

The poster for the 2016 Strenna



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Each of us can reflect on the poster of the Strenna for 2016: "With Jesus we journey together in an adventure of the Spirit." We don't need to be experts to interpret a picture. It speaks for itself. We allow it to speak through whatever the image evokes in us. I will try to suggest some ideas that come from the symbols that appear in the poster.

In the background there is the Basilica of Don Bosco in Castelnuovo. It reminds us that we have just finished the Bicentenary of the birth of our dear Father and Founder. This event was well prepared and was celebrated with great seriousness everywhere, but especially in the Salesian places. The memory of it should bring abundant charismatic fruits. It will not be quickly forgotten, but the essential aspects of it should be kept alive.

Our journey unwinds, starting from our humble beginnings at the Becchi. There is a stream of people. There are many of us - the Salesian Family, young people and lay people. We journey together and we are happy to do so. The symbol of the journey recalls the words of the Strenna: "we journey together ..." We have come from the Bicentenary with our charismatic identity strengthened and therefore with a more marked sense of belonging. It is a festive journey. On the journey we meet others and meeting them encourages us on our journey. Without others there would be no journey.

We walk with Jesus. He is the goal of the journey. We are all directed towards him. Jesus is also our leader on the journey. He shows us the way, because he is the way. He tells us so himself - "I am the way." The journey is the one taken by Jesus himself. He is our companion on the journey as he was for the disciples of Emmaus. He is a friendly travel-companion, especially for young people. With one hand Jesus invites a young person to walk with him and follow him. With the other he offers support. It is an expression of affection. He is the "face of mercy."

The walk with Jesus is an adventure. It is an adventure of the Spirit. This is why Jesus invites the young man, "Come on, follow me." We can say yes or no. We do not know where the following of Jesus will lead us. The Spirit, who is the interior teacher, extends to us the invitation of Jesus to be His disciples and persuades us to accept. The Spirit is discreet and quiet. He disappears to make way for Jesus. You "do not know where it comes from and where it goes, because it blows where it wills." His breath is imperceptible, but it gives life. The Spirit is unseen, but is present.

The journey with Jesus, which is an adventure of the Spirit, leads to a meeting with him. In the foreground of the poster we see the meeting of a young man with Jesus. The young man carries in his heart the spirit of Don Bosco. In preparation for the Bicentenary we were invited to start from Don Bosco. Now our commitment is to "start afresh from Jesus" in our specifically Salesian way. The centre place and the primacy should be given to the Lord Jesus - we follow Christ in the footsteps of Don Bosco.

The poster, by the Spanish artist David González Arjona.