

MARY CALLS US TO PRAY AND FIGHT AGAINST TEMPTATION AND EVIL



Mary Help of Christians is Our Lady in difficult times. She guides us in the path of conversion. She is a solicitous mother who cares for the salvation of her children, especially for those who are closed to grace and do not listen to her appeals. Our Mother urges us to remain steadfast in faith against the satanic temptation to build a world without God, where man is under the illusion that he can do what he wants. For a world without God, there is no future or eternal life. We look to the Lord who was crucified and has risen. We keep hold of the Cross. From the Cross comes the salvation of the world. The Cross renews Christ's victory over Satan in us.

In this regard we welcome with gratitude the announcement of a great ecclesial event: "Dear brothers and sisters, I have often thought about how the Church might make clear its mission of being a witness to mercy. It is a journey that begins with a spiritual conversion. For this reason, I have decided to call an *extraordinary Jubilee* that is to have the mercy of God at its centre. It shall be a Holy Year of Mercy. We want to live this Year in the light of the Lord's words: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (cf. Lk 6:36)"... This Holy Year will begin on this coming Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will end on 20 November 2016, the Sunday dedicated to Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe - and living face of the Father's mercy... I am convinced that the whole Church will find in this Jubilee the joy needed to rediscover and make fruitful the mercy of God, with which all of us are called to give consolation to every man and woman of our time. Do not forget that God forgives all, and God always forgives. We never tire of asking for forgiveness. From this moment, we entrust this Holy Year to the Mother of Mercy, that she might turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey with an open heart, to receive the indulgence of God, to receive God's mercy "(Pope Francis March 14, 2015).

Meanwhile we continue the process of preparation as we draw near to the **Seventh International Congress of Mary Help of Christians** (Turin - Colle Don Bosco, 6 to 9 August 2015). We give thanks to Divine Providence and to the many people of good will who are contributing to the success of the event. We are grateful for those who have already registered and for the expressions of interest received from different parts of the world. They show us that the Salesian Family, out of love for Mary Help of Christians, is now preparing for this significant event during the Bicentenary of the birth of Don Bosco and of the institution of the liturgical feast of Mary Help of Christians. For information, visit the website of the Congress, or write to congresso@admadonbosco.org.

We invite all our members and groups to join with particular devotion in the novena and the feast of Mary Help of Christians, entrusting the August Congress to her in a special way.

Lucca Tullio, President
Fr Pierluigi Camerini SDB, Spiritual Animator



Seventh International Congress of Mary Help of Christians

Turin-Valdocco / Colle Don Bosco

6-9 August 2015

"Hic domus mea, inde glory mea"

From the house of Mary to our homeshis mercy is from generation to generation

8. The home, a place of fraternal love

Don Roberto Carelli

Fraternity is an essential aspect of love in the family and in the church. It is the **fruit of natural fertility**, because brothers and sisters are born from the love of the spouses. Fraternity is also the **fruit of a supernatural fecundity**, because by his Incarnation and Passion the Son of God became our brother and has made us all brothers and sisters united in the love of the one Father. Fraternity is so central to the Christian lexicon that Christian love and fraternal love tend to become one and the same.

Among Christians it is so normal to call one another brothers and sisters in the Lord, especially among consecrated men and women, that we run the risk of trivializing the terms. Indeed, as noted by Pope Francis, brother and sister are "words that Christianity loves" and "words that all cultures and all eras understand". It is therefore necessary to recognize that **the community of faith and the ideal of universal brotherhood are the gift of God, not of nature**. They are the fruit of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, not the work of human hands. Where the sense of God's gift is diminished, the ideal of fraternity gives way to ethnic nationalism and selfishness. These lead, not to basic hospitality and equality, but to the very opposite. They exacerbate differences and arouse mistrust, alienation, hatred, and conflict.

There is a lesson to be learnt from modern culture. In it the ideal of fraternity is founded on the rational argument of our common humanity rather than on faith in the fatherhood of God. This kind of fraternity has resulted in the monster of a selfish individualistic culture, with nationalist policies and racist ideologies, which led to the philanthropy of 1968 or the globalism of today.

There is no escaping the fact that **fraternity is founded in the family and in God, not anywhere else!** It is the fruit of generation and redemption, not an institution or a convention! It is written in the flesh and blood of parents, and is redeemed in the flesh and blood of Christ! **We must not confuse Christian fraternity with the "fellowship" of the enlightenment.** Fraternity is real, fellowship is an abstraction. Fraternity brings life, fellowship sows the seeds of death. As Pope Francis says, "perhaps we are not always aware of it, but it is the family that creates fraternity in the world", and it is from there "that it radiates to the whole of society"! A vague humanitarianism, based on the feeling of our common human nature, is incomplete and imperfect, unable to counteract the selfishness that exists in the human heart. For this reason the Pope goes on to say, "Freedom and equality, without fraternity, can become individualism and conformity."

Scripture recognises **the beauty and drama of fraternity**. From the stories of Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers, to the parables of Jesus (the one of the two sons and that of the merciful father), Scripture reveals often the ambivalent nature of fraternity. It can be both helpful and harmful. It can be both freedom and threat. It enables us to choose but it is not the object of choice. We all have the same origin but different destinies. It unites us as one but we are all different. There is a **perennial tension between affection and envy**, laying claim to our own position but also making way for others. One part of Scripture can exclaim "How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity" (Ps 132, 1), and another says: "Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?" (Mal 2, 10). We will try to understand the meaning of fraternity with four observations:



It is the least arbitrary and longest lasting bond. Just as we do not choose our parents, *neither do we choose our brothers and sisters*. But the bond between brothers and sisters is *longer lasting* than that with our parents. We are brothers and sisters long before we marry and the bond between us remains after the death of our parents. For this reason it is a reassuring bond but can also be a difficult one. It creates an alliance that is strong even though unwritten, but it can become an alliance that is suffered more than chosen. It is a source of security, but requires

patience in accepting and recognizing that the other is like me but different and distinct from me. We have many things in common, but also things that distinguish us.

2. It is a relationship of blood and a bond of faith. In general terms, *fraternity is a link between equals, and it makes room for others who are like us*. It is learnt in the family and it extends to the whole world. The result is the tension between *consanguinity and common humanity*. On the one hand the ties of blood are the most immediate and binding, with the risk of making us less free. The bonds of faith are more discreet and allow for greater freedom, with the risk of being a bit anonymous. On the other hand the bonds of faith are more critical and deeper than blood ties, unless those blood ties are also bonds of faith. It is important then that among natural brothers the bond does not become exclusive, while between brothers in Christ it is important to keep God at the centre, keeping in mind always the motives of faith that unite us.

3. It is a link between equals with different identities. The experience of family in the course of history and in a variety of cultures makes us well aware of the tension between complicity and ongoing quarrels. This tension arises for many reasons: the rights of the firstborn, rivalry for recognition, parental preferences, jealousy and envy that generates resentment and can even lead to murder. The arrival of a brother or sister is always a critical event. The dilemma is whether there is room or they can make room for one more, if the desire to be unique in the eyes of the parents can be both exclusive and inclusive. On the one hand we grow up in the shadow of our brothers and sisters, and on the other hand there is the fear that our brothers and sisters will leave us in the shade.

4. The drama of agreement and disagreement. It should also be taken into account that the bond of fraternity needs a lot of attention. The relationship is easy, but often becomes perfunctory. The relationship between brothers and sisters must combine immediacy and respect, loving oneself and treating oneself well. It is terrible when there is discord between brothers. If it is serious, it can be very hard to heal. Their alliance is unwritten and inviolable, spontaneous and at the same time mandatory. Brothers and sisters are more likely to defend each other and also more likely to maltreat each other. Wrongs committed between brothers and sisters break the natural bond that exists, and end up increasing resentment and making forgiveness difficult.

What the Word of God says on the theme of brotherly love is very clear. The beauty of being brothers and sisters is marked by two major efforts that are part of the fraternal relationship – the effort to control their rivalry and the effort to accept what is different in the other. The Bible records that the just man in general and Jesus in particular, suffer through envy and presumption which are the two main threats to the fraternal relationship. Envy leads to an inability to see due to our always making comparisons: "Let us lie in wait for the righteous man because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. (Wisdom 2) Presumption leads us to think we see everything because we know someone well. "We know where this man comes from; and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from." So Jesus pro-

FAMILY CHRONICLE

DAUGHTERS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS: ASSISTANCE TO ADMA

During their recent General Chapter the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians made a commitment, in the article dedicated to the Councillor for the Salesian Family, to work with the Salesians in assisting our Association. We thank Mother Yvonne and the Sisters of the Institute for this support to ADMA in the common task of promoting devotion to Mary Help of Christians. Here is the article:

129 bis. The Councillor for the Salesian Family offers guidelines for the Institute to give its original contribution - feminine and Marian - to the growth of communion and collaboration in the Salesian Family. **The Institute accompanies** the Association of Past Pupils with particular attention that they may live their lay vocation with responsibility and autonomy. **It shares with the Salesians of Don Bosco the animation of the Association of Salesian Cooperators and the Association of Mary Help of Christians.**

THE SALESIAN FAMILY AT EXPO IN MILAN



This year EXPO 2015 will be held in Milan (www.expo2015.org). The theme is that of food and nutrition "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life." The Salesian Family will be there with a small pavilion, called *Casa Don Bosco*. The theme will be presented from a Salesian perspective: "Educating young people, energy for life", with a broader approach. Hunger and malnutrition, far from being just a matter of sustainable production or availability of healthy food, will be presented as relating directly to the education of the younger generation. An essential aspect of this process of education and integral formation

is the promotion and protection of the rights of every person - of children, of the elderly and disadvantaged, of women and men. Two hundred years after his birth Don Bosco still has much to say and to offer parents and educators, Civil Society and the International Community by putting the care of the younger generation at the centre of the political agenda.

Fr Claudio Belfiore of CNOS at Sacro Cuore in Rome is responsible for the organization of the Salesian participation in EXPO. *Casa Don Bosco* will be strategically located at the intersection of the two main roads of EXPO. There will be only three pavilions managed by religious organizations: Caritas, the Vatican and the Salesians. The area available is approximately 750 square meters of which about 240 will be occupied by the pavilion, which is a small prefabricated structure meant to look like a house, just in the style of Don Bosco. The message we want to communicate is: "Don Bosco educates the young people of the World." The three slogans of the Salesian pavilion are "nurture the dream", "educate the person," "nourish the body."

There is an agreement with EXPO by which tickets can be had at a significant discount. Book tickets by e-mail at ticket@expodonbosco2015.org. For information, contact info@expodonbosco2015.org . (Stefano Uberti).

PHILIPPINES - SALESIAN FAMILY DAY



Don Bosco used to say. (Junifer).

On 14 February 2015, about 100 members of ADMA with other groups of the Salesian Family met at the Don Bosco College in Canlubang Laguna to celebrate Salesian Family Day. The day began with concelebrated Mass in the Diocesan Shrine of Mary Help of Christians. Fr Gerry Martin, SDB, Rector of the pre-novitiate, presided. After Mass, there was the *Amazing Race*, a time for games and activities with much joy. Seven groups participated in the Family Day, including young people, the laity, the FMA and SDB. In the afternoon there was a short play and a mini-lottery. Everyone enjoyed the Salesian Family Day: "Run, jump, shout, but do not sin,"

TURIN STURA

In the suburbs of Turin there is a village called SNIA, where the kindergarten run by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians is located. Several years ago a group of people there founded ADMA.

On Saturday 21 February 2015 the worldwide spiritual animator, Fr Pier Luigi Cameroni, and the president, Tullio Lucca, came for a visit and a prayer meeting on the occasion of the bicentenary of St. John Bosco, to the joy and amazement of all.



A big number of people gathered and the overall atmosphere was very warm. Devotees of Mary Help of Christians came from the neighbouring villages, along with various groups of the Salesian Family and supporters, as if called by the sweet sound of a bell. It was a beautiful encounter. There was prayer and reflection on the difficult time we are going through. The message of Don Bosco is not to give up but to have confidence in our Mother and Helper. With so much faith, so much simplicity, so much friendship, we can look to the future, with our feet firmly on the ground but our eyes turned towards heaven. The Holy Mass was the central part of this unforgettable meeting. (Tullio Gazziero).

VIBORA (HAVANA - CUBA) - MEMORY OF MARIA DOLORES HERRERA VALENZUELA

The death occurred on 19 March of Maria Dolores Herrera Valenzuela, tireless missionary and catechist of the San Juan Bosco Parish in Víbora (Havana). She was a very active and enthusiastic member of the Salesian Family. She animated the local ADMA and attended meetings of ADMA National. She was an enthusiastic collaborator in the summer activities. Joy and availability characterized her in all her pastoral duties. She had a great apostolate in Caritas. Thank you Lord for giving us this sister so full of enthusiasm who went in search of the sheep with Easter joy. (The Salesian community of San Juan Bosco-Víbora).



TUXTLA GUTIERREZ (CHIAPAS - MEXICO) - REGIONAL RETREAT

This year, as in previous years, members of the Chiapas region came together for our annual retreat on the theme: "Make your hearts firm." (Message of Pope Francis for Lent 2015). Starting from his insistence on the "globalization of indifference," we reflect on the Salesian Family, to which we must not remain indifferent. The retreat took place at the Parish of St. John the Apostle in Tuxtla Gutierrez - Chiapas.



After the opening session, we went to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament where we had a prayer service with Psalms edited by Professor June Esperanza Pascasio, a member of ADMA from Chiapa de Corzo. This helped us to communicate with God and to lay a good foundation for our reflection on the Pope's message. The theme of the message was presented by some of our ADMA members who have vast experience in the pastoral care of the Parish: Víctor Manuel Castillejos, Carmelita Galdámez and Esperanza de Jesus Enriquez.

The three parts of the document were well explained:

1. If one member suffers, all suffer with it (1 Cor 12:20). The Church.
2. Where is your brother? (Gen 4.9). The parish and the community.
3. Make your hearts firm (James 5.8). The believer.

At the end of the Eucharist five new members were accepted for the Parral group and two for Villaflores.

We thank God for his protection because all returned safely to their places of origin and with a desire to continue to be the Church. The response to the Pope's message was very clear and now we begin to live it. (Carmelita Galdámez Alegría).

MADRID (SPAIN) - AREA MEETING

The meeting of the councils at the *La Elipa* ADMA began on 28 February 2015 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation. This is a parish entrusted to Augustinian Recollects. Thirteen local councils gathered in the parish hall, in a warm fraternal meeting with the relic of Don Bosco present. After sharing the life of each group we moved into the temple, where we worshipped the Blessed Sacrament with great recollection. Then we had Mass. Fr

Luis Fernando Alvarez, spiritual animator of La Elipa, presided while the Archpriest of the area, the curate of the parish and the Salesian spiritual animators concelebrated. We ended with a simple meal, with the joy of sharing our experiences and common prayer. (Bianco Somoza Gloria - President of ADMA in the Madrid area).





PHILIPPINES - DEVOTION TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

As a perfect gift for Don Bosco, the National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Parañaque City, Philippines, is in the forefront in spreading devotion to the Marian title that Don Bosco recommended to his children, not only to see what miracles are, but also and above all, to express their filial devotion to the Virgin Mary, whom he regarded as teacher, guide and mother. This is especially true this year when we also celebrate the bicentenary of the institution of the liturgical feast of Mary Help of Christians.

On the 24 of every month, the Shrine hosts the commemoration in honour of Mary Help of Christians. The new rector of the Shrine, Fr Remo Bati, has introduced some initiatives that have led to a rapid growth in the number of devotees. Just before the Mass he burns the letters with requests written and placed in the box located at the Pilgrim Centre. This is a way of asking Mary Help of Christians to intercede with her Son. There is also a short procession with the image of Mary Help of Christians, while the rosary is recited. At the conclusion the devotees offer flowers to the Virgin. This also marks the beginning of the Mass. At 7.00 a.m. there is a Mass of healing or a prayer-service of healing for the faithful. Fr. Remo has recognized two miracles attributed to the intercession of Mary Help of Christians. One concerns a man who was freed of a gall stone. Another concerns a person who came to the shrine on crutches because of problems with gout, but walked away comfortably immediately after the Mass of healing. A Franciscan nun, Sister Mary Edna, shared her experience of how Mary Help of Christians was the instrument of her recovery and now uses her to promote the devotion.

Fr. Remo reminded everyone that the preparation for the annual feast of Mary Help of Christians on 24 May is in full swing. Among other things, he cannot wait to publish a coffee-table book (photo album) in honour of Mary Help of Christians, with photos of about 32 parishes and chapels which bear the name of Mary Help of Christians.

On 24 February, Fr Anthony Paul Bicomong, Provincial of the Northern Philippines, blessed a life-size statue of Mary Help of Christians. It was received with great joy by pilgrims, especially by young people who put their photos with the Mother of God in their social media accounts.

The Salesians and the aspirants of the three houses of formation, have produced a video documentary on the diocesan shrine of Mary Help of Christians, located in the Diocese of San Pablo.

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 adress: pcameroni@sdb.org