



CAGLIERO 11

newsletter for Salesian
Missionary Animation



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Dear friends,

I am delighted to meet young people who are undergoing initial training as Salesians of Don Bosco, often in America and Europe. I am thrilled by their smiles, their stories of what they do for young people, the dreams that motivate their first steps on their vocational journey, and the concerns that give rise to questions and even wounds. The community remains the place where they experience communion and fraternity.

In our dialogues, we try to verify whether we are cheerful or happy. Because happiness is deeper, more stable, has more secure roots, and is the desire that truly moves our hearts. The next step is to ask ourselves whether we are trying to mature in faith or whether we are collecting tools to carry out activities. I wish you to find your permanent happiness in your encounter and friendship with Jesus Christ!

■ Fr Guido Errico SDB
Member of the Formation
Sector

Building bridges in the Holy Land



In today's Holy Land, marked by armed conflict, deep tensions and open wounds, talking about peace and disarmament is not an abstract ideal but a concrete necessity. Even when solutions appear partial and imperfect, every step that limits damage and reduces violence is a sign of hope. In complex contexts, limiting human suffering is already a choice of moral responsibility.

Building bridges instead of walls means choosing dialogue over confrontation and cooperation over the logic of force. **Disarmament is not only about reducing weapons** but requires a profound cultural and political change: disarming hearts, language and power structures that fuel hatred. However, no peace process can be considered authentic if it is not **based on justice**. Without justice, peace remains fragile and destined to break. Justice is the concrete recognition of the dignity of every person, respect for human rights and the protection of the weakest. It is the condition that allows the wounds of the past to be recognised and healed, preventing them from becoming new causes of violence. Without this foundation, any truce risks being only a pause between two conflicts.

Every person has the right to live in peace and stability. Peace is not only the absence of war, but the possibility of **leading a peaceful, dignified life free from fear**. Young people, who are often denied the hope of building their own future, have a particular need for this. A Holy Land marked by injustice robs them of their dreams, opportunities and trust.

Building peace means **investing in reconciliation**, in rebuilding communities and in healing wounded memories. It means putting people at the centre, not the force of arms. On this journey, the spiritual dimension offers light and support. Praying for a just and lasting peace means affirming that every life is sacred and deserves dignity. It is an appeal that crosses the religions and cultures of the Holy Land and invites everyone to become peacemakers.

Peace is not a utopia, but **a shared responsibility and a daily commitment** that requires courage, truth and justice. Only in this way can the Holy Land offer present and future generations a truly humane future.

■ Emanuele V. - missionary in MOR

FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- What "invisible weapons" damage relationships in your environment? How can you help to disarm them?
- Have you seen an "apparent peace" that hides injustices? What is needed for authentic peace?



BRINGING HOPE TO CAMBODIA'S BORDER CRISIS



Fr Michael, you are present in Cambodia and are close to people who have had to leave their homes and flee the Thai army. Can you briefly explain what this war between Thailand and Cambodia is about?

The current conflict between Thailand and Cambodia is linked to long-standing tensions over border areas. While the political and military aspects are complex, the impact on ordinary people is very painful. Villages near the border have become unsafe due to the presence of troops and the fear of violence. Many Cambodian families were forced to flee their homes suddenly. They are not involved in politics or conflict; they are victims seeking only safety for their children and families.

Together with others, you helped evacuate many people and visit them in the Refugee Camp. What do these people need most at the moment?

Together with our staff, we evacuated the students of Don Bosco Poipet in an emergency operation marked by fear and tension. Salesian family members visited two refugee camps. First, people need security—a place to sleep without fear. They also need basic necessities: food, clean water, temporary shelter, clothing, and medical care. Many children and youth are vulnerable. Beyond material needs, there is great need for Salesian presence and encouragement. Many families are traumatized. Children are frightened, and parents are deeply worried about the future. Listening, comforting, and offering simple signs of care are essential. In the long term, they will need support to return home safely or to rebuild their lives if returning is not possible.

How has this difficult situation affected the life of the Salesians in Cambodia?

This situation has strongly impacted Salesian life and mission in Cambodia. Some regular activities, especially in education and youth ministry, needed a change of perspective. Our youth events are now shaped by the reality of living near war. Past pupils have responded generously, serving those in need. We have shifted priorities to emergency assistance, accompaniment, and humanitarian coordination. While this has brought physical and emotional strain, it has strengthened our fraternity and mission. As Salesians, we bring not only material help but hope rooted in the gospel. We witness that Cambodians are not alone and not forgotten.



Fr Michael Gaikwad SDB

I come from Pune, **Maharashtra, India**. In 2015 I went as a missionary to Don Bosco Sihanoukville, Cambodia. Two years later I went to **Australia for theology** and was ordained in 2021. Since then I've been in **Don Bosco Poipet, Cambodia**. Here I'm the bursar and also responsible for the Don Bosco Children Fund Cambodia. We help students complete their basic education; there are around 1200 students.



Weapons around the world

Source: www.smallarmssurvey.org

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Civilian distribution: Over 650 million weapons are held by civilians out of a total of approximately 875 million (about 75%).

United States: Over 393 million weapons, with a density of about 120 weapons per 100 inhabitants.

Other Countries: India (46 million), China (40 million), Germany (25 million) and France (19 million) follow among the countries with the most weapons in civilian possession.

Europe: It is estimated that at least 35 million illegal firearms are in circulation.



MARCH SALESIAN MISSIONARY INTENTION

DISARMAMENT

For disarmament and peace
[Prayer intention of Pope Leo XIV]

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.
[Salesian missionary prayer intention]

Israel and Palestine

