

## MARY INVITES US TO EXPERIENCE THE SANCTITY OF FORGIVENESS



Dear Friends, in a world marked by so much violence, cruelty and corruption, **the Christian vocation to holiness finds its highest form in forgiveness and in the power of reconciliation.** Mary Most Holy invites us her children to experience joy in forgiveness, in prayer and in holiness. Forgiveness is the highest form of love and the greatest manifestation of love. Forgiveness is first of all a gift that we receive from God and we have much more power to forgive when we think how much God has forgiven us, how much his love and mercy touch us.

Today **the most serious and most terrible wounds in hearts and souls occur in families** that quarrel and break up, fracturing the dearest bonds. These wounds are so deep that it is difficult to forgive and rebuild torn relationships. In families there must be holiness, through the exercise of forgiveness which is fundamental in keeping them united. There must be holiness in families because if there is no holiness it is difficult to carry on the marital covenant and educational responsibilities. How often we must forgive! Between husband and wife, between parents and children, between brothers and sisters, and with everyone. But if there is holiness, everything takes on another meaning. Because holiness is an invitation to prayer, it is an invitation to live with God and in God.

**There is no future for the world without love and holiness.** This is the real reason why the world may not have a future ... if there is love and above all if there is holiness, we begin to respect life and to respect the planet we live on ... Our Lady it is calling for a global change in the world: not just the change that tells us to go and collect the plastic that is causing pollution, but a change of heart. When there is a change of heart, that plastic will no longer exist, because we will have responsibility in the heart and, since this planet in which we live is a holy land, we will respect it, love it and protect it. Our Lady wants this. **Lent** which we have started is also a strong invitation to conversion of heart, to purification of life, and to forgiveness and reconciliation.

We would also like to invite all our ADMA groups to accompany with prayer the **28th General**

**Chapter of the Salesians, held in Valdocco, Turin from 16 February to 4 April 2020, on the theme: "What kind of Salesians for the young people of today?".** The fundamental objective of the theme of GC28 is to help the whole Congregation to deepen, as far as possible, what is and what should be *the profile of the Salesian capable of responding to today's young people*, to all young people but especially the poorest and most in need, those who are cast aside, the most fragile and those deprived of fundamental rights. And this *in an increasingly complex world that is experiencing rapid change*. The theme of GC28 is divided into three parts: priority of the Salesian mission among today's young people; profile of the Salesian for today's young people; together with the laity in mission and formation.

*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*

5. The bread of the Eucharist - Part One



*So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further, but they constrained him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished*

*out of their sight. (Lk 24,28-31).*

### The origin of the Eucharistic ritual

We have emphasized the fact that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was to be betrayed, commanded his disciples, "Do this". He did not say, "Do what you want". And he ordered them to do it "in memory of me", not "as it seems best to you." And we have said that his mandate gave rise to a basic ritual different from that of the supper on Holy Thursday and that of the Jewish Passover meal. This ritual is already found after the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a true Christian liturgical form in the story of the disciples of Emmaus (Luke 24, 25.31). We spoke of rites, structure, ceremonies and signs; in short, of the form of the Eucharist. Now this question, which apparently is only a matter of ceremonies, is, however, the best way to get to the origin, that is, the moment in which we pass from the last Supper of Jesus to the Church's Eucharist. Indeed, in this theme of origin "what is at stake is the fundamental orientation needed to understand the Eucharist itself". Are you resolved to study in depth the parts of the Eucharistic celebration in order to have a more active and more aware participation?

### The essential "form" of the Eucharist

The word "form" referring to the Eucharist was used for the first time in 1939 by the Italian-German priest and Professor, Romano Guardini (1885-1968). It is used to indicate the manner of the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist as a living form, that is, as the only way in which the essence of the Eucharist becomes visible. The "form" of the Eucharist means not just the set of liturgical rites of the Mass considered separately, but the form that guides and supports the whole set. As such, it is at the same time "the key to reaching the essence of the Eucharistic event." Therefore, the "form" of the Eucharist has a theological and spiritual dimension of great importance.

## Modality of the essential form of the Eucharist

We see the fundamental form of the Eucharist in Luke 24, 25-31: first of all listening with an enquiring attitude to Sacred Scripture, which is then explained and updated for the disciples of Emmaus by the Risen Lord; then the attentive listening, which begins to understand and leads up to the request to the Lord to remain. And finally, the Lord's response sharing the Bread with the disciples. He gives them the gift of his presence and, at the same time, disappears and sends his disciples out as his messengers. This form is so rich and significant, and at the same time so coherent and compact, that we can hardly talk about it using one single word.

This explains why it is not surprising that there are different ways of speaking about this essential form of the Eucharist. For some, the form of the "Sacrament of the Sacraments" is a banquet; for others, a sacrifice; and for others it is a Eucharist, a prayer of thanksgiving and offering: the Eucharistic prayer. But in all these ways the form of the Eucharist "means both the gift of Communion, in which the Lord makes himself food for us, and Jesus Christ's gift of himself in which his Trinitarian 'yes' to the Father culminates in his 'yes' on the cross, reconciling all of us with the Father in this "sacrifice". There is no contradiction between "food" and "sacrifice": in the new sacrifice of the Lord both aspects form an inseparable unity." Do you live the Eucharist as sacrifice, mystery and banquet?

## The Eucharist, source and nourishment of ADMA spirituality

This explains why the Eucharist, from its origins, has had many names: Lord's Supper, Breaking of Bread, Eucharist, Sacrament of Sacraments, Holy Mass, Holy Sacrifice, Memorial of the Lord, etc.

The ADMA Regulations propose the Eucharist together with devotion to Mary as a true column of the apostolic spirituality of ADMA. They do so in the knowledge that the Risen Christ himself is now our Bread of Life, our strength and food for the journey that leads us out to the ends of the earth. The members of ADMA remember the words of the Risen Jesus: "My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink" (Jn 6.55). Keeping in mind this truly unheard-of reality of the Eucharist as food that nourishes your pastoral charity and makes it grow, read the text of John 6,48-59 with all the attention and understanding you are capable of. Never doubt it: "the Lord gives himself bodily to us. That's why it's up to us to give a corporeal answer. And this means above all that the Eucharist must extend beyond the doors of the churches into the many forms of service to people and to the world."

The Charter of the Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family recalls that our Father Don Bosco "placed at the centre of his spiritual life and apostolic action a strong devotion to Jesus present in the Eucharist, the master of the house" (art. 24).

From the letter of the Rector Major for the 150th anniversary of ADMA: "Entrust, trust, smile"

## Anchored in the Eucharist and Mary

"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, with the aim of promoting the glories of the divine Mother of the Saviour, to win her protection in life and particularly at the moment of death. Two special means are proposed: spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin and veneration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

Thus begin the Regulations written by Don Bosco on the occasion of the erection of the Association of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians, founded and approved by the Archbishop of Turin, Alessandro Riccardi, on 18 April 1869 and of which the 150th anniversary of its foundation occurs.

It is significant that this anniversary coincides this year (2019) with Holy Thursday, to underline how devotion to the Eucharist is, together with devotion to the Immaculate Help of Christians, the founding

point for the spirituality and life of the Association. The reference is to the two pillars of the educational system and of Salesian spirituality. The Christ we find in the life of Don Bosco is predominantly Jesus living and present in the Eucharist, the Bread of life, the Son of Mary, Mother of God and of the Church. Don Bosco lived from this presence and in this presence. In the life of Don Bosco, the Eucharist as sacrifice and sacrament, the Eucharist as a source of nourishment and a real presence for our adoration, is strength and consolation, a source of peace and at the same time a fire of activity.

### **Mary invites to the heavenly banquet**

For Don Bosco, love for Mary and love for the Eucharist always go together. They are the two pillars that support the life and mission of the Church. Don Bosco's understanding of Mary is seen in a particular way in his dreams. Mary appears as the Lady or Queen who awaits young people at the end of the adventurous journey of life and invites them to take part in the heavenly banquet. Like a good hostess, Mary welcomes the guests, after having carefully prepared everything. The heavenly banquet, as well as the Eucharistic banquet which always anticipates it and prepares for it, is the place of perfect communion. Communion with God and among us is the ultimate goal of Christian worship. Jesus offers himself on the cross so that we may be readmitted to communion with the Father. He offers himself in bread so that we can be one with him. In the same way, the "devotees" of Mary Help of Christians, are invited to be participants in the Eucharistic celebration, offering their life, their joys and sorrows, so that communion may grow - in the family, in the workplace, and in the ecclesial community.

### **A family-friendly journey**

This is the experience born in ADMA, in the footsteps of Don Bosco. It is a challenge to live fully the call to be spouses and parents, brothers and sisters, finding time for daily prayer, dialogue, forgiveness and charity. In this way we are in harmony with the family style of loving-kindness of the Salesian charism, the style of the oratory, seeking, under the gaze of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, to live every moment, even the most difficult ones, in mutual charity and without losing hope. The most beautiful testimony is to see how the Eucharist and Mary Help of Christians really become pillars of life, points of reference in the difficulties of every day. The dream of the two columns of Don Bosco becomes the heart of the family's journey. This implies a love between spouses that is renewed every day, a spiritual growth as individuals and as families, formation for parents in the difficult task of education, a friendship between children that makes them capable of sharing the faith and witnessing it to others. Each family participates according to its possibilities. There is an invitation to cultivate participation in the life of the local Church by actively taking part in the activities of parishes or oratories. All this seems to me a beautiful way of expressing and developing, faithfully and with today's theological and ecclesial vision, what Don Bosco intended in his time.

**The paper can be read at the following site:**

**[www.admadonbosco.org](http://www.admadonbosco.org)**

**For every communication you can contact**

**the following email address: [pcameroni@sdb.org](mailto:pcameroni@sdb.org)**

## FAMILY CHRONICLE

### 38TH SALESIAN FAMILY SPIRITUALITY DAYS: CONCRETENESS, COURAGE AND COMMITMENT

The traditional Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family took place in Valdocco, Turin from 16 to 19 January 2020. Turin for the 38<sup>th</sup> time. The event was attended by about 400 representatives of 16 of the 32 groups of the Salesian Family, from 43 countries around



the world. To continue to grow as the Family of Don Bosco; to implement the "politics of the Our Father" in the various situations each with their own characteristic features and to give visibility to the good that is being accomplished - these are the three concluding messages given by Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, Rector Major of the Salesians and centre of unity of the Salesian Family, at the end of the 38<sup>th</sup> Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family.

The programme of common activities provided ample time for listening to experiences and good practices of Christian, social and political commitment:

- The Bishop of Majorca (Spain), Monsignor Sebastia Taltavull Anglada, a Salesian past pupil, spoke of the committed Youth Ministry carried out in his diocese.
- The young people of the Salesian oratory of Aleppo (Syria) talked about the activities carried out with courage and joy, even during the war.
- Salesian Cooperators and Past Pupils of Don Bosco of Italy presented the "School of formation for socio-political commitment" inspired by Blessed Alberto Marvelli.
- Emma Ciccarelli, Salesian Cooperator, shared her commitment in the Family Commission of the Italian Episcopal Conference.
- Joaquin Martin Calleja, Salesian Cooperator, began by describing his experience in a Vocational Training Centre and his work with young people at risk, and went on to speak about the spirituality of the educator.
- Jorge Santos, Past Pupil, retired judge in Portugal, testified about his commitment to train judges in African countries.
- Nico Lotta, President of the Salesian NGO VIS, recounted the tough battle against trafficking in human beings.
- Past Pupils of the FMA of Cuneo illustrated their oratorian commitment, where many young people are becoming animators of the younger generations.

In addition to reports and round-table discussions, there were moments of shared spirituality and celebration, in the typical Salesian spirit. For the group work, participants were divided into 23 language groups. They shared their views on the needs identified to live the "politics of the Our Father", on how to find the right balance between spirituality and commitment, between a good Christian and an honest citizen, on concrete answers to the current needs of young people, how to give witness as credible believers and how to work in unity, in communities, as well as in groups of the Salesian Family.



Other resources are accessible on the website <https://salesianfamilydays.com/> and on ANSFlickr. ADMA was represented by the Primary ADMA Council and over 30 members from Italy, Spain, the Philippines and India.

## VIETNAM - SALESIAN FAMILY DAY OF THE NORTH VIETNAM SALESIAN DELEGATION

Hanoi, Vietnam - January 2020 - On 8 January, to mark the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Rat, the Salesian Delegation of North Vietnam celebrated the Day of the Salesian Family (SF). During the event, the participants, representatives of various SF groups, attended the presentation of the Rector Major's Strenna 2020 on the theme "Good Christians and Honest Citizens", given by Fr Thomas Aquinas Tran Quoc Tuan, Delegate of North Vietnam. Fr John Baptist Tran Van Hao, Delegate for the SF of the North, spoke about the various groups that make up the SF, in particular ADMA, recently established in North Vietnam.



## RWANDA - FEAST OF THE RECTOR MAJOR'S STRENNNA



The Salesian Vice-Province of Africa Great Lakes (AGL), celebrated the feast of the Strenna of the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, on 4 January. All the groups of the Salesian Family took part. Fr Pierre Célestin Ngoboka, Superior of the AGL Vice-Province, presided at the Eucharistic celebration. In his homily he commented on the Strenna of the Rector Major "Good Christians and Honest Citizens", inviting members of the Salesian Family to be creative in the field of education and to face the challenges in the world of young people, recipients of Salesian activity. **The 150th anniversary of the foundation of ADMA was also celebrated on this occasion.**

## MERURI (BRAZIL) - ADMA GROUP

On the occasion of his visit to Meruri for the closure of the diocesan investigation of the cause of martyrdom of the servants of God Rodolfo Lunkenbein, a Salesian missionary, and Simão, a Bororo Indian, killed in hatred for the faith on 15 July 1976, Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, met the local ADMA group and shared with them a moment of formation and fraternity. This group consists of about 20 people who perform various tasks on behalf of the mission. It is a group that is very dear to the Rector Major who has spoken of them on several occasions.



## EIGHTH NOTEBOOK OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

This volume of the Notebooks of Mary Help of Christians records many graces that marked the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) by Saint John Bosco and approved by the Archbishop of Turin, Alessandro Riccardi, on April 18, 1869. Among them are two contributions that are particularly significant from both a historical and charismatic point of view. The first is the booklet published by Don Bosco himself in 1869: *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*, introduced by Prof. Bruno Bordinon.

The second contribution is the letter addressed on 18 April 2019 by the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, to the Salesians and to the whole Salesian Family entitled: "Entrust, trust, smile!". With this letter Don Artime wishes to confirm and relaunch the Marian dimension of the Salesian charism.

By following these notes, we will remain faithful to the road travelled by Don Bosco. Devotion to the Mother of God characterized all his spirituality and his pastoral and educative action.

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of ADMA, the second group of the Salesian Family, these texts confirm the great and inseparable bond between Don Bosco and devotion to Mary Help of Christians. For the Salesians they are an invitation to live their vocation with charismatic fidelity. For the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, they are the guarantee of being "a living monument to the Help of Christians" by their lives. For all the devotees of Mary Help of Christians and for all the groups and members of the Salesian Family, they are an assurance that they are practising an ecclesial devotion, typical of Salesian spirituality, where the Mother is always a sure support.



PIERLUIGI CAMERONI  
(a cura di)

## 1869-2019: 150° di fondazione dell'ADMA

GIOVANNI BOSCO  
Associazione de' Divoti  
di Maria Ausiliatrice

ÁNGEL FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME  
Affida, confida, sorridi!

