

CAGLIERO¹¹

Newsletter for Salesian Missionary Animation



A Publication of the Missions Sector for the Salesian Communities and Friends of the Salesian Missions

Dear friends,
Although the missionaries of the 146th Missionary Expedition are already on their way to their destinations, the footprints of their sandals and their missionary zeal remained in the basilica at Valdocco. We are profoundly grateful to the Lord, because every missionary call *ad gentes* is also a clear sign that "the lord loves the Congregation, wants to see it vibrant for the good of the Church and never ceases to enrich it with new apostolic energy" (Const. 22).

It was very interesting for me during the Preparatory Course together with the new missionaries, to experience firsthand how this missionary call *ad gentes*, *ad exteros*, *ad vitam* is a precious gift of the Spirit for each of them, for the Church, for the world. Hence we need to know how to listen better and welcome the Lord who gives Life, the *Dominum et Vivificantem*; know how to invoke the Holy Spirit. It is He who calls, forms, sends and accompanies every missionary. It is he who continues to call today to leave one's own land and go! "Let him who has ears to listen understand..."

J. Basañes
Fr. Guillermo Basañes SDB
Councillor for the Missions

THERE IS A CLEAR CONNECTION BETWEEN CONSECRATED LIFE AND MISSION

The missionary dimension, which belongs to the very nature of the Church, is also *intrinsic to all forms of consecrated life*, and cannot be neglected without detracting from and disfiguring its charism ... The fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Decree *Ad Gentes* is an invitation to all of us to reread this document and to reflect on its contents.

The Decree called for a *powerful missionary impulse in Institutes of Consecrated Life*. For **contemplative communities**, Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus, Patroness of the Missions, appears in a new light; she speaks with renewed eloquence and inspires reflection upon the deep connection between contemplative life and mission.

For many **active religious communities**, the missionary impulse which emerged from the Council was met with **an extraordinary openness to the mission *ad gentes***, often accompanied by an openness to brothers and sisters from the lands and cultures encountered in evangelisation, to the point that today one can speak of a widespread "interculturalism" in the consecrated life.

Hence there is an urgent need to reaffirm that the central ideal of mission is Jesus Christ, and that this ideal demands the total gift of oneself to the proclamation of the Gospel. On this point there can be no compromise: **those who by God's grace accept the mission, are called to live the mission**. For them, **the proclamation of Christ in the many peripheries of the world becomes their way of following him**, one which more than repays them for the many difficulties and sacrifices they make. Any tendency to deviate from this vocation, even if motivated by noble reasons due to countless pastoral, ecclesial or humanitarian needs, is not consistent with the Lord's call to be personally at the service of the Gospel.



Franciscus

For the full text of the
Message for World Mission Sunday 2015
see: <http://tinyurl.com/poc2of3>





My going to the missions has become a tool to evangelise my own people

While growing up, I met many people who dedicated the whole of their life to the proclamation of the Gospel, either explicitly or through the services they rendered. I also wanted to do the same.

Although my call to the missionary life became quite evident at the novitiate in Ghana, the first time I actually considered going to the missions was when the first Nigerian missionary was sent to the Sudan in 2007.

During the post novitiate I was privileged on several occasions to participate in the village ministries. I was moved by the villagers' simplicity and availability to serve God. I asked myself many times why can't I stay back with this people? In the meantime my discernment continued and during my final year in the post-novitiate, I expressed my desire and availability to the Rector Major in 2012. He sent me to Bangladesh.

My arrival in Bangladesh was like my second birth. Learning from the scratch practically everything - culture, language, food - was not that easy. Contrary to my initial fears, Bangladesh turns out to be the mission I had always longed for. Here we minister to people who are really in need. I must say that their simplicity constantly helps me to make a sincere examination of conscience. To crown it all, is the joy of being in a Salesian community flavoured with fraternity, optimism and cheerfulness.

One may ask: "Why embark on *missio ad extreros* while there are people in Nigeria who have not yet embraced the Gospel?" Well, first of all I think that the Lord is calling me personally to be a missionary and not to heed this would be like the Prophet Jonah who tried to flee from God's call. Secondly, I have come to realise in these few years that going to the missions has not only nourished my faith and that of those to whom I've been sent, but it has become a significant tool of evangelisation as well for my own people - the Christian community where I come from. Since an average Nigerian will think, by default, only of migrating for greener pastures, by willingly accepting to work in a difficult place with socio-political, economic and religious problems becomes a practical missionary catechesis.

Moreover Nigeria has been blessed with lots of great missionaries, and the local vocations are blooming tremendously. Perhaps more missionary generosity from Nigeria, could be a fitting way to say *thank you* to the first missionaries who found it worthy to sacrifice their lives for us!

Surely I've got my daily challenges, and a total immersion into a new cultural context could take ages. But I do hold close to my heart the advice of my Novice Master: "You will suffer, but your suffering will be like that of a seed planted in the soil, which dies, in order to grow and bear fruit for the benefit of all!" Indeed, it is in sharing the sufferings of Christ, that we experience the greatest joy ever!

Cl. Joseph Kunle Ogundana
Nigerian, missionary in Bangladesh



Witness of Salesian Missionary Sanctity

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

In a circular letter to the confreres in 1930, the Servant of God Fr. Carlo Braga (1889-1971), a missionary in China and the Philippines, wrote: *"The type of mortification more pleasing to the Lord, and the most meritorious for us, is that of voluntary and generous acceptance of daily tribulations, which make up our cross. Our Holy Founder, when he spoke of mortification, pointed out that this cross is especially our EGO with its passions, the effort needed to overcome the bad natural tendencies, it is the pain that is inseparable from all spiritual struggles ... our good Father pointed out that one cannot leave this cross, neither day nor night, neither for an hour, nor for a minute. In fact in the Gospel we can read what our Divine Saviour said: 'If any one would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Mt 16, 24).'*"



Salesian Missionary Intention

For Salesians in South Asia working in educational and social apostolates

That as educators and pastors Salesians bear witness to the primacy of God and proclaim the Gospel to young people who attend our educational and social works.

While Salesians are known for the great educational and social work done efficiently, we are less known as spiritual men, who live only for God and his glory. Even in non-Christian contexts where a direct proclamation is not possible, our educational and social works are an eloquent testimony to the primacy of God and the Gospel in our lives and in our apostolate. Let us pray that Salesians give importance to the initial proclamation of the Gospel through the educational and social apostolate.

