



Summary

Editorial

- 3

With Maria, let us look forward to the coming of the Lord.

Formation

- 4

A great symphony of prayer in the jubilee of the Church:
4. *"In the name of the Father... The door of the Christian Prayer"*.

Family Alphabet

- 6

C as Compassion.

Salesian Blesseds and Saints

- 7

Philip Rinaldi: *Salesian Priest, Blessed*.

Family Events

- 9

- First ADMA DAY at Kolkata.
 - Venezuela: 36th National ADMA Day.
 - Brazil: Inauguration of the New Oratory "St. Joseph" at RESENDE:
A place of welcome, friendship, catechesis and hope.
-

Monthly prayer intention

- 11

For Pilgrims of hope.

WE ARE ASKING EVERYONE TO SEND US AN ARTICLE, A PHOTO OF A FORMATION MEETING, THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 24TH OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS, A VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY BEING CARRIED OUT. The article (.doc format, max. 1200 characters without counting spaces) and a maximum of 2 photos (.jpg digital format and no less than 1000px wide), with a title and/or brief description, must be sent to adma@admadonbosco.org. It is necessary to indicate in the subject line of the e-mail *"Family Events"* and in the text the author's data (name, surname, place of the shot, affiliation Adma, city, country). *By sending, you automatically authorise Adma to process, publish, even partially, and disclose the article and photographs in any form. The images may be published, at the editorial staff's discretion, on the website www.admadonbosco.org, and/or in other Adma websites, accompanied by a caption.*



With Maria, let us look forward to the coming of the Lord

My dear friends,

Here we are, step by step, at the start of a new liturgical year, at the door of Advent which precedes the Christmas of Our Lord Jesus. We are also at the centre of this year's formation itinerary, oriented towards rediscovering the beauty and importance of prayer, of listening to the Word, of daily dialogue with the Lord, in a filial, simple and direct relationship with God the Father.

Advent is truly a special time to put into practice the teachings received on prayer, enhancing the Marian dimension of our charism.

What better time indeed to fill with prayer, the silent suffering world, which still awaits the coming of the Lord! Yes, because in the heart of man dwells the hope of a new world, humanity still awaits the Saviour. There is still need of Jesus to heal the wounds caused by war, hatred, poverty and loneliness.

God entered history and transformed it forever. He transformed the history of yesterday, today and tomorrow, **he made all things new**. It is only in prayer and listening, like Mary, that we can contemplate the infinite greatness of God's plan and his infinite love, and let it enter into the tiny space of our daily lives: our littleness, our humanity, our flesh, our strengths and weaknesses, our desires, our wounds are the crib where God wants to do dwell.

The infinite God made himself small and humble and wants us to be small and humble like him: he wants us to be attentive and capable of grasping his love for us in our daily lives, so that we too can become capable of loving our neighbour in the small things, in the concrete and silent gestures, in the blessing glances, in the warm embraces, in the mercy of the heart.

Mary Immaculate and Help of Christians, Virgin in Listening, Mother of Hope is the door through which we can enter and live Advent. She was able to humbly accept the Father's will, carry Jesus in her womb and **'keep everything in her heart'**, until the death and resurrection of her Son.

May she teach us too, as she taught Don Bosco, to live this dimension of prayer well. May she teach us to look at our lives with new eyes, welcoming what the Lord has planned for us: God speaks to us through events, through circumstances, encounters, difficulties, joys and fatigues. Imitating Mary means entrusting, trusting and living up to everything that happens even when we do not understand, saying our humble 'yes'.

Thus, in prayer we will be able to breathe in God's infinite love and transform it into oxygen for our brothers and sisters, so that the world will still be able to rejoice and hope and do so a little through us.

I offer you all, our best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year 2025.

**Don Gabriel Cruz Trejo, SDB
Spiritual Animator ADMA, Valdocco.**

**Renato Valera,
President ADMA Valdocco.**



Formation

A great symphony of prayer in the jubilee of the Church:

4. *“In the name of the Father... The door of the Christian Prayer”*

The art of prayer

It is a fact. There is no Christian life where there is no prayer: without prayer one cannot have spiritual progress, nor does one put one's hand authentically to apostolic works which are effective edification of the Church. There are various types of Christian prayer: vocal prayer, mental prayer (meditation), adoration and contemplative prayer, also called prayer of the heart. Liturgical prayer itself benefits greatly from this prayerful fabric cultivated in the most varied forms, according to what the context of the moment and the inner dispositions of the person praying allow. In fact, there is no existential situation that cannot be fruitfully turned to prayer, and this is great news!

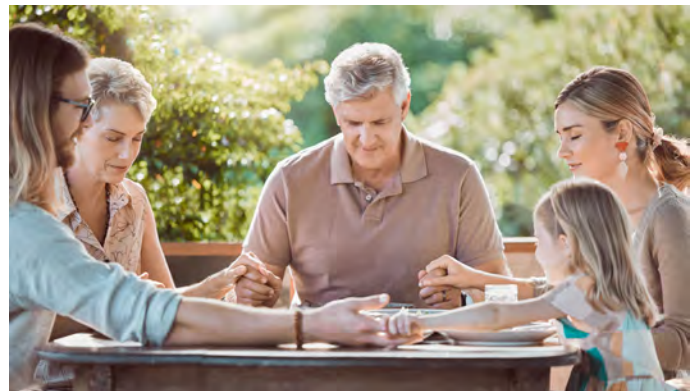
Regardless of the concrete forms it takes from time to time, Christian prayer is the actualization of our filial relationship with God, it is the frequenting of our Bridegroom and Master; it is spending time with the angels and saints; under the benevolent gaze of Mary. To pray is to be in the Divine Presence which already indwells us by grace; it is truly an anticipation of heavenly life, in the highest form that is permitted on this earth.

In this year's itinerary, we will focus in particular on vocal prayer, that is, prayer that is realised through the recitation of pre-prepared texts, and often attended to by generations of faithful who have gone before us. Vocal prayer retains absolute dignity and great fruitfulness. If practised properly, with due attention and personal appropriation of what is recited, vocal prayer in no way mortifies the personal relationship with God, but rather helps to keep it alive throughout the day, punctuating the course of the day (and night!) with many small 'divine appointments', which are the secret of union with God. To be truly effective, vocal prayer in fact presupposes a certain union with God that we can call diffuse prayer: it is a desire to be with Him, to live habitually in His presence, to manifest to Him naturally what is happening in us and around us.

It is therefore a grace that well-formulated prayers, long practised by believers, are made available to us, so as to help us say to God what we might be unable

to verbalise or even imagine. Thus, little by little, one feels accommodated by a text that might initially have seemed almost foreign. By practising it, that text becomes 'ours', begins to speak to life and, at the same time, puts the right words in our mouths to talk to God about the most important business of all: our spiritual health.

The Christian's common prayers therefore offer an authentic school of prayer, secure because they are guaranteed by the Church, inexhaustible because they reach into the mystery of God.



They are truly the treasure of the little ones and the poor, because they transmit intact faith, which is the greatest good we have, and they re-propose in the form of prayer the great truths of Christianity. These are prayers that Christians have passed on from generation to generations, imprinting on them the sensitivity of each language and culture. Their voices resonate in ours, when we pray these texts, in a moving sense of continuity that is a reflection of the catholicity of the Church.

Reciting these prayers makes one feel at home. Perhaps because they were learnt as children, they give off a sense of home, of intimacy, that lends itself well to communal recitation within the family.

The fact of knowing them by heart, then, offers the advantage of being able to take these texts calmly, 'ruminating' them in personal meditation, so that they release their spiritual fragrance. They are the prayers of the little ones, hence of anyone who really wants to be a little one of Jesus, a poor one in spirit. They are the heritage of us Christians, the mark of



unity and baptismal equality among all the faithful.

No scruples, though. It is not necessary to 'exhaust' these prayers every time we recite them, as if we had to pay attention to every detail in order to make a good prayer. The treasure remains ours, and even what we fail to grasp today, or are barely able to grasp, will still be available to us for the future. Sometimes all it takes is just a little insight to brighten up a day or unveil a truth that lay there, without our ever having paid attention to it.

In the name of the Father...

Generally speaking, the quality of prayer depends largely on how one is disposed to it. The moments preceding the actual prayer, those of immediate preparation, are decisive in reclaiming the soul and anticipating possible difficulties or distractions. The sign of the cross is traditionally the gateway to prayer. It reminds us first of all that we are in the presence of God. This sense of God's presence and of his majesty is the great secret of prayer, which imparts to it the familiar tone of dialogue, without losing its high seriousness. The sign of the cross, drawn with devotion on one's body, reminds us first of all whom we are addressing ourselves to: He is the Creator of the cosmos, the providential Ruler of the universe, the Redeemer who sacrificed Himself on the cross.

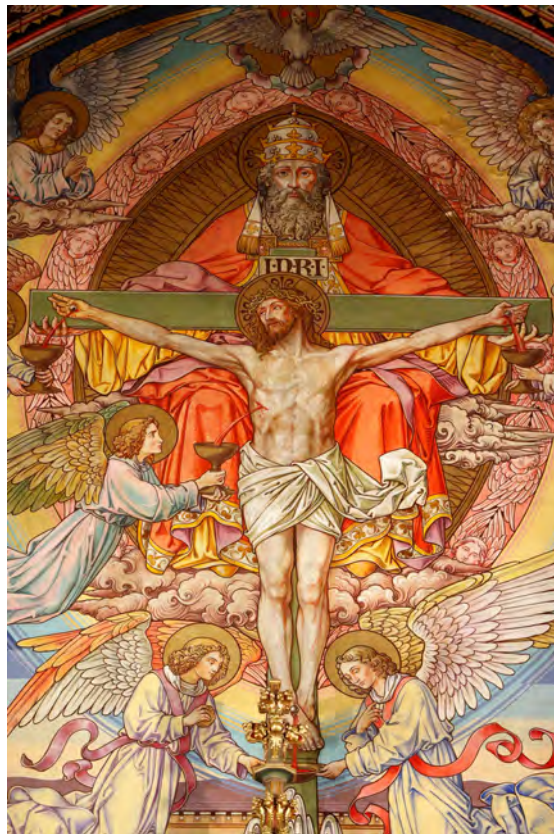
This is why we reproduce the sign of the cross on our body, almost 'entering into it' physically. It is God's embrace over our lives, it is the pledge of the Lord's unwavering love, which cost Jesus his passion. It is the badge of us Christians, which in fact was given to us on the very day of our Baptism.

The sign of the cross rhythms the fundamental stages of our life; we can reproduce it on ourselves every day, at rising and at rest, before meals or setting out on a journey; or at any moment or at any place for inspiring ourselves and others; and we can

also draw it on others as a sign of blessing, especially on our children.

It is a programme of life, our beloved sign of the cross. With it, we ideally touch the seat of our faculties: mind (head), will (heart), operative capacities (shoulders), so that our whole person becomes a space of encounter with the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity. It is easier to reach the heights of prayer if we follow the common path, the one indicated by simple, almost humble practices, capable, however, of preserving the precious treasure of faith. Such is the sign of the cross, the door to Christian prayer. Learning to make the sign

of the cross means learning to pray; it resounds its richness. And learning to pray means being Christian, seriously.



Fr. Marco Panero, SDB



Family Alphabet

C as *Compassion*

We continue to reflect on the preciousness of gestures of love and the urgency of curbing their underselling imposed by the widespread loss of modesty, fomented by the entertainment industry and obsessively celebrated by the media universe.

Everything pushes, with regard to gestures of affection, to lose the elementary evidence that the most precious things are the most guarded and the most expensive, the most sacred and in need of sacrifice. The logic of immediate enjoyment, with its persuasive invitations to feel free, to overcome taboos, to drop inhibitions, to casually tell or scientifically explain the things of love, produces mortal wounds in the hearts of our young people.

Sexophobic Christians?

Can we Christians, who recognise in the flesh of Jesus the revelation of the face of God, who profess a God 'born of woman', who claim to have seen and heard, even 'touched the Word of life', and who with infinite gratitude know that 'by his wounds we have been healed'? Certainly, although faith cherishes the unity of man in body and soul, we cannot deny that we have a heavy heritage behind us. Western culture believes that the most spiritual senses are sight and hearing, while faith knows a mysterious primacy of touch: the deepest experience of God does not coincide with a spiritual intuition or moral perfection, but with the Eucharistic experience; and the growth of Christian life does not consist in an overcoming of sensitivity, but in the development of spiritual senses, the ability to grasp the Lord's presence in everything, to experience the efficacy of His Word, to taste the realism and goodness of His Body!

Let us listen to Hadjadj, a French philosopher with an Arabic name, Jewish by birth and Catholic by profession of faith: 'the deepest love implies a tactile dimension. A mother who is too contemplative would make her child sick. All the sacraments of the Church are tactile. They offer the greatest resistance to the Internet. There is no baptismal site or, contrary to popular belief, televised Mass. One cannot give absolution on telephone. Communion

cannot be given through email. Imposition of hands is required. You need tongue contact. Aristotle, too, observes that it is neither sight nor hearing that distinguishes man from animals, but, paradoxically, what he shares most with them: for the other senses, indeed, man lags far behind the animals, but as for the fineness of touch he is far superior'.

In praise of the caress

Among the many gestures of love, the caress is certainly very revealing, if it prompts a director like Olmi to have one of his protagonists say: 'all the books in the world are not worth a caress'!



The caress expresses the mystery of tenderness, which is when affection takes the soul and the body together. The name itself says it: 'caress' comes from 'dear', which in Latin means 'flesh', and suggests the quintessence of the loving feeling, that feeling

of the other's preciousness, of the wonder and vulnerability of his or her existence, which makes us say 'you are dear to me', accompanying the word with the gesture of the hand.

Above all, the caress is not a simple touch, but it is contact with the untouchable. It is touching the mystery. Paradoxical: the caress touches the surface of the body, but seeks the depth of the soul. The caress does not want to define, to possess, but to bring out, to recognise. Lévinas, the great Jewish philosopher to whom we owe one of the best phenomenologies of eros, explains that 'the caress consists in not taking possession of anything, in evoking that which continually escapes from its form'. The caress 'does not aim at unveiling, but at searching, it is a journey into the invisible. In a certain sense it expresses love, but suffers from an inability to say it'. The truth of the caress, on closer inspection, is when sexuality and virginity are not dissociated, when the will to belong and to respect each other are one!

Fr. Roberto Carelli SDB

(Source: Roberto Carelli – Family Alphabet)



Salesian Blesseds and Saints

Philip Rinaldi, *Salesian Priest, Blessed*



“The word that did me the most good was when I told him that I was afraid some days I would make one of my own by running away”. And he answered me: “I would come and get you”. This immediate and affectionate reply from Fr. Paolo Albera, Rector of the Salesian house in Genova Sampierdarena, to the young 21-year-old Philip Rinaldi, who was there at boarding school discerning his vocation, encapsulates a real strategy (the same one used by Don Bosco) in a spiritual situation that could be defined as follows: not feeling called on one side and continuing to be called on the other.

Born in Lu Monferrato (Alessandria) on 28th May 1856, eighth of nine children, Philip met Don Bosco for the first time at the age of five, during one of the many walks the holy priest took with his youngsters. His youthful temperament was not what one might properly expect from a saint, but Don Bosco was able to see in him the makings of a good educator. At the age of ten, he was taken to the Salesian house in Mirabello for his studies. He saw Don Bosco there twice and immediately felt him to be his friend. Following a mistreatment he suffered, he returned to his family, where, however, he received letters from the Saint of Youth inviting him to return: “The houses of Don Bosco are always open to you”. He later confided: “I had no intention of becoming a priest”. But Don Bosco thought otherwise. He went to visit him in 1876. Philip was then in his twenties and with a marriage proposal. Don Bosco definitely won him over to his cause. Fr. Rinaldi later confessed: “My choice fell on Don Bosco.... He had answered all my questions”. He lingered in the family for another year,

preoccupied, for school purposes, with a headache and a diseased left eye. “Come!” - was Don Bosco’s last patient invitation - “Your headache will pass and you will have enough sight to study”.

Thinking back on all the resistance he had put up with, he would one day exclaim: “May the Lord and Our Lady see to it that, after having resisted grace so much in the past, I will no longer abuse it in the future”. At the age of twenty-one, Philip Rinaldi embarked on the path to adult vocations in Sampierdarena. In 1880, after his novitiate, he took his perpetual vows in the hands of Don Bosco himself. When on 23rd December 1882, the day of his priestly ordination, he heard himself asked by Don Bosco, almost at the end of the long period of vocational discernment: “And now are you happy?” He replied with filial emotion: “Yes, if you keep me with you!”.

Of his 49 years of priesthood, the first twenty saw him successively Rector at Mathi Torinese, a college for adult vocations, then at Turin’s ‘San Giovanni Evangelista’, then at Barcelona-Sarriá in Spain. A few days before Don Bosco’s death, Fr. Rinaldi wanted to go to confession to him and the latter, before absolving him, by now without strength, said only one word to him: “Meditation”. In 1889, Fr. Michael Rua, Don Bosco’s first successor, appointed him Rector at Sarriá, near Barcelona in Spain, telling him: “You will have to take care of very delicate things”. In three years, with prayer, meekness and a paternal and animating presence among the young people and in the Salesian community, he revived the work. He was then appointed Provincial of Spain and Portugal, contributing in a surprising way to the development of the Salesian Family on Iberian soil. In just nine years, also thanks to the financial help given by the venerable noblewoman Dorotea Chopitea, Fr. Rinaldi founded sixteen new houses. Fr. Rua, after a visit, was impressed and later appointed him Prefect General of the Congregation in 1901. In his new ministry, Fr. Rinaldi continued to work zealously, never giving up his priestly ministry. He performed his governing task with prudence, charity and intelligence for twenty years. After the death of Blessed Fr. Rua in 1910, Filippo Rinaldi was re-elected Prefect and vicar of Fr. Paul Albera, the new Rector Major. In an apparently bureaucratic role,



he did things to leave his mark. Above all, he became an expert director of the spirit: he would get up very early in the morning and, after celebrating Holy Mass, begin his two-hour confessional at five o'clock.

The last nine years saw him at the supreme leadership of the Congregation: he succeeded Fr. Paul Albera on 24th April 1922. When he was first elected Rector, he wrote to Fr. Giulio Barberis: "Me, Rector! But don't they know that it's ruining the poor young people? I am amazed to think of it". Elected Rector Major he would say: "I assure you it is a great mortification for me; pray to the Lord that we may not spoil what Don Bosco and his successors have done". He adapted Don Bosco's spirit to the new times, and in the role of Rector Major he showed more of his fatherly qualities and his wealth of initiatives: caring for vocations, forming centres of spiritual and social assistance for young workers, guiding and supporting the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians at a particular time in their history. He gave great impetus to the Salesian Cooperators; he established the World Federations of Past Pupils of Don Bosco and Past Pupils of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, giving a strong organisational boost. "Past pupils," he said, "are the fruit of our labours. We in our homes do not work to make young people good only while they are with us, but to make them good Christians. Therefore the work of the past pupils is a work of perseverance. We have sacrificed ourselves for them and our sacrifice must not be lost". Working among the devotees of Mary Help of Christians, he intuited and travelled a path that led to the implementation of a new form of consecrated life in the world, which would later flourish as the secular Institute of the 'Volunteers of Don Bosco'.

His leadership as Rector Major was as fruitful as ever. The Salesian Congregation grew prodigiously: from 4,788 members in 404 houses, to 8,836 in 644 houses, in an atmosphere where 'one breathed more the affection of the father than the authority of the Superior'. The impetus he gave to the Salesian missions was enormous: he founded missionary institutes, magazines and associations, and during his term more than 1,800 Salesians left as missionaries to different parts of the whole world, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Don Bosco from



whom, having asked as a new priest to go on mission, he heard the answer: "You will stay here. You will send others on mission". He made numerous journeys in Italy and other parts of Europe. He displayed admirable zeal and paternity, emphasising that the true physiognomy of the Salesian Work lies not so much in external successes, but in the profound, serene and calm intimate life. He translated his dynamic concept of spirituality and work into a socially effective form, working with Pope Pius XI to have the indulgence of sanctified work granted. A master of spiritual life, he revitalised the interior life of the Salesians by always showing absolute trust in God and unlimited confidence in Mary Help of Christians.

"It is true," testified Fr. Peter Ricaldone, his successor, "that he often had poor health, but he managed to achieve extraordinary good. He devoted himself with enthusiasm to the training of personnel with meetings, visits, writings that made him appreciated and loved by all". He was a tireless worker. In many ways and throughout his life, sparing no effort, he endeavoured to increase among working men and women of every category those forms of association and those saving organisations that always ended in the growth of Christian trade unionism and welfare works. To all Salesians, he particularly recommended service to emigrants without distinction of nationality, emphasising maximum universalism in charity.

Among the faces of Salesian saints, what characterises Fr. Rinaldi's is the note of paternity. As director, at the age of 33, he proposed: "Charity and meekness with the brothers, putting up with whatever may come my way". As provincial, he would say: "I will be a father. I will avoid harsh ways. When they come to speak to me, I will not let them see that I am tired or in a hurry". Of Fr. Rinaldi, Fr. Francesia, a first-generation Salesian, will say: "He only lacks Don Bosco's voice. Everything else he has". Before he died, the event that filled him with extraordinary joy was Don Bosco's beatification on 2nd June 1929. He led a crowd of 15,000 people to Rome. He was about to begin the 50th year of his priesthood when he passed away peacefully on 5th December 1931. His remains rest in the crypt of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin.



Prayer

*God, our infinitely good Father,
You have called Blessed Philip Rinaldi,
third Successor of St. John Bosco,
to inherit his spirit and mission
and to initiate various charismatic initiatives
in the Salesian Family.*

*Obtain for us the grace to imitate his goodness,
his apostolic resourcefulness, tireless creativity,
sanctified by union with God.
Grant us the graces we are in need of through his
intercession.*

**Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Family Events

First ADMA DAY a Kolkata



out by the four ADMA groups (Ranchi, Gobra, Barasat and Dum Dum).

The theme of the first ADMA day was the Dream of Don Bosco at the age of nine, in the Bicentenary year. So each group presented a performance on the Dream, while the theme of the cultural programme was 'A Dream which makes one dream'.

Calcutta (India). On the 24th August 2024, at the headquarters of the provincial house (INC) in Calcutta Dum Dum, the first ADMA DAY was celebrated, to honour Mary Help of Christians, patron saint of the Salesian Family, on the day of the monthly remembrance, and to promote the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) among the faithful.

In his message, Fr. Joseph Manipadam underlined the significance of the ADMA and Mary's role in Salesian spirituality. The interactive dynamic, in the form of a quiz on the message, helped the members deepen their devotion to Mary Help of Christians and to renew their commitment to the mission and values of the Association.

The day began with the Eucharistic Celebration presided by Fr. Joseph Manipadam, SDB, National Delegate for the Salesian Family. During the Celebration, through the welcoming ritual and after the homily, 20 new members, coming from Auxilium Ranchi, Auxilium Barasat and Auxilium Dum Dum made their promise, becoming part of the ADMA family. The Delegates welcomed them with a garland of flowers and the Provincial, Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil, FMA, handed them the ADMA kit.

In the afternoon, ADMA members of Mazzarello Ranchi and Auxilium Dum Dum went on pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary in Bandel. The FMA and participants prayed the rosary inside the church and, despite the incessant rain, visited the terrace where the miraculous statue of Our Lady is kept. The purpose of the visit was to deepen devotion to Our Lady and to encourage spiritual growth through pilgrimage and prayer.

After a break, the cultural programme began, with the introduction and warm welcome to Fr. Joseph Manipadam, the FMA Provincial and all the Delegates of the different ADMA groups. Sr. Stella Davis, FMA, Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family and ADMA, presented a report on the activities carried

At the 9th International Congress of Mary Help of Christians, which has just ended in Fatima, Portugal, the General Councillor for the Salesian Family, Sr. Leslie Sándigo, FMA, expressed the invitation to multiply the ADMA groups in the communities of the congregation, in order to spread the love for Mary Help of Christians.



Venezuela: 36th National ADMA Day

Egido, in the state of Mérida, from 27 to 29 September. The event was attended by more than 75 ADMA members, gathered to strengthen their faith and commitment, to deepen their identity and mission, reflecting on themes such as youth participation, integral ecology and the transmission of the messages of the Congress. For three days, ADMA members from all over the country shared experiences, carried out cultural activities, made pilgrimages and participated in Eucharistic celebrations. The fraternal live-in and the Salesian atmosphere characterised the meeting, in which the Daughters of the Divine Saviour,



Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and Salesians of Don Bosco participated.

Brazil: Inauguration of the New Oratory “St. Joseph” at RESENDE: *A place of welcome, friendship, catechesis and hope*

On 28th September, the opening of the ‘festive oratory of St. Joseph’ was held at the ‘Centro Educativo Esperança do Futuro’, in the Beira Rio neighbourhood of Resende. Salesians, young people from the Salesian Youth Movement, Salesian Cooperators and members of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) were present for the occasion. This oratory marked the beginning of a project that aims to provide a welcoming space where education, faith and fun go hand in hand. The ‘San Giuseppe’ oratory was born, in fact, with the commitment of also making it a meeting and training place for families, uniting the generations around the same goal: to build a more just and united future.



Monthly Prayer Intention

For pilgrims of hope

We wish to unite the prayers of all ADMA groups around the world for the intention of Pope Francis.

For pilgrims of hope

Let us pray that this Jubilee will strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, and transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

