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MESSAGE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE XIX GENERAL
CHAPTER TO ALL THE CONFRES OF THE
SALESIAN SOCIETY

Rome, 17th May 1965

Dear Confres,

1. Though separated by distance, we are united with you by means of a fraternal memento and through our prayers. We are thinking of you, spread as you are throughout the whole world, whether in your own native lands, or in faraway missions, bearing witness to Jesus Christ in liberty or in suffering.

It is you who have prepared this General Chapter with such apostolic zeal and enthusiasm never before evinced in any previous Chapter. We know that you are following us with lively attention, with great hope and perhaps also with some uneasiness; above all you are following us with your fervent prayers.

You realize full well that whilst you are working for souls in your field of apostolate, we too are working for the same souls as your true representatives, making your pro-

blems our own and trying not to belie your hopes.

Throughout the Chapter we have felt the presence of the whole Congregation around us and we are sure that this message will be a proof of our true union with each one of you.

2. We can, without doubt, affirm that this Chapter will take on a particular significance in the history of our Congregation.

In the Encyclical "Ecclesiam suam", Pope Paul VI has thus defined the work of the Council: "We believe that today it is the Church's duty to deepen the knowledge it should have of itself and of the mission it must exercise in the world."

Similarly the fundamental task of the Chapter is to help the Congregation in this decisive phase in the history of the Church, to deepen its knowledge of itself, of its origin, of its

research and study, in that truly universal spirit of Don Bosco, we have attained to a happy unity centred round the person of his VI Successor, Fr. Luigi Ricceri. Whilst we respect the differences that exist amongst us and surmount them in a brotherly manner, we strive to enrich ourselves with the contribution each has to offer. In the same apostolic spirit expressed in the motto of Don Bosco "da mihi animas" and in the spirit of that "charity which builds", with love and understanding we work for the updating of our Congregation.

4. Our work is in progress and will continue yet for some weeks. We have dealt with Vocations and Aspirants, with Liturgical Life and Piety, with the Parishes, with our apostolate among Youth, with the Co-operators, with the Past-Pupils, with Oratories and with the apostolate among Adults.

Fully aware of our responsibilities and without ignoring the actual conditions that prevail, we wish to make a detailed examination of our problems without excluding any or "evading" any that has a real and urgent significance.

In the preparation of new orientations and dispositions we need to count on your loyal confidence.

5. But allow us to remind you, and first of all to remind ourselves, what our ever revered Don Ziggotti pointed out to us when he presented us with the themes of the Chapter.

All external changes and new orientations, he said, however excellent they may be, will be of no use, if our hearts as religious apostles are not inflamed and our spirits deeply renewed.

It is to this renewal of our religious and apostolic conscience that, in this most important hour, we invite all our Confreres from the youngest to the most venerable: Novices, Clerics, Coadjutors and Priests.

The essential element of this renewal is this: let us quicken in ourselves *the truth of our religious consecration* to Jesus Christ our Saviour, and to God our Father.

Let us acquire a deeper conviction of this truth that it may sustain and animate in a practical manner our day to day life. It is Christ Himself who, through His Church,

vocation as a religious laxly taking part in the mission of the Church.

It is our strong desire to discern the will of God as regards our Congregation and to carry that out faithfully. To reach this goal we are trying first of all to go back to our authentic origins: to the spirit, to the aims, to the clarisms proper to Don Bosco, the Saint who was without doubt sent by God for a special mission.

Being aware that the will of God is manifested by means of providential events, we proclaim our firm, prompt and generous adherence to the decisions of the II Vatican Council and to the apostolic renewal to which it has given rise.

Following Don Bosco we wish to reinvigorate in ourselves that "sensus ecclesiae" - our awareness of being in, and of the Church, and to give our support to its gigantic efforts in this historic moment.

In particular, the Church in the Council has awakened to the fact that it is the Church of the poor". We also proclaim that it is our firm resolution to dedicate ourselves to all modern youth but particularly to "poor and abandoned youth", to those children of the working class to whom we have been called to work as sons of Don Bosco.

We resolve to get to know the youth and people of today better, to love them in the reality of their true situations, and to seek to their needs and to answer their most urgent appeals.

3. We have begun this task of orientation in our Chapter: it is quite a complex one. We are 150 in all, representatives of a Congregation that is spread over 150 countries in the world. These problems are not the same everywhere. We differ in age and experience and still more in our outlook and in our attitude towards problems. It is therefore understandable that, professing the same attachment to Don Bosco and youth, we have nevertheless experienced difficulties in arriving at a unanimous solution of the various problems.

But it is one of the beauties of the Salesian family spirit that it allows for frank and open discussion and mutual exchange of opinions. After a period of laborious and keen

invites us to look for the souls redeemed by His Precious Blood. He is the only saving power that leads them to eternal life. In this work of salvation we are made use of as instruments in proportion to the fervour of our religious life and according to the loyalty and generosity with which we offer our Divine Master the holocaust of our vows. It is this joyful offering which predisposes us to the love of souls and to the service of the Church, as it is attested with paternal exhortation, by His Holiness Pius VI.

6. Let us therefore renew in its totality and with trust the practice of our religious obedience, the holocaust of our own wills offered to God by submission to lawful superiors, who exercise their authority with respect and with paternal and fraternal love.

It is this filial and docile obedience that will make it possible for us to assume many heavy responsibilities and to lace up with greater courage to the new labours that await us.

The love of poverty, freely embraced, which liberates us from earthly ties, will be strengthened in us by the flight from seeking for ease and comfort which undermines religious life. Let it be functional poverty for the modernity of our apostolate, but let it always be a means of privation, of sacrifice for every single member, for the community and for the furtherance of the work itself.

Let chastity be our joy and shining witness, a chastity reinforced by our intimate union with Jesus Christ to whom we have consecrated all our affections and our whole body. In the exercise of continual mortifications and careful custody of the senses in the uncompromising severity of our evangelical and Salesian tenets, let us maintain unimpaired our ability to love Jesus in souls, which are so violently attacked by naturalistic doctrines and worldly fashions.

7. With one heart and one soul, united by the bonds of fraternal charity, let us share in the riches of community life generously, and let us accept daily the demands it makes on us since it permits us, by its guarantee of daily discipline, to love and adore Jesus Christ with greater energy.

The Salesian in the totality of his religious consecration,

closely united to the life of Christ, has the certainty of being a true apostle, a man abounding in energy and happy in *the* thought of his complete dedication.

May the golden advice of our Father, Don Bosco, in his last will and testament, comfort and urge us on: " Watch, so that neither the love of the world, nor the affection of parents, nor the desire of a more agreeable life induce you to make the great mistake *of* profaning the sacred vows and so transgressing the religious profession by which you are consecrated to God. Let none of us take back that which we have given to God."

S. Concluding this message, we turn to her whom Don Bosco called the true Foundress of the Congregation, the most loving Virgin Mary who our new Rector Major, Fr. Luigi Ricceri, recently called "*later huius Ecclesiae*", the Mother of this Capitular Assembly, and more so the Mother of the entire Congregation. We are here as in a Cenacle where she is present. She is more than ever our Help. To her maternal care let us respond with our fidelity renewing our consecration to her.

9. We will have the privilege and the joy of bringing to our common Father, Pope Paul VI, in the special audience which he will grant us before the feast of Mary Help of Christians, these sentiments of ours which are most certainly also yours.

We will listen with attentive and fervent hearts to the directives which the Holy Father will give our Congregation, and as sons of Don Bosco we will pledge him the full loyalty of our generous obedience.

Dear Confreres, a difficult but magnificent task awaits us in the Church of our times. Let us thank God that He has bestowed on us the immense honour of allowing us to work for Him in the Salesian Congregation. Let us be generous in carrying out this work so as not to disappoint the multitude of souls awaiting us.

In union of prayers and fraternal sentiments, we are.

Your Confreres
THE MEMBERS OF THE XIX GENERAL CHAPTER

SPEECH GIVEN BY THE RECTOR MAJOR,
FR. ALOYSIUS RICCERI, ON BEHALF OF THE SALESIAN
FAMILY, DURING THE ,PAPAL AUDIENCE OF
MAY 21, 1965

Most Holy Father,

The joy that fills the hearts of the sons of Don Bosco assembled today in Rome for the first time to hold a General Chapter, is no doubt a renewal of that holy joy our saintly Father and Founder experienced when in 1858 he visited the Eternal City and prostrated himself at the feet of the angelic Pope Pius IX. From that beloved Pastor did our dear Father receive enlightenment and strength to fulfil the task entrusted to him by Divine Providence. In that memorable audience did he finally decide to establish the Salesian Congregation according to the needs of the times.

Today, more than a hundred years from that happy event, the immediate successor of Don Bosco draws near to Your august throne to renew and confirm the pledge of loyalty, love, submission and filial attachment of the Salesians, of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, of the Cooperators, of the Pupils, Past-Pupils, to the Chair of St. Peter and to the person of Your Holiness, the Vicar of Christ. This has always been the vigorous tradition of our Religious Family and of the spirit bequeathed to its Holy "the Father and Teacher of youth", St. John Bosco.

We are extremely happy today, Most Holy Father, not only for the rare privilege of this audience, which You have so kindly granted us and which has brought around You the most qualified members of our Congregation from every part of the world, but also and above all, for the overwhelming tokens of Your love You have repeatedly bestowed on us.

The Don Bosco Boys Town of the Prenestine Quarter, the Institute of Arese, Your frequent visit to our Houses in Milan and Sesto San Giovanni, and the visit to our institution in Bombay during Your Apostolic-journey to India-

these bear eloquent testimony to Your special predilection and paternal solicitude for us, unworthy though we are of these precious favours.

The Salesian Family gratefully acknowledges these tokens of love, Most Holy Father, and is happy to offer You in return its filial homage of loving gratitude.

The Members of the General Chapter have gathered here today to beg Your Holiness for light and strength in this hour of immense responsibility for the Church and for the salvation of souls.

In a spirit of humility and fervent zeal, we are examining the apostolic horizons of the educative mission and pastoral work of the Salesian Family in the light of the teachings and the spirit of our Founder. We wish to find the solution and to take appropriate measures to meet the new compelling needs of our times.

We are especially anxious to correspond with generous promptitude to the appeals made by Your Holiness and the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council both inside and outside the Church for the spiritual regeneration and uplift of the people of the world.

Our thoughts, cares and affections are especially directed towards poor youth, the working class, underdeveloped nations, the technical and professional formation of a new society of labour, and last but not the least, the missionary field.

We perceive the need *for* *aggiornamenti* or updating with regard to the means of social communication, and *we are* aware of the increasing importance of a well-organized lay sector in the field of the apostolate.

A particular source of concern for us is the problem of personnel as also its spiritual and religious formation, by which it may be made to correspond to the manifold qualifications and requirements of present-day labour in oratories, institutes, boarding schools, professional schools and parishes.

What we have accomplished is very little indeed when we compare it with what yet remains to be done. Nevertheless, we gladly place our humble endeavours at the disposition of Holy Mother the Church, reaffirming at the same

time out unswerving fidelity to the teaching and example of St. John
Rosso.

May Your Holiness deign to receive our humble efforts, to support
them, to encourage them with Your enlightened words that will be for us
all a norm of action, and to render them fruitful by the comforting gift of
Your Apostolic Blessing.

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE NIX GENERAL CHAPTER
OF THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION
MAY 21, 1965

Dear and Revered Sons of the Salesian Society

of St. John Bosco:

Welcome to this meeting in this great and decisive hour for your religious family, great and decisive also for that larger family, the Catholic Church. Your General Chapter, held in Rome for the first time, brings into relief your vital link with the Church and portrays its inherent spirit of unity and universality. It aims at giving Us, with filial devotion, an idea of the work that has been done in the little over hundred years of the Society's existence, at recalling its *history* which began with its great and holy Founder, in order to point out to Us the well-balanced and prodigious development achieved through the work of his sons and to put before Us the plans which made such development possible, plans that were so marvellously realised the world over. By coming there today to ask Us for a word of encouragement and for Our blessing, you are renewing—and this is what counts most—your firm resolve to continue working with loyalty and generosity at the arduous, much-needed evangelical task you have undertaken.

Your Society has closed a chapter, has completed, as sailors are wont to say, the first leg of its journey, has ended an era and entered upon a new one. We have been pleased to give this hour which binds the past and the future, the importance it so richly deserves, so that this General Chapter may take its rightful place in the annals of the Society and may exert its guiding influence on those to come.

WORDS OF SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR THE OUTGOING RECTOR
MAJOR AND WARM WISHES FOR THE NEW ONE.

We greet with great affection the outgoing Rector Major, Fr. Renato Ziggiotti, with whom we had the pleasure of being in friendly contact and whole-hearted collaboration. We followed his intelligent, devoted and positive contribu-

lion to the progress of the Society with keen interest and admiration. Don Bosco. We are sure, is proud of him, as are his Confreres and those for whom the Salesian Society is working. God bless him!

We likewise greet with esteem and warm affection the new Rector Maestro, L. Lloysius Ricceri, who now holds the reins of the Society, a task for which his long years of experience and limitless dedication, have prepared him so well.

To him we extend our sincere wishes that he may, in the footsteps of his most worthy predecessors, lead the Salesian Society along its traditional lines, always responsive, however, to the call for constant development and adjustment to the needs of our times, as is demanded by the youthful vitality of the sons of St. John Bosco. And this our wish is extended also to his collaborators and to all those who, in the vast field of Salesian activity, are responsible for direction and administration.

We greet also all those who have taken part in the General Chapter and through them the entire Congregation which for the number of its members belonging to a multitude of nations and for its geographic extension very well deserves to be called ecumenical! When you return to the field of your apostolate, venerable and dear sons, convey to your Confreres and to all those for whom you are working our wishes and our blessings.

PROOF OF ESTEEM AND GRATITUDE OF THE PASTOR OF SOULS.

And now allow us to address to you a few words of encouragement and guidance. Counting on your good sense and your long years of experience. We shall be brief, though we do feel that your presence here and your achievements would call for a lengthened discourse. It is our wish first of all to convey to you our appreciation and sentiments of gratitude. You have our appreciation for what you are and for what you do. Your Society—or better, speaking in the name of the Church whose beloved sons you are and whose voice we now happen to be—our Salesian Society is something great in the life of the Catholic

world. More than to statistics which are, no doubt, most consoling by reason of the ever ascending graph they represent, We refer to the goodness and the stability of your Congregation. We refer to the piety, the abnegation, the faith, the piety that is its vigour and vitality; to the mission to which it is dedicated - the education of youth, especially of the poorer classes; to the simplicity, the wisdom and the efficacy of your Salesian pedagogy; to the confidence which you know so well to win, not only from ecclesiastics, but also from those families who are anxious to see to the proper education of their children, and from society at large. We refer to you as resolute pioneers, willing and disinterested co-workers and most competent educators; to the fruits of your noble activity which are abundant not only in quantity, but in quality as well, granted indeed that the chief quality is to be judged from the solid formation imparted and from the affection which your pupils, even in later years when they are sailing the stormy sea of life, bestow on their teachers: in line, We refer to the witness that your activity bears to the vitality of the Gospel and to the solicitude of the Church for the welfare of the world, the world of youth and the world of labourers in particular, to the honour and glory which you lend to Christ, Our Lord.

THE EXALTED MISSION OF THE SALESIANS IN OUR TIMES.

The Salesians represent one of the most notable, most beneficial, most significant most promising events in the Catholicism of the 19th and 20th century and, please God, it will continue to be so in the future. It is a dutiful ap

proclamation of the Lord's will today as a token of our gratitude to the Lord (the Father and eternal author of the efficacy of the work of God. We give expression to it also to eulogize your zealous labours in the Lord's Vineyard, along with the intention of fostering all noble feelings of secret pride, nor neglect the intention of repaying you for your incessant labour and hardships for which it is not even possible of praise would serve as adequate recompense, but with

the intention of assuring and reassuring you that the path you have followed is indeed the right one and that therefore it should be confidently and joyfully adhered to.

To Our words of appreciation We wish to add Our sentiments of gratitude which are an affectionate expression of what the Church owes you, of the esteem you have won in her, of the sense, *We care* say, of divine recognition which, as you knew, so readily and lovingly responds to the least act of service of compassion and charity done on behalf of youth and the poor. You have done it unto Me." We are extremely glad that Our apostolic mission authorizes us to anticipate in your favour- those consoling words *si* bids will constitute your true and only reward, the reward of eternal bliss.

PRESERVE WITH ENLIGHTENED CONFIDENCE.

From what We have stated, We are naturally led to say to you: courage, clearest souls, courage; continue and persevere. We trust you will not take amiss Our words of *exhortation*. Be courageous and persevere. We do not wish to speak of the subtle temptations and the grave dangers to which your good will may fall in every human enterprise is exposed to such snares- nor even of the weighty problems that attend consequent on the gigantic proportions which your work is assuming: - *the list of the Roman Empire* (Cfr. Livy, Hist. Proem.);: today We should rather consider the tremendous process of transformation sweeping over modern society, arising perhaps from some inexplicable spiritual anxiety, good or bad We cannot say. (*si* *videat ne cadat* (I Cor. 10, 12).

We would therefore exhort you to draw courage from this threefold confidence. Confidence in God: We do not deem it superfluous to stress the need of confidence in God to persons like you who, first, the fact that you are religious, recognise its prime importance. objectively and subjectively, both for your own sanctification and for the education of your charges. And We would remind you, dear sons, that the greater the outward acts by which you are, the more unwavering must

your confidence in God be, In thus exhorting you, We are only recalling to you something that is diala(istic of your spirit, a spirit which is so simple, joyful and self-reliant; a spirit which trusts in divine assistance to gain courage and perseverance in the accomplishment of its mission.

We shall not say more on this point; you are well acquainted with this type of psychology, in fact, you live it. You ought to have faith also in the aims for which your Society is working-could they be more noble, more modern, more diligent, more in keeping with the apostolic task of the Church today? You have chosen well. The Church approves of your choice and assures you of your reward. And lastly, faith in the methods which give your work its peculiar characteristics.

And here We wish to call your attention to the invitation to which the Church recommends and at which she herself is working. You will have to differentiate between essential forms and contingent ones; between interior forms that give life to your pedagogical system and to your educational mission, and the exterior ones which are by their very nature subject to modifications and improvement: between the forms that still hold good and those that are outdated and inefficient. Modern developments in the educational, technological, cultural and didactic fields, as well as changes in the patterns of social life, necessarily demand such a differentiation and adaptation which you have, to a certain extent, initiated in the field of your practical pedagogy, a pedagogy which draws its vitality from the pillars on which it rests-love and understanding of youth.

TO PROGRESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE COUNCIL IN A SPIRIT OF CHARITY, SACRIFICE AND ATTACHMENT TO THE WORDS AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

These are things you are all aware of, and it is they that warrant our renewal of confidence and courage. We shall then conclude these words with a last exhortation, one that is worthy of you: that is: progress. It is the exhorta-

don that every schoolmaster addresses to his pupils desirous
 of Christian perfection. We repeat it here with reference to
 the great effort that the Church is making in this direction through the
 Second Vatican Council. It is an effort to be always more loyal to the teachings
 of the Divine Master, an effort to revitalize her spirit and her methods, an
 effort towards greater authenticity and sanctity in Christian life, an effort
 towards a better understanding of the history of salvation and a more
 brotherly and apostolic approach to the man of today, with all his problems,
 his weakness, his resources and his aspirations. Whoever interprets the
 work of the Council, as a step towards the betrayal of the aims of the
 Church, her faith, her tradition, her spirituality, her charity, her spirit of
 sacrifice and her attachment to the words and to the Cross of Christ as a
 sort of passive acquiescence to the weak and immature relativistic
 ideology of our times, an ideology without principles and without a
 transcendent aim, as an effort to present a more indulgent- and less
 exacting Christianity, is sadly mistaken. The Council aims at a wiser disci-
 pline and at a more modern method by which she can establish fruitful
 contact with the human soul and modern society not to the detriment
 of her principles but to the benefit of her unflinching loyalty to Christ and
 of her mission to bear witness to Him.

This is what compels Us to affirm that this is indeed a great and
 decisive hour for the Church and that therefore this meeting takes on
 a special significance for you. We are indeed happy to learn that your
 General Chapter has grasped these points and has decided to draw from the
 deliberations of the Council, especially from its two Constitutions on the
 Liturgy and on the Church, important lessons for the progress both interior
 and exterior of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco.

We! I then, meditate on these points and practise them and rest
 assured that together with Our blessings you have also the blessing of
 God.

ADDRESS ,LIVERED BY THE MAYOR OF ROME DR.
AMEI 0 PETRUCCI ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OF CITATIONS OFFERED BY THE CO-OPERATORS
OF ROME AND LATIUM TO THE RECTOR MAJOR
F.R. ALOYSIUS RICCERI AND TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE XIX GENERAL CHAPTER AT THE NEW PREMISES
OF THE PONTIFICAL SALESIAN ATHENEUM ON
MAY 8. 1965

Your Excellencies,

Very Reverend Fr. Rector Major,

Reverend Members of the General Chapter,

Reverend Members of the Salesian Society,

And distinguished Salesian Co-operators of Rome:

It is my bounden duty-nay, it is but natural for me to participate in this feast of Salesian family joy at the conclusion of the Society's General Chapter. In fact, it is the first time in the history of this Congregation, which was established in Rome during the very years in which the renowned Piedmontese town was stirred with the contagious enthusiasm of preparations for national unity, that its major assembly convenes in the Roman Capital. This fact is also an acknowledgement of the guiding role that Rome, in ever greater measure, exercises over our land, uniting to the indisputable fascination of history and of ideals that centre round its name, a concrete and directive assistance in the field of organization and of moral orientation in our land.

I know full well that your Society has responsibilities that extend far beyond the borders of Italy, and that this General Chapter gathered here, has been convened in Rome also due to that atmosphere of Council Ecumenism in which Rome now lives, and because of the great development of your Salesian works in our city.

All these considerations prove a bond of union with Rome, for Rome considers it as her inviolable right and all-embracing vocation ever to gaze beyond the limits of national boundaries-and in this she is an example to the whole of Italy-for Rome is permeated with the atmosphere of the Council, and lives its different phases with a profound under-

standing, and finally also because Rome follows with loving pride the continual and progressive development of Salesian activity on behalf of Roman youth.

This Atheneum in which we now are, so imposing and so admirably suited to its purpose, could well symbolize the prodigious expansion of the Salesian work in Rome, and I for one, am struck with the full import of this manual institution. For here young priests from all over Italy and all over the world deepen their culture and pursue their studies of modern sciences concerning the human personality and the exercise of their activity as educators and as apostles.

Still I cannot overlook the fact that although the brain centre of your activity is concentrated here, its heart is diffused over dozens of institutions scattered all over the city. In these institutions thousands of the youth of Rome are launched into social life fully equipped with a complete moral and professional background.

Cinecitta', Tiburtino, Tuscolano, Quadraro - these are but a few of the names of the new Roman suburbs which spring to mind when one reflects upon the developments of your activity. Nor is it by mere chance that you occupy the farthest Hungarian positions in the ever growing city, positions which already a few years ago represented the limits of its suburbs, which only the overwhelming increase in population and housing colonies of the city has rapidly engulfed. It is in these areas that one is more likely to meet large numbers of needy youth, youth without an aim in life, youth too often thwarted in their physical, mental and spiritual development on account of uncongenial surroundings. There are already many generations of Romans who have received, as a result of your care thousands and thousands of young men capable of meeting life according to set ideals and according to a practical preparation perfectly suited to the needs of their times. The motive force of your activity, the one namely that does not limit itself to the revelation of eternal truths and to the practice of human virtues, but embraces also the acquisition of all those practical norms which can introduce the individual into society as a productive element, this motive force is something that constitutes not only an important

educational innovation for the benefit of the masses but it represents also a powerful contribution to society as a whole and helps to maintain the balance between classes.

The debt Rome owes you surpasses mention. It would be enlightening and interesting to compile statistics of the thousands of boys you have educated, but an apostolate like yours cannot be gaged by mere numbers, for in reality it is a question of training and qualifications, and in general, the boys whom you have turned out, distinguish themselves for such professional abilities, and for such probity of life as to single them out as pivot forces of the activities and enterprises in which they engage.

Nor can I forget that your works have manifested and manifest a character of adaptability and that you have, lastly, and practised the secret of making yourselves "all things to all men", in order to attract youths who have been abandoned in the most pitiable straits, and it would suffice in this connection, to recall your work during the last years of the war and during the postwar period, when the city was overrun by innumerable gangs of abandoned and desperate boys. You undertook the initiative little-by-little to rehabilitate these sorry street boys of Rome.

Yet we cannot commit the mistake of labelling your work as one of minimum assistance, which seeks to relieve only the severest miseries of the poor. When necessary your work begins at this level, but it aims at the perfect rehabilitation of the individual so as to make him enter or re-enter society not as a poor worthless being that merely receives food, clothing and a smattering of education, but as an individual equipped with every means to be of service to himself and others.

To this end in the past decades of your existence you have kept pace with all the latest developments in the field of psychology and pedagogy and even of technology. Today you could be justly proud, for not only is your pedagogical and professional equipment most up-to-date and adapted to its ends but also because your educational methods correspond to the needs of the modern world.

Very Reverend Fr. Rector Major,

I could continue endlessly heaping praises upon your

Salesian work in Rome and in doing this I could merely be Nuking the admiration of the citizens of Rome, for none would object to a lawful recognition of works that are inspired by genuine charity and that are entirely devoted to the welfare of the people and of the youth. But one who

lives in the enchanted atmosphere of wonderful institutions that spring up and grow day by day does not need any praises expressed in words.

I need only wish to state that my presence here in order to pay you an homage at the outset of your mission as the Sixth Successor of Don Bosco, the Saint of the Italian *Risorgimento*, the one who best expressed the dynamism and vitality and of renewal which stirred up our country during the nineteenth century, my presence here stands to signify that Rome, sacred and civil, merge together in this happy moment of the history of our city, and how difficult it is to distinguish between this twofold acclamation!

Since it devolves upon me to bring into relief especially the civic purpose of your activity, permit me to tell you that together with gratitude for the past we also place much reliance on Salesian work in the future, Rome of tomorrow, which we are trying to prepare by the inculcation of new directives, with the realization of new town-planning and new housing colonies, with new incentives to meet the needs of men qualified for their profession, men of upright character, ready to give and take, disposed to tolerance and collaboration.

Rome needs Don Bosco boys: I thank you and I thank all the Salesians because they have given Rome such boys in the past and because they are ready in the years to come to give us many more boys, and if possible, even better and more capable youths.

It is with these sentiments that I ask you to accept this silver medal which I, as Mayor of Rome, offer you in the name of the Municipality and as a token and wish for your future work of direction and apostolate: and it is with the same sentiments that I entreat the Salesian Provincial of Rome to accept this statuette of the Capitoline Wolf as our act of gratitude for the 80 years of activity in Rome,