

MARY EXHORTS US: RETURN TO MY SON!



Mary accompanies us daily with the heart of a Mother to guide us on the way of salvation, to an encounter with Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life of every man and woman. The coronavirus epidemic that is overwhelming the entire world reminds us that salvation is for everyone and that the Gospel touches everyone's heart. We must be converted to the voice of Truth that resounds in the heart of every person, abandoning the path of sin, of corruption and of the lie which kills and leads to damnation. Mary urges us to return to her Son who alone is our Saviour.

Satan's power is powerful and wants to destroy human life and the life of our planet. Mary has always been the Help of Christians in difficult times for the Church and for humanity, as she is now in the times we are experiencing. She exhorts us to conversion of heart from every form of hardness that resists Grace, conversion of the eyes from every blindness that closes us to the Truth, conversion of the ears from deafness to the Word of God, and finally conversion of the hands from every form of selfishness and indifference to the Love of God and neighbour.

In all her apparitions right up to the present day, the Blessed Virgin has constantly appealed for prayer and penance. We are called to welcome this appeal in our lives and in the lives of our families, our groups, and our communities.

It is really difficult to understand, never mind put into words, how small we feel in this situation and the need we feel to really anchor ourselves to the essential, through prayer! We need to pray

together, praying with perseverance and courage, following the suggestions of the Holy Father Pope Francis and in strong harmony with the whole Church. As members of the Association of Mary Help of Christians, we are also called to live this time of trial with the attitudes that Mary teaches us: her trust and her standing at the foot of the cross. 'Entrust, trust and smile' is the motto that has long been imprinted in our hearts even more than on our shirts or images or logos. It is also the motto that the Rector Major underlined during our 150th anniversary and that we want to live and bear witness to today even more than in the past:

Mary, we entrust ourselves to you,

Jesus, we trust in you,

Jesus and Mary in you we put our joy and find our reason to smile.

Let live the month of May with great faith and devotion, celebrating the novena and solemnity of Mary Help of Christians with the whole Salesian Family.

*Renato Valera, President
Fr Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Spiritual Animator*

Act of Entrustment to Mary Help of Christians



We can renew this Act of Entrustment to Mary Help of Christians every day in our homes and in our groups, especially in this hour of trial and suffering due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Let us live this moment in unity with Pope Francis who calls on the whole Church and all people of faith and goodwill, even those who do not know the love of God: *"To the pandemic caused by the virus, we want to respond with the universality of prayer, of compassion, of tenderness. Let us remain united. Let us make our closeness felt toward those persons who are the most lonely and tried. Our closeness to the doctors, the healthcare workers, nurses, volunteers... Our closeness to the authorities who must impose stringent measures, but for our own good. Closeness to all."* (Angelus of 22 March 2020 Vatican Translation).

Like Don Bosco, we believe that Mary is our Mother and our help especially in this hour of trial and tribulation.

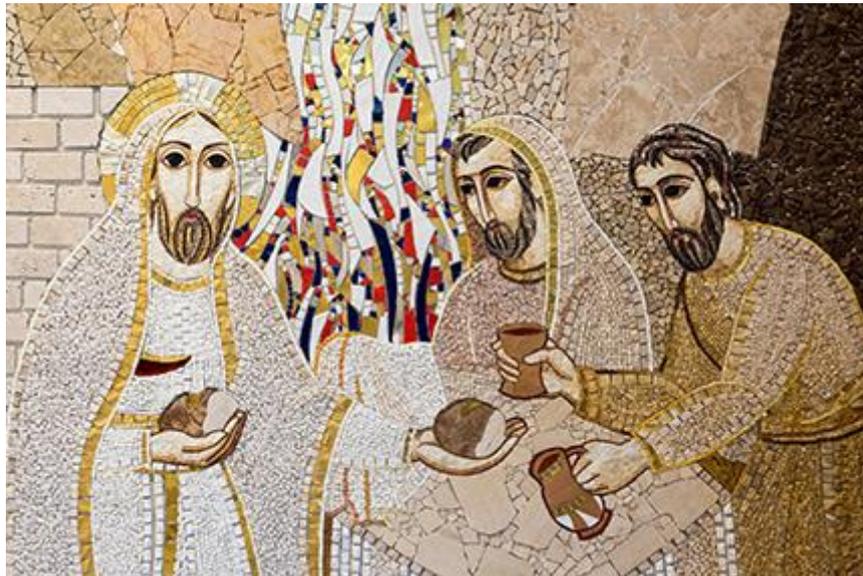
O Mary Help of Christians,
 just as our father Don Bosco did with the boys of the Valdocco oratory,
 on the occasion of cholera,
 we too, in a world affected by the Coronavirus epidemic,
 we want, as a Salesian Family,
 to express our filial entrustment to your Motherly Heart
 Comfort the sick and their families.
 Support doctors and healthcare professionals.
 Help all members of society and its governors.
 Welcome everyone who died from this epidemic.
 Above all, renew in each of us,
 in our communities and families,
 faith in your Son Jesus dead and risen,
 Making Don Bosco's words our own, we say to you:
 O Mary, powerful Virgin,
 great and illustrious rampart of the Church,
 wonderful Help of Christian,
 terrible as an army deployed in battle;
 you alone overcome every heresy in the world;
 in anxieties, in struggles, in hardship
 defend us from the enemy and at the hour of our death
 receive our souls into Heaven.
 Amen

Formative Journey 2019-2020
Anchored to the two columns: Jesus the Eucharist and Mary Immaculate-Helper

Luis Fernando Álvarez González, sdb

7. The bread of the Eucharist - third part

Therefore, my beloved, shun the worship of idols. I speak as to sensible men; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread... So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offence to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. (1 Cor 10.14-17; 31-33).



The Rites of Communion

Communion is one of the deepest and most essential words of Christianity. It needs to be understood very well. In the third part of the Eucharistic liturgy the Spirit enlightens the gaze of our faith with the vision of the Lamb of God and then we will understand everything.

What happens at Mass at the time of Communion? Are we to respond with the answer we learned before our First Communion when we were children? No! The secret lies in the very special relationship that is created between Jesus and us, between us and Jesus, linked to the fact of Communion. Jean Corbon (1924- 2001), one of the authors of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, explains it this way: "Adam, where are you. This thirst for the living God experienced by man in the earthly paradise is satisfied in Communion. Adam, the man of fear, is finally found, he is finally met, and Jesus, the new Adam, lifts him up and leads him to the perfect love that removes all fear."

In Communion, by eating the Body of the Lord given to us, we are converted into the One we welcome and the One whom the Spirit transforms for us. Indeed, in the Lord's Supper the gift is reciprocal and total. In personal terms I realize that I am no longer mine, but His, "who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal 2:20). What is mine is His. We are His and He is of the Father. We live by him, as he lives by the Father. If we have fully lived the liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic liturgy in all their spiritual fullness, then we will be transfigured in the light of Communion with Jesus, our brother, our friend, and our Lord.

Does communion with Jesus change your life, does it transform your heart?



It is the moment of **the wedding feast of the Lamb**, the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. It is the moment when the thirst I have for God meets the thirst that God has for me. It is the moment when the Bread of life gives himself to us as food and is handed over so that we have Life. Since there is one Bread, we, though many, form one body, since we eat the same bread (cf. 1Cor 10,16 ff.). In short, communicating with Christ essentially means also communicating with others. And each of the others becomes for me "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (cf. Gen 2:23). Do you live Communion as a true union with Christ the Head and with the Church his Body?

The seriousness and profundity of this moment of the Eucharist are emphasized liturgically by a series of sacramental rites (i.e. rites capable of bringing about what they mean), which prepare for it and defend it from superficiality and routine:

1st The *Our Father*: after the great Amen that concludes the Eucharistic Prayer, the first rite of preparation for Communion is the *Our Father*, in which we humbly ask for the Eucharistic Bread that we never deserve and also for the forgiveness of our sins, in order to enter well-disposed in communion with the Lord. The prayer ends with the doxology: "For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever".

The paper can be read at the following site:

www.admadonbosco.org

For every communication you can contact

the following email address: pcameroni@sdb.org

2nd *Rite of Peace*: The Assembly prays for unity and peace for itself, for the Church and for the whole human family. With this it also visibly expresses ecclesial communion and mutual love.

3rd *The Breaking of Bread*: after the rite of peace we witness in wonder the rite of the breaking of bread, performed by Jesus himself at the Last Supper. In the apostolic era, the term was used to indicate the entire celebration of the Eucharist. It means that the participants who celebrate, although many become one body, in the Communion of the one bread of life, which is Christ, (1 Cor 10:17). During this rite the *Lamb of God* is sung.

4^o *Regarding the rite of Communion*: the rubrics indicate that "it is strongly recommended that the faithful participate in the Body of the Lord with bread consecrated in that same Mass as the priest himself does and, when foreseen, share in the chalice, so that it is clearer from the signs that Communion is a participation in the sacrifice that is being celebrated".

The communion rites end with the *post-communion* prayer. After the Eucharistic liturgy, the *farewell rites* are celebrated. The liturgy ends with a final blessing and the Spirit sends us forth to the liturgy of life.

From the letter of the Rector Major for the 150th anniversary of ADMA: "Entrust, trust, smile"

On the journey to Heaven

In his *Treatise on True Devotion*, St Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort says that the special mediation of Mary in the life of grace of her children is possible because Mary, of all creatures, is the one who conforms most to Jesus Christ, the one most like him and closest to him. In essence, de Montfort says "true devotion" is nothing more than the "perfect renewal of the vows and promises of holy baptism", which entails the renunciation of evil and sin and total adherence to Christ. By way of fulfilling our baptismal promises, the more we love Mary and let ourselves be loved by her, the more she leads us to become like Jesus through the work of the Spirit. We know well that our heavenly Mother does not call her sons and daughters to come to her. She takes them by the hand to lead them to the encounter with her Son Jesus, the Son of God the Father.

This is why we can say, in harmony with this year's Strenna, that Mary is our Mother and Teacher. She supports us, so that we can "fly" on the **path of holiness**. The popular lay devotion of ADMA is rooted in this simple call which is given to all, to live the gift of Baptism radically by living our Christian vocation together with Mary. The members are not asked for anything more than what is asked of every baptized person. The difference lies in that "**extra gear**" that comes from "**true devotion**", that is, from the exchange of effective and affective love with Mary, which encourages us to grow continually in the love of God and neighbour.

In this perspective, it becomes clear that the spiritual relationship with Mary, although it is direct, intimate and permanent, is not "isolated, but is aimed at the Christian life in fullness [...]. This devotion to the Mother of the Lord, who is also our mother, consists in self-giving and availability for her mission. This leads to a mature and persevering response to Christ and through him to the Father in the Spirit." Don Bosco understood well that only love gives us wings on life's journey. Reciprocal love, reciprocated between Mary and her "devotees", is precisely the gift that ADMA members are called to bring to all the environments where they find themselves living and working. It is an authentic call and an invitation to live the Christian vocation with strength and vivacity.

This will be possible only if our heart is full of love for God and for Mary. In this sense Don Bosco is a true model. Fr Peter Brocardo says: "**Don Bosco is a saint full of God and, at the same time, a saint full of Mary**. Indeed, his whole life was lived for God and in dependence on God, and then for Our Lady. Even before his dream at the age of nine, Mary was already a living presence in his life, thanks to his earthly mother: 'John, when you came into the world, I consecrated you to the Blessed Virgin.' And in the dream, Jesus told him, 'I am the Son of her whom your mother taught you to greet three times a day.'"

Looking again at Don Bosco's relationship with Mary we realize how Mary can be our model and teacher in each of these fundamental dimensions of Christian life. We would like now to consider them briefly.

From Mary's house to our homes



The Salesian charism returns to its origins in the animation of the family. In the spirit of Don Bosco, the family acquires dynamic gospel joy. We are thinking in particular of **the current situation of the family** which is the original subject of education and the first place of evangelization. The whole Church has become aware of the serious difficulties in which the family finds itself and feels the need to offer the family exceptional help for its formation, its development and the responsible exercise of its educational task. We have come to realize that Family and Youth Ministry should be open to each other and go hand in hand. In the Salesian Family "particular attention is given to the family, the primary place of humanization intended to prepare young people for love and acceptance of life, the first school of solidarity between people and peoples. Everyone is committed to guaranteeing dignity and solidity so that it becomes, in an increasingly evident way, a small 'domestic church'".

This attention to the family is aimed at the human development, evangelization and education of the new generations: "Forming **'good Christians and honest citizens'** is the slogan repeatedly used by Don Bosco to indicate all that young people need in order to live their human and Christian life to the full: clothing, food, lodging, work, study and leisure; joy and friendship; active faith, grace of God, path of sanctification; participation, dynamism and involvement in society and church."

DON ÁNGEL FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME CONFIRMED AS RECTOR MAJOR

On 11 March, the 28th General Chapter of the Salesian Congregation, held in Turin, renewed the mandate of Rector Major of Don Ángel Fernández Artime for the six-year period 2020-2026. The first thought of the re-elected Rector Major was for young people: "I think this six-year period must be strongly marked by this conviction: we must bring God to young people. And at the same time, as I have said many times, and I will continue to say it all over the world: especially to young people most in need, the poorest, the exploited, the discarded ... We were born for them".

Fr Ángel Fernández Artime (aged 59) was born on 21 August 1960 in Gozón-Luanco, in Asturias, Spain. He made his first profession on 3 September 1978 and his perpetual profession on 17 June 1984 in Santiago de Compostela. He was ordained priest in León on 4 July 1987.

Originally from the Province of Spain-León, he holds a degree in Pastoral Theology and a licentiate in Philosophy and Pedagogy.



He was Delegate for Youth Ministry, Director of the school in Ourense, member of the Council, Vice-Provincial and, from 2000 to 2006, Provincial. He was a member of the technical commission in preparation for the 26th General Chapter. In 2009 he was appointed Provincial of South Argentina, and thanks to this position he also got to know and collaborate personally with the then Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, today Pope Francis.

In December 2013 he was appointed Superior of the "Spain-Mary Help of Christians" Province - a role he never took on however, because before being installed as Provincial he was elected by the 27th General Chapter as Rector Major of the Salesian Congregation. It was 25 March 2014.

Address of our President Renato Valera

Dear Don Angel,

With great joy we learned yesterday the news of your confirmation as Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco. This is good news that comes like a small light at a really difficult moment for all of us and for the whole world.

On behalf of the council of Primary ADMA of Valdocco and of the whole association I wish you a truly rich six years... rich in Jesus in the first place and in entrustment to Mary, rich in prayer, rich in encounters, rich in youth, rich in families, rich in whatever else the Lord will send your way.

We will all be guided by you and we will pray for you to Mary Help of Christians, that you may continue to bring the Gospel and the charism of Don Bosco to the whole great Salesian Family throughout the world as you have done so far, simply and directly, with the courage of truth in a merciful embrace.

With sincere friendship in Christ,

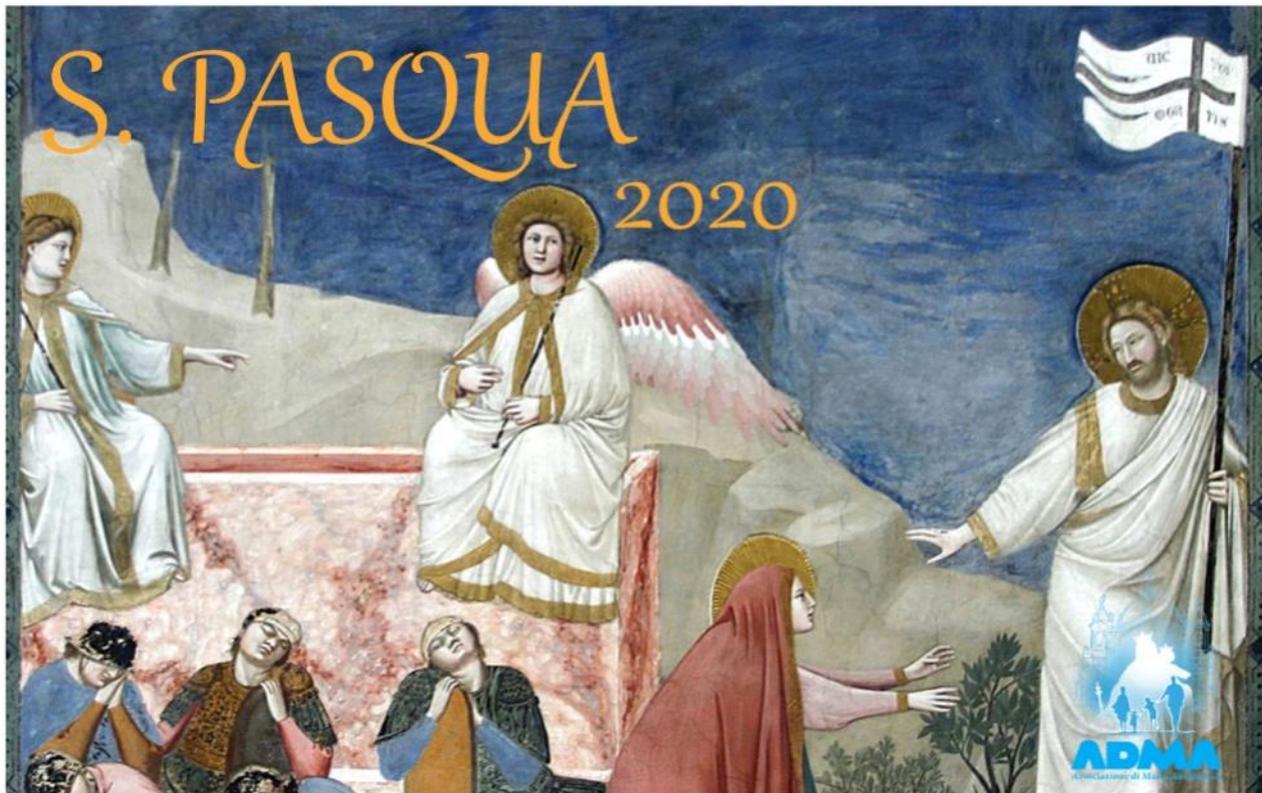
Renato and all the council of Primary ADMA



From the Address of the Rector Major at the closing of the General Chapter



One more challenge, and this is the last one! We have spoken about the Salesian Family. In recent years we have worked well with a huge effort by some of the group delegates. We have seen that they are not able to take on any more. However, the Salesian Family, together with the reality of the mission shared with the laity, will be the point of arrival and the guarantee of the Salesian mission. It cannot be just a position to occupy someone's life, or to make a little friendship. It is an essential charismatic element, much stronger today than in Don Bosco's times, because there has been a great development in these 160 years. This is why I invite you to truly continue to believe in the Salesian Family. This is not the same everywhere in the Congregation. In some parts it is a beautiful reality, whereas in others it is still only starting.



“Io sono la risurrezione e la vita... Abbiate fede! In mezzo al pianto continuate ad avere fede, anche se la morte sembra aver vinto. Togliete la pietra dal vostro cuore!

Lasciate che la Parola di Dio riporti la vita dove c'è morte”...

La Vergine Maria ci aiuti ad essere compassionevoli come il suo Figlio Gesù,
che ha fatto suo il nostro dolore..

(Papa Francesco – Angelus domenica 29 marzo 2020)

In questa ora di prova per tutta l'umanità, l'augurio pasquale sia speranza ai nostri cuori .

*Sig. Renato Valera, Presidente,
don Pierluigi Cameroni, Animatore Spirituale,
con il Consiglio dell'ADMA Primaria di Torino-Valdocco*