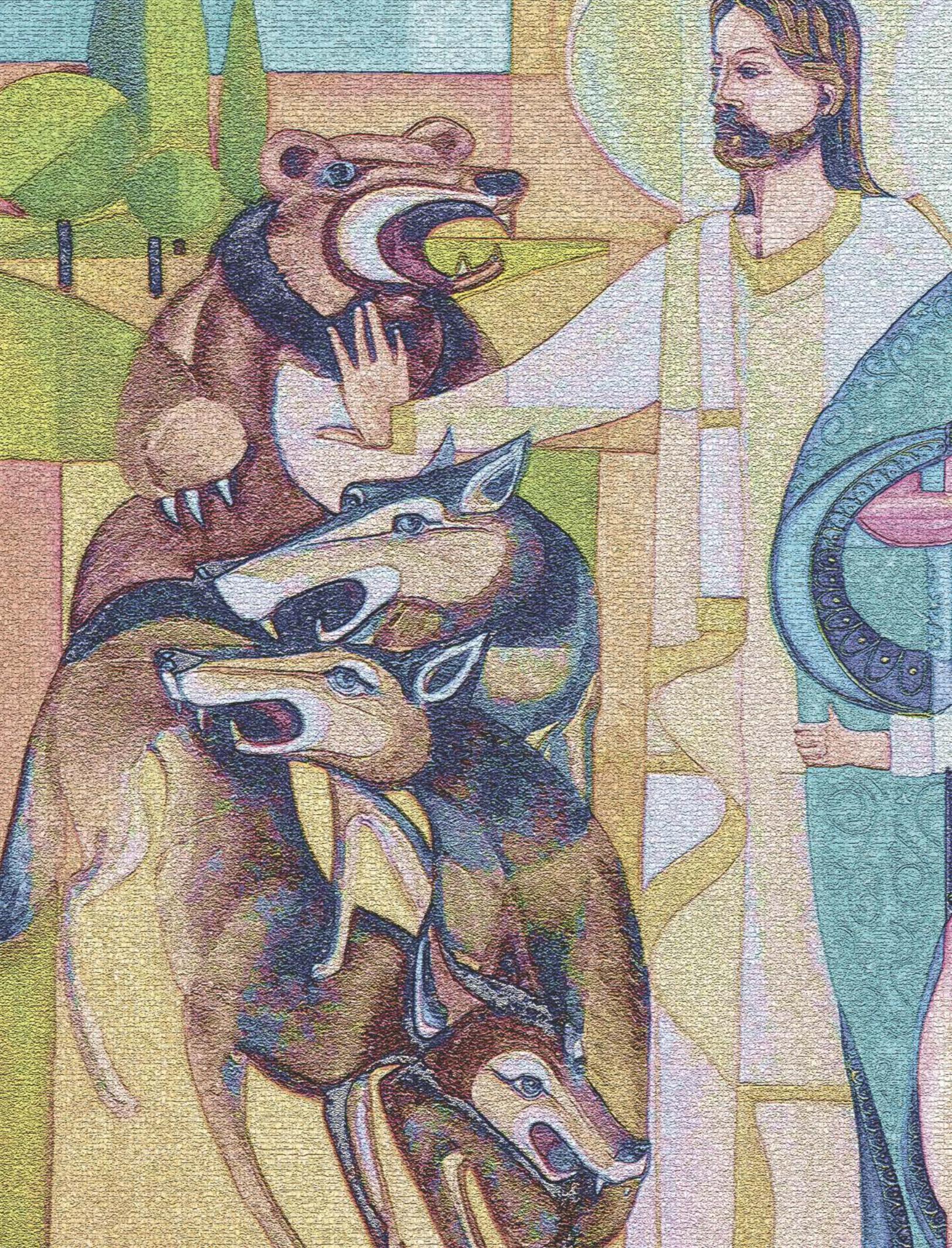
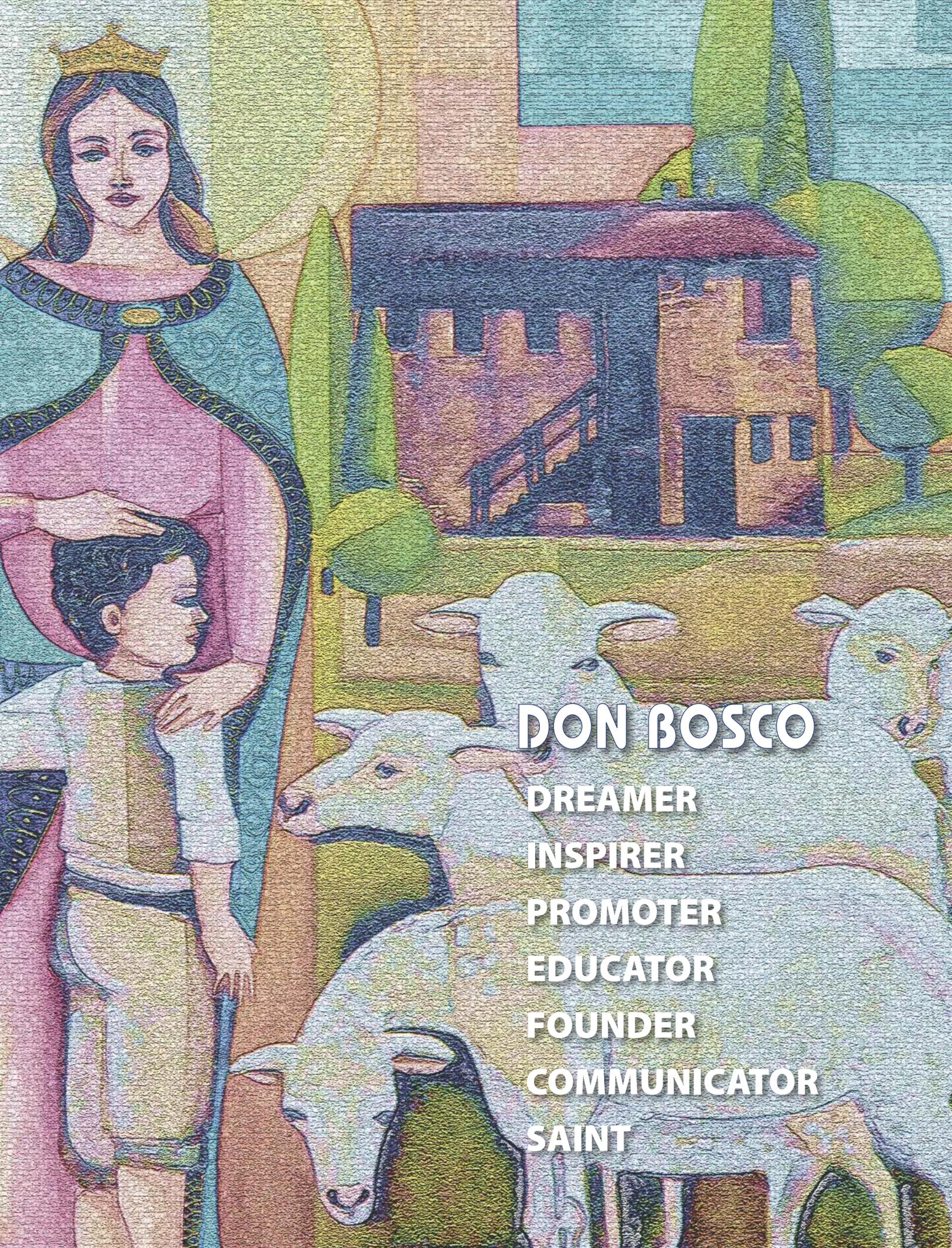


# SALESIANS 2013







**DON BOSCO**

**DREAMER**

**INSPIRER**

**PROMOTER**

**EDUCATOR**

**FOUNDER**

**COMMUNICATOR**

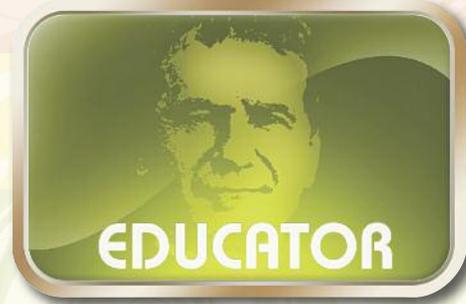
**SAINT**



Cover:

**We open our hearts**

Salesian missionaries to Austria,  
 - Praveen Antony (from India)  
 - Simplice Tchoungang (from Togo),  
 "Every country is a mission - there are no boundaries for God and his Gospel".



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Fr Filiberto González Plasencia, sdb  
General Councillor for SC

Dear friends,

With this edition “Salesians 2013” would like to share a Congregational process and project with you, one that needs this kind of preparation to be fruitful for us and especially for needy youth in society: the Bicentenary of St John Bosco's birth.

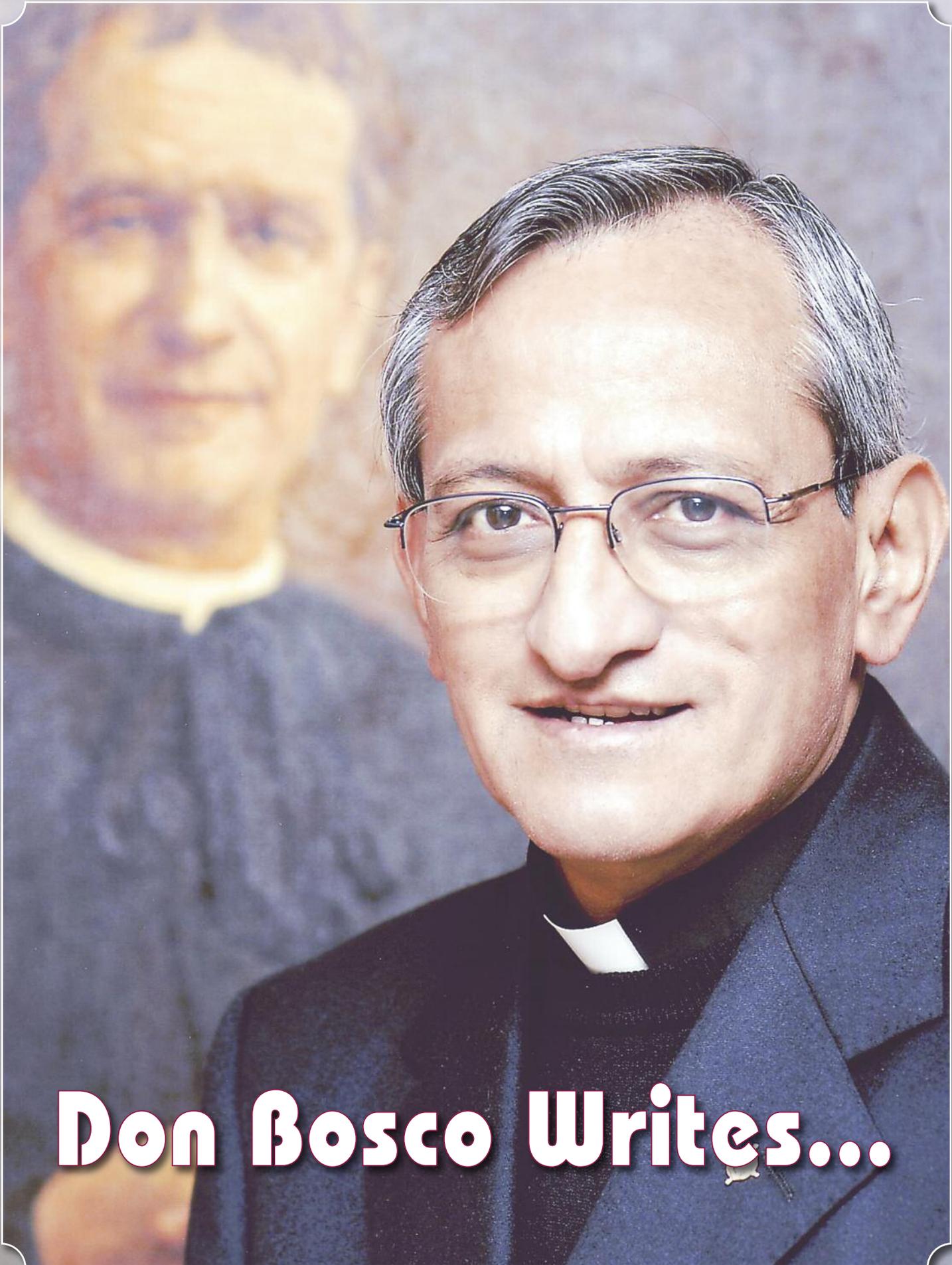
Our magazine will accompany the journey towards this grand event by presenting our work, our experience, and our testimony in a way that is specific to each year in the three-year preparation. It will culminate with celebrations on 16 August 2015 and again in August 2016. Our aim in showing you this common process, which has its origins in the *da mihi animas* is, in the words of the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, “to take up Don Bosco's spiritual and apostolic programme and the reason for his tireless efforts 'for the glory of God and the salvation of souls'. This way we can re-encounter the origins of our charism, the purpose of our mission, the future of our Congregation”.

There are three stages of preparation for the Bicentenary, each one with its well-planned dates and themes. The first stage refers to getting to know Don Bosco's story and it ran from 16 August 2011 until 15 August 2012; the second involves us in a deeper understanding, updating and implementation of Don Bosco's pedagogy, from 16 August 2012 until 15 August 2013; it then culminates in understanding and living Don Bosco's spirituality, the third stage which will run from 16 August 2013 until 15 August 2014.

In this edition we are sharing what we have experienced in the first stage, focused on understanding Don Bosco's story: who he was, his life experience, the choices he made. Study of Don Bosco has been the first condition for being able to communicate his charism and purpose; how relevant he remains for us today. As the Rector Major puts it: “Without this knowledge there can be no love, imitation, praying to him; and only love can urge us to get to know him. So it is a case of knowledge that springs from love and leads to love”. This is why you will see that the common thread running through the articles leads us clearly to Don Bosco's own story, but it does this, you will note, via people, communities, works, projects showing us that Don Bosco is alive still and continues to make history.

Thank you for the acknowledging this 'Salesians 2013' magazine. The editorial team and I invite you to get involved with Don Bosco and the Salesian Family for the benefit of our most needy youth.

December 8, 2012



# Don Bosco Writes...

# Don Bosco WRITES...

*I am writing to you  
as a father and friend,  
through my Ninth Successor.*

My beloved sons,  
Dear young people

The meeting with you in Madrid, on 17 August 2011, in the huge courtyard at the Salesian Institute, Atocha, remains firmly etched on my mind and in my heart. That was an unforgettable experience emotionally speaking, but especially significant from a Salesian point of view.

I enjoyed seeing your sense of responsibility, your pride at being young people committed to living your faith. I admired your desire to make your life an investment in God's plans for you and in the dream you nurture in your hearts. I was moved when I saw you pray, welcoming the Word with joy. It was marvellous to see you there in silence adoring the Eucharistic Lord. In the light of all this your cheerfulness seemed even more beautiful and pure, more contagious still. I enjoyed seeing so many Salesians and Salesian Sisters in your midst also, along with many young leaders. Some Provincials, Youth Ministry Delegates were amongst them. This is where they belong, there, attentive to your lives, desires and at the same time accompanying your growth and spiritual journey.

Now I am happy to know that you are preparing a huge feast for me in 2015. From up here in heaven, gazing on Jesus' face, we know whatever is going on down below on earth. And it is a beautiful story because it is a redeemed one, even if sometimes you only see the more dramatic side of it. Different from what you think, there is no distance between you and us, since you know so well that from the moment Jesus entered human history through his Birth, there is no human birth which is not holy, there are no children who do not have the resplendent Light of the Redeemer in their eyes. This closeness renders my presence amongst you more authentic and real, like at the time of the Valdocco Oratory in Turin, with one additional advantage - I can be alive in every Salesian presence spread across 130 countries around the world.

**"My dream ... your dream ...  
God's dream"**

The dream I had when I was nine, as I have said many times, was an event that marked my life, one



that gave me, over time, the guiding inspiration for my chosen field of work, made me able to dream up a clever system of education to win over your hearts, and gave me striking patience to fight so I could change the world, your world.

With the Lord's help I invite all of you, since you are "hope made flesh", to find the dream which will make you creative individuals amidst the many deceptive suggestions which bombard you.

To dream with your heart inclined to God and your feet firmly planted on the ground is no evasion, but an opening of your life to something new. You may not yet know everything about it that is to be known, but it will somehow seem significant. It means projecting yourselves towards something that you do not yet possess, but in which you recognise yourself; it means intelligently discovering the presence of "a God who accompanies us" as the days go on. No project that fills life with meaning, from the most modest to the most prestigious project, can be realised without first being led and nurtured by a dream. To make courageous choices in a fluid society without a soul and impoverished in terms of values, it is essential to rediscover the power

of a sweeping vision that uproots human beings from their mediocrity and has them moving forward to a new heaven and a new earth.

When I was 58 years of age, I wrote up the story of the first 40 years of my life, to which I gave the title "Memoirs of the Oratory of St Francis de Sales". I did this at Pope Pius IX's express command. I certainly did not do it out of a desire to immortalise myself or from yearnings for greatness. We are eternal because we are in God's heart, loved and saved by His Son, Jesus. It is something I did out of love, a spiritual testament to help you in the present and the future. I invite you to read this "life", not so much out of historical curiosity about my past, but rather because, between lines marked by blood and sweat, you can discover that the purpose of everything is to realise life in all its fullness. You will understand that those who have responsibility for education must necessarily conceive of their lives as a service of love, they must see their era as an opportunity for acceptance, must acquire knowledge not to humiliate or manipulate but to "shape" the heart to direct it to Christ. Education shows us up as people loved by God and man, because it is a practical exercise of charity.



While I embrace you all with affection I would like to reveal the biggest secret of my heart. I have always believed that my mission should demonstrate a particular characteristic: young people saving the young. I always wanted my love for you to be a mission shared by you and that you yourselves would become apostles of the young. We can want something or an ideal very much, but if we don't find the right approach, our ability to persevere wavers, because what does not convince does not become a stable goal in life. As it was in Isaac's time we have to dig new wells, give birth to a new culture, new ways of living together. I am counting on you, placing my life once more in the hands of your ability to pick yourself up, rediscover trust in life and in your insights for planning a future of solidarity and peace for yourselves.

In forming my group of Salesians, I put all my efforts into the young and it was a winning stroke of genius. Only you young people have the potential to transform your knowledge into wisdom, and employ this wisdom in living. Don't retreat into yourselves, like tired and resigned wayfarers, but interpret your human situation as a "divine adventure". Get involved with each other,

complement each other as the children of God spread throughout the world, in the splendid History of Salvation.

Be new prophets, men and women capable of pointing out the way to go amidst confused spirits, in the new, sometimes uncertain variable that God lets sprout in hearts and history. The meaning of life, like prophecy and like mission, becomes an immense treasure for society.

There is no longer time nor room for mediocrity, since lukewarmness and spiritual dullness are forcing us to live off the cultural dregs of our times. My dear young people, do not waste your youth by living it superficially, without compass and without energy! Dream big! Do great things in your life!

With a father's love.

Rome, 31 January 2012

Yours,

*Luciano Bono*  
Don Bosco





# DREAMER

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"It was at that age that I had a dream. All my life it remained deeply impressed on my mind".

*(Memoirs of the Oratory, Chapter 2)*



# Don Bosco Blesses Beijing

*Today Don Bosco's well-known 'missionary' dream in Barcelona has become a proven reality through Salesian presence in 131 countries in all parts of the world. With this reality we can be sure that the long line of Don Bosco's 'sons' stretching back to his own time has constantly cultivated the virtues of Mary following the example of their father...*

by Seo Jeongkwan Hilario

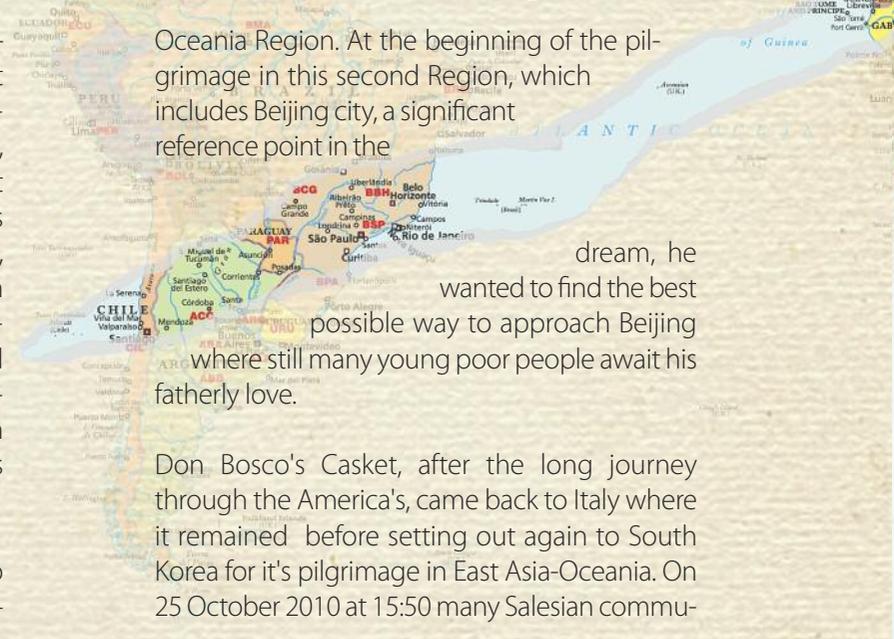
However, one thing is still lacking. From Santiago in Chile, the world is filled with the spirit of Don Bosco reaching across to the other antipode, the reference point, Beijing in China, where there is no official Salesian presence at present. Even though each of the other places and cities mentioned in the dream, Hong Kong, Calcutta, Africa, Madagascar, have their Salesian presences firmly established, Beijing, at the completion point of the line traced by Our Lady, and Don Bosco's love for young people begs for fulfilment. How might Don Bosco, as we approach the 200th anniversary of his birth, view all this today?

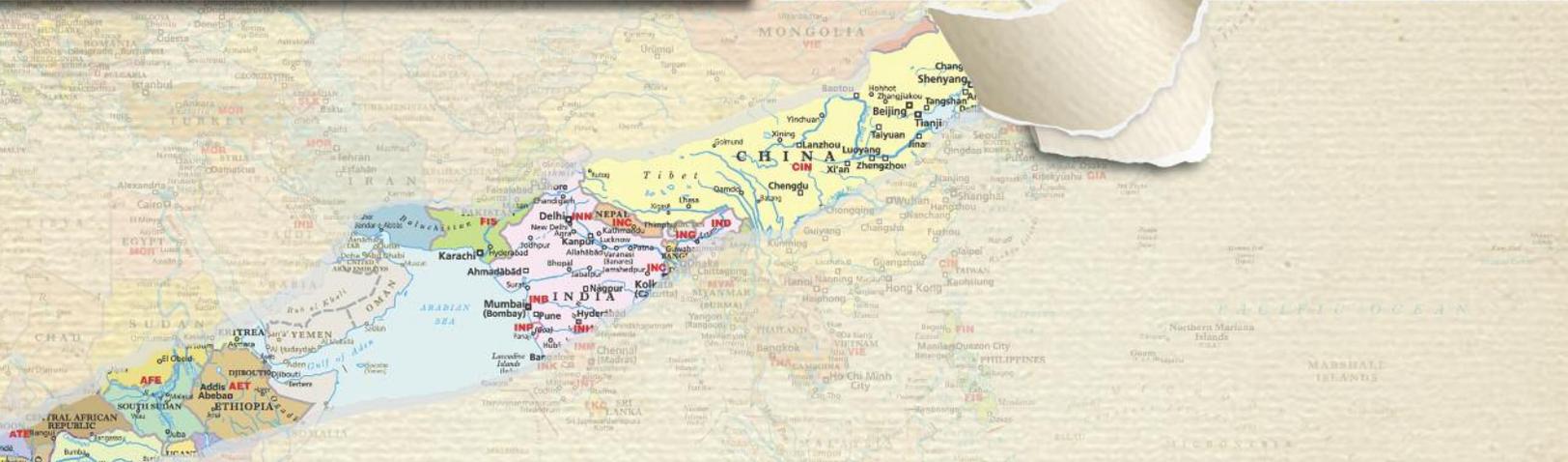
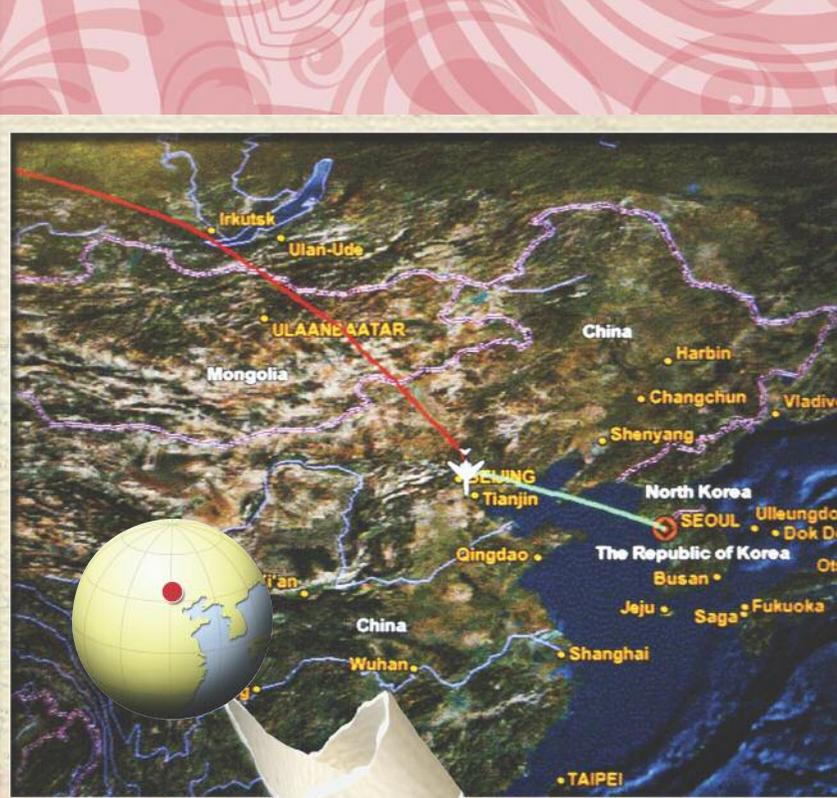
Perhaps it was Don Bosco who really decided to take his pilgrim route through the East Asia –

Oceania Region. At the beginning of the pilgrimage in this second Region, which includes Beijing city, a significant reference point in the

dream, he wanted to find the best possible way to approach Beijing where still many young poor people await his fatherly love.

Don Bosco's Casket, after the long journey through the America's, came back to Italy where it remained before setting out again to South Korea for its pilgrimage in East Asia-Oceania. On 25 October 2010 at 15:50 many Salesian commu-





nities, especially at the Pisana in Rome where Don Bosco's ninth successor, Fr Pascual Chávez lives, knew that the Casket would be passing above Beijing at that very moment. In Rome it was time for morning Mass and Flight KE927 conveying the Casket to Seoul was precisely flying over the city of Beijing in China. This I can vouch for as author of this article – I was accompanying the Casket from Italy to Seoul.

Above the city he had seen in his Barcelona dream, the city he longed to reach and realise his Oratory for poor and needy youth, Don Bosco saw where he wanted to care for the sheep and lead them to fresh pastures. He came in person over Beijing's skies. It was a brief passing-over, but seeing the city from 10km's altitude he could hope that the word promised by Mary will be realised; Don Bosco blessed the young people eagerly awaiting the arrival of their father.





## A Sea of Hands

by Jean-Marc Marie Mutangala

*"Is it him?,"  
"Is it not him?,"  
"Is he real, or just a statue?,"*

Many of those present were lost in silent thought and questioning as they pondered such questions in their hearts. But it was also a moment like the one which prompted the Roman centurion of biblical recall to say: *"This man was truly ..."*

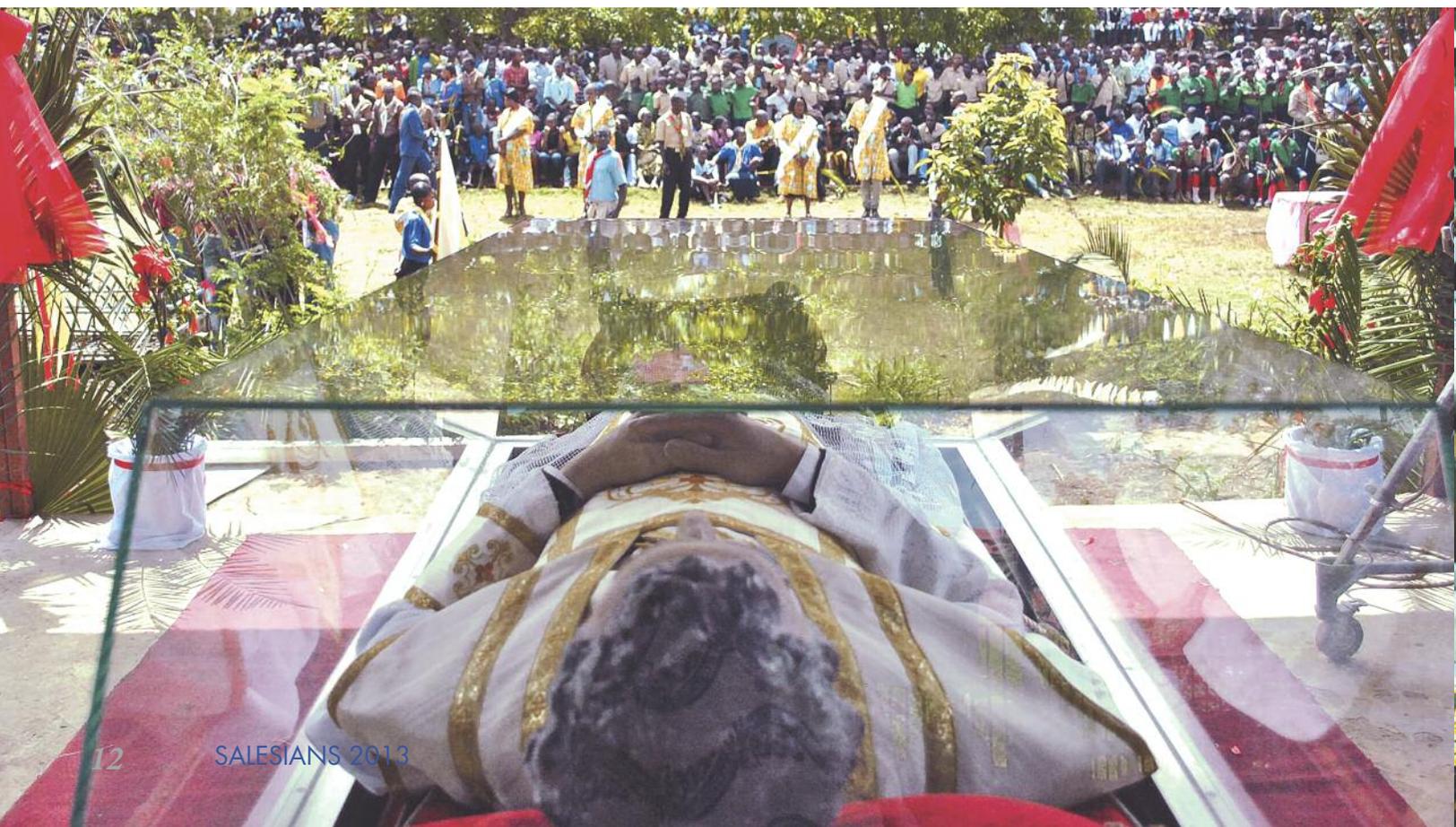
The veneration of Don Bosco's relic was an event which provoked deeper questions. Anyone who simply stopped at appearances, at what was visible, would not have succeeded in touching the invisible, would not have

touched the divine, the wonderful and extraordinary nature before him or her in the guise of the Don Bosco whom the missionaries had handed on. One needed to close one's eyes in order to better perceive with the heart.

Whoever could take the step enlightened by faith discovered a world of grace, an opportunity presented on a silver plate, or should we say in a golden casket, thanks to Fr Pascual Chávez and his Council's decisions to let Don Bosco meet up with his children wherever, across the entire world, the Magnificat was being sung with poor and neglected youth.

A sea of hands, a matrix of crossed arms was created: all the world wanted to touch Don Bosco, the world wanted to reach out and touch the visible traces of the Salesian charism. He was not just an invention of the missionaries but someone real for us: Don Bosco was there, right before our eyes.

The streets filled up, people pressed on all sides; everyone wanted to touch Don Bosco with their own hands. Hands reached out searching, hands intersected and arms intertwined! In some parts of the world it is an old superstition to cross arms rather than offer a hand of peace – and not such a peaceful gesture! In DRC all hands and



*Don Bosco visited the The Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the heart of Africa, from 16 March to 15 April 2012. Coming from Congo Brazzaville, Don Bosco touched Congolese soil at 9.30 in the morning, in Kinshasa. As with any encounter with a Saint in the Pilgrim Church, it was a moment of silence, curiosity and strong inner emotions.*

arms, those who seek, those who love, those who work together, those who want only peace, were crossed.

Don Bosco was a Saint for the people, and he remained so during his time amongst us. All traffic was blocked since young people had poured out onto the streets to touch the vehicle carrying their 'father'. The procession of vehicles was forced to stop when a young girl leaped enthusiastically from her bus to touch St John Bosco's hand.

He brought people who did not believe to tears, when they too received the gift of inner sight. He silenced cer-

tain non-believers, but they too could see that all went well as if guided by an invisible hand. He opened the hearts of people to receive the grace of forgiveness and be freed. He called together people from all ranks of society to encounter Christ around the altar. He remained the disciple of Christ, calling and gathering people around the table of the Paschal banquet.

Don Bosco visited Salesian communities and works in Kinshasa, Goma and down to Lubumbashi. For us his presence was a time of conversion and for rediscovering the Salesian charism. The various Salesian Family groups found opportunity to renew their commitment.

Don Bosco's pilgrimage amongst us will certainly put us on a firm footing as we begin our second century of Salesian presence in DRC. What our eyes have seen, what our hands have touched will stay with us as we relaunch the Salesian charism wherever we are now, and in other parts of the DRC where we have not arrived.

When our hands comes into contact with that of a saint, we are motivated to stand up and get moving for the mission. 





# Forming Lay People Transforming Society

by Randy Figuracion

*In response to the GC24 challenge, DB-CLAY was born in October 2002 in the South Philippine Province. Its aim is to be a Salesian institute of formation for lay adults and youth to become Christ-centred, empowered servant-leaders, living witnesses and agents of transformation in the family, society and the Church. It intends to provide a holistic Christian formation inspired by the spirit and example of St. John Bosco, hence a Centre for laity and by laity who own and share the Salesian mission deeply.*

*Through it, lay mission partners have a space for quality involvement and shared responsibility for the Congregation's pastoral work.*

Inside the carpentry shop at Don Bosco Technology Centre, Alex del Mar breathes a sigh of relief. The "Dream at Nine" bass-relief sculpture project is taking shape slowly. The artistic hands of artists – both Salesians and lay – have done wonders to the 8 x 10 foot wood and body fillers as the image of the Rector Major's Strenna 2012 comes to life. Alex doubles as a manager-cum-artist as he oversees this creation with the notable contribution of Frs Nioret and Joel. The work, a copy of the Strenna poster produced by *DOSA Comunicaciones* and based on the Spaniard Manuel Montes' painting, will be made out of fibre-glass. Once complete, it will be placed at the entrance lobby of Don Bosco Formation Centre as its identifying signage. Alex is managing the completion of the project details.

Fidel Orendain, the Salesian formerly in charge of DB-CLAY or Don Bosco Centre for Lay Adult and Youth, this bass-relief sculpture project is an icon of what DB-CLAY is all about. Its fundamental vision is to turn "wolves into lambs." To make this dream come true, a collaborative effort is needed by the Salesians and their lay mission partners. It is a partnership in the task of educating in the faith, involving a vast movement of people.

In assisting youth to grow into empowered servant-leaders and lay people to respond to the call to holiness, DB-CLAY offers programs such as *Youth Encounter*, *Youth Encounter for Yuppies* (Young Professionals), *Youth Encounter-Facilitators Seminar Workshops*, *Leadership Training*, *Human Sexuality Seminars*, *Team-building activities*, *Retreats and Recollection*. More recently, it has ventured into formation projects

Conceptualised by Fr.





*An important element for the quality involvement of the laity is adequate formation*



for catechists and lay pastoral workers offering its programs at the service of the local Church.

A feature now identified with DB-CLAY is the annual *Blessed John Paul II Ongoing Formation in Communication for Youth Animators and Catechists Conference* every October. The activity takes its pattern from the *John Paul II Catechetics and Youth Ministry Conference* begun in 2005 in Don Bosco Parañaque, spearheaded by the Salesian Catechetics Office. This gathers youth ministers seeking new ways to educate and form the youth of today through traditional and modern means.

The Southern Philippines version tends to put more emphasis on improving both the content and skills of Youth Leaders and Catechists in communicating God's Word, while at the

same time providing opportunities for fellowship as participants enrich each other through the witness of their lives and the sharing of their experiences in ministry. Now in its 3rd year, this 3-day activity gathers an increasing number of pastoral workers who wish to grow in excellence of service and renewed commitment by reflecting on the Holy Father's message every World Communications Day. It addresses the need for initial and on-going formation in order to be integrated, skilled, and thus effective ministers. It has also developed an annual Summer Seminar-workshop for teachers of Christian Living, for the same purpose every May.

An important element for the quality involvement of the laity is adequate formation. In response to such a need, the Southern Philippines version of the *Evangelium* Program has been intro-

duced under DB-CLAY. The Program is a 2-year certificate course in *Catechetics and Youth Ministry* offered every Saturday in a modular approach. It seeks to professionalise catechists and those who are involve in the ministry of the Church through systematic study and training. At the same time, it deepens their knowledge of Catholic doctrines and they acquire pedagogical methods and strategies to become better educators of the faith. Hopefully, this program can ensure qualified personnel for the Church's mission of transforming human society.

The bass-relief is still far from completion; Alex looks after the project day by day. It is much the same for the mission of DB-CLAY in cultivating the basic standards of formation and updating for lay people. With a clear vision ahead the work continues, daily, they being co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord. 

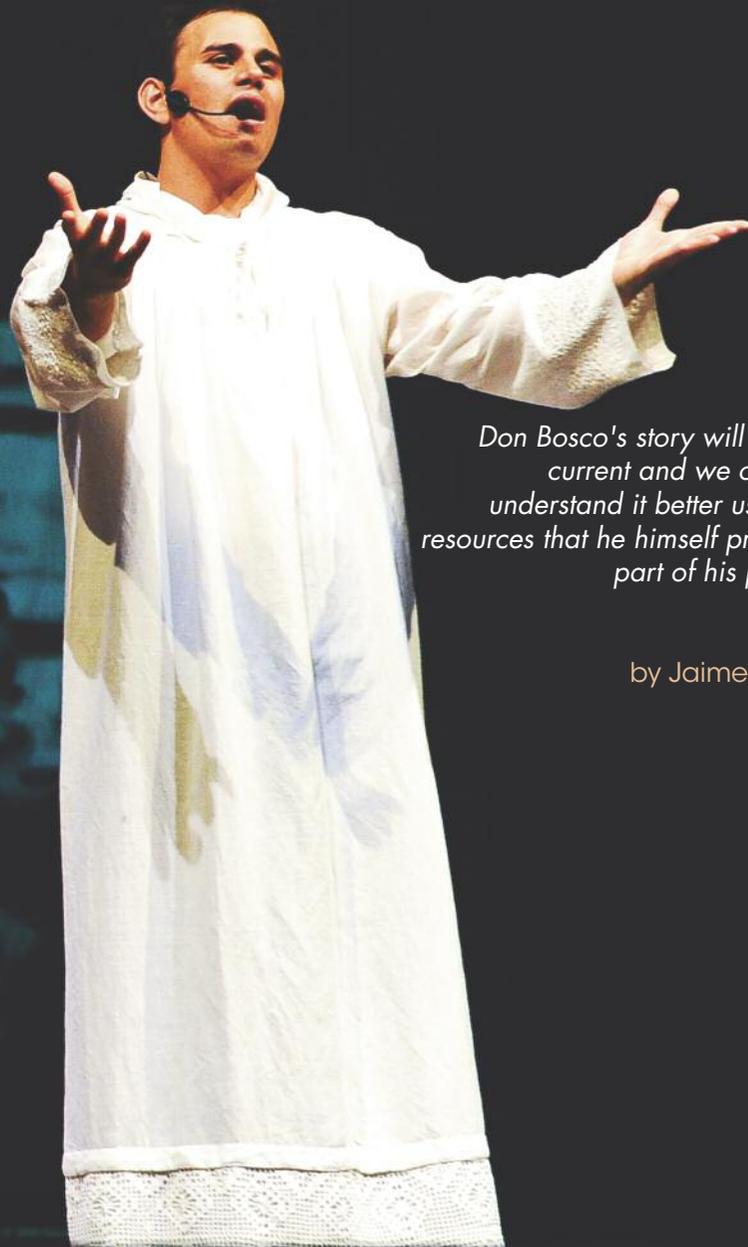




# Retelling Don Bosco

*Theatre, music and games were, for Don Bosco, basic pedagogical possibilities for entertainment, filling in free time and encouraging certain qualities in his boys. These same things today, in our 21st century, now become a way for us to come to a better understanding of Don Bosco's story.*

*Past pupils, young people generally, artists, poets and writers who have come into contact with Don Bosco's story have sought to retell it and come to a better understanding, bringing it into our own times yet again through theatre, music, dance, poetry or folklore. Amongst more recent examples of this are the Carnivals in Uruguay and Brazil, or musical productions that have been written and performed across the continents.*



*Don Bosco's story will always be current and we can always understand it better using all the resources that he himself proposed as part of his pedagogy.*

by Jaime González

In Uruguay the Texas theatrical group, made up of Salesian past pupils, took part in the Montevideo Carnival competing with another 47 groups, and presented the story of Don Bosco under the category of parody. As the performers described it, through music they are able to describe essential aspects of Don Bosco, his struggle against anything running contrary to the good of young people, his profound confi-

dence in God and the mission to the young. One member of the group said, at the end of his presentation: "it is very important for us for people to get to know Don Bosco's story, the story of a man who has guided us, taught us, changed us and given us the strength we need to know we can achieve our dreams as difficult as it may seem".

Moving on to Italy, singer and composer Marco Anzovino and the Turinese comic, Giampiero Perone, accepted the challenge of speaking of Don Bosco in a contemporary and attractive fashion using the language of today's teenagers. The show with the title "Don Bosco and the

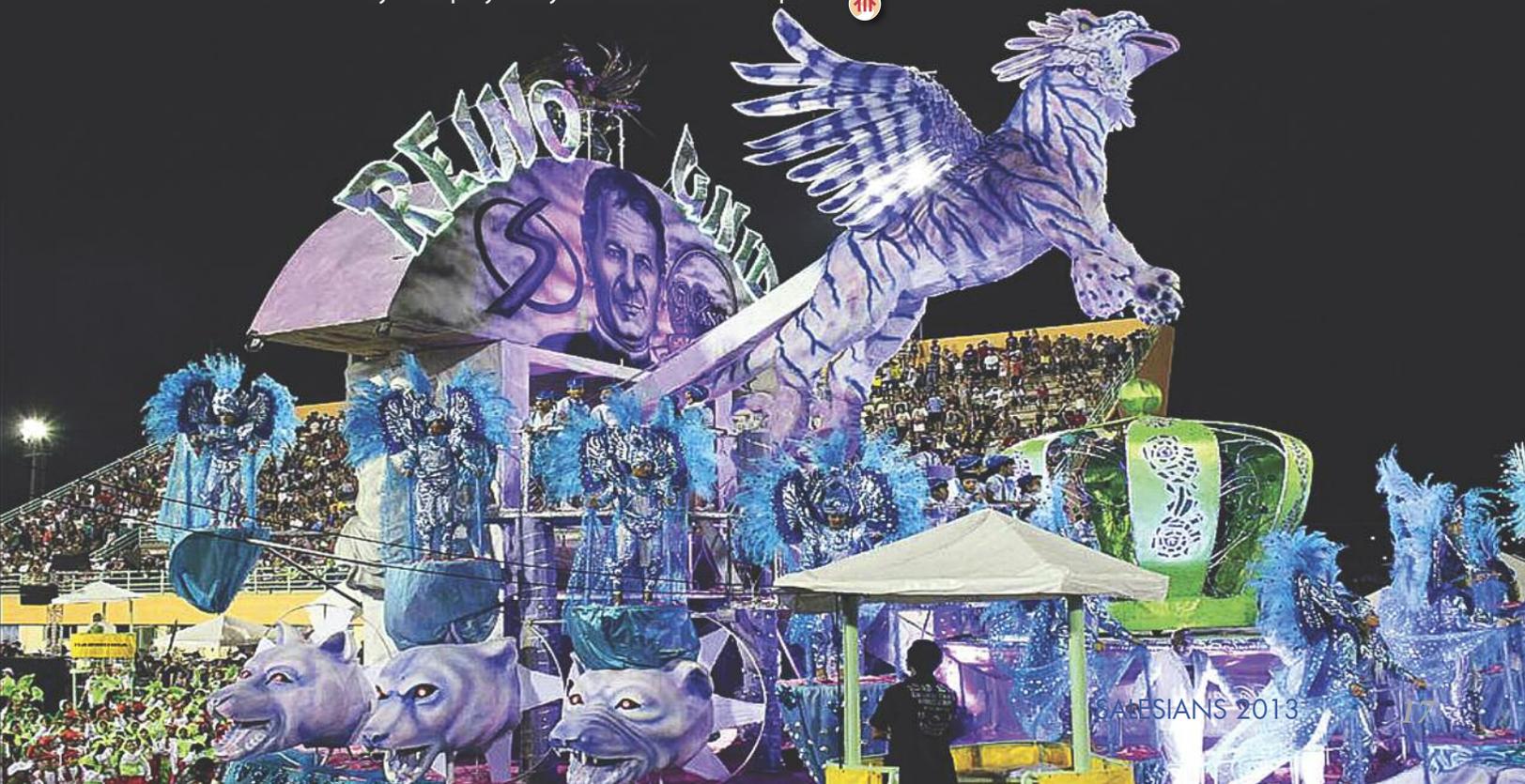
power of a smile" presented a specific side of Don Bosco's personality, his smile. His positive and optimistic outlook allowed him, in difficult times, to carry out a plan directed to youth and, especially, the most needy: those excluded, the least.

In Brazil, on 20 February, the *Reino Unido de la Libertad* (United Kingdom of Freedom) samba school gained first place at the Manaus Carnival with a production in honour of Don Bosco. The production, called "A boy, a dream, a work: Don Bosco's love made real", retold five occasions in the saint's life: his dream when he was nine years old, the Salesian Missions, the Salesians in Latin America, the Salesians in Amazonia and the 90 years of the school in Manaus.

The School set about making a huge presentation divided into five parts represented by five floats, a band made up of 300 drummers and some 4000 festive participants. Two of the floats that stood out in particular were the Oratory and the Missions. The one dealing with the dream and the Oratory was played by two clowns out

front showing how life could be tackled with fun, and demonstrating the dedication that Don Bosco showed for his boys. Then a circus magician, clothed in bright splendour and beauty and wielding a magic wand, highlighted the creativity that Don Bosco used to attract youth.

On the float dealing with the missions, the scene made allusion to symbols of places where Salesians are now, describing Don Bosco's evangelising work. Up front an elephant represented Africa, followed by the imposing grandeur of the Taj Mahal and two Chinese pagodas with flags flying gloriously. In the background a light from a large lighthouse at the ends of the earth, in Patagonia, appeared, the bright white light providing a sensation of peace.





## “Freely you have received, freely give”

*Don Bosco has not ceased to draw people from all backgrounds and religions, the same way he did when he was alive. It is as though his charisma and charm have remained untouched after all these years, kept alive through the hard work, dedication and faithfulness of his sons to the spirit he left them.*

*This same spirit has inspired many young people, the same spirit which drew Mohamed Abubakar (Peter), a young artist from Sunyani, a small district in Ghana, to Don Bosco.*

*This is Abubakar's testimony:*

I was born and brought up in Sunyani but my parents are from the north of Ghana. I thought I was one of the most unfortunate because I come from a broken family of six, and since my childhood, I had no one to run to for help. I could not further my education for I was abandoned by my parents

and relatives and had no one to care for me. I was practically left to cater for myself. Although I struggled to provide for myself for ten years, there was no way I could go back to school. However God sent me someone who helped me and gave me hope. A friend of mine who studied at Don Bosco Technical Institute led me there.

The first time I entered Don Bosco compound, I saw many people playing and others learning and I felt touched and wanted to be with them, to be like them. When I went back home I worked very hard and thanks

by Chiemeka Utazi (interviewer)



*I went to Don Bosco and prayed. I asked him to give me the same spirit he has so I can help many young people who have nobody to care for them*

be to God, I found myself in Don Bosco. It was like a dream because I never believed it to be a possibility. Everyone seemed better than I was.

When I discovered Don Bosco, I saw the richness of his generous heart. I met so many young people who were in a similar situation as I but were happy. I really felt reluctant to leave and from that moment I decided I would not to go back to my family

one very important. Therefore, I started painting Don Bosco.

I spent two years studying in Don Bosco and during this period, I saw and entered into a different rhythm of life. When I completed my studies I owed school fees and so avoided going back to the school because I had no hope of paying. I do believe in miracles and I always pray. One-day a girl came to me and told me the principal wanted

sometimes a thought came to me. I was a Muslim but I never saw people like this while I was growing up. They took good care of people they did not even know, so long as they were young and poor. They did not even know me. Just look, I am now educated, working and am very happy as a person.

I wanted to know why the Salesians were so good. That set me thinking hard about who I was, my motivations and behaviour. Somehow, I realised I had a soul, and suddenly it became very important to me that I had to save it. That prompted me to start searching inside myself to know what God wanted of me and for me. I reflected on how God provided the help I needed through Don Bosco. I prayed to God to show me the way. I decided to be baptised and started to learn about Jesus and the Catholic Church. I started attending catechism classes, was baptised with the name Peter and am now a Christian, a Catholic. I feel safe.



again. I had found a new home. I want to remain with Don Bosco.

At the technical school I chose commercial arts, partly because I felt I had the talent and because I might not make it to higher scholastic standards because of poverty, but most of all because the pictures I saw of Don Bosco inspired me. They were radiant and with very many beautiful colours. They were everywhere in the compound and I wondered who this man was. I wanted to know something about him because I felt he would be some-

to see me. I was so afraid because of the money I still owed the school. To my great surprise, the principal asked me to begin the industrial attachment. I did the industrial attachment for a year and teaching assistance for another year, after which the Salesians sent me to the capital city, Accra, to further my studies so I could be qualified to teach. Don Bosco was solely responsible for my schooling.

During my stay at Don Bosco I felt a powerful force pulling me to do something but I did not know what; and

When I saw the relic of Don Bosco, I knew he was the one. I was happy and I wish he had stayed here with me. I went to Don Bosco and prayed. I asked him to give me the same spirit he has so I can help many young people who have nobody to care for them. I wrote a letter to the Salesians and told them I want to go to Don Bosco Boys Home, for street children. I want to help them. I really want to help because I myself have experienced help from others. I also want to go to some villages to teach them how to tie and die cloths and make little handicrafts so they can survive. I received freely and I want to give freely.





# 'Bring me men to match my mountains!'

by Joseph Pulinthanath

*The Hubert D’Rosario Missionary Aspirantate at Sirajuli in Assam, North East India, is one of two unique institutions of the Congregation, the other being in Chennai: modern-day Cardinal Cagliari Institutes, like the one at Ivrea!*

From time immemorial, the easternmost ridges of the mighty Himalayas, known to the world as North East India, have harboured an array of dreams, tribes and promises as distinct as the rugged earth itself. One such dream took its birth in the early decades of the twentieth century, when eleven men, armed with unshakeable faith in God and seized by an unstoppable zeal, stepped into these hills and into the lives of their people. The first team of Salesians from Italy led by Fr. Louis Mathias had just begun a compelling chapter in the annals of the Salesian congregation.

Not without a price, because Europe was grappling with the consequences of World War I and the Congregation itself was facing severe scarcity of men and means. Yet Fr. Paul Albera, the Rector Major, felt the Assam missions had to be accepted not only because of the insistence of the Holy See but also because he knew missionary spirit was integral to the society of Don Bosco.

They arrived in Shillong on 13 January 1922, a date that in the course of time, proved to be a red-letter day for the entire North East. From then on the destiny of its nearly 200 ethnic groups became gradually and inextricably enmeshed in what they and subsequent groups of Salesians wrought in these hills and plains with untold sacrifice and love.

Before long, India’s North East became





*In his dream of April 1886, Don Bosco was shown continents and nations in which the Salesians would one day work.*

what is probably one of the most responsive missions of the Salesian world.

For the success of the overseas missionary engagements of the Congregation, personnel and finances proved crucial, and it was never easy to find either. However, it was the Cardinal Cagliero Institute at Ivrea that came to the aid of the Congregation with well-trained and motivated missionaries. Fr Philip Rinaldi established the unique missionary aspirantate and named it after Cagliero, the first Salesian bishop and missionary. Its mandate was to train young Salesians for mission 'ad gentes'.

It is noteworthy that the Cardinal Cagliero Institute at Ivrea was established in 1922, the very year the Salesians set foot in Assam. The promised land of the Assam missions would be fortunate to experience the mettle and magic of a host of admirable men - Vendrame, Piasieski, Ravalico, Marengo and many others like them that traced their indomitable missionary fervour to the Ivrea institute.

Today, ninety vibrant years later, as we are witnessing a resurgence of the North East from the back burner of history, it is gratifying to see the Salesian mission too coming a full circle. The starting of the Hubert D'Rosario Missionary Aspirantate at Sirajuli in Assam signals the second birth of the Cagliero Institute at Ivrea, which, during its heyday, provided over 1000 missionaries to all parts of the world, including Assam.

Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo of Tezpur Diocese blessed the Aspirantate, named after the revered missionary and Salesian Archbishop of Shillong, Hubert D'Rosario, in November 2011. Fr Václav Klement, the General Councillor for the Missions, inaugurated the Aspirantate.

Sirajuli promises to be a definitive milestone in the nearly century-long 'immersion' of the sons of Don Bosco into the destiny of these enchanting hills and valleys. It is a regional 'Te Deum' arising from grateful hearts that feel their turn has now come to send missionaries to other lands.

It was the Rector Major Fr. Pascual Chávez that challenged and urged the still vocation-rich provinces of India to replicate Ivrea and keep alive the missionary spirit of the Congregation. Fr. Joseph Almeida, the provincial of the Guwahati province, along with his council made the momentous decision to start the unique venture at

Sirajuli, a village on the 52nd National Highway, 82 miles north east of Guwahati, the capital city of Assam.

The story of the seven northern Provinces of India - Guwahati, Dimapur, Silchar, Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, and Konkan, has never been the same ever since. Sirajuli is their one immediate link to mission lands overseas.

In his dream of April 1886, Don Bosco was shown continents and nations in which the Salesians would one day work. The role of the Ivrea Institute in the formation of Salesians who went forth to those continents and nations has been remarkable. There is much to rejoice and be thankful about that in these changed times too, the spirit of Ivrea refuses to die. Instead, it gets rejuvenated and reborn in hitherto unknown parts of the Congregation - Sirajuli, for instance, where 60 young men are currently nurturing their dream of becoming missionaries 'ad gentes'.





# Dream of Don Bosco

*Interview with Starsky*

by Andrew Ebrahim

First of all watch 'The Dream'. Here you see an extraordinary 'mashup' by a young digital native. Starsky Torchia directed this short movie with the help of his Year 7 classmates at Salesian College, Chertsey. It was his 'Don Bosco Project'. As one commentator put it:

"It's about 12 minutes long and includes 'live action', video and still images, background music and graphic effects, and a very clearly delivered narrative - a lot of hard work and initiative. The Salesian message is very much alive in Chertsey!"

He's not wrong. This is one of the better YouTube efforts on the 'Don Bosco' theme.

This Dream of Don Bosco is actually an invitation to listen. We all know that nowadays people are impatient listeners. Unless you have flashy presentations (ppt) and smashing movie clips to accompany what you are saying, people's span of attention is more limited now than before.

But this one is different. It is "dynamic storytelling" with effective visuals to accompany the audio.

The director of this video clip was all of 11 years old at the time! That's why it is so wonderful!

We'll let Starsky tell us about himself:





<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRDV7XxsqaE>



 **Tell us a little about yourself - who are you?**

I am 11 years old. My grandparents on both sides are Italian except for my grandmother who is French. I am a Roman Catholic. The first few years of my life I lived in Germany and Italy as well as England.

 **Who is in your family?**

I live with my mum, Maria who is a professional dancer, my dad, Sebastien, who is a professional actor, my little sister called Livia and my brother called Tyler.

 **What are your likes/dislikes?**

I really enjoy thinking up future inventions and making models. I also enjoy making family movies and experimenting with applications such as Word and Power point.

 **What is it like being in a Salesian School?**

I really like being in a Salesian school as everyone is very supportive and cares very much about our behaviour and supports us for our future. Don Bosco also is a brilliant person to look up to. I have very quickly made lots of friends and all the teachers at 'Salesian' make learning interesting and fun; they are always very kind and generous with us. The school gives us lots of great opportunities which could help us in our future.

 **What was your initial reaction when you were given the Don Bosco Project to do for homework?**

Straight away I was excited and was thinking about the possibilities of making the project and how it was to be presented. I quickly decided that I should make a movie and then thought about how I would set up the main structure of it.

 **How did you go about devising your video?**

I first planned the time-line of my movie and where everything was going to be and then recorded my classmates fighting. I then put this onto Imovie and started adding pictures, sound effects and effective title screens around the clip.

I asked my parents to read a few sentences in the dream and asked my RE teacher, Father Andrew, if I could borrow the clip of the sixth formers going to Kolkata to use in part of my movie.

 **What did you find most interesting about the whole process?**

I found a lot about Don Bosco that was really interesting and how Don Bosco set about his work, starting with a very poor background and becoming more well known after looking after children and starting up a society that is still strong and relevant today.

 **What really struck you about the character of Don Bosco?**

I really like how he agreed to arm wrestle in the film 'Mission to Love' to show the children that he is the boss and they should listen to him instead of just totally ignoring his words and trying to get rid of him. I also like how when he does not achieve something first time he does not give up and tries every legal thing he can do to achieve his goal.

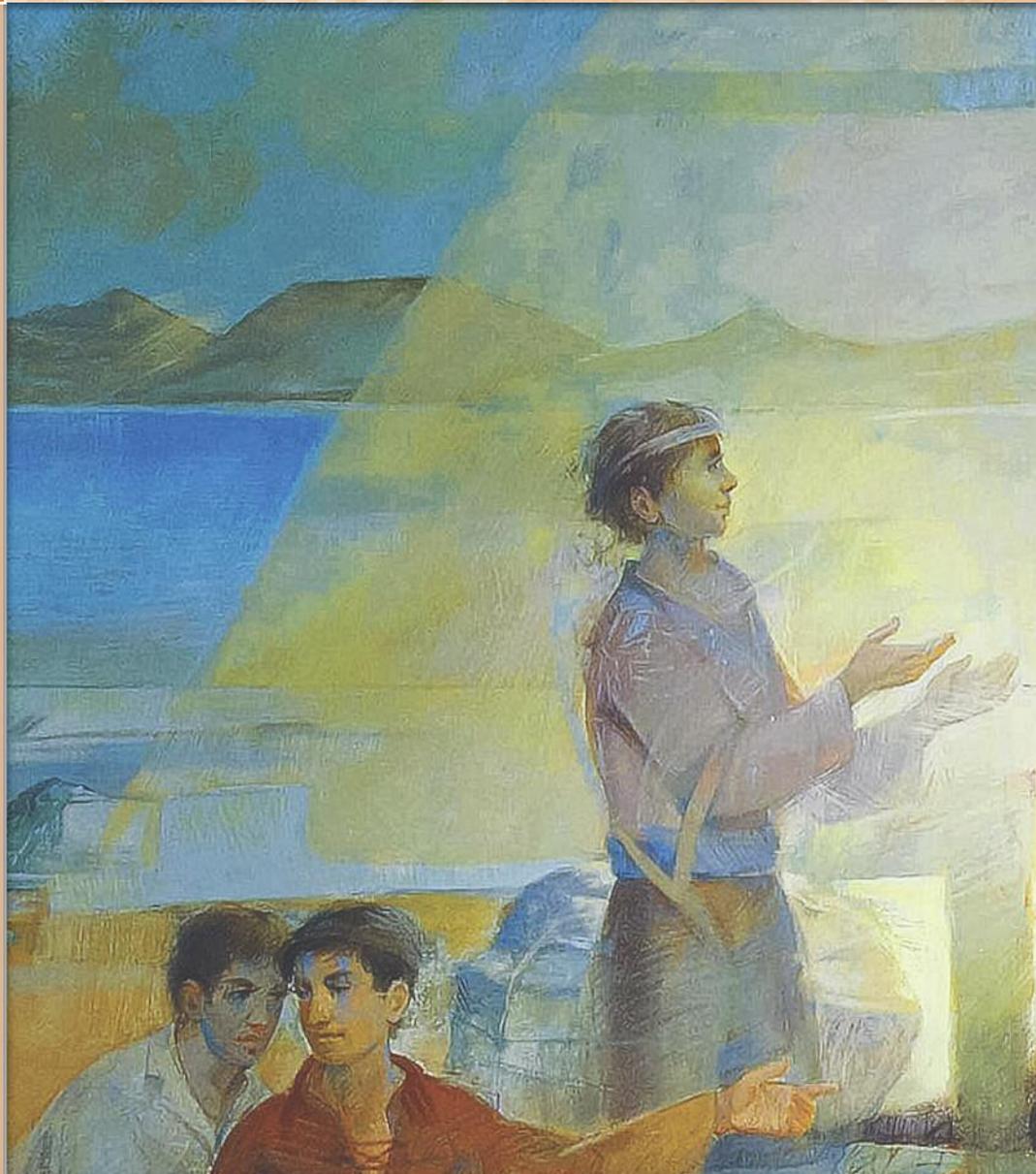
 **What are your plans for the future... what would you like to do with your life?**

In the immediate future I would like to concentrate on achieving good results at school and after that I hope to get involved in something to do with film.





# INSPIRER



- ▶ Salesian Social Network: By the Young For the Young
- ▶ Singing for Social Justice and the Defence of Human Rights
- ▶ Bosco Magic
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- ▶ Romania – Being Don Bosco Today
- ▶ Sicelo: We have Been Expecting You!
- ▶ Don Bosco's Printing Press: 150 Years Later



"Now what purpose can this chronicle serve? It will be a record to help people overcome problems that may come in the future by learning from the past. It will serve to make known how God himself has always been our guide. It will give my sons some entertainment to be able to read about their father's adventures". (*Memoirs of the Oratory, Preface*)



# Salesian Social Network

by Heriberto Herrera

*At eight o'clock each evening, once a month, computer screens begin filling up with messages from young people identified by strange 'nicks', names they have adopted on-line. This is the moment for 'chat salesiano'. These happy messages help identify who is involved. From Panama, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Argentina... all in SMS-style language. The conversation soon turns to a previously assigned topic. It can be a somewhat chaotic conversation but in the end one has a feeling of satisfaction at having shared a common identity – a Salesian identity.*



The chat session is one of the various services offered by the on-line Salesian Bulletin, Central America. The print version can also be found there. Earlier editions are available on the website.

More than seven thousand individuals have indicated their 'Like' in Facebook and Twitter regarding our site. The number is increasing. We send all of these followers a weekly e-letter.

Users discover fresh news daily on the site. The news comes from our works in Central America. Some also come from information channels run by the Congregation and the Church. Each local news item is accompanied by one or more photographs.

A network of thirty volunteers feeds this flow of information. They have received basic training in journalistic style, basic photography and intelligent use of social networks through seven workshops three days duration each. Other workshops are planned.

The site has three blogs updated at least fortnightly. A Salesian writes about his daily life, a journalist comments on the world of the Internet, and a mother of a family writes about how the Preventive System works wonders for the upbringing of her small children. Another blog is open for whoever wishes to write an intelligent and sensible message.

Visitors to the site write in daily. They may ask information about how to enroll their son or daughter in school or how to get in contact with a Salesian who had been their teacher earlier. Others write about topics important at the time. Very few write offensive messages and we always reply kindly and respectfully to them. Often they write back saying they are sorry.

The 'wall' is another part of the site: this touts news of activities around the Salesian Houses. There are also photography competitions or stories about proposed topics. Leaders find a good supply of resources for Youth Ministry. A video each day, almost always on YouTube, is an invitation to reflect on important issues. Radio Don Bosco, run by the nearby Don Bosco University, is tied in with our site.

Don Bosco in Central America is linked with Facebook and Twitter. These links give wide coverage to our messages. Every day we send out a thought from Don Bosco which thousands of our followers look forward to. This is our modern form of the "word in the ear", Don Bosco's famous educational play.

Our visitors are mostly young people. A team of young adults has responsibility for keeping this fascinating and powerful resource alive.



# By the Young For the Young



SALESIAN SOCIAL NETWORK





# Singing for

## Juan Francisco Lastra

*Juan Francisco Lastra is a Past Pupil of Camilo Ortúzar Montt Sixth Form College in Santiago and of the Silva Henríquez Catholic University. Today he is making his name as a songwriter singer and has been appointed a Peace Ambassador and Defender of Human Rights in Chile. Juan Francisco explains how in the Salesian school he learned music and the values he sings about.*

by ANS

At 28 years of age Juan Francisco now devotes himself entirely to music. His passion and commitment have slowly developed until he sees it as a vocation.

In the short biographical notes published on his site one reads: "In 1989 he entered the Salesian 'Camilo Ortúzar Montt' Sixth Form College, where he experimented with various forms of musical and artistic expression, trying to find answers to the questions that had been going round in his head since he was a child". While at the Salesian College, in addition to receiving an academic and human formation, he decided in his final year to learn to play the guitar and became more and more interested in the work of some serious singer song writers such as Violeta Parra, Silvio Rodríguez, Joan Manuel Serrat, Víctor Heredia, Atahualpa Yupanqui. In this way he began to write his own songs.

After College Juan Francisco enrolled in the Physical Education Course at the Silva Henríquez Catholic University and graduated. During the second year he was invited to take part with three songs at the "Víctor Jara" Festival, organised by the Salesian Institute for Higher Studies, but his performance lasted about an hour. He realised that through his music he could reach people. "I think this is the first sign of the quality of a musician, when the people recognise that he has something to say. Not all those who get on the stage communicate something".

As time passed and with performances following on from one another Juan Francisco became more seriously committed. He got to know new musicians. "Soon people began to contact me by post, the internet, began listening seriously to my work. So I had the courage to take part in a concert with some other musicians. My public began to grow. In this way I became more committed to being a singer".

In June last year he issued his first disc "*Desde mi Calle a la Imaginación*"

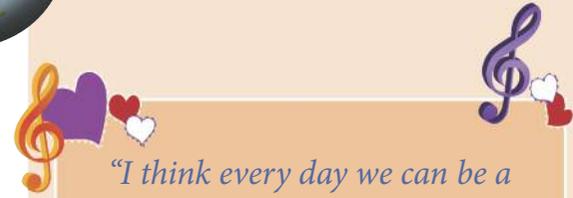




# Social Justice and the Defence of Human Rights

(From my street to imagination) containing 13 songs dedicated to children and dealing with solidarity and social mobility...

His singing has taken him to many national and international stages and he deserves the title of "Peace Ambassador and Defender of Human Rights in Chile" given him by the Committee of Observers and Defenders of Human Rights. Juan Francisco does not see this title as an honour but as a responsibility.



*"I think every day we can be a little better. I also believe that things are not going well. Every day society is becoming more selfish, more individualistic, more divided, with more discrimination. It is not right that there is more selfishness, that there is more consumerism... that is why I sing, because I believe I speak for many people."*





Wherever one goes in the Salesian world, one is likely to come across a Salesian magician, and not just the occasional performer. There are Salesian Family members of Magicians Unions and Clubs across the world.

by Brian Barnes

At age nine, John Bosco, already a keen story-teller and fluent reader, had one of his most famous dreams, one involving wild boys in which a tall impressive man told him "I will give you a teacher; under her guidance you can become wise". What greater gift could John have been given than the gift of wisdom! Bear in mind that John was only nine, turning ten and, in the two years that followed that gift of wisdom was to trigger an amazing activity.

tended his repertoire and his performances continued. These performances included a spiritual content with prayers and homilies, a condition for watching the performances. He must have hit on a delicate balance to attract the crowds but he was astute and recorded that 'conjuring was a source of wonder'.

John was determined to become a priest. He lacked the funds that others had. His determination was what carried him through. His public performances were mostly replaced by hard study and working to earn enough to live on. During these teenage years, included in the things he worked on were speech training and dramatics. How important these were to be in future years. The wisdom that young John had been promised was beginning to shape many of his decisions.

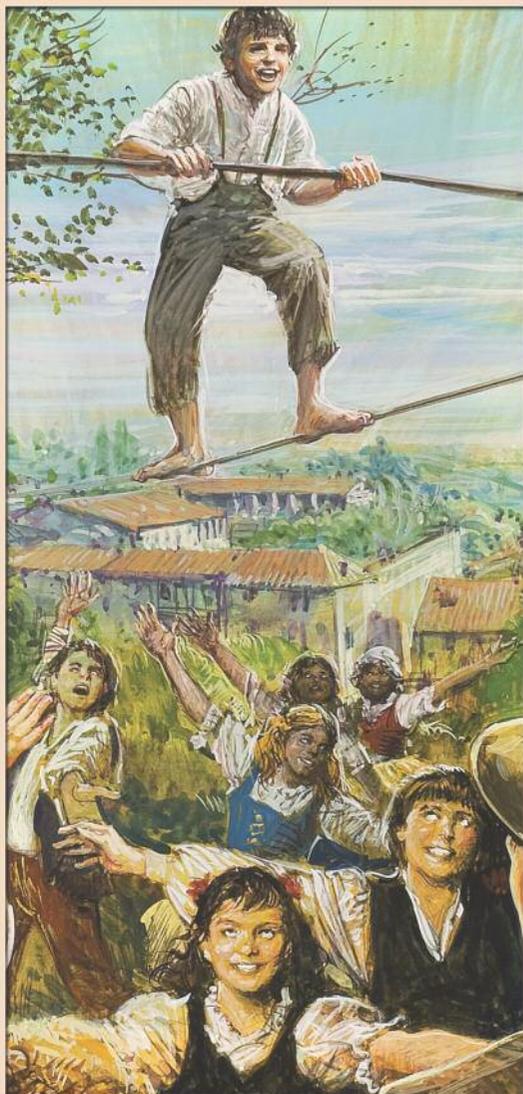
During John's final year of studying, before he entered the seminary, arrangements were made for him to lodge with a certain Thomas Comino's family. Thomas was a tailor and accepted John into his home. But John could not resist the opportunity to perform and in his own words 'These were everyday occurrences'. What Thomas and his family thought about this is not recorded, but other 'began to whisper that I was a sorcerer, that I had to be in league with the devil'. Thomas Comino felt it was then his duty to report John to the religious authorities. John was now suspected of being a black magic practitioner. In the world of conjuring, white magic is generally understood to be illusions that could be explained. If the performance could only be explained by external or

Mamma Margaret regularly took John to the weekly markets in the main square at nearby Castelnuovo. John noticed that the jugglers and acrobats attracted crowds to their performances. He wisely realised that, if he could copy their activities, he could attract bigger crowds to his story-telling. Using the gifts of observation, memory and regular practice, he emulated their performances and added juggling and acrobatic stunts, including tight-rope walking, to his story-telling. He now became a performer himself!

The next stage in his performing development was to be crucial. John became fascinated by the travelling magicians, too. He recognised that his own fascination would also apply to those attracted to his performances. He deliberately set out to watch each magician's performance many times until he knew how their tricks were done. He then went away and practised assiduously until he felt sufficiently confident to perform those tricks.

As he grew more confident he ex-

# Bosco Magic



Schools and oratories also have their own groups of budding young performers. Students at Salesian School Chertsey in the UK, for example, have the opportunity of expert tuition in magic from a Salesian Cooperator who is a member of the Magic Circle. What might lie behind this interest in conjuring and magic?

occult powers then it was frequently labelled 'black magic'.

These reports to the religious authorities eventually reached Canon Burzio, the most senior cleric in the district. John was summoned and held to account. The Canon had obviously made some enquiries, because he started by complimenting John on good reports of his studies. He then referred to the whispers about black magic and asked John to explain himself. In order to do so, John asked the Canon if he could borrow the Canon's watch. When the Canon could not find it, John asked if he could borrow a coin. As the Canon could not find his purse he suspected trickery and, turning furiously on John exclaimed 'you rascal, either you are the devil's servant or he is yours'.

John then lifted an adja-

cent lampshade and revealed the Canon's watch and his purse. With the furious Canon absolutely demanding an explanation, John capitulated. As far as we know, John had never before explained to anyone how his tricks were done. He told the Canon how he had found the watch and the purse and how, while the Canon was distracted, he had hidden them under the lampshade. Much to John's relief, the Canon burst out laughing and insisted on John teaching him some conjuring tricks.

On 25 October 1835 he donned the soutane, identifying him as a candidate for the priesthood. On that day he

made a number of private promises to cement his intention to further his spiritual progress. Ironically, among them we find his resolution 'I will no longer play games of dice or do conjuring tricks'. There was every possibility that the incident with Canon Burzio had played heavily on his mind. Where conjuring, as entertainment, had drawn crowds to the young John, it may not have fitted in well with his future ministry. John's instinct probably told him that he could not always explain to spectators how tricks were done. We can never be sure what was in John's mind but it is highly likely that the gifts of wisdom and understanding had played a major part in his decision. If John had not discarded conjuring on that day, then the John Bosco that emerged might have been a very different character.





## At Home with Don Bosco

by Erwin Joey E. Cabilan

*Because my passion is catechesis, I tried to look for Congregations where I would best be suited as an educator of faith. One night, while doing paper works, I emailed the Salesians of Don Bosco after visiting the website. I prayed, "Lord, if I get no reply after two weeks, this means that I will remain a lay professional catechist. Otherwise, this is a sign that I have to make a change in life." A day before the deadline, I got an email from Fr. Randy Figuracion, SDB. In my search for the right vocation, God found me!*

Since childhood, I have dreamt of becoming successful. I strove to reach my goals and was blessed with a Bachelor's degree in Education, two Master's degrees, the opportunity to study abroad, a teaching career and enriching experiences in my life as a catechist. I savoured my life as a young bachelor.

There came a point, however, when I started to ask myself: "Am I called to have more and to do more or to be more?" I pondered seriously on this question. As I searched within myself for answers, my childhood dream of

becoming a priest resurfaced.

### Educator of faith

My work as a catechist kept me in contact with people from all walks of life most especially the volunteer catechists and the young. I came to know and understand their situations. Being with them and living like them—simple, poor and wanting only God—has led me to understand, to love and to follow Don Bosco.

Article 34 of our Constitutions states that "evangelization and catechising

are the fundamental characteristics of our mission." St. John Bosco was called to work in vast field as a boy of nine years old when he encountered Jesus in his famous dream. As for me, being a young Salesian is my way of taking part in the work of making Jesus known and loved, especially among the poor and the abandoned youth.

### Accompanying the young

I share the gift of faith with the young in the public schools of Lawaan and Tabunoc, Cebu and even with the seminary aspirants at Don Bosco For-



mation Center, Lawaan.

On Sundays, I spend time with the young people who come to the Don Bosco Oratory, Pasil to deepen their faith and be their brother, friend and playmate. The youth in Pasil are simple and talented, warm and expressive. In spite of their struggles, they can still afford to smile and laugh. I believe they are fertile ground for sowing the seeds of God's Word. They already have the faith but need someone to accompany them so their faith can grow and mature.

Last May, I witnessed how the volunteer catechists facilitated the activities for the oratorians. Although they were noisy and restless at first, the kids cooperated as Fr. Andy Mendoza tried to make the Mass participative and meaningful. I realised that the fruit of this apostolate is not necessarily seen in great things. One time, after the Mass, a child came to me and held my hand and did *mano* (a Filipino gesture that expresses respect for one's elders). It was just a gesture of respect and gratitude for my presence with them. And through it, I came to experience one of the sweet fruits of my

work with the young. Even in their poverty, they're able to give one of life's greatest treasures: friendship. Thus they have Jesus.

I get weary and tired as I go from one apostolate to another. But I realise that being an earthen vessel of God's hope and love is indeed the noblest thing that one can be. I left my family and friends but together with my Salesian community and the young, I have a home: the heart of Don Bosco. With him, I only have this dream, "Give me souls, take away the rest." 



# Beating Heart on the



*At  
the Equator there is  
a Centre. At the  
midmost point of the world  
Becchi and Valdocco are  
giving heart to a  
continent.*

by Javier Altamirano

On the Equator there lies an oasis. Just 25 km south of the 0° parallel, along a broad valley which makes up the city of Quito, lies a house. And it is there that a small group of Salesians and lay people take in consecrated Salesians (SDB and FMA) and others in the Salesian Family, for three weeks. They come there so that their hearts can beat in harmony with the heart of a simple small-farmer and dreamer, founder of one of the most wonderful experiences for the education of the young: the Oratory at Valdocco. It is not the Alps they see but the Andes. And it is not Piedmontese they speak but varieties of Latin American Spanish, and Brazilian Portuguese. But one thing is certain: the same heart beats there which beat at Colle, and on the outskirts of Turin in the 19th century.

We call this house "the Centre" although its full name is Centro Salesiano Regional de Formación Permanente or Salesian Regional Ongoing Formation Centre. It came into existence in 1974 as part of a wave of postconciliar renewal by the Salesians, and was set up to serve the region. Today it has grown to be a 'prime meridian' for Salesianity for the entire American continent, especially since 2000 when the Salesianity School was introduced. More than 400 teachers and leaders have passed through since then (sdb, fma and lay) coming



# Equator

*It is a fine establishment with twenty four comfortable rooms, a main lecture hall, 6 smaller rooms for group work, a library which specialises in Salesianity, dining room, games room and a very nice rooftop terrazzo. But the chapel is the most beautiful room of all from every aspect*

from as far south as Tierra del Fuego and as far north as the Rio Grande and Colorado, where Spanish already begins to flow into English.

The Centre is located within the Campus of the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Quito. It is a fine establishment with twenty four comfortable rooms, a main lecture hall, 6 smaller rooms for group work, a library which specialises in Salesianity, dining room, games room and a very nice rooftop terrazzo. But the chapel is the most beautiful room of all from every aspect. It is both 'equator' and 'prime meridian' for the Centre. It aims to be an expression of Don Bosco's soul. Comfortable and well-lit, it invites recollection and devotion. One's attention is immediately drawn to Christ the Good Shepherd who is first of all Victim on the altar. These lead clearly to the energy and beauty of the Resurrection, the Risen Christ, like a runner who has reached his goal, arms raised, hands out-stretched, and chest breaking the tape which declares the winner... It all points to the Easter day when Don Bosco came to the Pinardi House to set up his Oratory permanently.

In the twelve years that hundreds have attended the Salesianity School, each has brought his or her own particular gifts of personality, Salesian style, culture and professionalism. The house seems filled with many colours, various tones and tastes, and song from around the continent. People come not only to receive and be strengthened in their charism, but they come to give and to nurture, to share and to help others grow.

The academic programme has two basic components: history and theology. The first helps to get to know Don Bosco, beginning from the facts and getting into his mindset through the events and historical and cultural transformations of his time; the second provides a basis for studying the profound intuitions of his life and the values that define his mission and spirituality in the context of church and society. One has to have experience to understand and knowledge in order to communicate it. The Centre thus becomes the core of an outwardly flowing enthusiasm, passion, experiential knowledge, conversion. Something is clear: nobody returns home as they came. Nobody remains indifferent.

Three levels, life, many lives in fact. Over three years (three weeks a year) men and women live together in the Centre. They are passionate about a way of living and passing on life. A fourth level takes them to Don Bosco's own places beginning with Colle and Turin. Behind all this there was one who dreamed, an historian and researcher with a pastor's heart, a genuine teacher, a mystagogue, and truly, the 'granddad' of everything there: Fr Fernando Peraza.

Already many of the teachers who have graduated have begun to show abundant results, firing people up like sparks in dry fields around the continent. Don Bosco is much more alive today than a dozen years back in lands that have many dreams and not a few nightmares still. Many youngsters, as in Don Bosco's time, await passionate Salesians, lay people, religious, men and women, to ensure that the Oratory continues as it always did. 





# Romania **Being Don Bosco Today**



by Andrei Laslău

It all began with my being an altar server in my parish, then attending the minor seminary. I was seeking something a bit different and came across a book on the life of Don Bosco; it was the 'something different' I was looking for: Don Bosco was the kind of priest that I would like to be. Reading his life and the events of the first Oratory in Valdocco, I could picture myself amongst his boys.

But the biggest moment of happiness came when I found there were Salesians in Bacău, and I met priests who, it seemed to me, were straight out of the pages of the Memoirs of the Oratory: not only were they in our midst,

the bunch of kids that we were, but they were the heart and soul of all our activities. I began to consider that their life could be my life.

I became a Salesian in 2009 and after studying philosophy at Nave, in Italy, the Superiors sent me for practical training to Bacău, my home city, to run the oratory there. Who could ever have imagined that I would be sent for practical training to the place where I had grown up as a leader!

## Back home

Bacău is nice but it is a complex place. The city has around 200,000 inhabitants and the Salesians are in a working-class suburb. Don

Bosco's name is spreading through the district and creating a culture around it which earns respect. This is a sign of the work we are doing. The "yellow house", meaning ours, has become a focus of interest and a meeting point for young people from the suburb and the city.

If it was just an oratory to begin with, offering a safe haven for young people to play and learn something good for their lives, we soon saw the need to offer something more, and so activities increased

There are four confreres in the community. We have the oratory, a day centre with after-school activities, a centre for developing approaches to independent living and a small trade



*I am Andrei Laslău, 23 years old and from Bacău, a city in eastern Romania. I grew up much the same way as many of my peers, but the Lord, with his plans, led me along paths that I could never have imagined...*



school for electricians and plumbers. We have a good working relationship with the local town council and nearby parishes. The leaders make an important contribution; most of them are young people for whom I was a leader before I left for Italy. Their average age would be 16-17 and they really are bursting with creativity. It often happens that I have an idea which I share with them and then together we come up with something very impressive, activities which the kids just love. Like in Don Bosco's times: young people for young people.

After all the book-work in Nave, I now find myself immersed in this situation which was something I already had acquaintance with, but it has also changed over time. The first weeks were really an adventure as I tried to understand how I could carry on existing activities and what might still be other possibilities for the future. But things had to happen just the

same, so bit by bit I learned what the need was.

The oratory and day centre are activities that keep me busy all day: planning, organising, meeting with the kids and leaders, volunteers, more planning, preparing meetings and just being there in the playground. We offer after-school activities at the "yellow house", along with manual activities, music courses and foreign languages, sports groups and other groups of an educational kind like the 'Friends of Dominic Savio', a clown group, the oratory band. And these are just weekday activities. Then according to the calendar we have other things like the Summer Camps that bring around 350 youngsters and 100 leaders together.

### **Giving young people hope**

I often ask myself if I'm really able to do all this. But there is always God's grace which

follows me and fills in for what I lack.

Young people from Bacău love dreaming big. Despite life's difficulties and uncertainties they know how to be optimistic and hope for a better country. There are problems in Romania, like everywhere else, but I so much admire the new generation which has understood that things won't change if they just leave their country and 'go west'; they stay, despite a low income, but continue to hope for and strengthen Romania's future.

As a young person myself, a Salesian and a Romanian, sent to be one of Don Bosco's sons in Bacău, I fell very much part of this new wave. The country's future demands good Christians and upright citizens and I feel I need to help young people to have hope, but also to give a solid and objective foundation to their hope. This is what we do as Salesians through technical training and by educating them to life.





*The Bosco Oratory has been developing and evolving since the first Salesians arrived in 1949. The Oratory catered mainly for the local people in Bosco Village, children of the workers and staff at St. John Bosco College.*

# Sicelo:

by Clarence Watts

Brother Maurice Bondioni was the first Salesian to arrive in Daleside, Johannesburg to take up residence in the first house in what was known as Transvaal (today Gauteng Province) on 2 March 1949. On 14 November 1949 the first pupils started day school in a small building named Don Rua School, which has since grown today to about 900 learners.

As the area around Bosco Centre developed, the number of young people coming to the Oratory also increased. Bosco Centre is surrounded by mainly farmland; so areas such as Drumblade, daleside, Walkerville and De Deur began to grow.

Michael Rua School, which started out as a farm school in 1949, gradually began to develop which resulted in it being moved about 500m down the road from Bosco Centre and it catered for the youth from the above mentioned farm areas under the guidance of Fr. Dino Miotto.

My first introduction to the Oratory was in 1994 when I was a Pre-Novice under the guidance of Fr. Paul Borok Kim from South Korea. Oratory was held every Sunday from 13h30-16h30 and consisted of an opening prayer, message and fun and games. We closed the day with a prayer. The young people were collected from neighbouring farm areas such as Dale-side, while the majority of the youngsters came from Bosco Village. The





# We have been Expecting You!

## Bosco Oratory, Daleside

average number of young people was about 40.

### New Challenge

When I returned from studies in Kenya in 2008, I was appointed as Director of Programs at Bosco Youth Centre. At the time Cleric Lingoane was Director of Oratory until July 2009 as he was preparing for his departure for Italy to continue his theological studies. Under Lingoane's guidance the oratory had grown tremendously. The areas from which the young people to Oratory had expanded to places such as Sicelo (Meyerton). At several of our Oratory Leaders meetings we discussed at length how to resolve the transport problem considering that we only had two mini-busses that can accommodate 8 people each. I remember on one particular Sunday Fr. Roy and I made about 6 trips to and from Sicelo.

At one of our meetings, Zanele, one of the young leaders, mentioned that there was a recreational place available in Sicelo; it had a soccer field, netball court, a hall and a playing area for the little children. I investigated the option of moving the Oratory to Sicelo where many of the young people come from. Enquiries were made to the Midvaal Local Municipality. They had no objections in the salesians utilizing the facilities at the Sicelo Sports and Recreation Centre on Sundays.

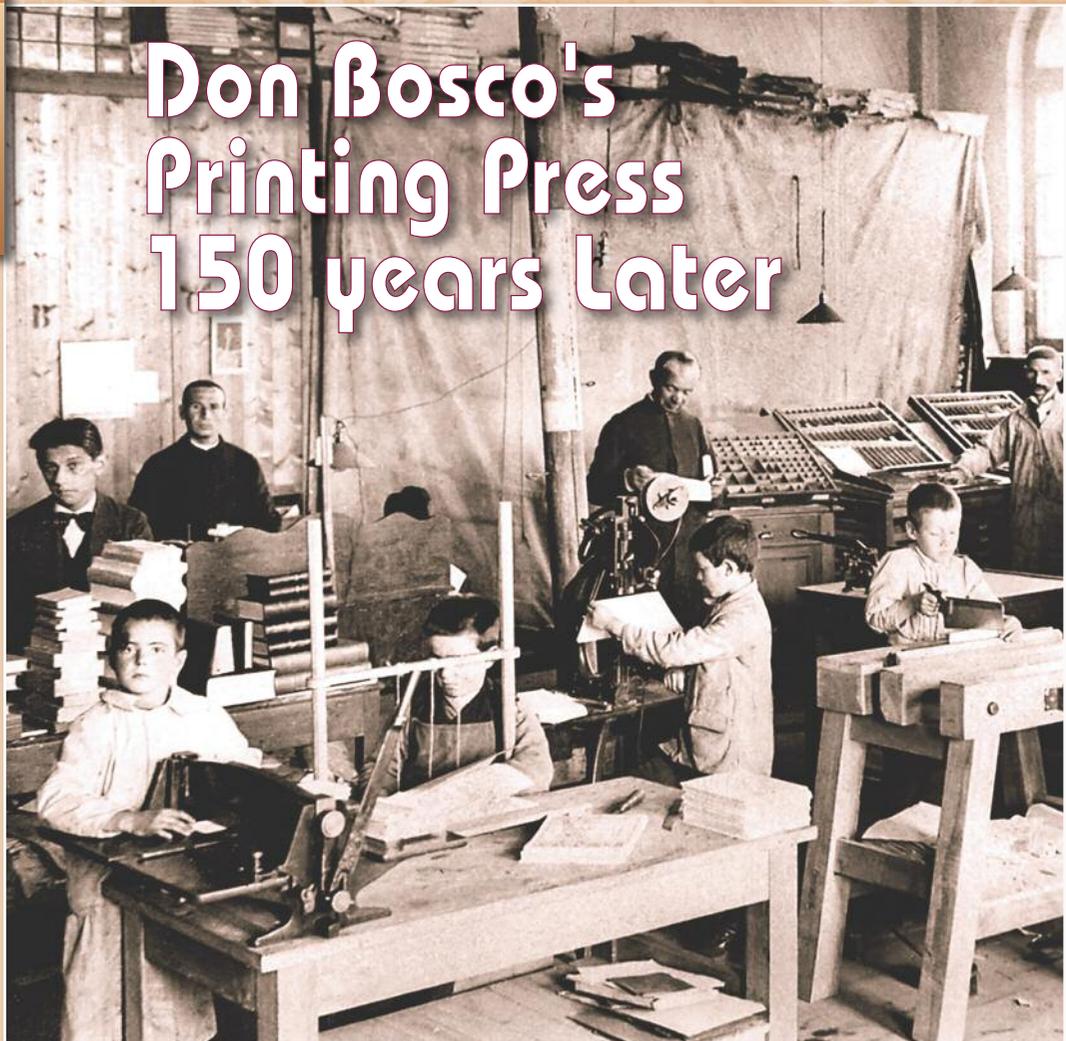
The Bosco Community approved the plan to move the Oratory and on 22 May 2011 the Bosco Youth Ministry Team launched the Oratory at Sicelo with about 50 young people. The Oratory runs every Sunday from 14h00 until 16h00. The Bosco team animates the programs which deals with various topics on a monthly basis; In August we dealt with women's issues, In Sep-

tember the focus was on culture and heritage.

The average number of young people frequenting the oratory varies between 80 and 100 kids. These young people look forward to the Sunday Oratory and we are also grateful to Ferrero who donates chocolates to Bosco Youth Centre and we distribute these to the youth from time to time.

We always strive to make the Oratory a place to learn, to pray, to play and to be a home. By going out to these young people every Sunday at Sicelo, we become missionaries among the youth and who knows one day we will see the fruit of our labours as we sow the gospel seed among the youth of this area. The word *Sicelo*, is a Sotho word that means "to ask" The young people have been asking for us, and we have responded to that call!





# Don Bosco's Printing Press 150 years Later

*The printing press which Don Bosco set up is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Set up almost as a family affair, it soon achieved excellence in the printing and binding industry, becoming a trade school which gave rise to generations of competent, much sought-after masters and workers in the trade*

by ANS

Halfway through the 19th century, Don Bosco had understood that the future lay in the ability to communicate. One day he laid out on the table all the printed pages of a book with the title *Guardian Angels*, and called over a young lad, telling him: "Now, you're the book-binder!" "Me, a book-binder? But I know nothing about it. How can I do that?" the boy shot back. "Just come here" Don Bosco insisted, "See these pages? You can sit down at the table and then just start folding them". He then sat down with the boy and they began folding the pages together. Then with some help from Mamma Margaret they sewed them together. The kids standing around began to laugh. "Well might you laugh", Don Bosco exclaimed, "but I know that we need a binding workshop in the house, and I want to begin right now".

Towards the end of 1861 Don Bosco had two machines set up in an appropriate room. The bench and job box with letters and ligatures were made in-house by the carpenters. Seeing this rather rough and ready-made equipment, the boys who had to start out with the job were not all that enthusiastic but Don Bosco encouraged them: "You will see! We will have a printing house, maybe even ten of them. You will see!".

## The first of many

The Oratory Printing Press, as the first Salesian Graphics School was known, went into production in 1862. Like anything that has a chance of growing up well, the Oratory Printing Press underwent many changes and grew as a result each time. As things got bigger and the area that housed them like-

wise, more powerful and more modern machines were acquired. The Press grew in efficiency and stature, and competed well with the best in the city: four presses, twelve steam-driven machines, afterwards converted to gas and finally to electricity, a typeset foundry, plate-maker, copperplate or intaglio printer.

In October 1872, some of the privately-run printing shops, jealous of the Salesian work and worried about its very promising future, formed an association, asking the Government to close down other printing presses "run by charity". But Don Bosco averted the threat with his usual vigour.

In 1884, at the National Exposition, the Salesian Printing House was given a huge shed bearing the sign "Salesian Factory: paper, print, mov-



able-type foundry, book-binding and bookshop". The following year Don Bosco encouraged his Salesian confreres with a circular about "spreading good literature" aiming to motivate them to pay more attention to the possibilities of the apostolate offered by the printing industry: "A good book", he wrote:

*... can even enter homes where the priest cannot. The dubious will take it as a gift or keepsake. There is no blush in the offering of it. Neglected, it does not feel troubled. Read, it calmly teaches truth. Scorned, it does not lament the fact, but leaves a lingering regret, sparks desire to know the truth which it is disposed, always, to teach. Whoever gives a good book*

*has offered a thought from God and gained incomparable merit in God's eyes."*

### In a digital age

The reputation won by Don Bosco's Printing Press spread throughout Europe winning many prizes and much recognition. As years went by new areas were opened and equipped to respond to contemporary needs and to remain in the vanguard of progress, as its founder wanted. The initials, too, changed, becoming SGS or the *Scuola Grafica Salesiana*.

Communication itself has been transformed. Ever faster, electronic, digital it is now a global network. The book, so loved by Don Bosco, might seem the victim of all this; but the Salesian Press reminds us that a book is more than a

kind of 'fast food'. It is an art, a trade, involving skills and professionalism. The Valdocco Press came into existence as a school and continues so today. Amidst all the changes it remains just what Don Bosco wanted and formed; it is rooted, even geographically-speaking, in its very origins: this is where its place is, beside the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians.

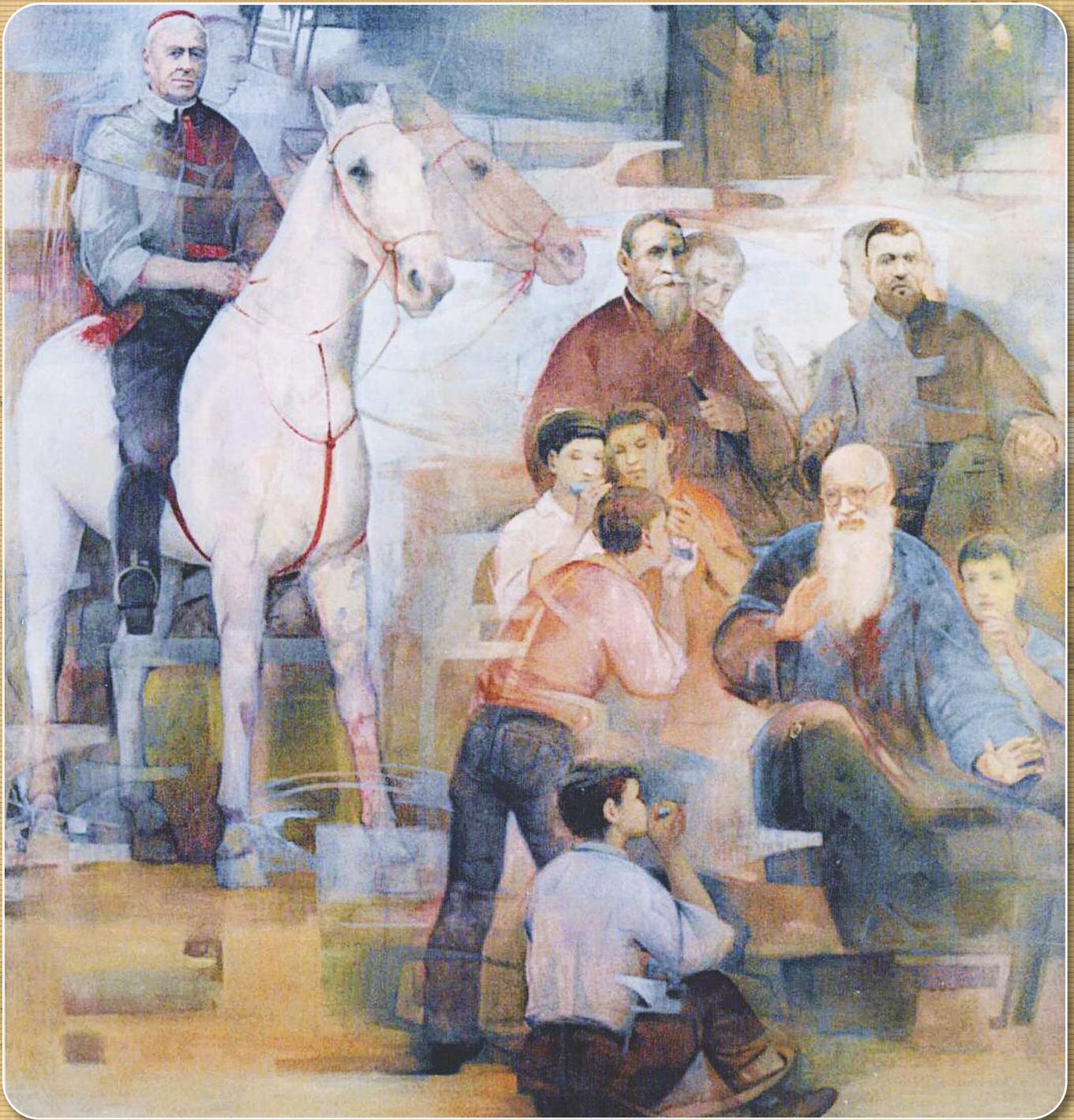
Its essential elements have not changed: after 150 years of experience it continues to function on a daily basis. It enjoys the growing esteem of workers in the field, is recognised internationally and still has the satisfaction of being able to teach the trade to so many young people.

Its two defining features have been handed down: family atmosphere and professionalism. 



# PROMOTER

- ▶ BIOSELVA: sustainable, respectful development
- ▶ Papua New Guinea: Discovering the Salesian Missions
- ▶ Creating a Missionary Culture for Our Young People
- ▶ Nigeria, Africa's Young Giant
- ▶ Like Sheep Without a Shepherd
- ▶ A Recycled Missionary
- ▶ From Valtellina to the Solomon Islands



"Many a time he informed me how much he esteemed this kind of the priestly ministry, comparing it to work in the foreign missions. He expressed a sincere wish that every city and province in his kingdom should establish similar institutions".

*(Memoirs of the Oratory, Chapter 41)*



# BIOSELVA: sustainable, respectful development

by Vicente Santilli



Bioselva is an association which came into existence to support the indigenous tribes of the Peruvian Amazon. The project came about as a response to the circumstances of populations who have never been taken into account by the State. These people want answers and respect which is in keeping with their world-view. Unfortunately, many have passed through these places offering unfulfilled promises, resulting in suspicion and mistrust.

Now with Bioselva, the perspective of the indigenous people is changing. The project involves training local members of the community in agroforestry, building and implementing two factories for collecting and processing products which will eventually

go on the market. "We are increasing cultivation of groundnuts and *sacha inchi* (vegetable oil from nuts), and sustainable use of *ungurahui* and *aguaje* (both palm tree fruits native to the Peruvian jungle)", says Enrico. Besides we are teaching new techniques for collecting the fruit without destroying the plants.

## The developers

Ms. Rosario had made acquaintance with Fr Yankuam (Luis Bolla), and became enthused about his mission. "His work", she says, "filled me with emotion and I accepted the challenge of getting involved in the project. Despite some apprehensions I saw that the Achuar were welcoming, keen to improve the situation and open to evan-





*A venture to defend the forgotten peoples of the Peruvian Amazon. Enrico Marinucci and Ms. Rosario Miñano with the help of Volontariato internazionale per lo Sviluppo or the International Volunteer Movement for Development (VIS), are setting up a business that will raise the standards of living and preserve the culture of Amazonian tribes, beginning with the Achuar.*

gelisation; this filled me with enthusiasm”.

Enrico had earlier worked with the Chankuap Foundation, an organisation from Ecuador that was doing something similar. Invited by Fr Ferdinando Colombo to do something similar in Peru, he had his doubts, initially, but aware that problems might be solved as things went along, he accepted the challenge. “Jesus makes a good companion, and most of my doubts were about training people and the business aspect, but I see that the Achuar respond well and are looking for the kind of development that respects their culture”. Besides, “The Achuar are happy with the project, and this makes us happy as it is a guarantee that things will proceed well”, says Rosario.

## Difficulties and problems

There is no lack of difficulties created by financial interests. Many of the Sierra and Selva communities do not want the exploitation that certain companies bring through oil-drilling and mines if they were to come into their territory, since these show little respect for the environment. More than half of the social conflicts that arise in Peru have their roots in people defending their land. Some companies have infiltrated the Achuar and divided communities, offering gifts, money, alcohol, and promising a false paradise; they have manipulated and corrupted some of the chiefs. The majority however have not accepted proposals of a destructive nature.

Due to contamination of the Rio Corri-

entes and other areas, the people do not want these companies in the Selva, because they will damage biodiversity, the environment and their culture. The local people are seeking human and not just socio-economic development. So it is urgent that the Bioselva project is supported by them so that ideologies coming from outside do not destroy their lives, world-view and nature.

Unscrupulous individuals did try to sink the project from the outset, offering money to collect information on the progress being made. However the indigenous people are not so easily tricked these days and were even ready to defend their culture and their people with their lives. This solidarity fills them with pride, since it is proof that the work has not been in vain.





# Discovering the Salesian Missions

by John Dickson

Young Shaun Larcom came to know Papua New Guinea thanks to a work experience in Port Moresby. After staying there for some months, he returned home and resumed his studies, but he retained his ambition to return to the South Pacific to carry out research on the relation between criminality and juridical pluralism in Papua New Guinea.

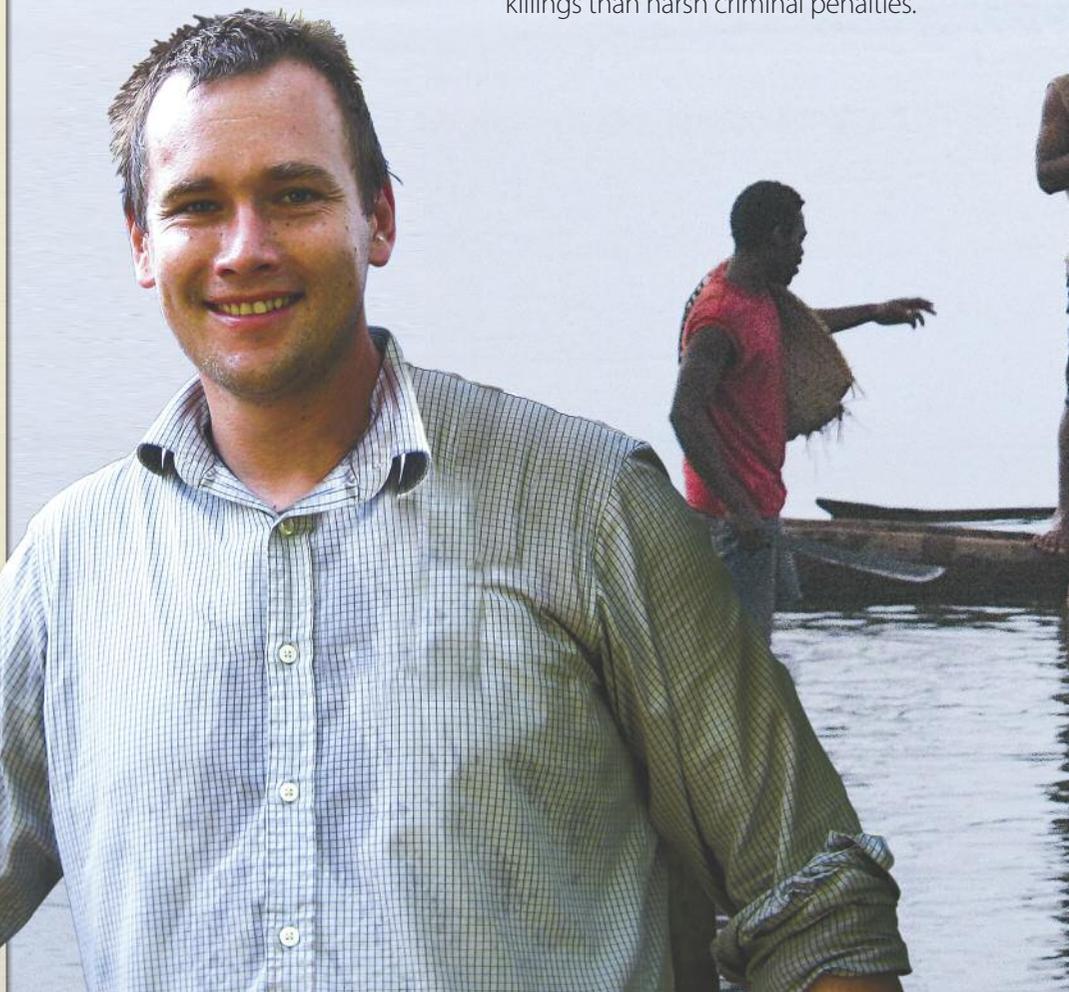
In the University Chaplaincy in London he came in contact with Fr. John Dickson, SDB, and through him with Fr. John Cabrido, a Filipino missionary in Vunabosco, who was great help to

him: He says: "Not only did Fr. John Cabrido give me a warm invitation to visit, within a couple of weeks he had organised a two month itinerary for my fieldwork, including hosts, guides, translators and transport."

From his research in the field, Larcom derived two significant results, one of which confirmed his hypothesis, while the other came to him as a complete surprise. What he expected to find, and what his econometric analysis showed, was that education seems to play a much greater role in reducing the propensity to engage in payback killings than harsh criminal penalties.



Papua New Guinea  
Papua New Guinea  
Papua New Guinea





*A research doctorate in the University College of London allowed Shaun Larcom, a young English student, to get to know the situation in the Salesian Missions in Papua New Guinea and their positive influence on the local communities.*

What the young student had not expected was the solid daily Gospel experience which he met in the Salesian communities. He modestly writes: "I am often struck by the radical message of the Gospel and how non-radical my own response can be. The same cannot be said of the Salesian missionary priests and brothers that I met and lived with. They really have embraced Christ's radical challenge to give up all and come and follow him. Leaving the comforts of home, including their families and friends, they live a life of service and prayer that reminds me of descriptions of the early Church in the Acts."

The Salesian schools and technical institutes in Papua New Guinea offer many young people the chance of gaining an education which otherwise they would not have had. At Vunabosco the Salesian community runs a non-selective institute which admits as many students as possible, regardless of their academic ability. In a country where secondary and technical education is the reserve of very few, the Salesian schools offer a vital service to the citizens.

The students gain an excellent education, despite very limited resources, that helps them flourish and serve

their communities when they go home. Larcom relates: "One of the former students of Bougainville, who I met, returned to his village and built a hydroelectric generator out of scrap, which provides regular electricity to the whole village."

Shaun Larcom concludes: "I will always remember the feeling of peace and happiness that I experienced while living with the Salesian community at Vunabosco. It is through the lives of these men, and of others like them, that the Church derives its beauty and really shines a light on the world"





# Creating a Missionary Culture for

by Juan Carlos Montenegro



*There are many ways to create a missionary culture in a province. One of them is through brief experiences in a mission setting. Let's talk about the history, problems and successes of Gospel Roads: Tijuana.*

This brief experience of mission began 8 years ago when the Youth Ministry Coordinator realised that young people at St. Dominic Savio's did not have any service opportunities. He went down to Tijuana to see how they might start some pastoral involvement with the Salesians in Mexico. When he arrived, he learned that a group from Oregon called "Ambassadors" used to bring young people to work in the oratories. The Salesians provided them with food, work, and a place to stay.

This idea was adopted by the Youth Ministry Coordinator at St. Dominic Savio's and this is how brief experiences of mission in Tijuana began. In the beginning, these experiences took place only on weekends, at least twice a year. The young people from St. Dominic Savio's arrived on Thursday night and left on Sunday morning after helping with whatever was needed in the oratories. This arrangement continued for many years.



# Our Young People

Up to that point, the experience was only one of collaborative service: the young people worked wherever they were needed. Unfortunately, something was missing. Community life – a very important factor in all mission work – was not then a priority. With this in mind, the Youth Ministry Coordinator and the Rector of the Salesian community in Tijuana got together and started to talk about the possibility of integrating the two experiences. At the end of this meeting and after obtaining the approval of the Salesian community, it was decided to have the missionaries take part in Mass, Morning Prayer, and the Good Night. With these additions, the short missionary experience in Tijuana began to have a religious community component.

At the same time that all this was happening, the Youth Ministry Delegate from St. Philip the Apostle Province in the Eastern United States was creating a movement called “Gospel Roads.” This movement consists of 3 retreats based on community service. The service component of the first retreat consists in helping in a shelter, vis-

iting the sick, and creating an oratory for the youngest ones. The second retreat is a little bit more complicated as the young people leave their local areas and go elsewhere to help others. This can be done in the same city or state or far away from where they live.

The third retreat is conducted outside of the USA. Young people who have taken part in *Gospel Roads* I and II can apply for this International Missionary experience.

Thanks to Divine Providence, the Provincial Delegate for Mission Animation in the western United States and the Youth Ministry Delegate from the eastern United States were able to get together and talk about their individual initiatives. When they saw the similarities, they committed themselves to a unified effort to collaborate in creating a missionary culture within the Salesians of the United States.

Today, *Gospel Roads Tijuana* is the perfect opportunity for young people to gain a different perspective on life. For ten days, the young share community prayers with the Salesian Religious each morning, engage in physical work at the oratories such as: mixing cement, painting, cleaning, or anything that is necessary to improve the quality of the site, and last, but by no means least, create community with the people from the neighbourhood by: sharing meals with them, playing sports with them, and most especially, sharing joyful oratory moments with the children. Each day finishes with the entire community getting together to have a well-deserved Good Night.

This experience has helped us to motivate our young people to make the decision to give one year of their lives to the most in need by becoming volunteers. This missionary experience in Tijuana has taught us that by working together we can make a difference in society: that truly, we can be love through service. 





# Nigeria, Africa's Young Giant

*Nigeria is really an entire world in itself, more than just a country. Unfortunately what we hear about it from outside is often limited and limiting. The tragic events are what make news, and these seem even more dramatic because of the large numbers of people involved.*

by Silvio Roggia

Nigeria is huge and its problems are proportionately complex and vast.

UN data for 2010 mention 158 million inhabitants 80 million of whom are Christian, 20 million of these being Catholic.

It is a kind of universe with its own constellations of history, civilisation and cultures rooted in the centuries, in peoples forcibly brought together to benefit external colonial interests.

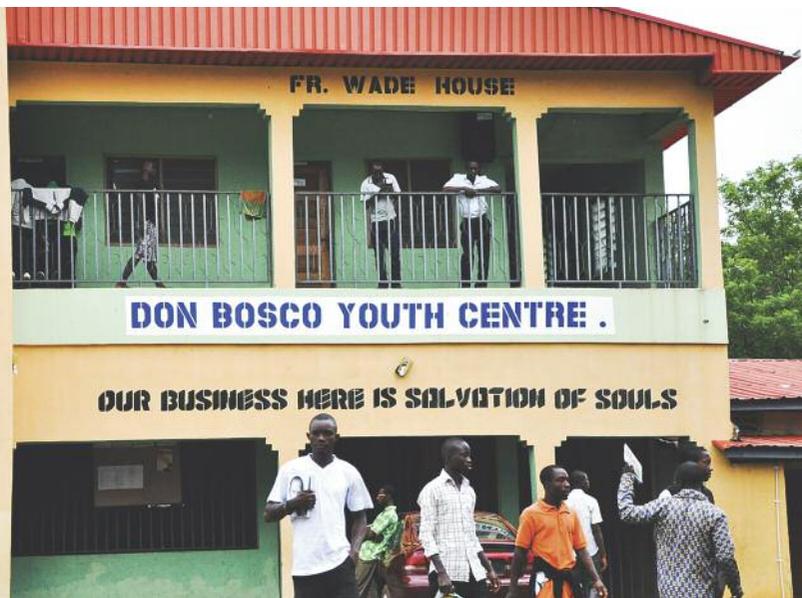
They continue to live under the one flag whose major factor of national unification is the resources coming from the export of oil, Nigeria being currently the sixth largest exporter of oil in the world in terms of daily output and tenth in terms of its reserves (around 25 million barrels of crude).

## Africa was made for Don Bosco

What is less newsworthy is the daily life of this African giant, especially the lives of the young, who make up the largest proportion of the population. According to UN data 53.25% of Nigerians (84,210,000) have not yet reached 20 years of age.

Salesians opened a double presence in Nigeria in 1982, at Akure and Ondo, followed by Onitsha in the centenary year of Don Bosco's death (1988).

We have become aware that if "Africa was made for Don Bosco





and Don Bosco for Africa”, as Fr Viganò used to love saying, this is 100% true for Nigeria.

The proof are the very many Catholic Associations named after Don Bosco well beyond areas where we find Salesians; and the proof is especially the consistent and growing number of young men ready to dedicate their lives completely as a gift, like Don Bosco, for their peers.

And if in the past we continued to dream while existing works were consolidated, to which in 2002 Ibadan was added, in recent times the reality seems to exceed all our hopes and desires: we opened a presence in Abuja, the administrative capital; since October 2011 two confreres have begun a community in Lagos; summer camps have been offered in Kintagora, in the country's north: this is a first step towards a permanent presence for Don Bosco there. Last October the Rector Major made Nigeria a Delegation of the West Africa Vice Province, including Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone as part of it.

The field is huge and the prospects and possibilities no less so, given the enormous challenges we face.

Amongst them, and first in order of priority is the quality of

how we hand on the Salesian spirit to the new generations: it is almost like a relay race where we have reached the crucial moment for passing on the baton.

If the mission in the past needed a container, walls, machinery for workshops, today the strongest appeal is directly to individuals, beginning with those who are not only preparing to continue along the path trodden by the first arrivals but to give wings to a charism that has the potential to transform millions of lives.

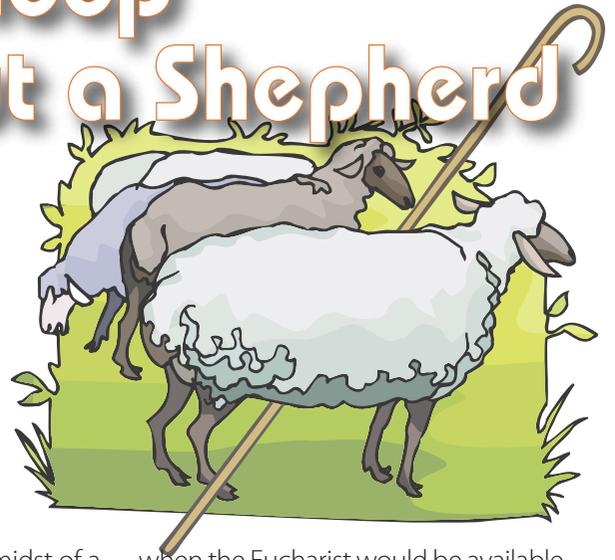
If the noise made by the falling tree is picked up by the antennas of the major media whose seismographs only register the sensational, often marked by destruction and death, we are surrounded by an enormous and growing forest, whose impact on the future will undoubtedly be a notable one, not only for Nigeria, and not only for Africa.

“Humankind in Africa as a spiritual lung for the world” (Benedict XVI) is one sixth of humankind as a whole and it is growing in Nigeria.

That it may grow with Don Bosco is something worth placing all our bets and resources on, just as he himself would have done 



# Like Sheep Without a Shepherd



by John A. Cabrido

The trek to Tuke may be arduous, but the final two-hour leg is infinitely more so! I finally gave up counting the times I fell—frontwards, backwards, sideways—as I and my six youthful helpers slithered down, the steep, mountainous descent. On one instance, for about 150 metres, I clung to slippery mountain walls and held tightly onto tree vines and roots for dear life, avoiding a plunge into a deep ravine.

Tuke's remoteness and inaccessibility may be a reason for the infrequent visits of its diocesan pastor. When I first arrived at the station in late February 2012 and celebrated the Eucharist, it was the first mass the people had had since May the year before. It was a difficult mass. The people knew neither the responses nor the songs; they were even mistaken in the postures during the celebration, opting to sit down during consecration! It quickly

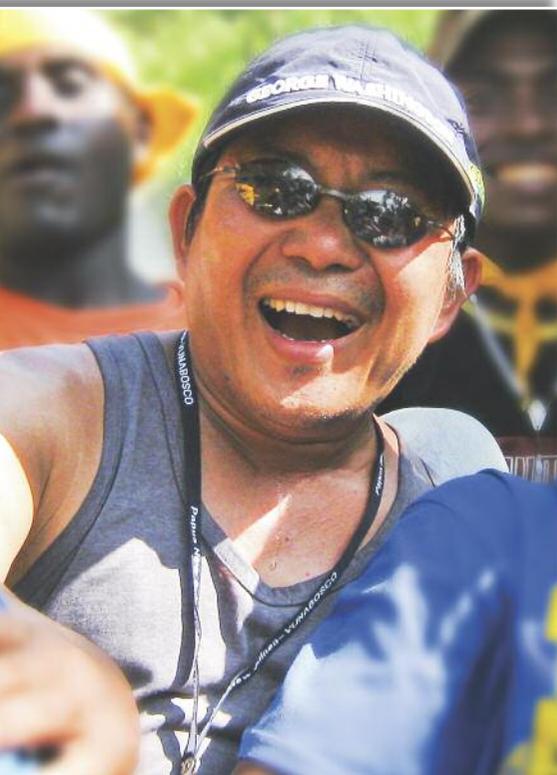
dawned on me I was in the midst of a nominally Catholic community who held steadfastly to its faith, while not growing in it.

Another root of Tuke's troubles is its lack of education. The elementary school opened only in 2008 with most in the community illiterate. Once, having mistaken a young adult as one of the teachers, I was corrected amidst thunderous laughter that the over 30-year old was actually a Grade 5 student!

Leaving the village for the first time was peculiarly difficult as I was worried

when the Eucharist would be available again for the people. The gospel description "sheep without a shepherd" was never as real for me as applied to the people there.

It was with immense relief, therefore, when on 17 March 2012 I greeted the archbishop, who had walked up to the Pomio mountains, bringing with him two diocesan priests, including the parish pastor. This paved the way for me for a two-week return to Tuke during the Holy Week and Easter celebrations. Unfortunately, the weather was totally uncooperative this time





*I must have walked over 100 kilometres through thick tropical rainforest spread over four discontinuous days before I reached Tuke, a tiny Catholic mission station established by German MSC Fathers nearly fifty years ago deep in the Pomio mountains. The 11 hamlets which comprise the Catholic community, belong to the archdiocese of Rabaul, led by Salesian Archbishop Francesco Panfilo, SDB.*

and continuous rains, a swollen river and impassable streams closed the school down. It was a blessing in disguise as this allowed me to tap the help of the school teachers and Catholic students, even if we had to pluck them out of their remote hamlets. The first batch of altar servers was a disaster and I had to request the headmaster for only the “trainable” ones, settling on seven youths ranging from adolescents to young fathers. Without the benefit of electricity, we celebrated our Holy Thursday “Last Supper” Eucharist at 3:00 PM to ensure we had enough daylight since darkness comes early in the rainforest. I was particularly insistent that my “apostles”—who all go around barefoot—would scrub their legs and feet vigorously before the service!

The “Rot bilong Kruse” (Way of the Cross) the next day was a truly memorable one. For the first time in over a week, the

sun finally shone which allowed us to commemorate the stations passing through the various hamlets. This was meant to rekindle faith in the places where they lived and not just in the mission station. The nearly three-hour celebration saw the faithful trekking through forests, climbing steep slopes and rambling down stony mountain paths reliving Jesus’ final passion, aided by a drama ensemble. Unspeakable horror almost befell us in the 10th station when a soldier-actor totally disregarded my explicit order “to remove only (the actor) Jesus’ top shirt but not his bottom laplap (waist-cloth). Speedily—and unhesitatingly—the errant youth tugged away at the waist-cloth! Mercifully, the inner loincloth held and scandal was averted. Not having a proper Easter candle, we had to make do with a gigantic tree trunk cut and decorated as a paschal candle, topped off with a small wax candle at its crest. In the darkness of the forest, that one

little candle made such a difference as the Exultet was being sung—in Melanesian Pidgin, of course! The Easter mid-morning mass was a joy as the church was bathed in light with festive decorations appropriately expressive of the new life running through the community.

When my fortnight stay came to an end in mid-April 2012, it was like a case of *déjà vu*—with a difference. With their local pastor just two days’ walk away and another priest at equal distance, I hoped the two diocesan priests would visit them more frequently and enable the faithful to celebrate the sacraments more regularly. I still left Tuke with a heavy heart but more tranquilly. As I continued my three-month sojourn through the various mountain villages, I incessantly encouraged young people to take heart and answer God’s call to be shepherds of his flock. 





*A Missionary! Who would have thought I would be one? In some sense of the word I was reminded that I was one, not because of the fact that I was baptised, but by the secular enforcements of the law in India. When I left Kenya, the country of my birth, at the age of 18, for India, soon after completing my G.C.E., I began my training towards the priesthood in the Salesian junior seminary of Don Bosco, Lonavla, in 1965. In my mind I was to live a normal life of a pre-novice and discern my vocation to be a priest. But being a foreigner, holding a British passport, studying in a religious institution, I was categorized as ‘a missionary’ by the State Government. And so began my ‘missionary vocation’.*

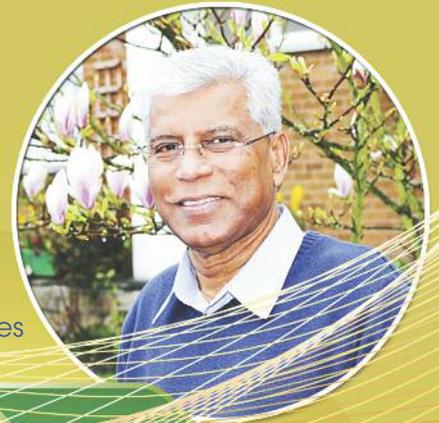
## Project Africa

When the Rector Major in 1979, at that time, Rev. Fr. Egidio Vigano, invited volunteers for Project Africa, the invitation offered me an opportunity to work as a priest in Kenya, my home country. I was reminded by my confreres, that I was not going to Africa as a missionary but as one who was merely returning to his home country, Kenya. So the Provincial put things right and assigned me to a mission Parish in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania.

The start of my first missionary journey to Africa, like St. Paul, was almost ‘shipwrecked’ by the local government authorities in India. I was not given the green signal to ‘sail’ with the first missionary expedition for Africa, and my ‘boat’ was firmly grounded, as my papers (being a foreign missionary) were not in order. I was duly reminded of my predicament by the Indian immigration official, who told me very casually but sarcastically, and I still remember his words: “Not even your Jesus Christ can save you from this.” The Salesian Brother who was assisting me get over this matter assured

# A Re-Cycled Missionary

by Tony Fernandes



me that all would be well and I need only to whisper a prayer. Mt. 10:22 – “You will be hated by all because of my name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.” How true. That night I was able to join the rest of the group with the help of friendly contacts.

For the next few years in Tanzania, I enjoyed a most wonderful missionary experience. Being missionary meant touching the lives of young people by word and example; standing up for what they dreamed; gently but firmly guiding them along the paths they wanted to thread; exploring with them the many options that lay before them in their search for God in their lives. The new Provincial, in 1986, ‘de-missioned’ me – I was to go home – to Kenya, and worked there for almost 20 years.

## Project Europe

When the Regional for Asia visited Goa, India, he

talked to the local confreres about Project Europe. He actually provided bait and I snapped at it immediately and applied to be part of Project Europe. Strange enough, I was being reminded once again, that I was not going to Great Britain as part of Project Europe but merely joining my family there, which I had left 34 years ago. I took that with a great spirit of resignation. But then, instead of being assigned to a community in England, I was requested to go to Scotland, a totally new place for me. This was to be a missionary experience that I had so much to learn from.

A re-cycled missionary! Yes, recycling actually gives you a warm glow, it makes you satisfied in the knowledge that you are making a positive contribution to the world around you. So why don't you give it a go and get the same glow? And that is what I have been telling myself in this new area of my missionary land, Great Britain.





# From Valtellina to the Solomon Islands

by ANS



## *What are the most important social issues in the Solomon Islands?*

As you can understand isolation is one of the main obstacles to be overcome, both for evangelisation and for providing basic health care and education. The tribal system provides an oasis of security in an ocean of isolation, as the tribe becomes the part of society providing an immediate response to all the urgent problems of support and peace with families and neighbouring tribes.

There is still the danger of hostilities among the different tribes and frequent disputes about land rights. Central government is considered very abstract and remote since it cannot intervene in time with regard to the tribes basic needs.

## *What contribution can the Church make to Solomon Islands society and what are the challenges presented by society?*

For practical purposes central government is absent from the more isolated places where, on the other hand the Church, her institutions and personnel are present. Basic health care and education both primary and secondary are areas in which the Church and society collaborate for the common good. The Catholic Church does a great deal to preserve good relations between the various tribes and for peaceful and fruitful co-existence. The challenges of corruption remain regarding the distribution of aid and civil institutions which often does not reach the people for whom it was donated in the first place.

In a society which calls itself Christian, in the various denomination, there is still too much difference between what they believe and what they practise. Sometimes reli-



*Bishop Luciano Capelli SDB of Gizo, in Rome for the Visita “ad limina Apostolorum”, replies to some questions from ANS. The Solomon Islands are a Republic independent since 1978 and part of the Commonwealth; a thousand islands, only 360 inhabited, with a population of 600,000. The majority are Christians: about 40% Anglicans, 20% Catholic and then other Protestant denominations. Two suffragan dioceses Auki and Gizo depend on the archdiocese of Honiara:*



gion is seen as an ‘insurance policy’ against evil spirits in which the people still firmly believe.

*Starting next October in the Church there will be two very important events: the Synod on the New Evangelisation and the Year of Faith. Does it make sense to talk about new evangelisation in the Solomon Islands, or are we still in the phase of the first proclamation? How do you inculturate the Gospel in the Solomon Islands?*

If by new evangelisation you mean proclamation by credible witnesses, there is certainly need for that! If by new evangelisation you mean new ways of proclaiming the Gospel message, I would certainly agree: there is a real need. The message has been proclaimed by missionaries for over a century, but there is still the need to bring the Gospel message into peoples’ everyday lives, giving meaning and direction to every decision. For this new evangelisation there really is an urgent need!

In fact we are setting up basic communities which are able to grow in faith and in solidarity: in this sense we have moved beyond the “implantatio ecclesiae”.

In addition, to overcome distances and build bridges it would seem that the episcopal light aircraft (in which the Bishop travels between the islands of his diocese) does a good job.

*What do you still retain of your origins and then what have you taken from the Solomon Islanders in all these years?*

From my Valtellinesi mountains, – the land of Fr Carlo

Braga and of the Venerable Fr Giuseppe Quadrio – from the culture of my origins and of my childhood the period after second world war I still retain the great ability of not giving up in the face of crises or of any kind of danger. The mountains taught me that arriving at the top victorious comes not from just aiming at the summit but from the constant struggle of the climb, putting one step a little further and higher than the last one without losing sight of the peak.

From the Solomon Islanders I have learned, on the other hand, lightheartedness, the joy of living just for today... patience and being content with little, with what is necessary, without stress.

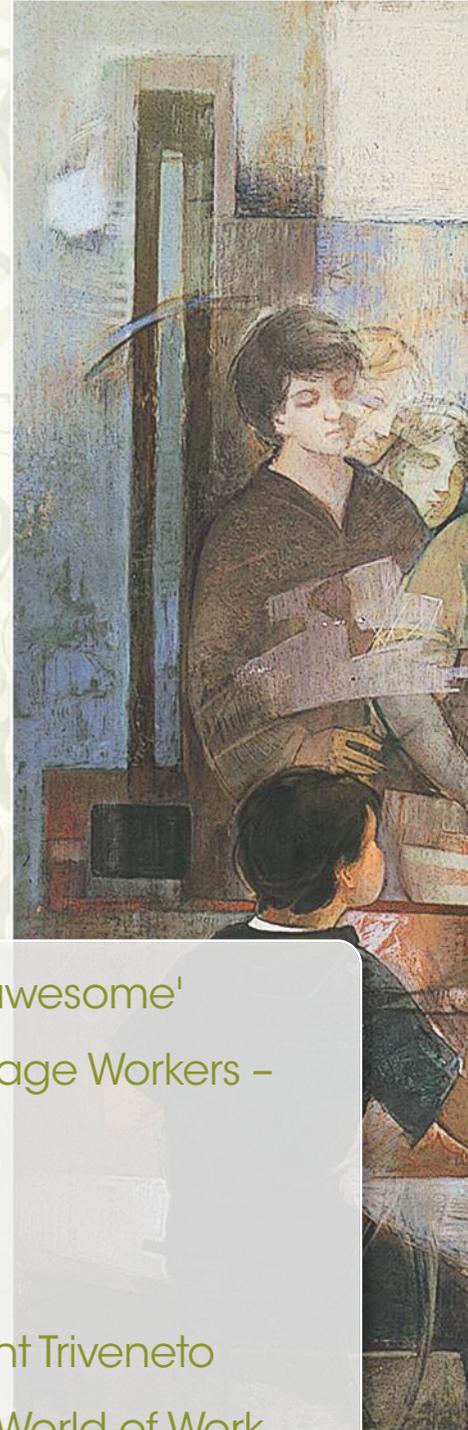
*We have heard that with Archbishop Panfilo, today the archbishop of Rabaul, you played in a Salesian football team that even the Philippine national squad could not beat. Do you still play?*

Two ligament operations on my right knee (in 1981 and 1991) did not stop me from kicking a football. But in '99, during a match, after having trapped the ball with my right foot while I was getting ready to shoot with my left I realised that ... the ball was no longer there! Those young scoundrels had taken it away from my feet! That was too much for a former champion ... so at 52 years of age I stopped playing seriously. But I’m still happy to kick a ball around occasionally, making sure the opponents are young enough! At 64 I can still join in with the altar servers in the elementary schools. How enthusiastic they all are! Naturally there’s ice cream after the match, which also helps to win over their hearts.





# EDUCATOR



- ▶ Between 'uncool' and 'awesome'
- ▶ Salesian Centre for Teenage Workers – CESAM
- ▶ Supermarket School
- ▶ Building Bricks of Hope
- ▶ Salesian Youth Movement Triveneto
- ▶ Don Bosco Today in the World of Work
- ▶ Learning the Art of Living
- ▶ SYM Valencia: Formation Programmes for Youth
- ▶ A Hundred-year-old Dream



“With a view to providing for this area in education what the times absolutely demanded, I set about compiling a Bible History. I aimed for a simple and popular style, free of the defects already mentioned. That was my reason for writing and publishing the text called Bible History for Schools. I could not guarantee an elegant production, but I worked entirely with the good intention of helping young people”.

*(Memoirs of the Oratory, Chapter 42)*



# Between 'uncool' and 'awesome'

## Austria

*being a Prefect at Don Bosco School Unterwaltersdorf*

Text/Photos: Markus Schauta

*For two years now, first and second year students at DBG (the 'G' stands for 'Gymnasium', or Grammar School) have prefects at their sides. Seventh and Eighth years are mentors, friends and confidants for the younger ones. We visited the school in Unterwaltersdorf and accompanied three prefects throughout their day.*

09:15

"Having great marks doesn't mean you have great social skills," explains Beatrix Dillman of Don Bosco. Thus, marks are not the primary criteria by which prefects are chosen. Accompanied by her colleague Michael Hofmann, the teacher is leader for the prefect project.

the last row of the bus: "These hierarchies have now eased." Occasionally, some arguments have to be sorted out and sometimes people even get put into the trash bin or locked up in the lavatories. The Bell rings for today's fourth lesson; it's time for French now.

10:10

The bell rings during the break. Three prefects of Class 1C sit comfortably at a nearby table and chat about their duties as prefects. "Some boys consider being a prefect pretty uncool" the three girls, Sophie Berger, Lisa Budinsky and Sophie Huszarek agree. Therefore, there are many more girls than boys to take care of first and second years. All three are students of Class 7G and have been prefects assigned to Class 1C since last September now. A total of 23 Students at 7th and 8th grade level currently participate in the project.

11:20

Fifth lesson, Mrs. Dillmann's music class. The students are happy as for once they are allowed to watch a movie today during Mrs. Dillmann's interview. It was decided to start the prefect-project two years ago, also to prevent bullying and similar problems between students.

Beatrix Dillmann and her colleague Michael Hofmann handle the coaching of new prefects and the regular feedback meetings. If urgent problems arise they are taken care of immediately in small meetings.

10:25

The bell rings again. Actually, the girls would have History now but they got the lessons off to talk about their commitment as prefects. "Their" students have grown close to them. "It is so cute when they instantly want to know why we couldn't visit them during the break!" says Lisa. The prefects broke up hierarchies. When the girls were in first grade, only older students were allowed to sit in

Teacher-prefect cooperation works out well. "Many heads-of-class are really ambitious and interested in the needs of their students and work together closely with the prefects. Some others, though, have still to get used to the new projects. Teaching also means education. We must not let administrative tasks steal too much time needed to teach and to care about the student's needs. Not always an easy thing to do!" explains Ms. Dillmann. "For that reason, I think, it is very important for our school to have this prefect project and to be serious about it."





**12:15**

Michaela Gross, head teacher of 1C, offered her lesson today to the prefects. "This happens about once in two months, when we are offered the head teacher's lesson and we can freely use it", explains Lisa. The students welcome their prefects happily. It's time for parlour games. The prefects conjure flexible tubes out of a black bag. The class arranges itself in a circle and everyone holds their tube close to the neighbours! Sophie throws a marble in the first one and it rolls through every single tube until it finally drops back into her hand.

**13:05**

Everyone goes into the refectory for lunch. "I could go home now, actually", says Lisa, "but we play with the young ones until 2:30 and afterwards go to the cinema". Usually, prefects accompany their class for two years. Some are afraid to

lose too much time for their Final Year exam preparation. Lisa will do the exam next year and is therefore not sure whether she will be able to look after her first years. Sophie definitely wants to take care of her class next year. "When I was in first year, I was afraid to go to school. Now I want to help others who might feel like I did." Sophie Huszarek says: Since her work experience in kindergarten she knows that she wants to work with children. Therefore, she is sure she wants to remain with her class next year.

**13:55**

After lunch, the students meet in front of their class. When you ask them how they like their prefects they all agree on "awesome!!" Lisa and both Sophies decide on taking their students to the so called Freizeitzentrum which is aiming to be a leisure centre. "Classroom cleaning!" orders Lisa and everyone helps to clean up the class and put the chairs

onto the tables.

**14:00**

The huge Freizeitzentrum is on the top floor. Some students play pool, others play with paddles or tabletop soccer and some play parlour games.

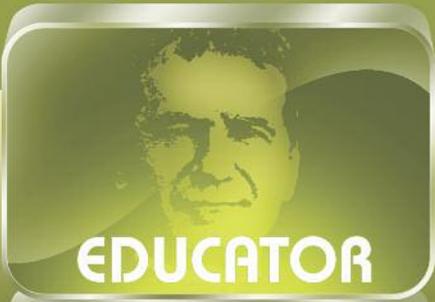
**14:30**

Don Bosco's auditorium is equipped with a huge screen. It is used regularly for movie screening like today's "Tim & Struppi". At about 3:00 p.m. Father Wiedemayr unlocks the door and the students quickly fill the room. "We are about to start, kids!" Father says, while preparing the equipment. Lights off, the movie is starting!

**16:30**

After the credits, the kids and their prefects finally go home. Julia, Sophie and Sophie will spend time with their protégés again next week.





# Salesian Centre for Teenage Workers

by Guilherme Barbosa

## History

It was then that Brother Mesquita, along with other Salesians, decided to create a new model in a Salesian style that combined young people's skills with their subsequent referral to formal work. CESAM (*Centro Salesiano do Adolescente Trabalhador*, or Salesian Teenage Worker Centre) was set up in May 1973 in the capital, Minas Gerais, and at the time bore the name *Vigilantes Mirins*. More than just an employment agency, this Salesian effort then went on to offer technical and personal preparation to each youngster, preparing him to face life's challenges with dignity and responsibility.

## CESAM

Currently CESAM, administered by the St John Bosco Province (ISJB), can be found in five States of Brazil: Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Tocantins, Goiás and the Federal District. These social units serve hundreds of young



*Walking across the courtyard at CESAM in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, Salesian Brother Raymundo Rabelo de Mesquita sees hundreds of young people who have but one aim: to qualify to enter the workforce. And looking at the scene, Brother Mesquita remembers how it all came about: "Forty years ago the Salesians from St John Bosco Province, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, saw a hiatus in the institutions providing education for the young and in employment agencies of that era. Many of them gave little importance to youth nor did they treat them with dignity and respect".*



# CESAM

## 40 years transforming the lives of the young

people each semester. With a multidisciplinary team made up of teachers, social workers, psychologists, and others, CESAM offers a framework to guide and monitor socio-familial, social and professional qualifications, holistic development for teenagers and a program of coordination and mobilisation for human rights. Each social unit is aimed at the education and evangelisation of needy adolescents aged 16-18 years. It legally employs teens, then passes them on to the formal labour market, accompanying them as they carry out their activities, gathering them on weekends for reflection and sport and also seeking to involve their families in the training process. Thus, guided by the spirit of the Gospel, and starting from a Salesian kind of spirituality, CESAM helps the young man, or woman as the case may be, to be "a good Christian and an upright citizen".

### CESAM + Family + Business: a great partnership

CESAM forms a social and educational partnership with business. These are businesses that recognise the strengths of the young, and recognise that they can change.

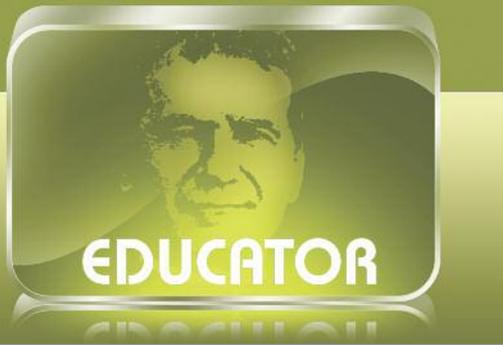
The unit enters into a contract of employment with the young individuals and a signed statement of commitment is established between them and CESAM. The young person promises to attend educational occasions, wear the correct uniform of the unit and behave appropriately. So that the educational process can develop as harmoniously as possible CESAM also accompanies the families of these young people, mainly by bringing them together for formation occasions.

Each young person, in order to be part of CESAM, has to undertake some study. The centre also accompanies the individual's schooling. It does this regularly by receiving a Declaration of Schooling and whenever necessary, the unit draws up contracts with schools.

Units in each State have some numerous partnerships and achievements. Recently CESAM in Espírito Santo signed an agreement with Petrobrás so that 125 young people could be part of the 'Petrobrás Jovem Aprendiziz' (Petrobras Young Apprentice) Program.

The dream which began in the 1970s continues with the same enthusiasm and with new prospects for today's circumstances.





# Supermarket School

by Angelika Luderschmidt  
photos by Gregory P. Gugala

"I haven't fully understood how it's all set up, but I'm making progress". Andreas Erhard gives a shrewd grin as he straightens up some spread cheese packets in the refrigerator. Just a few minutes before 18 year old Andreas had donned his uniform, a blue polo-neck with a red logo on the left saying "Don Bosco".

Andreas' work regimen begins out the back of the large supermarket. He likes it there and likes his work. Only just occasionally does his disability interfere with his work. Since birth Andreas has been partly paralysed on the right side. "But I can do everything. Sometimes my handicap gets in the way but maybe only every three months or so", he remarks. Then he immediately changes topic. When he speaks about his work, Andreas uses technical terms belonging to sales talk, as if he has been at this kind of thing for a long time. "Items have to be organised on the shelves in order of decreasing use-by date", he explains, while he shifts a container of yoghurt into its right spot. As well as organising all the items, other tasks he lists include controlling the range of goods or re-ordering.

Since September last year in the recently built "Don Bosco" supermarket, 21 young people from Aschau have been trained to become salespersons or wholesale merchants. For the managers, the Salesian Province in Germany, the Edeka sales point is a pilot project.

Earlier, Andreas and other apprentices were being trained in a small grocer's just a 150 square metres big, located near the pharmacy in the centre, but which has now closed down. The new sales location is around 600 square metres. "The work I can do here is much more interesting compared to what I could do in the old shop. Here I can speak with clients and advise them", says Andreas, hitching up his rather baggy, over-sized jeans.

In the Don Bosco-Edeka supermarket, Andreas is in charge of fresh and frozen products like he was at the grocer's. "Clients are very kind and positive towards us. Only rarely, when I can't find something, they show some annoyance". Andreas tosses a friendly greeting to a shopper pushing a cart.

"Here in the supermarket these kids acquire useful skills for their social life and have direct contact with clients. It is constructive training". (Hans Kiefl, in charge of the project)

Next to the kitchen, on the first floor of the supermarket, is a small study area. Each Tuesday Andreas has to come here with four of his classmates in Third Year. Accounting and maths are part of their course. And all day thur4sday they are at "Waldwinkel" Trade Centre for other courses. In the hostel attached to the Centre, Andreas shares with 260 special needs apprentices. Since there are no classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Andreas can take the first shift, 6 am till 3.30 like today.



*At Aschau am Inn in Bavaria, Andreas Erhard is pursuing his education by working in the sales sector. The "Don Bosco" Supermarket, Edeka, a well-known food distributor chain managed by the German Salesians of Don Bosco Province is helping disadvantaged youth. Andreas has been working there since September last. The Don Bosco Magazin followed him up at work.*



About half an hour after finishing his shift, Andreas goes back to the hostel and has two hours of free time; then there is an hour for study followed by supper. When he is not studying or working, Andreas listens to music and follows his favourite hobby: going on the Internet looking at motor vehicle sites. His eyes light up when he glances at the calendar stuck on the wall of his room and looks at the fast and powerful cars it displays.

At the end of next summer, the eighteen year-old will finish his training as a retailer.

Those responsible for the training at the supermarket are happy with him. The teachers at "Waldwinkel" too can see a bright future for this lad with his spiked hair and pierced ear. "Andreas will go his own way", says Hans Kiefl, in charge of the project. "The third Year is important for his maturity". The teacher standing nearby nods and adds: "Before he finishes his training, Andreas still needs to learn to curb his exuberance and get down to study". He will soon start his exam preparation. Then he will begin the practical part aimed at preparing himself for job interviews.

When we ask him where he would like to work, Andreas has a ready answer: "I would like to be in the technical area. It would be just great if I could find a job selling computers or mobile phones."





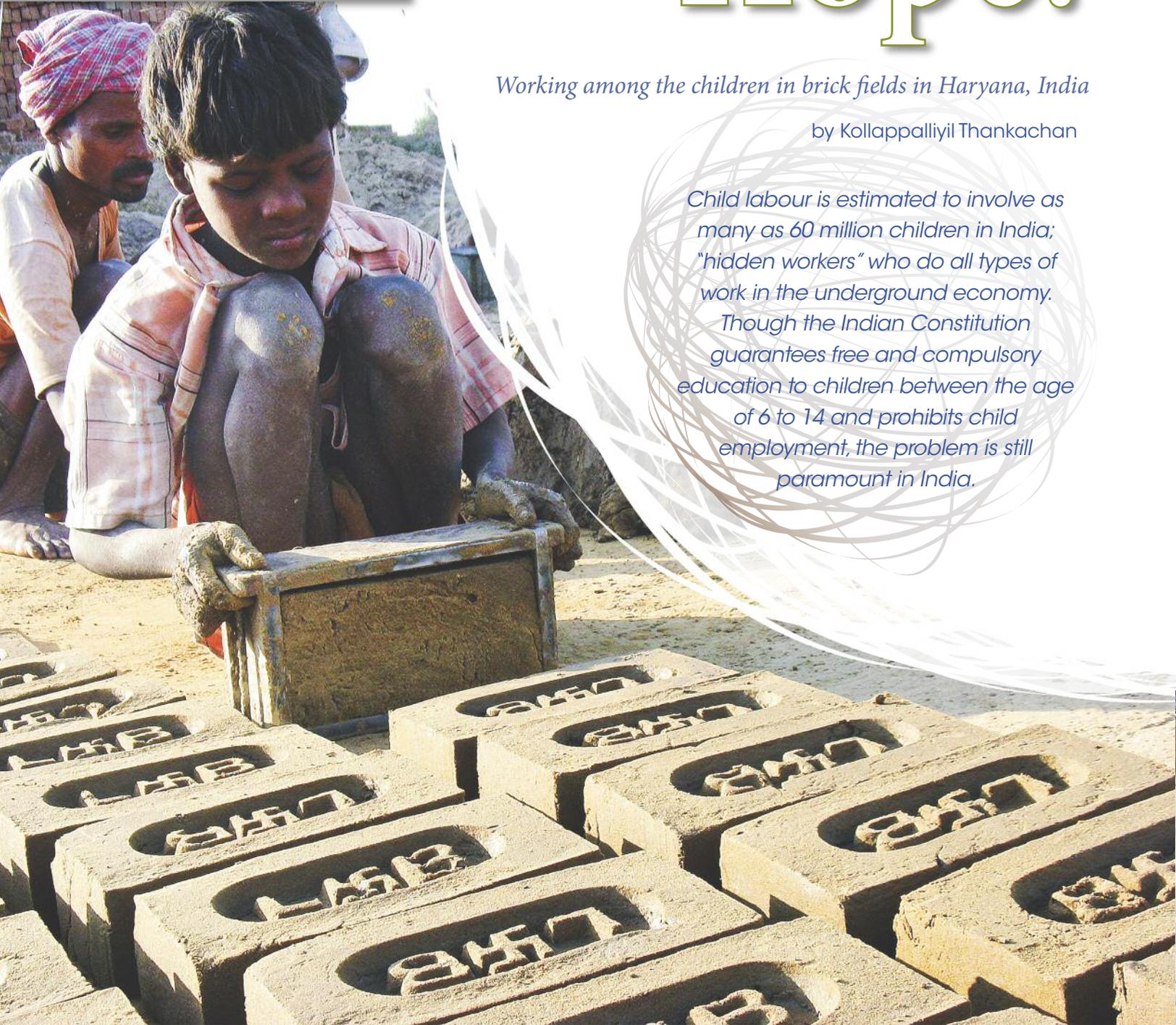
# Building Bricks of Hope!

*Working among the children in brick fields in Haryana, India*

by Kollappallyil Thankachan

*Child labour is estimated to involve as many as 60 million children in India; "hidden workers" who do all types of work in the underground economy.*

*Though the Indian Constitution guarantees free and compulsory education to children between the age of 6 to 14 and prohibits child employment, the problem is still paramount in India.*



Numerous brick fields now bloom on both sides of the long road which stretches across vast agricultural fields. There are thousands of people who work in these brick fields, living in shacks under horrible living conditions. They are poor migrants from the neighbouring states. There are about 500 brick fields in Pasahaur in Jhajjar district of Haryana, just 60 km from the heart of the capital of India, New Delhi. They supply bricks to many northern states but have no bricks to build a home of their own.

They start their day early in the morning. All night long a pall of smoke billows out from the chimneys where the bricks are baked in the morning. The smoke looks like a dark passing cloud, and leaves behind smarting eyes; at intervals there are just sparks to be seen when the dry grass is pushed downward inside the burning ovens.

It is not unusual to see many people young and old working among mud dunes, making bricks. And when it is children much less than 10 years of age it numbs the mind, seeing chil-

dren with tender hands working like expert brick makers under the scorching sun, from April till mid-June.

The brick field becomes a playground; a young child values each brick as his earnings. Other children, who are too young to make bricks, play around in the dust and mud and a few girls take care of their younger siblings when their mothers are at work. Sometimes pausing and looking hesitant, these malnourished children drag themselves off to work.

Don Bosco Pasahaur, situated in the same brick field area, has endeavoured to construct a children's village for these underprivileged children. Here the Salesians are helping to them build bricks of hope for a better future. Fr Joseph Thankachan, the Director, is mainly concerned with uplifting the living standards of an area with poor sanitation facilities, providing safe drinking water and shelter for healthier living. The Salesians have the uphill task of giving a bright tomorrow to these children reeling under an unjust system and living in inhumane condi-

tions. They have drawn up many plans. A few of them are:

- » Awareness programmes for the women and children in this brick field
- » Residential care for vulnerable children
- » Formal and non-formal education and care for the vulnerable.

The Salesians are working hard to overcome the problem of child labour in this area. Education is their tool of liberation. The children are ushered in to the non-formal schools and rescued from the hazardous conditions of brick-making.

Childhood should lie well beyond an expanse of dark smoke. A child's dream place should be allowed to flourish with laughter and joy, learning and merry-making. Instead, for many it is disturbed by greed and inhuman attitudes. Childhood is lost in the brick fields.

Society should stand as sentinels against these chimney owners and give deprived childhood a dignified life.





*Leadership courses offered by the Triveneto Salesian Youth Movement are a human and spiritual growth experience for someone who wants to work with the least in society and nurturing a passion for education. Something Benedict XVI said sums up nicely the meaning and the heart of this experience: "Go out and tell other young people how happy you are to have found the wonderful treasure who is Jesus himself. Be enthusiastic missionaries of New Evangelisation! Bring the joy that Jesus wants to give to those who suffer, are seeking" (from the 2012 WYD Message).*

by Iginio Biffi

# Salesian Youth Movement

*a Salesian experience at the Church's service in NE Italy*

**T**he Leadership project consists in providing an experience aimed at helping young people to be neighbours to the least amongst them, equipping them to manage the various summer leadership activities with head and heart. The aim is to strengthen the formation that the leaders are already receiving at local level. Young people from 14 to 18 are invited, who want to be able to educate with the leadership style that is part of Don Bosco's Preventive System. They are all young people, then, on the way to full human and Christian maturity, and they are ready for service in their own local churches. A leadership course of this kind lasts a week and each one is held over three days in

June in Udine, Verona, Mestre (Salesian Houses), as soon as school holidays begin. There are high expectations because it signals the beginning of summer and it is an incomparable opportunity for encounter involving staff and youngsters, around 2,000 of these latter. So that they can undertake a graduated course, there are four levels based on age and experience, each named after a biblical figure whose life points out the way to become a credible witness to other young people:

- » I level: DAVID
- » II level: THE TWELVE
- » III level: ST PAUL
- » IV level: MARY



# Triveneto

The purpose of these leadership courses also consists in leading these youth to discover or reinforce within themselves a desire for God. They also aim to help them realise that life is full when it is given to others.

The leadership courses are the result of close collaboration between the Salesians in the North East Province, the Salesian Sisters from the Triveneto Mary Help of Christians Province, and the Salesian Cooperators. The staff also includes a number of university students and young workers who put their study or work on hold to give a hand in many areas. A core group en-

sures coordination of staff and others who help in various fields (formation, logistics, assistance, prayer, animation, workshops). Friends and guests also come in from elsewhere: Rumania, Moldavia, Hungary and Bosnia.

The ingredient that gives real substance to this lively experience, is that they are all together, sharing quarters with another 500 young people. The leadership courses means that these young people often come into contact with consecrated individuals, older leaders and their own peers. Relationships take centre stage: festivity, tasks, sharing means that they

relate with each other and with adults who love and believe in what they like and believe in. This is an important time, something which creates the 'alchemy' of the event; there is room to open up to others, make comparisons, allow themselves to be accompanied. And for educators it is also an important time because it is in these personal relationships that the young people reveal themselves and their own depth.

More than 60% of those taking part come from diocesan parishes; the remainder come from Salesian settings (SDB and FMA)





# Don Bosco Today in the World of Work

by Jesús Rodríguez Mejía

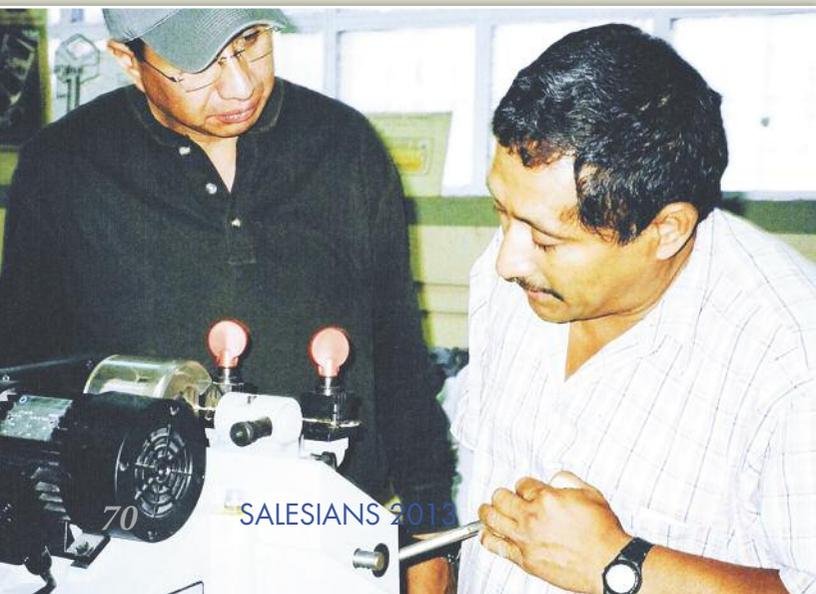


In imitation of St John Bosco, Salesians in Mexico opened their first work in 1892 in Santa Julia, Mexico, D.F. It was a school of arts and trades where the students could take courses in boot making, carpentry and tailoring, amongst other things.

In 1983 the Rector at Santa Julia was Fr José Lázaro y Reyes sdb, who along with some Cooperators followed Don Bosco's example in founding the Salesian Technical Training Centre, which had as its main aim the technical training of young people who needed this service.

At the time, this technical training had workshops dedicated to engine-tuning, carpentry, electricity, welding, plumbing and refrigeration. As the years went by, the Centre was redesigned and updated, thanks to help from: *Comide* (a Belgian aid group), *Senosiain Workshops*, Mrs María Guadalupe Salgado Mendía, *Kindermision-swerk* (Germany) and Mr Julio César Domínguez of KABA.

Recently all workshops have been re-equipped and programmes redesigned to suit the machinery and new equipment. It is worth noting that the courses have been set up so that 80% is practical and 20% theoretical. It is estimated that over the 29 years of the Centre's existence some 9,900 students have been trained.



# CENTRO SALESIANO

DE CAPACITACIÓN RAFAEL DONDE, I. A. P.

The Centre offers its services to anyone who requests it regardless of gender, race, religion or social circumstances, and is especially helpful for the most vulnerable and needy youth.

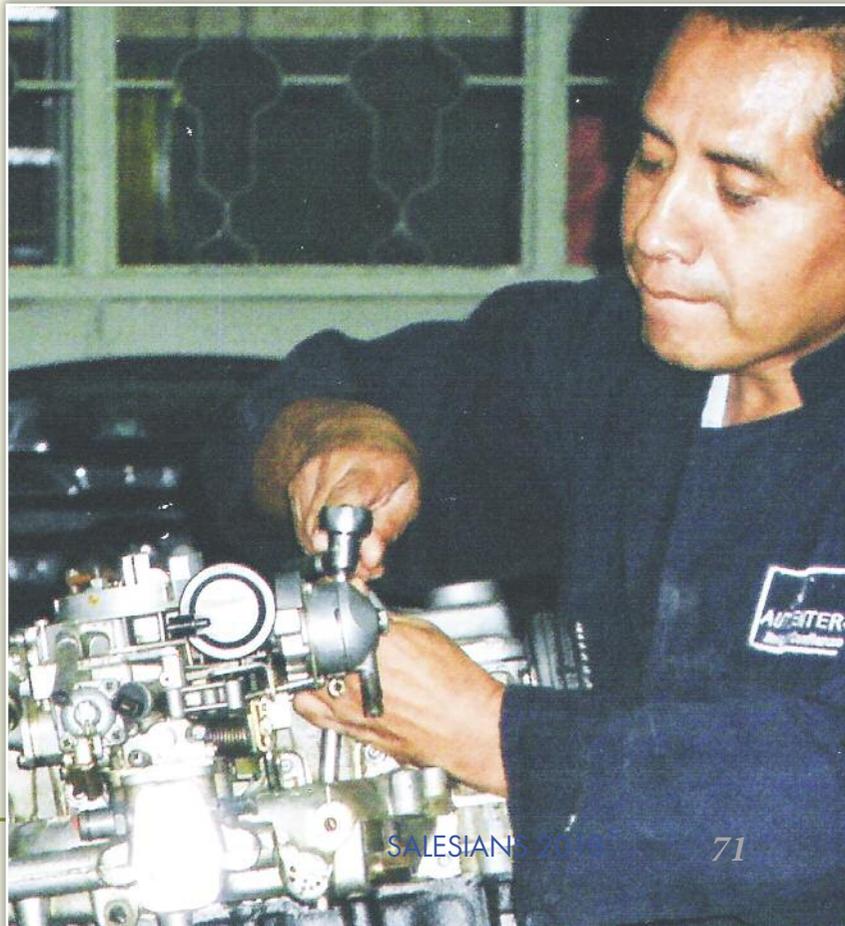
Currently the Centre offers technical training in the following: General mechanics, Fuel Injection, Carpentry, Lock smithing, Electricity, Electronics, Domestic electrical repairs, Drainage inspection, English, Domestic and commercial refrigeration and air-conditioning, Basic and advanced computerisation, Computer support and maintenance.

Weekly evening courses run from 6:00 to 9:00 pm and on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

At the completion of each course, pupils receive a diploma which recognises the training received.

The Salesian Technical Training Centre is currently directed by Bro Austreberto Velasco Sandoval, sdb., and Mr Jesús Rodríguez Mejía, Past Pupil, as Coordinator.

We take this opportunity to thank the many people and institutions who, throughout these 29 years have offered support, especially financial support to the Centre





# Learning the Art of Living



by Marjan Lamovšek

In Slovenia, a country bounded by the Julian Alps, the Adriatic Sea and the Pannonica Plain, the Salesian mission carried out by the sons of Don Bosco now in its second century (it began in 1901) is slowly expanding. To parish ministry, almost the only means of survival for the Salesians during the communist regime, other areas of Salesian work have now been added. A school, Gimnazija Želimlje, takes in around seventy new students each year, offering them education at the highest level, as well as an education which follows Don Bosco's system. Youth centres are opening up beside the parishes. They are a place for teenagers and older youth to find somewhere where they are welcome, can pass their time actively and be formed as good Christians and upright citizens. The summer oratory is by now well-known and widespread at national level. In fact it was recognised by the Slovenian Bishops Conference in 2011 for the support it has offered youth ministry nationally.

Many parishes benefit from the willing hands of

Salesian Family groups who see enormous potential in this area for educating the youthful generations. For the last two decades, in the social work area, the Salesian presence and voice on behalf of the young and needy, along with their many activities and those of their lay partners has been heard. One could additionally indicate other initiatives for the young, including the ones for young people who wish to be active amongst their peer group, that is, young leaders.

It would be too much to list them all. But just to round off the picture it is worth mentioning the DUO Centre at Veržej. It is an abbreviation in Slovenian which points to it being a centre for Arts and Trades. Some years ago a building was renovated at Veržej, and many young workers find a place there. The young, and the young at heart, can unravel the mysteries of one or other handicraft through courses at various levels and of different duration. They learn and gain experience with these handicrafts, and of life!





*With a fistful of clay in your hands you can feel like a creator. Straw too, of itself merely a dry stalk with little seeming value, in able hands and with a little imagination can become something valuable. It might be fragile, and it might burn like the stubble in the fields but it can have permanent value for someone who has fashioned it lovingly, carefully. In the end, it is no minor matter to have experienced that in life, it is not how much work you put in that counts, but the dedication and love with which you did so. This is an art acquired not by looking at the written word but by living.*





# SYM Valencia: Formation Programmes for Youth



by Marta Peirat

*The programmes organised by the Youth Ministry Team for the Valencia Province are aimed at young people from ages 9 to 20. They come together in age groups, be they just children or young adults, from all the youth associations and centres run by the Salesians in Valencia, Alicante, Castellón, Zaragoza, Murcia and Albacete.*

The purpose of these SYM gatherings (Salesian Youth Movement) is to accompany them in their growth and formation, strengthen the groups involved and get them to see the value of meeting other boys and girls who believe in the same values, but to do this outside their habitual surroundings. As the years pass the sense of belonging to Province and family has very much developed amongst those who take part.

Basically these gatherings foster an understanding of the Salesian world in each participant, its values and the fundamental elements of Salesian Youth Spirituality. Each event involves these objectives through different activities and proposals. For example the youngest ones, who belong to the ADS (*Amigos de Domingo Savio* or Friends of Dominic Savio), work with examples of youthful holiness: Dominic Savio, Laura Vicuña, Michael Magone and Francis Besucco. Beginning with the different activities, children from 9 to 14 share their ideas and undertake to take a strong apostolic interest in other youngsters of their age.

What is known as *Marchabosco*, for teenagers from 15 to 17, invites them to discover life as a way of sharing with others. The central activity for this event is a long hike in a natural setting involving stops along the way where they break into various groups and share a moment of formation. Night times are special, since

there is much festivity and good cheer stemming from the various activities.

*Campobosco*, on the other hand, gives young men and women an opportunity to make an option on behalf of others as young leaders. This is a young adult event – they are 18 to 20 years of age; the majority of these participants are already undergoing leadership formation. *Campobosco* teaches them how to relate in educational terms; they learn something of Salesian family spirit and youthful spirituality.

All three events cited above are organised in such a way as to place emphasis on Jesus and his word through prayer and celebrations adapted to those taking part. Games, play, leadership opportunities, musical evenings, dancing, sports, are all part of these events.

Those taking part are organised into groups to take up the activities prepared earlier by the leaders. The leaders, who are volunteers and have chosen to be there, accompany these groups during the event. The organisational work and support of the Youth Ministry Team is also very important, and each event has a group of adult volunteers and Salesian Cooperators who carry out this role. It is a lively expression of the kind of family spirit with which Don Bosco attracted his boys.



Although each is an annual event, it is a formation process ranging from childhood to young adulthood. Over twenty five or so years of these gatherings, many young people have taken part in this process since they were quite young and until they became adults; it has helped them discover their calling and to be committed educators with an identity that is clearly that of the SYM.

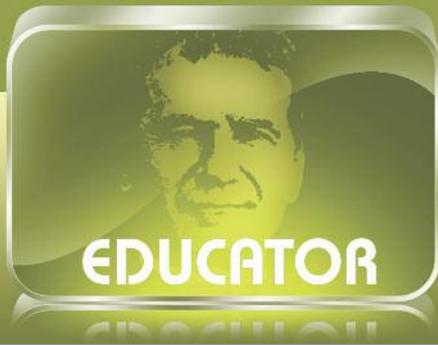


Some of the events are closely bound up with solidarity projects. This is the case with the ADS camps which, for the last ten years or so, are involved with solidarity projects run by *Jóvenes y Desarrollo* (the Salesian 'Youth and Development' NGO). Mexico, Peru, Togo, Mali and other countries have benefited from such help. Over the coming three years efforts are being focused on the *Chicos de la Calle* (Street Kids) Project in Guayaquil, Ecuador.



When all this formation process began, many of the different youth associations in the Valencia Province got involved: scouts, junior groups, parish groups, who previously had little contact with each other. The idea behind the formation events was to bring lots of young people of similar age group together, knowing that although they belonged to groups with quite distinct identities, they could all meet under a common and broader shared identity, their Salesian identity.





# A hundred year-old Dream

by Erzsébet Lengyel

The hundred year-old history of the Salesians in Hungary began in Péliföldszentkereszt, producing its many roses, but also its thorns. The location was not ideal for the Salesians, since there was no village in the vicinity of the shrine, only woods; the nearest village was 3kms away. Even so, once the Salesians had settled they gave rise to such a dynamic development that the following year they began expanding. They soon opened a house in Nyergesújfalu, while the original place was taken over as the novitiate. Don Bosco House, where the Salesian theological faculty operated, was constructed in 1932.

Unfortunately, the communist regime put an end to this rapid growth in 1950. The operation of religious orders in

Hungary was prohibited for the forty years that followed. Their institutions and houses were taken away; the building complex of Péliföldszentkereszt came under state ownership and was returned only in 1992, but in terrible condition. Fr József Havasi – who was provincial at the time and led the province for 18 years – really considered not asking for Péliföldszentkereszt back. Now he is happy that he finally did, because – despite the significant financial and physical effort – a flourishing paradise could be restored.

Péliföldszentkereszt, the “cradle of the Hungarian Salesians” is now enjoying its renaissance. The shrine has been administered over the last six years by Fr Ábrahám Béla, appointed provincial by the Rector Major, Fr Pascual Chávez, in

2012. He has been striving to modernize the buildings and to attract more and more young people through exciting activities and dynamic work on the part of leaders.

That part of Don Bosco’s dream which applies to Hungary began at Péliföldszentkereszt.

The first forty years gave birth to plentiful vocations, allowing Hungarian Salesian missionaries to go to faraway countries: they reached China, Japan, Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, India... Today, it is the other way round: Indian and Vietnamese missionaries help the dwindling Hungarian Salesian community.





*In the centenary year, 2013, the Salesians and other members of the Salesian Family in Hungary are working hard to show as much as they can from the past and the future to the whole country, and to spread Salesian spirituality by reaching as many as possible.*



During the years of exile, Hungarian Salesians hoped for their misery to end soon. There were some who retired to serve in the dioceses, others managed to depart for foreign countries and some even gave their life for Hungarian youth. István Sándor, Salesian Brother, is respected as one who persisted in his vocation and in the service of the youth. He could also have travelled to a foreign country with false documents, but he decided to stay and serve the young people until death. He was sentenced in a show trial and put to death, and so, as a martyr, is watching over his confreres and his beloved young people.

Now, the glorious past has to be followed by an arduous present, full of effort for continuation and growth. Hungary is the smallest amongst the Salesian provinces, but it still turns towards the future with hope. In addition to Péligődszentkereszt, the ancestral cradle, and the school of Nyergesújfalu, the three houses of Budapest and also Szombathely and Balassagyarmat, the house at Kazincbarcika is the most important Salesian establishment. Here, more than 1,300 students are being educated and nurtured – many of them Gypsies who find hope for a better future with the help of Salesians and learn a profession or gain their General Certificate of Secondary Education. The schools and oratories help spread the reputation of Salesians, and the young members and leaders in the Salesian Youth Movement carry Salesian spirituality to their friends.



The Salesians of Hungary, and their missionary brothers from India, Vietnam and Poland continue the hundred year-old dream in the heart of Europe, in this little country with its wonderful history, language without compare, and a huge heart.

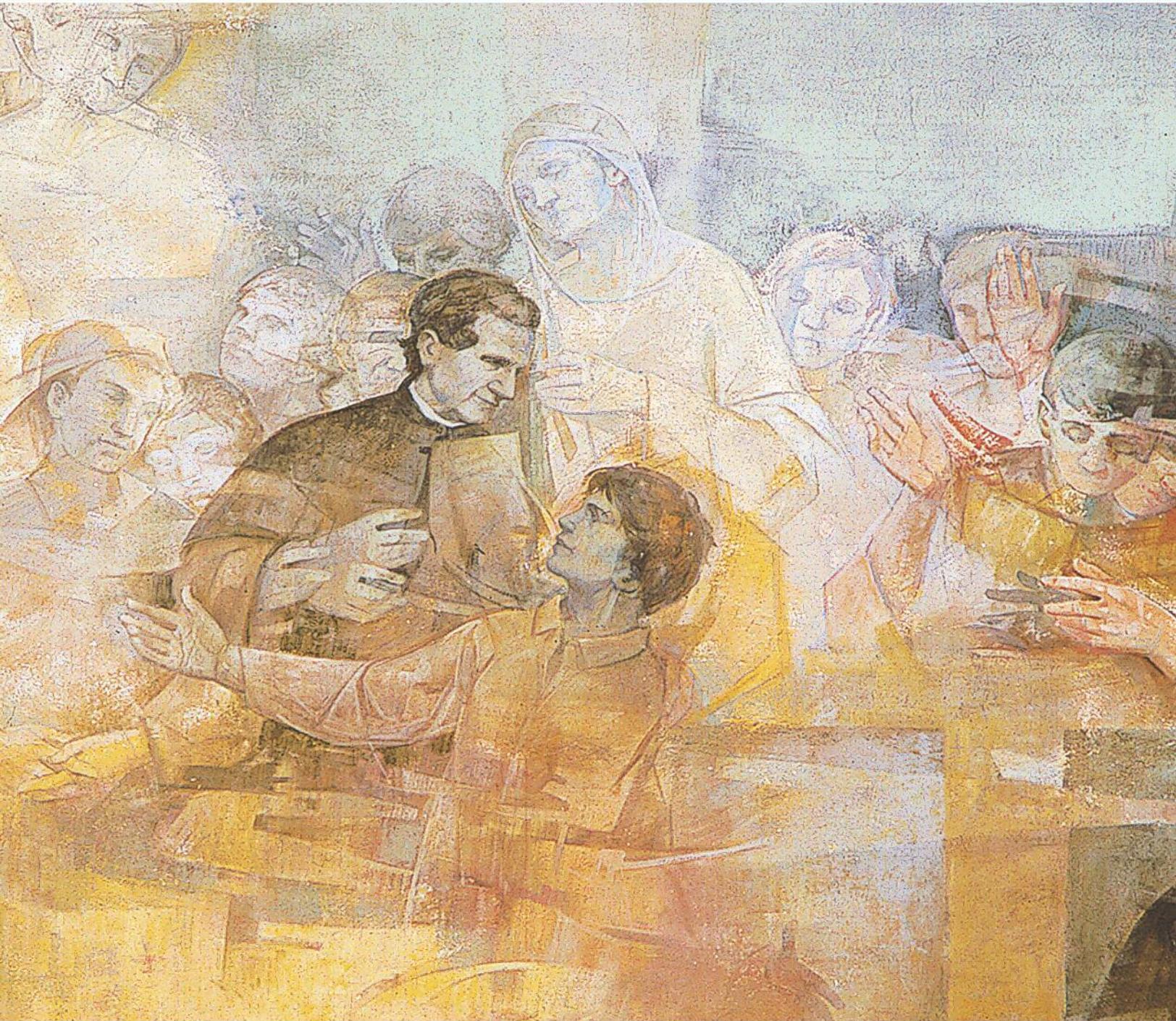




# FOUNDER



- ▶ Families Journeying with Don Bosco
- ▶ Tabernacles of Hope
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- ▶ 140 Years of Service to the Young
- ▶ A Gift Received, a Commitment to Honour
- ▶ From Pupil to Teacher: William's story



“Therefore I am now putting into writing those confidential details that may somehow serve as a light or be of use to the work which Divine Providence has entrusted to the Society of Saint Francis de Sales”

*(Memoirs of the Oratory, Preface)*



# Families Journeying with Don Bosco

by ADMA

## A Dream

Don Bosco was a Saint and a dreamer. His heart was turned heavenwards but his feet were firmly planted on earth; he loved to express himself through dreams. He would often narrate his dreams to his boys, especially during the 'Good Night', the brief thought that he offered his boys each evening.

In the famous "Dream of the Two Columns", the Saint saw the Barque of Peter being attacked by many smaller boats which were trying to "batter it with their prow and do as much damage as possible". The battle raged ferociously until the Pope, overcoming every obstacle, succeeded in attaching the Barque of the Church to the two columns entitled Jesus-Eucharist and Mary Help of Christians. Then the enemy fled and was lost and the sea returned to great calm".

Experience tells us that not only the Church as a whole, but even the small boat that is every family, proceeds

safely on its way when anchored to the two columns. This brief episode helps us to relate the experience of families who have spent years journeying with Don Bosco in ADMA, the Association of Mary Help of Christians founded by the Piedmontese Saint in 1869. It is one of the Salesian Family Groups.

## Who are we?

We are families who have journeyed together for some twenty or so years, guided by Salesian priests.

Each family plays its part according to its own circumstances: all we encourage is that they keep working at it in order to gain the greatest benefit. Families are also invited to nurture their participation in the Church's life by taking an active part in parish or oratory activities.

Learning from Don Bosco means cultivating various aspects of the Salesian charism in the family: the joy of living;

*We are families who have journeyed together for some twenty or so years, guided by Salesian priests, in a way that has brought many results:*

- » *love between spouses that is renewed daily,*
- » *spiritual growth both as individuals and as families,*
- » *formation as parents in the demanding task of education,*
- » *friendships amongst our children that enable them to share the faith and be witnesses to it for others.*



attending to prayer life and union with God in everyday circumstances; serving our neighbour, especially when our neighbour is young and poor; placing trust in God who is our Provident Father, and entrusting ourselves to Mary who is our Mother and Teacher.

## What do we do?

**Catechetics** - The priests choose and develop the topic for the year in line with what the Church proposes as well as accepting pastoral proposals from the Salesian Family. There are three essential reference points for this catechesis:

- » The Word of God and the Sacraments;
- » The dynamics of our married life and our role as educators;
- » Our commitment to a more intense life of prayer and greater fidelity to duties that belong to us as family, in our work, as members of the Church.

**A week's retreat** - is held in a family atmosphere, and one of commitment but also rest, friendship and simplicity. Key moments in the day include: morning prayer, catechetics; personal prayer and prayer as a couple; Rosary; sharing. For whoever wishes, one hour is given to Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

The high point of the weeks is called our personal 'desert', a place where we remain silent and in prayer to discover God and rediscover ourselves, in order to grow in love and in our ability to make mature decisions.

**A monthly day of recollection** - which lasts the whole day and is an extension of the annual retreat.

**The 24th of each month, Mary's day** - our coming together for an hour on the 24th is a small pearl which contains what Don Bosco loved so much and wanted his boys to love:

Mass, Mary, the Word, Confession and family spirit. Before we get arrive at 7 pm, the younger family members also come together for a moment of formation, sharing and a happy supper time.

**Pilgrimages** - These are special occasions when the family sets out to encounter Mary who as a loving Mother invites us to conversion. These are wonderful occasions to be together, and where the children learn to entrust themselves naturally to God by following their parents, sharing prayer moments, but also being with their friends.

## How?

**This is also a journey for our children** - It

is part of our style for all the family to be at meetings. This way the family is kept together while at the same time each one finds his or her own space and friends. By observing their parents praying and sharing their faith, the children learn what it is to live in the family in the presence of Jesus and Mary. It becomes natural for them to do the same.

Looking at our children, we are ever more convinced that the witness of our faith is the best gift we can possibly offer, the best legacy we can leave them.

## In a spirit of service

Organising recollections and summer retreats means many people need to be involved. Couples make themselves available for whatever is required: organisation, leadership, cooking, cleaning. The spirit of service is truly a vital ingredient in our journey of formation!

**"Freely you have received, freely you shall give"** - finance is not meant to be an obstacle: this is also something we learned from Don Bosco. When it does happen that a family cannot manage costs, the rest of the group help, with discretion, but fraternally. Money should not stop a family from receiving God's gift if this is what they want





# Tabernacles of hope

## Salesian Cooperators in Africa



*A trip to Africa is always full of emotion and wonderful surprises - surprises from the Holy Spirit in the form of Don Bosco and his sons. In Kenya, with the tireless Fr Simon Asira, vice provincial, as our guide, we met the Rectors of the Salesian community and its work at Embu, the Salesian Family Commission in Makuyu and, finally, Salesian Cooperators in Nairobi.*



by Giuseppe Casti

They were stories of ordinary, simple folk who love Don Bosco. They are committed to giving shape to the Salesian charism in the most authentic way possible. Nairobi is a large city and it embraces all the contradictions you are likely to find in Africa: bold modern buildings set beside ramshackle and crowded hovels in slums. Salesian Cooperators can be found in these shabby settings: organising themselves into little communities they look after street children, sending them to Don Bosco Boys' Town, a small Valdocco in the heart of Africa.

The same involvement, the same desire to give an African heart and face

to Don Bosco can be found in Tanzania. Fr Augustine Sellam, Youth Ministry Delegate, took us to Moshi, Morogoro, Dar Es Salaam. Wherever we went we found them all enthusiastically working for the future of the country.

These were the thoughts and images running through my mind when I was walking the streets of Juba. Juba? Yes, Juba, or, if it helps you, we are in South Sudan. In fact Juba is not even found as yet on many maps. It is but a few months since the State declared its independence. South Sudan is war-weary from the long struggle for independence which it paid for with

millions of dead and millions of refugees. Everything in Juba is covered in dust. It is red, insidious, gets into everything: your nose, ears, eyes, mouth, to the point where you begin to believe that your brain is probably covered with a thin film of red dust. Emerging from this cloud of red dust is a people already at the limits of survival. Their thin bodies and ravaged faces tell silent stories of life in its bare essentials, the tough daily battle for survival, life and death not all that far apart. And I ask myself: what does it mean to be a Salesian and a Salesian Cooperator in such extreme circumstances? The challenge immediately seems an unequal one, beyond our ef-

forts, when we see children dying of malaria, malnutrition or dirty water. We have nothing else to offer these people other than our poor and vulnerable selves, a loving presence that bends over their wounds and keeps hope alive. This is the way Jesus revealed God's love. Thus, just as the missionaries have done, so the Salesian Cooperators are doing in Juba: they

other day, Juba is wrapped in a cloud of red dust. I was expecting that like every other day men and women would emerge, and dirty children too, covered in a few poor rags. But no. I could not believe my eyes. They were clean, smiling, well-dressed. It was Sunday and they put on their Sunday best, the only clothing worthy of the name, they were all festive. I found

clothes? In their mud huts their must be a place, indeed let's call it a tabernacle, where Juba's inhabitants keep their Sunday best. Yes, it has to be a tabernacle, because it is more than just Sunday best. It is woven of dignity and freedom. There might be suffering but there is also a hope for a better future. Many threads might be grey with the daily grind, but there are also vivid colours of a splendid eternity. Yes, this clothing, the only one the inhabitants of Juba truly wear, must be jealously preserved as something unique and precious, in the tabernacle that is each of their huts in Juba. Fr Cyril Odia, a young Salesian priest, knows this only too well. He invites everyone to the oratory as they finish the Mass with an explosion of song and joy.



live with them, amidst their miserable dwellings.

It is Sunday morning. It is nine in the morning but the day has already reached 40 degrees. And, like every

myself smiling and ecstatic, as if I was seeing an apparition. Today in Juba really was a feast. And while I contemplated their faces which now shone with a new light I was asking myself: where do they keep these new

There in Juba, on the edge of the desert, on the banks of the White Nile, the Cooperators, real Salesians in the world, with Fr Cyril and the other missionaries bring about the miracle of hope that is re-born through the young.





*Main, House of happiness*



## Two hearts, a single charism

*"Don Bosco's far-sightedness and his passion for education seemed right, according to Main and her friends". This is what Sr Caterina Cangià said when talking of the script for "Main. House of happiness", while explaining how the film demonstrates the mutuality and educational affinity of two saints: Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello. We could put it this way: two apostolic hearts but a single charism as educators. And these are two aspects of the film script which become the key to this apostolic mutuality: "That's just like we do with the girls", says Maria Mazzarello. And Fr Pestarino points out that they also have Sunday oratory, while weekdays they teach the boys a trade.*

by Maria Trigila

*Sister Caterina, underlying Don Bosco's idea of education, and something which Mother Mazzarello fully subscribed to as well there is the primacy of the individual. Which scene in the film demonstrates this best?*

There is a beautiful scene where Main, recovering from the typhus which had left her weaker than before, has a powerful insight – something which we in the Institute refer to as a "vision" – which leads her to understand that she can put her life at the service of education of girls. In fact she asks Our

Lady, who is represented as one of those shrines you find along a country road: "Are you entrusting them to me?". The idea of "entrustment" and "taking care of" lie behind her choice, which today we describe as an "anthropological" one. For Main the growing individual must be looked after, cared for, brought to fulfilment. The girls are taught by word and deed: "What we teach by example remains". Main has a strong sense of reciprocity, stated quite clearly when she says: "Petronilla, I have no daughters, but I have many sisters

and I love them just the same".

*Don Bosco in the film is quite precisely situated. Why did you choose these details and not others?*

I first chose Don Bosco being urged on by Fr Pestarino when he tells him he wants to invite him and his boys to Mornese. Main brightens up at this announcement for two reasons: she knows that any of Fr Pestarino's suggestions are aimed at growth and she senses Don Bosco's greatness even before she has met him. Then Don



Bosco arrives. The whole village is in a festive mood and this increases when the boys and the band arrive. Main tells the girls with her: "Look at him. He is a saint". Main is convinced of this, so I asked myself how I could convey this to the viewer. I decided to do it through the way they looked at each other. By means of two close-ups the film says something about Main's recognition of holiness and Don Bosco's immediate insight regarding her: "You will be the first". Then we meet Don Bosco, when all the boys are asleep, in conversation with Fr Pestarino about founding a school for boys at Borgoalto. We see him then in Turin telling a young Salesian of his firm intention to found an institute that "will do for girls what the Salesians are doing for boys" and then we finally see him setting the seal on the General Council's decision to begin the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. His part in the film then concludes with a wonderful homily given on the occasion of religious profession, on the 5th August 1872, followed by the recommendation to "always be very cheerful".

*Don Bosco founds the Institute at the height of his missionary zeal when he has the courage to found houses in Patagonia, in 1875. Then in 1876 Mother Mazzarello writes to Fr John Cagliero: "Call on us soon ... in America! I would already like to be there!". This seems to tie the Salesian Congregation and the FMA Institute together from the outset. What was the little bit extra that you wanted to add to the film in this regard?*

The 'little bit extra' is summed up in a few words of Mother's, but particularly in the trusting, decisive, happy

tone with which she says them. The first missionary expedition, in the film, is immortalised by a photo and sealed with these words: "Don Bosco calls us to work amongst the girls of the ordinary people, amongst those most in need".

*The film clearly shows the impact that Don Bosco had on Domenica Mazzarello's life. Not just because the Sisters became citizens of the world, rather than just citizens of Mornese, but because ...*

Because everything was done in Don Bosco's name, following his recommendations and teaching as expressed through the early directors of the Congregation. The last words the film has us hear via a voice-off of Mother's are: "I die as the spouse of Jesus, as Daughter of Mary Help of Christians and Don Bosco. I want all of you to have this grace that I have loved so much and that now I will love even more".

*From other scenes I recall in particular the Letter from Rome, 1884 where Don Bosco wrote to the Salesian community at Valdocco: "The biggest danger which can undermine the basis of an educational relationship is the loss of familiarity". Would you say that this is one of the messages of the film?*

The film shows this clearly. You see it when some of the important decisions are being made like the division between the New Ursulines and the girls who decide to become Daughters of Mary Help of Christians; in the profession trial scenes, when a small girl "who can read well" is asked to play the part of the Bishop. Then when there is singing, games, study, theatricals... there is a whole texture of loving, caring presence





# 140 years of service to the young

by ANS

*The Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians has reached the age of 140. On 5th August 1872 in Mornese, a small village in the province of Alessandria, 11 young women consecrated themselves to the Lord and gave birth to what would become an international Institute present in 94 countries.*

On 5th August 1872 Don Bosco was in Mornese. He had arrived the previous evening to speak to the young women, explaining the significance of the ceremony, teaching them to read the responses and the formula of the vows: "Now you belong to a religious Family", he said, "which is totally the Madonna's; you are few in number, you are short of resources and you are not supported by human approval. Let nothing disturb you... The Institute will have a great future if you keep yourselves simple, poor and mortified... Remember frequently that your Institute must be a living monument to Don Bosco's gratitude to the great Mother of God, invoked under the title of Help of Christians." (cf Cronistoria I 305-306)

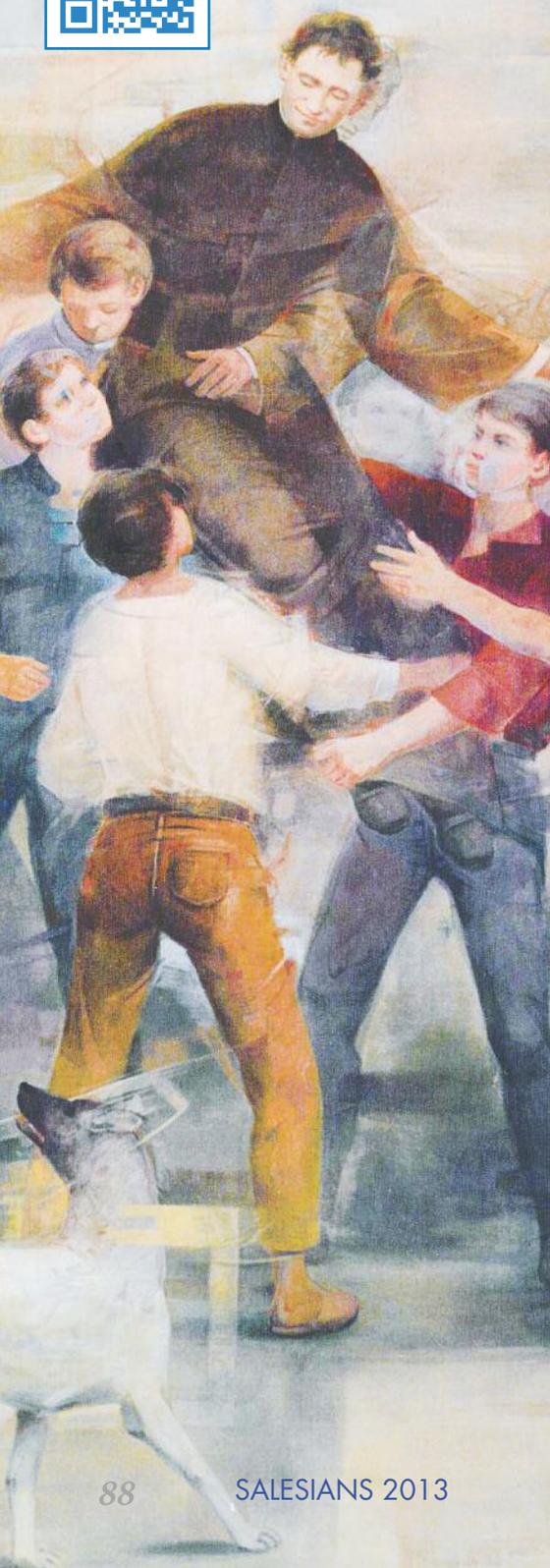
Don Bosco wanted a female Institute which could complement the educational work which he was carrying out for boys. In Maria Domenica Mazzarello, who would be the co-foundress, and in the first group of girls which met in Mornese, there arose the possibility that his

dream would be realised.

Today the FMA Institute numbers 13,653 sisters (as of December 2011) distributed in 1,436 communities in 94 countries of the five continents. Over the years they have kept alive a passion for the education of the young from many different cultures, the integral formation of the person, social solidarity, together with the planning and development of activities involving evangelisation, formation and 'prevention' (helping to keep young people out of trouble).

Schools, Vocational Training Centres, family homes, works for street girls, leisure clubs, volunteering, catechesis, works for primary evangelisation, work with indigenous people, works for women's rights, micro-credit organisations and micro-enterprises ... these are just some of the activities through which the FMA seek to live out their mission of educating and evangelising, together with a great many lay collaborators, volunteers and young leaders.





# A Gift Received, A Commitment to Honour

by ANS

Article 1 of the Association's Statutes says: "Past Pupils are those who, having gone to the oratory, or school or any other Salesian work, received a preparation for life there which follows the principles of Don Bosco's Preventive System".

The Past Pupils Association is quite a special kind of organisation: while its statutes are Christian-inspired, members of other faiths are fully members. The past pupil may be lay, a priest or a religious. Those of other Christian confessions or other religions are asked to honour their commitment by being consistent with their own beliefs and the human and cultural values they have learned.

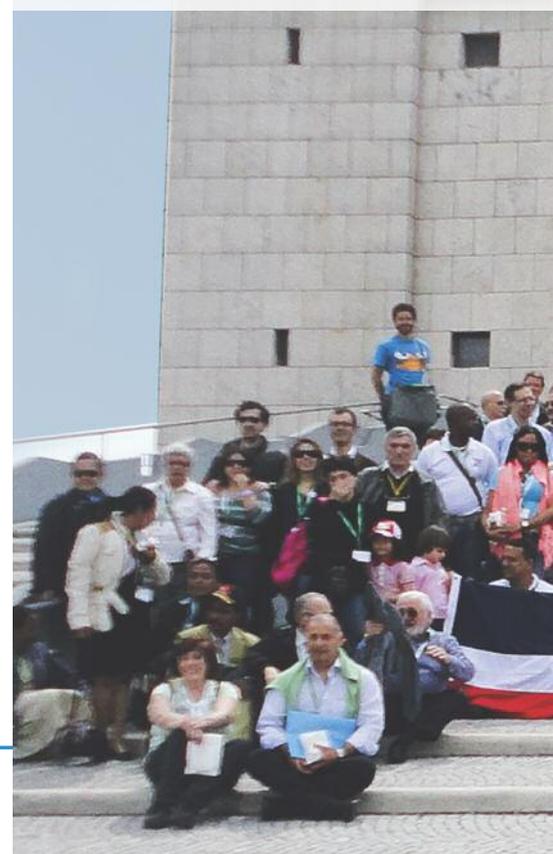
The Association has two strands: the first is made up of members who are committed in various ways on their local scene and to a formation process; the second is that of a much broader, less-structured movement. But more than its structures, the Association sees itself as being an environment for formation in faith, a place for religious dialogue, a workshop for various kinds of cooperation, an open field for evangelisation, a place for convergence, according to the individual's wish, for religious or secular motives.

The education received in the past should not be just a memory, but a force that urges the individual to have an impact on the present, transform it. It is an opportunity to relive the values which belong to the education received, those of Don Bosco's Preventive

System, in today's society, and especially in the "new digital continent".

Its origins are simple and feature the typical family style of Don Bosco's charism. On 24 June 1870, Don Bosco's Name Day, a group of "past pupils" brought him a set of coffee cups as a gift, in grateful recognition. Don Bosco wanted the tradition to continue, putting a whole day aside for it, and invited them to dinner for his part. The first of these "fraternal agapes" took place on 19 July 1874, and was the origins of the annual past pupils convention that can still be found in Salesian houses today.

In 1884, the past pupils – now more than 300 in number – took its first steps at organising itself; they committed



*The Past Pupils of Don Bosco Association recently celebrated its centenary. There are countless numbers of young men and women who have had a Salesian education, and earned the title of being a past pupil of Don Bosco. Some might be famous names but there are many more who in all simplicity are living example of Don Bosco's motto in daily life: "good Christian and upright citizen".*

themselves to preserving the education they had received, continuing the work for needy youth, nurturing friendships and solidarity amongst members. The first statutes were drawn up in Turin on 8 December 1911, at the first International Congress, urged on by Blessed Philip Rinaldi, who would later become the third successor of Don Bosco.

On 23 May 1920, when the statue of Don Bosco erected by the past pupils in the Square in front of the Basilica in Turin was blessed, the organisational structure of the Association was defined more clearly: local Unions, a Provincial Federation, an International Federation (known as the World Confederation since 1954). At that meeting it was decided to also accept non-

Christian membership, eliminating any kind of distinction and separation, privileging rather the notions of unity and fraternal bonds.

After the Vatican Council new and more practical forms of cooperation with the Salesians developed. The Confederation is part of a wider group of past pupils of other Congregations, recognised by the Church as an International Catholic Organisation (I.C.O.).

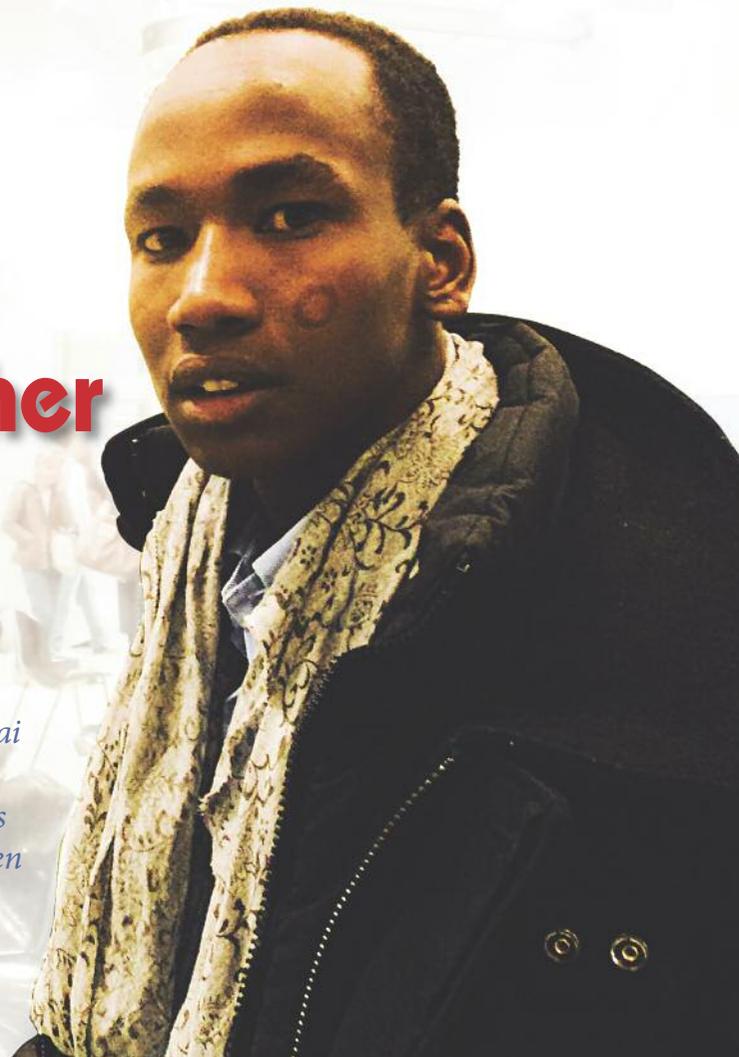
In recent years the Association has been working at formation of future leaders by running courses across the continents, and a number of international congresses have taken place to share new projects and local initiatives (Eurobosco, Asia Australia, Congrelat, Afrobosco). These take place every four

years, and the World Assembly, every six.

The Congress which took the Association into its second century was held in Turin and around the places of Don Bosco's birth and childhood, from 26 to 29 April 2012. The Rector Major and his Vicar took part. It was an important moment in the Association's history.

The World Confederation of the Past Pupils of Don Bosco has a strategic plan (2011-2016) aimed at a growth in the sense of belonging to the Association and the Salesian Family, at a deeper Salesian and Christian spirituality, stronger leadership, and organisational structure. The Rector Major has also frequently urged Past Pupils to strengthen their commitment to society and Church.





La REPUBBLICA Degli student

## From Pupil to Teacher

### William's story

*From an undertaking in favour of just one person advantages can be derived for a whole community. This happened in the case of William, a Tanzanian boy of Masai origin who benefited from the help of many people and from education by the Salesians in Turin. Now he intends to repay his debt for the benefit of the less fortunate children of his village.*

by ANS

William is now a young adult, 22 years old, tall, thin, alert and forever smiling; his most typical Masai features, other than this are the circular marks on each cheek and the large hole in both earlobes. He is the oldest of 6 brothers, and was born in Elerai, a small village at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. William, who also goes by the surname Makau, has also taken on the name of the family who adopted him in Italy: Cisero.

Despite a strong desire to do so, as a child he could not study much: "I went to a Lutheran mission school for two years. Nobody studied much because they didn't consider it important. A boy's job was to hoe the ground, look after the animals or sell necklaces. So I worked in the fields and covered many kilometres a day bringing meat to the miners, because my parents raised cattle and were unable to support all of us kids".

Then came the encounter with an Italian couple that changed his life: "We met on the beach at Zanzibar, in 2005, when I was selling handicraft and cloth to the tourists. They listened carefully to my story. They were interested in it and my desire to study. They encouraged me to do so". The Ciseros offered to pay for his schooling there in Zanzibar. "I accepted willingly, because I always loved school to the point where I just couldn't leave off reading books".

When he had finished his first few years of Secondary in Zanzibar, in 2008 William was adopted and came to Turin where he began attending the Edoardo Agnelli Salesian High School. This was his first contact with the Salesians although they had been in his hom country since 1980. He spent two years at the school, but came to understand that this was not the kind of course he wanted to



follow. So he changed schools – but still with the Salesians – to go to the Agnelli Polytech, where he studied electronics and nurtured his dream of becoming an engineer.

At Agnelli, as time passed, William became very popular amongst the students thanks to his life experiences: he told them about when he confronted a lion one night and the time he saw gold-prospectors being killed with a machete. For Fr Alberto Zanini, the Rector at the school, however, it was his passion for learning that most surprised and endeared him to his school mates.

During his third year at the Polytech, William was elected as President of the “student Republic”, since school leadership was set up to emulate the Italian State. In terms of religious confession he would not regard himself as practising: he had been baptised as a Lutheran but did not really identify with that Religion. Now he says that the values he learned at the Salesian school are his values. He loves sport and like many African athletes he is a stayer: “I like cycling and running marathons; I can run 25 km on foot without any worries! In a 10 km race with 6,000 other athletes taking part, I came 2nd. And in May 2012 I achieved the same over 6 km, against 200 other athletes of the Federation”.

In the summer of 2011 William returned home. He has taught various subjects, such as Swahili, the Masai language, and maths – all to children in his own village. He even made the blackboard and school benches himself, outside under the



shade of the trees, to encourage children to study and their families to let them study. But it hasn't been easy: “The ignorance and poverty of my people really made me feel bad! I went from house to house to invite the children, but their mothers couldn't see the use of schooling and didn't send them. At the beginning, only a few came, but at the end there were more than 30 of them. My real satisfaction came when they enrolled in the state school after two years with me”.

In the future William wants to go to university for further studies, but his dream is to come back to Elerai and fulfil his dream for education on his home soil by setting up a school. “I want the children of my village to be able to go to school like I did”.

Before William can achieve his objective he has a good number of challenges to face up to; but meanwhile his enthusiasm is contagious and he is a leader. The Agnelli council is putting together a project to support him and some Salesian mission volunteers are thinking of going with him to Elerai on their next mission.





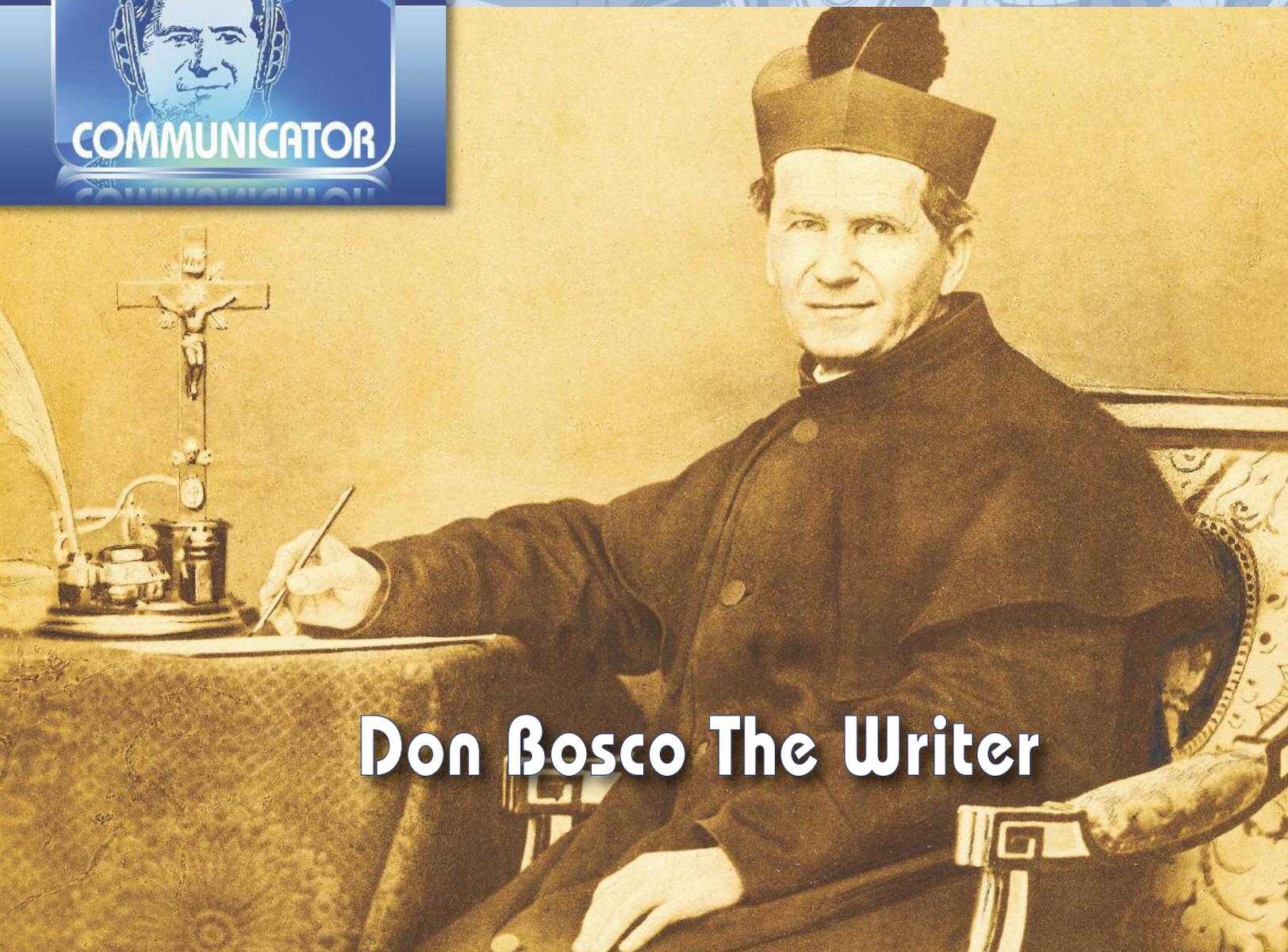
# COMMUNICATOR

- ▶ Don Bosco the Writer
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- ▶ Science and Technology – at Whose Service?
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“The Catholic Readings were warmly received, and the number of readers was extraordinary”  
(*Memoirs of the Oratory*, Chapter 60)



## Don Bosco The Writer

by Fco. Javier Valiente

From 1844, the year he published his first book, until 1888, Don Bosco wrote 403 individual titles including books and shorter works, to which we would need to add a huge quantity of letters and autobiographical writings. Some of his works saw a number of editions and enjoyed great popularity and a wide readership. During Don Bosco's life alone *The Companion of Youth* went to 118 editions and was translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese; in his *Spiritual Testament* he wrote: "In the sermons, conferences and books I have published I have done everything I possibly can to sup-

port, spread and propagate Catholic principles".

When we take a good look at Don Bosco's life, we become aware of the many initiatives he put in place to educate and evangelise the young. One can imagine Don Bosco's daily existence filled with looking after his boys, opening houses and schools, travelling around looking for financial resources, founding a religious congregation, speaking, preaching and hearing the confessions of his boys, writing letters, making official visits, journeys... but amidst the many things he had to do,

Don Bosco developed an intense activity as a writer and publisher, a real communications impresario, we might say today.

His publishing programme was marked by the major principles and concerns that drove his activities in life generally. At a time of attacks on the Church and the Papacy, criticism of religion, he set out to become a Catholic publisher, an apologist who could defend the Church and the Catholic Faith with his books. No wonder then that in this aspect too, he was like St Francis de Sales.

## Educational books

Besides his role as an apologist, Don Bosco wrote and published books with an educational purpose. The first book which Don Bosco wrote was *Historical Aspects of the Life of the Cleric Luigi Comollo* (1844), and he had 30,000 copies of this printed. *Church History* (1845) and *Sacred History* (1847) were also amongst the early works published by the saint as a response to the needs of his youngsters who, once they had studied the Catechism, had no other suitable books as a follow-up.

Books like *The Companion of Youth* (1847), aimed at religious practice of youth in parishes and religious centres; or *The Metric, Decimal System* (1849), published as a simple explanation of how to make use of this new approach which came into law in 1845. *History of Italy, Sacred History, The Lives of the Popes*, including a *Library of Italian Youth*, are a number of other examples of Don Bosco's interest in reaching out to young people through books.

## Political Press

But other than his interest in education, we can also find in Don Bosco's publishing activity a more modern mindset, one concerned with finding the most effective communication tools for creating opinion and influencing public opinion. Turin was very much alive in political terms during the second half of the 19th century and many kinds of newspapers and journals came into being (dailies, weeklies, etc.) all competing in a much broader market and on the lookout for a popular readership.

Writing to another priest, he encourages him to buy and invest in journals of a Catholic tenor in order to defend the Church's opinion, "instead of glorifying

the past and lamenting the present".

## A magazine for the Salesian Family

Another product Don Bosco set in motion, in 1877, was the *Salesian Bulletin*. Initially he was thinking of benefactors and Salesian Cooperators, and it was part of Don Bosco's communication policy for creating something to keep him in touch with all of the Cooperators by now spread around the world. This is a magazine which continues to be published today across the Salesian world, fulfilling the aims for which it was created by Don Bosco, to be an instrument for bringing people together, creating awareness of the life of the Congregation and fostering knowledge about the Salesian spirit in order to help the young.

## The Catholic Readings

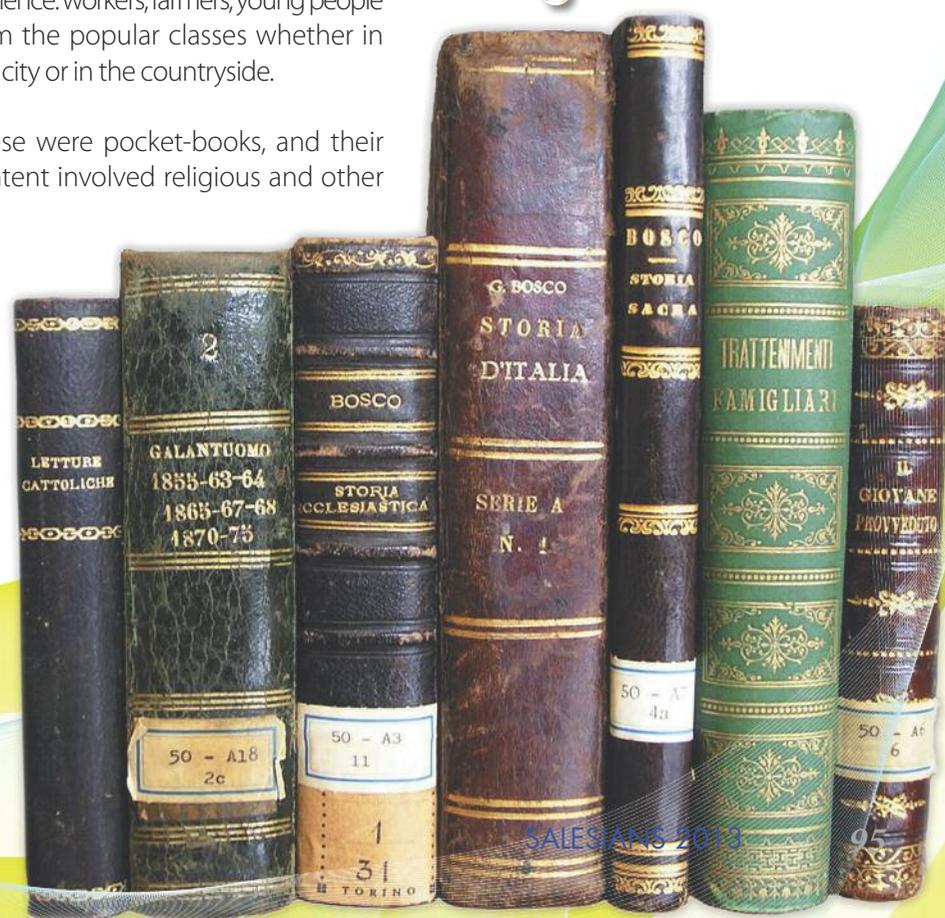
At the beginning of 1853 an important collection in Don Bosco's publishing efforts began, *The Catholic Readings*, which he addressed to a well-defined audience: workers, farmers, young people from the popular classes whether in the city or in the countryside.

These were pocket-books, and their content involved religious and other

topics aimed at the religious and moral formation of their readers. The scheme he followed, in many of them - especially the early ones - was usually presented as a dialogue between a father and his children on the topics presented. Many of his readership were young men who had left the countryside to come to the city and there, far from control by the family, they had abandoned religious practice, the sacraments and habits they had learned at home.

*The Catholic Readings* were full of testimonies, stories and examples of young people who behaved correctly. The lives of his pupils, Dominic Savio, Michael Magone or Francis Besucco, follow this style.

To resolve the distribution problem, Don Bosco used structures available through the Church; he also had people helping him who were in charge of subscriptions. *The Catholic Readings* were the core and most important effort in Don Bosco's publishing activity.





# Today's commitment to good press

*2012 has seen 75 years of presence in the Vatican. By pure coincidence this diamond jubilee comes at the same time as the 150th of L'Osservatore Romano, known throughout the world as the Pope's newspaper. The Salesians have had a particular bond with L'Osservatore Romano right back from Don Bosco's time, given the support he showed for Pope Pius IX.*

## Salesians and the Pope's Newspaper

by Carlo Di Cicco

L'Osservatore Romano came out for the first time on 1st July 1861 and on 31st December that same year Don Bosco was given all the necessary permissions to set up the first printing press at Valdocco. In 1937, while rumours of war were spreading and Nazism and communism became a dangerous threat to humanity, Pius XI called the Salesians to the Vatican "to look after the two printing presses, the Poliglotta and L'Osservatore Romano".

As a young priest Achille Ratti, without ever imagining that in the distant future he would become the Pope who would see to the beatification and canonisation of Don Bosco, had sought him out at the Oratory. He was left with an indelibly positive impression. He especially admired what was being done at Valdocco in the printing and publishing field. He recalled all this fifty years later when, as Peter's Successor, he sought to encourage printing and publishing in the young sovereign State that emerged from the Lateran Treaty signed in 1929 and which was gradually organising itself in every area.

Pius XI was convinced that his best choice was to entrust the printing and publishing of the Daily to the Salesians,

bearing in mind Don Bosco's prophetic intuition in understanding the decisive importance of the art of printing and publishing in contemporary times as a service to the apostolate and Catholic education.

Over seventy five years of direction from the Salesian community within the Leonine Walls there have been ten Salesian directors and seventy five Salesians, many of them Brothers who are and have been expert and competent professionals in the art of the Press.

Following their founder's example, Salesians have always considered good press in education of the young and love for the Pope to be of vital importance. A seventy fifth jubilee of active presence in his service coinciding with a similar important jubilee for L'Osservatore Romano, leads us to revisit the appropriateness and foresight of these two loves which Don Bosco handed down to his Salesians.

And given that Benedict XVI has launched the educational emergency as a new frontier for renewing society and living the Christian Faith by free choice, we might ask ourselves how the Salesians understand and put into

practice their love for the Pontiff today and carry out the aims of an apostolate of good press.

L'Osservatore Romano, given what the Salesians have done for it, is an inescapable fact for them, since it is what they do, almost something that belongs to the family and which continues on today. If communications is one of the crossroads of history for gaining a new perception of the world, reading L'Osservatore is one of the signs of support for the Church, as defined and presented by the Second Vatican Council. In that great assembly fifty years ago, the Church chose communion amongst its various components





'the Pontiff as features of its journey through time. So whatever helps communion is important. In our communications era, amongst the most numerous and best articulated of the media market offerings compared to the past, supporting the Pope's newspaper is neither something indifferent nor irrelevant. The spread and updating of the Holy See's Daily draws attention to the Salesians' special dedication. Spreading L'Osservatore, for the publication of which they remain essential, can be considered one of the new ways of understanding and expressing love for the Pope following the signs of the times.

In the multimedia area, L'Osservatore Romano is unique, notwithstanding the vast quantity of newspapers, websites, radio and TV dealing with religious topics. In Fr Filiberto González' words, as General Councillor for Social

Communication for the Salesians, in the immense ocean of information brought on by the Web, L'Osservatore Romano, by nature, is the most trustworthy source on the Church and the Pope. 





## Science and Technology: At whose service?

by Alexandre Garcia Aguado

*We often find ourselves saying “How time flies...” which leads inevitably to asking “What meaning am I finding in life?” Alexandre explains...*

Halfway through 2008, following World Youth Day, those were the questions which persistently bothered me. I had an excellent job as a systems analyst and prospects for the future were looking good, but I was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the idea that the various pieces of software I was developing always seemed to focus mainly on creating a positive financial outcome for the firm I was working for. Not that this was necessarily a problem or even something bad, but I really wanted the technology and knowledge that I was developing to be at the direct service of those most in need of such.

I had graduated in Free/Libre Software Technology, one of a number of technology courses available, and its philosophy was very much directed

towards social inclusion, collaboration and respecting the fact that human beings have a vocation to be something more. UNISAL (Salesian University) is one of the few universities that offered this course and it was through it that I came to know the Salesians, began to get involved in pastoral activities, then missionary-oriented ones and finally got to work in the Salesian mission in Angola as part of the Salesian Mission Volunteer Movement. I found this a way of giving meaning to my life and my professional training.

After a year of preparation finally, in February 2011, I left for Angola. Once I had arrived in this mission territory, the first step was to get to know something of the circumstances of the country and especially what was happening in the area of Information Technology (IT).

I soon came to the conclusion that the main priority in the IT area was in technical education since, after all, nothing we achieved would last long term unless there were people to continue with it. We began by redesigning the basic computer and technology course that we were already offering in our Trade Centres where some one and a half thousand students are attending annually. This redesigning required us to create new teaching materials and we sought to innovate by offering a multi-platform course in computer technology, calling it *UbuntuBosco*, where the student could work with Ubuntu, Windows-XP and Windows 7. This gave him or her a much broader view of things. We set up various training workshops and educational opportunities with more than 40 computer teachers from the centres,



# UbuntuBosco 12.10

and we prepared other young people to be responsible for the maintenance of the computers.

In addition to the basic training, we re-designed the course for computer assembly and maintenance, since this is a huge need in the country and this kind of course makes it quickly possible for young people to join the workforce.

One of the requests of the Salesians in Angola, once I had arrived, was to create a website so that we could finally have an Internet presence. We set up a group of young Angolans working with the Don Bosco Publishing House in Angola. Then we kept in touch through the Internet with Fr Andrés Algorta, responsible at the time for Social Communications and the Brazilian volunteers. In November 2011, the [domboscoangola.org](http://domboscoangola.org) site went online as a formation opportunity for young Angolans, a communication channel for Salesians in Angola and a way of integrating the Salesian Family.

In line with the development of the website, we aimed at improving the Internet connection in Salesian works. The Internet in Angola is costly, especially in the interior of the country where the only form of access is via Satellite (VSAT). We reached a very satisfactory contract with one Firm which made a significant improvement in our connections possible.

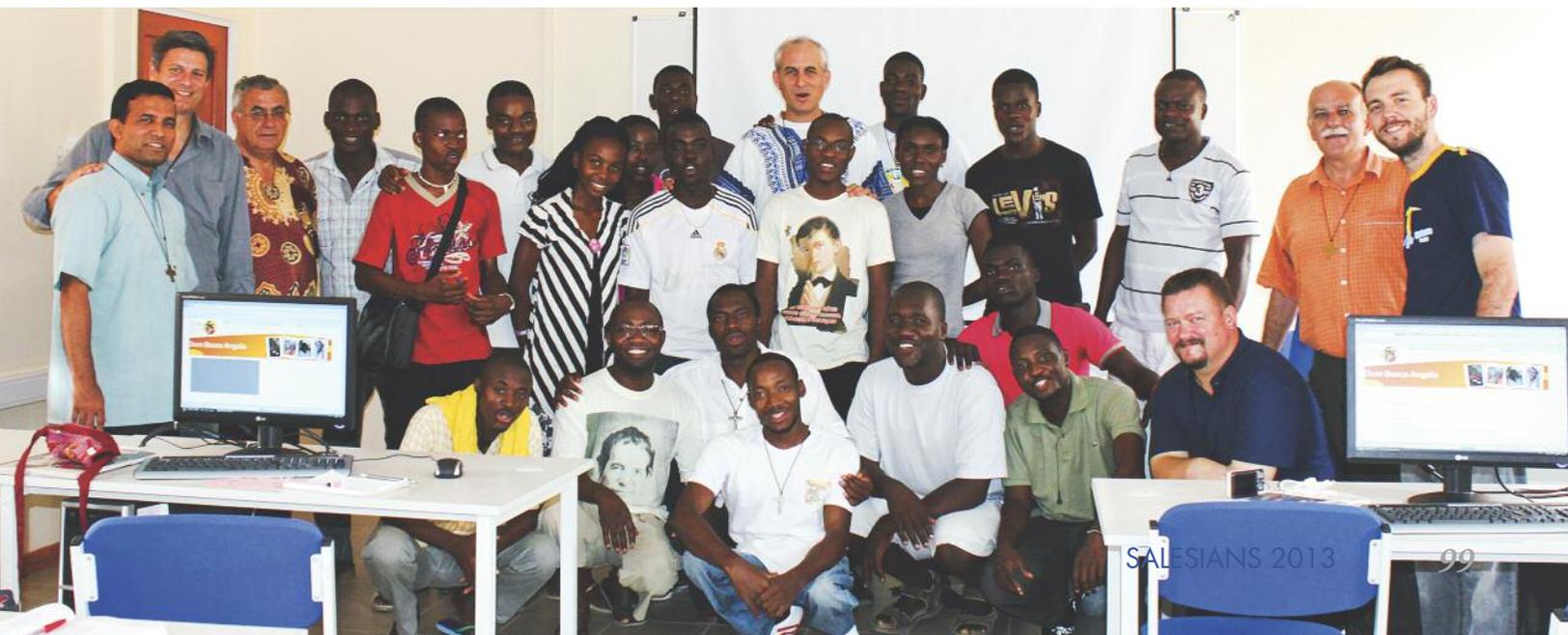
As well as these key projects, there were various other smaller activities and partnerships we were able to arrive at, as for example the OLPC (One Laptop Per Child) project, a worldwide project aiming to provide low-cost computers to help in educational settings for children. The pilot project in Angola is based at the Don Bosco School and has helped us to educate children in the use of Free Software and the physical structure of servers, Internet and whatever else is needed.

Salesians worldwide have opted for Free Software and in Angola this is the line we have followed, which in my

view is wonderful, since it is directly connected with what I believe and with the abilities that God has given me professionally.

All this is not just about using Free Software or developing it as we did with *UbuntuBosco*, but also about incorporating features of the free software community in daily activity, things like collaboration, sharing, freedom, appreciation of our being human, amongst many other things that are intimately connected to the Gospel and to what we believe in as a Salesian Family.

During this year of Mission Volunteer activity we achieved certain things, while others are still left to be accomplished, but for me the most important thing of all was to see the miracle of communion happening before my own eyes when we are able to put the little we have together, and receive incalculable riches from those who never previously thought they could have anything to offer. This was the way God showed me how to give meaning to my life.





# Gospel through Media

by Roman Sikoń

“The point is that we Salesians should preach the Gospel through media, as Don Bosco did”, says Roman Sikoń, Salesian, founder of the media evangelisation movement Art. 43. He has exchanged the typical soccer ball and guitar for the microphone and video camera that have gone wherever he has gone now for years.

It was 2007. A group of philosophy students at the Salesian Seminary in Krakow were listening to the Rector Major's conferences. “I wondered how it could be possible for the Salesians to be in something like 130 countries around the world while the ordinary individual knows so little about us and our work”, says Sikoń. “It was during the

retreat preached by the Rector Major when I recalled article 43 of our Constitutions and there I found the answer”.

Shortly afterwards, from that moment of inspiration for Roman Sikoń, the first media group Art. 43 came into being at the Salesian Seminary in Krakow. This particular article from the Constitutions became their starting point and programme. Roman made his first film at the refugee camp in Kakuma, northern Kenya, where he had worked as a volunteer for the Salesian Missionary Volunteer Service (SMVS), before he joined the Congregation. It was here that he found the enthusiasm and strongest support for his idea. A year later SMVS Youth for the World set up a profes-

sional film studio in Krakow adapted to the production of documentaries. So far, about thirty of these documentaries have been aired on regional and national TV stations. Moreover, 250 short films have been distributed via the Internet.

“It was at Smętowo, near Pelplin. I went there with Fr. Witek for a mission. The parish priest wrote to me a year, explaining that he had had three missions during his work there, but this one of ours was the most successful. Devotion and the number of the Holy Communion increased, and the collection increased as well! And I simply used a film to support to my words” recalls Fr. Bronisław Szymański. He is over 90 now, but still remembers almost every place he visited with his mobile cinema. The first religious films he got through the US Embassy in the mid 1960's. He used pack his suitcase with the newly acquired projector, 16mm tapes, tape recorder with his comments on the cassettes and then moved through Poland by train, from place to place, from one parish to another.

“I saw what life was like in the parishes. I had so many experiences; and priests used to come and ask for retreats, missions – all because of the films. I visited all our Salesian places. In Lublin, in





*The Salesians in Poland have been using media for evangelisation for years. Art. 43 is one of the many activities they undertake. The movement spreads throughout the world. But today, especially, all these media groups can work together via the Internet*

Kalina we blacked out the windows in the upper chapel and showed the films all day long. And I have to admit that during all my 78 years since I joined the Congregation, those seem to be the most fruitful to me" he recalls. Communist censorship didn't make Fr Bronisław's work any easier. The films smuggled from Italy with help of Archbishop Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II) were often screened in secret. That is why despite 20 years and 2520 projections there is not one single photo! Others continued his work - Frs Szymański, Michał Szafarski, Jan Waszczut and Fr Bernard Weideman all used media in their pastoral work.

Over the past few years new groups

of Art. 43 have been set up in Łąd, Świętochłowice, even in Ghana. "Fr Piotr Wojnarowski turned to us for help to set up a multimedia studio in the provincial house at Ashaiman, just like the one in Krakow. Together with volunteer Michał Król we spent two months constructing the Art. 43 studio in Ghana. Michał stayed there for two more years to train local volunteers and today the studio operates and develops independently" says Roman Sikoń. "My dream is for each Salesian province to have a small, professional studio like this with a group of Salesians and volunteers who express their vocation this way: preaching the Gospel through media, as Don Bosco used do" 





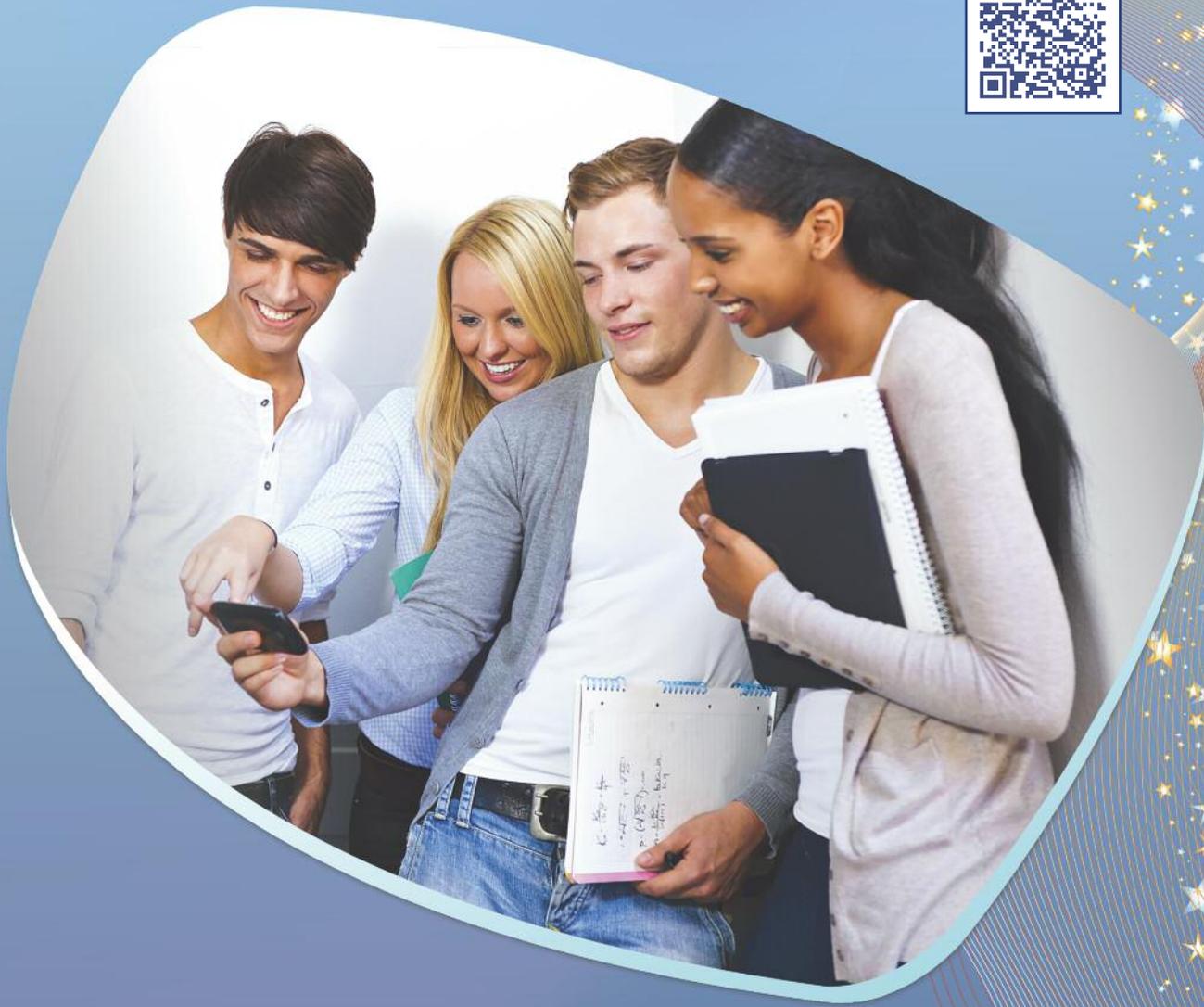
# Shake & Pray

App for iPhone & Android

by Don Bosco Publications

For many young people today their Smartphone is their link to the world. It is their TV, their video player, their games console, their diary – their best friend. In fact, it is their playground. Salesians must find ways of meeting them there, where they are. One way is the Smartphone application, known as an app. The Shake & Pray app offers young people a way of making their Smartphone their prayer book.





Attention should be paid to the various types of websites, applications and social networks which can help people today to find time for reflection and authentic questioning, as well as making space for silence and occasions for prayer, meditation or sharing of the word of God. In concise phrases, often no longer than a verse from the Bible, profound thoughts can be communicated, as long as those taking part in the conversation do not neglect to cultivate their own inner lives.

(Pope Benedict's Message for the 2012 World Day of Communications).



# A Radio run by street kids

*Radio stations, for Salesians, are something that can be set up and run in Salesian style: "we evangelise popular and youth culture, educating, guiding, informing, involving", the Salesian Social Communication System says about them. The text goes on to speak of consulting young people about the production of programs of an educational and pastoral nature, keeping an eye on communications culture, making sure those who run radio stations are professionally prepared and have a Christian and for that matter Salesian outlook on life. And part of the idea is to encourage the close involvement of young people themselves, where young people can do things for other young people.*

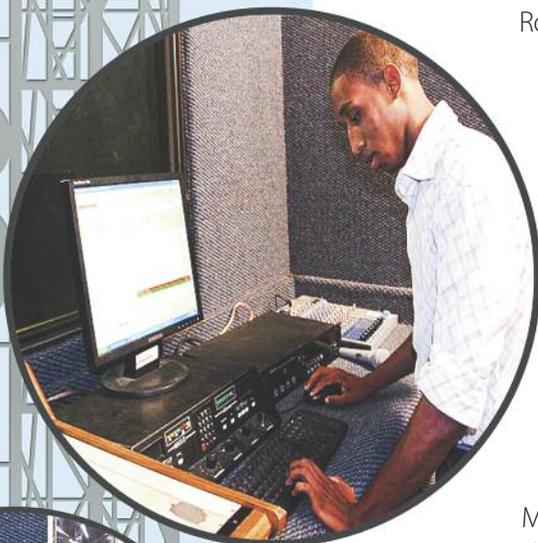
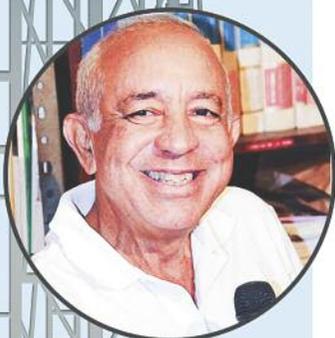
by ANS

Radio Juventus Don Bosco, Dominican Republic, is a station that came into existence in 2004, thanks to the courage and initiative of Fr Luis Rosario and a group of street kids. It really seems to incarnate the guidelines which the quoted document suggests. It is more than just a radio station; it is a form of education and pastoral ministry.

Fr Rosario tells us: "At first, all we wanted to do was set up a radio station. But we had no money – none to build a place with and none to buy equipment. But, as we got things under way, resources came, little by little: Some people contributed finance, others offered voluntary work..."

But the most extraordinary thing about this radio station is the people who give it life. Writing up its history, Germain Marte, who works there, says: "Who would ever have thought of putting a radio station of this quality in the hands of a group of young people off the streets? Only Fr Rosario, convinced that youngsters deserve trust, respect and opportunity for them to develop their talents".

The youngsters in question are part of the "Yo tambien" (Me too) project, aimed at street kids with a view to integrating them back into their families where possible, and into society, offering education as well. These are the ones who are running the Radio. "They are all an example of serious, disciplined and committed involvement. They make me really proud", says Fr Rosario. "We have been able to do with these young people just what Don Bosco wanted to do: make them good Christians and upright citizens".





Some of them are so well prepared that they produce and run a three hour program on Sundays. Many of them have developed skills as sound technicians or as editors. Others repair equipment.

According to Fr Rosario, "Radio Juventus Don Bosco" came about providentially. From the outset it has been able to rely on the generosity of many benefactors, like, for example, the Japanese Ambassador who saw to the necessary technical equipment. The Radio goes ahead without debts: none of the program producers pays for what is broadcast, but nor does the Station have to give them anything. The various teams – technical, engineering, production, news-readers, disc jockeys, finance – do their work voluntarily. The only request is that they respect the educational and pastoral policies of the station.

Internally things are well-structured, everyone with his or her role and function; the various teams come together once a month at least to plan their work. General meetings

are also held regularly, as well as opportunities for fellowship and sharing.

There is a participative work approach, frequent interaction with listeners, and some broadcasts are also done on location. Relationships with other Catholic broadcasters are very positive, and there is mutual cooperation, especially with stations in Santo Domingo city. Radio Don Bosco often networks with these when it comes to special Church celebrations, either national or international. Using the Vatican Radio signal, they link into a number of Papal activities.

Programs are aimed particularly at the younger generation, teenagers, but also young families. The Station is on air throughout the day. Radio Don Bosco follows Don Bosco's preventive system of education, based on three pillars: reason, religion, loving kindness. Building a better world is Radio Juventus Don Bosco's main objective, a world based on love, as expressed in its motto: "a voice for the civilisation of love"





# Pocket Faith

## Practical handbooks for

by Jan Misko



*Inspired by our founder John Bosco as well as by his great model Saint Francis de Sales Don Bosco Publishers Slovakia prepared an edition of practical books by means of which they seek to introduce deeper knowledge of basic truths of the Christian faith and the attitude of the Church to current topics to a wide range of people.*

Every day we are overloaded with lots of information from more or less serious media. Today it is considered to be a matter of course to be informed about what is happening in the world. However, if it comes to questions of faith we find ourselves searching, at times confused, and often our opinion is shallow, unable to serve us well when we need to respond to the more demanding questions of life today.

### Edition for a wide range of people

*Pocket Faith* is an answer to the needs and requirements of many believers, who often do not have time or even the possibility of taking part in lectures or discussions on some item of faith. It is also intended for those who want to look for answers to various questions of life, or know something of the kind of attitude a Christian might adopt regarding various issues. In addition, these pamphlet-style booklets can be a good resource for community meetings or for catechetics.

EDÍCIA VIERA DO VRECKA 2013





# every Christian

## Knowledge with understanding

While preparing the content for each topic we have sought the help of priests, consecrated religious and lay specialists in order to tackle the given issue as broadly and as accurately as possible. However, following Don Bosco's model we want to make the language of the books for our readers as understandable as it can be. For those who would like to look deeper into the topics, of course, we offer references to other literature.

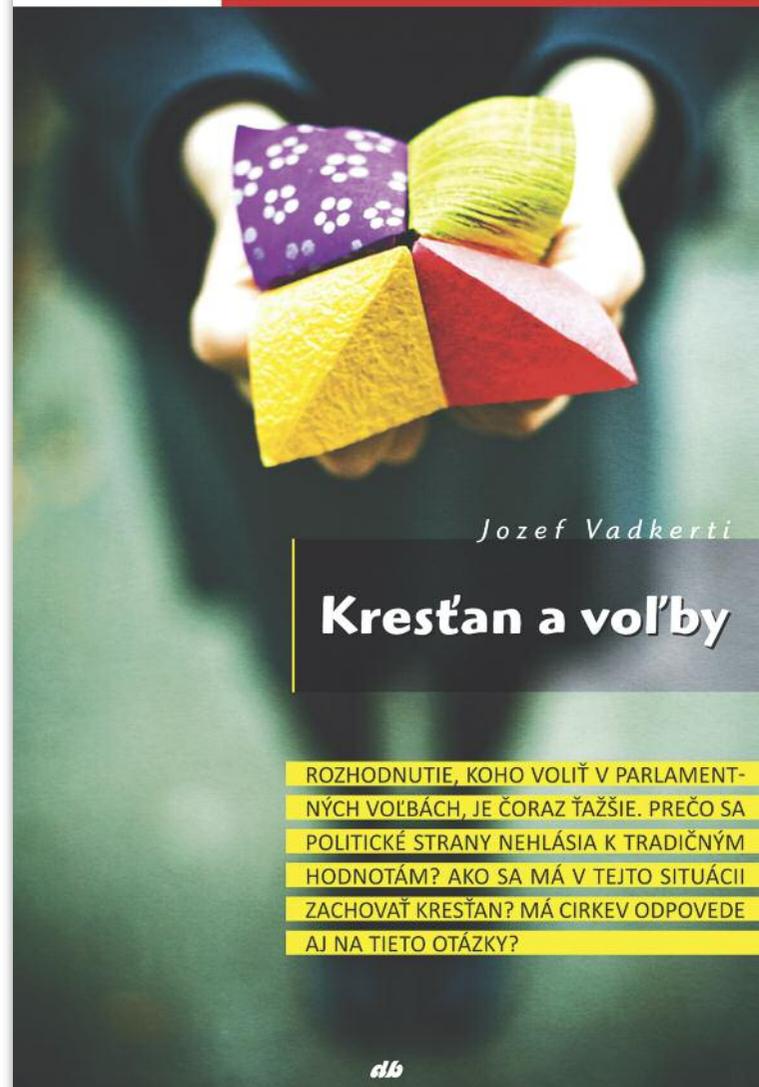
## Contemporary topics

Beside topics which our readership might well expect as normal for a series on faith, we want to deal with more sensitive ones as well, at the same time following the teaching of the Catholic Church. This led us to prepare 12 topics for 2012: how to live the Holy Scriptures every day; Christians and elections; Punishments in raising children; asking the question whether the media manipulate us; God in the marital bedroom (about birth control); I believe in God - I don't need the church; Saints Cyril and Methodius – as we never knew them before; private revelations in our lives; Was life better under communism?; Magic, superstition, calling down curses... what does God say about this? Money in the hands of a Christian; forming our conscience.

## At a price you can afford

Individual titles of the *Pocket Faith Edition* are published regularly each month. It is possible to subscribe to the edition or buy individual booklets separately in bookshops or through the Internet. Subscribers pay 1 euro for a title each month, that means 12 euro all-up for a year. If someone decides to buy the booklets separately, the price for one item is higher - 1.5 euro.

We very clearly have in mind as a Salesian Publisher that we want to be devoted followers of St. John Bosco, who used to publish the "Catholic Readings". He used the same approach to educate a wide range of ordinary people and defend values and the Church's teaching. We started the *Pocket Faith Edition* project in December 2010 and already in the first year we had 10,000 subscribers. Besides that, a further 2,000 individual items were sold in bookshops.



Jozef Vadkerti

## Kresťan a voľby

ROZHODNUTIE, KOHO VOLIŤ V PARLAMENTNÝCH VOĽBÁCH, JE ČORAZ ŤAŽŠIE. PREČO SA POLITICKÉ STRANY NEHLÁSIA K TRADIČNÝM HODNOTÁM? AKO SA MÁ V TEJTO SITUÁCII ZACHOVAŤ KREŠŤAN? MÁ CIRKEV ODPOVEDE AJ NA TIETO OTÁZKY?

db

Praktická príručka pre každého kresťana  
cena: 1,50 EUR; cena pre predplatiteľov: 1,00 EUR





# Festiclip, video for youth by youth



*Since 2005, the Atelier Multimédia Studio\* has been organising a video clip festival involving young people from fifteen to twenty years of age. They produce a short clip of less than seven minutes on a topic they decide on. The only request is that the clip contain a positive and educational message.*

by Vincent Grodziski

Sixteen-year-old Maxime attends a Salesian secondary school. This morning, her pastoral leader shows the class a video clip dealing with a seventeen-year-old girl who is pregnant. After they watch it, they share their thoughts. Some approve of the young girl and her partner's choice to keep the child while others oppose it. The leader moderates this exchange and invites the students to reflect more deeply. Maxime dares to join the conversation and speaks of a similar case in her circle of friends. Fiction becomes reality. Maxime's testimony is respected and allows them to look at things differently...

## A collection for sharing

The clip watched this morning in Maxime's class is part of the *D'clik* collection which holds a number of other clips. These touch on various issues : drugs, video games, integrating hand-

icapped children, racism, social networks via Facebook, alcohol... These clips all come from youth groups in the Salesian network. During the school year, a team is set up around a leader to produce a clip which can be part of Festiclip. This festival is open to schools or activities belonging to other Congregations. "For the final year students this was the opportunity for them to get moving", says Gérard Cuiet, a Marist Brother. "This production brought out some talents, shared experience and created class spirit. It was a very positive experience".

The project leads to five, ten thirty or more 'products'; it requires a degree of adaptation and the kind of discipline which allows each member of the team to get involved according to his or her abilities. The leader's role is important. "A parent of a student came to give basic knowledge to the students", said Veronique Le Pargneux, leading

another group. He then left them free. He was at their disposal when needed. The students quickly picked up the camera operation and editing, so they were able to complete the project alone". The leader does not necessarily need to be an expert in video since some of the group may have already produced films. "I leave them free to do what they wish", says Serge Pagès, leader at the St Vincent de Paul d'Avignon School. "I am there to help with questions, not to control. Through dialogue, the youngsters soon learn what is feasible or not". The young people are also the driving force of the project. The notion of confidence is important and they allow themselves to be challenged by their leader's questions.

## D-Day, or should we say 'C-Day'!

During festival evenings, all the clips



are shown. Once introduced by those who put it together and screened it, the clip is then noted by other groups present and also by a jury made up of people from the audiovisual world and the Salesian Family. Votes out of 20 give more importance to the message (out of 12) than to the technique (out of 8). "The fact of judging the films creates more interest", says Véronique Le Pargneux. "We were moved by the seriousness of the invitation and the reception we received. Everything was perfectly set up and organised. It certainly motivates one to come back next year. It is true that there is so much to be done to arrive at something of quality but you get ideas by seeing what others are doing, and I am certain we will be motivated to invite others to join our team". The public and the jury award a prize to those clips which have gained the most votes. To add something to the festival, there are interludes, songs, music and magic, offering participants a chance to show off their talents and discover talents of others their own age.

After the Festiclip, the Multimédia Studio selects two or three clips. It then suggests to those who produced it that it can be redone with professional material so it can then be added to the *DClic* collection 



\* The *Atelier Multimédia Studio* is a team made up of six Salesians of Don Bosco. Its aim is to achieve a variety of media products aimed at promoting young people and to help interpret the Gospel for today. It has to its credit the production of videos, CD-Roms, audio CDs, books and communication items (posters, leaflets, mini-expositions, ...). To know more :

[www.donboscomedia.com](http://www.donboscomedia.com)





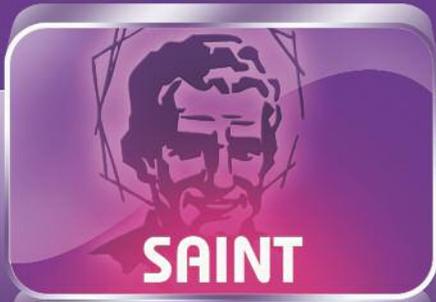
# SAINT

- ▶ Nino Baglieri, Tireless Apostle
- ▶ From 'Hell' to the Gates of Heaven
- ▶ A New Don Bosco
- ▶ Holiness in the Family

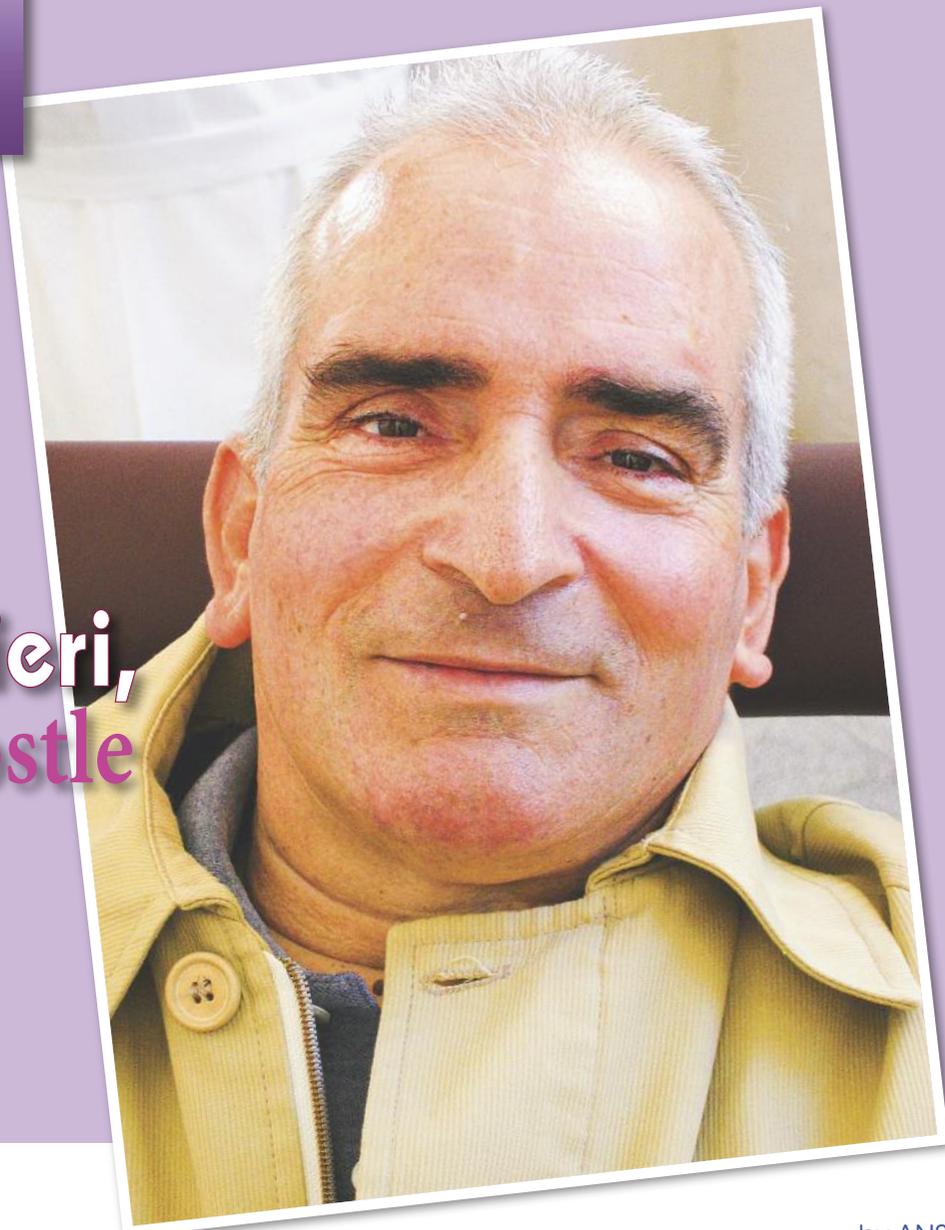
“We had put our own ministry, which called for great calm and meekness, under the protection of this saint (Francis de Sales) in the hope that he might obtain for us from God the grace of being able to imitate him in his extraordinary meekness and in winning souls”.

*(Memoirs of the Oratory, Chapter 32)*





## Nino Baglieri, tireless apostle



by ANS

Nino Baglieri was born in Modica (Ragusa) in 1951. After attending primary school he became a bricklayer. At seventeen years of age, on 6 May 1968, he fell from a scaffolding 17 metres high. Having been rushed to hospital, Nino realised bitterly that he was completely paralysed. In this way his life of suffering began, passing from one hospital to another, but without any improvement. He returned to his birthplace in 1970, but for Nino there followed ten dark years in solitude, suf-

fering and desperation, not once venturing beyond the house.

On 24 March 1978, Good Friday, at four in the afternoon, some people from the Renewal in the Spirit Movement were praying for him; Nino felt himself transformed. From that moment he accepted the Cross and said "Yes" to the Lord. He began to read the Gospels, and the Bible and rediscovered his faith. The same month, helping some youngsters with their

homework he learned to write with his mouth and to make telephone calls using a special stick. In this way a great number of relationships were established which would gradually lead him to bear witness in his condition to the gospel of joy and hope.

He began composing his memoirs, writing letters to all sorts of people in various parts of the world, made personalised cards which he gave to people who came to visit him. His writ-

*“in my last journey to God I’ll be able to run to meet Him.”*

ings also came to the attention of publishers and Setim published his “From suffering to Joy.”

From 6 May 1982 onwards Nino celebrated the Anniversary of the Cross and the same year became part of the Salesian Family as a Cooperator. On 31 August 2004 he made his perpetual profession with the Volunteers with Don Bosco (CDB). On 19 January 2007 in Rome he took part in the Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family, undertaking a painfully long journey by car to the Capital, in order to give his final public testimony.

On 2 March 2007, at 8 am, Nino Baglieri, after a period of long suffering and trial gave up his soul to God. After his death, they dressed him in a track-suit and sports shoes so that, as he had said, “in my last journey to God I’ll be able to run to meet Him.”

Cardinal Angelo Comastri, Vicar Gen-

eral of His Holiness for Vatican City, who had occasion to meet and know Nino Baglieri said: “When you met him he gave the impression that he was filled with the Holy Spirit... He used to celebrate the anniversary of his call to the cross like others celebrate their wedding or ordination anniversary... Nino Baglieri became an untiring apostle, a magnet of goodness, who attracted many young people to the love of God.”

### Memories of a friend and brother

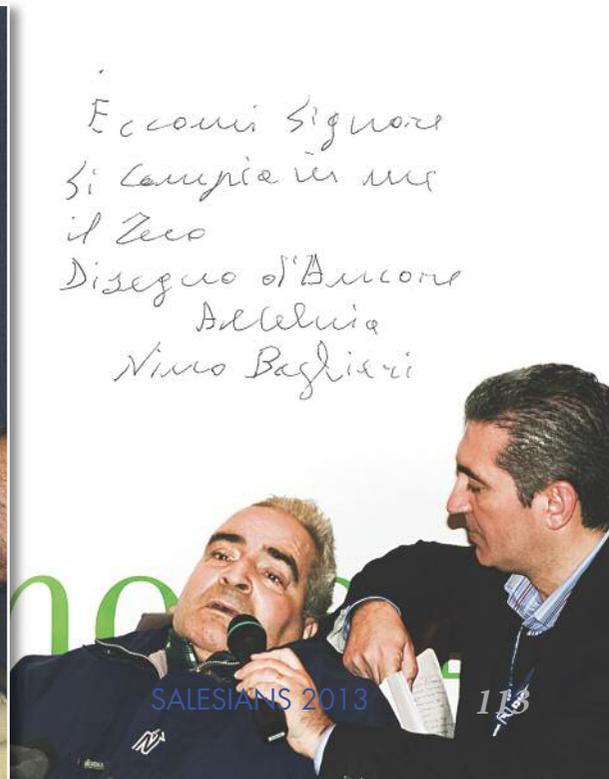
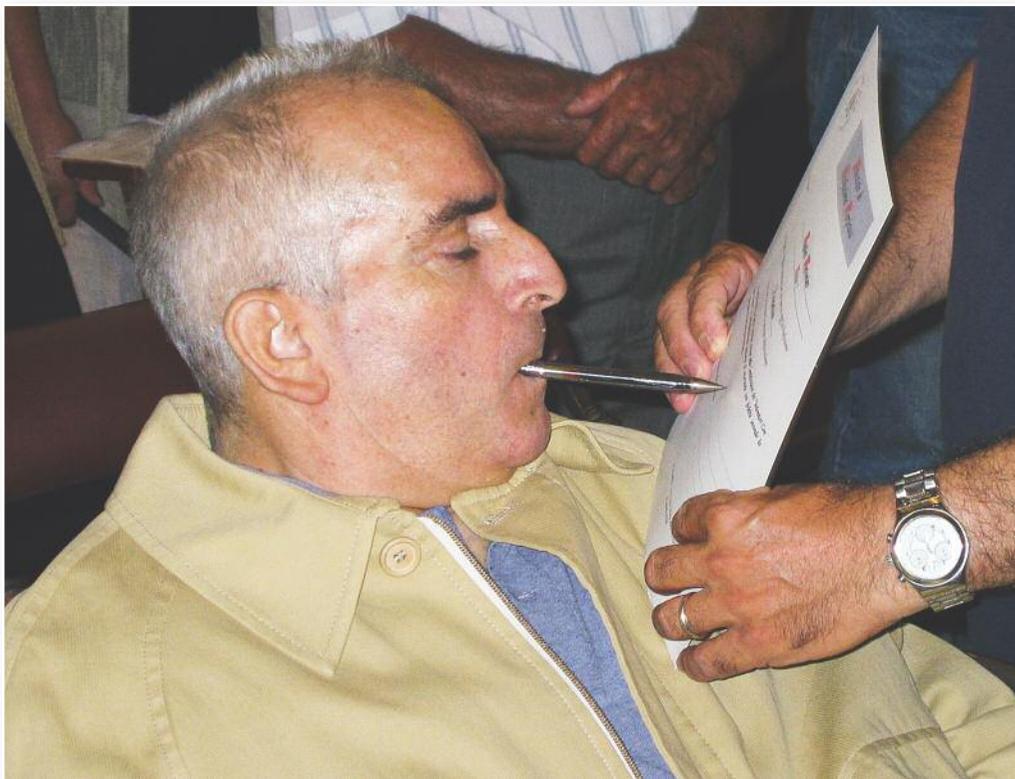
With the official request for the opening of the cause of beatification, the holiness of Nino Baglieri is on the way towards being recognised by the Universal Church. But someone who had the opportunity to know him and be close to him can testify already to the radical nature with which the Volunteer with Don Bosco (CDB) lived the evangelical virtues and Salesian secular



consecration. We offer below some recollections from the personal memories of his CDB brother, Gaetano.

“After having taken the promise as a Salesian Cooperator, Nino Baglieri felt that the call of the Lord to live the Salesian charism needed a secular consecration. In this way in 1994, he joined the CDB, living to the full all the characteristic features of this Institute.

The secular nature of the CDB is expressed in making oneself a bridge between God and men, trying to bear witness to the action and love of God in the life of men and women. While aware of his limitations, Nino knew how to safeguard a precious message to be passed on to the men and women of today: in a society every more directed towards the cult of the body, of pleasure, of physical strength, Nino had to communicate that suffering is not an instrument of sorrow and death, but of purification and of salvation!”



*Eccomi Signore  
51 compleanni me  
il zero  
Disegno d'Ancone  
Alleluia  
Nino Baglieri*



# From 'Hell'

by Erzsébet Lengyel

## Who was István Sándor?

Salesians describe him as a quiet, calm individual, very much dedicated to his work and apostolate, never raising his voice in anger but someone with a quiet educative presence: he was a true model of Christian life. In any set of circumstances he seemed to be organised, ready and determined, something which he also demanded of the young people he was with, especially those working in the printing press. He wasn't fond of lots of words but when he did have something to say it was always appropriate for the occasion.

He also knew how to listen. His charismatic presence was such that he felt he did not need to be hurrying after anyone and the boys felt they were always close to him. He prepared himself well to be a Salesian, a Brother, taking on the various roles of responsibility for the boys entrusted to him.

## The history

In the 1950s in Árpád Street, one of the main streets in Újpest, a Budapest suburb, a new hostelry was opened called "Hell". Nearby was the Clarisseum Salesian House which had an oratory, and a printing press already taken over by the State. When the young men and their 'boss' walked down the street they could see this pub sign mocking their faith, so they blackened it out with pitch. The pub's owners called the secret police (ÁVH *Államvédelmi Hatóság* got which means the State Defence Authority), who found clues leading them straight to the Clarisseum. This was the beginning of István Sándor's and his friends' Calvary: false accusations, spying, torture, prison and death by hanging on 8 June 1953.

Today 'Hell' is no longer there, the Communist regime has fallen to pieces, but the Church and the Salesian Congregation have taken on new life in Hungary and if the Lord so

*Hungarian Salesians during the two World Wars had always supported the Young Catholic Workers Movement (Katolikus Munkásifjú Mozgalom), throughout the country, especially by setting up small apostolic groups for young workers. But from 1945, the Communist regime, which was gaining more and more power, saw the Salesian Congregation as a special threat and in the name of the working class set about attacking anyone involved with the young and their moral, cultural and professional improvement.*





# to the Gates of Heaven

*In memory of István (Stephen) Sándor, Salesian Brother, Martyr*

wishes it, we will soon see István Sándor amongst the Church's Beati-  
fied, one of the first Salesian martyrs of  
the communist regime in Budapest.

## István Sándor amongst us

When we celebrated the 10th an-  
niversary of the "Nomad Camp",  
something which the Salesians have  
been promoting with the Cooperators  
and leaders, the youngsters spent a  
number of days together living in a  
most unusual fashion, meaning as  
"nomads", instead of in their usual  
homes and comfort.

The main thread running through this  
experience was the idea of István  
Sándor's life, not just the story of his life  
and martyrdom but also the real situa-  
tion he had to live through. The games  
too all evoked the 1950s. They all went  
back in time in their way of dressing, the  
things they used and other reminders of  
the era; there was the infirmary and even  
an interrogator's room. They also experi-  
enced the night raids, the hiding places,  
the various subterfuges and the Masses  
celebrated before dawn; all the kinds of  
things that István Sándor had to go  
through. And the martyr, or at least as he  
was interpreted by a pre-novice, then re-  
counted the most important events of  
his life. No longer a person from history  
he had become a friend and neighbour,  
a good example to follow. They prayed  
for his beatification, so that in these diffi-  
cult times the Church and Hungary as a  
nation might find a protector and a mile-  
stone marking their way.





# A New Don Bosco



*On October 2011, this statue of Don Bosco was ceremonially unveiled and blessed by Fr Fabio Attard, General Councillor for Youth Ministry, right in front of Vienna's Don Bosco House.*

*Standing there, Don Bosco seems to beckon the guests over and invite them to enter the house. The figure standing before us is angular, and seems to be even larger than it actually is due to the small head.*

*He stands there, solidly connected to earth once more, but gazing upwards into the distance, towards the future. His shoes, over-sized as they are, remind us of a clown. That matches pretty well the colourful ball in his left hand. This hand contains a message: Three fingers pointing away as a symbol of the Trinity.*





*His right hand reaches out expansively, turned upwards. Not only does it beckon us, but seems to invite everything from above. That is how he stands before us: heart in Heaven but solidly connected with earth.*

*One more tiny detail. There are three small sparrows at his feet, as if he is telling us:*

*“Be good, be happy – and let the birds sing”* 



# Holiness in the Family

*“New Evangelisation depends in great measure on the domestic church... and given that the eclipse of God and crisis in the family are related, so new evangelisation is inseparable from the Christian family. The family is in fact the way the Church follows since it is a “human space” for encounter with Christ... Family, based on the Sacrament of Matrimony is a particular implementation of Church, a saved and saving community, and an evangelised and evangelising one”*  
*(Pope Benedict XVI).*

by Pierluigi Cameroni

It is in the light of this that we record here some Salesian Family testimonies where the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony has been demonstrated *par excellence* or where they have manifested the truth of the Christian family.

The bicentenary of the marriage between Francis Bosco and Margaret Occhiena, Don Bosco's parents, reminds us that the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony flows from Easter as a sign of the love of Christ for his Spouse, the Church.

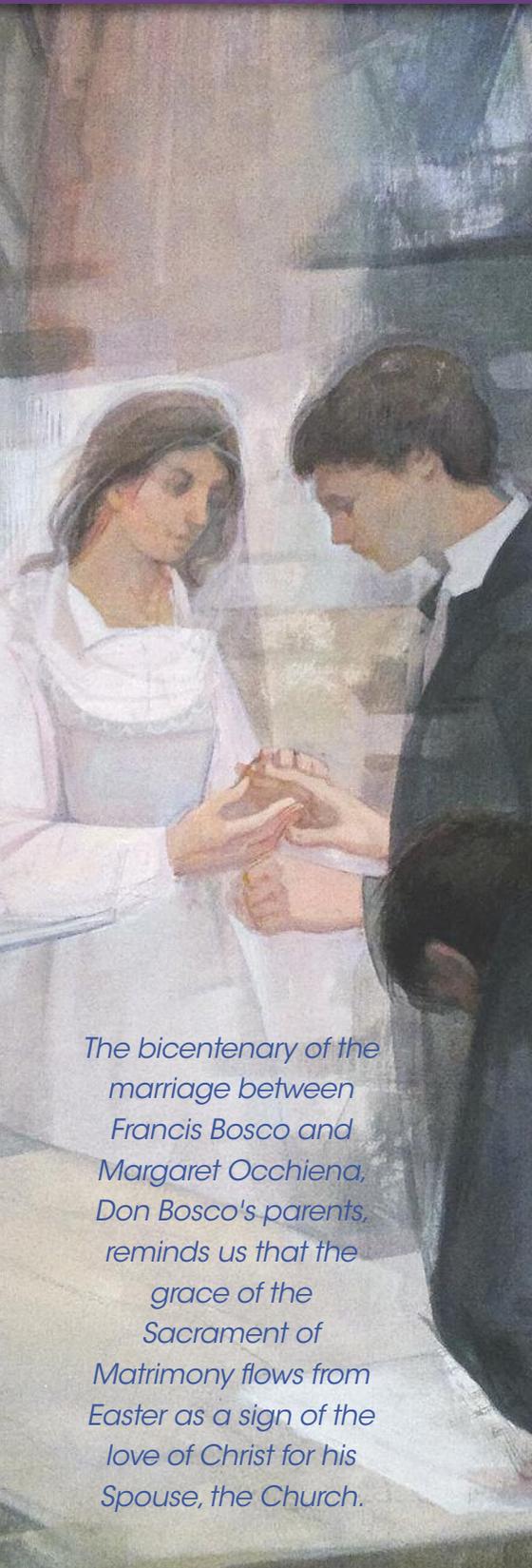
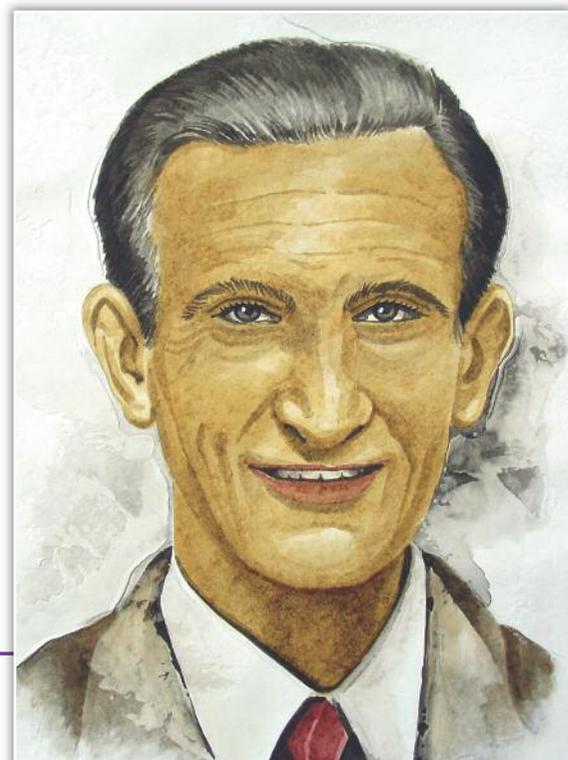
Margaret's married life with Francis Bosco was faithful and fruitful. Their vows were a sign of the fruitfulness that would broaden out to include the Family founded by one of their sons, John.

Francis and Margaret celebrated their wedding in the parish church at Capriglio on 6 June 1812, where they exchanged vows at the foot of the altar. Margaret, when she entered her new home at Morialdo, immediately accepted little Anthony as her son and took in Francis's elderly mother as well, also called Margaret, showing her love and respect. The Lord blessed this union between Francis and Margaret:

on 8 April 1813 they rejoiced at the birth of Joseph and on 16 August 1815, in the octave following the Feast of the Assumption, they rejoiced at the arrival of their second-born, John Melchior, the future Saint of the young.

The 7th World Family Congress (Milan 30 May – 3 June 2012) recalled the testimony of the “solid Gospel life” of Servant of God Attilio Giordani (Milan 3 February 1913 – Brazil 12 December 1972).

Attilio was a catechist, leader, teacher, brilliant theatrical actor, a delegate for



*The bicentenary of the marriage between Francis Bosco and Margaret Occhiena, Don Bosco's parents, reminds us that the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony flows from Easter as a sign of the love of Christ for his Spouse, the Church.*

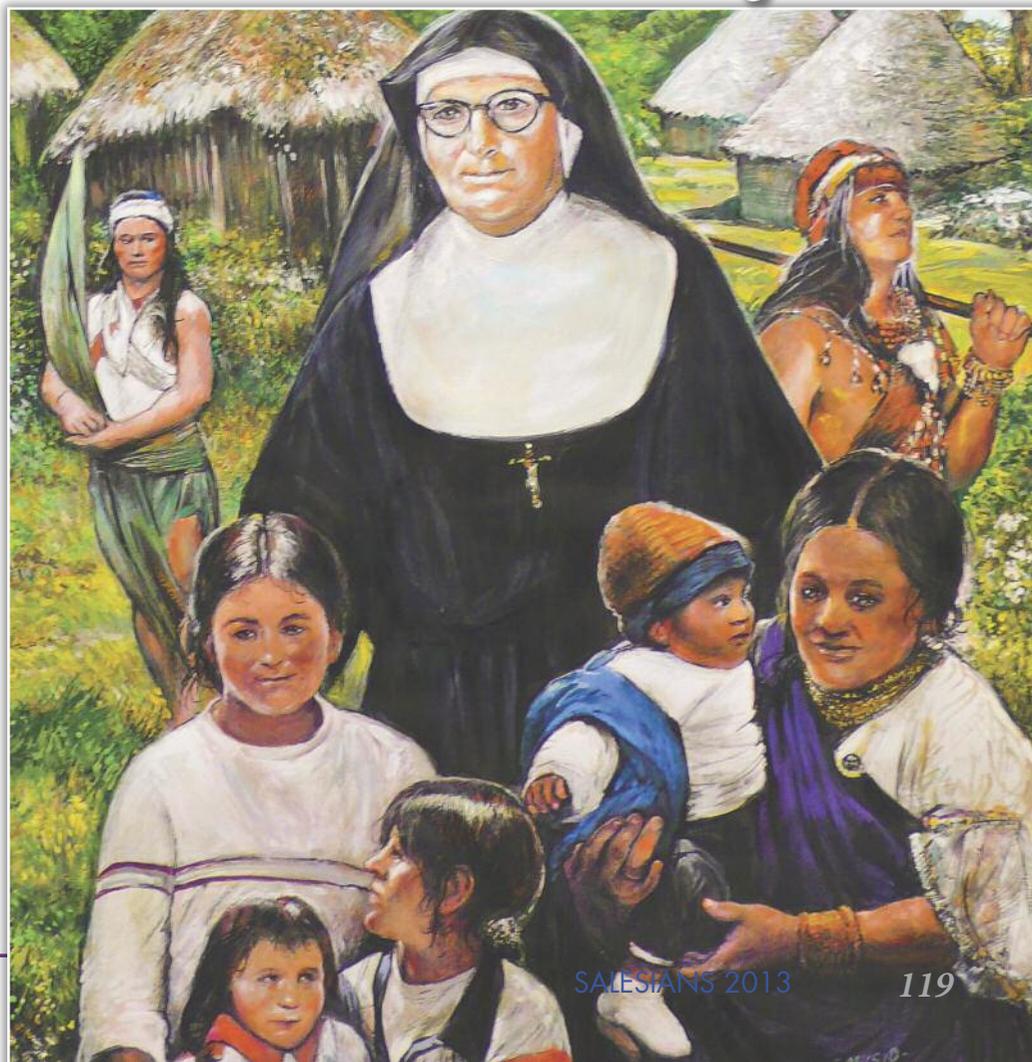


Catholic Action. He went as a missionary to Brazil, but above all he was a husband according to God's heart and the exemplary father of three children. Attilio lived a full life, a life very much on the move, especially on his bicycle, but always lived in the Lord Jesus' gaze, which he encountered in the sacraments. When at home he was always there for his family and when away from home, along with his family, he was full of ideas and proposals for the boys at the Salesian oratory. He had all the characteristics of Don Bosco, to the point where many of the boys, beginning with his own brother, became Salesians, thanks to his example. "Don Bosco would have been like this", many of them said. The fun, the outings, but also his charitable work in Milan after the war, the catechism classes and theatre where he improvised and had people in stitches, were Attilio's 'weapons' in his 'solid Gospel life' offered to the young. Attilio's family sowed Gospel hope and happiness, right until he went to the missions in Brazil, where his life's course came to an end.

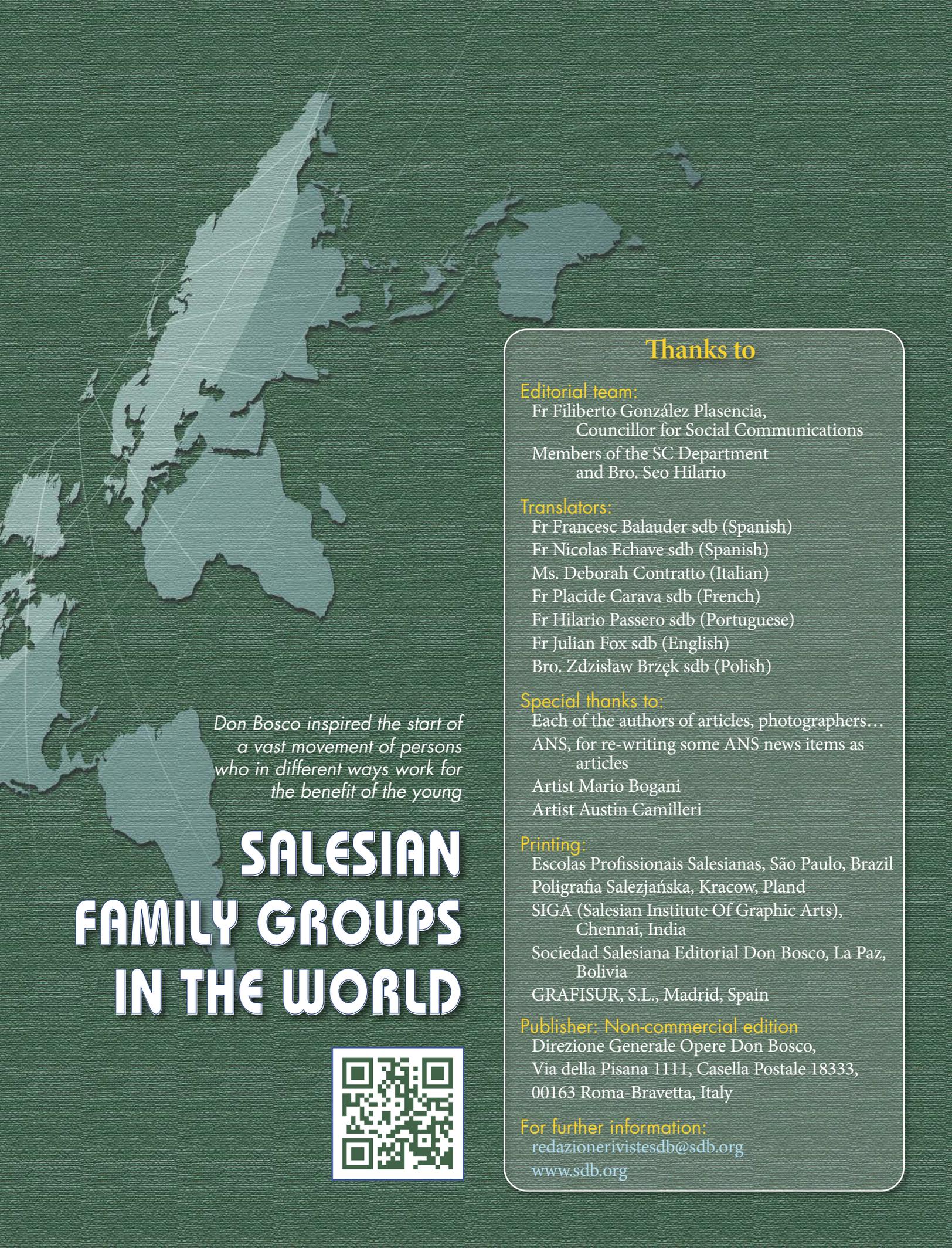
And now there is happiness in the Salesian Family because of the beatification, in Macas (Ecuador) on 24 November 2012, of Sr Maria Troncatti, a

Salesian Sister. Born in Córteno Golgi (Italy) on 16 February 1883 she died at Sucúa (Ecuador) on 25 August 1969, in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest. She became a 'doctor' of both body and soul: and while she looked after and cured people, she evangelised, proclaiming and testifying to everyone

the Father's infinite love and the tender motherliness of the Help of Christians. She stood out for her defence and care for so many children working to form new Christian families who were educated for the first time how being a young bride was a matter of their own free choice



- 
1. Salesians of Don Bosco
  2. Daughters of Mary Help of Christians
  3. Salesian Co-operators
  4. The Mary Help of Christians Association
  5. Past Pupils of Don Bosco
  6. Past Pupils of the FMA
  7. Women Volunteers of Don Bosco
  8. Daughters of Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary
  9. Salesian Oblates of the Sacred Heart
  10. Apostles of the Holy Family
  11. The Sisters of Charity of Jesus
  12. The Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians
  13. The Daughters of the Divine Saviour
  14. The Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
  15. The Sisters of Jesus the Adolescent
  16. The Damas Salesianas Association
  17. The Catechists Sisters of Mary Immaculate Help of Christians
  18. The Daughters of the Queenship of Mary Immaculate
  19. Volunteers with Don Bosco
  20. Witnesses of the Risen Lord
  21. The Congregation of St. Michael the Archangel
  22. The Congregation of Sisters of the Resurrection
  23. The Congregation of the Sisters Announcers of the Lord
  24. The Disciples
  25. The Friends of "Canção Nova"
  26. The Sisters of St Michael the Archangel
  27. The Sisters of the Mission of Don Bosco
  28. The Community of the Queenship of Mary Immaculate
  29. The Sisters of the Queenship of Don Bosco
  30. Visitation Sisters of Don Bosco



*Don Bosco inspired the start of  
a vast movement of persons  
who in different ways work for  
the benefit of the young*

# SALESIAN FAMILY GROUPS IN THE WORLD



## Thanks to

### Editorial team:

Fr Filiberto González Plasencia,  
Councillor for Social Communications  
Members of the SC Department  
and Bro. Seo Hilario

### Translators:

Fr Francesc Balauder sdb (Spanish)  
Fr Nicolas Echave sdb (Spanish)  
Ms. Deborah Contratto (Italian)  
Fr Placide Carava sdb (French)  
Fr Hilario Passero sdb (Portuguese)  
Fr Julian Fox sdb (English)  
Bro. Zdzisław Brzęk sdb (Polish)

### Special thanks to:

Each of the authors of articles, photographers...  
ANS, for re-writing some ANS news items as  
articles  
Artist Mario Bogani  
Artist Austin Camilleri

### Printing:

Escolas Profissionais Salesianas, São Paulo, Brazil  
Poligrafia Salezjańska, Kracow, Poland  
SIGA (Salesian Institute Of Graphic Arts),  
Chennai, India  
Sociedad Salesiana Editorial Don Bosco, La Paz,  
Bolivia  
GRAFISUR, S.L., Madrid, Spain

### Publisher: Non-commercial edition

Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco,  
Via della Pisana 1111, Casella Postale 18333,  
00163 Roma-Bravetta, Italy

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