

Interview with Fr Luis Víctor SEQUEIRA GUTIÉRREZ, Provincial of the Angola Province

We asked Fr Luis Víctor SEQUEIRA GUTIÉRREZ, the new Provincial of the Angola Province (ANG), some questions for readers of the OnLine Salesian Bulletin.

His appointment is due to the fact that the previous superior of the Salesians in Angola, Fr Martin Lasarte, was appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Lwena.

With this appointment, the Rector Major has also decided, again after consulting his Council, to elevate the Angola Vice-Province to the rank of Province, starting from the day of the installation of Fr Sequeira Gutiérrez. He will therefore be the first Provincial of the new Province. Son of Cristóbal Sequeira and Victoria Gutiérrez, Victor Luís Sequeira Gutiérrez was born on 22 March 1964, in Asunción, Paraguay. He attended the Salesian aspirantate in Ypacaraí in 1984, the prenovitiate in 1985 and finally the novitiate in La Plata, Argentina, in 1986. He made his first profession on 31 January 1987. His philosophy studies took him to São Paulo, Brazil, and to the Catholic University of Asunción.

From 1992 to 2020, he worked as a missionary in Angola, holding various posts: Bursar of the Don Bosco formation house in Luanda (1997-98), Rector of the Catholic Mission in Libolo (1998-2005), Rector and parish priest in Dondo (2005-11). From 2011 to 2014 he was Rector of the Luanda Formation Centre, as well as Deputy Director of the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie et Pédagogie Don Bosco in Luanda, now known as ISDB.

He previously served as Superior of the Salesians of Angola for the six-year period 2014-2020.

In November 2020, he was sent to Portugal to be part of the formation team for Theology students in Lisbon, also serving briefly as chaplain at the Medical Rehabilitation Centre in Alcoitão. Finally, in February 2023, he returned to Angola, where he had recently been appointed Rector and Parish Priest of the Lwena community.

Fr Sequeira Gutiérrez is fluent in Spanish, Guarani, French, Italian and Portuguese.

Can you present yourself?

I am Father Victor Luís Sequeira Gutiérrez, Provincial of Angola. I have been in Angola for 32 years and I am Paraguayan.

How did your vocation come about?

At a time of military dictatorship and in a Church where young people found a place for free expression, the encounter with the Word led me to conversion and commitment. I felt called to be at the service of this Church that leads to liberation, especially of young people.

Why Salesian?

Because my roots are Salesian, my mother was familiar with Salesian settings, in contact with the FMA and my father with the oratory and the priests who were real fathers (dads); furthermore, I was born and grew up in a Salesian parish, we can say that my nature is Salesian.

Do you remember any educators in particular?

Father Edmundo Candia, Father Rojas, Father Aquino.

Why a missionary?

It all started with aspiration, when I came into contact with the missions in the Chaco, then also with the missions in Africa and the Africa project. From that moment on I felt called.

What are the greatest difficulties you have encountered?

The encounter of the Gospel with the local culture, where the

life and dignity of people must be valued.

What are the greatest joys you have encountered?

The way people do not lose hope and always give you a smile, the gratitude they have for the missionaries.

How do you find work in this environment?

Above all, useful as an instrument of God, not indispensable, and therefore fulfilled as a consecrated and missionary person.

What are the young people in the area like?

They are cheerful, full of vitality, ready to learn, to be formed and to develop.

Are Christians persecuted in the area?

No, thank God, Angola is predominantly Christian.

What are the great challenges of evangelisation and mission today?

Human formation and the proclamation of the Gospel, in-depth dialogue with the culture.

What could be done more and better?

Give quality education and vocational training, embody the Gospel more in the culture, a catechesis that touches current reality.