

ADMA on line

ASSOCIAZIONE DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE
PRIMARIA - TORINO VALDOCCO

24th December 2010

Montly message

Mary brings us hope and joy



Mary knows our spiritual situation very well and she can see exactly how God sees us. Unfortunately today, most men and women's existence is characterised by a lack of faith, love, prayer and trust in God... arid land

inhabited by "hardened hearts, hearts of stone". It is an infernal situation, which marks man's separation from God, and the loss of all hope. Life away from God is a life with no sunshine, an infernal iciness, a life in which we are unhappy about ourselves... we actually hate ourselves, we despise ourselves and our neighbour. Mary can see this restlessness, which signifies hunger for God, hunger for happiness, hunger for eternity, hunger for immortality, hunger for holiness and hunger for inner cleanliness.

Faced with such a situation of slavery of darkness, **God decided to have Mercy on us: God gave us Mary in order to bring us hope and joy.** Hope because God can redeem us, free us and break the bonds of the slavery of darkness, and joy because it is the joy to do good, the joy of being close to God. God is joy, a joy which all those who experience a conversion feel. Mary is the source of hope and joy because **She leads us to Jesus, who is peace, hope and joy.**

We need to open our hearts to God's mercy, because we need our sins to be forgiven, the Grace that sanctifies, our heart to be purified, peace, joy, strength and light. From time to time, we must all face painful and difficult situations, both in our daily life and in our relations with our neighbour. Sometimes we feel powerless because we feel all sorts of attachments to things and people which make us slaves of bonds we would like to be free from. Often, we are faced with walls of indifference and selfishness, and we feel powerless when faced with events which seem to be beyond our strength.

Jesus said that anything we ask the Father in his name, he will grant it to us. Let us then try to ask Him what is closer to our heart with the certainty that derives from faith, that to Him nothing is impossible: from solving desperate cases, to world peace. From healing life threatening illnesses, to settling family and social conflicts. If we can also ask for the same thing in full agreement with other people, then it is Jesus himself who is among us and prays to the Father, and according to His promise, our wish will be granted.

Our Lady is like John the Baptist who, at the time of Advent, wants to smooth God's way so that He may reach our heart, and may bring us **the Christmas gift par excellence: peace; Jesus is our peace.**

*Don Pierluigi Camerini SDB
Promoter of spiritual activities*

VI International Congress of Mary Help of Christians
Częstochowa (Poland) 3-6 August 2011

TOTUS TUUS

CONGRESS OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY PROMOTED BY ADMA AND BY THE FMA AND SDB INSPECTORATE OF POLAND.

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Towards Czestochowa

4. Mary the sweetest Mother (don Roberto Carelli)

Mary is a Mother, the Mother of God and our Mother. Maternity is what characterises her and our act of entrusting in her more than anything else. As Monfort says, in the order of grace, there truly is only one Mother: “The head and the limbs are born from the same mother.” And if there is one mother, there will then be one love: “the measure of Mary’s love for her Son is the same as that of her love for mankind, for every single person. Her heart loves for Jesus sake, whose mystical Body we are part of”. Mary loves us with the same love she had for Jesus: nothing could encourage us more to entrust ourselves to Her than this! This is why the most cherished image we all have from the Gospel is the Nativity **scene of the Mother with her Child**, the Child’s centrality, the Child’s unity with His Mother, Joseph’s heavenly inspirations about them: *On entering the house they saw the child with Mary his Mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. Now, after they had left an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child to destroy him- “Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I have called my son...” When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said: “Get up; take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” Then Joseph got up, took the mother and child and went to the land of Israel. (Mt 2, 11-15.19-21).* In order to understand how invaluable our act of entrusting to Mary’s maternity is, it is useful to remind ourselves of what maternal love means to earthly creatures. **Maternal love is the first love and it is a very special love: we originate from it and it is original, unique and irreplaceable.** It is the kind of love which generates and nurtures us, which gives us life and welcomes life, which allows us to live and offers its own life, it is the most deep rooted and the most universal kind of love. When we think about it, it is the closest kind of love to God’s Trinitarian love, where the three persons become one. As a matter of fact, the symbiotic relationship mother-son, in which there are two in one and one in two, is the time in which, according to Balthazar’s expression, «maternal conscience still embraces the two bodies... in this embrace the mother is both herself and the child». Now Mary is all this for Jesus and for us as well: in a special way for Him, because she generates Him according to human nature, and in a universal way for us because she gives us divine life. Mary’s double maternity is expressed in the words of the Council, where maternity is depicted as a multi faceted itinerary and reality: *by conceiving, generating, nurturing and presenting Christ to the Father in the temple, by suffering with her dying Son on the cross, the Blessed Virgin cooperated in a special way to the Saviour’s work, with her obedience, faith, hope and fervent love, to restore our souls’ supernatural life. For this reason she has become our mother in the order of grace. (LG 61).* The other element which makes us maternity and which cannot be left unspoken is that **since the original sin maternity has been marked by suffering:** just like because of sin, the gift of divine life requires the Son’s cross, and just like the gift of natural life cannot take place without the mother’s suffering, so Mary as the Mother of God and our Mother pays the extremely high price of love in a unique way, with a little more love and a little more suffering. Every mother is called upon to see her son being born and suffer, to hold him in her arms for a long time or to lose him without being able to do anything about it, but Mary, as the *Mater divinae gratiae e Mater misericordiae*, experienced maternal love with incomparable intensity: just like she gave birth and offered her Son as a sacrifice, so she gives birth to the life of grace and allows us to be born again from the abyss of sin to the life of grace. We are looking at a very close and direct collaboration to the history of salvation! It is a mystical maternity, which more than any other shares in the intimate bond between the Cross and the Glory which characterises Christian salvation! “Just like the Incarnation gravitates towards Easter Sunday, so messianic maternity gravitates towards Easter Sunday’s spiritual maternity as its fulfilment.” Monfort makes the dramatic characteristics of Mary’s maternity perfectly clear: These words refer to Mary even more than they refer to Paul himself: “My little children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you” (Gal 4, 19). “I will generate God’s children until they will come to the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ my Son.” (Eph 4, 13). Saint Augustine excelled himself and what I have said, by saying that in order to conform to the image of the Son of God, while they are still living on earth, all the elected are hidden in the womb of the Holy Virgin. The first useful element which helps

us to understand the importance of maternity, the one that shows how close it is to God's creativity is the fact that it is a gift: "In every man that comes to the world can be found some of God's uniqueness. The abyss of procreation and conception takes us back to the depths of eternal life." Every woman who becomes a mother feels that her child is not an achievement but a gift, based not on calculations but on a gift. It is not the fruit of evolution but the miracle of devotion. And every man who becomes a father feels a silent wonder for the miracle of life which takes place in his wife and which brings to the light a child. In Mary and in Joseph who is at her side, this is even more so, as the child is "The miracle": this child is the Son of God, and she is his Mother; this child does not violate his Mother's integrity, and the Mother holds in her arms her own Creator! By entrusting ourselves to Mary we entrust ourselves to the One in whom maternity is redeemed, elevated, fully available for God's work. Entrusting ourselves does not mean simple protection, a moral point of reference: it actually means the gift of life, love, dignity, destiny: Mary entrusted herself to God, God entrusted Jesus to Her, Jesus will learn from Mary to entrust himself and will teach the Apostles to do the same. Mary and Jesus fully express how entrusting oneself means that a person is shaped and conformed. Freedom learns to be chosen and to choose, to invest and to be invested, to receive and to give itself, to receive as a gift and to make a gift of itself.

1. MODELLED ON MARY

The Church truly originates from Mary, in its Head and in its Body: she is the Mother of the Head, she is the Model of the Body and she is also Mother of the Body! As the Mother of the Church, she wants us to be like her and like Jesus. She wants to generate her Son's features in us, and for this reason she offers us her own features, the same ones she once offered her Son, and which she also received from her Son. Her maternal love for us, which is the same love she had for Jesus, expresses itself in the following way: we will become like Him, by becoming like her. Entrusting ourselves to Mary means above all, deciding to be modelled by her, as Grignon rightly says: *the Saints are modelled on Mary...Mary is rightly called by Saint Augustine forma Dei, true mould of God. This means that only in her, the God-man was naturally formed without losing any feature of his divinity; again, it is only in her that man can naturally be formed, as much as human nature would allow.*

There is a page by Fausto di Riez which expresses in a surprising way Mary's ability to shape our hearts. We must remember that she did it for Jesus too, who from the love he received from birth, learnt to love us until the end: *Oh Mary, nurse your Creator! Nurse the bread of Heaven, the redemption of the world. Nurse the one who suckles, so that he may turn the other cheek for you to those who hit him. May the little baby drink your milk, so that as an adult he may accept to drink vinegar. May your hands carry him now, so that for you, his arms will be secured to the cross. And you, as a mother, give him food for the body, so that he, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, may give eternal life to you and to us.*

2. GENERATED IN MARY

Mary is truly our Mother in the order of grace. We entrust ourselves to her in order to truly be her children. Now, we must convince ourselves that Mary truly gives life to us that for us she is everything a mother is for a child, that her gifts are far greater and effective than we can ever imagine. These considerations will help our feelings for her as a mother to grow. Above all, Mary is for us a wonderful Mother, worthy of all our trust, because she loves us with pure love. Mary loves us because she loves Jesus and because of Jesus, and she loves us with a never ending love, because she loves God immensely: *the first reason for Mary's great love for mankind is the great love she has for God...Therefore, since there isn't a single saint in heaven who loves God more than Mary, after God, we will not find a person who loves us more than this mother full of love does.*

If we could put together the love of all mothers for their children, of all the spouses for each other, of all the saints and the angels for their devotees, it would not match Mary's love for a single soul...Another reason why we are so loved by Mary is that she sees that we are the price paid for Jesus Christ's death.

Here we must consider that **maternal love is the first and most radical act of entrusting**. A child is radically entrusted to the care of his mother. This act of entrusting is the first way for a child to experience his existence, something which can and must remain unforgettable. This first experience is not anonymous but has the name of mother, and "mummy" is the first word uttered by all babies. A maternal introduction to the world of language takes place, and language for a baby is his "mother tongue"; it was the same for the One who is "the Word!" Entrusting oneself to his or her mother means many things: it is the feeling of being preceded, welcomed, loved, showered with love and care, initiated to freedom, prepared for greater things. By being entrusted to another per-

son, we understand that there is no need to be, know and understand everything from the start, that we can't control and guarantee everything, because faith is (in every way) original. On the other hand, starting with Mary and Jesus, for a Christian every space is filled with the logic of faith, which he experiences in all its forms: by trusting, confiding and entrusting one self, by acknowledging, obeying and giving thanks. We must remember that having had Mary as his Mother, and having experienced her greatness, Jesus cannot but recommend us to entrust ourselves to her, with all the love he has for her and with all the gratefulness his divine heart feels for his earthly mother.

3. EDUCATED BY MARY

Mary gave Jesus everything a mother gives her son: not only life, but also the meaning of life, not only his physical features but also the spiritual ones, not only the flesh but also everything about the soul which is influenced by the flesh: practical and mental habits, the gift of imagination and his inclination to sensitivity, a certain temperament and personality. Mary introduced Jesus from the human point of view to the language of his people, to the prayers of Israel, to the reading and the love for the Torah, to the costumes and traditions of the fathers. **Mary is the best teacher, because she not only educated the Son, but from the Son she was then educated.** In their mutual act of entrusting (experienced in a different way of course: first for him as a Son and she as a Mother then He as the Lord and She as the Disciple), Jesus and Mary learnt to experience everything that is entailed in a free bond of mutual entrusting according to God's will: being authoritative and meek, looking after a person and giving up all cares, balancing attachments and separations, interpreting and putting up with all the joys and sorrows which are inevitable but also educational in life, as they are a burden which can help us to grow and to make us wiser, but it can also paralyse us and make us foolish, they can make us mature or leave us to be immature. We must imagine that when Jesus explained the logic of love, he used the words and examples he had learnt from Mary: his invitation for the fruit to fall to the ground in order to bear fruit like the grain of wheat and to remain in Him like the vine-shoots are attached to the vine, took inspiration from his Mother, from her way of expressing herself and of behaving, of considering things and assessing them, of serving and consoling, of putting herself forward and stepping aside, of urging and waiting. No one will be able to educate us like Mary to what really counts and regarding God's will as a mission and as a vocation. Like Mary, we are called to "take possession" of our vocation by welcoming it and making it the focus of our identity, and "to dispossess" ourselves of our mission, and not consider it as a personal possession, but entrusting to God and to the Church all our work and all its fruits. **On Mary's educational work is based the whole maternal and educational work of the Church**, which in a way, is to be understood as the extension of the cares that the Mother had during Jesus' birth and growth, as well as for the origin and the beginnings of the Church. Christians are called to understand and at the same time to be *the Virgin's children, as the Virgin cooperates with maternal love for their regeneration and spiritual formation. They must also be children of the Church, since we are born from it, we are nursed by its milk and we are given life by its Spirit. Both contribute to generating Christ's mystical body: both are the mother of Christ, but neither of them generates everything (the body) without the other; and they must perceive more distinctly that the action of the Church in the world is an extension of Mary's thoughtfulness.* (MC 28).

FOR PRAYER AND FOR LIFE

I mentally and spiritually immerse myself in the scene of the Nativity of the Mother with her Child. I think about how similar Mary and Jesus are, how one takes on himself the features of the body and of the soul. I meditate upon Mary's humility and upon how she becomes the Mother of God, and upon God's humility who becomes the Son of man. Do I acknowledge Mary as my Mother? Do I really feel like I am her son? Do I have the humility and the joy to entrust myself to Her with a child's trust, of telling her about my joy and pain without feeling ashamed and without reserve, of asking her any favour I need with a child-like soul? How do I fight the temptations of cutting myself off from God because I feel self sufficient? And what about desperation and arrogance, superficiality and hardness of the heart?

Let us entrust to Mary Mother of God and our Mother our parents and teachers, so that all those who are invested with educational responsibilities such as our fathers and mothers, our spiritual fathers and mothers, priests and the bishops, as well as their head the Pope, teachers and catechists, may help us to appreciate and cherish the fact that God became flesh, thereby becoming "God among us".



PRAYER FOR LIFE



Lord Jesus,
You who faithfully visit and fulfil with your Presence
the Church and the history of men;
You who in the miraculous Sacrament of your Body and Blood
render us participants in divine Life
and allow us a foretaste of the joy of eternal Life;
We adore and bless you.
Prostrated before You, source and lover of Life,
truly present and alive among us, we beg you.
Reawaken in us respect for every unborn life,
make us capable of seeing in the fruit of the maternal womb
the miraculous work of the Creator,
open our hearts to generously welcoming every child
that comes into life.
Bless all families,
sanctify the union of spouses,
render fruitful their love.
Accompany the choices of legislative assemblies
with the light of your Spirit,
so that peoples and nations may recognise and respect
the sacred nature of life, of every human life.
Guide the work of scientists and doctors,
so that all progress may contribute to the integral well-being of the person,
and no-one will put up with suppression or injustice.
Give creative charity to administrators and economists,
so they may realise and promote sufficient conditions
so that young families can serenely embrace
the birth of new children
Console married couples who suffer
because they are unable to have children
and in Your goodness provide for them.
Teach us all to care for orphaned or abandoned children,
so they may experience the warmth of your Charity,
the consolation of your divine Heart.
Together with Mary, Your Mother, the great believer,
in whose womb you took on our human nature,
we wait to receive from You, our Only True Good and Saviour,
the strength to love and serve life,
in anticipation of living forever in You,
in communion with the Blessed Trinity.
Amen

(Benedict XVI 27th November 2010)

*The Council of the Presidency and the whole Primary ADMA of Turin- Valdocco
wish all ADMA members throughout the world, and all the groups of the Salesian Family
the grace of a Holy Christmas and of a fruitful 2011, ccompanied and blessed by Mary Help of Christians*



CHILE – ADMA’S VIII NATIONAL CONGRESS From the 22nd to the 24th October the VIII edition of the Association of Mary Help of Christians’ National Congress took place in Valparaíso. The inauguration began first with a Mass in “St John Bosco’s church”, and was followed by a cultural evening at the auditorium of the Salesian Institute, which was guided and organised by young people from the youth’s Pastoral and by their band. 120 ADMA members were present. They came from the whole country: from Iquique to Punta Arenas – and were welcomed by the faithful of the Salesian community in the Parish and in the Puerto Institute. **The theme chosen this year “With Mary Help of Christians, disciples missionaries of the Lord”** was developed through three reports. The auxiliary bishop of Valparaíso, **mons. Santiago Silva**, dealt with the theme “Disciples missionaries under the protection of the Aparecida”; then, **Rafael Silva**, National spokesperson for the Continental Mission illustrated the meaning, the aims and the steps necessary to accomplish this mission. Finally, **Fr Patricio Alvarez’s** talk was entitled “Mary, role model for the missionary disciple.” The congress ended on Sunday 24th with the Eucharistic celebration in the parish church “San Giovanni Bosco”, presided by the Inspector, **Fr Leonardo Santibañez**, and was concelebrated by **Fr Vicente Socors**, ADMA’s National Promoter and by Fr José López Verdugo and Fr Augusto Aliaga, from the Salesian community of Valparaíso. During the congress, ADMA members also voted during the elections for the Association. Following some discernment and dialogue, **Ricardo Ortiz was confirmed National President**, who is also Coordinator of the Metropolitan Area. For Valparaíso, Elsa Vil-





larroel was nominated coordinator; for the area of Maule, Gabriel and Loreto Letelier were chosen; while Lydia Avendano will be the coordinator for the areas of Puerto Montt, Valdivia, Urriaza Gladys and the southern area. In the final greetings, ADMA's National President drew our attention to the atmosphere of brotherhood during the Congress, as well as the warm welcome and availability of the Salesian community, and concluded by reminding everyone of the appointment to ADMA's World Congress which will take place in June 2011 in Poland.

FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE ADMA GROUPS, PUGLIA – BASILICATA – The first Regional Assembly of the ADMA groups from Puglia and Basilicata took place on Sunday the 14th November 2010 at the Centre for spirituality in Santeramo (Bari). Around 120 members took part in the meeting, representing the ten groups active in the Region, which all responded with great enthusiasm to the **Inspectorial Vicar's** invitation (**Fr Guido Errico**) and the **Regional delegate of the Salesian Family (Fr Tommaso De Mitri)**, to take part in the first Regional meeting. The ADMA groups from Bari, Bisceglie, Cerignola, Foggia, Lecce, Manduria, Martina Franca, Molfetta, and Potenza were present. The groups convocation was providential, thanks to the presence in the area of the World Promoter of Spiritual Activities **Fr Pierluigi Cameroni**. The meeting began with a booklet of prayers prepared by Martina Franca's ADMA entitled "To Jesus through Mary", and set the tone for the whole day by focusing people's attention on the annual theme of entrusting one self to Mary. We then moved on to the theme dealt with by Fr Pierluigi regarding "ADMA's mission and identity", and to the message "By your endurance you will gain your souls". (Luke 21,19). This was followed by a warm welcome by the Regional Delegate FS, the Inspectorial Vicar and the new **Regional President Mr Signor Nino Macario**. Fr Cameroni thrilled the audience during the various parts of the Congress: the two assemblies, the first of which dealt more with formation and the second dealt with organisation. Fr Cameroni's speech dealt with the great variety and vitality which characterises the ADMAs he had recently visited in Venezuela and in the Philippines. The characteristics common to all



the Associations are a deep Marian spirituality and a brave apostolic commitment in harmony with Don Bosco's spirituality. In all Marian Associations, great anticipation is felt for the VI International Marian Congress which is to be held in Cheztokowa in Poland from the 3rd to the 6th August 2011. All around the world ADMA is extending its membership to young people and young couples. The closing Assembly was conducted in the form of a conversation which touched upon various aspects, in particular regarding ADMA's notebooks and the monthly educational aids on the Association's website, which can be consulted when in need of training material, ideas about organisation and news from the various ADMA in Italy and around the world. The Holy Mass was con-celebrated in the Chapel of the Salesian School by all the promoters of spiritual activities of the ADMA groups present, and aside from the speakers who took part in the conference, the Salesian Family from Santeramo were also present. The moment of fraternal agape concluded the morning and was considered by all as a precious opportunity to re launch the life of the association and to encourage regional cooperation thanks to the new Regional Council which has now been officially set up. We left the meeting committing ourselves to have the same unforgettable experience every year, and with the promise by some members to meet in Poland. (Don Tommaso De Mitri Sdb – Regional Promoter of spiritual activities for ADMA in Puglia).



LUANDA, ANGOLA – November 2010 – From the 7th to the 10th November, **Fr Adriano Bregolin**, the Senior Rector's Vicar visited the ANG in Angola. On the first day Fr Bregolin accompanied by Fr Filiberto Rodriguez Martin, the ANG's Superior, celebrated the Eucharist in the Church of Saint Paul, and met **the group of the Association Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) from the parish and the chapel "Bom Pastor"**.

The paper can be read at the following site:

Italian:	www.admadonbosco.org/index.php?lang=it
French:	www.admadonbosco.org/index.php?lang=fr
Spanish:	www.admadonbosco.org/index.php?lang=es
Portuguese:	www.admadonbosco.org/index.php?lang=pt
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