Campo Grande, 24 June 2020

Dear Friends,

**All of us – you and we together – have done our best to be in touch with people near and far**, to nurture our hope, and continue to work enthusiastically, including during these difficult times of the Covid-19 health and financial crisis.

**We journey alongside our young people because we believe in them.** With them we share our lives, with them we communicate, for them we pray. We will always love them, journeying together and looking to the future.

**We have learned from our Father, Don Bosco, this Salesian style of living God's love with optimism and joy**, and always believing in the seed of goodness that grows and bears fruit in the hearts of our young people. This, then, is the source of our communicative style!

**Throughout the world’s Salesian Provinces we have seen some interesting and creative initiatives for communicating** and sharing experiences of service and solidarity on behalf of the poorest and most needy.

**We have available a huge network – the Salesian network – for communicating solidarity!** We have seen, for example, the commitment of Salesian Provinces and Regions to publishing and sharing the Salesian Bulletin around the world (both print and digital versions), the creation of so many “live-streamed” programs of an artistic, educational, musical nature.

**Communicating and re-inventing!** This means creating new and surprising ‘languages’ to enliven our storytelling and boldly share our dreams and projects!

**During these times we have closely followed the many initiatives by youth and volunteer groups promoting** solidarity by collecting and donating food and medicinal products and clothing. We have seen many projects to raise awareness of prevention of Coronavirus, well-conducted religious and liturgical celebrations, articles, and plenty of sharing through Social Networks.

**Over the last three months I have taken part in some very interesting video-conferences** organized both by many of our Communication Delegates and by communities and work groups.

**We like to approach young people, listen to them, be with them as friends,** accompanying them as they grow and develop. This style of communication sees us stay with them, aware of the fact that we are thinking of them, be they near or at some distance.

**The Salesian style of communicating comes from Don Bosco’s charism, his way of living** Salesian spirituality passing on the family spirit both to the confreres and to the whole Salesian Family.

**Communication is an essential part of our Salesian charism**: indeed, we discover the vitality of our charism in our style of loving God through the young.

**What is communication in a Salesian style**? It is that great love that springs from our educational heart and flows until our last breath, because those who love in the name of Jesus and serve the poorest and neediest will always be communicators of a message that is always new and never grows old.

**And how do we know that this Salesian style of communicating exists?**

- **When young people not only fill our houses, our playgrounds, our works and presences, but also our** web e sites and social networks with their joy and spontaneity.

**- When the echoes of young people’s dreams, their sorrows and hopes can be found in the sounds of music, the rhythms of dance,** the beauty of poetry, expressions of prayer and liturgy of life.

- **When young people tell us about their lives, tell us their stories, and look for** new ways of creating and sharing their digital messages, and are committed to their studies, work and their life of Faith.

These youthful expressions are the living expressions of the Salesian way of communicating!

**Communicating is a new way of building a more human and transparent society**. Communicating is a school of dialogue and respect for individuals, their culture, their history, their environment and their values.

**Communicating in a Salesian style means being faithful to the young.** They are our music, our dreams and our true joy. This is why someone who loves also communicates.

**Our Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, on 12 June this year, passed on this Salesian style of communication to us with great tenderness and truth,** as wetell young people what is most important:

**“Dear young people, we, the Salesians of our time, would like to tell you that we love you, that our life is yours and that, as was the case for Don Bosco**, each of us can tell you: “For you I study, for you I work, for you I live, for you I am even ready to give my life.”

**Recently I viewed the short film on our Salesian confrere, Bro. Artemides Zatti, beatified in 2002, entitled “Zatti, hermano nuestro” (Zatti our brother).**  In the midst of the sick, this Salesian was able to communicate both the charity that cares for people and the love that captivates. He gave his life in the service of others, communicating Hope in the Risen One and love for Our Lady.

**Communicating in a Salesian style:** this is our legacy, our commitment, our hope!



**Fr Gildásio Mendes**

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