

# CAGLIERO

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Newsletter for Salesian Missionary Animation



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Dear friends,  
Happy Easter to all of you!

As I write these first lines as Mission Councillor, I cannot but recall the words of a 12th century theologian, John of Salisbury: "We are like dwarves on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see ... farther than they did; however, not because of the sharpness of our eyesight or the power of our bodies, but because we sit higher and are raised by the greatness of these giants."

Therefore, I remember with deep gratitude all my predecessors in this Sector, especially Fr Guillermo Basañes for his service during the last six years (2014-2020). Thanks also to Fr. Václav Klement, Councillor for the Missions from 2009 to 2014, who, 11 years ago, had the intuition to start this Cagliero 11 as a simple but effective tool for missionary animation. I also thank all the members of the team of the Missions Sector in whose competence, dedication and collaboration I will trust to help me in the task entrusted to me - to "promote missionary spirit and action throughout the Society" (Const. 138).

As I have already expressed elsewhere, I did not expect this election. In fact, when I began to realize that something was about to happen, I explicitly tried to avoid this appointment because, among other reasons, our 'Visitatoria' has a serious need for personnel. However, I must humbly acknowledge that, indeed, "the Holy Spirit works as He wants, when He wants and where He wants ... We only know that our commitment is necessary." (Evangelii Gaudium, 279).

As I write these lines, we are experiencing a pandemic of a nature we have never before seen. This human tragedy is an invitation to have the courage to reflect and discern what the Spirit is telling us.

A high point in this six-year term will certainly be the 150th anniversary of the first Salesian missionary expedition (1875-2025). My wish is that each one of us will have the courage and the openness to let the Holy Spirit work in our hearts as He wants, when He wants and where He wants; that we may have the courage and the docility to leave our comfort zones and go with commitment where He sends us.

D. Alfred Maravilla SDB, Mission Councillor

## Interview with Fr. Alfred Maravilla

Fr Alfred Maravilla has returned to the Salesian Missions Department not as a collaborator this time, but as Councillor. Filipino, with a long, firsthand missionary experience, until recently the Superior of a thriving Vice Province, Father Maravilla speaks to us in this interview about his feelings as regards his new position



How do you feel now? People ask me how I feel as the newly elected General Councillor for Missions. My response is: I have tried my best to avoid this election. After my service in the Missions Department, I had envisioned myself returning for good to PGS. In fact, during the discernment process in view of the election of the members of the General Council, when I started to realise that something was going to happen, I explicitly turned down my nomination in the EAO Commission as Councillor for Missions because, among other reasons, our Vice Province is in serious need of personnel.

What about your vice-province of Blessed Philip Rinaldi - PNG and Solomon Islands? We have really just started laying foundations, structures and systems for our new Province. Unfortunately, I was nominated in 4 other regions. So at the first ballot, I received 178 out of 222 votes. With this election, at an instance, all the plans and vision for our Vice Province faded on the horizon together with my wish of remaining a missionary ad vitam in this part of the world. I believe in the Holy Spirit and He will draw straight on a crooked and uncertain future!" Up to now, I am still struggling to understand how this crooked line could ultimately become straight! What a tertiary student wrote to me encapsulates my feelings these days "I cannot understand why the Lord has to take you away from us!"



### How do you look at the new task as Councilor for the Missions?

This six-year period (2020-2026) will be marked by the 150th anniversary of the first Salesian missionary expedition (1875). My wish to the 1500 Salesians of our EAO region is that each one may have the courage to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts as he wills, when he wills and where he wills, so that, animated by Don Bosco's missionary spirit, we may have the courage to get out of our comfort zones and go forth. Thanks to this missionary spirit, Don Bosco's charism is now deeply rooted in EAO. It's about time that every Province in EAO, rich and poor in personnel, actively participate in our Congregation's missionary activity. Ironically, only such missionary generosity will keep our Provinces vibrantly alive to serve the poor and marginalised youth in our countries.

## "Are you happy in your heart?" (Ma sa' lach'ool)?

Since the day I participated in the 141<sup>st</sup> Salesian missionary expedition, I have kept in a drawer of my desk a small sheet of paper with a simple project for my missionary life. One of the points says: "May Don Bosco's missionary heart be the magnet of your life." This would be the simple advice I would share with anyone who may be reflecting on his missionary vocation. For a little over 9 years I have been working in Guatemala among the indigenous Maya Q'eqchi, in a missionary parish with 250,000 inhabitants, scattered over more than 400 villages.

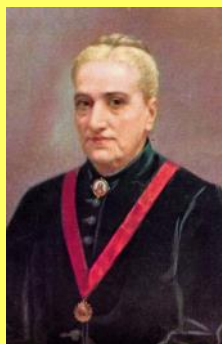
To be brief, what I learned in my missionary life among the Q'eqchi were 3 things: observe, listen and wait. The missionary comes as a guest to be with them and share their lives. There is this beautiful expression attributed to Francis of Assisi: "Preach the Gospel at all times and, when necessary, use words." The Q'eqchi are a wonderful people but, unfortunately, they resonate very little in the world. They have an expression to greet each other that is a jewel. When they meet anywhere, they ask each other, "Are you happy in your heart" (Ma sa' lach'ool)? After a few years of missionary life, I feel that this happiness fills my heart and that being a missionary is a great gift that God has given me.



Vittorio Castagna sdb, Italian Missionary in Guatemala, San Pedro Carchá

### Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity

Fr. Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Postulator General for the Causes of Saints



**The Venerable Dorothea De Chopitea (1816-1891), wife, and mother of six children.** She was the first Salesian Cooperator whose Cause of Beatification was launched. She was one of the very few people Don Bosco gave the loving title, 'mother'. And she was truly a mother for everyone; always ready to intervene where there was a need. A list has been compiled of no less than thirty-one foundations that owe their existence to her generosity. The virtue that shone in her the most was charity. "God's almsgiver" sacrificed an entire fortune like no other person did in Barcelona in her time. On her scale of values, she put love for the poor first, "The poor will be my first thought."



Mary Help of Christians,  
just as our father Don Bosco  
did with the boys of the Valdocco  
oratory, on the occasion of cholera,  
we too, in a world affected by the Coronavirus epidemic,  
we want, as a Salesian Family,  
to express our filial entrustment to your Motherly Heart  
Comfort the sick and their families.



### Salesian Missionary Intention

Support doctors and healthcare professionals.  
Help all members of society and its governors.  
Welcome everyone who died from this epidemic.  
Above all, renew in each of us,  
in our communities and families faith in your Son Jesus dead and risen,  
Making Don Bosco's words our own, we say to you:  
O Mary, powerful Virgin, great and illustrious rampart of the Church,  
wonderful Help of Christian, terrible as an army deployed in battle;  
you alone overcome every heresy in the world;  
in anxieties, in struggles, in hardship  
defend us from the enemy and at the hour of our death receive our souls into Heaven.  
Amen.

