

MONTHLY MESSAGE

n. 10 – 2019

Turin - Valdocco 24 October



MARY EXHORTS US TO PRAY AND MEDITATE ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY



With the foundation of ADMA, Don Bosco wanted to defend and spread the faith among the people of God. Popular expression of faith is the prayer of the Rosary that Our Lady asks for in her apparitions and that Don Bosco promoted among the boys of the oratory and among her sons and daughters. Our Lady wants the Rosary to become part of our life, because in our life we too go through joys and sorrows. Our Lady wants to change our hearts, she wants us to experience the faith and love of God through her presence. Precisely because the Rosary tells us about the mysteries of the life of Jesus, it is the manifestation of his mission, of his work of salvation, and we in the Rosary somehow relive the life of Jesus. **Our Lady leads us to understand that our life is in God.** If we are with God, our life has meaning. Without God it has no meaning, like a leaf detached from the plant. Our Lady wants the Rosary to become our life: **not just to pray, but to live the Rosary.** Today we Christians are lukewarm. Our Lady wants us to become more radical, more decisive.

Our life is a mystery until we place it into God's hands. Without faith our life is inexplicable, it is full of questions to which we cannot give an answer. Instead, through faith we understand why we are in the world, why we come from God and return to Him. Our daily life, our sacrifices, our joys, our pains, make sense if we unite them to the life of Jesus, to his pains and to his Easter. Those who do not believe have a desperate and poor life. Our Lady asks us to bear witness today to the light of faith at a time when there is so much disbelief and many live without God, without hope, without the light that illumines life.

God surrounds us with the presence of Mary, through her apparitions, her messages, the signs of her maternal love. Our Lady radiates her presence of light with her maternal love over the whole earth, over all hearts, over all humanity. There is nothing more beautiful than to feel loved, embraced and wrapped by Our Lady's love. Just as when a person in love feels safe because there is someone who protects, so, when we know that Our Lady is with us and protects us under her mantle, we can only rejoice.

Dear friends, the VIII International Congress of Mary Help of Christians (Buenos Aires, November 7-10) is approaching. We ask all the members and groups of ADMA in the world to join in a great novena to Mary Help of Christians from 24 October to 1 November, Solemnity of All Saints, to ask for special graces for this event of the Salesian Family.

*Mrs Renato Valera, President
Don 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

2. "Do this in memory of me!" - Second part



When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "**Were not our hearts burning within us** while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been **made known to them in the breaking of the bread.** (Luke 24, 30-35)

"He explained the scriptures to us."

Luke concludes Emmaus' account with the following commentary by the two disciples: "Didn't our hearts burn while he was talking to us along the way, *when he explained the Scriptures to us?* In our Masses we see a reader who goes up to the ambo, so that we all see and listen well; he opens for us the Book of Scriptures (lectionary) and reads aloud, clearly and slowly. Then the president proclaims a page of the Gospels, which we welcome in silence, "in our hearts", like Mary, and then exhorts us to live the Word and put it into practice, explaining how, what we have just heard is realized today, both in celebration and in life.

The celebration of the Word is not a mere preparation for the Eucharist. It is the risen Christ in person who challenges us with his Word of life and asks from us a confession of faith (the Creed) and a commitment to life. This requires a special sensitivity from us, so that the Word may be accepted in the heart and produce abundant fruit. The rite of making the sign of the cross on our forehead, mouth and chest expresses our intention to welcome the Word of God in our way of thinking and speaking in order to be builders of a new world according to God's plan. How do you listen to and interiorize the Word of God that is proclaimed?

"They recognized him in breaking the bread."

The synoptic gospels certify that Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples. This same pattern is repeated by the Church. The Eucharistic liturgy begins with the presentation of the offerings accompanied by the processional chant: the faithful carry the bread and wine in procession, a sign of their life offered in a daily spiritual sacrifice. From the beginning, Christians also present gifts and money to share with the poor (collection of offerings), inspired by the example of Christ who became poor to make us rich. On these gifts the priest will pronounce, at the moment of the Eucharistic prayer, the words of Christ: "This is my Body, this is the chalice of my Blood". In this way the union of the one sacrifice of Christ, present in the sacrament, and the sacrifice of the Church are realized. With him also the Church offers herself entirely in her members. Do you bring joys and sorrows, struggles and hopes to the Eucharist?

For this reason, **the Eucharistic prayer is the culminating moment of the celebration.** The meaning of this prayer is that the whole assembly be united with Christ in the recognition of the wonders of the Father and in the offering of the sacrifice. There are different versions of the Eucharistic Prayer. It is a moment of intense interior participation: it is a matter of listening and praying (without forgetting the Holy One, the acclamations, the great final Amen). On the other hand, this is the **true moment of thanksgiving** for all that the Lord has done in our personal life.

After the Eucharistic prayer, which transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, the faithful return to the altar in procession and sing the song of communion, to gather the "Eucharistic" offerings: the Body and Blood of Christ delivered "for the life of the world". The Church prefers communion under the two consecrated species in that same celebration, because it expresses better the Paschal character of the Eucharist and recalls what Jesus did on the eve of his passion: "He took the bread ... and took the chalice full of wine".

In the assembly we are not "strangers and silent spectators", but protagonists, since all the baptized and who received confirmation, participate in the one priesthood of Christ in the complementarity of the different functions and ministries: president, readers, soloists, those who present the offerings, commentator, psalmist, choir and the entire people, with its indispensable "Amen". How important that Amen is! It is the expression of the common priesthood of the people of God that is priestly in each and every one of its members.

The fruit of the Eucharist is union with Christ and the unity of his Body, which is the Church. It is also sharing the life and destiny of Christ and giving one's whole life to the mission without limits or reservations. The preparatory rites for communion dispose us to obtain these fruits: the 'Our Father', the exchange of peace and the breaking of bread.

From the Eucharist to life

Each Eucharist ends with the sending ("missa" in Latin) of the assembly, so that every Christian can do in life what he celebrated in the sacrament. The two disciples of Emmaus, after recognizing the Lord, got up "without delay" to go and communicate what they had seen and heard. The assembly is dissolved. Its function is not to last, but to witness and build the Kingdom. Do you live what you celebrate?

Before leaving, the Church remembers the sick and the infirm, and keeps for them in the tabernacle the Bread of Life, to take it home. In front of the tabernacle the celebration of the Eucharist is prolonged with the adoration and meditation of this inexhaustible mystery, because the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is permanent. Because He gives Himself to us, He does so forever and without limits. Between the celebrated Eucharist (sacramental liturgy) and the adored Eucharist (liturgy of the heart, prayer) there is a very close bond, which in Salesian spirituality was always very much alive (remember the ecstasy of the young Dominic Savio in the Church of Saint Francis de Sales).

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

According to a dynamic of communion

The process of the renewal of ADMA in these years has taken place in profound harmony with that of the universal Church, which has dedicated two Synods of Bishops to the family and one to young people.

At the end of the Synods on the Family the Pope remarked: «The experience has made those taking part in the Synod aware of the importance of a **synodal form of the Church for the proclamation and the transmission of the faith**. The participation of the young has contributed to a "re-awakening" of synodality which is a constitutive dimension of the Church [...]. As Saint John Chrysostom says, "Church and Synod are synonymous" - inasmuch as the Church is nothing other than the "journeying together" of God's flock along the paths of history towards the encounter with Christ the Lord.»

This synodal dimension was very strongly reaffirmed in the Final Document of the Synod of Bishops on young people as the right way of being and of acting today for the Church: «Synodality characterizes both the life and the mission of the Church, which is the People of God formed of young and old, men and women of every culture and horizon, and the Body of Christ, in which we are members one of another, beginning with those who are pushed to the margins and trampled upon...**It is in relationships - with Christ, with others, in the community - that faith is handed on.** For the sake of mission, too, the Church is called to adopt a relational manner that places emphasis on listening, welcoming, dialogue and common discernment in a process that transforms the lives of those taking part. ...In this way the Church presents herself as the "tent of meeting" in which the Ark of the Covenant is preserved (cf. Ex 25): a dynamic Church, in movement, which accompanies while journeying, strengthened

by many charisms and ministries. Thus does God make Himself present in this world.»

An expression of this shared journey is the experience ever more vital in the ADMA, of the **communion of faith and of charismatic belonging among the different states of life**: consecrated, priests, laity. There is a circulation of gifts and of prayer, a fruitful exchange that helps each one to find and to consolidate their own identity. This helps to overcome the way of relating to others that sometimes is understood in terms of function if not at times even utilitarian, by recovering an approach that is more ecclesial and based on communion in the same Salesian spirit.

Emphasis on the beauty and on the complementarity of the various states of life is an approach to be welcomed and appreciated even from a vocational point of view: priests, consecrated men and women and lay people who share a faith journey and a Salesian apostolic commitment. Between consecrated people and laity a communion of life is established that helps to enrich the proper identity of each one, facilitating their reciprocal recognition, appreciation and support not only at the practical level of work but also the fraternal and spiritual, according to the specific nature of each.

This proposal enables lay people to be approached and involved in the right way. ADMA encourages lay people to take on responsibility and to share in the mission not only *ad intra*, but also *ad extra*, that is to say not only in our works but also in other areas in the life of the Church and of society.

The dimension of the understanding and the development of ADMA lies in the **formation and fulfilment of lay people** prepared for the spirituality and the mission proper to the Association, in harmony with the ecclesiology of communion and with the rediscovery of a new prophetic, regal, and priestly awareness on the part of the laity. In addition the appeal to the lay character of the Association overcomes the tendency to identify the Church solely with the hierarchy and priests, and to encourage the shared responsibility and mission of the People of God. At the same time recalling the lay dimension of the Association discourages any tendency to think of the People of God solely in sociological or political terms and promotes the vital concept and **the specific nature of the People as the Body of Christ**. «Looking at the People of God is to remind ourselves that we all enter the Church as laity. The first sacrament, that which marks our identity for ever and of which we ought always to be proud is Baptism. Through this sacrament and with *the anointing of the Holy Spirit*, (the faithful) “are consecrated into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood” (LG, 10) [...]. It is good for us to remember that the Church is not an élite of priests, of consecrated persons, of bishops, but that all form the faithful Holy People of God. Forgetting this leads to a variety of dangers and deformations in our own experience, both personal and communitarian of the ministry that the Church has entrusted to us.»

Certainly, collaboration among the three states of life of the Church requires a change in pastoral thinking which impacts on all vocations but which, as regards the laity, demands that they be recognised and appreciated not merely as “collaborators”, but as “those co-responsible” in the life and action of the Church, so as to foster their maturing process and commitment. For this reason in the ADMA it is precisely the lay people who are those with primary responsibility for the competent and efficient animation of the Association.

FAMILY CHRONICLE

TURIN - MARIAN DAY 2019 - ADMA'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY



Meeting to "Share grace" under the gaze of the Help of Christians was the much-felt experience of over 600 participants in the ADMA Marian Day, which was held in Turin on Sunday 6 October with the presence of the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Arttime. Not only were thanks expressed for the 150 years of ADMA's history, but one also experienced the first Italian national meeting with numerous members from different regions: besides Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta, Liguria, Lombardy, Tuscany, Abruzzo, Puglia, Sicily. A day prepared by the ADMA Primary of Turin with the guidance of President Renato Valera.

The youth of ADMA shared ADMA'S origins with a curated and highly appreciated show, presenting snapshots of the presence of Mary Help of Christians in the life and mission of Don Bosco, in the construction of the Church of Turin and in the foundation of the Association of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians.

The Rector Major shared some of the contents of the Letter written for this special year, "*Entrust, have trust, smile*", emphasizing how the Association's current experience highlights "the beauty and complementarity between the various states of life in a perspective to be welcomed and valued also in a vocational key: priests, consecrated men and women, and lay people who share a journey of faith and Salesian apostolic commitment. He also underscored how "the Salesian charism in the animation of the family returns to its origins and the family in the encounter with the spirit of Don Bosco acquires dynamism and evangelical joy and experiences how the Family and Youth Ministry should be opened one to the other and walk together." He also urged to promote ADMA: "We promote the opening of this Association in places where it is not yet present, with pastoral creativity, even if 150 years have passed since its foundation. Mary Help of Christians will do the rest."

A powerful moment of "sharing of grace" were the experiences of the family of Domenico and Letizia of ADMA



Valle d'Aosta who narrated how, following Domenico's suffering a severe aneurysm, Mary's help was experienced through a network of friendship, solidarity, closeness on the part of many families. The story presented by Maria Russo, Salesian Cooperator, pediatrician, who shared the human and Christian story of her grandmother Maria, a "small and simple woman", who in difficult personal and historical situations did not shut herself off, but made life blossom in a gift of love and help for many: even the door of her house was always open to everyone until the end. Also, the story of Sister Luigina Silvestrin, Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, who shared how grace has accompanied her since she was a child and brought her to the choices of life and to live her vocation in joy and in communion.

In the afternoon, in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, was the much-participated Eucharistic celebration presided by the Rector Major, during which 55 aspirants shared the joy and grace of joining the ADMA and the Salesian Family.

This truly special Day has placed in our hearts that we can all share the grace we have received in our lives with our brothers and sisters: the grace of faith, the grace of being part of a big charismatic family that sustains us, the grace of living under the mantle of Mary, the grace of being accompanied by the Spirit, the grace of the small and great miracles we witness in our lives, the grace of small daily resurrections with the commitment to share this grace in our families, communities, oratories, workplaces, in the places where we live.

The paper can be read at the following site:

www.admadonbosco.org

For every communication you can contact

the following email adress: pcameroni@sdb.org

WORLD MEETINGS OF DELEGATES OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY

From 10 to 14 September and from 17 to 22, at the "Pius XI" Institute in Rome, two world meetings of delegates for the Salesian Family were held. Promoted by the Secretariat for the Salesian Family, there were delegates: 10 from Africa-Madagascar; 11 from Central and Northern Europe; 10 from the Mediterranean; 10 from Inter-America; 8 from America South Cone; 14 from the Asia East-Oceania Region; 8 from South Asia.

The meetings were coordinated by Fr Eusebio Muñoz, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, with the team of the Secretariat: don Giuseppe Casti, Delegate for the Salesian Cooperators; don Joan Luis Playà, Spiritual Assistant for the Volunteers of Don Bosco (VDB) and the Volunteers with Don Bosco (CDB); don Pierluigi Cameroni, Spiritual Animator of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA); and don Jayapalan Raphael, Delegate for the Past pupils of Don Bosco.

The purpose of the meetings was to present the figure and the role of the Provincial Delegate for the Salesian Family, through the sharing of certain themes: "The Charter of Charismatic Identity of the Salesian Family"; the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and in the Salesian Family; the relationship of the Salesian Family with Youth Ministry and Formation; the Provincial and Local Council; the Salesian Movement.

Thanks to the contributions of Mr. Renato Cursi, Salesian Cooperatore, currently Executive Secretary of the DBI based in Brussels, Mr. Tullio Lucca of ADMA and Emma Ceccarelli, member of the forum of families of the Italian Bishops' Conference, there was also discussion on issues, such as the family, education of children, parenting and the situation of youth today.

The interventions and the presence of some world leaders of the groups were significant: Mr. Antonio Boccia, Coordinator of the Salesian Cooperators; Mr. Renato Valera, President of ADMA; Mr. Michal Hort, President of the Past Pupils; two leaders of VDB. All of them helped us to touch the beauty and the variety of the one charism, especially in the ways in which it is lived and interpreted by the laity.

The visit to the Salesian Headquarters was very much appreciated, both for the meeting with Don Francesco Cereda, Vicar of the Rector Major, for the first group, and with the Rector Major, for the second group, and for the visit to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and the rooms of Don Bosco.

In the final sharing, there was unanimous satisfaction for the meeting, for the rich experience of fraternity and knowledge; for the contents proposed and discussed; for the recognition of the richness of life, variety and possibilities present in the unique charismatic family; and, above all, for the recognition and relevance of the great gift of Don Bosco and his charism to the Church and society.



ADMA PRIMARY: PILGRIMAGE OF SENIORS TO NIZZA

On Saturday 14th September 2019, the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, the members of the ADMA of Turin together with some of Asti made a pilgrimage to Nizza Monferrato at the *Istituto Nostra Signora delle Grazie*. After a festive and caring welcome from the sisters, the archivist Sister Paola Cuccioli presented the history of the Institute: of ancient origins, the custody of the Sanctuary was entrusted to the Franciscans who over the centuries enlarged and embellished it. In 1871, already expropriated from the religious, Don Bosco at the price of many sacrifices and with the help of Providence, bought and restored it, making it the Mother-Home of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, assigning to it the first Superior General, Mother Maria Domenica Mazzarello.

The Holy Mass, celebrated by Fr Roberto Carelli, concluded the morning. In his profound and touching homily, Fr Roberto underlined the beauty of ADMA members to celebrate Holy Mass on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross: "We are the fruit not only of the sacrifice of Jesus but also of the inner sacrifice of Mary. Mary, writes Don Bosco in the booklet '*Wonders of the Mother of God*', receives the title of Help of Christians on Mount Calvary".

In the first part of the afternoon, there was the opportunity to visit the archive of the Institute rich in ancient and precious findings and the room of Mother Mazzarello. The day ended with the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

During his last visit on 23 August 1885 in front of the church square Don Bosco said to the sisters: "I want to tell you that Our Lady is really here, here in your midst! Our Lady walks in this house and covers her with her mantle". And it is the same presence of which one feels the embrace when visiting this Institute even today.

