

Art. 19. Style of Prayer

§1. Salesian Cooperators are convinced that they can do nothing¹ if they are not in union with Jesus Christ. They invoke the Holy Spirit Who enlightens them and gives them strength day by day. Their prayer, rooted in God's Word, is simple and trusting, joyous and creative, permeated with apostolic ardor, holding tight to life and extending into it. So as to nourish their prayer life, Salesian Cooperators have recourse to the spiritual resources offered by the Church, by the Association, and by the Salesian Family. They participate actively in the liturgy and value the forms of popular piety which enrich their spiritual life.

§2. They reinvigorate their faith through the Sacraments. They find nourishment in the Eucharist for their apostolic charity. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, they encounter the Mercy of the Father, Who impresses upon their life a dynamic and continuous conversion and makes them grow in their capacity to forgive.

§3. They reinforce their interior and apostolic life with spirituality moments, including those offered by the Association.

CONSIDERATIONS

Core themes

1. Prayer: Simple, Vital, and Inspired by the Life of the Divine Trinity which is Transformed into Daily Life
2. Growth in the Spiritual Life in Communion with the Church and the Association

Keys to Understanding

A. As a Christian called to follow the Salesian path, the Cooperator perceives in a greater way his or her need for communion of faith and love with Christ, and “through Him” with the Father, in the Holy Spirit. Trinitarian Love inspires every Salesian Cooperator to put pastoral charity at the center of his life so he may be a sign and bearer of the love of the Good Shepherd to the young, more so because he receives from that same Lord the Spirit which gives him the light and the strength that he needs. Intimate union with Christ is transformed and experienced in daily life and grows in the measure in which the Cooperators carry out their own activities according to the Divine Will. In their care for their own family and for their secular commitments, everything is done “in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” They keep their communion with Jesus alive through daily prayer which is both simple and profound.

B. The prayer of the Salesian Cooperator is concerned with the Universal and Local Church, with the Salesian Family, and with the Association. It is prayer for and with the young, in a youthful style. A Salesian Cooperator keeps vigil so that there be no dichotomy between his prayer and his life: he prays with a sincere heart, fleeing from every type of conformism and formalism.

¹Jn. 15:5.

Vatican Council II. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*. Par. 4. Trans. The Holy See. n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2013. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html

Salesian Cooperators participate actively in the liturgy of the Church. They are open to the liturgical renewals promoted by Vatican Council II both for themselves and for the animation of the liturgy within their family, in the parish, and among the young. They voluntarily enter into the three rhythms by which the Church sanctifies time and the life of Her members in the Liturgy of the Hours (as much as is possible), at Holy Mass on Sundays, following the annual rhythm of the Liturgical Year and, in particular, of the Paschal Triduum. Vatican Council II and the renewed Liturgy have given great preeminence to the place that the Word of God must have in the life of the Church and of the Faithful, particularly of the laity. The Salesian Cooperator participates in these strong moments of reflection on the Word of God and in common celebratory moments in the liturgy proposed by the Local Church and by the Association for these are the "fonts from which the Church draws life." The Salesian Cooperator ought to take time every day to meditate on some passage of the Gospel and to maintain an intimate relationship with the Lord. The use of a daily missal is of great help in this.

The Council approves the *pious exercises of the Christian people* by harmonizing them with the liturgy. The Salesian Cooperator is a Christian with a simple soul who appreciates these forms of piety and makes use of them for himself and for others with a pedagogical and pastoral Salesian sense, just as Don Bosco did, without falling into "devotionalism". He or she lives devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through personal and/or community Adoration, and/or by paying a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, just as Don Bosco used to recommend so greatly.

Don Bosco insisted very much on two Sacraments: Holy Communion and Confession. He used to recommend that people approach the Sacraments, *in truth*, that is, regularly and frequently while seeking to avoid the temptation to make it a mere habit. In the Eucharist, the Salesian Cooperators find "the nourishment for their apostolic charity." Eucharistic Communion, made in intimate dialogue with Jesus, permits us to take on little by little the charity of the Good Shepherd. Confession, or the Sacrament of Reconciliation, is the "celebration, here and today, of the Father's limitless mercy for his weak and sinful children." This Sacrament, received with faith and regular frequency (at least monthly), impedes the Salesian Cooperator from becoming spiritually drowsy and helps him or her continuous conversion, in authentic Christian and Salesian growth.

References

Aubry J., *Lo spirito salesiano*.

Benedetto XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

Documenti Concilio Vaticano II (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 4; *Lumen Gentium* 34. 36; *Sacramentum Caritatis*; *Gaudium et Spes* 4).

Giovanni Paolo II, *Christifideles Laici*.

Regolamento dei Cooperatori redatto da Don Bosco (1876).

Vecchi J.E., *La spiritualità salesiana*.

from the *Regulations to the Project of Apostolic Life*

Art. 11 Style of Action

§2. They accompany their action with an attitude of contemplation, which urges them to seek and to recognize the mystery of God's presence in everyday life and the face of Christ in their brothers and sisters. Moreover, sustained by the Spirit, they confront with serenity the difficulties of life and the joys and the sufferings which accompany their apostolic work.

Art. 12 Spiritual Life

§1. Salesian Cooperators nourish their interior life through daily dialogue with the Lord, participation in the Sacraments, and with *Lectio Divina*.

§2. They celebrate the traditional Salesian Feast Days.

§3. If they have the possibility, they also participate in the spiritual exercises, retreats, and other initiatives proposed by the Association.

§4. They value spiritual guidance as accompaniment, exercised particularly by Salesians (both Religious – FMA and SDB – and lay)

from the *Holy Gospel According to St. John*

15:5 I am the Vine: you the branches: he who abides in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing.

from *Apostolicam Actuositatem*

4. Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the whole apostolate of the Church, the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's living union with Christ, in keeping with the Lord's words, "He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy. These are to be used by the laity in such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. In this way the laity must make progress in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties. Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life, in keeping with the words of the Apostle, "What-ever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17).

Such a life requires a continual exercise of faith, hope, and charity. Only by the light of faith and by meditation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), seek His will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal.

They who have this faith live in the hope of the revelation of the sons of God and keep in mind the cross and resurrection of the Lord. In the pilgrimage of this life, hidden with Christ in God and free from enslavement to wealth, they aspire to those riches which remain forever and generously dedicate themselves wholly to the advancement of the kingdom of God and to the reform and improvement of the temporal order in a Christian spirit. Among the trials of this life they find strength in hope, convinced that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

Impelled by divine charity, they do good to all men, especially to those of the household of the faith (cf. Gal. 6:10), laying aside "all malice and all deceit and pretense, and envy, and all slander" (1 Peter 2:1), and thereby they draw men to Christ. This charity of God, "which is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5), enables the laity really to express the spirit of the beatitudes in their lives. Following Jesus in His poverty, they are neither depressed by the lack of temporal goods nor inflated by their abundance; imitating Christ in His humility, they have no obsession for empty honors (cf. Gal. 5:26) but seek to please God rather than men, ever ready to leave all things for Christ's sake (cf. Luke 14:26) and to suffer persecution for justice sake (cf. Matt. 5:10), as they remember the words of the Lord, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Promoting Christian friendship among themselves, they help one another in every need whatsoever.

This plan for the spiritual life of the laity should take its particular character from their married or family state or their single or widowed state, from their state of health, and from their professional and social activity. They should not cease to develop earnestly the qualities and talents bestowed on them in accord with these conditions of life, and they should make use of the gifts which they have received from the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well. They should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and the virtues relating to social customs, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, and courage, without which no true Christian life can exist.

The perfect example of this type of spiritual and apostolic life is the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, who while leading the life common to all here on earth, one filled with family concerns and labors, was always intimately united with her Son and in an entirely unique way cooperated in the work of the Savior. Having now been assumed into heaven, with her maternal charity she cares for these brothers of her Son who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and remain involved in dangers and difficulties until they are led into the happy fatherland. All should devoutly venerate her and commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care.

from Guidelines and Indications for the Formation of Salesian Cooperators

2.1.2. SPIRITUAL LIFE RESOURCES

Care for one's spiritual life is found in the convergence between the opportunities offered by the Association and the personal concern which each Salesian Cooperator has for his faith life and for his growth in spiritual maturity and understanding of the vocation he or she has received.

Spiritual retreats

Don Bosco used to recommend the monthly retreat as an indispensable tool in the life of the Association. In the first *Rule of 1876*, he wrote: “On the last day of each month or on some other convenient day, they shall make their *Exercise for a Happy Death*, and make their Confession and Communion as if it was really their last.”² The concern for eternal salvation constituted, in Don Bosco's time, the horizon of some *practices of piety* which he bequeathed to his spiritual family. The fact re-mains that, still today, taking responsibility for time in one’s life, as a free *gift* of God, and finding the chance to stop the usual pace of one’s days every now and then so as to “take one’s life in hand” represents an extraordinary resource on the path towards human maturity and the *good life of the Gospel*. The seasons of the liturgical year are to be kept in mind when organizing these spiritual retreats.

The annual spiritual exercises

Each year, according to the indications of the Founder, the Cooperator has the opportunity to participate in a few days of spiritual exercises. These constitute a “strong moment of spirituality in which the vocational fidelity of the members is renewed with the *Promise*.”³ Don Bosco considered them the true and proper *summation* of all the other practices of piety.

In places where it is difficult to organize these at the Local Level, the Local and Provincial Councils can promote their organization at the level of an area through the work of a few Centers which are near to each other geographically, or at the Provincial Level.

Holy Mass and other prayer encounters

One reads in the *Project of Apostolic Life*: “So as to nourish their prayer life, Salesian Cooperators have recourse to the spiritual resources offered by the Church, by the Association, and by the Salesian Family. They participate actively in the liturgy and value the forms of popular piety which enrich their spiritual life.”⁴

The Eucharist is the *source* and the *summit* from which the experience of every believer begins and to which he is headed. Growth in the Eucharistic attitudes of *welcoming, listening, pardoning, being thankful, sharing, communion, and mission* represent the most important contribution to the life of each individual Cooperator and each Center.

Given that a prayer moment is integrated into every one of the meetings of the Association, it is opportune to organize other prayer encounters or celebrations of the Word – according to the different needs which arise and also on the occasion of significant social, ecclesial, or Salesian Family events.

Marian devotion and the Rosary

The Daily Entrustment to Mary is a characteristic element of Don Bosco's spirituality. The Salesian Cooperator finds in the prayer of the rosary simple nourishment for his or her Marian devotion and a concrete aid along the path of his or her life.

² *Salesian Cooperators: A Practical Way of Contributing to Public Morality and to the Good of Society*. Article VIII §2.

³ *Project of Apostolic Life: Statutes and Regulations*. Regulations, Article 25 §4. 97.

⁴ *Ibid.* Statutes, Article 19 §1. 39.

Spiritual accompaniment

The choice of a guide and personal spiritual accompaniment represents a very important resource in Salesian tradition. Don Bosco often used to recommend the chance to have a *stable confessor* who would be a companion even in the most difficult moments of one's existence as believers because he is starting from an adequate knowledge of the *history* and the *life* of each penitent.

For Salesian Cooperator married couples, it can be useful to choose, by common agreement, a *guide* who can accompany the couple on their journey and also their family throughout the entire time of the education of their children.

Pilgrimages

The metaphor of the *path* or the *journey* is one of the most apt in describing the experience of maturation and growth of a man. In Christian tradition and in that of many other religions, the *pilgrimage* represents an important moment which allows one to join his personal human and spiritual experience to a particular place or a particular person. Don Bosco himself, on the occasion of his annual spiritual exercises at the sanctuary of St. Ignatius above Lanzo, lived the experience of “the ascent of the mountain” as a privileged moment of asceticism and reflection.

For the Cooperators, knowledge, in particular, of the *places where Don Bosco lived, grew up, studied, and worked* constitutes an extraordinary opportunity to set one's heart on fire again and to increase one's love for the Founder and the sense of belonging to the Salesian Family.

2.1.3. TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR SELF-FORMATION

The Salesian Cooperator is the one who is primarily responsible for his formation. For this reason, and always keeping in mind that he is “integrated into the world and the Church,” he or she will be especially sensitive to the moments, the means, and the situations which can contribute to his or her formation, keeping an ever attentive gaze on some traditional forms of maturation and of growth.

The Personal Plan of Life

The insistence on the great advantage of making a *Personal Plan of Life* is constant and consistent with the different formative paths of Religious Orders, Congregations, and Associations.

Don Bosco used to speak often of the virtue of *temperance*. This virtue consists not only in *moderation*, but above all in the capacity *to organize time in one's life* in a balanced and harmonious manner: time for work and for rest, time to dedicate to one's family and time spent in one's apostolic commitment, time for study and time for prayer. This is the reason why the virtue of temperance is often represented in art and in iconography as a lady who holds in her hands a timepiece or an hourglass.

A *Personal Plan of Life* serves to help one schedule and, as much as is possible, guarantee this precious *balance* which contains the secret to serenity. It takes some thinking and foresight and is better written down, listing some daily, weekly, monthly, and annual *times* which guarantee a harmonious growth in one's experience as a human being, a Christian, and a Salesian.

Even the *time* that is to be dedicated to one's own formation must be planned with care.

The Association's Official Site and the World Wide Web

For those Cooperators who have the possibility and the competence necessary to take advantage of the *Internet*, frequent contact with the *official site* of the Cooperators of one's own Region or Province, or even of one's own Local Center, represents a precious instrument for growth in the sense of belonging and an opportunity to read and to make use of the formative materials that have been put there at the disposition of the Association. The same attention can be paid also to the many official pages of the different Congregations and Associations which are part of the Salesian Family and, in particular, to those of the SDB and the FMA.

Personal study

Don Bosco used to dedicate much time to study, as his numerous biographies attest.

This habit of “keeping the flame alive” – of love and of belonging to the Salesian Family – through the reading of texts of older and more recent tradition and, especially, of the works of the Founder helps one to know and to be faithful to the charism and the precious heritage which has been handed down.

Citing a noted statement of Nelson Mandela, one can affirm that “education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world” – and oneself.

The autobiography as a means of caring for oneself

The spiritual diary represents one of the tools suggested by the Masters of spiritual life for fostering and accompanying one's own spiritual journey; the autobiography, then, is one of the literary genres which were most dear to the history of spirituality. A few recent studies attest that the moment in which one feels the desire to “tell one's story,” this is an unequivocal sign of being in a new stage towards maturity. The little child and the adolescent do not know how to link with each other the experiences they make. The ability to establish connections, concordances, and coincidences is learned at a much more advanced age; and thus the memory of the past is transformed into *gratitude* and, contemporaneously, into the awareness of a *task*.

Updating

The Salesian Cooperator lives in the world and is integrated into an area and a particular context of society. It is his or her responsibility to remain constantly updated by means of social communications and to utilize all the resources at one's disposition to improve professional competency and the understanding of his or her commitment to be an *honest citizen* and a *good Christian*, according to Don Bosco's teachings. “Things are always better at the start,” said French philosopher Pascal. To understand the identity of the Cooperator and to be able to situate it with certainty in the Salesian Family and the Church today, it is necessary to return to its historical birth. Identity is not a static reality. Inside of it is an ever-evolving dynamism. It is born from the knowledge of its roots, bringing it to read and to live the present in an active way and always to look to the future with a creative eye and heart. This was Don Bosco. In essence, the Salesian Cooperators have the great fortune of having been founded directly by a saint – and a saint of great stature.

The Association of Salesian Cooperators entrusts this formative path to Don Bosco in this the bicentenary year of his birth, invoking, upon each one of its members and through his intercession, the Grace to live one's Salesian vocation with passion. May the perennial entrustment to Mary Help of Christians, Mother

and Teacher, contribute to rendering the task to be *signs and bearers of God's love* ever more felt and concrete – in all the places where Don Bosco's message and the Salesian vocation are incarnate, so as to be the leaven of hope and of love for the men, women, and children of our time.

from *The Identity of the Salesian Cooperator*

b) Architects of their own formation

Whoever re-reads the last chapter of the *Rule of 1876* will see the concern that Don Bosco had for assuring that the Cooperators have *an essential but substantial nourishment*. He prescribes only an Our Father and a Hail Mary daily “according to the intentions of the Holy Father.” Monthly he requires *The Exercise of a Happy Death* (a monthly retreat), with the same demands required of Salesian Religious: Confession and Communion “as if this were truly the last day of your life.” And this is, in his eyes, an act of extreme seriousness and importance, a key to the spiritual life. Finally, *for each year* he advises, without imposing, that the Cooperators “approach the holy *Sacraments* of Confession and Communion with greater frequency”; we know that this opening to the Sacramental world is one of the characteristic traits of Salesian piety. One more thing: each year, *two Feasts* ought to be celebrated with great solemnity: that of Francis de Sales and that of Mary Help of Christians “so as to animate the Cooperators in their devotion to these heavenly protectors” (Ch. V, 8) and have them attend a conference each time (ch. VI, 4). So now we ask ourselves: what about all of this in the light of the *Post-Conciliar Church*?

c) The Two Tables: the Sacred Scriptures and the Eucharist

The practices prescribed by Don Bosco must be fulfilled, today, in accord with the spiritual doctrine and the liturgical spirit promoted by the Council.

“Outstanding among all these spiritual aids are those acts by which the faithful are nourished in the Word of God at the double table of the Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist.” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 18) *The Word of God* is “the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life”; (*Dei Verbum* 21); therefore, meditation on it is explicitly recommended to the lay apostles (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 4c) A Salesian Cooperator, must, therefore, learn to live in familiarity with the Scriptures, and, especially, with the *Gospel*; he must meditate, above all, on the “liturgy of the Word” for each Sunday and let it illumine his week. *Lectio Divina* is today a wide-spread practice in the Church and is certainly to be recommended also to the Salesian Cooperators.

Then there's the *Mass*, with Eucharistic Communion: “This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished... especially active participation in the sacred liturgy.” (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 4a) “The Most Blessed Eucharist contains the entire spiritual boon of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Pasch and Living Bread, by the action of the Holy Spirit through his very flesh vital and vitalizing, giving life to men who are thus invited and encouraged to offer themselves, their labors and all created things, together with him. In this light, the Eucharist shows itself as the source and the apex of the whole work of preaching the Gospel.” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 5b) The Salesian Cooperator finds the source of meaning and the strength for his apostolic mission in Communion.

d) The two devotions: to Mary and to Don Bosco

“The perfect example of this type of spiritual and apostolic life is the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, who while leading the life common to all here on earth, one filled with family concerns and labors, was always intimately united with her Son and in an entirely unique way cooperated in the work of the Savior. Having now been assumed into heaven, with her maternal charity she cares for these brothers of her Son who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and remain involved in dangers and difficulties until they are led into the happy fatherland. All should devoutly venerate her and commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care.” (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 4) Mary helps us verify the maturity of our faith. “*Let us contemplate and imitate Her faith, Her solicitude for the needy, Her fidelity in the hour of the Cross, and Her joy over the marvels worked by the Father*”. (SDB Constitutions, 92) For Don Bosco, Mary’s maternal presence in his work of education was fundamental: “*Guided by Mary, who was his Teacher, Don Bosco lived in his encounters with the young of the first Oratory a spiritual and educative experience which he called the ‘Preventive System.’*” (SDB Constitutions, 20)

Don Bosco addressed the gaze and the prayer of his Cooperators towards *St. Francis de Sales*. Certainly, we do not speak about forgetting our Patron today - he who is the inspirer of sweetness and of Salesian joy – the “Doctor of Charity.” But now that he has *Don Bosco himself* as a companion in sanctity, it certainly would not be contra-indicated to be committed to know, to imitate, and to invoke more directly the one whom God and His Church have given us as Father and Teacher.

d) Some demands as regards formation

- There is *the risk that that which is educative* (and by this is intended, at various times: the motivating inspiration, the vocational moments, the reference to pedagogy and to spirituality) *might be marginalized* in respect to the technical, scientific, and skilled professionalism.

- In the fourth place, formation requires a *good dose of spirituality*, so as to strengthen fidelity to service and to purify motivations. If education is in the realm of evangelization and has as its goal as the integration of faith and life (in Don Bosco’s words: the honest citizen and the good Christian), then we must care for the coherency of the educators as regards their Christianity, especially when they are entrusted with being responsible for various tasks. Even this is formation, especially if we want the educator to be a model of a good shepherd and be sustained by apostolic passion.

from The Salesian Cooperator by Fr. J. Aubry, SDB

Whoever receives a vocation as a Salesian Cooperator can go ahead and follow it with confidence. The Holy Spirit is logical in his works and abounding in generosity. Whoever is called by him along the Salesian way of life will be endowed with the necessary qualities to stride confidently along that way; he will be enriched with helpful gifts, gradually “converted” and sustained in faith and joy. The Cooperator will lean confidently on the Divine strength and tenderness; he will frequently turn to God in humble and earnest prayer.

The Method of Prayer that is to be Followed in the Salesian Spirit

1. **Prayer that is Simple and Vital** – “Our style of work and our relationships with others demand that we must always be renewing the divine element in our apostolic commitment: “...Apart from me you can

do nothing”. We have but few practices of piety, but we pray without ceasing and after the manner of Don Bosco’s own union with God aspire to become contemplatives in action by praying in simple heart to heart colloquy with Christ, with the Father conscious of his presence, with Mary our helper”.

2. Generous Openness to the Sacramental World – “The Eucharist is the centre and the goal of the life of the Christian, as a binding force and a dynamic nucleus of the brotherly community. It is an encounter with the fullness of the same mystery of salvation in whose service he spends his life. The life of a Salesian is especially founded on this truth. The enthusiasm and the richness of all his activity take their origin from the Eucharistic mystery.

For this reason the Salesian cultivates the sense of liturgical celebration and caters for its needs, both in its interior qualities and by its external beauty, well aware that young people are attracted by the splendor and the truth of these celebrations.

In the Sacrament of Penance the Salesian meets Christ who pardons him and who pours into him the meaning of the ever-present necessity of the penitential spirit.

3. Special Confidence in Mary – “Mary most holy is the foundress and will be the sustainer of our works.” The Salesian is convinced of the special, unquestioned role which Mary – always the hand-maid of God and co-worker with his Son – has had in the life of Don Bosco and of the Congregation. She is the watchful mother of his boys and their “interior teacher”. She is, besides, HIS mother; hence he has for her, the immaculate one and his help, a tender and strong devotion, simple and true, enlightened and dynamically practical...”

To grasp the originality of the Salesian spirit we must take the total of its characteristics and examine how each affects the other. The building materials can be found in various places, but the Salesian building affected is a special kind. The instruments and notes are common property, but the “Salesian harmony” is unique. In its own fashion, it makes music to the glory of God and fills the Church with joy.

from the *Original Rule of 1876* by St. John Bosco

APPENDIX TO DON BOSCO’S ORIGINAL RULE

Plenary Indulgences

The Plenary Indulgences granted to the Association of Salesian Cooperators, after the revision made by the Holy See by the decree of 31 January 1968, are the following:

1. On the day of becoming a member;
2. Feast of St. Francis de Sales: 24 January;
3. Feast of St. John Bosco: 31 January;
4. Feast of St. Joseph: 19 March;
5. Feast of St. Dominic Savio: 6 May;

6. Feast of St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello: 13 May;
7. Feast of Mary Help of Christian: 24 May;
8. Feast of the Immaculate Conception: 8 December.

Condition for gaining the Plenary Indulgence:

- a) Confession, Communion and prayers for the Pope's intentions.
- b) Renewal, at least privately, of the promise to observe faithfully the Regulations.

N.B. If the above feasts are celebrated externally on some other day, the Cooperators may gain the Indulgence either on the day of the liturgical feast or on the day of the external solemnity.

Cooperators can naturally gain other Plenary Indulgences granted to all the faithful by fulfilling only the first of the two conditions, i.e. without renewing the promise to observe the Regulations.

Partial Indulgences

The numerous partial indulgences expressly granted in the past to the Pious Union have not been renewed; but Cooperators should try to gain those which are extended to all the faithful. It should be remembered in this connection that partial indulgences are no longer specified as so many days, months or years as in the past. When it is stated that to some action a partial indulgence is attached, this means:

“Properly disposed faithful who perform an action to which a partial indulgence is attached obtain, in addition to the remission of temporal punishment acquired by the action itself, an equal remission of punishment through the intervention of the Church.”

In addition to the partial indulgences attached to pious practices, three general concessions should be mentioned which relate to acts of piety, charity and penance.

1. A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who with some kind of prayer raise their minds to God with humble confidence, while carrying out their duties and bearing the difficulties of everyday life.
2. A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, motivated by the spirit of faith and compassion, give of themselves or their goods for the service of persons in need.
3. A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, in a spirit of penance, spontaneously refrain from the enjoyment of things which are lawful and pleasing to them.

Salesian Cooperator Daily Entrustment to Mary Help of Christians

Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Help of Christians,

we share Don Bosco's belief that you are the foundress and guide of the Salesian Family

and so we place ourselves with complete trust under your protection.

**Faithful to our Founder's ideal we promise always to work for the glory of God,
for young people especially those neglected and at risk, for families,
and for the whole Salesian Family.**

**You were Don Bosco's teacher,
help us to follow in his footsteps and imitate his humility,
his fatherly kindness and his untiring zeal as a shepherd of souls.
Teach us also his good respect for the Holy Faith and the bishops.
Instill in all Cooperators his love for purity, his simplicity of heart and his cheerfulness of outlook.**

Bless all Cooperators throughout the world.

Grant that we may remain faithful to our Promise until death.

**May we be given the joy of coming to know you in Heaven,
where we shall see you as you are
and join in an unending hymn of praise and thanksgiving
to your Son, Jesus, and to our Heavenly Father. Amen.**

“O Mary Most Powerful Virgin”

prayer composed by St. John Bosco

**O Mary, Most Powerful Virgin,
Great and Illustrious Defender of the Church,
Wonderful Help of Christians,
Formidable as an Army in battle array,
You who alone have overcome
every heresy in the world,
in our anguish, in our combats,
in our difficulties,
defend us from the Enemy
and at the hour of our death,
receive our souls into Paradise.**

Amen.