houses where young salesians from Africa mix with salesians in formation from other countries. It is advisable to make all possible efforts to treat all equally and comply with rules in the same manner. Examples: use of car, permission for driving licence, signatories of cheque books, ...

On the other hand, it is not advisable to deny all responsibilities to African salesians until they are ordained priests: they will not grow in maturity.

3.3 - Is it possible to have other forms of the *Rendiconto Amministrativo* at the end of the year since the present form seems out-dated?

3.4 - Mission Office and Procure. Discussion took place for better solutions in different Provinces and Delegations. There is no single or best solution. Situations are different.

3.5 - It is important to give specific information about administration to confreres in formation and for them to have the chance to coordinate and continue up-dating the administrators who are in place in local communities by giving them specific and qualified courses in meetings from time to time.

GROUPE FRANCOPHONE

1. *La gestion des biens en rapport avec la pauvreté*

- Dans la fondation des oeuvres, il faut tenir compte du train de vie de la société et veiller à avoir des oeuvres proportionnées aux besoins de la population et qui faciliteront la relève.
- Les projets doivent émaner d'une vue d'ensemble, et d'un projet unitaire, de façon à répondre aux nécessités réelles du milieu.
- Les projets doivent être faits en fonction de l'avenir - dans la mesure où celui-ci est prévisible - et être promoteurs de développement.
- Dans la gestion des biens, il faut tenir compte de la culture de façon à éviter le parasitisme, mais aussi savoir exploiter la disponibilité au sens de la solidarité pour une plus grande communion entre les communautés.
- Dans le rapport avec les familles des confrères il faut:
 - éduquer au sens d'appartenance à la communauté,
 - aider les familles à partir de la communauté,
 - éduquer la communauté au sens de la famille.

- En ce qui concerne l'aide aux pauvres, il faut partir des options communautaires à ce propos.

2. La solidarité

- Chacun doit se rappeler que l'argent de la communauté est un bien de l'Eglise et qu'il n'appartient à personne en particulier.
- Il faut, si possible, harmoniser la comptabilité de la maison avec celle de la Province.
- Il faut favoriser l'autosuffisance financière des communautés.
- Pour maintenir l'autosuffisance, il faut renforcer les liens avec les bienfaiteurs mais aussi veiller à la production.
- Pour maintenir les activités dans la communauté, il faut tenir compte des ressources financières de celle-ci.

3. Quelques problèmes spécifiques

- Comment organiser la recherche de fonds financiers?
- Comment procéder à une prévision budgétaire en se basant essentiellement sur des dons?
- Comment augmenter les recettes de façon à augmenter les capitaux?
- Comment créer une mentalité d'autofinancement?

GRUPO DE LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA

1. Pobreza

- O primeiro sinal da nossa pobreza é a dedicação ao trabalho
- A capacidade de estar com os destinatários.
- A preocupação em garantir a situação dos empregados
- A garantia dos serviços sociais aos trabalhadores

2. Solidariedade

Começa-se a trabalhar lentamente com consciência comum entre as casas, coisa que deverá ser objeto de estudo em vista dos “Diretórios” (Angola - Moçambique).

3. Alguns problemas

- Falta de capacidade de subsistência, até mesmo quanto à alimentação dos salesianos.
- Não existem recursos/fontes ordinárias onde arrecadar fundos.
- Existem recursos para projetos, mas não para o sustento ordinário das comunidades.
- Falta a criação de convenções com os bispos.

REPORT ON THE FIRST MEETING OF THE AFRICA- MADAGASCAR REGION

Addis Ababa, 9 May 1997

Participants.

All the Provincials, Superiors of Vice-provinces or other circumscriptions, and Delegates from the whole of Salesian Africa met together for the first time.

The following were represented:

- the Province of Central Africa (AFC)
- the Vice-provinces of East-Africa (AFE), Southern-Africa (AFM), Madagascar (MDG) and Zambia (ZMB).
- the Delegations of various countries: AFO; ATE; Ethiopia, Erythrea; Rwanda e Burundi.
- the Delegations of only one country: Angola and Mozambique.
- some countries where coordination is not yet formal: Nigeria, Sierra Leone.

It is hoped to have present at future meetings representatives of the other countries which could not be present, in particular confreres who work in North Africa and in countries with an Islamic majority.

Objectives

Naturally, the first meeting of a Region which is still in its early days could not have objectives of a very ambitious kind. It was rather a case of getting

- to know each other,
- to take note of the program of the Region for the present six-year period, and
- to begin a reflection on the needs to be faced.

These were the three objectives of the meeting at *regional* level. Further meetings are foreseen, with due attention to the vast distances involved in travelling in the Region.

Themes dealt with

1. *The program of the Region*

- The day dedicated to the Region in general began with a consideration of the program of the Rector Major and the General Council for the "Africa and Madagascar" Region, with the following three objectives in mind:
 - to take note of the various activities and meetings foreseen;
 - to make concrete the realization of the different activities;
 - to complete the program with other activities considered necessary.
- On the theme of **ONGOING FORMATION** in the Region, the following recommendations were adopted:
 - To make known all the possibilities of *ongoing formation* offered y numerous centres in the Region.
 - To set up a working group of persons working in the Region who could respond to the initiatives of the various Circumscriptions in the matter of ongoing formation, giving them competent assistance in such common priority topics as:

the formation of Rectors and of animators, the educative project, etc.

For the time being it is difficult to organize in the Region a course of ongoing formation similar to those being organized by other Regions in the Congregation.

- To encourage competent Superiors to grant to confreres, after many years of work, a sabbatical year for their formation.

- In the matter of **the period following practical training for Brothers**, there would be a course of ongoing formation next year, 1998.

It would be at Yaoundé for about ten confreres and in French. Attention was drawn also to the course for lay religious which exists at Nairobi, organized by the TANGASA Centre of Intercongregational Studies.

- Other observations were made, some dates were fixed for future meetings, and places selected where they would take place.

- The possibility and convenience was also considered of:

- the exchange of formative material for catechists and other animators;
- the holding of a meeting on "youthful distress", for a better preparation of the educative programs for the numerous works and activities in use in the Region for boys at risk;
- the promoting in the social communications sector of a periodical about Africa, and produced in Africa itself, for the purpose of correcting the image of Africa received elsewhere because of a European mentality more concerned with economic interests than with the true interests of the African continent.

2. The structure of the Region

- ❑ This part began with a reading and reflection of what the Constitutions and Regulations have to say about Regions, Provincial Conferences, and the figure of the Regional Councillor.
- ❑ In the light of the above the **common needs** which can exist in the Region were considered: ongoing formation, the effectiveness of our work, and the question was asked as to whether at the present time it is necessary to set up a Provincial Conference or Conferences in the Africa-Madagascar Region. The response was clear and unanimous: *"It does not seem that the time is yet ripe for setting up Provincial Conferences in the Region"*.
- ❑ Despite this it was considered useful and necessary to have meetings with the Regional to exchange views and go more deeply into themes aimed at and leading to a more coordinated growth of the various circumscriptions and foundations.
- ❑ There was some discussion on the preparation for the Team Visit due to take place in February 1998. When more precise indications are given by the Rector Major and his Council, this theme will have to be taken up again. There was a unanimous desire that all the communities of the Region be involved in the preparation for the Team Visit.

3. Other themes of common interest

A rapid survey was made to bring to light the plans for growth (new foundations) which the various circumscriptions or delegations have in mind.

The following indications of intent were given; they are still provisional:

- Angola: 2 new foundations;
- ATE Delegation: 3 foundations: Libreville (Gabon), D'Jamena (Chad) and Cameroon (English-speaking);
- Madagascar: 2 (Tulear and Tamatave);
- Ethiopia: 4 new houses are being built at Makanissa, Novitiatie, Adua, and Dekahare;
- Zambia is planning a new foundation in Nalawi and another in Zimbabwe;
- Nigeria is planning a new foundation at Abadam;
- Sierra Leone: a new work in the capital, Freetown;
- The AFC Province: a new foundation in Kinshasa.

The survey gives an idea of the natural growth of the different circumscriptions. The process to be followed was discussed for the timely presentation to the Rector Major of the plans for these new works, so as to obtain the necessary approval.

Information was shared concerning the extent to which sensitization to the GC24 had taken place in the various circumscriptions. Appreciation was expressed of the interest shown by all and of the variety of initiatives adopted by our communities and with the lay people who work with us.

Finally it was announced that the Rector Major would be in the Vice-Province of Southern Africa for the concluding celebrations for the centenary of salesian work at Cape Town.

Conclusions

It is not possible to point to many concrete discussions that were taken as commitments in this first meeting, but all the participants had the satisfying feeling of:

- knowing more about the Region,
- having established stronger links among ourselves,
- being more aware of the vast road that lies ahead, and more secure in the great hope which is evident in the Region.

We thank the good Lord and the confreres of Ethiopia who welcomed us so fraternally, and with whom we were able to share some periods of relaxation.

May Mary, in whose month the meeting took place, bless our labours for the Gospel throughout the Region.

Addis Ababa, 9 May 1997

Fr. Antonio RODRIGUEZ TALLÓN

Regional Councillor for Africa

