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After celebrating 150 years since the first missionary expedition of the Salesians of Don Bosco, in 2027 we will mark the 150th anniversary of the first missionary expedition of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

The year 2027, will mark the 150th anniversary for the [Daughters of Mary Help of Christians](#) of the departure of the first missionaries from Mornese to Uruguay (14 November 1877) and, subsequently, to Argentina. The first six very young missionaries had enthusiastically accepted Don Bosco's invitation to follow the first Salesians, who had been sent in 1875, in their venture.

"It is time to rekindle the fire!" (Mother Mazzarello, L 27) is the theme accompanying the three-year preparation period.

It officially began on 14 November 2024 with a celebratory event broadcast live from the Generalate in Rome, following the announcement by the Mother General of the FMA Institute, Mother Chiara Cazzuola, in **Circular no. 1038**: *"Every celebration, every important anniversary, is a call to return to the roots of our history, to the sources of our spirituality. We recall, with joy and gratitude, the words of Pope Francis to the Chapter Assembly on 22 October 2021: 'Do not forget the grace of the origins, the humility and littleness of the beginnings that made God's action transparent in the lives and message of those who, filled with wonder, began this journey'."*

The objective of the three-year period is: *"To celebrate with a grateful heart the missionary ardour of the Institute in order to rekindle, in today's world, the prophetic drive of our charism as a gift to the Church and to humanity"* (cf. Circular Letter of the Superior General of the FMA, no. 1038).

With the official start of this reflection, **the winners** of the international competition for the [creation of the LOGO and ANTHEM](#) for the 150th anniversary were awarded. On 24 November 2024, the **Missionary Festival** was held, **streamed live** from Rome, where the songs that reached the final of the aforementioned competition were presented.

Meanwhile, the timeline of initiatives planned for the three-year period highlights the synergy adopted between various institutions and Sectors, in order to foster a process of deepening the understanding of the Salesian missions up to 2027. The Missions Sector of the FMA Institute, the FMA Study Centre of the Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences "Auxilium" in Rome, the Salesian Historical Institute, and the Association of Salesian History Scholars (ACSSA) have pooled a series of proposals for research, animation, and reflection in line with the theme, with broad

international involvement of the Salesians and the FMA. In this way, the celebratory aspect has been combined with much local research in which the personal stories of the missionaries have intertwined with issues related to complex contexts, territories, and political, cultural, and social situations.

In particular, the FMA Study Centre collaborates directly with the Missions Sector of the FMA Institute, coordinating the calendar and events on the theme: *Salesian missions from Valdocco and Mornese to the whole world*.

The fifth and sixth editions of the “Salesian Thursdays at Auxilium”, organised by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians Study Centre on themes of pedagogy, spirituality, and history of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, are thus part of the programme, offering videos and texts in various languages on the [Study Centre's own YouTube channel](#).

The in-depth study of the 150th anniversary of the Salesian missions also included, in 2025, the **continental Seminars of the Association of Salesian History Scholars (ACSSA)**, with which the FMA Institute and the Faculty collaborate; many topics of international scope can be found online through the [ISS-ACSSA website](#).

“In 2026,” writes Mother Chiara Cazzuola in circular no. 1054, *“the Missions Sector, in collaboration with the **PEM (Missionary Spirituality Project)** team, proposes to the entire Institute, in preparation for the 150th anniversary of the First Missionary Expedition, an **online Pilgrimage to the places in South America** where our first missionaries arrived in 1877. With the Sisters of the General Council, we wish this opportunity to be valued by all, also with the involvement of the educating communities (animating nucleus, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, Past Pupils, Salesian Cooperators, lay men and women who share our mission, young people, etc.).*

We therefore ask you to participate as much as possible in the online Pilgrimage, registering not individually, but as educating communities. We hope to undertake a significant journey of missionary renewal in preparation for the anniversary of our First Missionary Expedition, which will be in 2027. The meetings will last an hour and a half and will be held via the Zoom platform, with translations into Italian, Portuguese, French, Spanish, English, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Polish, and Arabic.”

It is an invitation to renew the missionary dream of Don Bosco and the pioneers, Salesians and FMA, by getting involved in the educational commitment as a lever for social change and the promotion of the dignity of every person.

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