

ADMA on line

ASSOCIAZIONE DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE
PRIMARIA - TORINO VALDOCCO

24th April 2011

Monthly message

Mary and our joyful "yes" to God

This year, the 24th of the month coincides with the feast day of Easter, Jesus' supreme hour as well as the hour of our salvation; the Paschal mystery which we celebrate is the liturgy, is light, grace and strength for our life. The image which accompanies us is the one of the resurrection, which is to be found in the Pinardi Chapel, the cradle of Salesian art, where Don Bosco set up the parish youth club on Easter Sunday 1846. The Eucharist reminds us that in this sacrament we celebrate and experience the Paschal mystery, and at the same time, it commits all our groups to pray in front of the Sacrament, in order to ask for holy vocations for this year. Jesus' passion and death on the cross are not chance events, a simple decision taken by men; instead, they are the fulfilment of God's plan for salvation. **Our Risen Lord's example must be a light for our life.** We must learn to interpret everything around us, everything that happens to us and everything that makes us suffer either as the will of a God who loves us, or as something that is allowed by the One who still loves us. Then everything will be clear in our life, everything will be extremely useful, even what at a particular moment we either can't understand or seems absurd, even what (as was Jesus' case), throws us into a mortal anguish.



If we live our daily life in the light and grace of Easter, we learn to concretely take example from Jesus' spirit, who was obedient to the Father: we can only love God in this present life, by saying our "yes" to his will. Let us love then that smile to be given, that work to be done, that car to be driven, that meal to be prepared, that activity to be organised, all those who are suffering around us. Not even tests or suffering can scare us if, with Jesus' help, we'll be able to see God's will in them, and his love for us all. Our daily life is endangered by arrogance and by disorderly love for ourselves: only Jesus' cross and resurrection can purify it with the strength of love and the practice of the new commandment of love, not only on special occasions, but especially in our everyday life.

In order to experience all this, we trust in Mary: through Her we can welcome the Gift of Life given to us by God every day and every hour, and we can offer our life with love and joy. This is how the conversion of the heart and of our life takes place. May Mary's maternal blessing be for us a source of peace, love and union with her and her Son's heart. This is our Easter wish, the peace we wish to spread in our families, groups and communities. The joy of Easter and Mary's blessing are accompanying us along our path of preparation to the Congress in Czestochowa: this month more people have registered from all parts of the world, including Africa. Over 1000 people have now registered! We invite all to live this experience by paying attention to the monthly cards and by feeling as one, through our act of entrustment to Mary Help of Christians. **Pope John Paul's beatification** on the first of May brings all ADMA members great joy and gratitude to the Lord, as he was **the pope who completely belonged to Mary!** Happy Easter!



Fr Pierluigi Cameroni SDB
Promoter of spiritual activities

Mary is the Mediator of graces

Mary has to do with grace in every sense: she found grace, she is full of grace, she is the mother of grace, and she is the mediator of every grace! Her mediation of grace takes on many names: she is a «*mediation of love* » (Saint Alphonse), a «*mediation of intercession* » (Montfort). Above all and more concretely, she is a «*maternal mediation* » (Pope John Paul II). Mary is an excellent mediation, because she is at the same time the creature closest to God and to man: no one better than her can convey grace to creatures, and no one is more ready to welcome requests for grace, wiser in presenting them to the Lord, more authoritative in receiving them! Among the most ancient testimonies which have been passed on, is the famous hymn of saint Efreim, which praises Mary's using many titles, both affectionate and glorious ones: *In you, Mother of God, patron and mediator with the God you generated, mankind relies on for its happiness and totally depends on your help, you alone can defend and shelter us, as you enjoy His trust... Celestial door through which we run from earth to heaven. God's Bride, through whom we have been reconciled... Impregnable defence... Source of all good, Lady of all after the Trinity, a second comforter after the Holy Spirit, mediator of the whole world after the Mediator... Bridge for the whole world which leads to the high heaven, splendour of the Angels, protection for mankind, key which lets us into heaven... brightness which lights the faithfuls' souls, reconciliation for sinners, safety for those who stand firm, warning for those who have fallen, encouragement for the lazy ones, strength for the healthy ones, harmony for the churches, happiness for armies, the source of all goodness, good government for cities, peace for the world, patience for monks, strength for the defenders of faith, treasure for life, cloud which spreads celestial dew on earth, ladder through which the angels reach down to us, harbour for those who are overwhelmed by storms, joy for the afflicted, patron for those who are offended... Protection, strength, joy, sweetness, help, wall, ammunition, armour, defence, glory, patron, mediator, tranquillity, jubilation, peace, praise, blessing ...*

Despite objections and excessive caution which took place throughout history, the Church is fully aware of how real and effective Mary's maternal mediation is, within Jesus' mediation: *The one and only mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather encourages heartfelt cooperation on the part of creatures... The Church does not hesitate to openly acknowledge that this is Mary's subordinate function. The Church constantly experiences this, and strongly encourages it. (LG 62).* The basic idea is that the more one receives, the more he is able to give, and the more one is able to cherish, the more he is able to offer up. It is a law that is true in heaven and extends to earth: Jesus gives us a share of divine life, because he has in himself all divine life, and no one more than Mary can give us Jesus, because no one more than her has welcomed Jesus as a gift. Mary taken on the role of Mediator precisely because Jesus entrusted himself to her as a Son, and entrusted us to her as children. Throughout history, all the greatest spiritual teachers have described Mary as the mediator of graces, assuring us that such a role takes nothing away and adds nothing to Jesus' mediation, but is actually a guarantee of *welcome and dispensation*. Let's listen to St Alphonse: *No one denies that Jesus Christ is the only mediator of justice, who with his merits obtained us reconciliation with God. But on the other hand, it is sinful to deny that God may be glad to grant graces through the intercession of the saints, and especially through Mary his Mother, whom Jesus longs to see honoured and loved by us... But who could deny how reasonable and profitable it is for God to wish all graces to be granted through her hands, in order to exalt this creature beyond compare, who throughout her life, honoured and loved Him more than any other creature, and whom he selected to be his Son's Mother, our and her Redeemer?*

1. SHE'S THE MEDIATOR BECAUSE SHE'S A WOMAN

The natural tendency of a woman to carry another being, to help him mature and offer him to the world, the disposition of her body and soul to be made fruitful and to be fruitful, is the deepest and most fundamental reason for the maternal mediation of grace. For this reason, quoting some of the greatest medieval authors, St Alphonse reiterates the advantages and even the theological necessity of Mary's cooperation to Jesus' work. The redemption of the whole creation, of men and women and of their contribution is at stake. *Saint Bernard says that just like a man and a woman cooperated for our ruin, so it was decided that another man and another woman, (that is Jesus and his Mother Mary), should cooperate and make amends for us. The saint goes on to say that undoubtedly, Jesus Christ would have been perfectly able to redeem us, but "it was deemed more suitable for both sexes to cooperate for our redemption, as both sexes had contributed to our perdition."* Therefore, blessed Albert the Great calls Mary "the co-operator to our redemption." *The holy Virgin herself revealed to Saint Bridget that, just like Adam and Eve sold off the world for an apple, so Mary and her Son redeemed the world with one heart. Saint Anselm confirms this: "God*

managed to create the world from nothing, but as the world was lost because of sin, God did not wish to redeem it without Mary's cooperation".



The most significant page of the Gospel, in which Mary's role of mediator, (for which she was chosen, and to which she consecrated herself) is stressed, is **the episode of Cana's wedding**. That's where we have everything. Immediately we see Jesus and Mary, we see creation ("a wedding feast"), the old covenant (the stone jars "for purification"), and the new covenant (the "good wine", which was the first sign of Jesus' glory and the source of faith for his disciples.) At a deeper level, Cana is the bridal cross-road of the history of salvation: the messianic prophecies about the wedding feast find their fulfilment (Isaiah 25, 6), it is the pre-figuration of the Eucharistic feast, where it is no longer water that is turned into wine, but wine that is turned into Christ's blood, and we then move onto the wedding feast of the Lamb (Revelations

19, 7). With regards to us, we see a man and a woman who listen, obey each other and grant each others' wishes. We see a man oriented to his universal aim ("*my hour not come yet*") and a woman's attention to detail at a specific moment ("*they have no wine left*"); a man displaying his absolute power to save ("*you've kept the good wine until now*"), and a woman who shows her absolute power to intercede ("*do whatever he tells you*").

*Let us listen to a comment about the Redemptoris Mater: from the description of the events at Cana, the new maternity according to the spirit and not only according to the flesh emerges. This is Mary's attentiveness for mankind, her meeting man half way, with regards to all his needs. In Cana of Galilee we not only see a very concrete aspect of human poverty, which appears to be small and of little significant ("They have no wine"). But the latter has a symbolic value: meeting man half way means at the same time, introducing them to Christ's messianic mission and to his power to save: **We therefore have a mediation: Mary places herself between her Son and mankind with their poverty, suffering and hardships. She places herself "in between", meaning she becomes the mediator not like a stranger would, but in her position of Mother, aware of the fact that as a mother she can and she "has the right" to present to her Son mankind's needs. Her mediation then, has the qualities of intercession: Mary "intercedes" for mankind... The Mother of Christ presents herself to mankind as the spokesperson of her Son's will, and points out those requests that must be complied with, so that the Messiah's power of salvation can manifest itself. (RM 21).***

2. SHE IS THE MEDIATOR BECAUSE SHE IS A VIRGIN

Even on a personal level, the more virginal love is the more integral the gift of love becomes. In the same way in relation to God, virginal purity, which is always characterised by transparency and splendour, makes a person totally available, trustworthy and fruitful. God is looking for virginal hearts in order to work and spread his wonders, he is looking for men and women totally devoted to Him and to His service. God entrusted Himself to Mary because of her purity; in the same way we entrust ourselves to her, because we are sure of her love. **Her power of mediation cannot be simply explained by the fact that she is a woman, but it can be explained by the fact that she is a virgin.**

Basing himself on the Scriptures (Sir 24,41), and drawing inspiration from St Bernard, Grignon and many other Fathers of the Church, Don Bosco portrays the Marian mediation of graces using the image of a "waterworks", which transports the pure waters of grace thanks of its own purity: *And for this reason, the devil either tries to discourage or to spoil Marian devotion... This channel is pure because of Mary's trust, virginity, love of solitude, true humility, piety, fullness of grace, the protection of her senses, and is like gold because of her regal nobility and sublime love.*

In this sense, Mary's virginal integrity has nothing static, but is rather at the service of the mobility of love. **Virginal reserve is to be understood and taught as the best condition and best preparation for a gift of love**, especially when the latter is very delicate, that is, when the exchange of love involves heaven and earth, as it involves God. *The one between the Mother and the Son is a circle of love, as just like once the Mother said her Yes to her Son and everything concerning Him, in the same way it is the Son who today says yes to his Mother. This yes is divine, boundless and gives the Mother's yes all its celestial immensity. As long as the Mother lived on earth, she was a human being limited by nature, and she had to respect these limits, even though she tried to act according to her Son's intents. From the moment the Assumption to Heaven took place, she obtained the gift of fulfilling any of her Son desires. She knows no barriers except the ones we set up on earth to prevent her from acting. Only our no can put obstacles in the path of her eternal yes.*

3. SHE IS THE MEDIATOR BECAUSE SHE IS A MOTHER

Mary's feminine receptiveness and virginal transparency find their fulfilment in her divine and universal maternity, and it is this double maternity which makes her a mediator, specifically in relation to Jesus and to the Church. In particular, St Alphonse explains that Mary has two prerogatives: that of being the Mother of God and the Mediator for mankind: the first prerogative is the foundation of the second one.

There is one consideration in particular which makes us understand the Mother's authority in relation to her Son's heart. We tend to think of rights as separate from the sphere of love: rights appear to either precede or come after love, and also, rights appear to regulate public life, as well as love and our private life. **It is not easy to think of love as the foundation of our rights. On the contrary, spiritual authors, both the classic and modern ones, often write about Mary's maternal rights.** To us it appears as archaic language which is very far from us, but it is profoundly true. Mary's intercession is effective because between Jesus and Mary there is a double exchange of love and knowledge: She knows Him and loves Him in a unique way, she knows and shares his sensibilities, his thoughts and wishes, she knows how to address Him and how to ask Him for graces; and He loves Her more than any one else, he considers her as his Mother, he is infinitely grateful to her and because of this, he is glad to grant her anything she desires.

Mary's rights to mediation are extremely important for another three reasons. The first one is that as a mother, Mary was a mediator for her Son: thanks to her he received life; he learnt to love and pray as a man, he became acquainted with his people's religious tradition and with the whole history of salvation. The second reason is that her maternal right is based on duty, on her Son's mandate for her to be a Mother for us, so that by taking his mother's excellence into account, He could not deprive us of such a beautiful gift and such unfailing help. The third is Mary's passage from Maid to Queen, which fulfils her participation to her Son's glory, and is an acknowledgement of her qualities as a Mother, which makes her intercession irresistible.

4. FOR PRAYER AND FOR LIFE

I would now like to go back to the episode of Cana and to contemplate Mary's maternal side of Grace: Mary is granted all graces, because Jesus was welcomed in her immaculate Heart, which is where every man is also welcomed. And Jesus grants all graces, because in his divine Heart He listens to Mary, in the same way as every man's prayer is also granted by her.

Let us pray for families, where the greatest love and sorrow is present. Let us ask Mary for the grace to be granted comfort and recovery for family members who are suffering the most, for the conversion of those who are living in sin, thanks to the understanding and forgiveness of spouses who are experiencing a crisis, and let us pray for parents and children who find it hard to understand one another.

The paper can be read at the following site:

www.admadonbosco.org/index.php?lang=en

and here: www.donbosco-torino.it/

For every communication you can contact
the following email address: pcameroni@sdb.org

CAPACI (PALERMO) 31ST JANUARY 2011

New registrations– “ It’s 5,30 pm. I see people arriving on foot or by car, and they are all dressed up, because for each and every one of them this is an important day, a Unique day. I can tell how full of joy they are from the looks on their faces, the way they say hello or wave. Shortly, they will be called out to the altar and their “HERE I AM” will be heard by all faithfuls filling the church. The faithfuls followed with great attention and devotion everything that went on, and when the long awaited moment came. After the 10 new members made their commitment, the church was filled with rounds of applause and everyone felt moved. They wore their blue scarves and their badges, and they held the Rule in their hand. The Mass was followed by taking of pictures, hugs and a moment of entertainment for all. **We shared the joy of belonging all to Mary.**” (Sr Francesca Vicari – FMA – Promoter of spiritual activities) –



Testimony by Margherita Vitale “If one day someone had told me I would have taken up such an important COMMITMENT in front of God and his people, that I would have become an ADMA member, but especially that I would have prayed to our Lord, I wouldn’t have believed it. Now I do, and for this reason I feel I am a different person. For the past few months something inside me has changed and is helping me to face life with trust and serenity. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given me a great gift: he made me understand the importance of the Church and therefore the value of the Mass. I feel something inside me telling me: **GO! LEAVE EVERYTHING BEHIND AND GO!** I feel He’s calling me, and I can’t help going forward; and I do so, leaving behind what I would have never left behind in the past. I cannot explain how I feel: it’s like an inner flash of inspiration which forced me to wake up from a deep sleep. I owe all this to ADMA, since I officially became a member on the 31st January 2011. I am sure Jesus is among us. All we need to do is listen to him. I can now hear Him and I cannot help listening to Him. I will continue to treasure the gift I have received.

ADMA’ S SPIRITUAL EXERCISES, PIEDMONT– From the 25th to the 27th of the month, at the centre of Spirituality of Avigliana (Turin), the spiritual exercises for ADMA’ s groups in Piedmont took place, and were attended by about 30 members. Such a meeting confirmed the great value and importance of this experience, to help ADMA members to strengthen their identity and help them mature in their spiritual growth. The theme dealt with was the Senior Rector’s message: “**Come and see**” drawing inspiration from various sources: the word of God, Don Bosco’ s experience, the pope’s message for the world day devoted to prayer for vocations, and the testimony of the servant of God Fr Titus Zeman, a Slovakian Salesian and an apostle and martyr for vocations. Participants meditated on all the material proposed, and put it into context by referring to their personal experience, as well as their journey as ADMA members. In particular, we saw how **the family spirit provides the most fertile soil to prepare vocations**, and for this soil to bear fruit it needs hard and demanding work such as reconciliation and forgiveness, both within families and within Christian communities.

FAMILY DAY - Livorno – 13th March 2011



The day of the family was organised by the FMA Inspectorate from La Spezia, and was attended also by the inspectress Sr Celestina Corna, and by the pastoral delegate Sr Silvia Turrisi. Some families belonging to ADMA gave their testimony and shared their experiences. About 100 people arrived to the FMA's home. Promoters from Livorno welcomed the children with games and dances, while parents were involved in joyful moments of reflection with Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, who talked about the Family using new and deep words, very close to every day life. It was important to meet all together from different regions (Tuscany,

Liguria, Emilia Romagna), acknowledging we all had the same wish to share our experiences, the urgency of finding time to devote to our families in a familiar atmosphere, where our laughter was louder than the children's. **Families who talked about Families.** Experiences shared by others with which we identified, even when it came to describing imperfections. It was a wonderful day. My 8 year old child asked me: "When will the next meeting be?...He had forgotten all about TV and home..." The Mass managed wonderfully to involve the children, and the message for us adults was extremely powerful! Well done to Fr Pierluigi and for all who worked hard for this wonderful day!"

A testimony: *"The meeting which took place in Livorno was of great comfort to me and confirmed everything I firmly believe, especially in the light of my personal experience. First of all the knowledge that everything that happens in our life and may be unexplainable and/ or, hard to accept at the moment, (as was my case when in the past, I had some serious health problems...) And yet, in this last case I remember simply entrusting myself wholeheartedly to the Rosary, and I came out of it quite well, not to mention that things in my family improved considerably (we started praying the Rosary every week as a family etc...) The testimonies of these three big families did not impress me so much for the number of children they have, as for the way their life changed in terms of faith. My personal conclusion is that we should all "have more faith" in prayer and in Mary, especially in the light of what Don Bosco used to say when addressing Mary Help of Christians: "Do you want miracles? Pray to her a lot!"*



GELA 24 MARCH 2011 BLESSING OF THE NEW ADMA BANNER. Two women with a strong devotion to Mary were responsible for making the banner: **Di Dio Cafiso Concetta** (Adma member) and **Cosca Giuseppa** (sympathizer); the first one painted it by hand, and the second one finished it off by stitching it. The work was meticulous and painstaking, and in the end we got exactly what we were looking for. We decorated the image of Mary Help of Christians by setting special stones into Mary and Jesus' crown, as well as in the grapes and in the ears of wheat. All those present were moved because they felt Mary among us! We selected this day because it coincided with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (like every Thursday), as well as the commemoration of Mary Help of Christians. Fr Calogero Di Gregorio (ADMA's promoter of spiritual activities and local SDB) presided the Eucharistic celebration, which ended with the reading of ADMA's monthly message.

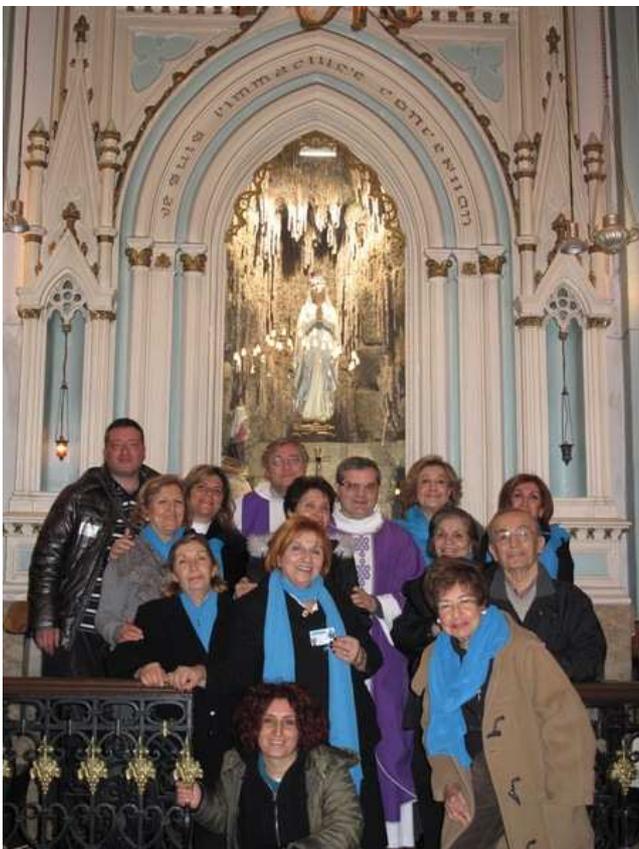


BURUNDI – LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE SANCTUARY DEDICATED TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - On 4 March in the “Cité des Jeunes de Buterere” at Bujumbura, in Burundi, Fr Guillermo Basañes, Regional Councillor for Africa-Madagascar, presided at the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone of the “Mary Help of Christians” Sanctuary which will rise in the poorest district of the city, attended by many of the faithful. Fr Gabriel Ngendakuriyo, Superior of the Vice Province recalled the inspiration for the Sanctuary came from Fr Paul Vicente da Silva, a Brazilian Salesian and a missionary in Burundi for over 35 years. Among the religious and civil authorities present were Fr Ferdinando Colombo, the promoter of the building project and Fr Franco Fontana, Vice President of VIS and entrusted by the Provincial with the responsibility of following up the construction work. Inside the foundation stone, in addition to a commemorative parchment were also placed various objects reflecting the charismatic and institutional links of the building. The most significant sent from the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin Valdocco, is a fragment of the altar which Don Bosco had built in 1862 and which after the recent restoration work has been jealously preserved. It was accompanied by a relic of the saint of youth, Don Bosco, and by a letter from the Rector of the Basilica, Fr Francesco



Lotto expressing the fraternal good wishes of the “mother church” for the people of Burundi. The Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA), through the President, Tullio Lucca and the Spiritual Director Fr Pierluigi Cameroni, also sent a letter with the prayerful hope that the new Sanctuary might become a sign of hope and reconciliation for that country so sorely tried. The Sanctuary which will rise in Bujumbura is the work of the architect Vittorio Giacomini who took his inspiration from the typical Burundi houses which express a sense of welcome and of family; it will hold more than 2,000 people and will be built by a local firm.

NORTH ARGENTINA – MEETING OF THE INSPECTORATE- From the 1st to the 3rd April, the meeting of the inspectorate took place in ADMA's headquarter in Cordoba, and was presided by the Inspectorate's Promoter **Fr. Aldo Tobares (SDB)** with the participation of the following communities: Centre: Córdoba: Pío X, Alta Gracia, Río Tercero y San Vicente; Cuyo: San Juan y Mendoza: Ceferino, Eugenio Bustos y Rodeo del Medio; NEA: Corrientes, Chaco y Formosa; NOA: Tucumán y Salta; Litoral: Rosario y Santa Fé. The spiritual retreat was attended by Fr Rubén Romero (sdb) who gave a sermon. Fr Carlos Bosio (sdb), inspectoral Delegate of the Salesian Family also took part. On the morning of Saturday 2nd of April the election of the **new Inspectorate's Council**, whose mission is to promote and coordinate the local councils' activities, took place. The following people were directly elected, and now make up the new Council - President: Mrs. Stella Correa de Recio (San Juan); - Vice president: Mrs Gladys Sanchez de Basile (Rodeo del Medio); -Treasurer- Mrs Elena Muñoz de Catelli (San Juan); - Secretary: Mrs. Beatriz Acosta de Sotti. Delegates from the various areas also joined in the Council: NOA: Mrs Raquel Calvo; NEA: Cristina Corradini; LITORAL: Maia Ines Piccoloti. In the evening we worked on the Senior Rector's message, watched a video and did group work. On Sunday 3rd April we reflected upon the theme of the International Congress of Mary Help of Christians, which will take place in Poland: "TOWARDS CZESTOCHOWA", focusing on the teaching aids sent by Fr Pier Luigi Cameroni (sdb), ADMA's world Promoter. Also, we read Fr Cameroni's message which he sends us on a monthly basis. This month the message is: "Mary wishes us to work for our conversion." He encourages us to live the 24th of the month as a strong call to communion with the whole Association, placing special emphasis on the moments of prayer, in order to ask for Mary's help regarding all of the Church's and the world's needs all together, and especially to be granted holy vocations. Thank you for the wonderful moments and days we shared!!! They help us and encourage us to continue working to spread love for Mary Help of Christians among our children and young people. (Stella Maris Correa de Recio)



ISTANBUL (TURKEY) – On Wednesday 6th April 2011, at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Istanbul, Fr Pierluigi Cameroni met the local ADMA group, and spent a day of brotherhood and communion with its members. The meeting was characterised by joy during all its stages: the welcoming speech, the celebration of the Eucharist, the welcoming of the new ADMA Council, the new membership card and badge given to all ADMA members, and the lunch and party prepared with a lot of love by all members. The Istanbul group was set up in 2008 thanks to the commitment of the late Fr Benjamin Puthota, and is currently made up of 15 people, under the guidance of Fr Andres Calleja.

