

July 1, 2017

## Salesian Lay Volunteers – Mission Possible?



**Dear Friends and Salesian Family members!**

The month of July means in many of the EAO countries time of summer or winter vacation in the schools as well many apostolic activities – summer oratories, faith - vocation or Bible camps and also volunteer service exposure for our young people.

Day by day I'm more deeply convinced that without the Youth Volunteer Services the Salesian Youth Ministry is not complete, is not truly dynamic and has no future! The name may be Don Bosco Volunteer Group (GIA), may be Cagliari Project (AUL), may be Torch Movement (CIN), may be International Volunteer Group (KOR), VIDES Japan, Korea, Philippines, Cambodia (FMA) or SAVIO (FIS) ... such are the different volunteer organizations of Salesian Family within our 11 EAO provinces.

During past six months I met few young or not so young missionary volunteers who spend one year of their life serving the young people in Samoa, Cambodia, Vietnam, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines or Timor Leste. It's amazing to listen to their experience: *'I applied because I did not want to continue my academic way in life or at least trying to do something good.*

*I thought teaching English is something I can do and so I wanted to do it. After almost one year here I have learned much more than I could have ever dreamt! Probably the best way to sum up my one year of volunteer life is that I shared my little knowledge, experiences and life!’*

Whenever I visit the Solomon Islands personally or access the Facebook pages of the Solomon Island Salesian family members I give thanks for 26 years long DBVG (Japan) consistent volunteer commitment. Whenever I listen to the DBVG members who returned from Solomon Islands to Japan, I realize how much both groups of young people are enriched by their mutual interaction. Self-less service witness of our young people shapes the lives of the young people all over the world. In developed materialistic countries without the volunteers there would be probably only 50% of consecrated vocations!

Yes, we dream about more missionary volunteers in all of our EAO Provinces and Delegations. Yes, we dream to go beyond two weeks of simple immersion experience, in order to give one year - full time in the Salesian mission! Sometimes the young volunteers coming from other countries to our EAO communities may become the inspiration or trigger for the growth of missionary volunteers in Vietnam, in Timor, in Cambodia, in Myanmar or in Mongolia. Let’s try!

In Don Bosco

**Fr. V áclav Klement, SDB**

EAO Regional councillor