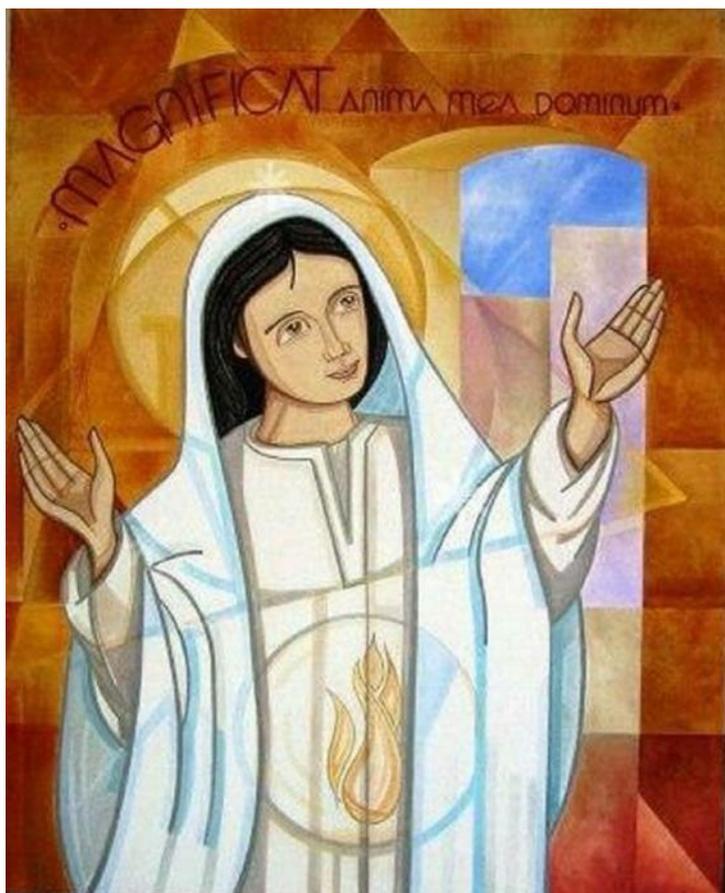




MARY URGES US TO PRAY WITH HER FOR NEW LIFE



Our Lady prays for us in this troubled, turbulent time, where there is often no peace in our hearts. **Mary not only prays for us, but prays with us** for a new life, for new times.

We must change in our hearts. God gave us freedom, but the world wants to take it away ... Where is the Spirit? Life is not just about eating, drinking, sleeping and working. We often say that we are Christians, but we do not have the courage to witness to what we believe. We are surrounded by a worldly, earthly life, devoid of hope and the desire for eternity to the point that we have fallen in love with and become attached to this worldly life. It seems that life is all about fun, eating and drinking. We forget that our life is also spirit.

Let us return to God and his Commandments, because if we have God and live his Commandments, the Holy Spirit will work in us and change us so that we will feel the need to bear witness. With our testimony we can change the face of the earth which is in great need of renewal not only spiritually, but also morally and physically. In fact, if we begin to belong to God,

we will respect the Commandments of God, and we will also respect the nature created by God and stop polluting it. If we return to God and his commandments, we will have a better life, new families and a renewed society.

As Christians and especially as devotees of Mary Help of Christians we are called to be prayer for those who do not pray, to be joy for those who do not see a way forward, who have no hope and live in disquiet. We are called to bring light into darkness.

Let us pray and ask for the help and protection of the saints to enable us to desire heaven and heavenly realities. Let us read the lives of the saints and imitate the example of their virtuous lives. We can ask for the help of the Holy Spirit: "Come Holy Spirit and give us strength to be witnesses, the strength to be renewed and to lead a new life". We pray for holy guides and holy priests. We also pray for the leaders of our countries, for politicians and for rulers.

Mary Help of Christians is with us. She walks with us, protects us and blesses us.

*Renato Valera, President
Fr Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Spiritual Animator*

Formative Journey 2019-2020
Anchored to the two columns: Jesus the Eucharist and Mary Immaculate-Helper

Luis Fernando Álvarez González, sdb

9. Come, let us adore him! - First part

The Tabernacle or "Eucharistic Tower" was introduced in the Gothic cathedrals at the time when Eucharistic devotion was beginning to develop. In the tabernacle the Eucharistic bread is kept and adored, the bread which at the consecration was transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The tabernacle is, therefore, the place par excellence of the presence of the mystery of the Eucharistic Lord. All the work of redemption that the Father accomplished through the Son is contained in the Eucharist. It is a perennial manifestation of his love and the ongoing work of salvation down through the centuries and throughout the world. The tabernacle was usually surrounded by adoring angels, witnesses of the presence of God. They recall the profound link between the earthly liturgy and the liturgy that is celebrated eternally in heaven.

History of Salvation

What is the background of the manifestation of grace, love and redemption? The background of the revelation of God's saving love for mankind is the drama of the history of humanity and of the whole universe which is in need of salvation because of original sin. Sin brought night and death into the world. In the history of salvation **night** means many different things:

- * when there was nothing, God created light with the first act of creation (Gen 1,1-5).
- * by night, God made the covenant with Abraham (Gen 15,1-21)
- * by night, Jacob struggled with God (Gen 32,23-33)
- * by night, Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt
- * in the middle of the night, the Word leapt from heaven to earth (cf. Sap 18,15);
- * by night, the Son of God was born as man
- * "On the night he was betrayed, he took the bread."
- * by night, he rose from the dead.

As it says in the Gospel of John (1,5), "light shines in the darkness and darkness could not overpower it." Therefore, every believer who prays before the Blessed Sacrament can be confirmed constantly that in his life there is nothing so black, sinful or dramatic that cannot be penetrated by the love of God, which dissipates the darkness, purifies the heart and converts from sin by forgiveness. Probably because of this mysterious tension between gold as absolute light and darkness and black which cannot overpower it, this colour combination is characterized by a particular beauty.

[Learn more about some of the biblical texts mentioned.](#)

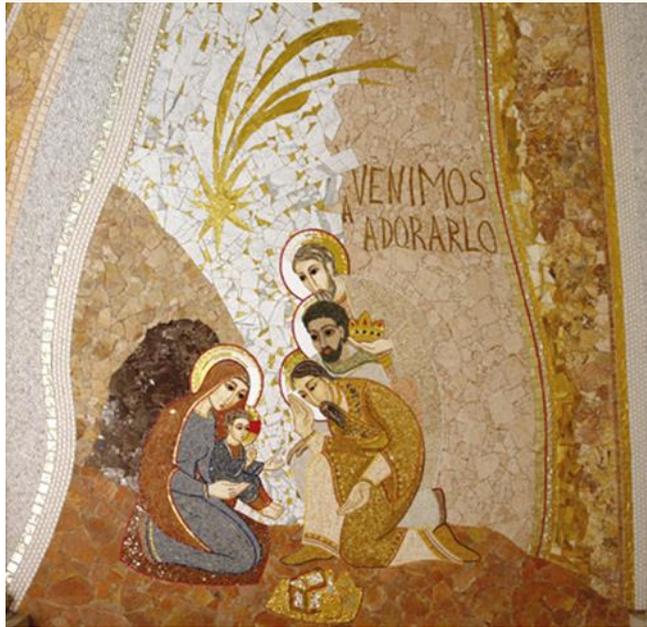
Which nights need to be enlightened?

The paper can be read at the following site:

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"They fell down and worshipped him"

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: `And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child,

and when you have found him bring me word, **that I too may come and worship him.**" When they had heard the king, they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and **they fell down and worshipped him.** Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way." (Mt 2,1-12)

The scene of the adoration of the Magi reminds us that in adoration we come into the real presence of the mystery of God in Christ, specifically in the Eucharist. The Magi remind us that their search for God ended with the discovery of a face. The Magi studied and searched through the stars, but their search reveals a clear and humble approach. At a certain moment they discover that they must go to Jerusalem and combine their search with divine revelation. In Jerusalem they do not introduce themselves with pride, but with absolute docility and openness. When they receive the information they need, they leave immediately to follow it. Eventually they discover that behind the stars there is not just something, as they had guessed, but Someone, a person with a precise face. When they combine their investigations with God's revelation, they arrive in Bethlehem, where they find a virgin who points out a child who is true God. Later they offer him their gifts, because the true recognition of the Other demands a concrete gesture. And they made a real gesture: first by their journey and then in adoration. In Jerusalem, on the other hand, the great experts of Scripture, who had shown the Magi where to go, remained at home: their knowledge was of no use to them except as a matter of pride. There is a knowledge that does not move you and does not make you undertake a journey perfectly compatible with what you are or what you want to be. The three kings reveal that there is another knowledge that moves people, makes you listen, ask, search, walk and find. This is the kind of knowledge that leads to salvation. The former will eventually reveal itself as the intelligence of the proud who until the end of the gospel will not be able to accept the Messiah. We too are called in adoration to insert ourselves in the path of the great wise seekers from the East.

Do you want to be in the presence of Jesus as a true and sincere worshipper?

"Everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live "

*"From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and **they bit the people**, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and **everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.**" So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live."*

(Num. 21.4-9).



In the episode of Moses and the bronze serpent in the desert, all who were bitten by a serpent and looked at the bronze serpent were healed. Both John (cf. Jn 3:14) and Paul (cf. 1 Cor 10:9) use this image. The man or woman who contemplates the bronze serpent in an attitude of prayer, although bitten by the serpent, remains unharmed. It means that by looking at Christ raised on the cross, like the serpent that Moses raised in the desert, with determination we can overcome and drive away the insidious serpent. The union with Christ that occurs so radically in the Eucharist makes the person safe from the evil of the world and the insinuations of the devil. In an era in which Christians must live so deeply immersed in the world and submerged by it, and therefore continually surrounded by the temptations of evil, one must know how to be in the world without being part of the world, one must be in the midst of evil but not get involved in the evil. The supreme evil is death that ends everything that exists, but whoever eats the Body of Christ and drinks his Blood, even if he dies, will live forever. (cf. Jn 6:51).

Can you keep your gaze fixed on Jesus?

What poisonous bites do you need to be cured of?

"He went to him"

*Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, **he was moved with pity**. **He went to him** and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "**The one who showed him mercy.**" Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (Lk 10,30-37).*

When Christ took on a human body, he took on our wounded and sick humanity, destined for death. He is like a good Samaritan who bends over our beaten humanity, robbed and half-dead, and heals it. At

the same time, the Eucharist strengthens in us the new life received in baptism, making us a living part of the Body of Christ. Thus, having in us the life of Christ, a life that is no longer linked to the blood of our parents, but to the blood of Christ, we become capable of making the same gestures of Christ and of **living not only according to Christ, but in Christ**. Therefore, **the Eucharist makes us capable of charity**. Through us can pass that one love with which Christ loved us and which then takes place in the same scene of the Samaritan passes through us: "Everything you did to one of these little ones, you did it to me" (cf. Mt 25,40). Anyone who lives in love is snatched from death and kept in Christ for the resurrection, because love lasts forever. Thus, the Eucharist is the medicine of immortality because it shows us the unity of the two tables, that of the Eucharist and that of charity.

Do you experience the compassion of Christ the Good Samaritan?

Do you have compassion for those who are injured in body and soul?

Do you live the Eucharist as the pledge of immortality and eternal life?

Don Bosco apostle of frequent communion and the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

- Don Bosco missed no opportunity to recommend that we never omit the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament even if it is very brief, provided it is constant.
- There is nothing that the devil fears more than these two practices: a good communion and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
- The Sacred Tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is preserved in our churches is the source of every blessing and every grace. He is present in our churches and he is among us precisely to comfort us in our needs. Believe also, my dear children, anyone who is devoted to the Blessed Sacrament has a sure pledge of eternal salvation.
- The veneration of the Blessed Sacrament and devotion to the Blessed Virgin are two anchors for the health of our miserable humanity.
- I want you to fly on two spiritual wings. The first wing is devotion to the Blessed Virgin, the other is devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.
- Recommend warmly devotion to Mary Help of Christians and the Blessed Sacrament.
- Propose devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Always have in your mind the thought of God's love in the Holy Eucharist.
- If you can do nothing else, go before the Tabernacle if only to say an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. This is enough to make us strong against temptations, If you who have faith, make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, make your meditation every day, provided it is not for a worldly end, I tell you, it is impossible for you to sin.
- Believe also, my dear children, everyone who is devoted to the Blessed Sacrament going frequently to communion and visiting Jesus Christ in the Tabernacle, has a sure pledge of eternal salvation.

FAMILY CHRONICLE

NEW WORLD DELEGATE FOR THE SALESIAN FAMILY FR JOAN LUÍS PLAYÀ



On 8 May 2020, the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, publicly thanked Fr Eusebio Muñoz for his service for six years as Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family and announced his appointment as Director and Procurator of the Salesian Mission Office in Madrid, Spain. In a letter sent to the Salesian Family, whom he has served in recent years, Fr Muñoz thanked all the groups, and the leaders and superiors of the branches of the Salesian Family.

At the same time, the Rector Major announced the appointment of Fr Joan Luís Playà as the new World Delegate for the

Salesian Family. Born in Terrassa (Barcelona) in 1947, a former pupil of the Salesian House in Terrassa, he joined the Salesians in 1966 and was ordained priest in 1977. He studied pedagogy, adult education, pastoral theology and spiritual theology, and graduated in Moral Theology from the Faculty of Theology in Barcelona. He was called by the Rector Major to the headquarters in Rome from 2015 to 2020, as Central Assistant of the Volunteers of Don Bosco (VDB) and of the Volunteers with Don Bosco (CDB). Along with his new responsibility he will continue to be the central assistant of the VDB and CDB.

NOVENA TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS 2020

This year the traditional novena of Mary Help of Christians, from 15 to 23 May, took on a very special meaning



given the health emergency caused by the spread of the Coronavirus, which for some months has been plaguing the whole of humanity. The novena is inspired by the Marian antiphon that runs along the entire Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin, between the capitals of the pillars and the cornice, written in capital letters.

"SANCTA MARIA, succurre miseris, iuva pusillanimes, refove flebiles, ora pro populo, interveni pro clero, intercedes pro devoto femineo sexu, sentiant omnes peccatores tuum iuvamen, quicumque tuum sanctum implorant auxilium" ("Holy Mary, come to the help of the helpless, strengthen the fainthearted, comfort the sorrowful, pray for the people, intervene on behalf of the clergy, and intercede for all holy women consecrated to God. May all sinners and all who implore your holy feel the power of your assistance.")

Every day, after a brief comment on each invocation, there was a presentation of a figure of holiness of our Salesian Family who lived at the time of an epidemic (Don Bosco, Mamma Margherita, the young Michael Rua, St Maria Domenica Mazzarello, Blessed Artemide Zatti, Venerable Andrea Beltrami, and Blessed Maria Troncatti). A practice for the day was then given. The service ended with the Act of Special Entrustment to Mary Help of Christians, calling on all to imitate Don Bosco by renewing their trust in Mary Most Holy, in this hour of great trial and suffering, but also of solidarity, faith and hope. The texts were prepared by Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, Spiritual Animator of ADMA and Postulator General.

MAY 24, 2020 - FEAST OF MARY OUR HELP IN TIME OF CRISIS



"Our Lady of difficult times": that was the title given by the Rector Major Fr Ángel Fernández Artime on Sunday 24 May in the homily he gave during the young people's Mass for the Feast of Mary Help of Christians in the Basilica in Valdocco, Turin. These are difficult times for the whole of humanity, affected in different ways but united by the coronavirus pandemic. The theme of trust in God takes on new meaning when "we touch the precariousness of the human condition, and discover treasures contained in vessels of clay".

There were no despairing faces but many pleading faces among the faithful who attended the Basilica and courtyards of Valdocco that day. Many went to confession, sometimes with tears but also a lot of hope, as people recognized in Mary the woman who shared human pain and who helped to overcome it in the sacrifice of the Son.

The evening Rosary had contributions from Rome and Central America, to indicate the universality of the Salesian Family. The first contribution was from Mother Yvonne Reungoat, Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. This was certainly more than just a symbolic passage. It indicated the theme of this celebration, which this year had to do without the "beautiful grand procession", as was said by the representatives of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) who led the last decade of the Rosary.

ASSOCIAZIONE DE' DIVOTI DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE (1869) - CRITICAL EDITION BY DON BRUNO BORDIGNON, SDB

The two-year period 1868-69 almost certainly represented the most important and fruitful period for Don Bosco's development and propagation of devotion to Our Lady under the title of "Help of Christians". In 1868 he published a booklet entitled *Maraviglie della Madre di Dio invocata sotto il titolo di Maria Ausiliatrice*

(The marvels of the Mother of God invoked under the title of Mary Help of Christians). It includes a description of the plan, construction and consecration of the church of Mary Help of Christians, as well as "the proof" that Mary is the help of Christians.

In 1868 also, the volume *Remembrances of a solemnity in honour of Mary Help of Christians* was published. In it there is a description of the ceremony of consecration of the Temple of Mary Help of Christians in Valdocco. Then in 1869 Don Bosco published the article that interests us here, namely **The Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians canonically erected in the church dedicated to her in Turin**. The subtitle specifies that there is also a *brief history of this title*, by Don Bosco himself.

"In the church in Turin dedicated to Mary Help of Christians, with the authorization of the Archbishop of Turin, an association of her devotees is canonically established. Its aim is to promote the glories of the divine Mother of the Saviour, to merit her protection in life and particularly at the point of death. Two special means are proposed:



spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament." These are the opening lines of the Regulations written by Don Bosco on the occasion of the erection of the Association of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians, which he had founded. It was approved by the Archbishop of Turin, Alessandro Riccardi, on 18 April 1869, and last year celebrated the 150th anniversary of its foundation.

This is confirmed by Fr Peter Braido: "Don Bosco was a born organizer. **He did not leave the veneration of Mary Help of Christians to spontaneous devotion alone.** He gave stability to the association that took her name. The direct witnesses saw in the founding of this association one of the most cherished initiatives of Don Bosco and the one of greatest import after the founding of the two religious congregations and the Association of Cooperators. He himself traced its origins in the issue of the Association of the Devotees of Mary Help of Christians canonically erected in the Church dedicated to her in Turin with historical information on this title by the priest John Bosco." (P. BRAIDO, Don Bosco priest of the young in the century of liberties, LAS, Rome 2003).

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of this second group of the Salesian Family, prof. Bruno Bordignon, Salesian of Don Bosco and scholar of Salesian history, produced a critical edition of the booklet, published by Saint John Bosco to promote the Association of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians, as a tool for the defence and growth of faith in the Christian people. This critical edition bears the mark of great passion and competence.

This publication further confirms the inseparable link between Don Bosco and devotion to Mary Help of Christians, to the point that for the Salesians it will be an expression of charismatic fidelity; for the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, a guarantee of being "a living monument to the Help of Christians" with their lives; and for all the devotees of ADMA an assurance that they are living an ecclesial devotion, proper to Salesian spirituality, where Our Lady is always a sure support.

(From the Presentation by Mr. Renato Valera, President of ADMA, and Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, SDB, Spiritual Animator of ADMA - *Editrice Elledici, 188 pages*).

CROATIA - A NEW ADMA GROUP FOUNDED

Zagreb, Croatia - May 2020 - On 24 May, on the occasion of the feast of Mary Help of Christians, a new ADMA group was set up in the Salesian parish of Mary Help of Christians in Zagreb-Knežija, in the presence of the Provincial, Fr Tihomir Šutalo. The president of the group is Mr Oto Horvat and the spiritual animator is the Rector and Parish Priest, Fr Ivan Šibalić.

