

# EX ALLIEVI Newsflash

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English Edition

(translations: Sandra Pistilli)





## When an educator touches his children's heart – or the art of being like Don Bosco

14 June 2024

The art of being like Don Bosco: *“Remember that education is a matter of the heart, of which God alone is the master, and that we can achieve nothing unless God teaches us the art and hands us the key”* (The Biographical Memoirs of Saint John Bosco, XVI, 376).

My dear friends of Don Bosco's charism, I'm writing you this greeting, I'd say, almost as a livestream, before it goes to print. I say this because I experienced the scene I'm going to tell you about only four hours ago.

I recently arrived in Lubumbashi. For ten days prior, I'd already visited very significant Salesian presences such as the displaced and refugee population of PALABEK, Uganda. These people are living in much more humane conditions today than when they first came to us, thank God. From Uganda, I went to the region of Goma in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a place struggling under a difficult situation.

There, the Salesian presences are full of life. A number of times, I observed that my heart was *“touched”*; that is, moved at seeing the good that's being done and that God's presence is so strong there, even in the midst of very great poverty. Still, my heart was touched with pain and sadness when I met some of the 32,000 people (mostly the elderly, women, and children) who have been welcomed and taken in on the grounds of the Salesian presence of Don Bosco-Gangi. I'll speak about this next time because I need to let it rest on my heart for a while.

Right now, I wish to refer only to one beautiful scene I witnessed on the flight that brought us to Lubumbashi.

It was a non-commercial flight in a medium-sized plane. I didn't know the flight captain but the local Salesians did. When I greeted him on the plane, he told me that he'd studied vocational training at our school here in Goma. He told me that those were years that changed his life, then added something else, speaking to me and to all of us: *«And here's someone who's been a “father” for us»*.

In African culture, when you say someone is *“a father”*, you're paying the greatest compliment possible. Not infrequently, though, this father is not the biological father to a son or daughter but the one who has really cared for him, supported him, and accompanied him.

**Cover:** Rakovnik, Slovenia - The new statue of the Founder of the Salesians in front of the church, a sign of gratitude to the Father and Master of the young for the vitality of the Salesian charisma in Slovenia. The work, 2.8 metres high, depicts Don Bosco surrounded by two young people of today, a boy with a mobile phone in his hand and a girl dancing, and the dog "Grigio", with also a ball to represent the playful aspect.



This captain is a man about 45 years old; his son, already a young pilot, was accompanying him on the flight. To whom was he referring? To one of our Salesian coadjutor brothers, that is, not a priest but a consecrated layman, as Don Bosco conceived the Salesians. That Salesian brother, a missionary from Spain, Brother Honorato, has been a missionary in the Goma area for more than 40 years. Together with the other Salesians, of course, he did everything possible to make such a vocational training school—as well as many other things—a reality. He came to know the captain and some of his friends when they were just kids—hundreds and hundreds of boys. In fact, the captain told me that four of his companions, who were practically street kids in those years, were able to study mechanics in Don Bosco's house and today are engineers in charge of the mechanical and technical maintenance of their company's small planes.

Well, when I heard the captain, a former Salesian student, say that Brother Honorato had been his father, the father of all of them, I was deeply moved. It made me think of Don Bosco, whom his boys considered their father.

I thought, «How true it is that education is a thing of the heart». It just confirmed my conviction that our presence among boys, girls, and youths is for us almost a "*sacrament*" through which we, too, reach God. That's why I've spoken with such passion and conviction in recent years to my Salesian confreres and to the Salesian Family about the Salesian "*sacrament of presence*".

I know that in the Salesian world, in our Family throughout the world, among our brothers and sisters, there are many fathers and many mothers who, with their presence and affection and their ability to educate, reach the hearts of young people, who need so much today. Indeed, I would say more and more that they need these presences that can change a life for the better.

Greetings from Africa—and every blessing of the Lord to you, friends of the Salesian charism.

Blessings,

Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime  
Rector Major

## Between Admiration and Pain

Today, I greet you for the last time from this page of the Salesian Bulletin. [As of August 16, the day on which we commemorate Don Bosco's birth \(August 16, 1815\), my service as Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco ends.](#) There's always a reason to give thanks, always. Thank you! Thank you—to God, above all, to the Congregation and Salesian Family, to so many dear people, and to so many friends of Don Bosco's charism, many of them benefactors. I also want my greeting to transmit and connect with something I experienced recently. Therein lies the title of this greeting: ["Between Admiration and Pain!"](#), because I'm going to refer to the joy that filled my heart in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically in the region of Goma, nowadays beaten by and immersed in warfare, and the joy and testimony that I received yesterday. I'll explain. Three weeks ago I visited the Palabek refugee camp in Uganda. Fortunately, thanks to Salesian work and other help in these years, it has ceased to be a Sudanese refugee camp and has become a place where tens of thousands of people have settled and found new life. Crossing through Rwanda, I arrived at the Congo border in the region of Goma. It's a beautiful land, beautiful and rich in nature—which is the very reason it's coveted in such a way that weapons "speak." Sadly, due to armed conflicts, in that region there are more than a million displaced people who've had to leave their homes and their land. We Salesians also had to leave our presence of Sha-Shah because it was occupied militarily. These million displaced persons have come to Goma. In one of its neighborhoods, Gangi, there's the Salesian presence named ["Don Bosco"](#). My joy was immense when I saw the good that's done there. Hundreds of boys and girls have their home there. Several dozen teenagers have been brought off the streets and are living in Don Bosco's house. Right there is the home for eighty-two babies — even newborns — and small children who've lost their parents or have been ["abandoned"](#) because the adults have no way to take care of their own children due to the war. There, in that other Valdocco, one of the many Valdoccos in the world, a community of three nuns from El Salvador, together with a group of ladies, takes care of those babies and little ones. All of them are supported by the Salesian house with the help that comes, thanks to the generosity of benefactors and of Providence. When I visited them, the sisters had dressed everyone for the party, even the babies sleeping in their cribs. How can we not feel our hearts full of joy in the face of this reality of goodness, despite the pain that abandonment and war produce? But my heart was stricken when I met several hundred people who came to greet me during my visit. They're among the 32,000 displaced people who've left their homes and land because of bombs and have come seeking refuge. They've found it on the playing fields and grounds of the [Don Bosco house in Gangi](#). They have nothing. They live on a few square meters of land under tarps or cloth. This is their reality. Together we look for ways to find food every day. But, do you know what impressed me the most? When I was with these hundreds of people, who are mostly elderly or mothers with children (most men haven't been able to come because of the armed conflict), they hadn't lost their dignity, their joy, or their smile. I was amazed even while my heart grieved in the face of so much suffering and poverty, even though we're doing our bit in the name of the Lord. But my heart was stricken when I met several hundred people who came to greet me during my visit. They're among the 32,000 displaced people who've left their homes and land because of bombs and have come seeking refuge. 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Among the guests these days at Sacro Cuore, the Salesian generalate in Rome, we had a visit from an extraordinary pianist who has traveled the world giving concerts and who has been part of great philharmonic orchestras. [She's a former student of the Salesians](#) who looked up to a certain Salesian, who has since passed away, as a great reference point and role model. She wanted to offer us a concert in the atrium of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart as a tribute to Mary Help of Christians, whom she loves very much, in gratitude for her life up to now. I share this because our dear friend, who was accompanied by her daughter, gave us a wonderful concert, of exceptional quality — and she's 81 years old! At that age, perhaps an age far past when some of the elders in our families say they no longer feel like planning or doing anything that involves effort, our dear friend, who practices her piano exercises daily, moved her hands with wonderful agility and was immersed in the beauty of the music and its execution. Time stopped for her in that hour. In her simple way, good music, a generous smile at the end of her performance, and the offering of some orchids to the Virgin Help of Christians was all we needed on that wonderful morning. My Salesian heart couldn't help but think of those boys and girls and young people who perhaps haven't had or no longer have anything to motivate them in their lives. She, our concert pianist friend, 81 years old, lives with a lot of peace and, as she told me, continues to offer the gift that God gave her. [Every day she finds more reasons for it: another life lesson and another testimony that doesn't leave the heart indifferent.](#)

That's why, my friends, I thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the good we're doing together. No matter how little it is, it helps to make our world a little more human and more beautiful. May the good Lord bless you. Cardinal Angel



# Thank you, don Ángel!





## AN EXPRESSION OF GOD'S DREAM for our Movement and Association

As we prepare to meet together as "one world" Extraordinary General World Assembly (EGWA) in Valdocco between the 2nd to the 6th October 2024, I invite everyone to journey together, and not to be afraid to change and be more relevant in the communities that we live. I augur that our meeting in Valdocco will be a celebration joy and synodality!

There is no doubt that your theme for this convention: "*Journeying Together: Change for Continuity*" reflects to the Rector Major's Strenna for this year 2024: "*The Dream that makes you Dream: A Heart that Transforms Wolves into Lambs*".

The Strenna and the theme of the EGWA are very relevant as they reflect the World Confederation's four Strategic Priorities for 2021 – 2027 which are Journeying Together (synodality), Spirituality, Mission and Solidarity.

For all our organisations around the world, it is important that we focus on the mission with the young especially those who are most needy. Our charism, our identity, and our Salesian spirituality finds its expression in the mission and solidarity with young people. Like Don Bosco, we are being invited to dream and dedicate our lives to young people to become "*Upright citizens and good Christians*".

### On the life of Movement and Association

Recently, the Rector Major Cardinal Angel Fernandez Artime when addressing one of our groups, he asked them "*Not to be afraid*" of the changes that we need to make and to be sure that we are relevant to the young in the world of today. He encouraged them "*not to complain*" about the changes that we need to make. Yes, we need to dream about our future... "*we need to change, otherwise we will die*" and our organisation will no longer exist as is happening in some Western and traditional countries.

We need not to be afraid to commit ourselves to the world of the young as it is today rather than as it was yesteryear.

We need to refresh ourselves, we need to revitalise our organisation, and re-engage in the communities where we live.

### About our educational and pastoral mission

The question we need to continue asking ourselves is: What are our dreams to be as past pupils and friends of Don Bosco in the 21st century? Everyone of us needs to dream by allowing oneself to be inspired by the love and gratitude toward Don Bosco, by reaching out to others in the same love and affection that Don Bosco showed to his boys in Valdocco. Our challenge is not only to dream but realise our dreams. The way forward is to build institutional capacity of our groups as recognised non-profit organisations, *we need to change our "old tools" into the "new tools"* that work for the young people of today, and we need to have professional strategic plan to turn our dreams into actions with projects that reach out to the young people.

We need to have strength, courage, and faith in God. We need to believe that we are God's instruments and believe in our role in building the Kingdom of God on earth. We need to prioritise our initiatives which relate to the mission and solidarity with young people. Let us not be afraid to step into the commitment to serve the young people in the same way that Don Bosco did in Valdocco.

Bryan Magro  
President  
World Confederation  
of Past Pupils of Don Bosco

# The Heart of Jesus - Infinite Love



The heart is the symbol of love. And since Christ had perfect love, his heart is for us the perfect symbol of love. His heart was saturated with perfect love for the Father and for mankind. We learn what love is by trying to understand and experience something of Christ's love.

In the second half of the 17th century, St Margaret Mary Alacoque received a series of visions in which Christ said to her: «*My divine Heart burns so much with love for men and for you in particular, that, not being able to contain within itself the flames of its burning charity, it must spread them through you and manifest itself to men to enrich them with its precious treasures*», from this divine heart three streams flowed: mercy towards sinners, charity towards the needy and love and light for the just.

We, being sons of Don Bosco, have a special devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Don Bosco received the order from Pope Pius IX to complete the project of building the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Rome. We have a responsibility to live this mystery of divine love in the human heart of Jesus.

Pope St. John Paul II said: «*This tremendous mystery of love, in which creation is renewed - is, in its deepest root, the fullness of justice in a human Heart: in the Heart of the first-born Son, so that it may become justice in the hearts of many men, who in the first-born Son were, from eternity, predestined to become children of God*». (Redemptor hominis) Three streams flowed: mercy towards sinners, charity towards the needy and love and light for the just.

«*To speak of the heart of Jesus is to speak of his humanity, of him who loved us with a human heart. To speak of the heart of Jesus is to speak of God's love for mankind. God took a body and a heart, so that we can contemplate and encounter the infinite in the finite, the invisible and ineffable Mystery in the human Heart of Jesus*». (Pope Benedict XVI)

The preventive system is a methodology of "*goodness*" that makes our love for Jesus visible to children, loving them as Jesus loves them. We can help the boys taste the infinite love of Jesus through our humble acts of loving kindness towards them. "*Not with beatings but with kindness*", John is heard saying in the nine-year-old's dream from the Shepherdess.

In the month of June we celebrate the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and thus we celebrate Redemption. To celebrate love is to respond to love by loving, to that Love that is so often unloved. "*The heart speaks to the heart*", St John Paul II said in this regard, referring to devotion to the Heart of Jesus as an expression and conversation of love.

We must first experience God's love in our lives and then we can share it with others.

Dear Past Pupils, you are invited to actively participate in the mission of love in the world, as stated in Article 2 of the SDB Constitutions: "*to be in the Church signs and bearers of God's love for the young, especially the poor*". Therefore, you are also signs and bearers of God's love in your family, in the workplace, in society...

Dear Past Pupils, learn to transform your love and gratitude for Don Bosco into service to young people, especially the Past Pupils of Salesian works who are most in need. Make them taste the infinite love of the Heart of Jesus.

Dominic Nguyen Duc Nam



## This time we talk about... Sport and hope in the... Olympic Games



Dear Past Pupils and Friends,

I will always remember the diversion of sport in the Salesian Oratory. Three or four games were played at the same time; the game of skill consisted of being able to distinguish one's own space, between footballs, basketballs and volleyballs. Many players were involved.

The Oratory! The courtyard! One of the luminous initiatives conceived by Don Bosco. He used to declare how *«in the Oratory the spirit of family is lived»*. Sport is considered important because it is capable of generating Education, Friendship, Respect for self and others, Spirit of sacrifice and Will. Qualities capable of enhancing oneself and to be put at the disposal of others.

I believe that the action carried out by Don Bosco was innovative because he succeeded in bringing together children from all walks of life, offering real opportunities to grow with values and giving them a better future.

It is hard to think of the Salesians or Don Bosco and not imagine them participating in the boys' game. This is borne out by quite a few images where Don Bosco himself is filmed in the middle of a courtyard full of youngsters cackling and having fun.

The teacher seen only in the cathedra, in catechism, from the pulpit is a teacher and nothing more, but if he goes down to the Oratory with the youngsters, if he is beside them during a football match or during volleyball practice, he becomes like a brother.

What does St Paul have to do with sporting activity? In several passages of the "Apostle of the Gentiles", references can be seen. First of all, he invites people to train *«in true faith, for exercise is useful for everything, bringing with it the promise of the present life and the life to come»* (1 Tim. 4:8). In the Second Letter to Timothy (4:7): *«I have fought the good fight, I have finished my race, I have kept the faith. Now only the crown of righteousness remains for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day»*. St Paul shows not so much the language of sport, but a discipline of life typical of athletes.

The current generation has in the mouse and the computer screen the two indispensable keys to access the world. The excessive power of the media is causing young people to lose their perception of the past and the future, crushing them on the dimension of the present, where everything is consumed instantaneously, where emotions are burnt out in an instant and experiences find no room for decantation.

Sport offers multiple reasons for interest and curiosity. It teaches how to face difficult moments, to face them with determination in the knowledge, or even just in the hope of overcoming them.

*«Every sporting event, especially the Olympic one, where representatives of nations with different histories, cultures, traditions, faiths and values confront each other, can become the vehicle of an ideal force capable of opening new, sometimes uncharted-for paths in overcoming*





*conflicts caused by the violation of human rights*». These were the words of Pope Francis, for the centenary of the foundation of CONI (Italian National Olympic Committee) on 23 December 2014.

On the same occasion, the Supreme Pontiff, the first supporter of sport to be understood as a model of life, said among other things: «*The Olympic motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" is not an incitement to the supremacy of one nation over another, of one people over another, nor to the exclusion of the weakest and least protected, but represents the challenge to which we are all called, not just athletes: That of taking on the hard work, the sacrifice, to reach the important goals in life, accepting one's limits without letting oneself be blocked by them but trying to surpass oneself*».

In a sports competition there is the synthesis of a whole life. The tension before the important tests, the commitment and dedication in preparing for the race. Then the confidence in yourself, in what you have done, in your own possibilities. Because if you have worked well, if you have done things properly, you can be worried, but not afraid. Sometimes signs of hope come from where you least expect it. That is the beauty of life: it is full of mysteries and novelties that cannot always be explained rationally.

In 2005, Pope Benedict XVI also said that sport «*is a discipline that, if practised with respect for the rules, becomes an educational tool and a vehicle for important human and spiritual values*».

Through sport one tries to make young people understand that everything one does must be done with passion, dedication, rules, commitment, goals. Because only in this way can good results be achieved.

Sport today is a great mass phenomenon: television and newspapers make us participate in events, even the most distant ones, with immediate enthusiasm. That is why we would like to conclude this editorial with a reflection that combines the Olympic Games (26 July to 11 August) with the Paralympic Games (28 August to 8 September) in Paris.

According to complicated chronological reconstructions, the first Olympiad dates back to 776 BC. Every four years, during the full moon, the Greek peoples would gather in Olympia, a city in Ilia in the Peloponnese, to compete in the Games. Any wars that may have been going on between the various cities were also interrupted on this occasion.

Without going into the competitive arena (although we hope that some of our alumni will be able to show off) we express a unanimous wish. Is it to be hoped that "*that decision*" can be repeated in the will of all? It would indeed be a great success for sport, but even more so it would direct humanity towards a better life.

Pierluigi Lazzarini

Spain



## Salesian presences put on their runners for Mary Help of Christians

(ANS - Madrid) - 30 May 2024

Hundreds of athletes have taken part during the month of May, or since the end of April, in various solidarity races in honour of *Mary Help of Christians*, whose liturgical celebration took place on 24 May. There are many Salesian presences organising night cross-countries, popular races or children's races encouraging the educative and pastoral communities and the Salesian Family to run for different solidarity causes.

The races usually have a route of 4 to 10 kilometres through the nearby streets. The participants are divided into categories according to age, from youngest to oldest. The first to reach the finish line are awarded a prize, but more than ever the important thing is not to win but to participate for a charitable cause that unites the Salesian houses in the same objective.

Salesians Cordoba held the 42nd edition of its *Popular Race* in honour of Mary Help of Christians organised by the *Salesians Cordoba Sports Club*, on 12 May. It brought together some 300 athletes from different parts of the province, among whom the



Montillana Rocío Marqués Córdoba stood out, playing for the *Club de Atletismo Galifas - Universidad de Córdoba*. On 8 May, the little ones were able to enjoy a children's race in the facilities at the Salesian school also organised by the Salesians Córdoba Sports Club.

The largest sports festival took place in Orotava on 19 May, with the celebration of the 46<sup>th</sup> *María Auxiliadora Cross*. The event, the longest running in the Archipelago only interrupted during the world pandemic, was attended by some 1,800 runners. Many fans crowded on both sides of the road to encourage all the runners who suffered in the famous "*ascent of the Marquesa*". According to the data obtained, La Orotava welcomed more than 5,000 people between public and participants during the morning of Sunday, 19 May at different points along the route.

The *María Auxiliadora Solidarity Race of the Salesian Las Palmas School* is in its 15th edition, a sporting event that has become increasingly popular in the city. From 50 participants in the first editions, it has grown to more than 1,600 runners of all



ages in the last edition of 2023. This year's event was held on Saturday, 4 May.

The 43rd edition of the **María Auxiliadora Cross-country**, organised by the *Parents association at the Salesian School*, with its president *Luisa Tirado* at the head, was held on 21 April through several in Algeciras. This race, which is one of the most traditional sporting events in the city is also a social, educational and cultural event that brings together the whole family in two different events: one of 5 kilometres and another of 10.

Another race that is gaining tradition is the one in Montilla, where in June they will celebrate the 21st edition organised by the **Don Bosco Past Pupils Association**, with the aim of promoting the values transmitted by the practice of sports in general and athletics in particular. This edition will take place on 22 June 2024.

On 10 May **Salesiana Alcoy** organised the 5th Edition of the **Salesian Ciutat D'Alcoi Night Cross-country**, a charity event whose proceeds go to the Salesian NGO *Bosco Global* specifically to the projects carried out both in Syria and Ukraine.

**Salesians Úbeda** held its 8th solidarity race organised by the *Salesian Sports Club*. The race involved some 800 participants who enjoyed a splendid afternoon of sport and conviviality. As it was a charity race, all the proceeds were donated to *Bosco Global*, and it had a specific impact on the neighbourhood of Gourle Diadie in Tambacounda (Senegal) where they intend to condition the area, to build a sports ground



that will allow its inhabitants to have a decent area for sports practice.

It is held on the same day as the feast of Mary Help of Christians. The route is approximately 4 km through the streets of the neighbourhood around **Cruces in Barakaldo** (Vizcaya) and the target audience are students from 6th grade Primary to 4th ESO. *Past Pupils and families of the centre are also invited to participate.*

During the celebration of the festival, this Thursday and Friday the Olympics will be held for infants to 4th ESO with different athletics, archery, shot put, shot put... with a prize giving ceremony on the podium as a final activity on Mary Help of Christians Day.

The Solidarity Race held around the month of Mary Help of Christians in **Salesians Ciudad Real**, took place this year on 28 April, Sunday, involving almost 300 students and families. The distances varied according to the categories.

Under the hashtag: #Correortucole the 40th edition of the **MAUX cross-country in Guadalajara** organised by the Salesians is held on Sunday 26 May. It takes place in an urban circuit of the city and is supported by the City Council of Guadalajara, the Provincial Council and the Junta de Castilla-La Mancha. It is a cross open to all ages.

**Source:** Salesianos.info

Ecuador



## Mater Maria Auxilium Christianorum

If you are here, it is surely because she brought you here,  
said Don Bosco to the Oratorians of Valdocco,  
She is the Mater Maria Auxilium Christianorum,  
the Virgin of the dream, of the jumper, the little boy Juanito,  
whose sweet voice told him that nothing can be achieved with blows,  
but kindness can do all things, because it comes down from God,  
as Saint Teresa of Avila said, in the end only God is enough,  
In a world where envy makes a clean sweep of love.

There from the office where every morning the diligent secretary,  
before turning on the computer, gives you a pleading look,  
Mother Help of Christians, protect me and guide me in my daily work,  
because I have a lot of things to do for the day,  
but your assistance, O Virgin, is kind to me, as it is every day,  
take care of my family, of my child who is left in the nursery,  
take care of my parents who are growing old to the rhythm of a melody,  
keep my job, which is my livelihood and my joy.



In the classroom, the teacher waits for his students,  
between the conflict of Faith and experienced science,  
looks at your image in the aisle of the Help of Christians,  
and without saying a word, a prayer to his inner self proclaims it,  
if you were the sorrowful mother of Jesus, the crucified Christ,  
be my loving mother to this one a convinced teacher,  
who morning, noon and night lives for the learner,  
who needs your help in daily academic practice.



On the wide desk before you see an agenda full of events,  
a high-ranking civil servant bows his head,  
Mother of help, to you I entrust this and all my days,  
make my decisions not to hurt or injure anyone,  
guide me in the path of justice and wholesome fairness,  
grant me your grace of efficiency and effectiveness,  
for on my work depends, others also important,  
make me an instrument of peace, harmony and joy.

Outside in the courtyard, a pupil looks, sighs and breathes,  
Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.

Dr. Fredi Portilla Farfán





Ecuador

## March of Faith: 57 years walking alongside Mary



Cuenca, Ecuador – May 2024

On 19 May, Pentecost Sunday, the "*Técnico Salesiano*" Educational Unit in the city of Cuenca celebrated the March of Faith with devotion and fervour.

This event, which has been taking place for 57 years, brings together young people, teachers, students, [past pupils](#), parents of family members and the community in a demonstration of gratitude and trust in Mary Help of Christians. The procession is a clear manifestation of the charism of the city, demonstrating a Christian commitment that is lived with enthusiasm, dedication and affection.

After the procession through the streets of Cuenca, the solemn Eucharist was celebrated to Mary Help of Christians, presided over by Fr Javier Herrán, former Rector of the Salesian community in Cuenca and current Rector of the Salesian community in Cayambe.

Concelebrating with him were Fr Juan Francisco Flores, Vice-Provincial of the Salesian Province of Ecuador (ECU); Fr Ángel Lazo, Rector of the Salesian community in Yannuncay; and Fr Franklin Arévalo, coordinator of Pastoral Care of the Técnico Salesiano.

# «THE DREAM THAT MAKES YOU DREAM» A heart that transforms "wolves" into "lambs"

**Fr Egidio Viganò**, Don Bosco's seventh successor, offers us other no less inspiring reflections. I am happy to see this magnificent line of continuity from all the Rectors Major in reading, meditating and interpreting the dream par excellence, drawing out ideas that are helpful even for our current times. Fr Viganò confirms, like other successors of Don Bosco before him, that Mary is the true inspiration, Teacher and guide of John, our Father Don Bosco's vocation.

It is of special interest, I think, that in the famous dream when he was only nine – a dream many times repeated and one to which Don Bosco attached great importance in his life – in his faith awareness, Mary appeared as an important personage directly in a mission project for his life, a woman showing a particular pastoral preoccupation for the young; in fact she appeared "as a shepherdess". And we should take note that it is not John who chooses Mary; it is Mary who takes the initiative in the choice; at the request of her Son, she will be the inspirer and guide of his vocation.<sup>20</sup>

The wonderful experience John had allowed him to establish a very personal relationship with Mary – the Lady of the dream – and it is for this reason that Don Bosco would experience intimately, throughout his life and on many occasions, the very special and great affection on the part of Mary. It is a very special relationship with the Virgin Mary.

Also **Fr Juan Edmundo Vecchi**, Don Bosco's eighth successor, notes that convinced as Don Bosco was that he was sent to the young, everything must be focused on that one sacred purpose, the young, and he must devote all his



energies to them. Such is the thread of the story that Don Bosco makes of his life in the *Memoirs of the Oratory* starting from the *first dream*: "The Lord sent me to look after boys, therefore I must cut down on other work and keep myself fit for them",<sup>21</sup> always convinced that he was an instrument of the Lord and that his whole life was marked by this call and mission among the young. Another great expert on Don Bosco confirms this: "The faith of being the Lord's instrument for a very singular mission was profound and firm in him. This was the basis in him of the characteristic religious attitude of the biblical servant, the prophet who cannot escape the divine will".<sup>22</sup>

Finally, **Fr Pascual Chávez**, Don Bosco's ninth successor, offers one that moves me among a large number of texts. It is a hymn to the mother figure of Mamma Margaret who, with the grace of God, was able to accompany young John by interpreting and intuiting how, in the dream he had when he was nine, the Lord and the Virgin Mary were calling her son to a very

special vocation. One could speak of Mamma Margaret, Fr Pascual says, as a true "Salesian" educator.

It was this educative skill that enabled Mamma Margaret to identify the particular potentialities hidden in her children, bring them to light, develop them, and return them almost visibly to their own hands. This was the case especially with John, her most outstanding offspring. How impressive it is to see in Mamma Margaret the clear sense and awareness of her "maternal responsibility" in the constant Christian guidance of her children, while always leaving them autonomous about their vocation in life, right up until her death! If young John's dream at the age of nine revealed many things to him about his future, it did so primarily for Mamma Margaret; it was she who first hazarded the interpretation: "Perhaps you will become a priest!" And some years later, when she realised that their home environment was a negative one for John because of the hostility of his stepbrother Anthony, she made the sacrifice of sending him to work as a farm-hand in the Moglia farm at Moncuoco. A mother who deprives herself of her youngest son to

<sup>20</sup> E. VIGANÒ, *Lettere circolari di don Egidio Viganò ai salesiani*, vol. I, Roma, Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, 1996, 10.

<sup>21</sup> *BM VII*, 171-172. Quoted in J. E. VECCHI, *Educatori appassionati esperti e consacrati per i giovani. Lettere circolari ai Salesiani di don Juan E. Vecchi*. Introduction, key words and indexes by Marco Bay, LAS, Roma 2013, 380.

<sup>22</sup> P. STELLA, *Don Bosco nella storia della religiosità cattolica*. Vol. II, p. 32. Quoted in J. E. VECCHI, op. cit., 381.

send him to work at a place far from home makes a great sacrifice, but she did it not only to avoid a rift in the family but also to set John on the road revealed to both of them in the dream (...) Divine Providence gave her the grace to be a "Salesian educator".<sup>23</sup>

### 3. THE PROPHETIC DREAM: a precious jewel in the charism of Don Bosco's Family

In the previous points we read how Fr Philip Rinaldi invited the confreres, and certainly at that time the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Salesian Cooperators, the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians and I imagine also the Past Pupils, to read the dream, to understand it, to internalise it and to feel its echo in their heart. I have no doubt about that. Certainly there has been a unanimous view in everything that has been written – be it historical research, historical-critical studies, reflections on Salesian spirituality or educative and pastoral interpretations – in recognising that this dream is much more than a simple dream. In fact, it contains so many charismatic elements that I dare to call it *a precious jewel of our charism* and a real road map for *Don Bosco's Family*.

You could really say that nothing is missing from it and there is nothing superfluous. That is what I want to refer to now.

#### 1.1. Looking at the dream

Where to look right now? In the first instance, at the **dream itself**, since it contains an extraordinary charismatic wealth. As I have already said, there is not a word too many and certainly nothing missing. The effort Don Bosco made in writing it down, to convey to us the fact that it is not just **"a" dream, but that we must see it as "the" dream** that would mark his entire life, is more than evident – even though at the time, as a child, he could not have imagined it. In fact, "Don Bosco, almost sixty years old – he felt old then and was so for the time – had to pose the problem of giving a historical-spiritual foundation to his Congrega-

tion by recalling the providential origins that justified it. What could be better than 'telling the story' to his sons of the cradle of the 'Congregation of the Oratories' in its genesis, development, purpose and method, as an institution willed by God as an instrument for the salvation of youth in new times?"<sup>24</sup> Indeed, the *Memoirs of the Oratory*, in which Don Bosco tells the story of his dream, are nothing more than the dream unfolded in his life story, in the Oratory and in the Congregation. This is why he also says in the introduction to his manuscript:

Therefore I am now putting in writing those confidential details that may somehow serve as a light or to be use to the work which Divine Providence has entrusted to the Society of St Francis de Sales".<sup>25</sup> And "Now, what purpose can this chronicle serve? It will be a record to help people overcome problems that may come in the future by learning from the past. It will serve to make known how God himself has always been our guide. It will give my sons some entertainment to be able to read about their father's adventures. Doubtless they will be read much more avidly when I have been called by God to render my account, when I am no longer among them."<sup>26</sup>

The story told in the *Memoirs of the Oratory* (and of the dream at nine years of age which is part of that) has been of such importance that it has involved its study, for their whole lives, by significant Salesian experts, seizing upon different perspectives over the years. A rich and noteworthy example, for example, comes from the various emphases that the great scholar of Salesian pedagogy, Fr Pietro Braido, made over several decades. It would be "an edifying story left by a founder to the members of his Society of apostles and educators who had to perpetuate his work and style, following his directives, guidelines and lessons" (1965); or "a history of the oratory that is more 'theological' and pedagogical than real, per-

haps the 'theoretical' animation document that Don Bosco most long pondered and desired" (1989); "perhaps the richest book of contents and preventive guidelines" that Don Bosco wrote: "a manual of pedagogy and spirituality 'told' from a clear oratorian perspective" (1999); or even a writing in which "the parable and the message" come before and "above history", to illustrate God's action in human affairs, and thus, rejoicing and recreating, "to comfort and confirm the disciples" from a clear "oratorian" perspective (1999).<sup>27</sup>

One of the precious stones of this jewel to which I am referring, is the one that allows those of us who enter the dream with a Salesian heart, whatever our Christian and Salesian journey or in the Family of Don Bosco, to be questioned in our heart: are we ready to learn, are we willing to be surprised by God who accompanies our life, as he guided the life of Don Bosco, and to feel like sons and daughters before that immense fatherhood that emanates from the figure of our father? Because:

- If we do not become a **BELIEVER** and if we are not convinced that God works in history, in the history of Don Bosco and in each one's personal history, we will understand little or nothing of the *Memoirs of the Oratory* and the dream, and it will simply be a "beautiful story".
- If we do not become **SONS or DAUGHTERS**, we will not be able to attune ourselves to the fatherhood that Don Bosco intends to communicate through the *Memoirs of the Oratory*.
- If we do not become **DISCIPLES**, ready to learn, we will not truly enter into the spirit of the *Memoirs of the Oratory* and of the dream.

It seems to me that these three initial dispositions (faith, being children of, and discipleship) are "essential keys" to understand and take on, for ourselves, what Don Bosco has narrated and left us as a spiritual legacy. What took place in his life, and marked and enlightened him forever, Don Bosco wanted to be a legacy

<sup>23</sup> P. CHÁVEZ VILLANUEVA, *Lettere circolari ai salesiani (2002-2014)*. Introduction and indexes by Marco Bay. Presentation by Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, Roma, LAS, 2021, p. 450.

<sup>24</sup> F. MOTTO, *op. cit.* 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> J. BOSCO, *Memoirs of the Oratory*, quoted in F. Motto, *op. cit.*, 9.

<sup>27</sup> F. MOTTO, *op. cit.*, 10.

that would profoundly help his Salesians and all of us who, by grace, feel and are part of his Family.

## 1.2. Young people, key characters in the dream...

From the first moment of the dream, the "Oratorian mission" entrusted to young John Bosco is evident, even if he does not know how to carry it out or how to express it.

As we can see, the scene is full of youngsters, who are absolutely real in young John's dream.

Therefore, it seems to me possible to state that the young are the central characters in the dream, and that even if they do not utter a word, everything revolves around them. In addition, the "heavenly" characters themselves and young John Bosco are there thanks to them and for them. The whole dream, then, is about them and for them: for the youngsters. If we exclude the young people from this dream, nothing significant for our mission would remain.

But what is interesting is that they are not like a photograph that fixes an image within an instance. These youngsters are in perpetual motion and activity: both when they are being aggressive (like wolves), when they cannot stand each other, and when, after being transformed in the way that the Lady of the Dream asks of young John, they become youngsters (like lambs) who are calm, friendly and warm. The most important thing that happens in the dream and that Don Bosco himself learns and, afterwards, all his followers, is discovering that the *transformation process* is always possible. It is an "Easter" movement – let me call it that – of conversion and transformation, of wolves into lambs, and lambs into what, in today's language, we would call a youth community that celebrates Jesus and Mary. It certainly seems to me an essential and central element of the dream.

## 1.3. ...where there is a clear vocational call

"This is the field of your work. Make yourself humble, strong, and energetic. And what you will see happening to these animals in a mo-

ment is what you you must do for my children".<sup>28</sup>

What happens in the dream is above all a *call*, an invitation, a vocation that seems impossible, unachievable. Young John Bosco wakes up tired, he has even been crying; and when the call comes from God (the dignified-looking character in the dream is Jesus), the direction that such a call can take is unpredictable and disconcerting.

This call is something very special in the dream; it is of a *unique richness*. I say this because it would seem that, due to his age, lack of a father, almost total lack of resources, poverty, internal family problems, quarrels with his half-brother Anthony, difficulties in accessing school because of the distance and the need to work in the fields, there is no possible future for John other than to stay there cultivating the fields and looking after the animals. Even to us it might seem like an unrealisable-dream, far away, perhaps destined for someone else, but not for him. It is the same interpretation that young John's relatives also give of the dream, as confirmed by his grandmother's words: "Pay n attention to dreams".<sup>29</sup>

However, it is precisely this difficult situation that makes Don Bosco (at this time young John) very human, in need of help, but also strong and enthusiastic. His willpower, character, temperament, fortitude and the determination of his mother, Mamma Margaret, a deep faith on the part of both his mother and John himself, make all this possible. The dream would always be there, but he would discover it through life: *I understood how, little by little, everything came true...* There is no magic, it is not a "fairy" dream, there is no predestination, but a life full of meaning, demands, sacrifices, but also of faith and hope that urges us to discover and live it every day.

In the dream, a very respectable man appears, of dignified appearance, who speaks to John, questions him, puts him in the hands of his Mother, the Lady. There is definitely a sending on mission. A mission as educator and pastor wherein a method is also pointed out: gentle-

ness and love. Here is an example of his vocational response:

John, faithful from an early age to divine inspiration, begins to work in the field assigned to him by Providence. He has not yet reached the age of ten and is already an apostle among his compatriots in the village of Murialdo. Is it not a Festive Oratory, even in embryo, sketched out, that young John began in 1825, using means compatible with his age and his education?

Endowed with a prodigious memory, a lover of books, regularly listening to sermons, he treasures everything, instructions, facts, examples, to repeat them to his small audience, instilling with admirable effectiveness the love of virtue in those who rush to admire the skill of his games and to hear his childish but warm words.<sup>30</sup>

## 1.4. And she, Mary, will forever mark young John's dream and Don Bosco's life

We are coming to the central moment of the dream: the Lady's motherly mediation (linked to the mystery of the name). For John Bosco, his mother and the Mother of the one he greets three times a day, it will be a place of humanity in which to rest, in which to find safety and refuge in the most difficult moments.

"I will give you a teacher. Under her guidance you can become wise. Without her, all wisdom is foolishness." In fact, it is she who tells him both the field where he will have to work and the method to be used: "This is the field of your work. Make yourself humble, strong and energetic." Mary is called upon from the very beginning for the birth of a new charism, as it is precisely her speciality to carry and give birth: for this reason, when it comes to a Founder who must receive from the Holy Spirit the original light of the charism, the Lord disposes that it is his own mother, the Virgin of Pentecost and immaculate model of the Church, who is to be his Teacher. She alone, the "full of grace", understands all charisms from within,

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in P. RICALDONE, Anno XVII. 24 March 1936 N. 74.

<sup>29</sup> J. BOSCO, *op. cit.*, 1177.

<sup>30</sup> P. RICALDONE, Anno XX Novembre-Dicembre 1939 N. 96.



as someone who knows all languages and speaks them as if they were her own.<sup>31</sup>

It is as if the Man of the dream said to the very young John Bosco: "From now on, be in agreement with her". "Let us note at once, here, that it is not John who chooses Mary, but that it is Mary who presents herself with the initiative of the choice: She, at the request of her Son, will be the Inspirer and Teacher of his vocation".<sup>32</sup>

This **feminine-maternal-Marian dimension** is perhaps one of the most challenging dimensions of the dream. When we look at this serenely, this aspect turns into something beautiful. It is Jesus himself who gives him a teacher, his Mother, and that he must "ask my Mother what my name is"; John must work "with her children", and it is "She" who will see to the continuity of the dream in life, who will take him by the hand until the end of his days, until the moment when he will truly understand everything. There is an enormous intentionality in wanting to say that in the Salesian charism on behalf of the poorest youngsters, those most deprived, most lacking in affection, the dimension of treating them with "kindly", with gentleness and love, as well as the "Marian" dimension, *are indispensable elements* for those who want to live this charism. Our Lady has to do with formation in the "wisdom of the charism".

And that is why it is difficult to understand that in the Salesian charism there can be someone (person, group or institution) who leaves the Marian presence in the background. Without Mary of Nazareth we would be talking about another charism, not the Salesian charism, nor about the sons and daughters of Don Bosco. Fr Ziggioni says it beautifully in this research we have done on the comments of the Rectors Major on the dream:

I would like to persuade all the Salesians of this very important fact, which illuminates the whole life of the Saint with heavenly light and therefore gives

an indisputable value to everything he did and said in his life: Our Lady, to whom he was consecrated by his Mother at birth, who shed light on his future in the *dream at nine years of age* and then returned to comfort and advise him in a thousand ways in dreams, in the prophetic spirit, in his inner vision of the state of souls, in miracles and countless graces, which he worked by invoking her; Our Lady is everything for Don Bosco; and the Salesian who wants to acquire the spirit of the Founder must imitate him in this devotion.<sup>33</sup>

### 1.5. Docile to the Spirit, trusting in Providence

There is certainly much to learn. Becoming humble, strong and energetic means preparing for what lies ahead. John Bosco must be obedient, docile to the Master's wisdom. He will have to learn to see and discover the processes of transformation; to understand that the route, the journey made with these young people leads to life, and to the encounter with the Lord of the dream and with his mother; leads to Jesus and Mary. John Bosco discovered all this

At stake is obedience to God, docility to the Spirit. Just as Mary is the one who "lets things happen", who lets what God has thought and dreamed happen to her, to the point of proclaiming that "fiat" to God, that the *Lord has done great things in me*, so also the Salesian, the Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, every Salesian Cooperator, every devotee of Mary help of Christians, every member of our Salesian Family which is the Family of Don Bosco, will have to learn to do precisely this style of docility to the Spirit. I add that I would like this style to become flesh and life at all stages of initial and ongoing formation in every group, congregation and Salesian institution. And let us not forget that the "formators", the "formandi", should be, we should be, the first to "let ourselves be formed" by the Spirit, like Mary. The dream offers, like no other element, like no other reality, what I believe can be de-

scribed as "*inalienable*" clues to the DNA of the charism. It is these clues or "principles" that can help us read, discern, and act in tune with creative fidelity.

And let us not forget that this is a community task, we must carry it out together, "synodally" – we could say today in line with recent synodal work – as a Salesian Family.

Accompanying Don Bosco in reflecting on his dream at nine years of age means also emphasising his abandonment to Providence, placing us, like him, in the "in good time you will understand everything". The dream itself was, for Don Bosco, an act of Providence. This is the radical conviction, the fundamental choice of life, "the essence of Don Bosco's soul", the central point, the deepest and most intimate part of him. There is no doubt that the abandonment to Divine Providence, as he had learned from his mother, was decisive for our father and must be for us the guarantee of the continuity of Salesian spirituality. It is abandonment to God, trust in God, because the God that Don Bosco learned to love is a reliable God. He really acts in history, and he has done so in the history of the Oratory, to the point that Don Bosco went so far as to say to the Salesian Rectors on 2 February 1876:

The other Congregations and Religious Orders had in their beginnings some inspiration, some vision, some supernatural fact which gave impetus to the foundation and ensured its establishment; but mostly it stopped at one or a few of these facts. Here, however, things are quite different among us. It can be said that there is nothing that has not been known before.

No step was taken by the Congregation without some supernatural fact advising it; no change or refinement or enlargement that was not preceded by a command from the Lord... For example, we could have written down all the things that happened to us before they happened and written them down minutely and accurately.<sup>34</sup>

(Continued)

<sup>31</sup> A. BOZZOLO (ED), *Il Sogno dei nove anni*. Questioni ermeneutiche e lettura teologica. LAS, Roma 2017, 264. Cf. fn 7 re availability of this in English.

<sup>32</sup> E. VIGANÒ, *Lettere circolari di don Egidio Viganò ai salesiani*, vol. I, 1996, Roma, Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, 1996, p. 10.

<sup>33</sup> R. ZIGGIOTTI, *op. cit.*, 264.

<sup>34</sup> F. MOTTO, *op. cit.*, 7.

# Museums around the world tell the story of the Salesian charism

(ANS – Rome) – 23 May 2024

From 18 to 22 January this year, the Salesian Missions Sector organised a meeting in Turin dedicated to Salesian museography.

The initiative gave the opportunity to learn more about this surprisingly widespread cultural presence in the panorama of Salesian presences in the world. A panorama seen from Valdocco in Turin traces the history of the Salesian charism.

«A museum – said Fr Alfred Maravilla, Councillor in charge of the Sector – is a non-profit institution at the service of society that researches, collects, preserves, interprets and exhibits material and intangible finds. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums encourage diversity and sustainability».

«Specifically, Fr Maraviglia, stressed, Salesian missionary museums pay attention to the original culture of indigenous peoples and encourage intercultural awareness in young people, helping them to grow in mutual respect of peoples and in the discovery of the other».

But where and what are these museums? One tour is enough to trigger the curiosity of enthusiasts. Looking at the Italian area and in particular Piedmont, we find the Missionary Ethnological Museum at Colle Don Bosco, built in 1942, and the Museum of Natural History started in 1878 and developed



around the school at the Turin Institute in Valsalice.

Salesian Europe offers an exhibition of some museum collections in Lisbon, Portugal, at the Provincial House, and in Madrid, at the Mission Office, dedicated mainly to African culture as well as to the history of some missionaries.

Still in Europe, some works should be noted among others that, despite not having particular exhibitions, represent great artistic and historical value, such as the Benedictine Monastery in Ensdorf, active from 1121

to 1802; the Benediktbeuren Abbey, in Germany, an hour by train from Munich. The Baroque-style building dominates the lake by the same name with its rich fauna and flora, recently restored with works suitable for the teaching of Ecology. Also worth remembering and visiting is the Polish Mother House in Oswiecim with the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians.

In Latin America, where Don Bosco's charism has been widely sown, there are a number of museums and collections that are stimulating for their anthropological, ethnographic and historical value. The *Vicente Rasetto* museum began in 1977 museum in Huancayo, Peru. In Ecuador, in Quito, we find the *Abya Yala Museum*. Opened in 1957, today it has drawn the attention of UNESCO and Ethnological Research Centres. The power behind it has been Cuneo-born Fr Juan Botasso, especially for editorial production. Today it is directed by Nataly del Pilar who, participating in the conference of Salesian missionary museums, among other things, hoped for a networking of the entire Salesian museography.

In Chile, it is worth noting the recent reopening of the Museum dedicated to Cardinal Raul Silva Henríquez and the presence in the South of the important Maggiorino Borgatello museum, with the history of the Mapuche Indians and other tribes. In Puerto Ayacucho, Venezuela, there is the Monsignor Ceccarelli museum.

Of note are the museum presences in Argentina and Brazil. In Argentina, we can consult the rich archives and documents of the historian Fr Gaetano Bruno, and not only that, we find the Regional Museum of Rawson, in the province of Chubut, with pre-Columbian collections and a collection of over 500 ceramics belonging to the native peoples. In San Nicolás de Los Arroyos you can visit the Antonio Scasso Museum and in San José the one wanted by the Gentilini Family concerning the agricultural school.

A must-see in Patagonia is the Historical and Natural Museum dedicated to the bishop and explorer Bishop Giuseppe Fagnano, which began in 1913. Here you can learn about the work of the first Salesian missionaries, with Alberto De Agostini among them, who were able to combine evangelisation and culture.

Brazil offers two valuable opportunities. One is in São Paulo, at the Provincial House, dedicated to Salesian history in that country, and the other in Campo Grande. The latter is of interest to UNESCO and among other things has also received the issuance of a stamp on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary. Fr Cesare Albisetti, the indigenous Bororo Tiago Marques, Fr Angelo Venturelli ("the one who managed to transform the manuscripts of Fr Albisetti into what is now the Bororo Encyclopedia"), Fr Felice Zavattaro and Fr João Falco, who



stamped his own character on the museum.

From Brazil, where St John Bosco has the most beautiful church dedicated to him in the capital Brasilia, we return to Turin, where we cannot fail to mention the renovated *Casa Don Bosco Museum in Valdocco*. Here an entire building was redeveloped under the direction of architects Sergio Sabbadini and Massimo Chiappetta: a total area of about 4,000 square metres and 27 exhibition spaces. The strong conservative restoration has led to the discovery of spa-

ces where Don Bosco, Mamma Margaret, Fr Rua operated in the early days of the Oratory in continuity with the little room where the Saint flew to heaven.

«*Here, in these environments*» said Cardinal and Rector Major, Ángel Fernández Artime, who strongly wanted the renovation of these spaces «*a pedagogy was born that changed the lives of Don Bosco's boys; eleven people have passed through here who today the Church recognizes as Venerable, Blessed and Saint: this means that Valdocco has been a school of humanity and holiness and we want to pass on this heritage to the world*». And yet in this Museum, the Rector Major continues, «*there are not only Salesians, but many past pupils of incredible social ability, some martyrs who have marked these ideals with their lives and blood, many consecrated and lay women*».

The Museum has Dr. Ana Martín García as director and a team of volunteer guides ready to accompany the ever-increasing number of visitors. In reality, visiting these environments with their mix of objects and religious art, paintings and maps, statues, writings and various collections gives you the feeling of encountering not a past memory, but the events of a current charism.

Fr Giuseppe Costa,  
Co-spokesperson  
of the Salesian Congregation

## Italy



# Inauguration of the Exhibition on the Dream at the age of 9 of Don Bosco at the CASA DON BOSCO MUSEUM in Valdocco

(ANS - Turin) - 23 May 2024

On the afternoon of Wednesday, May 22, the eve of the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, the Don Bosco House Museum in Turin-Valdocco inaugurated a temporary exhibition on Don Bosco's 9-Year Dream. The ceremony featured Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, Rector Major of the Salesians, and participants from the World Consultation of the Salesian Family, along with other prominent Salesian figures and cultural personalities. The exhibition, conceived and curated by Dr. Ana Martín García, General Coordinator of the Museum, traces the history of this extraordinary prophetic dream 200 years later. It showcases its iconographic representation in the arts and illustrates the dream's ongoing resonance today. The display includes historical photographs, works, and objects from the period between Don Bosco's beatification (1929) and canonization (1934), marking the beginning of the dream's artistic representation.

At the opening of the ceremony, Dr. Ms. Martín thanked the distinguished guests



and spoke about the celebratory purpose of the exhibition, highlighting its aim to trace the continued relevance of Don Bosco's dream today. She emphasized the special value of the exhibition, which for the first time presents a significant selection of display boards representing the dream. These plates were commissioned by the Salesian publisher Elledici from 1941 onwards and were disseminated through various publications, media, and languages around the world. «*Let us think of how many other dreams, projects, prayers, vocations, and initiatives these works may have given rise to!*» noted the exhibition curator.

The Rector of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, Fr Michele Viviano, also spoke at the ceremony, pointing out the relevance of the presence in the exhibition not only of the Elledici display panels, but also of some precious artefacts from the history of Don Bosco made available by the basilica - such as, for example, a historical stole of Don Bosco embroidered for him by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Fr Valter Rossi of Elledici Publishers then took the floor, underscoring the impor-







tance of these plaques for their role in shaping the collective imagination about Don Bosco's dream at the age of Nine and the person of the Saint of Young himself. He also spoke about the process of selecting the works and the large archive of valuable graphic materials that the Salesian publishing house still possesses. «I hope that this exhibition will kick-start research work that will allow us to discover the many other treasures that are in our possession and of which we may not even be aware», he added.

Fr. Leonardo Mancini, Provincial of the Piedmont, Aosta Valley, and Lithuania Circumscription, and President of the Elledici Publishing House, then took the floor. «Don Bosco's dream is an event, but this exhibition makes this dream visible in many different ways», the Salesian remarked during his speech. He highlighted the discernment employed by Don Bosco, his successors, and many Salesians worldwide *to correctly interpret* and carry forward that dream. Fr. Mancini exhorted the entire Salesian Family, well represented by many of its Superiors, to continue this action of discernment to



keep the original dream alive. Finally, the Rector Major took the floor with a short message in which he thanked all the organizers and collaborators of the project. He noted the presence of 16 Major Superiors or Heads of various groups of the Salesian Family, who, together with their deputies or delegates, comprised a total of about 50 Salesian Family personalities. «I am really excited to admire this exhibition and to see the originals of those cartoons and drawings I saw as a child in what we called "Filminas Don Bosco"!» he exclaimed.

«And I want to observe one last thing», he concluded, «so many things became possible when people give their best and collaborate with each other. This exhibition truly deserves it. Thank you all!».

The ceremony then concluded with the official ribbon-cutting and the awarding of prizes to four winners of the photo competition associated with the exhibition. Throughout the afternoon, numerous visitors crowded the various rooms of the Casa Don Bosco Museum to view the exhibition.



# "Shaping Tomorrow": SALESIAN MOBILE JOURNALISM

(ANS - Rome) - 23 May 2024

"*Mobile Journalism*" (or "*MoJo*"), understood as digital information created using mobile devices such as smartphones, is a communication area in which the Salesians of Don Bosco are heavily investing. This approach serves as a resource for agile and effective communication, especially in settings with limited structural resources.

In preparation for the Communication 2024 Conference "*SHAPING TOMORROW*", which will take place from August 1 to 7, 2024, at the Salesian Pontifical University (UPS) in Rome, the Sector for Social Communication is presenting a reflection on this theme.

The prospect of a new era in communication often evokes a mix of fear and fascination within the ecclesial community. It signifies a shift in perspectives, actions, strategies, and methods of evangelization.

Each new era introduces unique processes and innovative tools that reshape communication dynamics and influence cultural transformation. While some structures evolve, others become more defined, reflecting broader social changes, even within the Church.

Media message recipients are developing unprecedented skills and expressing increasingly sophisticated expectations. In this complex cultural and communica-



tive landscape, media platforms are constantly at the forefront, especially in the digital sphere. Considering the need to evangelize the entire world, including the vast digital continent, the Church must navigate this evolving reality and find its rightful place.

We are witnessing a shift of epochs, accompanied by a redefinition of paradigms. The evolution of communication calls for a reassessment of how we disseminate the timeless message of the Gospel.

The digital landscape has become an integral part of most people's daily lives, transforming the cultural fabric of society. This requires constant adaptation, even within

the Church, as we navigate the nuances of digital communication and immerse ourselves in a visually centered culture (FRANCIS, *Christus vivit*).

The internet is emerging as a distinctive arena for evangelization in this new era characterized by image-based communication.

*Mobile journalism* (*MoJo*) involves the use of compact devices like smartphones, tablets, digital cameras in journalistic activities.

Numerous reporters use these gadgets as integral tools for professional journalism, allowing them to capture photos and videos, edit, and distribute content.

*MoJo* is gaining popularity as a means of digital storytelling, and practitioners are often referred to as *MoJos*.

At the heart of this journalistic approach is the smartphone, a portable electronic device with networking capabilities.

With this single tool, journalists can gather, edit, and distribute content, providing the audience with immediate access to news and information. Furthermore, digital technologies have permeated our daily lives, constantly reshaping our methods of news gathering.

Smartphones are often the primary tools for distributing content that requires quick turnaround for websites, especially in si-

tuations where traditional crews equipped with bulky devices like cameras, microphones, lights, and tripods are not available. The versatility and accessibility of smartphones make MoJo an increasingly common option in various scenarios, contributing to its growing popularity.

*SalMoJo - Salesian Mobile Journalism* - represents a unique form of mobile journalism deeply rooted in the Salesian charism. Guided by the spirit and principles inherited from Don Bosco, *SalMoJo* embodies a distinct approach to identifying topics, creating content, and disseminating it across various media platforms.

The *SalMoJo* project was conceived to provide training in line with Christian and Salesian values such as faith, the Church, God, the Gospel, justice, life, health, respect, dignity, trust, effective communication, truth, brotherhood, ecology, love, kindness, assistance, Salesian missions, cooperation, education, and teaching. These training sessions aim to equip participants with knowledge and skills ranging from basic to advanced levels.

Besides promoting professionalism in content creation, the project aims to instil those values that can then shape the attitudes of the audience exposed to appropriately selected content.

In our rapidly evolving digital landscape, it is imperative to engage young people through the internet and social media platforms, which are expanding at an unprecedented rate.

The use of modern technologies and our skills enable us to reach millions of individuals, bringing the message of Jesus and the legacy of Don Bosco to diverse com-

munities worldwide, transcending geographical boundaries and working in Africa and Madagascar, North America, South America, Asia, Australia and Oceania and Europe.

In line with the Salesian vision, the *SalMoJo* project promotes humanistic, cultural, and professional initiatives centred on peace, justice, ecology, and solidarity, rooted in the Catholic faith and Salesian charism.

The process of digital evangelization places a strong emphasis on the inculturation of faith in the communicative landscape and the digital sphere, prioritizing the dignity and centrality of the person.

*The most skilled SalMoJo journalists are li-*

*kely to emerge from the past pupils who have grown up in our homes, schools, and parishes and have a true passion for journalism.*

It is undeniable that the digital environment represents the primary missionary frontier of our time. Pope Benedict XVI rightly encouraged the evangelization of this "digital continent" (BENEDICT XVI, *Message for the 43<sup>rd</sup> World Communications Day, 2009*).

Salesians from all continents desire to be present wherever young people gather.

Sociological insights and statistical data underscore that social media have become the natural environment of today's youth, where they invest a significant portion of their time.

The proliferation of new technologies and the expanding reach of the internet have prompted a paradigm shift in the Church's approach to evangelization.

With the advent of devices unimaginable only a few decades ago, the Church has gained access to virtual pulpits resonating with billions of individuals worldwide.

While this new era of evangelization may be challenging on one hand, it presents unlimited opportunities, considered by many as signs of the times.

"*We invite you to attend the conference on communication to be held from 1 to 7 August 2024 in Rome*", is the exhortation coming from the Sector for Social Communication.

In view of the conference, the Facebook page and Instagram profile of "*Shaping Tomorrow*" are already active.



## You see further than me

The 2024 Calendar published by the Salesians of the Sacred Heart of Bologna was entirely dedicated to former students who distinguished themselves in the field of faith; some of them even achieved beatification or venerability.

From this issue of *EX ALLIEVI Newsflash* and until Christmas, we will present some of them again. Those who would like to receive a copy of the Calendar are given the contact details:



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[www.sacrocuore-bologna.it](http://www.sacrocuore-bologna.it)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/sacrocuore](https://www.facebook.com/sacrocuore)

We highlight the last sentences with which the twelve months of 2024 were presented.

«Our itinerary on the road of dreams has made us experience how much the Lord sees further than we do, and that with him at our side we can see beyond ourselves, coming out of the narrow confines of our small and narrow points of view. Our existence and that of our pastoral educational communities can thus receive light and strength to face the epochal change that is taking place in these first decades of the third millennium.

The question of the dream is that of the impossible that awakens the creative dimension of the human. The structure of Christianity rests precisely on this, because "in the Christian idea of being alive is inherent a certain madness, an attraction for the impossible, the infinite, the unlimited. We should refuse to let ourselves be limited by what the world considers possible or thinkable".

As generated by God, we have within us the faculty of desiring the impossible».

(ROSSANO SALA - *You see further than I do - Signposts for dreaming again* - Workbook of the MGS, Salesian Youth Movement).



## Five young Oratorian martyrs BLESSED PAST PUPILS

*Blessed Francis Kesy, layman, and 4 companions, martyrs.*

*They were animators of the oratory, passionate about music, theater, sport, engaged in catechesis and united by an intense spiritual life.*

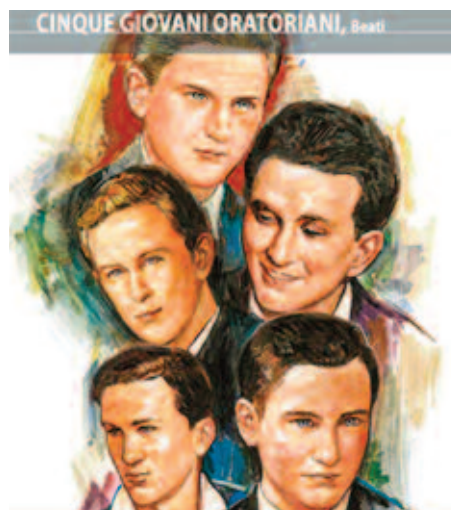
*In September 1940 they were arrested, accused of belonging to an illegal organization. Sentenced without a regular trial and without the possibility of defense, they gave a heroic example of faith and Christian life.*

*They forgave their executioners according to the most genuine spirit of the Gospel.*

On 1 September 1939 Hitler invaded Poland, starting the Second World War. The Salesian house in Poznan on Wroniecka Street was occupied and turned into a warehouse by German soldiers. Young people continued to gather in the gardens outside the city and in the nearby woods. Numerous secret associations sprang up.

In September 1940 Franz Kesy and four Oratory comrades were arrested on charges of belonging to an illegal organisation.

They were taken to the fearsome Fortress VII near Poznan itself, where they were tortured and interrogated. They were later transferred to several other prisons, where they were not always lucky enough to be together. Taken back to Poznan they



were tried and charged with high treason and sentenced to death. They were martyred in Dresden on 24 August 1942. They lived their imprisonment with a spirit of faith and Salesian spirituality. They prayed constantly: rosary, novenas to Don Bosco and Mary Help of Christians, morning and evening prayer. They tried to stay in touch with their families through messages they often managed to send secretly. They gave them courage, asked for and assured them of prayers. When they could, they joyfully animated the liturgical feasts spent in their cells. Their faith never wavered. They were credible witnesses to the end.

The martyrdom decree was published on 26 March 1999; they were beatified on 12 June 1999 by John Paul II.

### KESY FRANCISZEK

Born in Berlin on 13 November 1920, he was an aspirant at the Salesian minor seminary. During the occupation he was employed in an industrial plant. His spare time was spent at the oratory, where, in close friendship of ideals with the other four, he animated youth associations and activities. From prison, he wrote: «*I pray to the good Lord that all these tribulations and sorrows befall me and not you*».

### EDDARD KLINIK

Born in Bochum on 21 June 1919, shy and quiet, he became more lively when he entered the oratory. He stood out because, very busy, he gave the impression of being the most serious and profound.

### JAROGNIEW WOJCIECHOWSKI

Born in Poznan on 5 November 1922, he was a meditator. He was an entertainer in the best sense of the word. He was distinguished by his good humour, commitment and witness.

### CESLAD JÓZWIAK

Born in Lazynie, on 7 September 1919, he was somewhat short-tempered, but spontaneous, full of energy, ready for sacrifice, consistent and positively authoritative. One saw him aspire to Christian perfection and progress in it. A fellow prisoner wrote: «*He confided in me a concern: never to be stained by any impurity*».

### EDDARD KAZMIERSKI

Born in Poznan on 1st October 1919. At the oratory he was able to develop unusual musical talents. The religious life breathed in his family and by the Salesians soon led him to Christian maturity. He was free from any feeling of hatred towards the persecutors.







Italy



## Salesians 60 years in Potenza

(ANS – Potenza) – 13 June 2024

In the city of Potenza, among the many services, working-class neighbourhoods and concrete, the Salesians made a magnificent house flourish 60 years ago with a heart open to young people and families. In this space, it is possible, today, to grow both from a Christian and human point of view. But how impactful is the Salesian presence for this city? «From an ecclesial point of view, we are a fundamental reference point especially for the youth ministry of the city and the Diocese. We are the only Oratory that offers a daily educational service involving animators, adults, families and Salesians» the Director and Parish Priest Fr Egidio Laterza says.

Civil society also recognises the Salesian presence as a pastoral, educational, cultural and recreational centre of excellence. The Parish, the Oratory, the Youth Centre, the University Hostel, the Cinema and the well-equipped courtyards form a high-quality



educational and pastoral centre. The most effective response to this work is the large presence of families, adults, but above all of many children and young people.

Potenza is the regional capital of Basilicata and the highest in Italy, geographically located in the heart of the South. It was 1964 when the Salesians returned to Potenza to create a parish and an oratory, after having run the diocesan seminary for two years in the early 1900s. From this moment on, the history of the Salesian presence in the Lucano capital is a history of constant development and growth. The Oratory was

opened in 1966 and the foundation stone of the new church laid on the same date. It was consecrated in 1973. Between the late 1970s and the 1980s the house grew with the construction of the oratory complex, the chapel of St Dominic Savio, the Cinema, the clinic and other functional environments.

The 1990s saw the growth of the parish flock with the entry of many districts into the original nucleus of the Rione Risorgimento. They have also been years of intense educational activity: the alter servers group was formed and fundamental experiences sown for contact with the city, such as "Savio Estate" and "Festinsieme".

It is precisely in those years that many vocations to consecrated and non-consecrated life began to flourish, offering an important contribution to the Southern Province, something that continues to this day. Currently, Potenza's Salesian work consists of the Parish, the Youth Centre Oratory and the university hostel.



The Salesian Youth Centre Oratory in Potenza has hosted thousands of boys and girls over the years, helping them to grow in faith and life: about 800 are enrolled every year. From June to July, the "Savio Estate" (Savio summer) takes place in the courtyard of the oratory, bringing 400 children and pre-teens in addition to 100 animators, while catechesis involves more than 500 boys and girls. These are young people from all walks of life, coming quite heterogeneously from all areas of the city.

In the orbit of the Parish and the Oratory travel there are many associations formed over the years, including the Salesian Cooperators, the parish Caritas, the Don Bosco Families, the Association of Mary Help of Christians, the Witnesses of the Risen Lord 2000, *the Past Pupils*, the Mamma Margaret workshop, or – among the most dynamic – the Salesian Youth Sports Centres (PGS) and the Sociocultural Youth Cinecircles (CGS).

Another interesting experience, which has now become traditional, is the "*Gospel in*

*the Family*". During Advent and Lent, one evening a week, a priest, an animator and a lay couple are hosted by some families in the parish. On these occasions, the Sunday Gospel is presented, moments of prayer are shared, and the evening concludes with moments of conviviality.

The focus at the Salesian home is on the whole span of human life, but with a special eye on the lives of young people. For this reason, a new meeting point for young people has recently been opened in one of the Salesian Work's premises: the *40<sup>o</sup> 15' centre*. It takes up precisely the geographical coordinates of the city of Potenza and proposes itself as a meeting and growth place open to all.

Finally, the testimonies of some people who gave so much for Salesian work, but who left this life prematurely, continue to bear fruit in Potenza today. This is the case of figures such as Domenico Lorusso, Maurizio Ciriello, Linda Catalano, who have become animators from Heaven of groups that found, after suffering, the desire to

continue doing good. Domenico Lorusso was given the title "*Don Bosco*" while another important initiative inaugurating the Salesian summer in Potenza has now reached its tenth edition: the "*StradonBosco con Domenico*".

Thanks to the contribution of the "*Con gli Occhi di Maurizio*" Association, brand new multifunctional fields were donated to the oratory, and to make his memory live, the "*Happy Days*" were dedicated, days in which the oratorical activities carried out during the year are presented to the city.

.Semi di girasole or "*Sunflower seeds*" is the association that emerge in the coming months, an important tool for the growth of the community. It will be dedicated to Linda Catalano, educator and animator who died some months ago.

«*The lives of these young people become part of the pillars of the house of Potenza, to make Don Bosco's dream even more tangible, exciting, to continue*» concludes Fr Laterza.

Italy



## Celebration of the Centenary of Collegio Don Bosco, Pordenone: an Anniversary of Excellence and Education

(ANS - Pordenone) - 19 April 2024

The centenary celebrations at *Collegio Don Bosco Pordenone* continue: after the solemn start in 31 January 2024, the events continue to receive an excellent response from the city.

«This special anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on the noble educational traditions that have characterised this institution during these first hundred years of history" testify the Salesians in the Friulian city.

Numerous educational events, enriched by distinguished speakers, are the focus of the celebrations. Through conferences, seminars and cultural events, citizens are being offered an opportunity to explore educational issues of primary importance.

In recent days, "*Don Bosco*" has offered the city a brilliant theatrical show with the famous actor Giovanni Sciofoni on the theme of holiness: an evening that was an opportunity for fun but also for reflection for all participants.

The next cultural event will be a great musical gala to be held on 9 June at the *Teatro Verdi* in Pordenone, held by the



Pordenone Chamber Orchestra and the Accademia d'Archi Arrigoni. The evening will be opened by the students of the musical scientific project from the Salesian institute.

In the autumn, there will be a day of celebration that will involve all the past pupils of the Salesian school and the city authori-

ties. On this occasion, a commemorative photographic exhibition will be set up inside the Collegio Don Bosco to evoke the highlights of the institute's history, offering a fascinating look at the moments that have shaped its identity over the years.

In the same period, a book will be presented that will tell in detail the history of the house, testifying to its positive impact on the lives of generations of students.

«The Collegio Don Bosco wishes to thank the Municipality of Pordenone and the Friuli Foundation for their generous contribution, which made the realisation of this extraordinary event possible. In addition, we are grateful for the valuable collaboration of the Panorama Association, which has made possible a rich and diverse program» said Fr Emanuele Zof, Delegate for Social Communication for the Salesian *St Mark* Province of Northeast Italy (INE), to which the work belongs.

For more information about the events and how to participate, please visit the official website of the Collegio Don Bosco di Pordenone: <https://donbosco-pn.it/>

# 100 years of Collegio Don Bosco Pordenone

Pordenone, Italy – 25 April 2024

This year marks the Centenary of *Collegio Don Bosco* Pordenone. Already in 1920, Fr Giuseppe Marin, a diocesan priest, had begun an oratory dedicated to Don Bosco in the former villa Querini.

Then, in 1924, the Salesians arrived, with Fr Renato Ziggotti as director. The school had 100 students and there was also the fifth grade class with 25 schoolchildren.

Two years later, in 1926, the lower secondary school, named after Don Bosco, and the first class of the higher secondary were also opened.





(ANS - Corumbá) – 11 April 2024

## Teresa Institute in Corumbá celebrates 125 years of presence

On Thursday, 4 April, the Salesian *Santa Teresa* institute in Corumbá celebrated 125 years of presence and commitment to the pedagogical and social formation of its students.

The date was marked by a celebration with the students of the school and by the Mass in the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians. During the day there were also sports and recreational activities that involved Salesians, students and teachers.

The first Salesians landed in Porto Geral in 1899, arriving in the city by sailing down the Paraguay River. The Salesian community in Corumbá was established five years after the foundation of the *São Gonçalo* institute in Cuiabá, in 1894; and two years before its foundation, the Salesians in Uruguay had already passed through Corumbá, before continuing to Cuiabá.

Religious and educational activities began in the early 20th century in a modest rented building. The first 112 students were educated in the house, which had some classrooms, a chapel, a kitchen and rooms for the Salesians, initially all males and children of good families from Corumbá.

Future doctors, dentists, lawyers, politicians, engineers and successful businessmen would then emerge from this class, who would bring good intellectual formation and Don Bosco's ideals of being "*good Christians and upright citizens*" with them.

These 125 years have been marked by different educational phases. The first was the boarding house, which was aimed at young people from the countryside, a service that lasted until 1958.

To take care of the girls, in 1904 the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians arrived. They founded the School of the Immaculate Conception, an institution that ended its activities in 2021. And when there were about 400 students, around the 1930s, little by



little and with many sacrifices, the new building was built.

The current building was built in the 1960s, with a project carried out in several phases and the direction of the works entrusted to former student José Sebastião Cândia. The school thus came to have a large and comfortable three-storey space, with a total of 33 classrooms, which became fundamental when, from 1973 to 1997, the period of public education arrived. At that time, the institution had signed an agreement with the state government, and began a long period of educational service aimed at public school students, with three shifts and 5,000 students involved.

After these 24 years, the *Santa Teresa* in-

*stitute* has resumed offering a private education and continues to do so today, as a Catholic school which respects all differences of religion and belief, and always seeks to promote socialisation, respect, equality and interaction among its students, in a healthy and welcoming environment for all following the ideals of Don Bosco.

In these 125 years, the work has had more than 30 principals, some of whom later also became bishops, such as Michele Alagna (1946-55/1961-66), who was the one who with great commitment and entrepreneurial spirit built the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians and the new building of the work; or Segismundo Martinez, for two years principal of the School (1986-88) and subsequently, for 13 years, Bishop of Corumbá (2005-2018).

Among the longest-serving principals is the current one, Fr Osvaldo dos Santos, at the head of the institute since 2015, who has carried out a major overhaul of the structure of the complex, investing in technology, safety and comfort. Among the works carried out there are new classrooms for children's education, a parking lot and a covered field. While in the Salesian community there are also the Rector of the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians, Fr João dos Santos Barbosa Neto, together with Fr Jair Marques de Araújo, Rector of *Cidade Don Bosco* and parish priest of the parish of *St John Bosco*, and Fr Eduardo Moura.

The school has never stopped applying its Salesian pedagogy, which despite having ancient origins, is always attentive to changes and new needs of society and the labour market.

**Source:** Salesian Inspector of Brazil Campo Grande





Malta

## The Don Bosco Oratory celebrates 90 years

Victoria, Malta – 8 April 2024

Sunday 7 April, on the occasion of the Feast of Divine Mercy, the *Don Bosco Oratory* on Gozo, Malta, celebrated the 90th anniversary of the first oratory that came from a small Salesian house in Victoria. On the same day that Don Bosco was canonised in Rome, on 1 April 1934, on the island of Gozo, Fr Paul Micallef and Fr Joseph Spiteri gave life to what would become the *Don Bosco Oratory*.

The Salesians then left the island in 1965, but the oratory still remains a Salesian presence, currently led by a Director of the Diocese of Gozo and supported by the Past Pupils of Don Bosco. For the 90th anniversary, Fr Carmel Mercieca celebrated a solemn Mass in the chapel of the oratory, in the presence of numerous former students. Fr Mercieca launched a heartfelt appeal to continue Don Bosco's mission, to save the souls of young people.

The Past Pupils Association and Friends of Don Bosco has also organised a photographic exhibition to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the *Don Bosco oratory*, collecting ancient images and artifacts on the Canonisation of Don Bosco. For the occasion, the President of the World Confederation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco, Bryan Magro, was present, sharing this moment of joy and commemoration with all those who gathered for this special occasion.



Poland

## 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the Salesian school in Oswiecim

(ANS – Oswiecim) – 9 May 2024

Two hundred years ago Don Bosco had a dream in which God called him to work with and for young people. His dream has come true and materialised in many places around the world, and for 125 years it has also been carried out by his spiritual sons in the Salesian school in Oswiecim, in the *St Hyacinth* Krakow Province, Poland (PLS). The 125th anniversary of the work in Oswiecim, which occurs this year, is a special feast for the entire Salesian Family in Poland, for the Salesians, young people, teachers, parents and numerous Past Pupils of Don Bosco, from the centre, but not only that: the school is also the Mother House of the Salesians for all Poland, that is, the oldest Salesian house in the country.

Throughout this period there have been no shortage of problems and difficulties; yet, there have always been years of passionate work with young people and animation of the local community, with a variety of religious, cultural and educational initiatives.

The pinnacle of the celebrations for the 125th anniversary of the Salesian school in Oswiecim will be reached in the weekend of 18 and 19 May, involving the entire Salesian Family and the school's supporters and benefactors. The program of the Jubilee includes a Mass of thanksgiving; the *13<sup>th</sup> Salesian Family Picnic*; various concerts, competitions with prizes, moments of fraternal agape and numerous cultural and sports proposals. A charitable purpose will also be added to these celebrations: to raise funds to support Victoria, a sick seven-year-old girl, in her difficult recovery and return to fitness.

Organisers of the event are the Salesian community in Oswiecim, the Parents' Council and the Management of the Salesian Schools in Oswiecim; the Salesian Cooperators, the teachers, the school board, the pupils, as well as the parishioners of the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Oswiecim. For more information, visit the website or social media channels: Facebook - Instagram - YouTube



Poland



## Celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Salesian school in Oswiecim

Photo: Małgorzata Latawiec, Facebook PLS

(ANS - Oswiecim) – 22 May 2024

The 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Salesian School in Oswiecim, belonging to the Salesian Province of Kraków (PLS), was a special celebration for the entire Salesian Family in Poland, since the work is the Mother House of the Salesians in the country – that is, the oldest Salesian house in Poland.

200 years ago Don Bosco had a dream in which God called him to work with young people; his dream came true and for 125 years it has also been coming true in the Salesian School in Oswiecim.

The celebrations for the anniversary took place throughout the weekend of 18-19 May 2024 and included several stages: the 13<sup>th</sup> *Family Picnic* organised by the school community; the *Night of the Museums*, during which those who wished could visit the Salesian institute, the school, the basement, the sanctuary and the St Hyacinth Chapel; *the meeting of the Salesian Past Pupils Association*; and the official closing celebrations of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school. «It was wonderful – basko in Polish! There is no doubt that St John Bosco swas looking down from Heaven with particular pride on the city of Oswiecim, of which he is also the patron!» Fr Łukasz Wójcik, SDB said enthusiastically. The family picnic ma-



nifested the usual Salesian joy, seasoned by many attractions and a great fraternity among the hundreds of people, young and old, who came for the occasion.

During the picnic concerts, prizes, games, the good food and the numerous cultural and sports offers meant that everyone could find something that interested them. Throughout the day there were performances by talented young people, performances by the school orchestra and various dance groups, martial arts demonstrations, workshops for dog training...

*The Family Picnic* event in Oswiecim has also become very popular with artists and local organisations over the years, who therefore spontaneously want to show off their skills. In this way, the stature of the event increases even more and an even greater number of participants is attracted.

At the initiative of the Parents' Council, the Management of Salesian Schools in Oswiecim and the entire Educative and Pastoral Community, on Saturday 18 May the school opened its doors to everyone, allowing visitors a more in-depth knowledge of this milestone in Polish Salesian history. The main celebrations of the Jubilee took place, however, on Sunday 19 May, within



the walls of the school and the shrine dedicated to Mary Help of Christians.

After some time for the welcome and the possibility for past pupils to remember past times, all guests were invited to the theatre hall, where an academy for the anniversary took place.

The activity was opened by a short conference on the history of Salesian educational activities in Oswiecim, by Fr Waldemar urek, SDB, of the Catholic University of Lublin, interspersed with music from the Salesian Past Pupils' group and the songs of the "Auxilium" choir.

Iwona Gibas, from the Board of Directors of Małopolska Voivodeship, presented the Directors of the work and the School with the "Polonia Minor" award from the Marshal of Małopolska Voivodeship for their educational activities.

On the occasion, Katarzyna Mitka, School Superintendent, and Janusz Chwierut, Mayor of the city of Oswiecim, also expressed their appreciation and congratulated the leadership and staff of the Salesian educational institutions of the city, also giving some gifts.

At the end, those present attended the theatrical performance of the young people



from the Salesian hostel – the "Qui pro quo" group directed by Mrs. Róża Grzywacz, who staged the opera "Romeo and Juliet, the six days that shook the world". Then, during the solemn Mass, concelebrated among others by Fr Marcin Kaznowski, Superior of the Province of Krakow – and presided over and with the homily of Fr Marek Studenski, Vicar General of the diocese of Bielsko-Zywiec, who represented the Ordinary of the diocese, Archbishop Roman Pindel – all those present thanked God for the 125 years of Don Bosco's Dream in Oswiecim.

The weekend of celebration finally ended with a fraternal outdoor agape.

*«It was great to be here together with the entire school and city community; this memory will remain with us forever. Thanks to the guests and artists who enriched this celebration! We are grateful for the beautiful things that have been happening here for 125 years, and we must always remember that it is our stories that create this place»,* concluded the organisers.

Currently the Salesian school complex of Oswiecim includes the Salesian public secondary school (high school), Salesian public technical school and public vocational school.



## Spain



## The Fundación Don Bosco celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a major event at the CaixaForum in Seville

(ANS - Seville) – 15 April 2024

The ceremony for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fundación Don Bosco was held on 9 April at the CaixaForum in Seville, attended by the President of the Andalusian Parliament, Jesús Aguirre, the Mayor of Seville, José Luis Sanz, the Councillor for Educational Development, Patricia del Pozo, the Councillor for Employment, Rocío Blanco, and the Deputy Director General of the la Caixa Banking Foundation, Marc Simón.

More than 300 people gathered at this festive event, characterised by a great family atmosphere, together with a wide representation of the Andalusian public administration, the business sector and the third sector of Andalusia. In this way, recognition has been given to the work that this Salesian foundation has carried out in its 25 years of existence, that is, since it was created in 1998.

The gala evening, which had as its theme the transforming power of dreams, was presented by singer Virginia Carmona, while the musical entertainment was curated by singer Laura Gómez. The event saw the testimony of young peo-

ple in situations of vulnerability, who are or have been assisted in the different locations where the Foundation is present, through its 28 social centres and its over 90 presences, including centres for the protection of minors, apartments for young refugees, Second Opportunity Schools and multiple job placement projects.



Ignacio Vázquez de la Torre, Director General of the Fundación Don Bosco, sought to underline in his welcoming words «how much good has been done since the beginning of the Foundation, how many people have met Don Bosco in these 25 years... God only knows how many people have benefited from the intuition of the Salesian Congregation to approach people in situations of vulnerability». Vázquez then recal-

led that «in the Foundation we bring the charisma of Don Bosco to all the places where we are; every project, every strategy, every option has always tried to have the same nature that Don Bosco had in Valdocca, a sign of fidelity and authenticity».

Marc Simón, highlighted that «the link with employment unites the Fundación Don Bosco with the la Caixa Foundation, offering opportunities to create a more just society, with real equality». He also stressed that for la Caixa, involving young people in initiatives for their future is essential and could not be done without collaboration by everyone.

Therefore, now is the time to continue facing important challenges. Simón then concluded by insisting that we must «help incorporate technology, so that people have more opportunities».

Fr Fernando Miranda, Superior of Spain's Mary Help of Christians Province (SMX) and promoter of the Fundación Don Bosco, stressed that «the Foundation always has a providential vision of these young people who are in situations of vulnerability and if some sectors see young people as a finished story, for the Foundation they will al-





*ways represent a story to be written».*

Fr Miranda therefore insisted that every effort must be made to welcome the individual with the affection and trust that characterise the Salesian educational style.

The main moment of the event was focused on a round table attended by three young representatives from different locations and projects of the institution, who brought their testimonies. Through their stories they shared their journey towards autonomy and job placement. They were accompanied by Rocío Blanco, who stressed that *«we, as an Administration, are small compared to the work of the "Fundación Don Bosco"».*

*And the fact is, as a foundation, you help a lot of young people find their way. Young people are a great resource for Andalusia and for this reason, as councillor,*

*I would like to underline the enormous commitment and collaboration between public and private that makes us all great».* Fr Rafael Bejarano, SDB, Coordinator of Salesian Works and Social Services around the world, also participated in the event. *«A fundamental part of our work are educators in all the countries where we work;*

*they are passionate people, because being an educator is a complex task, but being an educator in the social field is even more complicated.*

*Such a beautiful task that offers young people a support to grow and progress»* added Fr Bejarano.

Patricia del Pozo, Past Pupil of the Salesians from "Santissima Trinità" in Seville, was moved by the words of affection towards the institution and by the memories that evoked the moments experienced at the event.

She also highlighted the role of the administration, stressing that *«every day we are committed to continuing to broaden horizons and reach new goals, confirming, for example, that Second Opportunity Schools are an engine for generating a future full of possibilities».*

The mayor of Seville, José Luis Sanz, said that *«today we have understood that this is not just a foundation, but a large family, which is located where it is most needed».*

Jesús Aguirre, President of the Andalusian Parliament, then closed the event with his words full of closeness to those who cur-

rently make up the organisation and to those who promoted it at its inception. He moved the audience when he remembered the recently deceased Fr Paco Ruiz, who was Superior of the Salesians in Seville and founder of the Fundación Don Bosco.

*«Betting on young people is betting on the future, reorienting their path and seeking the benefit of young people.*

*It is, therefore, the benefit of the whole society»*, concluded Aguirre.

The commemorative event held at the *CaixaForum in Seville* was an opportunity for the Foundation to reflect on the results achieved and recognise the work of those who made this path possible, looking to the future with renewed optimism and determination.

During 2023, the "Fundación Don Bosco" managed 10 centres for the protection of minors, 20 apartments for autonomy, three reception apartments for young applicants for international protection and accompanied the integration into the labour market of over 4,400 people through the 172 projects it develops.

Spain



# The Salesian contribution to the history of Salamanca

(ANS – Salamanca) – 30 April 2024

On 13 April, as part of the celebrations for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Salesian presence in Salamanca, an interesting conference was held on the theme: "*The Salesian legacy in Salamanca: a contribution to the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their presence*", given by Fr Joaquín Torres and Miguel Ángel Fernández, both members of the Salesian Delegation of Cultural Heritage in *Spain's St James the Greater Province* (SSM).

The conference offered a perspective on the history of the city of Salamanca, starting from the cultural heritage that preserves a rich Salesian charism, to enhance and safeguard its memory.

«*Salamanca was a forge of numerous Salesian vocations that, together with Past Pupils, Salesian Cooperators and members of the Salesian Family, spread throughout the world*». This is how Fr Torres began his address, stating that Salamanca cannot be understood without the Salesians, just as the Salesians cannot be understood without Salamanca.

The goal of the conference was therefore to make known part of the rich Salesian heritage of Salamanca and awaken an interest in being transmitters of that material and cultural heritage.

During the conference, the architectural richness of the *San José* centres in Pizarrales and *Mary Help of Christians*, which stands next to the *Don Bosco school*, could

not be overlooked. Images and chronicles contained in the rich archives in the houses have been shown, making it possible to take a journey through the Salesian history of the city.

History that begins on 30 December 1898 with the arrival of the first Salesians, who took their first steps in the parish of San Benito where the elementary teachings of drawing, model-making, masonry and music



were taught.

With the projection of some photographs, the following phases of the work were then described: the purchase of land to build the *Mary Help of Christians school*, on 11 July 1900; the start of work in 1902; the opening and blessing of the new school on 9 October 1909; the beginning of the construction of the new church of Mary Help of Christians and its opening on 14 June 1945.

The *San Benito school* was officially closed on 1 July 1955, the date on which the centre was ceded to the Diocese. Also on that date, the Salesian community moved to the *Mary Help of Christians school*, together with a group of 160 students who attended the summer courses. In September of the same year, in the Pizarrales district, the new *San*

*José school* opened its doors. This was the new Salesian presence in the city, which from that moment on would offer Vocational Training courses and welcome the students from the *San Benito school*.

During those early years, several images and artistic works accumulated that today make up a rich catalogue, which is preserved and available to those interested in studying its artistic or scientific value.

Together with its material heritage, the city of Salamanca boasts a valuable cultural and religious heritage. The contribution of the Salesian educational system to the world of education in the city has produced generations of *good Christians and upright citizens* who have spread throughout Castile and beyond.

The different groups of the Salesian Family, with their particular charism are another of the contributions that the city enjoys. And we cannot fail to mention the great devotion to Mary Help of Christians, visible in the streets and homes, with the presence of domestic chapels.

The Salesian presence in Salamanca is now opening up to the future, with renewed momentum. Historical memory becomes, for each of its recipients, educators, animators, families and members of the Salesian Family, a prophetic challenge: to continue responding to the needs of education and Christian evangelisation of the new generations that will be the future of the Church and society in the city of Salamanca and throughout the world.

Ángel Astorgano



eSwatini

## 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of eSwatini Salesian presence with Culture Day

(ANS – Manzini) – 26 April 2024

A day before the national holiday on 19 April, when the eSwatini Kingdom celebrates the Birthday of their King, Mswati III, the long-awaited and long-prepared Salesian Culture Day was held at the premises of Salesian High School. Some 800 young people led and prepared by their educators for the past few weeks, enjoyed their traditional cultural dances, traditions, and poems.

The Salesian High School opened in 1953 as the first Salesian presence in this country, 15 years before Swaziland's independence in 1968.

Thousands of Don Bosco Past Pupils received their education there, with good numbers of diocesan clergy and many who have made an impact on the social and political life of this Kingdom.

The Culture Day was graced by the presence of the Education Minister, Mr Owen Nxumalo, Salesian Past Pupils (class 1985), who attended the whole day event including dancing and sharing a heartfelt greeting with the school community.

eSwatini education minister appreciated his school days with deep gratitude when he and his schoolmates were moulded by the Salesians through daily assistance (including smoking guidance!), weekly Mass, and the strong impact of Salesian culture and values.



Mr Nxumalo also appealed to them to maintain the Catholic ethos in the school, where most students are from other Christian denominations.

As a Past Pupil he also appreciated the cleanliness of the school campus, which makes a difference in the lives of the young people. His reflection then extended to appreciating the unique Swazi culture, expressed in the language and livelihood and defines who we are.

At the heart of his message to the Salesian students was to focus on one of the main Swazi cultural values - deep mutual respect between the seniors and juniors, teachers and students that keeps this country peaceful.

All participants, including the Ministry of Education staff, Don Bosco Past Pupils eSwatini National Federation leadership (SAPPAS, President Mr Desmond Maphanga) and representatives of local society enjoyed this event held after a long pause of 7 years.

This event is part of year-long celebrations for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Salesian presence, which will conclude on 24-25 May with the presence of all eSwatini Salesian institution youth and accompanied by Past Pupils fundraising events – a Gala Dinner and Golf events.

Last year on 29 January the Don Bosco Past Pupils Federation of eSwatini became an official member of the World Confederation.

eSwatini



## Conclusion of the Platinum Jubilee of Salesian presence in eSwatini

(ANS – Manzini) – 27 May 2024

One year of 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of Salesian presence in the eSwatini Kingdom concluded with a youth rally and Mass on the Feast of Mary Help of Christians in Manzini, involving 1800 youth, Salesian Family and Lay mission partners representing all 12 Don Bosco educational institutions in the Kingdom.

It was the ever first Eucharist involving youth and lay mission partners representing all 12 educational institutions in eSwatini, based both in Manzini and around the Salesian parish of Malkerns (primary and secondary schools, Manzini Youth Care social, educative and vocational training projects). It was made possible thanks to the patient work of bringing on board a large diversity of our eSwatini Educative and Pastoral Community (EPC) through many meetings and patient networking.

The memorial day opened with the Solemn Eucharist of Mary Help of Christians, presided by Fr Klement (AFM provincial superior) well prepared, and animated by our school youth, with dyna-



mic songs in English, siSwati and Latin. The 12 SDBs included the community in eSwatini and representatives from Lesotho and South Africa, eSwatini MSMHC sisters, **Don Bosco Past Pupils** - some of them Manzini diocesan priests, dozens of lay mission partners and 1800 young people gave thanks for the mighty deeds of God during past 70 years in this country.

The official and formal celebration continued 4 hours in the makeshift tent amidst the Salesian school compound, with cultural contribution by our young people: traditional and modern dances: Ummiso,

Ingadla and Amapiano dances, choir songs, brass band, poem to Don Bosco in eSwatini, marimba performance. Contribution from every Salesian school and education project, by both girls and boys, was highly applauded and made of this last event of 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary a true Salesian family and youthful spirit celebration.

Between the cultural items few speakers addressed the whole assembly - Salesian Schools Principals representative, Mr Saverious Mdluli, Fr Vaclav Klement, SDB provincial, **Fr Bonginkosi Nhleko**, SDB,





delegate for the Don Bosco Past Pupils, Mr Desmond Maphanga, Chairperson of SAP-PAS (DB Past Pupils Federation of eSwatini) and at the main highlight was the Keynote address of Mr Owen Nxumalo, eSwatini Minister of Education and Don Bosco Past Pupil, who spoke on behalf of the eSwatini Prime Minister, Russell Mmiso Dlamini.

Mr Owen Nxumalo first broke the good news of the mini-projects from the government to improve the Salesian schools' facilities and appreciated the social and ecclesial impact of Salesian education in his country. No fewer than 3 Prime ministers and many leaders at social, political and church level have been raised thanks to the Don Bosco education institutions since 1953.

He expressed his thanks to the 40 Salesian missionaries and 4 local Salesians who spread in eSwatini the seeds of faith and education and, in the same time acknowledged the need to rekindle the missionary flame.

The Keynote speaker also challenged the youth and Salesian family with a triple dream - (1) rekindle the vocation dream in the hearts of young people and inspire the boys and girls to be generous in their an-



swer to God's calling, (2) rekindle Don Bosco education as the most powerful tool for world's transformation - to be relevant and empowering the young and (3) continue to live Don Bosco's Way and Spirit and becoming ambassadors of this rich heritage, the Salesian Way in the society, family and in the Church to be the architects of tomorrow's eSwatini!

On the following day, May 25, were organised two fundraising activities by the eSwatini Don Bosco Past Pupils, to sustain scholarships for some Salesian school students, in the morning was held Ezulwini-based SAPPAS Golf fundraiser and in the evening was held Manzini Salesian school compound held Gala dinner fundraiser - both with the '#Awakening the Giant' theme. During the Gala dinner the participants offered a "Prayer and Promise of Past Pupils and Friends of Don Bosco" and through the SDB provincial received a short message from the World Confederation President Mr Bryan Magro.

The concluding event of the eSwatini Salesian presence 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary was also reported by the National TV and Radio stations.







Ireland

## Celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of St Francis de Sales community Maynooth

**Maynooth, Ireland** – May 2024 – The Salesians in St Patrick's Province Ireland (IRL) celebrated, , the fiftieth anniversary of the *Saint Francis de Sales* community in Maynooth on the Feast of Mary Help of Christians.

The conferral of the Ministry of Acolyte and Reader to five Salesians was also celebrated on the same day.

Finally, 24 May also offered an opportunity for meeting among the members of the Salesian Family in Ireland, in particular among Salesians, FMA, Salesian Cooperators and **Past Pupils**.



Japan

## Board of Directors of the Federation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco

**Yokohama, Japan** - 13 June 2024

The Japan Federation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco, led by President Mr. Shinya Yokoyama, held the 2024 Board of Directors meeting at the Salesio Gakuin High School in Yokohama, on 8 June. This was the first meeting of the Council after the new organisation of the members of the council, and it was also the first opportunity for Fr Francis Assisi Atsushi Hamasaki, SDB, the new Salesian Provincial – Deleagte for the Federation, who took office only on 6 June – to hold his official positions.

At the beginning of the Board meeting, Fr Daniel Masaharu Torigoe, SDB, Principal of the school, gave a welcome address on behalf of the educational community, followed by discussion and approval of the previous year's activity report and budget, as well as the activity policy and budget for the current year.

In addition, the working group presented and discussed ideas for the **Federation's activities** on the occasion of the centenary of the arrival of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Japan (8 February 2026). President Yokoyama thanked the participants and said, «*After COVID-19, the Japanese Federation is starting over again. I hope we can add new strength to the Federation by maintaining close contact with each other and promoting the associatim*».

The new Provincial introduced himself as a former student of the Salesian school and expressed the hope of celebrating the centenary of the arrival of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Japan with the Past Pupils. After the Council meeting, Fr Peter Shin Mishima, SDB delegate for Past Pupils, held a study session on the theme of this year's Strenna, "*The dream that makes you dream*", followed by a visit to the church in Tsuzuki, adjacent to the school.



Italy



## With dream...actors "IT'S A DIFFERENT FAIRYTALE"

*At the San Giustino Theatre, disabled children stage the fairy tale of "Beauty and the Beast"*

The "Compagnia dei sogn...attori" is a special company. A theatre group that brings to the stage the stories and artistic endeavours of young people with disabilities, to strongly affirm that their diversity is an original, unique and irreplaceable creative source.

Thanks to the commitment and passion of the young people and the hard work of the volunteers, a new show was staged again this year at the San Giustino Theatre in Rome, directed by Antonio Castellano. Three evenings, on 10, 11 and 12 May, to laugh, get excited and reflect.

Before the curtain opens, there is great trepidation behind the scenes, mixed with reverential awe at the many details that must be attended to and cannot be overlooked or performed with distraction.

No finishing touches are left to chance or spontaneity. But it is enthusiasm that wins over all the performers.

The show is a truly sui generis re-adaptation of the famous Disney fairy tale "Beauty and the Beast". But, indeed, "It's a whole other fairy tale". The text was rewritten and readapted according to the needs and potential of the children, who, again this year, through their talent, managed to amaze the audience in the auditorium.

Amidst unexpected encounters, chats between friends, spells and twists, the actors bring the story of Belle (an explosive Clau-



dia Campetella) and the prince, played by Angelo Castellano, to the stage, with sets by Valentina Vasile and Omar Candido.

There is also an unexpected guest. Acting as narrator is He Himself, the very tall 'I' (Antonio Castellano), complete with long white beard and a vast repertoire of jokes.

But the characters in the tale are all there: there is Gaston (Marco Bonanni), who is not, however, the arrogant antagonist of the original story, but one of the shy and joyful friends who meet again months after the previous show. And yes, because it all starts with this meeting.

Soon, however, our youngsters will have to face the consequences of the spell cast by an old sorceress (Carla Lazzarini, a former Salesian pupil who studied with the

Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in her youth) who transforms them into the characters of the fairy tale.

So there is the Tic/Toc clock (Simone Fratoni), the chest of drawers (Samuele Soddu), the rose (Gabriele Ziantoni), the cup (Gabriele Frezza). And again, Spolverina (Giusy Salvo), the candlestick (Francesca Rossini).

Once again, it is friendship and love that win out. The spell vanishes and the group of friends, finally reunited, goes wild (literally) in wild singing and dancing.

Fun for everyone: for them, who satisfied can celebrate the realisation of their dream. And for the audience who, it must be said, never stopped laughing and applauding.

The show closes with a big embrace involving the stage and the audience. A way of offering everyone the opportunity to reflect on our desires and our differences. Trying to accept and recognise the other, even if, initially, he or she seems so far away from us.

This is one of the great gifts of Theatre, which makes the impossible possible, the unreal real, the finite infinite.

This gift has the efficacy of triggering a dynamic in which giving can cause in the other the capacity to give in turn to others.



**TEATRO SAN GIUSTINO**  
VIALE ALESSANDRINO 144

**LA COMPAGNIA DEI SOGN...ATTORI**



**PRESENTA**

**“E’ TUTTA UN’ALTRA FAVOLA..”**  
**Scritta e diretta da Antonio Castellano**

**10 - 11 Maggio**  
**h .20.30**

**12 Maggio**  
**h. 17**

**Costumi e Coreografia**  
Francesca Rossini  
Giusy Salvo  
Emanuela Carruba  
Massimo Pantano  
Carla Lazzarini

**Scenografie**  
Valentina Vasile  
Omar Candido

**Regia tecnica**  
Cristina Cellucci  
Andrea D’Iorio  
Leila Mancini  
con la collaborazione di  
Luca Prospero

**Interpretata da**  
Marco Bonanni  
Samuele Soddu  
Simone Fratoni  
Angelo Castellano  
Claudia Campetella  
Gabriele Ziantoni  
Gabriele Frezza  
Francesca Rossini  
Carla Lazzarini  
Giusy Salvo  
Emanuela Carruba  
Antonio Castellano

**Per info e prenotazioni:**  
**Carla** 3920556859  
**Antonio** 3392705129

In our case, there was a willingness to participate on the part of young people with disabilities with regard to the always good volunteers. This confirms that the intention was not just to create a group of people to put on a show.

Rather, we wanted to build a path that would progress more and more, so that those who, from time to time, join the theatre company would fall in love with it.

Antonio Carnevale

% % % % %

Anyone wishing to invite the Integrated Theatre Company "I Sogn...attori" can contact Mr. Antonio Castellano (tel. +39 339.2705.129 - email: tiratelli@libero.it).

Any arrangements will be facilitated by the fact that the "I Sogn...attori" Company is formed exclusively by volunteers.

The only strong desire is to be able to convey the message in favour of the disabled.







## Italy



## Feast of Past Pupils of Lazio and election of the new Presidency Council

Rome, Italy – 18 June 2024

The annual festival of the Federation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco, Lazio was held at Borgo Ragazzi Don Bosco in Rome on 16 June with a large participation representing the 12 Unions in Lazio.

The day began with the celebration of the Mass, which was followed by the traditional conference this year entitled "*Past Pupils: what future?*", with talks by Fr Gianluigi



Pussino, SDB, Fr Maurizio Palomba, SDB, and Cesare Sagrestani.

Elections were held for those completing their term of office in the Presidency Council. President Cesare Sagrestani (*Unione Testaccio*) and Councillors Marco Romano (*Unione Sacro Cuore*) and Alfonso Tesoro (*Borgo Ragazzi*) were confirmed for the next four years, while Paolo Schiavo (*Borgo Ragazzi*), Pierpaolo Foti (*Unione Pio XI*) and Vito Gentili (*Unione Pio XI*) were added.

## Solomon Islands



## Over two hundred young people at Wantok Bosco "LET YOUR DREAMS BE YOUR WINGS"

Henderson, Solomon Islands – 19 June 2024

Over 200 young people gathered at the Don Bosco Technical Institute, Henderson, from 7 to 9 June to participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> youth camp called "*Wantok Bosco*" on the theme "*Let your dreams be your wings*", inspired by the Rector Major's Strenna 2024.

The participants came from various parishes, from the *Laura Vicuña Hostel* (FMA), from *DBTI Henderson*, *DBRTC* and *Don Bosco Learning Centre schools*, Ranadi.

The Director of DBTI Henderson, Fr Raffy Galve, SDB, officially welcomed the participants followed by the presentation of the Rector Major's Strenna 2024 by Fr Sonny Fajardo. The next day the participants carried out various leisure activities and had the opportunity to go to confession and take part in the Eucharistic celebration. The session of the day was presented by Ms Camari Bainivalu, former principal of DBTI Henderson and first Salesian Cooperator in the Solomon Islands, who spoke about the Strenna 2024 and Don Bosco's Childhood Dream.

The second session involved talks from past pupils who encouraged young people to dream big.

During the third session, Ms. Adi Lydia Tenakanai, PGS SYM Coordinator, challenged young people to dream and build a stronger and better community by contributing small acts of hope. After lunch, the participants engaged in a series of sports activities, a spiritual moment. The concluding Eucharistic celebration was celebrated by Fr Peter Van.







## A new Past Pupils of Don Bosco Union in the Salesian presence in Manouba

(ANS – Manouba) – 18 June 2024

The World Presidency of the Association of Past Pupils of Don Bosco (EXA DB), coordinated by its World President Bryan Magro, met in Tunis from 13 to 16 June 2024, to welcome and support the first steps of the EXA DB Union in the Salesian Our Lady of Carthage presence in the city of Manouba, on the outskirts of Tunis.

A visit to the Salesian house in Manouba took place on the afternoon of 14 June. Mr Magro was accompanied by Peter Kovac, Secretary of the World Confederation, Fr Joan Lluís Playà, Central Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family Secretariat, and Br Dominic Nguyen, SDB, Delegate of the Rector Major for EXA-DB and the Salesian Cooperators.

The visit went far beyond the formality of a greeting and an exchange of information. The harmony of intentions and shared experiences transformed the moment into an authentic affirmation of Salesianity.

Manouba's Union had been in the making for some time. The rich experience of solidarity and organisational capacity of its members came together in its organisation; the impetus of the Salesian community led by Fr Domenico Paternò, Superior of the recently established North African District (CNA); the creative spirit of the young past pupils; the shared conviction that Don Bosco's educational system can reach very solid levels of personal and social transformation, with a bright future.

The Union has already taken the formal steps of its constitution: drafting the statutes, electing the members of the board of directors, submitting the documentation



to the competent authority, joining the World Confederation... And, above all, it specified its objectives and its field of action. And that is, it does not want to be only an environment in which to have a closed group experience, but rather a space from which to project towards others, in what is considered most necessary: to collaborate with educators and families in the development of children's capacities for solidarity and transformation; to respond as much as possible to the needs of the environment; to create spaces for formation and dialogue... All imbued with the values of life, peace, coexistence, tolerance, respect, joy, hope and love.

During the meeting, talks went further than simply good theories theories, but extended to beliefs born from concrete experiences

had inside and outside the educational space of the school. This, according to Bryan, provides the origins of the Union with the fundamental climate for its subsequent growth. Fr Playà underlined a curious coincidence: the Salesian presence in Manouba dates back 35 years.

«*What happened at Valdocco when Don Bosco was 35?*» he asked. It was 1851. Among the young people welcomed by Don Bosco to the Oratory was Carlo Gastini, who years later would lay the foundation stone of the Association of Past Pupils of Don Bosco. «*Today you play the part of Carlo Gastini, laying the foundations of an Association that is called to develop a great mission among and for the Tunisian people. In Don Bosco's Miriam house you will find, like Don Bosco himself, inspiration and help*». "It's hard to describe everything we've experienced. Without a doubt, it will remain in everyone's memory» commented Fr Playà.

The following day provided a second moment of conviviality, during which all the participants renewed the awareness that Don Bosco has no borders; that the Salesian charism "preserves all authentically human values"; and that "his humanism strives to give meaning to everyday life, and to provide a reason for hope and future prospects for the individual and for society", as expressed in the Charter of Identity of the Salesian Family.

The seed of the Salesian Family among the Tunisian people, and with it in the North African Circumscription, is sprouting through the Association of Past Pupils and Friends of Don Bosco: a new source of joy for all the groups that are part of it.

## Pakistan



# The commitment of Past Pupils to continue offering Salesian education to young people, IN MEMORY OF FR PETER ZAGO

(ANS - Quetta) – 19 June 2024

From the time of Carlo Gastini onwards, the Past Pupils of Don Bosco have been an active and prominent pillar of the Salesian mission. And they are often even more so in places on the *peripheries of the mission*, where the good stirred up by the first Salesian houses is beginning to bear fruit in seeds of good that they do not want to lose.

This is clearly visible today in Pakistan, where the Past Pupils of Don Bosco are working to save a school founded by the late missionary Fr Pietro Zago from closing.

Fr Zago (1935-2017) spent 62 years of his almost 83 years of life as a missionary, serving the young people of India, Indonesia, East Timor, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and finally Pakistan, where he spent the last 18 years of his life. He founded the two works currently in the country (Quetta and Lahore) and contributed actively to the support of refugees and the poor and to the reconstruction of villages after the earthquake of 2005 and the floods of 2010.

With his initiative, together with that of his mission companions, Fr Zago profoundly influenced the lives of countless children in Pakistan. And today his legacy survives through these institutions, which continue to embody his dedication and love for education and the underprivileged.

Last December, the National Federation of Past Pupils had the opportunity to visit



Quetta to establish the elections of the Local Unit and during this trip he also made a visit to Ziarat, a district of Quetta, to pay a visit to another school located there, also started in the early 2000s by Fr Zago.

«We were all deeply moved by the warm welcome and the obvious impact of Fr Zago's work» testified Mr. Asif Boota, National Vice-President of Past Pupils of Pakistan. «But the opening address given by the Principal of the school revealed an unexpected and heartbreaking situation: the school was risking closure due to insufficient funds».

The news was disappointing for all present, including Bro. Francis Nhat (SDB), Salesian Delegate for the Local Union of Past Pupils in Quetta. After the initial disappointment, Mr. Boota tried to explore the possibilities of intervention together with the Rector of the house in Lahore, Fr Noble Lal, the President of the Local Union of Past Pupils in Quetta, Mr. Awaish Yousaf, and the Rector of this work, Fr Samuel Ghouri.

So now, at the proposal of Fr Ghouri, the Na-

tional Federation of Past Pupils of Pakistan is working to develop a solid operational plan that will allow it to take responsibility for the management of this school, and to explore ways to prevent the closure of this vital institution for young people in Ziarat and throughout Quetta.

«We are now formulating and discussing the plan with the Salesian community and we are all determined to honour Fr Zago by ensuring that this school remains operational and continues to provide quality education to the children of Ziarat. We recognise the profound importance of this center and we are committed to mobilizing resources to support it», Mr. Boota said

Currently the National Past Pupils of Don Bosco Federation in Pakistan plans to sign a detailed contract that provides for the management of the school in Ziarat for one year, based on compliance with certain parameters. Subsequently, the National Federation entrusted the management of that school to the Local Union of Past Pupils in Quetta, but continued to monitor all activities.

For this reason, concludes the National Vice-President of Past Pupils of Pakistan: «This agreement would not only honor the legacy of Fr Zago, but would also guarantee the continuity of education and service to the less privileged of Ziarat and Quetta. I am sure, sir, that together we will be able to support the mission of Don Bosco and the dear memory of Fr Peter Zago, ensuring that his vision of education and service to the underprivileged continues».



## Great Britain

## Maureen Devereux, Sean's mother, to be appointed a member of the Order of the British Empire

London, Great Britain – 20 June 2024

On Saturday 15 June, King Charles III of the United Kingdom, made public the list of honours for his birthday, a list that collects the different orders of awards and recognitions awarded by virtue of their merits to the citizens of the United Kingdom and the other fourteen realms of the Commonwealth.

Among them is Maureen Devereux, the mother of Sean Devereux – Salesian past pupil and Salesian Cooperator, teacher and volunteer murdered in Kismayo, Somalia, in January 1993, at the age of 28, while working on development projects for UNICEF. The woman, co-founder and administrator



of the "Sean Devereux" Children's Fund, will be awarded the honour of Member of the Order of the British Empire for the services she continues to give, in memory of her son, in the fields of education and humanitarian support for young people in Africa. «I am shocked, humbled and deeply honoured» commented Maureen Devereux. «I accept it on behalf of the Fund, its dedicated trustees, past and present and the very many friends and family who have helped establish, run and support our charity over many years. The essence of Sean lives on in us today more surely than his death, to keep his vision alive and The Sean Devereux Children's Fund continues to help less fortunate Children in Africa».



## Papua New Guinea

## Salesian Missions Day: Building bridges through dialogue and reflection

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea – 20 June 2024

Salesian Mission Day was held on 8 June at the Don Bosco Technological Institute in Port Moresby, the theme being "Builders of dialogue". Members of the Salesian Family participated, including ADMA, Past Pupils, FMA, Caritas Sisters of Jesus, Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians, Salesian Cooperators and Salesians. The programme began with a stimulating Taizé prayer led by Rica Lavilla and the missionary group from the Don Bosco Technical School, Gabutu. After the prayer, Fr Angel Sanchez SDB led the participants in lectio divina, inviting them to reflect on the history of the Samaritan woman and encouraging them to reflect on their own lives and relationships. Fr Gregorio Bicomong, Superior of the Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (PGS) Vice-Province, led a session on the importance of building bridges through dialogue and understanding, highlighting the role that dreams play in shaping relationships and interactions. Throughout the day, participants were encouraged to engage in an open and respectful dialogue, sharing their thoughts and experiences. The focus of the programme was to build bridges and promote dialogue to inspire meaningful connections and create lasting relationships between participants.



## eSwatini



## The Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini

## Hon. Minister Owen Nxumalo Profile



Minister of Education and Training Honourable Owen Nxumalo is returning for a second term in Cabinet, having previously served as Minister of Public Service between 2016 and 2018.

Honourable Nxumalo was born on 14 July 1967. He began his career in 1989 with Standard Bank Eswatini, where he would stay for 20 years. During his time with the Bank, he occupied roles such as Bank Clerk, Branch Agency Supervisor, Branch Manager, Cash Centre Manager and QPC Manager.

In 2004, Honourable Nxumalo became Mayor of Manzini City, a role he would hold until 2010. Three years later, he was elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) by the people of Manzini South Inkhundla. In 2016, His Majesty King Mswati III appointed Ho-



nourable Nxumalo as Minister of Public Service, replacing Patrick Magobetane Mamba.

During the 2018 National elections, Honourable Nxumalo did not return to Parliament but would do so in the 2023 elections, once again being elected as MP of Manzini South. On 13 November 2023, His Majesty then appointed Honourable Nxumalo as Minister of Education.

The Honourable Minister holds a Diploma in Business Accounting. He also served as the Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on HIV and AIDS at the Local Level (AMICAALL) Chairman from 2004 to 2010. He also runs businesses in the trucking and property sectors.



## India



## The Salesian Institute in Siliguri receives recognition from the United Nations Association for Development and Peace

Siliguri, India – 17 April 2024

The Salesian Institute in Siliguri has received a certificate of recognition for carrying out the "Model United Nations" based on *Sustainable Development Goal 2 of the United Nations - ZERO HUNGER*, from the United Nations Association for Development and Peace (UNADAP).

The Executive Director of the Association, Dominic F. Dixon, who opened the event on 13 April and participated in the work, handed the certificate to Fr Babu Joseph, Principal of *Salesian College* in Siliguri and Sonada, during the closing ceremony on 15 April.

The certificate rewards the hard work, dedication and perseverance of the Principals, faculty and vibrant student community. In addition, at the end of the ceremony, **Dominic F. Dixon**, a former student of the Salesian Institute of Graphic Arts in Chennai, offered the students at the Siliguri Institute an internship at UNADAP, a seven-week advanced course on "*Business and International Relations*" and a seven-week online course focused on the "*spirit of excellence*". Finally, the suggestions made by the Salesian Institute will be presented to the United Nations Agency for Development and Peace.







## Christians in prayer and on pilgrimage for the beatification of Akash Bashir

(ANS - Lahore) - 16 May 2024

«The life of the Servant of God Akash Bashir shines as an inspiration and ray of light in Pakistan and in the world afflicted by terrorism and unrest», Fr Lazar Aslam, a Capuchin Franciscan priest serving in Lahore, says. In May, the Catholic community of the archdiocese intensified prayer for Akash Bashir, Past Pupil of Don Bosco, the first Servant of God in the history of Pakistan. And the pilgrimage before his tomb is fervent, especially for young Pakistanis: «His faith in God motivated him to protect and serve his community, and led him to perform a gesture of extreme altruism in the face of a suicide bomber», the priest says.

Akash Bashir was born in Pakistan on 22 June 1994, to a humble family, and studied at the Don Bosco Technical Institute in Lahore. He led a simple life, had dreams for his future, lived with his family, had friends at school and at work, enjoyed playing sports, and prayer was part of his life. On 15 March 2015, one Sunday morning, a suicide bomber attempted to enter St John's church in Youhanabad, a Christian district of Lahore, which at that time had more than a thousand faithful attending Mass. Realising the situation, Akash did not hesitate to sacrifice himself to prevent the bomber from causing a massacre in the church.

On 15 March 2022, on the seventh anniversary of his death, the diocesan phase of the canonical process for the proclamation of martyrdom was opened by the Church of Lahore. Fr Aslam says that «Jesus taught that the highest form of love is to lay down



one's life for friends, and his act of altruism reflected these teachings. Akash's last statement, "I will die, but I will not let you in" perfectly expresses his courage and devotion».

«His story» he says «serves as a powerful testimony to the transforming power of faith, resilience and sacrifice. It offers hope and inspiration to Christians in Pakistan and beyond. His life reminds us to embody unwavering faith and stand firm in the face of adversity. His extraordinary journey continues to guide and enlighten our community». According to Father Nibal Lal, Rector of the Salesian Community there, the profound experience of Salesian spirituality that derives from *Don Bosco's Preventive System* «had a profound and personal impact on Akash's human and spiritual formation. It led him to develop a deep understanding and friendship with Christ. He would often pause for a moment of prayer at the grotto in the courtyard of St John's Catholic Church in Youhanabad, before beginning his service. The three fundamental principles of Salesian spirituality – preventive system, holistic education and

love for God – have had a significant influence on his development of faith, they have been important pillars in determining his path», he notes.

«In this month of May we pray intensely for the beatification of the Servant of God Akash Bashir, Past Pupil of Don Bosco», says Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, Postulator General of the Causes of Saints of the Salesian Family.

The Postulator notes: «For the Christians of Youhanabad, for the Church of God that is in Pakistan and for the entire Salesian Family, Akash, with his great faith, is exactly this: a beacon, an example to follow. Many go to his grave to pray and ask for intercession (...). He had committed himself to living as an upright and good Christian citizen, as Don Bosco wanted, and had become a security volunteer in his parish church at a time when the situation in Pakistan was worrying with the risk of encountering suicide bombers who targeted religious sites» Fr Cameroni says.

The sacrifice of Akash Bashir had a huge impact on the Christian community – Catholic and Anglican – in Pakistan, but the Muslim community was also deeply affected: «Many in Islam have veneration for this testimony of faith, of strength, and therefore I believe it is a seed that will be a form of reconciliation, of prophecy, coming above all from a young Christian».

«This young Salesian Past Pupil, the first Pakistani on his way to the altars, represents all Christians and all young people who are brave and proud of their faith», he concludes.

Source: Agenzia Fides, AGI Prens

## Mexico



## A teacher heads for the altars: an exhibition on Servant of God Arturo Álvarez

Guadalajara, Mexico - 15 May 2024

An exhibition, "*La Química de la Docencia*" was inaugurated on Tuesday, 14 May at the *Salesian Anáhuac Garibaldi Institute*. It is a presentation of the life of the Servant of God Arturo Álvarez, a teacher at the institute from 1966 to 1968.

The event was attended by Guillermo Villarreal Chapa, responsible for the exhibition, the Superior of the Province of Mexico Guadalajara (MEG), Fr Filiberto González, the Rector of the work, Fr Carlos A. Montoya, and other school authorities.

Arturo Álvarez (1935-1992) lived a life of teaching and love for his neighbour in everyday life, with a natural, sensitive and generous spirit towards his neighbour, inspiring others by his example to live holiness in professional practice.

Standing out among his qualities as a teacher were his teaching and fraternal correction and the accompaniment of his students, some of the virtues that have put him on the path to holiness and that make him the first Mexican member of Opus Dei on his way to the altars.

During the event, a former student of the Servant of God shared his testimony and Fr González urged everyone to live holiness in daily life following Álvarez's example.







Peru



## Enthronement of Mary Help of Christians in Breña

Lima, Peru – 17 May 2024

As happens every year, in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Breña it is a tradition that a few days before the procession "*The Enthronement of the Virgin*" takes place. Step by step, rhythmically and elegantly, past pupils from the 1999 class prepare for the procession of the Virgin Mary



Help of Christians in Breña, practising movement, coordination and movement of the bearers of the statue.

Step by step with a feeling of love for the Mother, tears of emotion and joy, the young people participated accompanied by their family members sharing this experience of Salesianity.

Peru



## The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights grants recognition to the Salesians of Peru for their excellent educational work

Lima, Peru – 23 May 2024

The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, represented by Dr. Eduardo Melchor Arana Ysa, a former student of the 1982 class of the *Salesian Don Bosco School* in Callao, has granted special recognition to the Salesian Congregation of Peru for its valuable work in the educational field and the formation of children, adolescents and young people.

Present in the ministerial headquarters were companions and directors of the *Don Bosco school* in Callao, the *San Francisco de Sales* and *María Auxiliadora schools*. Fr José Valdivia, representing Fr Fernando Rodríguez, promoter of the *Sa-*



*lesian Don Bosco* and *San Francisco schools*, expressed his gratitude for this gesture of closeness and commitment on the part of the minister, to whom he gave, as a sign of affection, a small statue of Mary Help of Christians.

Similarly, directors Silvio Aylas, of the *Don Bosco del Callao School*; Alexis Barreto, of the *San Francisco de Sales School*; and Sister Paola Bravo, director of *María Auxiliadora*, expressed their gratitude and their commitment to continue education according to Don Bosco's preventive system.

Finally, the minister underlined the commitment of the Salesians to continue the education of young people.





Brazil

## Meeting of Presidents of the Federations of Past Pupils of Don Bosco in Latin America

Brasilia, Brazil – 30 May 2024

Following the convocation by [Eduardo Pessoa Cavalcante](#), Vice-President of the World Confederation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco and World Councillor for the Americas, an online meeting was held on Tuesday, 21 May, attended by the Presidents and Delegates of the Federations of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia-Bogotá, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and the Dominican Republic.

The objective of this meeting was to foster



discussion and communication, to address some urgent issues, including a study of the situation of the National Federations, the sending of national statutes, and the proposal to create a monument in honor of Carlo Gastini.

In addition, during the meeting, [Mario Lozano](#), former President of Costa Rica and responsible for the Spirituality and Formation Commission, recalled the importance of recognizing and relying on the Holy Spirit as a guide, strength and inspiration at all times, concluding with a suggestion, «*let us listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit*».



Spain

## The altar dedicated to Mary Help of Christians in Pozoblanco

Pozoblanco, Spain - 17 June 2024

1930s - This photograph shows an image of an old altar dedicated to Mary Help of Christians, in the Salesian school chapel in Pozoblanco (Córdoba).

The date of the document is not known precisely, but it seems that the photograph was taken around the 1930s.

The church in which the altar is located was opened in 1931, blessed by the parish priest of Pozoblanco, [Fr Antonio María Rodríguez Blanco](#), a former student of the Salesian school in Utrera. The architect was Juan Bautista Caballero.



Uganda



## Mr Joseph Ssemambo

### Africa Region GEX World Councilor

Africa Region - April 3, 2024

#### What memories do you keep of your Alma mater - Don Bosco Bombo (2006-2009)?

«The most beautiful memory I have we always touched the lives of the needy in the community through charitable work. We used to go out in the community as a school and we would clean the markets, and homes of the elderly and visit the sick in hospitals. We also had Don Bosco quotes written on the walls and I vividly remember these two "Run, jump, shout but do not sin" the other was "You still have much to do young as you are" I also remember how we cared for one another and we shared items with those that didn't have and we also had a saying "in Don Bosco we share" there was no suffering because we were always there for one another».

#### How did you become involved in the Don Bosco Past Pupils Association (as GEX)?

«My participation in the DB past pupils activities started in 2012 when I was in my first year at the University. I started as just a member and later I was chosen to be a class representative. 2016, I was elected as the National vice president and I served up to 2021. In 2021, I was elected as the GEX



councilor for Africa a position I still hold to date. There are a number of challenges faced and all these cut across to all members both in Uganda and Africa at large.

First is financial constraints, most of the activities require finances and this limits participation. Secondly time constraints. There's a challenge of balancing time with work, family, school and other engagements. As a result organizing events and participating in meetings becomes hard. Other challenges include difficulty in sustaining interest in past pupils, bringing together past pupils of different age brackets and communication challenges.

I get my inspiration from the Salesian way of doing work. The Salesians always give back to the communities through talent development, education or medical services. As a past pupil leader, I find so much joy in giving back to the school I went to and the community.

This is done through organizing events that contribute to the well-being of the students.

Serving gives me an opportunity to network with past pupils of different years and from different countries. I have managed to connect with past pupils from many European and African countries».

### Young past pupils (GEX) don't come easily together. How would you motivate those who received Don Bosco education to join the Association?

«DBPPs are spaces of networking and connections. I'd advise all young past pupils to always attend and network with past pupils of different ages.

When you network you get to know more about people, what they do, and where they live, coming together will help those who are unemployed to get jobs and expand business operations for those in businesses through partnerships National federations should not focus only on boardroom meetings but organize fun activities like games and sports, dinners, etc and they should organize communal engagements like charitable work

Also, associations should embrace the use of technology, this can be through opening up social media pages for communication and organizing online meetings more often to cater for those who are busy with work, school, and family».

### Learned lessons from the World Presidency as GEX councilor for Africa region?

«As GEX councilor for Africa, I have learned to be committed and dedicated. Fellow representatives from other countries have dedicated their time, effort and resources to serve».



### How do you bring the Salesian spirit to your professional workplace and vice-versa?

«I bring the spirit of honesty and teamwork at my workplace. I take full responsibility for all tasks in my hands.

At work we help one another with writing proposals, presentations, and closing deals, we share the spirit of togetherness. We also give back to the community through helping the needy and taking part in charitable activities».

### What is your Dream about the Young Past Pupils' growth in the African region?

«The GEX dream is big but with baby steps, we shall get there. First of all, I would like to see young people getting employment opportunities. Unemployment is a challenge in Africa but as DBPPs, we can contribute more to creating employment opportunities for our members. Through social networking events, young past pupils can come together and network.

As young DBPPs, we are the future of tomorrow, which means we need to prepare for that time. We can achieve this by equipping ourselves with the necessary skills, especially in IT, the world is evolving fast and therefore we need to also move at its pace.

We also need to take advantage of all social media communication channels. These help in connecting with one another».

## Malawi



## "Passionate about Jesus Christ, dedicated to young people": the eleventh Provincial Chapter of the ZMB

Lilongwe Vice-Province, Malawi – 18 April 2024

ZMB's *Mary Help of Christians* Vice-Province began its eleventh Provincial Chapter, scheduled from 17 to 20 April in Lilongwe, Malawi, with the theme: "*Passionate about Jesus Christ, dedicated to young people*". A varied and rich representation of Salesians, FMA, Salesian Cooperators, Past Pupils and other lay people gathered in the St John Bosco Parish in Lilongwe to begin the Chapter.

The event began with the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Archbishop George Desmond Tambala, D.C.D., archbishop of Lilongwe. In his opening address, Archbishop Tambala spoke of various issues concerning religious and the Church in general, stressed that young people are a blessing and recalled the need to review Formation to adequately respond to the needs of young people. He then concluded by proposing a collaborative approach, in the Church, between religious orders and dioceses to face the challenges of today.



## Poland



## Assembly of the School Boards for Krakow Province

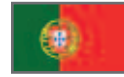
*Photo: Don Paweł Gacek, SDB*

Zabrze, Poland – April 2024 – A meeting of the School Boards for Krakow Province (PLS) was held on 12-13 April. The young people with their companions were hosted by the Salesian School in Zabrze. The event had the purpose of integrating the School Councils, exchanging ideas, praying together and developing cooperation among the young Salesians. **The theme of the meeting concerned the Salesian Past Pupils.** Fr Franciszek Janyga, Provincial Delegate for Youth Ministry, conducted a very interesting workshop on **Salesian Past Pupils** and how they can continue to actively contribute to the development of Salesian work, because as has been stressed «*we are one big family*». Workshop participants worked in groups to reflect on how to develop awareness among **Salesian school students that they will become Salesian past pupils**, and what to do so that they have the opportunity to develop and be formed in Salesian spirituality. Of course, there was no lack of moments of integration and great fun. The event culminated in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Eucharist.



Julia Markiewicz





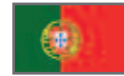
Portugal

## Salesian past pupils in national basketball championships

Porto, Portugal - 12 April 2024

The *Oficina de São José Past Pupils of Porto* triumphed on 7 August 1962, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division national basketball championships.

The club had been founded on 31 March 1940, and in more recent times, in the 2007/2008 championship, it also emerged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division national championship



Portugal

## Great success for the fourth edition of the "SHORT FILM FESTIVAL"

Lisbon, Portugal – 19 April 2024

The UCI Cinema room, within *El Corte Inglés* in Lisbon, hosted the fourth edition of the "*Short Film Festival*" of the Salesian Visual Arts Course in Lisbon on Friday, 12 April.

In the presence of many students who filled the room, eight films competed for the various awards: "*Special Jury Prize*", "*Best Screenplay*", "*Best Cinematography*", "*Best Editing*", "*Best Production*" and "*Best Film*". The latter was awarded to "*Tília*", directed by Emília Dias, Maria Lousan, Matilde Fernandes and Tomás Coelho.

The jury was made up entirely of past pupils who have attended the Visual Arts Course over the years, such as Diogo Gonçalves, now a music teacher, Joana Carvalho, a designer, Matilde Alagoa, who specialises in architecture, Rodrigo Moreira, an acting student and Maria Pinto, an expert in plastic arts.

Finally, the "*Family Award*" was given to the *Salesians of Lisbon* as a thank you for supporting the festival.



Spain



## Change for continuity: Spain's Past Pupils gather in Barcelona for their National Assembly

(ANS - Barcelona) - 6 June 2024

The annual Assembly of the Spanish Confederation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco took place in Barcelona from 31 May to 2 June, allowing all the participants to see at first hand the traces left by Don Bosco in the city.

In addition to increasing the number of participants, we had a considerable number of young people and we noted the increase in the number of women leading local associations of Past Pupils.

Hosted in the house of Martí Codolar, which celebrates its 75th anniversary, on Friday we had the presence of Fr Joan Lluís Playà, delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, who gave us the Good Night.

In addition, representatives of both inspectors welcomed us to such a special meeting and we were accompanied throughout the meeting by the world president Bryan Magro.

The confederal president Diego Aragón



gave a report on activities in 2023-2024, on behalf of all his Council, highlighting the great work in the animation and closeness with the local associations, an efficient and effective economic management, and an exponential increase of young people, thanks to the support coming from European funds, and the great work of the National Youth Coordinator team, presented by Anna Jordina Llorens.

The formative theme of the Assembly was given by Dr Sergio Rodríguez López-Ros, author of the book "Gastini - The Poet of Valdocco", who illustrated the figure of the founder of the past pupils movement, his fundamental values and the main milestones of a life dedicated to following Don Bosco and supporting him in many of his endeavours.

At the end of the presentation, the campaign to raise funds for the monument that is being carried out in Valdocco was presented.

The work of our group continued with va-



rious topics, moderated by Mr Ángel Gu-  
diña, in which a large number of partici-  
pants took part.

The reports of the *Regional Federations*  
and of the *World Confederation*, the pre-  
sentation of the economic situation of the  
National Confederation and of new tools of  
associative management, which will mo-  
dernize our task of animation, are worth  
mentioning.

There was also time for our magazine *Don*  
*Bosco en España*, the *Juan Bosco Siglo XXI*  
*Foundation* and the formation department.

Saturday afternoon was dedicated to di-  
scussing the traces left by Don Bosco in  
the city of Barcelona, visiting Can Prats and  
the whole area of Sarrià, and the Church  
of the Sacred Heart in Tibidabo, with ex-  
ceptional guides in all places.

Everyone was introduced to the figure of  
the *Venerable Dorotea de Chopitea*, a great  
benefactor of the Salesians in the city, and  
a Catholic committed to the most disad-  
vantaged youth of her time, whose cause



for beatification is being promoted by the  
*Past Pupils in Barcelona*.

The celebration of Corpus Christi on Sun-  
day, as Fr. Samuel Segura, SSM Vice-Pro-  
vincial, indicated to us, put us in tune with  
making the sacrament of presence in so-  
ciety our hallmark as *Past Pupils*.

In addition, we were able to thank and say  
goodbye to our dear *delegate Fr Eusebio*  
*Martínez*, who after four years accompa-  
nying with dedication, closeness and kin-  
dness, the *Past Pupils of Spain*, will finish  
his mandate due to his new obedience.

Thanks to all those who have made an un-  
repeatable meeting possible, especially to  
the Federation *Mare de Déu de la Mercé*,  
led by Joan Yebras and Josep Mascaró,  
who made us all feel like exceptional guests  
in Barcelona.

Executive Council

National Presidency  
of the Confederation

## Spain



# LXII Federal Assembly 2024 held in Ourense

## *St. John Bosco Old Students' Association - La Coruña*

On April 5-6 and 7, the LXII Federal Assembly of the Regional Federation of Past Pupils of Don Bosco "Camino de Santiago" was held in Ourense.

We participated in 47 members of the different boards of directors of the Local Alumni Associations that make up our federation, the Confederal Board and the Federal Board, as well as most of their Delegates.

In this Assembly we combined, as it could not be otherwise, times of intense work, training and information with other moments of shared food and coexistence in which we could enjoy everything that the



great organization of the Association of Ourense had prepared for us, such as a visit to the Monastery of Oseira and another to the church of Veracruz in O Carballiño, where the parish priest received us casually wearing a chasuble of Mary Help of Christians.

Below we leave you the magnificent photos taken by Javier, the president of the Astudillo Association, where the next Federal Assembly will be held next year, on April 25, 26 and 27

Organized by the Ancient Students  
of Don Bosco







## Programme of Activities 2024

### JANUARY

- ~ 12 - MEETING OF THE LOCAL DELEGATES OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY (LEÓN)
- ~ 16 - COUNCIL OF THE CEP
- ~ 18-21 - DAYS OF SPIRITUALITY OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY (TURIN)
- ~ 24 - COMMEMORATION OF SAINT FRANCISCO DE SALES. DAY OF THE SALESIAN CHARISM
- ~ 25 - VIDEOCONFERENCE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAYS OF SPIRITUALITY".
- ~ 27 - XANTAR-PAELLA XIGANTE OF ALL THE SALESIAN WORK IN A CORUÑA
- ~ 31 - DON BOSCO'S FEAST DAY, PARTICIPATION IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY

### FEBRUARY

- ~ 03 - SALESIAN FAMILY PROVINCIAL COUNCIL (MADRID)
- ~ 19 - PRESENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION TO THE STUDENTS OF THE 1st BACCALAUREATE (STUDENT LINKED)
- ~ 21 - DON BOSCO INDOOR FOOTBALL TROPHY LUNCH
- ~ 24 - SPIRITUALITY DAYS OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY, IN ORENSE
- ~ 26 - PRESENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION TO 2nd BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS (ASSOCIATE STUDENT)

### MARCH

- ~ 02 - SALESIAN FAMILY SPIRITUALITY DAYS, IN LEON
- ~ 09 - ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND LUNCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.
- ~ 31 - EASTER OF RESURRECTION

### APRIL

- ~ 04 - APRIL TO 5 MAY - MUSICAL "SUEÑOS" -(MADRID) WWW.SUEÑOSMUSICAL.ES
- ~ 5, 6 - AND 7: FEDERAL ASSEMBLY IN ORENSE

### MAY

- ~ 04 - PROVINCIAL FEAST (MADRID)
- ~ 24 - MARIA AUXILIADORA
- ~ 25 - FEAST OF THE UNION
- ~ 26 - HOMAGE TO MARY HELP OF MARY AUXILIARY IN
- ~ 29 - MARIA AUXILIADORA FUTSAL TROPHY LUNCH

### JUNE

- ~ 31, 1 & 2 - CONFEDERAL ASSEMBLY IN BARCELONA
- ~ 24 - SAINT JOHN BOSCO'S FEAST DAY - WORLD DAY OF FORMER PUPILS

### JULY

- ~ 19-22 - SCHOOL FOR DELEGATES IN EL ESCORIAL
- ~ MEETING IN DELEGATIONS
- ~ 30 - JULY TO 8 AUGUST CAMPOBOSCO 2024

### SEPTEMBER

- ~ 21-22 - SECTORAL MEETING

### OCTOBER

- ~ BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

### NOVEMBER

- ~ 14 - EVENTS TO MARK THE 98TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE ASSOCIATION.

### DECEMBER

- ~ PARTICIPATION IN THE OPERATION KILO FOOD COLLECTION CAMPAIGN.
- ~ SENDING CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

## Spain



## The Faculty of Theology in Seville hosts the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Sport and Faith

(ANS – Seville) – 9 April 2024

The San Isidoro Faculty of Theology of Seville hosted, on 4-5 April, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Sport and Faith, organised by the Archdiocese of Seville in collaboration with the Salesian Congregation. About a hundred participants, including 30 from Salesian backgrounds, took part in this event, aimed in particular at operators linked to the Pastoral Care of Sport, namely teachers, coaches, catechists, priests, sportsmen and anyone involved in the educational-sports field. Executives, coaches and sportsmen of recognised prestige also participated.

During the days there were several speeches and round tables, such as the one held by former footballers Javi Varas and Juan Carlos Unzué, as well as by the First Division referee Jorge Figueroa Vázquez, the latter a former student of the Salesian school of Nervión, called "How to live the faith in professional sport".

During the intervention, Unzué explained the process of SLA, a disease he suffers from and which forces him to use a wheelchair, and took the opportunity to launch an appeal to the public authorities: «We cannot allow people who want to live to feel forced to die due to a financial problem, be-



cause they feel that they are burdening their families».

Juan Carlos Unzué has lived with the mission of improving the conditions of people suffering from SLA ever since he discovered that he has it.

For his part, Jorge Figueroa Vázquez expressed the desire to «humanise the figure of the referee more, to highlight our personal side».

Telling some personal and family episodes derived from his activity as a referee, he said that gestures showing the religious identity and practice of sportsmen are not so rare. This was also confirmed by Javi Varas.

The next round table focused on overcoming self and limits in sport, with a contribution from marathon runner José M. Roas, the Paralympic swimmer Paco Salinas and the members of the "Nastic de Taragona" team, Rubén Cano and Álvaro Almazán.

Roas, who runs marathons with his son Pablo who has cerebral palsy, said that «Pablo is a blessing in himself, because he is proof that God exists and supports us».



For their part, Cano and Almazán outlined the path that led them to dedicate their time to this new experience, in which a thousand people are already involved.

Paco Salinas, on the other hand, spoke about the need to train at the highest levels with Paralympic approaches and acknowledged that faith gives him the strength to move forward.

Javier Tebas, President of the Football League, closed the opening day with an address in which he related sports practice and the needs it entails with the commitments that derive from a life of faith.

To do this he used the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians: «*Life is a spiritual race, and we must make every effort possible*».

Along these lines, he then explained why sport is comparable to the journey of faith: «*Faith is also trained through the fulfillment of the commandments*».

The opening session was attended, among others, by representatives of the two football teams in the city, the president of "Sevilla FC", José María del Nido Carrasco; and the Director of Institutional Relations of "Real Betis", Rafael Gordillo; together with Minerva Salinas, Councillor of the Municipality of Seville for Sport.



Two further round tables and a final presentation were organised on Friday 5 April.

The day began with a discussion on how to educate in the faith through sport, involving Sister Guadalupe Escudero, from the Order of Virgins, responsible for the house of spirituality at the Zamartze Monastery in Navarra; the sports coordinator of the *Escuelas Católicas Sevilla*, Manuel García; and Gema Saez, basketball teacher at the *Francisco de Vitoria University of Madrid* and Director of the *Sports and religious facts* research group at the same university.

The discussion, aimed mainly at coaches and sports teachers, was moderated by Gabino Carmona, sports coach and director of *Talent Executive Coaching*, a program of coaching processes for coaches, teams and players of professional and grassroots sports.

The day then ended with a talk by Paralympic swimming athlete Enhamed Enhamed, who briefly told the story of how he overcame vision loss. In this regard, he invited us to live with gratitude, to ask others for help when we need it, and to trust in God.



At the same time, he showed the audience how hard it was to achieve these beliefs; however, as he hit rock bottom in his sports career, he sought and found help and accompaniment.

During the day, Javier Trigo also presented the book "*God is a sportsman*", with 20 stories that illustrate this statement. Subsequently,

Trigo himself and Carlos Balbé presented the beginnings of the *Defe Foundation*, which aims to create a forum for discussion and reflection in which formulas and strategies for working with sport in education emerge.



To conclude the day on Saturday 6 April, the *First "Sport and Faith" Tournament* was held on the *Sevilla 3000* field.

The competition was aimed at the youngest in the Archdiocese of Seville, children between the ages of 8 and 12, and highlighted the importance of integration even among the youngest.

Finally, great satisfaction was expressed by Diego Pérez Ordóñez, Head of Educational Sports for the Salesians of Seville and member of the organising committee of the Day of Sport and Faith, described as "*a magnificent meeting of integration and evangelisation through sport in the Archdiocese of Seville*".





# Philippines



## An Italian team in the Championship of the Philippines



There is an Italian team playing in the Championship of the Philippines, but in the same Championship there is even an Italian player, but he plays for the rivals. All true. But let's go in order.

Football club list: Kaya FC-Iloilo - One Taquig FC - United City FC - Davao Aguilas FC - Manila Digger FC - Stallion Laguna FC - Dynamic Herb Cebu FC - Tulay FC - Don Bosco Garrelli United - Loyola FC - Maharlika Taguig FC - Manila Montet FC - Mendiola FC 1991 - Philippine Air Force FC - Philippine Army FC.

At the start of the Philippine Serie A is **Garrelli United**. But what is an Italian team doing in that league? It was founded by former seminarians of the **Don Bosco School**, named after Bartolomeo Garelli; the priest's first student in 1841.

In recent years, with the difficulties in organising the Championship, the Philippine Federation has promoted the enlargement of the number of teams. As a result, a team of military cadets, another one from the air force and even one from the **Don Bosco School** signed up, but let's face it, in the last game they suffered a heavy defeat: 12-0 by Kaya. Browsing through the Kaya roster, we found a further curiosity: the incredible story of Simone Rota.

*«I was adopted when I was six months old, from Italy. I grew up in the hinterland of Milan. Since I was a child, I always wanted to see where I was born. Ten years ago, around Christmas, I was planning to go to the Philippines for a month. First time,*



*right? To visit Manila. And so the orphanage where I had been adopted.*

*The case of a lifetime! At the same time, a team from the Philippines wrote to me, if I wanted to go and play there. They wrote me on Facebook, randomly. I signed up for six months. I said to myself: I'll give myself time in the meantime, I'll play there. From those six months the period became ten years long.*

*Football here is a bit strange in these years. There was a national championship, only of course not being a football nation, each team had to represent its province. Here there are so many islands. And because there weren't enough teams, we had*

*to meet like four times. That meant you had to take the plane. And it was not sustainable, it's too much money for them. Some teams withdrew.*

*Now it is starting again, only there are professional teams, but they have also left semi-professional or amateur teams to raise the overall number. Otherwise there would be... who knows... five or six of us.*

*Professionalism, here in the Philippines, is a big word. Because there's not a lot of money, there are fields, they rent them and you go and train there. There is a stadium and all the teams play there. They've all moved here. Yes, because otherwise... Only Sebu goes back and forth from time to time, but mainly the championship is in Manila.*

*We for example represent Iloilo, which is another island. It is established that we play one match at 3.30, one at 6 and one at 8.30.*

*Then. There are some teams where we get paid and we just play. The others, like... I think **Don Bosco Garrelli**... who come from the School anyway; or other teams, like... the Army or the Air Force. They're military teams, the athletes are military, they play. A bit like that. They're trying to increase the teams a little bit, but we're still far from the level...*

*If you win the championship, you qualify for the Champions League. If there is no Champions League there is the AFC Cup, which would represent the Europa League».*

Adelio Tamburrini

## Thailand



## A football league organised by Past Pupils

Hua Hin, Thailand – 9 April 2024

The Past Pupils Association of the Vitthayalai School in Hua Hin organised a football competition called "*Blue-White Champion's League 2024*", in which 16 teams from different high schools participated.

Fr John Bosco Dheparat Pitisant, Rector of the school, had the honour of opening the competition on 30 March. The goal of the championship, which ended on 5 April, was to create a space for **former students** to meet and strengthen unity between them.









## The vocation of the Salesian Past Pupil

On the fourth Sunday of Easter (April 21), the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations was celebrated and on the occasion of this event Pope Francis sent a message which also reminds us that we are on the way towards the Jubilee Year 2025.

In a part of his text he says: *«Our life is fulfilled and reaches its fullness when we discover who we are, what our qualities are, in what areas we can make them bear fruit, what path we can follow to become signs and instruments of love, of welcome, of beauty and of peace, in the contexts where each one of us lives»*. And in another passage he says: *«I am thinking of those who carry out their work with dedication and a spirit of collaboration; of those who are committed, in different areas and in different ways, to building a more just world, a more supportive economy, a more equitable politics, a more humane society; of all men and women of good will who work hard for the common good»*.

These statements lead us to think, especially what they can mean, if we refer to the **vocation of the Salesian Past Pupil**, not from the religious point of view, but as a committed lay person and according to the levels of belonging, as well as the degree of **identity acquired or not during his association as a Salesian Past Pupil**. In the **Statutes of the World Confederation**



of **Past Pupils of Don Bosco**, Chapter I, article 2, numeral b, we find four levels according to the degree of identity:

1. Those for whom having been a pupil or having attended a Salesian environment is a life project, which translates into associating to continue their personal formation, to make the educational charism of Don Bosco present in society and to carry out concrete projects in favour of youth. projects for the benefit of young people.
2. Those for whom having been a pupil or having frequented a Salesian environment is a choice, a mission, which they accept with all that it implies. They feel called to communicate the values received in Sale-

sian education: the spirit and pedagogical method of Don Bosco.

3. Those for whom having been a pupil or having frequented a Salesian environment is a grace, because they have been struck by the charm and attraction of Don Bosco, profoundly human and profoundly holy; this leads the former pupil to identify himself everywhere as a former pupil of Don Bosco.

4. Those for whom having been a pupil or having frequented a Salesian environment is a fact of life, an anecdote that has not marked their life.

**Alumni friend**, have you already discovered who you are, in which field you can bring your qualities to fruition and which path to follow according to your level of belonging? Have you thought about your spirit of collaboration and commitment according to your identity?

**Your vocation may be in the Salesian Past Pupils Association of Don Bosco, of the St. Peter Claver Province**. Here we have continued our personal formation, we have a mission, **we identify ourselves as Past Pupils of Don Bosco**, we are involved in concrete projects for the common good of the **Salesian Past Pupils** and for the Salesian Family. We are waiting for you.

Contact us: [exalumnos@sdbco.org](mailto:exalumnos@sdbco.org)  
[www.exalumnossalesianos.org.co](http://www.exalumnossalesianos.org.co)





Malawi

## Don Bosco Youth Technical Institute Malawi Launches TVET Communication Strategy

On April 22, 2024, Don Bosco Youth Technical Institute, Lilongwe - Malawi unveiled its Communication Strategy, a comprehensive plan designed to effectively communicate its programs in alignment with the institution's core mission of educating the youth and contributing to national development.

This initiative began in May 2023, when Don Bosco Tech Africa facilitated a workshop on developing a TVET communication strategy at the institute.

During the launch, Mr. Private Mchenga, the Principal Education Officer (Higher Education) at the Ministry of Education, emphasized the role of the communication strategy in promoting awareness of Don Bosco Youth Technical Institute's programs and supporting the government in achieving the 2063 goals.

Fr Michael Mbandama, the Provincial of ZMB province, highlighted the strategy's importance in equipping youth with essential skills for a prosperous future and enhancing the institute's engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The launch of the communication strategy positions Don Bosco Youth Technical Insti-

tute as the first TVET centre among the 11 countries implementing the Global Programme activities within the Don Bosco Tech Africa network.

The strategy aims to enhance the visibility of Don Bosco TVET offers and programmes in Malawi, facilitating communication with a broader network of internal and external stakeholders including government agencies in charge of education and labour relations, civil society organizations, industries and employer associations, development partners as well as small and medium-sized business enterprises.

Moreover, it seeks to empower the TVET centre to strengthen advocacy efforts, expand networks, and forge partnerships to promote apprenticeships, internships, and job placements for graduates.

The event was attended by various partners, including the government, private and public stakeholders, various media houses, and the Archdiocese of Lilongwe. They all expressed their willingness to partner with Don Bosco in implementing the Communication strategy.

Reported by Yanjanani Namitowa



Italy



## DBN Development Education Working Group dreaming together new projects

Rome, Italy – 23 April 2024

From 17 to 19 April, was held in Rome, the meeting of Working Group Education for Development of the Don Bosco Network. 11 participants, from 8 different countries, met to deepen the actions that their respective entities carry out in the field of Education for Global Citizenship and Social Transformation. On Thursday 18 April, Fr Rafael Bejarano, world head of Salesian Social Works and member of the Youth Pastoral Sector, gave a formative talk, linking global citizenship and the human rights work of Salesian entities with the ecclesial and Salesian magisterium, and encouraged the participants to become empowered in their knowledge of the documents that underpin the human, Christian and Salesian principles of our actions. In the rest of the sessions, participants reflected on strategies for joint action in the field of education for global citizenship, and how to foster the engagement of young people in society through Salesian organisations, and projected the future of the coming years in the Don Bosco Network. Friday was time for initiatives funded by European programmes such as *Erasmus+*. It started with the project "*Hands on Development*", presented by Bryan Magro from Malta, which combines development cooperation with non-formal education to get young people more involved in the international arena. We continued with the analysis of other calls made in the past and dreaming of possible new projects. An intense and productive meeting that has not taken place since before the Covid-19 pandemic.



Italy



## 21<sup>st</sup> Provincial Chapter of the Lombard Emilian Salesian Province

Monteartone, Italy - 30 April 2024

The 21<sup>st</sup> Provincial Chapter of the Salesian Lombardo-Emiliana (ILE) Province was celebrated from 25 to 28 April. On 25 April Chapter members, together with the Salesian Family in Lombardy, went to the Shrine of *Santa Maria al Fonte* in Caravaggio. The Eucharist was presided over by Fr José Miguel Nuñez engaged in the Extraordinary Visitation to the ILE Province conducted on behalf of the Rector Major. There was a significant presence of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Salesian Cooperators, the Union of Past Pupils, the Friends of Don Bosco and the faithful. The FMA Provincial, Sister Stefania Saccuman, led the entrustment to Mary at the end of the solemn concelebration. Chapter members then moved to the *San Marco* salesiana house in Monteartone where they carried out the work of the Provincial Chapter. Discussion on the core areas has produced a contribution that will be sent in view of the GC29 that will be held in 2025 in Turin. On Saturday, Archbishop Giordano Piccinotti, President of APSA, and a Salesian of the ILE Province, was a very welcome guest. In the homily he thanked the Salesian Congregation and in particular the Province of ILE and the confreres he met on his journey who helped him grow as a person and as a consecrated religious. The Provincial Chapter ended with the election of the provincial delegates who will be at the GC29 together with the Provincial, Fr Roberto Dal Molin: the delegate for Youth Ministry Fr Edoardo Gnocchini and Salesian Brother Claudio Beretta.





Thailand

## Conclusion of the Provincial Chapter Thailand

Bangkok, Thailand – 29 April 2024

The Provincial Chapter of the *Salesian St Paul* Province of Thailand (THA) was held from 22 to 25 April, under the theme: "*Passionate about Jesus Christ, dedicated to young people*".

The Provincial Chapter was moderated by Fr Peter Niphon Sarachit and was chaired by the THA Provincial, Fr Anthony Boonlert Panetattayasai.

In addition to the 36 officially elected members, 8 observers also participated in the Chapter, each of whom represented the groups of the Salesian Family of Thailand: Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Sisters Handmaids of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Daughters of the Queenship of Mary Immaculate, Sisters of the Queenship of Mary Help of Christians, Salesian Cooperators, Volunteers of Don Bosco, Association of Mary Help of Christians and *Past Pupils*.



The participants in the Provincial Chapter worked on the three core areas proposed by the 29th General Chapter (GC29) and reflected on the animation and governance of the Congregation, seeking to strengthen ties with the laity and the Salesian Family, and thus continue to work together for the well-being and future of young people.



Tanzania

## The first Provincial Chapter of the Province of Tanzania (TZA)

Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania – 15 May 2024

The *Saint Artemides Zatti* Province of Tanzania (TZA) met at the Provincial House Oyster Bay, in Dar Es Salaam, to hold its first Provincial Chapter, which took place from 6 to 10 May last.

The Chapter brought together a total of 27 Salesians, as well as an observer group composed of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Salesian Cooperators, *Past Pupils*, Catechist Sisters of Mary Immaculate Help of Christians and two young people. The opening Mass for the Chapter was celebrated by Archbishop Angelo Accattino, Apostolic Nuncio in Tanzania, while the concluding Mass was celebrated by Bishop Stephano Lameck Musomba, Auxiliary Bishop of Dar Es Salaam, representing Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi, archbishop of Dar Es Salaam.



The Chapter, which examined and studied the themes proposed for the next General Chapter, elected Fr Augustine Jacob Sellam, TZA Vice-Provincial as Delegate for GC29. In conclusion, on Saturday, 11 May the celebration of the Provincial Community Day took place to express support and closeness to the Superior of the TZA Province, Fr Emilius Aloyce Salema. In conclusion, on Saturday, 11 May the celebration of the Provincial Community Day took place to express support and closeness to the Superior of the TZA Province, Fr Emilius Aloyce Salema.

Poland



## Wrocław Province Salesian Family Day

Wrocław, Poland – 22 April 2024

Salesian Family Day was held on Saturday, 20 April at the headquarters of the Salesian Province of Poland-Wrocław (PLO), involving 70 people representing various groups. The presentation of the individual groups took place after the beginning of the meeting and the prayer led



by the PLO Provincial, Fr Bartłomiej Polański: Salesians of Don Bosco, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Association of Salesian Cooperators, Past Pupils of Don Bosco, Volunteers of Don Bosco, Association of Mary Help of Christians, Sisters of St Michael the Archangel and Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. Representatives of the PLO Province oratories also spoke during the meeting. At the end of the presentations Jarosław Wasowicz, SDB, gave a conference on the figure of Archbishop Antoni Baraniak, Salesian, Secretary of the Primate Cardinal August Hlond, a Salesian, and the Director of the secretariat of the "Primate of the Millennium", Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. Antoni Baraniak's list of merits and achievements is very long, but the greatest proof of his loyalty to God and Country was his attitude during the arrest and ruthless interrogations of the communist regime that wanted to force him to testify against Card. Wyszyński. He endured 27 months of torture without ever betraying, persevering in God's grace until his death. He was announced Patron of 2024 by the Polish Parliament.

The meeting also included, after the community Mass, a fraternal agape, and group work during which Archbishop Baraniak's strengths were summarised.

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Hungary



## Salesian Family Day

Péligföldszentkereszt, Hungary – 9 April 2024

Representatives of the Salesian Family met in Péligföldszentkereszt, at the first Salesian house in the country on 6 April after the annual retreat week of the Salesian *St Stephen of Hungary* (UNG). The meeting brought together all the members of the Salesian Family in Hungary - including the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Salesian Cooperators and the Past Pupils of Don Bosco - for a day of unity and company.



The event began with the solemn concelebration of Holy Mass, presided over by Fr János Andrásfalvy, Superior of the UNG Province. After Holy Mass, the Provincial greeted the participants and provided a brief overview of recent and future provincial events. Subsequently, the participants sat around tables arranged outdoors, enjoying the pleasant spring weather after the winter, to share their experiences and aspirations. Through these interactions, a collective vision of the Salesian dream emerged, enriched by numerous stimulating anecdotes that show the manifestation of God's work through the Salesian charism. In a culminating plenary session, representatives from each branch of the Salesian Family articulated their reflections on this shared Salesian vision.

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## Philippines

## The Salesian Family in the Southern Philippines: an ecclesial reality and a living heritage bequeathed by Don Bosco

Minglanilla, Philippines - 16 April 2024

The Salesian Family in the Province of the Southern Philippines (FIS) has gathered in a spirit of communion, formation and mission at the FMA *Mary Help of Christians School* in Minglanilla, Cebu.

This significant meeting, with the theme "*Communion, Formation and Mission of the Salesian Family in relation to Don Bosco's dream at 9 years of age*", involved members from different branches of the Salesian Family, including the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB), the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA), the Association of Salesian Cooperators (ASC), the Mary Help of Christians Association (ADMA), *Past Pupils of Don Bosco*, Volunteers of Don Bosco and Damas Salesianas. The novices, pre-novices and aspirants from the Don Bosco Formation Centre in Lawaan were also involved.

The central moment of the event was the enriching address by Fr Nestor Impelido, SDB, originally from the Northern Philippines Province. Fr Impelido stressed the urgency of a complete Salesian presence in the missions, taking up a reflection by Fr Egidio Viganò that «*in the missions there is an urgent need for an integral Salesian presence*».

Fr Impelido elaborated on some key points, underlining that the Salesian Family is an ecclesial reality and a living heritage bequeathed by Don Bosco himself. The day was marked by Holy Mass and community lunch, as well as a festival of talents that fostered a deep sense of fraternity and unity among the participants.



## Philippines

## The meeting of the Salesian Family in the Province of the Philippines South

Mati, Philippines - 28 May 2024

On 18 May the Salesian Family in Mindanao, Philippines, gathered at the *Don Bosco Mati* for a daily event where people mingled, and learned and saw cultural presentations from the different Salesian settings. After a performance by the Salesian Cooperators and members of ADMA, the participants were welcomed by Fr Rosmon Valenciano, Rector of *Don Bosco Mati*.

Immediately afterwards Fr Godofredo Atienza, Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family, introduced the main speaker of the day, Fr Nestor Impelido. Then followed the Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Valenciano. It was attended by young people, *past pupil of Mati and Cebu* and members of ADMA in Mati and Calinan.

The event ended with a final hymn in honour of St John Bosco, which marked the culmination of a day full of fun and joy, which reminded everyone of the family spirit.



Italy



## A new edition of the course for the new Salesian Family Delegates

(ANS - Rome) – 24 April 2024

The Course for the new Salesian Family Delegates is taking place in Italy in these days (20-26 April), between Rome and Turin: an annual event that is a useful formation opportunity for this position of responsibility, as well as an opportunity to share Salesian spirituality. A total of 15 Provincial Salesian Family Delegates of recent or upcoming appointment and two people in charge of other Salesian Family groups with a similar role within their group are involved – in addition to the members of the team that coordinate the course and the speakers, all up nine people.

It is a strongly international gathering, and while Italian is the official language, simultaneous translations are also provided in English, Spanish and French.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- reflect together on Don Bosco as Founder of a great charismatic family;

- explore the Salesian Family Charter of identity;
- discover and underline the role of the Provincial Delegate;
- know the groups of the Salesian Family for which the Salesians of Don Bosco have a particular responsibility;
- share experiences and reflections on Salesian Places.



The venue for the meeting on this special occasion, usually held only in Piedmont, between Turin and the places linked to the figure of Don Bosco, began this year in Rome, celebrating the episcopal ordination ceremony of the Rector Major, Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, and Archbishop Giordano Piccinotti, SDB, held on 20 April.

On Sunday 21st the group received a first formation session at the Pontifical Salesian University (UPS), offered by Fr Giuseppe Casti, on Don Bosco, initiator of a great movement of people dedicated to the salvation of young people. All those present went



to the Salesian Sacred Heart of Jesus basilica to share the joy of the Mass of Thanksgiving for the episcopal ordination of Card. Fernández Artime and Archbishop Giordano Piccinotti. The day ended with a time for exchange and discussion with Antonio Boccia, World Coordinator of the Salesian Cooperators and an information session on the presence of the Salesian Family in the Provinces, by **Br. Domenico Duc Nam Nguyen, SDB, World Delegate for Past Pupils and Salesian Cooperators.**

On Monday 22 April, the Rector Major's Central Delegate for the Salesian Family Secretariat, Fr Joan Luís Playà, led a session on the animation and accompaniment of the Salesian Family Groups. **The day also included a meeting with Mr. Bryan Magro, World President of the Past Pupils of Don Bosco;** and a round table on the role of the Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family and the Delegates for specific groups. *The Charter of Identity for the Salesian Family* was the focus of the activi-



ties of Tuesday, 23 April involving two presentations by the Rector Major Emeritus, Fr Pascual Chávez. The relationship with the different Salesian Family Groups as well as best practices for animating groups and holiness in the Salesian Family, were discussed in the afternoon.

On 24 April, the group moved to Turin to continue its work. The programme of activities also includes a pilgrimage to the sites of Don Bosco.

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> the work will continue to be on the move, with stops in Mornese to discover the Salesian charism in its feminine version, involving talks by Sister Lucrecia Uribe, FMA World Delegate for the Salesian Cooperators, and Sister Gabriela Patiño; and at Colle Don

Bosco, under the guidance of Fr Enrico Lupano. The course for new Salesian Family Delegates will conclude on Friday 26 April, with a final report on holiness in the Salesian Family, and responses and evaluations of the event.



## Two World Delegates of the Salesian Family on an animation visit to the TLS Vice-Province

(ANS – Dili) – 8 May 2024

Upon their arrival at the Provincial House community of Timor Leste (TLS), in Dili, on May 2, 2024, Fr Joan Lluís Playà, SDB, the Rector Major's Central Delegate for the Salesian Family Secretariat, and Brother Dominic Nam Nguyen, SDB, World Delegate for Past Pupils and Salesian Cooperators, has began their animation visit to the TLS Vice-Province. Some members of different groups of the Salesian Family from Maliana and Dili gathered at the AVR hall to greet and meet the two world delegates.

After the opening prayer led by Fr Nelson Gonçalves, SDB, the TLS Delegate for Salesian Family, Fr Joan and Brother Dominic welcomed the participants with a short video presentation. After that, there was an exchange of thoughts, feelings, and experiences between the participants and the delegates regarding the video.

The two World Delegates listened carefully to the participants who wanted to know more about the condition of the Salesian Family at the world level and how to bring together this real and enormous force of the Salesian Family at the local to serve the poor young people. Each group of the Salesian Family has its autonomy to do things and yet all of them must be going in the same direction, to the same mission as Don Bosco wanted. For this reason, there must be an accompaniment program for the leaders of each group of the Salesian Family. Participants in this meeting are the representatives from the Salesian Cooperators, ADMA of Malians and Dili chapters, *past pupils of Don Bosco*, FMA sisters, and Salesians of Don Bosco. After some days in Dili, Fr. Joan and Brother Dominic continued their animation visit to the eastern side of Timor. After some hours travelling from Dili



to Lospalos with the challenging road to the country side of Timor, both delegates of Salesian Family and the Salesian Cooperators and Don Bosco Past Pupils stopped over in Don Bosco Fuiloro for lunch. During lunch, there were little time for sharing with the Salesian Confreres in Fuiloro.

After lunch, both delegates proceeded their visit to the Salesian Community of Lospalos where the Salesian Family meeting will be held. The meeting was started with a prayer led by Fr. Nelson Gonsalves, SDB. After the prayer, Fr. Nelson being the delegate of the Salesian Family in the TLS Vice Province gave his introduction remarks. In his remarks he said that there are 32 groups in the Salesian Family and among them, there are 7 groups already existed in Timor. The meeting with the Salesian Family began with a short introduction on the document on the charismatic identity of the Salesian Family and a short video featuring the 32 groups of the Salesian Family that depicts the uniqueness of each in this vast movement of the Salesian Family. After short video, Fr Joan started his talk by giving a chance to the audience to share, converse and appreciate the video. To mention some of the sharing and dialogue, the Salesian Family has many branches and is found in many countries around the world. Although it has different names but we belong to one single family and we are

guided by one single Spirit towards a single destiny which is heaven. Then Fr Joan also put a question to the audience «*What is the strangest expression of the Salesian Spirituality in Timor-Leste?*». Most said that Salesian Spirituality is strongly presented in the area of Evangelisation and Education. They are like two wings of the same bird – you cannot have one without the other.

A seguire è intervenuto il sig. Nam, che ha illustrato la Strenna del Rettor Maggiore per il 2024. Egli ha osservato che tutti i gruppi della Famiglia Salesiana sono il risultato del sogno di Don Bosco e ha invitato tutti a sognare come lui, e ad impegnarsi per realizzare ciò che Don Bosco stesso sognava: ha nel sogno *"un cuore che trasforma i lupi in agnelli"*. The talk continued with the presentation by Brother Dominic speaking about the Strenna of the Rector Major for 2024. He said that all the groups of Salesian Family are the result of Don Bosco's dream, and so invited everyone to dream like him. Then Brother Nguyen challenged each group of the Salesian Family to strive in whatever possible way to realise what Don Bosco dreamt of: "a heart that transforms wolves into lambs." Brother Nam proposed 3 practical attitudes to help the young people in order to transform them:

1. Be joyful and share this joy to others
2. Do our duty happiness and love
3. Do good to others.

The meeting concluded with substantial snacks prepared by the Salesian Community of Don Bosco Lospalos. Among those who present were the SDBs of Lospalos and Fuiloro, FMA, ADMA of Lospalos and Fuiloro, Don Bosco Past Pupils of Lospalos and Fuiloro, Salesian Youth Movement, the Salesian Pre-Novices, and the Salesian Orphanage of Don Bosco Lospalos.





# A family visit to the Salesian Family of the country

(ANS – Dili) – 15 May 2024

"*In the Church, like Don Bosco, for the young and the least*". This was the motto that accompanied the visit of Fr Joan Lluís Playà, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, and Bro. Dominic Nyugen, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Cooperators and Past Pupils of Don Bosco, to the Salesian Vice-Province of Timor-Leste.

The visit took place from 1-7 May, coordinated by Fr Nelson Gonçalves, Delegate for the Salesian Family in TLS.

The Salesian Family in this country is made up of the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, the Salesian Cooperators, the Association of Mary Help of Christians, the Past Pupils of Don Bosco, the Past Pupils of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, and the Institute of the Volunteers of Don Bosco. Highlights include the Past Pupils association, very much committed in a country that has thousands of them, and the Association of Mary Help of Christians. All the Groups feel united by a deep communion, by Salesian spirituality and by their commitment to the country's young people.

During the visit, Fr Joan Lluís and Bro Dominic were able to meet with representatives of each of the Groups in Dili, Los Palos, Baucau, and the members of the Salesian Family Advisory Council together with many other members of the Dili area. They also visited the FMA communities in Laga and Dili, the *María Regina Gutierrez*



School promoted by a past pupil and the Instituto Superior CRISTAL, a university institution promoted by the *Cristal Foundation*, created by the Past Pupils and that accepts about 5,000 students in different pedagogical and technical specialties.

These were days of intense experience of the Salesian Family on the part of all. This is how Fr Joan Lluís expressed himself when the visit was coming to an end: «*The reception has been extraordinary. Arriving in Salesian Timor has been like entering and feeling at home at all times. Communication has made the family values transparent at all times.*

*We have been able to connect with valuable educational realities that speak of the se-*

*rious commitment with which presences are encouraged. We have seen the impetus of the Salesian Cooperators; the strength and work of the Past Pupils from Salesian Schools who speak of their potential and their ability to influence the social and ecclesial dynamics of the country; the convening capacity of the Association of Mary Help of Christians focused on devotion to Mary, worship of the Eucharist and charity towards the most needy; the simple but vibrant reality of the Secular Institute of the Volunteers of Don Bosco, and the joy of the young people who are preparing to make their profession in the Salesian Congregation as well as the dedication to the study and apostolate of the post-novices who are formed as educators of young people».*

«*And along with all this, the importance of walking together as a Family and taking a renewed awareness of the gift of Don Bosco's charism for the Church and society has been highlighted. It is about walking together, according to the characteristics of each of the Groups, helping each other to live Salesian spirituality, and knowing how to approach the different mission centres from a common vision to respond to the new challenges that arise in the field of education and evangelisation of young people. It is not about "doing everything", but about "doing everything together". Energy comes to us from God with the charism that he gave rise to in the heart of Don Bosco. Capabilities are developed with formation and shared mission. It is a case of "reflecting together", "praying together", "projecting together", "working together". Unity brings strength»* Fr Playà said.

Japan



## Animation visit of Salesian Family Delegates to Japan province

(ANS - Tokyo) - 21 May 2024

From 8-13 May, members of the Salesian Family in Japan had various fraternal meetings with Fr Joan Lluís Playà, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, and Bro. Dominic Nguyen Nam, Salesian Brother and the Rector Major's Delegate for the Past Pupils and Salesian Cooperators.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> they received a warm welcome from members of the Salesian formation community at Chofu. The next day they began their visit to the Salesian family in Japan by greeting to the tomb of Fr Cimatti, first missionary and founder of Japan province and praying for the success of this animation visit.



During the six days they were able to meet with the representatives of eight groups of the Salesian Family: Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB), Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA), Salesian Cooperators (ASC), Caritas Sisters of Jesus (SCG), Volunteers of Don Bosco (VDB), Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) and Past Pupils of SDB and FMA.

On 9 May they visited the FMA Provincial House where they received a hearty welcome from the provincial and her councillors, and the elderly sisters in the nursing home. After viewing an exhibit on the history of their presence in Japan, during the luncheon, Fr Playà expressed gratitude in the name of the Rector Major to the FMA members for their work with Sa-





lesians in the pastoral activities for youth. On 10 May they visited the Provincial House of the Congregation of the Caritas Sisters of Jesus. There, in addition to meeting with the representatives of the sisters, they visited a nearby kindergarten, where they greeted the children and sang a song to Mary with them.

On 10 May, they met with representatives of the Past Pupils, who shared their passion to be the members of the Salesian Family.

In the afternoon, Fr Playa and Bro. Nam gave a conference to ADMA members gathered from various parts of Japan, follo-

wed by a time of friendly conversation while enjoying a Brazilian barbeque.

On 11 May they met with representatives of the VDB in the morning, followed by a reception with members of the Salesian Cooperators in the afternoon.



They had a rush of meetings with these groups of the Salesian Family in Japan, but wherever they went, they left behind strong words of encouragement to the members to work together for the Sa-

lesian mission in Japan as people who share the spirit of Don Bosco.

By Fr Michael Lap and Fr Nakada





Italy



## Salesian Family festivities in the Salesian Province of the North East

Mogliano Veneto, Italy – 30 April 2024

The Salesian Family Festival of the Salesian Province of North Eastern Italy (INE) took place on 25 April at the Salesian Astori College in Mogliano Veneto (TV). It was a day of reunion and celebration that made this traditionally Provincial Day significant, marking the bicentennial of the Dream at nine years of age.

Some 500 people were present, representing the branches of the Salesian Family in the Triveneto: SDB, FMA, Salesian Cooperators, VDB, Past Pupil, Sisters of Maria Auxiliatrix, Sisters of Mary Help of Christians and also the Mamma Margaret Association, a group formed by some parents of the SDBs. After the greetings, the participants had a moment of prayer echoing Don Bosco's childhood dream. Later, the new FMA Provincial of the ITV Province, Sister Antonella Franchini, offered a "good-morning". Those present then watched a video of some testimonies of several members of the Salesian Family relating to how Don Bosco's dream became a reality in their lives. Then the musical entitled "*A heart that dreams*" created for the occasion by the Salesian Oratory in Chioggia was performed for the first time. This helped to pass on the beauty of the Salesian mission through artistic expression.



This was followed by the Eucharist was celebrated in honour of St Mark, patron saint of the Province, presided over by Fr Igino Biffi, Superior of the INE Province, who this year concludes his mandate and celebrates his silver jubilee of priestly ordination: at the end of the mass the Provincial received a gift and thanks in appreciation for his service.

Italy



## ADMA in Loreto

Loreto, Italy – May 2024

A solemn celebration began on 31 May in *Our Lady of Loreto Salesian House* to the hymn "Here I am" to welcome the newly constituted ADMA group (Association of Mary Help of Christians), erected by Decree on 20 May 2024 by the Provincial of the Central Italy Circumscription, Fr Stefano Aspettati.

Together with the Rector of the Community in Civitanova, the ADMA group of Civitanova, the Past Pupils and Friends of Don Bosco in Loreto and numerous faithful waited calmly for the 12 Aspirants of the Association of Mary Help of Christians to proclaim their commitment to consolidate and continue Don Bosco's dream.

The aspirants began their formation journey in August 2023 and were accompanied by the Primary ADMA in Valdocco, Turin and the Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family, Fr Gian Luigi Pussino.

At the end of the celebration, animated by the Community choir, the 12 members of the Group were given the Regulations, their card, badge and scarf. The evening ended with a convivial moment and a tribute dedicated to Mary.





## South Africa

# After five years, the Salesian Family in South Africa meets for the annual Consultation

Johannesburg, South Africa – 15 May 2024

After a longer break (2019-2024) was held the AFM province Consulta of the Salesian Family in Johannesburg (Benoni FMA provincial house) on May 11.

Presided by the SDB provincial, Fr Václav Klement, with 8 representatives of all 5 Salesian family groups present in Southern Africa (eSwatini, Lesotho and South Africa) – SDB, FMA, Salesian Cooperators, MSMHC (Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians) and Don Bosco Past Pupils. Outstanding was the first historic participation of Don Bosco Past Pupils (eSwatini Federation and GEX South Africa).

The Consulta meeting was well prepared by a simple survey to each group leaders, about their expectations and suggestion about the mutual relationships and common activities in each of the 4 "regions" within the large AFM territory (Cape Town, Johannesburg, eSwatini and Lesotho).

Beside the common sharing was distributed also the "Salesian Family" book (ed. SDB 2020), "Identity Charter of the Salesian Family" (2012) and the most recent SDB publication – *Don Bosco Echo* (Salesian Bulletin) and "Educating like Don Bosco" (Carlo de Ambrogio adapted edition). Few recommendations were agreed and



shared within all 5 groups: Annual meeting of the Consulta in presence (January) and quarterly online meetings; establish the 4 "regional consulta" meeting in 2024 (annual joint celebration of Don Bosco Feastday and Salesian Family Day); joint contribution to the *Don Bosco Echo* (published 3 times a year) and joint mission in each "region" focused on Vocation animation and Youth Ministry connection; each group makes effort to know better other 4 groups.

Probably the best fruit of this day was a strong resolution to launch the first group of ADMA (Association of Mary Help of Christians) in the Salesian parish of All Saints (Ennerdale) with an immediate formation call, starting a WhatsApp group joined by enthusiastic Youth, Parish Council Chair and few SDB and FMA who will accompany this group. After the Consulta meeting followed in the same venue (FMA new provincial house) Johannesburg region Salesian Family Day of Johannesburg region, animated by SDB and FMA provincial delegates for the SF with the participation of 40 SF members and Salesian Youth Movement representatives of this region.

After the formation part, Eucharist and Rosary prayer followed by a shared meal with a traditional South African "braai" (barbecue).

# EX ALLIEVI Newsflash

Religious and Social magazine of the World Confederation of Ex-students of Don Bosco

## The seat of the World Confederation of Past Pupils

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