



# acts

of the general council

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year XCV

january-april 2014

**N. 417**

official organ  
of animation  
and communication  
for the  
salesian congregation

Direzione Generale  
Opere don Bosco  
Roma

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of the General Council  
of the Salesian Society  
of St John Bosco

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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF ANIMATION AND COMMUNICATION FOR THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

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## 1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

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«*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*»

### LET US DRAW UPON THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE OF DON BOSCO, IN ORDER TO WALK IN HOLINESS ACCORDING TO OUR SPECIFIC VOCATION

«*The glory of God and the salvation of souls*»

Third year of preparation for the Bicentenary of his birth

*Strenna 2014*

PREMISE: A reflection on the inescapable task of evangelisation, in reference to the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* of Pope Francis. – COMMENTARY ON THE STRENNA FOR 2014.

1. Features of Don Bosco's spirituality. - 1.1. *Starting point: the glory of God and the salvation of souls.* - 1.2. *At its heart: union with God.* - 1.3. *Means: unseen values translated into visible works.* - 1.4. *Goal: holiness.* – 2. Core and synthesis of Salesian spirituality: pastoral charity. - 2.1. *Charity.* - 2.2. *Pastoral charity.* - 2.3. *Salesian pastoral charity.* - 2.4. *Progress so far.* – 3. Salesian spirituality for all vocations. - 3.1. *A spirituality common to all the groups of the Salesian Family.* - 3.2. *A spirituality proper to each group of the Salesian Family.* - 3.3. *Salesian youth spirituality.* - A spirituality of daily life as the place of encounter with God - An Easter spirituality of joy and optimism - A spirituality of friendship and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus - A spirituality of ecclesial communion - A spirituality of responsible service. - 3.4. *A spirituality of the Laity and of the Salesian Family.* – 4. Tasks for the Salesian Family. – 5. Conclusion. – *THE SAINTS.*

25 December 2013

*The Solemnity of the Birth of the Lord*

My Dear Confreres,

I send you my greetings and best wishes for a Happy and Holy Christmas, and invite you to contemplate God in “*the child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger*” (Lk 2,7). He is the supreme manifestation of the love of God, who lowered Himself to become a man like us, and in this way raised us up to the dignity of His Sons. Only God could imagine such a radical overturning of the human way of thinking. In Jesus made man the Father embraced all of us, so as to restore our life, consolidate hope and make His Kingdom visible.

This is why we cannot but evangelise; this is why we have to feel within ourselves the urgent apostolic need to communicate to others, especially to the young, the joy and the beauty of the faith that gives meaning, hope and a future to our lives, and to our commitment to collaborate in the building of a better world for everyone, especially for the poorest, for the disadvantaged and for the marginalised.

From this point of view, the recent Apostolic Exhortation “*Evangelii Gaudium*” of Pope Francis on the proclaiming of the Gospel to our world today, at the end of the year of Faith called for by Benedict XVI to commemorate the Council which providentially renewed the Church, is a quite exceptional document. Above all because it comes from the heart of the Bishop of Rome, the fruit of an experience on the front line and of his long reflection on the need to proclaim the Gospel to today’s world. In complete harmony with the contents of his talks and with his very personal style, Pope Francis declares that it was not his intention to write a theoretical treatise but to show the important practical implications of the issues touched on in the text. The purpose is very clear: to help to describe a particular style of evangelisation and to employ it in every activity undertaken. In close harmony with the incomparable Exhortation “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” of Paul VI, evoked by the title itself, the new document is a ‘Magna Carta’ for the Church of today, with a specific programme and with fundamental consequences, since it is not possible to leave things as they are; what is necessary is to be in a permanent state of conversion and of mission.

I think that this Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis is a very good preparation for our General Chapter; which as a programmatic document it will necessarily and providentially illuminate. It gives us a vision of what the Church’s attitude ought to be: without fear of the modern world, seeking new ways of preaching the Gospel, more missionary, more merciful, more courageous in making all the necessary changes. A Church

which will overcome the fear of coming out from its own closed structures and of losing the false sense of security which they may give us, but which, in fact, make us more rigid in our judgements of our world and less effective in evangelisation. A Church that knows how to criticise an economic model that makes an idol of money, that produces social exclusion and creates a culture of rejection and indifference. Therefore, a Church that has a special preferential love for the poor, and a decisive commitment to social justice and to peace. Here I would ask you to read, study and make known “The Joy of the Gospel”. Make it the subject of prayer so that it warms the heart, and above all, that it sends us out once more on our journey, full of joy at bringing the good news to the young.

In the Chronicle of the Rector Major you will find news about my activities (visits to the Provinces, meetings and events) undertaken in recent months, from the last circular letter on *Vocation and Formation* (ACG416) until the end of November. Therefore here I shall mention only some of the more significant ones in which I took part:

Above all the *World Youth Day* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from Monday 22 until Sunday 28 July, about which I wrote a letter giving a first introduction to Pope Francis, who by his gestures, attitudes, messages and decisions gave us a new way of looking at the world, a new vision of the Church, and also a new way of understanding and carrying out the service of authority (cf. Documents and News Items, 5.1).

*The meeting with Pope Francis* on 15 August, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, when he came to Castelgandolfo for Holy Mass, at the end of which I was invited to lunch and had the grace of sitting next to him. Then afterwards he also paid a visit to the community of our parish. On this occasion I gave him a letter requesting an audience for the General Chapter, which he willingly accepted, and for which we have already fixed the date on 31 March.

The *Italian SYM Gathering* on 16 August, at Colle Don Bosco, which gave me the opportunity to speak with the young people who had come from all the Provinces of the Salesians and of the FMA in Italy. During the Mass I launched the third and final year of preparation for the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco, inviting everyone to drink deeply from his spirituality and to discover in him a real master of the spirit. On this same day I wrote you another letter in which I mentioned the urgent need to refurbish the places in which Don Bosco lived and exercised his priestly and educator's ministry. In particular I refer to the Colle, where his little house can be found, together with the Temple dedicated to him, and to the Mother House at Valdocco, which is the place where so many visitors and pilgrims gather together. I appealed to your goodness and generosity to help with the carrying out of the most urgent work that needs to be done. I take this opportunity to thank those Provinces which have already shown their generosity and to appeal once again to those others which have not yet had the chance to express their solidarity.

The *Pre-Capitular Commission*, which was at work in the first part of September, and to which on the 7<sup>th</sup> I gave an opening address setting out the main lines of the work to be done in the current situation, marked as it is by epoch-making changes in society, in the Church and consequently in Consecrated Life.

The *Beatification of our confrere the Salesian Brother and Martyr István Sándor*, on Saturday 19 October, in the Cathedral in Budapest. It was a very beautiful and significant ceremony which helped us to appreciate the human, spiritual and Salesian qualities of this confrere of ours who not only expands the tree of Salesian holiness but proposes it once again to all of us.

Finally the *Assembly of the USG*, held at the 'Salesianum' between 27 and 29 November, in which we focused on the person of Pope Francis, his gestures and his message as a challenge for evangelical leadership. The Assembly, in which for the last time

I participated as Rector Major, ended with a meeting with Pope Francis in the Vatican in the Synod Hall, at which we had a question and answer session about what kind of Consecrated Life this new view of the Church demands, what is the place of religious life within it, what kind of formation, what kind of fraternal life, what kind of relationship with the local Church, what the frontiers towards which we are called to go are. You can find this precious document on the website of the two Unions of Superiors General: [www.vidimusdominum.org](http://www.vidimusdominum.org) For me, undoubtedly the best thing was the fact that Pope Francis said that he expected consecrated persons to be “witnesses to faith and to love for the Risen Christ, witnesses to the Kingdom, and witnesses to the radical nature of the Gospel” – which confirms the relevance and the validity of the theme of our GC27. In addition, on this occasion, he confirmed what I had asked him at our first meeting a few days after his election, that he was to dedicate the year 2015 to Consecrated Life, since it was the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Saint Teresa of Avila, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Saint Philip Neri and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Don Bosco.

So then, I think these news items which can enlighten the mind and warm the heart are the best way of introducing the **Commentary on the Strenna for 2014**, which I now offer you.

\* \* \*

We are concluding the three years of preparation for the Bicentenary of the Birth of Don Bosco. After having dedicated the first year to getting to know him in the history of his times, and the second year to recognising him as an educator and putting into practice his own educational method, in this third and final year we want to explore the source of his charism by drawing on his spirituality.

Christian spirituality has charity at its core, in other words the very life of God Himself Who is *Agape, Charity, Love* at the deepest level. Salesian spirituality is no different from Christian spirituality. It too is concentrated on charity; in its case it is

a matter of “pastoral charity”, in other words that charity which urges us to seek “the glory of God and the salvation of souls”. “*Caritas Christi urget nos*”.

Like all the great holy founders Don Bosco lived his life as a Christian with a fervent burning charity, and contemplated the Lord Jesus from a particular standpoint, that of the charism with which God had entrusted him: the mission to the young. “Salesian charity” is pastoral charity because it seeks the salvation of souls. It is also educative charity because it finds in education the resource that allows it to help the young to develop all their energies for good. In this way young people can grow up to be upright citizens, good Christians and future inhabitants of heaven.

I am inviting you therefore, dear members of the Salesian Family, to draw from the wellsprings of Don Bosco’s spirituality, in other words from his educative and pastoral charity. It finds its model in Christ the Good Shepherd and its prayer and its plan of life in Don Bosco’s motto: “*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*”. Closely following this path we will be able to discover “Don Bosco the mystic” whose spiritual experience lies at the heart of the way we live our Salesian spirituality today, in the variety of vocations which take their inspiration from him; and we ourselves will be able to have a strong Salesian spiritual experience.

Getting to know Don Bosco’s life and his educational method still does not mean understanding his deepest secret and the real reason for his being so surprisingly relevant today. Being familiar with the various aspects of Don Bosco’s life and works and even of his educational method is not sufficient. Behind all this, as the source of the fruitfulness of his activity and relevance is something that can even escape us his sons and daughters: his deep inner life, what we could call his “familiarity” with God. Who knows but maybe this is the best idea we have of him in order to love him, to pray to him, imitate and follow him so as to encounter the Lord Jesus and bring young people to this same encounter!

Today it would be possible to draw up a spiritual profile of Don Bosco, starting from the impressions of his earliest collaborators. We could then move on to Fr Eugene Ceria's book, "Don Bosco with God", which was the first attempt made to provide a popular account of his spirituality. We could then compare the various re-interpretations of Don Bosco's spirituality offered by his Successors, before finally coming to the research that has marked a turning point in the study of the way Don Bosco lived his own faith and religious life.

These recent studies are more faithful in the way they are in touch with the available sources and are open to a consideration of the various spiritual perspectives that influenced Don Bosco, or with which he was in contact (Saint Francis de Sales, Saint Ignatius, Saint Alphonsus Maria Liguori, Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Philip Neri, ...). However, they also help us to recognise that his was an original and creative experience. At this point it would be interesting to have a new spiritual profile of Don Bosco, a new hagiography, as this term is understood by spiritual theology today.

Don Bosco the "spiritual man" attracted and was of special interest to Walter Nigg, a Lutheran pastor and professor of Church History at the University of Zurich. He concentrated on the spiritual dimension and he wrote thus: "Describing someone while overlooking the fact that we are dealing with a saint would be like presenting a half truth. The category of saint has to take precedence over that of the educator. Any other ranking would falsify the hierarchy of values. On the other hand, the saint is someone in whom the natural borders on the supernatural, and in Don Bosco the supernatural is there in a remarkable way... We ourselves have no doubt: the real modern saint of Italy is Don Bosco".<sup>1</sup>

In the 1980s this opinion was shared by the theologian Fr Dominique Chenu O.P.; to a journalist who asked him to suggest

<sup>1</sup> W. NIGG, *Don Bosco. Un santo per il nostro tempo*, Torino, LDC, 1980, 75.103.

some saints who might have a relevant message for our new times he answered: "I would especially like to recall to mind one who was the precursor of the Council by a century, Don Bosco. He was a prophetic model of holiness because his work broke with the way of thinking and believing of his contemporaries".

In every cultural era and in every context we need to answer these questions:

- What did Don Bosco receive from the environment he lived in?
- How much does he owe to his surroundings, his family, the Church of his time?
- How did he react, and what did he give to his time and surroundings?
- What has been his influence on the times that have followed?
- How did his contemporaries see him: Salesians, the people, the Church, lay people?
- How have later generations understood him?
- What aspects of his holiness seem of most interest to us today?
- How do we today translate the way Don Bosco interpreted the Gospel?

These are the kinds of questions that a new hagiography of Don Bosco will have to answer. It is not a matter of identifying a definitive, perpetually valid profile of Don Bosco but of providing one that is relevant for today. Naturally, certain aspects of each saint are emphasised that are particularly of interest for their current relevance, and others are left aside that are considered not to be so necessary at this particular time in history, or that are judged to be less relevant in identifying the saint's chief characteristics.

Saints, in fact, are a response to the spiritual needs of a generation, an outstanding illustration of what Christians at a particular time mean by holiness. And evidently the hoped-for

imitation of a saint can only be proportional to the absolute reference point which is Jesus of Nazareth; in fact, every Christian, in his or her real situation, is called to incarnate in his or her own way the universal figure of Jesus, obviously without ever exhausting it. The saints offer us a concrete and valid path towards this identification with the Lord Jesus.

In the commentary on the Strenna which I am offering to the Salesian Family, the three key issues I develop are: features of the spirituality of Don Bosco; pastoral charity and the core and synthesis of Salesian spirituality; Salesian spirituality for vocations. At the end I shall propose more completely some practical tasks which I shall already anticipate here.

## **1. FEATURES OF DON BOSCO'S SPIRITUALITY**

Coming to a precise identification of Don Bosco's spirituality is not an easy undertaking; it is not surprising that this aspect of his personality is the least explored. Don Bosco is a man fully taken up by apostolic work; he does not provide us with any descriptions of his interior development, nor has he left us any special reflections on his spiritual experience. He does not write spiritual diaries nor offer explanations for his inner motivation. He prefers to transmit a spirit by describing the events of his life, or through biographies of his boys. It is certainly not sufficient to say that his apostolic spirituality is that of someone who carries out an active ministry, a balance between a learned and a popular spirituality; rather it is necessary to identify what is at the heart of his spiritual experience.

This raises a serious question: given the real shortage of sources regarding his inner life, how do you investigate the spirituality of Don Bosco? We can leave it to spiritual theologians to delve into this methodological issue as we try to identify some of the fundamental aspects and the characteristics of his spiritual experience.

*Spirituality* is a characteristic ‘feel’ for Christian holiness and being inclined in that direction; it is a particular way of ordering one’s life in order to achieve Christian perfection, and being part of a special charism. In other words, it is a Christian way of life in union with God which presupposes faith.

*Salesian spirituality* consists of various elements; it is a style of life, of prayer, of work, of interpersonal relationships; a community way of life; an educative and pastoral mission based on a pedagogical heritage; an approach to formation; a characteristic set of values and attitudes; a particular view of the Church and of society through specific areas of engagement; an historical patrimony of documentation and writings; a characteristic language; a typical set of structures and works; a calendar with its own celebrations and anniversaries...

In the general framework of a history of spirituality in the XIXth century, we can point out some elements which seem to us to be especially relevant in describing the spiritual experience of Don Bosco; they are his starting point, his deepest roots, the means he uses, his goal.

### ***1.1. Starting point: the glory of God and the salvation of souls***

The glory of God and the salvation of souls were Don Bosco’s passion. Promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls meant conforming his own will to that of God who obviously greatly desires the full manifestation of that goodness that He Himself is, in other words His glory which is the authentic achievement of what is good for man – which is the salvation of his soul.

In a rare fragment of his “story of a soul”, Don Bosco will confess (in 1854) the secret regarding the purpose of what he was doing: “When I began to devote myself to this particular aspect of the sacred ministry I set out to consecrate all my efforts to the greater glory of God and to the salvation of souls,

and to work to make good citizens on this earth so that one day they would then be worthy inhabitants of heaven. May God help me to be able to continue until my last breath. Amen”.<sup>2</sup>

In the same passage a few lines earlier he had written:

*“Ut filios Dei, qui erant dispersi, congregaret in unum. John. c. 11 v. 52.* The words of the holy Gospel which let us know that the Divine Saviour came into the world to gather together into unity the scattered children of God, it appears to me can be applied literally to the young people of our days. This, the most frail but most precious part of human society on which rests the hopes for a happy future is not of itself perversely inclined [...] The difficulty consists in finding a way to bring them together, to speak with them, bring them to lead a good life. This was the mission of the Son of God, only His holy religion can do this”.<sup>3</sup>

At the basis of the decision to set up the Oratory there is the salvific will of God, expressed in the incarnation of the Son, sent to gather around Himself in unity men lost in the byways of error and mistaken paths to holiness. The Church is called to respond in its own time to this divine mission of salvation. So the Oratory fits into this economy of salvation; it is a human response to a divine vocation, and is not a work founded on the good will of an individual.

As confirmation of this, we can read in an account from 16 January 1861: “Questioned about his opinion regarding the efficiency of grace he replied: I have studied these questions a great deal; but my system is one that redounds to the greater glory of God. What is the point of me having a narrow system that then sends a soul to hell, or a broad system provided it send souls to heaven?”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Cfr. G. BOSCO, *Piano di regolamento per l'Oratorio maschile di S. Francesco di Sales in Torino nella regione Valdocco. Introduzione*, in P. BRAIDO (ed.), *Don Bosco Educatore. Scritti e Testimonianze*. Roma, LAS 1997, 111.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 108-109.

<sup>4</sup> D. RUFFINO, *Cronache dell'Oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales*, n. 2, 1861, 8-9.42.

Similar is the explanation he gives on 16 February 1876 about the way he carried out his plans: “We always go ahead with confidence; before undertaking anything we make certain that it is God’s will that these things are done. We may meet a thousand difficulties on the way, but that does not matter. God wants it, and we are fearless in the face of whatever difficulties there may be”.<sup>5</sup>

Identical to the purposes of the Oratory are those of the “Work of the Oratories”, in other words of the Salesian Society, of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, of the Salesian Cooperators, of the Association of Mary Help of Christians; all of them are animated, motivated and guided by the same purpose. A few quotations regarding the Salesians from among the many one could cite will suffice.

In the introduction to the first draft of the Constitutions, Don Bosco declared that the first group of clergy collaborators had joined together “promising to occupy themselves only with those things that their Superior judged to be for the greater glory of God and for the benefit of their own souls”.<sup>6</sup> In the following chapter on the purpose of the Society he repeated: the Salesians “come together to form a single heart and a single soul to love and to serve God”.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, on 11 June 1860 in the request submitted to the Archbishop of Turin for the approval of the Constitutions one reads: “we the undersigned, moved solely by the desire to ensure our eternal salvation, have come together to live a common life and so more easily give our attention to those things that concern the glory of God and the salvation of souls”.<sup>8</sup> Then on 12 January 1880 he wrote to Cardinal Ferrieri saying that the aim of the Salesian work was still the same: “I believe I can assure

<sup>5</sup> G. BARBERIS, *Cronichetta*, quad 4, 52.

<sup>6</sup> BOSCO Giovanni, *Costituzioni della società di S. Francesco di Sales [1858] - 1875. Testi critici*, a cura di Francesco Motto, Roma LAS 1982, 70-71.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 82.

<sup>8</sup> *Epistolario*, ed. Motto, vol. I, 406.

your Eminence that the Salesians have no other aim than to work for the greater glory of God, on behalf of Holy Church to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the Indians of the Pampas and in Patagonia”.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, Don Bosco had already mentioned the same purpose of the growing Society of Saint Francis of Sales, writing on 9 June 1867 to the Salesians in a circular letter, two years before the approval of the Congregation: “The first aim of our Society is the sanctification of its members [...] Everyone should enter the society guided by the sole desire to serve God with greater perfection, and for his own good, and it goes without saying that the real good for himself is his spiritual and eternal good”.<sup>10</sup>

## ***1.2. At its heart: union with God***

The *unum necessarium* is at the heart of his interior life, of his dialogue with God, of his work as an apostle. There can be no doubt that holiness shone out in Don Bosco’s works, but it is also true that his works were simply an expression of his faith. It is not the works he accomplished that make Don Bosco a saint as Saint Paul reminds us: “*If I have all the eloquence of men... but without love then I am nothing at all*” (1 Cor 13); but it is a faith enlivened by practical charity (cf. Gal 5:6b) that makes him a saint: *you will be able to tell them by their fruits* (cf. Mt 7,16.20).

All Christians are called to a real and not merely psychological “union with God”. Union with God means living one’s life in God and in His presence: it is the divine life that is within us by participation; it is the exercise of faith, hope and charity, to which necessarily follow the infused virtues, the moral virtues etc. Don Bosco gave an evangelical zeal to his whole life, making his whole purpose in life the transmission of faith in God, in living out the theological virtues: with a faith which became a fascinating example for the young, a hope that was expressed in

<sup>9</sup> *Epistolario*, ed. Ceria, vol. III, 544.

<sup>10</sup> *Epistolario*, ed. Motto, II, 386.

words that were a shining light for them, with a charity which became an expression of love for the least and neglected ones.

Don Bosco was always faithful to his mission of practical charity: where a disincarnated mysticism would have run the risk of his being detached from reality, faith obliged him to keep his feet firmly on the ground so as to keep faith with those most in need; when he might have been overcome by fatigue or tempted to give up, hope sustained him; when there seemed to be no solution St Paul's way ahead urged him on: "*Caritas Christi urget nos*" (1 Cor 5,14). Don Bosco' charity did not falter when faced with difficulties: "*I have made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost*" (1 Cor 9,22). It was not conflicts that were to be feared in the field of education but, lack of effort and disengagement.

*Living by faith:* means abandoning oneself with joyful trust in God who revealed Himself in Jesus so as to be able to live in all situations in a salvific manner: in other words responding to all circumstances in such a way as to allow God to show in them His work of salvation. No situation corresponds perfectly to God's will, but a person can act in each situation so as to always carry out God's will.

*Living by hope:* means waiting on God each day so as to be able to accept His gift when it comes; it means waiting each day for God who comes through His created gifts: every day has its gift. So in all circumstances – even failure: "nothing can separate us from the love of Christ" (Rm 8,39).

*Living by charity:* means opening up the present moment to the love of God. In order to be able to live a spirit of sacrifice constant practice is needed; a stimulating context is needed: certainly, the Salesian mission is just that.

Don Bosco lived all this in a *spirit of genuine piety*. He did not leave any formula for practices of piety, nor any special devotion of his own. His approach is realistic and practical. Just the prayers of

the good Christian, easy, simple but said with perseverance. What Don Bosco wanted was that the Salesians should consecrate their whole lives to the salvation of souls and sanctify their work offering it to God; prayer ought to take its place as the raising up of the mind and heart to God, as petition and as nourishment. In other words, the “practices of piety” had something of an ascetical role. The results of this in the life of Don Bosco are plain for all to see.

Let us listen to two witness statements. This is what a past-pupil forty five years of age, a soldier and army instructor from Florence wrote to Don Bosco in Turin:

“My Dear Don Bosco, it seems you were quite right to sigh over me, but you can also be sure that I always loved you, will always love you. I take every comfort from you, and from afar I admire all you do. I don’t speak ill of you, nor do I allow anyone else to speak ill of you. I always defend you. In you I see someone who wants my soul at all costs. I am confused, ecstatic, thrilled by your way of thinking; always firm and deeply felt. It disconcerted me and made me feel astonished to see that you always loved me so much. Yes oh dear Don Bosco. I believe in the communion of Saints [...]. No one more than you knows me and understands my heart and can decide. In conclusion therefore: advise me, love me, forgive me and commend me to God, to Jesus, to most holy Mary. I send you a heartfelt kiss and swear that I love you...”<sup>11</sup>

The second witness statement is a very moving page written by Saint Louis Orione to his clerics in 1934, the year of Don Bosco’s canonisation:

“Now I shall tell you the reason, the motive, the cause for which Don Bosco became a saint. Don Bosco became a saint because he nurtured his divine life, because he nurtured our divine life, At his school I learned that this saint didn’t fill our heads with nonsense or anything like that but rather he nourished us with God, and he nourished himself with God, with the spirit of God. As a mother feeds herself so then to be able to

<sup>11</sup> F. MOTTO, *Ricordi e riflessi di una educazione ricevuta in Ricerche Storiche Salesiane* 11 (1987), 365.

feed her child, in the same way Don Bosco fed himself with God so as to feed us too with God. For this reason those who knew the saint and had the special grace to grow up close to him, to listen to his word, to be near to him, in some way to live the life of the saint, took from that contact something that is not of this world, that is not human; something that nourished his life as a saint. Then again, he turned everything to heaven, everything to God, and drew out from everything a reason to raise our souls to heaven, to turn our steps towards heaven”.

### ***1.3. Means: unseen values translated into visible works***

At the centre of Don Bosco’s spirituality there is God alone to be known, loved and served for the sake of one’s own salvation through the carrying out of a real practical personal vocation: religious and apostolic – charitable, educational, pastoral – for young people especially the poor and abandoned, for their total salvation, following the example of Christ the Saviour and at the school of Holy Mother and Teacher Mary. It is not without significance that the noun he uses most, for example, in one of the volumes of his letters is God, and the verb most used after “doing” is “praying”.<sup>12</sup>

In Don Bosco there was an active spirituality; he tended towards activity, hard work under the influence of an awareness of need and the consciousness of a heavenly mission. The choice of hard work gives a particular meaning to detachment, in the area of apostolic activity. Where in Saint Alphonsus detachment is above all an interior disposition in man, in Don Bosco it acquires more meaning in the context of hard work: detachment helps us to dedicate ourselves to the works God gives us to do.

In Don Bosco one finds the sense of the relative value of things, and at the same time the need to use them for the purposes he has at heart. He prefers not to be too firmly attached to any particular scheme of things; therefore his approach is

<sup>12</sup> F. MOTTO, *Verso una storia di Don Bosco più documentata e più sicura*, in *Ricerche Storiche Salesiane* 41 (2002), 250-251.

practical, pastoral, spiritual, rather than theological-speculative. In him there is this specific originality: salvation is to be achieved by means of loving-kindness, meekness, joy, humility, eucharistic and Marian piety, love of God and of one's neighbour.

The relationship between the love of God and love for one's neighbour is identical for both the Christian and the religious. It is a matter of living a consecration to God and His greater glory in a total dedication to working for the good of souls, one's own and those of others. Likewise it is a sacrifice without keeping back anything for oneself, made in union with one's brothers and sisters, in the love of obedience and of shared solidarity.

Don Bosco, with true sensitivity and priestly zeal, engaged himself in society, witnessing to the faith, exhorting, without any human respect, becoming directly involved even in areas where to some it appeared he was compromising priestly dignity. He lived the strong values of his vocation, but he also knew how to translate them into social action, practical measures without retreating into the spiritual, into 'churchy things', into liturgical matters, understood as being cut off from the problems of the world and of life.

In Don Bosco the Spirit was alive. He did not race ahead; nor did he hang back. Secure in his vocation, his daily life was not closed in on itself without horizons; as though in a protective shell as if refusing to face reality in all its breadth and variety; in a world limited to a few needs to be satisfied; where there is an almost mechanical repetition of traditional attitudes; as a refusal to face tensions, demanding sacrifices, risk with no immediate success, but struggle.

Of interest, in this regard, is a quotation from 130 years ago which, were it not for some particular expressions could be considered of our own day. It is an "external" witness statement regarding Don Bosco. It offers us an interpretation, which others, perhaps also inspired by Salesians, gave to his work. It is that of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, Lucido Maria Parocchi, who in 1884

wrote:

“What precisely is specific about the Salesian Society? I want to tell you what is the distinguishing mark of your Congregation, what it is that forms your character, just as the Franciscans are distinguished for poverty, the Dominicans for the defence of the faith, the Jesuits for culture. You have traits similar to those of the Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits, but they are differentiated by their manner and purpose... What therefore is special in the Salesian Congregation? What gives it its character and physiognomy? If I have properly understood it and unless I am much mistaken, what gives it its specific character, its essential note and particular countenance, is charity practised in accordance with the world’s needs at the present day, *nos credidimus Charitati. Deus caritas est*”. Today’s world can only be attracted and drawn towards good by charitable works. Nowadays the world has no time for anything besides material things; it does not want to know anything about spiritual things. It ignores the beauty of the faith; it knows nothing of the greatness of religion, it rejects any hope in a future life, it denies God Himself. This world understands Charity only as a means, not as the end and the principle. It knows how to analyse this virtue but not how to make a synthesis of it. *Animalis homo non percipit quae sunt spiritus Dei*: as St Paul puts it. If you tell people of this world: “It is necessary to save the souls that are being lost, it is necessary to teach those who do not know the principles of religion, and to give alms for love of that God who one day will reward those who are generous”, the men of this world will not understand. It is necessary therefore to adapt oneself to this world, which is in full flight. God makes himself known to pagans through the natural law; he makes himself known to the Jews by means of the Bible; to the Greek schismatics through the great traditions of the Fathers; to protestants through the Gospel, to the world today through charity. Tell this world: “I am taking youngsters off the streets so that they don’t fall under the trams, so they don’t fall down a pit, I will put them in a hostel so that they don’t waste the best years of their lives in vice and carousing, I bring them into schools to educate them so that they don’t become a prey on society, don’t end up in prison; I call them to me and

I look after them so that they don't poke each other's eyes out", then the men of this world understand and begin to believe".<sup>13</sup>

With regard to our works we have to bear in mind that if *the secular world* appreciates our social services it often does so because of the way we become quickly involved and get on with things, because of the practical usefulness of the service provided, almost secularising the religious element in which they see only philanthropy and not love and the inspiration of the gospel. Sometimes our works are considered as though they were similar to profitable businesses or perhaps reputable ones when the social services of the State are lacking. Even *believers* often have their doubts about the religious value of our works, even when it helps them and is of service to them; they give the credit to those managing them and are not inspired by the religious experience of the Congregation. Too easily they have little confidence in the relevance and adaptability of our works. That is something to make us think – and quite a lot!

#### **1.4. Goal: holiness**

Don Bosco is heir to the religious humanism of St. Francis of Sales, who proposes to all classes of people the path of holiness. However, the aspect emphasised by Don Bosco is a holiness common to all, each one according to his state of life. He did not think in terms of degrees of holiness, unwilling to be analytical in this way. He used scholastic schemes taken from the Catholic spirituality of the time. His is a Christocentric and Eucharistic, Marian theology, nourished by the practice of some virtues, especially obedience. Holiness does not exclude joy, cheerfulness; it requires not penitence but commitment, coming from a life of grace in the carrying out of one's duties.

To the classical term "devotion" used to indicate that state of love that makes us act promptly and lovingly for God, Don Bosco preferred the word holiness, that of the person who lives in a

<sup>13</sup> BS 8 (1884) n. 6, 89-90.

state of habitual grace because he has succeeded through personal effort and the help of the Spirit to avoid the normal sins more common to the young: bad companions, bad talk, impurity, bad example, stealing, intemperance, pride, human respect, neglecting religious duties...

After Saint Francis of Sales and before the Second Vatican Council, Don Bosco teaches us that holiness is possible for everyone; to everyone is given sufficient grace to achieve it; that holiness depends greatly on a person's cooperation with grace. Certainly holiness is made difficult but not impossible, by various obstacles: imperfections, defects, passions, the devil, sin. Holiness is not impossible, given the many means at our disposal: the theological virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the moral virtues both infused and acquired, ascetical practices...

Our spirituality runs the risk of being thwarted, because times have changed and because sometimes we live on a superficial level. To really bring it to life we need to start again from Don Bosco, from his spiritual experience and from his preventive system. Clergy at the time of Don Bosco saw what was not going well and did not want to become religious, but they were captivated by him. Young people need "witnesses" as Paul VI wrote. What is needed are "spiritual men", men of faith, sensitive to the things of God and ready to accept religious obedience in the search for what is the best. It is not novelty that makes us free but the truth; truth cannot be what is fashionable, superficiality, improvisation: "veritas liberavit vos".

## **2. CORE AND SYNTHESIS OF SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY: PASTORAL CHARITY**

Previously we have seen the "type" of spiritual person Don Bosco was: profoundly human and totally open to God; in harmony between these two dimension he lived out a plan of life that he had taken up with determination: at the service

of the young. As Don Rua says: “He took no step, he said no word, he took up no task that was not directed to the saving of the young”.<sup>14</sup> If one examines his plan for the young one sees that it had a “heart”, an element that gave it meaning, originality: “Truly the only concern of his heart was for souls”.<sup>15</sup>

There is therefore a further practical explanation for the unity of his life: through his dedication to young people Don Bosco wanted to give them an experience of God. On his part this was not just generosity or philanthropy but pastoral charity. This is called the “core and synthesis” of the Salesian spirit.<sup>16</sup>

“Core and synthesis” is a telling and demanding affirmation. It is easier to list the various features, even the basic ones of our spirituality, without committing ourselves to any sort of hierarchical relationship, which would choose one as being the principal one. In this case it is necessary to enter into the spirit of Don Bosco or of the Salesian in order to discover the explanation for his way of doing things.

To understand what is involved in pastoral charity we take three steps: we look first at charity, then at the specification “pastoral”, and finally at the ‘Salesian’ characteristics of pastoral charity.

## **2.1. Charity**

One of the sayings of St Francis of Sales is this: “The human being is the perfection of the universe; the spirit is the perfection of the human being; love that of the spirit; and charity that of love”.<sup>17</sup> This is a universal approach that places four modes of existence on an ascending scale: being, human being, love as a form of being superior to any other of its expressions, charity as the highest expression of love.

<sup>14</sup> SDB Constitutions 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Cf. SDB Constitutions 10; FMA Constitutions 80.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. SAINT FRANCIS OF SALES, *Treatise on the love of God*, Vol II, Book X, c. 1.

Love represents the high point, the culmination of the maturing process of any individual, Christian or not. The educational process sets out to lead a person to being capable of self-donation, to a selfless generous love.

It is psychologists, and not just Jesus Christ, who say that a fully developed, fulfilled and happy individual is capable of generosity and can manage to live a love that is not just concupiscence, in other words for the personal satisfaction of being loved. Various forms of neurosis and personality disorders arise from being self-centred and all the usual treatments tend to open people up and to help them to concentrate on others.

Charity is then the main proposal in every spirituality: it is not just the first and the main commandment, and therefore the main programme for the spiritual journey, but also the source of the strength to make progress. There is an abundance of reflections on this especially in Saint Paul (*2 Cor* 12,13-14) and Saint John (*1 Jn* 4,7-21). Let us take just a few of the main points.

The awakening of charity within us is a mystery and a grace; it is not a human initiative but a participation in the divine life and the effect of the presence of the Spirit. We could not love God had He not Himself loved us first, making us feel Him and giving us a taste and the intelligence to respond to Him. We could not even love our neighbour and see in him an image of God without having a personal experience of the love of God.

“The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us” (*Rm* 5,5). On the other hand even human love cannot be explained rationally, and for this reason it is said to be blind. No one can say exactly why one person falls in love with another.

From its nature of being a participation in the divine life and a mysterious communion with God, charity creates in us the capacity to discover and to perceive God: religion without charity distances us from God. Authentic love, even that which

is human, takes those who are at a distance towards the faith and a religious setting. The parable of the good Samaritan highlights the relationship between religion and charity to the advantage of the latter.

Saint John in his first letter sums this up as he writes: “My dear people let us love one another since love comes from God; and everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Anyone who fails to love can never have known God, because God is love” (*1 Jn* 4,7-8). In saint John the word “to know” means “to experience”, rather than to have precise ideas: whoever loves experiences God.

Since charity is a gift that allows us to know God by experience, it also enables us to enjoy Him in the beatific vision: “Now we are seeing a dim reflection in a mirror; but then we shall be seeing face to face. The knowledge that I have now is imperfect but then I shall know as fully as I am known” (*1 Cor* 13,12).

Therefore charity is not only a special virtue but the form and substance of all the virtues and that which constitutes and builds up a person: “If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels... if I have the gift of prophecy... if I give away all that I possess... if I have faith in all its fulness, to move mountains... but am without love, it will do me no good whatever” (*1 Cor* 13,1-3).

For this reason, charity and its fruits are things that last, impervious to time: “Love does not come to an end. But if there are gifts of prophecy the time must come when they must fail, or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever, and knowledge, for this the time will come when it will fail. But once perfection comes all imperfect things will disappear” (*1 Cor* 13,8-10). This applies not only to life but to our history. That which is built on love remains and builds up ourselves, our community, our society; whereas that which is based and built on hatred and selfishness destroys itself.

Therefore charity is the greatest and the root of all the charisms, through which the Church is built up and operates. It is after having explained the purpose and the role of the various charisms that Saint Paul introduces his discourse on charity with these words: “Be ambitious for the higher gifts. And I am going to show you a way that is better than any of them” (1 Cor 12,31).

It is the principal charism, even when it is expressed in everyday things and has nothing extraordinary or showy about it: “Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish, it does not take offence and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people’s sins but delights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes” (1 Cor 13,4-6).

For Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, as for all the saints, charity is central. It is the constant guiding force of their lives. It is right to know this and to say so. Every so often in fact a member of the Salesian Family experiences this and discovers the importance of charity in an ecclesiastical movement after having lived for many years the spirituality of our Salesian charism. It seems as though before this they had never heard anyone speak about it effectively nor been able to live life intensely.

In the dream of the diamonds – which is a parable of the Salesian spirit – charity is placed in front and precisely over the heart of the personage: “Three of those diamonds he wore on his chest... the third over his heart bore the word Charity”.<sup>18</sup> In this dream what is placed in the front is the fundamental part of our spirit.

In addition, charity is recommended by our founders in a variety of ways: as the basis of our life in community, as a pedagogical principle, source of piety, condition for balance and personal happiness, the practice of particular virtues such as friendship, good manners, the sacrifice of one’s own interests.

<sup>18</sup> MB XV, 148 (The whole of the famous “Dream”).

Learning how to love is the purpose of consecrated life, which is nothing other than “a way that starts from love and leads to love”.<sup>19</sup> The combination of practices, and discipline, of norms and spiritual teaching is intended to obtain a single objective: to make us capable of welcoming others and putting ourselves at their service with generosity.

## ***2.2. Pastoral charity***

Charity has many expressions: maternal love, married love, charitable works, compassion, mercy, love for one’s enemies, forgiveness. In the history of holiness such expressions cover all the areas of human life. We Salesians (SDB) and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA) as in general all the groups of the Salesian Family, speak about a “pastoral” charity.

This expression appears many times in the Constitutions or Statutes of the various groups, in documents and talks. The meaning of pastoral charity is explained very well in the Second Vatican Council when, referring to those who devote themselves to education to the faith, it says: “They are gifted with sacramental grace enabling them to exercise a perfect role of pastoral charity through prayer, sacrifice and preaching... They are enabled to lay down their life for their sheep fearlessly and, made a model for their flock, can lead the Church to ever-increasing holiness through their own example”.<sup>20</sup>

The word “pastoral” indicates a specific form of charity; it immediately calls to mind the figure of Jesus the Good Shepherd.<sup>21</sup> Not only, however, his way of acting: kindness, seeking the lost one, dialogue, forgiveness; but also and above all the substance of his ministry: to reveal God to every man and every woman. It is more than evident how different this form of charity is to other forms whose preferential focus is on particular

<sup>19</sup> Cf. SDB Constitutions 196.

<sup>20</sup> LG 41.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Jn 10.

needs of people: health, food, work.

The element typical of pastoral charity is the proclamation of the Gospel, education to the faith, the formation of the Christian community, bringing the yeast of the Gospel to the situation. This therefore requires being totally available, devoted to the salvation of humanity, as shown by Jesus: of all men and women, of each and even of a single one. Don Bosco and our Salesian Family following in his footsteps express this charity with the phrase: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*.

The great Institutes and the major currents of spirituality have summed up the heart of their own charism in a brief phrase: “For the greater glory of God” the Jesuits say; “Peace and good” is the greeting of the Franciscans; “Prayer and work” is the programme of the Benedictines; “Contemplate and pass on to others the things contemplated” is the norm of the Dominicans. The witnesses from the early days and the subsequent reflections of the Congregation have led to the conviction that the expression that sums up Salesian spirituality is precisely “*Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*”.

Certainly the expression is frequently found on Don Bosco’s lips and had an influence on his spiritual attitude. It is the saying that impressed Dominic Savio in the office of Don Bosco still a young priest (34 years of age) and moved him to make a comment that is still famous: “I understand; here you do business not with money but with souls. I hope my soul will have its share in this business”.<sup>22</sup> For this boy it was clear therefore that Don Bosco was offering him not only education and a home but above all the opportunity for spiritual growth.

The expression has been taken up in the Liturgy: “inspire us with that same apostolic charity to seek the salvation of our neighbour and so serve you the one and only good”.<sup>23</sup> And this was quite

<sup>22</sup> J. BOSCO, *Life of Dominic Savio*, in Dominic Savio ed T O’Brien Guild Publications London, 1969, chap VIII, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Prayer for the Liturgy on the Solemnity of Saint John Bosco.

right given that Don Bosco had this intention in mind with the foundation of his institutes: “The purpose of this Society as far as its members are concerned is nothing other than an invitation to come together urged on by a saying of Saint Augustine: *divinorum divinissimum est in lucrum animarum operare*”.<sup>24</sup>

### 2.3. *Salesian pastoral charity*

In Salesian history we read: “On the evening of 26 January 1854, we gathered in Don Bosco’s room and he suggested that with the help of the Lord and St Francis of Sales we should first test ourselves by performing deeds of charity toward our neighbour... From that evening on those who agreed – or would later agree – to this were called Salesians”.<sup>25</sup>

After Don Bosco, each of the Rector Majors, as authoritative witnesses, has reaffirmed the same conviction. It is an interesting fact that all of them have been concerned to repeat it with a unanimity that leaves no room for doubt.

Don Michael Rua affirmed at the canonical process for the beatification and canonisation of Don Bosco: “He left it to others to accumulate wealth... and to chase after honours; Don Bosco really had nothing other at heart than souls: with deeds and not only his words he said: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*”.

Don Paul Albera, who spent many years with Don Bosco and knew him well, declares “The driving force of his whole life was to work for souls to which he devoted himself entirely... The salvation of souls one might say was his only reason for living”.<sup>26</sup>

Even more tellingly also because it highlights Don Bosco’s profoundest motivations, Don Philip Rinaldi saw in the motto “*Da mihi animas*”, “the secret of his love, the power and the ardour of his charity”.

<sup>24</sup> MB VII, 622.

<sup>25</sup> MB V, 8.

<sup>26</sup> P. BROCARDO, *Don Bosco profondamente uomo - profondamente santo*, LAS, Roma 1985, 84.

As regards current awareness after the re-thinking of Salesian life in the light of the Council, as the Rector Major Fr Egidio Viganò declares: “It is my conviction that there is no brief expression that sums up better the Salesian spirit than that chosen by Don Bosco himself: *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle*. It indicates a fervent union with God which enables us to penetrate the mystery of His trinitarian life manifested in history in the missions of the Son and of the Spirit as the infinite Love *ad hominum salutem intentus*”.<sup>27</sup>

Where does this expression or motto come from, and what precise meaning can it have today? I say ‘today’ because nowadays the word ‘soul’ does not mean nor give the same idea as it did in previous ages.

This motto of Don Bosco is found in Genesis, chapter 14, verse 21. Four kings form an alliance and wage war against five others, among whom is the king of Sodom. When the city was being sacked Lot the nephew of Abram and his family are among those taken prisoner. Abram is told about this and having armed the men he sets out with his tribe. He defeats the invaders, recovers the loot and rescues the people. Then in his gratitude the king of Sodom says to him: “Give me the people, the rest is for you”. The presence of Melchisedek, a priest whose origin is unknown, gives a particular religious and messianic significance to the story, especially on account of the blessing he gives to Abram: a situation therefore anything but “spiritual”. However, in the request of the king there is a clear distinction between the “people” and the “rest”, the things.

Don Bosco gave the expression a personal interpretation according to the religious-cultural view of the last century. “Anima” indicates a man’s spiritual quality, the centre of his freedom and the reason for his personal dignity, where he is most open to God. When Don Bosco gives the biblical text an

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 85.

accommodated, allegorical, prayerful, liturgical interpretation, the expression from Gen. 14,21 takes on particular characteristics: *animas* are the men and women of his day, they are the real youngsters he is dealing with; *cetera tolle* means detachment from things and creatures, a detachment which in him is certainly not equivalent to the annihilation of self, the annihilation in God, as for example the contemplative theologians or mystics understand it. For him detachment is a state of mind that is necessary for the most absolute freedom and availability with regard to the demands of the apostolate itself.

The links between these two meanings, that of the Bible and that given by Don Bosco, in our own culture point to very practical choices.

In the first place pastoral charity takes the individual person into consideration, and is concerned with the whole person; first and foremost it is concerned with developing all the person's potential. Giving "things" comes later; providing some service is in view of the development of the person's conscience and sense of his own personal dignity.

In addition, a charity which above all considers the person is guided by a "vision" of that person who does not live by bread alone: he has immediate needs but also infinite aspirations. He wants material things but also spiritual values. According to the expression of St Augustine, "He is made by God, athirst for Him". Therefore the salvation that pastoral charity seeks and offers is that which is full and definitive. Everything else is ordered in relation to that: charitable works to education; this to religious initiation; religious initiation to the life of grace and to communion with God.

In other words it could be said that in our education or development we give the first place to the religious dimension: not for the sake of proselytism, but because we are convinced that religion is the deepest resource for a person's development. In a time of secularism, this approach is not easy to implement.

The saying “*da mihi animas*” also points to some form of method: in the formation or the re-generation of an individual it is necessary to re-awaken his spiritual powers, his conscience, his openness to God, thoughts about his eternal destiny. Don Bosco’s pedagogy is a pedagogy of the soul, of the supernatural. Once this has been realised the real work of education can begin. The rest is really background or preparatory work.

Don Bosco clearly says this in his biography of Michael Magone. This boy comes in off the streets into the Oratory. He is happy, and from a human point of view a good lad: he is spontaneous and sincere, he plays, studies and makes friends. There is only one thing missing: his understanding of the life of grace, of a relationship with God and how to achieve it. From a religious point of view he is ignorant or inattentive. He breaks into tears when he compares himself with his companions and recognises that this is missing. Then Don Bosco speaks to him. From that moment the educational journey described in the biography begins: the awareness and the adoption of his own religious-Christian dimension.

There is therefore an ascetical process for someone moved by pastoral charity: “*Cetera tolle*”, “Leave all the rest behind”. One has to give up many things in order to preserve the main objective; many things can be entrusted to others, and many activities can be left to one side so as to have the time and be available to open up the youngsters to God. And this not only in one’s personal life but also in the programmes and the apostolic works themselves.

“Whoever examines the life of Don Bosco, following his thought processes and exploring the results, finds a matrix: salvation in the Catholic Church is the only repository of the means of salvation. He feels the challenge of abandoned, poor, aimless young people awaken in him the urgent need for education in order to enable these youngsters to take their proper place in the world and in the Church through methods using

gentleness and love, but with a tension that has its origin in his desire for the eternal salvation of the young person”.<sup>28</sup>

#### **2.4. Progress so far**

As a summary we can take up again the fundamental ideas of our reflection.

- Ours is an apostolic spirituality: it is expressed and grows through pastoral work.
- The apostolate becomes a genuine spiritual experience, and not merely the expending of energy, stress, and wear and tear, and is animated by charity; it is a source of effectiveness, confidence and joy in pastoral work.
- Charity gives unity to our personal lives; it resolves the tensions that arise between activity and prayer, between community life and apostolic commitment, between education and evangelisation, between a professional approach and the apostolate.
- The whole thrust of our spiritual life consists in revitalising pastoral charity, purifying and intensifying it: “ama et fac quod vis”.

### **3. SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY FOR ALL VOCATIONS**

If it is true that Christian spirituality has common elements valid for every calling, it is also true that it is experienced through particular differences and specifics according to one’s state in life: priestly ministry, consecrated life, lay faithful, family, youth, the elderly, ... they all have their typical spiritual experience. The same is true for Salesian spirituality.

<sup>28</sup> P. STELLA, *Don Bosco nella storia della religiosità cattolica*, vol. II, Zurigo, PAS Verlag, Zurigo, 13.

### ***3.1. A spirituality common to all the groups of the Salesian Family***

There are elements of spirituality common to all the groups of the Salesian Family: they all draw inspiration from Don Bosco, who is the Founder of the Salesians, of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians together with Mother Mazzarello, of the Salesian Cooperators and of the Association of Mary Help of Christians; the other groups refer to their own Founders. These elements are listed in the “Charter of Identity of the Salesian Family”, which needs to be known and reflected on since it constitutes the frame of reference for our spirituality of communion and for our formation to communion.

The features that are characteristic and recognised by all the groups can be found especially in the third part of the “Charter of Identity”. They regard our life in relation to the Trinity, the links with Don Bosco, communion for the mission, the spirituality of everyday life, contemplation in action following the example of Don Bosco, dynamic apostolic charity, the grace of unity, a preferential love for the young and for the working class, loving kindness, optimism and joy, work and temperance, initiative and flexibility, a spirit of prayer, entrustment to Mary Help of Christians.

We should not forget that the Preventive System is an expression and practical application of this shared spirituality. It once again links us to the spirit, the attitudes and the gospel choices of Don Bosco. The “ingenuity” of his spirit is tied to the implementation of the Preventive System. It is a successful system, which is the model and the inspiration for many people nowadays who are engaged in education in the various continents, in multicultural and pluri-religious contexts. It is a model that demands from everyone continuous reflection so as to bring about more and more the centrality of the young as those for whom and with whom the Salesian mission is carried out.

### ***3.2. A spirituality proper to each group of the Salesian Family***

On the other hand each group of the Salesian Family has its own spiritual elements. Quite rightly, on account of their origin and development, the various groups have their own particular history and special aspects of the common spirituality that they have demonstrated in a special way or others that are original to them. These elements are the specific difference of each group; they need to be known and constitute a richness for the whole Family.

Variety is a gift of the Spirit, who does not like uniformity and standardisation; the differences and the specific features, however, must not become excuses for divisions or arguments but should enrich everyone and converge on a unity, which is communion to be welcomed as a gift and to be brought about by commitment. These identifying elements are present and made explicit especially in the Rules of Life, but also in the traditions of the various groups.

### ***3.3. Salesian youth spirituality***

As time passed a Salesian youth spirituality also developed. In addition to the three biographies of the boys Michael Magone, Dominic Savio and Francis Besucco, written by Don Bosco, we can think of the pages he addressed to the young people themselves in the “Companion of Youth”, and of the “Sodalities” Don Bosco set up as an opportunity for them to take a spiritual and apostolic lead...

It would be interesting to know the developments that have taken place throughout our history and tradition in Salesian youth spirituality, up to the present time when an official formal arrangement has been formulated and spread among the young through the Salesian Youth Movement. Spirituality is the basis of the Salesian Youth Movement, which grows with the commitment of the young people themselves and which needs the

support of animation on the part of the various groups of the Salesian Family. The Salesian Youth Movement in fact is an opportunity, a gift and a task for all the groups of our Family.

Salesian youth spirituality is a spirituality suited to the young; it is lived with and for the young, planned and lived out as part of a young person's experience. It aims at creating a blueprint for today's young Christian living in and prepared for the world of today; offered to all the young because it applies to the "poorest" but at the same time capable of providing goals for those who make more progress; it also sets out to make the young person a role model for his peers and in the place where he finds himself.

*A spirituality of daily life as the place of encounter with God*

Salesian youth spirituality sees daily life as the place of encounter with God. The basis of this very positive view of daily life and of life itself is faith and an appreciation of the Incarnation. In this kind of spirituality one shows oneself to be guided by the mystery of God Who with His Incarnation, Death and Resurrection affirms His presence in all of human reality as a saving presence.

For a young person, daily life is made up of duties, socialising, sport, growing pains, family life, the development of personal gifts, future prospects, demands, aspirations. It is all of this that needs to be taken on board, reflected on and lived in the light of God. According to Don Bosco, to become a saint all that is needed is to do well what you have to do. He considers being faithful to one's obligations in life as the touchstone for virtue and as the sign of spiritual maturity.

What is needed so that daily life can be lived as a spirituality is the grace of unity which helps to harmonise the different features of life around a heart in which the Holy Spirit dwells. This makes conversion and purification possible; through the power of the sacrament of Reconciliation it enables the young

person to maintain a free heart that is open to God and given to one's brothers and sisters.

Among the *attitudes and experiences* of daily life to be lived deeply in the Spirit could be considered: one's family life; love for one's work or studies, cultural development and scholastic experience; the need to combine extraordinary experiences with the "daily grind", a positive and reflective view of one's times; the responsible acceptance of one's own life and spiritual progress day by day; the ability to guide one's life according to a vocational plan.

### *An Easter spirituality of joy and optimism*

The decisive truth of the Christian faith is that the Lord has truly risen! Therefore eternal life with God is our ultimate goal and it is already now our goal since it has become real in the body of Jesus Christ. Salesian Youth Spirituality is paschal by nature and is imbued with this escatological reality.

The most deeply rooted inclination in the hearts of the young is the desire and the search for happiness. Joy is the noblest expression of happiness and, together with celebration and hope, is the characteristic of Salesian spirituality. Christian faith is the proclamation of supreme happiness promised and conferred by "eternal life". However, this is not something to be won but rather a gift which shows us that God is the source of true cheerfulness and hope. Without excluding its pedagogical value, cheerfulness has above all a theological value; Don Bosco saw in it an essential manifestation of the life of grace.

Don Bosco understood and helped his boys understand that commitment and joy went hand in hand; that holiness and cheerfulness are inseparable. Don Bosco is the saint of the joy of being alive. His boys learned this lesson about life so well that they could say in terms typical of the Oratory that 'holiness consists in always being cheerful'. Salesian youth spirituality offers a path of holiness that is simple, cheerful and serene.

The appreciation of joy as something spiritual, the source of commitment and its consequence, requires that certain *attitudes and experiences* are fostered in the young: it demands that the opportunity for their close involvement is fostered; in friendly and fraternal relationships, with the joyful experience of affection; youthful spontaneous celebrations and group events; a sense of wonder and a taste for the joys that the Creator has placed on our path: nature, silence, things achieved together; the demanding joy of sacrifice and solidarity; the grace of being able to endure suffering under the sign and with the consolation of the Cross of Christ.

*A spirituality of friendship and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus*

Salesian youth spirituality is intended to lead the young person to an encounter with Jesus Christ and to make possible a relationship with Him of friendship and trust, creating an enduring trusting fidelity. Many young people have a sincere desire to know Jesus and try to respond to the questions about the meaning of life, to which, however, only God can give a real answer.

Friend, Teacher, Saviour are words that express the central role of Jesus in the spiritual life of the young. It is interesting to recall that Jesus is presented by Don Bosco as the friend of the young: "Young people are the delight of Jesus" he used to say; as the teacher of life and of wisdom; as the model for every Christian; as the redeemer who gave his whole life in love until death for our salvation; as being present in the little ones and the poor.

Following the path of conformity with Christ requires that certain *attitudes and experiences* are developed: the participation through faith in the community that lives with the memory and in the presence of the Lord and that celebrates Him in the sacraments of Christian initiation; the pedagogy of holiness, that Don Bosco demonstrated in reconciliation with God and with one's brothers and sisters in the sacrament of Reconcilia-

tion; learning how to pray personally and with others, special moments in which to grow in love and in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; a systematic study of the faith, enlightened by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

### *A spirituality of ecclesial communion*

An adequate experience and understanding of the Church is one of the points in the discernment of Christian spirituality. The Church is a spiritual communion and a community that becomes visible through shared gestures and works; it is the service of men and women from whom it does not detach itself like a “sect” that considers good only those works that bear its own imprint. It is the place chosen and offered by Christ where He can be encountered. He has consigned to the Church the Word, Baptism, His Body and Blood, the grace of the forgiveness of sin and the other Sacraments, the experience of communion and the power of the Spirit, which move people to have love for their brothers and sisters. Among its household treasures, the Family of Don Bosco has a rich tradition of filial fidelity to the Successor of Peter and of communion and collaboration with the local Churches.

Precisely because of its ecclesial dimension, Salesian youth spirituality is a Marian spirituality. Mary was called by God the Father to be, through the grace of the Spirit, the mother of the Word and then give Him to the world. The Church sees Mary as the example of faith. Don Bosco did so and we too are called to do the same in communion with the Church. Mary lived her life as Mother of God and our Mother; as the Immaculate One full of grace, totally open to God, to holiness and to a Christian life lived with total fidelity; as the Help of Christians in the great battle of the faith and the building of the Kingdom of God. She is the one who protects and guides the Church. Therefore Don Bosco considered her Our Lady of difficult times, the support and buttress of the faith and of the Church. In Mary Help of Christians we have a model and a guide for our educational and apostolic work.

Therefore *the attitudes and the experiences* that need to be created are: making the practical setting of the Salesian house a place where one experiences a true model of the Church, one that is fresh, attractive, active, capable of responding to the expectations of the young; with groups and especially the educative community, that unites the young people and the educators in a family atmosphere in a project of total education; with participation in the local Church, where all the faith-filled forces of Christians come together in a visible communion and an evident spirit of service in a given locality; with respect for and trust in the universal Church understood and expressed in love for the Pope; a special love for, devotion to and imitation of Mary the Immaculate Help of Christians; knowledge of the saints and of those other significant Christians distinguished by their thinking and achievements in various fields.

#### *A spirituality of responsible service*

Life lived as an encounter with God, the path of identification with Christ, the Church seen as communion and service where each one has a place and where the gifts of everyone are needed lead to and bring to maturity a conviction that life brings us into a vocation of service. Don Bosco wanted his young people to become “good Christians and upright citizens”.

Don Bosco, as a young man and an apostle, saw and lived his life as a vocation starting from his dream at nine years of age. With a generous heart he responded to the invitation: to be among the young in order to save them. Don Bosco used to invite his boys to engage in “a practical exercise of love for their neighbour”. Salesian youth spirituality is an apostolic spirituality because it reflects the conviction that we are called to collaborate with God in His mission, responding with dedication, fidelity, trust and total availability. So apostolic vocations and vocations to special consecration should be proposed to young people.

Responsible service implies some attitudes and experiences that need to be fostered: openness to the real situation and to personal contacts; the promotion of the dignity and the human rights of the individual, everywhere; living in one's family with a generous spirit and preparing to form one on the basis of mutual self-giving; encouraging solidarity especially towards the poorest people; undertaking one's work with honesty and professional competence; promoting justice, peace and the common good in politics; showing respect for creation; fostering culture; identifying God's plan for one's life; coming gradually to mature and consistent decisions with regard to serving the Church and others; bearing witness to one's own faith and living it in a practical manner in some sphere, such as educational, pastoral and cultural animation, voluntary service and missionary commitment; knowing about and being open to vocations of special consecration.

### ***3.4. A spirituality of the Laity and of the Salesian Family***

The groups of the Salesian Family involve many lay people in their mission. We are aware that there cannot be total involvement without also sharing the same spirit. It is a fundamental task for us to communicate Salesian spirituality to the lay people who with us are co-responsible for the educational ministry. The Salesians, in conjunction with the other groups of the Salesian Family, undertook the task of formulating a *Salesian lay spirituality* in the XXIV General Chapter.<sup>29</sup> Certainly the lay groups of the Salesian Family especially the Salesian Cooperators and the Past Pupils constitute a source of inspiration for such a spirituality.

Having become more aware that there cannot be a youth ministry without a family ministry we are thinking about the right kind of *Salesian family spirituality* to elaborate and present. There are family-style groups which draw their inspiration

<sup>29</sup> GC24, *Salesians and Lay People: communion and sharing in the spirit and mission of Don Bosco*, Rome 1996, nn. 89-100.

from Don Bosco. In this area we are only at the beginning but it is a way ahead which is helping us to develop our mission not only to the young but to ordinary people. We need to develop a family ministry and so share some spiritual experiences with families, and with couples so as to prepare young people for setting up their own families.

#### 4. TASKS FOR THE SALESIAN FAMILY

4.1. Let us commit ourselves to a better understanding of what **Don Bosco's spiritual experience** was; his spiritual profile, so that we can discover "Don Bosco the mystic"; in this way we can imitate him by living a spiritual experience with charismatic identity. Unless we make Don Bosco's spiritual experience our own we cannot be truly aware of our Salesian spiritual identity; this is the only way we can be disciples and apostles of the Lord Jesus, with Don Bosco as our model and teacher of spiritual life. Salesian spirituality reinterpreted and enriched through the spiritual experience of the Church after the Council and through reflection by today's spiritual theology, offers us a spiritual journey leading to holiness. We recognise that Salesian spirituality is a true and complete spirituality: it has tapped into the history of Christian spirituality, especially that of Saint Francis de Sales; it has its source in the specific and original experience of Don Bosco, has been enriched by the Church's experience and has arrived at the reinterpretation and mature synthesis that we have today.

4.2. Let us live the core and synthesis of Salesian spirituality which is **pastoral charity**. Don Bosco lived it by seeking the "glory of God and the salvation of souls" which became a way of prayer for him and a programme of life in the "da mihi animas, cetera tolle". This charity needs to be nourished through prayer and rooted in it by looking at the Heart of Christ, imitating the Good Shepherd, meditating on the Scriptures, experiencing the

Eucharist, making time for personal prayer, taking on a mindset of service of the young. It is a charity which translates into and is made visible by concrete neighbourly gestures, affection, work, dedication. Let us take up the preventive system as a spiritual experience and not just as a proposal of evangelisation and pedagogical approach; it finds its source in the charity of God “who provides in advance for all his creatures, is ever present at their side, and freely gives his life to save them”;<sup>30</sup> it prepares us to see God in the young and calls on us to serve Him in them, recognising their dignity, renewing our faith in their resources for good and educating them to the fullness of life.

4.3. Let us pass on our proposal for Salesian spirituality according to the **diversity of our vocations** especially to the young, to lay people involved in Don Bosco’s mission, to families. Salesian spirituality needs to be lived according to the vocation each one has received from God. Let us recognise the common spiritual traits of each of the various Groups in the Salesian Family as indicated in the “Charter of identity”; let us make the witnesses to Salesian holiness known; let us invoke the intercession of our Blesseds, Venerables and Servants of God and ask for the grace that they may be canonised. Let us offer Salesian spirituality to the young we accompany. Let us offer Salesian spirituality to lay people who are committed to sharing Don Bosco’s mission: and by focusing on family ministry, point to a spirituality for families that is appropriate to their circumstances. Finally, let us also invite young people, laity, and families in our educative and pastoral communities to have a spiritual experience, as also those in our groups and associations that belong to other religions or those who find themselves somewhat diffident about God; because a spiritual experience is also possible for them, there is room there for inwardness, silence, dialogue with their own conscience, openness to the transcendent.

<sup>30</sup> SDB Constitutions 20.

4.4. Let us read some of **Don Bosco's writings** that can be considered as sources of Salesian spirituality. Above all I invite you to read again and to put into practice the "Dream of the ten diamonds" This offers us a spiritual image for each one of us who draw our inspiration from Don Bosco. I then propose to you an anthology of the spiritual writings of Don Bosco's where he is a true master of the spiritual life.<sup>31</sup> In this way we can draw on some pages, less well-known but which speak to us directly about Salesian spiritual life.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This time I conclude the commentary on the Strenna not with a fairy tale but with the testimony and the message that Fr Pasquale Liberatore has left us. For many years he was the Postulator for the Causes of our Saints, and a saintly man himself. This is his poem entitled "The Saints".

It is a short personal "credo", which brings together everything about Salesian spirituality that can be seen being put into practice in a genuine and authentic way in the wealth and diversity of the fruits of holiness in the Salesian Family starting with our beloved founder and father Don Bosco. We found this poem in his office on the day he died. In it he praises the saints and uses a variety of images which we find very beautiful. Reading this poem we can almost reach out and touch the unmistakable and delicate human and spiritual sensitivity of our Saints, and sense their yearning for the fullness of life, love and happiness in God; we observe their interior strength and the spiritual experience we ourselves are called to live and to know how to present with passion and conviction to others, especially the young.

My first letter as Rector Major was entitled "Salesians, be saints!" and I saw it as setting out the programme for my peri-

<sup>31</sup> Saint John BOSCO. *Teachings on the spiritual life*. An anthology. Edited by A. GI-RAUDO, LAS - ROME 2013.

od as Rector Major. Now I am happy that my final letter written as the successor of Don Bosco is a heartfelt invitation to drink deeply from his spirituality. This is really what I should like to be able to do myself and to propose to all of you, my dear members of the Salesian Family and young people.

### **THE SAINTS**

*“They shall be like the stars of heaven:  
they shall shine out like the firmament”.*

#### **Like the stars of heaven**

visible in their thousands to the naked eye,  
but infinitely more numerous  
to the telescope which views those without haloes.

#### **Glowing volcanos**

like peep-holes  
into the mystery of the Fire of the Trinity.

#### **Adventure stories**

written by the Holy Spirit  
in which surprise is the norm.

#### **Expressions of the most varied literary forms**

yet always fascinating:  
from the style of a drama to the flavour of a fable.

#### **Classics of the grammar of the beatitudes**

always convincing  
thanks to their joyful existence.

#### **Cosmonauts in space**

to whom we owe the most astonishing discoveries  
only possible for those who distance themselves from the  
earth.

#### **Giants as different from us**

as the genius always is  
yet made from the same stuff as ourselves.

**Capable of mistakes and failures**

but always exceptional people:  
not to be under-estimated with the excuse of making  
them our fellow travellers.

**Expressions of God's utter gratuity**

which enriches and raises up  
according to the mysterious criteria of his liberality.

**They are dwelling in unchanging peace**

above the normal human conflicts  
yet always dissatisfied because they never cease to strive  
for even more.

**In orbit around the essential**

they are prophets of the absolute.

**Great artists**

in the forge of the Beautiful  
before which the human heart is ecstatic.

**Men and women fulfilled**

witnesses to the secret harmony  
between nature and grace.

**God's fools**

so much in love  
as to speak in disconcerting ways.

**The furthest removed** by instinct from every kind of sin,  
always the closest  
to every sort of sinner.

**The stages on which the Divine performance takes  
place**

and yet themselves humble spectators  
thanks to a merciless awareness of their own nothingness.

**Engaged in a continuous hiding of themselves**

and yet inevitably shining out  
like a city built on a hilltop.

**Bearers of eternal messages**  
beyond time,  
progress, cultures and races.

**Fiery words**

which the Lord speaks to shatter our laziness,  
raps on the desk with which the Divine Master  
awakens us his distracted pupils.

**Living miracles**

before whom no experts are needed  
to acknowledge the extraordinary quality of the Gospel  
lived *sine glossa*.

**Heroically detached from what is human,**  
they are the supreme experts  
in human nuances.

**True masters of psychology**

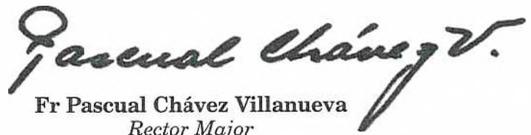
who by the pathway of love  
reach the most hidden recesses of the human heart.

**Able to quicken our finest roots**

and touching ancient strings of harmony  
they instil homesickness for the future.

**Like the stars of heaven**

so different among themselves  
yet at heart lit up by the same fire.

  
Fr Pascual Chávez Villanueva  
Rector Major

### 4.1 Chronicle of the Rector Major

#### – *April 2013*

The Rector Major began the month of April, celebrating Mass on morning of Monday 1<sup>st</sup> at Auxilium for the communities of Auxilium and Sr Teresa Valsè Pantellini.

He then spent that week at home working in the office and receiving many visitors. Among these, in addition to several members of the General Council, could be mentioned the following in particular: on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Mons. Mauro Morfino, SDB, and later Fr Tadeusz Rosmuz, who was undertaking the Visitation of the Austrian Province. On Thursday 4<sup>th</sup>, he met Fr Renato Furia, Rector of the Community of Ancona, and later, accompanied by the Provincial and the Rector and the confreres of the Community of Sulmona, Fr Costantino Carnevale, who was celebrating his hundredth birthday.

At midday on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> the Rector Major went to the FMA Community of Ersilia Canta where he said Mass for the Easter Octave.

On Monday evening 8<sup>th</sup>, he went to the Vatican for a meeting with

H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

During the following days, while continuing his work in the office, the Rector Major had several meetings and visitors. In particular, on Wednesday 10 he had a meeting with the members of the ISS; on Thursday morning 11<sup>th</sup> the Rector Major received Doctor Carola Carazzone, President of the VIS, and at midday, Sr Pina del Core, Principal of the Auxilium Faculty; in the afternoon he had a meeting with the members of the International Social Communication Consultative Committee. On Friday morning 12<sup>th</sup> he received Fr Peter Zago, a Missionary in Pakistan.

On Saturday morning 13<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major presided at Mass with the International Social Communication Consultative Committee. At midday he left for Spain, Cambados, for a few days rest. At the airport of Santiago di Compostela he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr José Rodríguez Pacheco and by the Rector of the Community.

During his stay in Spain, while mainly based in the Cambados

house, he made several visits and had various meetings including the following.

On Monday 15<sup>th</sup>, after Mass with the community, the Rector Major gave the Good Morning to all the students in the school before leaving for La Coruña. First of all he paid a visit to the community of the Don Bosco College where he stayed for lunch. In the evening he visited the community of Calvo Sotelo, said evening prayer and gave the Good Night.

On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>, in the late morning he presided at Mass with the Provincial Council and in the afternoon visited the FMA Community in Cambados and then that in Caldas de Reis. There he met the youngsters and staff of the Laura Vicuña Family Home, celebrated Mass for the community and after supper returned to Cambados.

On Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez visited Vigo. In the morning he went to the Community of Mary Help of Christians, had lunch and preached the monthly day of recollection. In the evening he visited the Community of the San Roque College. He said evening prayer, gave the Good Night and after supper returned to Cambados.

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major went to Santiago de Compostela where he celebrated Mass in the crypt of the tomb of the Apostle. Afterwards he met the Salesian community and after lunch returned to Cambados. In the evening there was an official reception for him by the Mayor together with the SDB and FMA Communities and other members of the Salesian Family.

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> he spent the day in the Cambados community. In the evening with all the community he went to the cemetery to pray for the deceased Salesian confreres buried there and then went to the Cistercian Monastery in Argenteira for Evening Prayer during which he spoke to the Sisters.

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>, after lunch he went to Santiago to take the return flight to Rome.

After spending three days at home with the usual commitments, on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major left for Cerignola for the Provincial Feastday on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this foundation in Puglia. On his arrival in the afternoon he was met by the Provincial Fr Pasquale Cristiani, who took him to the Salesian house and later to the Stadium for a first meeting with

the youngsters with whom he then went to the Cathedral Square where the Bishop Mons. Felice Di Molfetta welcomed them and expressed his gratitude for the presence of the Salesians in his diocese. After the Rector Major expressed his thanks, in the College Theatre he met the confreres who were celebrating significant anniversaries of profession and priestly ordination. He had supper with the FMA community and then attended a Concert and completed the day at midnight with the Good Night to the youngsters who were continuing with a prayer vigil and all-night adoration.

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>, in the College Courtyard, packed with members of the Salesian Family from the Southern Province, Fr Chávez took part in the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the Salesians in Cerignola, which opened with the Mayor's Greeting and during which the Jubilarians were remembered. He then went to the Cathedral for Mass and after lunch returned to Rome.

On Saturday morning 27<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major preached a day of recollection for the members of the EPC of the Astori di Mogliano Veneto who had come to Rome on

pilgrimage, and then celebrated Mass with them.

Among other meetings and visitors in these days between 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April could be mentioned, in addition to those with various Councillors, a meeting with the FMA Provincial of ILS, Sr Celestina Corna, on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>, with the Bishop of the local diocese, Mons. Gino Reali, on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup>, and with Fr Rayen Ferrington, Delegate for the Sudan and South Sudan Delegation, on the evening of the same day.

### *- May 2013*

At midday on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup>, Fr Chávez went to Genzano for lunch with a group of Past Pupils from the Oratory of Genzano and from Roma-Pio XI.

On Thursday morning 2<sup>nd</sup>, accompanied by Fr Adriano Bregolin and Fr Juan José Bartolomé he left for Englaand for a Retreat for the Salesian Family of the Great Britain Province. On their arrival at the Airport they were met by the Provincial Fr Martin Coyle, who took them to the community in Farnborough. There they said Mass, and had lunch and supper. The following morning after celebrating Mass they left for

Cambridge and from there went to Wyboston Lakes, where the Retreat was being held, which began in the evening.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> were days of retreat during which the Rector Major, in addition to giving talks, met those taking part who wished to see him.

On Monday 6<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of Saint Dominic Savio, Fr Chávez concluded the retreat with a meeting with the missionaries from Project Europe and after the closing Mass and farewell lunch returned to Rome.

He spent Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> and the morning of Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> at home with a variety of meetings and interviews. Then in the afternoon of Wednesday he left for Brussels for a visit to the Province of North Belgium and Holland. On his arrival he was met by the Provincial Fr Mark Tips and Fr Eric Halvoet. Waiting for him at the Provincial House was Fr Albert Van Hecke with all the confreres of the community. He had supper, said evening prayer, gave the Good Night and had a short meeting with the Provincial Council.

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of the Ascension, after morning prayer and breakfast the Rector Major left for Amsterdam, where

he was welcomed by the confreres, collaborators and young volunteers, after which he opened the new international community in Holland. In the afternoon there was a Mass after which the Rector Major had a meeting with the confreres, members of the Salesian Family, friends of Don Bosco, and young volunteers. Having returned to Brussels, after supper and evening prayer he met the two confreres who would be making their perpetual vows, Simon Edward Nongrum (India) and Toni Berek (Indonesia).

On Friday morning 10<sup>th</sup>, after morning Mass with the community of the Provincial House, Fr Chávez had a meeting at Vremde, Jeugdorg Don Bosco Vlaanderen, with the team from this house for marginalised youngsters, which was followed by lunch. In the afternoon at Sint-Pieters-Woluwe he met the staff of the Salesian schools and after supper he was taken to Heverlee, Louvain, where he had a meeting with the staff (SDB, FMA, and volunteers) of the Jeugdienst Don Bosco which ended with a Good Night.

On Saturday morning 11<sup>th</sup> he left for Sint-Denijs-Westrem (Ghent), where he presided at a

Mass with the perpetual profession of Toni Berek and Simon Edward Nongrum, attended by a large congregation of all the Salesian Family followed by a reception, lunch and a meeting. Afterwards the Rector Major gave an interview to the 'Salesian Bulletin' and then returned to the Provincial House.

On Sunday morning 12<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major met the missionaries and students in Belgium, with their Rectors and then presided at Mass with them and the community of the Provincial House. In the afternoon he was taken to the airport for the return journey to Rome.

On Monday afternoon 13<sup>th</sup>, the feast of Saint Mary Dominica Mazzarello, the Rector Major went to the Generalate of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians where he celebrated Mass. He stayed for supper and then gave the Good Night.

Fr Chávez spent Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> working at home and with the usual meetings and visitors. Among these were Fr Roberto Dal Molin, Provincial of INE, Dr. Michele Gentiloni, Fr Gianni Mazzali, Fr Filiberto Rodríguez, and Fr Sagayaraj Philominathan, Provincial Economist of the INM

Province with Fr John Bosco, Rector and Provincial Councillor. On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> he went to the Salesian community in the Vatican for the closing of the canonical visitation.

On Friday morning 17<sup>th</sup> May, the Rector Major presided at Mass with the community of the Generalate on his name-day, and at midday left for Portugal. On his arrival he was met by the Provincial, Fr Artur Pereira, who took him to the Provincial House and then later to the community in Estoril. There he said evening prayer and gave the Good Night.

On Saturday morning 18<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez left for Fatima, where in the house of Nossa Senhora das Dores he met the confreres of the Province. In the afternoon he met the young people who were testing their vocation and spoke to the young people of the SYM. At the end of the Arte e Fe youth celebration he went on to Capelinha, where he presided at the ceremony in honour of Our Lady of Fatima, addressing the pilgrims. Then in the Holy Trinity Basilica he presided at Mass for the Salesian Family, and after supper led the recitation of the Rosary and the candle-lit procession followed by a Prayer Vigil in the Basilica del Recinto.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of Pentecost, after a meeting with members of groups of the Salesian Family, Fr Chávez went to Manique. There he presided at Mass for the sick and elderly confreres. After lunch he returned to Lisbon and in the afternoon had a meeting with the Provincial Council, said evening prayer and gave the Good Night followed by supper.

On Monday morning 20<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major presided at Mass on the occasion of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians which was being celebrated in all the Salesian centres in Lisbon for the whole Educative Pastoral Community of the school. In the afternoon after lunch he began the return journey to Rome.

On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> Fr Chávez took part in the half-yearly Assembly of the USG (Union of Superiors General). On Thursday afternoon 23<sup>rd</sup> he left for Turin.

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May in Turin the Rector Major celebrated the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians with Mass for the Salesian Family and the young people, and the procession. It was another day of meetings among which the most important were with the Archbishop Mons. Cesare

Nosiglia, with the Novices of the whole of Europe, and with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

Having returned to Rome, on Saturday morning 25<sup>th</sup> the Rector Major had a meeting with the World Consultative Committee of the Salesian Family.

On Sunday morning 26<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez presided at the community Mass and in the afternoon with all the Council went to Sant'Agnello, to the FMA house, to make a Retreat until Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May.

#### – *June 2013*

Having returned to Rome at the end of the Retreat the Rector Major with the Councillors spent two days on normal work, including preparation for the *plenary session of the General Council which began with a meeting on Monday evening 3<sup>rd</sup>*.

As usual sessions of the Council were held in the mornings from Tuesday to Friday but in addition for the Rector Major there were a number of other meetings, above all with the General Councillors for various reasons, and then visitors both individuals and groups. Some of these were as follows:

On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Rector Major received Dr Michele Gentiloni

Silveri, and on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> the Provincial of Germany Fr Josef Gr nner.

On Friday afternoon 7<sup>th</sup>, he had a meeting with the Directors of the Mission Offices.

On Saturday morning 8<sup>th</sup>, he presided at Mass for those attending the Consultative Committee of the Mission Offices.

At midday on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>, Fr Ch vez presided at Mass for the Oratory Leaders from the St John the Baptist Oratory in Ciampino.

On Monday morning 10<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major had a meeting with Fr Adriano Bregolin, Fr Jos  Miguel N n ez and Dr Carola Carazzone to discuss the participation of the Congregation in the EXPO-2015. In the evening he went to the Vatican for a meeting with H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

On Tuesday afternoon 11<sup>th</sup>, Fr Ch vez received a Delegation of three Indian Bishops: Mons. A.M. Chinnappa, Archbishop emeritus of Chennai, Mons. Soundarajan Periyarayagam, Bishop of Vellore and Mons. Antonymsamy Neethinatan, Bishop of Chinglepet. In the evening he welcomed the Provincials who had come for their formation course.

On Wednesday morning 12<sup>th</sup>, before the Council Meeting, the

Rector Major met the group of Provincials also as an introduction to their formation course. During the course, he met individually with each of the Provincials: Fr N stor Castell, from the Uruguay Province (on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>); Fr Francisco Alves, from the Manaus Province (Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>); Fr Pejo Orkic, from the Croatia Province (Friday 14<sup>th</sup>); Fr Janez Potocnik, from the Slovenia Province (Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>); Fr Am rico Chaquisse, Superior of the Vice Province of Mozambique (Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>); Fr Leonardo Mancini, Superior of the ICC Circumscription (Monday 17<sup>th</sup>); Fr Lanfranco Fedrigotti, Provincial of China (Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>); Fr N stor Ledesma, from the Paraguay Province (Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>); Fr Roberto dal Molin, from the North East Italy Province (Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>); Fr Jos  Gabino Hern ndez, from the Mexico-M xico Province).

There were also other meetings in this period, in addition to the frequent ones with the Councillors. Among these were those with Fr Slawek Bartodziej, SDB (ZMB) (Monday 17<sup>th</sup>), Fr Donato Lacedonio (Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>), Mr. Gigi Cotichella, then Fr Giovanni Barroero and, in the evening, Fr Jos  Luis Placencia

(Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>); Fr Gianni Garzia SDB, Parish priest of the parish of the Nativity of Mary (Friday 21<sup>st</sup>). In the afternoon of Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> he attended a showing of the film "La croce alla fine del mondo". In the afternoon of Friday 21<sup>st</sup> he met the group preparing the Salesian Family Days.

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> the Rector Major led a day of recollection for the Provincials and, as Grand Chancellor, presided at a meeting of the Curatorium of the UPS.

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June was the Feast of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist and according to tradition the feast of the Rector Major. In the morning Fr Chávez had a final meeting with the Provincials and then presided at Mass. In the afternoon there was a concert in which the FMA communities of the Auxilium and of Madre Ersilia Canta took part, and in the evening the day ended with supper.

On Tuesday morning 25<sup>th</sup>, before the usual session of the Council, the Rector Major met with Fr Vaclav Klement, Fr Lanfranco Fedrigotti and Fr Carlo Socol. In the afternoon he went to the Auxilium to preside as Grand Chancellor, together with Mother Yvonne as Vice-

Chancellor, at a meeting of the Academic Council of the Faculty.

Among interviews during the following days those could be mentioned with Fr Luciano Alloisio, in charge of the Don Bosco in the World Foundation, and with Fr Giovanni Mandrella, SDB.

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of the Apostles Saints Peter and Paul the Rector Major and all the Council went on a pilgrimage to Gargano. On the way they stopped at Vasto, where they had lunch with the confreres of the community. They left for Puglia and having arrived at San Giovanni Rotondo visited the Sanctuary guided by the Superior of the Community. They celebrated Mass in the old Church and then visited the Convent where Padre Pio lived. Then they left for Monte Sant'Angelo, where they were welcomed by the Michaelite Fathers. They had supper and went to bed.

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> after morning prayer and breakfast they left for the Abbey of S. Maria di Pulsano, where they were given a conducted tour and then proceeded to Siponto, where they also had a guided tour of San Leonardo and Santa Maria di Siponto, before returning to

Monte Sant'Angelo. Here they had lunch with the community of the Michaelite Fathers. In the afternoon they visited the Sanctuary of Saint Michael the Archangel and then left for Rignano Garganico, where they met the FMA Community of San Severo and the Priests who are Salesian Cooperators with whom they celebrated Mass and had supper before returning to Monte Sant'Angelo.

– *July 2013*

On Monday morning 1<sup>st</sup> July the Rector Major and the Councillors celebrated Mass in the Sanctuary and after breakfast as they left made a tour of Gargano and then went on to Sulmona. Here they were welcomed by the Confreres of the Community, had lunch and then returned to Rome.

On Tuesday afternoon 2<sup>nd</sup>, Fr Chávez had a visit from Sr Maria Belén Camargo, RCSCJ, and later, accompanied by Fr Adriano Bregolin went to the Vatican for an audience with the Pope emeritus, Benedict XVI.

On Wednesday afternoon the Rector Major with all the members of the General Council went to Castelgandolfo for a meeting of the two General Councils – SDB and FMA.

On Thursday morning 4<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez had a visit from Mons. Gino Reali the local diocesan Bishop, and then presided at a meeting of the Council. In the afternoon he saw Major Andrea Zapparoli and later H. E. Mr Gábor Gy riványi, the Ambassador of Hungary to the Holy See.

On Friday morning 5<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major chaired a meeting of the Council and then immediately left for Tivoli to greet the General Chapter of the Salesian Oblates of the Sacred Heart.

The Rector Major spent Saturday and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at home.

At midday on Monday 8<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez, accompanied by Fr Filiberto González, went to the home of the Mexican Ambassador to the Holy See H. E. Mariano Palacios Alcocer. In the afternoon he saw Fr Stefano Vanoli, the new Director of the Mission Office in Turin and then Fr Donato Lacedonio.

The following days were mainly occupied with meetings of the Council and receiving visitors. Among these were Fr Manlio Sodi (Monday 15<sup>th</sup>) and Miss Pina Bellocchi and another Councillor of the VDB (Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>).

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup>, he met the new FMA Provincials in Castelgandolfo, at the summer residence of the FMA Council.

In the afternoon of Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> he met the team preparing the Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family.

On Thursday morning 18<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Miss Lorena Bianchetti, a TV Presenter, and then a group of VDB. In the afternoon the Rector Major presided at Mass for the opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Institute and greeted them in the name of the Congregation.

On Friday morning 19<sup>th</sup>, he presided at the closing Mass of the Plenary Session of the General Council and later at its final meeting. In the afternoon he preached at the day of recollection for the VDB, which concluded with Mass.

On Saturday morning 20<sup>th</sup>, he presided at Mass for the VDB Assembly and then saw Fr Claudio Cacioli. Afterwards he went to the community in the Vatican.

Early on Sunday morning 21<sup>st</sup>, he left for Rio de Janeiro to take part in World Youth Day. He would return to Rome on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup>. During these days the Rector Major met many confreres, FMA

Sisters and other groups of the Salesian Family and naturally young people from the SYM or from our centres in the various continents. On his arrival in Rio de Janeiro he was met by the Provincial Fr Nilson, and by Fr Natale Vitali and other confreres and young people of the SYM, who accompanied him to the house.

At midday on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>, Fr Chávez presided at Mass and in the afternoon visited the Expo-Cattolica.

On Tuesday morning 23<sup>rd</sup>, with Mother Yvonne, the Rector Major gave a press conference and in the afternoon visited the Vocational Fair.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>, was SYM Day at Niteroi. In the morning there was a Forum with the young people of the SYM in which Mother Yvonne also took part and which concluded with a Concelebrated Mass at which several Salesian Bishops, many Provincials and confreres from all round the world took part as well as the young people. The SYM Festival continued all through the afternoon and evening and finally there was a Prayer Vigil and the Good Night.

On Thursday morning 25<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Fr Aroldo Rojas, SDB

from the Province of Venezuela and then with the Councillors went to Copacabana, the location of the celebrations. In the house, he followed the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis on TV.

On Friday morning 26<sup>th</sup>, he presided at Mass attended also by the students of theology from Chile, and then, with the Councillors he went to Corcovado, where most of the young people of the SYM had gathered. In the evening he returned to the house and watched the Via Crucis on TV.

On Saturday morning 27<sup>th</sup>, with all the Councillors he took part in the Concelebration for the bishops, priests, seminarians, and religious in Rio Cathedral at which the Holy Father presided. In the afternoon he met the team of volunteers who made the preparations and undertook the welcoming of the SYM, young people and those who were staying in Niteroi, and the following evening, again on TV he watched the Prayer Vigil at which Pope Francis presided.

On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>, there was the closing ceremony for WYD with the departure Mass. In the afternoon the Rector Major received a visit from four Salesian Bishops, Mons. Tarcisio

Scaramussa, Mons. Antonio Altieri, Mons. Antonio Emidio Vivar and Mons. Cesar Teixeira.

On Monday afternoon 29<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez began the return journey and arrived in Rome on Tuesday evening 30<sup>th</sup>.

### - August 2013

The Rector Major spent the whole of the first part of the month of August at home with the usual office work interspersed with the normal meetings and interviews. Among these can be mentioned those with Fr Raúl Biord (VEN) and Fr Eusebio Muñoz (UPS) (Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>), Fr Gabriele Corsani and Fr José Manuel Prellezo (Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>), Fr Maurizio Spreafico (MOR), Sr Donata FMA, Fr Gianfranco Venturi, Fr Sergio Pierbattisti and Sr Celestina Corna FMA (Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>); Fr Chávez to whom he wished a happy nameday, and then Fr Guido Novella (Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>).

On Wednesday morning 14<sup>th</sup>, he paid a visit to the Generalate of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus, to whom he gave a message in view of their approaching General Chapter. On his return he saw Fr Giovanni Barroero and then a family who had come to ask a blessing for their son, Alessandro, 13 years old and seriously ill. The

Rector Major gave the Blessing of Mary Help of Christians and a special relic of Blessed Zephyrinus Namuncurá.

On Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the morning the Rector Major, accompanied by Fr Adrian Bregolin, went to Castel Gandolfo. There he concelebrated Mass with Pope Francis and after the Angelus was invited to have lunch with him in the residence of the Secretary of State, H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, at the end of which he returned to the Community of the Parish, which had a visit from the Holy Father. Immediately afterwards he returned to Rome, to the airport to fly to Turin. There he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Stefano Martoglio who took him to Valdocco, where he had supper with the Provincials present.

Early on Friday morning 16, Fr Chávez went to Colle Don Bosco. There he had a meeting with the young people at the Gathering of the Italian SYM and a question and answer session the result of the group work they had had the previous days. Then the Rector Major presided at Mass and launched the third and final year of the three-year period of preparation for the bicentenary

of the birth of Don Bosco. In the afternoon, after lunch, he left to return to Rome.

Between Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August, Fr Chávez had a short break, walking in the mountains in the Val di Funes in Südtirol. During these days should be mentioned on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>, a visit to Fr Giannantonio Bonato and the Salesian community in Bolzano. Here he celebrated Mass, had lunch and visited the recently restored centre. On Monday 26<sup>th</sup>, he paid a visit to Benediktbuern, in Germany, where he met the Provincial Fr Josef Grünner, and had a meeting with him, the Vice Provincial and the Rector of the Community. He then said Mass, had lunch with the members of the community who were present, to whom he spoke at the end of the meal. He then visited one of the sections of the work and returned to the Val di Funes. On Thursday evening 29<sup>th</sup> he had a visit from the Provincial Fr Roberto Dal Mulin. On Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>, he returned to Rome.

### – *September 2013*

The Rector Major spent the first part of the month of September with his usual work of animating and guiding the

Congregation. Among meetings and receiving visitors could be mentioned in the first place on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>, that with two new confreres joining the community in the Vatican, Fr Piero Antonio Gullino and Bro. Andrea Polledro, both belonging to ICP. In the following days he saw Fr Donato Lacedonio, Fr Luciano Alloisio (Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>), Bro. Hilario Seo and then Fr Jan Cverzeko, on Friday morning 6<sup>th</sup>, and in the afternoon Fr Artur Pereira, Provincial of Portugal, accompanied by two confreres Fr Gonzalo Carlos and Fr Chaves, and a prenovice. In the evening he welcomed the members of the Pre-capitular Commission.

On Saturday morning 7<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major presided at a Mass for Peace in connection with the day of fasting and prayer called for by Pope Francis. Later he had a meeting with the Pre-capitular Commission to set the work in motion.

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>, at 11.30, the Rector Major presided at Mass for the first professions of the novices in Genzano and at the end of the celebration stayed for lunch.

On Monday morning 9<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw the confrere Francis, the first missionary from Myanmar, whose father had died

unexpectedly the previous Friday. In the afternoon he spoke with some Provincials, members of the Pre-capitular Commission, Fr Tim Ploch (SUO), Fr Luis Onrubia (SMA), and in the evening paid a visit to the Community in the Vatican for the celebration of Mass and for supper on the name day of the Rector Fr Sergio Pellini.

On Tuesday afternoon 10<sup>th</sup>, he took part in the filming of the video for the presentation of the Strenna.

On Wednesday morning 11, he saw Fr Stanislaw Rafalko (UPS) and, in the afternoon Bro. Antonio Maggiotto and then Bro. Jean-Paul Muller, Economist General.

On Thursday evening 12<sup>th</sup>, he welcomed the Salesian Bishop George Rajendran, from the Diocese of Thuckalay, in Tamil Nadu, India, accompanied by Maria Anthuvan, SDB.

On Friday morning 13<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major saw Fr Manuel Cayo, Provincial of ARN, then Fr Jan Nieweglowski, former Provincial of Warsaw and then Fr Vaclav Klement. At midday Fr Chávez with Fr Adriano Bregolin, went to visit Fr Francesco Maraccani in the clinic. In the afternoon he saw Fr Filiberto González and in the evening met

the FMA novices from the two novitiates in Italy, one in Rome and the other in Castelgandolfo, to whom he gave a conference and with whom he then had supper.

On Saturday morning 14<sup>th</sup>, with his Vicar he spoke with the Provincial of Bangalore (INK), Fr Thomas Anchukandam.

On Monday 16<sup>th</sup>, he spent the morning with the new missionaries, preparing for their departure.

On Tuesday morning 17<sup>th</sup>, he saw Fr Francesco Cereda, then the Provincial of Venezuela, Fr Luciano Stefani and at lunchtime thanked the Pre-capitular Commission at the end of their work. In the afternoon he saw Mons. Tomasso Caputo, Archbishop of the Diocese of Pompei.

On Wednesday morning 18<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Fr Angelo Pozzi, a missionary in the AFC Province.

On Thursday afternoon 19<sup>th</sup>, he saw Sr Emanuela Verdecchia, a missionary in the Holy Land, a sister of two Salesian confreres, one of them deceased.

Early on Saturday morning 21<sup>st</sup>, Fr Chávez, with his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, left for Uruguay. He arrived in Montevideo almost at midnight and was welcomed by the

Provincial Fr Néstor Castell, with some members of his Council and other confreres.

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>, about midday he visited the elderly and sick confreres in the Mamma Margaret house, where he inaugurated a new section. In the evening at Villa Colón he met the young people of the Salesian Youth Movement and said Mass.

On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>, he gave a day of recollection for the Confreres of the Province in the Diocesan Retreat House "Saint John Mary Vianney". In the afternoon he presided at Mass and later, in the church of John XXIII centre, held a meeting with a hundred couples who are part of the Salesian Family. Again in the Retreat Centre "Saint John Mary Vianney" the Rector Major had a formation meeting with the Salesians and Lay people involved in the animation of all our works, about the youth situation and the response we are being called to make. In the afternoon he visited the FMA Provincial House and ended the day with a Mass for the Salesian Family, in Maturana.

On Wednesday morning 25<sup>th</sup>, in the Provincial House, Fr Chávez gave a press conference and then blessed the image of Don Bosco

in the Tacurú Movement, a work of great social significance, and on his return to the Provincial House had a meeting with Salesian Past Pupils politicians. In the afternoon he met Dr. Tabaré Vázquez, a Past Pupil and former President of the Republic of Uruguay and again a Presidential candidate, and then young confreres in initial formation, with whom he said Mass. The day ended with a session of prayer and dialogue with Salesians and young people in the church in Maturana.

On Thursday morning 26<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major met Mons. Carlos Collazzi, SDB. This was followed by a meeting with the Provincial Council and in the afternoon he gave another interview and later began the return journey to Rome.

On Friday evening 27<sup>th</sup>, he arrived in Rome.

On Saturday afternoon 28<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez left for Turin where the following day Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>, he met those taking part in the *Harambée* and then presided at the Departure Mass for the 144<sup>th</sup> *Missionary Expedition*. In the afternoon he spoke with Fr Stefano Vanoli, the new Director of the Turin Mission Office and later returned to Rome.

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup>, at midday he went to the Vatican. Here he spoke with Bro. Giuseppe Canesso and then had a meeting with H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. After lunch he spoke with H. E. Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga.

### - *October 2013*

On Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, with Fr Francesco Cereda and Fr Fabio Attard, the Rector Major went to the UPS for the funeral of Fr Riccardo Tonelli, presiding at the Mass. In the afternoon he saw Fr Manlio Sodi.

On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> he chaired the Curatorium of the UPS.

Among the many visitors he received in this period should be mentioned: Mons. Antonisamy Francis, Bishop of Kumbakonam, India (Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>); Fr Claudio Ciolli, Superior of the Vice Province of Madagascar (Friday 4<sup>th</sup>), Fr Franco Pirisi, missionary in Teheran, and Fr Giuseppe Casti, World Delegate of the Salesian Cooperators (Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>), Fr Jozef Kamza, Salesian missionary in San Lorenzo, Perú, Fr José Luis Plascencia and Fr Roberto dal Molin, INE Provincial (Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup>). On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> he saw a group of Salesians and Cooperators from

Australia. On Wednesday evening 9<sup>th</sup>, he saw Major Andrea Zapparoli.

He spent Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> in the office.

On Friday afternoon 11<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major left for Zagreb for the celebration of the centenary of the presence of Salesians in Croatia. On his arrival he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Pejo Orkic and other confreres who took him to Jarun for supper and repose.

On Saturday morning 12<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major had a meeting with the President of Croatia, Mr. Ivo Josipovic, followed by the blessing of a new part of the Provincial house. In the afternoon he gave a press conference and in Zepce attended a Concert "Dominiks". After this he met the young people of the SYM at Jarun, followed by Mass, supper and the Good Night.

On Sunday morning 13<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez met the Salesian Cooperators and the Past Pupils of Don Bosco in Jarun. Then he recited the Rosary in the church of Our Lady of Freedom followed by Mass presided by the Archbishop of Fiume, together with other Archbishops and Bishops. The Rector Major gave the homily and received the promise of 15 new Salesian

Cooperators and the renewal of the vows of the confreres. In the afternoon he visited the FMA community in Jarun and then met the confreres in initial formation, together with the aspirants and prenovices in the formation community at Podsused and stayed for supper with them.

On Monday morning 14<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez had a meeting with the Provincial Council followed by one with the Rectors and then with all the confreres. He then presided at Mass and after lunch left for the airport for the return journey to Rome.

On Tuesday morning 15<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major went to the UPS for the Mass at the Opening of the Academic Year. In the afternoon he had a meeting with Fr Gianni Mazzali, Provincial of Sicily.

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> there were celebrations for the Vicar of the Rector Major Fr Adriano Bregolin on his birthday. In the morning Fr Chávez saw Bro. Hilario Seo, who had finished his work and was returning to Korea. In the afternoon he left for Perugia for the celebration of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the Salesians. He was welcomed by the Rector Fr Tadeusz Rosmuz

and by the confreres of the Community and by a group of young people from the University Hostel.

On Thursday morning 17<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major paid a visit to the Mayor Wladimir of Perugia, and then took part in an International Congress "Youth and Work: bringers of morality and development", at the end of which the Mayor presented him with Honorary Citizenship. In the evening he presided at Mass in the Cathedral of St Lawrence, assisted by the Archbishop Mons. Gualtiero Bassetti. The day ended with a Charity Dinner in the Oddi Palace.

On Friday morning 18<sup>th</sup>, in the Great Hall of the Faculty of Education of the University of Perugia he met the University authorities and young students to whom he spoke on the subject "Young people seeking the meaning of life". Then he blessed the new part of the Salesian house and after lunch returned to Rome. In the evening he left for Budapest for the beatification of the Salesian martyr Brother István Sándor.

On Saturday morning 19<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major went to the Cathedral for Mass and the rite of beatification of Stephen Sándor.

Presiding at the liturgy was Cardinal Péter Erdő, Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest and Primate of Hungary. Cardinal Angelo Amato, representing the Pope and Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints read the Apostolic Letter by which Stephen Sándor was declared Blessed. In the afternoon Fr Chávez took part in the SYM Festivities held in the Arena.

On Sunday morning 20<sup>th</sup>, he left for Szolnok, the birth place of Istvan Sándor. Here Fr Chávez was welcomed by the Archpriest of the Parish and gave an interview before the Mass of Thanksgiving at which Mons. Miklós Beer, Bishop of Vác presided and the Rector Major gave the homily. In the afternoon after lunch he visited the museum with a Salesian exhibition and then returned to Budapest. In the evening in the Provincial House at the end of Mass he greeted the faithful who were present and then had supper with all the confreres of the Province and concluded with the Good Night.

On Monday morning 21<sup>st</sup>, Fr Chávez met the confreres of the Province and some of the FMA at the Clarisseum. He celebrated Mass and then left for the airport for the return journey to Rome.

On Tuesday morning 22<sup>nd</sup>, Fr Chávez spoke with Fr Marian Stempel, then with Fr Adriano Bregolin. In the afternoon he saw Fr Carlo Russo.

On Wednesday morning 23<sup>rd</sup>, he held a meeting with Fr Adriano Bregolin and Fr Marian Stempel. In the afternoon he received the lawyer Dr. Michele Gentiloni Silveri, and later presided at Mass for the Mamma Margaret Group from Turin, after which he had supper with them.

On Thursday morning 24<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major met with the Vicar and in the evening went to the Vatican to see H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

On Friday morning 25<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez spoke with Fr Francesco Cereda and then with Fr Adriano Bregolin. After lunch he held a short meeting with the Councillors in residence for various administrative issues and in the afternoon with his Vicar received the lawyer Dr. Michele Gentiloni Silveri.

On Saturday morning 26<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major saw the missionaries who were following an updating course at the UPS and at midday presided at Mass for them. In the afternoon he went to the Sacro Cuore for a meeting with the Salesian Past Pupils.

He spent Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> in the office. At lunch Fr Chávez met the new Superior of the Vice Province of AET, Fr Estifanos Gebremeskel and his Vicar, Isidoro Apostoli, who had come for a meeting with a delegation from Eritrea.

On Monday morning 28<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Fr Gianni Mazzali. In the evening he met with Fr Sergio Pellini, Rector of the Community in the Vatican.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>, the feast of Blessed Michael Rua. The Rector Major presided at the community Mass. In the morning he saw Fr Francesco Maraccani and then Fr Francesco Motto. In the afternoon he saw Fr Adriano Bregolin and then Dr. Michele Gentiloni Silveri.

On Wednesday morning 30<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez met the AET Delegation, composed of the Superior, the Vicar and Economer of the Vice Province plus 4 confreres from Eritrea. Then he saw Fr Giovanni Barroero. At lunch he welcomed the confreres and co-workers from Hungary who had come for the Thanksgiving Mass for the beatification of Stephen Sandor. In the evening he presided at the Mass in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart

On Thursday morning 31<sup>st</sup>, he presided at the community Mass

for our confrere Bro. Domenico Dassie who had died the previous evening from heart failure in the hospital while undergoing dialysis. Later he saw Fr Estifanos Gebremeskel, Superior of the AET Vice Province.

– *November 2013*

Friday 1<sup>st</sup>, Solemnity of All Saints was spent in the office.

On Saturday morning 2<sup>nd</sup>, he saw Fr Francesco Maraccani and then Mons. Miguel Ángel Olaverri. In the afternoon with his Vicar the Rector Major left for Catania for the Feast of the Salesian Family and of the SYM of Sicily around the casket of Don Bosco. After supper at the Saint Philip Neri house, he gave a message to those taking part in the Prayer Vigil.

On Sunday morning 3<sup>rd</sup>, at Palacatania he gave an address and then presided at Mass. In the afternoon after lunch he returned to Rome.

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup>, with his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé and Fr Adriano Bregolin, Fr Chávez left for India.

On Tuesday morning 5<sup>th</sup>, he arrived in Calcutta, where he was welcomed by the Provincial Fr Thomas Elicharail and other confreres who took him to the

Provincial House. Early in the afternoon he visited the Don Bosco Seri, where he gave a talk to the students and members of the EPC. Then they went to Don Bosco Liluah. There he met the young people from all the parishes, schools and other centres of the Salesian Family, presided at Mass, and after supper returned to the Provincial House.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> was a day of meetings with the Provincials of the South Asia Region. In the evening, at Park Circus, the Rector Major met confreres from South Bengal and after supper he held a meeting with the Provincial Council.

On Thursday morning 7<sup>th</sup>, he left for DUM DUM Auxilium. There he celebrated Mass for the FMA, had breakfast and gave a conference. From there he went to the airport for the flight to Bagdora. At midday he had lunch with the FMA at Chamta and then left for Sonada. On his arrival he met the confreres from North Bengal and the students of philosophy from DB College. The day ended with supper followed by the Good Night.

Friday 8<sup>th</sup>, there was the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of DB College. Sonada. The Rector Major spoke to the lay

students, the religious, members of Staff and confreres, after which he blessed the new College building, which was followed by Mass and the celebration events. In the afternoon he left for Siliguri. There he met the students, past pupils, faithful from the parish, students from the College. In the evening Fr Chavez spoke to the confreres, had supper and gave the Good Night.

On Saturday morning 9<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major gave the novices a meditation and then spoke to the students of Salesian College. He then met the the Salesian Family of North Bengal, Nepal, Sikkim and Bihar and presided at Mass. At the end he went to the airport to return to Calcutta. On his arrival he went to Don Bosco Park Circus, where he addressed the students, took tea with the diocesan authorities and religious Superiors to whom he spoke about Consecrated Life. Afterwards he presided at Mass for the Salesian Family of South Bengal which was followed by a Concert and finally by a firework display and supper.

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>, the journey to Bangladesh was cancelled on account of a National Strike and the Rector Major stayed in Calcutta. In the morning he

presided at Mass with the community of the Provincial House and then recorded a video message for the confreres, members of the Salesian Family, lay co-workers and young people in Bangladesh, and then paid a visit to the Mother House of Mother Teresa. He was welcomed by Sister Prema, the Superior General and three other Councillors with whom he chatted, and then visited the room of Mother Teresa, the museum and her tomb. In the afternoon Fr Chávez, accompanied by his secretary Fr Juan José Bartolomé, left for the airport and the flight to Bombay, where they arrived after midnight. There they were welcomed by the Provincial Fr Godfrey De Souza.

On Monday morning 11<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major presided at the community Mass in the Provincial House. Later he visited the "Don Bosco Karjat" for street children and then the aspirantate, where he opened the Province Scout Camp 2013. In the evening he returned to the Provincial House for a meeting, first with the FMA and then with the confreres with whom he had supper.

Early on Tuesday morning 12<sup>th</sup>, he took the return flight to Rome where he arrived in the evening.

On Wednesday morning 13<sup>th</sup> he saw Fr Adriano Bregolin, then later Fr Giovanni Barroero, then Fr Marian Stempel and then Fr Francesco Maraccani. With Fr Adriano Bregolin he had a meeting with the lawyer Dr Michele Gentiloni Silveri.

On Friday morning 15<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Fr Adriano Bregolin, then Fr Marian Stempel, then Fr Francesco Maraccani. In the afternoon he saw Fr Francesco Cereda and later met with Fr Adriano Bregolin and Fr Francesco Maraccani.

On Saturday Morning 16<sup>th</sup>, the Rector Major went to the Vatican for an appointment with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, H. E. Cardinal João Braz De Aviz. He then met the confreres of the Vatican community and stayed for lunch in honour of H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. Also present were Cardinal Raffaele Farina, Cardinal Angelo Amato and Mons. Savio Hon Tai Fai. In the afternoon he spoke with Fr Francesco Cereda.

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> he worked in the office.

On Monday morning 18, the Rector Major had a meeting with Fr Adriano Bregolin, Fr

Francesco Cereda, Fr Joaquim D'Souza and Fr Manlio Sodi. Later he met Bro. Gabrielle Garniga, Economist of the Sri Lanka Vice Province.

On Tuesday afternoon 19<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez went to the Vatican for a medical appointment at the FAS and in the evening took part in an event in honour of the Blessed Martyr Stephen Sándor organised by the Hungarian Embassy to the Holy See at which the film "The Servant of God Stephen Sándor" was shown in the Conference Hall of the Hungarian Academy in Rome, in Via Giulia.

On Wednesday morning 20<sup>th</sup>, Fr Chávez saw Bro. Jean Paul Muller and then Fr Marian Stempel.

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, at midday, accompanied by Fr Adriano Bregolin, he left for Berlin for a meeting of Provincials and Vice Provincials of the Atlantic-German Zone of the North Europe Region. On their arrival they were met by the Provincial Fr Josef Grunner, who took them to the Don Bosco Centre at Marzahn, where the meeting was to be held. This began in the evening with a first presentation of the programme and the place, with a Good Night and a social evening.

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>, the programme was focused on Berlin as the

political, historical, cultural centre with a visit to the German Parliament, a meeting with some members of Parliament, a tour and a visit to the Cathedral. In the evening after returning to the Don Bosco Centre, there was an exchange of information and a discussion.

On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>, the programme included the presentation of the Don Bosco Centre and a sharing of information about similar projects for disadvantaged young people and the challenges in other Provinces. In the afternoon there was discussion about the main issues of the Provincial Chapters in preparation for the GC27. They then went to the centre of Berlin for a Concert and after supper had a meeting with the confreres of the community and those belonging to the Polish mission which concluded with the Good Night.

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of Christ the King, the programme focused on Salesian pastoral work with the presentation of the Salesian parish of Marzahn, Mass and a meeting with the parishioners. In the afternoon discussions continued on the themes of the GC and then with an assessment

of the implementation of Project Europe in this area of the Region, especially from the point of view of evangelisation. After supper there was a final meeting and the Good Night.

Monday morning 25<sup>th</sup>, they made the return journey to Rome.

On Tuesday morning 26<sup>th</sup>, he presided at Mass for the Directors of Salesian Publishing Houses in Europe. Then he received the President and the two Vice Presidents (one an SDB and the other an FMA) of SALOS, the PGS of Poland. Then Fr Francesco Maraccani; later Fr Donato Lacedonio; later Fr Valerio Bocci, then Fr Ivo Coelho, Rector of the Ratisbonne Theologate in Jerusalem, and in the evening Fr Marek Kaczmarczyk.

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> was the first day of the Half-yearly Assembly of the USG.

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>, the second day of the Half-yearly Assembly of the USG. In the afternoon he had a medical check-up at the FAS.

Friday 29<sup>th</sup>, the third day of the Assembly of the USG, in the Vatican, for a meeting with Pope Francis in the Synod Hall. In the afternoon he released a video message.

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> he spent in the office.

## 4.2 Chronicle of the General Council

### *Summer Plenary Session 2013*

The Summer Plenary Session of 2013 was preceded by the *Retreat* at Sant'Agnello, between 26<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> May preached by the Secretary of the Rector Major, Fr Juan José Bartolomé, on the subject «Blessed is she who believed: the faith pilgrimage of Mary». It was an experience that was greatly appreciated and one that was very positive for their physical and spiritual refreshment, after an intense period of service to the Congregation in their accompaniment of the Provinces.

The Session *which began on 3 June* engaged the Councillors *until 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013*. In addition to the plenary sessions, 25 in all, there were meetings of groups or commissions for the study of various topics. During the session there was also – between 11<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June – a *meeting of new Provincials*, the last during this six year period. While, over the years this course has been greatly appreciated by those taking part, and been considered very important by the Rector Major

and the Council, nevertheless the way it is carried out needs to be reviewed so as to make it more effective from the point of view of the development of the skills required by the task entrusted to the Provincials. In the course of the session, the Councillors also made their own contribution to the animation meetings, especially those held at the Generalate.

As always, in addition to the topics or more pressing problems for the animation and the guidance of the Congregation, the necessary time was devoted to the ordinary business matters coming from the Provinces such as the appointment of members of Provincial Councils and the approval of the appointment of Rectors, the opening and the canonical erection of houses, and/or activities, issues regarding confreres or economic-administrative matters. A summary of the more significant matters on the agenda is provided here.

### 1. Appointment of Provincials

In this session four Provincial Superiors were appointed. Following a careful process of

discernment and taking account of the results of the consultation held in the Province, the General Council made the necessary appointments. This is the list in alphabetical order of the Superiors appointed in the course of this session: Fr Godfrey D'Souza, for the Province of Mumbai, India; Fr Estifanos Gebremeskel, for the Vice Province of Ethiopia-Eritrea; Fr JAIME MORALES, for the Province of Bogotá, Colombia; Fr Giuseppe Ruta, for the Province of Sicily, Italy. In n. 5.4 of this number of the AGC there are some biographical details of the Provincials appointed.

## **2. Reports on the Extraordinary Visitations**

The examination of the reports of the Extraordinary Visitations to the Provinces presented by the respective Visitors is always one of the more important items on the agenda of the General Council for the animation of the Congregation in its various local presences. This study provides the opportunity to reflect together on the progress of each Province on the basis of the Visitor's observations and to offer suggestions for action regarding

its government. This results in recommendations useful for the Rector Major's concluding letter and in proposals for initiatives and guidance on the part of the General Council. During this session, reports from the following eight Provinces or Vice Provinces were studied: the Province of Austria; the Province of Campo Grande, Brazil; the Province of South Philippines; the Province of Sicily, Italy; the Province of León, Spain; the Province of West United States; the Vice Province of Ethiopia-Eritrea; the Vice Province of Sri Lanka.

## **3. Study topics and practical decisions**

In the course of the session, as well as matters concerning the Provinces and Regions, the Council considered some issues connected more generally with the government and animation of the Congregation, paying particular attention to the Project of animation and government for the six-year period and to the life and activity of the Council itself. Some practical decisions were made regarding matters discussed. The main topics considered were as follows.

**- The Strenna of the Rector Major for 2014.**

In introducing the work of the plenary Session, the Rector Major presented the theme and the spiritual and pastoral programme of the Strenna for 2014: «**Let us draw upon the spiritual experience of Don Bosco, in order to walk in holiness according to our specific vocation**», corresponding to the third year of the three-year period of preparation for the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco.

**- Rethinking Salesian Youth Ministry.**

This is in response to the GC26, which at number 45 of the Acts asks the Rector Major “to encourage through the competent Departments a deeper understanding of the relationship between evangelisation and education», and to update the Youth Ministry Manual drawn up by Fr Antonio Doménech. The work had been done by Fr Fabio Attard and his Department with the involvement of a large number of others (Provinces and teams of pastoral specialists and theologians). The General Council studied the document and made its own contribution, with special regard to consistency

with the Constitutions and General Chapters. In presenting the Manual Fr Fabio Attard explained the purpose of this fundamental frame of reference, which does not offer any new pastoral guidelines, but rather a new and more theologically uptodate structure.

**- Structures of Government of the Congregation.**

A fifth and definitive reflection took place on the Structures of Government of the Congregation, taking as the starting point the replies from the Provinces to a questionnaire on the composition and the government of the General Council and the proposal from a specific Commission, which concluded with a vote on each of the issues. As part of this assessment process and a proposal to be presented at the GC27 there was also a new arrangement of the European Regions after consideration of the replies from each of the Provinces of Europe. Naturally, it will be for the members of the Chapter to decide on each and every one of the proposals.

**- Approval of Provincial Chapters.**

For the 57 Provincial Chapters which produced or updated their

Provincial Directories, those of Formation, of Economy, and the POP, and SEPP. these were studied and approved together with some relevant observations. Others will be considered during the next winter plenary session.

**- Financial and economic project for the Direzione Generale.**

In the course of the session there was further reflection on the Economic arrangements for the *Direzione Generale* which had already been preceded by various debates and discussions within the Council and by a proposal from a Commission, seeking to ensure the viability of the *Direzione Generale* with regard to its running costs, maintenance and assistance given to the Provinces. The decision made in the Council was to provide the GC27 with information about the economic situation of the *Direzione Generale*, that would help in understanding the need for a regular annual contribution from the Provinces and a proposal regarding the quota to be set according to the possibilities of the various Provinces.

**- Approval of the Consolidated Account for 2012.**

In the course of the session, the General Council – following the presentation by the Economist General – examined and approved, in accordance with the General Regulations, the ***Consolidated Account for 2012*** of the *Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco*.

**- Distribution of the Mission Fund.**

The General Council considered and approved the proposals presented by the Commission for the n. 152 – June 2013 – distribution of assistance from the Mission Fund. These are funds coming from the Mission Offices for the benefit of the numerous projects and plans of the Congregation.

**- EXPO Milano 2015.**

The Regional Councillor Fr José Miguel Nuñez gave an update on our participation in the World EXPO 2015, at which DBN is an official representative of the Congregation and VIS is directly involved in the World Exposition on the theme «Feeding the planet; energy for life», planned to be held in Milan between 1 May and 31 October.

Among the *significant events* during the Session the following

in particular may be mentioned:

- **The meeting of the General Councils** of the Salesians of Don Bosco and of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians was held on Tuesday 3 July 2013 at the Santa Rosa house in Castel Gandolfo. Comparing the respective themes of their next two General Chapters, they then posed two basic questions: To what challenges have we attempted to respond in our General Chapters? What kind of Salesian and Daughter of Mary Help of Christians would we like as a result of the General Chapters?

### 4.3 Chronicle of the General Councillors

#### The Vicar of the Rector Major

At the end of the winter session of the General Council the Vicar of the Rector Major, Fr Adriano Bregolin, went to *Budapest* for the Celebrations for the *Centenary of the presence of the Salesians in Hungary*. The day after he arrived he took part in

the Cathedral in the Solemn Concelebrated Mass at which H. E. the Cardinal Archbishop Péter Erdő presided and then in the civil celebration held in Buda Castle. On Sunday 27 January he went to Péliföldszentkereszt, where he celebrated Mass in the community church, meeting friends and co-workers of the Salesians and in the afternoon took part in another celebration in Budapest-Óbuda with representatives of young people and members of the Salesian Family especially of the Salesians Cooperators.

The following day Monday 28<sup>th</sup> was devoted mainly to the Salesian confreres. Fr Bregolin spoke to them on two topics: the first – the Strenna of the Rector Major; the second – religious discipline in the current context of the Salesian Congregation.

Having returned to Rome, on the 29<sup>th</sup> he left with the Rector Major for Turin where on 30<sup>th</sup> he took part in the opening of the new headquarters of the LDC Publishing House. On 31<sup>st</sup> he took part in the celebrations for the solemn feast of Don Bosco.

Again back in Rome, on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February he presided at the *ASTRA (Extraordinary Assembly of the Generalate and of the*

*Salesian Community in the Vatican*), the equivalent of the Provincial Chapter held in the various Provinces.

After the few days spent in Rome, on the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup> February he left with the Rector Major for *Mexico*. Having arrived in Mexico City, on 7<sup>th</sup> he concelebrated Mass with Fr Pascual Chávez in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe and in the afternoon went to Guadalajara. Here with the Rector Major on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February he met the Provincial Councils of both Provinces. Then at Tlaquepaque, he took part in a meeting of the confreres of the two Provinces, and a concelebrated Mass, followed by lunch. In the evening he took part in a meeting of the Salesian Family in the Auditorium of the Anahuac Chapalita College. On Saturday morning 9<sup>th</sup>, with Fr Chávez he attended a meeting with the young people of the SYM of the Province and in the evening took part in a Mass to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Guadalajara Province (MEG)*. This was followed by a Gala Dinner held to thank the principal benefactors and the collaborators of the various houses in the Province.

On Sunday 10 February after a visit to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Zapopan, in the afternoon Fr Bregolin was taken to Amatitán, the Retreat and Conference Centre of the MEG Province to preach the Retreat for the Rectors of the two Mexican Provinces. On the morning of 16<sup>th</sup> after the conclusion of the Retreat at which the Rector Major was present, he returned to Guadalajara, and from there with the Rector Major flew back to Rome.

After a short break in Rome, at midday on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> the Vicar, with the Rector Major and the Regional Councillor Fr Marek Chrzan, left for *Krakow, Poland*.

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> was spent in Miejsce Piastowe, where the Mother House of the Congregations of Saint Michael the Archangel is located as well as the Generalate of the Michaelite Sisters. He concelebrated Mass with the Rector Major for the beginning of the *General Chapter of the Congregation of the Michaelite Sisters*. Also present were the Superior General of the Michaelites, P. Kazimierz Radzik and all his Council. In the afternoon, after the Rector Major had addressed the Chapter members, he visited the nearby community of the Michaelite

Fathers. Having returned to Krakow with the Rector Major he had a short meeting with the confreres in the Theologate.

Having returned to Rome on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, the following day he drove with the Rector Major to Bocca di Magra, near La Spezia, for a formation meeting for the local FMA Superiors and Councils which was held in the Carmelite Convent. He then returned to Rome on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

On Friday morning 1<sup>st</sup> March, Fr Adriano Bregolin had a meeting with the Rector of the Community in the Vatican, Fr Sergio Pellini, and with Fr Marek Kaczmarczyk, the new Commercial Director of the Vatican Press. On Saturday evening 2<sup>nd</sup>, with Fr Chávez he left for *San Paolo, in Brazil*. They were welcomed by the Provincial Fr Edson Donizzetti and taken to the Provincial House. In the afternoon they travelled on to Campos do Jordão, where with the Rector Major, Fr Bregolin preached a Retreat for the Provincials of the two Regions, America South Cone and Interamerica.

On Saturday morning 9<sup>th</sup>, there was a pilgrimage for all the Provincials to Aparecida together with groups of the Salesian

Family from the San Paolo Province. In the evening he went to the airport for the return flight to Rome.

On the evening of 10<sup>th</sup> March he began preaching a Retreat for the Provincial Councils, the Rectors and Superiors of the SDB/FMA Provinces of *Southern Italy*. The Rector Major gave the morning conferences and Fr Adriano Bregolin those in the afternoon.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March he began the *Canonical Visitation to the "Blessed Michael Rua Community" of the Generalate*. On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March he went to the Vatican, accompanying the Rector Major for an appointment with the Secretary of State, H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. Immediately afterwards, again with Fr Chávez, he took part in a short private audience with the Holy Father.

The Vicar spent Holy Week in the Generalate, on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March chairing another session of the *ASTRA*. On Easter Sunday he celebrated the Solemn Mass with the Community of the Generalate.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April, Low Monday, he accompanied the Rector Major to Auxilium to celebrate Mass attended by the Community of

Auxilium and the Teresa Valsé Pantellini Formation Community.

He then spent a period of time between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April with ordinary office work. Afterwards between 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April he accompanied the Rector Major on a short break at the Cambados house, in the Province of León, Spain.

After a further few days in the office, on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April, the Vicar went to *Seville* for a *Congress of the Salesian Family in this Province*. Here he gave a Conference on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>, on the subject of the Charter of Identity of the Salesian Family and then on the Sunday presided at a solemn Mass with all the Groups of the Salesian Family. On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> he returned to Rome.

On 30<sup>th</sup> with the Rector Major he had a meeting with Bishop Mons. Reali in which it was agreed that in September, the responsibility for running the parish of the Nativity of Mary by the Generalate community would come to an end.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May he had a short meeting with a group of Past Pupils from the Lazio Region, in Genzano. On 2<sup>nd</sup> he accompanied the Rector Major to *England* for a meeting and a Retreat for a

considerable group of the Salesian Family, 50 Salesians, 50 Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and 50 Salesian Cooperators and young volunteers who are working in our centres. Having returned to Rome on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> May, on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May the Vicar chaired *the final meetings of the Assembly of the ASTRA*, during which the Delegate and the Substitute of RMG to the General Chapter were elected.

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup>, accompanying the Rector Major, he left for *Portugal*. On Saturday morning 18<sup>th</sup>, he left for Fatima, where he took part in a meeting of the confreres from the Province in the Nossa Senhora das Dores house, and in the afternoon in a meeting for teenagers and young people trying their vocation. With the Rector Major he concelebrated Mass for the Salesian Family in the Holy Trinity Basilica and after supper the recital of the Holy Rosary and a candle lit procession followed by a Prayer Vigil in the Basilica del Recinto.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of Pentecost, after a meeting with the members of groups of the Salesian Family, with Fr Chávez he went to Manique for Mass and an opportunity to meet the sick and elderly confreres. Having

returned to Lisbon he took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council at which the Rector Major on this occasion presided.

After returning to Rome, on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> he took part in the half-yearly Assembly of the USG. On Friday afternoon 24<sup>th</sup>, he began the meeting of the *World Consultative Committee of the Salesian Family* which ended on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>. In the afternoon he left with the confreres of the General Council for their Retreat held at Sant'Agnes di Sorrento - NA.

He returned to Rome on 2<sup>nd</sup> June and began the work of the summer plenary session of the General Council.

At the end of the session, the Vicar of the Rector Major went to Brazil, with the Rector Major, to take part in the *World Youth Day*, in Rio de Janeiro. During this period (from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July) he took part in the various planned events while residing in the Salesian House in Niteroi.

Having returned to Rome on 30<sup>th</sup> July he stayed in the Generalate for the first part of August. On 15<sup>th</sup>, with the Rector Major, he went to Castel Gandolfo for the Holy Father's Mass and was able to meet the Pope personally, immediately after lunch

together with other confreres from the Salesian parish.

In the evening of 15 August, accompanying the Rector Major, he left for Turin, and the following day Colle Don Bosco, where with a solemn Concelebration, the third year of preparation for the bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco was launched, and at the same time the large gathering, the *Confronto of the Italian Salesian Youth Movement* brought to a close.

On Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August with the Rector Major he left for a short rest in the mountains.

Having returned to the Generalate on 31<sup>st</sup> August, he spent a few days with his family to be close to his brother who was seriously ill. Then he left for *Chile* on 24<sup>th</sup> September. After a short stay in Santiago, on 25<sup>th</sup>, the following day he went on to Punta Arenas. Here on 27<sup>th</sup> September he presided at the Celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *San José Institute*. On 29<sup>th</sup>, with the Provincial and the Bishop Bernardo Bastres and other civil authorities he took part in the celebrations of various Catholic Associations in the city and on 30<sup>th</sup> the festivities with the students from the Don Bosco College. On the same day he

returned to Santiago, where on 1<sup>st</sup> October he took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council and in the afternoon went to the Salesian house of Santiago - La Cisterna, visiting the College and the National Temple dedicated to Don Bosco.

In the morning of 2<sup>nd</sup> October he spoke to the confreres of the Province who were gathered for a Provincial Assembly at the Spirituality Centre in Santiago - La Florida; after which he left for Italy.

In the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> October he went to Palermo - Istituto Ranchibile. For the occasion those responsible for various Groups of the Salesian Family in the city had come together. The Vicar had supper with them and then at the end of the meeting gave them a short talk. The following day he spoke to various groups of students in the Institute and met in particular the representatives of the local Union of Past Pupils.

On 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October the Vicar was in Bologna for a time of reflection and assessment with members and the committee of the Community of the Mission of Don Bosco. On 17<sup>th</sup> he left for Budapest, where he took part in the celebrations for the *Beatification of Stephen Sándor*.

In particular on 18<sup>th</sup> he met a group of Salesian Brothers from Europe, gathered for the occasion at Peliföldszentkereszt, the Province Retreat House. He returned to Rome on 21<sup>st</sup>, after a meeting with the confreres of the Province at which the Rector Major presided. On 30<sup>th</sup> at the Sacro Cuore in Rome, he took part in a Thanksgiving Mass for the Beatification of Blessed Stephen Sándor.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November he preached a Day of Recollection for the FMA of the Auxilium Institute-Faculty, in Rome and in the evening went to Catania where with the Rector Major on 3<sup>rd</sup> November he took part in the Youth Festival welcoming the Casket of Don Bosco, which had arrived in the city.

On 4<sup>th</sup> he left for *Calcutta, India*. On 5<sup>th</sup>, with the Rector Major, he visited Don Bosco Seri and then Don Bosco Liluah, where there was a large meeting with young people from all the parishes, schools and other centres of the Salesian Family.

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> he took part in a *Meeting with the Provincials of the South Asia Region*. In the evening at Park Circus, with the Rector Major, he met the confreres from South Bengal and

after supper took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council.

On 7<sup>th</sup> he left for *Goa*. Accompanied by the Provincial on the same day in the evening he met a good group of confreres from the Province. In the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> November he visited in quick succession Saint John Bosco in Panjim and then the Basilica of the Good Jesus, where the relics of Saint Francis Xavier are kept. In the evening at the University College of Fatorda there was a meeting with the Salesian Family of the Province. On 9<sup>th</sup> November he went to the Prenovitiate in Pinguli and also the Salesian House in Paliem where there is a small residential home for children and youngsters at risk.

Having left Goa, on 10<sup>th</sup> November he arrived in *Mumbai*. The same day he had a meeting with the Salesian Family at the Salesian house in Matunga. The following day with the Rector Major who in the meantime had arrived from Calcutta, he visited the Don Bosco Karjat for street children and then the aspirantate where he opened the Scout Camp 2013 for the Mumbai Province. In the evening back in the Provincial House he took part in a meeting with the FMA and then one with

the Salesian Confreres at both of which the Rector Major presided.

On 12<sup>th</sup> he left for Rome.

On the morning of 16<sup>th</sup>, with the Rector Major, he had a meeting with the Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, H. E. Cardinal João Braz De Aviz. Then he joined the confreres of the Vatican community and stayed for a lunch in honour of H. E. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, with the presence also of Cardinal Raffaele Farina, Cardinal Angelo Amato and Mons. Savio Hon Tai Fai.

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, accompanying the Rector Major he left for *Berlin* for a *meeting of Provincials and Vice-Provincials of the Atlantic-German Zone of the North Europe Region*. The meeting ended on 25<sup>th</sup> November. On his return to Rome between 27<sup>th</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December he took part on some occasions in the World Council of Salesian Cooperators.

### **The Councillor for Formation**

In the months of *January/February 2013* the Councillor for Formation took part in the Feast of Don Bosco at Chiari on the

days 30<sup>th</sup> January-3<sup>rd</sup> February and also on this occasion visited the postnovitiate of Nave in ILE 31<sup>st</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February. Between 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> February he chaired a meeting of the Regional Coordinators for Formation in Nairobi (Kenya). He visited the theologate, the prenovitiate, the sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians and the Provincial House in Upper Hill and also the novitiate of the FMA. Between 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February he visited the Ratisbonne Theologate in Jerusalem and chaired the Curatorium. He then visited the communities of Bethlehem, Cremisan and Beitgemal in the Holy Land.

In *March* and in the following months he worked with his collaborators especially on the preparations for the 27<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. However, he had other engagements as well.

In *April* between 12<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in the name of the Rector Major, he made the *Extraordinary Visitation of Eritrea* and in particular the communities in Asmara and Dekemhare.

On *May* 1<sup>st</sup> he presided at the celebration of the perpetual professions in Rome-Gerini; between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May in Addis Abeba he took part in the

conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation of the AET Vice Province. He took advantage of his journey to Ethiopia also to visit the prenovitiate in Addis Abeba - Mekanissa, the novitiate at Debre Zeit, the aspirantate in Zway and the Don Bosco Children home for street children in Addis Abeba. Having returned to Italy, on 24<sup>th</sup> May he took part in the Feast of Mary Help of Christians at the UPS and the conferral of the Doctorate "honoris causa" on Fr Luigi Melesi.

In the months of *June and July* his main engagement was participation in the summer plenary session of the General Council. In addition in *June* the following events could be mentioned. On 7<sup>th</sup> he took part in the Curatorium for the specific formation for Salesian Brothers in Turin-Valdocco; on 8<sup>th</sup> in the Curatorium for the specific formation of Salesian candidates for priesthood in Rome-Gerini; on 12<sup>th</sup> in Chiari he presided at Mass on the first anniversary of the death of Fr Silvio Galli; on 20<sup>th</sup> he took part in the Administrative Council of the *Opera PAS*; on 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Curatorium of the UPS.

In *August* on 5<sup>th</sup> he presided at the celebration of the perpetual professions of the Daughters of

Mary Help of Christians at Mornese; on 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> he worked with the *Liturgical Commission of the GC27* to share criteria for animation, identify collaborators for the hymn book, and prepare aids for the various celebrations and for the discernment process in view of the election.

In *September* on 8<sup>th</sup> he presided at the celebration of the first professions of the novices from Pinerolo at Colle Don Bosco. On 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> he worked with the *Pre capitular Commission* in the preparation of the working document for the GC27.

In *October* on 1<sup>st</sup> he attended a meeting of the Theological Commission of the USG; on 5<sup>th</sup> he took part in the Curatorium and on the 15<sup>th</sup> in the inauguration of the Academic Year at the UPS. On 5<sup>th</sup> he presided at the celebration of the perpetual professions of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Rome. On 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> he had meetings with the Salesian Cooperators from Puglia at Molfetta and the Rectors of the Southern Italy Province at Santeramo. On 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> he took part in a meeting for Salesian Brothers and the beatification of the Salesian Brother Stephen

Sándor in Hungary. On 21<sup>st</sup> he gave a day of recollection for the community of Turin-Crocetta and presided at a Mass in honour of the new Salesian Blessed Stephen Sándor. On 30<sup>th</sup> he took part in a meeting of the Superiors of the AET Province with some Salesians from Eritrea. On 31 in Turin-Valdocco he chaired the Commission for the Salesian special places and the Curatorium for the specific formation for Salesian Brothers.

In *November* on 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> in Turin-Valdocco he took part in the second meeting for missionaries in Europe as part of Project Europe. Between 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> he was in Melbourne Australia taking part in a meeting of Provincials and Delegates from the East Asia and Oceania Region. Afterwards on 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> November he took part in the half-yearly Assembly of the USG.

In *December*, starting on 3<sup>rd</sup>, he was mainly engaged in the winter plenary session of the General Council; on 14<sup>th</sup> he chaired the Curatorium of the formation community of Gerini and at the end of the month and the beginning of January he visited the formation community and the study centre in Jerusalem chairing the Curatorium there.

## The Councillor for Youth Ministry

In the period from February to May 2013 the Councillor for Youth Ministry was mainly engaged in visits and in the final phase of the process of *Rethinking* which led to the production of the final text of the *Frame of Reference for Salesian Youth Ministry*.

His first engagement was with the second World Consultative Committee for Youth Ministry between 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013, which had as its theme the study of the reports sent in from all the Provinces in view of the revision of the Fundamental Frame of Reference for Salesian Youth Ministry giving it a more clearly evangelising dimension. Taking part in the Committee meetings were National and Regional Delegates and the Councillors for the Missions and for Social Communication.

On 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013, the Councillor had a meeting with all the Youth Ministry Delegates in Spain sharing with them the latest stages of the *Rethinking* process and the outline of the new edition of the *Frame of Reference*.

Again in Madrid, between 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013, Fr Fabio

with Bro Mario Olmos SDB, the Coordinator of the IUS, took part in an intercontinental seminar of the IUS on education and social inclusion, prevention and education from the point of view of Salesian pedagogy. Held at the Don Bosco Centre for Higher Education (CES Don Bosco) in Madrid, it was organised by the Education Group of the Salesian Institutes for Higher Education, consisting of 21 Salesian Universities and Centres of Higher Education, to be found in 13 countries and dedicated to research and the training of professionals in the field of education. This working party is itself part of the Salesian Institutes of Higher Education (IUS), which brings together 67 Salesian Centres of University Education in 21 countries.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> March at the Don Bosco House in Madrid there was the third meeting of the International Pastoral Theological and Salesian Team. This working party made up of 12 Salesians and led by the Youth Ministry Department concentrated on the drawing up of a new preparatory draft of the third edition of the document: *Salesian Youth Ministry – A Frame of Reference*.

On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 the Councillor, with Fr Robert Simon, responsible for the SYM took part in a meeting organised by the Pontifical Council for the Laity in view of the WYD in Rio 2013. In the course of the meeting some ideas were shared regarding the topics and the organisation for the programme of catechesis to be held during the WYD.

On 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013, the Councillor took part in the General Assembly of the Don Bosco International (DBI), in Brussels. Among items on the agenda were the various media through which the Salesian charism – in its different cultural and educative expressions found today in Europe – can become engaged with regard to the more urgent issues which are preoccupying the European Union and the United Nations in Geneva: issues which require strategies for the rethinking of the education and support of young people, as for example the Youth Guarantee initiative (for the employment, education or training for work experience of the young); or which consider the possibilities of managing the social implications of the economic crisis, such as the European Sunday Alliance (a

network of businesses which promote a Sunday free from work in Europe). There was encouragement for the efforts of Salesians who work locally with immigrants and other youngsters in some way or other excluded or on the margins of society, with the invitation to help the DBI in its activities of safeguarding and support, relying on the fact that Don Bosco himself would have wanted nothing less.

On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013, on the occasion of the National Assembly of the Soci, the Association of Salesians involved in Social Work – in the SCS/CNOS Federation, which was celebrating 20 years of its foundation, there was an exhibition at the *Sala del Carroccio* in the Rome Campidoglio. Fr Fabio took part and spoke about the challenges presented by modern society to involvement in education and evangelisation. Fr Aldo Giraud, an historian of the Salesian Congregation, also took part and described the historical roots of the activities of Don Bosco and the Salesians in the area of hardship. Among those present were other figures from the world of social work: Dr. Danilo Festa, Director General of the Third Sector and Social Training

Services of the Ministry of Work and Social Policies; Dr. Raffaele De Cicco, Coordinator of the Office for National Civilian Service; Dr. Pietro Barbieri, the recently elected Spokesman for the National Forum of the Third Sector. Fr Stefano Martoglio, Superior of the Circumscription of Piedmont, Val d'Aosta and Lithuania and also Provincial Delegate for the sector for Marginalisation and Hardship brought the meeting to a close. A profound and sincere thanks was expressed to Fr Domenico Ricca for the work undertaken in these years and who after sixteen years of activity in the service of the Congregation and of the Federation, was leaving the role as President of the Federation.

On 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> April 2013, in Lisbon, Portugal, the Councillor, with Fr Miguel Angel García SDB, the one responsible for the Office for Schools and Technical Training in the Youth Ministry Department, took part in the Second Meeting of the European Salesian Schools Commission for Salesians (SDB) and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA). The meeting had two main intentions: the study of the complex of indicators of the Salesian identity of schools

and technical training centres, and forward planning for the period 2013-2015, starting from the subjects proposed by the Commission. Provincial representatives for schools and technical training centres discussed the common demands and the challenges, and drawing up an outline of the indicators examined the following particular areas: the area of the educative plan; the area of pedagogical competence and of the educational vocation; the area of organisational culture. In the reflections of those taking part, there emerged the importance of the family for the evangelisation and education of youngsters. Work finished with the planning of a third meeting in 2014.

Between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2013, at the Generalate in Rome a first meeting was held for those responsible and those involved in the European Planning Process for the schools and technical training centres in Europe. At the meeting, promoted by the School and Technical Training Office of the Department 25 people professionally engaged in this area took part, coming from Bosnia, Great Britain, Italy, Malta, Kosovo, Poland, Spain and Hungary. The Councillor

opened the meeting with an agenda dealing with formation in programmes for European planning and discussion on the possibilities of procedures and synergy to promote networking with representatives of each Province so as to improve awareness and cooperation among different Salesian centres. The meeting ended with the assumption of some commitments in view of greater visibility and effectiveness in the future with regard to Salesian European Planning.

Between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 in Manila, Fr Fabio together with Fr Robert Simon, who keeps a close eye on the East Asia and Oceania Region, was engaged in the work of a Regional meeting of Youth Ministry Delegates in the Region. Among issues considered were the analysis of the process of Rethinking in the Provinces, the Synod on New Evangelisation and the scheme of the third edition of the Frame of Reference.

Between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May 2013, also in Manila, Fr Fabio led three days of reflection and prayer for about 600 teachers from the schools in the North Philippine Province. This event which is held every two years has as its purpose that of providing an opportunity

for a deeper reflection on Salesian spirituality. The theme for the days was The spirituality of the Preventive System.

Between 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2013, in Yaoundé, a Congress was held on the Pedagogy of the Preventive System. Fr Fabio gave a talk entitled "A Youth Ministry in the light of Don Bosco's Pedagogy". The Congress examined in a positive manner the challenges and the opportunities which the Preventive System today offers the continent of Africa.

The last engagement for the Councillor in this period was taking part in a course on youth ministry which Professor Fr Rossano Sala gave at the UPS. On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013, Fr Fabio shared the views and the methodologies used by the Department in its activities and also presented the scheme of the next edition of the Frame of Reference for Salesian Youth Ministry.

After the summer plenary session of the General Council, during the period between July and November 2013, the engagements of the Councillor for Youth Ministry were mainly linked to three kinds of visits. The first was that at the World Youth Day (WYD) in Rio de Janeiro, with the experiences of the

Salesian Youth Movement (SYM), both in Rio and in Turin. Then visits to the Regions bringing to an end the process of animation for the six-year period. Finally visits of formation and for retreats.

Between 19<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> July the Councillor took part in the Rio WYD which had been preceded by a continental meeting of the SYM America. Between 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August Fr Fabio also took part in the SYM Confronto 2013 – a week of prayer, reflection and study of Salesian Youth Spirituality on the part of young people from all the Provinces of Italy.

On 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August, the Councillor visited various countries in Africa – Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria – to lead formation workshops in youth ministry for young Salesians and lay people involved in Salesian works. Fr Fabio also gave a Retreat to young Salesian priests in the quinquennium in Poland at Łódź between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October 2013. Two visits should also be mentioned, to Cagliari, 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> October, and San Cataldo, Sicily, 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> November, on the occasion of the pilgrimage of the casket of Don Bosco in these two cities.

At the end of the six-year period the Councillor held the last annual meetings of the 7 Regions, bringing to an end the process of Regional animation for the whole Congregation. Between 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September, at Addis Abeba, he chaired a meeting of Youth Ministry Delegates from all the Provinces of Africa and Madagascar. Between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October, the Youth Ministry Delegates of the two Regions of America – Interamerica and America South Cone – met together in Bogotá, Colombia. Between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November, in Kochi, India, the Councillor chaired the work of the Youth Ministry Delegates of South Asia, that is to say from India and Sri Lanka. Between 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November, it was left to the three Regions of Europe to bring the process of youth ministry animation in this six-year period to an end. Some common elements of these meetings have been: an evaluation of the progress made in the light of the GC26; the subsequent spin-off of these meetings at Province and local levels; the process of Rethinking of youth ministry proposed by the GC26; discussion of the scheme of the *Frame of Reference for Salesian Youth*

*Ministry* and the prospects for the next six-year period in view of the knowledge of and familiarity with this document.

Finally could be mentioned the last study seminar on Salesian spiritual direction which had as its theme: "Salesian spiritual direction and pastoral challenges today". It was organised in Santiago de Compostela, between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November, with the participation of a team of experts in formation for spiritual direction. This team accompanied a process of reflection, which had begun in April 2010 dealing with the subject of Salesian spiritual direction in relation to Saint Francis of Sales, with the charismatic experience of Don Bosco and finally with the current challenges such an experience offers us.

### **The Councillor for Social Communication**

**January 2013.** When the winter plenary session of the General ended, between 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January Fr Filiberto González, General Councillor for Social Communication, took part in the meeting of the World Consultative Commission for the

Missions held in Turin-Valdocco, speaking on the topic: «A communication approach to the area of the Salesian Missions».

**February 2013.** On 5<sup>th</sup> Fr Filiberto took part in the World Consultative Commission for Youth Ministry. Between 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> accompanying the Rector Major he took part in the celebrations for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Guadalajara Province, Mexico (MEG), their Province of origin. Between 16<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> March he visited the Provinces of Brazil in this order: 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, São Paulo; 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, Fortaleza; 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, Recife; 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, Campo Grande; 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Porto Alegre.

**March 2013.** His visits to the Brazil Provinces continued: 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, Manaus; 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, Belo Horizonte; 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> in Brasilia, where he had a meeting with the CISBRASIL. In each Province wherever possible he always met the Provincial and his Council, the Province Delegate for SC and his Team, formation personnel and those in formation, various communities and Salesian works (schools, parishes, formation centres, centres for street children), Faculties of Communication in our Universities, groups of lay

people involved in communication, radio centres. In the CISBRASIL he met the personnel working in the school network, technical training centres, social work, the 'Salesian Bulletin' printed and digital, the Don Bosco publishing house, marketing. The purpose of these visits was: the stimulation in every Province of synergy between the SC Department and those for Formation, Youth Ministry and the Missions; promoting the awareness and practice of the SSCS 2.0; an invitation to change the way of thinking about SC in the Congregation; the unification of Salesian Brazil in the preparation and celebration of the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco. After returning to Italy, on 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> March the Councillor took part in the March meeting of the Committee of the SEI in Turin.

**April 2013.** Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April Fr Filiberto chaired a meeting of the SC Department Team, and from 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> a meeting of the World Consultative Body of Social Communication, held at the Salesianum in Rome.

**May 2013.** On 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May together with Sr. Giuseppina Terruggi, the Councillor presided at the Annual SC Days for the

formation personnel and those in formation of the SDB and FMA in Italy, organised by the SDB Department and the FMA Sector for SC, coordinated by the Dean of the FSC-UPS, Fr Mauro Mantovani, with a team representing the Department and the Sector for SC, formation personnel and those in formation from formation communities in Rome. Each year the starting point for reflection and discussion is the theme offered by the Pope for World Communication Day. Between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> at the Salesianum he chaired a meeting for SC Provincial Delegates. Afterwards between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> he took part – at the Salesian Retreat House in Porto – in the annual meeting of the five Salesian Publishing Houses in Europe: Editrice CCS Madrid - Spain, Editrice **ELLEDICI** Turin - Italy, **Edições Salesianas** Porto - Portugal; Editrice **Don Bosco** Munich - Germany; **Don Bosco Publications** Great Britain. On 17<sup>th</sup> May he left for Guadalajara - Mexico to assist his mother in her illness until she died on 31<sup>st</sup> May. He then returned to the Generalate for the summer plenary session of the General Council which began on 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

**August 2013.** After the conclusion of the summer plenary session of the General Council, Fr Filiberto González remained in Rome in the Generalate, during the month of August until the middle of September to continue with the ordinary tasks of his role and to collaborate, with other members of the SC Department with Bro. Hilario Seo in the preparation of the production of the magazine *Salesians 2014*.

**September 2013.** On 15<sup>th</sup> September the Councillor left for Argentina, accompanied by Bro. Felipe Loaiza, member of the Department, and at Bariloche (ARS) between 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> met the Delegates for Social Communication from the Regions of America South Cone and Interamerica. As well as considering the annual assessments and the Province projects in the areas identified in the SSCS – synergy in the sectors, animation of SC, formation, information and production – there was further consideration in the new area of the SC sector, attention to and the promotion of art and culture. Two other issues were also examined by the participants from the two Regions: the progress being made on the way

to the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco in 2015 and the role of *social media* in education and in the institutions. This time the group benefited from the presence of new Provincial Delegates who had not been at the previous meeting in the MEG Province: two Salesians, two lay people and two lay experts in the field of SC.

**October 2013.** On 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> October Fr Filiberto was in Turin-Valdocco taking part in the meeting of the Council of Administration of the SEI. Between 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October in Mumbai (India), with Bro. Ephrem Santos, he had a meeting with the SC Delegates in the South Asia Region. Topics on the agenda were the same from SSCS as those considered and examined at the meeting of the Interamerica America South Cone Regions, with three additions: reflection on *social media* and Youth Ministry, criteria for a participation and presence in *social media* by Salesians and lay collaborators in the mission, and the study and approval of the Statutes and the structure of *BOSCOM*, a body for Social Communication of the Provincial Conference of India, which brings together the

Delegates for SC and the Directors and those Responsible for the SC centres and media in the country. Between the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> and the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> he presided in Hua Hin (Thailand) at a meeting of the CS Delegates in the East Asia and Oceania Region, accompanied by Bro Ephrem Santos. The agenda of topics for study and discussion were the same as those mentioned already for other meetings. Something new was the election of a coordinator and a vice-coordinator of the Delegates for the East Asia and Oceania Region.

**November 2013.** Between 30<sup>th</sup> October and 17<sup>th</sup> November Fr Filiberro visited his family in Mexico. He took the opportunity to visit the studentate of theology in Tlaquepaque; at Amatitán he met two groups on different occasions of 35 Salesians each time gathered for Ongoing Formation, and he spoke to them about the GC27, CS, the new Frame of Reference of Youth Ministry, the Missions and Project Europe, the invitation to practise an evangelical, transparent, professional and generously sharing economy, personal accompaniment in

formation and the awareness of being and living as the Salesian Family. He met the confrere José Carlos Contreras, who had been declared innocent and released from custody after four years unjust imprisonment. With the Provincial and the Provincial Council he looked at the topics mentioned above and visited various Salesian communities in the MEG Province. After returning to Rome, between 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November he chaired a meeting of 11 Directors or representatives of Salesian Publishing Houses in Europe. In the meeting there was reflection and discussion about good practices and the challenges arising from various directions: the Salesian charism, new readers and users of books, new technologies, Salesian and lay personnel, the financial and economic situation in Europe – these last two topics were dealt with by the Economist General Bro. Jean Paul Muller. The Rector Major and his Vicar presided at Mass and the Councillors for YM and West Europe gave the Good Nights. As a result of the meeting it was agreed to create a *web page* for the European Publishers: *Don Bosco Media*.

## The Councillor for the Missions

During the winter session of the Council Fr Václav Klement made three short visits to three Salesian foundations among Muslims: in Tunisia (IRL, Manouba 26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> December), in Azerbaijan (SLK, Baku 31<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> January) and in Turkey (MOR, Istanbul 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> January 2013).

After the winter session finished, the Councillor left for Turin to chair the *World Consultative Committee for the Missions Meeting* (27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> January) with the task of assessing the work of the last six years and drawing up plans for the future. Taking part in this third meeting of the Committee during this six year period were 15 SDB, 1 FMA, a Salesian Cooperatore and a lay Delegate for Missionary Promotion.

Following the meeting Fr Klement went to visit the mission in Kazanlak and Stara Zagora (CEP, Bulgaria 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> February) to assess the beginnings of this project for Rom-Gypsies in the Stary Lozenec district in the city of Stara Zagora.

Afterwards the Councillor devoted the whole month of February to visiting East Asia:

Hong Kong (CIN, 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> February), East Timor (ITM, 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> February), Singapore (18<sup>th</sup> February), Cambodia (THA, 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> February), Laos (THA, 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> February) and Vietnam (VIE, 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February).

Then in the month of March visiting four Provinces involved in Project Europe, the Councillor met all the missionaries and the Provincial Councils to evaluate the process of integration and formation of the confreres who had arrived in the last ten years. His travels started with a meeting in Pélifoldszentkeresztén (UNG, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> March), where 18 missionaries gathered from the three Provinces AUS, CEP and UNG. Then the Councillor spent two days in Vienna (AUS, 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> March), three days in England - London, Bollington and Bolton (GBR, 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> March) and finally, three days in Ireland - Dublin and Maynooth (IRL, 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> March).

He spent Holy Week involved in the Interamerica Regional programme for Hispanic migrants. Between 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April the Councillor, accompanied by the Provincials of MEG - Fr Salvador Cleofás Murgia and of SUO - Fr Tim Ploch, visited four communities

near the frontier between Mexico and the USA (Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez, Laredo, Nuevo Laredo) and also the area of Los Angeles.

The Sixth General Assembly of the Don Bosco Network in Seville (SSE, 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> April) elected a new President, Miss Joanna Stozek, a member of the NGO SWM - Młodzi Swiatu. Two days were spent on a workshop on strengthening the Planning and Development Offices (PDO).

In the Provinces of ANG, ATE and AFO (6<sup>th</sup> April-5<sup>th</sup> May) Fr Klement visited five countries (Angola, Cameroun, Togo, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast), encouraging especially the nine communities for initial formation, meeting the respective Provincial Councils and visiting 24 apostolic communities. Among the more significant events was the opening of the new Socio-Cultural Centre in Ouagadougou (the capital of Burkina Faso) on 26<sup>th</sup> April, in the presence of more than 1000 youngsters, young people and other people connected with the new foundation.

Between 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> May the Councillor paid a visit to the two communities (Lahore and Quetta) in Pakistan (FIS) in the context of providing support for a fragile but promising presence.

Thanks to efficient collaboration with the Social Communication Department material was produced for the Salesian Missions Day 2014 '*We are the others! – Concern about migrants and the Salesian mission in Europe*' which is available in digital form on the site [www.sdb.org](http://www.sdb.org).

*At the beginning of the summer session of the General Council, Fr Klement*, with the Economist General Bro Jean Paul Muller, chaired – in the Generalate – the annual meeting of the Directors of the five International Mission Offices (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June).

At the end of the summer session the Councillor for the Missions left for Latin America, to make a first fact-finding missionary visit to the four Provinces he had not yet visited, meeting the Provincial Councils, visiting the houses of formation and the PDO. In *Perú* (21<sup>st</sup> July-15<sup>th</sup> August) he visited all three mission areas (the Andean area near Cuzco; the Apostolic Vicariate of Pucallpa entrusted to the Salesian Congregation with the Bishop Mons. Gaetano Galbusera; and the foundations in Amazonia, the Vicariate of Yurimaguas). In *Bolivia* (16<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> August) he visited seven missionary communities and the

works for street children. In *Colombia* (25<sup>th</sup> August-1<sup>st</sup> September) while visiting the two Provinces COB and COM, Fr Klement took part in the Congress of the Salesian Youth Missionary Movement ICHTHUS (Medellín, 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August).

The **144<sup>th</sup> missionary expedition** was preceded by a 25 day course (Rome and Colle Don Bosco), in which 36 SDBs took part (4<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> September). Presiding at the Missionary Expedition on 29<sup>th</sup> September at Valdocco was the Rector Major. Also taking part were 15 FMA and 7 lay volunteers and about 350 members of missionary groups in Italy.

After the departure ceremony for the missionaries, Fr Klement undertook visits in East Asia: between 4<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October in the Province of *CIN* (Taiwan, celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the Salesians, Hong Kong) and between 17<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October in the Delegation of *Mongolia* - Darkhan and Ulaanbaatar (VIE). From 23<sup>rd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October he held the consultation for the appointment of the next Provincial of *South Korea* (KOR), visiting all the 13 communities in the Province and chairing two discernment sessions.

Between 31<sup>st</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November in Turin-Valdocco, with Fr Francesco Cereda and Fr José Miguel Nuñez, the Councillor led the *second meeting for missionaries present in Europe* with others who were accompanying them (50 SDBs).

Having returned to the Generalate, on 3<sup>rd</sup> November Fr Klement took part in the Executive Committee Meeting of Don Bosco Network, for the first time also with the full-time Coordinator of the DBN, Mr. Wojciech Mroczek.

Special events during a visit to the South Asia Region (5<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November) were visits to the two Missionary Aspirantates - Chennai, Perambur (*INM*) and Sirajuli (*ING*), the annual seminar for mission promotion (40 SDBs and members of 6 other groups of the Salesian Family) at Dimapur (*IND*) and a first visit to the new Mission Office in Delhi (Director Fr MC George, with 16 collaborators, *INN*).

After the *Study Days on the first proclamation of Christ in America* («From the first proclamation to missionary discipleship») organised jointly with the FMA Missions Sector at Los Teques, Venezuela (20<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> November, with 70 participants)

there was the 4<sup>th</sup> *American Missionary Congress (CAM 4/COMLA 9)* in Maracaibo, Venezuela. The presence of more than 50 members of seven different groups of the Salesian Family at the CAM 4 was clearly thanks to the 5 Salesian Bishops.

### **The Economer General**

As soon as the winter plenary session of the Council concluded, the Economer General, Bro. Jean Paul Muller, began at the Generalate *a course for 17 new Provincial Economers* with a discussion about their daily life of responsibility, and acknowledging that in most of our Provinces the administration of goods and the organisation of our lay staff are undertaken to the highest professional standards.

After a three day break in Munich (25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February) he returned to Rome to attend to various issues with the help of his consultants and assistants. In a meeting (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> March) with the Provincials and Economers of Spain in Santigao di Compostela, the Economer General was able to inform himself about the process involved in creating the two future new Provinces in Spain.

Invited to the UPS on 4<sup>th</sup> March to take part in a Congress "Responsible and cooperative Finance", the Economer, in his talk, pointed out the importance of involving in the decision making processes all the interested parties and all those concerned.

After discussion and dialogue with the Provincials and Economers of the America - South Cone Region in San Paolo, Brazil between 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> March, the Economer returned to Rome with a good impression of the efforts being made in the Provinces on behalf of abandoned youth in the various countries of the Region. He then had a meeting with the Economers of Italy to inform himself and to reflect on the changes made in Italian law and the effects on our works, especially the schools.

Between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March, during a visit to the Ukraine, the Economer visited the works in Lviv, and in talks with the confreres responsible, discussed the possibilities of new projects such as in Kiev, and the challenges from work for students and youngsters at risk. A good number of young confreres full of energy is a great sign of hope for the development of the charism

on Don Bosco in this country on Europe's doorstep.

On 19<sup>th</sup> March he brought together all the Economers who had investments in Polaris to discuss with them future action for the benefit of the Provinces.

During a visit to Slovenia the Economer had the opportunity to visit all the works in the Province. He was particularly interested in a visit he made to a centre in Maribor, still under construction, conscious that this new Salesian foundation is very significant and important for the Congregation and the Church. He spoke with the confreres in Trstenik and learned more about the difficult times during and after the war in this beautiful country.

A "Face to face" meeting with the prenovices of Italy at Genzano on 19<sup>th</sup> April was a challenge to answer many questions about religious life especially about the Salesian Brother, and to speak about his own personal development in relation to the responsible role he has in the Congregation.

During an opportunity to participate in the Provincial Chapter of Germany at Benediktbeuern (21<sup>st</sup> May), the Economer spoke about the

progress of the Congregation in the different Regions of the world, in order to encourage those taking part to take more interest in the teaching and the work of the Congregation.

During June-July the Economer took part in the plenary session of the General Council.

After the session was over, on 29<sup>th</sup> July he took part in a day of recollection with the confreres at Kolding, in Denmark.

On his return to Rome he was mainly engaged in 'Fundraising UPS' and Leasing Contracts.

On 8<sup>th</sup> August he left for India, and Shillong, to attend a meeting of Provincials, Provincial Economers and Delegates for the GC27. He then paid a visit to the site of a new SPCI Centre in New Dehli.

On 14<sup>th</sup> August he was with the novices at Genzano, speaking about the vocation of the Salesian Brother.

On 19<sup>th</sup> August in Luxemburg he met some people involved in financial and legal matters.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> August he was involved in discussions with the editorial committee of the Austrian and German Salesian Bulletin in connection with GC27.

Between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August he visited the PLN Province at

Pila to examine the situation regarding the economy and administration of the Province in which Salesian Centres in Poland, Sweden and Russia are involved.

Between 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August he took part in the Forum Valdocco on the central theme: "Reason in the pedagogy of Don Bosco".

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September, at the Generalate he had discussions with confreres from different Provinces (with regard to the reports about accounts, personnel situations, administration issues, etc.) in preparation for visits in the following months by members of the Economist's Department.

Between 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September, at Trebnitz, he was involved in a Symposium on the value and importance of the Central Administrative Archives of a Congregation.

Between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September he attended a meeting at a Congress in Chicago Illinois, and gave a paper and led a discussion about the expectations of the new generations with regard to educational studies.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October in Rome he attended a conference on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Pacem in terris*.

Between 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October he met the Provincials and Economers of the East Asia and Oceania Region at Dalat, Vietnam.

Between 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October he took part in a European meeting of Salesian Brothers on the occasion of the beatification of Stephen Sándor in Budapest.

In the time he spent in the Office the Economist General devoted his time to preparing the Budget of the *Direzione Generale* for 2014. He also held a meeting with those responsible for the Mission Offices and for the Salesian NGO.

Between 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October he was in the Ukraine to inform himself about the current situation regarding the development projects at Leopoli. He met the Nuncio Apostolic, and then the Patriarch, with whom he visited the site for the first Salesian foundation in the capital Kiev.

On 1<sup>st</sup> November he left for Lubumbashi, D.R.C. where he gave a number of talks to the Rectors about production projects, centres of formation and an historical centre.

Having returned to Rome on 8<sup>th</sup> November he immediately went to Berlin, where there was a

Conference “Falling Walls”, in order to meet various people from the economic and political worlds.

On 14<sup>th</sup> November in Cologne he gave a talk on the ethical challenges facing financial and religious institutions.

On 18<sup>th</sup> November he went to Turin to meet the Provincial Economist and the architects involved in the “Salesian Places 2015” project. After visiting various places in Valdocco, the Economist General was convinced of the urgent need for an expression of solidarity within the Congregation on behalf of the Places which are of great importance for Salesian history and for the Salesian future.

On 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November in Berlin he chaired a Congress on Curative Pedagogy with the central theme of Inclusion.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November he had a meeting with the Provincials of the Atlantic-German Zone gathered round the Rector Major in Berlin-Marzahn.

Having returned to Rome he was present at the Assembly of European Salesian Publishing Houses held in the Pisana between 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November. The worrying situation facing some of them necessitates their

working together more, making use of their individual strengths and obliging those responsible in Europe to take strategic decisions for the future regarding the reorganisation of printing and publishing houses.

### ***The Councillor for the Africa - Madagascar Region***

When the winter plenary session of the General Council was over the Regional Councillor for Africa and Madagascar Fr Guillermo Basañes left for the South Africa Vice-Province visiting Johannesburg and meeting the Provincial Council on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January in Booyens.

He then spent a short time in the neighbouring Vice-Province of Mozambique, leading the Quarterly Day of Recollection (29<sup>th</sup> January), attending a meeting of the Provincial Council (30<sup>th</sup> January), and on 31<sup>st</sup> January presiding at the first professions of the Salesian novices in Namaacha.

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> February Fr Guillermo accompanied the Rector Major at the *jubilee celebrations for the presence of the Salesians in Burundi* – the AGL Vice-Province – held in Ngozi.

Between 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February he gave the Retreat for the confreres of the Portuguese Province (POR), in the Turcifal diocesan centre.

Afterwards Fr Guillermo went to Argentina, to spend some time with his parents and family between 16<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February.

When the Councillor returned to Rome, since he had not received the VISA to enter Eritrea, the Rector Major sent him to the Ratisbonne theological studentate in Jerusalem between 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March to see, first of all the students from AET, and also the other confreres from the Africa Region residing there.

From 13<sup>th</sup> March, being already in Ethiopian territory, the Regional Councillor was able to begin, in the name of the Rector Major, the *Extraordinary Visitation of the AET Vice Province*. The communities in Eritrea were visited by the Councillor for Formation. At the concluding meeting with the Provincial Council of AET in Addis Abeba, on 10<sup>th</sup> May, both General Councillors were present. Moving from the universal Latin liturgical calendar to that of Ethiopia, Fr Basañes had a Lent of 72 days.

Between 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May he visited the Delegation of Sudan – the AFE Province – staying in Juba, the capital of the new republic of Southern Sudan. On 16<sup>th</sup> he attended a meeting of the AFE Provincial Council.

Finally, between 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May the Regional Councillor was in Madagascar, where he was able to attend a meeting of the Provincial Council and celebrate the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians.

On Saturday evening 25<sup>th</sup> he returned to the Generalate to take part in the Retreat and then the summer plenary session of the General Council.

When the summer session ended the Regional Councillor left on 22<sup>nd</sup> July for the AET Vice-Province, where on 24<sup>th</sup> at the Provincial House in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, he presided at the installation of the new Superior, having had a meeting with the Provincial Council the previous day.

On 25<sup>th</sup> Fr Guillermo Basañes was already in the ANG Vice-Province for a visit which had at its centre the Assembly of the Confreres on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July in the house of Palanka (Luanda) to launch the consultation process for the appointment of a new Superior.

From there the Regional Councillor went to the ZMB Vice-Province, where on 5<sup>th</sup> August in Lusaka he presided at the first professions of the FMA. On 7<sup>th</sup> he had a meeting with the Provincial Council in the house of Chawama, and then on 8<sup>th</sup> there was the opening of the year at the SDB novitiate at Makeni. He then went to the community in Chingola; on the way he greeted the confreres in Kabwe and also the Salesian Bishop Clement Mulenga.

The following day 9<sup>th</sup> August, he crossed the frontier, entering the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the confreres of the *AFC Province* were waiting for him. From then until 22<sup>nd</sup> November, in the name of the Rector Major, Fr Guillermo made the *Extraordinary Visitation* of this Province more than a hundred years old. The meeting with the Provincial Council to open the Visitation took place on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, and that to close it on 21<sup>st</sup> November. On 15<sup>th</sup> August he presided at the celebration of the first Salesian professions at Imara (Lubumbashi) and on the following Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> August, at Sakania he took part in the opening of the centenary of the Diocese, at which our confrere the Bishop Gaston Ruvezi presided.

The Visitor was able to go to all the 27 houses and presences of AFC, in spite of innumerable transport and communication difficulties. In order to reach all the places where the Salesians are living and working in the Congo he had to travel through four neighbouring countries. Between 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November, together with the Economer General, he took part in a meeting for all the Rectors of the Province which was held in the Theologicum in Lubumbashi.

When this long stay in the D.R.C. was over, Fr Basañes went to the capital of the Cameroun, where on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> November he took part in the Curatorium of the theologate in Yaoundé and that for the specific formation of Salesian Brothers. Then in the same house of theology he presided over the work of the Twelfth Conference of the Provincials and Superiors of the Vice-Provinces of Africa and Madagascar – *CIVAM* – in which they concentrated mainly on the study and discussion of the GC27 Working Document.

This week spent in the Cameroun was the last planned engagement on the agenda of the Regional Councillor for Africa in this six-year period 2008-2014.

***The Councillor for the  
Latin America - South Cone  
Region***

When the winter plenary session of the General Council was over the Regional Councillor Fr Natale Vitali went to Argentina, to the ARS Province to give the Provincial and his Council on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013, the letter of the Rector Major as a conclusion to the Extraordinary Visitation carried out in the Province during the previous term.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January in the Interprovincial Novitiate in Curitiba, Brazil, he received the professions of 20 newly-professed from the BPA, BRE and BSP Provinces.

On 1<sup>st</sup> February he was already in Campo Grande to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation of the BCG Province*, which would continue until 24<sup>th</sup> May.

The Visitation formally began with a meeting with the Provincial Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

In the Province there are 20 Salesian communities, 4 of which are working specifically with the Xavante and Bororo Indians. The 20 communities are in the Federal States of Mato Grosso, Mato

Grosso del Sud and Paulista.

In the city of Campo Grande he also visited the Museo de las Culturas Dom Bosco an historic patrimony and testimony of Salesian work with the Indians of Mato Grosso.

In this Province the evangelisation of the Indians has been sealed with the blood of the Salesian priests *João Fuchs, Pedro Sacilotti and Rodolfo Lunkenbein* and by the scientific work of the Salesians *Cesare Albisetti, Angelo Venturelli, Felice Zavattaro and João Falco*.

Interrupting the Visitation of BCG for a time, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March the Regional Councillor took part in the Retreat preached by the Rector Major to all the Provincials of the two Regions of America at Campos Do Jordão, San Paolo.

Immediately afterwards, there was a meeting for the Provincials of the Region. One of the topics considered was the evaluation of the planning programme for this six-year period.

On 13<sup>th</sup> March he was in Chile, meeting the Provincial Council to help with the process of putting into practice the guidelines from the Extraordinary Visitation.

On 18<sup>th</sup> in Brasilia he took part in a meeting of the Provincials of

the CISBRASIL, and also with the FMA Provincials of Brazil.

On 26<sup>th</sup> March in Recife he took part in the Provincial Council and on 29<sup>th</sup> he had a meeting with the Provincial Council of Uruguay, at Montevideo, to assess the Extraordinary Visitation of 2011.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May he took part in a meeting of the Provincial Council of Belo Horizonte and on the 7<sup>th</sup> May in the Curatorium of the Novitiate of CISUR in Alta Gracia, Córdoba, with the four Provincials and the Novitiate Team. On 8<sup>th</sup> May he did the same with the postnovitiate of Córdoba. The following day, 9<sup>th</sup> May he held a meeting with the FMA Provincials of the South Cone.

On 10<sup>th</sup> May he returned to the Campo Grande Province to complete the visits to the communities; on 20<sup>th</sup> he had a meeting with the community Delegates for Pastoral work; on the 21<sup>st</sup> with all the Rectors, summing up the results of the Visitation, and finally on 22<sup>nd</sup> May with the Provincial Council.

He then returned to Rome to take part in the Retreat with the General Council and after that in the summer plenary session of the General Council.

At the end of the summer session of the Council the Regional joined the Rector Major at the *World Youth Days* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. To listen to Pope Francis and to witness at first hand the faith of the young people from all over the world was a very powerful religious experience.

On 1<sup>st</sup> August he had a meeting with the Provincial Council of the Campo Grande Province in Brazil, to inform them about the letter of the Rector Major and for the closure of the Extraordinary Visitation.

On 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August he took part in the Curatorium of the Regional Centre for the Formation of the Brother (CRESCO) in Guatemala, where this year there are 5 Brothers.

On 8<sup>th</sup> August he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Manaus Province in Brazil (BMA)*, which is a missionary Province. First of all he met the Provincial Council to make an evaluation of the previous Extraordinary Visitation and of the current situation of the Province.

The Manaus Province has 88 professed Salesians and 16 Salesian communities. Of the 88 Salesians, 14 are indigenous. The Salesians have 8 colleges, a university Faculty, 4 formation

houses, one of which is an aspirantate for young Indians, 9 social works, 10 parishes and 5 missions, two of which are working exclusively with the Yanomami people, 3 public churches and 11 oratories. The great missionary work undertaken by the Province, the inheritance of the heroic deeds of many missionaries, needs to be emphasised.

During the Visitation Fr Vitali also spoke with 11 Bishops and two FMA Provincials. He concluded the Visitation with a meeting with the Rectors and with the Provincial Council on 28<sup>th</sup> October.

On 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October in the San Paolo Province he had a meeting with all the Rectors and with the Provincial Council to carry out an evaluation of the Extraordinary Visitation which had taken place in 2010. He did the same in the Porto Alegre Province on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November.

In addition, in November the Regional Councillor carried out a consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial in three Provinces in Brazil: Belo Horizonte, between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November, in five different places; Campo Grande, between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November in two places;

Porto Alegre, between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November, in three different places.

On 10<sup>th</sup> November he also visited the novitiate in Curitiba (BPA), where at present there are 10 novices from the BPA, BRE and BSP Provinces.

On 12<sup>th</sup> November he had a meeting with the University of Campo Grande and the 4 other Faculties that the Province has through networking.

On 19<sup>th</sup> November he visited the Paraguay Province holding a meeting with the Provincial Council and visiting the postnovitiate and the house for the sick.

On 21<sup>st</sup> November he *held a meeting with the six Provincials of Brazil* to make an assessment of the year and to plan for the next year. Then on 22<sup>nd</sup> he met with the Provincials and the FMA Provincials of Brazil in the Salesian Schools Network of Brazil (RSB). On the same day the strategic alliance between the Salesian Publishing House of Brazil and the EDB in Barcelona Spain officially began.

On 25<sup>th</sup> he took part in the Curatorium of the Theologate in Lapa (BSP) Brazil, where there are 58 students from the six Provinces of Brazil.

Between 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> he took part in a meeting of the extended Team of the Salesian Regional Centre of Ongoing Formation in Quito.

Finally on 30<sup>th</sup> November, he returned to Rome to take part in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the Interamerica Region***

At the end of the winter plenary session of the General Council, Fr Esteban Ortiz González, Regional Councillor for Interamerica, on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January travelled to Port-au-Prince (HAI) and the following day had a meeting with the Superior Fr Ducange Sylvain and his Council to present the letter with the recommendations of the Rector Major following the recent Extraordinary Visitation carried out by Fr Guillermo Basañes in 2012. While he was in Haiti the Regional Councillor took the opportunity to see how the reconstruction work on some of the houses hit by the earthquake in 2010 was progressing.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January he left for Lima (PER) where he met the Provincial Fr Santo Dal Ben with his Council to discuss the

situation in the Province, especially regarding plans for restructuring.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January he went to La Paz (BOL) where on 31<sup>st</sup> he took part in the Feast of Don Bosco and in the celebrations for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the *Our Lady of Copacabana Province of Bolivia*. On the same day he met with the Provincial Fr Cristobal López and his Council to present the letter with the recommendations of the Rector Major following the recent Extraordinary Visitation.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Fr Esteban Ortiz reached Caracas (VEN), and the following day met with the Provincial Fr Luciano Stefani, and his Council to evaluate together the implementation of the recommendations of the Rector Major following the Extraordinary Visitation which took place in 2011.

After this the Regional Councillor went to the Saint John Bosco Province of the Antilles (ANT), here also for an evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations of the Rector Major following the Extraordinary Visitation which took place in 2011.

First he went to Havana (Cuba) where the Provincial of the

Antilles, Fr Víctor Pichardo was waiting for him, and with whom together with the Council of the Delegation of Cuba he had a meeting. Then on 7<sup>th</sup> February with the Provincial he travelled to San Juan for the purpose of continuing the evaluation, meeting with the Council of the Delegation of Puerto Rico.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February, Fr Esteban Ortiz travelled from San Juan to Santo Domingo and on 9<sup>th</sup> he met the Provincial and his Council to conclude the evaluation, at Province level.

On 10<sup>th</sup> February he travelled to Los Angeles to undertake the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Saint Andrew the Apostle Province of the West United States (SUO)*.

Before formally beginning the Visitation to SUO, on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> February the Regional Councillor met with Fr Tom Dunne, the Provincial of SUE and his Council to assess the steps taken to implement the recommendations the Rector Major sent to the Province following the Extraordinary Visitation which took place in the first part of 2012. Afterwards on the afternoon of 11<sup>th</sup> and during 12<sup>th</sup>, the Regional Councillor took part in the meeting which the

Provincial Councils of SUE (New Rochelle) and SUO (San Francisco) hold each year.

On 13<sup>th</sup> he met with the Provincial Fr Timothy Ploch and his Council to take a first overview of the situation of the San Francisco Province.

Starting on 15<sup>th</sup> February, in San Francisco (California), in the Corpus Christi community the visits to the 13 communities in the Province began.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Fr Esteban Ortiz suspended the visitation and went to São Paulo (Brazil) to take part in the Retreat which the Rector Major preached to the Provincials of the two Regions of America in Campos do Jordão.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March he returned to the San Francisco Province to continue his visits to the Salesian communities and arrived in Los Angeles (California).

On 31<sup>st</sup> March the Regional Councillor again suspended the Visitation of the communities in order to take part in the *SUO Provincial Chapter* which was held in San Juan Bautista (California) between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> April.

On 6<sup>th</sup> April he resumed the Visitation in the community of East Los Angeles.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May he concluded his visit to the last SUO Don Bosco

Hall Salesian community in Berkeley.

During the following days there were several meetings with the Provincial Commissions in Los Angeles, and on 4<sup>th</sup> May Fr Esteban Ortiz took part in the blessing and opening of De Sales Hall, where the Aspirantate and the Prenovitiate are located (Bellflower).

On 10<sup>th</sup> May, as a concluding part of the Extraordinary Visitation of the San Francisco Province (SUO), the Regional Councillor held a meeting with the Rectors of the communities, and the following morning, in a Provincial Assembly presented the final report of the Extraordinary Visitation; in the afternoon he had a final meeting with the Provincial Council.

On 13<sup>th</sup> May he travelled to Bogotá to undertake the consultation prior to the appointment of the new Provincial of COB. On 14<sup>th</sup> May he met with the Provincial Council; on 15<sup>th</sup> he visited the new Retreat House, the Salesianum, in Fusagasugá; on 16<sup>th</sup> he had a meeting in the community of the Theologate (Bogotá) with the participation of most of the communities (125 Salesians took part); on 17<sup>th</sup> he met with the

communities in the North of the country at Bucaramanga (16 Salesians took part), and the same day he travelled to Medellín; on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> he met the Postnovices of COB in the morning and then in the afternoon he had a meeting with the Provincial of COM, Fr John Jairo Gómez and his Council.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May, after celebrating Mass in the Novitiate at La Ceja, Fr Esteban Ortiz, travelled to Quito and on Monday morning met the Provincial of Ecuador, Fr Marcelo Farfán and his Council; on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> he travelled to Machala, and on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> from Guayaquil began his return journey to Rome.

In the week 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May he took part in the Retreat with the General Council at Sant'Agnello, before the start of the summer session of the Council.

When the summer plenary session of the General Council was over, Fr Esteban Ortiz González, Regional for Interamerica, on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July travelled to Bogotá (Colombia) to take part on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July, in the installation of Fr Jaime Morales Alfonso as the Provincial of the "San Pedro Claver" Province (COB).

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July he went to Quito to meet the Team of the Salesian Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation (CSRFP) and to discuss the way to evaluate the Centre. On Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> the Regional Councillor went to Rio de Janiero to take part in the *World Youth Day*, with the Rector Major and other members of the General Council.

On 29<sup>th</sup> July he went to Medellín (COM) to take part on the following day in the Curatorium of the Novitiate at La Ceja, where this year there are novices (30) from four Provinces (BOL, CAM, COB, and COM).

On Thursday afternoon, 1<sup>st</sup> August, he travelled to Bogotá (COB) and on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>, took part in the Curatorium of the Formation Community of the students of theology from the Andean Provinces (BOL, COB, COM, ECU, PER); at the time of the Curatorium there were 46 students of theology.

On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August, the Regional Councillor travelled to Guatemala to take part in the Curatorium of CRESCO (Regional Centre for the Specific Formation of the Salesian Brother) that was held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>.

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Divine Saviour Province of Central America (CAM)* with a meeting with the Provincial Fr Alejandro Hernandez Villalobos and his Council.

The following day he began his visits to the 24 Communities in the Province going to Quetzaltenango (Guatemala). After completing all the visits to the Communities (9) in Guatemala, on 9<sup>th</sup> September the Regional Councillor travelled to Panama, where he visited the Technical Institute and the Saint John Bosco Basilica-Parish. On 14<sup>th</sup> September he arrived in Costa Rica, where he visited the three communities in that country (San Isidro, Cartago, San José) On 25<sup>th</sup> September he went to Nicaragua to visit the three communities there (Granada, Managua and Masaya). Afterwards on 4<sup>th</sup> October he went to Honduras and visited the two communities in Tegucigalpa. Finally he went to El Salvador to visit the five communities the Province has there (Don Rua, Saint Cecilia, Saint Ana, Ricaldone, Ciudadela).

During his visits to the Salesian houses in El Salvador, the Regional Councillor interrupted

the Extraordinary Visitation on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October to chair the *annual meeting of the Provincials of the Interamerica Region* which on this occasion was held in Caracas, in the Provincial House of the Province of Venezuela, the meeting began on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and ended on Friday 26<sup>th</sup>; one of the items was the preparation for the GC27.

Between Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October the Regional Councillor carried out the consultation for the appointment of a new Provincial for VEN, with several meetings with the confreres in various places in the Province: Valencia, Barinas, Puerto La Cruz, Puerto Ayacucho, Los Teques, Caracas.

On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November he returned to the Province of Central America (CAM) to conclude his visits to the communities in El Salvador, meeting the Province Commissions, and preparing his final report. He then held a meeting with the Rectors and on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> a Province Assembly at Ayagualo to close the Extraordinary Visitation.

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November he had a meeting with the Provincial and his Council at which some situations in the Province were

examined

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Fr Esteban Ortiz travelled to New York to spend some days with his family.

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> he went to New Rochelle for a talk with the Provincial of SUE, Fr Thomas Dunne about the process being followed in the Province after the Extraordinary Visitation of the previous year (2012).

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November the Regional Councillor went to Quito (Ecuador) and took part in the annual meeting of the Extended Team of the Salesian Regional Centre of Ongoing Formation (CSRFP), with Fr Natale Vitali, Regional Councillor for Latin America - South Cone, the representatives of the Departments for Formation and for Youth Ministry (Fr Horacio López and Fr Rafael Borges, respectively), the Coordinator for Formation for CISUR (Fr Daniel Costa) and the members of the CSRFP Team (Fr Javier Altamirano, Fr Josue Nascimento, Fr Julio Olarte and Fr Alejandro Leon).

Finally on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November he began the return journey to Rome, where he arrived on 1<sup>st</sup> December to take part in the winter session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the East Asia and Oceania Region***

When the winter plenary session of the General Council was over the Regional Councillor for East Asia - Oceania, Fr Andrew Wong, on 1<sup>st</sup> February began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of South Philippines*. He began by visiting the communities on the Island of Mindanao. On 9<sup>th</sup> February he went to the Island of Cebu to visit the communities in this area. On 21<sup>st</sup> February he went to another Island called Samar, where there is a single Salesian community.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February the Regional left South Philippines to go to the North Philippines to carry out the consultation and discernment process for the appointment of the new Provincial. He did this in the four areas of the Province.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March the Regional left the North Philippines and returned to South Philippines to continue the Extraordinary Visitation, visiting the communities located in another Island called West Negros. He stayed there until 15<sup>th</sup> March and then returned to Cebu to visit the remaining communities in that area.

Fr Andrew Wong celebrated Holy Week in the city of Cebu,

between 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March. On the days of 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> April he met the various Province Commissions as an important part of the Extraordinary Visitation. On 13<sup>th</sup> April he took part in the Silver Jubilee celebrations of profession of seven confreres.

The Regional concluded the Extraordinary Visitation of the South Philippines Province on 17<sup>th</sup> April with a meeting with the Provincial, with the Provincial Council and with the Rectors of the communities. On 18<sup>th</sup> April he arrived in Manila to visit the North Philippines Province.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April he took part in a meeting for the Youth Ministry Delegates of East Asia and Oceania, with the presence of Fr Fabio Attard, General Councillor for Youth Ministry and his collaborator Fr Robert Simon, who had come from Rome for the occasion. The meeting continued until 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May the Regional went to mainland China to visit the missionaries in various cities. On 13<sup>th</sup> May he went to Thailand to visit the Province and the same day visited two missionaries in Laos.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May the Regional left Thailand, travelling to Suva, in

the Fiji Islands, to visit the formation community of the novitiate and postnovitiate of the Province of Australia. He stayed in this community until 18<sup>th</sup> May. On 19<sup>th</sup>, Pentecost Sunday, he left Suva and went to Samoa to visit the three Salesian communities in this Pacific Island.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> May he left Samoa to return to Rome where he arrived on 24<sup>th</sup> May, the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians.

At the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council, the Regional Councillor, Fr Andrew Wong, on 20<sup>th</sup> July left Rome for Chennai, in order to carry out in the name of the Rector Major – the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of Chennai, India*. On 31<sup>st</sup> July he began the Visitation to the Province with the first community, the studentate of theology “Becchi Don Bosco” at Kavrapettai.

On 27<sup>th</sup> August the Regional left Chennai to go to Bangkok, in order to participate in the *Congress of Salesian Brothers of the East Asia-Oceania Region*, that was held in Hua Hin, until 23<sup>rd</sup> August. On 24<sup>th</sup> August the Regional went to Manila to take part in a meeting of the Curatorium of the studentate of theology at Parañaque. The

meeting ended on 26<sup>th</sup> August and the Regional returned to Chennai to resume the Extraordinary Visitation.

On 6<sup>th</sup> September Fr Andrew Wong had the most unforgettable experience of his life. With some confreres he made a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Veilanganni. The whole months of September and October were then taken up with the Extraordinary Visitation of the Province of Chennai, which Fr Wong concluded on 16<sup>th</sup> November.

On 18<sup>th</sup> November the Regional left Chennai for Melbourne, in Australia, for the *annual meeting of the Superiors and Provincial Delegates for Formation in the East Asia-Oceania Region*. Also present were Fr Francesco Cereda, Councillor for Formation and Fr Chrys Saldanha, from the Formation Department, who led the meeting. This ended on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and on 24<sup>th</sup> November the Regional returned to Rome to take part in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the South Asia Region***

When the summer plenary session of the General Council was

finished the Regional Councillor for South Asia Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga, left Rome for a long Week-end in the Salesian foundations in the Yemen, which depend on the Bangalore Province. Between 28<sup>th</sup> January and 4<sup>th</sup> February with the Vice-Provincial he visited the Salesians who live and work in the four cities of Sana, Hodeida, Taiz and Aden. The Salesians take care of the Catholic communities in these cities and are chaplains to the Sisters of Mother Teresa.

From the Yemen the Regional went on to Chennai, India, arriving on 6<sup>th</sup> January. The following day he went on to Delhi to visit the house of the SPCSA and all the National level sectors which function there. His stay lasted five days. From Delhi the Regional travelled to Sri Lanka, via Chennai, and on 15<sup>th</sup> February he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Vice-Province of Sri Lanka (LKC)*. He began by giving a talk to the Provincial Chapter which was just finishing at that time. This was also the opening meeting of the Extraordinary Visitation. The following day the Regional met with the Superior of the Vice-Province and his Council to acquaint himself

with the situation of the Vice-Province.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February he began visiting the Houses and this was finished on 27<sup>th</sup> March. Thus the Regional visited the houses of: Dankotuwa-aspirantate, Nochchiagama, Kilinochchi, Pallavarayan Kaddu, Murunkan, Negombo, Kotadeniyawanovitiate, Metiyagane, Kandy, Uswetakeiyawa, Palliyawatte, Ahungalle, Hungama and Dungalpitya. In the course of the visits he also met in groups the Salesians in formation, the Salesian Sisters in five different places, and paid courtesy calls on the Bishops of Chilaw, Jaffna and Mannar. The Extraordinary Visitation finished on 27<sup>th</sup> March – Wednesday in Holy Week – with a concluding conference for the Rectors and a meeting with the Provincial.

On Holy Thursday the Regional returned to Chennai to carry out pastoral ministry in various parishes. On 1<sup>st</sup> April he went to Guwahati, to the Don Bosco Institute, for the annual assembly of the SPCSA. At the same time he met the Directors of the Development Offices and other experts in the field of building construction. After this, the SPCSA Council (just the

Provincials) met to deal with administrative issues. On 6<sup>th</sup> April there was a meeting of the *National Consultative Body of the Salesian Family*, with the Superiors and the representatives of the major groups of the Salesian Family in South Asia. Among other things they discussed the shared celebrations for the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco. On 9<sup>th</sup> April he returned to Chennai and visited some houses in Tirupattur.

Between 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April the Regional preached a Retreat of five days to the members of the Provincial Chapter of the Bangalore Province, and then took part in the opening of the Chapter. Afterwards at the invitation of Mons. George Rajendran, Salesian Bishop of Thuckalay in the south of India, Fr Maria Arokiam visited the Diocese for three days from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April. On 25<sup>th</sup> April the Regional went to Vellore to join in the celebrations of the World Day of Gratitude of the Salesian Sisters, in the presence of the Mother General, Sr Yvonne Reungat.

Between 27<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May the Regional was in the *Mumbai* Province to carry out

the consultation in view of the appointment of the new Provincial. He had a meeting with the Provincial Council and then went to the cities of Mumbai, Pune, Nasik and Baroda to meet the confreres in groups and lead the discernment process. On 4<sup>th</sup> May he left for *Myanmar* to visit the country which earlier had been part of the Calcutta Province. He visited the confreres and the works in Anisakan, Pyin oo Lwin (Maymio), Thibaw, Lashio, Mandalay and Yangon. He encouraged the confreres, prenovices, novices and students of theology and enjoyed the company and the hospitality of the confreres.

Having returned to India on 13<sup>th</sup>, the Regional had a medical check up in Chennai, visited his relatives in his home town of Varadarajanpet and returned to Rome on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

When the summer plenary session of the General Council had finished, Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga travelled to Brazil to take part in the *World Youth Day* in Rio de Janeiro, between 20<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> July. Afterwards he travelled to India, and on 3<sup>rd</sup> August began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Bangalore Province*. Nevertheless, on the

following days he went to Shillong, for the inauguration of the academic year at the Sacred Heart Theological College on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of the month. Then between 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August there was a half-yearly meeting of the Council of the SPCSA (Conference of Provincials) at Siloam near Shillong. After a day of recollection and another with the Economist General Bro. Jean Paul Muller, there were two days of the usual work. After this the Regional went to the Calcutta Province and met the confreres in four different places to carry out the consultation for the appointment of a new Provincial. Having completed this he returned to Bangalore to continue the Extraordinary Visitation.

The Visitation of the Bangalore Province took the Regional to 43 separate Salesian presences. He met almost 380 confreres in addition to many members of the Salesian Family and some ecclesiastical authorities in the course of his visit to the two States of Karnataka and Kerala. The Visitation lasted between 17<sup>th</sup> August and 22<sup>nd</sup> November. During this time Fr Maria Arokiam was in Calcutta, in the period between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>

November, to accompany the Rector Major who was visiting that Province, as well as attending *a meeting with all the Provincials of the Region*. Then resuming his work in Bangalore, the Regional concluded the Extraordinary Visitation on 22<sup>nd</sup> November with a meeting with the Provincial Council and with the Rectors. Then Fr Maria Arokiam visited his sick father in his home town, Varadarajanpet, staying some days with him. He then travelled to Rome where he arrived on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

### ***The Councillor for the North Europe Region***

After the end of the winter session of the Council, the Regional Councillor Fr Marek Chrzan went to Brussels in Belgium to take part in the Feast of Don Bosco in Ghent Cathedral at the conclusion of the pilgrimage of Don Bosco's relics in the North Belgium and Holland Province.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February he left for Malta to visit and also to spend some time studying English. During his stay in Malta he had the opportunity to visit all the Salesian communities and to get to know the local situation.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February he returned to Rome to leave again on 19<sup>th</sup> February, with the Rector Major and his Vicar, for Poland and Miejsce Piastowe for the beginning of the *General Chapter of the Michaelite Sisters*. After this visit he took part in the Provincial Chapter of the Wrocław Province (PLO) at Tarnowskie Góry, bringing the greetings and fraternal blessing of the Rector Major.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February he returned to Malta for the second part of the English language course.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> March he went to the Ukraine to visit the new Circumscription of Greek Catholic Ukraine. He paid a visit to a new foundation in Dnietropietrovsk in East Ukraine and then all the communities in Lviv, meeting the confreres, the Superior and the Council of the Circumscription. He spent Holy Thursday in the Salesian Latin Rite community in Bibrka-Przemyslany, which belongs to the Polish Province of Krakow (PLS).

For the Feast of Easter he went to Poland to the new novitiate for the Polish Provinces of Piła and Warsaw at Kutno-Woźniaków. Afterwards he took part in the Provincial Chapter of the Warsaw Province (PLE) in

the house of Lutomiersk, and then in the Provincial Chapter of the Province of Piła (PLN) which was held at the Marian Shrine in Licheń. On Divine Mercy Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April, in the Salesian parish in Kielce he presided at Mass and some perpetual professions.

On 12<sup>th</sup> April he went to his family to see his parents who were celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary. After this he took part in the Provincial Chapter of the Krakow Province (PLS), which was held in the Salesian theological studentate in Krakow. He also visited the novitiate in Kopiec, preaching the day of recollection.

On 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> April he chaired the meeting of the Polish Provincials' Conference (*KSIP*) together with some Delegates from various National Salesian Sectors.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April he went to Vienna in Austria for the conclusion of the Extraordinary Visitation of the Austrian Province (AUS), which had been undertaken by Fr Tadeusz Rozmus.

On 28<sup>th</sup> April he went to Zagreb in Croatia to be present at the PGS European Salesian Games hosted this year between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013 by the Province of Croatia (CRO).

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May he left for Gdańsk in Poland (PLN), where between 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May he presided at the *meeting of Provincials from the North Europe Region*.

On 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> May he was in Turin to meet the young confreres from the Region who are studying theology at the Crocetta. On 22<sup>nd</sup> May he took part in the European meeting for Salesian novices at Pinerolo.

On 24<sup>th</sup> May he presided at a solemn Mass at Rumia in Poland where the Salesian parish church was declared the Diocesan Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians.

On 25<sup>th</sup> May he returned to Rome to take part in the Retreat and the summer session of the General Council.

At the end of the summer session of the Council, Fr Marek Chrzan took a short holiday in Poland, visiting his parents and relatives. On 15<sup>th</sup> August in the novitiate at Poprad in Slovakia (SLK) he presided at the first professions ceremony.

On 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> August he took part in the conclusion of the pilgrimage of the relics of Don Bosco in Poland at Oświęcim, where he presided at the solemn Mass and the perpetual professions of some

Polish confreres.

On 30<sup>th</sup> August he went to Budapest to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Hungarian Province*. The Visitation began with a meeting with the Provincial Council and visits to the following communities: Budapest-Obuda, Kazincbarcika, Budapest-Újpest.

On the evening of 13<sup>th</sup> September he had a meeting with the European Council of the Salesian Cooperators, which was holding its annual meeting at Pelifüldsentkerest, in Hungary.

On 15<sup>th</sup> September he went to Milan in Italy to preside at the celebration of the perpetual professions of confreres from the Lombardy-Emilian Province (ILE).

On 17<sup>th</sup> September he resumed the *Extraordinary Visitation* in Hungary visiting the communities at Szombathely, Péliföldszentkereszt, Balassagyarmat. On 27<sup>th</sup> September he concluded the Visitation with a meeting of the Rectors in Budapest.

On 30<sup>th</sup> September he went to Lubiana in *Slovenia*, to begin the *Extraordinary Visitation* to this Province of Ss. Cyril and Methodius. On 1<sup>st</sup> October he began the Visitation with a meeting of the Provincial Council at Lubiana, and then he visited

the following communities: Šentrupert, Cerknica with a presence also in Italy at Opcina near Trieste.

On 13<sup>th</sup> October he took part in the celebrations for the *Centenary of the presence of the Salesians in Croatia*, held in the presence of the Rector Major in Zagreb.

Afterwards he visited the community in Veržej and then went to Hungary, to Budapest, for the *Beatification of the Salesian Brother martyr Ištván Sándor*. Then he went to visit the community at Mužlja in Serbia. On 23<sup>rd</sup> October he presided at the Provincial Feastday in Maribor, and then visited the communities at Želimlje, Ig, and Podgorica in Montenegro. Finally he visited the communities in Maribor, Lubiana-Kodeljevo and Lubiana-Rakovnik.

On 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> November he went to Slovakia for the consultation for the appointment of a new Provincial for the Province of Slovakia, holding three meetings of confreres in Bratislava, Žilina and Prešov.

On his return he visited the Salesian centres with Slovene confreres in Austria at Št. Primož and then the community of elderly confreres in Trstenik.

Between 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November

he took part in the meeting in Berlin of Provincials and Vice-Provincials of the Provinces in the *Atlantic - German zone* of the North Europe Region with the Rector Major and his Vicar.

On 27<sup>th</sup> he concluded the Extraordinary Visitation of the Slovene Province meeting the Rectors, Provincial Delegates and members of the Provincial Council in the house of Lubiana-Rakovnik.

On 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> he went to Austria, for the consultation for the appointment of the new Provincial of the Austrian Province. He chaired the meetings of confreres in three places Völkermarkt, Vienna and Linz.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December he returned to Rome to take part in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the West Europe Region***

At the end of the winter session of the General Council the Regional Councillor Fr José Miguel Núñez left Rome on 28<sup>th</sup> January to go to Madrid to preach the monthly day of recollection for the community of the Theologians, in preparation for

the feast of Don Bosco. On 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> January he presided at the celebrations to mark *the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Salesian presence "Lora Tamayo" in Jerez de la Frontera*. On 29<sup>th</sup> he gave a conference for the teachers from the Salesian houses in the Province on Don Bosco the educator.

On the days 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> February, the Councillor took part in a Retreat for Rectors from the Provinces of Barcelona, Seville and Valencia at Sanlúcar la Mayor, in view of their unification in the new Circumscription. On 3<sup>rd</sup> he chaired the Curatorium of the postnovitiate in the same city.

On 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> February in Madrid he took part in various meetings of the National Youth Ministry Centre with the Province Delegates. On 14<sup>th</sup> February he visited the postnovices in Granada and spent the day with the formation community.

On 17<sup>th</sup> February in the name of the Rector Major the Councillor began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the León Province*, which lasted until the end of the month of May. During these three and a half months the Councillor visited all the houses in the Province, met the Provincial

Council twice and chaired two meetings of Rectors. He also took part in various meetings of the Salesian Family and on a number of occasions met the young people of the SYM. In addition he also had private meetings with the Bishops of León, Lugo, Orense, Oviedo, Palencia, Santiago, Valladolid and Vigo.

In the course of the Extraordinary Visitation of SLE the Regional also had some other engagements.

On 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> February, Fr José Miguel went to Barcelona to chair a meeting of the Social Platforms of the West Europe Region. Taking part were the eight Provinces of the Region involved and their Provincials.

During 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> March he chaired the *annual meeting of the Provincials of the West Europe Region* held this time in Santiago de Compostela.

Between 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March the Councillor took part in a Retreat for the Rectors in the Provinces of Bilbao, León and Madrid in Loyola (San Sebastián), in view of their unification in the new Circumscription.

During Holy Week with the SYM-Leon he took part in the Easter Gathering held in Cambados.

On the days 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> April the Councillor attended the FRB Provincial Chapter held in Lyons.

Following the restructuring process of the Spanish Provinces Fr José Miguel met with the Provincials on 6<sup>th</sup> May in Madrid. For the same purpose on 12<sup>th</sup> he took part in a meeting with the Provincial Councils of Barcelona, Seville and Valencia at Godelleta (Valencia).

On 13<sup>th</sup> May he gave a conference on Don Bosco the educator for teachers and the Salesian Family from Extremadura at Badajoz.

Fr José Miguel preached the Novena of Mary Help of Christians at Vigo and took part in the Feast in the same house. He concluded the Extraordinary Visitation of the León Province with a meeting with the Provincial Council on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

Fr José Miguel then returned to Rome to take part in the Retreat with the General Council between 26<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June at Sant'Agnello and then in the summer plenary session of the General Council.

At the end of the summer session of the Council, the Regional Fr José Miguel Núñez left Rome to take part in various meetings of the Region in Madrid.

In the last week of August he went to Paris for the installation of the new Provincial of FRB in Lyons on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

On 29<sup>th</sup> August the Councillor went to Lisbon to take part in a meeting of the Provincial Council of Portugal and accompany the process of revitalisation set in motion following the Extraordinary Visitation and the Provincial Chapter of 2010.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September the Regional held a meeting with the Conference of Provincials of Spain in Madrid to finalise the process of the restructuring of the Provinces.

Between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September Fr José Miguel spent a week with his family.

Between 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September he preached a retreat for the postnovices of Spain at Sierra Nevada, in Granada.

During the rest of the month of September he met all the Rectors and the Provincial Councils of the various Provinces in Spain in six separate meetings (Barcelona, Bilbao, León, Madrid, Seville and Valencia) to launch the consultation process for the new Superiors in view of the restructuring of Salesian Spain.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September in Madrid he met the National Youth

Ministry Commissions for a day of formation and planning.

In the month of October he was in London where he followed a four week English language course.

On 29<sup>th</sup> October he returned to Spain to celebrate in *Campano (Cadice)* the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the Salesians.

On 31<sup>st</sup> October he travelled to Turin for the meeting for the missionaries in Project Europe which was held over the weekend in Valdocco. On the same day 31<sup>st</sup> October there was a meeting of the Technical Commission for EXPO 2015.

In the first week of November in Madrid there was an ordinary meeting of the West Europe Region on 4-5 and of the Iberian Conference on 6-7.

In addition, during the month of November, there were a number of different meetings for the coordination and animation of various sectors in Spain (National Youth Ministry Centre, the CCS Publishing House, Mission Office, the "Jóvenes y Desarrollo" Foundation).

On 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> the Councillor paid a visit to the house in Kenitra, Morocco.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November he gave a conference in Jaén, on the

occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Don Bosco Project Foundation. Finally on 24<sup>th</sup> November he returned to Rome to take part in the winter plenary session of the General Council.

### ***The Councillor for the Italy and Middle East Region***

After the conclusion of the winter session of the General Council and a short visit to his parents, Fr Pier Fausto Frisoli returned to *Sicily to continue the Extraordinary Visitation*. He celebrated the Feast of Don Bosco at Catania Barriera in the morning and in the evening at Ragusa where he closed the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the work. He then continued the Visitation of the communities in Modica, Catania - Salette, Palermo - Saint Clare, Palermo - Jesus Adolescent, Camporeale, Palermo - Ranchibile, Marsala, Alcamo, Trapani, Gela, Riesi, Messina - Giostra, Messina - Savio, Catania Provincial House.

In addition to the communities mentioned, Fr Frisoli met the two groups of the Don Bosco Volunteers in Sicily, numerous communities of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the

Finance Committee, confreres in the first five years of priesthood, those in their perpetual vows, and those involved in technical training. On 15<sup>th</sup> February he also visited the National Vocation Office and on 16<sup>th</sup> February attended the Assembly of CNOS/Schools.

On 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April he shared with the Provincial Council the conclusions of the Visitation, which he then presented to the Assembly of the Rectors on 8<sup>th</sup> April. The previous day he had presided at Mass on the occasion of Youth Day in Sicily.

Between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April, Fr Frisoli was in the office. On 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April, with Fr Gianni Mazzali, ISI Provincial, he visited the confreres at Manouba in Tunisia. He then chaired the Curatorium at Turin-Crocetta, Pinerolo and Rome-San Tarcisio.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April he began the *Extraordinary Visitation of the Saint Mark Province of North East Italy (INE)* with an assembly at Mogliano Veneto. He then visited the communities of Albarè, Bardolino, Venezia Mestre A. Zatti, Verona Santa Croce, Monteortone, Padova, Venezia Mestre San Marco, Venezia Mestre IUSVE, Venezia Mestre Ispettorìa, Costanza and

Bacau in Romania. Between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May at the Sacro Cuore in Rome he chaired the meeting of CISI. Having returned to INE, he met the Rectors, those in practical training, the Executive Committee of CNOS/Fap. On 26<sup>th</sup> May he returned to Rome to take part in the summer session of the General Council.

At the end of the summer session of the Council, Fr Pier Fausto Frisoli took part on 24<sup>th</sup> July in the General Assembly of the Don Bosco Volunteers, presiding at Mass. Between 25<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> August he visited his parents and then returned to Rome. Between 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August he took part in the 'SYM Gathering' of the Region held in Turin. Between 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> he went to visit the confreres in the first five years of priesthood, those in their perpetual vows, and those preparing for their perpetual profession in Turin and Messina; he then returned to Rome.

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September he went to Moldavia for the Extraordinary Visitation of the community in Chisinau, which belongs to the INE. On 6<sup>th</sup> he led a formation meeting for teachers and formation personnel in INE on the subject of the spirituality

of Don Bosco. On 7<sup>th</sup> September, in Pordenone, he received the perpetual profession of three confreres, and the following day he made the Extraordinary Visitation of the community in Castello di Godego "Mons. Cognata". He then returned to Rome where between 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, he chaired the *Conference of the Provincials of the Region*.

On 19<sup>th</sup> September he resumed the Extraordinary Visitation of the Saint Mark Province of North East Italy, visiting in turn the following communities: Mezzano di Primiero, Belluno, Venezia - Castello, Schio, Verona - Don Bosco, Verona - San Zeno, Castello di Godego, Este, Trento, Bolzano, Mogliano Veneto - Comunità Proposta, Mogliano Veneto - Astori, Udine, Tolmezzo, Pordenone, San Donà di Piave, Porto Viro. Between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November he chaired a Formation Seminar for School

and Technical Training Centre Chaplains. Between 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November at Monteortone he led the first stage of the Formation Course for new Rectors in the Region. On 13<sup>th</sup> November he took part in the presentation of the Manifesto for Technical Training promoted by CNOS/Fap, CIOFS FP, ENAIP, ACLI, in the presence of the Minister for Work, the Under Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research and other members of Parliament.

He then resumed the Extraordinary Visitation of INE, going to Santa Maria La Longa, Chioggia, Gorizia. On 27<sup>th</sup> he had a meeting with the Provincial Council and the following day gave the final report to the Assembly of the Confreres held in Venezia-Mestre.

On 29<sup>th</sup> November he returned to Rome for the winter session of the General Council.

**5.1 Letter of the Rector Major following World Youth Day held in Rio de Janeiro**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
29<sup>th</sup> July 2013

*There follows the text of the Letter that the Rector Major, Fr. Pascual Chávez Villanueva, on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013, addressed to the Confreres and to the young people at the end of the World Youth Day (WYD), held in Rio de Janeiro between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> July 2013. It is his reflection on the experience of this “splendid ecclesial event”, concentrating especially on the charismatic figure of Pope Francis, who with «his gestures, attitudes and addresses enlightened minds, warmed hearts and reinforced everyone’s desire to be true “disciples and missionaries of Christ” sent into the world, without fear, to serve and transform it». The Rector Major links the experience of the Days and the appeals made by Pope Francis to the process we have been following in preparation for the Bicentenary of the birth of our beloved Father and Founder Don Bosco and, in particular to the GC27 with its challenging theme “Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel”. Here then is the text of this Letter of the Rector Major:*

My Dear Confreres,

I am writing to you immediately following the closure of World Youth Day, in Rio de Janeiro.

I have had the grace and privilege of being part of this, along with other members of the General Council, Fr Adrian Bregolin, Fr Fabio Attard, Fr Natale Vitali, Fr Esteban Ortiz and Fr Maria Arokiam Kanaga.

I was very happy to see so many confreres, Provincials, Vice-Provincials, youth ministry delegates, young confreres in formation accompanying the various delegations from five continents.

Even though geographical distance and the financial crisis was a limiting factor for many, the arrival of so many other SDBs and young people who wanted to come meant there were more than 7,000 youthful members of the SYM from Salesian works as well as from those of the FMA, Daughters of the Divine Saviour and the Sisters of Charity of Jesus.

I believe I am speaking for everyone who took part when I describe the great joy and enthusiasm of these days for us around the charismatic figure

of Pope Francis. His gestures, attitudes and addresses enlightened minds, warmed hearts and reinforced everyone's desire to be true "disciples and missionaries of Christ" sent into the world, without fear, to serve and transform it.

I especially appreciated how the three components – gestures, attitudes and thought – came together seamlessly to help us understand better the figure of Pope Francis. It all explains his moral strength, his freedom to act and speak, his prophetic stance. Only thus can he lend true value to all he does and says in exercising his Petrine ministry. Only thus can we appreciate the vision of the Church that he has and feels he is called to promote. Only thus can we better appreciate his way of governing: he starts from where things are, and is very sensitive to this, to set processes of change in social dynamics, through a culture of dialogue and respect for diversity, well aware of the irreplaceable role of the Church in collaborating in reconciliation for a fractured world.

We are speaking of a Church freed from a worldly spirit, the temptation to harden and solidify itself within its institutional framework, to a bourgeois lifestyle,

to a closing in on itself, to clericalism. A Church that may be truly the body of the Word made flesh and, like Him, incarnate in this world, resplendent in the poor and suffering. Its service is to offer Christ and Gospel values for the necessary transformation of society. A Church that can no longer reduce itself to being a small chapel, but rather a home for humanity. In Pope Francis' heart there is a desire for a Church connoted by openness and where everyone is accepted, in all their diversity of culture, race, tradition, religious confession. Such openness and acceptance are possible through a culture of dialogue and encounter which makes unity with respect for diversity possible. A Church that goes out on the street to evangelise and serve, reaching out to the geographical, cultural and existential periphery. A poor Church that favours the poor, becomes their voice and gives them back a voice to overcome the selfish indifference of those with more, as well as the desperate violence of those who feel most exploited and defrauded. A Church that gives just attention and relevance to women, without whom the Church itself runs the risk of becoming sterile.

Of the almost 20 addresses he gave, in my view the most important because they were the most programmatic, were the one he gave to the Brazilian Episcopal Conference and another to leaders in society, as well as the messages to youth who were the central characters in the WYD.

*To the Brazilian Bishops:* Pope Francis began his address by offering the Aparecida document as a key to understanding the Church's mission. The Church does not have the power of a transatlantic ocean liner because it is a simple fisherman's boat. God manifests himself in it through poor means, and pastoral success does not depend so much on human efficiency as on God's creativity. The Church then is called to transform itself little by little, recalling that the mystery enters people through the heart and cannot be reduced to rational explanation. The Holy Father then gave the Bishops the icon of Emmaus as a key to understanding the present and future, offering an innovative ecclesiological, not a Christological interpretation. He sought to have it understood that abandonment of the Church is due to the fact that it is reduced to being a relic of the past, unable

to respond to the problems and challenges of humankind today. The Church cannot escape the night it is experiencing because of the flight of believers to whom it promised something higher, stronger, more resolute and speedy. Unfortunately the Church seems to have forgotten that there is nothing higher than Jerusalem, or stronger than the weakness of the Cross, or more convincing than kindness, love, beauty, or more speedy than the rhythm of pilgrims – the Church should keep step with them to rediscover the tempo of “being with” those with whom it walks, nurturing patience and an ability to listen, comprehension of so many diverse situations. Finally, the Pope identified the grand priorities the Brazilian episcopate should give its attention to.

Turing to *political and cultural leaders* he sought to make them aware of the historic moment we are experiencing, of their responsibility for resolving conflicts, of the urgent need to redeem politics. More than once he emphasises the importance of the culture of encounter they need to foster to overcome the sorrowful exclusion of the elderly through cultural euthanasia that makes it impossible for them to

enrich society with their wisdom, values. A culture of encounter that should eliminate the social waste of the young, when they are so often denied the possibility of work and a future.

In his messages *to the young*, the invitation was always one of investing their energies, their very lives in positive causes for which it is worth spending their lives. In particular, Jesus Christ is the great cause worthy of one's entire life. He exhorted them to be fearless in making courageous choices. Making use of metaphors he told them they can be God's field where the good seed germinates, grows and bears fruit; he invited them to go down to the field with God's team and train to become athletes of Christ; he exhorted them to work in the field of transformation to renew the Church and be transforming agents in society and the world. Finally he invited them, like Christ and with Christ, to depart, again without fear, to go out and serve the world and enrich it with the gift of Christ and the Gospel, beginning all this by serving their friends and companions, and all the other young people they can contact.

So, in Rio de Janeiro, Pope Francis sent the Church out onto

the street, took it to the peripheries, had it speak as a Mother, gave it back energy, and by doing so through his gestures and attitudes, taught us the kind of Church he wants and the kind of rapport it must have with the world.

Obviously I experienced this splendid ecclesial event with my brothers and sisters, with the young, as a Salesian, as Rector Major, trying to understand better how this new ecclesial movement has to be accepted, translated and lived out in our Salesian Congregation.

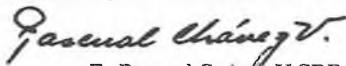
And, without there being too much pretence, I have to say that the road we have taken in preparation for the bicentenary of birth of our beloved Father and Founder, Don Bosco, and especially for GC27, with its challenging theme of "Witnesses to the radical approach of the Gospel", are in perfect harmony with this appeal to Christ, his Gospel, to simplicity, poverty and humility.

Through this letter I invite all of you, Salesians and the young, to take up the Holy Father's addresses again, to take up and bring to life his spiritual and pastoral guidelines as a priority not only for Youth Ministry but

also as part of our journey towards the bicentenary.

While we continue to pray for Pope Francis, as he himself requests insistently and everywhere, let us entrust the Church and our beloved Congregation to Mary Immaculate, the Help of Christians, that they may be up to what the Lord and the young expect of them.

Affectionately, in Don Bosco



Fr Pascual CHÁVEZ V. SDB  
Rector Major

## 5.2 Liturgical Memorial of Blessed Maria Troncatti, FMA

With a Rescript dated 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013 (Prot. N. 147/13/L) the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, responding to the request submitted, determined that *Blessed Maria TRONCATTI, FMA, should be inserted into the proper Liturgical Calendar of the Salesian Society of Saint Francis of Sales to be celebrated each year as a Memorial “ad libitum” (Optional Memorial) on 25<sup>th</sup> August, the date of her “dies natalis”.*

The same Pontifical Congregation *has approved the proper liturgical text* for the celebration that will be inserted in the ordinary texts of the Liturgy for the “Common of Virgins” or the “Common of women saints” (for those who worked for the underprivileged).

The liturgical texts specifically approved are those of the *Prayer (the Collect of the Mass and the Prayer for the Liturgy of the Hours)*, and of the *Second Reading for the Office of Readings*.

The proper liturgical texts are given below.

### *COLLECT*

- *IN LATIN.*

Miséricors Pater,  
qui, Spíritus Sancti virtúte,  
matérnam caritátem Christi  
ad gentes nuntiáandi  
in Beáta María Troncatti,  
virgine, suscitásti,  
concede nos,  
eius intercessióne,  
pacis et reconciliatiónis  
artífices esse,  
ut omnes sanctum  
nomen tuum magnificent.  
Per Dóminum.

- *IN ENGLISH.*

Merciful Father,  
 who through  
 the power of the Holy Spirit  
 stirred up in the Virgin Blessed  
 Maria Troncatti  
 a maternal charity  
 to announce Christ to the nations,  
 grant, through her intercession,  
 that we might be instruments  
 of reconciliation and peace,  
 so that all may glorify  
 your holy name.  
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 your Son,  
 who lives and reigns with you  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**SECOND READING  
 FOR THE OFFICE  
 OF READINGS**

**From the Encyclical  
*Redemptoris missio*  
 of Blessed John Paul II,  
 Pope.**

(nn. 42. 69-70. 88: AAS 83[1991]  
 289. 317-318. 335)

*To live the mystery of Christ  
 as testimony  
 of Spiritual maternity*

The missionary, who, despite  
 all his or her human limitations  
 and defects, lives a simple life,

taking Christ as the model, is a  
 sign of God and of transcendent  
 realities. But everyone in the  
 Church, striving to imitate the  
 Divine Master, can and must bear  
 this kind of witness; in many  
 cases it is the only possible way  
 of being a missionary. The  
 evangelical witness which the  
 world finds most appealing is  
 that of concern for people, and  
 of charity toward the poor, the  
 weak and those who suffer. The  
 complete generosity underlying  
 this attitude and these actions  
 stands in marked contrast to  
 human selfishness. It raises  
 precise questions which lead  
 to God and to the Gospel. A  
 commitment to peace, justice,  
 human rights and human  
 promotion is also a witness to  
 the Gospel when it is a sign of  
 concern for persons and is  
 directed toward integral human  
 development.

The Church needs to make  
 known the great gospel values of  
 which she is the bearer. No one  
 witnesses more effectively to  
 these values than those who  
 profess the consecrated life in  
 chastity, poverty and obedience,  
 in a total gift of self to God and  
 in complete readiness to serve  
 humanity and society after the  
 example of Christ.

In the religious missionary the virginity for the sake of the kingdom is transformed into a motherhood in the spirit that is rich and fruitful. It is precisely the mission *ad gentes* that offers them vast scope for «the gift of self with love in a total and undivided manner». The example and activity of women who through virginity are consecrated to love of God and neighbour, especially the very poor, are an indispensable evangelical sign among those peoples and cultures where women still have far to go on the way toward human promotion and liberation.

An essential characteristic of missionary spirituality is intimate communion with Christ. We cannot understand or carry out the mission unless we refer it to Christ as the one who was sent to evangelise. St. Paul describes Christ's attitude: «Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross» (*Phil 2:5-*

8). The mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption is thus described as a total self-emptying which leads Christ to experience fully the human condition and to accept totally the Father's plan. This is an emptying of self which is permeated by love and expresses love. The mission follows this same path and leads to the foot of the cross. The missionary is required to «renounce himself and everything that up to this point he considered as his own, and to make himself everything to everyone». This he does by a poverty which sets him free for the Gospel, overcoming attachment to the people and things about him, so that he may become a brother to those to whom he is sent and thus bring them Christ the Saviour. This is the goal of missionary spirituality: «To the weak I became weak; I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the Gospel» (*1 Cor 9:22-23*). It is precisely because he is «sent» that the missionary experiences the consoling presence of Christ, who is with him at every moment of life – «Do not be afraid, for I am with you» (*Acts 18:9-10*) – and who awaits him in the heart of every person.

RESPONSORIAL

*1 Cor 9:22*

- R. To the weak I became weak, \*  
I have become all things to all,  
that I might save some at any  
cost.
- ℣. The Lord has sent me to the  
poor.
- R. I have become all things to all,  
that I might save some at any  
cost.

### 5.3 Decree on the martyrdom of the Servant of God Stephen Sándor, SDB

*Below in an English translation  
is the "Decretum super martyrio"  
of the Salesian Brother István  
SÁNDOR, published by the  
Congregation for the Causes of  
Saints on 27th March 2013.*

#### DECREE ON THE MARTYRDOM

*«If anyone of you should suffer  
for being a Christian, then he is  
not to be ashamed of it; he should  
thank God that he has been called  
one» (1 Pt, 4.16)*

Numerous is the host of  
martyrs who for their faith shed  
their blood on Hungarian soil  
during the period of the

communist regime, immediately  
after the second world war.  
Among these witnesses to Christ  
even to the shedding of his blood  
must also be numbered the  
Servant of God Stephen Sándor,  
a lay religious of the Society of  
Saint Francis of Sales.

From his teenage years Stephen  
followed an exemplary path of  
faith, fortified by religious  
profession in the Society of Saint  
Francis of Sales and strengthened  
by holiness of life according to  
the rule of a Salesian Brother. He  
was distinguished by a genuine  
religious vocation according to the  
spirit of the Founder Saint John  
Bosco, gifted with an intense  
fervent zeal for the salvation of  
souls, especially of the young.  
This was the foundation on which  
the Servant of God would face up  
to martyrdom without doubts or  
hesitation.

The first-born of three children,  
Stephen Sándor was born in the  
village of *Szolnok* on 24<sup>th</sup> October  
1914 into a deeply religious family,  
from which he received the first  
"rudimenta fidei". These were  
further developed and put into  
practice in assiduous attendance  
at the religious and liturgical  
activities of the local parish,  
directed by the Order of Friars  
Minor. Later his vocation turned

towards the Society of Saint Francis of Sales, which he entered as a postulant on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1936. After two years preparation, on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1938 he was admitted to the novitiate as a Brother. In this period he showed a remarkable personality and spiritual depth, rooted in love for the Eucharist and for Mary Help of Christians, becoming for his companions not only a friend but a model for life, especially in humility and obedience. After having completed military service, the Servant of God made his first triennial profession on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1940, the second on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1943, and finally perpetual profession on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1946. During this time he was engaged first as an apprentice and then as a manager of a printing press, at the same time exercising the role of an educator of the young and of the apprentices, while outside the Salesian Congregation he was known as a member and as an organiser of the National Association of Young Catholics. He gave the highest testimony to the spiritual and apostolic nature of the Salesian Society: in fact he carried out his duties with singular diligence, demonstrating holiness of life, piety, competence and fidelity to

Christian principles. Cultivating an interior life and preserving in all his occupations union with God, he practised with everyone and everywhere a pedagogical method in the spirit of Saint John Bosco – commonly called the “preventive system” – that is offering to the young the gospel of joy, through the pedagogy of kindness. He lived his faith in a active manner, devoting himself to evangelisation and the teaching of Christian doctrine, according to the mission of the Salesian Society, carrying this out with a true oratorian spirit. The constant work he undertook among the boys of the Oratory, in looking after the altar servers and as “a master printer” demonstrated his competence as an educator, which he confirmed with the proofs of an intense spiritual life.

Throughout 1943, when the Servant of God was preparing to make his perpetual profession, the communist party took control in Hungary and immediately the very bitter hatred of the regime for religion especially towards the Catholic Church manifested itself: in fact, in all sorts of ways the Church was forced to submit to the power of the Hungarian state, which gradually sought its annihilation by the confiscation

of church property, the closing down of all youth associations, the nationalisation of all schools, arriving finally, in 1950, at the suppression of all Orders and Religious Congregations.

Stephen Sándor too had to leave the Salesian house and had found work in a printing press in *Szolnok*, when the Public Authorities sent him to Budapest as an instructor of young orphans preparing them for work, and of apprentices. In this work, rather than following the atheistic principles of the regime, the Servant of God continued with prudence to teach the principles of the Christian religion, fostering the Catholic faith in the minds of the young. All this, however, was not to the liking of the regime, so he became the subject of secret investigation by the Public Authorities.

Fr László Ádám, Provincial at the time, decided to send Stephen Sándor abroad to enable him to continue to live his life as a religious; but the Servant of God did not take advantage of this opportunity preferring to devote his life to saving Hungarian youth even at the price of martyrdom. His sacrifice was an expression of his conviction regarding fidelity to God and to the Salesian vocation,

which always encouraged him to carry out this great ideal in the place Providence had marked out for him.

Nevertheless, following the interception of his correspondence, the hidden activities of the Servant of God were discovered and on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1952 he was arrested and imprisoned. He was subjected to inhuman interrogations and fierce torture and psychological pressure, which weakened the mind and deceived the will, to the extent that he admitted the absurd and false accusations made against him, – his involvement in plots against the democratic order, high treason and other crimes, all accusations which carried with them the death penalty. Even in prison the Servant of God firmly maintained his fidelity to Christ, praying with all his might and offering his sufferings to the Lord. In addition, in spite of knowing that the carrying out of the condemnation to death was close, with exceptional serenity he was a source of consolation for his companions. On 12<sup>th</sup> March 1953 the sentence of his being condemned to death was formally pronounced, and it was carried out by hanging on 8<sup>th</sup> June in the same year.

While the memory of the Servant of God and that of several other confreres persecuted and killed under the communist regime was kept alive, it was only on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2003 that the first formal steps were taken to introduce the cause of beatification and canonisation. The diocesan enquiry was undertaken by the Archdiocese of Budapest-Strigonio between 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006 and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2007. The juridical validity of the diocesan enquiry was recognised by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints with a decree of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008. When the *Positio* was prepared, there was discussion, according to standard procedure, whether the death of the Servant of God really was martyrdom. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012 the Special Commission of Theologian Consultors gave its positive decision. The Cardinals and Bishops assembled in an Ordinary Session with the undersigned Cardinal Angelo Amato presiding recognised that the Servant of God was killed for his fidelity to Christ.

Made aware of all these things by a report of the undersigned Cardinal Prefect, the Supreme Pontiff Francis, accepting and ratifying the votes expressed by

the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, on today's date declares that: *The martyrdom and the Cause of the Servant of God Stephen Sándor, a professed Brother of the Society of Saint Francis of Sales, is verified in this case for the intended purpose.*

The Supreme Pontiff directed that this decree be published and preserved among the Acts of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

Given at Rome 27<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

† ANGELO Card. AMATO, S.D.B.  
*Prefect*

† MARCELLO BARTOLUCCI  
Titular Archbishop of Mevania (Bevagna)  
*Secretary*

## 5.4 New Provincials

*Below (in alphabetical order) we provide some biographical details of the Provincials appointed by the Rector Major with his Council in the course of the summer plenary session 2013.*

1. *D'SOUZA Godfrey, Provincial of the Province of MUMBAI, INDIA*

On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013, the Rector Major with his Council appointed

Fr *Godfrey D'SOUZA* as the new Provincial of the Saint Francis Xavier Province with headquarters in *MUMBAI, India*. He succeeds Fr Michael Fernandes.

Fr Godfrey D'Souza was born 8<sup>th</sup> November 1952 at Parel, Mumbai, India, and has been a Salesian since 24<sup>th</sup> May 1972, the date of his first religious profession made in Yercaud, at the conclusion of the year of novitiate. Perpetually professed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1979, he was ordained priest on 18th December 1982 in Mumbai.

After having worked as young priest in Hubli, Karnataka, in 1986 he left for the missions in Africa, working in Southern Sudan in Tonj and Wau, between 1986 and 1991, and in Tanzania at Dodoma - S. Dominic Savio, between 1991 and 1994. Having returned to the Mumbai Province, he was a pioneer in the new Salesian foundation in Suttgaiti, Karnataka, between 1994 and 1996; from 1996 he was for six years Rector of the Provincial House in Mumbai - Matunga; between 1998 and 2003 he was Provincial Secretary and from 2003 to 2009 he was Vice Provincial and Delegate for Youth Ministry, contributing greatly to

the animation and administration of the Province. In 2009 he was appointed Rector of the house of Mumbai - Andheri, a role he was still filling when he was appointed Provincial.

## 2. *GEBREMESKEL Estifanos, Superior of the Vice-Province of ETHIOPIA - ERITREA*

To lead the Vice-Province "Maria Kidane Meheret" of *ETHIOPIA - ERITREA* the Rector Major with his Council on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013 appointed Fr *Estifanos GEBREMESKEL*. He succeeds Fr Genaro Gegantoni.

Born 18<sup>th</sup> April 1969 in Makallé, Ethiopia, Estifanos Gebremeskel made his first profession on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1991, at the end of the year of novitiate undertaken in Adigrat. Perpetually professed on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1997, he was ordained priest on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1999 in Adigrat.

After ordination he did pastoral work for two years in Makallé and for a further two years in Dilla in Ethiopia. He then went to Rome to study at the Salesian Pontifical University (2003-2006). After returning to the Vice Province he was Rector in Adigrat for six years. Since 2012 he has been Vice-Rector, Economist and

Director of the Oratory in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia. Between 2007 and 2011 he was a Councillor of the Vice-Province and since 2011, until his appointment as Superior, he was Vicar of the Vice-Province. From 2007 he was also Delegate for formation.

3. *MORALES ALFONSO Jaime Enrique, Provincial of the Province of BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA*

On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013, the Rector Major with his Council appointed Fr *Jaime Enrique MORALES ALFONSO* the new Provincial of the Saint Peter Claver Province with headquarters in *BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA*. He succeeds Fr Mario Leonardo Peresson.

Jaime Enrique Morales Alfonso was born on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1946 at San Eduardo, Boyacá, Colombia, and has been a Salesian since 29<sup>th</sup> January 1965, the date of his first religious profession which he made in Tena, at the end of the year of novitiate. Perpetually professed 14<sup>th</sup> December 1970, he was ordained priest 15<sup>th</sup> August 1974 in Bogotá.

After ordination he did pastoral work in various houses, including the Provincial House between 1985 and 1988. He was then appointed Rector of the

house in Tunja from 1988 until 1993. In 1993 he was appointed Vice-Provincial, a position he held for six years with the role also of Rector of the Provincial House. Then between 1999 and 2004 he was in Ecuador, where he worked in the house of Quito - El Girón and from 2004 until 2010 in the Provincial House in Quito. During the ten years spent in Ecuador his role was that of animator, Vice-Rector, and Rector of the Regional Centre for Ongoing Formation in Quito. At the end of 2010 he returned to the Bogotá Province and was again appointed Vice-Provincial; in 2011 he was also Provincial Delegate for formation and in 2012 Delegate for Social Communication.

He was also Episcopal Vicar for Religious.

4. *RUTA Giuseppe, Provincial of the Province of SICILY, ITALY*

To lead the Saint Paul Province of *SICILY* the Rector Major with his Council on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013 appointed Fr *Giuseppe RUTA*. He succeeds Fr Giovanni Mazzali.

Born on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1959 at Modica (RG), Italy, Giuseppe Ruta made his first profession on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1975, at the end of his

year of novitiate at Lanuvio. Perpetually professed on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1982, he was ordained priest on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1986 in Modica, his home town.

After ordination he worked in the house in Barcellona, Sicily and then went to Rome to study at the Salesian Pontifical University (1987-1989), obtaining a doctorate in Theology. After returning to the Province he worked for two years in the house of Messina - Don Rua and from 1991 until 2010 in Messina - San Tommaso, as professor, and from 2005 to 2010 also as Rector. From 2010 until his appointment as Provincial he was Rector of the house of Catania - Cibali. Between 2003 and 2009 and from 2011 until his appointment as Provincial he was a Provincial Councillor. Within the diocese he was also responsible for University Ministry and was Episcopal Vicar for Consecrated Life.

## 5.5 New Salesian Bishops

### 1. *ESCOBAR AYALA Gabriel Narciso, Vicar Apostolic of Chaco Paraguayo (Paraguay)*

On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013 the Press Office of the Holy See announced

that Pope Francis had appointed the Salesian priest Fr *Gabriel Narciso ESCOBAR AYALA, Vicar Apostolic of Chaco Paraguayo*, assigning him the titular see of Media. The Vicariate Apostolic of Chaco Paraguayo, vacant for two years, has always since its foundation (1948) had a Salesian to lead it.

Fr Escobar Ayala, born on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1971 in Asunción, Paraguay, completed his secondary studies at the Sacred Heart of Jesus - "Salesianito" College in Asunción, and then entered the prenovitiate of Lambaré (Asunción), and afterwards the novitiate in Ramos Mejia, Buenos Aires (Argentina).

He made his first profession on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1993 and his perpetual profession on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1999. He did his theological studies at the Pontifical Catholic University of Santiago Chile, obtaining a Licence in Religious Studies and a Licence in Education.

He was ordained priest on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2001 in Asunción, Paraguay.

After ordination he held the following posts: from February 2001 until 2004 he was Economist of the Salesian community in Concepción and at the same time curate in the parish of Mary Help

of Christians in Concepción, as well as a military chaplain in the same city; from February 2005 until the end of 2007 he was at the “Salesianito” in Asunción, as Economist of the Salesian community and curate in the Sanctuary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and Provincial Delegate for Catechetics, Religious Education in Schools, Youth Ministry and Social Communication; from February 2008 until the end of 2012 he was Rector of the “Salesianito” in Asunción. Then he was appointed Rector of the San José Salesian Institute in Concepción, a role he held until his appointment as Vicar Apostolic.

His episcopal ordination took place in the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians in Asunción on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2013.

## **2. *BIORD CASTILLO Raúl, Bishop of the Diocese of La Guaira (Venezuela)***

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013 the Press Office of the Holy See announced that Pope Francis had appointed the Salesian priest Fr *Raúl BIORD CASTILLO* Bishop of the Diocese of *LA GUAIRA, Venezuela*. In the Press Office statement it was reported that

the Diocese of La Guaira covers 1,497 sq.km, with a population of 388,000 of whom 352,000 are Catholics, with 50 priests, 55 religious and 2 permanent deacons.

Fr Raúl Biord Castillo, was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1962 at San Antonio, Venezuela, made his first profession on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1980 in the novitiate at San Antonio de Los Altos, as a member of the Salesian Province of Venezuela. On 13<sup>th</sup> September 1987 he made his perpetual profession – and after theological studies in Rome at the Salesian Pontifical University, obtaining the Licence in Theology – he was ordained priest on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1989 in San Antonio de Los Altos, Venezuela.

After ordination he worked for some years in the postnovitiate in Los Teques, and then in the years 1996-1997 he was again in Rome, where he obtained a Doctorate in Theology at the Gregorian Pontifical University.

After his return to Venezuela, he exercised his ministry for some years in Los Teques, first in the prenovitiate, then in the San José Sixth Form College; in Los Teques he was also a curate and chaplain to religious Sisters – then between 2000 and 2003 – Professor and Rector in the

“P. Ojeda” Salesian University Institute (IUSPO).

In 2003 he was transferred to Caracas, to the Provincial House. Here he had several tasks with important roles including that of Professor in the Institute of Theology for Religious (ITER) and Professor in the Diocesan Seminary. He was also Secretary of the Pastoral Theological Commission of the Bishops' Council in Venezuela; consultor

to the Bishops' Commission on Doctrine and to the Association for Catholic Education (AVEC). Within the Province he had the following roles: Delegate for the Work Preparation Centres and Delegate for Formation. A member of the Provincial Council from 2002, in July 2004 he was appointed Vice-Provincial a post he held until his appointment as Bishop. For a year he was also Provincial Secretary.

5.6 Our dead confreres (2<sup>nd</sup> list 2013)

"Faith in the risen Christ sustains our hope and keeps alive our communion with our brothers who rest in Christ's peace. They have spent their lives in the Congregation, and not a few have suffered even to the point of martyrdom for the love of the Lord... Their remembrance is an incentive to continue faithfully in our mission" (C. 94).

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P ALESSI Alfredo	Messina (Italia)	28/10/2013	93	ISI
P ANDRIOLO Francesco	Castello di Godego (Italia)	02/12/2013	89	INE
P ANTONA Giuseppe	Torino (Italia)	23/07/2013	93	ICP
P ARBA Luigi	Guayaquil (Ecuador)	18/08/2013	100	ECU
L ARMAN Giuseppe	Gorizia (Italia)	04/12/2013	93	INE
P ASMA André	Wijchen (Olanda)	23/10/2013	81	BEN
<i>Fu Ispettore per 8 anni</i>				
P BARBOSA José Maria De Souza	Manaus (Brasile)	31/10/2013	54	BMA
P BASSI Mario	Arese (Italia)	05/07/2013	97	ILE
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P BELLONE Ernesto	Torino (Italia)	05/11/2013	84	ICP
P BERVOETS Alphonse	Lubumbashi (Congo R. D.)	08/11/2013	89	AFC
S BONASERA Luigi	Ivrea (Italia)	12/10/2013	62	ICP
P BORT Aldo	Venezia-Mestre (Italia)	18/10/2013	88	INE
P BÖSZE József	Szombathely (Ungheria)	20/07/2013	89	UNG
P BRESSAN Carlo	Roma (Italia)	11/08/2013	92	ICC
P BRIOSCHI Giuseppe	Arese (Italia)	05/08/2013	97	ILE
P BRUZZONE Pierino	Roma (Italia)	03/04/2013	87	ICC
L BULFE Domingo	Fernando de la Mora (Paraguay)	11/06/2013	71	PAR
P CAHILL David	Celbridge (Irlanda)	06/12/2013	89	IRL
P CALERO MONTENEGRO Orlando	Managua (Nicaragua)	21/08/2013	90	CAM
P CAPPELLETTI Edward	Yonkers, New York (U.S.A.)	12/12/2013	92	SUE
P CAPRA Giuseppe	Fossano (Italia)	02/12/2013	80	ICP
L CAVALLERO Oreste	León (Spagna)	12/07/2013	85	SLE
L CENA Ugo	Catania (Italia)	22/08/2013	77	ISI
P CENCERRADO ALCAÑIZ Felipe	Alcázar de San Juan (Spagna)	13/11/2013	86	SMA
L CENDALI Candido	Arese (Italia)	30/07/2013	80	ILE
P CESCÓN Argentino	Manaus (Brasile)	05/04/2013	91	BMA
P CHAMPANIL Jacob	Berhampore (India)	08/05/2013	62	INC
P CHAUVÉL Charles	Guernsey, Channel Isl. (GBR)	24/08/2013	92	GBR
L CINCOTTA Jerome	Tampa, Florida (U.S.A.)	25/10/2013	89	SUE
P CISZEWSKI Władisław	Varsavia (Polonia)	29/07/2013	75	PLE
P COOPER Edward	Engadine (Australia)	09/09/2013	87	AUL
P CORTI Giovanni	Comodoro Rivadavia (Argentina)	27/11/2013	88	ARS
P COUBLE Jean	Roanne (Francia)	29/11/2013	86	FRB
L Da SILVA Fernando José	Campo Grande (Brasile)	05/12/2013	86	BCG
P DANĚC Josef	Brno (Rep. Ceca)	10/12/2013	62	CEP
L DASSIE Domenico	Roma (Italia)	30/10/2013	79	RMG
P DE PASQUALE Michele	Riesi (Italia)	20/11/2013	90	ISI

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P DEC Jan	Campinas (Brasile)	29/09/2013	95	BSP
P DEL CASTILLO VITERI Bolivar	Quito (Ecuador)	24/08/2013	93	ECU
P DEL DEGÁN Mario Ernesto	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	06/07/2013	76	ARN
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P DELL'AGNOLO Paolo	Bahía Blanca (Argentina)	17/10/2013	84	ARS
P DI BARBORA Ernesto José Luis	San Nicolás (Argentina)	22/07/2013	67	ARN
L DUARTE Carlos Alberto	Manique - Cascais (Portogallo)	16/06/2013	76	POR
P DZIUBINSKI Marian	Rosenheim (Germania)	12/07/2013	67	PLS
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P ESPINOSA ZEVALLOS José Luis	Guayaquil (Ecuador)	22/09/2013	83	ECU
L FARINA Carlo	Roma (Italia)	29/07/2013	78	ICC
P FERNANDES Egidio	Panjim (Goa, India)	29/04/2013	62	INP
P FERNÁNDEZ PÉREZ Rafael	Santo Domingo (Rep. Dom.)	02/07/2013	83	ANT
P FERREIRA Antonio da ilva	São Paulo (Brasile)	06/10/2013	86	BSP
P FERREIRA Marcello Martiniano	Niterói, R.J. (Brasile)	08/06/2013	80	BBH
P FILIPIAK Marian	Sulów (Polonia)	07/11/2013	68	PLO
P FOSSATI Gianni	Torino (Italia)	27/04/2013	90	ICP
P FRAGNITO Cosimo	Salerno (Italia)	03/12/2013	86	IME
L FREITAS Anthony	Arcadia, California (U.S.A.)	31/07/2013	94	SUO
P GALAJ Kazimierz	Lutomiersk (Polonia)	16/07/2013	81	PLE
L GARMAN Alan	Farnborough (Gran Bretagna)	06/04/2013	95	GBR
P GELSOMINO Andrea	Varazze (Italia)	27/04/2013	90	ICC
P GENOVESI Bruno	Roma (Italia)	05/08/2013	90	ICC
P GIANETTO Ubaldo	Roma (Italia)	15/05/2013	85	UPS
P GIL Raimundo Miguel	Rosario (Argentina)	28/05/2013	90	ARN
P GIOVANNINI Giulio	Castelfranco Veneto (Italia)	13/10/2013	83	INE
L GIPPETTO Francesco	Palermo (Italia)	22/10/2013	73	ISI
L GIURICIN Giovanni	Udine (Italia)	03/07/2013	90	INE
P GODNIĆ Vittorio	Gorizia (Italia)	30/11/2013	93	INE
S GOLAS Grzegorz	Bollingtona (Gran Bretagna)	04/08/2013	27	PLO
L GONZÁLEZ NAVARRO José Ramón	Caracas (Venezuela)	13/06/2013	85	VEN
P GUIOTTO Sillo Gaetano	Genova-Sampierdarena (Italia)	15/09/2013	85	ICC
P HELIANEK Krzysztof	Czerwińsk (Polonia)	18/09/2013	46	PLE
P HERNÁNDEZ PORTAL Agustín	Arevalo (Spagna)	18/05/2013	76	SMA
P HIGGINS Bernard	Bolton (Gran Bretagna)	07/12/2013	92	GBR
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
E HOÀNG VAN TIEM Joseph	Bui Chu (Vietnam)	17/08/2013	74	—
<i>Fu Vescovo di Bui Chu per 12 anni</i>				
P HOSTE René	Aalst (Belgio)	07/12/2013	80	BEN
P HRBATÝ Eduard	Kromeriz (Repubblica Ceca)	18/05/2013	89	CEP
P INGOLDSBY Thomas	Askeaton, Co. Limreick (Irlanda)	20/10/2013	95	IRL
L IWANAMI Shizuo Ludovico	Beppu, Oita (Giappone)	18/09/2013	85	GIA
P KALAC Jaroslao	Civitanova Marche Alta (Italia)	06/05/2013	81	ICC
L KALAVANAL Thomas	Aluva, Kerala (India)	18/08/2013	48	INK
P KROMOSER Johann	Wien (Austria)	29/07/2013	76	AUS
P KRZYWON Szczepan	Sosnowiec (Polonia)	26/05/2013	85	PLO
P KUPTZ Herbert	Köln (Germania)	08/04/2013	76	GER

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P LANNEER Marcel	Halle (Belgio)	25/05/2013	86	BEN
P LARREA LAFUENTE Juan	Shillong (India)	17/04/2013	92	INS
P LEBORONI Paolo	Roma (Italia)	12/04/2013	71	ICC
P LONERGAN Patrick	Westridge (Sud Africa)	07/06/2013	72	AFM
<i>Fu Ispettore per 6 anni</i>				
P MALTESTA Mamuel	Buenos Aires (Argentina)	02/06/2013	90	ARS
P MANNU Antonio	Selargius, Cagliari (Italia)	09/05/2013	89	ARS
P MARCHESI Romano	Castello di Godego (Italia)	21/05/2013	93	INE
P MARCO LORES Víctor	Barcelona (Spagna)	29/07/2013	72	SBA
L MARIN LORENTE José Antonio	El Campello (Spagna)	24/06/2013	82	SVA
P MARTÍNEZ BUENO Sebastián	Logroño (Spagna)	15/10/2013	89	SBI
L MASALA MANNU Giovanni	Roma (Italia)	10/07/2013	87	ICC
P MEUWIS Alfons	Heusden (Belgio)	06/07/2013	83	BEN
L MICHALAK Vicente	Ponta Grossa (Brasile)	18/05/2013	84	BPA
P MICHAU Jean-Pierre	Paris (Francia)	03/09/2013	72	FRB
P MILLER Jozef	Brussel (Belgio)	18/07/2013	92	BEN
P MISCIO Antonio	Firenze (Italia)	05/08/2013	90	ICC
P MODOSCH Erich	Natters, Tirol (Austria)	07/06/2013	71	AUS
P MORENO ECHEVERRÍA Luis Alb.	Manta, Manabí (Ecuador)	24/06/2013	92	ECU
P MORENO GUTIÉRREZ Miguel	Sevilla (Spagna)	28/08/2013	74	SSE
P MOZAZ GASTÓN Jesús	El Campello, Alicante (Spagna)	01/06/2013	83	SVA
P NAGY Ferenc	Székesfehérvár (Ungheria)	26/09/2013	92	UNG
L NART Celestino	São Paulo (Brasile)	10/06/2013	92	BSP
P NAUGHTON James	Birmingham, Alabama (U.S.A.)	27/11/2013	75	SUE
P NIETO LAMAS Julio	Arévalo (Spagna)	24/07/2013	87	SMA
L NOVELLI Alessandro	Roma (Italia)	10/09/2013	105	ICC
P PALÁSEK Stanislav	Olomouc (Rep. Ceca)	06/10/2013	83	CEP
P PALUMBO Eugene	Wayne, New Jersey (U.S.A.)	11/09/2013	91	SUE
P PARIPPIL Joseph	Mumbai (India)	30/08/2013	77	ING
P PARRACINO Mario	Rignano Garganico (Italia)	10/09/2013	78	IME
L PAVAN Giovanni	Venezia-Mestre (Italia)	29/09/2013	76	INE
P PEDERZANI Daniele	Arese (Italia)	26/06/2013	73	ILE
L PERA Guerrino	Torino (Italia)	01/11/2013	79	ICP
P PEREIRA Bosco Daniel	Mumbai (India)	19/07/2013	63	INB
L PERILLA Juan Pompilio	Medellín (Colombia)	23/09/2013	94	COM
P PINNA Giovanni	Roma (Italia)	18/04/2013	97	ICC
P PIROG Bronisław	Rzszów (Polonia)	02/07/2013	87	PLS
P PISARSKI Nikodem	Beppu, Oita (Giappone)	06/05/2013	94	GIA
P POLO SEGURA Antonio	Jan Juan (Porto Rico)	19/06/2013	90	ANT
P POMERO Francesco	Torino (Italia)	18/04/2013	94	ICP
P PRAZERES Marcos	Belo Horizonte (Brasile)	16/07/2013	80	BBH
P PREROVSKY Ulderico	Roma (Italia)	27/09/2013	89	UPS
P PUTHANANGADY Paul	Aluva (India)	14/11/2013	79	INK
P RIZZATO Guido	Quito (Ecuador)	26/05/2013	91	ECU
P RODRIGUES Fernando	Goiana (Brasile)	23/08/2013	79	BBH
P RODRIGUEZ ARANA Ruddy Félix	La Paz (Bolivia)	04/09/2013	65	BOL
L RODRIGUEZ PUENTE Venancio	Quéretaro (Messico)	04/06/2013	80	MEM

SURNAME AND NAME	PLACE of death	DATE	AGE	PROV
P ROMERO ÁVILA Javier	Guadalajara (Messico)	20/08/2013	67	MEG
P ROSSI Florindo	Sondrio (Italia)	25/07/2013	76	ILE
L RÖTZER Herbert	Benediktbeuern (Germania)	15/11/2013	70	GER
P RUGGIERI Antonio	Civitanova Marche Alta (Italia)	25/08/2013	87	ICC
L RUIZ BALLESTER Enrique	Barcelona (Spagna)	02/11/2013	80	SBA
P SABATINI Giuseppe	Civitanova Marche Alta (Italia)	17/07/2013	88	ICC
P SABBADINI Luigi	Varazze (Italia)	03/05/2013	88	ICC
P SÁNCHEZ RAMOS José	Madrid (Spagna)	30/08/2013	85	SMA
P SÁNCHEZ RODRÍGUEZ Martín	Arevalo (Spagna)	30/06/2013	88	SMA
P SANITÁ Mario	Arese (Italia)	04/07/2013	90	ILE
P SCARLATTI Teobaldo	Roma (Italia)	29/04/2013	84	ICC
P SCHINETTI Pietro	Treviglio (Italia)	20/10/2013	94	ILE
L SECCO Antonio	Castelfranco Veneto (Italia)	13/10/2013	75	INE
L SEREN-THA Mario	Torino (Italia)	26/11/2013	78	ICP
P SHULTZ Edmund	Ji-Paraná (Brasile)	30/04/2013	81	BMA
P SILVESTRI Mario	Montevideo (Uruguay)	10/09/2013	81	URU
P SIMONETTI Albino	Arco, TN (Italia)	07/10/2013	74	ANT
L SONGWE Gilbert	Kinshasa (Congo Rep. Dém.)	07/06/2013	43	AFC
P SORENG Patrick	Juba (Sud Sudan)	15/09/2013	62	AFE
P STEINER Josef	Mödling (Austria)	06/11/2013	83	AUS
L SUTHAM Chayaban Andrew	Hat-Yai (Thailandia)	30/08/2013	77	THA
P TARDITI Marco	Santiago del Cile (Cile)	10/09/2013	90	CIL
P TEIXEIRA Jayme	Vitória (Brasile)	29/07/2013	78	BBH
L TESTA Marco	Torino (Italia)	01/08/2013	83	MOR
P THOMANN Italo	Farnborough (Gran Bretagna)	04/05/2013	83	GBR
P TOCCOLI Vincent	Cannes (Francia)	05/08/2013	71	FRB
P TONELLI Riccardo	Roma (Italia)	01/10/2013	76	UPS
P TÓTH Jozef	Hody (Slovacchia)	14/05/2013	93	SLK
P TREVISAN Giacomo	La Spezia (Italia)	10/10/2013	77	ICC
P TUVERI Giovanni Italo	Roma (Italia)	08/08/2013	81	ICC
L VAN ADRICHEM Leo	Rijswijk (Olanda)	04/04/2013	82	BEN
P VANÍČEK Josef	Tišnov (Rep. Ceca)	06/08/2013	87	CEP
P VANZETTO Adone	Roma (Italia)	12/08/2013	88	ICC
P VARGAS MÁRQUEZ Enrique	Sevilla (Spagna)	12/04/2013	72	SSE
L VELASCO COLOMO Ángel	México (Messico)	25/11/2013	81	MEM
L VENIER Domenico	Castello di Godego (Italia)	26/08/2013	89	MDG
P VICENTE GONZÁLEZ Juan Fco.	Ávila (Spagna)	14/07/2013	85	SMA
P VICENTE PEREÑA Jesús Amable	Sevilla (Spagna)	22/07/2013	90	SSE
P VIEDMA ESPINOLA Pedro	Asunción (Paraguay)	22/05/2013	90	PAR
L WASCHL Hermann	Ensdorf (Germania)	14/11/2013	79	GER
P ZAMBON Adelson Caetano	Rocha Miranda, R.J. (Brasile)	20/06/2013	65	BBH