

Never grow tired to walk! Can you tell me, what should I change?

Dear friends and confreres,

Exactly today we are starting again our Lenten journey, forty days of walking towards the Resurrection of our Lord. This year we celebrate on 16th April! Every Lenten season is a special 40 days pilgrimage of conversion. Conversion means walking forward God, getting out of our comfort zone. It is always a healthy move. We are invited to move out from our personal comfort zone, move out from our routine, mediocre life-style or move from the security of our small life-space, where is *‘everything under control’*.

This year I spent the Don Bosco Feast Day among a group of young missionaries mixed with rather senior confreres - really meaningful multi-generation family experience. One day in the afternoon I was surprised by one not-so-young confrere who asked me straight forward: *‘Can you give just 3 minutes time? Could you tell me, what should I change to become a better Salesian?’* It was a short, but serious, fraternal and very Gospel-like face to face encounter. Knowing him well for past few years, I have shared few points for his personal growth - conversion. This encounter touched deeply my heart!

During this 2017 Lenten journey Pope Francis invite us to consider the **parable of the rich man and Lazarus** (cf. *Lk 16:19-31*): ‘Let us find inspiration in this meaningful story, for it provides a key to understanding what we need to do in order to attain true happiness and eternal life. It exhorts us to sincere conversion....

Lazarus (= means God help us!) teaches us that other persons are a gift. Each life that we encounter is a gift deserving acceptance, respect and love. The word of God helps us to open our eyes to welcome and love life, especially when it is weak and vulnerable...

In the **rich man** (= has no name!) we can catch a dramatic glimpse of the corruption of sin, which progresses in three successive stages: love of money, vanity and pride!’ ... Like the rich man when we close our heart to the gift of God’s word, we end up closing our heart to the gift of our brothers and sisters. [*Francis – Lenten Message 2017; full text in attachment*].

I wish you from the bottom of my heart a sincere journey during next 40 days, so we can sign together ‘Alleluja!’ with a trully deep joy – a fruit of this conversion journey!

Mary, Mother of the pilgrim people of God, pray for us!

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