



ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS
World Congress 2018
WORLD CHALLENGES TODAY AND ASSCC POSSIBLE ANSWERS

CHALLENGES: THE AMERICAS

Asmirian Montilla Pacific Caribe Region World Councilor

- Social standpoint: violence linked with drug trafficking. Many kinds of violence: sexual exploitation, violence against women, human trafficking, buying and selling of organs.
- Economic standpoint: corruption, tyranny, hunger, migration, enslaving work, destruction of the creation.
- Religious standpoint: secularization, relativism, the de-Christianization of religion: God is the great absent one. There is a new form of syncretism that is religious-esotericism. Indifference and atheism are increasing. Religion, when present, is only the distribution of sacramental services. The shepherds have lost the smell of the sheep and their roles as formators and guides. Scandals of some are known by the people, but unfortunately, the laity remain silent.
- Scientific-technological standpoint: science becomes a new religion, completely disconnected from human ethics.
- Educative standpoint: education to citizenship and on human rights and values are lacking.
- Communication and social media standpoint: we are losing the value of human relationships - all is for show, life is appearances, and of short duration.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES FOR THE AMERICAS

- Become agents of transformation in all sectors of the Church and of Society.
- Respond with the New Evangelization in order to be bearers of good news that makes our faith and joy shine through. We must be impassioned about the defense of all life from conception to natural death.
- We need a new Salesian Cooperator who answers these challenges in Don Bosco's style. We need to live the Preventive System so we can ask the young people to give their best. They always seek the truth and they also need to be of service, with responsibility.
- We need life-long formation: reflecting, assessing, and acting all together in the line of prevention, recuperating a deep consciousness of human dignity.
- We need to know the implications of scientific-technological progress.
- We need to create a culture, a way of thinking, a new humanism. We have to express solidarity with the poorest, the weakest, and those suffering.
- We need to bring Gospel values into the spheres of politics, business, and work.
- We need to be people dedicated to the common good - coherent, credible, and concrete witnesses of an incarnated Faith.
- We need to have an experience of God and be involved in building a more just, more human, more fraternal world.
- We need to give our greatest contribution in participation in society, with education to world citizenship and the rights of every person.
- We need to be laity who reach out and share the life of the world, generously united to a new Salesian educative passion.
- We need to be happy with our Salesian vocation, act in unity, and in co-responsibly so as to bear good fruit.
- We need to remain united to Jesus to recuperate the newness of the Gospel and give coherent witness.
- We need to bridge the gap between laity and pastors so they may regain credibility.
- We need to "spiritualize religiosity" by bringing spirituality into a joyful life imbued with a "a Christianity that is mystical and political" (Karl Rahner).
- We must not be afraid to dream great dreams: the world expects this from us.



ASIA AND OCEANIA CONTINENTS CHALLENGES

Philp Yu EAO Region World Councilor

- Family education is seriously compromised by distorted social standards and behaviors. Parents must work hard, and do not have time to be with their children.
- We have to pay particular attention to at-risk youth who come from the North to the South of India, because of poverty, unemployment, debts... They are forced to do various heavy jobs, exploited by the bosses, without any insurance, without a home, without any social protection in case of illness or accidents... everything is up to them, without any on-line help to manage the language, the laws, the offices.
- Aging in ASSCC is very common: the average age is over 60.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE EAO CONTINENT

- We have to work for the "family" which is the first source of education and is also fertile ground for human and Christian growth. We can give a family style which supports young people offering the witness of a spirit loving goodness, of welcome, simplicity, and joy.
- The fundamental question is : "what we can do for young people?" We must follow a discernment process to know "Who can do something?" and "How to do it?". The key to success is solidarity, the collaboration of the whole Province.
- Confront the provincial Councils to disseminate in the Local Centers the commitment of the cooperators to help at-risk migrants, working with the other members of the Salesian Family and:
 - 1) Make the local reality known and how to access to medical care
 - 2) Create schools and night classes for studying the local language, supporting better education for the people.
 - 3) Offer counseling to find job opportunities according to their qualifications.
- We need more formation for all Salesian Cooperators, aspirants, young Cooperators and adult ones. We have to translate the "Guidelines for formation" and adopt the "commentary to PAL" and define the "Animation Criteria".
- We need to improve all aspects: spirituality, apostolic work in the Salesian mission, autonomy, communion, formation for Leaders...
- Above all, we need to know how to relate to young people, how to speak between young and old to face the same challenges.



AFRICAN CONTINENT CHALLENGES

Patrick Hinvi Africa (French speaking) Regional World Councillor

- **Economic level:**
 - extreme poverty is a chronic suffering. In the 1960s development was at 3.5%, in the 1970s it was at 7%, since the 1980s at 2.5%. Sub Saharan Africa has the least development.
 - Africa depends on foreign aid.
- **Social standpoint:**
 - there are many young people with great potential, but there is no one following them.
 - There is a lack of quality medical care for endemic diseases: malaria, tuberculosis, HIV.
 - A sea of irregular migrants crowd the Mediterranean shores.
 - Social corruption is in every area.
 - The educational and instructional system is among the major problems:
 - The states, as happened during colonial times, do not invest in education and instruction
 - There is the lack of quality teaching; the teachers are paid little and go on strike often.
 - The classes are over-crowded and the school churns out jobless young people
- **Religious level:**
 - in Africa there are two large religions: Christianity and Islam with an animism that contaminates them, creating conflicts.
 - Islamic terrorism by Boko Haram, the deadliest group of the planet, are carrying out attacks especially in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa, killing many civilians.
- **Political level:**
 - colonial times left a difficult political system, unsuccessful in many countries with civil wars and misrule.
 - Population is cut out of the power games, not even the vote allows them to be listened to. Elections are manipulated, and awareness of frauds suffered by institutions.
 - The One-party maintains itself with violence, corruption, mafia recycling of capital, nepotism.

All these make Africa poor and distances it from the dream of well-being.

AFRICAN CONTINENT POSSIBLE ANSWERS

- We have to achieve a shared awareness of the African situation.
- We have to pay attention that young people are the largest part of the population, and value their great potential to give answers to the challenges. Africa itself must act to develop and create a better future.
- Many sources must be invested urgently in formation and education.
- Salesian Cooperators are committed in areas that must be further incremented, both in the area of instruction with Christian and Salesian formation, and in recreational activities and service toward the poorest.



EUROPEAN CONTINENT CHALLENGES

Antonio Boccia Italy – Malta – MOR Region World Councilor

- There is a socio-political breakdown of the European Union that no longer represents peoples to the detriment of agreements that ensure peace.
- Economic development at different speeds that makes Europe be perceived more as a weight than an opportunity.
- Management of the reception of migrants remains difficult according to principles of solidarity and protection of human rights. The difference is perceived as a threat and cultural diversity is not valued.
- Excessive use of social media risks weakening the positivity of direct personal relationships; the sense of loneliness causes a form of ostentation to emerge from social networks which reaches to the point of aggression.
- There is a distorted use of affectivity and sexuality. Gender diversity is no longer a value through the homologating of every form of sexual expression to the point of justifying homosexual relationships, alterations in the generation of life, surrogate motherhood, children as a right and not as a gift.
- Spirituality is expropriated from the hearts of the young; but they want to change the world by asking adults to be authoritative guides, indicators of high goals.
- Often parents and adults renounce their role as an educational guide, do not perceive the needs of young people, and impose choices that are far from the needs of young people.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT

Institutional

- Pay attention to the socio-political dimension of our commitment as lay people (good Christians, honest citizens)
- Going out of the Centers to go to the "outskirts" and getting close to the realities of youth, family, and territorial discomfort and then, changing the perspective, from the outskirts to the Centers for a maturation of the ASC that comes from experience (missionary)
- To be protagonists in the cultural reconquest of society: act, get involved.
- Assume with responsibility commitments in civil society that foresee qualifying participations for the affirmation of the evangelical principles, living from authentic witnesses.

Spiritual nostalgia of the young generations

- Create attractive vocational proposals. Do not be afraid to show high life choices.
- Young Salesian Cooperators as animators of other young people (G x G). To make young people co-responsible for our mission.
- To take care of formation as a dimension of personal, ecclesial and associative growth at the various levels, avoiding improvisation (according to the Guidelines for Formation, Animation Criteria) attentive to the human, Christian, and Salesian dimensions.
- Our vocation as Salesian Cooperators must be spent to help young people to "recognize", "interpret" and "choose" ways for their holiness.

Body, affectivity, and sexuality

- Sexuality, the high expression of married life, as complementarity between man and woman, is one of the components of marriage and must be treated, renewed as a mutual gift of oneself.
- Qualifying Family Pastoral Care as a specificity of our secular reality in relation to Youth Ministry (Congress of Madrid).
- Re-appropriating our role as educators, specific to our charism (Preventive System).
- Being "alongside" the young to accompany them in the various stages of their emotional growth, as "attentive listeners" of their concerns, joys and worries.

Anthropological effects of the digital world

- Recover the relationship based on personal encounter.
- Use technology as an instrument of education and evangelization
- Make the Salesian mission visible through the means of communication using new technologies as an apostolic opportunity, without forgetting the "good press".