 Reading time: 3 min.

We asked Fr Alexandre Luís de Oliveira, the newProvincial of the Salesian Province of São Paulo (BSP), some questions for readers of the OnLine Salesian Bulletin.

Fr De Oliveira was born in Campinas, in the State of São Paulo, on 18 October 1975. He met the Salesians in the Salesian work in Campinas, where he was a student at the institute and participated in youth groups and parish activities.
His mother, Tamar A. Da Silva, still lives in the city of Campinas.
He did his novitiate in Indápolis, near Dourados, his postnovitiate in Lorena, his practical training in San Carlos and Pindamonhangaba, and his theological studies in the house at Lapa in São Paulo. He made his perpetual profession on 31 January 2004 in São Paulo, and was ordained a priest on 17 December 2005 in Campinas.
He spent his first years as a priest in the Salesian presence in Lorraine, at the San Joaquín Institute (2006-2008). From 2009 to 2011 he was Rector and Parish Priest of the Salesian work in the city of Americana; in 2012 he became Rector of the Provincial House in São Paulo, and at the same time Delegate for Youth Ministry; from 2013 to 2017 he was Rector of the Postnovitiate in Lorraine and Provincial Delegate for Formation; from 2018 to 2022 Rector and Parish Priest of the Mary Help of Christians house in Campinas, and is currently Rector of the San José house, also in Campinas. He also served as Provincial Councillor for three consecutive three-year terms, from 2012 to 2020.
Fr De Oliveira succeeds Fr Justo Piccinini, who has completed his six-year term as Provincial.

Can you present yourself?
I am Fr Alexandre Luís de Oliveira, Brazilian, from the Salesian Province of São Paulo (BSP). I am 49 years old, 25 years of religious profession, 19 years of priestly ordination and I am currently a Provincial.
I am from the city of Campinas SP. I attended the Salesian house as a child. I was a little chorister, attended the oratory and was a former student at the Don Bosco Vocational Centre at the Salesian St Joseph’s school. Together with my family, I also attended the chapel at St Joseph’s and the Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians. Living with the Salesians and frequenting these places I felt called to vocational discernment.

Why Salesian?
Salesian, because I feel deeply identified with Don Bosco's charism: the education and evangelisation of young people.

How did your family react?
From the beginning, my family accompanied me with its support and constant prayers so that God's will for me would be fulfilled and that I would be happy with my life project.

The encounter and individual who most impressed you
I have always been impressed by the presence of the Salesians who are very close to young people. This ease of access always brings back good memories and has also stimulated me in my vocational response.

Your greatest joy?
My greatest joy is my religious consecration and the day of my priestly ordination. Being a Salesian priest fulfils me deeply.

What are the most urgent local and youth needs?
I believe that the most urgent need of young people is to have creative references in their formation/education in values.

What could be done more and better?
I believe that, as Salesians of Don Bosco, we can be closer to young people, we can offer them more opportunities for contact with us as consecrated persons, and in this way, through our witness, we can also invite them to their vocation.

Plans for the future? Dreams? Initiatives?
For the present and the future, we can be living signs of Don Bosco's presence among the young, our communities can be more open to welcoming them and offering them real opportunities for spiritual, human, educational and professional growth.

Do you have a message for the Salesian Family?
A message of living hope, of a return to our origins, of a return to Don Bosco. May we dream his dream and the dreams of the young. May our communities, schools, social works, parishes and university centres be a home for young people, a place for their realisation.