



Cochabamba (Bolivia), March end 2017: The Rector Major presided over the Team Visit to Interamerica Region. At the heart of all these events and meetings there shown the appealing face of Fr. Luigi Bolla, all painted up in the bright colors of his beloved Achuar, with the added dignity of a long white beard. In this month of May, the Provincial of Peru will lead a pilgrimage in the traditional style. He will be carrying with him the mortal remains of Fr. Bolla over land and rivers. The revered missionary will return from Lima to Kuyuntza, to the beloved land and people where Don Bosco's son had been "all things to all" (1 Cor 9: 22).

"We are burying our dear missionary brother, Don Luigi, once again," I would like to tell the Salesians during this Bolivian Visit, "but we are careful not to bury also the missionary spirit of our communities and our provinces!" This is the ardent and

confident prayer that we place this Marian month in the hands of the Help of Christians at Valdocco: Help us, dear Mother, "let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigour" (see Evangelii Gaudium 109).

Fr. Guillermo Basaños, SDB  
Councillor for the missions

## ... in a permanently missionary state

We now have a new edition of the Manual of the Delegate for Missionary Animation (DIAM). It is in the press. However, here are a few tips that could be helpful to our communities:

"Today we are guided by Pope Francis: to live the missionary dimension of our charism means to live our Salesian life *in a permanently missionary state* always trying to reach out to 'all the peripheries that need the light of the Gospel'. It is in this fashion that we keep alive our passion for Jesus and his people. It is this that will help us overcome pastoral ascidia, malice and the psychology of the tomb. A missionary heart rediscovers the 'joy of being Christian, supported by the inner happiness of knowing Christ and belonging to his Church'. From a missionary option comes the 'joy of evangelizing'. It is this joy that overcomes the 'fatigue of faith' and the loss of apostolic dynamism.

"On the other hand, this missionary spirit that every Salesian must live does not exclude, but in reality implies, that there are Salesians with a specific vocation to be a missionary among those who do not know Christ or have abandoned him (*ad gentes*), outside of his own country (*ad exteros*), and through a lifelong commitment (*ad vitam*)."



Help us, dear Mother, "let us not allow to be robbed of missionary vigour" (Evangelii Gaudium 109)



# TO SHARE WITH THE OTHERS THE HAPPINESS!



**M**y missionary vocation is a consequence and development of my Salesian and priestly vocation. The testimonies of missionaries I came across in person or through my readings in the time of my adolescence were truly provocative 'voices'. They made me understand the vastness of the boundaries of the Church. They made me realize the identity of the Church as 'yeast' in the World. The launch of Project Africa became my opportunity to concretize it. One of my motivations was to make it possible to share with others the happiness that comes from living with the dignity of the Sons of God. He is our Father (Dignity that encompasses and gives meaning to all human rights).

I remember what it cost me to move from Italy to sub-Saharan Africa at the age of 40, the difficulty of communicating, relating with people from a totally different world. The language problem was bad enough .... how much more difficult it was to understand and accept the new ways of looking at life and death. I had to adjust to a new society with the important roles of the elderly, the adults and the youth. I needed to find ways and systems to collaborate with all of them for the education of the next generation. ... I had to accept myself as an ignorant man who had a lot to learn yet. ... I had to be patient with myself and give myself sufficient time to understand what to do and how to do it.

This, however, helped me understand that what the mission needed from me the most was not so much what I could do but the love I could put into relationships. I ought to thank the Lord for filling my missionary life with so many joys. Looking back at all my experiences in my 68 years, I must say that I never could have planned hoped for what my Missionary vocation has given me. I never imagined I could reach such vast horizons, that I could share my life with so many peoples and cultures. Only my missionary call could have made it possible for me to exercise my priestly ministry in so diverse environments and cultures.

The mission I worked in has given me yet another joy. This is like the happiness of parents when they see their children succeed in life; and the satisfaction from seeing them live by the values they received. The Salesian Province of Adriatica - my province of origin sent me to open the mission at Onitsha. I worked there my first 22 years. This mission has already produced 40 Salesians, two of whom offered themselves to the Rector Major for the "Mission ad Gentes". Onitsha has the first organized group in Nigeria of Don Bosco Alumni. Out of Onitsha has come the first African volunteer for Don Bosco ...

The missionary lives with the certainty of what the Lord has told us: "I am with you always ...". He is aware of the call to collaborate with Him who wants to be the life, the soul and the joy of the world. The missionary vocation is to make Him Emmanuel: "the God with us".

**Fh. Nicola Ciarapica**  
*Italian, missionary in Nigeria*



## Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity

*Fr. Pierluigi Cameroni SDB, Postulator General for the Causes of Saints*

The **Venerable Dorotea Chopitea** (1816-1891), the first Salesian Cooperator whose cause for beatification was initiated, a wife, a mother of six children, was one of the very few people whom Don Bosco addressed as 'mother'. And she really was a mother to everyone - always ready to go wherever help was needed. This "almsgiver of God" sacrificed a fortune as no one else in Barcelona of her days. In her scale of values what came first was the love of the poor: "The poor will be my first thought."

## For Salesians in Africa



## Salesian Missionary Intention

***That, as prophets of mercy, justice and peace, they may know how to educate the young to the social dimension of charity.***

*Africa, in many countries, continues to suffer serious social problems, such as ethnic divisions, political corruption, the radicalization of the political groups, the lack of equal opportunities for all and freedom of expression. It is part of our commitment to education and evangelisation to propose itineraries of faith that will lead our young people to be, in their context, brave citizens who are builders of a more just and fraternal society, credible witnesses of reconciliation and peace.*

