

## 150th anniversary of SALESIAN MISSIONS

Valdocco, November 2025

**ACTS of the 1st WORLD MEETING of DIAM/PDMAs**  
*(Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation)*



**150** **GIVE THANKS**  
**RETHINK**  
**RELAUNCH**

**150**  
GIVE THANKS  
RETHINK  
RELAUNCH

**150th anniversary of the First Salesian Missionary Expedition**

VALDOCCO

- 8-9 November**  
Italian youth meeting of Missionary Animation  
**BeAMission**
- 10-11 November**  
PDMA world meeting
- 11 November**  
156th SDB – 148th FMA Salesian Missionary Expedition
- 12 November**  
Inauguration of Salesian Missionary Expeditions Museum in Genoa  
MUSEO delle ESPEDIZIONI MISSIONARIE
- 13-15 November**  
Missions Sector Consulta

salesian missions sector

**BeAMission**

- 08.11 - 14.00 Launch of activities and start of program
- 08.11 - 20.45 Missionary party
- 09.11 - morning Living libraries and dialogue with the new missionaries
- 09.11 - 15.00 Holy Mass and youth missionary sending
- 09.11 - 16.30 Refreshments and farewells

**PDMA world meeting**

- 09.11 - 19.00 Vespers and start of the meeting
- 10.11 Formation, sharing and reflection
- 11.11 - night Bosco Food presentation
- 11.11 - morning Continental and regional PDMA meetings
- 11.11 - 15.00 Meeting with the Rector Major
- 11.11 - 17.00 Salesian Missionary Expedition
- 12.11 Day in Genova and inauguration of Salesian Missionary Expeditions Museum
- 12.11 - night PDMA meeting conclusion

**MISSIONARY EXPEDITION**

**11.11 - 17.00 156th SDB – 148th FMA Salesian Missionary Expedition**

The Mass will be broadcast live on the ANS Agenzia Info Salesiana YouTube channel.

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**150th anniversary of the First Salesian Missionary Expedition**

## Ringraziare (Give Thanks)

We give thanks to God for the gift of missionary vocation which enable the sons of Don Bosco today to reach out to poor and abandoned youth in 137 countries.

## Ripensare (Rethink)

This is an opportune occasion to rethink and develop a renewed vision on the Salesian Missions in the light of new challenges and new perspectives which led to new missiological reflections.

## Rilanciare (Relaunch)

We have not only a glorious history to remember and be grateful for, but also a great history still to be accomplished! We look to the future with missionary zeal and enthusiasm so that we may reach out to even more poor and abandoned youth.

Objective of the 2025 Celebrations: *Keep the missionary spirit and enthusiasm alive in the Congregation in order to foster greater missionary zeal and generosity among the Salesians and the whole EPC (cf. RMs Guidelines after GC28, n. 7).*



## MISSIONS SECTOR

- RMG Fr. Jorge Mario Crisafulli SDB  
 RMG Fr. Reginaldo Cordeiro SDB  
 RMG Fr. Pavel Ženišek SDB  
 RMG Fr. Eric Mairura SDB  
 RMG Marco Fulgaro

## PARTICIPANTS

- ACC Fr. Jean-Claude Mukendi SDB  
 AOS Fr. Tran Quoc Huan SDB  
 ATE Fr. Privat Ignace Fouda SDB  
 AET Fr. Trinh Kinh Luan SDB  
 AFE Fr. Joseph Padinjareparampil SDB  
 AFM Fr. Václav Klement SDB  
 ANG Fr. Andrés Maria Algorta Young SDB  
 MOZ Fr. Manuel Jone Chimbale SDB  
 TZA Fr. Nicodemus Orioki SDB  
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 INB Fr. Michael Bansode SDB  
 INC Fr. Rosan Kullu SDB  
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 ING Fr. Amit Chama Lakra SDB

INH Fr. Mattukoyya Mariadas SDB  
INK Fr. Varghese Kootungal SDB  
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INN Fr. Pradeep Kumar Tirkey SDB  
INP Fr. Andru Jacinto Dias SDB  
INS Fr. Sagi Stephen Parappilly SDB  
INT Fr. Suresh Felix SDB  
LKC Br. Christopher Rodrigo SDB  
INS Fr. Joseph Palamthattel SDB  
AUL Lauren Hichaaba  
CIN Fr. Leung Po Tak Anthony SDB  
FIN Fr. Juvelan Paul Samia SDB  
FIS Br. Louie Domasian SDB  
GIA Br. Naokatsu Takeshita SDB  
INA Fr. Catur Prastawa SDB  
KOR Fr. Stefano Yu Minam SDB  
MYM Fr. Henry Daw SDB  
PGS Fr. Mathew Shoji SDB  
THA Fr. Nopphadol Joseph SDB  
Cambodia Fr. Arun Michael Charles SDB  
TLS Fr. Jose San Juan SDB  
VIE Fr. Dominic Trần Quang Hiên SDB  
ANT Fr. Ysidro José Ramírez SDB  
CAM Fr. Marcelo Navarrete SDB  
COB Fr. Ever Quisaboni SDB  
COM Fr. Edward Páez SDB  
ECU Fr. Edwin Marcelo Coronel SDB  
MEG Fr. Osvaldo Gorzegno SDB  
MEM Virginia Cerón  
PER Fr. Jozef Kamza SDB  
SUO Juan Carlos Montenegro  
VEN Fr. Pedro Sanchez SDB  
ARN Br. Juan Pablo Tobanelli SDB  
ARS Fr. Francisco Chimento SDB  
BBH Br. Walberto Giordano Santos Silva SDB

BCG	Fr. Aldir da Silva SDB
BMA	Fr. Wellington Batista de Abreu SDB
BPA	Fr. Edvaldo Nogueira SDB
BSP	Fr. Tiago Eliomar SDB
CIL	Fr. Hector Hernández SDB
PAR	Fr. Anh Duy Nguyen SDB
URU	Fr. Adrián García SDB
CRO	Fr. Josip Tafra SDB
ICC	Fr. Stefano Casu SDB
ICP	Fr. Marco Cazzato SDB
ILE	Fr. Giovanni Rondelli SDB
IME	Fr. Giuseppe Russo SDB
INE	Fr. Fabio Maistro SDB
MOR	Fr. Edwar Gobran SDB
SMX	Joaquín Rodríguez Díaz
SSM	Fr. José Carlos Sobejano SDB
AUS	Br. Günter Mayer SDB
BEN	Fr. Andy Jebarus SDB
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FRB	Fr. Albert Kabuge SDB
GBR	Fr. Roman Szczypa SDB
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PLN	Fr. Krzysztof Tomieczkowski SDB
PLO	Fr. Andrzej Witowski SDB
PLS	Fr. Łukasz Wójcik SDB
SLK	Jan Resutik
SLO	Fr. Janez Potočnik SDB
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## STAFF

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## Greetings from the General Councillor for the Missions

Córdoba, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2026



Dear Salesians, young people and members of the Salesian Family,

I am writing to you from Córdoba, from the national congress of missionary groups in Argentina, to present the acts of the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the first Salesian missionary expedition, which we experienced in Valdocco and Genoa last November.

Reliving the joy of the first missionary expedition of the Salesians sent out by Don Bosco 150 years ago has been an immense grace: I certainly never imagined I would begin my term as General Councillor for the Missions in this way!

We have inherited a beautiful and precious legacy, which we must preserve.

The three verbs *Give Thanks*, *Rethink*, *Relaunch* form a programme that will accompany us for a long time, well beyond these celebrations!

We are publishing these acts some time later, as we are in the process of drawing up a proposal, having gathered a wealth of input from every corner of our Congregation to rethink, improve and update the entire process of discernment, formation and accompaniment of Salesian missionaries of today and tomorrow. A long-term endeavour, set against the backdrop of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which has involved: many missionaries, especially those sent out in recent years, both through written contributions and through continental meetings (Cambodia, Kenya, Italy and Uruguay); the Provincial Delegates for Missionary Animation at various stages and in various ways; all the members of the General Council of the Salesian Congregation, together with their collaborators; and various other partners in the mission.

We entrust ourselves to Don Bosco and Mary Help of Christians, that the Lord may continue to nourish the Salesian Family with the missionary charism in service to young people and peoples in every corner of the Earth!



*Fr. Jorge Mario Crisafulli*  
**General Councillor for the Missions**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crisafulli', written over a light grey rectangular background.



**Saturday, 8 November – Sunday, 9 November**

*BeAMission* was born from the desire to come together, share stories and relaunch the missionary journey, starting from the experiences lived in recent years and interacting with Salesian missionaries from all over the world. The event is part of the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the First Salesian Missionary Expedition and is the result of collaboration between young people, Salesians of Don Bosco and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians from all over Italy.

Around 30 people for each of the Salesian territories (SDB and FMA Provinces of Italy) participated in BeAMission, a vast mosaic of missionary energy. The majority of them made some summer missionary experience in the last years and some of them are members of the Missionary Animation commissions of the provinces.

The program is organized by the “ENAM” (Ente Nazionale di Animazione Missionaria), composed of Salesians, Salesian sisters and young people.

After the launch of the program, the participants were invited to a in-depth study of the missionary spirituality of Valdocco.

Later, the meeting with Fr. Jorge Mario Crisafulli SDB, General

Councillor for the Missions, who helped the participants to understand *What does mission and Salesian mission mean today*.

Later, a moment of reflection in groups and then the official inauguration of the

Italian missionary animation exhibition by the Rector Mayor, Fr. Fabio Attard.

In the night, a “missionary party” with music and stands from all the countries who host the missionary experiences.



The day ended with the goodnight talk by sister Chiara Cazuola, General Mother of the FMA sisters.

Here, the speech of Fr. Fabio Attard SDB for the inauguration of the exhibition in the Museo Casa Don Bosco.

## “SPLENDETE COME ASTRINI NEL MONDO” MUSEO CASA DON BOSCO, VALDOCCO

Dear friends, brothers, sisters, young people, and members of the Salesian Family, it is with deep joy and gratitude that we gather here today in Valdocco – the living source of Don Bosco’s dream – to open this missionary exhibition: **SPLENDETE COME ASTRINI NEL MONDO** (“SHINE LIKE STARS IN THE WORLD”).

The title itself speaks to us with evangelical force and takes us to the heart of the experience of the early Christian community, encapsulated in St Paul’s invitation to the Philippians: “Be blame-

less and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world.” (Philippians 2:15). Today, as in the past, the Church and the world need luminous hearts, lives that shine with hope, young people and adults who know how to radiate the light of the Gospel through their humanity, their professionalism, and their joy in being missionary disciples.

### **From the source of the dream to the frontier of mission**

One hundred and fifty years ago, in 1875, from this holy Salesian land, Valdocco, Don Bosco bid farewell to his first missionaries setting off for Argentina. They did not set out with great resources, but with immense faith, with a hope they were convinced would not let them down. Alongside this spiritual attitude, Don Bosco, in his farewell address, entrusted them with a pastoral mandate: “never forget the young people, especially the poorest and most abandoned”. This mandate was not merely words, but a call containing the prophecy of charity, the very essence of the Salesian charism. That event is ours today. It continues to be a call to us towards a creative and generative fidelity.

Every Salesian missionary expedition, every new educational and pastoral presence that arises in any part of the world, is a building block that continues to enrich the missionary dream, strengthening the beat of that heart which invited and continues to invite us to “bring Christ to young people and young people to Christ”.

By presenting this historical journey, this exhibition also aims to be an opportunity to recount those stories that make the protagonists’ experience a living memory: stories of men and women who had the audacity to dream big, overcoming fear and risking

everything. And they lived it by giving their lives so that others might come to enjoy their lives to the full.

## Witnesses to a charism that continues to flourish

This exhibition introduces us to real people: Salesians and Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, lay people and young people, who have embodied the missionary dream with creativity and passion. Each and every one of them has made the Gospel shine in different cultures and distant places. In this diversity, from the very beginning, a single melody emerged: that of Salesian charity, simple, joyful and concrete.



They remind us that **the missionary choice does not grow old, has no expiry date, is not a memory of the past.** On the contrary, it is a gift that remains ever relevant, and the proof of this lies in the fact that today we are able to connect deeply and immediately with their witness.

Today, these 'new territories' of mission are still with us and are not limited merely to geographical locations: they are the digital worlds, the urban peripheries, the fragility of young people adrift, the hearts wounded by loneliness or disillusionment. Being missionaries today means letting ourselves be guided by the example of our first missionaries and, like them, **inhabiting these places in the style of Don Bosco**, which they lived out: an educational

and pastoral commitment that transforms lives. The style that characterised the first missionaries from the very beginning must be kept alive today; their boldness is more necessary than ever because it is urgent.

## Shining Together

Dear friends, the title of the exhibition is also a **mission entrusted to us: “Shine like stars in the world”**. It is not a matter of shining alone, but of **forming constellations of light**, living communities where faith becomes culture, where joy becomes service, where the Gospel becomes shared life.

In today’s world, marked by isolation and fear, whilst Don Bosco still teaches us to look to the future, not to be afraid to dream and to be bold in taking risks if the good of young people is at stake, this is a journey we must undertake together.

If his spirit invites us to kindle new fires of hope, to build bridges, to let the Salesian charism shine in the new frontiers of education, intercultural dialogue and global solidarity, we live this out in communion.

Today, in this blessed place, we ask Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello to give us a piece of their missionary heart: a heart that knows how to dream, that knows how to set out, that knows how to remain faithful.

May this exhibition increase in each of us the desire to be, together, a light for others, educators and witnesses, builders of a more humane and more evangelical world. Thank you.



The main moments of the morning of Sunday, 9 November, were the “living libraries” (testimonies of the missionary experiences of the young people) and the dialogue in group with the SDB and FMA new missionaries, who, divided in small groups, answered some questions of the young people, fostering them to take a missionary commitment in their life.

1. What does it mean to give your life in response to the Lord’s missionary call?
2. What motivated you to embrace this vocation within your vocation?
3. Why leave a poorer country for a richer one (Project Europe)?
4. Have you always wanted to go on a mission, or did this vocation come at a certain point in your consecrated life? (Tell us about it.)
5. What is the emphasis in your missionary vocation: do you go to meet and evangelize young people, or to meet young people and their poverty?
6. What prompted you to choose to go on mission?

7. What forms of poverty exist in today's West, which is becoming a mission frontier?
8. What does "mission" mean in the 21st century?
9. What does "mission" mean in the Salesian charism?
10. Children and young people always need our help: why did you decide to leave your country (aren't there poor children there too?)
11. What do you think are the needs of young people today? What are their forms of poverty?
12. Aren't you afraid of facing a new world and a new way of being Christian and Salesian?
13. What fears and hopes do you bring with you?

At 3.00 p.m. the Holy Mass and missionary sending of young people.



## PDMA WORLD MEETING

On Sunday, 9 November, before the Vespers, the General Couincillor for the Missions and the Missions Sector team introduce the meeting and each participant introduce himself/herself.

After dinner, Fr. Mike Pace SDB guides those who want to join for a night walk in Turin.



### Monday 10.11.2025

The day starts with the Mass and the prayer.

The Rector Major, Fr. Fabio Attard SDB, introduced the meeting with a short greeting.

### SALESIAN MISSIONS TODAY: CHALLENGES, PRESENT AND FUTURE

*Fr. Jorge Mario Crisafulli – General Councillor for the Missions*

Thank you for this opportunity to share some ideas and insights about the challenges, the present and future of the Salesian missions (our mission *ad gentes* or *inter gentes*) with you Provincial Delegates of Missionary Animation. This 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a clear invitation to look at the past with gratitude, to assess and rethink our present situation and to look at the future with hope by relaunching with renewed passion the missionary ardour of the heart of Don Bosco.

The final document of GC29 states that “Don Bosco’s charism is a gift for the whole Church and for all cultures.” The Salesian charism is a global charism, capable of adapting to all times and cultures for the salvation of the young. The first missionary expedition marked the beginning of the worldwide expansion of the Salesian Congregation. Examples of this are the missionary projects for “America” (1875), “Asia” (1906), “Africa” (1980) and Europa (2004). Someone was even speaking during GC29, about launching an “Oceania Project.”

Don Bosco did not set out to found a “missionary order,” yet through that first expedition, he and his sons discovered that the Salesian charism is missionary by nature. In 1972, Don Ricceri stated that **missionary activity is not something marginal or optional**, but rather “an essential and distinctive element that **touches the very essence and life of our Congregation.**” For him the missions became a “privileged place” where the Salesian charism was able to flourish and expand. The missions opened the doors to an extraordinary geographical and pastoral expansion — parishes, schools, shelters for orphans, migrants, hospitals, etc. In fact, we became one of the most dynamic missionary movements in the Church. In 150 years, 10,000 Salesians have left their provinces to go to the mission *ad gentes*, *ad exteros*, *ad vitam*, and today we are present in 137 countries, with 92 provinces, 14,000 Salesians and 1782 communities.

I invite you to look at some statistical data regarding missionaries sent *ad gentes* in the past 30 years<sup>1</sup>.

From the last years of Don Egidio Viganò's Rectorate (1993), 850 missionaries have departed for the *ad gentes* missions, with an average age of 34 years. Of these, 465 (55%) remain in their mission territories, 70 (8%) have changed destinations, 132 (16%) have left the Congregation, 257 (30%) have returned to their provinces of origin, and 46 (5%) have died in mission lands.

Let us pay attention to their origins: 220 (26%) are from the East Asia–Oceania Region; 156 (18%) from South Asia; 132 (16%) from Africa–Madagascar; 129 (15%) from Central–Northern Europe; 109 (13%) from the Mediterranean; 64 (8%) from Interamerica; and 40 (5%) from the Southern Cone.

Now let's look at their destinations by region: 287 (34%) have gone to Africa, 156 (18%) to East Asia–Oceania, 132 (15%) to Central–Northern Europe, 97 (11%) to the Mediterranean, 79 (9%) to Interamerica, 73 (9%) to the Southern Cone, and 26 (3%) to South Asia.

Beyond the numbers, these data reveal a trend that profoundly challenges our missionary identity. We must underline that the two Asian regions continue to be the most generous in sending missionaries. The two African Regions are progressively becoming missionary-sending regions rather than receiving ones. The regions of America and Europe balance out, sending and receiving roughly the same number of missionaries. **It is, however, worrying that many missionaries have either returned to their home provinces (at least 30%), left the Congregation (16%), or requested a change of missionary as-**

<sup>1</sup> The data relating to missionary expeditions is constantly updated by Marco Fulgaro, secretary of the Missions Sector.

**signment (8%). Clearly, we must review and improve the quality of the processes of discernment, selection, and formation of missionary candidates. At the same time, the receiving provinces must strengthen their processes of accompaniment and inculturation for new missionaries.**

Tomorrow the Rector Major, Fr. Fabio, will present the missionary cross to 19 new missionaries from 12 countries, who will depart for 11 new destinations. They come from India, Zambia, Poland, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Vietnam, Kenya, Madagascar, Angola, Bolivia, Japan, East Timor, and Uganda. Their destinations are Romania–Moldova, Greece, Turkey, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Thailand, Mozambique, South Africa, Vanuatu, Brazil, and Chile. This fills us with joy but also invites reflection. While we celebrate their generosity, **we are aware that the number of new missionaries decreases each year. This is worrying and deserves deeper reflection. What is happening to us? Is our missionary zeal and fervour progressively cooling or maybe we are entering in a paralyzing inertia?**

Some issues are essential for the future: the discernment, accompaniment, selection and immediate preparation before departure. We believe that a longer period of preparation could strengthen the discernment, the accompaniment and formation of new missionaries. We believe that a period of 6 months, with an appropriate team of formation guides, with missionary experience could strengthen the immediate preparation for the missionary send-off. During this period of intensive formation, the new missionaries could do proper spiritual accompaniment and discernment of their missionary vocation, study languages, some specific courses in the field of missiology and above all to be exposed to different ministries. We are thinking of a formation community here in Torino have access to a strong spiritual

formation in the places of Don Bosco and Mary Mazarello. We will have time to present this proposal to the general Council in December, prepare the logistics in 2026, in order to start in 2027. I think that both provincials from the sending and receiving provinces should be contacted and participate in the discernment of the selection process in dialogue with the mission sector. The receiving provinces should prepare the provincial and local communities to receive, accompany and continue the process of formation and inculturation of new missionaries.

**I point out now to few challenges that weaken the missionary dimension of our Congregation:**

1. **The global vocation crisis:** In several regions Salesians are aging and vocations are decreasing—especially in the Americas and Europe, which have seen a 24% and 26% decline respectively over the past decade. Only Asia (+8%) and Africa (+34%) show signs of growth. As a result, many provinces hesitate to send missionaries (lack of personnel, request for missionaries). Interestingly, a good number of provinces are asking for missionaries. Without them, they are “condemned” to disappear.
2. **The mistaken idea that “the time of missions is over”:** those who defend this approach defend that we are all missionaries. However, without missionaries *ad gentes ad exteros* and *ad vitam* we would not be present today in 137 countries in the world. Every province is called both to send and to receive missionaries. The Church, the Salesian Congregation were, are and will remain missionary until the end of time.
3. **The belief that the Mission Sector is no longer necessary:** there was a strong trend in GC29 has emphasized that a secretariat for the missions under the Rector Major or under the Youth Ministry sector would be enough.

To say that “the time of missions is over” would imply for us a *charismatic suicide*. The missionary dimension is “an essential and distinctive element that touches the very essence and life of our Congregation.” Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime affirmed that “the missionary dimension is part of our identity” and that the missions “push the Congregation forward, freeing it from paralyzing inertia and giving birth to beautiful dreams that become reality.”

St. John Paul II stated very clearly in *Redemptoris Missio* that “the fact that the whole Church is missionary does not exclude the existence of a specific *missio ad gentes*; just as saying that all Catholics must be missionaries does not exclude the existence of *missionaries ad gentes* and for life, by a specific vocation.” In fact, missionary activity must embrace all situations. The “missions” must not be seen as separated from the one mission of the Church. We must move from a merely geographical vision, still valid, to a global vision encompassing cultural, social, and existential frontiers.

One of the resolutions of GC29 was to modify article 30 of our Constitutions as follows:

“Peoples not yet evangelized **have always been the object** of Don Bosco’s apostolic concern and zeal, and they continue to urge and keep our missionary fervour alive. In missionary work, we recognize an essential feature of our Congregation. Through missionary activity, we carry out the patient work of evangelization and Church planting among specific human groups **and rekindle the faith even in countries of ancient Christian tradition.**”

This work mobilizes all the educational and pastoral resources typical of our charism. Following the example of the Son of God, who became like his brothers in all things, the Salesian missionary makes the values of those peoples his own and shares their anguish and hopes.” (R 18–24)

GC29 thus embraces an evolved concept of mission, not limited to geographic territories. Indeed, regions that were once missionary destinations now send missionaries throughout the world (Africa, Asia). For this reason, C.30 includes as “mission lands” even those countries of “ancient Christian tradition” now in need of a new evangelization.

We can therefore identify three contexts in which the Congregation exercise her missionary activity:

1. **The original peoples** who still await the first proclamation. There are human groups and sociocultural contexts that do not yet know Jesus or the Gospel. Think of the Apostolic Vicariates entrusted to the Salesians: Baku (Azerbaijan), Chaco Paraguayo (Paraguay), Gambella (Ethiopia), Méndez (Ecuador), Mixes (Mexico), Petén (Guatemala), Pucallpa (Peru), and Puerto Ayacucho (Venezuela). These generally have few priests, religious, and lay collaborators. Their Christian communities are very young and growing, with limited capacity for evangelization. These peoples and young Churches are the beneficiaries of our *ad gentes* missions.
2. **Our educative and pastoral communities where the Salesian charism is well planted.** These are the majority of our communities in the world. These must now become missionary communities that “go forth” to bring the joy of the Gospel to new frontiers. All Salesians, lay collaborators, and young people of the Salesian Family are called to embrace

this missionary commitment, especially toward the existential peripheries where young people suffer—forming “honest citizens and good Christians.” In fact, GC29 added a specific regulation (R15) emphasizing that our missionary and youth pastoral action must prioritize services to young and vulnerable communities. GC29 identifies concrete faces of young people who represent new missionary frontiers: migrants and displaced children; street children exposed to violence and exploitation; those suffering discrimination or isolation; those without education, vocational training, or decent work; those manipulated politically or ideologically; victims of ecological or social crises; spiritually abandoned youth, mentally struggling, or without hope or community; and hyperconnected youth who feel lonely despite living in digital networks. ***These young people are our new mission territory!***

**Pope Leo XIV has called us also to be a missionary church without forgetting the Digital Continent. The digital oratory and Artificial Intelligence** are also emerging mission fields. The digital age is not the future—it is our present. Young people learn, suffer, and hope through screens and networks. On July 29 this year, Pope Leo XIV addressed Catholic digital missionaries, stressing the need for Christian witness in digital spaces and calling for virtual oratories—places of dialogue, formation, and encounter with Christ. He invited evangelizers to foster peace and hope online. Our mission must create welcoming and healing digital presences that accompany young people. In June, Pope Leo also participated in a Vatican conference on **ethics and Artificial Intelligence**, emphasizing that its development must protect human dignity, children, and youth. He warned that “access to data is not the same as intelligence,” and that technology must serve communion, not control. It can aid education and communication, but can never replace the

quality of human presence and real accompaniment that true mission demands.

3. Finally, regarding our missionary contexts, let us not forget that there are countries in need of a new evangelization, especially “those of ancient Christianity or even younger Churches where entire groups of baptized persons have lost a living sense of faith or no longer recognize themselves as members of the Church.”

Allow me to say a word on the “**Project Europe**”, launched by Fr. Pascual Chávez in 2004. The document *Eccllesia in Europa* states: “Europe is today one of those traditionally Christian regions where a first proclamation or renewed proclamation of the Gospel is necessary—even for the baptized, for those distant from faith, or those who have abandoned Christ. There are also vast social and cultural areas that need a true *missio ad gentes*.”

I do not believe that Europe’s re-evangelization can be accomplished merely by bringing missionaries from Asia, or Africa. These new missionaries and the receiving communities must be adequately prepared. We must search for new ways in dialogue with the laity and young people. During the last General Chapter, a European Provincial gave me a vivid image: Europe is like a forest burned by years of secularization, yet beneath the ashes remain glowing embers still alive. We must start from there. Who are these embers? First, the Salesians—the communities joyfully living their charism and fully committed to the mission. Salesians must rethink and redesign their presences prophetically. In Europe there still are families and young people committed to the Gospel and the Church, thousands of lay collaborators, Salesian Family members, Cooperators, past pupils, and volunteers engaged in the mission. All together, we are called to be the protago-

nists of this new evangelization. We evangelize educating and we educate evangelizing. We evangelize through our social works and through our social works we truly evangelize. The new evangelization of Europe will be carried out mainly by young people and the laity, associations and organizations of young people and the laity animated by courageous Salesians who are capable of inspiring and accompanying people more than being protagonists. The second nucleus of GC29 expresses it clearly: Salesians together with the laity, the Salesian Family, with and for the young, are called to lead this revitalization of Christian life in Europe.

**Africa** deserves special attention. The “Project Africa” has been one of the most fruitful in the Congregation’s history. In fifty years, we are now present in almost every country on the continent. The great challenge now is the *quality* of formation for the new generations. Over the last ten years, the number of Salesians in Africa has grown by 34%, now exceeding 3,000. Most *ad gentes* missionary candidates today come from Africa. Therefore, rather than a “Project Africa,” we should speak of a “Project Formation for Africa.” The focus must be on *quality over quantity, charismatic identity over generic activity*. Africa must form good formators, strengthen formation houses and teams, deepen studies, Salesian identity, and exposure to the Salesian mission. This is the emphasis of GC29 and the new *Ratio*: **formation in mission!**

Mission in Africa must also focus on a deeper, more systematic evangelization and catechesis, as Paul VI asked in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: “It is necessary to evangelize—not in a decorative, superficial way, but in a vital way, in depth and right to the roots—the culture and cultures of man... always beginning with the person and returning always to the relationships among persons and with God.”

Interreligious dialogue remains essential in Africa, especially with Islam, in predominantly Muslim countries where we are present and valued for our educational and vocational training work, even when explicit religious teaching is not allowed. The strategy in such places remains that of “preaching without preaching,” evangelizing through kindness and a smile. In these works, where most of our beneficiaries are Muslim, our priority commitment must be to form young people in tolerance, respect of other’s conscience, mutual acceptance, dialogue, understanding, and forgiveness. In Muslim contexts, we “evangelize” by educating for coexistence, harmony, and peace.

In **America**, the Salesian missions must focus on interculturality, an incarnated evangelization, care for vulnerable youth (especially migrants), popular piety, the promotion of justice, closeness to indigenous peoples demanding dignity and respect for their rights, care for our common home, listening to young people of other religions or of no faith, and strengthening communities rather than building structures. Above all, we need youth ministry rich in spirituality, creativity, and pastoral innovation, with special focus on vocations. We must overcome the fear of proclaiming Christ openly.

Finally, **Asia**—the continent of vast cultural and religious diversity, where Christians and Salesians represent a tiny minority. The mission continues through educational witness, vocational training, service to the most vulnerable, and interreligious dialogue. The fraternal witness of our communities will be essential for transmitting the Gospel. We must continue forming lay people, educators, and catechists imbued with the Salesian spirit, creating new educational and pastoral communities oriented toward mission. The promotion of specific vocations will be essential for the future of Salesian Asia and of the Congregation. The Mission Sector must continue preparing *borderless*

*missionaries*, especially trained for the “Chinese world”—its language, culture, history, spirituality, and social sensitivities—for the day when new doors open.

Pope Francis once said: “I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and clinging to its own security.” Pope Leo XIV dreams of a poor Church for the poor—a missionary Church, permanently in mission. We too prefer a Salesian Congregation and Family that is wounded and dusty but alive and healthy, with feet on the ground and hearts in heaven because we are missionary.

After 150 years since that first missionary expedition, the mission continues. Don Bosco’s missionary dream is still growing, thanks to the creative fidelity of his sons and daughters. We are all called to be missionaries. Young people are our mission land—our promised land. The passion for Jesus and for the salvation of the young moved Don Bosco to send his first missionaries to Patagonia. What does our love for Jesus and for young people move us to do today? Each of us should ask: *Where is my/our Patagonia today?*

Let us return to the starting point: Don Bosco’s dream has not faded. Don Bosco has not closed his eyes. He looks at us and calls us to continue. Yes, his dream is still alive—because we are the dream, and we are the mission.

Then, the presentation of best practices from the continents.

## ASIA

### 1. RECENT BEST PRACTICES OF MISSIONARY ANIMATION IN SOUTH ASIA REGION

This report consolidates the missionary animation efforts across our provinces, highlighting the collaborative roles of the Regional Delegate for Missionary Animation (RDMA), Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation (PDMA), and **Local Delegates for Missionary Animation (LDMA)**. By integrating their responsibilities, we foster a vibrant missionary spirit, ensuring efficiency and impact at regional, provincial, and local levels.

**Role of LDMA:** The Local Delegate for Missionary Animation (LDMA) is appointed in each community to oversee missionary animation efforts and foster a vibrant missionary atmosphere within the local community. To ensure effective animation, the LDMA understands the role of an animator, demonstrates creativity and enthusiasm, and actively seeks innovative methods to achieve the goal of cultivating a missionary spirit in the community.

#### **Coordinated Responsibilities of PDMA and LDMAs**

The PDMA and LDMAs work in tandem to animate the missionary spirit across provinces and local communities (e.g., parishes, schools, colleges, hostels, and youth centers). The PDMA, supported by the Provincial and his Council, coordinates province-wide efforts, while LDMAs, appointed in each community drive grass-root level animation.

Together they:

- Conduct animation sessions for confreres, novices, pre-novices, aspirants, and youth groups to cultivate a missionary ethos at both provincial and local levels.

- Organize key events, including Annual Mission Day, monthly Salesian Missionary Day (11th), seminars, quizzes, exhibitions, competitions, prayer services, and exposure trips to mission areas.
- Lead and support the Provincial Missionary Animation Commission, comprising confreres and lay members, to collaboratively plan and execute activities.
- Distribute missionary materials (e.g., Cagliari-11, prayer services, missionary biographies) via print and visual media, ensuring visibility on notice boards, particularly in formation houses.
- Form and sustain missionary groups through regular meetings, prayer sessions, and “missionary weeks” during holidays to promote volunteerism and inter-group gatherings.
- Provide training and follow-up to enhance local animation effectiveness.
- Invite missionaries to share experiences, connecting communities with global mission work.

### **Key Initiatives**

1. WhatsApp Group: The Provincial Delegate for Missionary Animation (PDMA) connects all Local Delegates for Missionary Animation (LDMAs) through a dedicated WhatsApp group to facilitate communication and coordination.
2. Jubilee Prayer: The Jubilee Prayer is distributed and recited within communities to promote spiritual unity and missionary fervor.
3. Spiritual Formation: Regular catechism classes, Bible study sessions, novenas, and rosary devotions are conducted to foster spiritual growth among the faithful.
4. Youth and Children Engagement: Children and youth are encouraged to participate in missionary groups and to pray for

mission lands, nurturing their involvement in missionary activities.

5. Monthly Observances in Formation Houses: All formation houses observe the 11th of each month with Eucharistic adoration and Holy Mass dedicated to the mission apostolate.
6. Family and Pastoral Care: Family counseling and care for the sick and suffering are provided to strengthen community bonds and support those in need.
7. 150th Missionary Expedition Celebration: A commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Missionary Expedition is scheduled for November.
8. Missionary Day: Missionary Day is observed approximately monthly in all houses to promote missionary awareness and engagement.
9. Salesian Missionary Volunteers: Several houses have successfully initiated programs to prepare Salesian missionary volunteers.
10. Visit of Pre-Novices: Pre-novices participate in visits as part of the preparations for the 150th anniversary of the Missionary Expedition.
11. Booklet: Booklets in preparation to Celebrating 150 Years of Salesian Missionary Zeal are being prepared to commemorate the milestone.
12. Retreats: Retreats focused on fostering missionary zeal are organized to inspire and motivate participants.
13. Animation Program: Animation programs for catechists are conducted, highlighting the history of the province. Additionally, renewal programs are organized for village catechists to enhance their skills and commitment.
14. Ad Gentes: Opportunities for interaction with missionaries serving outside the province are facilitated to strengthen ties and share experiences.

## Impact of the Integrated Structure

The integrated PDMA-LDMA approach ensures missionary news and activities permeate every community, fostering sustained awareness and zeal. Continuous training and frequent communication amplify the effectiveness of grassroots and provincial efforts, creating a cohesive missionary animation framework.

## Consolidated LDMA Presence Across Provinces

Province	Number of LDMA
Bombay INB	36
Calcutta INC	30
Dimapur IND	In progress
Guwahati ING	42
Hyderabad INH	25
Bangalore INK	31
Madras INM	50
Delhi INN	10
Panjim INP	17
Shillong INS	38
Tiruchy INT	33
Sri Lanka LKC	16

## Conclusion

The collaborative efforts of the RDMA, PDMA, and LDMA create a dynamic and sustainable missionary animation framework. The RDMA ensures regional synergy, while the PDMA and LDMA jointly drive provincial coordination and grassroots enthusiasm. This integrated approach fosters a robust missionary spirit, ensuring impactful engagement across all levels.

## 2. MISSIONARY ANIMATION IN A MULTICULTURAL AND MULTI-RELIGIOUS CONTEXT - CAMBODIA

Good morning my dear friends, I am Fr. Arun Michael Charles from Cambodia.

Before I start my presentation, I would like to give an overview of our region. The East Asia Oceania Region. Our EAO region has 18 countries with eight provinces, four vice provinces and five delegations. The EAO region is multi-cultural and multi-religious.

Coming to the topic, "Missionary animation in a multicultural and multireligious context", I would like to set the backdrop of Cambodia.

We had the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s. During this regime, most of the elders, skilled workers, doctors, engineers, artists, scholars etc. were massacred because they were seen as a threat to the Khmer Rouge regime. This damaged the culture and ethnicity of the entire country, with no elders to guide the later generations. Buddhism is an integral part of their way of life and so for a Khmer or a Cambodian, Buddhism and the cultural practices involved with it are essential. It is part of their culture and society.

The students in our schools are predominantly Buddhists and Muslims. Christians are a minority and so, every year, we may have one catholic in the school or none.

There are many cultures that influence Cambodia. We have Korean, American, Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese cultures and of course indigenous cultures and traditions.

We use the good morning talks and good night talks as a tool to form our young people."

We have common prayers with Buddhist monks and integrate prayers from Indigenous traditions and their religion, ... from Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity for various festivals.

The video shows our students from different religions praying when one of their fellow students Rothana died in a road accident this year.

This shows a Jarai indigenous ritual, the intervention and prayer by one of our local Muslim leaders after mass on the feast of our Lady.

This is when we invited a few Buddhist monks from the nearby monastery to pray and bless the students.

Every year we conduct a seminar on Salesian Spirituality for our 2nd year students at our technical schools.

Music and Dance is part of Khmer culture and so we use music and dance to enkindle the missionary spirit of St. John Bosco.



## AFRICA

### **Missionary animation facing the great challenge of refugees and internally displaced persons, ... with the hope of the missionary group accompaniment**

- Face reality with courage by relying on the Gospel, which is good news for all of life and for every life;
  - Sow seeds of hope in hearts so that peace may come and for greater solidarity, more brotherhood.
1. Hello dear sisters and brothers! I am Father Privat Fouda from Cameroon, ATE Vice-province.  
To begin, I will briefly introduce our former large Region: Africa Madagascar, now subdivided into two Regions: South-East and Central-West.
  2. Our Africa and Madagascar Region comprises 54 countries, of which 38 have Salesian presences. There are 15 circumscriptions - 6 Provinces, 9 Vice-provinces.
  3. We have chosen to share with you the topic of the Salesian presence among Refugees and displaced persons (particularly in Kenya AFE, Ethiopia AET, and Uganda AGL). Without limiting ourselves to this, so that hope may grow, we will also talk to you about the accompaniment of the missionary group in AFC and ACC (DRC).

#### **4. SALESIAN ACTIONS IN REFUGEE CAMPS AND AMONG DISPLACED PEOPLE IN AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR**

##### **4.a- The general situation in the world**

##### **STATISTICS ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS 2023 (2024 REPORT, IDMC)**

## 2023: 34.8 million – 2025: 83.3 million

The IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) is a global reference organization for data and analysis on internally displaced persons (IDPs), who are people forced to flee their homes but remain within their own country's borders. According to their 2025 global report, by the end of 2024, 83.4 million people were internally displaced worldwide, mainly due to conflicts (73 million) and disasters (10.4 million), representing a record level.

### 4.b- The situation in Africa and Madagascar

**The different places where refugees and internally displaced persons can be found – The listing is not exhaustive (More research is needed)**

1.	Angola		Few urban refugees in Luanda
2.	Ethiopia	Gambella	7 refugee camps from South Sudan, war and natural disasters as main reasons
3.	Ethiopia	Shire	7 refugee camps from South Sudan, war and natural disasters as main reasons
4.	Ivory Coast	Duékoué	IDPs
5.	Kenya	Kakuma	REFUGEES
6.	Benin	Porto Novo	IDPs
7.	Mali	Bamako	IDPs
8.	Nigeria	Kontagora - Koko	IDPs
9.	Rep.Centrafricana	Bangui	IDPs after 2013 crisis and flooding
10.	Cameroon	East	REFUGEES from RCA

11. Cameroon	Far North	IDPs Boko Haram
12. Cameroon	Noso	IDPs after 2016
13. Tchad	East	REFUGEES from Sudan
14. Rwanda	Butare - Rango	REFUGEES from Burundi
15. South Africa	Cape Town	illegal immigrants and internal migrants (squatter colonies or 'new settlements')
16. South Africa	Johannesburg	illegal immigrants and internal migrants (squatter colonies or 'new settlements')
17. South Sudan	Gumbo/Juba	IDPs
18. South Sudan	Maridi	IDPs
19. South Sudan	Tonji	IDPs
20. South Sudan	Wau	IDPs
21. Sudan	El Obeid	REFUGEES
22. Sudan	Khartoum - Parish	REFUGEES
23. Sudan	Khartoum - VTC	REFUGEES
24. Uganda	Palabek	REFUGEES
25. R.D. Congo	Goma - Ngangi	REFUGEES and IDPs for Congo situation

#### 4.c - The camps where the Salesians are present (*To be explored further*)

**Sudan:** Gumbo; Juba

**RDC:** Goma;

**Ethiopia:** Adwa (Tigray)

**Uganda:** Palabek

**Kenya:** Kakuma

#### 4.d- The three main Salesian presences

Kakuma, **Kenya: 300.000** refugees and IDPs

Adwa, Tigray-**Ethiopia: 115.000** refugees and IDPs

Currently, Ethiopia is hosting more than 930,000 refugees, primarily from South Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea. The number of internally displaced people in Ethiopia was estimated at over 4 million in August 2023, largely due to conflicts.

Palabek, **Uganda: 80.000** réfugiés et déplacés internes

18,500 at the beginning of 2018 to around 57,000 at the end of 2021, then up to 70-75,000 in 2023

## 5. Activities

The Salesians of Don Bosco have been actively involved in providing humanitarian assistance and development projects to support refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Our initiatives are designed to address both immediate needs and long-term empowerment within these vulnerable communities.

1. Emergency Relief and Basic Needs:
2. Education and Vocational Training:
3. Psychosocial Support and Counselling:
4. Health and Sanitation:
5. Community Empowerment and Integration:

## 6. GC29: Statistics and challenges

### GLOBALE – STRUTTURE con ATTENZIONE a MIGRANTI e RIFUGIATI

REGIONI	MIGRANTI e RIFUGIATI Centri	SDB impegnati a tempo pieno	SDB impegnati a tempo parziale	Memori impegnati della famiglia salesiana	Altri religiosi/ impegnati non salesiani	Laici impegnati non membri della famiglia salesiana	Volontari (maschi + femmine)	Animatori giovanili impegnati	Destinatari (maschi + femmine)
RASE	2	2	1	13					355
RASS	27	58	32	33	15	118	162	39	78254
RAFM	2	10	2	12	23	130	5	40	31025
RECN	16	7	10	3	0	93	33	118	798
RMED	88	24	84	178	5	457	321	334	7411
RAMI	36	12	14	62	6	664	152	37	1607
RAMS	2								
TOT	173	113	143	301	49	1462	673	568	119450

## 7. The evangelizing action: “Da mihi animas”

- Beyond aid and social work... to be a presence that supports and bears witness
- Africans, missionaries for Africans (Paul VI, Kampala-Uganda 1969)... Youth for youth!

## 8. Testimony of Father Trinh Kinh Luan, SDB of the AET (Ethiopia-Eritrea)

Dear Fr. Privat, Warm greetings. I hope this message finds you in good health and peace.

In response to your kind request, I am pleased to share a brief history of my presence in Adwa and some information regarding the current humanitarian situation.

I was assigned to Don Bosco Adwa on 16th September 2019. Not long after my arrival, the world was struck by the

COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly affected our pastoral, educational, and community activities. **We adapted our mission to respond to the new challenges** — focusing on supporting students and families through small-scale relief efforts, awareness programs, and spiritual accompaniment.

However, soon after, the war in Tigray broke out, bringing immense suffering, displacement, and destruction. During the conflict, Adwa became one of the most affected areas. The Don Bosco compound and community opened their doors to serve the local population and thousands of displaced people who sought safety and support.

At one point, our compound sheltered and assisted thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs), providing daily bread, water, and a place of refuge, especially for children and mothers. Our Technical College workshops were transformed into bakeries and classrooms into temporary shelters. Despite the communication blackout and lack of external aid, our community tried to remain a sign of God's love and hope amid great darkness.

Today, the situation remains very fragile. Around **115,000 refugees** and internally displaced persons are living in six camps within and around Adwa. Many of them continue to depend on humanitarian support for food, education, and psychosocial care. Don Bosco Adwa, together with various partners, continues to offer assistance through education, vocational training, psychosocial support, and youth empowerment programs.

Through all these experiences from the pandemic to the conflict we have seen the hand of God sustaining us, and the resilience of the people inspiring us to continue our mission with faith and hope.

Thank you once again, Father, for your kind attention and concern for our community and the people of Tigray, Ethiopia

## PERSPECTIVES:

*The Salesians are the sons of a migrant, Don Bosco, who came from the rural areas of Castelnuovo d'Asti and moved to Turin. Their first recipients were young migrants, and the first missionaries in Argentina had to take care of Italian migrants. But above all, today, the Salesians work with and for migrants, especially children and young people, on all continents.*

- **Addressing migrations in general:** through listening, observation, information sharing (Data center), missionary solidarity, and prevention of the causes that trigger them;
- **Promoting synodality within the Regions:** Communion, Coordination, Communication (CCC);
- **Promoting lay and Salesian Family vocations** for this specific service;
- **Migrations, refugees, and missionary social communication:** towards interregional Coordination?

In refugee camps and among displaced people, the Salesians are committed to continuing the mission of compassion and service, striving to offer hope and the prospect of a better future to all those affected by forced migration.

*... with the hope of the missionary group accompaniment*

**Sow seeds of hope in hearts so that peace may come and for greater solidarity, more brotherhood.**

- Contribute to nurturing the missionary spirit among young people and young Salesians in the formation houses.
- Spread the missionary culture through activities of mutual aid, sharing, and initial evangelization.
- Promote volunteering vocations or Salesian missionary vocations.

## EUROPE

### **PROJECT EUROPE: The Salesian Province of Ljubljana / Slovenia**

Thanks to the Project Europe, the Salesian Province of Ljubljana-Slovenija (SLO) has welcomed six missionary confreres between 2021 and 2024. All six were sent to us at the end of their post-novitiate: one from Uganda, two from Congo, two from Vietnam and one from India. It is interesting to note that all six come from countries where Slovenian Salesians had worked as missionaries in previous years.

During these three years, one of them did not renew his vows and left the Congregation; the other five are continuing their vocational journey as candidates for the priesthood. After their arrival, they devoted a whole year to studying Slovenian; they continued their formation for another two years, working with young people in oratories/youth centres and boarding schools. In this way, they were able to experience direct contact with young people and get to know Salesian life and mission in the different houses of the province. During the summer, they were included in the provincial programs for children and young people (spiritual retreats, summer camps, summer programs for young people, etc.), always accompanied and supported by their young Slovenian confreres.

After completing their first three years of language studies and various pastoral experiences, they are now continuing their theological studies at the Faculty of Theology in Ljubljana. Accompanied by a formation team, they live in a formation house (*Casa del Buon Pastore*), which is part of the Salesian community in Ljubljana and offers specific Salesian formation to confreres in formation. We are aware that every missionary vocation requires careful

discernment. This gradual and progressive journey is accompanied by spiritual guides, the Director and the formation team.

**Positive aspects** of the presence of missionaries in the Province:

- A new understanding of the missionary dimension: from a Province that sends to a Province that receives missionaries
- A fraternal welcome for missionary confreres
- Valuable help in youth ministry
- Openness to multiculturalism
- New links with the Provinces from which the missionaries come



**The difficulties and challenges** are related to:

- Language learning (linguistic skills)
- Integration of missionaries into a new socio-cultural context
- Integration of philosophical and theological studies into the curriculum of the Faculty of Theology
- Vocational discernment (priest or lay person)
- Deepening of missionary identity
- Vocational fragility

**Janez Potočnik,**  
PDMA SLO

## AMERICA

### Work process - PDMA Interamerica Regional Plan

I am Edwin Marcelo Coronel, Delegate for Missionary Animation of the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús Province of Ecuador. For about a year now, I have been responsible for coordinating the PDMAs of Interamerica.

Today, I will explain the process of the Regional Plan, which began in 2022.

The definition of the Regional Plan involved a series of steps that were completed during 2022, under the direction and animation of CORAM, with the participation of the PDMAs and members of the Regional Commission for Missionary Animation.

1. Survey on needs and challenges
2. Consolidation of survey responses
3. Identification and prioritisation of issues.
4. Definition of: objectives, lines of action, activities, deadlines and indicators.
5. Subsequently, at a meeting, the proposed Regional Plan is approved, with some suggestions added.

#### 1. SURVEY

The survey takes into account the four areas of the Missions Sector Plan, which are: Missionary Vocation, Missionary Animation, Missionary Solidarity, New Frontiers.

Subsequently, it is considered necessary to designate two members of the team to propose the first draft of the Regional Plan.

Provinces participating in the survey: Colombia Medellín

(COM), Colombia Bogotá (COB), Mexico Guadalajara (MEG), Mexico - Mexico (MEM), Venezuela (VEN), United States - West (SUO), Ecuador (ECU), Bolivia (BOL) and Peru (PER).

### **Missionary vocation: challenges and difficulties**

- It is necessary to strengthen networking
- Since the PDMA is not part of the provincial council, it is difficult to socialise activities.
- In some provinces, the PDMA has not been given its due value.
- Develop a formation program for missionary groups.

### **Missionary vocation: needs**

- We ask that the continuity of processes be guaranteed, ensuring the stability of delegates.
- Guarantee the formation of young Salesians in the missionary field, both from a theoretical and practical point of view.
- A budget for missionary animation is requested.
- Work in synergy with the delegation for youth ministry.

### **Missionary animation: challenges and difficulties**

- Strengthen missionary groups
- Give greater interest to missionary volunteering from a vocational point of view.
- Consolidate the missionary animation group in each province.
- Promote missionary news

### **Missionary animation: needs**

- The formation process should be aimed at Salesians and lay people in the missionary field
- A provincial animation group is needed.

- Database of places for missionary volunteering
- Coordination of activities for the region.

### **Missionary solidarity: challenges and difficulties**

- Motivate economic solidarity in favour of priority works.
- Ensure that communities feel committed to missionary animation.
- Closeness to the PDOs

### **Missionary solidarity: needs**

- Support for communities on a human and economic level
- Fundraising for missionary animation
- Knowledge of the work of the Mission Offices.

### **New frontiers: challenges and difficulties**

- Strengthen mission locations.
- Work in synergy with Youth Ministry, serving those most in need.
- Attention to migrants
- Audiovisual material to help with initial proclamation.

### **New frontiers: needs**

- Opening of provinces to welcome and send volunteers.
- Raise awareness among missionaries through the creation of materials.
- Learn about successful missionary experiences in the sector.

## **HIERARCHISATION OF THEMES**

For this phase of the Regional Plan process, the designated members of the CORAM team carried out a preliminary identification of the themes in the responses of each of the DIAMs, in order to obtain a better reading that would facilitate the decision-making process.

The identification of themes facilitated the work during the Continental Meeting of DIAMs in October 2022, where the work carried out was presented in order to prioritise the themes to be considered in the Regional Plan.

A second tool that facilitated the work of drafting the objectives, lines of action and identification of those responsible is as follows.

## APPROVAL OF THE PLAN

The composition of the Regional Plan is presented to CORAM, based on the work carried out by DIAM during the Meeting. The observations and recommendations of Fr. Hernán Carmona, CORAM, and the team are included in order to obtain the final version of the Regional Plan.

The theme of Missionary Volunteering is integrated into the Regional Plan

Fr. Hernán Carmona, then CORAM, presents the Regional Plan to the DIAMs in an online meeting. The Regional Plan is approved.

In the afternoon, the participants shared in mixed groups according to some questions.

### 10.11 SHARING IN MIXED GROUPS

#### 1 – Give thanks

Thank you, God, for bringing us all together here: share a profound reason to be grateful today.



## 2 – Rethink

Do you truly feel called to be missionaries in your daily lives?

## 3 – Relaunch

Can you identify a fruit of this 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in your life?



In the afternoon, two copies of the collection of Cagliari11 from 2009 to 2024 were offered to the Rector Major and to the Museo Casa Don Bosco.

The groups presented the synthesis and the questions, later Fr. Jorge Crisafulli answered to them offering a vision of the Salesian missions in

line with the anniversary and the GC29.

Fr. Luca Barone SDB presented at the end of the afternoon a video realized by the Salesian Mission Office of Turin (Missioni Don Bosco) around the 150 years from the 1<sup>st</sup> Salesian Missionary Expedition: <https://www.missionidonbosco.org/a-150-year-long-story>

During the vespers, in the historic Church of Saint Francis de Sales, a profound moment of faith and dedication unfolded as the Salesian family gathered for the solemn Delivery of Missionary Assignments. This moving ceremony marked the beginning of a new chapter for dozens of new missionaries – SDBs and FMAs who have accepted the call to bring the Gospel and the Salesian charism to distant lands.

Presiding over the event was Fr. Stefano Martoglio, the Vicar of the Rector Major, who handed each missionary the precious letter of obedience — a symbol of trust, availability, and readiness to serve where the Congregation most needs them. The presence of the Rector Major and the Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians elevated the celebration, filling the church with warmth and encouragement as both shared heartfelt words of blessing and support.

One by one, the missionaries approached the altar as Fr. Martoglio called their names. Each received their assignment with visible joy and emotion, embodying the missionary spirit that has animated the Salesian tradition for generations. Representatives of missionary animation from different countries were also present, welcoming their future collaborators and strengthening the bonds that unite the Salesian world across languages and cultures.

The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians also took part in this meaningful event, receiving their own missionary assignments alongside their Salesian brothers. Together, they celebrated this shared mission in the very church where Don Bosco himself once prayed and celebrated Mass — a sacred space that continues to echo with his dream of a world transformed by faith and love for the young.

As hymns of thanksgiving rose and fraternal embraces were exchanged, the atmosphere brimmed with gratitude, joy, and hope. The evening became a vivid expression of missionary zeal — a testimony that Don Bosco's spirit continues to inspire new generations to go forth as signs and bearers of God's love.

For every missionary who received their assignment that evening, the journey has begun — a journey that transcends borders and embraces all peoples, fired by the same love that moved Don Bosco to send his first missionaries more than a century ago.



The day concludes with a cultural night and party, where the publication *Bosco Food* was presented by Fr. Pavel Zenisek SDB.

## Tuesday 11.11.2025

The participants worked for continents (four groups) around the process of discernment, accompaniment, welcome and follow-up of the missionaries.



### A) ACCOMPANIMENT OF THE MISSIONARIES AFTER BEING SENT OFF

- Are they involved **in the discernment and formation** before they leave the province? If not, why?
- Are they in touch with them **after they have left** for another province? If not, why?

## B) INTEGRATION TO THE COMMUNITIES (of my province) AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL

- What main challenges the DIAM meet in helping the integration of the missionaries in province and culture?
- What could be improved in this matter?

The afternoon starts with a meeting of the Rector Major who gives some input related to the work groups of the day before and then answers to the spontaneous questions of the participants.

After the official pictures, the central event of the anniversary started: the Mass with the sending of the 156<sup>th</sup> Salesian missionary expedition.



## SALESIAN MISSIONARY EXPEDITION

*Exactly 150 years ago, the first Salesian missionaries left for Argentina, beginning a wonderful story that has allowed the Salesian charism to develop, now present in 137 countries around the world. Today we celebrate this anniversary with the 156th missionary expedition of the Salesians of Don Bosco and the 148th missionary expedition of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA).*

*Fr. Fabio Attard, Rector Major of the Salesians, who is presiding over this celebration, will present the missionary cross to the departing Salesians who are offering themselves to be missionaries “ad vitam”, and Chiara Cazzuola, Mother General of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, will present it to the FMA missionaries.*

*As with Don Bosco, this missionary sending forth in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians is a gesture to Give Thanks, Rethink and Relaunch the Salesian missions, before Mary Help of Christians, in this jubilee year.*



Homily of Fr. Fabio Attard, Rector Major

Dear brothers and sisters,

*“We are worthless servants; we have done only what we ought to have done!”* (Lk 17:10). These are the concluding words of the Gospel we have just heard. Through these words we want to connect symbolically with that memorable event that took place here in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, exactly 150 years ago, on 11 November 1875. This is not an exercise that takes us back to the past but rather an invitation that allows us to participate in that extraordinary moment that still speaks to us powerfully today.

When handing over his written reminders to the first missionaries and saying his tearful farewell, Don Bosco was sowing a seed as small as a mustard seed, trusting and hoping that it would grow into a large plant. That farewell ceremony contains a gospel lesson that is still meaningful for us today and will remain so forever.

Today, before you, brothers and sisters, who are about to be sent on this 156th missionary expedition, I would like to share some brief reflections in the light of the Gospel. The Gospel speaks of the useless servant, that is, the servant who seeks no profit. It is an image that presents itself to us as a mirror of the spirit contained in the Reminders that Don Bosco wrote and gave to the first missionaries. We are convinced that in those Reminders Don Bosco tried to tell them everything that was in his heart.

### **THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST**

A first call that emerges from Don Bosco’s mind and heart, as reflected in the Reminders is the centrality of Christ: “Seek souls, but not money, honours or dignity.”.

In these few, dense words the whole Gospel resounds. The voice of Christ resounds, saying, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” The sending of the apostles resounds: “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Don Bosco was not sending officials or administrators, people capable of organising and managing. Don Bosco was sending apostles. And he did so with the full and profound awareness that this mission was not his own project, but a response to the mandate of Christ himself.

Here lies the first invitation: every Christian mission, every apostolic work, every act of charity finds its source in the gospel and reaches its destination, which is life in its fullness. It is not enough to do good, it is not enough to help the poor, it is not enough to educate young people. All this is valuable, but it only becomes an expression of the gospel if the ‘useless servant’ is rooted in Christ, only if this call is lived in the light of his name, only if all commitment leads to that integral maturation marked and fermented by gospel values.

When Christ is the basis and foundation, then every action and gesture bears witness to the logic of grace and not to human activity alone. This emerges when we have the awareness and conviction that without Christ we can do nothing, but with him we can do everything.

### **FIDELITY TO THE CHARISM**

A second invitation is fidelity to the charism. In this historical period, as a Congregation and Salesian Family we are insisting much and frequently on this charismatic identity. It is not a question of having a lot of information about places and names. Rather, it is a question of the urgency of knowing the spirit of Don Bosco and the Salesian charism.

In order to live and share the gift of the Salesian charism with

young people and for their good, wherever we are, we need to know this great gift. And this gift comes to us through the life of our dear Don Bosco. When we know Don Bosco deeply, the Salesian spirit he has given us sends us to meet young people so that we may be witnesses of the gospel. That same pastoral charity which is the basis of the preventive system, lived and communicated to us by Don Bosco, marks us, shapes us and thus makes us transmitters of love which is preventive, of a presence which accompanies, which communicates trust, which educates in a healthy and integral way – pure gospel.

Charismatic fidelity is not something we have or can obtain. It is what we are called to be, that is, rooted in Christ, passionate about Jesus, and then we live it and communicate it in the style of Don Bosco. A style marked by fraternal life, family spirit, presence among young people, and collaboration among all those involved in the mission for the good of young people. This is the most convincing and credible witness we can offer. Charismatic fidelity is the high road so that our consecration and our dedication, passion and educative and pastoral commitment become gifts to our young people.

### **SERVING THE POOR**

The third and final invitation concerns service to the poor. Don Bosco's example clearly tells us that in order to serve the poor, we must first be poor ourselves. The witness of poverty and moderation is not ideology, it is the gospel in action. When we identify authentically with Christ, the choice of poverty, which for us consecrated persons is a vow, becomes a liberating choice.

It is a choice that truly sets us free to serve. Don Bosco is very clear on this point: free from the pursuit of honours, from dependence on money, from attachment to comfort. Don Bosco shows us that this is the only way to become true believers, credible pastors, and then we will be believed by those we meet. Poverty is the

only wealth that makes us free to win hearts, to open the doors of young people's hearts to the Gospel.

The missionary truly communicates authority before everyone when he is consistent with himself and with the One who sent him. A community that lives poverty and moderation becomes the living gospel.

Taken together, we can say that the Reminders can be based on these three pillars: identity with Christ, fidelity to the charism and service to the poor.

I conclude by asking the Lord of life to fill each and every one of us with his Spirit, enriching us with his strength to live and transmit the beauty of the gospel according to the heart of Don Bosco.

Amen.

### **Solemn sending**

We offer our praise and supplication to God the Father, the giver of every good gift, for these brothers and sisters of ours who are sent to bring the good news of salvation to various regions in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We bless and praise you, O God, for in the mysterious plan of your mercy you sent your Son into the world to free mankind from the bondage of sin through the shedding of his blood and to fill them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Having conquered death, before ascending to you, O Father, he sent the Apostles, vicars of his love, to proclaim to the nations the Gospel of life, and to immerse the faithful in the regenerating waters of Baptism.

He revealed your love for the little ones and the poor, and never fails those whom you call to serve their brothers and sisters.

Look, Lord, upon these servants of yours, our brothers and sisters, whom, having been invested with the sign of the cross, we send forth as messengers of salvation and peace.

Guide their steps with your right hand, sustain them with the power of your grace, that they may not falter under the weight of their apostolic labours.

May the voice of Christ resound in their words. May those who listen to them be drawn to obedience to the Gospel.

May they have the pastoral heart of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello; may they be for young people a paternal and maternal presence of Jesus, who desires abundant life for all.

Grant them the ability to listen, to show solidarity with everyone, imagination, creativity, apostolic courage, the patience to wait, and the enthusiasm of love.

May they be joyful signs and bearers of salvation.

Pour your Holy Spirit into their hearts, so that, having become all things to all people, they may lead to you, O Father, a multitude of children who, in the holy Church, may praise you without end. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Dearest brothers and sisters, may Mary, Mother and Teacher, accompany and protect you. In the name of Don Bosco and in memory of the first missionary expedition, go and proclaim to the young people and the poor of the world the joy of the Risen Christ!



### Presentation of the cross

Lord, Holy Father, who willed that the cross of your Son should be the source of every blessing and the fountain of every grace, bless these crosses. Grant that those who wear them may commit themselves to being renewed in the image of your Son. He lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Dearest brothers and sisters, receive this sign of the love of Christ the Redeemer. May it be for you a support and a model of authentic and faithful love. Be the smile and the tender presence of Jesus to the young people to whom you are sent. In your mission you will live in holiness and find the joy that fills life.

## The SDB missionaries of the 156<sup>th</sup> Expedition

From		SURNAME	NAME	To
AGL	S.	BALIKUDEMBE	Solomon	BANGLADESH
AGL	S.	OFOYRWOTH	Isaac	VANUATU
BOL	S.	LENAZ	Paolo Estefano	BRAZIL (Manaus)
GIA	P.	MORITO	Chihiro	SOUTH SUDAN
IND	S.	HUMTSOE LOTH	Dominic	ROMANIA/ MOLDAVIA
ING	P.	UTTAM	Molson Hubert	SOUTHERN AFRICA
MDG	P.	NIRINA RASENDRAMANANA	Charles	TURKEY
PLS	P.	WOSIEK	Marcin	GREECE
ZMB	S.	MUMBA	Mwila	BANGLADESH
ZMB	S.	NG'ANDWE	Musa	ROMANIA/ MOLDAVIA
TLS	S.	DO NASCIMENTO	Tobias Freitas	MOZAMBIQUE
ANG	S.	DA GRAÇA	Francisco Miguel	BRAZIL (Manaus)
VIE	S.	TRAN VAN NHO	Francis	THAILANDIA
VIE	S.	NGUYỄN THANH SANG	Simon	MONGOLIA
VIE	L.	NGUYEN TIEN NAM	Vincent	CHILE

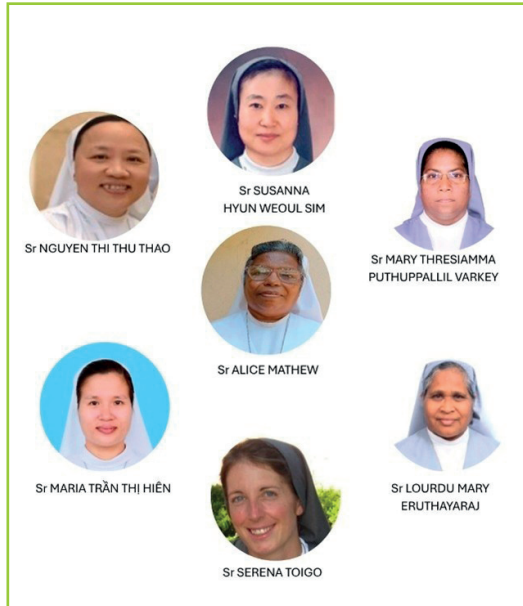
Not present today:

ACC	S.	NGUSU NSIMBA	Josue	GREECE
ACC	S.	NTUMBA LILEY	Jean	VANUATU
AFC	S.	MBUNGU MAKUTUBU	Michel	CHILE



### SDB from previous expeditions

From	SURNAME	NAME	To	Expedition
AFC	S. MULUMBA NTAMBWE	Blaise	GER	154 <sup>a</sup>
AFC	S. MUTIMA BALEKAGE	Alain Josaphat	URU	155 <sup>a</sup>
AFC	S. KAKULE KATALICO	Confiance	URU	155 <sup>a</sup>
AGL	S. NDAYICARIYE	Eric	KOR MONGOLIA	155 <sup>a</sup>
INS	P. MAWA	Albert Tron	LKC	155 <sup>a</sup>
MDG	S. ANDRIAMANDRANTOSOA	Nirina Romeo	MOR	153 <sup>a</sup>
AFC	S. MUGISHO	Christian	MOR	153 <sup>a</sup>
<i>Italia</i>	P. GORZEGNO DAVICO	Oswaldo	MEG	<i>Left in 1969</i>
INE	P. CAPPELLETTI	Roberto	MOZ	143 <sup>a</sup> <i>(new destination)</i>



### The FMA missionaries of the 148th Expedition

From	Surname and name	Destination
Vietnam	Sr NGUYEN THI THU THAO	<i>waiting</i>
Vietnam	Sr MARIA TRẦN THỊ HIÊN	<i>waiting</i>
India	Sr MARY THRESIAMMA PUTHUPPALLIL VARKEY	<i>waiting</i>
Korea	Sr SUSANNA HYUN WEOUL SIM	<i>already in Ethiopia</i>
India	Sr ALICE MATHEW	<i>already in Sri Lanka</i>
India	Sr LOURDU MARY ERUTHAYARAJ	<i>already in Sri Lanka</i>
Italia	Sr SERENA TOIGO	<i>waiting</i>

## 12.11 Genova

On the following day, the participants moved to Genova to live another exciting moment of the anniversary.

The day began at 10:00 a.m. at Porto Antico, where approximately 200 participants gathered for a uniquely Ligurian welcome: fresh focaccia, the region's beloved flatbread. But this was no ordinary breakfast. It was a moment of communion before embarking on a profound journey of memory.

At precisely 10:00 a.m., the group boarded a vessel to retrace the route taken by those pioneering ten Salesians who departed these same waters in mid-November 1875. Guided by Fr Francesco De Ruvo, Sr. Anna Maria Spina (FMA Superior in Genoa) and other competent historians, the boat glided toward the iconic Lanterna lighthouse while narratives of courage, faith, and Don Bosco's final counsel echoed across the deck. The saint's parting words to care for "the children of Italian emigrants"—already 30,000 strong in Argentina—resonated with fresh urgency in today's world of migration and displacement.

The symbolic voyage connected past and present, reminding all aboard that missionary work is never finished but continually renewed with each generation's "yes" to God's call.

Upon returning to shore at 11:15 a.m., the gathering proceeded to a momentous unveiling. Civil and ecclesiastical authorities joined the Rector Major and a carefully chosen group of young people—ten in number, representing the original missionary band—to reveal a commemorative plaque at Porto Antico. This permanent



marker now stands as silent testimony to the extraordinary courage of those first Salesians who set sail with little more than Don Bosco's blessing and an unshakeable trust in Divine Providence.

The procession then wound its way to the Don Bosco Institute in Sampierdarena, founded by Saint John Bosco himself in 1872. Here, the celebrations took on the joyful, youthful character that defines Salesian education. The entire student body – representing 30 nationalities—lined the entrance in exuberant welcome, their enthusiasm a living embodiment of the global mission born 150 years ago.

Young people presented flags from every nation represented in their school community, creating a vibrant tapestry of cultures. Students offered symbolic gifts to the Rector Major: notebooks representing education, work bags symbolizing vocational training, and an institute sweat-shirt embodying community belonging. Each gift carried deeper meaning—tools for the mission, instruments of service, symbols of solidarity.

Fr. Attard responded with his traditional “Good Morning” address to the students, that quintessentially Salesian greeting that transforms a simple salutation into a moment of pastoral accompaniment and encouragement.

At 12:30 p.m., more than 350 people processed into the parish church for a solemn Eucharistic celebration. The congregation included not only Salesians and the Salesian Family but also distinguished civil and military authorities: the General of the Liguria Le-



gion, the Provincial Commander of the Carabinieri for Genoa, and numerous other officials—a testament to the profound impact Salesian presence has had on this industrial port city for more than 150 years.

The Mass itself became a moment of profound communion, linking the thanksgiving for past graces with prayers for future missionaries and the ongoing work among young people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

The afternoon's pinnacle arrived at 1:30 p.m. with the inauguration of the Museum of Missionary Expeditions, a meticulously designed space created to "help visitors give thanks, rethink and relaunch the missionary work."

The ceremony featured an impressive array of speakers. The Archbishop of Genoa opened the proceedings, followed by the representative of Genoa's Mayor, who spoke on behalf of the city. The Director of the Maritime Museums of Genoa added his institutional greeting before the museum's creators—Francesco De Ruvo and architect Valentina Calabrese—explained their vision for this unique space.

Mother General Sr. Chiara Cazzuola and Rector Major Fr. Fabio Attard offered their reflections, emphasizing the enduring relevance of missionary courage and generosity in today's complex world. "We are honored as the Sampierdarena community to welcome the leadership of the Salesian Congregation with the new courageous missionaries because they are an example and stimulus to make our lives a gift of love," said Fr. Sergio Pellini, Director of the Don Bosco Institute Sampierdarena.

The ceremonial ribbon-cutting opened the doors to a thoughtfully curated exhibition that traces 150 years of Salesian missionary adventure. Guests moved through the exhibits with evident appreciation and emotion, many visibly moved by the stories of sacrifice, joy, and transformative service preserved within.

As the museum visit concluded, the guests gathered in the students' refectory for a fraternal meal that embodied the family spirit at the heart of Salesian life. The convivial atmosphere, marked by warmth, laughter, and genuine connection, reflected what participants repeatedly described as an experience of authentic Salesian hospitality.

“Everything was truly realized in the spirit of family, and all the guests genuinely appreciated this cordiality, this love,” one participant noted, capturing the sentiment that pervaded the entire day.

The celebration concluded with a group photograph at the Institute's Don Bosco monument before guests departed, carrying with them renewed commitment to the missionary calling and tangible hope for the future.



To view all the photos and videos from the 150th-anniversary events in Valdocco and Genoa, please click on this link:  
150 Salesian missions\_Foto&video  
<https://bit.ly/4dbn9Km>





## **MISSIONS SECTOR**

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