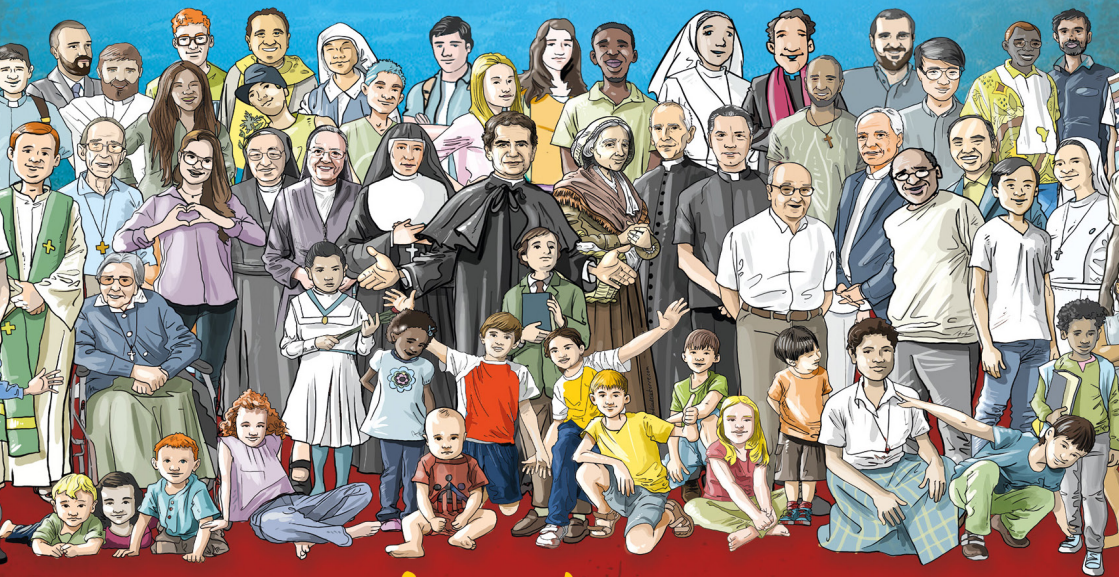


XLI SPIRITUALITY DAYS JANUARY 12-15, 2023 VALDOCCO

Salesian Family

SUMMARY OF THE REFLECTION OF THE GROUPS



At the *Yeast* in today's
human family

XLI Spirituality Days of the Salesian Family
Valdocco, January 12-15, 2023

**SUMMARY OF THE
REFLECTION
OF THE GROUPS**

AS THE YEAST IN TODAY'S HUMAN FAMILY.

41° GIORNATE OF SPIRITUALITY OF THE SALESIAN FAMILY
VALDOCCO, 12-15 JANUARY 2023

AS THE YEAST IN TODAY'S HUMAN FAMILY.

SUMMARY OF THE REFLECTION OF THE GROUPS

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PRESENTATION

As a Salesian Family, convened by the Rector Major, we accepted the invitation of the Strenna 2023 to reflect on the lay dimension of the Salesian Family.

Under the title «As Yeast in the Today's Human Family», the Father of the Salesian Family intended to emphasise the value of the lay dimension and the complementarity of the Groups called together to be «yeast in the dough of humanity».

From January 12-15 in Valdocco we were more than 250 members of the Salesian Family belonging to more than 18 Groups and we listened, reflected and prayed together, trying to discover and better grasp the will of God for our Family.

The program was divided between assembly meetings in the theatre, prayers, guided tours to the places of the birth of the charism, sharing, celebrations and some congenial moments.

Here we would like to present summaries of the work of the different groups who reflected on the Strenna in relation to the Salesian Family, and the interventions of the round table encouraged rich dialogue and debate among all the participants.

May these pages serve to continue to deepen the lay dimension of our Salesian Family.

Don Joan Lluís Playà i Morera,
Central Delegate of the Rector Major for the Salesian Family

Don Alejandro Guevara,
ADMA Spiritual Animator, coordinator of GEFS 2023



WORK OF THE GROUPS ON THE 2023 STRENNA

Friday, January 13, 2023



INDICATIONS

On the morning of 13 January, divided into language groups (a total of 17), we answered two questions on Strenna 2023 that the Rector Major had presented. Here is the summary of their work.

1. Each participant in the group shares ***two of the most significant aspects*** of the Strenna that help to enhance ***the lay dimension of the Salesian Family***. In the end, the group chooses the three most significant aspects.
2. Each participant in the group indicates ***two challenges*** to better live the lay dimension within the Salesian Family. At the end, the group chooses the three most suitable challenges.

GROUP WORK

1. **Indicates the 3 important aspects that contribute to enhancing the lay dimension of the Salesian Family:**
 - * Being «leaven», being a community on a journey, sharing, enhancing the Salesian charism and spiritual life.
 - * Taking a special look at young people: understanding and involving them according to their potential, to share the «mission on the way» and the Salesian charism.
 - * Taking care not only of «doing», but mainly of «being», interiority, the life of prayer.
 - * Testimony: being invisible «yeast» in the area and in the situation in which I live (school, work, family, community...).
 - * Courage: being able to face new challenges and new times with creativity.
 - * Shared charism: although there are different ways of living «the call», each according to their vocation, the charism and mission

are the same and aim at building up the kingdom of God.

- * Each of us must deepen our identity and live it fully.
- * We have to be «yeast» even if the conditions are not optimal.
- * Each vocation, lived in fullness, enriches the vocation of the other.
- * Young people, even if not directly identified in a group of the Salesian Family, are the beneficiaries yet share responsibility at the same time.
- * All members of the Salesian Family are called to rediscover, revalue their identity as Christians and experience everything in the presence of God.
- * It is necessary: to promote education in values, so that there is reflection on socio-political life by actively participating in it.
- * Enhancing the pastoral dimension of the laity.
- * To make society aware of the different charisms that exist within the Salesian Family, enhancing the spirit of the Family of Nazareth.
- * Being «leaven» in the dough as the kingdom of God, silently and moved by the Holy Spirit, influencing, giving the lead to and transforming society in its entirety by remaining faithful to our charism, each in the mission to which God calls them.
- * Grounded in the world: being present in places of life, work environments, families, social spaces, culture.
- * Entrustment to the Lord: «I am where You want me to be... it is there that I am called to be yeast and salt».
- * Valuing the word «together»: working with young people. Your life enriches me, my life enriches you.
- * Like Don Bosco, instilling fundamental values, supported above all by the family unit.

- * Enhancing the lay dimension: providing more opportunities to learn more about the Salesian foundations and various Groups (including through educational materials, social media, the Salesian Bulletin...); giving them more responsibility with invitations and proposals; but always remaining understanding in their regard because they have other responsibilities (studies, work, family...)

2. The 3 challenges that secularism presents to our Salesian Family

- * Personal journey of faith in relationship with Jesus that takes place as a personal relationship.
- * Youth-adult formation to overcome the dichotomies that arise from the cultural context.
- * Complementarity of the different states of life to know each other, live and share the mission.
- * Growing in awareness and knowledge of one's vocational identity and in the awareness of being a Charismatic Family in the Church.
- * Collaborative vocational animation with lay people who can help, advise and support young people to make convinced and courageous choices.
- * Taking care of interiority and openness to what is happening outside us, reflecting in what contexts we are called to be «yeast» today.
- * It is necessary to create affective relationships which generate closeness and communion, respect and recognition of each one's role, in collaboration with the laity, to bring out and/or enhance their skills/abilities, with the awareness of making each grow in their role and in their place so they can be themselves.
- * Being yeast «ad intra ed extra» not only limited to your group, community, family, but open to all realities and new situations.

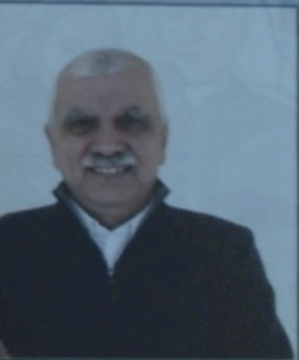
- * Consecrated persons and lay people can live and share salesian spirituality together.
- * It is important for consecrated/lay people to know each other and journey together: in true, fraternal and family awareness.
- * Being willing to work with young people in true complementarity.
- * Growing in social commitment: being convinced, prepared and serious Christians, without fear of taking responsibility.
- * Formation: recognising and enhancing one's vocational identity through processes that help adults and young people to recognise, live and enjoy their vocation.
- * Strengthening the local Advisory Councils, capitalising on the directions already taken and giving new impetus to the Provincial Advisory Council. Establish a local Advisory Council where none exists.
- * Recognising that the Salesian mission is unique because it is God's work, taking care of one another and creating communion.
- * Forming oneself and forming to social and political commitment, keeping eyes and hearts open to the experience of those we meet, becoming models for young people and making them responsible.
- * Creating new ways to translate the salesian foundations and what made us love Don Bosco into the present time, through the formation of Educative and Pastoral Communities (councils) at local and provincial levels.
- * Journeying with the Church and the Pope for the implementation of synodality.



ROUND TABLE

Friday, January 13, 2023

TAVOLA ROTONDA



Antonio Boccia



Susanna Torres



Pierluigi Dovia

Famiglia



INDICATIONS

As part of the Days, on Friday we chose to ask for the presence and witness of four people to shed light on the lay dimension of the Salesian Family from different perspectives.

- * **Fabio Attard**, sdb, explored the current moment of the laity in the Church, starting from the thinking of Pope Francis and the Dicastery for the «Laity, Family and Life», offering an ecclesial and broad perspective and indicating the relationship and complementarity that exists between lay and consecrated persons.
- * **Mr Renato Cursi** offered us a reflection on the identity of the Christian lay person with a Salesian style, endeavouring to share some concrete elements of lay spirituality.
- * **Mr Pierluigi DAVIS** spoke to us about the fields in which the apostolic commitment of the laity can be carried out with a salesian spirit: politics, social life, profession, volunteering.
- * **Ms Susana de Torres** shared her experience, underlining the educational processes to be strengthened in young people (high school, university, vocational training, volunteers...) to lead them to become lay people committed to social transformation.

The round table led by Mr. Antonio Boccia, World Coordinator of the SSCC.



THE PRESENT MOMENT OF THE LAITY IN THE CHURCH

Fr Fabio Attard, *sdb*.
Laity Europe Project Coordinator

The present moment of the laity in the Church should be seen in the light of the Church's journey starting from the experience of the Second Vatican Council. We find here the beginning of a reflection that still continues not only to enrich thought and reflection, but above all to shed ever new light on the identity and action of the laity and the entire believing community. I will limit myself to three nuclei.

- A. The first document after the Second Vatican Council to deal in a very careful and profound way with the vocation of the laity is the *Apostolic Exhortation* **CHRISTIFIDELES LAICI** (30 December 1988). The image that guides this document is the parable of the vineyard and its workers, a very evocative image. Herewith the 5 points made by this document.
1. **Christ is the vine and we are the branches.** The dignity of the lay faithful in the Church comes from the fact that all of us, through baptism, are part of the Church, the Mystical Body Christ. We are sons and daughters in the Son. We are living and holy temples of the Spirit, participating in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Jesus Christ.
 2. **This identity is nourished by the one Vine,** Christ, and does so by actively participating in the life of the Church which is Communion.
 3. **It is an active and life-giving participation:** we are all constituted, chosen, because we go and bear fruit in terms of shared responsibility in the Church as Mission.
 4. The workers in the vineyard are called to be **good stewards of God's manifold grace** in the variety of their vocations and charisms.
 5. For this to bear fruit, there is a need for **formation processes and experiences.**

It is very important to recall this first great document because it immediately clarifies *the identity* with its radical dimension, from a *missionary perspective*, indicating the *responsibility to manage commitments* as well as the *responsibility to form oneself* to live this call in a way that is relevant.

B. A second document on this ecclesial journey: Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation EVANGELII GAUDIUM. Three short points.

1. Commenting on the theme of the laity, quoting *Christifideles laici*, Pope Francis first of all also clarifies their **identity**, using the image of «*closeness to Jesus' mandate*» and «*missionary communion*»: two sentences, a whole programme. The Church's intimacy with Jesus is an itinerant closeness (go forth), and communion «essentially [it] is likened to a mission on behalf of communion» (*Christifideles Laici*, 32). Faithful to the model of the Master, it is vital that today the Church goes forth to proclaim the Gospel to everyone, in all places, on all occasions, without delay, without revulsion and without fear. The joy of the Gospel is for all people, it cannot exclude anyone. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 23)
2. The second reference is to **challenges**, with a journey still to be taken. And the Pope identifies three aspects that must be strengthened: the *awareness of one's vocation*, which needs to be more manifest, *lack of formation* and, finally, for Christian values to *penetrate* the social, political and economic world: increased awareness of the identity and mission of the lay person in the Church. We have a large number of lay people, although not enough, with a deep-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the commitment of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith.

But the awareness of this lay responsibility that arises from Baptism and Confirmation is not manifested in the same way on all sides. In some cases, because they have not been formed to take up important responsibilities, in other cases because they have not found room in their particular Churches to be able to express themselves and act, due to an excessive clericalism that keeps them on the sidelines of decision-making.

Although there is a greater participation of many in lay ministries, this commitment is not reflected in the penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic world. It is often limited to intra-ecclesial tasks without a real commitment to the application of the gospel to the transformation of society. The formation of the laity and the evangelisation of professional and intellectual categories represent important pastoral challenges. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 102)

3. The third point is ***the response to the poor***. It is a privilege that the laity take up but one that does not end up being a field reserved for the laity. It is a call to be taken up by the entire believing community. Although it can be said in general that the vocation and mission proper to the lay faithful is the transformation of various earthly realities so that every human activity is transformed by the gospel, no one can feel exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 201)

Let us summarise the core idea that Pope Francis leaves us in *EVANGELII GAUDIUM*: gradual awareness of one's identity – communion and mission – needs to be strengthened by taking on responsibility. And the response to the poor is a test case for this.

- C. Finally, hopefully there is time to explore the third source: ***the current Synodal Way of the Church*** that shows us some directions we can take for a journey of complementarity between consecrated and lay people that challenges us in a concrete way at the level of the Salesian Family. In this current ecclesial context, discovering the convergences of our journey «with» and «within» the ecclesial journey is a call and a grace that we cannot renounce.



THE IDENTITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LAY PERSON WITH SALESIAN STYLE

Renato Cursi.
Salesian Cooperator. Rome

What sense does it make today, in the midst of the Church's synodal journey, to speak of the identity of the Christian lay person with a salesian style?

Before delving into the reflection on the figure of the Christian lay person, their role in the apostolic mission of the Church, their dignity and what makes them special, on what distinguishes «the salesian style», it is appropriate to ask ourselves the reasons for choosing this topic for our reflection during the 2023 Salesian Family Spirituality Days.

We question ourselves regarding this identity first of all because «with humble and joyful gratitude we acknowledge that Don Bosco, by the initiative of God and the maternal mediation of Mary, gave rise in the Church to a singular experience of evangelical life», which today takes the form of an «apostolic family», made up of institutes of consecrated life, religious and secular, as well as of lay apostolic associations. Both the Salesian Family and the wider Salesian Movement find themselves continually interacting with this word, «lay».

Secondly, precisely because this Family has a significant presence of lay members, I believe I can say that together we recognise the need to return not only to the etymological and historical origins, but even more so the theological and ecclesiological origins of the word «lay» and its meaning for us today. Does it still make sense to talk about the «lay» person today? How much does the world's use of this word, for some time now, to describe everything that denies the transcendent dimension of faith, *etsi Deus non daretur*, affect our understanding of it?

Thirdly, we speak today of the lay person «in the Church» in order to go beyond the questions and challenges of our local, provincial or Salesian Family situations, in order to understand the specific

nature of this word in the broader and universal context of the Church, allowing ourselves to be enlightened by the Spirit, the Word of God and the Magisterium. The Salesian Family, in fact, lives «at the service of the mission of the Church, especially in the vast world of youth, in working class areas, for the poor and for peoples not yet evangelised».

Fourthly, I believe that all of us here feel the urgency of a greater contribution of the laity both in the apostolate of evangelisation and in the Christian animation of the so-called «temporal order», but together we also recognise the need to promote a common vision within the Church and the Salesian Family regarding the criteria to which this contribution should refer and the guidelines that it should follow.

Finally, we also recognise that «Our current synod experience has awakened in the lay faithful the idea of, and a desire to, get involved in the life of the Church, in its engagement with the world today, and in its pastoral work on the ground». We therefore ask ourselves: «what can be the specific contribution of salesian-styled Christian laity to the synodal journey of the Church at this time?».

In the years of the «end of history» and the ideologies of the twentieth century, in the time of «sad passions» and «liquid modernity», the great existential challenges, together with those of the survival of humanity and creation, revolve around the great question of identity.

Who am I? This is the big question we tend to escape from today or around which, often so painfully, we wrestle endlessly with answers that also seem to have no end to them. A question that often turns into: «Who am I for you?». To emphasise the need for our identity to be recognised. Pope Francis asks young people, and us, the Salesian Family who are at their service, to reformulate this question this way: «For *who* am I?».

«Who are we» lay Christians with a salesian style for in this *kairological* time of «missionary synodality»? We too, as Pope Francis suggests, pointing young people to Mary's example, must respond using the language of the mind, the heart and the hands all at the same time.

With these motivations, questions and from this perspective we propose to 1) understand why the Church speaks to us of the «lay person» as a vocation, 2) reflect as much on the forms and approaches of this vocation as on the criteria and guidelines that the Church offers them, and finally 3) grasp what it means to live it with a Salesian style and 4) let ourselves be challenged by some practical directions for a synodal future.



Famiglia Salesiana

XLI GIORNATE DI SPIRITUALITÀ





AREAS AND CHALLENGES OF LAY INVOLVEMENT

Pierluigi Doviš
Director Caritas diocesan. Turin

The starting point

At a time when relativism has confused things, including in the experience of many Christians, it is appropriate to state that:

- * if the vital setting of the catholic priest's call is the sanctuary, then the privileged point from which to begin to proclaim the Kingdom is the pulpit, and the available toolbox is sanctification and government;
- * if the vital setting of the call for the consecrated catholic is the enclosed garden, the privileged point from which to begin to proclaim the Kingdom is anticipation, and the available toolbox is the radical approach of the Gospel;

the vital setting for the vocation of the lay Catholic is the profane understood in the strict sense of the term: what lies outside the temple/church, (pro = ante fanum = temple or church):

- the privileged place from which to begin to proclaim the Kingdom is the sharing of solidarity;
- and the available toolbox is professionalism.

A first great consequence

The *profane*, as the lay Catholic's vital habitat, cannot be looked upon as if we are *tourists* observing it, *travellers* passing through it casually and always fleetingly, nostalgic *guests* from elsewhere ready to return home, *prisoners* uncomfortably and passively locked up in it, or clever *terrorists* doing everything to blow it up.

Jesus' indication that the disciples are in the world but not of the world (cf. Jn 2) does not refer to *the profane*, but to the evil mentality that transforms what is outside the temple/church into what is **against** it, distorting the order of creation.

Therefore, *the space of the profane*, as our natural and innate habitat, must see us as its inhabitants; with an especially strong and convinced characteristic: we are in it **with love**.

The *Second Vatican Council* translates and summarises this attitude with the opening phrase of the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*: «*The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age ... Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts*».

Traditional ecclesial activity describes it with the term *pastoral charity*, that is, the praise of the shepherd who loves his sheep: he guards them, stays with them, knows them, makes them grow, cares for them, engages with them.

Salesian spirituality gives this depth in three specific ways:

- * *style of presence (willingness to be in the profane by getting involved, like educators with young people), which is the implementation of the preventive system;*
- * «*strive to make yourself loved*» *(commitment to be loving, attractive, not repellent), which is the secret of the love typical of the Salesian charism;*
- * «*love what they [the profane] love, so that they may love what you love*» *(paraphrasing Don Bosco), which is the educational perspective proper to the spiritual and pastoral experience of the salesians.*

The need for «consistently»

But, careful, *the profane* needs to be treated *consistently* and must be experienced and brought alive with its own tools. Otherwise, it is disfigured. We shouldn't use a carpenter's or workshop tools in the kitchen to cook but pots, ladles and dishes.

Our role as lay people must empower us to show how a pot – while remaining a pot – does not exhaust its purpose in simply allowing food to cook: more and better things can be done with it.

If we treat the *space of the profane* with «other» tools, we degrade it. On the other hand, by using it for what it is, we can also bring out what *is beyond* appearances, enhance it.

The lay catholic is not *subversive* (upending and unravelling things by breaking them) who disfigures *the profane* by confusing it with the «den of the Evil One», but is *eversive* (bringing to the surface what is in the depths, like the plough when it turns over clods of earth) recognising the profane as *a place of grace* and bringing its roots and generativity to light.

This is the profound meaning of the lay Catholic's *professionalism*, this individual's expertise, challenge, the lay person's «pulpit». This professionalism must take place above all within three areas: *social relationships, professions* (even seemingly marginal ones), *cultural debate*.

In all, but especially in the last of these, what is needed is not so much *to foster dialogue as to allow us to become the topic of dialogue*, or to expose ourselves to *“the reason for the hope that is in you*.

In such a highly heterogeneous and unstable setting the role of the lay Catholic cannot be limited to the «*crusader*» who wields non-negotiable values, but should take on the role of the «*mestizo*» who is extremely patient and persevering in getting people to see that the values of the Good News are important for everyone.

Everything contributes to the goal

There are no neutral areas in *the profane* where the disciple's objective is concerned – encountering Jesus. Each and every element of the profane is a moment of encounter. And these moments are so not because we charge them with religious meta-significance, but because they are so in their own right, by virtue of creation. Living the conjugal relationship as an encounter with Christ, for example – even in physical terms – or engaging in our profession ethically and with care or dealing with people who quite openly think differently from the Gospel: all this profoundly changes how the lay person is and acts.

We definitely must avoid the temptation to *clericalism* the laity, all the more so if worldly matters are involved, because this takes us away from our vocation and from an essential task of the Church's mission.

Let us recall what *Lumen Gentium* wrote in no. 33, taking up Pius XI's *Quadragesimo anno*: «*the laity are called in a special way to make the Church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can it become the salt of the earth*».

This is about family life, work, school, administration, economics, culture, technology, science. They are places of private life and work. It is social relationships in the strict sense. Lay Christians are 'lay' insofar as they *are within* the various elements of profane life and live them to the end.

The current meeting points for being Kingdom workers

So, rather than being sent into the world to establish the Kingdom where it did not exist, as if it were a conquest and we were unskilled *workers in the Kingdom*, instead we are planted in the temporal order as *skilled Kingdom workers* whose task is not so much to bring new things in from outside but to reveal them by pulling them out of the very soil we stand on. We are *witnesses of truth (adtestator veritatis)*. This truth, today in particular, seems to pass through some urgent **central meeting points** we need to deal with:

1. **bringing out a human and fraternal community in our own little area** through constant mutual listening, debate (a serious way of understanding *synodality*), the primacy of relationships, a sense of wise openness, cultivating what is genuinely *human* in the first place. This is the typically secular frontier of the precept of charity to which we are called. It is the junction where the Salesian Family can bring more resources taken from the inspiration of St Francis de Sales and the spirituality of Don Bosco;
2. **giving work back its generative sense (inner and not only material) by focusing on the** four adjectives that the Social Doctrine of the Church highlights as evangelical and essential and true paths of meaning: «free, creative, participatory and supportive». But also focusing on the centrality of promoting and defending work as an element of humanisation; focusing on the ability to train and accompany the very young in work as well as those eternally excluded from this circuit; and focusing

on freeing work from the clutches of the *economy alone* to return it to the dimension of development of the individual;

3. **never again being alienated from civil involvement in the management of public affairs and building up the common good**, leaving behind the preconception that, especially in the West, has blocked the laity from *political involvement*, and instead taking the **duty of politics** (in all its various forms) seriously and profoundly as an essential element of the lay vocation that cannot be omitted;
4. **engaging systematically in expanding the gift economy** that generates bonds (community) between people and territories, between the market and the society, between institutions and groups, between societies in the north and those in the south of the world;
5. **making the perspective of integral ecology our own** as a way that allows the truth of the gift given to us in creation to emerge. So the current focus on ecological transition is not superficial cheap environmentalism or environmentalism at any cost, but correcting the relationship between creatures, which implies a change of personal mentality before choices of direction at the general level.

In conclusion

Lay Christians guided by salesian spirituality are particularly called to *be fully* part of this understanding, to *be involved* (which means *committing themselves together*, similar to the term solidarity) «with» and «for» *the profane*.

Being involved necessarily brings the issue of *contamination* with it. We thank God for the good kind of contamination (that results in growth). For the bad kind (which destroys) it is essential to rebuild *areas of community discernment* without which the action of lay people outside the temple/church risks being a game of «one against all». The Salesian Family is also this, but it must be more deeply appreciated, willed, organised, brought into action.



EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES TO STRENGTHEN THE SENSITIVITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE FOR BECOMING ACTIVE LAY PROMOTERS OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION.

Susana de Torres. Educator, Madrid

Good afternoon. Before I begin my presentation, I would like to express my gratitude for being here with all of you. I'm very flattered, and I don't deny being a little nervous, sharing the word with the people next to me. I sincerely hope that my experience, which is what I offer you today, will help you to reaffirm your Salesian vocation: we are «*signs and bearers of God's love for the young*».

When I received the invitation, I thought: how can I contribute to the Salesian Family Spirituality Days 2023? How can I contribute to the reflection on educational processes to strengthen in young people their sensitivity to becoming active lay promoters of social transformation?

Before starting to write, I consulted the different meanings that the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy offers for the word *process* and I chose the following:

1. The action of moving forward;
2. The passage of time;
3. Set of successive phases of a natural phenomenon or an artificial operation;
4. The action of following a series of matters that have no end.

After reading them, I drafted my own definition: «A set of actions that develop over time, that move us forward and that have no end». But I was not too convinced because neither the objective of these actions nor their purpose was defined.

What could be the objective of a salesian pastoral process with children, adolescents and young adults? It's clear to me: *Da mihi animas caetera tolle*: The salvation of the children and young people God has entrusted to us.

It is true that sometimes it is difficult to bring it down to earth for many reasons: coldness towards religion, and the emotional fatigue that COVID has generated among people makes me wonder if the beneficiaries of our works «want to be saved», at least in the way we propose it to them. I consider that we are living in times of change, and that some of the practical schemes, which are not fundamental, need to be transformed. Our young people still need us and they challenge us to «sharpen our ears» and to «widen our hearts even more».

When we talk about pastoral processes at school, I personally distinguish four concentric circles that surround the life of our children. If I may, let me give you the name of the pillars of every Salesian work: *Playground* would cover the outer circle; *Home* would be the second of them; *School* the third, and *Church* the closest and most intimate of all. Let me detail each of them:

1. The outermost circle, the *Playground*, represents the ministry of environment; a festive, purposeful and non-invasive ministry. A ministry that is resonant thanks to the Salesian sacrament of presence the Rector Major talks about. A pastoral ministry that offers courageous proposals to our youngsters through the Good Morning, tutoring, solidarity campaigns... a pastoral ministry that nurtures a feeling of belonging to Salesian work thanks to closeness and simple details ... an affective and close up kind of ministry, often one of «first proclamation». A pastoral ministry that answers the question: What can we propose to these young people that is close and attractive to them?
2. The second circle, *Home*, comes about spontaneously if the Playground brings them together and keeps them active. This is when our young people get a taste of «being» or «feeling part of». Observation by educators is very important in this process: What are the young people most open to our proposal asking us for? What kind of place are we going to offer them to continue growing in their faith? This is where the most personal proposals come into play: being involved in celebrations, in province or diocesan events, taking on some pastoral responsibilities, etc.

3. The *School circle* I would focus on group commitment, a gradual project where the young person freely and depending on age and stage can grow together with others by taking on responsibilities that are of help to their life of faith. This is akin to the *Valdocco* sodalities... These young people are our «Michael Rua's» those who «go halves with us». They share in our responsibility for educative and pastoral work.
4. And finally, we come to the *Church circle*, focused on personal commitment. After having experienced everything that the Salesian house offers them in the previous stages, young people find themselves faced with a proposal for spiritual accompaniment. What personal project does God have for you? How can you be «like that good yeast that helps to grow and make the bread of the Human Family bigger and tastier?».

Staying in this last circle is not something eternal. When their formation among us has come to an end and they flex their own wings, a new horizon opens up where the Salesian school feels like home, like a safe place they can return to... and here is the great challenge: What can we continue to offer these young people? How can we accompany them in their process of becoming «good Christians and upright citizens?».

Let me go back to my definition of process: «A set of actions that develop over time, that move us forward, that have no end, and whose objective is the salvation of the young people that God has entrusted to us». We need to continue fostering partnerships between us as a Salesian Family so that the young people who leave our schools find a community in which they can live and celebrate their faith, where they rediscover «their roots», and become men and women capable of transforming society in terms based on the gospel.

Let me conclude my presentation with words from Don Viganó: «*In the hearts of all who are Salesian in their approach, young people are the sacred ground before whom we take off our shoes. Like Moses, God speaks to us through them. They are the native place of our mission, the theological place where God seeks to remain at our disposal, awaits our return and offers us the grace of an encounter with Him*».



SUMMARY OF GROUP WORK OF «VOCATIONAL» GROUPS

Saturday, January 14, 2023

INDICATIONS

On the morning of January 14 we gathered in «vocational» groups (consecrated persons, lay people and secular institutes) to work on the Round Table that helped us to deepen our grasp of some aspects of the lay dimension of the SF. Each group came together following these questions:

1. **What contribution can each of the Groups** of the Salesian Family make, starting from their own identity (religious institutes, secular institutes, lay associations), **to enrich the secular nature of our Family?**
2. The **religious Groups** of the Salesian Family... how they can enrich the lay complementarity of our Salesian vocation.
3. The **lay Groups** of the Salesian Family... how they

SUMMARY OF THE REFLECTION

1. What contribution can each of the Groups of the Salesian Family make, starting from their own identity:

- * Synodality nourishes the salesian spirit and invites ongoing formation for young people on the themes of education to love, politics, the social scene, the economy, spiritual and cultural growth.
- * Growth in mutual understanding between lay and consecrated persons (of Salesian Family Groups) promoting communion for mission. Each group will have to live its vocation to enrich the Salesian Family.
- * It is important that formation be done «together» (consecrated persons, families, young people – pastoral outreach), but also designed and planned together.
- * Offer young people (especially university students) all the possibilities that the Salesian Family offers, all groups to have the opportunity to participate in the Salesian charism in its multifaceted reality.

- * Formation must appreciate the identity of each group to make possible and enhance complementarity and dialogue between Groups.
- * Ensure the exchange of information and communication between Groups, allowing them to grow in mutual knowledge and fostering communion and mission.
- * Promote the lay mission in the world, outside the confines of the institute, to be leaven in the world.
- * Bring out interiority: living your call even in difficulties, aware that the seed does not germinate without suffering.
- * Appreciate and respect the vocation of the laity and consecrated persons with their own witness.
- * Each Group will have to know not only its strengths but also its limitations in order to complete the missing part in other Groups.

2. Specific contributions of Religious Groups.

- * Diversity is a strength and wealth; openness bears fruit with patience. The specific nature and identity of the other Salesian Family Groups must be recognised.
- * Ensure spiritual accompaniment and vocational animation for the laity and share responsibility for formation and animation with the laity.
- * Mutual formation between groups recognising the specific nature and identity of the other groups of the Salesian Family.
- * Change the idea that if the SDB's are missing there are no salesians! The other Groups can keep the fire burning! Be more confident towards the laity by promoting synodality.
- * Sense of openness towards novelty and ensure a combined journey with the various religious Groups, with cooperation between them.
- * Help lay people understand and appreciate the beauty and

diversity of their vocation and accompany young people in their choice.

- * Emphasise the importance of God's Word.

3. Specific contributions of lay Groups.

- * Maintain openness and appreciate diversity as a strength and wealth because it leads to complementarity and fosters the charism of each one.
- * Engage with availability, responsibility, collaboration and humility with consecrated members.
- * Not sitting comfortably but stepping out of our comfort zone; recognising the need to grow without becoming discouraged.
- * Take an active role in formation in the Salesian Family also as lay people, accepting the secular as the place for encountering Jesus.
- * Accept the same responsibility of being a witness as Salesian Family religious do, taking the mission out from oratories and sacristies.
- * Ensure Salesian presence as Cooperators, Past Pupils, Witnesses of the Risen Lord, etc.,
- * Be more confident regarding priests, with an attitude of shared management and responsibility.
- * Help young people and families in difficulty to flourish and care for vocations.
- * Live and witness better to one's vocation.
- * Ensure presence, prayer, respect and availability.
- * Support the apostolate of the other charisms not only with professional skills, but also with their own specific charism of the Group to which they belong.
- * Offer a different point of view and be able to reach non-traditional places for religious such as state schools to testify in all contexts such as work, family, parish etc.,



FINAL SUMMARY FOR GROUPS OF BELONGING

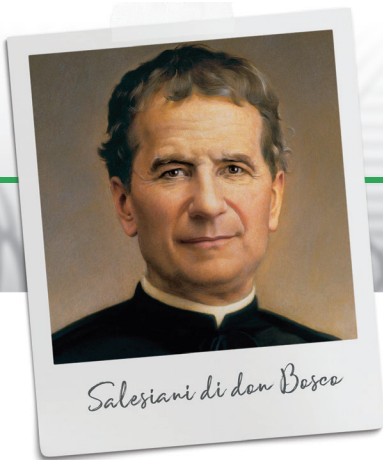
Sunday, January 15, 2023

INDICATIONS

On the morning of Sunday we gathered as Groups belonging to the Salesian Family to reflect on the insights received on the previous day on holiness and the experience lived among young people. The groups worked on two questions.

1. After what you have experienced, reflected on, shared and celebrated in these days, what «invitation/exhortation» do you feel strongest in your heart?
2. In your opinion, which concrete aspect of the secular should be intensified more... (in your personal life, In the life of your community/group/association, in the Salesian Family as a whole, to be leaven and a sign of communion and mission in the yeast of the Human Family?)

We present what each Group reflected on. The smaller SF groups formed a single sharing group.



SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO (SDB)

To be intensified in personal life

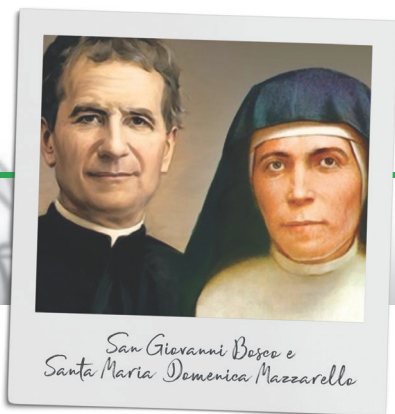
1. Toolbox: «Professionalism» as consecrated individuals.
2. Rediscover my specific nature: orienting everything towards the kingdom of God; example of concrete lay life that sometimes leads to living the vows without having professed them.
3. Union with God... grace of unity expressed in the areas and contexts of life... not life torn between the spiritual, educational, organisational.
4. He pushes the example of Don Zatti: lived his consecrated life and heartfelt lay collaboration in a serious way.

To be intensified in communities

1. Shared responsibility and greater integration in pastoral work beyond the employment contract as employees. Provide formation to accompany youngsters at an educational level which can become «spiritual guidance».
2. When a lay person replaces an SDB and what is expected of the SDB is also expected of the lay person, then there is a need instead to respect your life as it is and not nurture misplaced expectations.
3. Non-Christian lay people work with us... their contribution must be valued.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

1. Know yourself as a Salesian Family (starting from initial formation) including them also in vocational paths by seeing that there are many vocations.
2. Formation together also enriches the understanding of our identity.
3. Overcome the «first in the class» complex as SDBs.



DAUGHTERS OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS (FMA)

To be intensified in personal life

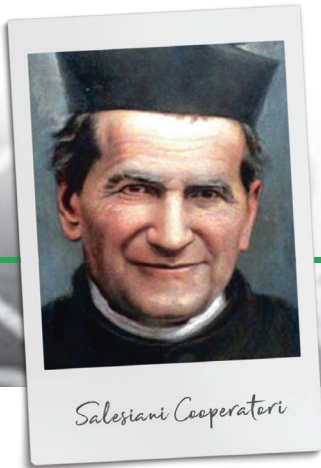
1. To be human, real and holy. Insert ourselves into the multiple contemporary reality by improving our encounter with the other.
2. Look at the laity with a sense of complementarity.
3. Commit to living fraternity with all the people we meet.

To be intensified in communities

1. Value some secular situations and open up to the novelty that they contain.
2. Presence among young people, woven by God, to «touch» their reality.
3. «Get your hands dirty» and do something, «knead» life with the laity, involving them as much as possible.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

1. Support and accompany the Associations and find «the point accessible to the good» in each, from which to start and continue.
2. Be a meaningful presence. Rejuvenate the Associations in terms of ideas, skills, projects, to respond to their lay and salesian commitment.
3. Resume discussion of the Advisory Council as a place of visibility and planning.



ASSOCIATION OF SALESIAN COOPERATORS (ASSCC)

To be intensified in the ASSCC

1. Initial and ongoing formation also done by lay people in a lay style. Initial formation above all, but then ongoing formation (not overlooking the formation of individual Salesian Cooperators, their formators, and those who perform a service of responsibility and animation within the Association), which must be increasingly 'lay' formation, such as topics that also concern the more specific situations of the lay person such as social, political, cultural life... but above all, the style must be that of the lay person, so that formed as lay people they he can be a leaven for those they meet in the daily settings of work, study, family, leisure, social and civic commitment.
2. The sense of belonging. Let this formation be the leaven that increases a sense of belonging, to Christ above all, to the Church, to the Salesian Family and within it to the Association of Salesian Cooperators, to the world that we are called to love and serve from within with the Father's gaze, with the Son's love, with the creativity of the Spirit.
3. The identity. Let the sense of belonging be the impetus that confirms our identity as a specific gift of our Association to the Salesian Family, to the Church in the world. Having a strong identity does not close us in on ourselves, because we risk the yeast alone not carrying out its function: it deflates and implodes. Instead let it be the push to mix ourselves in the world and with the world, so that the flour becomes bread, fresh, fragrant, soft and crunchy... to share with everyone!

All this not to close ourselves in on ourselves (yeast with yeast does not do the work of yeast, but deflates and implodes) but to mix us in with flour and give a new, fragrant bread, for everyone!

To be intensified «in» and «with» the Salesian Family

- 1. The Salesian Family** Advisory Council, or rather the Salesian Family Advisory Councils at all levels: let them be intensified, valued, lived, see people involved... not as an opportunity to prepare for feast days, pilgrimage or events they manage in turn, but as a **place** to concretely experience being a Salesian Family together, as a **place of understanding**, getting to know and recognise each other starting from the groups actually present in a given area; as a place **of common formation**; as a place that shapes and makes our **salesian heart** grow, that learns to agree, adopt the same rhythm, beat in unison for young people; **as a place where to take on responsibility** of being yeast for young people and for the world.
- 2. Formation paths:** A particular attention to **initial formation paths**: where the Salesian Family is present and where we speak concretely of the Salesian Family and present all the vocations it includes, for true accompaniment and true discernment.
- 3. Vocational animation** also sees the laity truly present in these paths, in various fields of activity, in the experiences proposed to young people... so that the vocation of each can be safeguarded and accompanied by others in freedom.
- 4.** As an Association we are committed, first of all, to propose and present the vocations of the Salesian Family Groups present in our area in our initial formation processes according to these indications.



ADMA

To be intensified in personal life

- * We are grateful to have had the opportunity to reflect together on the lay dimension that springs from the gift of baptism and that in the Salesian Family we can live with that personal style that is tailored to us by the Holy Spirit.
- * Personal spiritual formation must be intensified to draw – from the power of the Eucharist and the accompaniment of Mary – what is needed to be leaven as courageous lay people in the places where we live, and light to see and illuminate the beauty of others through the gaze of Jesus.

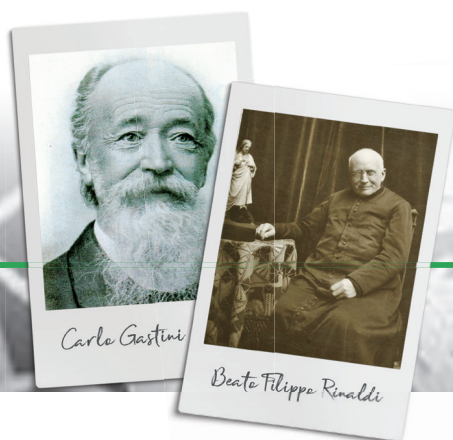
To be intensified in the life of the Association

- * Creation of spaces for discussion with those we meet in our various situations, trying to be outgoing Christians who, as the Pope says, know how to dialogue with and welcome everyone where they are at and make them feel loved.
- * Take special care (i) in the accompaniment of the journey and in the involvement of young couples / families and adults and (ii) in establishing relationships and networks that allow for the development and communication of the family spirit to all.
- * Finding new ways to encourage the apostolic commitment of the members by making them understand the importance of mission and of being mission in everyday life, in the simplicity of gestures, following the example of Mary;

- * Always recall the importance of intercessory prayer for one another;

To be intensified «in» and «with» the Salesian Family

- * Joint formation paths for lay people, consecrated persons and priests on «being lay today».
- * Plan and build together: Complementarity not only between states of life, but between Groups.
- * Commit to living together by making the relationship the instrument for the care of communion as a foundation also for mission.



WORLD CONFEDERATION OF PAST PUPILS OF DON BOSCO

To be intensified in personal life

1. Bring the spirit of Valdocco with us.
2. Let our love, commitment and our gratitude for Don Bosco guide us in our identity as past pupils and friends of Don Bosco. That is why we are called to be yeast.
 - * the first place we act as yeast is in our family with our wives/husbands and our children.
 - * we are also yeast in our profession or in our work. Perhaps

we do not work directly in the field of education or with young people, but we are witnesses of the salesian charism in our workplace. Above all because of our love for Don Bosco and out of gratitude, we are committed to working with young people in our society.

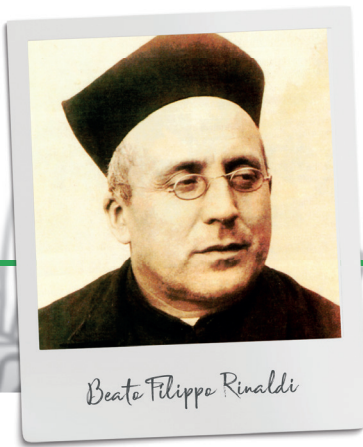
- * we are committed to working in the socio-political field. As lay people, we are uniquely positioned to act as a leaven in our society.

To be intensified in the Association

1. As Past Pupils we must strengthen our identity, our mission with young people through solidarity, which is an expression of our salesian spirituality.
2. The active participation of the laity must be more inclusive. Salesian laity and consecrated persons should together co-create the expression and mission of the Salesian charism in today's society.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

1. We feel we have the fuel (the strength) to continue working in the Salesian Family.
2. Formation together is also important... By «together» we mean that we enrich ourselves by an increased sharing of the way we live the expression of Don Bosco's charism with the other groups of the Salesian Family.
3. We believe that there can be more room in the Salesian Family, even during these Salesian Family Spirituality Days, to discuss, further explore and truly discern the meaning and role of the laity. We hope that these Days will leave more room for the laity to contribute more with their experience. Rather than a vertical approach, we should take a more horizontal one in our approach to the lay dimension of the Salesian Family.



VOLUNTEERS OF DON BOSCO (VDB)

To be intensified in personal life

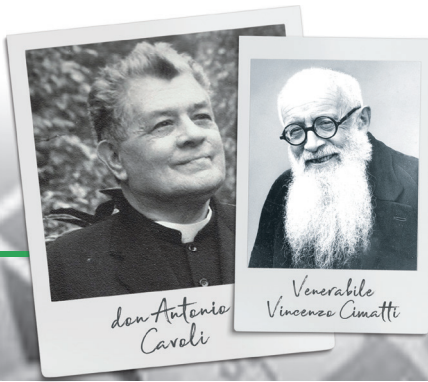
1. Personal enrichment through contact and exchange of experiences with the people of the various groups of the Salesian Family.
2. Live the family spirit and communion with the Salesian Family.
3. The personal experience of the Salesian Family encourages us to communicate and share the beauty of our charism.

To be intensified in the Institute

1. Become aware of our identity according to our Constitutions; our presence in the Church and in the world as leaven is for us a radical choice for our lives.
2. Be consistent in our choices; remember «Who» I do it for.
3. The complementarity of my clear role in the Salesian Family: to support each other and our groups.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

1. Discover the beauty and greatness of the «Yes» that each member of the various groups of the Salesian Family has said in his or her own way to God.
2. The experience of the Salesian Family helps to discover / enhance one's specific charismatic identity.
3. The overall picture of all the representatives of the Salesian Family shows the liveliness of the Salesian charism and we strongly feel the legacy entrusted to us by Don Bosco.



THE CARITAS SISTERS OF JESUS (CSJ)

To be intensified in personal life

1. Be faithful to one's duties: be like yeast in the «human family».
2. Be closer to the lay faithful and share the faith with them.
3. A deeper awareness of the Salesian Family.

To be intensified in communities

1. Currently there are many lay collaborators in our mission. «Let's do it together» – this mentality is growing. We need courage, an open heart as a Congregation and as every sister.
2. Do more of our formation together with lay collaborators to be able to share our mission more.
3. Involve non-Christians in our mission.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

1. Unity in the Salesian Family: each member, even if of different nationalities, forms a «family» in Don Bosco.
2. The diversity of the Salesian Family that is very united in its diversity, that shares joy in the larger family, and transmits the charism.
3. Accompany young people to discover their vocation and be yeast in the Church and in the world.



ALL OTHER GROUPS

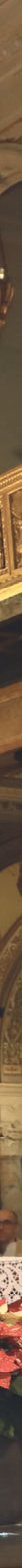
To be intensified in Groups

1. Commitment to mutual knowledge that can develop **complementarity** within the Salesian Family; we believe that the “natural” tool for this are the various **Salesian Family Advisory Councils**, to be strengthened, developed, re-evaluated, promoted, etc.
2. Commitment to **formation**: it is the deepening of each one’s particular charism that contributes to the enrichment of the “general” charism of the SF, and will make each one in their own field of activity able to be of help to the growth of other vocations.
3. Commitment to **witnessing and transmitting the faith** not only through organised activities and places, but **throughout one’s life**, wherever we are.

To be intensified in the Salesian Family

- * A concrete aspect to live in the Salesian Family in the as a whole: introduce tools with which to **be able to verify/evaluate the real progress made** in the integration of the lay dimension in the Salesian Family, so that it is not just words.





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