

MARY CALLS US TO CONVERSION FOR OURSELVES AND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Synod of Bishops dedicated to young people, to faith and discernment, reminds us that **faith is a gift that is transmitted from generation to generation**. All this requires a daily journey of conversion, prayer, openness of heart, and a renewed choice of God and his love. Our Lady is preparing a people who are converted in a radical, beautiful and profound way. **They are to be leaven, salt and light for the new generations** through example, prayer and the gift of self. Conversion is truly a change of life, a change in the way of thinking and living, which starts with each one of us, a holy mother, a holy father, and a holy family. It begins with a life of grace.

In the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of our Association this path of faith passes through the generations, transmitting the lamp of faith. We make it relevant through special attention to the family, to the accompaniment of young people preparing for marriage or in the first years of marriage and of parents in their educational and pastoral commitment for children and young people.

In all this we feel **in communion with the Salesian Family**, called to live today the charism of Don Bosco in a variety and wealth of congregations, associations and institutes. Art. 3 of our Rules says: "The Members are part of the Salesian Family" through Salesian devotion to the Help of Christians in the form established by Don Bosco himself. This belonging commits us to honouring Mary, Mother of the Church and our Help, participating in Don Bosco's mission to the young and the ordinary people, especially in the aspect of increasing and defending the Christian faith among the people." In the Salesian Family the Association emphasizes and promotes popular Marian devotion as an instrument of evangelization and development of the popular classes and of needy youth."

ADMA's belonging to the Salesian Family is not generic but is rooted in the particular Marian devotion lived and spread by St John Bosco. **The Marian character of the Association is one of the constituent elements of the Salesian charism and spirit**. Our commitment to participate in the Salesian mission to young people derives from this belonging, motivated in this way. It enhances our commitment to the custody, growth and defence of the faith among the people of God.



In this spirit we begin the Advent journey towards Christmas with Mary, the Virgin Mother. We wish all our members a holy Christmas and a special 2019, a year of grace for ADMA.

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

Formation Programme 2018-2019: With Mary, the woman who believes

150th foundation of ADMA (18 April 2019)
8th International Congress of Mary Help of Christians
(Argentina 7-10 November 2019)

Fr Pierluigi Cameroni
World spiritual animator

3. November-December: Mary Virgin Mother



Del 7 al 10 de noviembre de 2019. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Mary is also the **Virgin-Mother**, she who "believing and obeying...brought forth on earth the Father's Son. This she did, not knowing man but overshadowed by the Holy Spirit." This was a miraculous motherhood, set up by God as the **type and exemplar of the fruitfulness of the Virgin-Church**, which "becomes herself a mother... for by her preaching and by baptism she brings forth to a new and immortal life children who are conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of God." The ancient Fathers rightly taught that **the Church prolongs in the sacrament of Baptism the virginal motherhood of Mary**. Among such references we like to recall that of our illustrious predecessor, Saint Leo the Great, who in a Christmas homily says: "The origin which (Christ took in the womb of the Virgin He has given to the baptismal font: He has given to water what He had given to His Mother-the power of the Most High and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit (cf Lk. 1:35), which was responsible for Mary's bringing forth the Saviour, has the same effect, so that water may regenerate the believer."(54) If we wished to go to liturgical sources, we could quote the beautiful *Illatio* of the Mozarabic liturgy: "The former [Mary] carried Life in her womb; the latter [the Church] bears Life in the waters of baptism. In Mary's members Christ was formed; in the waters of the Church Christ is put on." (Marialis Cultus 19).

1. Virgin Mother, Daughter of your Son

In the life of Jesus, his Mother played a decisive role. For Judaism it is the woman who transmits membership of the chosen people (a Jew is one who is born of a Jewish mother), passing on to her son an awareness of the covenant with God, especially through family life. The home is considered a "small temple", in which the table constitutes "the altar". The woman is the one responsible for the domestic liturgy and for the observance of the norms of purity that govern daily life.

The rabbinic tradition emphasizes that the Torah revealed at Sinai was given to women first, because without them Jewish life would not have been possible. Accordingly, husbands are invited to "listen" to their wives, for it is through them that blessings reach the family. **The family thus becomes the most important nucleus of Judaism** and in it the role of women is decisive. According to Jewish teachers it is the task of men to teach the content of revelation, the Torah and the Talmud, while the task of the woman is to transmit the experience of revelation, the sense of mystery, without which the contents would have no value and their study would be a purely intellectual exercise.

The vocation of the Church has its true harbinger and complete fulfilment in Mary, the young woman who, with her "yes", made the Son's incarnation possible and, consequently, established the conditions for every other ecclesial vocation to happen. **The "Marian principle" precedes and exceeds any other ministerial, charismatic and juridical principle** in the Church, and it supports and accompanies them all. (*Instrumentum Laboris* No. 96)

Speaking to women prisoners, some with small children or expecting a child, Pope Francis uttered words full of hope and future, like a pregnant womb.

Motherhood is not, and never will be a problem. It is a gift, and one of the most wonderful gifts you can ever have. Today you face a very real challenge: you also have to care for that life. You are asked to care for the future. To make it grow and to help it to develop. Not just for yourselves, but for your children and for society as a whole. As women, you have an incredible ability to adapt to new circumstances and move forward. (Pope Francis Santiago de Chile, 17 January 2018).

2. Advent-Christmas liturgical season

In this way the faithful, living in the liturgy the spirit of Advent, by thinking about the inexpressible love with which the Virgin Mother awaited her Son, are invited to take her as a model and to prepare themselves to meet the Saviour who is to come. They must be "vigilant in prayer and joyful in praise." We would also remark that the Advent liturgy, by linking the awaiting of the Messiah and the awaiting of the glorious return of Christ with the admirable commemoration of His Mother, presents a happy balance in worship. This balance can be taken as a norm for preventing any tendency (as has happened at times in certain forms of popular piety) to separate devotion to the Blessed Virgin from its necessary point of reference - Christ. It also ensures that **this season**, as liturgy experts have noted, **should be considered as a time particularly suited to devotion to the Mother of the Lord.** This is an orientation that we confirm and which we hope to see accepted and followed everywhere. *(Marialis Cultus No. 4)*

3. Generate in faith

In the art of spiritual accompaniment, to educate to the faith is to learn to recognize, interpret and choose from a faith perspective, listening to what the Spirit suggests within everyday life. Parents, educators and teachers are called not only to transmit contents, but to be witnesses of a human maturity, starting generative dynamics of **spiritual fatherhood or motherhood** capable of making young people responsible for their own adventure.

In the personal relationship of accompaniment, it is important to realize the difference between masculine and feminine approaches, both for mentors and for those who are accompanied. In this respect, the richness of the tradition that speaks about **spiritual fatherhood and motherhood** needs to be deepened and preserved. *(Instrumentum Laboris n. 123).*

Mentors are called to respect the mystery that all persons carry in themselves and trust the Lord who is already at work in them. They are invited to realize they are a model that can influence others through what they are, rather than for what they do or suggest. The deep affective interaction that is created in the space of spiritual accompaniment - the fact that tradition talks about spiritual fatherhood and motherhood is no coincidence, as a profound generative relationship - requires a sound formation on the part of mentors, and the willingness to work, first of all, on themselves spiritually and, to some extent, also psychologically. Only in this way will they be able to truly serve, listen and discern, and avoid the most frequent risks related to their role: displacing those they accompany in the search and responsibility of choices, denying or removing the emergence of sexual issues and, lastly, crossing boundaries and becoming inappropriately and destructively involved with the people they are helping in their spiritual journey, with the potential for actual abuse and dependency. When this happens, in addition to the injuries caused in the accompanied persons, a climate of fear and mistrust starts spreading, that discourages the practice of accompaniment. *(Instrumentum Laboris No. 130).*

This dynamism, whereby we go out of ourselves to give our life and work unsparingly so that everyone, individually and collectively, may encounter the joy of love, also characterizes the way the Church exercises the authority entrusted to her, in a way that is truly generative and therefore creates communion. According to some analyses, etymologically speaking, **authoritativeness is the capacity to make all creatures grow** (*augeo*, in Latin, hence *auctor* and *auctoritas*) in the originality that the Creator conceived and wished for them. Exercising authority means taking on the responsibility to foster development and set freedom free, rather than exercising control that holds people down and keeps them captive. *(Instrumentum Laboris No. 141).*

In particular, experiencing and encountering fragilities in our own selves, in other people, in a group, society or culture is as exhausting as it is valuable. To young people, this can be the opportunity to discover hidden resources, and to raise new questions also for vocational purposes, pushing them to abandon the constant search for small certainties. By accompanying these paths, the Church will discover new frontiers and new resources to fulfil her mission. *(Instrumentum Laboris No. 145).*

4. Live the grace of baptism

At the baptismal font, we are born to the life of grace: immersed in the death of Jesus on the cross, we have been freed from the power of original sin and we have risen to the new life that Jesus inaugurated. Day by



day, therefore, we are called to renew this gift and make it fruitful by living the baptismal promises: I renounce sin and the evil one and I believe in God. Day by day, I choose God as the only good, as Lord of my life. The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to live with fidelity and coherence, believing that the path of holiness is the fruit of his presence in our life (cf. Gal 5,22-23). In the hour of trial and temptation, we lift up our eyes to "the One who was pierced", believing that "by his wounds we have been healed".

Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation. Do not be dismayed, for the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to do this, and holiness, in the end, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (cf. Gal 5:22-23). When you feel the temptation to dwell on your own weakness, raise your eyes to Christ crucified and say: "Lord, I am a poor sinner, but you can work the miracle of making me a little bit better". In the Church, holy yet made up of sinners, you will find everything you need to grow towards holiness. The Lord has bestowed on the Church the gifts of scripture, the sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and a multifaceted beauty that proceeds from God's love, "like a bride bedecked with jewels" (Is 61:10). (Gaudete et Exultate No. 15).

To Mary Most Holy

O Mary Immaculate, in your hands I renew the promises of my baptism.

*I renounce forever Satan, the father of lies,
accuser of the children of God, the enemy of our joy.*

*I reject his deception, his seduction and his works
and I entrust myself entirely to Jesus, the living sign of God's love for me.*

And to be more faithful to him today I choose you, Mary Immaculate as my Mother and Lady.

To you, as a son, I entrust and consecrate my life and my family.

*O Mary, may I always live in accordance with your heart
and on the last day welcome me into your arms.*

Present me to Jesus, saying of me: "This is my son!".

Then my soul will enter paradise

and it will be a 'magnificat' to God with You, O Mary, my Immaculate Mother.

Amen

The paper can be read at the following site:

www.admadonbosco.org

For every communication you can contact

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FAMILY CHRONICLE

SOUTHERN ARGENTINA - ANNUAL RETREAT 2018

On Saturday 6 October, ADMA in Southern Argentina held its annual meeting at the Provincial House of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, in the Almagro district of Buenos Aires.

With a view to the 8th International Congress of Mary Help of Christians, which will be held here in Argentina from 7 to 10 November 2019, the theme proposed for the meditation was precisely that of the Congress *"With Mary, the Woman who Believes"*.



The reflection was given by **Sr. Anna Maria Porta (FMA)**. Starting from the question "what does it mean to believe?" she invited us to retrace "with Mary" her growth and maturation in faith, from the Annunciation to her presence at the foot of the Cross, where, as Mother of Sorrows, she accepted the will of God, and received in her arms the dead body of her Son.

From that question, Sr. Anna Maria guided us through the Old Testament, where the most salient characteristic of the faith lived by the prophets and our forefathers was trust in God and in his promises, up to the New Testament, where St. James affirms that faith must translate into works. We contemplate Mary's growth of faith, lived according to the teachings of the Old Testament, which manifested itself in concrete works at every moment of her life.

And how do we live our faith? How should we live it? Trust in God and the certainty that his promises are fulfilled involve the believer's commitment to live according to the Word. So our attitude should be "I believe and accept with my life". "Believing" should be part of me and I should act accordingly. It is not enough to say "I believe" as something outside of myself. Once again, Mary is the model to follow: She, a believing woman, believed in the Word of God, believed that her promises would be fulfilled. Even when there were things she did not understand, she kept them in her heart and accepted them.

After a shared lunch, we recited the Holy Rosary for the intentions that Pope Francis recommended to us, concluding the day with the Eucharist presided over by our Spiritual Animator **Fr Vicente Ricchetti (SDB)**, who concluded the Mass with the beloved blessing of our Mother, the Help of Christians (María Inés Ursino and Alicia Gabriela Canales - President and Vice-President of the Provincial Council ADMA ARS).

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TURIN - PRIMARY ADMA'S TWENTY-EIGHTH MARIAN DAY

The twenty-eighth Marian Day of Primary ADMA took place on 21 October 2018. It was attended by several groups from the districts of Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta districts and the neighbouring Provinces. Fr Eusebio Muñoz, Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family, praised the celebration and gave a very rich reading of the Regulation highlighting the constituent points of the identity and mission of ADMA. He emphasized in particular evangelical simplicity, the popular dimension of the Salesian charism and apostolic passion.



Then there were several interventions and a sharing of experiences. The President, Renato Valera, outlines the events planned to mark the 150th anniversary of ADMA; Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, Spiritual Animator, presented the new Booklet of Mary Help of Christians "All generations will call me blessed", which recalls the journey of the Association in these past ten years. He also referred to the International Congress of Mary Help of Christians that will take place in Argentina in November 2019. Tullio and Simonetta Lucca shared their experience in Spain last summer, when a programme was initiated for families in that country. The young people of ADMA shared their experiences with the Salesian Youth Movement in an attractive and moving way both on the occasion of the meeting of young people with the Pope in Rome, and on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In the afternoon, after the recitation of the Rosary animated by the young people, there was the celebration of the Eucharist during which 10 new members of the groups of Venaria, Arese and Turin made their commitment as members of ADMA.



MINSK (BELARUS) - MEETING OF ADMA WITH THE SDB AND FMA OF BELARUS AND WITH LOCAL ADMA GROUPS

On 27 and 28 October two very significant meetings were held to share the ADMA experience in Belarus, a country that is experiencing a renewal of the Salesian presence. On Saturday 27 October the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, together with Tullio and Simonetta Lucca as representatives of the Primary ADMA of Turin, were able to explain the charismatic lines of the Association and the pastoral proposals for renewal.

The life of practical faith that becomes the spirituality of daily life, at the school of the Eucharist and of Mary, and the special attention to families and young people, have also proved to be relevant to the Salesian situation in Belarus. This was confirmed on Sunday 28 October when the proposal took concrete form in the day of retreat for the Groups from Minsk and Smorgon.

Spending a day together allowed the participants to experience in practice the beauty of the journey, which is spreading also in other countries. Don Bosco's dream continues with generosity also in Belarus where the Salesians and the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians are building a stone shrine in Baraulany and at the same time a living Church of people founded on the two columns: the Eucharist and Mary Help of Christians.

GUDALAJARA (MEXICO)

By the grace of God, we started the group of ADMA families in the Chapalita School of Anáhuac in Guadalajara. On the second retreat, on 7 October, twelve families participated, with children from kindergarten to high school. Mary Help of Christians always accompanies us! (Paco Origel).



BILBAO (SPAIN) - BEGINNING OF ADMA FORMATION COURSE

On Saturday 20 October 2018, one hundred people from the various ADMA groups met in Deusto-Bilbao to start a formation course.

The activities of the local groups during 2017-18 were presented in a power point. Then the formation themes for the new year were presented and studied in groups. The day ended with a family lunch and some moments of celebration. (Arcadio Cuadrado, Spiritual Animator).



2019: Events for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of ADMA (18 April 1869)

2018: 16 September - Pilgrimage for the opening of the 150th anniversary of the Primary ADMA

2018: 21 October - Marian Day in Turin

2019: 10-13 January - Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family in Turin

2019: 18 April - ADMA foundation date (falling on Holy Thursday). Day of prayer and Eucharistic Adoration

2019: 21-23 May – Meeting of World Consultative Body of the Salesian Family in Turin

2019: May 24 - Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians - Eucharist with the Rector Major

2019: 6 October - Marian Day in Turin with the presence of the Rector Major

2019: 7-10 November - 8th International Congress of Mary Help of Christians in Buenos Aires (Argentina)

SEVENTH BOOKLET ON MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - ALL GENERATIONS WILL CALL ME BLESSED



PIERLUIGI CAMERONI
la cura di

Tutte le generazioni mi chiameranno Beata

L'Associazione di Maria Ausiliatrice
nel 150° di fondazione
(18 aprile 1869-2019)



The Association of Devotees of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2019. In fact, it was founded in Turin on 18 April 1869 by St John Bosco, with the intention of defending and consolidating the faith of the Christian people, through an "itinerary of sanctification and Salesian apostolate". Don Bosco's inspiration was to offer a simple Christian programme to sustain the ordinary life of the faithful, anchoring them firmly to the "two pillars" of the Eucharist and Mary, Immaculate Help of Christians.

The contributions in this issue of the series *Booklets on Mary Help of Christians* document and make available various reflections and experiences gained during the past ten years of the life of the Association of Mary Help of Christians. The titles are as follows:

1. ADMA: *Identity and Mission.*
2. *The Charismatic Identity Card of the Salesian Family of Don Bosco. Introductory notes and reading suggestions for the members of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA).*
3. ADMA: *Identity and role of the Local Council.*
4. ADMA Families: *To be a Family in the charisma of Don Bosco.*
5. Youth ADMA: *Notes and guidelines.*

The contents are in deep harmony with the programme of the universal Church, which has dedicated two Synods of Bishops to the family and this year celebrates the Synod dedicated to young people, in addition to the programme that the Salesian Family shares annually in the light of the Rector Major's Strenna.