

# MESSAGE

## TO THE SALESIAN COOPERATORS

Dear Salesian Cooperators,

Convoked by the World Coordinator, we, the Members of the World Council, gathered in Rome from February 22-26, 2017, and lived a moment of grace marked by fraternity and our Salesian Spirit. We came from the 11 Regions of the Association and were fully aware that we represented all the Provinces, all the local Centers, and each one of you. Despite the differences that exist among us due to our diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, we found ourselves united through our love for Don Bosco and the precious heritage of the charism which he left to us. It is the true wealth upon which are founded our vocation and our choice to work as veritable Salesians in the Church and in the world and in communion with the entire Salesian Family.

During the meeting, we had presentations about the realities of our Regions – those areas where we are called to live out our vocation and our mission. Our apostolic commitment, the Salesian Spirit, our communion, and our collaboration develop within the context of our daily lives. We retain it important to continue our efforts to accompany the Salesian Cooperators and the Centers as regards initial and on-going formation so as to increase ever more the sense of belonging to the Association. We are aided in this by the *Project of Apostolic Life* and by our new documents which are powerful tools for everyone, and, in particular, for those who have the responsibility for formation. In describing the situation of our Regions, we highlighted many positive points of our realities - in particular, love for Don Bosco and commitment to the poorest youth. We see the need to reinforce our sense of belonging as an opportunity for growth. This sense must be manifested through active participation in meetings and encounters, in fidelity to a Promise made to God, and in economic solidarity. It is economic solidarity that permits us to live a just autonomy and to realize our plans and projects in those parts of the Association which are the neediest.

Our reflection was aided and accompanied by our prayer moments which were completely centered on the family so as to underline our desire to journey together with the entire Church and the Salesian Family. Experiences of accompanying families that are in difficulty, which are already underway within our Association, motivate us to continue in this direction with courage. The future of the young and of society depend upon it.

Together with the Church, which is preparing to celebrate the Synod on the young, we, too, as Association, look to the next world Congress, which will be held in Rome from October 25-28, 2018. This is an event for which we cannot be found unprepared. For this reason, already now, we are praying and invoking the Holy Spirit so He illuminate us in such a way that as Salesian Cooperators, we feel CO-RESPONSIBLE in carrying out and developing this great event for the Association of Salesian Cooperators. The theme of the Congress will be: **SALESIAN COOPERATORS: CALLED TO BE CO-RESPONSIBLE IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO NEW CHALLENGES.**

May Mary Help of Christians and Don Bosco accompany us on this journey which we wish to undertake together with you - with profound faith and pastoral charity.

The World Council  
Rome, February 26, 2017