

ADMA on line

ASSOCIAZIONE DI MARIA AUSILIATRICE
PRIMARIA - TORINO VALDOCCO

24 January 2012

Monthly Message

Mary invites us to give testimony to the peace of the heart



The month of January is a time particularly dear to the Salesian Family as a whole, mostly for the memory of our father and founder Don Bosco. **The Rector Major in his strenna exhorts us to make of the youth the mission of our life, through the consciousness and imitation of the father and master of the youth.** “Through the demands and the enquiries of the youth, God is asking each member of the Salesian Family to sacrifice him/herself for their sake. That mission is not therefore a vain activism, but instead a configuration of our heart to the heart of the Good Shepherd, who does not want the loss of any of his sheep. It is consoling to see how much in the whole Salesian Family we give our lives for the sake of the young, mostly the poorest: street children, the marginalized youth, the young laborers, kid soldiers, young apprentices, abandoned orphans, abused children; **but a heart who loves is always a heart that interrogates itself.** Even today, and maybe today more than ever, Don Bosco is questioning. Through the consciousness of his history, we must listen to the interrogations of Don Bosco turned to us. What do we additionally do for the young poor? What **are** the new frontiers in the region where we work, in the country in which we live? Do we have ears to hear the cries of today’s youth? Apart from the poverties that we have already identified, how many more do they weigh down in the life of the young people of today? What are the new frontiers in which we have to commit ourselves today? Let us think about the reality of families, the educational emergency, the misleading in the affective and sexual education, the lack of social and political commitment, to the flowing back in the privacy of the personal life, to the weakness of spiritual life, to the unhappiness in the young people’s life. **Let us hear the cry of the young and let us respond to the most urgent needs,** to the most concret needs and to the spiritual needs”.

We are Association of Mary Help of Christians and we want mostly to pray and witness so that the heart of every human being, and mostly that of the young, might experience the divine peace that Jesus carries for us and that nobody can destruct. Mary helps us to make prevail the peace that God gives to those who love and that none can destruct. We are called to live by the grace of baptism, that is not a factor of the past nor a ritual formality, but a sacramental sign of God’s love for everyone of us and of the call to witness that love. **Mary helps us to become the seed of the new humanity, and to be the seed of a tree that shall extend its branches over the whole world.** In order to become premises of the new humanity we have to ask for forgiveness for our omissions, have a pure heart, free from sin and pure eyes to see and walk on the path of God’s life. We must therefore, straighten the paths of our own life, so that the love of God might be born and live in us. We must remove the obstacles one by one: those put in front of us by our limited way of seeing things, and by the weakness of our will. It is necessary to have the courage to choose between our way and His way for us, between our will and His will, between the programm designed by us and the plan of His most powerful love. When we have taken such a decision, we must work to adjust our rebellious will to His, by living worthy the present time that God gives us to live. Only in that way can we understand what is God’s love and we shall be the stretched hands of Mary towards that humanity that thirsts for God and the true peace that only God gives.

May Don Bosco intercede for all of us in that beautiful adventure that he lived and has left for us as a precious heritage for the salvation of the youth.

*Sig. Lucca Tullio, President
Don Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Spiritual Animator*

Training Path 2011-2012



5—Mary Help of Christians in the foundation of the salesian Congregation (don Pierluigi Cameroni)

The Holy Spirit aroused, with the motherly intervention of Mary, Don Bosco to be apostle of the youth and founder of a new charism in the Church. The Virgin Mary holds a place in the life of Don Bosco, an extraordinary place: there are not many founders in whose lives Mary has intervened as she did for Don Bosco, with the same motherly sollicitude, the same continuity, the same richness of events, the same broad mindedness, the same fecundity of deeds, even charismatics.

From what matured in Don Bosco there was a global perception of the times that went consolidating and precisizing: **Mary is a living person, a risen one who intervenes actively in the history and in the lives of persons, even in a wonderful manner.** The faith of Don Bosco in the risen Christ, experienced and promoted with the love for the Holy Eucharist, was accompanied by the faith in Mary as a living and active lady in the life of the Church and of humanity, both in his vocational story and in his pastoral mission. The affirmation of Don Joseph Aubry strikes great expert in salesian spirituality, when he said: “Let us realize that the devotion of Don Bosco for Mary has been, for a tenth, the manifestation of a spontaneously sensible heart and the fruit of an education that turned out to be intensively marian; and for new tenths, **the response to improvised initiatives of Mary that irrupted in his life in various forms**” (J. AUBRY, *Apostoli salesiani con Maria*, in A. PEDRINI, *La Madonna dei tempi difficili*, LAS, Roma, 1980 p. 137).

MARY, GOOD SHEPHERDESS – At the origins of the vocation and mission of Don Bosco **Mary reveals herself as Good Shepherdess of the youth.** The first intervention is without any doubt the “9 years old dream” whereby John Bosco receives from Christ the Good Shepherd, the annunciation of his vocation, the specific field of his mission, the indication of a pastoral and educative style made of a tameness, kindness and affection. Jesus gives the small to John Mary as Teacher and Good Shepherdess who in due time indicates to the small John his pastoral mission. The salesian flock belongs, from the beginning, to the Good Shepherd and to the Lady Good Shepherdess. That dream was repeated several times, always with peculiar newness: “the second Sunday of October of that year (1844) I had to pastor my youngsters and the Oratory would be transferred to Valdocco. But the uncertainty of the place, of the means, of the persons left me without any good thought. The precedent evening I went to bed with an anxious heart. That night I had a dream again, a kind of appendix of the dream I had at the Becchi when I was nine years old. I judged it better than to say it literally. I dreamt that I was among many wolves, goats and kids, lambs, sheep, dogs and birds. All together made an unbearable noise, a devilish noise that could frighten the most courageous. I tried to run away, when a **Lady, well dressed with a shape of a pastor made sign a to me to follow her and to accompany that strange flock, while SHE preceded us.** We went roaming by all sites; we did three stations and stops. In every stop many of these animals changed into lambs, the number went miraculously increasing. After having walked lots of miles I found myself in a meadow, where these animals jumped and pastored all together without any temptation to harm one another. Caught up by a strange fatigue I tried to sit near a neighbouring street, but **the shepherdess invited me to continue the walk.** After another brief walk, I came to a large courtyard with a gate and there was a church. Then I realized that three quarter of the animals have turned to lambs. And their number became more and more numerous. At that moment various young pastors joined to keep them. But they stopped a while and suddenly started walking. **Then something marvelous happened: many lambs changed into young pastors, who, in growing number cared for others.** With that increasing number, the young pastors divided into groups

and went to other places to gather other strange animals and guide them into other sheep folds. I wanted to go back, because it was time for me to go and say my daily mass, but the lady pastor invited me to look at the meadow. Looking at it I saw a field with melons, potatoes, cabbages, beetroot, lettuces and many other herbs. – Look another time, she said to me, and I looked again. Then **I saw a beautiful and high church**. A live band, instrumental and vocal music invited me to sing my mass. Inside that church there was a white side in which there were cubic characters written: *Hic domus mea, inde gloria mea*. Continuing my dream I wanted to ask the lady where I was, what was the explanation of this walking with stops and stations, that house, church, and another church. **You'll understand everything when with your material eyes you'll see in fact with the eyes of your soul**. But when it seemed that I was awake, she said to me: I see clear and I see with material eyes; I know where I go and what I do. At that moment the *Ave Maria* bell rang in the church of S. Francesco and I woke up (GIOVANNI BOSCO, *Memorie dell'oratorio di S. Francesco di Sales dal 1815 al 1855, Introduzione, note e testo critico a cura di ANTONIO DA SILVA FERREIRA*, Roma LAS, 1991 pp. 129-139). In Don Bosco the conviction that the presence of Mary in his mission and the foundation of the Congregation together with the serious responsibility he had to carry out, was so strong that he could affirm: “The Virgin Mary indicated to me in a vision the field in which I had to work. **I therefore possessed the design of a plan, premeditated, complete, from which I absolutely did not want and couldn't go astray. I was absolutely responsible for the success of all this**. I saw clearly the line I had to pull tight, the means I had to adopt in order to succeed in my endeavour; so I couldn't and I did not want to expose myself to the risk of failing such a designed plan and to submit to the judgement and the will of others” (MB III 247).

MARY THE IMMACULATE - Successively the ecclesial atmosphere of the year 1850 pushed Don Bosco to honour Mary in her mystery of Immaculate: a Lady to contemplate, but also to invoke, to experience as near and active. Mary intervened to make Don Bosco feel how much that privilege had a lot to do with his mission. The Immaculate sent to don Bosco the first boy, poor and abandoned, Bartolomeo Garelli, on 8th December 1841 and, after *a warm Ave Maria*, Don Bosco started with him with mission as evangelist of the Good News. Don Bosco has always considered that encounter as an intervention of Our Lady and the feast of the Immaculate as a particular day of grace: “**all of us are indebted to Mary and all our most greatest things initiated and finished on the day of the Immacolata**” (MB XVII 510). The 8th December 1854, the day of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate, another young boy, **Domenico Savio**, having entered few months before in the oratory of Valdocco was consecrated to Mary. Few months later **he will give birth to the Company of the Immaculate**, breeding ground of all youngsters dedicated to Mary from which the first salesians will come: **the 18th December 1859, day of the foundation of the congregation**, out of 16 young people who engaged themselves, 15 were members of the Company of the Immaculate. The salesian congregation finds its foundations in the track of the oratory of Valdocco, among those young people to whom Don Bosco dedicated himself and with their collaboration. That presence of Mary Immaculate in the foundation of the salesian congregation is providential: “the Lady Good Shepherdess wants to say that the work of education supposes a liberation from sin to live and grow in the grace of God and that the **educators themselves need a vigorous purity, that makes them educators fully available and valid**. In fact the Immaculate Conception appears to be for Don Bosco a mystery of permanent victory, that gives naturally to Mary the role of fighter of the kingdom of God and of help in the work of education: she is the one who unceasingly scratches the head of the snake” (J. AUBRY, *Apostoli salesiani con Maria*, in A. PEDRINI, *La Madonna dei tempi difficili*, LAS, Roma, 1980 p. 140).

MARY THE HELP – The years around 1860 the face of the Good Shepherdess-Immaculate takes the features of the Help: that devotion will accompany the last 25 years of the life of Don Bosco and that is at the origin of the worldly expansion of the congregation and the salesian mission. Our Lady acquires everyday to the eyes of Don Bosco her final strokes, those of the Help of Christians which initiated his vocation, she was the mistress and the guide for a great ecclesial mission. On the decade 1865-75 the salesian congrega-

tion is approved, and the Association of the devotees of Mary Help of Christians is founded and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians too. Then follows the beginning of the missionary adventure, the entry of the salesian Congregation to other countries in Europe and the organisation of the Cooperators. **Mary Help of Christians presides over that worldly expansion**, carrying us to the understanding of the Church. Don Bosco was convinced that his initiatives were the will of God and of Our Lady, his guide from the first dream, he interpreted this divine will in the concret circumstances that came up, inspiring him with the necessary courage to face all the fatigues and sacrifices on his way.



“MARY THE MOST HOLY IS THE FOUNDER AND WILL BE THE SUSTAINER OF OUR PRESENCES” (MB VII, 334), and mostly to the merit of the foundation of the salesian congregation. A certain evening of the year 1864, after he had obtained the *Decretum Laudis*, he turned to the first salesians this way, introducing the dream of the garden of roses he had on 1847: “I already told you various things in forms of dream, from which we can argue how much Our lady the Most Holy loves and helps us; but as we are here gathered among ourselves, so that **each one of us might have the assurance that it is Mary the Virgin who wants our congregation** so that we might love one another always more and more and work

for the major glory of God, I will tell you, not only a description of a dream, but what the Blessed Mother has pleased to show me. She wants us to put on her all our confidence” (MB III 32). On 1875 when the Constitutions were approved definitely by the Holy See, Don Bosco told Don Barberis and Don Lemoyne the dream of the tape he had on 1845 when he failed his first tentatives to gather around him in a stable mode some of his collaborators. The lady, the same of the first dreams, had shown him a large plain full of young people, the development of the house of Valdocco, the big church built at the place of the martyrdom of martyrs of the Tebea legion and went on this way: “- do you want to know what to do in order to keep them for ever? Take your tape and tie their front. So I took from her hands the small white tape and I saw that this word was written on top: **Obedience**. I then tried to do whatever the Lady would tell me to and I started to tie the front of one of my volunteer coadjutors with the tape, and suddenly I saw a big and marvellous effect: and that effects grew along while I was carrying on the mission that was entrusted to me, since those ones gave the impression of going away and leaving me they stopped and decided to remain with me to help me in my mission. **In that way the Congregation started**” (MB II 299-300). In one of his sermons on 1868 he told the confreres: “Our pious Society is one of the latest religious congregations, but unlike the others, it arose through the bounty of the Most Holy Mary who above all is the founder and the Mother, from the Last Supper up to today” (MB IX 347). Don Bosco was profoundly convinced that as Mary was present at the beginning of the Church and her mission at the Upper Room, she has been present from the very beginning of the salesian congregation, inspiring and sustaining. Even in a discourse he made during the celebration of the feast of the Immaculate in 1884 Don Bosco talking to his sons affirms: **“our Congregation is destined for great things and to expand to the whole world, if only salesians will remain faithful to the Rule given to them by Mary the Most Holy”**. Finally towards the end of his earthly life, the night from 9th to 10th April 1885, in Barcelona, another time Mary appeared to Don Bosco in the likeness of a shepherdess, she presented to him the future development of the congregation scattered all over the world, with youth centres in Chili, China, India, Madagascar and the whole of Africa: “- where to find all these people, and how to send missionaries to these places? These places are for savages who eat human flesh; there are heretics, persecutors, so what was to be done then? - See, she

said, have a good will. You have only one thing to do: **to recommend that my sons might cultivate constantly the virtue of Mary.** - Well, yes, it seems I have understood. I'll preach your words to all... When the Saint had finished, he added: - **How Mary loves us!** (MB XVII 73-74). Few months before his death, when he celebrated his first and unique mass at the basilica of S. Cuore in Rome, on 16th may 1887, with eyes fixed on the painting of the Help of Christians Don Bosco was moved to tears remembering his first dream: "I had in front of me the live scene when I was 10 and dreamt of the Congregation. I saw and heard my mummy and my brothers questioning me over my dream... - At that moment Our lady would have told them: - in the due time you'll understand everything" (MB XVIII 341). If we consider that Mary inspired and sustained Don Bosco in the foundation of the Congregation and of the Salesian Family how much more true it is that Don Bosco has always been able to venerate and render a cult to Our Lady for her special intervention. We too, if we want to be true sons of Don Bosco we must experience the maternal help of Mary Help of Christians and cultivate the devotion to her.

SOLEMN ACT OF CONFIDENCE OF THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS (14TH January 1984)

We Salesians, gather in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to that infinite love with which he has always loved the world that he gave his only Son

and to send his Spirit for the redemption and the sanctification of mankind.

Glory to you, merciful Father, to you, Son redeemer, to you, Spirit the sanctifier, one and thrine Love that saves!

We praise you, Trinity divine, to have inefably associated Mary to the work of salvation,

raising her as Mother of God and Mother of ours.

And you, Lord Jesus, Son of Mary and early fruit of the new creation, give us your spirit to put in our hearts the same feelings of your love.

We pray that you might renew in us the inefable Testament made on the Cross, when you gave to your Apostle John the quality and the title of Son of your Mother Mary.

Repeat also for each one of us these words: "MOTHER, THIS IS YOUR SON!", in order to always love with "Mary in our home!"

That she might remain motherly with us; take us by her hand

And be our Inspiring model in the work of evangelisation of the "small and the poor".

That she might help us to be the living stones of the Church, in communion of life and action with the Pope and the Bishops.

That she might obtain for us intensity of listening and apostolic zeal

To become valid prophets of hope in the third millenium of the christian Faith.

That she might educate us to the pastoral inventiveness and that attractive goodness, nourished by asceticism,

that renders us experts in dialogue and friendship, specially among the poorest youth.

O Mother help of the Church, we the Salesians of Don Bosco today WE ENTRUST OURSELVES TO YOU, personally and in community, to your goodness and your intercession.

We entrust to you the precious treasure of our Constitutions,

the commitment to fidelity and unity of the Congregation, the sanctification of its members,

the work of all moved by an attitude of cult in spirit and truthfulness of life,

the vocational fecondity, the arduous responsibility of formation,

the boldness and the missionary generosity, the animation of the Salesian Family

and mostly, the hard-working ministry of predilection towards the youth.

We proclaim you, with joy, "Mistress and Guide" of our Congregation.

Receive, we pray, this filial Act of Trust

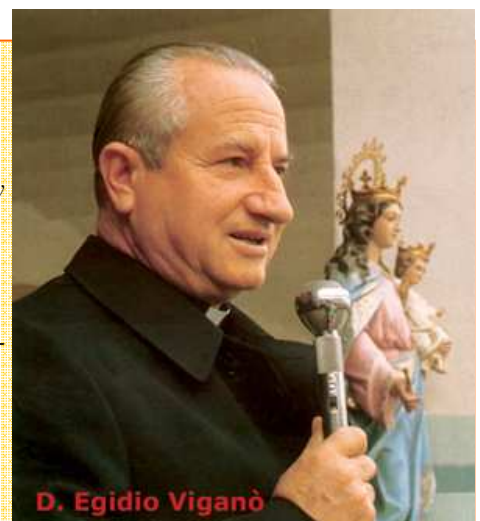
And make us greater participants to the Testament of Jesus at the Calvary:

through Him, with Him and in Him we propose to live and work tirelessly

to the edification of the Father's Kingdom.

Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us! Amen.

(Don Egidio Viganò)



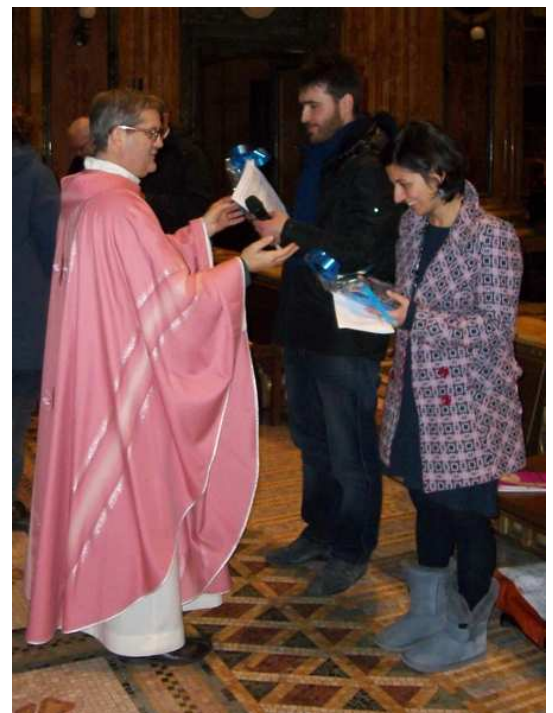
D. Egidio Viganò



SICILIA- NEW REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ADMA. Elected on the 18th of September 2011, on 15th October various roles were given: Luigina Ciaramella, Chair Lady; Rosario Russo, Vice president and in charge of the pastoral for families; Nerina Petitto, Secretary; Giuseppe Auteri, Treasurer; coordinator of zones who will take care of various localities of Sicilia: Nicola Burrascano, Maria Grazia Fichera; Rosario Russo; Maria Canale.

GELA (CALTANISSETTA - ITALIA) – Act of confidence of the children of Mary Help of Christians. Every year, during the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and near the Holy Christmas, we have always dedicated an evening for our children asking Our lady to particularly protect them the way Margaret consacrated her little John to Mary and had taught him to be devotee to Her. The children present were called (around 60), the prayer of confidence from a mother and finally a blessing was given to them. Families have participated in two encounters of formation over the importance of prayer in the life of couples and the necessity to dialogue and relate in reciprocal respect in order to grow together. To attend, both moments, there were Don Calogero Di Gregorio and Luigina Ciaramella. The conclusion was pondered by the distribution of sweets to all small ones. (*Luigina Ciaramella Regional President of ADMA*).

TORINO ADMA PRIMARIA – Christmas Retreat – On Sunday the 11th December 2011 a retreat for the preparation of the Holy Christmas took place with the participation of 200 people and around forty children, young boys and girls. In the morning there was the presentation of a **new exercise book of Mary Help of Christians “The marvels of the Mother of God”**, made by **Don Roberto Carelli**, who in a very catching manner presented Mary as the “Aqueduct to paradise”, he developed how much the devotion to Mary Help of Christians, lived and promoted by Don Bosco, educates us to the concreteness and to the defence of the faith, he also underlined the beauty and the commitment to the witness of faith. In the



afternoon Don Pierluigi Cameroni commented in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians the paddle of Lorenzone, as was suggested in the December number of the ADMAonline; a real moment of contemplation that helped everybody to meditate on the spiritual and charismatic richness of that cloth ordered by Don Bosco. During the Holy Eucharist, 5 new members expressed their commitment to the ADMA.



ARGENTINA – ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS. On the 12th of December 2011 the salesian provincials of Argentina **P. Angel Fernandez Artime (ARS)** and **P. Manuel Cayo (ARN)** have sent a letter to all groups and members of the salesian Family, announcing the celebration of the **1st National Congress of Mary help of Christians for Argentina that will take place in the sanctuary Luján from 21st to 23rd September 2012.** They reiterated that from the beginnings of the life and vocation of the saint founder, Saint John Bosco, the Virgin Mother was present and had manifested her maternal solicitude in an extraordinary and marvellous way and how such presence is continuous in the work of the salesians. In tuning with the Strenna of 2012, that invites us to know and imitate Don Bosco making of the youth the mission of our life, they exhort the members to give a relief to the marian devotion which marked the life and the work of the saint of the youth. In celebrating that congress, to the national marian sanctuary, the provincials want us to put ourselves in the conditions of pilgrims towards our Father's house, to continue as Mary did, to be disciples and missionaries of the living Gospel, that Jesus is the Redeemer. The leitmotiv chosen for the congress is: "**The**

Virgin in the life of Don Bosco: presence, help and devotion". Our hope is already the grace of encounter in the house of the Virgin and the deepening of the love and the marian devotion, essential characteristics of the salesian charism and spirituality. May the congress help us to grow in apostolic strength and personal sanctity, in the resemblance of Don Bosco himself and of the first salesians, who transplanted that salesian vocation and taught all that Mary always did for the whole Church.

CORDOBA (ARGENTINA) – On the 12th of December 2012 the members of ADMA of the Pio X College of Cordoba, for which P. José Cuesta, is spiritual animator, elected a new local council: Myriam Giuliano De Pinotti (Chair Lady); Gloria Beatriz Acosta De Sotti (Vice president); Silvia Beatriz Garay (Secretary); Delia Claria de Buteler (Treasurer). We wish them a very good work of animation with the help of Mary Help of Christians!



VIITH WORLD CONGRESS FOR THE FAMILIES (Milan 30th May – 3rd June 2012) – “We cannot carry out the Youth Ministry unless it is united and opened to the Family Ministry. The presence of the youth and families and couples that, under the guidance of Mary, share the same way of life, made of formation, sharing and prayer, is trully a providential gift of Mary help of Christians who cares about the new generations”. With these words the Rector Major, at the conclusion of the VIIth International Congress of Mary Help of Christians, handed to our Association the commitment for the families and the youth. In the guidelines of 2012 we came to know how much the goal of the Association, rather on the defence of the faith of the people, is more update today and becomes the educative proposal to indicate Mary Mother and Mistress of education. For each family this means to welcome Mary in her home. The devotion to Mary and the centrality of Eucharist become decisive in the way to discipleship and the commitment for education to become spouses, to educate the children, to fertilize the church and the society. **In such a perspective we have decided to commit ourselves to the church event of the VIIth word encounter for families to be held in Milan in 2012.** A primary possibility is that of **getting a space at the International Fair of the Family.** It seems opportune for us to make known our reality to the families participants to offer a help in

living the christian dimension in everyday’s life. Beside such a commitment, we intend to organise **our presence with some representatives to those days of the families**, while for the 3rd Sunday of June we foresee a more significant presence, at least of the Italian families of ADMA and even the groups of the Salesian Family who dedicate a particular attention to the family ministry. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us: **“the New Evangelisation depends on its major part on the Domestic church. In our times, as it was already in the past times, the eclipse of God, the spreading of ideologies contrary to the families and the downgrading of the sexual ethics are the same. The eclipse of God and the crisis of the family are linked, and so is the new evangelisation inseparable from the christian family. Family is in fact the life of the Church for it is a “human space” of the encounter with Christ. The spouses, “not only receive the love of Christ, becoming a saved community, but are called to transmit to the brethren the same love of Christ, becoming the saving community”... there are some areas in which it is particularly urgent to install the protagonism of the christian families in collaboration with the Priests and under the guidance of the Bishops: the education of the children, adolescents and youth to love, understood as a gift of self and communion; the preparation of the fiancees to matrimonial life with a faith itinerary; the formation of the spouses, specially of the young couples; the associative experiences with a charity goal, educative of civil commitment; the family ministry turned into the arch of life, valuing the time of work and the time for the feast”** (Discourse to the Plenary of the Pontifical Council for the Family, 1st December 2011).



The paper can be read at the following site:

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

and here: www.donbosco-torino.it/

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