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EDITORIAL

SHINE, LISTEN AND DO NOT FEAR

Dear friends,

we have lived through a summer full of important events for the Universal Church, such as the World Youth Day in Lisbon, and for our Salesian Family, such as the happy surprising appointment of our Rector Major, Don Angel, as Cardinal by Pope Francis, an appointment that will be made official in the consistory of 30th September.

So many events and at the same time so many gifts that the Lord bestows on His people on their journey, through the Holy Spirit and the mediation of those who place themselves with trust and availability at His service.

In his homily on 6th August at World Youth Day, Pope Francis showed young people how to walk their way in the world and in everyday life through three words: **shine, listen and dare.**

'Shine' because - says the Pope – *“today we need a little light, a flash of light that gives us hope to face so many obscurities that assail us in life, so many daily setbacks, to face them with the light of the resurrection of Jesus. For, He is the light that does not fade, He is the light that shines even in darkness”.*

'Listen' because *“all there is to do in life lies in this word: Listen to Jesus. The whole secret lies here... Because He has words of eternal life for us, He reveals*

that God is Father, He is love. He shows us the path of love."

'Don't be afraid' because *"to you, young people, who sometimes think you can't make it - a bit of pessimism assails you at times; to you, young people, who are tempted at this time to become discouraged, to judge yourselves as perhaps inadequate or to hide your pain by masking it with a smile; to you, young people, who want to change the world - and it is good that you want to change the world - and who want to fight for justice and peace; to you, young people, who put effort and imagination into your lives, but it seems to you that it is not enough; to you, young people, whom the Church and the world need like the earth needs rain; to you, young people, who are the present and the future; yes, to you, young people, Jesus says today: Do not be afraid! Do not be afraid!"*



These words addressed to young people are a cue for all of us, and as Salesian Family they also show us how to live the appointment of Rector Major Don Angel as Cardinal. It is an opportunity as sons and daughters of Don Bosco to shine with hope, an event to be lived by listening to the will of the Lord and His word and finally entrusting ourselves without fear, thanking our Rector Major for his availability and obedience.

We have recently lived the memory of Saint Maximilian Kolbe who in his writings reminds us

"God is everything: He alone is infinite, most wise, most clement Lord, creator and Father, beginning and end, wisdom, power and love.

Everything that exists outside of God has value in so far as it relates to Him, who is the creator of all things, the redeemer of men, the ultimate end of all creations. He manifests His will to us and draws

us to Himself through His representatives on earth, wanting to use us to draw other souls to Himself and unite them in perfect charity. Consider, brother, how great, by God's mercy, is the dignity of our condition. Through the way of obedience, we overcome the limits of our littleness, and conform ourselves to the divine will which guides us to act righteously by its infinite wisdom and prudence. By adhering to this divine will which no creature can resist, we become stronger than all."

And again, St. Maximilian reminds us how to let Mary help us on our way:

"All these things we will obtain more easily through the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin whom God, in his goodness, has made dispenser of His mercy. There is no doubt that Mary's will is the same as God's will. By consecrating ourselves to her, we become in her hands instruments of divine mercy, as she was in God's hands. Let us therefore allow ourselves to be guided by her, let us be led by the hand, calm and safe under her guidance. Mary will think of everything for us, she will provide for everything, and by banishing all anxieties and difficulties she will promptly come to the aid of our corporal and spiritual needs".

So let us pray for Don Angel and his new service in the Church, as we, as Salesian Family, prepare to live this new pastoral year, which will lead us to the 9th International Congress of Mary Help of Christians at Fatima, for which registration will soon open.



Renato Valera,
ADMA Primaria's President.

Alejandro Guevara,
ADMA Primaria's Spiritual Animator.

FORMATIVE PATH

THE ORATORIAN MISSION: THE EDUCATIVE CHARISM

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not be lost, but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him”.

(John 3: 16-17)

The dream at the age of nine seems to take place in the courtyard of any Salesian oratory in the world. We are not on the mountain of contemplation nor are we in the sacred space of the temple. Giovannino finds himself close to home in a very spacious courtyard, packed with boys, which he later recognised as a familiar place near his home in Becchi. A place where there is no loneliness, but multitude: there are boys everywhere and these do not have an angelic appearance but a concrete one; they play and quarrel, they cheerfully amuse themselves, but few blaspheme. The first instinctive reaction is to use force to make them better, to help them behave appropriately. And a bright and distinguished man appears in the courtyard, indicating what the proper attitude towards the boys should be. And then, also a lady dressed in light.

John stands in the middle, as a mediator between the rowdy boys and the powerful figure of the man and then the woman who invite him to stand at the head of his comrades as their positive and purposeful leader. They offer him a style of action – *“not with blows but with meekness and with charity”* - and invite him to instruct them on the ugliness of sin and the preciousness of virtue. Faced with the impossibility of educating them, the man refers to the woman, pointing out to the boy as a teacher: *“I will give you the teacher under whose discipline you can become wise, and without whom all wisdom becomes foolishness. It is she, in fact, who indicates to him both the field where he is to work and the methodology to be used: “Here is your field, here is where you are to*

work. Make yourself humble, strong, robust.” From the outset, Mary is called upon to give birth to a new charism as it is precisely her speciality to carry and give birth.

The reciprocity between these figures - the boys on the one hand, the Lord (later joined by the Mother) on the other - is the most important message of the dream.

The encounter between the youth’s vulnerability and the Lord’s power, between their need for salvation and his offer of grace, between their desire for joy and his gift of life must now become the centre of his thoughts, the space of his identity. The score of his life will all be written in the tonality that this generating theme gives him: modulating it in all its harmonic potential will be his mission, in which he must pour out all his gifts of nature and grace.⁽¹⁾

The privileged place of the encounter between young people and God is the courtyard, the sacred ground of the incarnation of Don Bosco’s charism for all times and situations. God comes into the world of the young which in the dream is represented by a courtyard where they play, have fun and also negative experiences of contrast and contention. Not elsewhere but he comes among them and wants to be among them, in the space of their daily relationship.

The re-proposition of the ‘incarnation strategy’ is clear: God does not wait for people to come to Him but sends His Son to them. In the same way, the dream naturally and unquestionably places John in the usual place of young people’s lives. He will thus be called to evangelise the ordinary places of young people’s growth:

The courtyard therefore speaks of the closeness of divine grace to the ‘feeling’ of the youngsters: to welcome it one does not have to leave one’s own age, neglect its needs, force its rhythms. When Don Bosco, by now an adult, wrote in ‘Young Provident’ that one of the devil’s tricks is to make young people think that holiness is incompatible with their desire to be cheerful and with the exuberant freshness of their vitality. He would only be giving back in mature form the lesson



intuited in his dream and which then became a central element of his spiritual magisterium.

At the same time, the courtyard speaks of the need to understand education from its deepest core, which concerns the heart's attitude towards God. There, the dream teaches, is not only the space of an original openness to grace but also the abyss of resistance, in which the ugliness of evil and the violence of sin lurk. This is why the educational horizon of the dream is frankly religious and not just philanthropic, and stages the symbolism of conversion, and not just that of self-development. In the courtyard of the dream, filled with boys and inhabited by the Lord, what will be the pedagogical and spiritual dynamic of the Oratorian courtyards in the future is therefore disclosed to John. ⁽²⁾

The horizon of the mission is therefore religious, not philanthropic: God is the true need of man, the desire for God is the true desire of every man. For this reason, the Salesian oratory assumes the work of education as God's work, and Salesian pedagogy is a pedagogy of grace, where things, tools, activities, strategies, skills are not an end in themselves, but intended to interpret life as vocation and mission.

Don Enrico Stasi - SDB

⁽¹⁾A. BOZZOLO, *Il sogno dei nove anni. Questioni ermeneutiche e lettura teologica*, LAS, Roma 2017, p. 252.

⁽²⁾ *Ibid*, 253.

NAZARETH, GOD'S FAMILY

INTRODUCTION

Just as in the eternal mystery of God the Son is mirrored in the Father from whom he receives all things (Jn. 5: 26-27), the Father is mirrored in the Son in whom he delights and whom he invites to imitate (Mt. 17:15); and just as every child learns to say, 'I', by being mirrored in the 'you' of his mother, in the radiance of her smile and in the tenderness of her breast and hands; so every family can grow in love by being mirrored in the Holy Family, the concrete ideal of every family. In it happens the most ordinary and at the same time most extraordinary fact: a family in which there is God, a home in which God dwells, which prolongs the mystery of the Incarnation, in which *"the Word became flesh and came to dwell among us"* (Jn. 1:14).

In this small collection of meditations written to accompany Christian families to live the Advent and Christmas season well, we will go together to Nazareth to learn to love as God wants us to love, to prevent break-ups and find peace in family ties, to regulate affections and overcome resentments, to grow in the wisdom of earthly things in the light of the things of heaven: because, thanks to the gift of Jesus and Mary's welcome, the things of earth were destined for heaven and those of heaven came down to earth.

The cue was offered to me by Pope Francis in a passage of the beautiful Apostolic Exhortation dedicated to the family, 'Amoris Laetitia'. In it, every family is given the concrete and wonderful icon of the family of Nazareth. It is not an abstract and ideal icon, too heavenly and too perfect, far removed from common experience. Certainly, the experience of Joseph and Mary is singular and extraordinary, but it represents and realises the ideal to which all families can be inspired and aspire in a simple way, hosting Jesus and Mary in their homes, and invoking the intercession of Mary and Joseph for every need. In Mary's home, we learn to love each other with the same love of God, and to face the trials of love with the humility, courage, patience and faith of the first 'Christian family'! Let us enter into the mystery of Nazareth guided by the very concrete words, luminous and at the same time dramatic, of Pope Francis:

Every family is presented the icon of the family of Nazareth, with its everyday life made up of hardships and even nightmares, as when it had to suffer the incomprehensible violence of Herod, an experience that is tragically repeated even today in so many rejected and helpless refugee families. Like the Magi, the families are invited to contemplate the Child and the Mother, to prostrate themselves and adore Him



(cf. Mt 2:11). Like Mary, they are exhorted to live their family challenges, both sad and exciting, with courage and serenity, and to treasure and ponder in their hearts the wonders of God (cf. Lk 2:19, 51). In the treasure of Mary's heart, there are also all the events of each of our families, which she treasures. She can therefore help us interpret them to recognise God's message in family history (AL 30).



in the Holy Family too, there are dreams and nightmares, friends and enemies, riches and poverty, times of prayer and times of work; there is a family history that sustains and that weighs, that must be recognised and elaborated, to become capable of tracing God's passages, his calls, the missions entrusted to us, the crosses that cannot be immediately understood but that in the meantime

must be borne.

As we can see, there is here the portrait of a holy family, because God is in it, but it is a real family, because it really lives in the world: as in every family,

Fr. Roberto Carelli – SDB

HUMBLE AND HIGHEST CREATURE

- In our Pilgrimage with Mary,
Teacher of Integrale Ecology

1. THE MOTHER WHO TAKES CARE

Pope Francis dedicates only one issue of the encyclical *'Laudato si'* to Mary's presence and role in creation, (241). Despite its brevity, it is a dense text, presenting Mary first and foremost as **"the mother who cared for Jesus"** and who **"now cares for this wounded world with maternal affection and sorrow"**.

In the message given at the Angelus on the first day of the year 2023, Pope Francis offered an extraordinary commentary on this succinct expression, recalling all Christians around the world to the importance of caring: *"if we really want the New Year to be good, if we want to **rebuild hope**, we need to abandon languages, gestures and choices impelled by selfishness and learn the language of love, **which is caring**. Caring is a new language, which goes against the languages of selfishness"*.

The adjective 'new' can refer to two particular aspects of the language of caring. First of all, to the fact that it is the language chosen by Jesus to manifest the face of God's love: the care that Jesus has for those He meets, in fact, is itself the Gospel, the revelation of the Father's face. Secondly, the systematic reflection on the ethics of care, which lies at the origin of the discourses so common on this subject today, is a consequence of the entry of women into philosophy and theology in the last century.

Although the capacity for care does not belong exclusively to women, moreover, as far as the personal development of this capacity is concerned, its starting point is inevitably found, for every human being coming into the world, in the relationship with their mother. Without the maternal care which begins at the moment of conception and manifests itself as acceptance, protection, nourishment, the human being coming into the world could in no way survive. This need is so true that Jesus, the Son of God, also needed it: to come into the world, he had to rely on the care of a woman. And it is for this reason that the Pope, in his message for the beginning of the New Year, points out precisely to Mary as an example and model of care: "She welcomed with wonder the mystery she lived, kept everything in her heart and, above all, cared for the Child, who - the Gospel says - was "lying in the manger" (Lk. 2:16). This verb 'to lay' means Mary laid the child in the **manger with care**, and tells us that Mary's own language is that of **motherhood: to tenderly care** for the Child.

It is important to remember, however, Mary was not alone in caring for the child. Joseph's presence, beside Mary, is to be equally estimated. A pregnant woman, who sets up her whole life to care for a new human being: body, mind, heart and time, in turn needs someone to care for her. The language of care, therefore, is a community language. African wisdom expresses this awareness through the

Humble and highest creature

famous proverb: *'It takes a village to raise a child.'* The original place of care, then, is not simply the relationship between mother and child: it is that relationship, certainly, but embedded in a wider network of relationships. Precisely for this reason, when Joseph discovers that Mary is pregnant and would like to abandon her, an angel sent by God invites him to take charge, that is, to care, for the mother and the child.



If, therefore, in the personal relationship with our mother our capacity to receive and give care has blossomed, it is in family life that the language of care develops in its most beautiful form, which is that of reciprocal care, or care as 'teamwork'. Within the family of blood and in the larger family that can be the school, the parish and any other educational work, this is precisely the great challenge, the great call that awaits us as adults, parents and educators: not only to learn to express ourselves more and more and better through the new language of care, but to ensure that the children, young people, and young adults entrusted to us gradually learn to understand and express it. Don Bosco would call it 'family spirit' and say that the future of society depends on the transmission of this language.

Pope Francis therefore emphasises the link between education for care and education for peace, in daily life as well as in international relations, and invites all believers to regain awareness of the responsibility entrusted to us to build the future: in the face of the personal and social crises we experience, in the face of the tragedy of war, "we are called to face the challenges of our world with responsibility and compassion. And we can do this if we care for one another and if, all together, we care for our common home. We implore Mary Most Holy, Mother of God, that in this age polluted by mistrust and indifference,

she may make us capable of compassion and care, capable of 'being moved and stopping before the other, as often as necessary,'

The Pope also indicates what the **concrete steps of care are:**

1. **taking care of our life** - each of us must take care of our own life -; taking care of our time, of our soul;
2. **taking care of creation and the environment** in which we live;
3. and, even more, **taking care of our neighbour, those whom the Lord has placed beside us**, as well as our brothers and sisters who are in need and call for our attention and compassion.

The order in which we are invited to take care of ourselves; of the environment in which we live and of our neighbour is not random: the first two directions of care, in fact, are the basis of the third, which is indeed the most important but which cannot sustain itself without the other two. The 'ecological conversion' so much desired by Pope Francis, therefore, cannot take place without each of the children coming into the world learning to think, speak and act according to the new language of care. And in this journey of continuous renewal of our minds, hearts and hands, Mary's presence and help are fundamental!

Sister Linda Pocher – FMA

FAMILY EVENTS

East Timor – 158 New members of TLS Vice province ADMA group

On the 24th June at the National Shrine of Fatumaca, 158 people made their promise as members of ADMA of the Salesian Vice Province of East Timor (TLS).

Fr. Manuel Pinto, Vicar of the TLS Vice Province, presided over the Eucharist, concelebrated by Fr. Manuel Ximenes, Delegate for ADMA of the TLS Vice Province, with 4 other priests. Present at the celebration were many ADMA members from different centres of the country together with their presidents and their close collaborators, FMA sisters, their Provincial Vicar, Sr. Evangelina Xavier da Costa, FMA, and the families of the new members.

After the homily, the candidates made their promise to live the virtues of Mary, ready to be her witnesses in their Christian life as well as promoters of devotion



to Our Lady. Each candidate received Our Lady's Medal and the ADMA Manual as a rule of life. At the end of the celebration, in front of the Shrine, the ADMA TLS presented the first edition of its bulletin.

Kenya – “The Call of Mary and our Christian call”: Nairobi Marian Congress 2023



The Marian Congress 2023, organised by the Salesians of the East Africa Province (AFE) and held at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians at the ‘Don Bosco Upper Hill’ centre, ended on 1st July, with a solemn Mass presided over by Fr. Simon Asira Lipuku, AFE Provincial. The Mass was concelebrated by Fr. George Tharaniyil, who will assume the leadership of the AFE Province for the sesennium 2023-2029 from the month of August, and by Fr. Emilius Salema, Superior of the new Province ‘St. Artemis Zatti’ of Tanzania (TZA). Among the others present was Fr. Alejandro Guevara, ADMA’s World Spiritual Animator.

The final day was marked by a pilgrimage of about 10 kilometres to the Garden of Resurrection, a unique place of prayer in Africa. More than 850 participants, divided into groups of 20, joined the pilgrimage, praying the Rosary and singing Marian hymns.

On arrival, the pilgrims were welcomed by the priest in charge of the place, who told them: *“To pray is to listen to God, and let us not tire of praying because God, in His time, answers.”* This was followed by a talk on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and everyone had the opportunity to confess individually. Then, Cardinal John Njue, Archbishop Emeritus of Nairobi, celebrated Mass and expressed his closeness to the Salesians, thanking them for organising the Marian Congress.

Afterwards, the history of the Garden of Resurrection was presented to the participants. This special place of prayer was created by the late Cardinal Maurice Otunga who dreamed of having a place solely for prayer. He is buried in the very Garden of Resurrection. Now the Cardinal is on his way to

Family events

sainthood. The day ended with a Hymn to Mary, led by the Choir of the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians.

The last day of the Congress had as its theme: *“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord (Lk. 1:38)”* and there was a sharing on the acceptance of God’s will in Mary’s life and in our lives; **the symbols of the day were the ‘steps’ of Jesus and Mary.**

The Lectio Divina was on the same theme, emphasising the importance of saying ‘Yes’ to God, followed by the action of getting up, setting out and hurrying to meet others who need our help, putting the needs of others first, just as the Blessed Virgin

Mary did when she went to visit Elizabeth. The message was: *‘Are we ready to go out and serve? Where do you want to start?’*

The keynote speaker, Professor Clement Majawa, spoke on **‘Accepting God’s will in our lives’**, emphasising the need to be informed, formed and transformed by the truths of the Bible.

In the concluding Mass, Fr. Simon Asira Lipuku recalled Don Bosco’s deep devotion to Mary Help of Christians. Fr. Alejandro Guevara, for his part, thanked everyone for the organisation and urged them to carry on Don Bosco’s dream.

Papua Nuova Guinea – ADMA Youth Camp 2023

Con il tema della Strenna 2023 del Rettor Maggiore “COME LIEVITO NELLA FAMIGLIA UMANA DI OGGI. La dimensione laicale della famiglia di Don Bosco”, si è svolto dal 26 al 28 maggio il campo dell’Associazione di Maria Ausiliatrice (ADMA) - Giovani 2023.

With the theme of the Strenna 2023 of the Rector Major, “AS LIEVITO IN TODAY’S HUMAN FAMILY, the lay dimension of Don Bosco’s family”, the youth camp of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA), took place from 26th to 28th May 2023.

Originally called *‘300 young people for Mary’*, the group was founded in 2008 by the late Fr. Valeriano Barbero, a Salesian missionary pioneer in Papua New Guinea, today the group has evolved into the current **‘ADMA youth’**.

The event was attended by the Catholic schools of Port Moresby with **268 people including students and animators.**

The first session was led by Fr. Gregorio Bicomong, Superior of the Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands Vice Province (PGS), who urged the young people to act as a leaven in their families and communities, applying the Church’s social teachings and becoming agents of social change.

The second session was led by Salesian Cooperator Sheryll Extra-Isoaimo, who explored the Rector



Major’s Strenna 2023 from the perspective of a laywoman.

After the group sharing, each school was asked to develop its own project to animate the school Marian group and raise awareness in the neighbouring community. In order to promote devotion to Mary Help of Christians, the participants then had the opportunity to visit the Marian exhibition set up in the Shrine, organised by the PGS Vice Province.

South Mexico – Electing ADMA Congress

In the structure of the **Casa del Hombre Nuevo**, in **Tlazala**, State of Mexico, the **Congress** was held to elect the new council that would animate the province of Our Lady of Guadalupe, South Mexico, for the period 2023-2027.

Urbano Rodríguez Higareda SDB and Sister Luz María Martínez FMA were present. Martha Angélica Nieto Reyes, the Provincial President for the period 2019-2023, convened the meeting as part of the activities planned for the renewal of the Provincial Council of ADMA Mexico South.

The day began with the arrival of representatives from the regions of Michoacán, Puebla, Chiapas, Estado de México, Mexico City and Hidalgo, who brought together the 17 ADMA centres of the province.

The election of the new Provincial Council took place in an atmosphere of festivity and great spirituality, with moments of common prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist, Songs to the Holy Spirit, the Procession with the Virgin Mary, a presentation of Salesian holiness and the causes of ADMA, as well as a moment of confession by Fr. Efrén Sanchez SDB and Fr. Hugo Herrera SDB.

During the second day of the congress, there was the presentation of Fr. Juan Aarón Cerezo, Sdb,



on the theme *'Like Mary, dwelling place of the Holy Spirit'* which offered the participants a very useful formative opportunity, followed by moments of relaxation and sharing among the ADMA members present.

In the presence of Ignacio Ocampo SDB and Sister Margarita Chavarría FMA, the election of the new Provincial Council was carried out. The elected members are as follows: Alejandro Gómez, ADMA Juvenil; CEJUSA Coacalco, President; Jaqueline Martínez Laura Vicuña Coacalco, Vice president; Nelly Maritza Jaramillo ADMA Instituto Don Bosco CDMX, Treasurer; María Concepción Carranco ADMA Laura Vicuña Coacalco, Secretary; Andrea Hernández ADMA María Auxiliadora Ocozocoautla Chiapas, Councillor for Formation; Ángel Ramón Medellín ADMA Juvenil CEJUSA Coacalco, Councillor for Communication. We offer our prayers for them.



I will give you the
TEACHER
 IX Congress of Mary Help of Christians

Fatima 29 August - 1 September 2024

Registration from 24 September 2023

www.mariaauxiliadora2024.pt

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.